

...To haters of *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'*, the film was made because Fifty Cent, the multi-platinum selling rapper, is now Fifty Cent and G-Unit multi-million earning brand that has evolved into making G-Unit films, G-Unit comedy tour and DVDs, G-Unit video games, G-Unit clothes and sneakers and most recently a publishing deal with MTV for G-Unit books...David L. "Money Train" Watts, [Hiphopbattle.com](http://Hiphopbattle.com)

**"I hate watching films that are kind of autobiographical, but not. The pacing is painfully slow, feels overly long and there's almost no music in this!"**

-- **Michelle Alexandria, ECLIPSE MAGAZINE**

***But the movie ultimately lacks an emotional core. It will certainly make 50 Cents even richer, but it wouldn't have killed him to try a bit harder.***  
By **A. O. SCOTT, NY Times**

***The Independence Day motif is one of several elements that appear tired and second-hand in the wake of Craig Brewer's less "realistic" but much more compelling "Hustle & Flow." "Get Rich or Die Tryin'" also pales in comparison to "8 Mile," the earlier autobiographical rap drama starring 50 Cent's music industry mentor, Eminem...John Beifuss, CommercialAppeal***

***"Crippled by a trite story line and a serious lack of flash from rapper and first-time actor Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson, Get Rich or Die Tryin' pretty much dies trying."***

-- Tom Long, **DETROIT NEWS**

**"50 Cent's fanbase might love this valentine to the rapper's ego no matter the quality, but other audiences might not be as forgiving with this half-realized urban fairy tale."**

-- **Brian Orndorf, EFILMCRTIC.COM**

**"... too unsophisticated for anyone who should be allowed to see it and too unrealistic for that audience to really believe in it."**

-- **Kevin A. Ranson, MOVIECRYPT.COM**

**"A reiteration of the now-clichéd hip-hop rise-to-fame legend that duplicates the crime-to-rhyme formula of Hustle & Flow."**

-- **Nicholas Schager, SLANT MAGAZINE**

**"The film's inability to resist the lure of maximum exploitation becomes frustrating."**

-- **Kenneth Turan, LOS ANGELES TIMES**

**That Howard came off as a more convincing -- not to mention skilled -- rapper in Hustle & Flow than 50 Cent does here is among the biggest failings of Get Rich."**

**-- Glenn Whipp, LOS ANGELES DAILY NEWS**

**"For all its biographical truth, Get Rich's journey into a ghetto of hustlers, gangstas and mindless violence is all too familiar."**

**-- Kirk Honeycutt, HOLLYWOOD REPORTER**

**"Good news for 50 Cents! He doesn't have to worry about finding a date and a tux for the Oscars, because he won't be invited. He's playing himself, HOW HARD CAN THAT BE?!?"**

**-- Willie Waffle, WAFFLEMOVIES.COM**

**"The usual hip-hop hypocrisies infest this semi-autobiographical tale of a dope dealer's rise to rapping glory, which laments the sad brutality of life on the streets while glamorizing every minute of it."**

**-- Steve Schneider, ORLANDO WEEKLY**

**"Get Rich or Die Tryin' will always be known as the 50 Cent movie. Not because of who stars in the film, but because that's how much it's worth."**

**-- Phil Villarreal, ARIZONA DAILY STAR**

**"Even though it's inspired by the real life of rap megastar Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, "Get Rich or Die Tryin'" has the pulpy feel of fictional gangsta melodrama that plays like a contrived cross between "New Jack City" and "Hustle & Flow."**

**-- Todd McCarthy, VARIETY**

**"The 50 Cent Fan Club will fill the seats hoping to get a glimpse into their hero, but Get Rich never offers any insights into what drives the man and his music."**

**-- Sean McBride, SEAN THE MOVIE GUY**

**"For those who don't take 50 Cent's talent for granted going in, there's nothing to indicate what's so special about him, much less why he of all people deserves to have a movie made about his experiences."**

**PETER BURGE, MIAMI HERALD**

**"Before we enter the theater, we know he's a millionaire winner starring in a movie about how he won. So it's hard to believe him when he isn't smiling."**

**-- Wesley Morris, BOSTON GLOBE**

**"A preposterous rags-to-riches story with a flat lead character that it's determined to raise to the level of a deity."**

