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SKA: THE SOUND OF THE WORKING CLASS

by: Andrew Olivieri

My first experience with ska was when I first played “Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater” on PlayStation in 1999. Ska was largely popular among the skateboarding community, but the soundtrack to “Tony Hawk” brought the ska genre to the less adventurous middle-schoolers such as myself. The blaring brass trumpets coupled with the fast tempos of punk rock pumped adrenaline into my system as I pulled off combo tricks in a 32-bit virtual skate park. Sometimes, I would play just to listen to Goldfinger’s “Superman” over and over. Ska was fun, fast, and edgy. It shaped my childhood musical taste and led me down the road to other ska punk bands such as Sublime, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Rancid, and No Doubt. Unfortunately, the mainstream popularity of ska music fizzled out, and returned to the underground at the turn of the century.

The ska punk I knew and listened to was innocuous in its lyrics. American ska bands sang about girlfriends, parties, drugs, heartbreak, self-loathing, and the other common woes of the teenage heart. However, ska punk was rooted in the woes of the English working class in the 1970s, an era during which racial tensions were boiling over. Unemployment was running high and the xenophobic National Front was emerging as an influential political actor in the UK. The working class was at risk of becoming polarized between white workers and immigrants who came from former British protectorates.

It was from these conditions that ska punk, also known as ‘2 Tone,’ developed in the indus-

trial town of Coventry, England. “It was obvious the Mod/skinhead revival was coming and I was trying to find a way to make sure it didn’t go the way of the NF [National Front],” recalls Jerry Dammers of The Specials (see Petridis). “I idealistically thought, we have to get through to these people, and that’s when we got the image together and started using ska rather than reggae. It seemed a bit more healthy to have an integrated kind of British music, rather than white people playing the two.” The punk scene was predominantly white, while the Jamaican ska scene was predominantly black and West Indian. Through the cross-pollination of genres, Dammers hoped that working-class Brits would find commonality in their social lives as well as their working conditions.

2 Tone combined the smoother, relaxing tones of Jamaican ska, the predecessor to reggae, with the faster and harsher sounds of punk rock. The signature style of ska punk is a guitar upstroke on the offbeat (the skank) with horns taking the lead, and a piano or bass guitar emphasizing the bass line. It seemed like an unlikely marriage, but the diverse working class of Coventry proved to be the ideal incubator for this genre. The Specials propelled ska punk to the mainstream and had several Top 10 singles in the UK between 1979 and 1981.

The Specials were a multi-racial band that wrote songs that promoted racial unity, an anomaly in the punk genre, which was typically anti-establishment. Their lyrics spoke out against violence, while their fast-paced ska tempos gave their audience a fun rhythm to which they could bob their heads and dance. Their song “Ghost Town” was the campy anthem of the riots that were going on throughout the UK. The song spoke out against youth violence, which was destroying local neighborhoods and party scenes. Another song of theirs, “Doesn’t Make It Alright” was a plea to end racial violence due to the warped ideologies of groups such as the National Front and neo-Nazis. One of the verses says, “Just because you’re a black boy / Just because you’re a white / It doesn’t mean you’ve got to hate him / It doesn’t mean you’ve got to fight. / It doesn’t make it alright.” This song is emblematic of the message that ska punk was trying to send: Dance, don’t fight.

Ska punk didn’t hit the mainstream in the US until the mid-1990s. Before then, ska punk thrived in the underground punk scenes of New York City and Orange County, California. College radio helped inject ska punk into the mainstream. Both VH1 and MTV began to include ska punk music videos within their normal video rotations. Ska punk’s target audience moved beyond the working class, and the lyrics of most of the songs reflected that. Instead of singing about racial violence and class struggles, the lyrics became campier in nature, with themes focusing on the college-aged audience. In 1997, Neil Strauss of The New York Times wrote, “...the audience is a broad, multi-racial mix, where hippies meet skinheads and college jocks dance with rude boys” (see Augustyn and Calhoun, 2013, p. 113). Even though American ska punk was less rooted in the woes of the working class, it still fulfilled the original intention of ska, which was to bring various social groups together through music.

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INSANE IN THE MEMBRANE: WHERE SCIENCE & MUSIC COLLIDE

by: Sophie Breitbart

This isn't another thesis on the beauty of birdsong. You're safe from an article pondering the wonders of wailing whales, cliché facts about the science of sound waves, and any future mentions of "The Element Song". Now, without further ado, let's dive into the more interesting intersections of science and music, such as musical, alien love letters, a typical plant's Spotify queue, and a playlist that brings in the outdoors when cabin fever's nearly pushed you to the edge.

If you had the resources to create an object that would be hurled millions of miles into outer space in the hopes of being intercepted by a life form intelligent enough to decipher it, what would it be? As a representative of Earth and member of the human species, what would you choose to convey?

Carl Sagan, of Cornell professorship and hit television series "Cosmos" fame, led such an endeavor (Reed 2015). He directed the "Golden Record" project in preparation for the 1977 launch of two Voyager spacecraft, one of which would carry the capsule into space at a breakneck speed of nearly 1 million miles per day (Reed 2015, LaFrance 2014). Sagan and his team strove to consolidate a sampling of sounds, images, songs, and greetings demonstrating "the diverse culture, nature and industry of planet Earth" onto a 12-inch copper disk plated in gold (Reed 2015, "The Golden Record"). Recognizing the potential for music to communicate gigantic concepts between people, he took a leap of faith that the record's intergalactic recipients could understand the symbol-encoded instructions ("The Golden Record").

If the life form succeeded in prying off the protective aluminum jacket and putting the cartridge and needle in place, they would be privy to 115 images encoded in analog form and audio meant to be played at 16 2/3 revolutions per minute [rpm] ("The Golden Record"). After an introductory remark from 1977 UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, they would hear 55 greetings in unique human languages (Reed 2015). Sounds ranging from trains to volcanic eruptions, an infant's cry to the "brain waves of a young women [sic] in love" would follow (Reed 2015, LaFrance 2014). Australian Aboriginal songs, Igor Stravinsky's composition "Rite of Spring", Blind Willie Johnson's "Dark Was the Night", and Senegalese percussion are also included ("Music From Earth", Reed 2015). There are two interesting omissions from the multimedia package. Possibly an indicator of their creation date, the records do not contain hip-hop (LaFrance 2014). The project's team also wished to include the appropriately themed Beatles tune, "Here Comes the Sun", but was unable to due to copyright laws (Reed 2015).

While the records are still "drifting in their search for interstellar contact", their contents are freely available online for Earthlings to enjoy (Reed 2015). Find them on NASA's Voyager website and witness the material that may be the first step in facilitating interstellar communication!

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Another largely uncharted territory that's closer to home is... home. The multitude of life forms in our front lawns, Greek yogurt, and rivers is still heavily shrouded in mystery. Now, scientists are slowly lifting that veil by investigating how creatures respond to music.

So, do plants actually perk up when included in their gardener's gossiping circle? While that's up for debate, there is proof that sound affects plant growth. These results are noticeable on a trip along the highway, where flora intentionally situated to reduce noise pollution exhibit different patterns of growth when compared to members of the same species raised in a quieter environment (Chivukula et al. 2014). Sound vibration can potentially stimulate a plant or seed, significantly affecting the quantity of sprouting seeds when compared to those exposed to either unorganized noise or silence (Chivukula et al. 2014). However, don't bring your corn to a Korn concert: when some plants are exposed to "hardcore" vibrations, they'll droop in disappointment (Chivukula et al. 2014). Since it's composed of a series of mostly gentle vibrations, plants tend to favor classical music (Chivukula et al. 2014). Play them some Itzhak Perlman: violin music in particular stimulates plant growth (Chivukula et al. 2014).

Music also affects bacteria and carp. In a 2004 study by Juergensmeyer & Juergensmeyer, four species of bacteria were exposed to a set linear vibration: *Escherichia coli*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*. Monitored via optical density readings, these bacteria displayed consistent reductions in lag time (the stage in population growth that precedes rapid logarithmic growth) and increases in overall growth (Juergensmeyer and Juergensmeyer 2004). When common carp species *Cyprinus carpio* was consistently exposed to 1) 4 hours of Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik", 2) 4 hours of "Romanza-Jeux Interdits", or 3) no music (ambient noise) for 106 days, the carp given daily music exposure grew better (weighed more) than the control (Papoutsoglou et al. 2009). The "Romanza" fish also exhibited greater feed efficiency, a value indicating how much food consumed is converted into desired output which, for carp, is mass (Papoutsoglou et al. 2008).

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Finally, a playlist for when Middletown is one giant snowball but your mind is yearning for a mid-afternoon hike somewhere sunnier:

Begin your imagined adventure with a good old-fashioned rooster crow with The Beatles'

“Good Morning, Good Morning”. Sun is flooding the landscape and birds are flinging song into valleys and meadows. Dive into Wilco’s “Summer Teeth” and Pink Floyd’s “Cirrus Minor” for some avian arias. Next, wander down to the hillside farm and make a pit stop at the pigpen with The Beatles’ “Piggies”. Exit the commotion and find some peace by the ocean with the late, great Otis Redding (“The Dock of the Bay”). By now, the sun is sinking and crickets are assuming their evening posts. Try Yo La Tengo’s “Green Arrow” for a sampling of their song. With night descending, roll out a blanket under the stars and settle into Neko Case’s “Marais La Nuit”, a marsh’s symphony erupting just outside her Vermont farmstead’s barn (Deusner 2009).

Special thanks to Mitchell Irving’s 8tracks playlist “The Entangled Bank” for zoomusicological inspiration.

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DISC JOCKEYS CHANGING THE COURSE OF MUSIC

by: Amber Dimitroff

During the 1940s, the term “disc jockey” was used for the first time. It was at this same time that radio stations were primarily working with major record labels like RCA, Columbia, and Decca. It is important to remember that each of these labels had a subsidiary for their race and hillbilly artists. After the Second World War, the tastes in music of the radio listeners began to change; more people wanted to hear race music, as well as hillbilly.

The West

KLX, a station in San Francisco, needed some diversity in their lineup. The manager of the radio station brought all of his hosts together and informed them that someone, anyone, had to start a country show. Cliff Johnson, also known as Cactus Jack, would be the one to step up and take on this task. Cliff had gone west after the war, like many of the Okies, to work at the shipyards. Coworkers of his would approach him and request hillbilly songs to be played during his show; a popular request was to hear Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys. Since KLX was not a country station yet, Cliff didn’t have any of Bob Wills’ records. One of the guys from the shipyard loaned Cliff a copy that he owned. Once Cactus Jack played the record on the air, everyone wanted more. Due to the aftermath of the war, production of records was low. Cactus Jack reached out to his listeners and asked them to send in their Bob Wills records. It was in that moment that hillbilly records started getting traction in the San Francisco area.

The South

Located in a town on the banks of the Mississippi River, Helena, Arkansas is home to the KFFA radio station. It was at this station that Dewey Phillips hosted a show called Red Hot ‘n’ Blues.

This broadcast reached a large, mixed audience of both white and black southerners. Phillips' show was aired in the evenings and would play recordings of black R&B songs. It was common for southern DJs to play race music because that was the kind of stuff that they grew up listening to as well. What is especially important about Red Hot 'n' Blues is that on a good, clear day the broadcast would transmit even farther; so far that it could be heard all the way in Memphis, Tennessee about fifty miles north up the river.

Through this interaction with KFFA's broadcast, radio stations like WLAC in Nashville, Tennessee started to change up their programs. WLAC began selling late-night airtime to anyone who wanted to sponsor a show; Randy, of Randy's Record Shop, would purchase one of these slots. It was easier for companies to purchase a radio show in the evenings because the costs were lower because there was less air traffic. Randy's Record Shop sold mostly to a black community for years, so he had an idea of what they liked and might have wanted to hear on his broadcast. In 1946, Randy's show began broadcasting with its host, Gene Nobles. His show was broadcasted for a black audience, but white listeners would tune in as well because they liked what they were hearing. The combined efforts of Randy and Gene would help push this exposure of different music genres to a wider audience, taking its first steps towards rock 'n' roll.

The Midwest

In Cleveland, Ohio, a now well-known Alan Freed had begun his disc jockey career. Freed was a host for a show on the WJW station. While working at the station, he had met Leo Mintz, a record shop owner in the area. It was supposedly Mintz who influenced Freed to start playing race music on his show. Similarly to Randy in Nashville, Mintz had noticed some trends in his record shop involving white youths purchasing more and more R&B records. Freed obviously thought that Leo was onto something and began playing more R&B; in 1951 he started a show called Moondog's Rock 'n' Roll Party, and it was a huge success. Freed was able to get a mixed audience because he "rechristened rhythm and blues to avoid the racial stigma" as Bill Millar states in his 1982 piece on Alan Freed. Not only did Freed push rock 'n' roll in the Midwest with his radio program, but he also began hosting concerts that brought in huge crowds of blacks and whites. He was able to do this because he had black performers come to these concerts. At his first ever Moondog Coronation Ball in 1952, Freed invited the Moonglows and the Dominoes to perform at the Cleveland Arena. This concert also caused the first rock 'n' roll riot in history. Because of the impact that Freed had on rock and roll in Cleveland, he would end up working in New York.

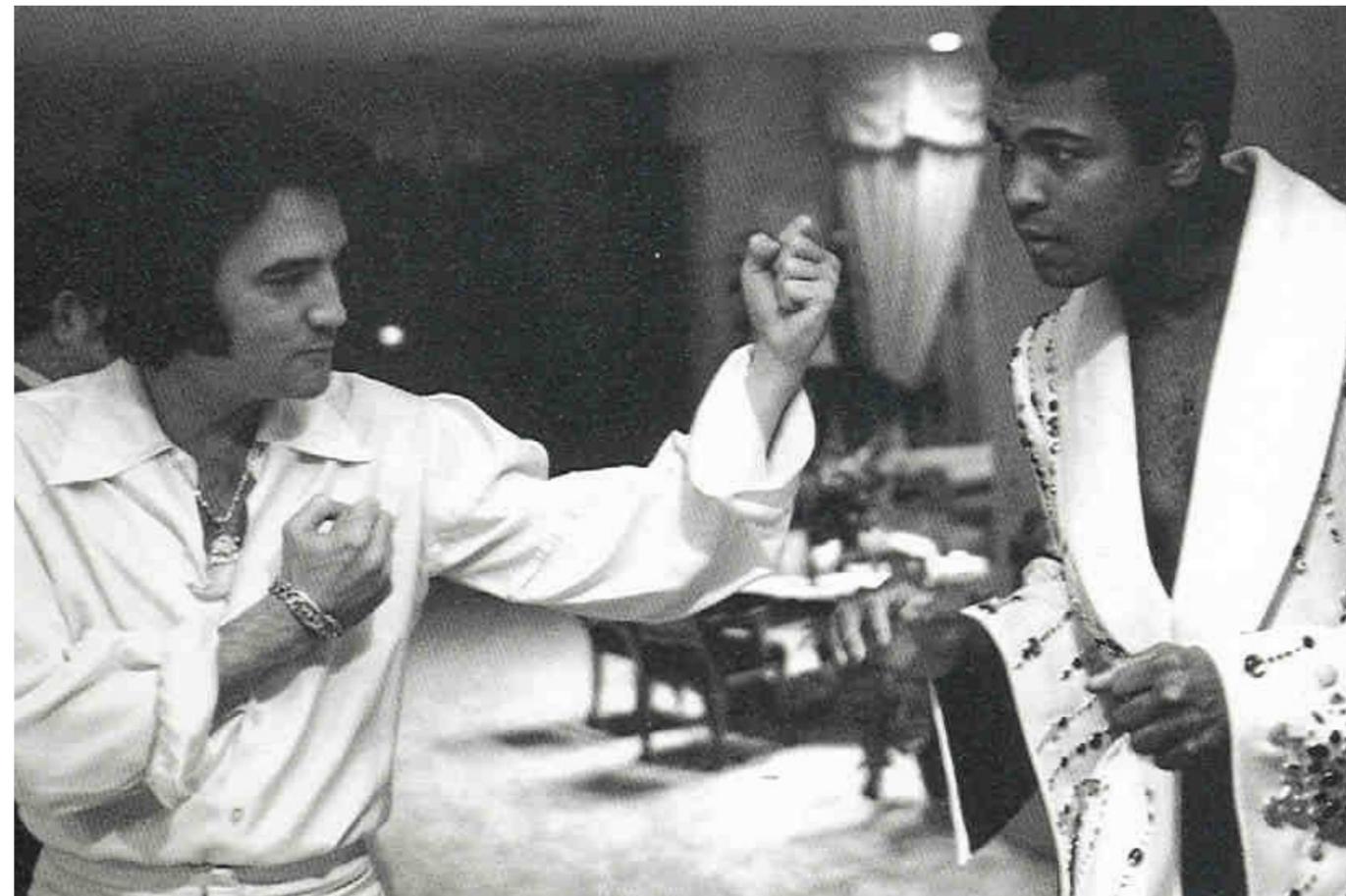
The owners of the recording labels began to realize how influential DJs were and knew the importance of getting their artists played on the radio. To help promote and sell more records, the owners had decided to pay off the DJs to get spots on various charts. This was obviously not fair to other artists who worked hard to get their names on the charts with their music. It was this conflict of interests that sparked the Payola Scandal of 1959. During the investigations, the government found Alan Freed and Dick Clark heavily involved. Due to the findings, Freed was released from his position at WINS station in New York.

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A TRUE KING

by: Zander Kotsen

Many people know Elvis Presley as the king of rock, but few are familiar with how his iconic rise brought the blues of African Americans to the forefront of popular music in the 1950's. Presley's music played a key role in breaking down the race barrier that was so prevalent during this era. Numerous people continue to view him as a racist and criticize him for stealing black music to this day. They believe he profited off of music that he had no business recording in the first place, and therefore think he is an overrated culture thief. However, many black artists of his time praise him for his innovative tone, which was full of heart. Elvis's style included a mixture of gospel and blues, which was full of soul and appealed to blacks.

As a young white boy growing up in Tupelo, Mississippi, Elvis was surrounded by black culture. He often ventured to Shake Rag with his friends, which was a small African-American community in Tupelo where blues music could be heard at any time. Elvis would listen to the music for hours on end, which led the blues sound to become rooted within him. Presley's family moved to Memphis, Tennessee, when he was 13 years old, and his infatuation with blues music continued. During his free time, Elvis would frequent Beale Street, which served as the heart of Memphis's blues scene. B.B. King even recalled knowing Elvis before he became popular as they met each other at this area. As Elvis's career began to take off, his roots were not forgotten and it showed in his music.

Presley's popularity continued to increase, bringing with it a national spotlight and plenty of critics. He was often attacked by the media, who attempted to find flaws in his character and per-

ceived him as racist. Different sources falsely quoted Elvis in their articles, including a Boston tabloid called Sepia, which stated that Elvis claimed the black man could only “shine [his] shoes or buy [his] record.” Publications like these made it that much easier for blacks to claim that Elvis was a music bandit. Elvis attempted to set the record straight, and was quoted in an interview with Jet saying the following; “A lot of people seem to think I started this business. But rock ’n’ roll was here a long time before I came along. Nobody can sing that kind of music like colored people. Let’s face it: I can’t sing like Fats Domino can. I know that” (Presley). Black artists loved Elvis, and Elvis gave these artists the appreciation and notice that they deserved.

The fact that we talk about artists like Bo Diddley, Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, and Little Richard to this day shows that they received their rightful recognition. Elvis covered many of these artist’s songs including Carl Perkins’ “Blue Suede Shoes”, Little Richard’s “Tutti Frutti”, and Chuck Berry’s “Maybellene”. Instead of viewing Elvis as a crook, they saw the true art in his work and viewed him as one of their own. Little Richard commented on Elvis’ version of “Tutti Frutti”, stating “Elvis took my Tutti Frutti, and I was disgusted, but by him singing it, he really made it bigger and made me bigger”. Elvis’s iconic look and style made blues and rock and roll that much more popular. Black artists saw this, and many of them considered his work collaboration as opposed to stealing. When asked to describe Elvis, Chuck Berry said “Describe Elvis Presley? He was the greatest there was, or ever will be.” Rufus Thomas, who recorded for Sun and Chess, stated that “Elvis came up with a style of his own, and it was very creative.”

This creativity added a new touch to his music that wasn’t always found in blues. Elvis added a new energy to support his character and make his music that much more intriguing. He was often compared to blacks, and some radio stations refused to play his “negro music.” KWK in St. Louis stopped playing rock and roll because Elvis’ music was so closely related to back culture. Many talk shows also rejected Elvis due to the vulgarity of rock and roll. Eventually, his fame became too hard to pass up and the blues and rock and roll mixture was accepted. Presley brought black music into the homes of many white families who had previously refused to play it.

