

# BLACKWORLD

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## In view of recent events, BLACKWORLD presents this special edition M u r d e r

By Daniel L. Hartley

"You have two new messages, one is urgent. Urgent message one forwarded by... at extension 6-5555 was received at 10:10 am today..."

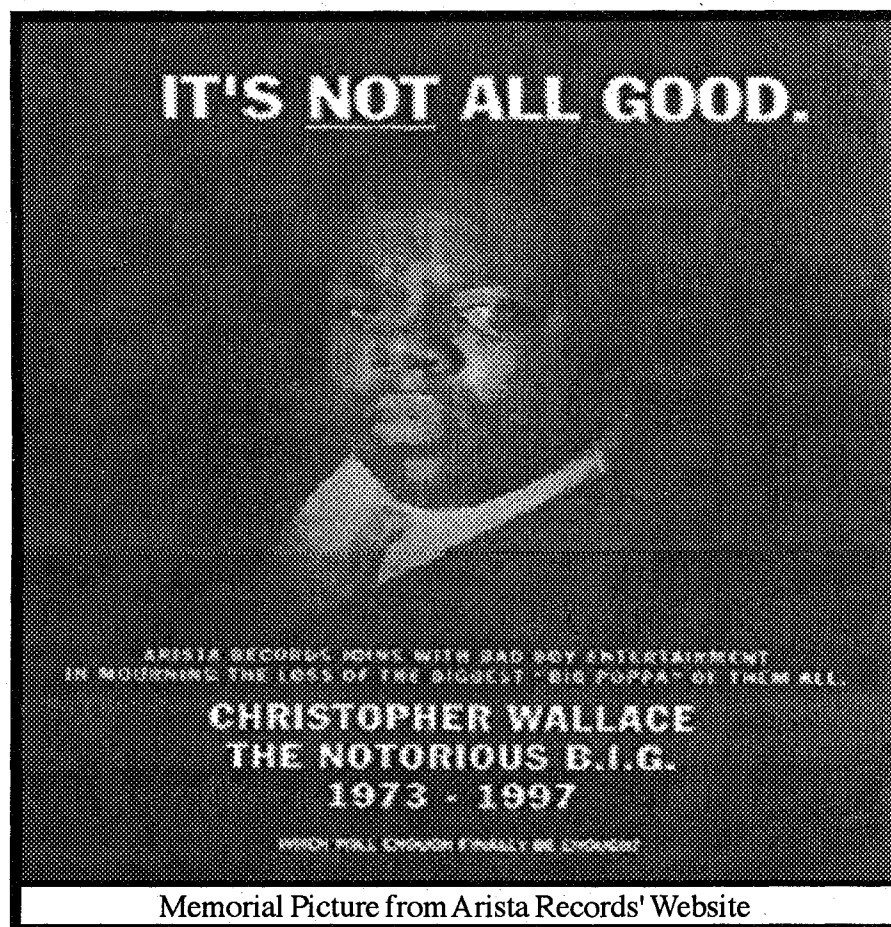
This has really got to stop..."

"Nine o'clock, good morning everybody. I'm Lisa G, um, running off with Angie Martinez, Mister Majik, Mister Cee and peace who just wakin' up...um...the story came in a short time ago that Notorious B.I.G...was shot and killed in a drive-by shooting in Los Angeles earlier this morning after leaving a party...um...I just got a report from someone who spoke to Biggie's manager that Biggie was in the passenger's seat...yeah...I...it's like deja vu....."

There was nothing easy about Sunday morning, March 9. The above segment was taped from a broadcast on WQHT New York, known to most of the tri-state area as Hot 97 FM that morning. To awaken to such news can be, to say the least, unsettling. Wednesday, March 6, the insidious disease AIDS claimed the life of five year old Gabriella Irizarry, who was a champion of HIV awareness. On Thursday, March 6, four schools girls perished after an uprooted tree fell on a church van. These are tragic losses by the Black community which have transpired over the past week. However, this article is about the murder of a 24 year old black man named Christopher Wallace.

This is not an article on death.

While parked in a green Chevrolet Suburban, Christopher Wallace, known to the urban black community as the Notorious B.I.G., was gunned down and killed in Los Angeles yesterday. The "drive-by" shooting occurred after a party at the Petersin Automotive Museum, according to an Associated Press report. Wallace, as he sat in his sports utility vehicle, was shot and later driven to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. As concerned people mourned outside the hospital, Wallace was pronounced dead, reportedly from at least five gunshot wounds.



