

7-1 Project: Project Submission

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IDS 404: Popular Culture

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Area and Example of Popular Culture

For my topic, I have chosen to write about the popular culture and Iconic Nicki Minaj who is a Trinidadian who was raised in Queens, New York is a singer, rapper, songwriter, and actress. Nicki Minaj is her stage name, but her real name is Onika Tanya Maraj and since getting her start as a backup singer she has gone on to produced four charting albums and has sold over 100 million records worldwide making her the bestselling female rapper of all time and according to Billboard magazine she has been crowned the greatest female rapper of all time. She continues to create a legacy of lasting impact and is at this current moment preparing to release her fifth studio album. Nicki Minaj played an influential role in my life growing up and I credit her for my love of not just music but poetry, songwriting and acting. As a black woman in a male industry, she represented to me that hard work and talent will get you to the door, but it takes you the induvial to use that talent to walk through.

Relationship between Example, Are of Popular Culture, and Populations

After the huge success of her first album Pink Friday Nicki Minaj fame skyrocketed and with that came the massive fan base of young men and women. “The album was an immediate success. Pink Friday debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 chart with 375,000 copies sold in its first week. It marked the second-highest debut week in the history of female hip-hop recording artists, with Lauryn Hill's Miseducation of Lauryn Hill moving 422,000 units in August 1998” (Haffenden, 2020). Her most popular fanbase are from members of the LGBTQ community. Throughout her career her fan base has also grown although she recruits new younger demographic yearly.

Societal Impact

The impact society has on celebrities is quite huge. People cannot be famous without the support and approval of society. They are completely reliant on the support of society to keep their status. In recent years we have seen how the disapproval of celebrity actions by society has often left them to being canceled and ignored. In the case of Nicki her passionate fans have carried her over through many controversies. Although there are many people in the public who routinely call her out for her actions and want her to be held accountable for them.

General Education Interdisciplinary Lens

The history lens will apply when discussing Minaj career trajectory from how the beginning, height and finally how it currently stands in today's. The humanities lens will explore her influence in music, movies, shows, and audience. The natural and applied science lens will focus on measuring her popularity throughout the years. "The study of human behavior and interaction can sometimes overlap with the humanities lens, which also studies different cultures. Studying society, culture, and human relationships will lead us to an understanding of how people live and how to improve our lives" (The Four General Lenses, 2023). When speaking of social science learns we can dive deeper into Niki Minja relationship with her fans more closely. They called themselves the Barbs and they are a force to deal with. Her influences over them and the love, respect, and blind allegiance they have for her. I want to talk about the public outlook of the famous rapper and how there seems to be a shift of late to do the rapper continues outburst and social media displays and the decision she made on marry and having a baby with a convicted rapist. This has caused many to denounce the rapper, including myself. These lenses will be used to tell the tale of the one and only Niki Minja and the sad tale that unfortunately led so many women to lose themselves and stand and united with men to get the respect and recognition that their males peers receive.

Thesis Statement

Nicki Minaj is a fascinating and talented superstar who is more than just popular music or popular culture. She has gone on to have an influence on movies, television, music and fashion. She has successfully carved her own lane leading many women to follow as well as cultivated a massive fanbase that has overtaken the world. Her presence and work through music has united and bridged gaps between different cultures.

Impact on Institutions

Analysis from the humanities lens into Nicki Minaj has expanded into the impact she has had upon institutions. The sensational rap artist has influenced institutions such as politics, community, education, family, and market driven organization. There was a bill created by George Santos “Medical Information Nuanced Accountability Judgement Act,” or MINAJ Act, H.R. 2631, introduced Tuesday by Santos, would prohibit the federal government from imposing “any mandate requiring an individual to receive a vaccine that has not been authorized for marketing for at least ten years unless a public health emergency is declared”(Kurtz,2023). That is because during the height of Covid Nicki Minaj on the public platform Twitter shared her individual opinions about covid. Her influence has also extended into education due to UC Berkely offering a course about the rapper's impact on hip-hop and society. Families with teenage boys or girls might be deeply influenced by Minaj music since that demographic routinely listen to rap music. Due to her successful albums and records plus work within shows and movies, the market-driven organization can use that popularity to make products such as toys, posters, clothing, makeup, shoes and so on.

