

"gangsta's paradise" by coolio

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Gangsta's Paradise is a hip-hop song created by the rapper Coolio in 1995. A lot of the hip hop of this generation had a very lyrical feel to it and echoed a sense of endearment for where they grew up, but also echoed a want to get out of their respected neighborhoods and make the existing world a better place for everyone. Hip hop was a way of these artists to express what life was like for predominantly African Americans growing up in low end neighborhoods in populated cities. The 1990's was a launching pad for the hip hop genre and would bring attention to many wrong doings going on in previously ignored sectors of society. In Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise" he is attempting to convey how he is stuck in the street life and societal differences between blacks and whites keep him stuck in this life.

To illustrate, in Coolio's lyrics of "Gangsta's Paradise" he states, "I can't live a normal life, I was raised by the streets, so I gotta be down with the hood team." (Verse 2). Coolio knows that because he came from the streets, that there's some false pretense that says he has to be down with gangs, drugs, and violence just by where he's from and what he was born into, or he will receive harsh backlash from people around him. Coolio later states in "Gangsta's Paradise", "I guess they frontin'; that's why I know my life is out of luck, fool!" (Verse 3). This echoes Coolio's sentiments of knowing that this life that is made up for him is what he's destined to become. Overall, Coolio uses these lyrics to show to us that this life he leads is one already made up for him and how it's just how things have to be for a black male growing up in his type of surroundings.

Furthermore, Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise" showcases some obvious cultural differences between blacks and whites in America. In an article from <https://assignbuster.com/gangstas-paradise-by-coolio/>

The New York Times it reads, "Is a gangsta the same as a gangster?" (Daniel Victor). This quote comes from the article about a white jeopardy contestant answering, "what is Gangster's Paradise" besides the original title of the song. While a minor mistake, this showcases how the song even holds its relevance today, with the two cultures being far from the same. In the song, "Gangsta's Paradise" Coolio raps, "They say I gotta learn, but nobody's here to teach me. If they can't understand it, how can they reach me? (Verse 3). Coolio is pointing out how many people outside of his neighborhood will say he needs to better himself and learn new ways of making a living. However, Coolio points out how most of the people who are saying these things are usually white higher ups with no real grasp on him or his culture. Moreover, Coolio showcases how the culture differences between two different social and economic groups shines very bright.

Lastly, in the music video to "Gangsta's Paradise" it brings Coolio's lyrics to life by using very clear and somewhat movie like visuals. The video uses visuals of a white female teacher going throughout her day at a presumably low-end school in a low-end area. She seems frustrated throughout the video, leading us to believe that her job is causing her potential stress, or is just not going how she intended. Coolio raps almost as if he's talking to her as well, as they sit in a dark room surrounded by other people smoking and gambling. This leads one to believe that Coolio is either advising or telling this lady about the struggles of growing up with her student's circumstances and that she will never understand or be able to reach those kids without first understanding where they came from. These visuals support a thesis that points toward a notion of cultural differences of blacks and whites, and

how these differences lead to him and others being stuck in getting by, by using these street tactics that aren't correct.

In conclusion, "Gangsta's Paradise" is a masterfully crafted hip-hop song that harps on cultural climate issues among the black community and white community. When Coolio raps about having to be "down with the hood team", he is stating how because he was born where he was, that he will always be stuck in the "street life". Coolio also raps and uses visuals in his music video to convey how there are cultural differences between the black and white community, and how these higher up white people don't understand how to fix a problem they know nothing about. Overall, "Gangsta's Paradise" is a timeless classic that is still relevant today with ever increasing racial tensions among blacks and whites.