

# Tupac

Tupac Amaru Shakur was born Lesane Parish Crooks on June 16, 1971 in New York City. He moved to California with his mother and, by the time his debut album "2Pacalypse Now" was released in 1991, he was considered an unequivocal figure in West Coast hip-hop, distinguished by his lyrical commentary on society and systemic oppression. This LP was a means of commenting on mass incarceration, racism, police brutality, and the inequity within the War on Drugs. Tupac's parents were Black Panther members, and his godmother is Assata Shakur, the de facto leader of the Black Liberation Army in the 1970s. Shakur learned about the politics of the Black Panther Party and the associated Black Liberation Army at an early age from his mother and her friends, many of whom were imprisoned or otherwise targeted by the government for their belief.



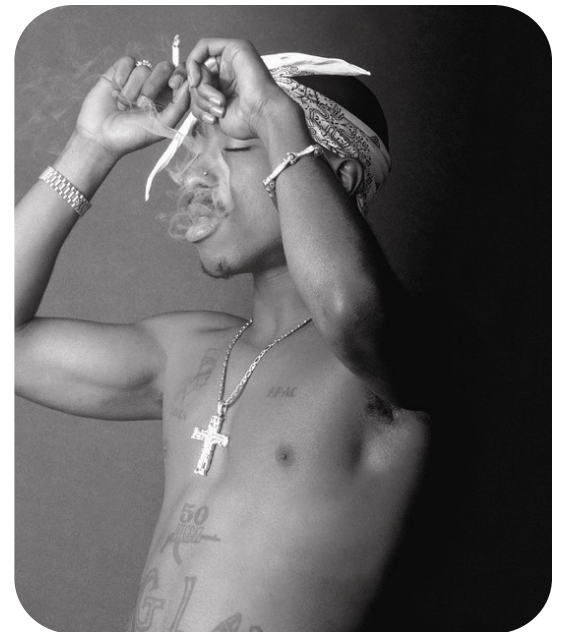
# Black History

Tupac's family and own experiences contributed to his public immersion in the rising Black power rap music movement, which commented on systemic and historical inequities. Discrimination in the Black community appears in many ways in Tupac's music. He addressed the systemic mechanisms that lead to a cycle of inequity and oppression. His hit "Dear Mama" speaks about his mother's complicated identity coming out of the Reagen crack epidemic and addresses the racist origins of the War on Drugs.



Tupac was known to be one of the few artists who spoke directly to Black women, speaking to their beauty and self-empowerment to counter the cycle of oppression that they face. He encouraged them to shed their dependence on men who didn't treat them right, particularly in his song "Keep Ya Head Up."

At a young age, Tupac was making ripples in American society and music, speaking about the struggles of the poor and Black men and women. His posthumous album "Greatest Hits" is one of only nine rap albums in the United States to be certified Diamond by the RIAA and, in 2002, he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



Tupac was killed in a drive-by shooting in 1996 at the age of 25.