This Page
Left Blank
Intentionally
Lifeline BIOGRAPHIES

TUPAC SHAKUR
Hip-Hop Idol

by Carrie Golus

Twenty-First Century Books · Minneapolis
INTRODUCTION
“How Long Will They Mourn Me?” 4

CHAPTER ONE
A Young Talent, 12

CHAPTER TWO
The Jungle, 22

CHAPTER THREE
A Thug’s Life, 34

CHAPTER FOUR
From Prison to Death Row, 50

CHAPTER FIVE
Tomorrow Is Not Promised, 66

CHAPTER SIX
Resurrection, 80

Timeline, 95
Glossary, 99
Filmography, 100
Discography, 100
Source Notes, 101
Selected Bibliography, 105
Further Reading and Websites, 106
Index, 108
“How Long Will They Mourn Me?”

Las Vegas, Nevada, was burning hot on Friday, September 13, 1996. Outside the University Medical Center, a small crowd sweated. The temperature soared to 100°F (38°C). The group was mostly young, mostly African American. There were dozens of children. They were there because of Tupac Shakur, the rapper as famous for his police record as for his music. Inside the hospital, Tupac was fighting for his life.
Six days before, Tupac had been shot four times. He had been riding in a car driven by Marion “Suge” Knight. Knight was a close friend. He also owned Death Row Records, Tupac’s record label. At a stoplight, a white Cadillac pulled up next to Knight’s car. Someone inside opened fire. Tupac was hit twice in the chest, once in the hand, and once in the leg. Knight wasn’t seriously hurt.

Still, few people thought Tupac would die. He had already survived one shooting two years before. That time he took five bullets. Two of them were to the head. And yet he had checked himself out of the hospital the very same day. “I haven’t seen anybody in my twenty-five-year... career leave the hospital like this,” Dr. Leon Pachter, one of Tupac’s surgeons, had told reporters afterward.
But the Las Vegas shooting was much more serious. Knight and Tupac’s mother, Afeni, were at the hospital. Tupac couldn’t get out of bed. On his third day, doctors took out his right lung. They also gave him drugs to put him into a coma (deep sleep). They did so to keep him from trying to get out of bed and hurting himself. On the seventh day, he gave up the fight. Tupac died at 4:03 p.m. He was twenty-five years old.

“If I Die 2night”

News of Tupac’s death spread quickly. The crowd outside the hospital grew larger. Many of the mourners wept. Some stared blankly into space. Others spilled liquor on the ground in Tupac’s honor. A long line of cars circled the area. Many of them blasted Tupac’s music. The most popular songs were those about death, such as “If I Die 2night.”

Bullet damage: The black BMW Tupac and Marion Knight were in on September 7, 1996, sits in an impound lot a few days after the shooting.
Shakur left the hospital, surrounded by family. Knight showed no emotion as he pushed through the crowd. There was just one moment of anger. A friend of Tupac’s screamed at the hospital staff. He demanded to know why they’d let Tupac die. Hundreds of police officers made sure the mourning stayed peaceful. But there was no violence. There was just a feeling of deep sadness. “I hope you tell the truth about Tupac,” one young mourner told a reporter for *Rolling Stone*. “He was a hero to me, and he kept it real for the hood [neighborhood].”
The Rap About Tupac: Life of conflicting images comes to a violent end

From the Pages of USA TODAY

Stacy Bell wiped tears from her eyes as she stood before the makeshift shrine honoring slain rapper Tupac Shakur. “I’ve been upset all weekend,” said Bell, who works at AMC Music and Video store in San Bernardino, Calif., and helped create the memorial of photos, hats and 2Pac CDs. “I feel like he had a lot to still offer to the younger people,” said Bell, 25.

Whether the artist who overcame poverty to become one of gangsta rap’s biggest stars really was changing will never be known. But his Friday-the-13th death from respiratory failure and cardiopulmonary arrest in Las Vegas six days after being shot is once again raising questions about the controversial music and its influence.

“Many fans are acting like he was some type of hero or some type of martyr,” Tom Joyner, nationally syndicated radio host, said Sunday. “Fans should be asking themselves: ‘What can we learn from this?’ But many view him as a god. What does this say about our society?”

It says his music and life were as contradictory as the society it reflects. At the Brooklyn [New York] church Shakur attended as a teen, he was mourned Sunday as the victim of a society that destroys black youth. To others, he was written off as another violent rapper glorifying gangsta culture in his music—living by the lyrics, dying by the lyrics, getting what he deserved.

Shakur was riding with Death Row Records chief Marion “Suge” Knight Jr., 31, to a nightclub when he was shot four times. He was 25. Police say they have no suspects, no motive and no leads. No one from Death Row, including Knight, has commented on the case. The same goes for Interscope Records, distributor of Death Row, and MCA Music, the 50% owner of Interscope.

