

Mutulu Shakur Interview w Hip-Hop Icons Father

Written by Robert ID2740

Saturday, 17 June 2006 01:33 -

Hip-hop culture fans of the late rap icon Tupac Shakur (2Pac) all know the name Mutulu Shakur. When they hear the name they know someone is speaking of the late rapper's father and also the father of hip-hop culture's Mopreme Shakur, Sekyiwa Shakur, Nzingha Shakur, and Tupac's other siblings. But many do not realize the depth of Dr. Mutulu Shakur.

Dr. Shakur's political and social consciousness is well respected among those who know of the Black Liberation Army and the struggles of the Black movement in the United States.

Dr. Mutulu Shakur, incarcerated freedom fighter, has been locked down since February 12, 1986. Dr. Mutulu Shakur has been imprisoned as a political prisoner in US penitentiaries the past 19 years for activities in support of the Black Liberation Movement, and during that time he has still managed to contribute to the struggle and contribute to the legacy of his late son Tupac Shakur (2Pac).

The F.B.I. and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, with law enforcement, made every effort to keep him separated from his son Tupac. But there were those 'cherished times' they spent together as 'father and son', 'teacher and student' and 'respected friend to respected friend'.

In his first interview granted in over 3 years, Dr. Shakur spoke to ThugLifeArmy.com's Robert about Mutulu's son, the late hip-hop icon Tupac, as well as about Mopreme and all of Dr. Shakur's children. He also talks about the importance of the Thug Code, that he, Tupac and Mopreme helped conceive and write.

We would like to thank Dr. Shakur for granting us this time with him and we would hope you find his information enlightening and useful.

For more on Dr. Mutulu Shakur please visit his web site at <http://www.mutulushakur.com>

ThugLifeArmy – I would like to thank you for taking time to do this for us Dr. Shakur –

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ThugLifeArmy – Many in the hip-hop community are aware of your name, because of your son the late Rap Icon, Tupac Shakur. Can you give us some Shakur family history?

Dr. Shakur – One of the things important to remember about Tupac's role as a Hip-Hop Great, which was to continue to educate his peers, because there was a struggle waged for their struggle to survive. One of the methods he used was to keep in their minds eye, that there exist political prisoners and prisoners of war of that struggle. You cannot know me outside of the context of political prisoners. You cannot know Geronimo Pratt, Sekou Odinga, Assata Shakur, Herman Bell, Akmed Evans and the rest except within the context of our struggle for freedom. And that is what made Tupac so amazing. You cannot name yourself ThugLifeArmy without having a historical background of the Black Liberation Army (BLA). Although there is a distinct differences. It is important to understand the historical development and differences.

ThugLifeArmy – What are the earliest memories of Tupac you have? What age would he have been?

Dr. Shakur – From the cradle to the grave! The days running wild in South Bronx at the Lincoln Detox Program. Playing with the acupuncture needles in arms and the ears of the victims of chemical warfare, giving them hope with his smile and joy that they too will one day smile and find joy again. All night meetings in the struggle, singing and clapping to Stevie Wonder, Frankie Beverly, Nina Simone and Gil Scott Heron, hair unruly, personality infections going all out, all the way down. This interview is not sufficient for a complete expo.

ThugLifeArmy – What is the biggest thing you miss by not being able to share time with Tupac?

Dr. Shakur – The potential of our collective development. Although I cannot play an instrument and I sing like a dog in pain, I do hear and compose lyrical and musical concepts. Politically, the Geo-Political landscape, the internationalization of Hip-Hop would have required a strategy to participate in the awakening of the consciousness and the spirit of the have nots being smashed to ashes, neglected and terminated by the pursuit of the wealth and hegemony, yeah we would have done something. Tupac defines the shining path.

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ThugLifeArmy – You have been locked down since 1986 correct?

Dr. Shakur – Yeah! I have been underground since 1981. I have been a target for COINTELPRO and J. Edgar Hoover since 1967! The struggle don't stop!