At the end of the day, it wasn’t about the color of Elvis’s skin. It was about the music, and the soulful style of blues, gospel, and rock n’ roll that meshed together to become loved by so many. During a time of segregation and oppression, it was difficult for blacks to get their music heard. Elvis served as a mediator between cultures as he took this style and made it his own through the numerous influences by which he had been surrounded. Black culture was alive and well in Elvis, even though he was a white Southern man. His intent was never to steal the music of other artists. True artists overlooked any color that might be involved. Instead of there being black and white, there was Elvis. He is not the king of rock and roll because he invented the music. He is the king because he was able to transform the music into something new and fresh while maintaining it’s originality. Elvis served as a gateway to bring blacks and whites together, and the thought of this change is the true reason why so many Americans objected to his music.



ERIC PRYDZ: CONQUERING THE MIDDLE GROUND

by: Arjun Malhotra

Eric Prydz, more commonly known by his stage name ‘Pryda’, is a world renowned DJ and producer, and has been for almost 10 years. From Sweden, Pryda, along with the likes of Tiesto, Axwell and Sebastian Ingrosso, is part of a group of northern European DJs born in the late 70s and early 80s that are considered electronic music royalty. Most of these artists began their careers by producing trance and underground music but slowly moved towards the more mainstream genre of progressive house. Once this transition was made, most D’s never looked back. For Pryda, however, that was definitely not the case.

Eric Prydz crossed over to popular, commercial house at a fairly early stage in his career. He produced the track “Call On Me” in 2004 that sampled Steve Winwood’s “Valerie”. The song went on to become his first hit single and was number one on the German top 100 for six weeks in a row and topped the British charts for five consecutive weeks. The single took Pryda to another level of popularity and it seemed almost certain that he would continue to produce more tracks along the same lines as “Call On Me,” but there were many reports that suggested that he eventually stopped playing the track at his shows in an attempt to distance himself from the song. Philip Sherburne, the contributing editor at Pitchfork, said, “For many EDM acts, once they go pop, they stay pop, but Prydz’s career since [the release of “Call on Me”] has represented a kind of balancing act between overground notoriety and underground cred.” In 2006, Prydz became the first ever artist to be given the go ahead to sample a Pink Floyd song. He sampled the school choir chorus of “Another Brick in The Wall” and created his smash hit “Proper Education.” This previewed his ability to master the balance between underground and commercial music.

Prydz’s perfectly achieved balance between underground and mainstream music can be

characterized by his record labels. He owns three record labels: Pryda, Pryda Friends, and Mouseville. On Pryda, Eric Prydz releases his own music that is mostly progressive and tech house. Various EDM artists such as Axwell and Jeremy Olander have released their tracks on the Pryda Friends record label, and the genre of music is mostly progressive house. On Mouseville Records, Eric Prydz releases techno and underground tracks as the artist Cirez D. The uniqueness and varying styles of all three record labels show how Eric Prydz is one of the few artists that can actually fuse commercial success with underground success.

Eric Prydz has released two albums, and the first one, titled, “Eric Prydz Presents Pryda,” came out in 2012. The album was a 3-CD set and according to Magnetic Magazine’s album review, “Disc 1 was rare and unreleased material while Discs 2 and 3 are a brilliant rendition of a retrospective into Eric’s career thus far, mixed and sequenced by the man himself complete with some of his special re-edits.” The first track of Disc 1 is “Shadows” and the song is composed of Pryda’s typical funky techno beats, however, the addition of lyrics once again appeals to a more commercial audience. Another song on the album is “Leja” which is named after Prydz’s daughter. The song has several down-tempo beats and soothing female vocals, showing Prydz’s versatility.

Eric Prydz’s second studio album that released early in 2016 is called “Opus.” The album is by far Pryda’s most successful piece of work. It includes several previously unreleased tracks and six singles. The lead single “Everyday” went up to number three on the US Dance Club Songs Charts and the album itself reached number one in the US and the UK. “Opus” accurately portrays the middle ground Pryda has conquered with tracks from all over the spectrum. On one side of the spectrum are songs like “Black Dyce” and “The Matrix” that bring out Prydz’s underground side characterized by a hard bass line. In the middle of the spectrum are EDM crowd-pleasing techno and progressive house tracks such as “Eclipse”, “Generate,” and “Opus.” On the other side of the spectrum are songs such as “Breathe” featuring Australian artist Rob Swire. The song has a lot of pop influence in it and along with “Moody Mondays” there is a side of Opus that appeals to the commercial audience as well.

While analyzing the album Opus, Phil Shelburne said, “ At Ultra Music Festival in 2013, he performed on the same stage as Calvin Harris, Avicii, Tiësto, and David Guetta, but that same week he also played Scuba’s Hotflush party at Miami’s 300-capacity Electric Pickle club.” This quote perfectly sums up Eric Prydz. There is never one single stage or type of festival he will stick to playing to, his sets will never only have one kind of beat and his albums will never contain tracks that all appeal to the same audience. Pryda’s ability to identify the 21st century consumer’s taste but still stick to his underground roots truly makes him one of the few DJs that has conquered the middle ground between underground and commercial electronic music.

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LITTLE RICHARD'S CHILDHOOD

by: Narin Luangrath

Richard Wayne Penniman, better known as Little Richard, was one of the architects of rock and roll. One reason he stands out among the other brilliant musicians of his generation is that his performing style was so eccentric. His hyper-energetic singing, flamboyant mannerisms, and trademark vocalizations (such as the “A-wop-bom-a-loo-mop-a-lomp-bom-bom!” in “Tutti Frutti”) made him an unforgettable character. His success is even more surprising when you consider the hardships he had to overcome during childhood.

Little Richard was born in Macon, Georgia on December 5, 1932 to Charles Penniman and Leva Mae Penniman. His parents claim that they actually named him Ricardo, but the name Richard was accidentally written on his birth certificate and was subsequently never corrected. Charles Penniman was a Seventh Day Adventist preacher. The Penniman family line was very religious, with many other family members and relatives also being preachers or holding high church positions. What is surprising is that Charles Penniman supplemented his income by owning a bar, the Tip In Inn, and by selling bootleg moonshine, something you wouldn’t expect from a devoutly religious man. The Penniman family was very large. Richard was one of 12 children. They were very poor, and in interviews Little Richard would talk about trying to squeeze four kids onto one bed while the rest slept on the floor.

Another thing that affected his childhood was the fact that he was born with his right leg slightly shorter than his left leg. Consequently, he walked with a limp, for which other kids bullied and teased him. In Charles White’s biography of him, Little Richard recalls that kids called him names like

“freak,” “sissy,” and “faggot.” The latter two came from the fact that his limping looked effeminate in some people’s eyes. Considering this bullying, it is surprising how Richard would end up embracing the “feminine” aspects of his personality. From a young age, he would wear makeup and grow his hair long, which irritated his father. When he sang for the church, in gospel groups like The Tiny Tots and the family band The Penniman Singers, he would often sing at an octave higher than he was supposed to. As we know now, these personality traits would become important aspects of Little Richard as a performer.

When watching interviews of Little Richard post-performing career, he comes across as a very kind person. So it might be surprising to hear that he was a very mischievous child. One notable story is that of Little Richard’s birthday present to Miz Ola. Miz Ola was an elderly lady who lived on Monroe Street, on Pleasant Hill, around the corner from where Little Richard lived. Miz Ola was celebrating with a couple of friends when Richard dropped off a gift concealed in a shoebox container. Upon opening the gift, Miz Ola screamed “Aaaaaah—I’m gonna kill him!” and charged after Richard down the street. It turned out Richard had stuffed the shoebox with his last bowel movement.

Such antics put a huge strain on his relationship with his father. But the thing that really bothered his father was Richard’s feminine personality, which he saw as manifestations of homosexuality (a highly researched topic too large for this article). In an interview in 2000, Little Richard opened up about one particularly brutal way in which his father would punish him: “My dad used to take me ... and put me in the bed naked ... he would tie my hands up to each end of the bed and he would tie my feet. He would whoop me and blood would shoot out of my back [and] my back would turn purple, and I would be screaming and hollering and he would say ‘shut your mouth.’” Charles Penniman would eventually kick Little Richard out of the house when he was only 15 years old.

In the late 1940s, Little Richard began singing for various traveling bands and vaudeville groups. He eventually got a contract with RCA Victor and later with Peacock Records where he produced some songs, most of which weren’t successful. He eventually signed with Specialty Records under which he recorded “Tutti Frutti.” As we know, the song was a massive success, hitting second place on the R&B charts and jump-starting his career.

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THE PERSONALITIES OF EMINEM (1999-2002)

by: Dante DeSario

During the 40 months between 1999 and 2002, rapper Eminem created three of the most influential rap albums ever. The first, *The Slim Shady LP* (1999), catapulted Eminem into overnight celebrity, becoming quadruple platinum and maintaining the #1 spot on the Hip Hop/R&B billboards for 92 weeks. *The Marshall Mathers LP* (2000) followed suit, selling over 10 million albums domestically and over 32 million albums worldwide. Finally, *The Eminem Show* (2002) similarly sold over 10 million albums domestically and was his third album in four years to win the Grammy for Best Rap Album. Regardless of Eminem's lyrical and personal controversy, his albums received widespread acclaim. Some attributed this to his childhood struggles, while others claimed it was his expressed lyrical prowess. However, the true genius behind Eminem is his ability to create a dynamic range of content under three personalities: Marshall Mathers, his original name and poignant personal side, Eminem, his political-rapping pseudonym, and Slim Shady, his darker alter-ego.

The *Slim Shady LP* was Eminem's second album, primarily written under, as the name would suggest, Slim Shady. Characterized by lyrical themes of violence, misogyny and excessive profanity,

Slim Shady parades Eminem's rebellious side. "97 Bonnie & Clyde" depicts Eminem and his daughter disposing of his wife's corpse, and was written during a time when Eminem was forbid to see his daughter. "Brain Damage" reviews Eminem's childhood, when he was beaten daily by another student. This is a reoccurring theme. The *Slim Shady LP* flaunts Eminem's abusive childhood with limitless confidence and energy. Under this pseudonym, Slim Shady delivers hilariously self-aware lines: "Wanna copy me and do exactly like I did? / Try 'cid and get fucked up worse than my life is?" These lines give a lighthearted approach to the grave authenticity of Eminem's struggles. However, this cognizance is ephemeral, quickly overcome by exaggerated and shocking lyrics. Under the Slim Shady alter-ego, Eminem found a perspective to become over-the-top controversial—an essential element of his appeal.

In *The Marshall Mathers LP*, we are exposed to new layers of Eminem's broken psyche. This isn't to say that it is less perverse or offensive. He still makes songs about killing his wife (in the song, "Kim") and intentionally homophobic lyrics in "Criminal." Regardless of Eminem's astonishing misdemeanor, Marshall Mathers gives an equally upsetting perspective on his childhood. In "Criminal," Marshall Mathers delivers the sad lines "A mother did drugs, tar, liquor, cigarettes and speed / The baby came out disfigured, ligaments indeed / It was a seed who would grow up just as crazy as she / Don't dare make fun of that baby / 'Cause that baby was me... / How the fuck you supposed to grow up when you weren't raised?" We gain insight into his abusive childhood household and feel his pain. In "Drug Ballad," when Marshall Mathers speaks of his drug addictions, we absolve him, understanding where his disposition originates. These are the lyrics that add to the authenticity of Eminem: the sides that show the actual pain and suffering behind his offensive facade.

In Eminem's second and third albums, he established himself as an artist. Using Slim Shady, he gained publicity through controversy, while Marshall Mathers gave him authenticity. His audience learned the reoccurring themes of his music: his hate for Kim, his love for Hailie, his abusive childhood, and his drug addictions. Just as Eminem is the well rounded combination of his two alter-egos, the true brilliance of *The Eminem Show* is in its amalgamation of these aforementioned themes. Politically charged, he counters critics by turning his vulnerabilities into lyrical kindling. In response to reviews that criticized him for "stealing from the African American community," he raps "I am the worst thing since Elvis Presley / To do black music so selfishly / And use it to get myself wealthy." He acknowledges his controversial position in the public eye, while reaffirming his love for his daughter, and hate for his wife and mother: "Now you probably get this picture from my public persona / That I'mma pistol packing drug addict who bags on his mama... / Now look, I love my daughter more than life in itself / But I got a wife that's determined to make my life living hell." In "Cleanin' Out My Closet," Eminem speaks of his abusive mother's addiction to painkillers, which forced him to believe he was always sick—he became a "victim of Münchhausen's Syndrome." Most notably, he evolves from his usual themes, using his outspoken voice to share his opinion on political matters. In "White America," Eminem heavily criticizes the American government for being hypocritical, attacking Lynne Cheney and Tipper Gore. In *The Eminem Show*, Eminem reaches his prime, using his three egos to create a voice unafraid to voice his opinion, personal or political.

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DAVE GROHL AND THE FOO FIGHTERS: ESCAPING THE SHADOW OF NIRVANA

by: Ethan Rode

The death of Kurt Cobain, the lead singer of Nirvana, on April 5, 1994 brought a sudden halt to the growth of one of the most influential grunge bands of the 1990s. Nirvana's antiestablishment message and raw performances caused them to skyrocket up the pop charts. The news of Cobain's sudden and tragic death left both band members and fans in shock and wondering what would be next.

Following Cobain's death, Dave Grohl, the drummer of Nirvana, decided to start a side project featuring himself as the lead singer. Grohl's small side project developed into the Foo Fighters, one of the most successful rock bands in history. Although the Foo Fighters have experienced fame and success, it has been a constant struggle for Grohl and the band to escape the shadow of Cobain and to shape their own legacy. While the influence of Cobain and Nirvana on the band is undeniable, the Foo Fighters have had a distinct and significant influence on the evolution of rock music. Among other awards and recognition, the Foo Fighters have received 11 Grammys for best rock album, best hard rock performance, and best music video. [1]

The first Foo Fighters album was recorded in 1995, with Grohl playing all of the musical instruments featured on the album. Grohl recruited bassist Nate Mendel, drummer William Goldsmith, and guitarist Pat Smear to join him for the band's first tour in 1995. However, this first lineup would

not be the final make-up of the band. Goldsmith quit the band and was replaced by drummer Taylor Hawkins. Smear also quit the band for a period and was replaced by guitarist Franz Stahl, who was later fired by the band. Guitarist Chris Shiflett filled the open spot for the band. In 2010 Smear was officially renamed a member of the band to finish the present lineup of the Foo Fighters. [2] Over the years the Foo Fighters have released hit song after hit song. "Learn to Fly" (1999), "Walk" (2011), "Best of You" (2005), "My Hero" (1997), and "Everlong" (1997) are just a few of the many songs that have led the Foo Fighters to rock stardom. Despite their success, the Foo Fighters have always seemed to be fighting to escape the shadow of Cobain and his influence on the world of rock. Many fans of Cobain accuse Grohl of copying the musical style of Cobain and of using the Foo Fighters as a continuation of Nirvana. Since Cobain's death in 1995, Grohl has always faced questions regarding this accusation. While Grohl recognizes the influence of Cobain on the Foo Fighters, he has consistently stated that the Foo Fighters are their own, independent band.

In an interview with Everett True, Grohl stated, "I knew that when I was recording the album, people would say 'OK, that song has some distorted guitars and heavy drumming and a strong melody to it, it must be like Nirvana.' The moment I realized that, I thought 'fuck it, I don't give a shit!'... It's just what I love to do." [3] Fans of Nirvana should not be angry and bitter that Grohl has found success as a musician following the death of Cobain. Instead they should be satisfied that Cobain's influence has lived on in affecting many bands such as the Foo Fighters in developing their own musical style.

The Foo Fighters' success is largely due to Grohl's mentality of doing what he loves to do. It is clear that all members of the band love what they do, and that their personalities and musical talent are contagious. All members of the band are not afraid of making fun of themselves and are known for creating comical music videos. Despite the success of the band, the Foo Fighters have remained humble and continue to have fun. The Foo Fighters play "functional, populist, feelgood stadium rock." [4] During live performances, Grohl is like the energizer bunny on caffeine pills as he draws the crowd into the show. Grohl's relentless energy and the band's driving guitar rock have been the keys to the Foo Fighters' success.

With the release of *Sonic Highway* (2014) and an unexpected EP, *Saint Cecilia* (2015), it is clear that the band has no intentions of slowing down. The Foo Fighters continue to utilize their formula for success to pump out songs that fans want to listen to. Although the band might have come out of the ashes of Nirvana, it is clear that Grohl and the Foo Fighters have in fact escaped the shadow of Kurt Cobain. Some have labeled the Foo Fighters as the last remaining rock band. As a fan of rock music, I doubt that this is actually the case. Instead, I believe that the Foo Fighters will influence future bands, much like Cobain influenced the Foo Fighters themselves, and continue to develop new music for rock fans to consume. Fans of rock must just have the patience to allow new musicians to develop and to enter the world stage.

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“THESE BITCHES SUCK”: A LOOK AT THE GIRLS WHO JUST DON'T GIVE A F*CK WHAT YOU THINK

by: Mae Moskin

I want you to close your eyes and picture someone who is punk. Go ahead, do it. What do they look like? Are they skinny? White? Maybe their hair is dyed and their face is covered with piercings?

Now close your eyes and picture a rockstar, really see them on the stage. Maybe you see Mick Jagger, Jimi Hendrix, or Kurt Cobain.

I bet you did not picture a bunch of teenage girls, standing on that stage, singing with the passion and anger and level of raw emotion that anyone who either knows or has been a teenage girl, knows only they possess.

The girl bands in the '70's, '80's, and '90's punk and rock scenes dealt with talent, adversity, sexuality, and a strong desire to change the system.

Although rock has its origins in everything from rhythm and blues to hillbilly, I want to look at

three decades of girl groups who dominated the punk and rock scenes. By focusing on the Runaways in the '70's and their “I don't give a fuck” attitude, the pop rock sounds of The Bangles in the '80's, and, finally, the clear feminist anti-corporate empowerment rhetoric of Bikini Kill and the larger Riot Grrrl movement, I will explore the ever evolving feminist struggle that is punk rock.

The Runaways, who would go on to shape rock and roll forever, were just in their teens when they formed in 1975. By 1979 they would disband, but the rise and falls in the time between were great. There were multiple replacements before the final members, Joan Jett, Cherie Currie, Lita Ford, Sandy West, and Jackie Fox were finalized (The Runaways). Currie, who was just fifteen when she auditioned in 1976, had been inspired to join a band after seeing David Bowie in his Diamond Dogs tour. Currie later said, “I kid you not, when I watched him on stage a lightning bolt came out of the sky and zapped me” (Sullivan). When Cherie didn't have a song to sing at her audition for the band, Joan Jett and manager Kim Fowly wrote for her what would be one of the band's greatest, most sexually charged and controversial hits, “Cherry Bomb.” The girls elicited strong opinions from both the public and the music industry, and found it hard to be taken seriously. Before signing to Mercury Records in 1976, going on to do world tours and appearing in Magazines like Creem, Choppers, Circus, Rolling Stone, and even Play Girl, the male dominated Rock and Roll industry was not especially welcoming to the new feminine presence (The Runaways).

The Runaways not only embodied female empowerment, but youth culture as well. When Jett was interviewed at her house in 2010 about their hit Cherry Bomb she said,

“I do think it's an anthemic song, I think it's got the hooks. It's what rock 'n' roll is. It's the fuckin' height of rebellion. It's saying and shoving it right up parents' asses. And boy's asses. I really think it's a female-empowering song. And I felt it then. Even though it was about a specific thing, and even though people tried to diminish it and say, 'Well, you know, the corset. It's just sex.' You're missing the point. We're owning our sex. We aren't the toy. I just feel it's a powerful song and I feel powerful singing it. I feel strong singing it. You like that people connect to it. And can find a meaning in it even now.” (Kubernik)

Nonetheless, the corset caused quite the stir, and critics were not always eager to praise the girls's attitudes. One article written about the band in Creem started with “These bitches suck.” Currie, who battled with alcohol and drug addiction until getting sober in 1984, said in 2010 that,

“Of course, you always remember the negative stuff first, 'cause there was so much of it. Magazines like Creem had it out for us. Guys just had problems with girls coming into their territory.” (Sullivan)

Luckily for generations to come, the Runaways successfully infiltrated that territory.

