

# Rhythm and blues

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First Last Number 18 September Rhythm and Blues Rhythm and Blues originated in the United States of America. The genre derived its influence from Jazz, blues, and gospel. Although, Rhythm and Blues songs combined folk songs from Americans and African Americans, the songs were mostly sung by African Americans (Friedlander, p. 20). The phrase came into existence after the billboard magazines renamed the race records chart. The genre experienced rapid development following the Second World War, as the majority of the poor village youths migrated to the cities, as a result of surging unemployment. The migration resulted in increased number of black audience. The increasing fame of Rhythm and Blues among the African Americans resulted in the genre becoming popular as work songs, gospel songs, and church hymns, ballads, and lyrics as well as secular music. Combining the two styles of music into one genre instilled strong emotions among the singers and lead instruments thereby reflecting soulful and melodic blues with rhythmic force and concentration (Wingood, et al. p. 438).

The recent years have witnessed Rhythm and Blues music receiving widespread criticisms for various reasons. Although singers have been praised for being soulful and capturing emotions of the audiences, the genre has been associated with negative activities in the society like sex, selling drugs, and domestic violence (Rubin et al. p. 26). Most of the early artists who performed Rhythm and Blues were associated with drugs and sex. Even the terms used to identify the stars portrayed the aspects of sex and drugs. For instance, some of them were identified as hard-living and hard-drinking characters. As the fame of musicians increased, the number of followers

increased. Male musicians had a big number of female followers, who spent time together and were willing to engage in sexual activities (Rubin et al. p. 28). The dance styles and style of dressing among musicians and other characters in the music videos has been described as lewd, due to its explicit contents.

The theme of drugs has been prevalent among most of the artists performing rhythm and blues (Smith, Stacy and Boyson, p. 63). The behavior of most artists has been considered as strange. In fact, there are other artists who have confessed being addicted to alcohol and other drugs like heroin and cocaine (Smith, Stacy and Boyson, p. 66). The negative influence of the drugs on the artists resulted in increased criticisms of the genre, as critics believed that the music was responsible for destroying morals of the youths in the society. Some artists had to spend their time in rehabilitation centers, following drug addiction, while others died of drug intoxication. The increased fame of the genre has been characterized by increased rivalries among artists. The increased rivalry has resulted in some artists composing songs with violent content, as a way of responding to their perceived enemies. Later on, music videos would be released with violent scenes. The strong influence of rhythm and blues among its audience has been described as one source of negative vices in the society (Smith, Stacy and Boyson, p. 69). That is, most of the modern rhythm and blues artists have been associated with negative activities like sex, drugs and violence in the society. The negative publicity resulting from the activities of musicians has attracted widespread criticisms in the society, leading to music censorship.

Works cited

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