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Common Appears at White House Event as Pundits Criticize Invite



Common's White House Invite: Reaction Overblown?

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By [SUNLEN MILLER \(@sunlenmiller\)](#) and [SHEILA MARIKAR \(@SheilaYM\)](#)
May 12, 2011

A White House event intended to be a celebration of poetry and the power of spoken word went off without a hitch Wednesday but enraged right-wing pundits upset over the invitation of the rapper and poet Common.

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Common appeared at the "[Evening of Poetry](#)" event -- part of Michelle Obama's White House Music Series -- where he recited some lines amidst piano accompaniment in front of the audience of children and adults.

Some critics of Common's participation in the White House event, which also featured comic and writer Steve Martin and singer Aimee Mann, were upset that the rapper has slammed former [President George W. Bush](#) in his poetry.

President Obama avoided mention of the controversy surrounding [Common's participation](#) as he welcomed the audience to the White House event.

Common is hardly one of America's most controversial rappers; aside from appearing in a number of Hollywood films and on a track with boy band the Jonas Brothers, he has also released a number of albums since

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
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