Memorial Picture from Arista Records' Website

The museum party celebrated the 11th Annual Soul Train Music Awards on March 7, were rapper 2pac Shakur won a posthumous award for his album "All Eyez on Me." Just six short months ago, Tupac Amaru Shakur, famous hip-hop artist and actor, was slain on a Las Vegas strip in another drive-by shooting.

Wallace, a Brooklyn native, is survived by his mother, known around Bedford-Styvesant as Ms. Price, his wife, singer Faith Evans and two daughters.

"They're killing our poets" said Jessica Care Moore, who won Amateur Night at the Apollo five times for her poetry. In a recent phone conversation, Moore also remarked on the profundity of "the power of words and music." Moore refused to accredit Wallace's murder to a "random shooting." "Tupac and Biggie had a lot of influence with our youth." "What you say is very powerful", Moore added.

However, the stark and startling similarities do not end with the manner in which these two young brothers were killed. Both stories are shrouded by a myriad of unsolved questions and unresolved police investigations. Both artists had intimate ties to the president or chairman of prominent record labels that will continue to receive money from record sales.

Bad Boy Entertainment, an Arista label headed by President and CEO Sean "Puffy" Combs, is scheduled to release a 2 CD set by the Notorious B.I.G. March 25, following the release of Mary J. Blige's third album later this month. B.I.G.'s record, "Life After Death...Til Death Do Us Part" contains cuts, such as "Somebody Gotta Die", "My Downfall" and "You're Nobody 'Til Somebody Kills You", that can be viewed as prophetic.

Similarly, Tupac had several projects that were released after his death that foreshadowed his demise.

The album "Makaveli," a take off on the Italian Makiavelli who faked his own death, was released on Death Row Records. Despite his recent probation violation and subsequent nine year jail conviction, chairperson Marion "Suge" Knight stated on the television show "America's Most Wanted," "that he will continue to run Death Row." According to the Associated Press, Knight violated probation for his involvement in a melee at the MGM Grand Hotel last September 7 and the sentenced was shortened to "just under eight years." The Federal Bureau of Investigation is currently investigating Death Row Records, reportedly for possible connections to Los Angeles street gangs.

This is not an article about gangstas or drugs.

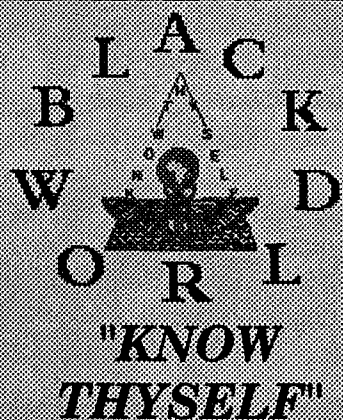
"I was a full time, 100 percent hustler" are the first words written in the Notorious B.I.G.'s Biography at the Arista Records website. Chris Wallace, once "a hustler", turned into a platinum artist, who has sold close to 1.5 copies of his album "Ready to Die", and won rap artist of 1995 at the Billboard Music Awards. Wallace also captured the single of the year and won "Lyricist of the Year" at the Source Awards last year. A recent article in the April edition of heralded Wallace as "the once and future king."

Yet, despite these accomplishments, his on-going affiliation with illegal substances tarnished his success. Wallace was arrested for having marijuana and firearms in his home in Teaneck, New Jersey. After they discovered the Notorious B.I.G. in a parked car smoking marijuana, Brooklyn police charged Wallace with drug possession. Various news sources have printed stories concerned with Wallace and his role in the hip hop world.

This is not an attack on mass media.

In an articles in the associated press on Sunday, March 9 identified Wallace, also known as Biggie Smalls, as a "high-profile gangsta rap artist" who "built his gangsta rap persona

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## Special Editorial

### The Hook

**USA Today:** The beef between the rival coasts centered largely on who created the hard-core style of rap music known as gangsta rap, a genre whose graphic language and vivid descriptions of violence have made it one of the best-selling vehicles in recorded music.

**New York Post:** Wallace, a former crack-dealer from the Badford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, found immediate success after the release of his 1995 debut album, "Waiting to Die" but continued to have brushes with the law in New York and New Jersey.

