

# [Music and the eighties essay](https://assignbuster.com/music-and-the-eighties-essay/)

One of the best known decades for music was the eighties. During this generation, there were a number of landmark events. This decade set a standard for music to evolve from for years to come. One of the most recognized advancements was Mtv. It was first debuted on August 1, 1981. This gave way to the first video jockey (VJ). A video jockey was someone who announced videos and told a brief synopsis of the band. Mtv was an outlet for music videos and a gateway for musicians to get their music to the fans.

When it first aired at 12: 01 am, the first words were, “ Ladies and Gentlemen, rock and roll”. The first video played by Mtv was, “ Video Killed the Radio Star” by The Buggles. The digital phase wasn’t completely in play back then. The screen would actually go black for a few moments in between videos while an Mtv employee would insert another VHS tape. Although Mtv was growing more popular, it still had criticism from other artists. It got a lot of negative attention for playing limited music by black artists. One of the black artists that were on the receiving end was, Rick James.

Mtv actually banned the video, “ Super Freak”, because it didn’t fit into their criteria for television. Believe it or not, but another black artist that had a hard time getting airtime was Michael Jackson. Michael was on the CBS record label at the time and the president of the record label made an announcement that if Mtv didn’t allow more black artists airtime, it wouldn’t allow them to play any of the videos from its labeled artists. So, with that, Mtv aired Michael Jackson’s, “ Billie Jean” video. This gave Mtv much more popularity.

After the video aired, Mtv started switching the focus from just Rock music to Pop and R&B. This also gave way for other artists, such as Whitney Houston and Prince. In 1983, Mtv notably was the first to air the popular rock band, Kiss without their stage make up. This was a first for the band, which gave Mtv huge ratings. After several years of supplying fans with a 24 hour feed to videos, Mtv got noticed for other shows, such as Headbangers Ball, 120 minutes, Yo Mtv Raps, TRL, Road Rules and Real World. Mtv has been going strong for almost 30 years.

In the beginning, they were told they played too many videos, now they are known for not playing enough videos. Mtv also made way for many music shows. Because of its recognition, more music videos were being played by other stations. Some of these were HBO’s Video Jukebox, WTBS aired Night Tracks, ABC came out with ABC Rocks and VH1 got its start. There was a lot of history making events in the eighties with music. In 1980, the legendary John Lennon of the Beatles was murdered. On May 11, 1981, the popular Reggae music star, Bob Marley died.

In 1982, Michael Jackson’s album, Thriller is released. In 1983, the first music CD is sold. In 1984, Marvin Gaye dies, Prince’s first film, Purple Rain is debuted, Michael Jackson gets burned in a Pepsi commercial and Tina Turner makes a comeback. In 1985, Whitney Houston releases her first album and the popular song, “ We Are the World” is produced. In 1988, music CDs outsells vinyl records. In 1989, Milli Vanilli wins the Best New Artist Grammy and then has it taken away because they were caught lip synching.

It’s hard to talk about music today without bringing up music from the eighties. Some of the artists today got their ideas and musical talent from watching their idols from that decade. For example, Usher credits his dancing and musical talent from Michael Jackson. In fact, there are numerous artists that give thanks to eighties icons. Some of the most iconic artists will always be associated with the eighties because of their “ one hit wonders”. A one hit wonder is someone that made a huge success off of one hit song.

Some one hit wonders are: “ We’re Not Gonna Take It” by Twisted Sister, “ Mickey” by Toni Basil, and “ Lean on Me” by Club Nouveau. There are dozens of one hit wonders from the eighties. Most still get played today. You can hear a lot of them in commercials and television ads. When we think about music in the eighties, we look at the pictures and see how far we’ve come. Even the ways videos are produced today are much more different. The budget today seems much more beyond than what they had back then. The simplest video in the eighties involved neon colored backgrounds and big hair.

Today, videos include explosions, enhancements and lots of exotic locations. Eighties music also influenced fashion. There was big hair cloned from the heavy metal bands, adidas tennis shoes worn from the Run DMC look, lace gloves inspired by Madonna and make up from the punk rock bands. Although music is much more highly developed in this decade, we have to give credit to the eighties for paving the way. Without it, we may not have some of the talented artists that we have today. Not to mention some of the songs that our parent’s can’t seem to stop singing 30 years later.