The Bangles used their folky, pop rock sound to build off the path that groups like The Runaways had paved, and form their own spin on girl-empowering music. The core of the “Paisley Underground” scene of '60's-inspired rock revival, the band released their first single in December of 1981 (The History of). They were strongly influenced by The Beatles, country, classical, and folk music, and one journalist described hearing their sound by saying,

“The set built from folky Beatlesque shake-alongs to psycho-pop implosions which are then punched into a full force acid attack with renditions of Love's 'Seven And Seven Is' and The Seeds' 'Pushin' Too Hard' as encores. The Bangles certainly know their musical history and the roots from which they have grown.” (Pouncey)

They went on to sign with Columbia, sell millions of records, go on world tours, and top the Billboard Songs of the Year chart before disbanding in 1989 and later reforming in the nineties (The History of). Together they dominated the relatively new genre of Pop-Rock.

Bikini Kill, part of the ever-evolving Riot Grrrl Movement, redefined what it meant to be “punk rock.” Based out of Olympia, WA, and Washington DC, the feminist punk band was formed in 1990 and broken up by 1997. Kathleen Hanna sang, Tobi Vail was on the drums, Billy Karren played guitar, and Kathy Wilcox was on the bass. As their website states, “Bikini Kill believed that if all girls started bands the world would change” (About Bikini).

The group encouraged girls to start bands as a form of cultural resistance, and used their tours as a means to create underground networks between girls who played music. Their use of shows and fanzines to spread news took advantage of independent media as a way for girls’s voices to be heard, not taken advantage of (About Bikini). Their song lyrics spoke to both youth and anyone who was facing a struggle. The song “RIP (Rest in Pissed-off ness)” goes, “cuz look/ there’s another boy genius who’s fucking gone/ and I wouldn’t be so fucking mad so fucking/ pissed off if it wasn’t so fucking wrong/ it’s all fucking wrong/ it’s not fair, it’s not fair, it’s not fair” (True, Stars and Gripes). Their resistance to the corporate machine meant they refused to do interviews and inspired an “International Punk Underground” that included bands like the Pee-hees, the Make-up, Red Aunts, and, in the UK, Blis, Kenickie, and Comet Gain (True, Stars and Gripes). Part of the larger underground hard-core punk movement “Riot Grrrl,” Bikini Kill inspired strong reactions from listeners around the world. The Riot Grrrl movement, which originated in the ’90’s, was not about one specific sound, but the evolution of sound itself. It was not about hating men (both Bikini Kill and Huggy Bear had male members), and it is still very much alive today (True, The Ten Myths).

Since before the days when Bessie Smith sang about her “Down-Hearted Blues” and the Ronettes said “Bye Bye Baby,” women have been using music as a way to find voice to express their struggles. It doesn’t matter if this is done by wearing a corset onstage at fifteen, gracing the cover of Rolling Stone, or self-making fanzines, the more voices are added to punk and rock movements, the more the very resistance these genres stand for can grow.

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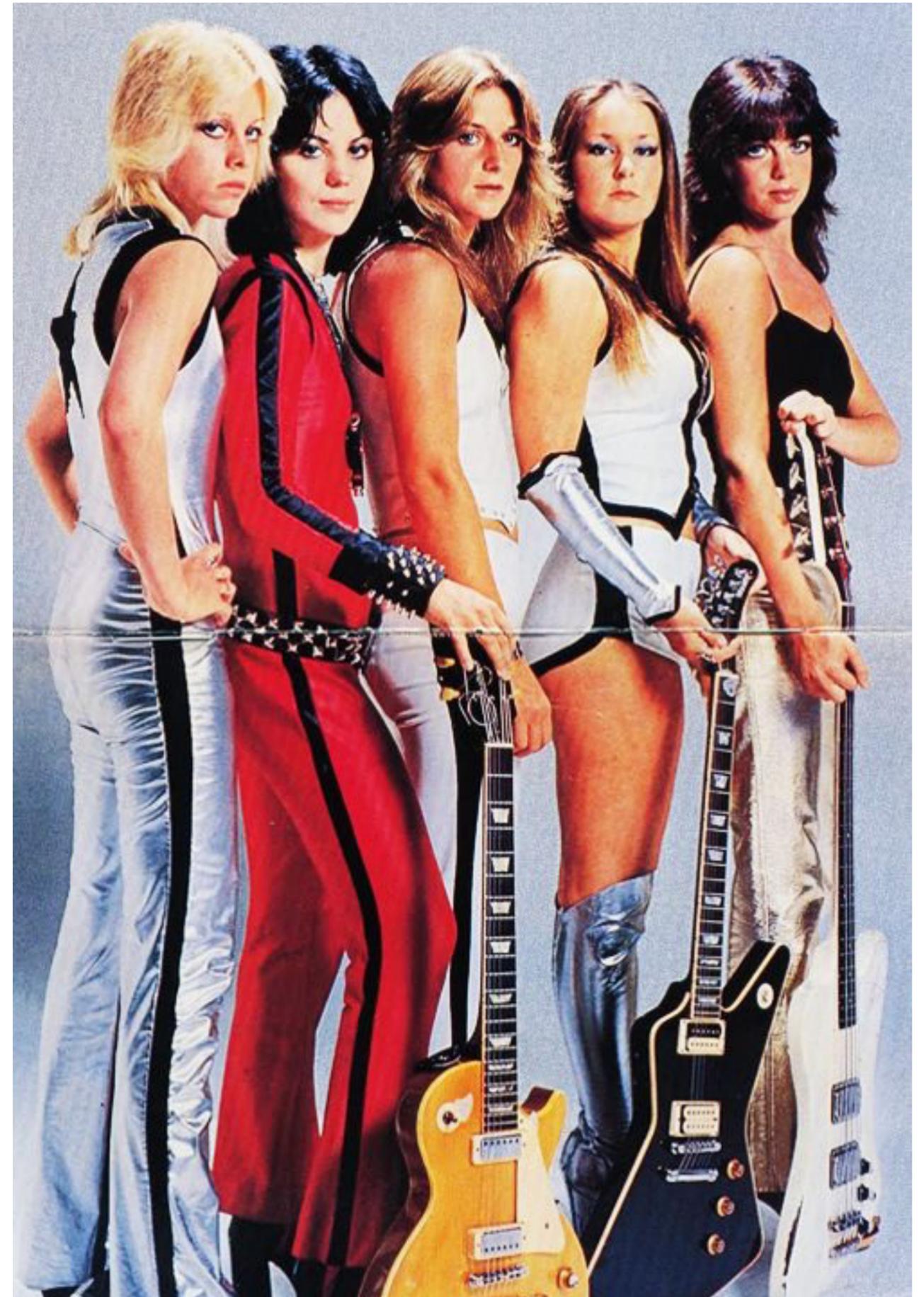
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MASS APPEAL:

A LOOK BEHIND GANG STARR'S WIDESPREAD SUCCESS

by: Matt Hecker

“The rhyme style is elevated, the style of beats is elevated, but it’s still Guru and Premier. And it’s always a message involved.”

Guru’s opening to the hit song You Know My Steez is perhaps the best, and maybe only, way to describe the musical craft of hip-hop duo Gang Starr in only a few lines. Rapper Keith Edward Elam, better known as “Guru,” and producer DJ Premier dominated the hip-hop scene for a decade from 1990 to the early 2000s. Even after the division of the group, Gang Starr’s legacy continues in the form of Guru’s lasting influence on subsequent rappers and DJ Premier’s continued dedication to make beats for some of the best present-day rap artists. The rap group’s outstanding success can be attributed to the unique craft of the two members which, when combined, created a perfectly balanced sound between the duo.

Gang Starr has its origins in Boston, Massachusetts in the mid-1980s, when rapper Keithy E. The Guru, later shortened to Guru, collaborated with Producer Mike Dee and various other part-time producers. In 1987 and 1988, Gang Starr released three singles on Wild Pitch Records, resulting in little recognition from any mainstream audience. The group’s career together was short-lived: They split in 1989, leaving only one member, Guru, willing to carry the alias Gang Starr with him as he began a fresh rap career in New York City. Guru soon contacted Houston local DJ Premier and, in the same year of their formation, the two released the LP No More Mr. Nice Guy on Wild Pitch Records, generating a sizable fan following. The group’s first release would serve as the jumping off point in a rap career known by critics, hip-hop fans, and impressionable rappers alike as one of the most successful and influential in history: Between 1989 and 2003, the group created six critically acclaimed albums. Two of these albums, Moment of Truth in 1998 and Full Clip: A Decade of Gang Starr in 1999, were certified gold by the RIAA.

DJ Premier was one of the primary innovators of a rap beat style that would later define rap production in New York in the '90's. Influenced by producers such as Marley Marl, Jam Master Jay and UTFO, Premier based the creation of his beats on samples from various jazz, funk and soul artists, creating a “boppy” sound. Additionally, DJ Premier would often sample short excerpts of rap tracks and combine them with more excerpts and, through his expansive understanding of the flows of rap songs, seamlessly intertwine the two (or three or four), creating a flowing chorus in between Guru’s verses. The result was a distinct and catchy beat that many praised even before the addition of Guru’s lyricism.

Guru’s rap style is almost always initially characterized through his distinct, monotone flow that remains constant throughout every song and album. His raps were often slower and more deliberate in comparison to other rappers, and although every rapper has a distinct “sound,” Guru’s was one that was rarely heard at the time, causing a new sense of originality and distinction. Further, Guru’s articulation of words and verses caused every song to feel smooth and unrushed, fitting in perfectly to the beats of DJ Premier.

Guru was on a separate playing field from his competition as far as actual lyrical content was

concerned. Guru emerged in the rap stage at a time when the genre of music was being criticized for its juvenility and violence. Rappers were portrayed as dangerous thugs with the intent of corrupting an impressionable youth audience. What Guru brought to the rap scene greatly contradicted this notion of rap. Guru wrote uplifting and insightful lyrics, preaching listeners to follow his words of wisdom as a way to elevate themselves in society. In one of Moment of Truth's hit songs Robin Hood Theory, Guru proposes that we must place an emphasis on our youth, rapping, "They innocent, they know not what they face/while politicians save face genius minds lay to waste/ If I wasn't kickin rhymes I'd be kickin down doors/ Creatin' social change and defendin' the poor." Further, in My Advice 2 You, Guru raps, "So let's make this bond to keep this hip-hop strong/You a man Baby Pop you know right from wrong/So stay out of trouble, and that goes for me too/That's what we need to do, that's my advice to you..." Guru's thought-provoking lines were general enough that they could be applicable to any individual going through a struggle, while still remaining thoughtful and on-topic. For this reason, Guru could effectively appeal to Gang Starr's audience, which largely consisted of underprivileged black teens looking for an outlet and expression of their struggles.

The two artists alone represent an incredible amount of skill in their respective fields. When combined, however, DJ Premier and Guru are able to highlight the other's strengths and create track after track of critically-acclaimed rap. In Complex's documentary "Gang Starr: Magnum Opus," DJ Premier claims, "I tailor the track to the artist. So everything that I make for Guru is meant for him and it's made on the spot. I've never just had a stack of beats and said, 'hey pick out of these 30 which one you want.' Everything has always been organically made while you wait." Later, DJ Premier says that Guru would provide him with a description of a given song they were working on, and only then would Premier begin engineering the beat. The result is a beat that shapes perfectly to the lyrical content of Guru: If Guru's lines are gloomy and depressing, Premier's beats will evoke the same emotions. The work of one member serves to complement the work of the other. Similarly, DJ Premier was known to tailor the tempo of a song to accompany the rap style of Guru. Premier began shifting his work from the typical 100 beats per minute rap songs that were characteristic of the late 1980s, down to 80 or 90 beats per minute, due to the fact that Guru's rapping style flowed much better with a slower tempo. As mentioned, Guru's signature style was to rap at a slower, more deliberate pace. The result of Premier's decreased tempo and Guru's calculated, purposefully unhurried flow was to force the listener to focus on every intentional word in the song as well as the depth and message of the lyrics as a whole. The combination of DJ Premier's catchy, jazzy beats combined with Guru's distinct rap sound drew the listener in, while the gravity of Guru's lyrics made them stay.

In 2006, DJ Premier announced on several occasions that Gang Starr had officially come to an end after a few stagnant years of production. Four years later, in February of 2010, Guru suffered a heart attack, fell into a coma, and died on April 19. The rapper reportedly had a falling-out with his partner DJ Premier seven years prior to his death. Despite their end, Gang Starr will always be remembered for the influential songs and albums they have created over the years. As rapper M.O.P states, "You can search from as far back as you can remember up until this very moment and you'll never find anybody like Guru. Nobody. His voice was amazing. And Premier...the passion that this dude has. Let me tell you something: can't nobody change Premier for nothing in the world."



Robert Moog designed the Moog synthesizer in 1964. Moog was looking to create a system controlled from a soundboard that would be able to produce a series of complex sounds and tones not easily found on certain instruments. The concepts, when combined with some elegant design choices, were authoritative, and revolutionary during this time period.

THE EVOLUTION OF ELECTRONIC DANCE MUSIC

by: Corey Aviles

Electronic dance music, also known as house music, is one of the fastest growing genres of music today. Forbes "Top Ten EDM" artist raked in more than \$250 million combined in 2014. But where did this musical form come from? And what does the future hold for the new uproar of seemingly never ending popularity of this style of music?

Electronic music has been around for almost 50 years. This musical form dates all the way back to the 1960s. In fact, inventions like the theremin, one of the first electronic instruments, dates back all the way to 1918. However, it was not until the 1970s that electronic music started to work its way into the mainstream, in the form of disco. Disco could be considered the first wave of electronic music, along with funk, soul, and smooth jazz, and the arrival of disco divas like Donna Summer who pioneered the sound of electronic based music. Individuals like Summer sparked the curiosity of many to start experimenting with funky disco sounds. This led right into the 1980s, which are now known as the experimental era of electronic music.

Out of the dying embers of the disco era came a new, more pronounced sound of electronic music. The first to forge and dominate this new sound was the German band Kraftwerk. Kraftwerk is considered one of the first pioneers of electronic music, by introducing the unique electronic sound to a broader audience. For example, Kraftwerk paired their knowledge with bands like Led Zeppelin

to help them create a more futuristic sound. In fact, in Led Zeppelin's song "Whole Lotta Love," the theremin can be easily heard, an instrument that many never thought to incorporate in their work for nearly 50 years. Furthermore, it pushed different bands to keep up with the futuristic sounds of electronically produced music. Bands like Pink Floyd incorporated the Moog synthesizer, an electronic musical instrument that has the capability to produce a variety of traditional acoustic instruments electronically, such as guitars, keyboards, drums, and so on.

Also during this time Kraftwerk help define the different branches of electronic music like electro, house, and techno. House music was born in Chicago and originated from funk and soul elements that vanished with the decline of disco. Coincidentally, the robotic style of techno was born in the neighboring city of Detroit, where the Belleville Three created a type of electronic sound that was more technical and organic in nature. During this era synthpop was also created and took root. Synthpop songs are songs that sound like pop at heart, but with catchy, simple dance beats. During the 1990s electronic sounds and beats took off, primarily because of the introduction of the computer craze. People were able to access a wide range of resource and to create their own electronic mixes. With such a diverse range and combinations of different beats the electronic music market was flooded with a variety of style, especially in Europe. As a result of this surge many clubs, raves, and festivals started to become an oncoming trend. The vogue developed into the era of the DJ. With the amount of resources available to such a wide audience any regular Joe could become a DJ. Yet people like Paul van Dyk, and Armin van Buuren were able to rise above the rest with their one-of-a-kind, catchy remixes. Along with the music came the partygoers. Very common and popular places to find these massive raves are in the Netherlands and Frankfurt, Germany. Recently, the torch has been passed from Frankfurt to the new rave capital of Germany, Berlin, as well as in the United States.

Within the last decade electronic music has still been on the rise and many of the electronic music genres are still popular, especially the genre of house. House music is up-tempo style disco-like music, but categorized by deep bass rhythms with piano or synthesizer melodies and soul music singing, or sometime substituted with rap. House music, dubstep, and trap, also known as electronic hip-hop, are the genre of choice in clubs replacing techno. They are becoming so popular that even some songs are getting airplay on the radio, something that electronic music fans of the '90s would have never imagined.

The real question is, what does the future hold for this seemingly timeless music? Is the house and electro hip-hop craze going to crash and burn like disco did, or is it going to lead to something even more popular? David Guetta, a man who is leading the way for the future of EDM believes, "it is an evolution. The thing is that, every musical genre starts from the underground, gets trendy, then it becomes popular, and then it dies or it is reinvented in a different way," Only time can tell the fate of electronic music.

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RED ROCKS ROCKS

by: Christian Barker

Every morning on my way to high school, I pulled out of my neighborhood and looked out to the Colorado Rocky Mountains. Along the range, there was something different than the rest of the panorama. There was an area of broad, bright red rocks. The massive rocks of Morrison, Colorado, are home to the U.S. National Historic Landmark of Red Rocks Amphitheatre. Being from Colorado, I am very interested in the value and history of Red Rocks as it pertains to the 20th century. Voted the top amphitheatre in America by Rolling Stone magazine, the detailed history, unique geology, and elite performances make Red Rocks one of a kind.

The history of Red Rocks as an entertainment venue began in 1906 when John Walker opened up the stage as a temporary platform for artists. Prior to this, the rocks were considered a sacred venue to 32 different Native American tribes. Walker found interest in the site because of its two three-hundred foot monoliths created Earth's only naturally occurring acoustic amphitheatre. All 640 acres would later be purchased in 1928 by the city of Denver for \$54,133, the equivalent to \$737,382 in 2015. After 13 years of construction, the park officially opened on June 15, 1941. Now 868 acres of wildlife, standing 6,450 feet above sea level, and officially holding 9,525 fans, Red Rocks attracts fans from all of the world.

Red Rock's geology is equally as fascinating as the popular musical groups that perform there. The two great sandstone ledges, as mentioned before, both stand taller than the Niagara Falls. This provides a unique concert experience because performers will project different light shows on the rocks and music amplifies off the walls back into the crowd. Does Red Rocks only attract music lovers? The answer is no. Just as much as fans love visiting for concerts, geologists and others interested will come to witness the history within the giant rocks. These walls contain a record book of ages as nearby dinosaur tracks tell of the Jurassic period 160 million years ago. One of the rocks even has evidence of the 40 foot sea serpent Plesiosaur. Concluding the one of a kind geology, Red Rocks was once listed among the Seven Wonders of the World, along with the Pyramids of Giza and Temple of Artemis.

Performances at Red Rocks Amphitheatre started off small and have grown exponentially, now drawing the world's top talent. The first concerts were before the rocks were established as an official amphitheatre. Pieta Satriano and his 25 piece brass band opened up as the very first performance in 1906. Opera singer Mary Garden put Red Rocks on the map in 1911, commenting "It was the finest venue I have ever performed in." The pioneer of soul music, Ray Charles, performed in August 1962; the result of his concert was a ban of alcohol, cans, and bottles from the amphitheatre because of fans throwing beer cans onto the stage. The same thing happened during Peter, Paul, and Mary's performance in July 1964. A month later, The Beatles played at Red Rocks on their first U.S. tour (more to come on The Beatles). The unique concert setting was quickly becoming a fan and artist favorite. Geddy Lee of rock band Rush said "It's an amazing location. One of the most beautiful concert venues in America...or anywhere. I would hazard a guess that it's one of the most beautiful anywhere." Further, Pearl Jam guitarist Mike McGready agreed, "It was just stunning. We were never able to get there [again]. I don't know why. I want to go back." 20th century Red Rocks continued to attract the best rock groups, including U2, The Eagles, Coldplay, Jimi Hendrix, and Bruce Springsteen. Not only was Red Rocks a beautiful place to perform, it was a popular venue for live recordings, particularly for videos because of the visual uniqueness.

Hands down the top, most exciting concert in Red Rock's history is The Beatles performance on August 26, 1964 to an audience of 7,000 fans. It was the sixth stop on the group's first tour in America. Interestingly, it is only one of four venues visited during their tour that is still in operation today. Although The Beatles was the most appealing concert at the Rocks, it was also the only concert not sold out during their tour. The cause of this was attributed to lack of public transportation for the teenage audience. Colorado was excited for The Beatles to play at Red Rocks, a college student told one reporter, "There was just so much excitement about seeing The Beatles. There had been all this hype. It was still really new. I don't think any of us thought about quality of music. We saw The Beatles. We saw them live. That was the big thing." Oddly enough, there were more fans waiting at the airport for the arrival of the English band than there were at the actual concert. The concert was a special case because The Beatles earned a fee of \$20,000 for their performance in a day where the biggest acts only made about \$5,000. In honor of The Beatles 24 hour trip to Denver, Red Rocks held a 50 year anniversary of their performance with the group "1964."

