

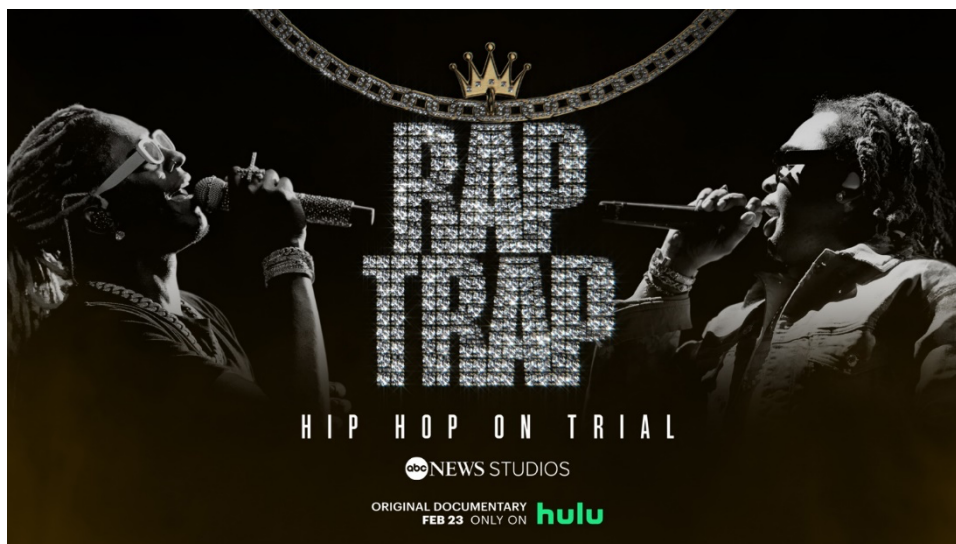
Feb. 16, 2023

ABC NEWS STUDIOS DOCUMENTARY HOUR EXPLORES USE OF LYRICS IN CRIMINAL  
CASE AGAINST HIP-HOP STARS YOUNG THUG AND GUNNA

'Rap Trap: Hip-Hop on Trial' Traces Rise and Impact of Young Thug and Gunna

Documentary Explores Historical Mischaracterizations of Hip-Hop and Revisits Case of Rapper  
and Activist McKinley Phipps Jr.

'Rap Trap: Hip-Hop on Trial' Begins Streaming Thursday, Feb. 23, Only on Hulu



\*ABC News

The 2022 arrest and indictment of hip-hop stars Young Thug (Jeffery Williams) and Gunna (Sergio Kitchens) stunned the hip-hop world and reignited a national conversation about the use of lyrics in the courtroom. For some, the lyrics were evidence of potential wrongdoing. But for others, the case spotlighted a disturbing trend of criminalizing Black art that goes back decades, prompting a national movement to protect art and creative expression. A new **ABC News Studios** documentary hour, "**Rap Trap: Hip-Hop on Trial**," explores the criminal case against the rappers and asks the question: Should rap lyrics be used in criminal prosecutions, and what effect would that have on artists' free speech rights?

The documentary dives into historical perceptions of the genre and other examples of when lyrics have been used against an artist in the courtroom, including the case of activist and rapper **McKinley Phipps Jr.**, who served 21 years in prison for a crime he says he did not commit. Phipps and his family open up about the lasting impact of incarceration and the healing power of art. "Rap Trap: Hip-Hop on Trial" also features interviews with hip-hop artists **will.i.am**, **Jerrika Karlae**, **Fat Joe** and **Killer Mike**, who reflect on the importance of protecting and standing up for artists' right to express themselves. Additional interviews include **Kevin Liles**, co-founder and CEO of 300 Elektra

Entertainment, who spearheaded the “Protect Black Art” movement; scholar **Michael Eric Dyson**; and **Erik Nielson**, co-author of “Rap on Trial.” **“Rap Trap: Hip-Hop on Trial”** begins streaming **Thursday, Feb. 23**, only on [Hulu](#).

“Rap Trap: Hip-Hop on Trial” is produced for Hulu by ABC News Studios.

### **ABOUT ABC NEWS STUDIOS**

ABC News Studios, inspired by ABC News’ trusted reporting, is a premium, narrative non-fiction original production house and commissioning partner of series and specials. ABC News Studios champions untold and authentic stories driving the cultural zeitgeist spanning true-crime, investigations, pop culture, and news-adjacent stories. Its subsidiary, ABC News Films, acquires and produces feature documentary films.

\*COPYRIGHT ©2023 American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. All photography is copyrighted material and is for editorial use only. Images are not to be archived, altered, duplicated, resold, retransmitted or used for any other purposes without written permission of ABC. Images are distributed to the press in order to publicize current programming. Any other usage must be licensed. Photos posted for Web use must be at the low resolution of 72dpi, no larger than 2x3 in size.

**LINK:** <https://bit.ly/3KdH8eB>

**SHARE:** <https://hrefshare.com/97095>

**TRAILER:** <https://bit.ly/3lFTQbX>

### **ABC News Media Relations**

Lauri Hogan

[lauri.l.hogan@abc.com](mailto:lauri.l.hogan@abc.com)

Sydney Tretter

[sydney.tretter@abc.com](mailto:sydney.tretter@abc.com)

-- ABC --