

Hip-Hops 'Gangsta's

Written by Robert ID742

Saturday, 22 January 2005 23:22 -

One of most infectious hip-hop songs of 2004 was Jim Jones' banger, "Certified Gangsta." In the lyrics, Jones and Cam'ron glorify the street life, the life of a gangster.

From the gangsta rappers who rose to popularity in the '90s to the New Yorkers who use the lingo and stories of notorious crime families like the Gambinos, the gangster way of life resonates with many rappers. It's no coincidence that Beanie Sigel's name sounds so much like Bugsy Siegel, and that rapper Capone says he runs New York like Al Capone.

Rap artist see themselves as gangsters because of the outlaw lifestyle many lead. Most of the most popular rappers sharpened their skills in the streets. Like gangsters, many rappers at one time or another have lived above the law.

Brian De Palma's 1983 movie "Scarface," starring Al Pacino as a Cuban exile who becomes an American drug kingpin, is a hip-hop favorite. When a 20th-anniversary edition was released on DVD, it included a documentary on the movie's hip-hop influence.

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Kevin Liles, former president of hip-hop label Def Jam, told USA Today he's seen the movie more than 100 times.

"Everybody could relate to the struggle that Tony went through and the point that when you do it that way, you always end up in jail or dead," he said.

The most obvious — and since most ridiculously copied — Gambino rhymer is Wu Tang Clan. They were the first group in hip-hop to repeatedly mention the mafia in their rhymes.

On Raekwon's "Only Built 4 Cuban Linx," Wu shouted out: "La Cosa Nostra" (which means This Thing of Ours).

Using the slang of mafioso families, Wu Tang boasted of owning New York, giving boroughs new names: Staten Island became "Shaolin."

Now rappers from Jay-Z to Ja Rule talk about their Italian connects. The street name of the

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owner of Rule's label, The Inc., is Irv Gotti.

Making money on the street and in the recording booth, a lot of young rappers think the gangsta way of living is the way to make it big in hip-hop.

If you ain't got a court case, you're nothing, the thinking goes. But the Notorious B.I.G., Tupac and Big L. went out like gangstas: Now they are certified dead.

[Source](#)