**The New York Times:** Notorious B.I.G., a gangsta rap artist who turned his drug-dealing past on the streets of Brooklyn into a platinum-selling recording career, was killed here early this morning in an apparent drive-by shooting as he left a crowded midtown party.

**New York Newsday:** The Notorious B.I.G. made his name as a gangsta rapper barking hip-hop rhymes about his real-life past dealing crack on the tough streets of Brooklyn.

### Introduction

In his powerful and historical 1963 book, *Blues People: The Negro Experience in White America and the Music that Developed From It*, LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), "by means of analogy and some attention to historical example," closely scrutinizes the "path that the slave took to citizenship."

Poignantly starting in the year 1619, "twelve years after the settling of Jamestown in 1607, as the date of the first importation of Negroes into this country to stay," Baraka makes his analogy "through the slave citizens music - through the music that is most

closely associated with him: blues and a later, but parallel development, jazz." By examining blues and jazz - which are nothing more than the natural, linear progressions of the enslaved Africans "field hollers and slave songs," Baraka writes that, "something about the essential nature of the Negroes existence in this country ought to be revealed, as well as something about the essential nature of this country, i.e., society as a whole." Or in other words, the music of Black people is directly influenced by and is a result of their existence/struggle for survival within what WE know as, "a system of racial oppression and capitalism" and what THEY affectionately refer to as, "the Great Melting Pot and the land of opportunity" - the United States of America.

Ironically, yet tragically enough, the historical and social continuation of Baraka's research findings in *Blues People*, rap music, saw one of its most promising talents, platinum recording artist, the Notorious B.I.G., violently murdered early Monday morning in Los Angeles. And without a doubt, this murder reveals a tremendous amount about both Blacks in America and the American society that inspired Biggie's music and cultivated the small mentality of his killers.

### WHO

The Notorious B.I.G., whose real name is Christopher Wallace, burst onto the rap scene as an established solo artist approximately three years ago with the release of his debut album, "Ready to Die." Within a short span of time, Biggie's voice and lyrical skills dominated the industry. Biggie blessed

the tracks of chart-topping, jeep and mix-tape bumping singles for Total, Jay-Zee, 112, Michael Jackson, R. Kelley and Junior Mafia. For his talent and efforts, Biggie won Billboard, Soul Train and the prestigious "Lyricist of the Year Award" from the Source. The scheduled March 25th release of his two CD, sophomore album, "Life After Death...Til Death Do Us Part," is the rap industries most anticipated release. Already, the album's first release, "Hypnotize" is racing up the charts toward #1 while in heavy rotation at stations play-list across the country.

Biggie is survived by a wife, smooth R&B singer, Faith Evans and two small children. Christopher Wallace was only 24 years old at the time of his death.

### WHAT, WHEN & WHERE

The Notorious B.I.G., contrary to the media reports, was not the victim of a drive-by shooting! Characteristically, drive-bys are high speed cars sporadically shooting into a crowd of people. So, critically analyze what happened to Biggie: Biggie was shot while his car was stopped at a red light after leaving a Vibe magazine party at the Peterson Automotive Museum in midtown LA. The vehicle pulled up to Biggie's side, the passenger side, and opened fire directly into the door and window of Biggie's vehicle...no one else in the vehicle was shot and according to eyewitness reports, no "stray bullets" hit any other objects. This was a calculated murder, not a drive-by. This was a "hit." I'm not spinning some JFK Oliver Stone conspiracy theory, but it can not be denied that these gunmen knew exactly "what" they were doing and "who"

their mark was.

Also, where is the "motive" for this murder? And more importantly, "who" committed it? Biggie had no "beef" at the party or, unlike last years Soul Train Awards where he and members from his crew faced-off backstage with the late Tupac Shakur and his crew (until a gun was pulled and both crews exited without incident), this awards show was calm. Coincidentally, this was Biggie's first trip to LA. since Tupac's murder last year.

### WHY?

There is no valid or logical reason why Mrs. Wallace's 24 year old son lost his life or why Faith lost her husband or why Biggie's children lost their father or why Puffy lost his friend or why the hip-hop industry lost yet another young and talented MC.

