

Informing the Hip Hop Community Interscopes Lyric Committee

Written by Wise Intelligent ID3613
Friday, 20 April 2007 05:11 -

Informing the Hip Hop Community: Interscopes Lyric Committee by Wise Intelligent

About a week or so ago, rapper Young Buck made an appearance on New York's Hot 97's Angie Martinez's show to promote his new album "Buck the World", the first single of which is incredible (I love that record).

You know, it was pretty much your typical rap interview except for one revealing exchange in particular. This was when Young Buck spoke of a record addressing Police Brutality that unfortunately did not make the record? It was said in the interview that Interscope Records (home of Dr. Dre's Aftermath, Shady Records; Eminem, G Unit; 50 Cent, Lloyd Banks, Young Buck; The Lox; Jadakiss, Styles and Sheik, amongst others) has an official "Lyrics Committee."

Buck stated that it was this Interscope "lyrics committee" (more like committee of ONE person; Jimmy Iovine) that decided it best to leave the police brutality track off of the album. Their reasoning being, that they [Interscope/Jimmy Iovine] felt the record that portrayed violence against police officers could heighten the chances of a police officer getting shot or killed and that, Interscope did not want to be responsible in whole or in part for the death of a police officer. The interview went sort of like this:

Angie: There's this wild video on youtube that I just got a little clip of its called f the police

Buck: oh yeah, they wouldn't let me put that record on my album

Angie: too violent

Buck: They said it was too violent; Interscope

Angie: Interscope said too violent

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Buck: they blamed it on the lyric committee, so I researched to see if it was a real lyrical committee

Angie: no they didn't

Buck: It was the lyric committee

Angie: they said the lyric committee said you can't put this out

Buck: So I went as far as trying to find out well who is the lyric committee

Angie: shut up

Buck: the lyric committee is in Interscopes building

Angie: is there really a lyrics committee, no

Buck: you tell me

Angie: nahh there's not, I'm telling you its not, that's your man Jimmy lovine saying I don't want to deal with that

Now isn't this just fucking beautiful! A "Lyrics Committee" designed to monitor (read censor) lyrics of artist on the Interscope roster? The question I present to Interscope, the Hip Hop and Black Communities is, if Interscope sees something wrong with a rapper releasing a record addressing police brutality (because Wal-Mart won't except the record) due to fear of violence

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against police officers, why then is it common place to spend millions of dollars marketing the other 12 tracks on the rappers album that may heighten the violence in the black community against young blackmen, women and children????

Why did not the "lyrics committee" come to the same conclusion when listening to lyrics that portray violence against young black males who work, go to school, and live on these same blocks that the police officers patrol? Ladies and gentlemen of the INTELLIGENT COMMUNITY, this is the nature of the beast with which we are dealing!

When we consider the fact that it was Jimmy Iovine who posed on a cover in the 70's with the words "Rock & Roll Niggers" painted on his chest, we get a greater understanding of this beast.

Here, we have a mainstream rapper attempting to address an issue that not only affects himself but the entire community. A political issue, if you will, and his Major Label tells him that that song is NOT going to make the final cut of his album. They made a principled stand which reveals without a doubt that they completely understand the power of this music, and its ability to influence and motivate its audience (positively or negatively), and they will NOT support lyrics and songs that promote an atmosphere of violence and intimidation directed at the police department. Do you see how fuckin insulting, hypocritical, and dangerous this is. We have to organize our efforts to take away their power to choose what's best for our community to see, hear, and experience!

It has always been my position that the black rapper is NOT allowed to address or lend his voice to any issue that confronts the community from which he comes, knowing that if he did, like Don Imus, he would lose his major corporation sponsorship, i.e., his contract!

The black rapper runs the risk of losing his recording contract if he dare engage his demographic in anything that resembles intelligent dialogue? And yes, I do mean, the black rapper. In the event that the black rapper would have written the song MOSH (Eminem; anti war record), he would have been dropped from his label faster than Jimmy Iovine can say "Rock & Roll Nigger!"

Black and white America must understand this very pertinent point; **BLACK PEOPLE DO NOT CONTROL THE DISTRIBUTION OF ANYTHING IN AMERICA;** nothing! Everything from the

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food on his table, clothes on his back, roof over his head, education in his head, to the drugs and alcohol on his corners, is controlled by others who are not black!

So, what is it that makes us believe that the BLACK rapper is responsible for the distribution, diffusion or dissemination of the music and images (positive or negative) that you hear and see on MTV, BET and or Clear Channel Radio, etc

The fact that Major Labels have "lyrics committees" is evidence enough to show that multi-platinum, gold, and wood selling rappers are NOT even responsible for the subject matter that is or is not allowed on his or her own album, let alone the distribution of this subject matter! The artist can make a song about anything from life to death to love to lust and everything in between, but the records companies and their lyrics committees make the final judgment on what get pressed up and sent to Wal Mart, Target, and the like.

Now let me make this final and crucial point crystal clear before I bring this to a conclusion. As artists we must and should be held accountable for what we say and do on wax and video, our words and actions have a profound impact on our communities whether we know about it or not, but we should not be held responsible for which of our records get major or minor video or radio airplay. That decision is in the hands of the radio and video stations and their parent companies. They decided that Little Brother was too "intelligent" for the B.E.T. audience! They made the decision not to promote any rappers whose music would motivate black youth toward positive attitudes and lifestyles. Do you really think Immortal Technique, Wise Intelligent, Little Brother; Public Enemy etc...took themselves off the radio and video shows? Corporate America and their entire support system made the decision to make the thug, pimp, hustler, and drug dealing rapper the face of Hiphop culture by placing him or her on the cover of every mainstream magazine around the world! The rapper is but the most visible part of this sick and twisted daisy chain of events...If you have the heart to make a move against Snoop than have the heart to ride heavy on Jimmy!

The point of this article is not whether there is really such a committee at record companies that scrutinize the lyrics of rap artists. The point is that the major record companies do, as evidenced by the aforementioned incident, ultimately decide what lyrics the rapper can or can not put on his or her album.

It's no longer SMART to be DUMB!

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WISE INTELLIGENT

PROPER

EDUCATION

ALWAYS

COUNTERS

EXPLOITATION