

crime legislation does not include violence against women. Anyway, but back to the United States. In November, some students at the University of Illinois also fought to cancel an Eminem concert at the university. So it's not just the foreigners who are against Eminem.

The fact of the matter, though, is it's not just Eminem. I'm sure many rap fans don't even like him. But if it were only Eminem that sang about killing and littered his lyrics with profanity, then there would be no issue concerning rap music. Since people still have a problem with rap, it's not just Eminem. It's the genre as a whole.

Many people will remember the whole Allen Iverson fiasco early in the fall. For the ones in the dark when it comes to sports, Iverson is a professional basketball player who (coincidentally?) carries the impression of being a thug. He also released a rap single to radio stations in October. Instantly, the single created controversy. Critics railed it for its violent and homophobic content. Eventually, the NBA forced Iverson to make a public apology and change the lyrics. So Iverson's music was too nasty for the NBA, huh? Iverson must have said some pretty offensive stuff in his song. Yet music executives agree that Iverson's lyrics are not that different from what is already on hip-hop radio. If that's the case, then Iverson's songs are representative of the whole rap genre and therefore unfit for the public ear.

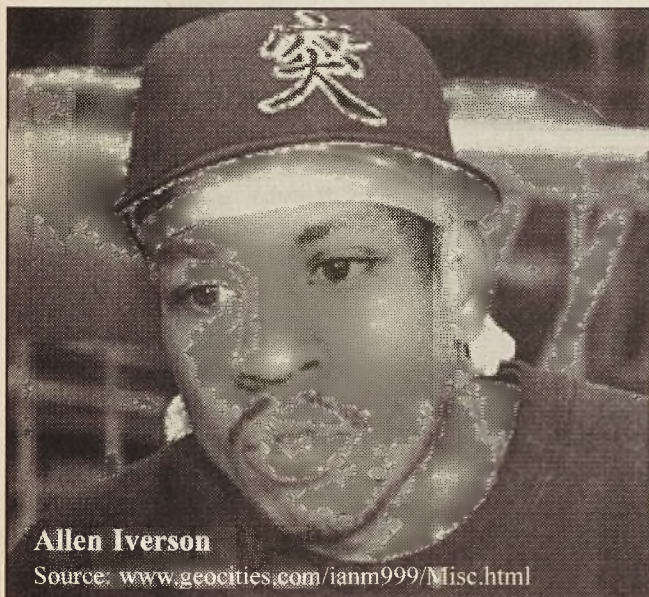
Actually, Iverson's not a bad guy. I read an article that described a visit he made to a local elementary school in his hometown, where he played

basketball and horseshoes with about 200 kids and never stopped smiling. And I'm sure he always wanted to release a rap album. It may have been a childhood dream of his. I'm not arguing that Iverson's a bad guy. My point is that it's sad Iverson had to resort to writing a song that was offensive in order for him to believe it would be successful. Iverson's record executive mentions that other songs on the album will talk about taking care of his children and the meaning of responsibility. My question is, then, how come those songs weren't released to the radio first? Why did Iverson release the offensive material to the radio? Oh, I already answered that. Because he wanted to be a successful rapper, and the responsible, more meaningful songs just won't cut it.

Dr. Dre experienced the same problem in 1997. Here's what he said, "I have kids and wanted to get away from the 'b—es and hos' and the violence, but I had to come back to the real. Back to the gangsta." Dr. Dre tried to rap about responsible material, and I applaud his effort. It just wouldn't sell. How sad it is.

Many of my friends who listen to rap say they listen to it "for the beat." For me, I cannot look past the offensive lyrics. Whether it's believable or not, I believe that our country still possesses strong values. Yes, our former president had affairs and stuff, but as a whole, this nation was outraged by his acts, simply because of our morals. And even though we Asians migrated to America, we now represent this country as our own. We take this country's history as our own.

So now I ask, how can we listen to rap music and at the same time represent a nation whose values are so strong? These values were instilled by our founding fathers who believed so strongly in them that they put the words "In God We Trust" on all our money. I do not see how anyone with any type of moral standard (religious or not) can, in any way or form, endorse some of the things spoken in some rap songs. Of course, it's silly to even conceive of our founding fathers listening to Nelly or Jay-Z, but it's even more ridiculous to think that they would approve of the lyrics. And yet, we embrace rap and hip-hop music. We dance to it. It's playing in our cars when we drive. We consider it one of our favorite types of music. Shame on us. EW



Allen Iverson

Source: www.geocities.com/ianm999/Misc.html