

How music shaped our culture

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How Music Shaped our Culture Hum 176 11/2/2012 Music is a mass market in the United States, resulting in a strong influence throughout the nation's culture. Youth culture in particular has been impacted since the explosion of rock n roll in the 1950's. As the market continues to expand with each generation, an increasingly wider demographic felt the impact of music on daily life. The introduction of new technology contributed as well with music becoming easier to obtain and distribute. As needs change in America so does the music with it. During the Civil Rights Movement, the music of the African American people became more and more popular, Gospel and R&B would tell tales of trouble in the African American communities. They would sing of their unfair treatments, of being poor, and of their dreams of change and freedom from hate. The 1950's brought around rock and roll and challenged the acts of war and limitations. The music in the 1960's and '70's had a strong political sound that protested the wars and government of that time. This was especially true in the time of the Vietnam War. Songs rang of sounds of peace and love and the end of a war no one really thought we needed to be involved in. The 1950's had a lot of change happen in just a short amount of time in the world of music with the bringing of Rock and Roll. Rock and Roll challenged many limitations that were set at that time, which brought around the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. As white musical traditions were blended with the black musical traditions and black performers started to become popular a revolution started and encouraged the desegregation movement of the 1956-1964 time period. This revolution was the age of Rock and Roll. When the " British Invasion" started in the mid 1960's the sounds of rock and roll changed. According to the text of Media

and Culture Ch. 3; the Rolling stones would influence generations of musicians emphasizing gritty, chord-driven, high-volume rock, including bands in the glam rock, hard rock, punk, heavy metal, and grunge genres. On the other hand, the Beatles would influence countless artists interested in a more accessible, melodic, and softer sound, in genres such as pop-rock, power-pop, and alternative rock. Today rock and roll is still one the more popular forms of music. Though, I myself prefer alternative rock, hard rock, and nu metal rock to any other form. Artists in these genres include Linkin Park, Breaking Benjamin, Staind, Rage against the Machine and Shinedown just to name a few. These artists have more songs with political outcries and their feelings about themselves and what needs to be changed in our world. For example, Linkin Park's song Catalyst is influenced by their fears of Nuclear War, according to their lead Mike Shindoa at a 2010 Madison Square Garden Concert. Shinedown's song 45 is influenced by everyday life and trying to become comfortable with who you are according to their lead Brent Smith. The music we listen to reflects who we are and what we do. Music has shaped how we view things that need to be changed, our political views and even the way we dress and act. It gives us meaning in our lives and gives us something to reflect upon. Some music is just for fun, some are about romance, and others are about who we are as a people. Music has broken barriers for people to address issues that may have never been changed. It has given people a sense of freedom in a way and made us feel a little more comfortable to be open with our views. It has, in a way, changed the course of history. Maybe if rock and roll hadn't been thought of, we would probably still be segregated. If the political music of the world hadn't been heard we

may be in a totally different kind of America with hardly any rights. Music brought around many different forms of rebellion, some good and some not so good. Some form of music has glorified violence but has also made us aware of the amount of violence in our country. Some other forms of music have pointed out corruption in the government and others have touched our hearts in a way to reach out and help others. Music is the life and soul of our world and affects us in every way imaginable; it has changed the way we have changed. As our views changed we have reflected that in our music and it will continue to shift in the same pattern.