ThugLifeArmy – During Tupac's rise in the hip-hop world you were probably one person he could confide in as he grew in the music field. Did he feel happy or comfortable with his success?

Dr. Shakur – If you study his lyrics, he is best qualified to answer that question! If you can imagine a tidal wave which rises high into the atmosphere and crashes down on earth, dragging everything around it out to sea, weakening its foundation. The whole perception of stardom conflicted with his innate nature. Something he became in spite of his nature, which is primarily based upon being real and struggles with his own demons and at the same time allowing his spirit to guide his instincts. The recipe for external distorted perception.

ThugLifeArmy – Did he ever loose focus of his teachings as a child?

Dr. Shakur – This response must be qualified, as any human being evolves what one knows and has been taught should always be a source of evaluation. As a young man, one always struggles to be self-determining (to be their own man). The consequences of being a Shakur and the price it carried was never lost on Tupac. Could he alter his outcome? If so, how? At what price? What method would be used? And, at the end of the day would he respect himself? He evolved a strategy to manipulate outcomes true to who he was; the shining path. When it is all said and done, I am for one, proud of him! Mistakes notwithstanding!

ThugLifeArmy – Afeni Shakur has done a marvelous job (I think) keeping Tupac's legacy alive and in the public eye. Are you proud of the way Tupac's legacy seems to not only live on but grows even among the youth of the nation and the world?

Dr. Shakur – Yes. His mother has done a marvelous job maintaining integrity of his creative, spiritual contributions. He is an Icon because she has done right by his sacrifices. That must be

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respected.

ThugLifeArmy – As his legacy grows, I think his spirit lives on even more today than when Tupac was with us physically. How do you feel Tupac would receive all the love that he has sparked?

Dr. Shakur – First of all, I completely agree! In Tupac's transitional stage, he has communication, which has empowered, motivated and stimulated people all over this planet to fulfill their objectives and hold fast in times of despair to be strong enough to endure. This is not my subjective hope but my objective factual evidence delivered to me through mailings, E-mails and all types of communications for the last decade since his passing. I have met so many people in these dungeon holes of various prisons throughout the U.S. who have inspired me to hold on, be strong and that I am not forgotten; based upon Tupac's continued input into their lives. Tupac still lives, vicariously through others.

ThugLifeArmy – Tupac has touched many and his spirit grows it seems every year. Do you feel that his murder will ever be solved?

Dr. Shakur – I am on it!

ThugLifeArmy – Coming out of the early struggle with the Black Panther movement, what are your views on the 'New Black Panther Party' or other Panther inspired groups out there?

Dr. Shakur – Every generation has a responsibility to make an offer of commitment and sacrifice for the future generations. Say, "let a 1000 flowers bloom." Judge people by their work; this political reality is different than the past. Any people who negate their freedom fighters weaken the proceeding wave, which allows a people to negate their responsibility and turn over their survival to the opposition in the face of natural and unnatural disasters such as Katrina! Such as the Drug Plague! Such as Aids! Such as Famine and Genocide!

ThugLifeArmy – I understand recently you have been moved to Florida from Atlanta. Can you see a purpose for this being done?

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Dr. Shakur – I believe it was the Department of Justice attempt to incite some action on my part that would affect my upcoming parole arguments reclassification. Every 10 years a Federal Prisoner's classification is reviewed. They know I had just moved my mother, who is blind and who has been blind all of my life, from New York to Atlanta; who I had not seen in 18 years. Moving me from Atlanta to Florida would put a hardship on our visitation as the late stages of her life. She is the source of my strength, an example that I use to overcome personal challenges. I am sure they had other political and legal objectives. Their personal one was the one intended to get an emotional reaction. At the time I had a Brief in the Supreme Court. They also choose to put a re-enactment drama on my case to poison the public.

ThugLifeArmy – With so many caught up in the system, how has the treatment of Bro. Stanley Tookie Williams effected those in lock down, and is it effecting you personally?

