The Real Enemy: Ice Cube, Black Criminality, and Hip Hop

Jeff Chang *Can’t Stop Won’t Stop*
Chapter 15

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“Through his acted-out fantasies the Black-on-Black criminal experiences a triumph, a sort of ‘get over,’ a sort of ‘get back’ on the “Man” and his system—a system designed to kill him spiritually if not physically. [...] Despite his apparent ‘getting over’ on the system, he has surrendered to it in a devious fashion.”

Amos Wilson (Black on Black Violence 75)
“The Black-on-Black criminal’s only problem is that he is not really “the man.” He does not possess the power to legitimize his victimization of his race. And this is what makes him an outlaw—not his attitudes, not his violent behavior, his victimization of his brothers”

Amos Wilson (Black on Black Violence 79)
Context

- LA Rebellion
- Generational tensions
- Black-Korean community tensions
- Food deserts/disinvestment
- Gangsta/ Conscious tension
- Sexism in lyrics
- Police brutality
Album Tracks:

• “Wrong Nigga to Fuck Wit”
• “Steady Mobbin”
• “True to the Game”
• “No Vaseline”
• “Horny Lil’ Devil”
• “Black Korea”
• “Dope Man”

• Release Date: 1991. Priority Records
• #2, Billboard Top 200 Albums
• #1, Billboard Top R&B/ Hip Hop LPs
• Certified Platinum (1.6 Mil.)
Ice Cube on growth

“I wouldn’t say some of the things now that I did in ‘89, ’88, ‘because […] I’ve grown as a person. I need to grow as an artist, so I would never say ‘yo, I’m looking for a nigger to shoot’.

Ice Cube interview with bell hooks (1994)
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