



Music and Censorship

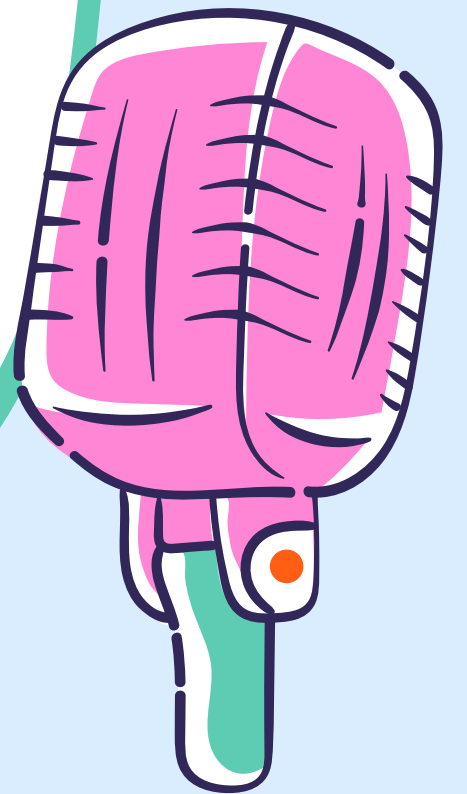


Dr. Courtney Allen

Jazz

Early Jazz and Racial Barriers

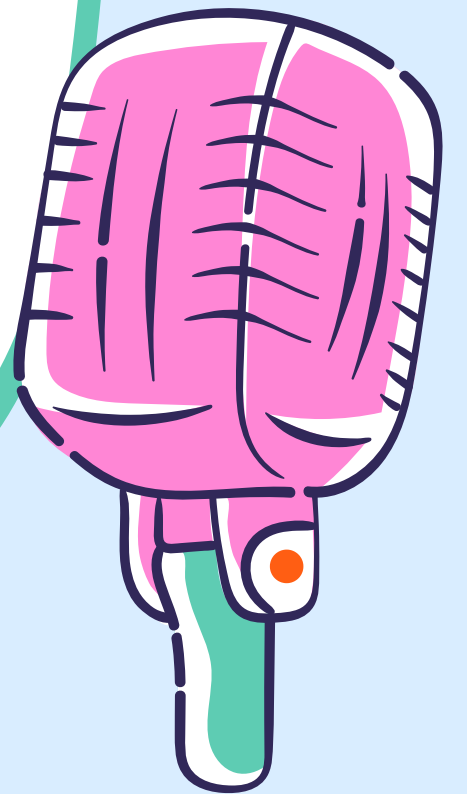
- **Black jazz musicians faced censorship and exclusion from mainstream venues and radio.**



Blues and R&B in 1950s-60s

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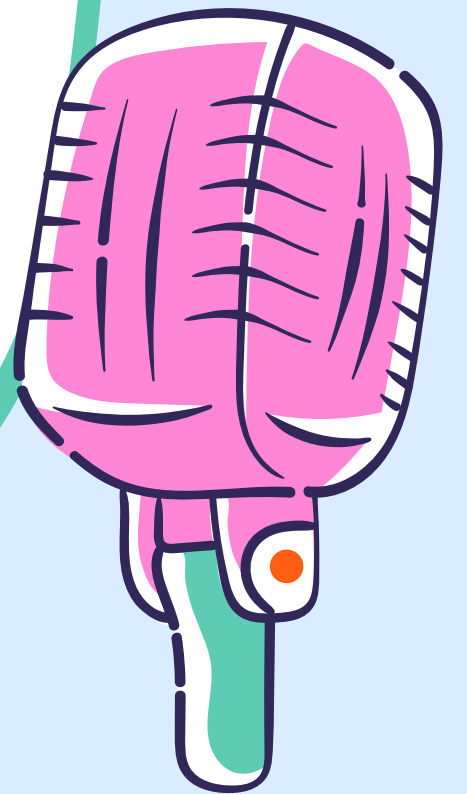
- **The sanitization of Black music for white audiences and the suppression of political messages.**



Hip-Hop and Rap Censorship

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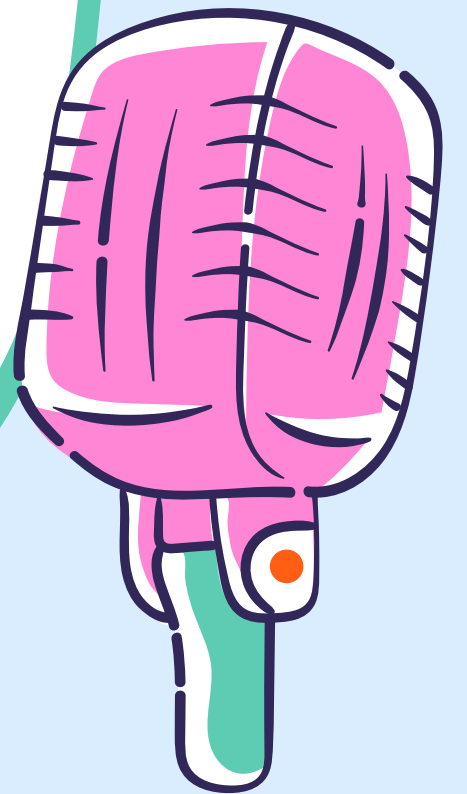
- **The rise of parental advisory labels, FCC regulations, and industry blackballing of controversial artists.**