I was fortunate enough to walk the stage of Red Rocks for my high school graduation ceremony. All I could think about was the rock legends that had stood in the exact spot I was in performing to crazy, screaming fans. If you haven't been to Red Rocks Amphitheatre for a concert, then add it to your bucket list. It is an experience you will cherish.

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BOUNCE MUSIC: PRESENT BUT OFTEN UNSEEN

by: Aili Francis

Today, millions have heard Beyoncé's new song "Formation" or seen its accompanying video, which boasts over 28 million views on YouTube despite remaining unlisted. "Formation" begins with the raspy, colorful voice of Messy Mya, a New Orleans bounce artist who was brutally murdered in 2010. While Beyoncé's song focuses on black lives in America in regard to police brutality and Hurricane Katrina, it delves a little deeper into the realm of black culture in the South, specifically, bounce culture in New Orleans. The sampling of the voices of bounce artists Messy Mya and Big Freedia, along with the shots of bounce dancers in "Formation," have made Beyoncé one of the first mainstream artists to give national exposure to bounce culture. While bounce music has been popular in New Orleans for over two decades, in recent years, it has resurfaced on the main stage. Despite emerging on national platforms through various ways, bounce music and dance have hardly ever been acknowledged by mainstream media outlets until fairly recently.

Many might turn their heads and ask, what is this "bounce music," and, more importantly, why should I care? Maybe you should not care, but bounce music is on the rise, and it is extraordinary. Whether or not you knew it then, you have likely seen some derivative of bounce music at some point in your life. One famous product of bounce music is "twerking," a popular dance de-

fined by sexual hip movements in a squatting stance. Bounce music effectively began the “twerking movement,” a trend that would later be exploited by Miley Cyrus in her famous performance at the VMA Awards in 2013. While twerking remains extremely popular to this day, bounce music has achieved neither its same level of notoriety nor its recognition.

Originating in New Orleans in the late 1980s, bounce music spread through block parties as a new form of hip-hop music. The music was—and still is—predominantly played in black communities in New Orleans, but has since spread to areas across the South due to many bounce artists’ dislocation after Katrina. Bounce music mixes the call-and-response pattern popular in blues and hip-hop music, and adds a high-energy beat to give it its distinct sound. The call-and-response structure in bounce originates with the chants of the Mardi Gras Indians, a group of black New Orleans residents who have dressed up, danced, and sung around New Orleans as part of a Mardi Gras tradition since the 1800s.

While the lyrical basis is call-and-response, the instrumental foundation of bounce music is the “Triggerman beat” (Showboys, “Drag Rap”). The “Triggerman” beat is a fast-paced, percussive sound that plays on loop throughout bounce songs. In addition to the synthesized percussive sound of the “Triggerman” beat, bounce music also utilizes the artist’s voice as a percussive instrument to provide a repetitive sound that gives the music its unique structure, energy, and catch. The highly repetitive, energetic nature of bounce music is almost as effective a stimulant as a shot of Red Bull. Its fast-paced, animated sound has an exhilarating quality that inspires those listening to get up, dance, and attempt to chant along. Bounce music is usually, if not always, accompanied by its unique dance style. Besides twerking, other extremely popular forms of bounce dance are characterized by shaking one’s entire body in an extremely fast-paced, wobbling motion. One skilled bounce dancer, now featured on Big Freedia’s television show on Fuse, helped expose bounce to national audiences years ago in his audition for “So You Think You Can Dance.” In his audition he states, “New Orleans bounce has been around for a long time, but we never really made it on a national level.”

While it is still a fairly unknown genre, bounce music has by now entered the national market. For example, the popular comedy 22 Jump Street, which used the electro-bounce hybrid song “Express Yourself ft. Nicky Da B” by Diplo for a party scene in the film, was watched and downloaded by millions across the United States. While twerking, Beyoncé’s “Formation,” and a few films are bringing some aspects of bounce to the national music forefront, none do it better than New Orleans native, Big Freedia.

Big Freedia, the designated “Queen of Bounce,” has been working for years to achieve for bounce what it has failed to attain in the past: national recognition. Within the last few years, Big Freedia has toured the country, starred in her own television show, and set a world record. Big Freedia, unlike the other mainstream icons borrowing from bounce, maintains a close relationship with New Orleans and bounce culture that shines through her performances onstage, music videos online, and show on television. With Big Freedia’s growing popularity and Beyoncé’s “Formation,” bounce music looks like it may enter the mainstream in its original forms. Having a star like Beyoncé incorporate bounce culture into her music may give it the national exposure it has been leaning towards for years, but it may continue to fly under the radar. What is next up for bounce music in America? Can it go mainstream, or more importantly, should it? What will happen when musicians, not having grown up with bounce music or in New Orleans, attempt to recreate it on their own? With bounce music’s powerful, close connection to black culture and history in New Orleans, it is extremely hard to imagine the reproduction of it through outsider artists. Having grown up in New Orleans, I am excited for the future of bounce music, but worried for what is to come.

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MUSICAL HEALING

by: Bryan Irwin

Coming into the forefront of medical treatment for mental and even physical disorders, musical therapy has provided patients with an escape from stress and has even provided somewhat supernatural-appearing aid to people with physical and mental disabilities. The concept of music therapy entails the idea that exposure to certain forms of music can be used to help with maintenance, recovery, and improvement of the psychological and physiological problems that patients with these disabilities face (1 pg. 290). The use of music therapy has shown an improvement in the mood of patients and can even be connected with increased learning ability (2 pg. 96).

Treated as a double-edged sword, music therapy applies both scientific and artistic treatments for patients that provide both a soothing and healing effect. The functions of music that come with singing and the playing of instruments are used by therapists with the intention of tapping into the effects that entail improved health and an escape from suffering. This happens in the way that playing a musical instrument can help with coordination of muscles. Additionally, listening to music and singing the lyrics of songs promotes socialization and the development of interpersonal relationships. These tactics are helpful with patients who suffer from physical ailments such as cerebral palsy and behavioral handicaps (2 pg. 96).

The characteristic of music as a universal language allows it to reach people of any culture or region of the globe and makes it applicable to almost anyone. When a mentally disabled child hears a song that he or she enjoys it may make them smile; this can be used as positive reinforcement for improved behavioral habits and even physical habits such as the promotion of a healthy appetite. A

second benefit of musical therapy is that it is applicable to all ages and all types of disorders. Although variety exists between different ages and diseases, disorders such as speech problems that are found both in older patients who have suffered from a stroke and patients of all ages who suffer from cerebral palsy can be treated with music (2 pg. 97).

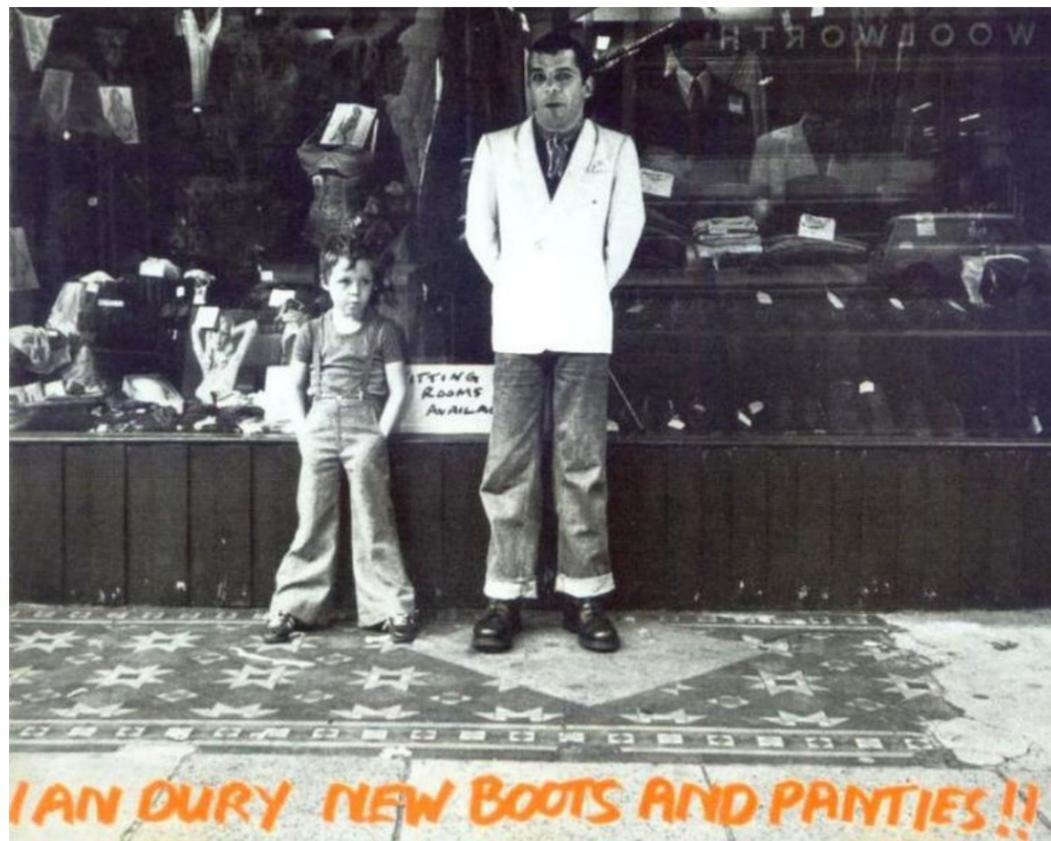
Music therapists are beginning to change the framework of old treatment methods through shifting their focus towards stress management, maintenance of health, and personal development in patients of all ages (3 pg. 19). As music therapy has grown over the years, the scope of the diseases it is used to treat has continuously expanded. During its initial emergence into the therapeutic world, music therapy tended to be used in the treatment of mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and intellectual developmental disorder. As this field has grown, however, it now treats expectant mothers, recovering drug addicts, and people struggling with pain management. Music is also being used as a speech motivator for the mute and a tool for correcting speech impediments through singing activities (3 pg. 33).

As a counselor at a summer camp for children and adults with mental and physical disabilities, I have personally encountered the therapeutic abilities of music with the campers. Each day, my group of campers, who mostly suffered from a combination of intellectual development disorder and extreme cerebral palsy, would participate in about an hour of karaoke. As the campers chose their favorite songs and were given the microphone, their faces would light up with joy. Their ability to recall almost every lyric with ease amazed me for the reason that many of the campers were, for the most part, non-verbal or very introverted. Along with this phenomenon, the camper whose turn it was to sing was almost always accompanied by the voices of fellow campers who would dance with the music and sway to the rhythms in their wheelchairs with enormous smiles on their faces. After the group finished the activity, each camper exited the karaoke tent relaxed and content. This experience of mine shows that music has the ability to increase social activity, brighten moods, and improve physical health through encouraging dancing and physical activity.

With the advancement of medical technology and medicine such as pills and injections, a push towards more natural treatments is occurring and the use of music is becoming more prevalent. When the lyrics of a song reach out to a specific crowd that is dealing with any kind of mental or physical problem, patients find ways to relate to the music and find comfort in its melodies. Music has the wonderful power of connecting with people in unique ways, while simultaneously tending to a wide variety of ailments. It holds the ability to bring back joyful memories, provide relaxation, and reduce anxiety. It is through the human connection that patients find recovery. On the musical level, artists have the power to reach out and console and elate the minds of extensive amounts of people. Through improving the attitudes of victims of illness, both mental and physical recovery is found (3 pg. 33).

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HOW DOES IT GO? SEX, DRUGS AND ...

by: Moniroth Chhean

Fill in the blank: “Sex and drugs and _____”. If you answered “rock and roll,” then you are certainly not alone.

It’s a popular expression that was coined in the 1960s to describe the crazy, party-heavy lifestyle of the rock stars of that time. Namely, it is said the phrase was spoken by the Rolling Stones in an interview describing their backstage parties. Despite the unclear origins of the phrase, it was made popular by Ian Dury’s first single release of the same title, “Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll”. Though the single wasn’t a hit, it managed to become an anthem for the punk rock scene, the sub-genre that branched out in the mid-1970s, around the same time of the song’s release in 1977. Along with the connotations of rock and the youthful rebellious punk-rock subculture which had arisen from the sub-genre, the song had been interpreted—quite literally—as the title entails: about the excess of sex and drugs as a lifestyle of Rock stars. The introduction to the song says:

Sex and drugs and rock and roll
Is all my brain and body need
Sex and drugs and rock and roll
Are very good indeed

As these lyrics are repeated, for the most part, in the chorus of the song, it appears to encourage the lifestyle of rock stars of the 1960s and 70s. Even decades later, until the 1990s (and even the 2000s) rock stars were “expected” to either do drugs or have sex with their fans or both—making it part (or rather, the creation) of the cliché stereotype of rock stars. Even history had been made to agree, as various rock stars—from Elvis Presley to The Beatles and Guns N’ Roses—had

fallen to drugs, especially after they had become rock stars. Elvis Presley died from an overdose of drugs and Slash, guitarist of Guns N’ Roses, has been addicted.

The song title is currently used as a title for the FX TV series, *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll*, first aired last year in 2015, as well as the title of Ian Dury’s biographical movie, released in 2010. The TV series is about the rise of a once rock star and a budding new rock star—but does not dissuade from the stereotypical life. Dury, despite his ridicule of the “rock ’n’ roll lifestyle”, had been known as a womanizer—he himself falling to the life of sex and drugs and rock and roll, contrary to the intention of his single “Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll”.

However, continuing on with the song, the next verse is juxtaposed against the chorus in that it almost challenges the aforementioned lifestyle. The first line of the verse: “Keep your silly ways or throw them out the window,” is meant to ridicule the cliché life of rock and roll, but is usually overshadowed by the chorus and title of the song. Therefore, rather than challenging the party-life of a rock star, the song is taken to advocate the lifestyle. The next three lines of the verse: “The wisdom of your ways, I’ve been there and I know / Lots of other ways, what a jolly bad show / if all you ever do is business you don’t like.” These lines continue the song’s subtle ridicule. However, it would be easy to misinterpret this verse due to the last line: “if all you ever do is business you don’t like,” which could be construed as living the daily—ordinary and “boring”—life of regular people rather than the ‘typical’ lifestyle of Rock stars. The chorus:

Sex and drugs and rock and roll
Sex and drugs and rock and roll
Sex and drugs and rock and roll
Is very good indeed

These lines, following the verse, enforce the stereotypical lifestyle. Against this chorus, the rest of the song—the verses meant to challenge and ridicule—turns into something that advocates and encourages the party-life. These controversial lyrics, and the meaning, had the song banned by BBC, and despite not being a hit, the song won critical acclaim. The impact the song had lingers still, especially with the connection made between “sex and drugs” and rock and roll.

Here’s a little piece of advice
You’re quite welcome it is free
Don’t do nothing that is cut price
You know what that’ll make you be
They will try their tricky device
Trap you with the ordinary
Get your teeth into a small slice
The cake of liberty

Even if Ian Dury hadn’t created the phrase, his song—despite not being taken as Dury had intended—made the expression popular and, even now, remains connected with the genre of rock.

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THE BEATLES' LAST GIFT

by: Kelvin Cuesta

As far as I can remember, I've been listening to and admiring the work of The Beatles. John, Paul, George, and Ringo transformed music. Consequently, many artists trace their influences, inspirations and success to The Beatles. Heck, even I pick up an instrument sometimes and try to imitate a song, usually failing to sound anything like them. Some love them, some don't, but it is undeniable what they did for the realm of music. Coming back to them time and time again, I always discover new things. This time it was their last concert dubbed by many as the Rooftop Concert up on 3 Savile Row.

Jan. 30, 1969 marked the date the Beatles would last play live together as the Fab Four. It was their last gift to fans and pedestrians roaming about on a blistering, winter London day. To cope with the January wind, engineer Alan Parsons was sent out to buy ladies' stockings to put over the microphones to his considerable embarrassment.[1] It was nothing short of being cold, but they would play their last live set with nothing to stop them except the local police department.

No longer did they look like the boys causing Beatlemania across the globe. They were experienced musicians with lives, wives, classic moustaches, beards, fur coats, and with highly esteemed backing artist and friend Billy Preston, who has the only joint Beatles credit. Ringo is comfortable in the back wearing his wife's bright red coat, smoking a cigarette to keep warm. John appears in the center wearing Yoko's fur coat, Paul is to the right of him, and George is also donning another fur coat. Picture a city rooftop surrounded by various Apple Corps employees and fans with police quickly approaching and various Londoners taking time out of the workday to hear what could be and ultimately was the last public Beatles appearance.

The whole concert was conceived of a desire for the band to “Get Back.” The title of a record and project they enacted, it like its name was an attempt to get back to their roots as a performing band rather than the studio band that they had become after their last tour in 1966.

That concert marked a ravishing return to the band that many had grown to love. Teetering on the edge of collapse, the 42-minute concert was a last ditch effort to cast aside egos and differences for a final set. To me it was refreshing to see The Beatles return to a sound that they ditched a long time ago. It was to the ear more R&B, bluesy, and early rock rather than the highly technical studio work that came with The White Album and Abbey Road.

Their set consisted of 17 songs with 11 making it to the Let it Be album and others being covers released in later compilations. Some of my favorites include “Don’t Let Me Down,” the seven minute “I Want You (She’s so Heavy)” jam session, and “One After 909.” The song “One After 909” holds significance especially since it is one of Lennon and McCartney’s first songs originally composed in 1960, recorded in 1963 and shelved, eventually making it into Let it Be.

“I’d like to say thank you on behalf of the group and ourselves, and I hope we passed the audition,” Lennon says after finishing the last rendition of “Get Back.” Lennon here uses a witty remark to end the 60’s. They had done it all and been there and back, from their early days failing some auditions to gaining the worlds approval. Only a few other artists and bands have had the lasting success and legacy that the Beatles have.

It is funny that their last appearance together was a small concert and not a grandiose event, in a way they had come full circle. In essence, “They [got] back to where they once belonged,” the small stage performers hoping for a shot at the limelight. Ironically, their last audition was not taken well by the police and had to be cut short.

The rooftop now belongs to an Abercrombie and Fitch children’s store.

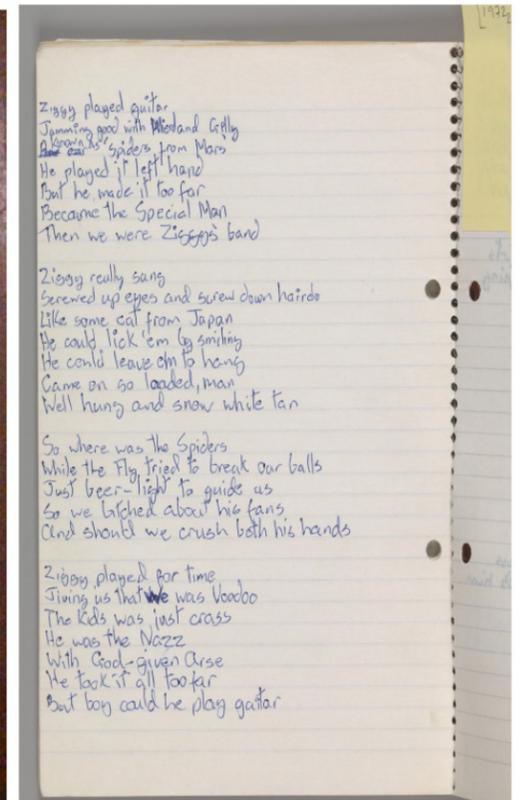
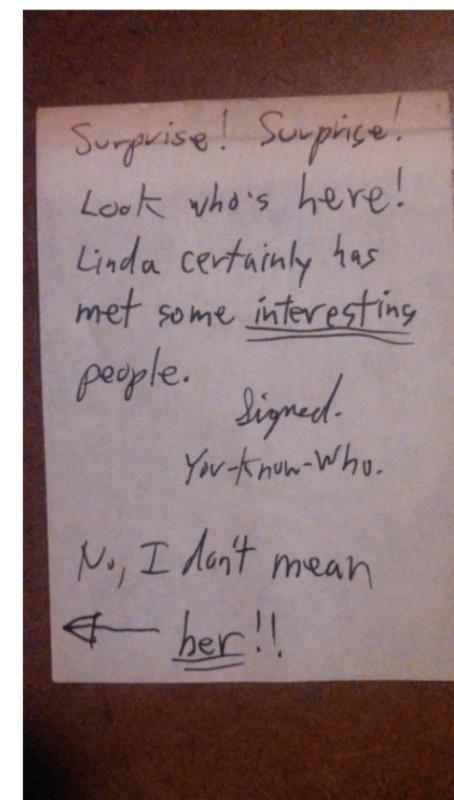
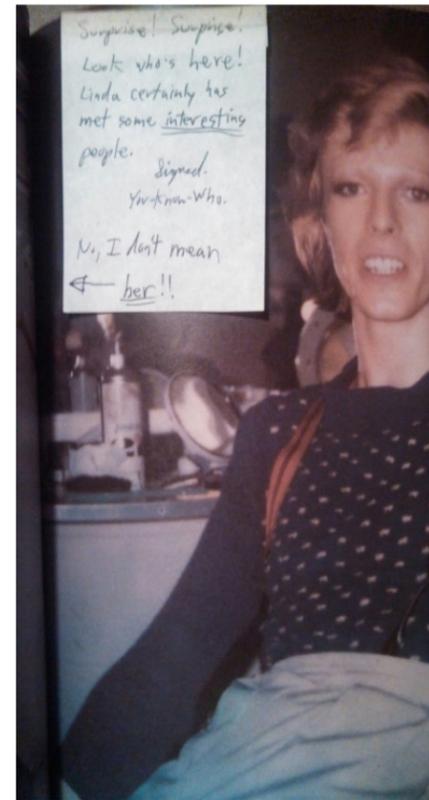
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(Left to right: Photo of Bowie by Linda McCartney and note found on that page; Close-up on the note found in the book; Bowie's handwritten Ziggy Stardust lyrics used to compare to note)

“SHE WAS A YOUNG AMERICAN”

by: Viveka Cousins

It wasn’t until this year, the year of Bowie’s passing, that my parents started mentioning all of these small connections to Bowie. My mother, a Swedish immigrant, came to New York in the ‘80s with an already ingrained passion and love for David Bowie. She evidently joined a wave of exotic, leather-jacket wearing Bowie groupies when she moved at 22 to Manhattan from the small town of Angelholm, Sweden. When I asked her why she left Sweden she named three things as her motivation/inspiration: her pursuit of fashion, the excitement of New York City, and David Bowie. She said Bowie was the soundtrack to many pivotal moments of her life but most importantly to her moments sobbing about ex-boyfriends and her lifelong dream of running away to America.

