

Student's Name

Professor's Name

Course

Date

Heavy metal

### **Introduction**

Music is a significant factor in cultural observation. It is a source of evaluating traditional taste, rituals, and values. There are always certain groups or classes of individuals who feel that mainstream music fails to represent or neglects their actual ideologies. Modern music does not satisfy the emotional desires of these groups of people thus resulting in the formation of musical subcultures (Mishrell 8-39).

Heavy metal is a music genre with roots in psychedelic rock and blues rock. Its origin dates back to the late nineteen sixties and early nineteen seventies in Birmingham England. Its evolution is blue collar towns where young men were frustrated, frequently rough and tumble, and felt marginalized from the common culture. These people were mainly white, poor, with feelings of cynicism and hopelessness about the growth of western culture (Mayer, Adam, and Jeffrey 27-51).

The characteristics of heavy Metal subculture includes; distorted guitars, dynamic vocals, emphatic rhythms, rapid-fire drumming, flamboyant instrumental virtuosity, complex time signatures, and dissonant or atonal arrangements that are disturbing to many listeners. Lyrics are

unintelligible due to the screaming or growling singing technique of the genre. Aesthetic traits of the metal scene include make-ups, long hair, and tight trousers (Howe, Tasha and Howard 608-629).

Lyrical themes in heavy metal music include; personal failure, despair, sexual longing, and frustration. Other topics include; challenging social customs such as propriety ideas and Christian ethos as well as rejecting feminism and celebrations of socio-cultural diversity. The genre celebrates violent, nihilistic and hedonistic behaviors thereby going against shared societal beliefs. Social figures felt song lyrics and album artwork advocated drug use as well as portrayed sadomasochistic and misogynistic themes. The oppositional ethos of the genre results to its obsession with paganism, occultism, and Satanism (Howe, Tasha and Howard 608-629).

Metal genre involves several different subgenres such as death, doom, thrash and punk metal. These subgenres either omit, alter, or emphasize on some of the heavy metal attributes. However, these subgenres are united by the theme of transgression. These genres challenge taste boundaries concerning the occult, the devil, sex, or violence (Sinclair, Gary and Paddy 2-14).

### **Death metal**

Death metal genre emerged in Florida in the late nineteen eighties as a new and more seditious level of heavy metal. It is known for chaotic music scenes and blasphemous music. Death metal musical sounds are distinct from modern notions of music due to the use of different vocal component along with excessive virtuosic element. Death metal subculture members consider certain behavioral and stylistic traits of metal to be insurrectional and liberating (Mishrell 8-39).

A celebration of anti-Christian values is frequent in the death metal subculture to fight Christian hegemony. Death metal subculture members celebrate war, violence, horror and gore

in an attempt to counter Christian ethos. Christian dominance over other beliefs and theologies led to the rebellious behavior of this subculture. Songs like “Behead the Prophet,” “Repent to Die,” and “Holy Deception,” demonstrate the anti-Christian stance of this subculture as well as their effort to interrupt Christian dominance (Mishrell 8-39).

Masculinity is a significant style within the death metal subculture. A substantial interest in metal is to represent female subordination and male power. The music, visual images, behavior, and lyrics serve to represent gender identities. Death metal musicians show off their muscles on stage violent musical lyrics to demonstrate their masculinity. Death metal masculinity is identified by declining Christian conception of a civilized man and by enfolding primal masculine attributes. This subculture portrays masculinity through the apparent celebration of violence (Mishrell 8-39).

Another example of masculinity in death metal is the vocal component. Women lack the biological capability of mastering the provocative guttural sound of this subculture. Men have the ability to speak and sing in a deeper voice. Heavy metal genre treasures this ability to produce deep voice. The deep vocal technique indicates the sounds of misery, death, and chaos. The significance of this demonic sound is to terrorize the idea of manliness and intimidate outsiders (Mishrell 8-39).

Death metal subculture threatens two social tolerance thresholds. Firstly is the permissive threshold where it challenges and threatens collective social rule. Secondly is the legal threshold where it hinders social legitimacy (Mishrell 8-39).

### **Assumptions of death metal**

Death metal subculture gives voice to individuals discontented with the established social institutions. These people find refuge in and identify themselves with death metal subculture. The dominance of Christianity tends to enforce its values to the members of the society. This music genre embraces the celebration of satanic and anti-Christian values to combat the hegemony of Christianity which is a menace to individual autonomy. The community should accommodate all people regardless of their beliefs rather than enforcing traditional values on them. By doing so, no group will feel marginalized (Mishrell20-39).

### **Implications and consequences of death metal**

Death metal subculture represents the most excessive type of music. It is too much regarding image, sound and lyrical content. It portrays continuous rebellion of the traditional establishments and a threat to community values and beliefs. Efforts to eradicate this music genre have been futile and the genre continues to gain economic success. As long as some individuals in the society feel marginalized this subculture will attract more and more young male individuals. The community should address the views and beliefs of all its members so that everyone fits into the mainstream culture.

### **Conclusion**

Heavy metal continues to grow and produces new styles, sound, and some controversy. Death metal continues to mold, shape, and adapt to the permanent changes of current society. The community must be ready to accommodate the next phase of Heavy metal music.

Works Cited

Mayer, Adam, and Jeffrey M. Timberlake. "“The Fist in the Face of God” Heavy Metal Music and Decentralized Cultural Diffusion." *Sociological Perspectives* 57.1 (2014): 27-51.

Mishrell, Kirk W. "Rockin'TheTritone: Gender, Race &The Aesthetics of Aggressive Heavy Metal Subcultures." (2012).

Howe, Tasha R., and Howard S. Friedman. "Sex and gender in the 1980s heavy metal scene: Groupies, musicians, and fans recall their experiences." *Sexuality & Culture* 18.3 (2014): 608-629.

Sinclair, Gary, and Paddy Dolan. "Heavy metal figurations Music consumption, subcultural control and civilizing processes." *Marketing Theory* (2015): 1470593115569015.

