“The Ice Age: Jay-Z”
Somebody Scream

Hank Williams
Hunter College, CUNY
AFPRL 290: Hip Hop History and Culture
Key Hip Hop Themes

• Authenticity
• Crossover success
• Hip Hop as culturally dominant form
• Economics: Hip Hop as economic capital?
  • Crack/drugs as “start up” money?
• Hip Hop as cultural capital
Jay-Z

- Centrality of crack/ hustler
- Aspirational/ success
- Trickster
- Authenticity(?)

Image: Nate Van Dyke/ coroflot.com
Hip Hop’s Cultural dominance

“With eighty-one million CDs, tapes, and albums sold in 1998, rap outstripped America’s top selling format, country. Up from its seventy two million sales mark the previous year, rap music had increased sales by 31 percent, more than rock which saw only a 6 percent increase, and more than country, which experienced a 2 percent gain. In fact, if the south gained any momentum in the music industry in 1998, it was through rap”.

(Somebody Scream, 212)
Hip Hop’s Economic Independence

“Master P negotiated a partnership deal with Priority records for his No Limit label that gave him not only eighty-five cents on each dollar generated [...] but also ownership of his masters, his publishing, and his company. The deal was emblematic of just how powerful hip hop had become, and how much power it allowed some of its movers to wield”.

(Somebody Scream, 212)