

Gender and Culture in Popular Music

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Abstract: Pop music is a global cultural phenomenon, not only as an art form, but also as a socio-cultural phenomenon. In popular music, gender and culture are two important themes that are intertwined and together constitute the cultural background and artistic value of popular music. This article will provide an in-depth analysis and discussion of pop music from the perspective of gender and culture.

Keywords: Pop; music; Gender; Culture.

1. Introduction

One musical genre evolves or branches off into another, and two or three genres can merge into a new genre: one musical genre can become an entire ethnic culture. Culture and its various expressions, such as language, politics, economy, religion, art, etc., are inextricably linked. Since all music has cultural attributes without exception, we say that "music" is cultural music; Since all the cultural attributes contained in music are necessarily externalized into specific musical forms, we say that "culture" is the culture of music. Music and culture in popular music are interdependent. Sometimes, people don't want to admit that they like certain songs because of stereotypes. If the song is gay or bisexual, then listeners will most likely label it as gay or bisexual as well. So the taste of music is subjective. Musical taste cannot be used to generalize culture.

Pop music is a genre of adaptation, assimilation, innovation, and experimentation made up of current pop music. Pop music is a technology-driven, global phenomenon that encompasses the widest range of musical forms, styles, and genres, varying from period to period and country to country. Popular music began with the publication of sheet music. At this time, many Americans began to use the piano for family entertainment celebrations. Families got together to record so that everyone could enjoy music at home, which led to the expansion of pop music through new markets in the music industry. With songs and compositions now available in the form of digital files, music from a country has become easier, and some popular music formats have become global (such as rock and alternative music), while others have an appeal in a certain culture (such as heavy metal and K-pop). Through the mixing of musical genres, new forms of popular music continue to evolve, reflecting the ideas of international culture.

2. The Strategy of "Gender Representation" "in Popular Music

Gender issues in popular music are a complex topic that involves many aspects such as music creation, performance, and appreciation. First of all, the image of women in pop music is often portrayed as weak, male-dependent, and lacking self-awareness. This image not only limits women's self-identity and development, but also affects people's perception and attitude towards women. Secondly, there are also stereotypes of male images in pop music, such as rough,

violent, selfish, etc., which are often regarded as the mainstream image of men, ignoring the diverse characteristics and values of women.

In addition, sexism in pop music is also manifested in the choice of song content. Many songs tend to focus only on men's emotions and lives, ignoring women's needs and emotions. At the same time, many songs also convey discrimination and prejudice against women through the language and imagery in the songs, which is not only detrimental to the protection of women's rights and interests, but also harms women's self-esteem and self-confidence.

2.1. Views on women performing rock music

From the perspective of feminism, gender expression in pop music is more direct and obvious than classical music, such as lyric songs that emphasize more authentic experiences, making it easier for the audience to understand the emotions expressed through repeated sentences, tone and other factors. Cooper's article "women in pop music" explores the lyrical popular songs from 1946 to 1976 to women in 11 stereotypes: evil women, emphasize female physical characteristics, the need for men, women as the property of men, women as mothers, women as sexual objects, feminine women, childlike women, women as admirers, physically attractive women and supernatural women.

In the post-feminist sexual theory, the American feminist political scientist Judith Butler became the representative of the post-feminism in an extremely radical and avant-garde way. In her academic book *Gender Issues: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity, and Life: The Limits of the Reason of "Gender"*, Butler proposed and demonstrated the theory of "gender expression". Butler disagreed with some Beauvoir "gender" theory, that gender and actors, is a changing performance, to some extent, gender is forced, if it deviates from social gender norms, will be rejected and punished (like women if not married or have children are considered outlier). Therefore, no gender is the "real" social gender, and gender is both constructed and acting. It forms certain norms through repeated ways and achieves certain effects in a specific way. To be widespread in large-scale industrial societies. The strategy of pop music is to use musical factors such as rhythm, tone and singing, and use non-musical means such as makeup, dance, lyrics, multimedia to express their feelings and desires, especially in dance music, live performances and music TV (MTV). The avant-garde pop artists try to challenge the traditional image of "masculinity" and "femininity", using

open gender performances to show the differences of gender, race, class and sexual orientation, and a commercial promotion strategy that truly and clearly reflects the patriarchal values.

Rock music is characterized by aggressive guitar and solos, powerful and shouting vocals and loud, thunderous drums. The typical lineup includes drummers, bass player, rhythm guitarist, lead guitarist, singer, and keyboardist. Rock and roll is almost all about male. For women, learning rock is a very bold move, guitar, band, machinery, technology is also women, men generally don't want to listen to women play bass, drums or electric guitar, as David Lee Ross (David Lee Roth) observed: "if a little girl picked up the guitar said, "I want to become a rock star, " her parents will never allow. There are not so many lead-tone guitarists, not because women can't play the instrument, but because they are locked up and taught to do something else.

