

Media Questions Of The Week



NEW YORK DISK JOCKEY WILLIAM B. WILLIAMS SHOWS WHAT SPURS THE PAYOLA—THE HOT COMPETITION OF THE 8,000 RECORDS A DEEJAY RECEIVES EACH YEAR

Gimme, Gimme, Gimme on the old PAYOLA

As probers turn from TV to radio, clear evidence of disk jockey bribery crops up

With the facts of TV-quiz corruption firmly fixed, evidence has begun to turn up of wholesale corruption in radio—among the entertainers who dominate that field today, the disk jockeys. The U.S. was becoming familiar with a new word, "payola," trade jargon for bribes to promote certain records over the air. The Harris subcommittee in Washington considered public hearings on payola in December. Preliminary investigation indicated that there was plenty for the probers to dig up—and so does the lively slang prevalent among the disk jockeys themselves (right).

The climate for deejay corruption is created by the enormous output of popular records. Many more are produced than can be played

over the air—and moreover, as New York's William B. Williams (above) says, "If a disk jockey had to listen to all these records, he'd go to the kookie house."

Bribes in cash or goods are paid by music publishers to plug a song in all its recorded versions, by record companies to boost their own disks and by record distributors to promote the makes they handle. Besides the deejays, others in a radio station who can influence music selection are paid.

Many disk jockeys like Williams, who makes \$65,000 a year, do not have to rely on payola. But on the following pages LIFE shows how payola does work, in stories by a disk jockey (pp. 46, 47) and a record executive (p. 48).

DEEJAY SLANG GLOSSARY

Dead Presidents—\$20 bills with Andrew Jackson portrait, \$50s with Ulysses Grant portrait, etc. used in payoffs
Bread—the cash involved in payola
Schlockmeister—a master at accumulating the schlock, or loot
Freebie—plug for a record given without payola
Charts—hit record lists in music trade magazines
Happening—a record making the charts
Breaking—a record moving up on charts
Ride—to play a record repeatedly
Nyping a platter—overselling a record
Bomb—a terrible record

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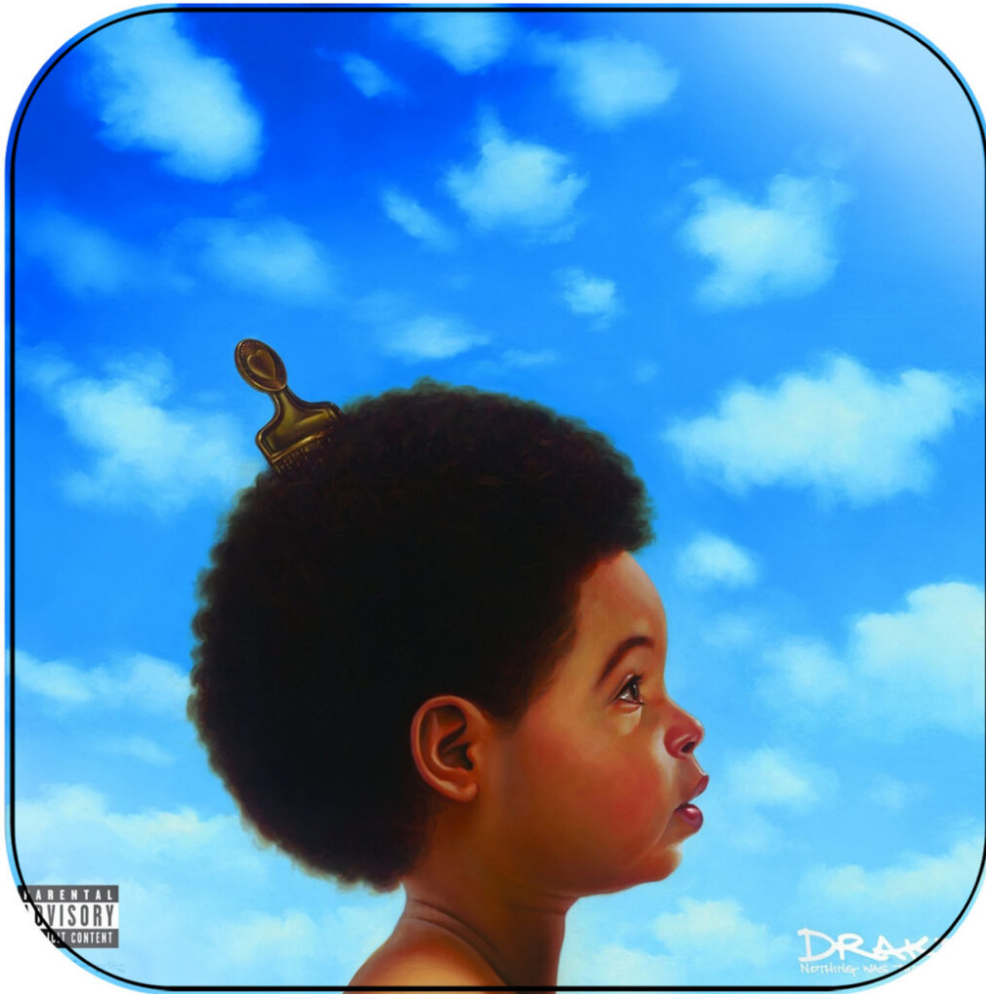
Does Drake's [lawsuit](#) against Universal Music accusing them of using bots and payola to boost streams for Kendrick Lamar's "Not Like Us" have merit?