### Conclusion

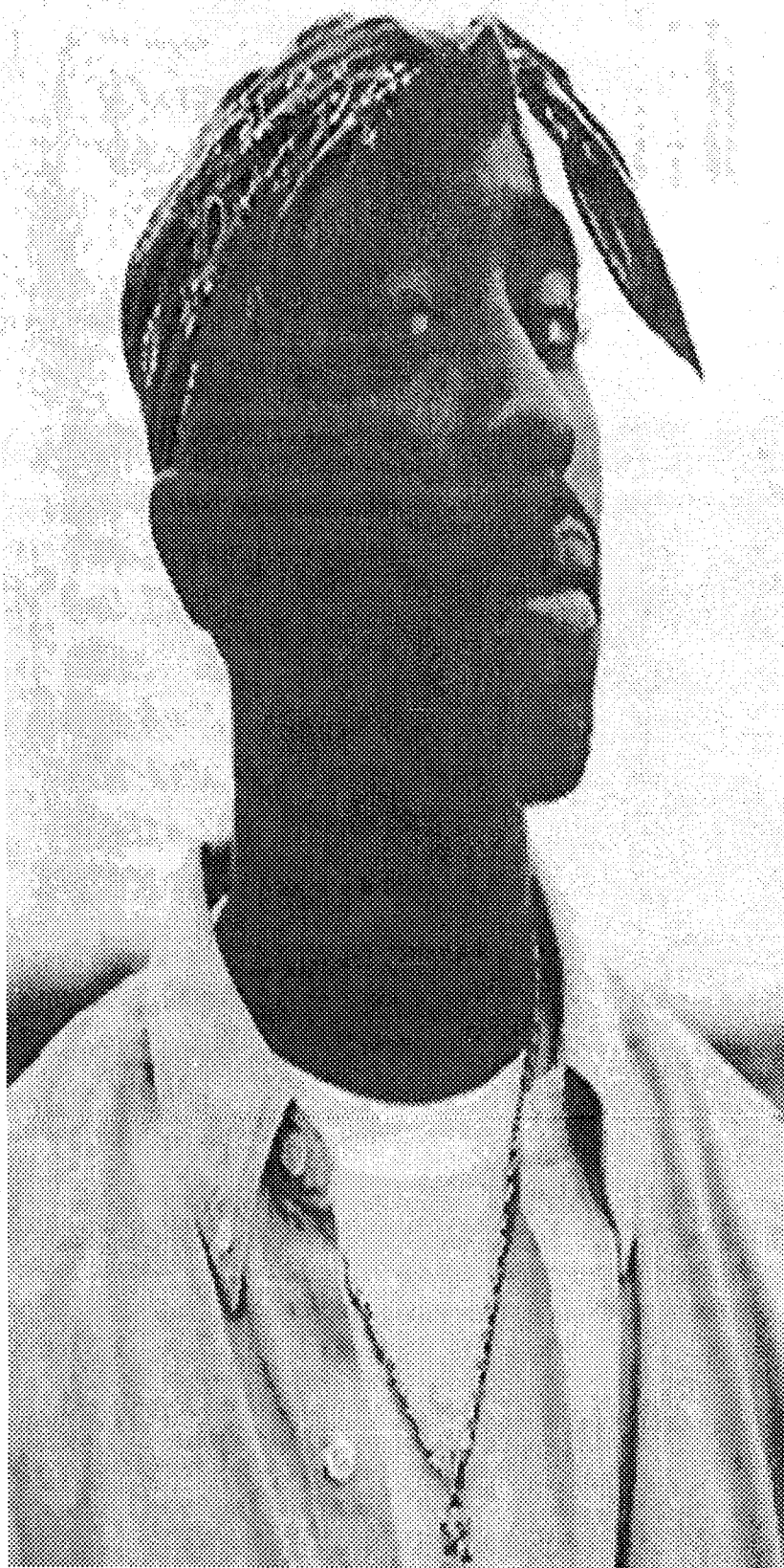
The inaccurate and racially biased newspaper quotes at the beginning of this article is yet another example of the media reporting on our community and culture when they should not even attempt to do so. It is up to us, as Black people, to educate and learn for ourselves. If we do not, then we become susceptible to the hype of media-fueled "East Coast vs. West Coast" nonproductive mindlessness that is a contributing factor in Biggie's death.

With the death of 24 year old Christopher Wallace, some asshole out in LA is thinking that they "represented for the Westside and smoked that fool Biggie for Pac," when in all actuality, Black on Black crime statistics just went up.

