

Hip Hop Davey D Busta Apologized but Who Will Apologize to Black Women

Written by Davey D ID4570

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Busta Apologized for Arab Money, But who will apologize to Black Women? by Davey D

When I first heard the Arab Money song, I kept thinking to myself it was just a matter of time before some of the cats within the Arab Hip Hop community were gonna raise an eyebrow and say something. Yeah, we all have seen news clips and heard the stories of kings and sheiks in some of Arab nations who are just wylding out in money earned from their vast oil reserves. We've all heard the news reports about how America is in a financial tailspin because of so called "Arab Money".

How that translates in certain Hip Hop circles where money and power is often prized, bragging about being rich like the folks who run shit in places like Dubai is the ultimate goal. It's the ultimate symbol of power. It says I'm richer than Donald Trump. I got Arab Money!!!. Keep in mind, Hip Hop is no stranger to this phenomenon. We have always been in search of power.

I can recall the early days of Hip Hop when cats started off taking on fancy titles like Grandmaster, Grandwizard, King, Queen, Prince etc. Hip Hop pioneer Afrika Bambaataa would bestow the title "King" and "Queen" on early followers of his Zulu Nation in an attempt to help young wayward brothers and sisters feel good about themselves. Bam's approach was in the tradition of the freedom fighters from previous generations who wanted Black people to no longer be known as Negro or colored. It was rooted in those who wanted us to connect back to African centered consciousness.

Sadly what Bam was trying to do was in steep competition with the early Black exploitation movies where Black men would take on defeat white gangstas. That wasn't so bad but eventually that aspect gave way to Superfly movies and that would be an inspiration for early Hip Hop cats to show up at gigs and display their monetary prowess.

I recall the early days when cats would show up to early gigs being driven in fancy OJs. They would make it a point to have those rides pull up so they could step out sporting expensive sheep skin coats and other fancy threads purchased at places like Dapper Dans. If you didn't have the loot for Dapper Dan than you got your shit from the "Jewman" on Delancey or JujU's or Onyx up in the Bronx. As I said a lot of that early swagger was a hold over from pimp culture personified by the Superfly image. Others say it was a hold over from the Harlem drug culture best personified by Nicky "Mr Untouchable" Barnes, Guy Fischer and their ilk. As things evolved

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Hip Hop carved out its own signature fashion statements which included everything from fat gold chains to collections of expensive suede sneakers or shoes i.e. Pumas or British Walkers. Being fly, street savvy or being a hardrock was the goal back then as it is today in many of our hoods.

Over the years I've seen Hip Hop embrace and emulate Italian Mafia culture, Columbia Drug cartel culture, Foreign dictatorship culture. We embraced the Jiggy era and became enamoured with the Donald Trumps of the world and started embracing the business tycoon, big money mogul culture. You name it, if it represented power, good or bad we found a way to embrace it.

Folks may recall it was just recently that Hip Hop mogul Jay-Z tried to one up his competition who were all up in the club making it rain with dollars, by making it rain with Euros. When he did that it was reported that the stock market took notice of his move. I guess we should not be surprised that a guy like Busta comes along and decides he'll skip making it rain English pounds or some other foreign currency and just go for the zenith-Arab Money.

AS I'm writing this, I wonder if Busta would've been allowed to do release a song called "Jewish money"? How long do you think that would be tolerated? Folks forget that Diddy tried to flip a rhyme in his song "All About the Benjamins" where he bragged about 'stacking chips like Hebrews". The story goes, Clive Davis who headed up the label that distributed Diddy's Bad Boy heard it and was having no parts of it. He put a stop to that quick, fast and in a hurry. That line was omitted from both the radio edits and non radio edits of the song. I'm wondering who was tghe record executive who greenlit "Arab Money". How did that get by? But lets not digress.

This quest for power has not been limited to rap stars. As a radio guy I can tell you first hand that the balling mentality was fully embraced and oftentimes fueled by record label executives and their promotional staff. I'm sure there are deejays reading this who can tell stories about how the promo guy who was working the records seemed determined to be more of a star then the artists he was pushing. I recall how cats would show up at the station sporting the latest gear and exuding a swagger that sometimes resulted in the promo guy getting more air time than the artist. This mentality was aided by cats whipping out the record label expense card which allowed him to rent fancy rides, get suites in 5 star hotels and take an entire radio station's staff out on the town to drink bottles of Crystal or Hennessy. Keep in mind all this was always at the artist's expense. All that money spent would later be recouped, but lets not digress.

