

Effects of gangsta rap essay

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“ Obviously rap music is too violent. It serves as a musical accompaniment to the entire underclass culture of violence,” says the author of “ See No Evil”, David Klinghoffer, in an article in the National Review. This extremely narrow minded philosophy has neglected to discover what rap music really is and what it means to its millions of buyers, who are mostly of upper-class status.

Rap is not only music, it is also a black cultural expression that prioritizes black voices from urban America, and it is a form of rhymed storytelling accompanied by highly rhythmic, electronically based music. Rap music is a form of art or expression like any other type of music. Rap music in itself is not violent. Rap music of today is merely a reflection of the violence that many urban dwellers deal with daily in America.

The art of gangsta rap reflects life as the rapper knows it and he or she in no way invites anyone to recreate his or her lives. Condemning gangsta rap music is an empty attempt by politicians and older generation individuals who are unable and unwilling to tackle the true problems that grip urban American cities. Gangsta rap brings together a mixture of some of the most complex social, cultural, and political issues in contemporary American society. Rap bloomed in the depths of the ghetto, which is a place characterized by violence, poverty, and crime. Although rap currently reflects a diversity of opinions, lifestyles, and feelings, rap responds directly and indirectly to the trials and tribulations of life at the bottom and for the most part remains true to the ugly reality of the streets. For most young black people rap music is the only way to escape from the pain of the world in which they live.

It paints an ugly picture but when they hear that the rapper has also experienced this pain it makes it much easier to deal with and it gives a sense of hope that one day they may make it too. Young listeners love rappers such as Snoop Dog or Gucci Mane. They like them because they “keep it real”.

The phrase “keep it real” simply means that listeners can relate wholeheartedly to what the rapper talks about in his lyrics. The rapper is not faking what he says and how he feels. The rapper has truly experienced all of the things he discusses and this makes him or her real. Most rap tales are stories of wandering around all day, unemployment, gang ties, feeling threatened by the police, and a bad home life.

This is real life to an urban person. These types of realities have to be faced everyday. Even as rappers achieve a central status in commercial culture, they are far more likely to be vulnerable to censorship efforts than highly visible white rock artists. In other areas of black entertainment, such as comedy, Redd Foxx, Richard Pryor, and Eddie Murphy have gotten away with a lot of raw humor that is popular among whites as well as black audiences. When rappers aspire to the same level of rawness then all of a sudden the same people are not laughing it off anymore. Society has a problem with young blacks communicating with each other and young whites. Rap is not something that everyone understands so it is scary to those who are not familiar with the art form.

We all fear what we do not understand or what we cannot control. No one can control rap music except for those who create and understand it. This

concept leaves many people, especially older people, feeling left out and angry and so to silence the communication that rap creates it has been labeled evil and a cause of violence. Ultimately there are different types of rap that focus on certain issues. Some rap deals with raw issues like police brutality and racial issues. In contrast, many east coast rappers, such as Nas, the late Notorious Big, and Wu-Tang Clan describe a black street life in which criminal wealth goes with paranoia, betrayal, and imminent death.

According to John Leland of Newsweek, “ rappers should be success stories. They are young men, usually of humble beginnings, who through sheer talent and hard work rose to the mansion on the hill. These are complex and creative individuals. This is usually never the case especially when it comes to gangsta rappers. Take the late Tupac Shakur for example. The deaths of Tupac Shakur and the events surrounding his death had and still have many people believing that rap music and the industry in general played a part.

Everyone that was against rap music used his death as an excuse to blame rap for violence. They were saying that his violent lyrics are part of the reason that he was murdered. C. Delores Tucker, a very famous anti-rap music advocator, was quoted as saying “ Mr. Shakur always talks about violence and now it has come back to him. What type of thing is that to say about someone who has died? Shakur did talk about violence in a lot of his music but he also has just as many positive lyrics. He has made songs about teen pregnancy, suicide, and one of his all time bests was a song called “ Keep Ya Head Up.

” This is a song dedicated to black women. He tells the black woman that he loves her and begs other men to honor and respect her as a mother, sister, etc...