Curtis Morris  
Editor-in-Chief

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## Something is Missing... (Continued From Cover Page)

around authenticity." Reporter Paula M. Story, said in her lead that Biggie "made his name as a gangsta rapper *"barking"* (emphasis mine) hip hop rhymes." One has to question where reporters get such information. The terms "barking" and "gangsta" can be found at the aforementioned website, but in different contexts. Biggie's "barking" is a comparison to that of a "army sergeant." Without this information, one can infer that the reporter is describing Biggie as a canine. USA Today found it pertinent to list Wallace's weight in their article Monday.

Other disparities, such as the

photo caption on the front page of the New York Post of Biggie Smalls and Puff Daddy, are also causes for alarm. It refers to this young brother's brutal demise as being "rubbed out." This callous treatment Wallace's murder highlights the inability of certain media entities to report on such a delicate issue. No writer can scribe a story, especially one as direly important as this one, without intimate ties to the Black community. They cannot relate to the loss; whether it is viewed as the tragic loss of another black man or viewed as the gruesome removal of one of hip hop's most influential artists.

This is not a loss by the "East Coast." Our peril should not be geographically restrained. Our plight cannot be gilded by superfluous propaganda or trivialized to some coastal "rivalry". This atrocity encompasses the sphere of Black music and our entire Diaspora.

This is a story about the systematic destruction of Black music.

In the span of about a half a year, the black community and the hip hop world have lost two of its most prominent figures in contemporary urban music. Many expected a thematic parallax in hip hop music; to denounce violence after the Tupac

incident. Yet, this is neither a story to acknowledge the existence of violence in music nor to recognize how violence has been an integral part of this country's existence. It does not seek to affirm our savage seizure from our homelands, or to avouch our nefarious exploitation as free laborers or to bear witness to this country's reliance on the perpetuation of violence in the Black community. No. In the aftermath of this latest tragedy, it is the responsibility of both artist and consumer alike to eliminate negative elements that endanger the life not only of our music, but of our people.

# Biggie Smalls

## Requiem for Our Blindness

By Kwasi Bediako

The March 9th death of New York mega-successful recording artist, "Notorious B.I.G." (also known as "Biggie Smalls," but formally named Christopher Wallace), bespeaks not only of the tragedy of violence and death, but also of other serious ills that are prevalent in the African American community. These are ills that we, as African Americans, have let multiply into the chronic pathology of hatred, animosity, and fragmentation that we now see manifested before our very eyes, and ironically, pathologies that we have begun to accept as normal "blackness."

Christopher Wallace was indisputably a talented artist. Almost single-handedly, he multiplied the financial coffers for Bad Boy Records to heights unparalleled in the music industry. However, in spite of his talent, in spite of his creativity, and in spite of the millions of records he sold and the money he earned, Christopher Wallace is now DEAD at the age of 25. It is shameful indeed that Mr. Wallace had to create the persona of "Biggie Smalls" in order to find success (and maybe even meaning) in life. It is a shame that he found fame in performing lyrics

that degraded the daughters of Africa, lyrics that espoused the virtues of Eurocentric materialism and sexism, and lyrics that did not contribute in any significant way to the upliftment and building of African people. It is a shame that he had to become "Big Papa" in order to become somebody (by the dominant society's standard). Biggie Smalls was nothing more than a spokesman and promoter of European cultural values: money, sex, and power. It is a sad commentary on the nature of our world that the character of "Biggie" contributed to the shooting of Christopher Wallace.

This should be a sign to all hip-hop artists who are coining the images that white record company executives want to promote. The motto that is proliferated among the youth is to "keep it real," yet the images of the gangsta, the playa, and the ruffneck are not based on any concrete experiential reality of Black people. However, we have been suckered into believing that these images reflect who we are as a people. We weren't brought to these shores as gangstas, playas or ruffnecks, so the intelligent person must first ask the question, "What were the conditions that created these images of

Black men?" and secondly, "How did these images become embedded in our minds?" Paying special attention to the fact, that we accept them unequivocally and call them part of our "culture." People accept personas when they do not know who they are.

African American artists in every sphere of cultural production - music, visual arts, dance, theater, etc., must cease to allow our aesthetic creation from being bastardized and co-opted by people who do not have our best interests at heart. They should use their talents for positive and affirmative endeavors. People would still groove to a song that talked about treating sisters right, for example, if it still had a dope beat. If Christopher Wallace had used his talents in an uplifting way for the African American community, he might not have sold as many albums, but he probably would still be alive today.