She said “Young Americans” was the song of her dreams, mostly because she dreamed of being a young American. At 15, she would hide away in her room on the third floor, blasting this song and screaming “She was a young American!” at the top of her lungs in broken English as her brothers laughed outside the door. She said the sound of Bowie’s voice mollified her teenage tears. The music was always loud enough to not hear her mother scream, “Sänk volymen!! (Turn it down!!)”. She told me she didn’t care when her mother was angry; nothing else mattered to her except her emotions and that very song.

My mother met my father a few years after she had moved to Manhattan. They fell into a fast love, originally meant for my mother’s green card, but one thing led to another and it turned into “real” love. They bonded over many things, one of them being Bowie and another being a want

for more in life. Shortly after my sister's birth in Manhattan, they drove to Los Angeles in search of something better. They tell me about this road trip often but they had never mentioned that they played Bowie all the way to California. My mother was obsessed and my father was in love with her obsession. Bowie was the sound of their travels. Once they settled down in California my mother opened a clothing company and my father continued acting. Years later, my mother's clothing company spread back to Manhattan which called for her moving back to New York for six months out of every year. I was too young to understand exactly why she was leaving all the time but I made a point to remember the streets she worked on, so I knew how to address my letters. The store was on Prince and Lafayette in Soho, New York right next to David Bowie's apartment.

My mother told me she hadn't known that he lived there when she got the space. She described the first time seeing him hailing a cab while she was outside her store: he smiled at her and said hello, and then disappeared with his wife Iman into the hectic city. My mother said he was very private and very sweet. He was the morning smile she would see when she approached her store to open. Once in awhile, he and Iman would come into the store and Iman would try on sweaters while my mom would help her style them. She said he made each space have a little bit of extra energy. She was unsure if that was just because she admired him as a performer or if the emotion and the feeling exerted in his music was actually true to his character.

In the late '80s, before my mother and father left for Los Angeles, my father picked up a book from The Strand bookstore on the corner of East 12th St. in Manhattan. It was a photography book by Linda McCartney with photos of almost every famous musician that was around in the '70s. I hadn't heard anything about this book until two days after hearing about Bowie's death. My dad was cleaning out his office and came across the book again. Knowing my love for photography, he asked me if I wanted to look at it. I looked at every page, seeing of course many photos of Paul McCartney, until I came across a page that had Aretha Franklin on the left and David Bowie on the right. There was a small note wedged in between the crack of the page divider. The note read, "Surprise! Surprise! Look who's here! Linda certainly has met some interesting people. Signed, 'You-know-who' No I don't mean her (pointing to Aretha on the page next to Bowie)." After reading this, I couldn't help but feel the irony. Not even two days had passed since Bowie's death and my father, randomly deciding to clean his office, found this book with a note wedged in it that could very possibly be from David Bowie himself. I'm still not sure what to make of it, or what to believe. My dad told me that when he first purchased the book from The Strand he never got all the way through it and never saw Bowie's page. I, of course, being too amazed to not find out, Googled "David Bowie handwriting" and everything I found looked too similar to ignore, but not perfectly exact. I still don't know what to believe. I guess it's up to whoever looks to decide for themselves.

I flash back often to my mother's face when she heard about Bowie's death. She was told by one of her friends while we were at dinner. Everything seemed to change for her that night. It wasn't just like losing an idol; she said she lost a little bit of her youth and memory with his death. She cried all night to my father and I heard her weeping and weeping. At first, I didn't understand how she could be so torn up until she told me everything I needed to know in order to understand. Bowie was her youth, her teenage lust and loss. Bowie was her voyage soundtrack to America because leaving Sweden was her great escape. Bowie was her purchasing a leather-jacket and learning English to willfully adapt to the New York lifestyle of the '80s. He was the curbside view, hailing a taxi and throwing her a morning smile. It wasn't until now that I understood all of those tears. Bowie made her into the "Young American" she always wanted to be and now that he was gone she questioned if she still was one.



REDEFINING THE CHARTS IN THE AGE OF STREAMING

by: Nicole Ruiz

The music industry is going through a tough time today compared to how it operated in the past. People just don't consume music like they used to. Record sales used to be an easy way to tell which artist's work was rising to the top, and this is definitely not the case anymore. With the rise of Pandora, Spotify, and other streaming services, the need for physical CDs is becoming obsolete. Some figures say that in 2014 digital sales of music went up 7 percent while sales of physical copies of albums dropped by 8 percent. I would bet that most of the kids born in the last decade have never purchased a physical disk and quite possibly never will in their lives. So many artists and genres are right at our fingertips—on our laptops and mobile phones—so why would we go out to the store and spend \$15 for one album?

In defense of streaming

It is widely understood that streaming services only give artists a fraction of a cent per play, and I don't find that fair at all. In another article, artist Rosanne Cash—daughter of Johnny Cash—said that her album was streamed 600,000 times in 18 months and she only made \$104. This, I will agree, is outrageous. It is hurting the smaller artists, the ones who don't have the following to make money from CD sales and concerts. It is very unfortunate that it really does hurt ones who rely on each and every sale, and whose small number of streaming plays is not bringing in much cash. It is unfortunate as well that on the other hand, the big artists—who are some of the most vocal opponents of streaming sites—don't really need those few cents anyway. This is something that should really be changed, but in my eyes does not take away the value of these platforms.

Although it hurts the smaller artists financially, I think that streaming services are invaluable to many musicians. Without streaming services like Pandora and Spotify, would they even be heard? When was the last time you went out to the store and purchased an album of some small local band that nobody had heard of just to check them out? Streaming services are crucial for some artists to get their music out to the masses. The only way an artist can get the general public to buy their albums and go to their concerts is to get their music out there in the first place, and online streaming

is a great way to do that.

Proposition to accommodate listening styles into our formulas of success

So much new technology has arisen in the last few decades that makes it difficult for us to measure an artist's success. In my opinion, record sales and radio play are no longer an accurate representation of who is putting out the most popular content. The Billboard charts have historically been one of the most respected rankings of music popularity since 1953. The Billboard site states that the rankings are calculated with a formula that rates a track's popularity based on a few different ways of listening. For one of its most well known charts it states, "Our Hot 100 formula targets a ratio of sales (35-45%), airplay (30-40%) and streaming (20-30%)." There are two main issues I find with the way this is being used to determine the most popular music. First, people aren't buying as many CDs, and even if they are purchasing a CD, who's to say they are actually listening to it? People may be purchasing music they don't listen to or end up hating after they buy. I think the number of streams a song gets is a much more accurate way to see what people are actually listening to. Second, people do not get to choose what is played on the radio for the most part. I personally do not like what most of the mainstream radio stations play. How does this opinion factor into who makes it onto the charts? Purchase of music and radio plays are the two biggest factors in popularity according to Billboard, but I think we should be questioning this formula a little more closely.

If people are buying fewer CDs and streaming more, why aren't the charts calculated with a higher weight for online streaming? If we're going to be measuring success by these charts, shouldn't we be keeping the formulas changing along with the technology? Why aren't Spotify streaming charts a more respected way of determining who is most popular and thus who is most successful?

I propose a change to rankings. Let's see what people choose to listen to in their home, on their own, in their bedrooms. What they listen to while they're walking around, or when they're throwing a party. The number of streams a song gets is, I think, a much more accurate way to measure the popularity of an artist or song.

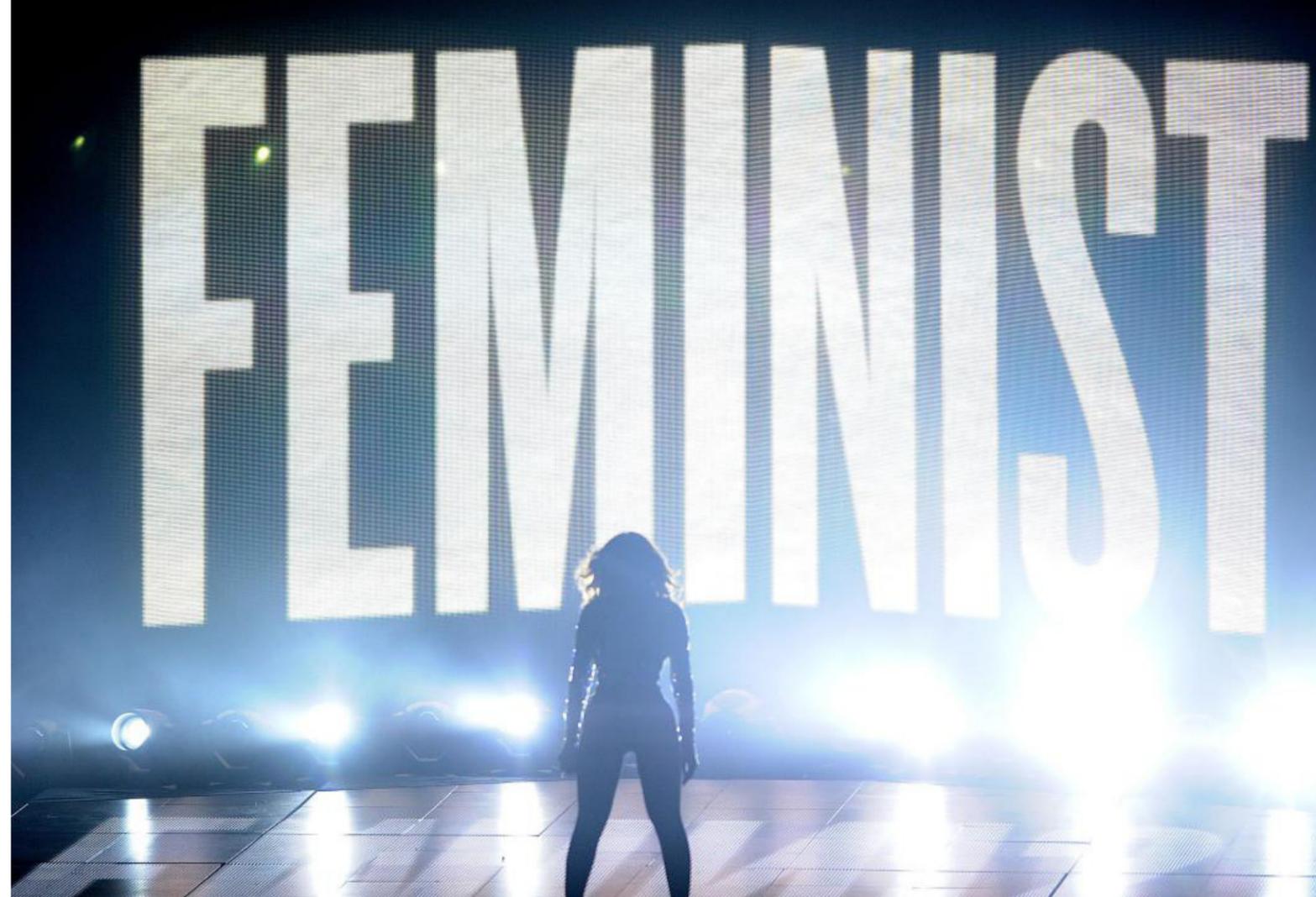
As I have been reading and learning a lot about early blues, rock, and R&B, I can't help but wonder if some of the artists that got ripped off on the charts would have had better success had Spotify and other streaming services been around. People like Little Richard, Bo Diddley, and Chuck Berry, who didn't really start to top the charts until they were covered by white artists. I feel that if streaming sites had been around at the time, more people would have had access to the original versions of the songs and they would have gotten a much wider audience. They could have potentially had a much better shot of moving up the charts. Let's not allow the artists with the smaller mainstream media audiences of today to fall through the cracks completely. Let's help them be recognized by allowing them onto the charts that they deserve!

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MORE THAN JUST VIDEO VIXENS: THE WOMEN OF HIP-HOP

by: Camila Lopez

Women, particularly women of color, have always maintained a major presence within the world of hip-hop. However, their presence has not always been for the best reasons. Since the beginning of hip hop and to this day, sexism has been a part of the culture. Hip-hop music is not inherently sexist, but it mirrors the misogyny in our greater society. At times, male rappers perpetuate the exploitation of women. Sexism is also prevalent in every other music genre, too.

The epitome of the exploitation of women is shown in Nelly's "Tip Drill" music video, which depicts him swiping a credit card between a woman's butt and Dr. Dre's infamous lyric of "Bitches ain't shit but hoes and tricks." The famous "video vixens" are a staple in the hip-hop world. Women are often used as accessories for the male rappers, disposable and abundant. They are used as a status symbol to show that a rapper has "made it" in the industry. Women, cars, stacks of money, and fashion are the main ways that rappers show off their success. Colorism towards dark skinned women is especially visible in this culture. Countless lyrics by male artist profess their preference of light skinned women rather than dark skinned women. Light skinned, mixed and white women

are often valued and represented more in hip-hop. Lyrics like those in Lil Wayne's "Right Above It," which states "Beautiful black woman I bet that bitch look better red," refers to the slang term "red-bone" which means to "be light skinned." Hip-hop can act as a double-edged sword in the way that it has also promoted female artists and a platform for men and women to combat sexism and advocate for women's issues.

Black women have been able to gain power and fame from hip-hop culture. In the 1990s there was a large rise in female rappers and girl groups. Women were able to reclaim their sexuality by dressing in whatever outfit that was deemed "proactive" while calling out sexism. TLC did this in their hit "No Scrubs." While wearing revealing tight leather outfits, the women boast about their financial and romantic independence from men. When Left Eye raps "See, if you can't spatially expand my horizon / Then that leaves you in the class with scrubs, never rising," she calls out men who are useless to her. Queen Latifah's music video for "U.N.I.T.Y" tackles major issues of the daily misogyny that women face. Queen Latifah addresses slurs used to degrade women, catcalling, street harassment, and domestic abuse. Latifah chants "You ain't a bitch or a ho" and calls for the unity between men and women. "U.N.I.T.Y" won a Grammy Award in 1995 for Best Solo Rap Performance, which was the first time a woman won the award. She was able to break through the doors of hip hop while it was a man's world, become very successful, and pave the way for future female in music.

Akoto Ofori-Atta, a writer, states, "This gray area... includes the contradictions of loving an art that is reluctant to include you. Loving men who, at times, refuse to portray you in your totality; and rejecting sexual objectification while actively and proudly embracing your sexuality. Although hip-hop feminism has gone through phases, it has always, at some level, dealt with these incongruities." Missy Elliot and Queen Latifah showed the world that women who did not fit into society's idea of beauty, of being white and thin, could be successful. These women used their bodies when they wanted to but did not rely on their bodies to sell music. In Missy Elliot's video for "The Rain (Supa Dupa Fly)," she is literally wearing a black trash bag. However, women have the freedom to dress as they please and the amount of clothing one wears does not determine her self worth. Female rappers have used hip-hop as a platform to bring social issues to light and bring up other women in harsh circumstances. In Missy Elliot's "Work It" she addresses sex work when she claims, "Ain't no shame, ladies do your thang / Just make sure you're ahead of the game." Missy does not shame women who are often degraded for their work but encourages them to do what they want.

At the 2014 MTV Video Music Awards, Beyoncé came out on stage with gleaming white text that proclaimed "FEMINIST." She was a part of a spark of young women reclaiming the word and calling for equality. In "Flawless," Beyoncé samples a speech by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie reading "But why do we teach girls to aspire to marriage and we don't teach boys the same? We raise girls to see each other as competitors....for the attention of men. We teach girls that they cannot be sexual beings in the way that boys are." Beyoncé uses her fame to enact social change and fights for the equality of the sexes. Beyoncé continuously transforms the music industry and breaks barriers. She has been nominated for 468 awards and won 181 of them, including 20 Grammys. Nicki Minaj is another groundbreaking female musician. She is unapologetically herself. Her songs and videos have caused controversy for being sexually explicit, like her "Anaconda" video that depicts her twerking in a bikini. However, she does not let men sexually exploit her like rappers do with video vixens in their music videos. Instead, she reclaims her sexuality. Minaj told Rolling Stone "If you got a big ol' butt? Shake it! Who cares? That doesn't mean you shouldn't be graduating from college." She knows that the two aspects are not mutually exclusive.

Joan Morgan, author of "When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: My Life as a Hip-Hop

Feminist," comments, "I could care less about what these boys are expressing in their lyrics, whether it's misogynistic or sexist or not, because we've had that conversation" but the problem is the societal issues that police black women's body and behaviors due to "respectability politics." However, I think that both are still relevant problems. Lyrics influence and teach listeners how to feel and think to a certain extent. Black women are the ones who are affected most by the derogatory mentality of some hip-hop since they are the ones that are called "bitches" and "hoes" and objectified in music videos. This is harmful for both society and women of color because it creates a stereotype of how black women act, from which the role of women in hip-hop is inseparable. Over the past 20 years, black female rappers have changed the entire music industry and opened the door. Female artist show young girls that they can make it in a male dominated world and that females do not need to act a certain way.

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BECOMING CULTURAL ICONS IN ONE HARD DAY'S NIGHT

by: Sam Green

On July 6, 1964, the Richard Lester film "A Hard Days Night" was released, starring The Beatles as themselves. This rock-doc did not take itself too seriously, which allows for a relaxing view of the band in a much more personal way that extends far beyond brief radio interviews and hits heard over a stereo. By taking us through several days in the life of The Beatles, "A Hard Day's Night" displays the band members' playful charisma, but also makes a point to sell them as youthful in order to make them relatable to their younger fans. The silver screen gives the screaming Beatles fans more than just their music by showcasing their personalities and transforming them from rock stars into spokesmen of their generation.

It was clear from the very first song that the movie was not going to revolve around the content of the individual tracks, but instead simply use them as a vessel to satisfy the fans' need of Beatles music. The first song, not including the title song, "A Hard Day's Night," that is played in the opening credits, is "Should Have Known Better." The song has no introduction and seems almost randomly inserted into the scene, yet it sets the tone for the rest of the movie by allowing the audi-

ence to relax and simply enjoy The Beatles. While in the scene the song is diegetic, The Beatles are lip-syncing over the studio version of the song, which only enforces the intention of the song to be a crowd pleaser. The liberal insertion of music within the movie is not a distraction from the rest of the movie, but rather amplifies John, Paul, George and Ringo's easygoing tone throughout.

While at first The Beatles' superficial appearance seems to be almost clone-like with their suits and matching shaggy haircuts, the movie serves to individualize the band members through their dialogue. Even though they all have their sense of humor, John is the unpredictable comedian of the group providing constant one-liners and comic relief. George is the quiet one who remains rarely heard in the back. Paul is consistently likeable and offers the group leadership. Ringo is goofy, but adds complexity and vulnerability to his character with his self-described inferiority complex that he attributes to his position as the drummer. By distinguishing each of The Beatles from one another, the members gain a level of authenticity that allows their millions of fans to connect with them on a personal level that they were unable to experience before.