Dr. Shakur – The state was willing to kill a person, who by objective facts has rehabilitated, has served enough time, not diminished the severity of the crime, who has influenced others to change their lives to the point that it is recognized on an international level, that person who's credited his grasp on humanity, and changed his life based on the historical models of our struggle. And who in fact had proof of his innocence and was denied a chance to present it. Tookie Williams' killing was a killing of any hopes of rehabilitation as a legal justification for freedom. It discouraged personal reform, and more importantly, it told us that the likes of George Jackson, Nelson Mandela and Assata Shakur will always be perceived as heroes of our struggles, but criminals in the eyes of the U.S. Tookie Williams' assassination requires our own Truth and Reconciliation Tribune here in America of the war by the U.S. COINTELPRO against the Black Liberation Movement.

ThugLifeArmy – It has been said that you helped Tupac, Mopreme and others write the 'Thug Code', which was written in 1992 and presented at the 'Truc Picnic' in California. If we can not stop all the violence, do you see that this document, (if followed), would still hold true today for an end to gang violence?

Dr. Shakur – The 'Code of Thug Life' was evolved behind enemy lines between various crews across this country. Tupac agreed to become the spokesperson and agitator of the code. Once we understand how important this combination was, how important drugs, arms and specifically horizontal aggression (internal conflict) plays in the acquisition of wealth by illegal and unmonitored means by the CIA, the U.S. Government, Wall Street, and venture capital and natural resources around the world, you'll understand how important of a tactic and strategy that

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the 'Code of Thug Life' represents. Yes, it is still important. We must take people from where they are to where they should be, it's a process. We do not have the capacity to do it instantaneously.

ThugLifeArmy – That brings us to the topic of 'Thug Life'. With all the teaching you did with Tupac on the history of thugs and thuggery, do you think the world still sees Tupac as what the mainstream definition of a thug is, or do you think he changed the definition of what a thug and thug life is? He definitely left his influence in the hip-hop culture, but beyond that.

Dr. Shakur – I think if those who claim to represent Thug Life, have they transformed their behavior to the degree that it re-characterizes Thug Life. Is there a collective consensus among the Thug Life cadres acting in the interest of respect of the ideals put forth and left by Tupac? Will they carry the Thug Life image that carries on the principles like in India? The thuggies were a cult of assassins who out of a form of religious cult, transformed themselves to work in the interest of the underclass of India against British colonialism, oppression and chemical warfare. It will take the political, social, and spiritual awakening of the have-nots to redefine Thug Life, not by crime but by the pursuit of justice and protection of our human dignity. The hoods must be transformed by those who are willing and capable of meeting the challenge.

ThugLifeArmy – I'm sure you have regular contact with Mopreme, Set and your other children, but are you still in contact of any of the others from Tupac's 'inner circle'?

Dr. Shakur – All of my children are special. They all are making significant impact on other people's lives. The trials and tribulations that are the consequences of the paths their parents have taken have cost them tremendously. Like a Phoenix, they have endured, persevered and come to terms with who they are. In this reality, I might not be seen as a great parent or a good parent but they trust me as a comrade, friend and confident and hopefully a teacher. I have been away from them most of their lives and although they hold it against me personally, they respect the principles of the sacrifice. I ask all those who love and support Tupac to comprehend and love and respect his sisters and brothers and the extended family who has sacrificed as a result of association. They are some of the best among them. They are the revolutionary babies, R.B.'s.

ThugLifeArmy – All the hours you spent talking with Tupac, what can you tell us that you would spend time talking about, that we may not know but as fans would appreciate?

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Dr. Shakur – Every challenge, every goal, every celebration, every disappointment within the limits of my methods of communication we discussed. We yelled and screamed a lot. We laughed til' our sides hurt a lot. We spent many uncomfortable moments of silences choosing and discerning where to take the conversations, understanding clearly that tomorrow, the next moment, the next hour was not promised.