**-- Ken Hanke, MOUNTAIN XPRESS (ASHEVILLE, NC)**

I will now deal with most of the film critics or haters, of *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'*. Right now the count on the national film review Web site [www.rottentomatoes.com](http://www.rottentomatoes.com) is 78 against *Get Rich* and 18 for it. It is beyond stupid for film reviewers to try to hate on *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* because it is "supposedly" not as good as *8-Mile* and *Hustle & Flow*. You can compare *8-Mile* and *Hustle & Flow* against each other because they are both films that are about the music first and the man second. In *Get Rich* the theme is what makes the man makes his music. You don't have any deep understanding or probing in *Hustle* or *8-Mile* about what early childhood influences impacted the lead character's lives. When you meet Jimmy "B-Rabbit" Smith Jr. or Djay their world as an adult is already established. There is not any deep psychological trauma like their mother being burned alive or physical trauma like having to get shot nine times before they started their rap careers. No one is trying to kill B-Rabbit or Djay for just wanting to be a rapper. *8 Mile* and *Hustle* can't be compared to *Get Rich* because the stakes of the lead character are not the same on any level.

You can't hate on a film that was never trying to follow in the direct footsteps of two highly promoted and critically reviewed hip-hop films. Lets say the critics had their way and the majority of *Get Rich* was not about a crime drama and Marcus's criminal life, but just him trying to record music and get a record deal. These same critics and even more would say *Get Rich* is still a joke, weak, had bad acting by Fifty, was too predictable and was trying to be another *8 Mile* or *Hustle & Flow*. What most of these self-centered hip-hop neophytes masking as film critics fail to realize is that there are several ways to enter hip-hop and become successful.

*8 Mile* showed the unconventional way of MC Battling as a way for a rapper to shine to the top. Other than Eminem there has been virtually no other MCs who has become a battle rap champion and then went on to be even a gold selling rapper. There are so many recent high profile MC battle champions, Jin, Eyedea, Wreckonize, Poster Boy, Spitfire, etc., that flame out or never get a record deal it is more a fact than an realistic expectation of success in world of hip-hop. And don't even mention the fact that almost everyone in the underground Detroit hip-hop scene was bitching and moaning at how unrealistic *8 Mile* portrayed the Detroit hip-hop scene. I told my Hiphopbattle.com editor Dave Velo Stewart that the Detroit rappers should shut up and let the world think Detroit did have some type of record labels and radio promotion going on. If Curtis Hanson had made the Detroit hip-hop scene in *8 Mile* really seem as bleak, broke down and disorganized as it was back then, audiences would not care about as much as Eminem becoming a successful rapper from the "D". Film critics who praised *8 Mile* for its realism and gritty setting and authentic dialogue had no clue how off the film was to what it really was like in Detroit back in the mid-90's. And these critics would not have cared. And if you think Eminem, Jimmy Iovine, Interscope Records CEO or Eminem's manager Paul Rosenberg, who is also a producer on *Get Rich*, wanted *Get Rich* to be a carbon copy of *8 Mile* you are now "Losing it". What makes *8 Mile* great and *Get Rich* good now and great one day is that they are not similar in structure, theme and writing. Each film can stand-alone by itself.

And as far as *Hustle & Flow* goes, the number of real pimps that have become real rappers is zero. I mean Craig Brewer should go back to 2005 Sundance at his film's premiere and thank the Hughes Brothers for making his film's inspiration *American Pimp*. In *American Pimp* there was a story of a pimp who also had dreams of being a rapper and was trying to pursue his goal. Nothing was made of the fact that he wanted to be a rapper, but his story was almost exactly what ended up on the screen seven years later. Does any film critic really believe that Craig Brewer wrote *Hustle & Flow* in 1998 or 1997 and had never seen *Pimps Up & Hoes Down* or *American Pimp*? Film critics don't know and they don't care.