It is apparent from this incident that the African American community is in need of some serious healing. If not you, then who? If not now, then when? May the spirit of Christopher Wallace find eternal peace. Peace & Blessings.

## Don't Jump To

## CONNECT THE DOTS

By Roberto Augustus Gayle

Without evidence, we can't jump to conclusions about who murdered Biggie. However, the link from his death to Tupac's is too close in time frame and style to ignore. For all we know it can be some crazed fan, living out his own thug dreams...who knows.

Tupac's death was not as much of a shock to the public on the East Coast as Biggie's. Even with Biggie's life (as of late) following a troubling road filled with court cases, car crashes, down playing the rivalry with the West and his own personal life, no one had the presage of the big man's life coming to an end. Through out the whole Tupac ordeal, Biggie and the entire Bad Boy organization tried to distance themselves from any involvement to avoid any beef. Not to say it was a West coast retaliation to the murder of 'PAC, but what other

situation could cause such violence against this so called "gangster rapper?" Even if the people from Tupac's set didn't order this murder, Tupac steaming from his first shooting, created a heated climate where tensions could be placed in anyone's direction.

From its inception, rivalry in hip hop has been the fuel that brought out the best quality in an artists' music. You have the KRS-One vs. MC Shan battle (that continues today as a novelty), MC Ehit vs. DJ Quick, and the very public feud between LL Cool J and Kool Moe Dee. Never did you think that those heated confrontations would ever end in death.

That line was never crossed. The beefs stayed on records. Heads think that this rap game is some urban soap opera. Consumers think these rappers can take the gun shots that they claim to bust on records. Reality, they

can't. Nobody is yelling, "cut!, wiping up the fake blood" and then moving on to the next scene. Real life is being depicted by what an artist says but, we should all understand *why* they are saying it. Some artists to the point of tears and having fucked up feelings. In front of the video camera or microphone, its all about "getting paid."

Why did he have to die because he rhymed about ghetto violence? For now, this question remains unanswered. But regardless of whatever violent scenes B.I.G. depicted, none of them was too far from the truth. If you have the skill to construct such lyrics, then the streets are ill enough to fulfil many of the hellish scenarios that Biggie rapped about. In the end, the streets were all he knew.

Rest in peace my brother. You will be missed.

# Turning Negatives into Positives

Before I start this article (in which I plan to address several things), I would like to say that the members of The Black Caucus, would like to give our condolences to the friends, family, and fans of Christopher Wallace (Notorious B.I.G.). His death is a major loss to the rap community. Before my views on the rap industry changed, Biggie was one of my favorite artist. When his first album dropped, my roommate and I at Hofstra, were bumpin that CD everyday. Therefore, despite my current ideological problems with Biggie's lyrical content, I am ashamed, and angry that he was killed, especially at the hands of another black man. What makes it worse, is that it was over bullshit.

The fact that Biggie was killed is a real tragedy. I can't say that enough. However, to me, the real problem is that his death has caused us to get more emotional, more up in arms, and has us wanting to take more action than the fact that the Africana Studies Program may be shut down. It's got us, as students, more upset than the fact that thousands more of our people will not be able to get to, or return to S.U.N.Y next year because of Pataki's tuition increases. Let's keep it real. We're more upset about Biggie's death, than we are about the fact that the Central Intelligence Agency has been placing crack cocaine in our community, causing untold numbers of deaths, peoples lives to be ruined, and thousands of our brothers, and sisters to be incarcerated. Honestly, how many of us really knew Biggie? Probably not a lot, but I bet almost all of us know someone who has been negatively affected by crack cocaine.

Again, I'm not trying to detract from the tragedy of Biggie's death. However, the real tragedy isn't necessarily that he's dead, but the fact

that he was killed by another black man. Let's look at the larger picture here. Black on Black Violence is the real problem. Why is it that the only time we get upset about the issue of Black on Black violence, is when one of our rappers, or celebrities is the victim? We have young black soldiers dying everyday in our communities. If their deaths don't bother us just as much as Biggie, or Tupac's death, then there is something seriously wrong with our community. We can no longer say nothing, feel nothing, and do nothing about this self-imposed genocidal problem in our communities. Let's make Biggie in death, even greater than he was in life. In other words, Biggie's death should inspire everyone to start to make radical change in our community. To start to take preventative, or proactive action. This is the only way we will be able to truly show this rap giant our respect. I know that his soul will rest much easier if we use his tragedy to organize, take action, and make an honest attempt to solve the problems in our community, so no more of our soldiers will die senselessly. I know as Biggie's fans, you will have no problem making that commitment.