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The larger point I'm making here is that many in Hip Hop have always been in search of acceptance and power. Such sentiments may not be directly articulated, but collective actions speak volumes. One has to wonder why else would a generation of rappers aspire to be like former Mafia boss John Gotti at a time when the people associated with Gotti as well as those in his old Queens neighborhood were making it quite clear that they had no love for Hip Hop and the "NIGGERS" who did the music. I clearly recall those days when we would get clowned for trying to be Italian.

The quest for Arab Money was obviously an attempt to pay homage to the perception of all Arabs being rich. The are in many people's minds the ultimate ballers. However, people who understand their culture won't stand for the nonsense, and so when Busta's song dropped you heard the grumblings. You heard the upset from many Arabs who clearly understood that the majority of their folks are barely getting by. Cats simply aren't balling in places like occupied Palestine. Just like we here in the states have a few ballers in our midsts they too have ballers but how many of us ordinary folk really ball? Not many.

I recall when I went to Beirut a few years back and having to explain that Black folks in America are not like the folks in the video throwing money at the cameras. It a gross corporate backed stereotype which cast us all in a false light. Well, many of us here are subjected to constant barrage of media images that have us believing all Arabs are ruthless terrorists or rich oil owning sheiks.

So as I noted I knew it was just a matter of time before there would be a response. Members of the group Arab Summit dropped a song called "Real Arab Money" and took Busta to task. There was talk others would soon follow up songs. Before it got too far out of hand a conversation was had, Busta explained himself, cleared the air and apologized. He called for his song to be pulled, the Arab Summit cats pulled theirs and we are now celebrating the maturity of rappers for resolving a dispute peacefully.

I appreciate what took place, but I couldn't help thinking to myself, that over the past 20 years I seen everyone from Diddy to Public Enemy apologize to groups they offended. The Jewish community brought PE to task for remarks made by Professor Griff. The end result was the group breaking up for a while and Chuck taking a tour of the Holocaust museum.

A few years ago Diddy apologized to Japanese women for offending them. Several years ago Cypress Hill was forced to endure a year long radio ban in San Francisco resulting in them

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issuing an apology to the Gay community for offensive remarks their opening act made during a concert. A hype man tried to amp up the crowd by yelling out "what are we men or fags?".

Andre 3000 was forced to apologize to the Native American community when he came on TV during an awards show doing some sort of dance dressed native headgear. Folks weren't having it and he made attempts to smooth things over.

Many rappers were taken to task for remarks they were deemed insensitive to the victims of 9-11. Remember how Jadakiss caught heat for suggesting George Bush knocked down the Twin Towers in his song "Why"? Not sure if Jadakiss apologized, but I do know the radio stations around the country bleeped out Bush's name.

Kanye West may not have apologized to white men or white women but I do know radio outlets around the country bleeped out the words white man when he suggested that white men profit off our misery in the song "All Fall Down". In his song Gold Digger they bleeped out the word "white girl"

Personally I have no problem with folks trying to clear the air and make amends for wrong doings. My question is when will Hip Hop apologize for the foul things rappers say everyday about sistas? When will folks apologize for the foul things we say about each other in songs? Can we get a moratorium on rapping about violence? Moving weight? Pimping? or balling at a time when everyone is losing their jobs?

Could you imagine if Busta and all other artists held a press conference and publicly apologized to Black women for all the foul shit that has been said in our songs and all the foul shit shown in our videos? Could you imagine if they said that all artists will put a a moratorium on these offensives things? Could you imagine that? Imagine if all those guys came together and compiled all the songs that artists like Paris, Jungle Brothers, Nas, NY Oil and others where they have uplifted women and put that out for the world to embrace?

My fear is that such a thing would happen and the corporate backers of this music and culture would shut it down. For example, even though Busta has apologized, Arab Money is still being played on radio. Maybe those in power are holding on to those offensive Arab stereotypes. I recall when Brand Nubian did a song called 'sincerely' where they apologized to Black women

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on their Foundation album. I spoke with Lord Jamar at the time and he explained that the group was overruled by their label Arista/BMG which at the time was headed up by Clive Davis who didn't want that released as their first single. I recall commercial radio at the time refused to play it even on the anniversary of the Million Man March which is when Brand Nubian's album came out.

I guess at the end of the day it is what it is... Like I said, I'm glad Busta cleared the air with the Arab community and apologized. I'd like to see more artists do the same as it pertains to the one group of people I feel endure the most hurt from rappers-Black women.

Thats some food for thought