Most film critics who love *Hustle & Flow* and would never sweat Craig about what were his real life film and media influences. Most film critics would never call into question how little *Hustle & Flow* showed of the real Memphis hip-hop scene. There are no recognizable Memphis hip-hop artists, like Three 6 Mafia, rapping or doing a cameo in the film. You don't see Memphis hip-hop because Craig and John Singleton did not show it. But would film critics even know that is why *Hustle & Flow* to this date is still not a film favorite amongst hip-hop fans, hip-hop artists or the black community in general. And then these same critics, like Ebert & Roeper, that praised *Hustle & Flow* to the nine were left scratching their heads when it did not do well the box office. People were not feeling *Hustle & Flow* not because it was not a well-written and well-acted film. People who love hip-hop didn't go see *Hustle & Flow* because the story of a pimp actually being a successful rapper is as realistic as a convict on death row, like Stanely "Tookie" Williams, being pardoned and then when release being elected as governor of California. The closest you get to rappers that briefly pimped some women out are Uncle Luke or possibly Ice-T. But even then it was still a part of Luke's and Ice's general street hustling manifesto. Luke or Ice were never full time pimps—even though they could have been great ones—if that means anything at all.

Now let's turn to the world of gangsta rap. There had not been up until *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* a serious, well directed and written, big budget urban film chronicling the rise of a young thug that turns away from crime to become a rapper. There are so many national examples of this type of hip-hop success it's a wonder five *Get Rich* had not been done before Fifty's story hit the screen. If you did a big budget film about Eazy-E, Tupac, Notorious BIG, Snoop Dogg, Suge Knight, The Game and so on and so on you would invariably find many of the same scenes in *Get Rich* playing out in those semi auto-biographical films. And the Tupac and Biggie films are already in development. Don't get me wrong. There have been several direct-to-DVD and cable films or the short lived UPN series *Platinum* trying to show the dark side of hip-hop and gangsta rap. Even HBO's *OZ* and the *Wire* have lightly touched upon this theme. But nothing is like *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* because of none of those other violent hip-hop films or TV shows actually were playing out in real courtroom with real heavyweight hip-hop defendants:

## **Guilt by association**

**Hip-hop moguls Irv and Chris Lorenzo - Irv and Chris Gotti, as the wanna-be gangsters style themselves - are on trial in Brooklyn Federal Court for allegedly laundering money for drug dealers through their Murder Inc. record label. They say they're innoCents, and rapper Ja Rule brands the prosecution a "war against hip hop."**

**As the Lorenzos tell it, hanging around with dope kingpin Kenneth (Supreme) McGriff and even becoming his business partner was just a harmless bit of showbiz that helped them earn some street cred and sell more albums. In our book, that's enough to make them guilty, at least morally.**

**Lost in the sensation of the trial is the toll that big-time crack dealers like McGriff exacted on the city starting in the 1980s. They made huge amounts of money while thousands of babies were born addicted to crack, women descended into prostitution to feed their habits, men abandoned families and children slept in bathtubs seeking shelter from incessant random gunfire.**

**There was a reminder last week of how grim that time was as a rival kingpin of the era petitioned in Manhattan Supreme Court for a sentence reduction under the revised Rockefeller drug laws. John McCaskell was a top soldier in the Fat Cat Nichols organization, which assassinated rookie cop Edward Byrne as he guarded a witness.**

**Despite that bloody, degrading history, the Lorenzos liken thugs like McGriff and Nichols to modern day Robin Hoods, well-meaning rogues who began making money outside the law but intended to go legit at some point. The argument is repeated *ad nauseam* on hip-hop radio stations, and it's truly nauseating...The Associated Press**

The reason why all the 78 film critics are "out to lunch" and the 18 that like it are right on target is the current Murder Inc. trial. Federal prosecutors are directly alleging that the real life Fifty Cents attempted murder was prompted by Fifty making a song called "Ghetto Koran" that insulted the legendary drug lord Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff. The character Majestic in *Get Rich* is unquestionably based on McGriff. When Majestic burns Katrina alive it is no different than McGriff ordering his hitmen to kill a pregnant girlfriend who would not have an abortion. Majestic funds and protects a fake gangsta rapper named Dangerous that gives him instant street cred just like a McGriff allegedly funds, protects and gives street cred to Murder Inc.'s top rapper Ja Rule. Majestic is dissed by Marcus on a Mixed-Tape and orders him killed is no different than McGriff doing the same to Fifty. There are so many direct scenes in *Get Rich* and the Murder Inc. trial that is an insult for any real film critic to think otherwise:

**McGriff is so supremely monstrous that one of his henchmen had a standing assignment to muscle any of the dealer's harem who became pregnant into having an abortion.**

