

Annotated Bibliography

Eastman, Jason T., and Terry F. Pettijohn. "Good Times and Endless Love: Billboard R&B/Hip Hop Songs of the Year Across Social and Economic Conditions." *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 11 Dec. 2017, pp. 1-12, <https://doi.org/10.1037>.

In the journal article "Good Times and Endless Love: Billboard R&B/Hip Hop Songs of the Year Across Social and Economic Conditions", Jason Eastman and Terry Pettijohn describe the study done that analyzed the types of R&B and hip-hop songs that charted on the Billboard, and how their themes, lyrics, tempo, and general mood changed over time with the changes in the social and economic conditions of society. They used GHTM measurements to determine the positive or negative current socioeconomic state and compared it to the music. Some of the aspects they used were BPM, which a lower one indicated a sadder song, and a higher one indicated a happier song, a longer song indicated a sadder one and a shorter song indicated a happier one. They also observed if the songs had reproduction lyrics or leisure lyrics. They found that in tougher socioeconomic times, the R&B and hip-hop music on the Billboard became sadder, and in better socioeconomic times, the R&B and hip-hop music on the Billboard became happier. Another trend that was noticed was that during tougher socioeconomic times, more female R&B and hip-hop artists made it onto the Billboard, due to the fact that they make more sad songs, and possibly that the female songs provide comfort for many people as opposed to male songs. These results are in contrast with most types of entertainment such as television and other genres of music, which typically tend to get happier in times of difficult socioeconomic conditions.

This relates to my argument by displaying that the connection that listening to R&B has to emotions for most people is likely bringing out whatever emotion the song is conveying and is most likely similar to the emotion they are already feeling. I will use this information and compare it to the results I get from my survey, to figure out if people listen to R&B to comfort them in hard times, but by hearing about those same times, not necessarily hearing happier music to help them escape the feeling. I will use this in my argument to defend the point that R&B helps mental health not because it directly makes people happier, but because it helps them identify with what they are feeling and feel as if they are not alone. I will combine this information with information from my other sources to argue the idea that the R&B genre addressing more serious topics can be a positive thing for people's mental health.

Keywords: music, economy, Billboard charts, R&B music, popular, artists

Research Source: Google Search

Quotations: "The social and economic conditions under which R&B/Hip-Hop music is created and consumed was assessed with the GHTM... More difficult times are indicated by higher numbers, whereas times of calm and prosperity are noted with smaller values" (Eastman 4).

"Previous studies also uncovered how more comforting artists are successful during difficult social and economic times... there is a negative correlation between the GHTM and the presence of male artists on the charts... comforting female performers are successful during challenging social and economic conditions and as audiences seek out soothing and consoling figures in media" (Eastman 4).

“Generally, researchers uncovered that with the exceptions of movies and country music that get happier when times get hard because audiences use them to escape reality, audiences gravitate toward more somber and more meaningful media with comforting performers during difficult social and economic times” (Eastman 5).

Questions: How does the fact that R&B becomes more popular during hard times show that the fact that R&B addresses serious topics has an important positive effect?

Do the results from my survey correlate with the evidence from this study that female artists are listened to more during difficult times due to them giving a comforting feeling?

Kwan, Lois, et al. “Trends in Positive, Negative, and Neutral Themes of Popular Music From 1998 to 2018: Observational Study.” Edited by Sherif Badawy. *JMIR Pediatrics and Parenting*, 21 June 2021, <https://doi.org/10.2196/26475>.

In the journal “Trends in Positive, Negative, and Neutral Themes of Popular Music From 1998 to 2018: Observational Study”, Lois Kwan discusses how a study was done to find out how often different negative and positive themes are found within different genres of music, and if they have increased or decreased overtime. The study was comparing time and each genre to each other. The results showed that out of all the genres, hip-hop and R&B have negative themes shown up the most often in their lyrics and their music videos. They also showed that across all genres, the number of negative themes compared to positive themes have increased since 1998. Kwan expresses that the effect music has on people, especially adolescents, is inevitable because they are constantly consuming it from social media, their peers, and always being exposed to it around them. She also explains that these two genres that have the most negative themes, hip-hop and R&B,

have also become more popular over time, and are currently the most popular genres and adolescents are constantly exposed to them.

She explains that music has a very strong impact on adolescents and that it affects many aspects of their lives, such as their mental health, their overall wellness, the connections they make with others, regulating their emotions, and using it as an outlet to express and identify themselves. The negative themes that were found in these genres include, “drugs, weapons or violence, self-harm, suicide or death, crime, stigmatized mental health issues, abuse or domestic violence, discrimination or racism, alcohol use, gang participation, police brutality, misogyny, infidelity, and objectification,” which she claims have a negative effect on those who are consuming this music. (Kwan 2).

