

= Eazy @-@ E =

Eric Lynn Wright (September 7 , 1964 ? March 26 , 1995) , better known by his stage name Eazy @-@ E , was a U.S. American rapper who performed solo and in the hip hop group N.W.A. Wright is affectionately called " The Godfather of Gangsta Rap " . He was born to Richard and Kathie Wright in Compton , California . After dropping out of high school in the tenth grade , he supported himself primarily by selling drugs before founding Ruthless Records and becoming a rapper . Arabian Prince , Eazy @-@ E , Dr. Dre and Ice Cube formed N.W.A. After DJ Yella and MC Ren joined the group , N.W.A released their debut single Panic Zone . In 1988 , they released their most controversial album , Straight Outta Compton . The group released two more albums and then disbanded after Eazy released Dr. Dre from his contract .

Eazy 's main influences included 1970s funk groups , contemporary rappers , and comedians . When reviewing Eazy 's albums , many critics noted his unique overall style , with Steve Huey of the All Music Guide remarking : " While his technical skills as a rapper were never the greatest , his distinctive delivery ... over @-@ the @-@ top lyrics , and undeniable charisma made him a star . "

= = Early life and Ruthless Records investment = =

Eric Wright was born to Richard and Kathie Wright on September 7 , 1964 , in Compton , California , a Los Angeles suburb notorious for gang activity and crime . His father was a postal worker and his mother was a grade school administrator . Wright dropped out of high school in the tenth grade , but later received a high @-@ school general equivalency diploma (GED) .

Wright supported himself primarily by selling drugs , introduced to the occupation by his cousin . Wright 's friend Jerry Heller admits that he witnessed Wright selling marijuana , but says that he never saw him sell cocaine . As Heller noted in his book Ruthless : A Memoir , Wright 's " dope dealer " label was part of his " self @-@ forged armor " . Wright was also labeled as a " thug " . Heller explains : " The hood where he grew up was a dangerous place . He was a small guy . ' Thug ' was a role that was widely understood on the street ; it gave you a certain level of protection in the sense that people hesitated to fuck with you . Likewise , ' dope dealer ' was a role that accorded you certain privileges and respect . "

In 1986 , at the age of 22 , Wright had allegedly earned as much as US \$ 250 @,@ 000 from dealing drugs . However , after his cousin was shot and killed , he decided that he could make a better living in the Los Angeles hip hop scene , which was growing rapidly in popularity . He started recording songs during the mid @-@ 1980s in his parents ' garage .

The original idea for Ruthless Records came when Wright asked Heller to go into business with him . Wright suggested a half @-@ ownership company , but it was later decided that Wright would get eighty percent of the company 's income , and Heller would only get twenty percent . According to Heller , he told Wright , " Every dollar comes into Ruthless , I take twenty cents . That 's industry standard for a manager of my caliber . I take twenty , you take eighty percent . I am responsible for my expenses , and you 're responsible for yours . You own the company . I work for you . " Along with Heller , Wright invested much of his money into Ruthless Records . Heller claims that he invested the first \$ 250 @,@ 000 , and would eventually put up to \$ 1 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 into the company .

= = Musical career = =

= = N.W.A and Eazy @-@ Duz @-@ It (1986 ? 91) = = =

N.W.A 's original lineup consisted of Arabian Prince , Dr. Dre , Eazy @-@ E , and Ice Cube . DJ Yella and MC Ren joined later . The compilation album N.W.A. and the Posse was released on November 6 , 1987 , and would go on to be certified Gold in the United States . The album featured material previously released as singles on the Macola Records label , which was responsible for

distributing the releases by N.W.A and other artists like the Fila Fresh Crew , a West Coast rap group originally based in Dallas , Texas .

Eazy @-@ E 's debut album , Eazy @-@ Duz @-@ It , was released on September 16 , 1988 , and featured twelve tracks . It was labeled as West Coast hip hop , Gangsta rap , and Golden age hip hop . It has sold over 2 @.@ 5 million copies in the United States and reached number forty @-@ one on the Billboard 200 . The album was produced by Dr. Dre and DJ Yella and largely written by MC Ren , Ice Cube , and The D.O.C . Both Glen Boyd from the Seattle Post @-@ Intelligencer and MTV 's Jon Wiederhorn claimed that Eazy @-@ Duz @-@ It " paved the way " for N.W.A 's most controversial album , Straight Outta Compton . Wright 's only solo in the album was a remix of the song " 8 Ball " , which originally appeared on N.W.A. and the Posse . The album featured Wright 's writing and performing ; he performed on seven songs and helped write four songs .

