

Blizzard Bag #2/Calamity Day # 2

Street Law-Mrs. Arp

Answer the following questions, after reading the attached article.

1. Define: nominated, vivid, glorify, acquitted, about-face, catering, dividends
2. Why do you think Dogg calls his new album "Reincarnated"?
3. "You know, I don't have no regrets about what I did, 'cause I did it to the fullest." What did he do?
4. Is having done something to the fullest a good reason not to regret doing it? Why or why not?
5. Has Dogg really changed if he doesn't regret his past actions? What is the difference between finding new interests, tastes or personas and changing your character?
6. What is the difference between music describing a crime-ridden neighborhood and music glorifying such crime? Based on Dogg's own comments in this article, which would you say he was doing? Explain.
7. Why did Dogg's music attract such interest even from kids who did not grow up in crime-ridden neighborhoods?
8. Do you think kids want music that glorifies the life of crime? Explain.
9. Why might an established star be more likely than a rising star to create music whose message is broadly considered acceptable?

An Older, Wiser Snoop Dogg

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An older, wiser Snoop Dogg

When Snoop Dogg danced out of his recording studio, his high had nothing to do with an herb.

"How ya' all feeling? I'm feeling good," he said. "Pop pop bang!"

He's happy because his latest album, "Reincarnated," is up for a Grammy tonight.

He's nominated for Best Reggae Album -- not his signature West Coast Hip Hop that made him a superstar.

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Since the 1990s, he's sold more than 30 million rap albums, and he's been nominated 13 times for a Grammy, but so far without a win.

"I am the Susan Lucci of the Grammys," he laughed. "Crown me Susan Lucci!"

He's kidding, of course, but he's very serious about what he says has been a musical and spiritual transformation, so much so that he doesn't want to be known as Snoop Dogg anymore -- he prefers Snoop Lion.

He was born Calvin Broadus in Long Beach, Calif. The story goes he was nicknamed Snoop because he looked like Snoopy from the Charles Schultz cartoon.

Truth is, he doesn't know where he got the name came from, but his was hardly a Peanuts upbringing.

When he first burst on the scene, Snoop Dogg's music spoke of his crime-ridden neighborhood in poetic, but often vivid detail -- so much so, critics argued he glorified the gangster lifestyle.

From "Gin and Juice":

Rollin' down the street,
Smokin' indo,
Sippin' on gin and juice, laid back
with my mind on my money
and my money on my mind

He joined a gang, sold crack, went to jail. Was even charged with murder at one point, but later acquitted.

Through it all, though, his fan base only grew....

"You know, I don't have no regrets about what I did, 'cause I did it to the fullest," he said. "But as you get older, you get wiser, and now that I'm wiser, I want to give, you know, some light to the situation and give them another avenue, or another door to walk through."

His single "No Guns Allowed" is a musical about-face:

Let the music play,
me don't want no more gunplay
When the bodies hit the ground,
There's nothing left to say, ay, ay
Me don't want to see no more innocent blood shed,
Me don't want to see no more youth dead.
Come hear me now.

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"I'm so sick and tired of all this violence, this gun violence," said Dogg. "And how could I speak on it, you know, being one who has advocated violence and gun violence? And the only way I could do it was through a song that spoke from the heart."

"Do you still carry a gun?" Cowan asked.

"No."

On stage, and off it, he says he's a different man.

In 2005 he established the Snoop Youth Football League.

"I wanted a football league to cater to the friends and the people that came from the communities I came from," he told Cowan. "It just seemed like no football league was catering to the inner city."

He actually coaches one of the teams himself. "On the ball, on the ball, let's go! On the ball!"

And it's not just for boys; there's a program for cheerleading, too.

It's already showing some big-league dividends. Last year, one of Snoop's alums, Ronnie Hillman, was drafted by the Denver Broncos. He's going to the Super Bowl next Sunday.

Cowan asked, "Is it different having the kids look up to you as a coach as opposed to a rap star?"

"It's better," he replied. "Because they don't care about my flaws. You know, as a rapper they bring up my flaws -- when I went to jail, I was an ex-drug dealer, whatever ex- I was, it would seem to linger.

"But when it comes to football, they don't care about the ex-, they care about what's right now."

James Maae, who goes by "Chubba," is one of Snoop's star linemen. He told Cowan it was not at all strange to have Snoop Dogg coach his team. "I just think of him as a regular coach," he said.

Chubba's mom, Taape, says she's happy to accept Snoop's outreach to the community. No reason to turn her back on it, she figures, just because of his past.

"Just to see this side of him is different, it's a good different, you know?" she said.

Cowan asked Snoop, "How do you square your past life -- dealing drugs, and still smoking a lot -- with coaching kids?"

"It's easy!" Snoop replied. "I don't go to practice doing it. I don't do it in front of them. They don't never see it. When I'm Coach Snoop, that's what they get. They get the coach."

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He admits he hasn't lost all his "Snoop-ness." His mini-fleet of custom Cadillacs can still make quite an entrance.

"This is my '69 Cadillac Fleetwood 'Snoop de Ville,'" he laughed, "with the chandeliers in the interior to make you feel like you're at Grandma's house!"

At 42, a father of three and married now almost 20 years, Snoop has plenty of places to arrive in style. A few weeks ago he was even playing the Kennedy Center, with the President and First Lady looking on.

"I snuck a peek, I looked up top, and seen him having a good time," Snoop said, "so it let me know that I was in the right place, and I was in the right spirit, and the right mind, so I continue to do what I normally do."

At the White House, a chat with Secretary of State John Kerry ended with a fist bump -- and later, a chance to talk one-on-one with the First Family.

What did he say to the president? "Oh, that's personal man, you know, we shared a few tics, you understand me? But that was some personal. I don't want to discuss that right now. But it was, it was brilliant."

If the reincarnated Snoop hasn't pleased everyone, that's probably no surprise. His fellow gang bangers, for example, don't always take to the "new" Snoop.

But in that, he says, there's a lesson.

"A lot of my friends thought I was weak when I had seen the light," Snoop said. "But, what I was told, if you ain't losing friends, you ain't growing up.

"So I guess I grew up."