This relates to my arguing by specifically discussing the effect that R&B music, the genre I am focusing on, has on adolescents and how that has changed overtime. However, I would use this to support a counterargument, because the author claims that because this genre has an increasing number of negative themes, it has an increasing negative impact on listeners. However, with support from my other sources, I would argue that even though these “negative” themes are being portrayed through this genre, it can have a positive effect on people in a unique way. I would say that it is helpful for music to discuss serious topics that are otherwise avoided, because it can do so in a way that still makes people feel good. People enjoy listening to music, and when they are doing so while still hearing serious issues being discussed it can help them not avoid those topics. It is important for these topics not to be avoided because they are real and need to be addressed. Hearing about them in music can bring awareness to them and help people feel seen and heard.

Keywords: music, adolescent, themes, trends, social media, mental health, pop culture

Research Source: Google search

Quotations: “Specifically, when each genre was compared to all other genres, hip-hop/R&B had a significantly higher frequency of negative themes when compared to all other genres” (Kwan 2).

“Music has historically played a multifaceted role by serving as a form of creative expression to convey emotions or as a constructive outlet for individuals to explore feelings through direct engagement” (Kwan 7).

“It important to note that the potential social psychological impacts of music cannot be mitigated, as music has become a pervasive part of society, especially for youths who live in a world saturated with media” (Kwan 7).

Questions: Why does music have such a significant and unavoidable impact on people in society today?

Why does music having these “negative themes” mean that they have a negative effect on mental health?

Mulder, Juul, et al. “From death metal to R&B? Consistency of music preferences among Dutch adolescents and young adults.” *Psychology of Music*, Jan. 2010, pp. 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735609104349>.

In the research journal article “From death metal to R&B? Consistency of music preferences among Dutch adolescents and young adults”, Juul Mulder discusses a study that was done that determined people’s favorite music genres, as well as their favorite

artists, and they were asked repeatedly in increments to determine if there was a trend in how much their answers would change over time. The genres were grouped into categories, into which R&B fit in “Urban”. The results showed that generally younger participants named younger artists as their favorite, while older participants named older artists as their favorite, and there was a low consistency in who they named over time as their favorite artists, meaning most of their answers changed, regardless of gender and age. In terms of genres, the Urban category, which contained R&B, was the second most popular among all the participants generally. R&B was also grouped into “Elite” style music as well as Urban, and Elite came out third in popularity. The consistency in answers for the participants favorite genres were consistent over time. Overall, the music taste of the participants stayed fairly consistent throughout the entire study, and R&B stayed near the top of the preferences generally.

This relates to my argument because I am trying to figure out how popular R&B music is and how much people tend to listen to it, as well as what artists they tend to lean towards. Knowing which demographics tend to listen to certain genres or artists over others may also be helpful information towards my argument, because there could be certain reasons why a particular demographic prefers to listen to R&B or certain types of artists in comparison to other demographics. This could contribute to the information I am looking for, such as why people choose to listen to R&B music, what it helps them get through, how it makes them feel, and how it helps their mental health. For example, the younger demographic deals with different issues on a daily basis than the older demographic generally. I can use this in my argument to explain why people choose R&B.

Keywords: music taste, popular music, stability, youth, preference, genre

Research Source: Google Search

Quotations: “Music preference was assessed by asking participants to list their top three favorite artists, as well as assessing preference ratings for a wide range of musical genres” (Mulder 72).

“A second style was labelled Urban, and comprised the genres R&B, dancehall, rap/hip hop, and reggae. A third style was constructed based on relatedness in preference ratings of the genre’s classical music, singer/songwriter, jazz, soul/R&B and lounge music, and was labelled Elite” (Mulder 75).

“The most preferred musical style is Pop, followed sequentially by Urban, Elite, Rock and Dance (see Table 1). Within these styles, certain genres are more popular than others... The genres rap, R&B, and reggae are similarly popular within the Urban style, while the genres soul/R&B and lounge music top the Elite style” (Mulder 76).

Questions: Do the results from my survey show that R&B music is just as popular as the study shows?

Is there more or less consistency in people’s favorite artists than in the study?

Puryear, Mark. “Tell It like It Is: A History of Rhythm and Blues.” *Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage*, Smithsonian Institution, 20 Sept. 2016, folklife.si.edu/magazine/freedom-sounds-tell-it-like-it-is-a-history-of-rhythm-and-blues.