**"Basically, that was like my job," Philip (Dahlu) Banks testified at the Lorenzos' trial last week. "[A girlfriend] might be pregnant, Supreme did not want to have the baby, I gave them money to get rid of it. They didn't want to get rid of it, I had to do something to move them along."**

**The woman survived to have a baby boy, now 10 or 11 years old, the son of a drug dealer who had his mother shot because she refused to abort him. An added, sick twist came to light when Banks testified that the three-man "squad," or hit team, included a young man nicknamed "Son."**

**The government stated outside the jury's presence that Son was also the gunman who shot the rapper 50 Cents in May of 2000. 50 Cents proved to be as lucky as the young woman who refused to have an abortion. He survived to become a megastar who appears on posters for his new movie everywhere you turn...John Mazurlli  
Newsday**

And for many film critics to keep praising *8 Mile* and *Hustle & Flow* as the more realistic and pure hip-hop autobiographical film than *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* is borderline insanity and full on jealousy. Real people did not die from during Eminem's rise to rap stardom or in Craig Brewer's pimp rapper cinematic fantasy. But real people did get killed, did get shot and real people, like Chris and Irv Gotti are facing 20 years to life for crossing the line from making gangsta rap records to living a gangsta rap lifestyle. Ja Rule should change his name and do a Ricky Williams for a year or two after seeing himself immortalized forever as the fake gangsta rapper Dangerous. McGriff and Chris and Irv Gotti and their defunct Murder Inc. have clearly lost the battle that the started with Fifty many years ago:

**"Supreme said, 'I got him,'" Ragin told Assistant U.S. Attorney Carolyn Pokorny. "I didn't know who it was 'he got,' and Supreme explained he got 50 Cents."**

**"He thought [50 Cents] was dead," Ragin said. "He got shot so many times at close range and there was so much blood."**

**While Lyons allegedly rinsed his hands with rubbing alcohol to remove traces of gunshot residue, McGriff described how 50 Cents reacted to the gunfire - "squirming" for cover and desperately trying to stop the rounds with his hands.**

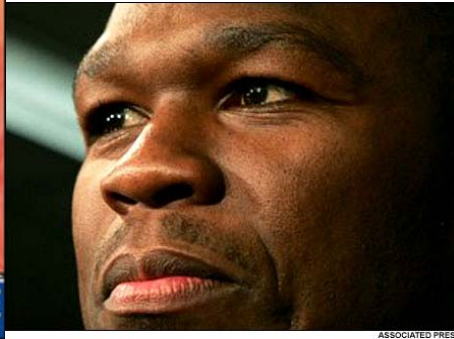
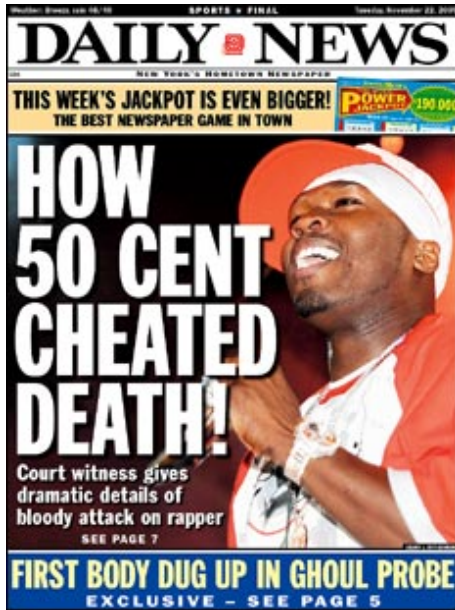
**The rapper, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, was hit nine times.**

**Defense lawyer Gerald Shargel argued that the outcome of the case could hinge on whether jurors hear allegations linking the Lorenzo brothers to the shooting.**

**"The 50 Cents artist is at the height of his popularity, and this is an explosive issue," Shargel told Brooklyn Federal Judge Edward Korman, referring to the rapper's starring role in the new film "Get Rich or Die Tryin'."**

**Prosecutors contend the evidence will show the Lorenzos had knowledge of McGriff's violent activities while they were allegedly laundering his illicit drug cash through Murder Inc., whose artists included Ja Rule and Ashanti...John Mazurlli  
Newsday**

Even The Game's great Fifty Cent hating "300 Bars" mixed-tapes will not go anywhere when people start seeing *Get Rich*. I don't care how much one hates Fifty Cent. Him surviving 9 bullets and coming back to be as successful as he is today is not a career path any rapper would want to do. And after nine rounds many upcoming rappers would go work at Micky Dees or a take safe desk job instead of continuing in the highly volatile world of gangsta hip-hop.



