

Speak Out: Tupac Shakur

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Once man understands the social environment which surrounds him, it will determine the ground on which he walks on. We live in a society that is based on how we relate to others. It is from how we judge others we perceive our own identities. It is from how we judge others, a level of structure is made. From an organizational climate, permeates a class structure. A class structure may develop into a community. It is from this community that determines experience.

Tupac Shakur, Lesage Parish Crooks, was born (June 16, 1971 – September 13, 1996). Shakur was raised in a hostile environment where he was raised by a single mom. His father was an active member of the Black Panthers. Shakur was born shortly after his mother was released from prison for conspiracy to the United States government. Shakur grew up in a low income family where he was surrounded by drugs and gang violence. It is from the environment that he was accustomed to he was able to write about in his music and act it out in his films.

Shakur was a talented artist. He voiced through rap music the intimacy of growing up in the hood. Growing up in the hood was a power struggle to survive male dominance of gangs and white oppression. Sharks asked for respect of his peers. Although he represented black gangsters in his music, he was a child of God who expressed his sorrow and pain through telling stories through the complacency of life. He was a product of a generation of black street culture that is reflected of unspoken identity. Shakur's embraced life's challenge by writing from personal experience.

Shakur had a gift of self-expression. In many of his songs, his voice speaks about depression. Although he was a prolific rapper, who had money and fame he was lonely and felt poor. He felt his life was empty from having empathy. He felt no one really understood him and his struggle. Although he was famous, he felt people would not give him the respect as a common man. His appearance through the media was a strong and tough man who was a careless thug. Shakur was a thriving artist, who used his rap music as therapy, begging for someone to understand his culture and to accept with his cultural identity. The lyrics of his songs were highly compromised with the hidden truth. He asked that people don't judge him. Shakur was very committed to his music.

Shakur wrote his music with personal conviction. His art was how he felt about society's ills, the pain and the confusion. He became an inspiration to his culture with his concern for his community. His music was resistive to current issues and he was adamant about his personal conviction with society which was different from how the media portrayed him as a political outcast. Shakur died a tragic death where he was shot down in Las Vegas, Nevada. Tupac will be remembered as a musical icon.

SPEAK OUT

I am a middle aged female who has a need to having her voice heard. I want to touch others' lives with the words I speak. I ask to close your eyes and open up to what is being said. You may not understand, but you will relate to what is said in my lines of poetry. Women feel pain, love and loss...these are the words I write in my lines of poetry.

To my Stolen Child

Stolen I cry I morn for the life I had let go many tears hold suicidal thoughts not wanting to let go

There is not a time that goes by in thought in memory in prayer that I kept you on my mind

Memories sustain holding you near my heart will wrongfully remain

Can't let go of letting go knowing that you exist the need the want of having you shall persist

As long as I know you in my heart I fear I am to blame stolen from my womb, unaware, my life won't be the same

I walk low head bowed down hurt in an epitome of shame I live in the poverty of resentment for the life I loosed I am
the blame

I confess I lived in sin the host of sin I lived a white lie tales of darkness envy infidelity and lust must soul lead to die

It was for this secret God had changed my life in Chasity a decision an idea a legacy to strive

If only I had the will to fight for what is mine I owe my child an oath to whose will has defined my purpose

I wish you were here with me now, we parted for good reason

Love

I felt love for him in my heart only because you showed he cared
 My heart was broken many times by the ones I trusted most
 He talked me through the hurt and pain and showed me what I am worth
 Through all my frustrations hatred of being deceived I learned to shut out the world
 He taught me how to set aside my anger by expressing my true feelings
 I had learned to open up and trust through what was once was broken
 I was able to speak openly for the first time by sharing my emotions
 I learned I am best being who I am and not no imitation
 I have learned to speak my mind and not from altercations
 I feel better with who I am and not from others expectations
 If only I had spoken what I feel now it would be a start to a new beginning
 Why do I feel so guilty about being in love, while our actions act freely?