The point of this brief on Tupac is that yes he talked about violence but rap music is not to blame for his death. Shakur grew up in a terrible environment which caused him to have a negative outlook on life. Tupac like many other rappers was educated and wanted to be positive all of the time. He said, “ Yes, that’s what I want to do.

I want to move people. I want to heal them, but I’m still just tryin to silence the demons inside me. ” In other words Tupac admitted his troubles but never asked anyone to follow his bad example. He and other rappers often admit to mistakes and usually ask listeners to take heed and learn from them. Snoop Dog was faced with a murder charge.

He did not pull the trigger but his bodyguard did. In his trial he had to face the negative comments and perceptions that people had about him because he was a gangsta rapper. In a Rolling Stone interview Snoop’s attorney David Kenner said, “ Snoop was perceived negatively, and we had to dispel that inaccurate opinion. ” In many cases rappers are merely entertaining and should not be perceived by their lyrics only. Being a rapper is a job. In most cases that part of them stays at the studio while they are at home. These misconceptions deeply hurt the rappers.

Snoop Dog says, “ People think that I like being notorious, this shit ain’t cool. It’s not what I’m about anymore. This is nothing cool, nothing fun, nothing to

laugh about. This is stressful. ” The media needs to focus on statements like that instead of violent lyrics all of the time. People need to know that these rappers have feelings and hearts and they do not like the negativity that surrounds their occupation.

In other cases it makes them angry. Tupac Shakur says, “ I am a product of a society that openly tells me that my life ain’t worth anything. In any other country with any other skin color I would have been a great lawyer. I would be Tom Cruise in “ The Firm”.

But in America with black skin, I’m just Tupac the cop-killer dude. You know, I’m a revolutionary. I’m straight thuggin’ out here. thuggin’ against society, thuggin’ against the system that made me. If Tupac had not been murdered, his next project entitled “ One Nation” would have had many people eating their negative comments.

“ One Nation” was Tupac’s way of asking all black rappers to unite no matter where they were from. They would unite to show the world that rappers could stand together for the betterment of the black community. The 90’s have been pretty tough on musicians across the board. Many have experienced trouble but the difference is that the non-rappers music is totally diffused from his problematic life. It is in no way blamed for their lifestyle or violence.

Their music is not considered an issue. Rappers cannot seem to avoid their negative connotation. Some people feel that it is short sighted to hang the blame of urban violence on rap music.

The problem of urban violence is much bigger than rap. Many rappers come from poor, low-income areas in the nation. This is an issue alone that must be addressed. Rap attracts many black youth from the mean streets. According to a 1995 issue of the Journal of Black Studies, violence is provoked by social shame. People who are considered low and less than others are more likely to be violent individuals. That is why incidents of violence are high among poor blacks.

Every since the beginnings of slavery blacks have been made to feel less than human. Rap artists are primarily black and poor. This accounts for the high volume of violence that is heard in many rap songs today. Some rappers choose to rap vivid lyrics that take you to the places and make you visualize their pain, while others overlook the violence and rap about fantasy as an outlet. Youth and maleness are among the determinants of violent behavior. Youth, maleness, blackness, and poverty are descriptions for the bulk of the rap artists of today. They were not rappers all of their lives and their lyrics as harsh as they may seem normally reflect images that they have seen or experienced. With these four factors stacked up against them America should be applauding these young men for taking the time to express their anger in a song instead of on the streets.

In conclusion rap music is an art form that reflects life. If this were a non-violent society then there would be nothing called gangsta rap. Even more simply rap music is a form of entertainment and should not be used as a crutch for violent acts by anyone whether it be artist or listener. When a rap artist is involved in a criminal or violent act it has nothing to do with him/ her

being a rap artist but it has everything to do with his/her environment and upbringing.

People make choices and decisions for themselves. Rap music can not be blamed totally for the right or wrong decisions made by people. It is a medium by which people are educated and entertained.

All those who are against rap music must really take a look at what is going on around them. Rap music mirrors what goes on in the urban American city. If the problems are to be solved the fight should be against the causes not the effects. Politicians and other anti-rap campaigners should try and get together with the rappers because at this point in time rappers are the only ones who are facing the true issues by talking about them.