“Sometimes the lure of violent culture is so magnetic that even when one overcomes it with material success, it continues to call,” Jesse Jackson, who prayed with Shakur’s mother at the rapper’s bedside last Sunday, told The Los Angeles Times. “He couldn’t break the cycle.”

—Edna Gundersen; Bruce Haring; Ann Oldenburg; Contributing: Andre Montgomery
Son of a Panther
Tupac's mother was a leader in the Black Panthers, an African American political group of the 1960s. The Black Panthers worked to spread their message of “black power.” Afeni and twenty other Panthers had been arrested on April 2, 1969. They were called the New York 21. The police said the group had planned to blow up several places in New York.

While out on bail (money posted to get out of jail until trial), Afeni became pregnant. She was not sure who the father was. It may have been Billy Garland, another Black Panther. Or it may have been a local drug dealer, Kenneth “Legs” Sanders. At the time, Afeni was living with Lumumba Shakur. Shakur was another member of the New York 21. When he found out she was pregnant by another man, he kicked her out.

Afeni Shakur was born Alice Faye Williams. She was named after Alice Faye, a singer and movie star of the 1930s and 1940s. Afeni changed her name after joining the Black Panthers in the 1960s.
69  Vibe, 80.
69  Dyson, 169.
69  Thug Angel.
69  Gobi, Thru My Eyes: Thoughts on Tupac Amaru Shakur in Pictures and Words (New York: Atria Books, 2005), 98.
70  Ibid., 86.
75  Ibid., 150.
81  Smith, “Tupac Shakur,” 305.
82  Marriott, 125.
82  Ibid.
84  Vibe, 152.
84  Ibid., 257.
84  Thug Angel.
84  Dyson, 100.
87  Ibid.
92  Vibe, 98.
93–94  Thug Angel.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


*Thug Angel*. DVD. Directed by Peter Spirer. QD3 Entertainment, 2002.


FURTHER READING AND WEBSITES

Books


Websites

*All Music*
http://allmusic.com
This online resource allows viewers to look up musicians' biographies, discographies, and more. The site includes a profile of Tupac Shakur as well as a collection of album reviews.

*Alternative Intervention Models (AIM)*
http://www.hearteducation.org
This organization, founded by Leila Steinberg in 1998, provides programs that confront juvenile crime and drug use, as well as promote artistic expression.

*The Huey P. Newton Foundation—The Original Black Panther Party*
http://www.blackpanther.org
This website has information about the history of the Black Panther Party, including videos, virtual tours, and profiles of famous members.

*Official Tupac Site*
http://www.2paclegacy.com
Tupac's official site includes Tupac's quotes, photos, news, and more.

*Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation*
http://www.tasf.org
The official home page of Tupac's foundation includes news about upcoming events, information about performing arts camps, a photo gallery, and more.

*Tupac Shakur Media*
http://www.youtube.com/user/TupacShakurRecords
The official Tupac YouTube channel features music videos, interview clips, and the *Tupac: Resurrection* documentary.

*Vibe*
http://www.vibe.com
*Vibe* magazine's website lets visitors check out hip-hop news, interviews, and videos.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Above the Rim</strong>, 52, 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African National Congress, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Eyez on Me</strong>, 67–69, 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amaru Entertainment, 87–88, 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson, Orlando, 72, 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apartheid, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollo Theater, 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aykroyd, Dan, 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad Boy Records, 56, 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore School for the Arts (BSA), 18–19, 21, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell, Stacy, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue Hospital, 57, 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkman, Alan, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Liberation Army, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Panthers, 9–10, 13–14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blunk, Timothy, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brink's robberies, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronx Legal Services, 13, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks, Ronald “Money-B,” 30, 32, 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buck, Marilyn Jean, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bullet</em>, 70, 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuck D, 83–85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton Correctional Facility, 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cochran, Johnnie, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combs, Sean, 56, 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condorcantqui, José Gabriel, 11. See Túpac Amaru II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crack cocaine, 16, 18, 20, 23–25, 33, 63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughtry, Herbert, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Row Records, 5, 8, 56, 64–68, 70, 73–74, 77–78, 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Underground, 27–32, 34–35, 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJ Jazzy Jeff, 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Don Killuminati: The 7 Day Theory</em>, The, 81, 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke, Elizabeth, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyson, Michael Eric, 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Coast vs. West Coast rivalry, 56, 67, 75, 78, 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, Faith, 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, Linda, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), 10, 13–14, 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Communications Commission (FCC), 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuller, Charles, 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuseyamore, Damon, 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gang Related</em>, 71, 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gangster rap, 49–50, 53–54, 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garland, Billy, 9, 12, 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobi, 69–71, 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregory, Atron, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gridlock'd</em>, 71, 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding, Maurice (Mopreme), 13, 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hicksens, Donald, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Higher Learning</em>, 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hip-hop, 24, 27, 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House of the Lord Church, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard, Ronald Ray, 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Humpty Dance”, 27–29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“If I Die 2night,” 6
Interscope, 8, 39, 41, 68