Social Backlash

Social Backlash

- **Political leaders and media have targeted Black music, from jazz being labeled as "immoral" to hip-hop being blamed for violence.**



Duke Ellington & Black Artists in the Swing Era

- **Many Black jazz musicians were barred from performing in segregated venues and had to alter their music to appeal to white audiences.**



Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit" (1939)

- **The song was blacklisted from radio due to its anti-lynching message. Holiday faced harassment from authorities, including the FBI.**



R&B Industry Sanitization

Little Richard vs. Pat Boone

- **Little Richard's music was often covered by white artists like Pat Boone, with record labels promoting the censored, "cleaner" versions to mainstream audiences.**



R&B Industry Sanitization

Ray Charles and Jim Crow Laws

- **Charles refused to play segregated venues and was banned from performing in Georgia for years.**



Hip-Hop & Censorship Battles

2 Live Crew vs. Obscenity Laws (1990)

- **Their album *As Nasty As They Wanna Be* was ruled obscene in Florida, leading to arrests for performing it live. The ruling was later overturned on First Amendment grounds.**



Hip-Hop & Censorship Battles

N.W.A. and "F* tha Police" (1988)**

- **The FBI sent a warning letter to their label, and police forces refused to provide security at their concerts.**



Hip-Hop & Censorship Battles

Tupac Shakur & Government Scrutiny

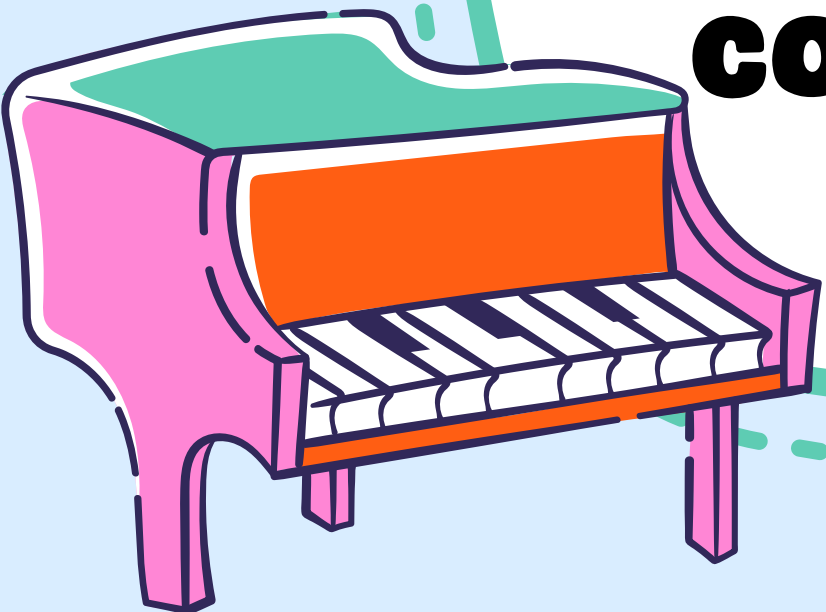
- **Politicians, including Vice President Dan Quayle, publicly condemned his music, and he faced police harassment.**



Modern-Day Censorship &
Industry Control

**Kendrick Lamar's "Alright" & Political
Backlash (2015)**

- **Used as a protest anthem during Black Lives Matter demonstrations, the song was criticized by conservative commentators.**



Modern-Day Censorship & Industry Control

Megan Thee Stallion & Cardi B's "WAP" (2020)

- **The song sparked backlash from politicians and conservative groups, highlighting continued attempts to control Black women's musical expression.**




Modern-Day Censorship & Industry Control

Kendrick Lamar's Superbowl Performance (2025)

