
CER: How have popular musical and performance trends throughout history used traditions and styles developed by Black Americans?

Claim	
Evidence	
Reasoning	

This is the sound not just of black America, but the sound of America. It is deeply American, almost especially when it's sung by British people like David Bowie and Annie Lennox and Amy Winehouse. And it fills me with pride. Like, I know that there is something irresistible and ultimately inevitable about black music being a part of American popular music. But it also reminds me that there's a history to this, a very painful history. And in the most perversely ironic way, it's this historical pain that is responsible for this music...Motown is the most powerful mass-produced expression of black glamour, of black self-confidence, of black self-reliance... It's just the most exciting, romantic sound you're ever going to hear. And at the center of it is what can only be described as a refulgent, tasteful blackness. Here you have in Motown a force that is actively combating these ideas of black people as being inherently inferior. Motown is the antidote to American minstrelsy... And this is what I was thinking about standing there in that kitchen, chopping those vegetables. It's — the thing that made me laugh was just how all that history is just very silently coursing through this music. It might not even be aware that it's even there. It's so thoroughly atomized into American culture. It's going to show up in a way that even people making the art can't quite put their finger on. What you're hearing in black music that's so appealing to so many people of all races across time is possibility, struggle. It is strife. It is humor. It is sex. It is confidence. And that's ironic. Because this is the sound of a people who, for decades and centuries, have been denied freedom. And yet what you respond to in black music is the ultimate expression of a belief in that freedom, the belief that the struggle is worth it, that the pain begets joy, and that that joy you're experiencing is not only contagious, it's necessary and urgent and irresistible. Black music is American music. Because as Americans, we say we believe in freedom. And that's what we tell the world.