Social, Historic, or Theoretical Approaches

Socially speaking Nicki Minaj has done a lot to change the way female artists were viewed in society that helped pave the road for more female artists to follow. There had been incredible female artists before Nicki, do not get me wrong, but I feel like she was able to outpace male rappers' years ahead of her while wearing 12 heels and a green wig gave the women in the field more recognition and respect. Historically female rappers were not seen in competition with the men, but Nicki really changed that. She also taught young women especially young black girls like me that with hard work and talent you can be just as good as anybody.

Better Understanding the World

Yes, Nicki Minaj can help you understand the world! She helps you understand society's treatment of women especially women of color. She can help you understand the power of misogyny and roles we all play in it as well as help you understand that money truly cannot buy happiness. To be honest her impact is so extensive that honestly there are so many ways that by analyzing her we can gain insight into the way our world works. How she has helped me understand is that talent is just that talent and that you should never be afraid to pursue what you are gifted at.

The older I get the more unfortunately I witness the loss of some of our greatest legends such as Tina Turner who recently just passed. There are few of them left and to my generation who are still growing up Nicki Minaj really does count as one of those iconic legends. Her ongoing legacy has shaped two generations such as the millennials and Gen Z. She has set a great record for other future female rappers as well as inspired generations of people. More specifically as a black woman has opened the doors for more black women to get in the industry.

In a perfect world, race will not be a factor, but it is everything in our culture. Nicki Minaj although is mixed race is first and foremost a black woman and therefore treated like it. Racism is an evil that has corrupted many to all institutions and that is no different in the music industry and in society. When Nicki was getting popular, she was constantly attacked for what she wore, how she acted and the lyrics she penned. They said she was too ghetto, too loud and angry, overly sexual, and too dark skin. All these are negative stereotypes that are often used to describe black women and men to make them feel small and less than. This was to humble her for her success and in turn humble other black women who dare to challenge the status quo. Nicki never let those comments affect her to an extent as she kept on doing and wearing whatever she wanted. This proved quite successful since the public came to adore the very traits, they hated her for. As a black girl watching those interviews and reading the headlines it was hard when black women are automatically stereotypes no matter what we do but seeing how she kept on going and hitting back really changed me. As the only black child in my adopted family and sometimes only black person nearby it can be extremely hard and discouraging to see how people engage with you and treat you. Nicki Minaj took those stereotypes and made them her superpower because like me she refused to let them change her. By doing this she inspired many black and brown people of color that they should not be afraid of who they are or what people say.

Broaden Outsider Understanding

When outsiders hear her story, they learn not only about her struggles but her will to succeed. They learn that black women are no longer tolerating less and are more than capable of reaching the highest of heights. Though I think the most important lessons they will learn from her is

survival because let's get it straight whether you hate her or love her you cannot deny how talented she is.

Field of Study on Profession

My field of study is in communications, especially in the PR world. Nicki Minaj is incredibly famous public figure who is a rapper, writer, actor, fashionista, and businesswomen. She has been a force to deal with since stepping on stage, and her influences and drive continue. As a student near graduation and who one day hopes to be a Publicist, there are many things I have learned and been influenced by from Nicki. She has instilled in me the need for demanding work and thicker skin. She showed me how hard it can get for a black woman working in the public eye as well as inspire me to not being black or other stereotypes slow me down or get in my way. Success was not guaranteed for Nicki when she began but she carved her own way and now is one of the most famous artists in her industry.

Strategies

The strategy that I am taking from Nicki Minaj is to find what drives me in life and when that is found to work hard at making it an actual possibility. Nicki Minaj in her song fly said, "I get what I desire, it's my empire/ and yes, I call the shots, I am the umpire." She wanted to be at the top of her field, and she got through extensive hard work and faith within herself. I can use her persistence to make sure I get far in my career field.

Reflection Critical Analysis

Critically analyzing Nicki Minaj has honestly been a weird experience because although I know a lot about her since I was a fan for an exceptionally long time it is different to put it in words especially now that I am an adult and no longer see her as a role model. She was to me a symbol

of something I was hoping to become when I grew up. I wanted to be bold as her, wanted to know my own self of fashion, wanted to reach the top of my fields like she did as well as become a successful example for little black girls. Examining her again has given me some of those aspirations back, especially mixed in with me graduating and stepping into my career and other major life goals.