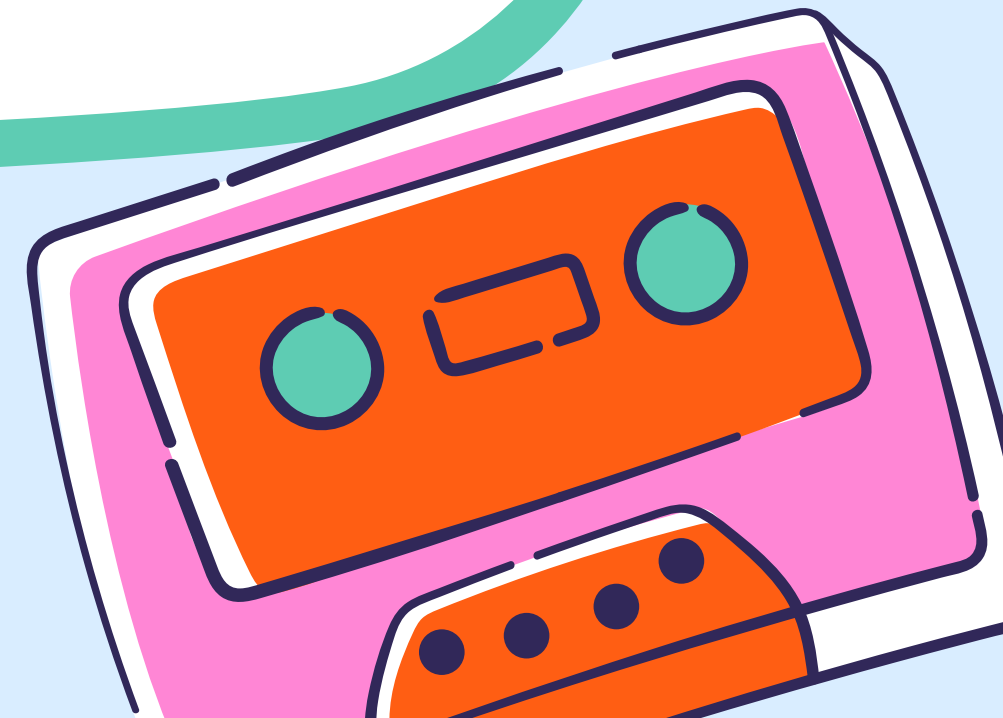
- **Symbolism of the Half-time performance was form of resistance to the current government**





TRIVIA GAME

"Test Your Knowledge About the Black Music & Censorship"



Answer the Question

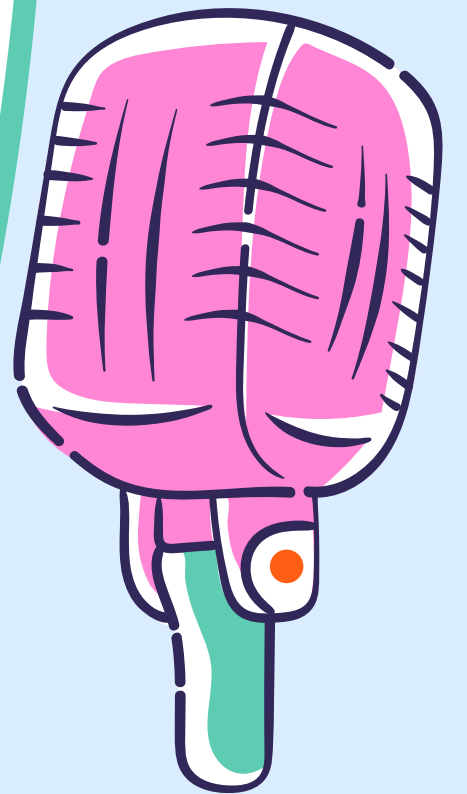
What was one of the key reasons for censorship in African American music during the early 20th century?