No matter how many bad reviews are posted on Rottentomatoes.com. *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* is in the same position that *Scarface* was when it was released back in the day. All the critics panned it as being too violent and presenting a stereotypical look at Cubans and Latinos in general. The film critics especially hated on Universal for casting Al Pacino to play a Cuban instead of finding some Latin actor for the role. Now so many years later those *Scarface* haters would not utter a peep about how bad they still think *Scarface* is or how bad an acting job Al Pacino did. There are some film critics, like the New York Times' A.O. Scott, so bold that hating on *Get Rich* is not enough. They want to now be music critics and let everyone know now that Fifty Cent also sucks as rapper. I guess the 15 million in CDs that Fifty sold was all a fluke or a fairy tale:

**Unfortunately, that tear represents the far horizon of his range as an actor. As a rapper, 50 Cents has been an overachiever, selling boatloads of records in spite of his pedestrian skills. Lacking the verbal wit of a Jay-Z, the storytelling ability of a Biggie Smalls or the engaging personality of a Kanye West, he has gotten over through doggedness and a certain truculent charisma. That is not quite enough to sustain nearly two hours of drama, however, and Mr. Jackson is an inert, clumsy presence at the Center of the movie, which seems to have been edited around his deficiencies...A.O. Scott New York Times**

The Future of Fifty Cent the actor may be brighter than Eminem the actor because he is not afraid to keep elevating his skills. There must be a stack of scripts at UTA high enough to hit a 747 landing at LAX that Eminem has passed on before, during or after *8 Mile*. Coincidentally, it was an extremely smart strategy of Jimmy Ivoine and William Morris to not let Fifty do any films until *Get Rich* was made first. This plan worked with developing and launching Eminem's Hollywood first feature. 250 Million worldwide is nothing to sneeze at the box offices for *8 Mile*. Paramount can only hope they make a third as much with *Get Rich in the theaters*, but that will greatly depend if they aggressively market the film outside the hood and overseas. The real money for *Get Rich* will be made on DVD, pay-per-view and VOD and new platforms like the PSP and iPod DVD. But no matter how much money *Get Rich* makes some film critics are so damn naïve that they think *Get Rich* is being over hyped and over packaged to urban consumers just to sell Fifty's new video game:

**“Everything about 50, from his image as a gangster, to the video game, and now this movie feels packaged - packaged to make 50 seem hard and tough, when it seems like he's anything but a hard core thug. What makes "Hustle and Flow" work is that you can see DJ's progression from being a pimp to a rapper, and his desperation to get out by any means necessary”...Michelle Alexandria, Eclipse Magazine**

Of course, Paramount released *Get Rich* the week before Fifty's new game *Bulletproof*. How stupid do you have to be to think that a major Hollywood film is not going to use every marketing opportunity in can muster to cross promote an already hit video game and its film's main actor. The video game industry is bigger than the film industry and there are higher expectations of the sales of than even the movie. Eminem actually has a small part in Fifty's game. There is no Eminem video game the last I checked. And don't even look for the *Hustle & Flow* game because an EA, Rockstar Games, Activision, etc., would not invest millions into making a pimp turned rapper video game. The bottom line is *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* was made because Fifty Cent, the multi-platinum selling rapper, is now a Fifty Cent and G-Unit multi-million earning brand that has evolved into making G-Unit films, G-Unit comedy tour and DVDs, G-Unit video games, G-Unit clothes, G-Unit merchandising and most recently a new publishing deal with MTV to launch G-Unit books. *8 Mile* was made to take Eminem to another level of stardom, control his image and establish the Eminem brand. Those are the same exact three reasons why *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* was made for Fifty Cent. Lastly, there are so many haters to *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* and also Fifty Cent that this article could go on and become a book. But the easiest way to sum up everything is quote the opening hook and opening verse of Fifty Cent's "Hustler Ambition" from the *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* soundtrack.

**“Like The Fire Needs The Air...I Won't Burn Unless You're There” ....Hook  
“I Need You To Hate To...So I Can Use You For My Energy....Fifty Cent**  
Sincerely,

*David L Watts a.k.a. Train*