Bias

It is important that we can check our personal biases when interacting with popular culture because due to diverse backgrounds, religions, cultures and so on we all see and interpret things differently. For my popular culture topic on Nicki Minaj there are millions of people who have opinions about her that can be different than me but can still be able to capture her in the way she is. It is important to be able to form your mind but also essential that we can take or look for other people's opinion. Especially in a work-related situation they might be able to see something that you are just missing.

Critical Analysis popular culture influence on field of study or profession

Critically analyzing popular culture can influence my field of study by pushing me to reach my highest potential. Among everything I ever gathered from Nicki is the drive to make her dreams come true despite who is telling her she will never be able to do it. I honestly have a lot of people who do not believe in me and what I hope to accomplish one day so there is a need to prove them right but there is a bigger need to prove me right. The only problem is that it is a lot harder than typing words. I have applied to so many jobs currently and have not really been going anywhere. A little discouraging at times but I am looking at the end goal. Although I am working to be in

the PR side of the entertainment industry, I do still link some of that reason to Minaj. I wanted to be her Publicist so bad that she could use one now.

Different educational lenses

My analysis on Nicki Minaj would have changed slightly if I had chosen to examine her through the social science lens. With the social science lens, I think I would have dived into how society's influence on the star impacted how she is now and how we see her. The way we as people actively engage with celebrities and art and how we often hold them to ambitious standards expecting better. Today through social media we are connected more than ever to these celebrities and that has made it worse for both the fan and the artist especially female artist. Since fans can interact with them online through post, memes, and videos it has created a new parasocial relationship among the fans who hold an entitlement to the stars. Nick Minaj has in recent years used this relationship to lead her fans into a nasty social battle online, that attacks anyone that speaks badly about her. Nicki Minaj herself often engages online with terrible remarks about others in the name of standing for herself. It was sad when it began but now, I do not even know how to call it. Years of the limelight and constant criticism mix with another younger female rapper coming on has affected her. I think it will have led to interesting approaches, but I like the fact that I chose to go with the humanities lens.

Analysis used in other Aspect of Life

My analysis of Nicki Minaj can be used on both my professional and personal life. I say this because as I get older and enter different spaces or online, I am cautious about what I engage in and how I reflect on things. Like I said I was such a huge fan of Minaj because her music was inspiring to me, and I loved who I thought she was. Now as an adult I cannot just be part of an

organization or even peacefully listen to an artist, author or so on before I have done my research and my investigation. “Most people think of popular culture as the most common forms of entertainment, whether television, movies, music, or what's on the web. But popular culture is grounded in expressions of shared experiences that are much more fundamental to our society, including the values and beliefs that have shaped it, for example, integrity, community, compassion, courage, sacrifice, respect, hard work, and justice” (Taylor ,2009).

What we let influence us has a significant impact not just who we become but who we surround ourselves with. Nicki Minaj was a great influence in my life, and I attribute some of who I am because of her but as a grown adult who has done my research and is capable of critically thinking I do not see her the same and do not want to. I do believe society greatly on her life for her to turn the way she is and fans just keep her delusional. I only want to be the main force that has influence in my life, and I pray that is not too late to unlearn some terrible traits that I learned from this woman.

Critical Analysis of Popular Culture Interactions with People.

Critically analyzing popular culture can help me improve my communication and interactions with people I meet both professionally in my career and in my personal life. Especially when they have a different point of view or culture than me, but we can come together to appreciate or enjoy a common ground. Popular culture can be used as an ice breaker and even help me land a job. My interviewer asked about shows I mentioned I liked, and I said Supernatural, and it turns out that her brother-in-law worked on the show! It led us to continue talking about the show, laughing and getting back to the interview. It's a great way to form new relationships and share a bond with an individual or group of people. Since popular culture is broad and is essentially part of every culture it won't be hard to find something that you can use to interact with someone.

“Some of us may be very selective in our consumption of popular culture, but it’s difficult to find someone who has not been touched by popular culture at all. Even if the mere mention of popular culture makes you roll your eyes and sigh, most of us—no matter what nation you are a citizen of—have been impacted by the economic and social impact of popular culture” (Open Oregon 2023).

Reflections

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