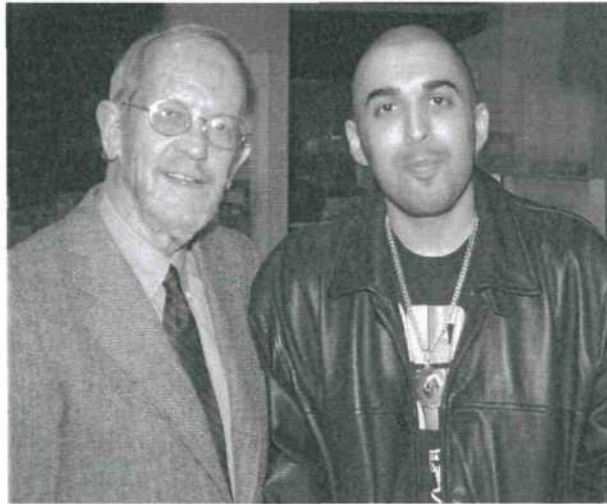


## Murder, he wrote



JAG GUNDU

• When DeeJay Ra (right) met Elmore Leonard ...

“Put down the gangsta rap CD and pick up the gangster fiction novel,” was the theme of a highly anticipated meeting between literary legend **Elmore Leonard** and hip-hop activist **Raoul S. Juneja** (a.k.a. DeeJay Ra) at the final event of Leonard’s ‘Mr. Paradise’ North American reading tour.

Juneja, considered “one of the entertainment industry’s most vocal and effective campaigners” (*FilmInk*), launched an Elmore Leonard ‘grassroots media’ tribute with HarperCollins last week through his Lyrical Knockout Entertainment commemorating the Toronto visit of “America’s greatest crime writer” (*Newsweek*).

At the event held at an Indigo bookstore, the rap radio host of Indian heritage referred to endless praise for Leonard from Hollywood heavyweights **Pam Grier** and **Samuel L. Jackson** since their 1996 *Rum Punch/Jackie Brown* film release as part of his inspiration for encouraging support of **Quentin Tarantino’s** favourite author amongst global fans of urban music, especially students.

“We’re fooling ourselves if we think any youth following R&B will ever enjoy *Hamlet* over Janet just because their teacher tells them to, but perhaps they’d understand Shakespeare’s characters better if they started with the Elmore novel which became one of their favourite J.Lo movies (*Out Of Sight*), Juneja told international digital cable channel BookTV.

“And regarding hip-hop, few of today’s gangsta rappers are making any effort to explain the fiction element in their songs the way Ice Cube did for my generation.

“So perhaps by pointing out an example of where new rappers are borrowing their ideas from we can give students both a dose of reality and an interest in reading at once.”

Michigan-based Elmore Leonard has written more than three dozen best-selling crime fiction books. Leonard’s *Be Cool* sequel to *Get Shorty* is currently filming in Los Angeles. Produced by **Danny DeVito**, it stars **John Travolta**, **Uma Thurman** and **Harvey Keitel**.