

Notes From a Hip Hop Refugee in Exile

Written by Min. Paul Scott ID2932
Sunday, 13 August 2006 00:58 -

Notes from a Hip Hop Refugee in Exile: - Have We Lost the Black Cultural Wars? By Min. Paul Scott

Fliipin" through the channels the other day, I came across that episode of Gilligan's Island where the band of stranded castaways rolled up on that Japanese soldier who was still fighting WW II 20 years after it was over. I guess homie didn't get the memo. As I sat down to write my 50 something-ish essay on the war to save Black culture from the clutches of corporate evil doers, I turned to MTV2 and saw the same booty slappin" and gun clappin" that I saw over a decade ago. I guess, I didn't get the memo either...

There has been a war going on in Black popular culture between those who believe that the genius of black talent should be used to uplift humanity and a corporate empire hell bent on turning little Black boys into thugz and little Black girls into strippers, for decades.

Although some may point back to earlier conflicts between the Civil Rights folks and the promoters of Blackploitation as the genesis of the dispute, for the Hip Hop generation the first shots were fired somewhere between the late 80's when Ice Cube first penned the profound statement that "life ain't nuthin" but bitches and money" and the early 90's when Snoop Dogg told the world about the joys of

"doin" it doggy style." Despite the hundreds of conferences, books, lectures etc discussing the problem of "negativity" in Black culture, more than a decade later Cube is still reppin" for the "g's" and Snoop is still "pimpin" ho's".

Holly"hood has not faired much better as all the righteous attempts to promote positive images on the silver screen by 80's icons like Spike Lee have not prevented an occasional "Soul Plane" from popping up. Perhaps taking the biggest hit was our last refuge of Black literature where, classics such as the "The Bluest Eye" have been pushed off the shelf by urban smut like "How I Seduced My Five Babies" Daddies." Even though we have been constantly told how Black folks don't read, these books are now taking up major retail space at even the most lily white bookstores.

I am a member of that generation who was led to believe by groups like Public Enemy and KRS One that Hip Hop really was going to change the world for the better. No matter how messed up

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the Black reality seemed to be the revolution was coming and it would only a matter of time before the arrows shot by the conscious rappers and activists would pierce the hearts of even the most incorrigible thugz and pull them into the Black empowerment process. But in 2006, we see ourselves still in the same downward spiral.

So what happens to a Hip Hop dream too long deferred? Do we keep holding on till all hope is gone or do we become that bitter old former 60's Black militant turned ultra right wing conservative who hates everyone associated with youth culture. We must first keep it real with ourselves. We must face the sad reality that in the war for Black culture, we got whopped like that trick" from Hustle and Flow. Unlike that Apollo dude, who died in the ring in that old Rocky movie, you gotta know when to throw in the towel. You've got to know when to hold "em and know when to fold "em. Am I suggesting some sort of "if you can't beat them, join them exit strategy. Don't be ridiculous. We must cut our loses, do an assessment of what worked and didn't work and get ready for the next phase of "tha struggle."

So, today, we are the Rap Refugees raging against the machine, throwin" the finger at the corporate media establishment while proudly sporting 1988 throwback African medallions and Malcolm X caps as the kids with the gold teeth in the white Tees jeer at us from their Cadillac Escalades with the spinnin' rims."

We are the Black culture guerillas fighting behind enemy lines taking shots at the invincible enemy until the forces of good are once again strong enough to wage a full scale war against the "evil Doers."

That is the purpose of the "Notes From a Hip Hop Refugee in Exile" project as through a lecture tour, series of essays and an upcoming book, I will aid in the process of critically examining why we lost so that we can move forward.

So prepare for battle, as we lick our wounds, gather the troops and prepare for Rap World War II

This is TRUTH Minista Paul Scott signing off from exile....

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Min. Paul Scott is a lecturer and activist based in Durham NC.

For more information about the "Notes From a Hip Hop Refugee in Exile" project/lecture series visit: <http://www.hiphoprefugee.blogspot.com>

Phone (919) 451-8283

email: [notesfromexile at yahoo.com](mailto:notesfromexile@yahoo.com)