Dude, drop the gun, not the mic

By David Bishop

Drugs. Poverty. Guns. Glorification of a criminal lifestyle. These are just some of the negative connotations associated with rap music. For decades rap music has been labeled as a bad influence by parents, organizations and teachers. It has led to the creation of the parental advisory warning label. However, despite the negative light that it’s portrayed in, I believe that not all rap music is a bad influence, and in some cases may even be a good influence.

One reason that rap music is not a bad influence is some artists are perhaps good influences. Platinum recording artists J. Cole and Kendrick Lamar are known to reference God and love in many of their songs. In fact, in Lamar’s latest album, over ten biblical references were found.

Another reason that rap music is not a bad influence is that their lyrics are used to fight various injustices and bad things. In his song “4 Your Eyes Only,” J. Cole pens a letter to the daughter of his deceased friend who fell victim to gang culture and condemns it. Kendrick Lamar’s newest album examines wickedness and weakness. Rick Ross’ song “Apple of My Eye” is about appreciating life and people, with the chorus crying,”Always speak and say hi, Don’t you ever, ever walk on by.” In Jay Z’s hit album “4:44” he warns others to be loyal to their significant others, and apologizes to his wife for his own digressions.

The final reason that rap music is not a bad influence is the most obvious. If a song can convince you to embrace a life of crime, not only are you gullible, you are possibly crazy. If someone commits a crime and says that a Drake song made them, they will go to jail, not Drake. At the end of the day your choices are your choices, not Eminem’s or Kanye West’s.