

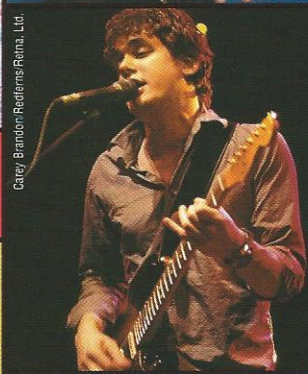
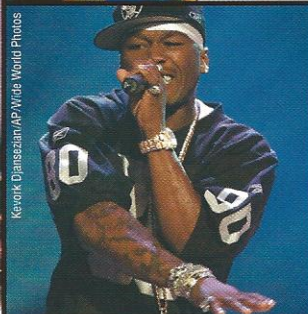
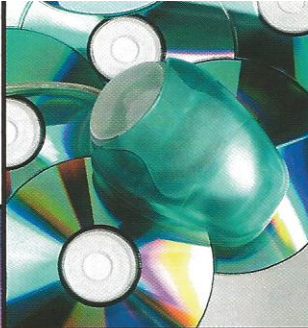
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Zach Cordner/Getty Images



Superstar Beyoncé Knowles stars on the big screen, releases a hit album, *Dangerously in Love*, and wins four *Billboard* Music Awards.



Kevin Dineen/AP/Wide World Photos

Carey Brandon-Redfern/Retna, Ltd.

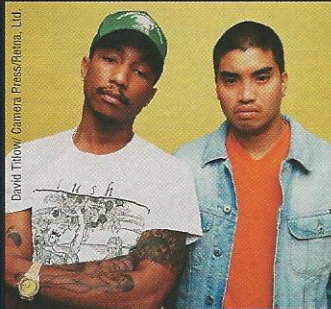
← The legal battle between the music industry and music downloaders prompts lawsuits and online music purchasing outlets, while driving CD prices to their lowest point in a decade.

← According to Nielsen SoundScan, 50 Cent's debut, *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, is 2003's best-selling album, with 6.5 million copies sold.

← Songwriter John Mayer wins a Grammy in 2003 for the album *Room for Squares* and follows it up with *Heavier Things*.

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→ The Neptunes' Pharrell Williams and Chad Hugo receive three Grammy nominations as a production duo. Williams gets three more for collaborations with Snoop Dog and Jay-Z.



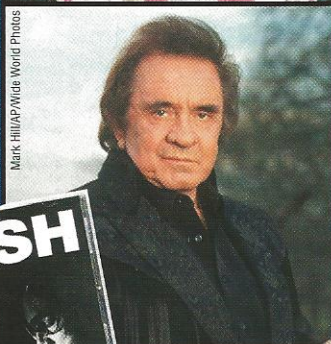
David Titlow/Camera Press/Retna, Ltd.

→ OutKast's genre-busting album *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below*, featuring the infectious single "Hey Ya!," wins the Grammy for Album of the Year.

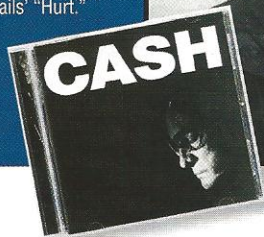


Frank Miceolotta/Getty Images

→ Country music legend Johnny Cash dies at 71, but wins three CMA awards posthumously, including Best Single for his remake of the Nine Inch Nails' "Hurt."



Mark Hill/AP/Wide World Photos



flash

Claiming that he has "had it with the rap game," Jay-Z, 33, retires after the release of *The Black Album*.



Coldplay claims the title of *Spin* magazine's Band of the Year, and the band's lead singer Chris Martin marries actress Gwyneth Paltrow.



Andy Cottrell/Camera Press/Retna, Ltd.