Rock girls can also knock down the house! Nowadays, at music festivals and concerts, we see mostly male rock bands, so why are there so few female bands? Rock music is dominated by men in the world, and female bands are not absent, but relatively few. In fact, in China, women's rock bands have appeared on the stage as early as 1990, when the all-female cobra band, plus the Breathing band, attended a modern concert in Beijing. The former is the first women's rock band in China. However, marriage, children, and family are the inevitable problems for women. In addition, the style of women in rock music changes quickly, which leads to the low popularity of many works. However, after this, we can still see a lot of women, such as enthusiastic Mongolian Skengler, Houhai big shark Fu Han, new pants Zhao Meng, Hai Peng band Chen Sijiang, hedgehog drummer Shi Lu and so on. Their styles are more diverse and they can express their opinions more independently. More naturally show a woman's charm, rather than deliberately not to and. It has also become a beautiful and unique landscape in rock music. With more and more female band members in rock music, it is more conducive to the long-term development of rock music. I believe that the spring of Chinese rock music will always be accompanied by the continuous participation of young rock musicians.

2.2. Early video culture: Madonna

With the advent of the industrial society, pop music with its dynamic rhythm, clear emotional confession, catchy melody and other factors, coupled with the commercial operation and promotion as well as the rapid popularity, so that it has the widest audience, greatly subverting the traditional music appreciation mode.

In the classical literature of gender research, pop music is regarded as a cultural phenomenon to analyze the representation of gender characteristics in pop music from a cultural and social perspective. Among them, the study of American singer Madonna is more distinctive. Madonna west inside is the iconic characters in the nineties of the American pop music stage, she with sexy, subversive image in the conservative age, and quickly influence in the world, her music works show that the commodity society of material worship, to personality, to sex, greatly affected the then and after the social life.

For example, her unconventional role-playing performances on MTV and stage, underwear clothes, and sexy pout have made them synonymous with sex appeal, but also caused controversy over her rebellion against gender

traditions. In "The Negative End", Susan. In "The Negative End", Susan. McClary's Live Story: The Resurrection of Madonna explores the interaction between music and visual elements through an analysis of Madonna's masterpieces Like a Prayer and Open Your Heart. She explores the double bondage of women into the music world, arguing that Madonna's embodiment of the body and female sexuality powers her and rejecting social destruction of the power she represents, and that criticism and fear of Madonna stems from "the fact that she is out of male control". Madonna knew the expectations of the patriarchal society for women and expected this "role playing" to bring her success, so she borrowed the characteristics of African American music and paid more attention to the physical rhythm of dance and music to stimulate certain audiences and create market effects, and became the famous "temptation witch". Some scholars believe that Madonna's bold performance is a victory of female culture over mainstream patriarchy, while others believe that her costume performance and gay performance are a challenge to heterosexual norms: some give Madonna a diversified gender performance, others think it is a marketing of women's bodies..... Whether it is a compromise or a subversion of the patriarchal culture, the most important thing about pop music is to attract the audience, and in this respect, Madonna is the winner.

3. Gender and The Blues: Jazz

Jazz grew slowly in New Orleans, and much of early jazz involved sex. More precisely, early jazz was a sort of lower-class music, with musicians playing in brothels, doing business and entertaining, so sex and jazz were associated from the beginning. New Orleans alone created similar jazz in the vast rural south as well as in cities such as Baltimore and Saint Louis, said to have originated from jass, a sexually suggestive term originally used in New Orleans Red Light District, JASSING IT UP. Jass is a slang term for a brief orgasm in the course of sex sessions, which was considered vulgar and unacceptable, so it was later renamed Jazz. Then the word jazz became popular and circulated.

Early jazz instruments included cornets, trombone and drums from military brass bands, clarinet and bass brought by well-educated affluent mixed Creoles living in the city, and guitars by wandering minstrels and blues singers. In the lack of complexity, the band makes up for it with volume and passion. All jazz musicians have established their careers in bars, brothels and story town for the stormy music of a metropolis like Crescent City. Many famous works are named after the place names of the region — The most famous are Basin Street Blues and Cannard Street Blues, and many such musicians.

3.1. What does jazz have to do with civil rights

That's where we need to talk about black history and culture. In the sixteenth century, African society was severely invaded by the European colonists. In order to satisfy their own interests, the colonists trafficked a large number of black slaves from Africa to America for trade, which is the "slave trade" in human history. As more and more black people were trafficked to mainland North America, black culture began to take root in the North American continent, and black music slowly penetrated into American and Latin music.

In Africa, music is actually an important part of their life. In African society, music has already the aesthetic meaning; it is an important part of people's daily life, has a strong social

function. They want to escape from their master, and the music helps them to escape. Because the song they sing carries a message. To help the African slaves gain their freedom. These African-Americans use music to express their desire for life and their social voice. So that people can understand the injustice they receive. They strongly need music to defend their rights, emphasizing democratic equality and civil rights. Become the banner of the nationalist movement.

