

The cultural impact of music, dance, and art created by black people

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



Cultural diversity has challenged the old relationship between culture and civilization, with which many communities understood themselves as superior and others as inferior. This situation has been the starting point to generate and legitimize inequality. The music video "Apeshit" proclaims that representation in the arts is not a white privilege and demands acceptance, inclusion, and tolerance towards black culture. The Louvre is a museum full of art and history that reflects the great years of white colonialism. In this period of history, the concept of race emerged as a strategy of control and legal exploitation toward female sex and black people.

The couple decided to pay a new tribute to the black community and launched this musical success to take us through a short guided tour, full of aesthetic, social, and cultural references. This essay tries to expose and analyze the hidden meanings in Apeshit through the literary resources used by the authors and the analysis of the human dimensions represented in the video. The artwork shows that music, dance, and art created by black people also deserve recognition and send a message to contemporary society about exclusion and social abuse.

Human beings are predisposed to appreciate the beauty of their environment and also to react to it. The aesthetic dimension of the human being reflects the creation of works of art or other artistic manifestations such as "Apeshit." Inside the museum, there is an extensive collection of pieces ranging from antiquity to the 19th century, each one capable of generating emotions and feelings in the viewer. The video is also an artistic display of dance and fashion. The couple appears with up to 6

different spectacular designer outfits, which incorporate or complement the pieces on display, echoing their colors, shapes, or mood. In each shot, we appreciate works of art such as 'Mona Lisa' by Leonardo da Vinci, the Greek statue 'Nike of Samothrace,' 'Coronation of Napoleon' by David, The Raft of the Medusa by Théodore Géricault among many others.

Recording at the Louvre and surrounded by famous works of art goes beyond opulent luxury. In general, the aesthetic power of Apeshit seeks to affirm the equality of black culture with white culture. At the same time, the couple brags about their accomplishments in a demonstration of empowerment by sending a clear message: Being black is also an art form.

“ Apeshit” is a cultural manifestation within the Hip Hop/Rap genre that traces ideological, social, historical, and cultural influences. Music, art, and dance are the elements of this culture. It was born suburban to define the identity of some races displaced to other cultures. This kind of music jumps up to fame in the mid-1970s in the Bronx, New York, which was born of rootlessness, poverty, and marginalization. The genre served as a way to manifest the problematic situation in which African-American citizens lived. Social struggles, political declarations, and economic crises influenced by figures like Malcolm X and Martin Luther King contributed to the emergence, positioning, and permanence of hip-hop as a cultural movement. Hip-hop can talk about life in gangs or how to spend the first million dollars on girls and luxury cars, can shout out the injustices caused by racism in the conventional system, or can boast of wearing Louis Vuitton fashion. It can be an anti-system graffiti in the subways or a consumer object in an art gallery. Perhaps

today, no other genre of popular music in the Western world faces this dilemma in such a disturbing way.

Through symbolism, the video has many more anti-racial messages to unpack. In one scene, a black woman appears gently combing the hair of an Afro man. In the background, relegated to the background appear the opaque painting the Gioconda. The shot looks like a magazine cover and is an attempt to restore the balance between both cultures. Afro is a symbol of their cultural identity. This scene places black beauty and culture ahead of the canons of Western art. In the year 2016, Beyoncé, declared to the world: 'I like my baby hair with baby hair and Afros' Formation, (2016). Wendy Cooper examined the biological and social conflicts surrounding the hair. She holds hair is an easy-to-control variable that can denote status, establish fashion, or serve as a badge, 'Hair: Sex, Society, and Symbolism' (1971) (p. 7).

The sequence of Paolo and Francesca da Rimini followed by the image of a black woman who comforts her partner in a rather survival scene. They imitate the lovers that appear in Dante's Inferno. The sin of the characters in the painting happens to play a secondary role for the public. The important message here is how Paolo and Francesca's lives are abruptly interrupted by violence. The reference of this image is the death represented by the stab in Paolo's chest. This sequence creates a contrast that identifies pain and sadness in black communities due to police brutality and the devaluation of black lives. Then we see the same couple in a moment of intimacy, celebrating love and black beauty as a symbol of survival.

Another of the most symbolic references to black communities is Marie-Guillemain Benoist's Portrait of a Black Woman, one of the only portraits of black women in the history of Western art until the 20th century. It was completed by a female artist, possibly in support of the abolition movement. Here is linked female creation + black independence. (5: 37) The picture was created six years after the first attempt to abolish slavery in the French colonies. This paint symbolizes the allegation against slavery and a revindication of women's rights. The black model takes the pose of a lady belonging to the bourgeoisie and possessor of property and capital. The model projects a dignified and fixed gaze showing pride in the color of her skin. In 1804 Napoleon crowned himself and then his wife, Josephine, as Empress of France. Beyoncé symbolically is crowned when placed just below the crown intended for Joséphine. In front of the work, a dozen dancers and Beyoncé move, taking advantage of the extraordinary dimensions of Jacques-Louis David's canvas. Each with underwear the same color as their skin, creating an effect of semi-nudity, contrast, and racial pride. The video shows amazing shots like the stairs leading to the Victory of Samothrace. The staircase is covered by dancers who appear to rise from a hypnotic dream under the power of two women: Beyoncé herself and the mutilated marble body of the winged figure. This scene intensifies the verses ' Give me my check, put respect on my check / Or pay inequity, pay inequity'. Both represent the awakening of female power and a call for equality salary between genders. In 2017 Beyoncé wrote on Facebook. As #GlobalCitizens, we can make our voices heard and turn awareness into meaningful action and positive change, #WomensMarch. ' This is a worldwide movement of

feminist actions that bring together women's groups and organizations that act to eliminate the causes of lack of economic autonomy and violence against women.

