

Lesson 14

discussions and assignment

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



History of Rock Music How was rock 'n' roll marketed to teenagers in the 1950s? Did the music industry's strategies for marketing rock music change in subsequent decades?

Rock Music has its origin in the late 1940s and early 1950s. At that time it was referred to as rock 'n' roll, and was marketed specifically to teenagers. In 1950s, teenagers got help from their parents financially. The economy boomed and teenagers were supported to complete high school and join colleges (Campbell and Brody, 1999). Parents also gave their children freedom and allowed them to interact with their peers. As a result, teenagers exhibited a more liberalized culture and had more fun than before. Music became the starting point for teenagers to enjoy their freedom and utilize the money given to them by their parents.

Rock 'n' roll transformed teenagers into a marketing concept. On 13th October 1958, pop singer Jo Stafford commented that “ Rock 'n' roll is an economic thing” (History-of-rock. com, n. d.). Teenagers were considered as the first generation to become a sufficient market for rock 'n' roll because they were given enough money by their parents to buy music in large quantities that can influence the music market.

Rock 'n' roll music got the attention of youth since 1952. The economy had allowed them to own radios and televisions. Because 'n' and roll was becoming popular, radios and televisions played it regularly (History-of-rock. com, n. d). The music was easy to dance to, appealing mainly to teenagers who saw fun in dancing. The music was therefore played for dance in the inner-city, especially black schools, and parties for white schools.

The income channeled to music in 1950s also benefited the increasing range

of advertisers targeting teenagers (Campbell and Brody, 1999). Teen-oriented radio stations and television programmes (e. g. American Bandstand) were also developed to meet the increasing teenage demand for rock ‘ n’ roll music. Teenagers also purchased rock ‘ n’ roll music records as a way of rebelling against adults in order to assert their generational identity.

In the subsequent decades, the strategies for marketing rock music changed as technologies and recording studios became an avenue for marketing music in 1960s and 1970s (Campbell and Brody, 1999). New generation record producers such as Smokey Robinson and Brian Wilson had a commercial challenge to widen the concept of music beyond rock ‘ n’ roll, and to target a wider sphere of teenage lives.

References List

Campbell, M. and Brody, J. (1999). *Rock and Roll: An Introduction*. New York, NY: Schirmer Book.

History-of-rock. com. n. d. The Teenagers. Accessed May 7, 2015 from <http://history-of-rock. com/teenagers. htm>.