This brings me to my next point. I would like to address the phone mail message being sent around, with a brother, obviously distraught over Biggie's death, who is saying, "Fuck LA., Fuck all you down with the West Coast. Fuck Tupac and all them niggas. Let's riot, etc..." I know that everybody will disregard this message. This brother is nothing but an agent provocateur. That's right, an agent for the government. He is no better than those who sold out Malcolm, Martin, Fred Hampton, and Geronimo Pratt. He serves the same government who murdered little girls in Alabama, allows

police to brutalize us on a daily basis, and who put crack in our communities. The funny, yet sad part is, that he probably doesn't even know that he serves in that capacity. See, he's a fallen victim to the media who has hyped up the coastal feud, which only serves the government in the elimination of more young soldiers. They will be executed in the same manor that Biggie was, and for the same reason. You see, if we will willingly kill off each other over a media imposed feud, then the government, doesn't have to put crack in our communities any more. They don't have to take the chance of getting caught, helping to bring about our destruction. This brother is helping the media, and the government, by attempting to rekindle this East Coast, West Coast bullshit. This in itself brings about the utmost disrespect of Biggie, the very person who's death he was outraged about. Not to mention, Bad Boy and Death Row since they were both making a valid attempt to squash this nonsense. Biggie's murder was just a terrible act, that happened to be perpetrated by my brothers in LA. This brother doesn't see that, just as my brothers in LA acted ignorantly, he too is just as lost, and just as ignorant as they were, by making his comments. To your call for a riot brother, I would like to say that we no longer need to have riots. Riots are senseless and don't accomplish very much. They are really a waste of time and energy. What we need is an organized riot. Which is known as a rebellion, which leads to a revolution. However, Biggie shouldn't be the reason for these rebellions. The injustices committed against our people every day through institutionalized racism, which is prevalent in our government, should be the "cause" for our revolution. An

honest evaluation of our history of struggle in this country will clearly show that rebellion and revolution are our only viable solutions towards Black people gaining freedom, liberation, and the power of self-determination for our people. Clearly, this brothers phone mail message makes no sense and if followed, could only further us down the path of self - destruction and genocide. However, despite this brothers "agent provocateur status," I want to send him a cordial invitation to come down to our weekly Black Caucus meetings, held Friday's at 8 p.m. in the Uniti Cultural Center. Obviously, this brother is so fed up with the current situation, that he is moved to and ready to take action, and so are we!

In closing, I just want to reiterate the fact that we should honor Biggie Smalls through action. There are steps we can take that will start to prevent these things from occurring frequently. However, as The Black Caucus, we don't have all the answers, but if we came together as a campus community with our incredible and brilliant minds, we can surely find them. Therefore, The Black Caucus would like to invite all those students moved to action, all those affected by Biggie's death, and all interested students of color to our meeting this Friday at 8 p.m. in the UCC, were we will be discussing Biggie, Black on Black Violence, and what we can do to solve some of the problems in our communities. Come with an open mind, your ideas, and your comments. After all, as Nas said, "Why shoot the breeze about it? When you could be about it."

Sincerely,  
Andre English  
Chairman of The Black Caucus

## WILL WE EVER LEARN?

When will we, as a people, Black people, ever learn? How many more Black men and women have to be killed before we open our eyes and see the white supremacist government officials for what they are - PIGS - and take a stand? Why do we continuously allow our people to die in vain?

Notorious B.I.G. was shot and killed in Los Angeles on Saturday, March 8, 1997. Another brother gone. Another family without a husband and a father. Another notch on the belt for the white supremacist government that sold the gun to the person who murdered him. Someone should tell them (the government) to stop trafficking crack cocaine in the Black community,

because we no longer need their help to commit genocide and accelerate our extinction. Based on our actions, we are willing and more than capable of killing ourselves.