Apeshit is a display of ostentation, power, fame, and wealth. The duo does not hesitate to throw poisonous darts with each verse of this new musical success. The lyric is expressive, suggestive, and emotional through the use of different literary resources like simile and onomatopoeia. 'Fast like a Lambo. Using the simile, they compare the speed they have had to generate money with the speed of a Lamborghini. Jay-Z and Beyoncé are evidence of the unachievable American Dream for African American communities. Jay-Z has accumulated a fortune that conservatively totals \$ 1 billion. Making him one of only a handful of entertainers to become a billionaire, and the first hip-hop artist to do. His wife, Beyoncé, has an estimated net worth of \$ 355 million. (O'Malley Greenburg, Forbes June 3, 2019). 'We livin' lavish, lavish/I got expensive fabrics/I got expensive habits.' In these verses, they use rhyme to create harmony in the song, but also memorability.

Through it, Beyoncé wants to notice they are a couple that lives in luxury and abundance despite their skin color. Their money comes from concerts, tours, records, and advertising contracts, but also from the different companies they manage. The couple is one of the most powerful in the music industry. They are satisfied with the fortune they have created working hard, and the luxurious life they can afford. The song is a reference to black empowerment and a display of how they have achieved what

historically belonged to white communities. In 1804 Napoleon crowned himself and then his wife, Josephine, as Empress of France. Beyoncé Symbolically is crowned when placed just below the crown intended for Joséphine. In front of the work, a dozen dancers and Beyoncé move, taking advantage of the extraordinary dimensions of Jacques-Louis David's canvas. Each with underwear the same color as their skin, creating an effect of semi-nudity, contrast, and racial pride.

Since Beyoncé's debated performance in the 2013 Super Bowl, many have signaled the superstar's commitment to the black community and the black movement. Showing solidarity with those like him who have had to face discrimination, violence, and lack of opportunity, Jay Z alludes to the NFL. 'I said no to the Super Bowl / You need me, I don't need you / Every night we're in the end zone / Tell the NFL we're in the stadiums, too.' (3: 33)

The Carters make it clear that they don't need any platform to achieve success because, with their talent, they can move crowds with them. The lyrics support attitudes like that of former NFL San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who remained on his knees during the national anthem. In 2017 ESPN presented Kaepernick with the Sports Illustrated Muhammad Ali Legacy Award. It was Beyoncé, personally handing him the trophy. She said: 'Colin took action without fear of consequence or repercussion, just hoping to change the world for the better.' But Kaepernick was also associated with the broadest and most historic civil rights movement. When Martin Luther King Jr. launched his famous 'I have a dream' speech in the March on Washington in 1963, he spoke from the steps

of the Lincoln Memorial as a way of showing that the country did not live according to the equal values that Lincoln personified. Kaepernick has used a similar strategy regarding the national anthem. Kaepernick used his kneeling to symbolize the gap between the country's racial practices and the values that the national anthem speaks of with its emphasis on America as the 'land of the free.'” Aside from the drama about this African American couple's show of power, attacks on the Grammy and NFL, the political reading of the Apeshit video clip is clear: Beyoncé and Jay-Z once again remember that the black community exists, and it is as relevant as the others. Apeshit is a way of saying that visibility is essential, 'remind us because we can also be as powerful as you.'

The video was set in a historical context where civil society and America's most compelling democratic institutions were agitated by Donald Trump's racist and discriminatory policies. The number of hate groups in the United States had increased, and the Republican-controlled Congress at the time revoked some essential protections for women's rights nationwide. Along with this, the White House had announced that it would eliminate an equal pay initiative that would take effect in 2018. Beyoncé has previously demonstrated against police violence against blacks. 'We are sick and tired of the killings of young men and women in our communities. It is up to us to take a stand and demand that they 'stop killing us. We do not need sympathy. We need everyone to respect our lives. We are going to stand up as a community and fight against anyone who believes that murder or any

violent action by those who are sworn to protect us should consistently go unpunished.'

Evidence shows that Apeshit, "The Carters" was able to show that music, dance, and art created by blacks also deserve recognition. Through discourse and visual image, the couple manages to present themselves as an artistic product at the level of the works exhibited at the Louvre. The video impulse the recognition of diversity as an element for the vindication of the Afro-descendant community. Apeshit is a message to analyze in depth how the great empires basing on slavery, oppression, and the sacrifice of many for the benefit of others. Beyoncé and Jay-Z addressed a dizzying number of political and social issues related to the notions of dominance, inheritance, legacy, respect, and pride; but also, with robbery, abuse, oppression, and cultural exploitation. The great symbology of the video allied to the combativeness of its music allows its messages to emerge, making the dominant power prove its own medicine by using its art as a reference against them. The fact that the video was shot at the Louvre further highlights the accusatory nuances even though the interpretive approach may vary depending on the cultural education and human dimension of each viewer. As Malcolm X express:

'A race of people is like an individual man; until it uses its own talent, takes pride in its own history, expresses its own culture, affirms its own selfhood, it can never fulfill itself.'