



### R. Kelly Children's Book Being Re-released

Anna Maria Gibson, New York

R. Kelly's critics might be surprised to hear about the re-release of a children's book about the embattled R&B singer. *Can Fly! The R. Kelly Story*, which is based on the Grammy winner's rags-to-riches tale, first came out in 1998, and is now being re-released on March 1.

The decision to reissue the biography after a brief suspension of the title was based on public demand.

According to Kim Delaney, the book's author and founder of the publishing company putting the biography back into print Delaney said, "We were concerned about the controversy surrounding Mr. Kelly."

However, she added, "We want to be certain that continued publication of this book would serve to further motivate and cultivate a positive effect."

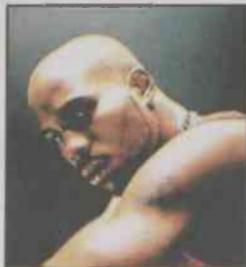


### Jermaine Dupri & Janet Jackson An Item?

Yves Erwin Salomon, New York

Jermaine Dupri recently confirmed that he is dating Janet Jackson. Reports circulated several months ago saying that the pair was dating, but then Jackson had also been linked to Justin Timberlake. In the latest issue of *Honey* magazine, Dupri shares that he and Jackson are a couple, and he explains exactly how special Jackson makes him feel, saying, "I love being around her! When I'm with her I don't think about anything else. She's a very beautiful person."

Dupri, who was recently named president of black music at Arista Records, has also moved his So So Def Recordings over from Columbia Records to Arista. Following the changeover, So So Def artists Jagged Edge and Bow Wow will remain with Columbia.



### DMX Arrested on Christmas Eve

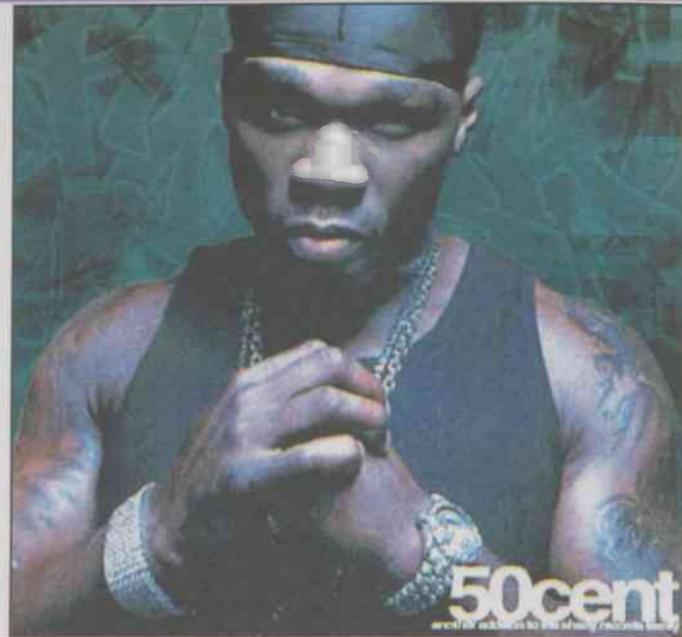
Yves Erwin Salomon, New York

Rapper and actor DMX was arrested on Christmas Eve (December 24) in Harrison, New York, when police officers observed the rapper allegedly making an unsafe lane change in his black Chevrolet Suburban on the Hutchinson River Parkway.

After police officers pulled the rapper over at 2:30 p.m. ET, he provided the officers with incorrect information when he was asked for his license and registration. DMX was then arrested, and charged with failure to signal a lane change and possession of a forged instrument.

DMX was later released. The rapper's publicist was unavailable for comment.

DMX's Christmas Eve arrest was the latest in a string of arrests. The rapper served 11 days in the Eric County Correctional Facility in March.



Rapper is burning up the charts

## Who Is 50 CENT? You'll Be Surprised

By Jim Farber  
New York Daily News

He is a former crack dealer and jailbird who has admitted to shooting people.

But rapper 50 Cent still listens to his grandmother.

"She always said, 'Whatever you do, be the best at it,'" the emcee says. "Right now, what I want to be is the best bad guy you've ever seen."

He's well on his way.

Even before the release of a single major-label album, 50 Cent has become hip-hop's most notorious figure.

His violent past includes an attempt on his life two years ago, which left his body with nine bullet holes.

His controversial presence has earned him recent mentions in nearly every sensational hip-hop news story, from the October murder of Jam Master Jay — who discovered him — to the ongoing FBI investigation into an alleged financial connection between Irv Gotti's label Murder Inc. and the drug gangs of south Queens.

Among reasons: He used to sell crack in that area, and has a feud going with Murder Inc. artist Ja Rule.

Somehow, 50 Cent has found time to make music.

In fact, the 27-year-old, born Curtis Jackson, has the most hotly anticipated album of 2003, "Get Rich or Die Trying," which hits

stores Feb. 11.

Key parts of the set were produced by none other than Eminem, who put a pair of 50 Cent cuts on his smash "8 Mile" soundtrack, including the current hit "Wanksta." Other cuts on the CD were produced by hip-hop's most important groove-master, Dr. Dre.

But there's no denying that all the hype has as much to do with the danger surrounding him as the catchiness of his raps.

"I'm the biggest target out there," he announces.

But does he worry?

In conversation, 50 Cent exudes a disconcertingly easy charm, coupled with a bizarre tendency to giggle when you bring up things like the attempt on his life.

"It's no big deal," he says. "After you recuperate, you get past it."

He had to get past plenty.

Born in south Queens, he never knew his father. His mother, a drug dealer, was murdered when he was 8. "I was so young," he says. "All I really know is my grandparents, who raised me."

By his early teens, 50 Cent was selling crack.

"I was stuck in that zone," he says. "When you're there, you think it's your only option."

In August 1994, 50 was convicted of criminal possession of a controlled substance. He served three years in prison.

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## BET Cancels Two Programs

By Richard Prince

Black Entertainment Television is canceling two of its three regular news shows.

"Lead Story" and "BET Tonight With Ed Gordon" — were cancelled at the end of last year.

As it prepares for the acquisition of new programming, spokesman Michael Lewellen said recently.

The shakeup also means the future of the network's most well-known news personality, Ed Gordon, "is still to be determined," Lewellen said.

Effective immediately, approximately 40 positions across a range of company departments will be eliminated or about 12

percent of the company's total workforce of 350 people nationwide, according to the network.

Of BET's three regular news shows, only "BET Nightly News" will remain, Lewellen said. News and public affairs programming will now focus on special shows such as single-topic specials and town hall meetings.

The network had to "adjust its programming schedule and the staff that supports them" to make way for recent programming acquisitions that include movies and other entertainment shows, he said.

"When we announce our new direction, all of our programming genres are

going to be affected," Lewellen said.

"Our new focus will strike a better balance between original programming and an increase in acquired shows," added BET President and Chief Operating Officer Debra Lee in a statement.

Owner Robert Johnson sold BET to Viacom — the giant media conglomerate that owns CBS, UPN, MTV, VH1 and more — in 2000 for \$1.5 billion.

With Viacom ownership, it was said, BET could take advantage of greater news resources and could shake its image as primarily a purveyor of music videos and little original programming.

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