Jackson, Janet, 45, 47–48
Jackson, Jesse, 8, 17
Jacobs, Gregory “Shock G,” 27–30, 32, 34, 42, 46, 69
Joyner, Tom, 8
Juice, 32, 38–39

King, Martin Luther, Jr., 10, 93
Knight, Marion “Suge,” 58, 56, 64–65, 70, 72–78

Las Vegas, Nevada, 4, 6, 72–74, 78, 85
Little Shawn, 55
LL Cool J, 20
Luv, Ray, 24

Machiavelli, Niccolo, 82–83, 94
Makaveli, 81, 84–85
Makaveli Records, 71
Mandela, Nelson, 25
Marin City, California, 21–23, 25, 40
MCA Music, 8
McKernan, Craig, 55
MC New York, 20
Me Against the World, 62–63, 68
Menace II Society, 44–45
Morris, Keisha, 62

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 48
New York 21, 9–11
New York Women’s House of Detention, 10

Nothing but Trouble, 31
Notorious B.I.G. (Biggie), 56, 68, 74, 83, 92
N.W.A (Niggaz with Attitude), 35, 49
Oakland, California, 33, 37–38
Outlawz, 56, 84

Pinkett, Jada, 19, 42, 44, 67
Poetic Justice, 45–47, 54
Powell, Kevin, 54
Pratt, Geronimo, 12–13
Pratt, Linda, 12, 21–22
Quayle, Dan, 39–40

Raisin in the Sun, A, 17–18
rap music, 50; rivalry in, 56, 67. See also gangster rap; hip-hop
Rebel of the Underground, 30
Rolling Park Junior High, 18
Rolling Stone (magazine), 7
Rosenberg, Susan, 15
Rose That Grew from Concrete, The, 26
R U Still Down? (Remember Me), 87

Sanders, Kenneth “Legs,” 9, 16–18
Shakur, Afeni (mother), 6–7, 9, 13–15, 60, 63, 90–91; and drugs, 16, 20–21, 23, 63; motherhood, 11–12, 14, 17–18, 22–23, 78, 94; and politics, 9–11
Shakur, Lumumba, 9, 13, 60
Shakur, Mutulu, 13–15, 42, 44
Shakur, Sekyiwa (half sister), 13, 21–22
Shakur, Tupac Amaru: and acting,
17, 32, 45, 47–48, 54–55, 70–71, 86, 89; arrests of, 38, 44, 51, 53, 55; at Baltimore School for the Arts (BSA), 18–19, 21, 23; birth of, 11; childhood of, 16–22; death of, 4, 6–7; gangster image of, 8, 35, 39–40, 43, 49, 54, 66; in jail, 38, 44, 50, 54, 58, 60–61, 64, 66; marriage of, 62; and police, 37–38, 55; and rap, 20, 23–24, 27–28, 32, 35, 64; and religion, 14, 92; rumors surrounding death of, 83–85; selling drugs, 25; shootings of, 5–6, 8, 55, 58, 73–74; and thug life, 41–42, 48; and writing, 12–14, 23–24, 26–27, 94

Singleton, John, 45–46, 54
Smith, Danyel, 31, 33, 43, 52, 81
Steinberg, Leila, 25–26, 60, 64
*Straight Outta Compton*, 35
Strictly Dope, 24
*Strictly for My N.I.G.G.A.Z*, 43–44

Tamalpais High School, 23
tattoos, 40–41
Thug Life, 60

*Tupac: Ressurection*, 88–89
*Tupac Shakur: The Lost Tapes*, 25
2Pacalypse Now, 34–36, 39, 44
Underground Railroad, 30
University Medical Center, 4, 73, 78
Vanilla Ice, 77
*Vibe* (magazine), 31, 33, 36, 43, 52, 54, 60–61, 75, 81–82, 85
Vietnam War, 35, 40

Walker-Teal, Qa’id, 40–41
Wallace, Christopher. See Notorious B.I.G. (Biggie)
Whitehorn, Laura, 15
Whitwell, Mark, 51–52
Whitwell, Scott, 51

