Week 2 Assignment – Race & Ethnicity

HMNT 3001

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Through time popular culture as evolved in music and television when in regards to Race/ Ethnicity. Historically, popular culture was known to marginalize members of non-dominant ethnic and racial groups. This was seen a lot through television and within music. These forms of media unfortunately became the mental representation of different groups.

One of the most compelling times that race and ethnicity played a role in music was in the 60s & 70s. During this time, many were faced with the civil rights movements and through its melodic instruments, many were able to connect to these sounds as they faced racism. A great example of an artist that helped bridge the gap between the different races and communities was Aretha Franklin, *Respect*, although it was wasn’t a civil rights song, it helped in activist aspect, that we all deserve respect no matter where we come from. This idea of stereotypes was also displayed over time through television/ movies, an example of this could be The *Godfather* which was released in the 1970’s as well, in the Latin American culture it is stereotyped that, it is a drug and poverty culture. These two forms of media, are no different in today’s world. Many artist have utilized their platform to try to address the many racial issues we continue to face today, one rap that stands out the most to me in the same way Aretha took an activist approach, trying to mend the different communities, was Lil’ Baby - *The Bigger Picture,* he raps in the hook:

“It's bigger than black and white

It's a problem with the whole way of life

It can't change overnight (nah)  
But we gotta start somewhere  
Might as well gon' 'head start here  
We done had a hell of a year  
I'ma make it count while I'm here  
God is the only man I fear..”

This spoke volumes and it was relatable to the issues many communities unfortunately still face today. Television and Music are two out of three of the world’s most common form of media and communication/ connection. Through these outlets we are able to see another perspective, relate or even disagree, but it connects us to one another. I do believe over time, producers and artists have attempted to reflect the change and social values we all long for. Although it may not happen overnight, it’s the continuous effort that will eventually get us to the equality we all deserve.

References

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