

Promotion of violence in rap music

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Music! An ancient form of expression that has been a cornerstone of humanity still widely persists in human culture. It's what connects people and has the ability to reflect a person's most inner thoughts and emotions through sounds and lyrics. From the abnormally structured classical tunes from the 1600 hundreds to the smooth sounds of reggae. You could say that the world would be a much gloomier place without it. Music is perfect! Right? No, unfortunately not. Some genres of music do in fact the opposite of creating good times. While that is probably not the intention for most songwriters. The genre I would like to explore today is rap music and why I think that it in many cases promotes violence.

There are of course many ways to confront this rather controversial topic and everyone's opinion differentiates from one another. While most would argue that rap music is beneficial for our society, I would beg to differ. Hip hop has done more harm than good in my eye History You see, in the days of early hip-hop when artists like DJ Cool Herc broke the scene with this new and exciting form of music it was something that made people in the socio-economic areas of New York city connect and feel happy. Hip-hop was a way to escape the struggles of the ghetto. During the 90's rap music really started to take a downwards spiral. And with it came the gangs and the criminal activity which has persisted into the present. But you could argue that the songs that contain violent lyrics are just a different subgenre of hip-hop and to some degree it is, but you shall not forget that artists that dominate rap usually have some rather questionable lyrics in some of their songs. Perhaps you could take the rapper Kendrick Lamar which is very popular and has many people who look up to him (especially young people).

While he mostly writes non-explicit songs there are a few that promotes violence.

So why does rap promote violence?

As teenagers and young adults, we are looking for role models. For a lot of us it is our father, but unfortunately, and I am not trying to generalise in any way, but some socio-economic areas are populated with teens who do not have their father present and that is just a fact. So, some people find that father figure in these rappers and, well they look up to them basically. When these people do something that is morally wrong like objectifying women or even something that defies the law, teens feel like they need to act the same to be “cool” or socially accepted and be a part of a group. Because teenagers are very impressionable!

We can get the same idea that “Well if they can do it, so can I!”. I’m very impressionable as well, I listen to metal and you know sometimes I daydream about that lifestyle. Some people are more prone to commit crimes. For example, people in the poorer areas of major cities, people that may be bound by past events such as trauma or neglect from their parents. Those are the traits that most criminals have in common. As we have seen, hip-hop Most artists today, even outside of rap, write lyrics about drugs, sex and violence. So, how does just one music genre have such a negative impact on the youth? Today’s generation has such a different outlook on life opposed to the older generations. Today’s generation will learn everything from rap music, in their daily life, whether it be bad language, drugs, violence or sex. They’re going to learn about it anyway no

matter if it comes from rap music, their peers, parents or just being out and noticing what is going on around them. The glamourizing of these things is the problem though. Unfortunately, some rappers paint villainous ideas as heroic. What I mean by that is basically is that it glamourizes the “gangster lifestyle” with you know, materialism, women, money and guns.

So that makes it easier for teenagers to replicate their favourite rappers, because young men usually tend to behave in a similar fashion to their father or show the same traits as them Hip-hop kind off became a culture. It was something that seems exciting in a somewhat bleak world. Something that feels exciting because some people like to break the rules because of the rush you get from it. Well, some rappers use their fame to speak out against injustices such as racism, police brutality etc, and that is amazing, more power to them. But those artists often get overshadowed. But you know what they say: “A bad apple spoils the bunch”.

Rap music with positive messages is often overlooked by the majority of society because of the vulgar language in the songs they hear. So basically, what I feel like rappers, and famous people in general should do is to be more careful with what they do and what they promote. Because as I said before, teens are impressionable. We need role models and people that can show us that we can achieve anything. The world needs more Elon Musk’s, not more gangster rappers who can’t pull their pants up. We need to focus more on the people that only want to bring joy. That’s how we progress as a society.