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Every one is a crew that has a crew.

Greatest rapper of this generation: Kendrick Lamar or J. Cole?

J. Cole and Kendrick Lamar are lyrical geniuses, so fans are still hopeful the Rap Gods will remain in a joint album. Although the two are collaborative friends, hip hop heads have been debating who's the greatest rapper of the box for a while now. Some fans say Kendrick's "DAMN" remnants him as one of the greatest rappers of all time. Although J. Cole isn't pursuing fame, fans argue his gift as a storyteller makes him the greatest rapper alive.

Who is this generation's best lyrical emcee?

Kyleen Kahne
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#TeamKendrick

Kendrick and Cole have mutual respect for each other as lyricists and emcees. So much so that they were reportedly working together on a collaborative album. Back in December 2018 artists promoting his new album "Go Plus Then Will," Ab-Soul told the Hip-Hop Lounge that Kendrick and Cole were working on the album Regardless following week appearances. These days we don't know if the joint album will ever really happen.

According to the Tudor, Ab-Soul said:

> *"I don't really know too much about it. I just hope they use my verse."When Charlamagne asked again if there was a Kendrick/Cole album, Ab-Soul continued, saying: "There is a Kendrick/Cole album. They put it. They put something in the works. They been working on that motherfucker for awhile."*

But Kendrick and Cole's respect for each other might stem from how much they have in common. Both are socially conscious rappers, both are really great lyricists, both were inspired by Pimp Gods like Tupac, and both have inspired and connected with younger generations by spitting rhymes about the ruler of everything and the ruler of life. Which this is a tough call—this debate must be settled. Who will go down in history as this generation's greatest emcee?

Read more of the perspectives, decide and vote!

https://feeds.archive.org/web/20171231141128/https/dpbp.com/gallery/lil-uzzie-vs-kendrick-lamar-1-PSOlyzdEKLaGD6

#TeamKendrick

Kendrick's popularity and acclaim grew with each subsequent album. The master lyricist just released his fourth studio album, "DAMN," to critical acclaim and commercial success—resulting in his highest first week sales ever. But many fans still call his previous album, "To Pimp a Butterfly" his magnum opus.

Having two albums competing for the title on your greatest isn't a bad problem to have. "To Pimp a Butterfly" took home a few Grammys, but not Album of the Year in 2018. It hurt, but expected lost. The Grammys still struggle to properly honor hip-hop/rap music in the major non-genre categories.

Mic's Andrew Lanagh wrote:

> *If a verse simply up to the critics, Lamar's magnum opus, To Pimp a Butterfly would sweep Monday's ceremony, including a trophy for album of the year—one of the "Big Four" categories, and arguably the most prestigious since it rewards a complete work, as opposed to a lone song or perceived potential.*

Listen to Kendrick's magnum opus, "To Pimp A Butterfly" below via Spotify.

Preview not available. No embeds API access.

#TeamKendrick

While music critics have called "To Pimp a Butterfly" Kendrick at his best, there's no doubt he's one of the greatest emcee with Compton's John Kennedy wrote:

> *Kendrick Lamar knew something the rest of us didn't when he released The Heart Part 4 in March. My spirit is satisfied if you and me,"he raps with unshakeable confidence behind his words. The lonse didn't reach the first time the Compton lyricist—who hasn't even reached his 30th birthday—has called himself the greatest rapper alive.*

KL's rhymes can be smooth, but often times, he delivers an aggressive flow. Kendrick isn't just a storyteller, his voice and lyrics are his ruby city and he summons his audience to be mindful of and take action on what's happening in the world around them. Kendrick's unapologetic, militant and revolutionary lyrics translate into anthems. He paints a picture of the harsh realities Black people face in America, where the liberation struggle continues.

Though he's been blasted—like many rappers—about the misogynist in his lyrics, recent critiques have only brought more visibility to the complexity of being a Black feminist and hip-hop head (just those who are both and still haters KL is the greatest.) Still, Kendrick eventually highlights the Black community's resilience in the face of struggle, but like he raps, "we just be alright!"

https://feeds.archive.org/web/20171231141128/http://www.complex.com/music/2017/04/damn-makes-kendrick-lamar-one-of-the-greatest-rappers-ever

#TeamJCole

J. Cole has been killing the game for quite some time, but he proved he overall it with "Forest Hills Drive" The album went double platinum without any features. "2014 Forest Hills Drive" like most of Cole's music, takes you on a personal journey His music is so relatable—often times tackling social issues from his perspective and through the point of view of others. Cole delivers a smooth flow that clearly lays out a narrative, to the point that you can visualize it (at his rhymes single take you there).

He doesn't necessarily sell himself the greatest. But how can he not be? Time again, for Cole, it's not about winning a title or even living to the spotlight. He's made a conscious effort not to focus on fame. He's been focused on family. his art is secondary. He continues to use his personal experiences and the Black experience as the groundwork for his music. Black, Cole won't even make any future dice tracks because he feels rap lands best black people down. To many, he holds the title of greatest rapper alive.

Listen to the chart-topping "2014 Forest Hills Drive" below via Spotify.

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#TeamJCole

J. Cole followed up "2014 Forest Hills Drive" with two more chart-topping albums "4 Your Eyes Only" and "KOD." The New York Times' Jon Caramanica wrote about "4 Your Eyes Only":

> *A slim transitional film from a student of the genre storytelling rapper to a teacher. That's clearest on "False Prophets," released separately just before the album (it wasn't included because it disrupted the narrative), which found Mr. Cole diagnosing the successes of his peers and heroes without naming them, through the universal filter of the black people.*

While The Guardian's Alexis Petridis gave "KoD" four out of five stars, writing:

> *KOD's musical entire is a curious, appealing arrow somewhere between beatifically stoned and slightly unsettling. Mixed emotions around little scene than an more keyboard figure and a disembodied cry of "get money" from Lil Baby's guest appearance on the slitty Junior MAFIA hit of the same title – ripped out of context, it sounds blood and disquieting – and there's something really haunting about Photograph, with its delicate two-note pattern sample and a chorus whose vocal appears to be slightly out of step with the beat.*

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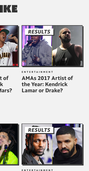

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