



The music style has evolved through the years and is still changing today

Today, pop music is identified by teen artists such as Britney Spears and 'NSync, yet it encompasses an enormous variety of different styles of music.

Lee Austin, a disc jockey at radio station 93.7 in Houston, said today's music contains a healthy mix of many different genres.

"Pop today is an amalgam of many different formats," Austin said. "A radio station can play an artist like Staind and go right into Britney Spears. You have rap, R&B, hip-hop and rock all occupying pop music, resulting in more diversity on the charts than there has ever been."

While pop music today is diverse, some people argue that it lacks depth and sincerity.

"Pop music is very generic," said Jeff Cassidy, a sophomore business major. "You just take a catchy base rhythm and add some uncreative country lyrics and there is your next million-dollar single."

Austin said pop music has not always been perceived as packaged and shallow as it is today.

"Pop today (compared to pop in the past 50 years) is much more formulated; it emphasizes style over substance," Austin said.

Recent studies suggest that the average American youth spends four to five hours per day listening to music. Music is believed to influence anything from a person's grades to a teenager's perception of sex and violence.

The controversy of explicit

content in music and its affect on the listener arrived with the sexuality of Elvis in the 1950s and the was stirred by protest music of the 1970s. While some aspects of popular music may be controversial, it remains an outlet of expression and growth for many people.

Many music critics seem to feel the current teeny-bopper trend is ending. Lagging concert attendance and an older, more sophisticated fanbase seems to indicate that a new type of pop may be emerging.

Ross Hutchinson, a junior biological systems major, said it is about time for a change in pop.

"I think the pop music of today is catchy for the time being, but as the teenagers grow up, they don't want to listen to the same stuff," Hutchinson said. "There is a constant recycling of popular tastes, and I think the Backstreet Boys have just about run their course."

Travis Lyons, a writer and TV producer, said the attitude surrounding the recent tragedy of Sept. 11 of self realization and peace will dominate the music scene for the next few years.

"The recent world events will cause artists to reflect on themselves and our day-to-day existential concerns resulting in a more heartfelt and individualistic sound, reminiscent of the rock and folk music of the late '60s and early '70s," Lyons said.

By MICALA PROESCH
THE BATTALION

From Elvis Presley to Britney Spears, pop music has been making people dance and constantly stuck in the minds of Americans.

The popular music genre is characterized by its accessibility and familiarity. Pop songs generally feature dance rhythms, generic lyrics, repeated riffs and a strong emphasis on a distinctive, catchy melody or hook.

Pop music emerged in the United States in the early 1950s with the birth of rock 'n' roll. In the mid 1950s, the popularity of rock hits like Bill Haley and His Comets' "Rock Around the Clock" moved rock music into the mainstream. Elvis Presley became the first American rock star and the Beach Boys formed one of the first popular boy bands. However, in the late 1950s, the prevalence of popular rock music began to decline and a wave of camera-friendly teen idols began to dominate the music scene. This rise of palatable pop music catered to the tastes of white middle-class teenagers who craved a new medium of entertainment.

The controversy of explicit

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