After the release of Straight Outta Compton , Ice Cube left because of internal disputes , and the group continued as a four @-@ piece ensemble . N.W.A released 100 Miles and Runnin ' and Niggaz4Life in 1991 . A diss war started between N.W.A and Ice Cube when " 100 Miles and Runnin ' " and " Real Niggaz " were released . Ice Cube responded with " No Vaseline " on Death Certificate . Wright performed on seven of the eighteen songs on Niggaz4Life .

In March 1991 Wright accepted an invitation to a lunch benefiting the Republican Senatorial Inner Circle , hosted by then @-@ U.S. President George H. W. Bush . A spokesman for the rapper said that Eazy @-@ E supported Bush because of his performance in the Persian Gulf War .

= = = End of N.W.A and feud with Dr. Dre (1991 ? 94) = = =

N.W.A began to split up after Jerry Heller became the band 's manager . Dr. Dre recalls : " The split came when Jerry Heller got involved . He played the divide and conquer game . Instead of taking care of everybody , he picked one nigga to take care of and that was Eazy . And Eazy was like , ' I 'm taken care of , so fuck it ' . " Dre sent Suge Knight to look into Eazy 's financial situation because he was beginning to grow suspicious of Eazy and Heller . Dre asked Eazy to release him from the Ruthless Records contract , but Eazy refused . The impasse led to what reportedly transpired between Knight and Eazy at the recording studio where Niggaz4life was recorded . After he refused to release Dre , Knight declared to Eazy that he had kidnapped Heller and was holding him prisoner in a van . The rumor did not convince Eazy to release Dre from his contract , and Knight threatened Eazy 's family : Knight gave Eazy a piece of paper that contained Eazy 's mother 's address , telling him , " I know where your mama stays . " Eazy finally signed Dre 's release , officially ending N.W.A.

The feud with Dr. Dre continued after a track on Dre 's The Chronic , " Dre Day " , contained lyrics that insulted Eazy @-@ E. Eazy responded with the EP , It 's On (Dr. Dre) 187um Killa , featuring the tracks " Real Muthaphuckkin G 's " and " It 's On " . The album , which was released on October 25 , 1993 , contains pictures of Dre wearing " lacy outfits and makeup " when he was a member of the Electro @-@ hop World Class Wreckin ' Cru .

= = Personal life = =

Wright had a son , Eric Wright Jr . , in 1984 . He also had a daughter named Erin who has legally changed her name to Ebie . Wright also knew that he had at least five other children by five separate women during his lifetime . His oldest son Eric in an interview in 2015 , said that three more children , now adults , were confirmed through DNA testing with Eric Jr 's sister and Eazy @-@ E 's father , to be his as well . He had two children with Tomica Woods , and found out he was dying of AIDS while she was pregnant with their second baby . This brings his total children to at least twelve .

Wright met Tomica Woods at a Los Angeles nightclub in 1991 , and they married in 1995 , twelve days before his death . They had a son named Dominick and a daughter named Daijah (born six months after Wright 's death) . After Wright 's death , Ruthless Records was taken over by his wife .

= = Legal issues = =

After Dr. Dre left Ruthless Records , executives Mike Klein and Jerry Heller sought assistance from the Jewish Defense League (JDL) . Klein , a former Ruthless Records director of business affairs , said this provided Ruthless Records with leverage to enter into negotiations with Death Row Records over Dr. Dre 's departure . While Knight had sought an outright release from Ruthless Records for Dr. Dre , the JDL and Ruthless Records management negotiated a release in which the record label would continue to receive money and publishing rights from future Dr. Dre projects with Death Row Records , founded by Dr. Dre with Suge Knight . The FBI launched a money @-@ laundering investigation under the assumption that the JDL was extorting money from Ruthless Records to fight their causes . This led to JDL spokesperson Irv Rubin issuing a press release stating " There was nothing but a close , tight relationship " between Eazy @-@ E and the organization .