With the fans' newfound ability to relate to The Beatles, John, Paul, George and Ringo are able to establish themselves as cultural icons. For a movie that does not take itself very seriously, it still manages to pull together a strong recurring theme of liberation, especially from older generations. From early in the movie, The Beatles are constantly being ordered around by people noticeably older than them, preventing them from doing what they want, namely dancing at clubs, talking to girls, or really anything that involves their independence. At one point The Beatles are told "It's homework time for you college puddings," and made to answer mail, further associating them with their youthful fans, and diverging from older generations. They respond to this demand by escaping their hotel room and going to a club filled with other youth. This rejection of authority is a fantasy for the rising counter culture generation, who dream of rejecting the establishment.

One of the most intriguing and politically charged scenes in the movie is George's meeting with a professional trendsetter, where he establishes himself and his generation as self-minded. Throughout the scene, the man constantly tells George what he wants him to endorse to the younger generation, because he thinks that despite George's candid response that a garment was "grotesque," that the youth is easily manipulated and so it will still be a big seller with the right marketing. George asserts himself as the true voice of the generation, saying that despite the older man's professional and calculated views, the youth still has a mind of their own.

"A Hard Day's Night" serves to create The Beatles' cultural significance that previously hadn't existed despite already having millions of fans. It gave them the ability to fashion and display each of their personalities, personalities that would have otherwise been inaccessible by the public within the context of a band. However, the movie does more than focus on The Beatles on an individual level. Throughout "A Hard Day's Night," The Beatles intently transcend into spokesmen of a generation, whose members will from then on idolize them.



THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BEYONCÉ'S 'FORMATION'

by: Sadie Sprague-Lott

There has been an ongoing debate in the music world about the social responsibility of artists to their fans and the public. Differentiations in the artists, their success, and the time period have affected the level to which artists in hip-hop specifically have voiced their opinions on political issues.

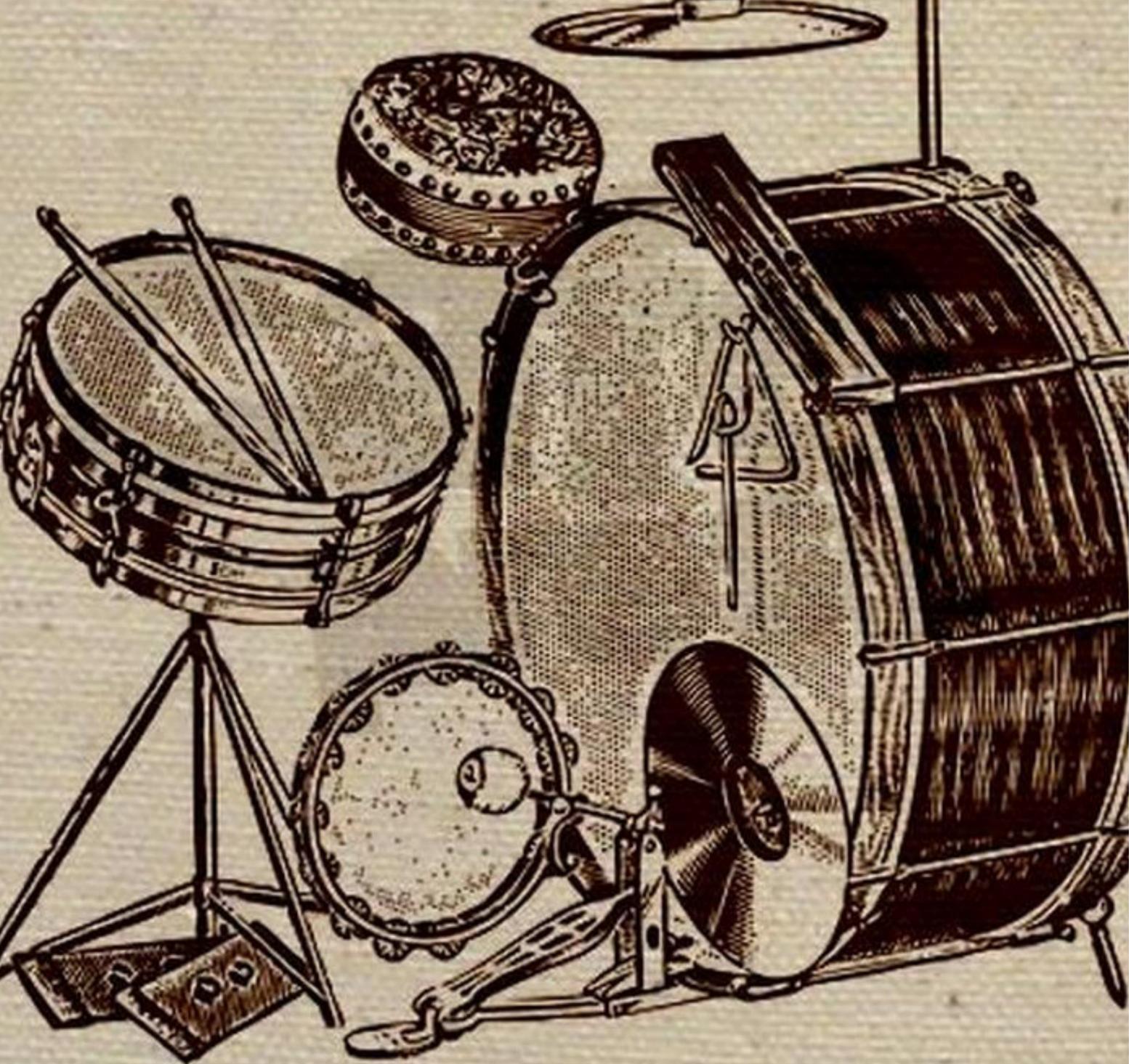
Many would argue that Beyoncé has been one of the most innovative women in hip-hop and pop culture during the 21st century. Her inventive music videos and song lyrics have always been known to push the envelope sexually and in regards to gender. However her latest song, "Formation," many would argue is her most politically controversial song to date. The song came out the day before her Super Bowl performance and was then performed at the Super Bowl. In the chorus Beyoncé calls on black women to come get into formation and slay together. The idea of being in formation has historical context. "Formation, is a different kind of resistance practice, one rooted in the epistemology of (and sometimes only visible/detectable to) folks on the margins of blackness. The political scientist Cathy Cohen talks about activism at these margins, the kind of deviance-as-resistance built and cultivated at the margins of respectable blackness. Formation, then, is a metaphor, a black feminist, black queer, and black queer feminist theory of community organizing and resistance" (Zandria). There is a strong desire in Beyoncé's song and lyrics to fight white supremacy and social order. In these lyrics Beyoncé challenges social issues facing the black community that have been coming to new light in the last few years. This new-found resistance that Beyoncé's propos-

ing is shown throughout many other lyrics in her song, the music video, and her Super Bowl performance.

Visually for this song Beyoncé has pushed boundaries that create a strong support for her message that cannot be misinterpreted. In the music video she is in a scene that resembles post-Katrina New Orleans. She is on a police car that is sinking; Beyoncé is dancing in what appears to be the house of a master of a slave plantation; a young black boy dancing in front of a SWAT team. Not only was her music video controversial, but also in her super bowl performance she and her background dancers were in Black Panthers uniforms. Beyoncé has always been a dynamic artist in her visual accompaniments to her songs, from her stage presence, to her last album, "Beyoncé," where a video accompanied every song. These things combined caused major backlash from people. They feared that Beyoncé was talking about issues that were not real and that even if they were the Super Bowl was not the platform for these actions to be taken. Beyoncé's platform has never been one this vocally pro-black, and for many white fans this came as a shock. Black artists are often seen as distanced from the black community and the 'wrongdoings' that happen in there. For many, this was an eye-opener to recognize that Beyoncé was even black. It has gone as far as a Saturday Night Live creating a skit titled "The Day Beyoncé Turned Black," which aims to capture in a humorous nature the day Beyoncé dropped "Formation" while addressing the issue that most people had not even recognized that she was black up to this song.

In the past there have been times where social issues surrounding the black community were acknowledged and it caused similar actions taken by artists. This type of storytelling of social conditions can be traced back to the early 1900s and the blues era, when black artists were telling their narratives of harsh conditions and searching for work and travel. Although for the time it may not have been seen as very politically inclined, it in fact can now be seen as a catalyst for this narrative of storytelling. A more recent example of this kind of response to social issues relating to hip-hop would be "Fuck The Police" by the group N.W.A. The song addressed police brutality that members of the group had faced and was also in response to the events that took place involving Rodney King. This song was extremely criticized and in Detroit the playing of the song led to their arrest. Similarly, for Beyoncé's new tour she now has no police in one of her stops that are willing to work her concert in response to this song.

Historically music and hip-hop music especially have given a voice for black artists and artists of color that they may not be able to have in any other environment. This song from someone of Beyoncé's stature shocked a lot of America, but it tends to be when artists are at the height of their career that they feel comfortable enough to push boundaries like this. "Formation" is an innovative song in the way it addresses not only blatant racism but institutionalized as well. Songs like this if nothing else ignite conversation, and although not all artists think that this is their political responsibility, those that do often strike a chord with white America.



FROM WAR TO WOODSTOCK: A HISTORY OF DRUM SET IN THE U.S.

by: Noam Radcliffe

Many historians believe percussion to have been the first type of instrument played by ancient peoples, and indeed there does seem to be some logic to this. After all, what could be easier than striking a surface with an object? And what could be more immediately satisfying than feeling the rhythm of your heartbeat replicated in song? But since those early, primitive days, drumming has evolved a great deal, from simplistic timekeeping to creating intricate patterns and textures. Alongside the manner of play, the drums being played have changed as well. In this essay, I will track those changes as they occurred within the United States, the birthplace of the drum set as we know it today.

Up to and through the Civil War, drumming took place almost entirely in two locations: in the orchestra, and on the battlefield. In both of these scenarios, each drummer played but a single drum. For instance, there was the bass drummer, the snare drummer, and any other number of various drummers playing rudiments on their drums, emphasizing the one and three of each bar. It wasn't until after the Civil War that the drum set began to appear. During the war, many units included a musical squad, which would play marching music for morale and organizing purposes. After the conflict had ended, many of these would-be bands stayed together and began performing in small towns. When their performances began to move inside, however, they realized that the size of their groups was no longer feasible, as the performing spaces were too small. Many instruments were dropped, including some of the drums. But drummers weren't satisfied to have only a snare, or only a bass drum, so in the 1870s many began to practice what is known as double drumming, in which the drummer places the snare drum on a seat or other stand and the bass drum on the floor, and then plays both with his sticks. The sound created was a close approximation of having two separate drummers, but was more economical in terms of space and number of members.

Double drumming was the dominant mode of playing for quite some time, even as the first bass drum pedals began to appear. It wasn't until 1909, when William F. Ludwig Sr. patented and began marketing the first widely available bass drum pedal, that things truly changed. The pedal was quickly and widely adopted, as it allowed for the bass drum to be played with the foot, freeing up both hands to focus on the snare drum. The mechanical nature of the pedal led to the new setup being known as the "trap" set, a shortening of "contraption." Ludwig's original design remains essentially unchanged to this day.

In the 1890s, Asian and European immigrants began to flood the country, and they brought with them many of their own ethnic percussion instruments, such as the Chinese tom and wood-blocks, and the Korean temple block. These "effects" instruments, combined with the snare drum and the bass drum with pedal, rounded out the first iteration that could really be described as a drum set per se.

In the 1920s, with the rise of swing, drummers began to move away from the rudimentary style of marching and vaudeville drumming and started to incorporate greater syncopation in their playing. In doing this, they sought a better way to keep time with their right hands than having to mute a cymbal by holding it while playing. The first solution people came up with was the "low boy," a pedal that, when stepped on, would press two small cymbals together down by the player's foot. This allowed drummers to keep time with their left foot by creating a clicking sound, opening and closing the cymbal. Over the course of the decade, the low boy was replaced by the "sock cymbal," which was slightly higher up, and then finally by the hi-hat as we know it today. At the same time, in New Orleans, drummers began experimenting using fly swatters instead of drumsticks so as not to drown out the rest of their band mates. These fly swatters eventually became the brushes that would characterize much of jazz music.

With the popularization of the hi-hat, many beat patterns that had traditionally been played on the snare or on an effect instrument like the wood block moved instead to the hi-hat. It was at this time, in the 1930s, that the first super star drummer came into the public eye: Gene Krupa. Krupa was instrumental in changing a great many things in drumming, including things within the kit itself. The sizes of the drums within his kit set the standard for swing, with a 24-28-inch bass drum, a 14-inch snare, a 9x13-inch bass drum-mounted tom, and a 16-inch floor tom. He also worked with his drum manufacturer of choice, Slingerland, to create tom toms that were tunable with a drum key, which replaced more traditional Chinese toms that couldn't be tuned.

In the 1940s and 1950s, jazz musicians in Harlem began to push the boundaries of swing, creating a genre known as be-bop. In be-bop, the beat was moved from the hi-hat to the ride cymbal, a relatively new cymbal that was larger than cymbals had been before. These cymbals were generally between 20 and 24 inches, while most cymbals had previously been less than 20 inches. With the new cymbal came other changes to the kit, including a general shrinking of the drums, especially the bass drum. Drums began to be used to add accents, color, and texture, rather than just to keep time.

Also in the 1950s a few important changes were made to drum technology. Up until this point, drum heads had been made of calfskin, but in 1957 Remo Beli invented the plastic, or Mylar, drum head, which was unaffected by moisture. The next year, Joe Calato invented the plastic-tip drumstick, a more resilient alternative to wood, and the year after that the Rogers Drum Company developed the "Swiv-O-Matic" tom holder, which allowed for greater flexibility in tom positioning.

In the 1960s, cymbals grew heavier and thicker to cut through the more aggressive, and generally louder music that was being produced. Drummers began to add more toms, more cymbals, and in some cases more bass drums to their kits, a trend that would continue through the 1970s and reach its logical conclusion in the 1980s with Neil Peart completely surrounding himself with instruments such that he need be lowered into his kit by a crane.

Drums have been a constant element in American popular music for as long as the nation has existed, and the changes in the kit have in many ways paralleled and expressed changes in the music itself. As the music changed, so did the kit, and vice versa. From the fog of war to the haze of drugs, the change in drums has been a mirror to the change in culture.

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HAIL! HAIL! CHUCK BERRY! —A MOVIE REVIEW

by: Isaiah Bellamy

Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll is a 1987 documentary film directed by Taylor Hackford that introduces audiences to "The Originator," Chuck Berry. The film features big name stars such as Chuck Berry himself, Jerry Lee Lewis, Keith Richards, Johnny Johnson and Eric Clapton as they narrate the rise of Chuck's fame leading up to a star studded rock performance celebrating his 60th birthday in Saint Louis.

The documentary begins with a general synopsis of how it all began at the Cosmopolitan Club in his hometown of St. Louis Missouri. There he played with the Johnnie Johnson trio, soon to be known as the Chuck Berry Trio. Johnson recalls the reason for the decision: "He knew more about business than I did." At the time Chuck had gone to school, as his mother did, and was now working carpentry, as his father did, all the while creating a name for himself at the Cosmopolitan Club. But he says, "As the money got larger [from gigs] I put the paintbrush down and picked the pick up." He started at \$800 a week playing six nights a week, but that would soon change when he was scooped up by Chess Records of Chicago. In 36 hours Chuck recorded four songs for Leonard Chess, "Maybellene," "Too Much Monkey Business," "Wee Wee Hours," and "Roll Over Beethoven." "It wasn't too hard to write," he says, "because I had been making up verses that hole time." Song-writing came naturally to Chuck, in fact, "Poetry," he states, "is my blood flow."

As the film carries on, the questions from producers seem to try and capture Chuck Berry's somewhat mysterious persona. Chuck Berry's agent Dick Allen is cited in the film saying, "He never had a big entourage." In fact, you can see Chuck sauntering through the airport solo with a single suitcase in hand apparently equipped with a toothbrush, a comb and a guitar. We also get to hear an anecdote by a young Bruce Springsteen. Because Chuck was a one-man crew, bands were hired to perform his songs with him and seeing as how everyone at the time, including Bruce, knew his songs this was no issue. Bruce played his set and the crowd was moderately pleased but he knew one thing, "They came for Chuck," he said with a modest laugh. But there was an issue: Chuck hadn't shown up to the set yet. It wasn't until five minutes before the show began that Chuck walked through the back entrance of the gig and went straight to the office. Business as usual. Chuck emerged from the office, seemingly ignored the band, and walked out on stage. Bruce frantically asked Chuck what songs they were going to play, and he responded smoothly, "We're going to do some Chuck Berry songs." While this go-with-the-flow attitude does capture the way in which Chuck performed his music, it was quite contradictory to how he got there.

The film centers mostly on the rehearsals Chuck led his band and crew through for the infamous 60th birthday celebration, and here is where we can identify the edgier side of Chuck. Seemingly soft spoken and polite in interviews of his childhood, you can hear him yelling about someone adjusting his mic in order to get the proper sound on film. "I don't care how it sounds on the film! It's how Chuck Berry sounds, and it's my amp, don't touch my amp!" Keith Richards explained that working with Chuck was no easy task. You can sense the tension while Chuck was trying to get Keith to play a chord in one of Chuck's songs. The two repeated the same few bars about 10 times before Chuck was satisfied. Throughout the rehearsal Keith reaches often for his pitcher of beer, sipping every time Chuck begins critiquing one thing or the other. "If you want to do it, we're going to do it right," Chuck mentions to Keith.

Keith recalls another time Chuck expressed his wild and unpredictable character. As Chuck walked out of a dressing room, Keith made the mistake of tapping Chuck on the shoulder, saying a friendly, "Hey man don't leave without saying goodbye." Chuck responded with a punch to Keith's face. "I was just proud I didn't go down," Keith says with a laugh. In fact, Chuck had another physical encounter with Jerry Lee Lewis. "What was it about?" the producer presses. "Well I said I was the king of rock and roll," says Lewis. "He didn't like that. We were friends after that." Keith also

made a point to mention, "I can't dislike the man." It's something about Chuck that allows him to receive the most animosity and the most love no matter what room he is in.

This rough exterior may have been established through the experiences Chuck had as an up and coming black artist in the '50s and '60s. In a sit-down interview with three greats, Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, and Little Richard discuss the frustration and struggle they endured in order to reach their fame. "You were black and they didn't want you on the television [or the radio]," Little Richard recalls. Knowledgeable in mathematics, Chuck knew how cruel the music business was in signing black artists. "Half a cent per record," he recalls. Little Richard went on to explain how white artists like Elvis Presley, Pat Boone, and Gene Vincent got their fame through Sun records covering black artists' songs. "The white kids would take my record and put it in the drawer see? And put his [Pat Boone's] on the dresser, but we was still in the same house ya see?" he exclaims with a laugh. But this laughter couldn't be heard at the time of any of the black artists being covered. In fact, Richard recalls having quite the resentment for white artists because they were restricting his growth. But later on black artists such as these greats have come to terms with it, acknowledging that without the white artists the music would have never reached the ears of so many.

"There's not very many ways to play rock and roll other than the way Chuck plays it," Eric Clapton admits. The man Chuck Berry was a legend in the eyes of legends. The power he displayed over a crowd was breathtaking. His music, centered on school, love, and cars, captured the hearts of black, white, old and young. He broke all the boundaries of the preexisting rules of R&B, jazz, and rock and roll, with piano rhythms played on his guitar. "The one thing about rock and roll," Chuck says, "is the freedom." And free is exactly what he looks like on the stage. If there is one thing this incredible film "Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll," it is that it illuminates that Chuck Berry not only defined rock and roll, but that he is rock and roll.



LITTLE RICHARD: TUTTI-FRUTTI, GOOD BOOTY

by: Frankie Brown

Richard Wayne Penniman, better known by his stage name Little Richard, is among the most influential figures in rock and roll history. His charisma, unique vocal ability, and songwriting ability made him a pivotal figure in the founding of many music genres, including rock and roll, soul, and funk.

Like many black artists of his time, Little Richard grew up in the church, singing gospel music. In fact, his first stage performance was an impromptu opening number for Sister Rosetta Tharpe at the tender age of 14. Hooked to singing from this point on, in 1948 Little Richard joined a troupe called Dr. Hudson's Medicine Show, where he learned and performed his first secular song "Caldonia." This Georgian native was about to embark on one of the most impactful musical journeys of his time.

Richard grew up in a strict household—a number of his family members were pastors, and his early signs of homosexuality were not taken too well. In fact, his father kicked him out of the house at 13. This served as a blessing in disguise, as he moved in with a white family in Macon, Georgia, where he continued to sing and foster his musical talent.