In the article “Tell It like It Is: A History of Rhythm and Blues”, Mark Puryear explains how the genre of R&B music began, the meanings behind it, and how that has evolved over time. He talks about how the genre emerged from African American culture and

African Americans struggles with racism and discrimination throughout history. It has been involved with The Great Migration, the Second Migration, and the Civil Rights Movement. R&B music became a mix of gospel music, blues, boogie, and conveyed African American culture. He discusses that despite the fact that this type of music has an extensive range of tempos, paces, etc., it has a certain consistent feeling and language to it. The genre of music became part of movements and activist events for African American rights. Puryear also addresses how over time, the genre of music has expanded further in its range of what it includes, and it has evolved and become an art form that connects people of all different cultures and backgrounds, while it still connects people to their African American culture and helps them identify with that culture. It also helps them through their ongoing struggles with discrimination, etc. He concludes that R&B music has come a long way from where it began, and while it still maintains many of its aspects of its roots, it has become a mainstream genre of music that is very popular across the US today and all types of people.

This relates to my argument because one of the ideas I am aiming to convey is how R&B music makes people feel and what emotions it evokes for them, as well as when they like to listen to it, what mood it matches for them, and how it helps them. This all connects to the roots of R&B and its purpose. How this purpose has evolved over time affects my argument because I will be comparing different artists and which ones are more popular, and how the different ones make people feel, and some of the artists will be older and some will be newer. This will help me determine how the change in the genre over time has changed the effect it has on people and their mental health. Combined with

information from other sources on how this genre has changed over time, I will use it to display how artists from different times help certain aspects of people's mental health.

Keywords: R&B, African American, music, history, cultural, community

Research Source: Google search

Quotations: "A distinctly African American music drawing from the deep tributaries of African American expressive culture... was initially developed during a thirty-year period that bridges the era of legally sanctioned racial segregation, international conflicts, and the struggle for civil rights... worldwide currency today thus reflect not only the changing social and political landscapes of American race relations, but also urban life, culture, and popular entertainment in mainstream America" (Puryear 2).

"While R&B music was not explicitly political from the late 1940s through the 1950s, its appeal across racial divides served as an emotion and psychological bond that linked American youth of all races and ethnic backgrounds" (Puryear 17).

Questions: How much has the genre of R&B changed over time and shifted away from its original purpose, while still maintaining its connection to its roots and connects people to their culture?

Do the results from my survey line up with what this article portrays that when people listen to R&B music today it makes them feel connected to their culture, or does it mostly bring up other emotions for them?

Reynolds, Fátima. "The Transformative Power of Music in Mental Well-Being."

Psychiatry.Org-The Transformative Power of Music in Mental Well-Being, American

Psychiatric

Association, 1 Aug. 2023, www.psychiatry.org/news-room/apa-blogs/power-of-music-in-mental-well-being.

In the article “The Transformative Power of Music in Mental Well-Being”, Fátima Reynolds explains that music has significant power in healing symptoms of mental illness, controlling mood, giving people an outlet for their struggles and trauma. It also can give people a way to connect that likely would not otherwise because they may be very different, but through their similar music interests, they can be brought together. Music can also help people connect by helping people understand each other and bringing out empathy. It also can give people of underrepresented groups a way to speak up about issues that they deal with in a way that is often easier for other people to understand and be exposed to because music is something that people are constantly either intentionally listening to or hearing and they are more likely to take an interest in the meaning of the lyrics. There are certain genres that do this especially well, ones that have a historical background where they were created as an outlet for this, such as rhythm and blues. Overall, Reynolds conveys that music has a strong therapeutic effect in several ways, and it is a very common way that mental health is affected because it is everywhere in many people's everyday lives.

This relates to my argument by explaining the different effects that music has on people's mental health and wellness, and it also explains why certain genres such as R&B, the genre I am focusing on, have a certain healing and unifying effect because of their history. I will use it to support how effective music is in improving people's mental

health, the fact that it has so many ways of doing that, and why rhythm & blues specifically is very effective in these areas.

Keywords: music, mental health, diversity, wellness, community, connection

Research Source: Google search

Quotations: “Recent research suggests that music engagement not only shapes our personal and cultural identities but also plays a role in mood regulation” (Reynolds 2).

“In addition to its healing potential, music can magnify the message of diversity and inclusion by introducing people to new cultures and amplifying the voice of marginalized communities, thereby enhancing our understanding and appreciation for diverse communities” (Reynolds 2).

Questions: How does music bring people to understand each other and bond with people that they otherwise wouldn't?