

## Can Hip Hop Improve the Way We Date By Jeff Carroll

Written by Jeff Carroll ID4493

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The current dating environment is summed up in two words, The GAME. The GAME seems like it is growing in popularity. References are made to it everywhere: in Rap and R&B music, on TV and in film, in the poems of HBO's Def Poets and the jokes on BET's Comic View, and of course in books. In the summer of 2004 UPN had a show called The Player. Everybody thought the movie with Vivica Fox and Morris Chestnut called, Two Can Play That Game, was funny. Even comedian Bill Belamy starred in a film called, How to Be a Player. These movies and jokes are funny until somebody gets hurt or killed. It's easy to think that seriously dating a couple of women or getting a guy who you don't like to buy you something is cool until it happens to you.

The fact is, The GAME is a very serious problem with the way we date in America. It's a problem that I think is being spread like a disease. The GAME is now being popularized and made acceptable through Hip Hop. Just as Hip Hop's popularity is growing so are the behaviors of The GAME. Hip Hop, like Rock, Grunge or Goth is able to start trends. I believe The GAME is a trend. Even though trends can last for long time periods and can become part of the behavior of society. This is why I wrote the book, Hatin The GAME. I feel we need to respond to this growing social trend. I believe Hip Hop can also be used to popularize progressive trends.

People always talk about the influence that Public Enemy had with songs like "Fight the Power." I like to use KRS One's song, "Jimmy," about using condoms. These songs were able to popularize positive trends. If you think of all the people you have known who have been killed and how many of them died because of a relationship gone bad, then maybe you'll understand the severity of this problem. I wrote my book, Hatin The GAME to help us start a conversation about solving this problem. People always talk about how people on the lower part of the economic scale need to do more. Well, Hip Hop culture is a creation of people in the lower class, so I think it is the perfect vehicle to start trends that can bring an end to The GAME.

Now that I haven't been dating since 2001 and have been out of The GAME, I have had a chance to reflect. Listening to my friends talk about their experiences dating, their complaints seem avoidable. Being married is real cool because it's a relief not having to go out looking for somebody to date. When you're dating, all you think about is one good time after another. You get used to having to get dressed up all of the time. When you are going out every weekend to pick-up women you realize how the Player lifestyle can consume you. Even for women having to think about a man's motives every time they are approached can take its toll. Thinking about how men will react to the clothes you wear or the way you talk to them all the time can be frustrating too. I always knew dating could have an affect on men, but it wasn't until after I got married when I noticed how much I had been affected by living this American dating lifestyle. I ran into a pretty young female who had to be in her mid-twenties. She said she believed men

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and women could not be friends. It made me remember how I felt when I first heard the song "Women Ain't Nothing But Bitches and Hoes." I was like, I knew a few people thought that way, but when that record came on in the club it seemed like everybody felt that way, even the girls. It was different from other songs that sang about game-type behavior like, "Poppa Was a Rolling Stone," or, "Ain't Nothing Going On But The Rent." At least they weren't saying all men are broke or just want to enjoy the physical benefits without contributing to the costs of a relationship.

In my book I give a list of things that people can do to protect themselves from the victimizers, Golddiggers and Players in The GAME. One simple thing like publicizing your relationship is a basic activity, but a lot of people still accept the DL (down low) relationships. Hatin The GAME also offers a solution which is in the form of dating codes for the Hip Hop community.

One of the dating codes is for people to define their relationships before having sex. Hatin The GAME also includes a discussion with married people who navigated their way through The GAME to find their life partner. There are other chapters that discuss what Golddiggers and Player really are as well as the impact that trying celibacy can have on sexual addiction.

So, get a copy of HATIN THE GAME and start positive relationship trends that can help STOP this foolishness.

For more from Jeff Carroll please visit - <http://www.rbgworld.com/> and at <http://www.myspace.com/AYoJeff>