

90s Rap Songs for Trump

written by Billy Thompson | October 28, 2016



I am just about 40 years old, which means I was in high school and college in the 1990s, which means 'my music' included the golden age of rap – Biggie, Tupac, Wu-Tang and Outkast, just to name a very few. It was the age of "conscious rap" or "backpack rap," just before hip hop completely crossed over to the mainstream, and I was white and a suburbanite, so the stories weren't my stories, but they were, in a sense, *our* stories. The lyrics were the thing, and in so many instances they played a part in precipitating our current cultural moment, at least the diversity and social progressiveness of it. Which of course runs counter to the Trump movement, so I thought it'd be fun to imagine what those artists would do with the prospect of a Trump presidency. And then I thought wouldn't be fun to imagine they already had. I finally found something that could be fun about this.

Below is a list of ten songs that if they were released today, and the narrative went that they were about the Donald, you'd not only believe it, but they'd be great political commentary, even twenty years or so after their release.

10. "Bring Da Ruckus" – Wu Tang Clan

Let's jump right into it, shall we. I mean, really, from day 1 of Making America Great Again, this was always what we were in for, right?

Representative lyric: *Bring da motherfuckin' ruckus*

9. "Supa Star" – Group Home

With Trump's, eh, *interesting* attempt at courting black voters by broadly stating that all inner cities are ersatz war zones where you 'get shot walking down the street to the store," this song from Group Home's 1995 album *Livin Proof* adds just a touch of nuance to that take.

Representative lyric: *I wasn't living rich and I also wasn't poor/I try to appreciate but I deserve more*

8. "Lifestyles of the Rich and Shameless" – Lost Boyz

It doesn't take thinking too hard to imagine this as a pretty on point metaphor for Donald Trump's lifestyle.

Representative lyric: *The lifestyles of the rich and shameless, some die with a name, some die nameless/it's all the same game, it's all the same pain, it's all the same pain, it's all the same game*

7. "Ain't Sayin Nuthin New" – The Roots

I'm from Philly, so the Roots have long been my jam, and I'm 95% sure they have actual Trump songs ready now. But as the title of this song indicates, bigotry veiled as policy was not invented by Trump.

Representative lyric: *You don't like me but don't even know why you should hate me*

6. "Respiration" – Black Star, featuring Common

This election cycle has been tough. I and people I truly care about have not been able to feel comfortable, even when things have looked so good. Only two weeks to go, and still it's like someone's sitting on our chest, just the thought of it happening, a Donald Trump presidency. Elections always feels like life or death at the time, but also like it doesn't really matter on a day-to-day basis who wins. This feels like life or death. Full stop.

Representative lyric: *This ain't no time where the usual is suitable*

5. "Stakes Is High" – De La Soul

Seriously, y'all. Vote! Donald Trump was fully endorsed by the NRA. Just saying.

Representative lyric: *Gun control means using two hands in my land*

4. "Moment of Truth" – Gang Starr

Here's where we'll start really getting personal. This is a song about reflection, which Trump does not seem all that good at or perhaps even capable of.

Representative lyric: *Your image and your business were truly not done right*

3. "Everything is Everything" – Lauryn Hill

The level of our national discourse matters. And it's so low right now. I've got kids and that bothers me. If you watched the second debate especially, you know we're all losers in this.

Representative lyric: *It seems we lose the game before we even start to play, so easily led astray*

2. "Mathematics" – Mos Def

Picking a sample lyric from this song is pretty much impossible, as it's a stone cold classic and crazy timely even though it was released in 1999. So, given its plain awesomeness and Trump's nonexistent facts and figures, it gets two.

Representative lyrics: *Millions spent on defense in the last sixty years and folks still live in fear... Why did one straw break the camel's back, here's the secret: the million other straws underneath it, it's all mathematics*

1. "The Infamous Date Rape" – A Tribe Called Quest

Mic dropped.