ThugLifeArmy – This year is also the 20th yr of lock down for yourself. In those 20 years so much has changed and you have been locked down longer than most of the younger generation of hip-hop. Do you ever see a day when you will walk a free man?

Dr. Shakur – No question about it. The purpose of my continued incarceration must have some impact on your generation, what specifically it is, history will determine. I, for one will try to impact that history. My obligation to struggle with the gangs, the crews, the clicks, the have-nots while understanding their need to act, challenging their failure to act in the principles that unify, protect and develop resources is the task that I embarked upon. The hip-hop culture, that impacts on the world theater escalates the thinking of all hip-hop dwellers to think globally and by consequence think of the importance to build to survive.

ThugLifeArmy – Was there ever a time when you would talk to Tupac and you just could not understand where he was coming from?

Dr. Shakur – Tupac was embraced by two classes. One class embraced him because, what was visible to them was the end of a difficult road that was recorded by 'Bling-Bling', things that they worshipped, jewelry, cars, furs, which was portrayed in his videos and honestly in his demeanor. On the other hand the other class who loved him, who understood his experience, the price of his struggle which was impacted on the have-nots. They listened closely to his lyrics and embraced the fullness of his life's work. That continued to remind him of his presence in their lives. It is these people who search me out behind enemy lines and show me love that energizes me to continue the task.

ThugLifeArmy – With so much mis-information out about Tupac, what is the main falsehood about Tupac that is portrayed by the media.

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Dr. Shakur – Most people do not understand that Tupac did not live in isolation of world events. His personal and professional decisions were in fact stimulated or retarded by those accounts. What do you think Tupac's reaction would have been to Katrina? The AIDS epidemic in Nambia, South Africa? Don't you think that Tupac would have went to France and wrote a song and been down with the youth groups, the have-nots? How do you think he would have reacted to Hugo Chavez? Giving Aid to people in Katrina's aftermath, cutting oil prices to poor people in Amerika,. Becoming a hero in South Amerika by befriending Fidel Castro. Think about it! How do you think Tupac would have reacted to the murder of Tookie Williams? What would he have called Arnold Schwarzenegger? Would he have reacted irrational to the public media representing the frustration of your generation? And would you have called him crazy? One must take stock of their own process of evolving, understanding that as a process! Aim high and go all out. Do the best that you can and have no doubt that you will run into the spirit of Tupac, N 2 Da Gutter! FREE ALL THE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND SAVE THE BABIES!

ThugLifeArmy – Dr. Shakur is there anything else you would like to comment on?

Dr. Shakur – Although the interview is complete, I'd like to make a few comments. Firstly, you should understand that this topic of Tupac, although very important, it requires a lot of emotional effort.

ThugLifeArmy you should know that anytime you use the term 'army' associated with any element of Tupac, the frame of reference will be to the Black Liberation Army. The period for those women and men who sacrificed long ago. This is a new political reality. A reality of which your generation will have to determine what is best and effective for the outcome you seek. And in order not to make the mistake of the past and to fully understand the commitment of the past you have to study the history of the BLA and its effects on the life of Tupac, negative or positive is for you to determine.

Also, I believe that the have-nots are not a state of mind but in fact a station in life. Is it permanent? I think we choose not to hone in the exploration of others. We deny ourselves on principles. The have-nots are not people incapable of great achievement. In fact the have-nots, the world over are the major players in the transformation of policy on the environment, respect for labor and land. They are the ones who in the end bring truth to power. We must reject the proposition that have-nots in the United States are a cursed group but rather a positive force that will usher in a era of power with equality that is Tupacism.

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I believe it won't be easy. The enemy of humanity are more desparato- They have no vision- We have a vision guided by a spiritual light. The unseen. I hope you all read N 2 Da Gutter, a novel I've written to give respect to Tupac Amaru and the revolutionary babies of the Black Liberation Movement. And listen to the new Dare 2 Struggle CD and upcoming Dare 2 Win CD.

Stiff Resistance ----- Dr. Mutulu Shakur