Credit: Ben P L

Can Victor Willis of the Village People successfully sue anyone who calls ["Y.M.C.A."](#) a gay anthem?

Throwback-Drake: Started From The Bottom



Drake's "Started From The Bottom" is the first single from his 2013 album, *Nothing Was The Same*. He co-wrote the single with Noah Shebib and Michael Coleman about his early life. Coleman also produced "Started From The Bottom" under his production name, Mike Zombie. Drake was on his third album and had already become a worldwide rap star but he wanted to get into the mindset of his younger self before he became successful. He cited Marvin Gaye's *Here, My Dear* as an influence because he never intended to make a straight rap album, wanting instead to "make songs for the people." Rapper Future was in the studio with Drake and kept telling the engineer to start the song from the bottom and Drake used it as the song's title.

"Started From The Bottom"'s shuffling snare drum and melodramatic piano grabbed ears and, with Drake's words, became one of the biggest aspirational rap hits since Jay-Z's "Hard Knock Life (Ghetto Anthem)." Director X was at the helm

of the video that had appearances from Drake's mother, Noah Shebib, and Boi-1da. The song was one of seven singles that made *Nothing Was The Same* the seventh best-selling album of 2013 in the United States.

Wiz Khalifa, Lil Wayne, Papoose, Wyclef Jean, Chris Brown, Meek Mill, Ice Cube, Warren G, Chino XL, and Soulja Boy have recorded remixes of the single. Drake released his eighth studio album, *For All The Dogs*, in 2023. Drake had a rap battle with Kendrick Lamar in 2024 that started when Lamar dissed Drake and J. Cole on the song "Like That." Drake released the singles "Push Ups," "Taylor Made Freestyle," "Family Matters," and "The Heart Part 6." Lamar fired back with "Euphoria," "Meet the Grahams," and "Not Like Us." Rap fans agreed that Lamar won the battle and "Not Like Us" became the biggest pop song of 2024. Drake celebrated his 38th birthday (Oct. 24) by giving away free chicken slider sandwiches from Dave's Hot Chicken.

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Is Stevie Wonder right about the Drake and Kendrick Lamar beef being a distraction from real-world issues like homelessness?

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Did Kendrick Lamar [“Ether”](#) Drake with his “Euphoria” and “6:16” diss tracks?

SZA is more genre-less than other artists who’ve said this, but she definitely makes R&B records. So.

*It’s not the *only* reason why she’s seen as an R&B artist.*
<https://t.co/w8ha7j7yEt>

– reporting for duty. (@TheGreatIsNate) [May 1, 2024](#)

Is SZA’s music classified as R&B because she is [Black](#)?

Update: Brian McKnight’s upcoming concert in Detroit has been canceled <https://t.co/TsapKzczHE> [pic.twitter.com/VaEzmTUBtm](https://t.co/VaEzmTUBtm)

– philip lewis (@Phil_Lewis_) [May 4, 2024](#)

Will Detroit be the only city to cancel [Brian McKnight’s](#) shows because of his comments about his children?