

Is Hip Hop Really the Blame for this Don Imus Thing

Written by Davey D ID3563

Wednesday, 11 April 2007 21:45 -

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I have a question for the masses. Don Imus and his supporters have been running around saying they learned about the phrase "Nappy Headed Hoes" from rappers. They said it's because of Hip Hop that they felt it was ok to joke around in the way that they did. Now I'll be the first to confess I'm not up on everything So I gotta ask folks; What rapper referred to sistas as "Nappy Headed Hoes"? I recall the group Nappy Roots? I heard Ludacris say he has hoes in different area codes, but what song or group was Don Imus listening to that he got inspired? What song was this and when was it played on the radio?

To be honest he was more likely to pick that up from a comedian like Chris Rock or Eddie Griffin if anything not Jay-Z, Ludacris, Diddy or anyone else. But I'm not excusing rappers for their foul language or disrespect, but I do think we should put things in historical perspective.

When I was growing up I heard comedians like Richard Pryor. I have all my mother's old albums. I saw and heard him call women "bitches" even after he came back from Africa and stop using the word "Nigger" I heard comedians like Red Foxx, dis women. I heard Blowfly who was doing super duper dirty rated x raps back in the mid 70s and he had no connection to Hip Hop as it was emerging in the Bronx.

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Back in those days I heard the raunchy songs of Millie Jackson 25 years before Lil Kim showed up. And long before Too Short or Snoop started pimping or moving keys, I had Superfly and the Mack lacing me up about those insidious trades. Heck lets go even further back and bring up the fact that as a kid I used to go to school out in Pelham Bay section of the Bronx and would be called "Nigger Charlie" in the second and third grade by white kids who saw the posters on the subways we used to ride for the movie "Nigger Charlie" and the "Return of Nigger Charlie". Some of y'all reading this are old enough to know what I'm talking about. These were actual ads in the form of posters on the subway stations throughout New York.

What's interesting while our parents and other elders were listening to albums by Pryor and Foxx which had the word Nigger within the title. Or reading books by activist Dick Gregory called "Nigger", a young Afrika Bambaataa was running around the Bronx bestowing titles like "King" and "Queen" on cats as a way to make them feel good. Like Bam used to say if I start calling brothers and sisters King and Queen perhaps they'll behave like Kings and Queens. This my friends was going on in the mid 70s.

Now Don Imus has been around since the 70s. He was also someone who made a name for himself by playing popular Black music. Hence he's full of shit when he says he picked up all that "nappy headed hoe jargon from rappers. He was more likely to pick it up from the Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson generation since they were grown men fighting for our liberation in the 70s, but apparently not objecting to Nigger Charlie posters adorning our subways. Most of us within Hip Hop were either weren't born or were very young.

The only difference between then and now, is that I don't recall well known radio jocks like Frankie Crocker, Jocko Henderson, Mad Hatter or Ken Webb calling women hoes on the radio. Such words were bleeped out. Station owners like Percy Sutton and others had his jocks be more civil and conduct themselves with class. All that changed in the 80s and 90s. Suddenly it wasn't cool to be civil. In fact it was considered weak. My question is how did this happen? Help

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me fill in the pieces. I know we had Tipper Gore raising a stink in the late 80s about music being too edgy but her target was music in general not just rap. Punk and other forms of rock were coming under fire during her PMRC campaign.

Now I do recall back in the late 80s many Black radio stations refused to play groups like Public Enemy, KRS or Brand Nubian. Those Afro centric groups were considered noise. Does anyone recall when we had R&B stations bragging in their jingles that they didn't play rap? I remember that clearly. I also recall white dance music stations Top 40 stations changing format and embracing Hip Hop around the same time. That would include Hot 97 in NY, KMEL in San Francisco and Power 106 in Los Angeles.. Was that the beginning of the end? I do recall KMEL in San Francisco playing NWA with jingles saying keeping it true to the streets.

By the time people like C. Delores Tucker and Calvin Butts raised a stink, so called gangsta rap had been on the radio for 5 years. These activists came out against 2Pac and Snoop Dogg and totally missed the previous years where stations found they could garner number one ratings playing NWA. As I look back at the time period, I saw only one objection. That was boycott lead by the trilogy of college stations in 1989 against NWA that was led by Hip Hop shows on college and community stations KPOO, KALX and KZSU under the banner Bay Area Hip Hop Coalition. The NY Times covered that boycott. Outside of that there wasn't much discussion. If anything there was resistance from white college programmers who felt that a boycott was censorship and made it a point to play the NWA records inspite of the boycott lead by Black jocks at the time.

My question is since 1970s we been calling women bitches and hoes and calling each other nigger in very public spaces. How did this happen and continued to happen over this 30 year period.. Where did we drop the ball? How ironic that our parents missed the boat and now 20 years later they blame us for something they should've nipped in the bud back in the days. That's Something to ponder...

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