

Assignment 6: 2 Live Crew Debate

Reflect on the 2 Live Crew case and answer the following questions:

- What are community standards? This is especially at issue when we can generally point to multiple overlapping communities.
- How does music communicate one community's standards to another? Can it? Is that even a reasonable question?
- If context determines the meaning of the music, how would regulating the music itself work?
- Was banning 2 Live Crew implicitly racist?
- Is legal sanction on cultural production ever OK? When?

Besides, do you find 2 Live Crew obscene? Among all the voices,

1. **Strongly objective:** *George Will* - Nasty was misogynistic filth and characterizing their lyrics as a profoundly repugnant "combination of extreme infantilism and menace" that objectified black women and represented them as legitimate targets for sexual violence.
2. **Partially objective:** *Kimberlé W. Crenshaw* - Obscenity prosecution on the 2 Live Crew was wrongheaded and racist, but misogyny did exist and should not be tolerated.
3. **Strongly supportive:** *Henry Louis Gates* - 2 Live Crew is engaged in heavy-handed parody, turning the stereotypes of black and white American culture on their heads. 2 Live Crew must be interpreted within the context of black culture generally and of signifying specifically. These young artists are acting out, to lively dance music, a parodic exaggeration of the age-old stereotypes of the oversexed black female and male.

Which voice do you agree with more? Refer to this week's readings and explain why you resonate with this voice and how you will interpret the 2 Live Crew songs. Minimum 250 words in total.