Friendship

Every time I needed support, you threatened me
 Every time I asked for your opinion, you said bad things about me
 Every time I needed your company, you ignored me
 Every time I cried out loud, you laughed at me
 Every time I asked for forgiveness, you did not care
 Every time I asked for help, you told me off
 Every time in every need in every situation, you were never a true friend
 I lived in fear of my life
 I felt all alone, living in poverty, failing, suicidal thoughts
 I was alone shut out absent from life not knowing purpose
 As if I never existed

SPEAK OUT

We should reinvent prose, music and poetry by the words we use and the things we say.

The sex trade in African is sexting, the sex trade around the world is....Sexting is when young girls are sexually abducted and the ones who become victimized for money that is mistaken for love and they lose their sense of reality. Today, in rap songs women are disregarded by using names that the white man wanted to call black women in the past. Where rap music today talks about hating other blacks, killing other blacks and hating women. In the past music focused on the struggle of blacks while having black pride. **Stop the Violence** of women being victims of mental violence by vulgar names used in rap songs. Where music from old school talked about loving women. Originally rap music called women prostitutes for the women who did prostitute amongst gangster using them to buy them things or to trap men with their babies. Music today is going nowhere with violent lyrics and with the use of acoustics replacing the band. While rap music speak in gangster language only the black youth understand. **James Brown** represented black culture in his music, especially when he proclaimed to all black race about having pride in themselves to dark skinned people who were so wrongfully ashamed. **Why the Caged Bird Sings** when blacks share a dark past so readily ignored in mainstream America afraid of becoming a victim of what whites might think or hurt with the memory of the black past ever happened. **Farewell** to Maya Angelou, may she always be noted for her verse of wisdom...

Farewell

There is so much time and many things to see;
 So many deeds to do and so many task to complete.
 As time passes and you continue to age,
 May you confront worries with laughter in an untimely way?
 You made a difference in the lives of others that you've touched
 The time has come to quiet your soul to a more peaceful journey.

Sexting

It was the red tape hidden with muddied vision
 Persistently a condition of monetary pleasure
 A measurement an instrument an object of desire used to
 A calling a selection a submission of abuse
 Girls by example sexting a label a condition a translation
 More money more problems
 More money spent meant the more the girl felt loved
 A value dollar all too often misunderstood

Why the Caged Bird Sings

Dead surfaces, cracked walls, dead shadows
 Creep at night. A whistle blows, screaming, death cries.
 Can hear the cry of broken glass, shattered,
 and it cries for mercy, alone, echoing in the wind...
 Opening and unfolding death. Slowly, its wings spread out
 only to find darkness. His beak could not cry out for mercy.
 Words withheld inside of an empty prison.
 Hidden, fearful, broken inside its empty cage.
 Slowly its spirit begins to die.

Fight the Violence

Why should we ban violent lyrics in rap songs, when
 words degrade women, erasing the pain of the struggle,
 painfully giving reason for lost hope and dreams,
 painfully denying women the social freedom to be respected?
 Why should we ban violent lyrics in rap songs, when
 it discriminates against women feminist values, of being
 independent from men as single mothers,
 which is the purpose of the cause to alienate against sexist remarks?
 Why should we ban lyrics in rap songs, when women
 need to be loved by their sons they gave birth to, who they
 raised to be men, with hope their sons
 would bring to his family while loving another women and
 carrying the burden of providing for a family...
 We should ban violent lyrics in rap songs, so
 our voice as women can be heard.

James Brown

His lungs carried
 A 1/2 note
 Harmoniously in tune
 A symphony of instrument
 Defying the sound of rhythm.
 A child silenced
 Shame
 "I'm Black and I'm Proud"
 The tears of rage
 Words shouted,
 Words whispered,
 Words sung,
 Harmoniously in vision
 With what was needed
 To be said.

Song of Solomon

Poem for Michael Brown

The Song of Solomon echoes passages of faith

A mother's fate has grown fond of.

Her son's voice, soft spoken, remembered, sorrowfully.

The winter chills purge throughout her body, timidly in regret,

With the wretched pain, unwinding anger to let go

The burden of self-doubt, questioning the death of her son.