= = Illness and death = =

On February 24 , 1995 , Wright was admitted to the Cedars @-@ Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles with what he believed to be asthma due to a recurring cough and wincing that occurred beginning in July of 1994 . Instead , he was diagnosed with AIDS . He announced his illness in a public statement on March 16 , 1995 . Wright allegedly lost his virginity at the age of twelve , and his promiscuous behavior resulted in not only the fatal disease , but also in nine children by seven different women . During the week of March 20 , having already made amends with Ice Cube , Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre , he drafted a final message to his fans . On March 26 , 1995 , at approximately 6 : 35 p.m. PST , Eazy @-@ E died from complications of AIDS , one month after his diagnosis . He was 31 years old . He was buried on April 7 , 1995 at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier , California . Over 3 @,@ 000 people attended his funeral , including Jerry Heller and DJ Yella . He was buried in a gold casket , and instead of wearing a suit and tie , Eazy @-@ E was dressed in a flannel shirt , a Compton hat and jeans . On January 30 , 1996 , ten months after Eazy @-@ E 's death , his final album , Str8 off tha Streetz of Muthaphukkin Compton was released .

= = Musical influences and style = =

Allmusic cites Eazy @-@ E 's influences as Ice @-@ T , Redd Foxx , King Tee , Bootsy Collins , Run @-@ D.M.C. , Richard Pryor , The Egyptian Lover , Schoolly D , Too \$ hort , Prince , The Sugarhill Gang , and George Clinton . In the documentary The Life and Timez of Eric Wright , Eazy @-@ E mentions collaborating with many of his influences .

When reviewing Str8 off tha Streetz of Muthaphukkin Compton , Stephen Thomas Erlewine noted " ... Eazy @-@ E sounds revitalized , but the music simply isn 't imaginative . Instead of pushing forward and creating a distinctive style , it treads over familiar gangsta territory , complete with bottomless bass , whining synthesizers , and meaningless boasts . " When reviewing Eazy @-@ Duz @-@ It , Jason Birchmeier of Allmusic said , " In terms of production , Dr. Dre and Yella meld together P @-@ Funk , Def Jam @-@ style hip @-@ hop , and the leftover electro sounds of mid- ' 80s Los Angeles , creating a dense , funky , and thoroughly unique style of their own . " Birchmeier described Eazy 's style as " dense , unique , and funky , " and said that it sounded " absolutely revolutionary in 1988 . "

Several members of N.W.A wrote lyrics for Eazy @-@ Duz @-@ It : Ice Cube , The D.O.C. , and MC Ren . The EP 5150 : Home 4 tha Sick features a song written by Naughty By Nature . The track " Merry Muthaphuckkin ' Xmas " features Menajahtwa , Buckwheat , and Atban Klann as guest vocalists , and " Neighborhood Sniper " features Kokane as a guest vocalist . It 's On (Dr. Dre) 187um Killa features several guest vocalists , including Gangsta Dresta , B.G. Knocc Out . Kokane , Cold 187um , Rhythum D , and Dirty Red . Str8 off tha Streetz of Muthaphukkin Compton featured several guest vocalists , including B.G. Knocc Out , Gangsta Dresta , Sylk @-@ E. Fyne , Dirty Red

, Menajahtwa , Roger Troutman , and ex @-@ N.W.A members MC Ren and DJ Yella .

= = = Legacy = = =

Eazy @-@ E has been called the godfather of gangsta rap . MTV 's Reid Shaheem said that Eazy was a " rap @-@ pioneer , " and he is sometimes cited by critics as a legend . Steve Huey of AllMusic said that he was " one of the most controversial figures in gangsta rap . " Since his 1995 death , many book and video biographies have been produced , including 2002 's The Day Eazy @-@ E Died and Dead and Gone .

When Eazy was diagnosed with AIDS , many magazines like Jet , Vibe , Billboard , The Crisis , and Newsweek covered the story and released information on the topic . All of his studio albums and EPs charted on the Billboard 200 , and many of his singles ? " Eazy @-@ Duz @-@ It " , " We Want Eazy " , " Real Muthaphuckkin G 's " , and " Just tah Let U Know " ? also charted in the U.S.

In 2012 a Eazy @-@ E documentary was released by Ruthless Propaganda , called Ruthless Memories . The documentary featured interviews from Jerry Heller , MC Ren and B.G. Knocc Out .

In the 2015 film Straight Outta Compton , Eazy @-@ E is played by Jason Mitchell , and the film is dedicated in his honor .

= = Discography = =

Studio albums

Eazy @-@ Duz @-@ It (1988)

Str8 off tha Streetz of Muthaphukkin Compton (1996)

Extended Plays

5150 : Home 4 tha Sick (1992)

It 's On (Dr. Dre) 187um Killa (1993)

Impact of a Legend (2002)

With N.W.A

N.W.A. and the Posse (1987)

Straight Outta Compton (1988)

100 Miles and Runnin ' (1990)

Niggaz4Life (1991)