I wanted to be hurt when I found out that Biggie died. I wanted to scream and cry and preach of Black love. But then I came to my senses. Feel pain over B.I.G.? For what? Nothing is going to come out of it. Black people do not care about their own. It is going to be talked about and exploited and that will be the end of it. The Black community has yet to take a united stand against the C.I.A. for bringing illegal drugs into our community. The Black community has yet to

unify, so that we may escape the degradation placed upon us everyday. The Black community has yet to take action against those Police officers who act as our twentieth century overseers...those who manipulate, beat, lynch, and incarcerate our people. Why should I feel anything?

For every Movement and Struggle, for every Martin and El Hajj Malik El Shabazz, for every church that has been burnt, for every Rodney King and Shane Daniels, for every Black Panther, for everyone who has sacrificed their life, so that I may attend Stony Brook... receive an education, and give back to

my community—I feel nothing. I, unfortunately, like the majority of Black students here at Stony Brook, who are a reflection of Black people all over the world, have become deaf, dumb, and blind.

When will we, as a people, as Black people, ever learn? NEVER. How many more Black men and women have to get killed before we open our eyes, see the white supremacist government for what they really are—PIGS—and take a stand? WHO CARES? Why do we continuously allow our people to die in vain?????

PEACE AND LOVE  
Da Dona





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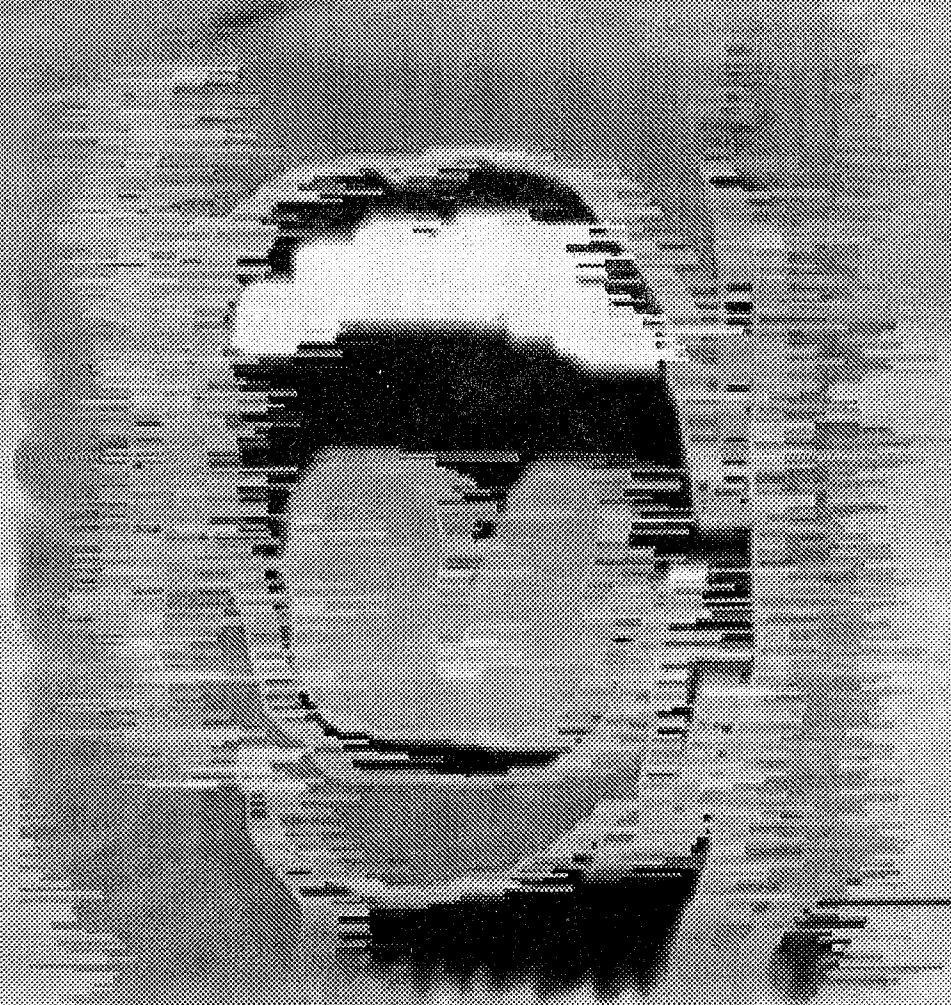
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