Since 1951 Richard had been recording songs for RCA and Peacock Records (to not much success), but it was not until 1955, when Richard recorded "Tutti Frutti," that he would have his first hit record. Showing his truly inventive nature, Richard opens the song with an a capella call, "A-wob-bom-a-loo-mob-a-lomb-bom-bom." This was a vocalized drum pattern Richard had imagined. This, along with the suggestive lyrics, distinct vocals and piano playing, served as a basis for Little Richard's career as well as laid the groundwork for future rock and roll artists. It also introduced the instruments that would become staples in the genre in the years to come: saxophones, bass, guitars, the piano, and drums.

Some sources indicate that he wrote the song while working as a janitor in a bus station; he then went on to polish the song while working in various clubs across the south. His original lyrics had to be reworded, however. The sexual nature of these words would have caused too much of a stir and limited the success of the song. For example, it is reported that the original lyrics of the chorus went "A-wob-bom-a-loo-mob-a-lomb-bom-bom! / Tutti Frutti, good booty / If it don't fit, don't force it / You can grease it, make it easy," lyrics wholly too suggestive for audiences at the time.

Many successful artists covered this song in those days: Pat Boone, The Beatles, and Elvis Presley, to name a few. Cover versions were common at the time. For marketability, in a time of racial strife, white cookie-cutter vocalists would cover songs by black artists to gain airplay. Pat Boone's cover rose to #12 on the pop charts, while Little Richard's version was stuck at #17. In the BBC Rock and Roll series, Little Richard acknowledges this phenomenon, and remarks that while white children prominently displayed Pat Boone's version, his original was still hidden in their bedrooms. This shows that Little Richard was aware of the record companies' attempt to capitalize on his unique sound, as well as his humorous acceptance of this. He is not bitter or angry, but accepts this as a facet of life and his career.

Over the next year, Little Richard would produce multiple songs to chart success, including "Lucille," "Slippin' and Slidin'," "Rip It Up," "Ready Teddy," and "The Girl Can't Help It." Pat Boone, Elvis, and Bill Haley covered many of these songs as well. Richard's iconic looks, due to his heavy use of makeup, had him playing roles in movies like "Don't Knock the Rock," "Mister Rock and Roll," and more.

Interestingly, Richard chose to shun secular music in 1957. He went back to recording gospel music and having a full life in the ministry. Though already both rich and famous by this time, this decision highlights how deeply his Christian upbringing was engrained in him. Gospel legends like Mahalia Jackson commended his religious music.

Though he would return to secular music within the decade, he would never sing to the same enthusiasm from the crowd as he did in his early years. Though not as widely popular after his hiatus, his pivotal role in engineering the sound that would become Rock and Roll was never doubted. In fact, he was among the original 10 inductees in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Little Richard was more than just a vocalist—he was a personality and a performer. Because of these attributes, he is a legend in the industry.



SELF-MADE LEGEND: THE BO DIDDLEY STORY

by: Chad Elliott

Bo Diddley is considered one of the rock and roll pioneers and has influenced the entire genre, helping make it what it is today. He was one of the original rock style guitar players, and was so unique in his playing that other artists have tried to mimic his rhythms in their own songs. Bo Diddley's rise to rock stardom is one of hard work and self-make, for Bo Diddley persevered to do what he loved every step he took, and never let anything stop him from making the music he loved.

Bo Diddley was born in McComb, Mississippi under the name Ellas Bates, but was sent at a young age to live with his cousin Gussie McDaniel in Chicago. He learned music in the church where he learned to play the violin for years. It wasn't until he heard John Lee Hooker, a blues legend, that he decided to pick up a guitar. He worked various odd jobs and played on street corners while in Chicago, developing a very unique "mute-stringed, choke-neck style of rhythm guitar" using his violin backgrounds to help form the sound (1). While in high school in Chicago he formed a band called the Hipsters, and got a regular gig at the 708 Club, a local Chicago bar. As he continued to play there, he gained the attention of Checker Studios, a subsidiary of the highly regarded Chess Records, and signed a contract in 1955.

That same year he recorded his first hit, "Bo Diddley," followed by a string of other top R&B songs. Ed Sullivan featured Bo on his show, which was a huge mark of a top artist, and allowed Bo

to get his music to a much wider audience. He invented the famous "Bo Diddley beat" that year in the same song, and artists generations in the future (Buddy Holly, The Who, Bruce Springsteen) have used this very beat in their own songs. His unique guitar style, great stage presence, and creative songwriting allowed his music to become more and more popular in the late '50's and early '60's. Bo also had crossover success with his song "Say Man" that included "verbal sparring" between himself and his maraca player. This was derived from an African-pastime known as "signifying" and foreshadowed rapping battles in the future (1). Unknown to many is the fact that Bo Diddley was an inventor as well. He invented his own cigar-box style guitar in 1958, and even created one of the first home studios ever. This is a true validation of how Bo Diddley was a truly "self-invented legend" (1). Bo Diddley did what he loved and continually changed the things around him to match what he loved, whether it is the type of instrument he was playing or the style he played, he always did what he loved.

Television appearances, touring, and recording new songs kept Bo Diddley popular all the way to the mid-1960's. As the style of rock and roll began to change more drastically, he stopped making as much music, but continued to give lively performances when he toured, and even opened for The Clash, a punk rock band, in 1979.

Bo was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame for his contributions to the genre in 1987, and won the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Rhythm and Blues Pioneer Awards in 1996. He released his last studio album later that same year, and continued to perform live after that. Bo also worked vigorously on the topic of underpayment and bad contracts, trying to get the artists what is due to them. He not only contributed to the rock world with his talent at the guitar, but also strived to better the environment for all musicians now and in the future. Bo died of heart failure June 2, 2008 in his home in Archer, Florida. He was known to be "The Originator" to many for his great influence on the huge hits in the years that would follow his super stardom.

While Bo Diddley may not have had the extreme popularity and crazed fan base that the Beatles had, he contributed so much to the evolution of rock that he cannot be ignored. He was truly passionate for his music and paved the way for some of the all-time greats. No matter the era or the situation, Bo strived to make music he loved and invented new aspects of rhythm guitar that had never been done before. Bo Diddley was a self-made legend and deserves the title.

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N.W.A

The World's Most Dangerous Group



N.W.A.: THE LEGACY CONTINUES

by: Terence Norton

After Kendrick Lamar performed at the Grammy Awards on February 15, 2016, bound in chains while rapping about racial injustice, he received a prolonged standing ovation from the audience. His galvanizing performance would not have been possible, however, without the groundbreaking music of N.W.A. (an acronym for Niggaz Wit Attitude). It has been more than 25 years since N.W.A. was formed in Compton, California, yet its musical legacy endures. The iconic group popularized gangsta rap and spawned a cadre of musicians, like Lamar, who continue to voice the angst of a disenfranchised black culture.

N.W.A. was the brainchild of rapper Eazy-E (Eric Wright). He recruited other rappers and DJs from his Compton neighborhood to write songs and form a group. The original members included Dr. Dre (Andre Young), Arabian Prince (Kim Nazel), and Ice Cube (O'Shea Jackson), with MC Ren (Lorenzo Patterson) joining the group when Arabian Prince left just before the release of their first

studio album. The group burst onto the scene and made a name for itself with its 1988 debut album, "Straight Outta Compton." Written from their personal experiences of living in Compton, the music graphically addressed the disturbing reality of urban city life, namely guns, drugs, racial inequality, and police brutality. N.W.A. generated considerable controversy with their profane lyrics, as keenly evidenced in their song, "Fuck Tha Police," in which they rap about debasing police harassment and officers who "think they have the authority to kill a minority." As Ice Cube related in a 2015 Rolling Stone article, the lyrics grew from their personal experiences of being racially profiled and constantly harassed by the police as early as 9 and 10 years old. "When you in the hood, they get you early... just to put that intimidation in you," explained Ice Cube. Not surprisingly, the group referred to its music as "reality rap," but to the music world the album and the radical cultural commentary in N.W.A.'s songs marked the beginning of the gangsta rap genre.

Most radio stations initially refused to play N.W.A.'s songs due to the graphic lyrics and violent themes. The album generated a lot of buzz, however, and continued to sell simply on word of mouth. The album's sales also got a boost from an unlikely source when the FBI sent a letter to N.W.A.'s label, Priority Records, castigating the group for advocating disrespect of law enforcement. The publicity made even more people want to hear N.W.A.'s music. "Straight Outta Compton" went multi-platinum and sold more than three million copies.

As with many groups, there were problems. Just as N.W.A. was finishing its first tour, Ice Cube left the group. He clashed with the group's manager, Jerry Heller, over financial issues and felt undercompensated. The group proceeded to make a second album in 1991, "Efil4zaggin [Nigga-z4Life]," which debuted at number two on the Billboard 200 sales charts but also would become the group's final album. By the end of the year, Dr. Dre, who had produced the highly synthesized sound of "Efil4zaggin," would also leave to start his own record label. The aftermath of N.W.A.'s breakup was ugly, with members of the group insulting other group members in later recordings.

While N.W.A. existed for only a few years, the group's influence extends to today's artists. Many rap and hip-hop musicians praise N.W.A. for being the first group to promote gangsta rap, thereby allowing them to write music that openly speaks to racial inequality, violence, and police mistreatment without fear of career repercussions. N.W.A.'s willingness to push boundaries and brutally depict what was happening in the lives of urban youth shaped a corps of rappers. Indeed, The Game has stated that N.W.A. was his biggest musical influence. 50 Cent has similarly credited N.W.A. with guiding his lyrics about his personal experiences involving violent crime. This homage to N.W.A. is conspicuous in a scene from his "Hate It or Love It" music video with The Game, where the two rappers as young boys spray-paint "N.W.A" on a wall. The group's music did not resonate solely with minority audiences, however. Eminem was also influenced by the group's lyrics to rap about his own distressed and poverty-stricken life. N.W.A.'s unique ability to connect with the disconnected formed the basis of its appeal and its lasting influence on modern artists.

More than a quarter of a century after radio stations refused to give the group's first album any airplay, N.W.A. is finally getting the recognition they deserve for their groundbreaking gangsta rap sound. In December, N.W.A. was announced as a 2016 inductee into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. A biographical film, "Straight Outta Compton," titled after their pioneering debut album, was released on Aug. 11, 2015, to critical and popular acclaim. The group, whose music was initially shunned and vilified by the mainstream entertainment industry, was portrayed in a big-budget movie directed by F. Gary Gray, further cementing N.W.A.'s position as the most important gangsta rap group in the history of American music. The dramatic film has been nominated for several honors, including a nomination for Best Original Screenplay at this year's Academy Awards on Feb. 28, 2016.

Undoubtedly, much has changed since N.W.A. popularized gangsta rap in 1988. Several of its members went on to successful solo careers, including Ice Cube, who became a well-known actor, and Dr. Dre, who famously became a business mogul, selling his Beats empire to Apple, Inc. for more than \$500 million. Unfortunately, some things have remained the same. After the shooting death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, relations between law enforcement and minority communities remain as tense as they were when N.W.A.'s music was released. This is why the brutally honest emotion of N.W.A.'s trailblazing gangsta rap still resonates today. N.W.A. ushered in a revolution with lyrics that were unafraid to expose the ugly truth of inner-city life for young minorities. Their music continues to inspire, as seen in Compton-born rapper Kendrick Lamar's electrifying Grammy performance, and will forever serve as an inspiration for artists hoping to give a voice to those marginalized by society.

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A LIFE OF ADVERSITY OVERSHADOWED BY A LIFE OF SUCCESS

by: Ben Shively

Ray Charles is arguably one the most talented and renowned musical artists of all time. Today, many people know about his success and are familiar with his music, however, the struggles that Charles overcame throughout his lifetime can be easily overlooked because of the many talents and musical productions that he is known for. Two of the biggest blows that Charles experienced occurred back to back during his childhood in Albany, Georgia, where he was born. When they were both just mere infants, Ray and his little brother, George, were playing together in a local washtub when suddenly George began thrashing in the water and screaming for help. Ray tried to lift his drowning brother out of the water, but was simply too weak to do so. When Ray returned to the scene with his mother, George had already passed away. Losing a sibling and a best friend at such a young age is an unimaginable tragedy for most of us. Witnessing the event firsthand and living with the knowledge that he had been powerless in the situation haunted Ray for the rest of his life.

Only months after George's death, Ray experienced yet another trauma. He began oozing mucus out of his eye sockets and would wake up each morning with his eye lids stuck together. The doctors diagnosed the problem as congenital juvenile glaucoma and told Ray that he was on the verge of becoming completely blind and had no hope of recovery. Ray's mother, Retha, responded to the problem by treating Ray exactly the same. Fearing Ray's dependence on others because of his disability, Retha continued to make Ray do the same chores he had always done and forced him to learn the lay of the land around their home without helping or guiding him at all. Shortly after becoming blind, Ray was sent to a state school for the deaf and the blind in St. Augustine, Florida. While he was there, both of his parents died, leaving Ray a young, blind orphan all alone in the world. All of these hardships that Ray Charles endured occurred within the first fifteen years of his life.

It is truly amazing to see how Ray Charles was able to overcome so many crushing obstacles throughout his childhood and still find the perseverance and resilience to live on in pursuit of his passion. Despite the setbacks, Ray continued to develop a prowess for music at the school for the blind that he attended. It seemed that, no matter what happened in his personal life, nothing could take away the joy he received from playing and listening to music. He is quoted saying, "I was born with music inside me. Like my ribs, my liver, my kidneys, my heart. Like my blood."

In light of being born with an incredible musical ability, which seemed to be firmly ingrained in Ray's body and mind, more problems arose for the artist only a short time after all the trauma of his childhood occurred. Ray began using narcotics, heroin for that matter, at the age of sixteen. He has commented on his drug use saying that once it began, he continually felt the need to do more and more and more. Many people have claimed that Ray turned to drugs as a means to ease all of the pain that lurked inside of him from the past. However, it is fair to say that Ray's addiction to drugs only worsened the hardships of his life and created yet more obstacles for him to overcome. When Charles was arrested for drug possession in the early '60s, the officer who took him in reported that Charles had the worst needle scars, on both of his arms, that he had ever seen, on both of his arms. This alone is clear evidence to suggest why Ray Charles would always be seen wearing a long sleeved shirt.

Although Ray Charles took part in the use of illegal narcotics, he was not a criminal at heart. He was a man holding on to a lot of pain and needed the help and support from the people around him, as opposed to an excess of heroin, which is what he had turned to instead. Ray ultimately needed to be heard and known by others because what he went through is something that regular people simply could not possibly relate to. The fact that Ray needed to be heard is exactly what makes his music so special. He pours his entire soul into his work for everybody to get a glimpse of. Ray has even spoken of this himself, stating "I want people to feel my soul. I try to bring out my soul so that people can understand what I am." So now, when we talk about who Ray Charles really is, we think about his musical genius and rise to fame, but we must also look at the burden he carried the whole way there. Ray will forever stand as a historic example of a man who struggled his whole life but never gave up. His legacy tells all of us that humans have an endless supply of willpower and hope in a world full of challenges and setbacks.

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BUILDING A LEGACY: THE RISE AND FALL OF DEATH ROW RECORDS

by: John Fought

As the late 1980's gave birth to gangster rap, with the epic rise of larger than life characters like NWA rappers Easy E, Ice Cube, MC Ren, and Dr. Dre, the mid 1990's saw rap explode across the mainstream airwaves, bringing with it a wave of controversy and scandal. At the center of this new cultural movement was Death Row Records.

As has often been the case in the entertainment industry – particularly with black artists – the records sold by these late 1980's rap artists made millions of dollars for record labels but that didn't mean the artists got paid (St. Clair). Determined to break the cycle of theft and exploitation by record labels, Dr. Dre and a few other rappers decided to set out and form their own record label, one that would allow them to maintain control of their music and the profits. Dre first contacted Dick Griffey, a black businessman in LA who had produced other R&B artists, who offered Dre and his crew space in a studio he owned in Hollywood.

It was around this time that Suge Knight stepped onto the scene. An imposing figure, Knight

was a college graduate who had attended El Camino Junior College in California on a football scholarship. At one point he had picked up a contract to play for the Los Angeles Rams, but in 1986 he lost the contract and went to work as a bodyguard for Bobby Brown. It was in this role that he first met Dr. Dre. Suge already had a colorful history before starting at Death Row, having been charged with attempted murder in 1987 over a minor argument and with assault in 1990 for breaking a man's jaw, a charge to which he later plead guilty (Independent). He had built a reputation for himself by doing what few thought possible: extracting royalty payments owed to black rappers from record labels and white artists (St. Clair). In a scene reminiscent of movies like *The Godfather*, Vanilla Ice claims that Knight threatened to throw him off a hotel balcony unless he paid his client points on a record (St. Clair). This account is not unlike another given by Easy E, who claimed in a lawsuit that Knight threatened him with a baseball bat and a pipe if he didn't release Dre from Easy E's label (Independent).

Dre and his team quickly went to work in their newly acquired studio space, producing one of the most important rap albums of the '90's, *The Chronic* (St. Clair). With a hit ready to hit the shelves, Dre and his team ran into a new problem: they lacked a way to distribute their records. This is when Death Row's major financial backer, a man named Harry-O, entered the stage. Harry-O was one of LA's largest cocaine dealers and was currently serving a long sentence for conspiracy to commit murder and drug trafficking charges, but he had also dabbled in legitimate businesses prior to going in (St. Clair). He told his lawyer, David Kenner, that he wanted to invest in something within the entertainment industry and to contact Suge Knight about possibly investing in Death Row. Knight and Harry-O met in prison, and agreed on giving Harry-O a 50% stake in Death Row in exchange for 1.5 million dollars. After this deal, David Kenner became the lawyer for Death Row Records (St. Clair).

With the new infusion of cash, Death Row lived up to its reputation by throwing extravagant parties, many of which began to attract the attention of the FBI (St. Clair). Dre took his new album around to all the major record distributors, including Sony, but ultimately all refused due to the growing public debate over free speech and the influence of gangster rap. Finally, Dre found hope when he went to Interscope Records, an LA outfit owned by Ted Field and Jimmy Iovine. Interscope was on the verge of bankruptcy and was looking for way to breathe new life into the label, which it bet it could do with Dr. Dre's *The Chronic*.

The bet paid off with *The Chronic* going multi-platinum. The album introduced another one of Death Row's rising stars, Snoop Doggy Dog, who's first album *Doggy Style* also went double-platinum. In 1995, Death Row hit it big again. Rapper and actor Tupac Shakur was in jail and Knight was the only person willing to bail him out, to the tune of 1.4 million dollars, on the condition he signed with Death Row (Fisher). Shakur agreed and soon released *All Eyez on Me* which sold 9 million copies (Fisher).

At their height, Death Row was raking in \$150 million in sales each year, with Suge Knight at the helm (St. Clair). From the outside it seemed as if Death Row was untouchable, a new rap mafia. The label had become infamous, with periodic news stories of crimes fueling Death Row's image of street credit that appealed to both black and white youths alike. Keith Murphy, an editor at *Vibe* magazine, once said of Suge Knight, "He was hip-hop's boogeyman... [He] gave these guys an avenue to make themselves bigger than they ever could have dreamed of" (Fisher).

Despite the success and revenue from multiple hit records, something ugly had been brewing beneath the surface of Death Row. The studio had become overwhelmed with gang members and thugs from Knight's entourage, making it near impossible to produce a record (St. Clair). Snoop Dog once described the place as "everybody being in a chokehold" (St. Clair). The company had been

plagued with mismanagement and frivolous spending, causing many of the artists to not receive their cut of the money, particularly Dr. Dre who had helped launch Death Row (St. Clair). Dre soon left and the death blow came in 1996 when, after a scuffle with members of the LA Crips gang at a Tyson fight in Las Vegas, Tupac Shakur was gunned down in cold blood (Independent). Following the incident, Knight was convicted of a parole violation and sentenced to 9 years and Snoop Dog left the label in 1997 (Independent). The dream that was Death Row was no more.

Harry-O and his ex-wife sued Knight for \$107 million dollars for their cut of the business, which they never received, and Suge Knight, who had only \$11 dollars to his name, filed for bankruptcy (Fisher). In the end, most of the money generated by Death Row landed in the hands of two white men: Ted Fields and Jimmy Iovine of Interscope Records (St. Clair). Death Row Records may have finally faced execution at the hands of its own management and the greed of the entertainment industry, but its legacy lives on because Death Row paved the way for future rap artists and brought gangster rap out of the ghetto and into the mainstream, where it remains today.

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MUSIC AND BLACK LIVES MATTER

by: Angel Riddle

Music's deep connection to forces of resistance is nothing new. Music is indicative of the time in which it was developed, and speaks to a generation.