*Yo! MTV Raps*, 37
Young, Andre (Dr. Dre), 65, 69
PHOTO ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The images in this book are used with the permission of: © Al Pereira/ Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images, pp. 1, 28; © Ron Galella/WireImage/ Getty Images, pp. 3, 50; © S. Granitz/Wireimage/Getty Images, p. 4; AP Photo/ Frank Weise, p. 5; AP Photo/Lennox McLendon, p. 6; Medio Images/Photodisc/ Getty Images, 8, 15, 24, 47 (top), 49, 59 (top), 68, 74 (top), 77 (top), 85, 89 (top); R. Marsh Starks/Las Vegas Sun, p. 7; © Librado Romero/The New York Times/Redux, p. 9; MTV Films/Amaru Entertainment/Paramount Pictures/ The Kobal Collection, pp. 12, 27, 89 (bottom), 95; © Bettmann/CORBIS, p. 16; © Business Wire/Getty Images, p. 17; Library of Congress (LC-USZ62-113271), p. 18; Seth Poppel Yearbook Photos., p. 19; © Peter Freed/USA TODAY, pp. 20, 65; © USA TODAY, pp. 25, 69; © Jack Gruber/USA TODAY, p. 22; courtesy of Leila Steinberg-www.alternativeinterventionprojects.org, p. 26; © Everett Collection, p. 29; © Warner Brothers/ courtesy Everett Collection, p. 31; © Pat Johnson/Retna Ltd., pp. 32, 34, 36; © Neal Preston/CORBIS, p. 35; © aerialarchives/Alamy, p. 37; Island World/The Kobal Collection, p. 38; Peter Brooker/Rex Features USA, p. 39; ©Lawrence Schwartzwald/ Sygma/ CORBIS, p. 41; © Jonathan Alcorn/ZUMA Press, p. 43; © J. Vespa/WireImage/ Getty Images, p. 45; © COLUMBIA TRI STAR /ZUMA Press, p. 46; Columbia/ The Kobal Collection/Reed, Eli, p. 47; Columbia/The Kobal Collection, p. 48; © Henryk T. Kaiser/ Monsoon/Photolibrary/CORBIS, p. 51; Kimberly Butler/ Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images, pp. 52, 80; AP Photo/ Justine Sutcliffe, p. 53; EG/Globe Photos, Inc., p. 54; ERIK PENDZICH/Rex Features USA, p. 56; Krussberg/Photoreporters/Globe Photos, Inc., p. 57; © Krussberg/ Hulton Archive/Getty Images, p. 59 (bottom); © Chris Cozzone/Zuma Press/ Newscom, p. 61; AP Photo/Lauren Greenfeld/VII, p. 66; © Gobi, p. 70; Orion/ The Kobal Collection/Watson Glenn, p. 71; © Kelly Jordan/Globe Photos, Inc., p. 72; © Malcolm Payne/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images, p. 73; © Berliner Studio/ BEImages/Rex Features USA, p. 75; © Ethan Miller/Getty Images, p. 76; Everett Collection /Rex Features USA, p. 77 (bottom); © Chris Farina/CORBIS, p. 78; AP Photo/Ron Edmonds, p. 81; © Imagno/Getty Images, p. 82; © Scott Gries/Getty Images, p. 83; Polygram/The Kobal Collection, p. 86; © Graham Whitby-Boot/Alistar/Globe Photos, Inc., p. 87; © Keith Winter/Getty Images, p. 88; © Robb D. Cohen/Retna Ltd., p. 90; c. Foxsearch/Everett/Rex Features USA, p. 91; © Henry S. Dziekan III/Getty Images, p. 93; Paramount/Everett/RexUSA. com, p. 96; WENN/Newscom, p. 97; © Robb D. Cohen/Retna Ltd., p. 98.

Front cover: © Dorothy Low/Contour By Getty Images; back cover: © Ron Galella/WireImage/Getty Images.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carrie Golus has been a freelance writer since 1991. She has written hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles, as well as website content, brochures, video scripts, press releases, and the text for a museum exhibition. She holds a BA and an MA in English language and literature from the University of Chicago. Her titles include *Jim Thorpe* and *Muhammad Ali* for the Sports Heroes and Legends series.
This Page Left Blank Intentionally
As USA TODAY, the Nation’s No. 1 Newspaper, puts it, “[Tupac] Shakur saw himself as both artist and urban soldier, battling the media, the law, the courts and rival rappers.” Tupac overcame poverty to become one of hip-hop’s biggest stars. His life, death, and music were all surrounded by controversy.

Raised by a single mother and ex-Black Panther in Harlem, Tupac grew up aware of the problems in society around him. His social conscience and creative talents made him a unique voice in rap music. He starred in several Hollywood films about the challenges of urban life. But Tupac also struggled with drug abuse, served time in prison, and faced extreme violence—including a shooting that took his life. Throughout Tupac Shakur’s career, he outraged some and inspired many. He continues to be known as one of the greatest rappers in the history of hip-hop.