3.2. The woman in the jazz scene

Women have been involved in jazz since its birth, but sadly their achievements are not as well known as men are. In the early stages of jazz, female instrumentalists often formed bands with their siblings or all-female jazz bands.

For many women, entering the professional jazz world is a difficult task. At the beginning of the 20th century, modern pop music had an initial development. Swing bands and big bands playing jazz provided the stage for female musicians, and the earliest female images in modern pop music were born, such as Billie Holliday and Ella Fitzgerald.

In the 1930s, they wrote the history of jazz with the big band of Lester Young and Count Basie. More importantly, the emergence of black female jazz singers gives women a voice in music, greatly challenging the gender status quo in music

It is also because of African-American traditions that black women are more involved in music than white women, and they are willing to open their arms, even with mixed, light-skinned female musicians. It makes female musicians realize that they are not only substitutes for male musicians, but should have equal rights to create, distribute and perform. The 1960s were the era of rock music. The boycott of traditional rock culture has made female musicians more rebellious and critical, and they began to fight for gender equality through music. Power Music Wave: Sex, rock, and freedom.

In the 1970s, in the wake of Woodstock's mental breakdown, affirmative action, feminism, and sexual liberation reached a climax, bringing together minority voices and creating a new genre: gorgeous rock. However, there is still a long way to go to achieve gender and rights equality. The music world and the society as a whole need more tolerance and change.

3.3. Jazz dancing equals sex

Nowadays, many people equate jazz dance with sexy dance, in fact, this is not right, like the girl group dance can only be counted as a branch of jazz dance, jazz dance also has classical jazz dance, ballet jazz dance, Latin jazz dance, not all jazz dance is the chest turned up.

In addition, there is no subjective hint in the dance of professional dancers. The so-called "hint" is just the expression of the dance itself on the stage. Walking out of this dance, the dancer is an ordinary person.

As for why people feel that some dance is sexually implied, it is because the core emotion of this dance is sex, the dance is emotional, even without lines, but the dancer can tell you what he wants to express — sadness, joy or sexy wild. Sex is the vast majority of people must experience things, itself is not vulgar, vulgar is very vulgar people's sexual imagination.

4. Culture in Pop Music

As a cultural phenomenon, pop music is deeply influenced by its social and cultural background. First, the socio-cultural background reflected by pop music influences the way songs

are written and performed. For example, pop music in different regions often has different styles and characteristics, which are closely related to local cultural traditions, social environment and other factors. Secondly, the cultural values contained in the pop music will also affect the acceptance and dissemination of the songs. For example, the positive, optimistic and enterprising cultural values conveyed by some songs are often more easily accepted and spread by the public.

5. Rock and Roll Also Has an Impact on Society

Rock music has had a broad and profound impact on society. Here are some aspects of the social impact of rock music:

(1) Innovative music styles: Rock music has led the innovation of the music industry with its unique music style and sound. It breaks the shackles of traditional music, pushes the use of musical instruments such as electric guitar, bass guitar and drums to new heights, and stimulates the diversity and innovation of music creation.

(2) Expression of the spirit of rebellion and freedom: Rock music has become the carrier for the young generation to express the spirit of rebellion and freedom. It conveys questions about authority, institutions, and social norms, and encourages independent thinking and the pursuit of individual freedom.

(3) Forming cultural movements: Rock music evolves into a cultural movement that attracts a large number of followers. It not only introduces music, but also represents the lifestyle and attitude recommended in fashion, art, film and other fields, forming a unique rock culture.

(4) Promoting social change: Rock music has played an important role in social change. It became a voice against war, racial discrimination, social injustice, and inequality. Rock artists convey social issues and political views through songs and performances, inspire people to think and act.

(5) Diversity and Inclusion: Rock music encourages diversity and inclusiveness. It transcends the boundaries of race, gender, and social context and attracts participation and appreciation from a wide range of people. The power of rock music lies in its ability to unite people and establish a common values and cultural identity.

(6) Stimulate artistic creation: Rock music has inspired and influenced many art forms, including painting, film, literature, etc. It encourages creative expression and artistic diversity, providing artists with new ways to generate creative inspiration.

6. Conclusions

Gender culture has also been influential in the appreciation of pop music. With the development of society and the diversification of culture, people's demands and preferences for pop music are also constantly changing. However, gender culture still influences people's appreciation habits and preferences for pop music to some extent. For example, some traditional ideas of gender roles still influence the way people like different types of music.

Gender and culture are fully reflected in pop music. As a social and cultural phenomenon, the development and evolution of pop music is deeply influenced by social, history, culture, politics, economy and other factors. As an important aspect of social culture, gender is also fully reflected in popular music. From the perspective of the origin and

development of pop music, the gender differences are mainly manifested in the differences between men and women in their creation, performance and appreciation habits. These differences are also influenced by various cultural factors, including gender culture, social culture, family culture, etc. Therefore, we should understand and analyze the gender and cultural issues in pop music from multiple perspectives, so as to better understand the changes and development trends of social culture.

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