Mahalia Jackson's contralto voice captivated audiences across America as she sang at the funeral of Martin Luther King Jr. The Beatles served as a voice for the rising flower children throughout the 1960s as they fought for the end of war and social justice. Beyoncé sang "Take My Hand, Precious Lord" at the 2015 Grammy Awards after the killing of Michael Brown. Music and life are intertwined.

Now, in light of both the recent 58th Grammy Awards ceremony and the Super Bowl, you can scarcely go online without being bombarded with talk of both Kendrick Lamar and Beyoncé Knowles. Both have taken political stances in their latest works, Lamar's "To Pimp A Butterfly" and Beyoncé's self-titled album and latest single, "Formation," which she performed at the last Super Bowl halftime show and sparked a lot of controversy over its strong and poignant messages.

Kendrick Lamar's "To Pimp A Butterfly" is one of the most striking, creative, and politically charged albums of our time, capturing the essence of what it is like to be a black man in 21st century America. Lamar counteracts racial tension with revolutionary self-love, best represented by the track "i" where Lamar boldly states "I love myself" in the catchy chorus.

The album speaks specifically to the Black Lives Matter movement, which began in 2014 after the unjustified shooting of Michael Brown. The album combined many musical genres, jazz, hip-hop, R&B, and "blaxploitation funk," to create something entirely new. This combination of artistic genius and powerful messages has resonated strongly with Americans. The album won a Grammy for Best

Rap Album and has been used to inspire protests against police brutality, most notably in July of 2015 when protestors in Cleveland united to chant the hook of Lamar's song "Alright."

The album is entirely reflective of the current state of America and has helped to inspire solidarity amongst supporters of Black Lives Matter.

More recently, Beyoncé's song "Formation," where she proclaims love and ownership over her blackness, calls out the way Hurricane Katrina was handled in 2005, and requests police officers to "stop shooting [black people]." At the already iconic Super Bowl halftime show, Beyoncé's dancers were dressed in the style of the Black Panthers and demanded justice for Mario Woods. This is not the first time Beyoncé has sent out strong political messages, having both reclaimed the word "feminist" at the 2014 VMA's and making private donations to BLM to bail out protestors in both Baltimore and Ferguson.

Coming out so strongly in support of the Black Lives Matter movement has only strengthened the loyalty of her fan base, although some have decided to boycott Beyoncé because of her "anti-cop" messages. However, Beyoncé's performance was not a call to incite violence on police officers—it was a plea. It was a plea for Americans to acknowledge the oppression black people face to this day. It was a plea for audience members to understand that it is 2016 and, even in this "post-racial" society so many believe they live in, an entire group of people has to beg for unjust killings to be put to an end. It is a commentary on power inequality.

Artists, including Lamar and Knowles, have come under fire time and time again for politicizing art that should serve only as entertainment. However, nothing exists in a vacuum. Nothing is exempt from being reflective of the context and time period in which it was created. As black artists in a time of racial tension, Knowles and Lamar have a right to give their input on what it is like to live in the '10s in America. Like Public Enemy, Bob Dylan, The Beatles, and many artists to come before them, today's musicians tell stories. They raise important questions, critique modern society, inspire, and give hope to every new generation. They create protest songs, songs that proclaim they will not remain complacent in the face of injustice and inequality. They tell the truth, engaging with the truth and engaging with the voices of today's youth through music.

Both Beyoncé and Lamar have taken on issues that for so long have gone untouched by mainstream America and are forcing all these issues into the mainstream where they can no longer be ignored. They aren't radicalizing pop music, they are carving out spaces to voice the concerns of the American public and, in doing so, creating discourse on these topics. Consumers control what is popular and not the other way around. Which artists are given these platforms and are critically acclaimed speak volumes for the youth today, a youth that is restless, passionate, and demanding change.

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STAGE PRESENCE: BRINGING THE PRIVATE SELF INTO THE PUBLIC EYE

by: Peter Fortunoff

When artists perform, they showcase a specific persona. Bessie Smith's varied wardrobe and emphasis on her large size displayed her rejection of typical 1920s notions of sexuality, decorum, and diet. In contrast, Elvis' change from free-spirited "Elvis the Pelvis" to a more palatable and reserved performer alludes to a compliance with his manager's wishes and embodiment of a carefully curated image. David Bowie used costumes and his stage persona, Ziggy Stardust, to convey the "outsider" status of his bisexuality. While Bessie Smith and David Bowie used stage presence to defy mainstream sexuality and diet, Elvis' performance conveyed his conformity to the public's desires.

Bessie Smith's performances were characterized by her unique costumes and shameless self-display. Writer Paul Oliver in "Bessie Smith" (1971) notes that her costumes transgressed gender and cultural lines: "She both favored a kimono dress decorated with the currently popular Oriental flower patterns and sometimes changed into a tuxedo and strutted across the stage, exploiting her strong contralto voice by doing a male expression" (11). Oliver also mentions the role of Smith's body language in conveying emotion: "With simple, generous sweeps of her full but shapely arms she would emphasize her words [...] striking her palm or wringing her hands in a physical expression of her vocal phrases. As she reached the peak of her blues she would throw back her head and sing full and loud." (29). Smith attracted audiences with her commanding visual presence and emotive voice. Her varied wardrobe and bodily movement on stage, as described by Oliver, allude to her rejection of fragile femininity. Jennifer Ryan in "Bessie Smith: Upsetting the American Appetite" further describes Smith's rejection of mainstream ideas through her sexuality. She not only "refus[ed] to occupy a single, conventional sexual identity" on stage, but also in her personal life through sexual partners (Ryan, 27). She openly discussed her "scandalous affairs" with both sexes, asserting her "power of choice" over typical ideas of heterosexuality (Ryan, 27). Smith also countered the idea that women should be thin. She "deliberately positioned her stout body in opposition to dieting trends" (Ryan, 17). Criticized for embodying excess through her "abundant flesh, sexual appetite, [and] the consumption of drugs and alcohol," she flaunted her large figure to symbolize her self-assurance and individuality (Ryan, 25-26). Stage performance allowed Bessie Smith to demonstrate her sexual fluidity and bodily pride by wearing gender-defying costumes and emphasizing her large figure.

While Smith's performances display her defense against mainstream images, Elvis' transition reveals his submission to public demands. Irene Oppenheim in "Rocking the American Dream" describes the controversial beginning of Elvis' career: "When Elvis Presley first started performing he was banned from a number of radio stations and public appearances because his hip-swiveling renditions of such songs as 'Hound Dog' and 'Mama' were considered the forbidden realm" (22). Known as "Elvis the Pelvis," he embodied the "free spirit and rebelliousness of teenage youth" (Hammontree). The suggestive dancing gave Elvis publicity yet prevented him from gaining appreciation from an even wider audience. However, he soon appeared less passionate on stage, replacing upbeat dancing with a reserved posture and more innocent lyrics.

Some listeners and writers attribute Elvis' reservation to manager Colonel Tom Parker who "didn't give a damn about music or taste or artistry; but he cared very passionately indeed about



Bessie Smith performing with a top hat and cane



Elvis and his gyrating pelvis

Bowie's performance costume



money” (Gray, 3). Parker is thought to have carefully modified Elvis’ persona to become a “more saleable commodity” (Oppenheim). When examining Elvis memorabilia commissioned by Parker, including action figures and lamps with the singer’s torso, author Erika Doss discusses his malleable identity: “Elvis has been consistently renegotiated and reconstructed to mesh with individual and institutional preferences” (4-5). To appeal to public desires and garner a larger audience, Elvis lost his rebellious character. Under Parker’s influence, Presley became “sweeter and tamer” (BBC/WGBH). Writer and spectator Steven Rosen in “Elvis Presley: The Sweet Inspirations” immediately noticed the singer’s “\$200 outfit, \$12 hair style, and \$37 shoes,” portraying Elvis as a fabricated object (1). A combination of commodities and prices, Elvis had evolved into a product of “radio stations, the clothing industry [and] the management agencies” (Rosen, 1). Rosen noted Elvis’ reserved performance later in his career: “Gone were the sensuous bumps and twist movements; in fact it didn’t even look like he was sweating” (1). Elvis began as a rebellious youth symbol yet allowed others to dictate his image. His transition to a more reserved and managed figure indicates his submission to the wants of his fans and the overbearing influence of his manager.

While Elvis’ performances represent his submission to the public’s desires, David Bowie used costumes and theatrics to proclaim his “outsider” status. David Jones, Bowie’s birth name, joined a rock and roll youth group at the age of 15. He jumped between five other groups, none of which became famous (Sandford, 137). To promote himself as an artist merging pop, psychedelic rock, and British Music Hall genres, he adopted the name David Bowie. His fascination with alternate personas began when studying dramatic arts and miming at the London Dance Centre at the age of 20 (Sandford, 156). He adopted the alter ego of Ziggy Stardust, a gay spaceman, to communicate his bisexuality. Much like the character’s space origins, Stardust’s costumes were “out of this world” (Frith). His outfits during a 1973 concert, for example, ranged from “an iridescent turquoise and crimson jump suit with sleeve and trouser extensions to make him look like a strange tropical fish” to a “white satin Japanese ensemble with thigh-length boots” (Shaar Murray). Bowie’s unexpected and space-derived costumes visualized the alienation he felt as a result of his sexual orientation. While Elvis succumbed to public opinion, Bowie aggressively defended his individuality. For example, he often “kneel[ed] before band mate Mike Ronson and fellat[ed] the guitar” though conservative spectators found it to be “garish and disrespectful” (Hester, 21). The image of Ziggy Stardust and the confidence Bowie had when portraying him “sent the message that it was perfectly cool to celebrate your inner freak” (Hester, 22). Similar to Bessie Smith using the stage to proclaim her individuality, David Bowie used it to embrace his bisexuality through an alter ego.

Exemplified by Bessie Smith, Elvis Presley and David Bowie, stage performance allows artists to proclaim their individuality, assuming they defend these qualities against public backlash. Though Smith was an African American female performer in the 1920s and Bowie was a British male popular in the ‘60s and ‘70s, they both used their stage presence to reject notions of heterosexuality and health. In contrast, Elvis, under the influence of his manager, gave up his signature gyrations to present a tasteful image to a wide audience. One can speculate whether modern day artists’ social media debacles and questionable clothing choices are testaments to their true beliefs or simply calls for attention. Falling within the extremes of curated Elvis and nonconformist Smith and Bowie, artists either express their individuality by communicating their true beliefs or showcase false personas for popularity and public approval.

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MAX MARTIN AND MODERN MUSIC

by: Annie Ferreira

“...Baby One More Time,” Britney Spears’ debut single, reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100 in early 1999 (1). It was also Max Martin’s first number one single, and over the next 17 years his songs would go on to reach the #1 slot 20 more times (2). “I don’t really think we understood what we had done,” Martin said in “The Cheiron Saga,” a 2008 documentary about the earlier part of his career (2). Since that moment, Martin and his protégés have dominated the pop charts, their style of songwriting and producing redefining what pop music, and pop stardom, means. What he had done, in essence, was start to reshape American popular music.

Martin was born Karl Martin Sandberg in a suburb of Stockholm, and grew up learning music through Sweden’s public education system. He began as a musician himself, modeling his glam-metal band, It’s Alive, after Kiss. But his love of pop music eventually led him to take up songwriting and producing, and in 1994 he opened Cheiron Studios with friend and fellow Swede, D.J. Denniz PoP (2). Early on, Martin wrote songs for the Backstreet Boys, and through their record label met Spears. Today he writes hits for Taylor Swift, Katy Perry, The Weeknd, and even Adele.

Martin’s formula for success can be described as a combination of “ABBA’s pop chords and textures, Denniz PoP’s song structure and dynamics, eighties arena rock’s big choruses, and early-nineties American R&B grooves” (2). John Seabrook, who wrote the 2015 book “The Song Machine: Inside the Hit Factory,” theorizes that “perhaps the greatest advantage that Sandberg and his Swedish colleagues enjoyed was their relative freedom from the racial underpinnings of the long-established American distinction between R. & B. and pop” (2).

In this way Martin is similar to the British bands in the 1960s who were able to adapt the blues because, for them, it lacked a strong racial association. Likewise, Martin reshaped the traditionally African American R&B genre, bringing it to a mainstream white audience. Originally, Martin offered “...Baby One More Time” to R&B group TLC. They turned it down though, in part because of the lyrics can be seen to represent abuse or S&M, both stereotypes that black women are wary of (2). Martin’s offer, though, demonstrates how he originally conceived of his music as R&B, yet his cultural background might not have allowed him to fully grasp the nuances of the genre. Instead, he took the catchiest characteristics of R&B, meshed it with Euro-pop, and made his own Frankenstein style.

In the early 2000s, when Martin was still establishing himself, hip-hop was at the top of the charts, with producers like Timbaland making music with big beats (3). And yet “American pop music was linear and minimalistic, with few chord changes, and no big lift in the chorus,” says Tor Herman-

sen, one half of the Norwegian producing team of Stargate (3). In contrast, Martin wrote songs where the melody was the guiding force. Kelly Clarkson’s 2005 hit “Since U Been Gone,” demonstrates this style as well as Martin’s philosophy about music. Both Martin and his frequent collaborator Dr. Luke admired the Yeah Yeah Yeahs’ “Maps.” Yet Martin felt that the entire song was building toward a powerful chorus which never materialized. The two decided to rewrite the song, but make the chorus into a pop hook (2). “Since U Been Gone” is often cited as the key song that unseated hip-hop on the charts and brought in a new era of pop music (4).

This new melodic style, ushered in by Martin, meant that lyrics were less important. Songwriting became about fitting words into existing, catchy melodies, leading to a lack of “wit, metaphor, or double entendre, songwriting staples from Tin Pan Alley through the Brill Building era” (2). For example, Martin and his co-writer Rami Yacoub thought that “hit” was American slang for call, leading to the unclear lyrics in “...Baby One More Time” (5). Seabrook characterizes the words as “more like vocalized beats than like lyrics” (3). The oh-na-na’s in Rihanna’s “What’s My Name,” or the aah-aah-aah’s and awe-awe-awe’s in Katy Perry’s “Firework” both draw the listener in using sound and not words, and both hit the #1 spot on Billboard’s Hot 100 (6).

Martin is not the first songwriter-producer to embrace the industry aspect of the music industry. In some ways, he is reminiscent of producers like Phil Spector and Barry Gordy in the executive control he exerts over his songs. Martin records all the songs he works on himself, then sends the recordings to the artist he’s sold the song to and demands they copy his exact style and cadence (2). There have also been other moments in pop history where one specific sound has dominated the airwaves: Motown, Elvis, and The Beatles all did it. Yet, Martin’s sole control over the American pop charts, especially given his status as a foreigner, make his case unique (7). Paul McCartney and John Lennon are the only two people who have had more #1 hits than Martin, and though their reign over the pop charts was totalizing, it also only lasted about 10 years. Martin has been shaping the sound of popular music for almost 20.

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THE SOUND OF MUSIC: HIP-HOP

by: Shayna Beaumont

Today hip-hop music is very much so intertwined with the pop and R&B music to which today's youth listens. Whether it be Kendrick Lamar, a rapper from Compton, featuring on a single with Taylor Swift, America's pop icon, or everyone knowing the lyrics to Fetty Wap's "Trap Queen;" the sound of hip-hop has taken over and everyone is tuned in. It is said that hip-hop originated in the Bronx, New York around the early '70s, specifically at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue. There a man by the name DJ Herc was throwing a back to school party for his sister and "extended an instrumental beat (breaking or scratching) to let people dance longer (breakdancing) and began MC'ing (rapping) during the extended breakdancing". Thus hip-hop was born. This music was a product of the "urban renewal" project in New York that left many ethnic neighborhoods in the South Bronx of New York impoverished and run down. The youths, to pass time, created this new type of music. With this music came the culture of the "four elements," a concept coined by Fab 5 Freddy, "MC'ing, DJ'ing, b-boying/girling (breakdancing), and graffiti." These four elements are still important, but the major key on why hip-hop has lasted this long has everything to do with the sound.

One of the first majorly known hip-hop groups is The Sugarhill Gang, with their hit song "Rapper's Delight" ('79). These rappers were recorded singing over a sample of Chic's Billboard hit "Good Times." The song "Good Times" was a disco groove with a heavy bass line, and electric guitar and piano presence. Sugarhill's version takes out the piano and samples in some cowbell playing on a beat, and amplifies the thrum of the bass line, while the beat/bass line repeats itself throughout the whole song. These small adjustments were quintessential to hip-hop back in those days with many artists sampling other songs, and then adjusting them to have more breaks or harder, more emphasized beats within them. When the '80s came only a year, later the music became much more percussive and b-boy heavy. Rap groups like Run DMC, Jungle Brothers, and The Fat Boys had the elements of hard rhymes over even harder beats that went along with their music. The music was made with a style that fit the culture of breakdancing, a popular dance that accompanied the music at the time. The '80s were seen as the "Golden Age of Hip-Hop" due to the creativity and originality of the electronically tampered beats. Artists pushed to make new sounds because "you'd get laughed off the stage for copying someone else's style" back in the '80s. Hip-hop was based around the "skillful production of sounds" so every scratch on the turntable and every off-beat drew the fans in. The '80s sound really focused on beat mixing/matching, beat scratching, and juggling the beats. DJs who could do all of this, along with improvising using all of these mechanisms, were idolized, like DJ Jazzy Jeff. As the '80s came to a close, and the heavy emphasis on DJ expertise started to die down a bit, hip-hop took a new, more instrumental turn.

Hip-hop in the 90's was equally, if not more, hard hitting than hip-hop in the '80s. The emergence of new groups gave hip-hop different vibes and layers to bump to. There were hardcore hip-hop artist and groups like Ice Cube, Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Tupac, The Notorious B.I.G., and Wu-Tang Clan gave the more street, raw side to hip-hop. This type of hip-hop was "profane [and told] gritty tales about urban crime;" it was the reality of what many of these rappers experienced in their neighborhoods. The sound typically heard on this type of hip-hop was a much smoother sound than what was heard in the '80s, but with much more sinister and harder lyrics. The advancement of technology made DJing and making beats, a more complex technique. The sound system gave a smoother sound to the tracks, even making the songs melodic to an extent. An example is Snoop Dogg's "What's My Name" ('93), which has a funky backdrop melody, a slow "head nodding" beat to it, and aggressive lyrics asking "what's my muthafucki'n name?" This one side of hip-hop had its fan base in the much grittier people who could relate to the lyrics. The other side of hip-hop in the '90s was composed of groups and artists like De La Soul, The Fugees, The Digable Planets, and A Tribe Called Quest, to name a few. These artists gave a more poetic, relaxed vibe to hip-hop. The music was much more conscious and political in a less abrasive way. There was a message being made but it was less violent and more Afro-centric, uplifting, and cool. In this type of hip hop the sound

is centered around beats but with an instrumental component to it. A unique bass line, a blaring horn, or the presence of a drum cymbal sticks out and gives the music an almost jazzy sound to it. This change in sound highlights the clever rhymes and witty lyrics making them come out more in the song. An example is “Bonita Applebum” by A Tribe Called Quest (’90), which has a simple drum beat, bass line, and simple lyrics that are rapped/spoken smoothly. In both of these cases of hip-hop, despite the lyrics being of completely different content, the lyrics are what stand out the most. The lyricism of these artists is what shone through on tracks with the beats being close up there but not as central as in ‘80s hip-hop.

Today’s era of hip-hop has a mix of all things passed down from the ‘70s. Record scratching is a bit of a lost art, and many producers do not feature it on their music. With how technology has advanced hip-hop is much more electronically progressed. DJs have their own staple sound to them such that Hip-hop listeners can easily identify the producer behind the music being played. There are R&B and pop artists that integrate hip-hop into their music through features or rapping a bit themselves. For the true hip-hop artists like Kendrick Lamar, J. Cole, Kanye West, and Drake, having the most unique and different sounds that haven’t been heard is essential. The creation of beats through tampering and incorporating melodies into hip-hop is what’s making it so easy for listeners who aren’t necessarily fans of the genre to gain interest. “Singing rappers,” as I like to call them, add a sing-along component to their music to make it more palatable. An example of a “singing rapper” would be Fetty Wap, or even Drake to some extent. The lyricists of today like Kendrick Lamar and J. Cole are very much focused on the delivery of their lyrics and the Afro-American power behind it. They couple this with beats and a sound that compliment the turns of phrase in their words. It’s very much a lyrics first, sound second approach for them. Overall hip-hop has seen many different stages from its humble beginnings to its booming fame now. Hip-hop is all over and the youths are eager to hear the next artist and how they can flip and change this genre that started off with basic percussive beats played on a loop.

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