

BEATS, RHYME, and CULTURE SUMMER 2004

Assignment 1 Due Sunday June 20, 2004 [by midnight via [e-mail](#)] (5% of grade)

The following is a list of the 42 FIVE MIC albums as awarded by *The Source* magazine. A council of deejays, on air radio hosts, and music directors rate albums and five Mic's is the highest honor an album can get (<http://home.fuse.net/ButchGibson/5mic.htm>). For a bit of info on these albums, go to: http://rateyourmusic.com/lists/list_view/list_id_is_1761.

1. 2Pac - *All Eyes On Me*
2. 2Pac - *Me Against The World*
3. A Tribe Called Quest - *Low End Theory*
4. A Tribe Called Quest - *People's Instinctive Travels Through The Paths of Rhythm*
5. BDP - *By All Means Necessary*
6. BDP - *Criminal Minded*
7. Beastie Boys - *License To Ill*
8. Big Daddy Kane - *Long Live The Kane*
9. Brand Nubian - *One For All*
10. De La Soul - *De La Soul Is Dead*
11. Dr. Dre - *2001*
12. Dr. Dre - *The Chronic*
13. EPMD - *Strictly Business*
14. Eric B. & Rakim - *Let The Rhythm Hit Em*
15. Eric B. & Rakim - *Paid In Full*
16. Geto Boys - *Grip It On That Over Level*
17. Ice Cube - *Amerikkka's Most Wanted*
18. Ice Cube - *Death Certificate*
19. Jay-Z - *Reasonable Doubt*
20. Jay-Z - *The Blueprint*
21. Jungle Brothers - *Straight Outta The Jungle*
22. LL Cool J - *Radio*
23. Main Source - *Breaking Atoms*
24. Mobb Deep - *The Infamous*
25. N.W.A. - *Straight Outta Compton*
26. Nas - *Illmatic*
27. Nas - *Stillmatic*
28. Notorious B.I.G. - *Life After Death*
29. Notorious BIG - *Ready To Die*
30. Outkast - *Aquemini*
31. Public Enemy - *It Takes A Nation Of Millions To Hold Us Back*
32. Raekwon - *Built 4 Cuban Linx*
33. Run DMC - *Raising Hell*

34. Run DMC - *Run DMC*
35. Scarface - *The Diary*
36. Scarface - *The Fix*
37. Slick Rick - *The Adventures Of Slick Rick*
38. Snoop Dogg - *Doggystyle*
39. The D.O.C. - *No One Can Do It Better*
40. The Fugees - *The Score*
41. Ultramagnetic M.C.s - *Critical Beatdown*
42. Wu-Tang Clan - *Enter The 36 Chambers*

Your assignment is to listen to the album of your choosing and write a short paper describing it. There are many angles to write from, what I do not want is a review of the album. Instead, take it as an opportunity to express your comfort level with rap music. **Is it the beats**, Who was the producer for that track? Is it the storyline? (please give De La Soul a chance). Is it subject matter? Is it all fiction? . . . just a few ideas.

Please use proper citation when referencing songs. See below for example:

No Malcolm X in my history text / Why is that? / Cause he tried to educate and liberate all blacks / Why is Martin Luther King in my book each week? / He told blacks, if they get smacked, turn the other cheekⁱ

As real as it seems the American dream / Ain't nothing but a calculated scheme / To keep us locked up shot up and back in chains / To deny us our future to rob our name / Kept our history a mystery, but now I see / The American dream wasn't meant for meⁱⁱ

No one in the world loves me / I'm headed for danger / Don't trust strangers / Put one in the chamber / Whatever I'm feelin' is anger / Don't wanna make excuses / Cause this is how it is / What's the use? / Unless we're shootin' / No one notices the youth / It's just me against the worldⁱⁱⁱ

I felt like it should have been women all over the country talking about, 'Tupac couldn't have done that.' And people was actually asking me, 'Did you do it?'"^{iv}

He went from a nobody nigga / To the big man on the block / He's mister local celebrity / Addicted to move a key / Most hated by the enemy / Escaping the luxury / See, first you was our nigga / But you made it / So the choice is made / Now we gotta slay you^v

And they say it's the white man I should fear / But it's my own kind doin' all the killin here ^{vi}

"I'm not sayin' I'm gonna rule the world, or I'm gonna change the world, but I guarantee that I will spark the brain that will change the world."

- Tupac Shakur (June 16, 1971 – September 7, 1996)

ⁱ Tupac Shakur, "Words of Wisdom" 2Pacalypse Now (Interscope Records, 1992).

ⁱⁱ 2Pac, "1 in 21 A Tupac Shakur Story" Panther Power (AIM Records, 1997).

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Editors of Vibe, ed. Tupac Shakur. (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1998), 50.

^v 2Pac, "I Ain't Mad At Cha" All Eyez on Me (Death Row Records, 1995).

^{vi} 2Pac, "Only God Can Judge Me" All Eyez on Me (Death Row Records, 1995).