A) Political dissent

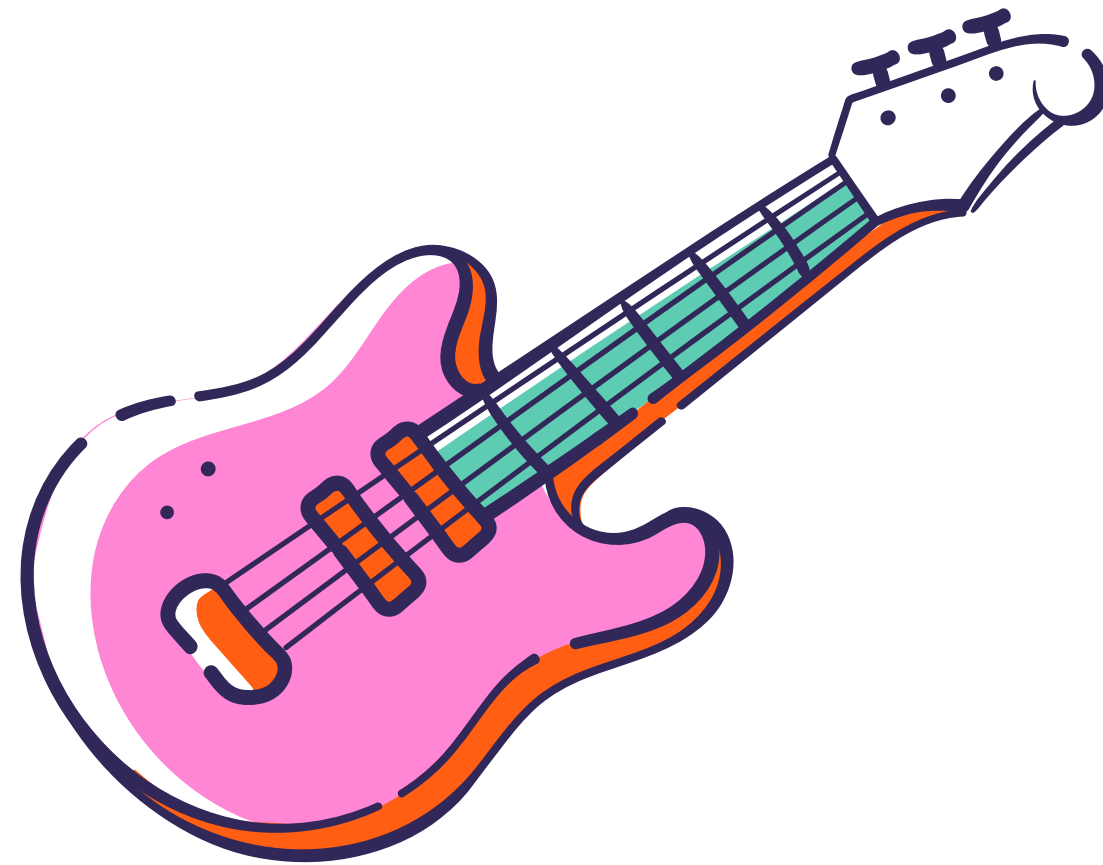
C) obscenity and profanity in lyrics

B) The portrayal of social inequality

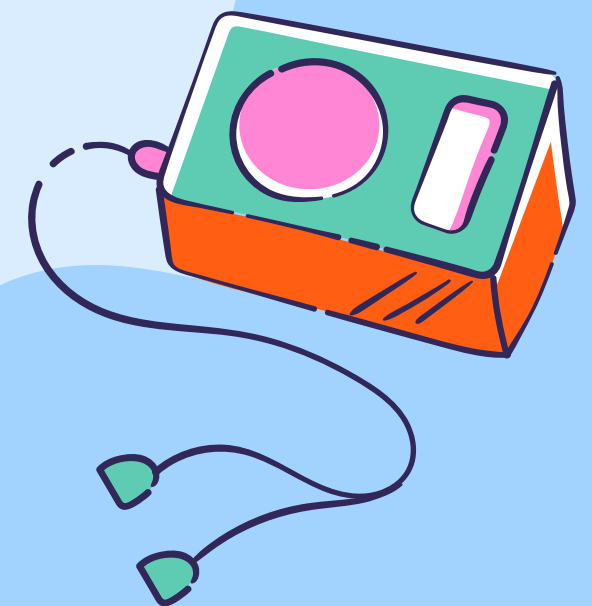
C) Fear of cultural



This Answer is



c) obscenity
and profanity
in lyrics

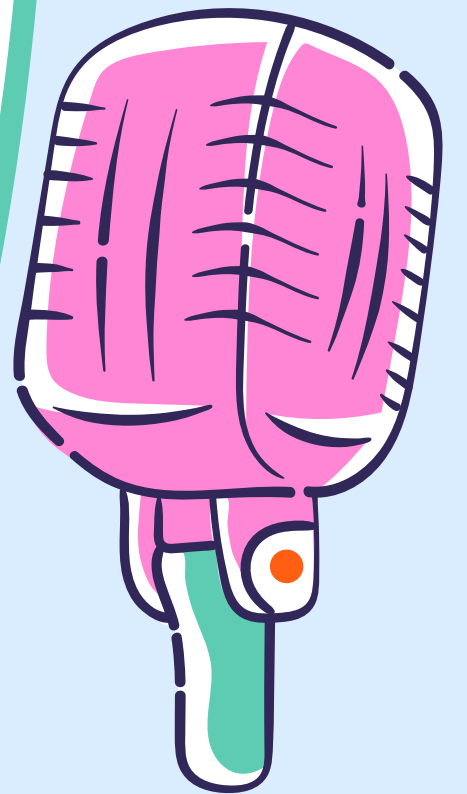


Answer the Question

The censorship of African American music was only related to lyrics, not the music itself.

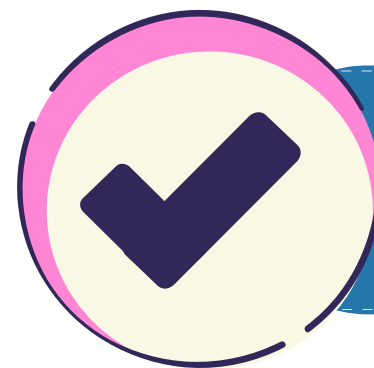
True

False





This Answer is



False



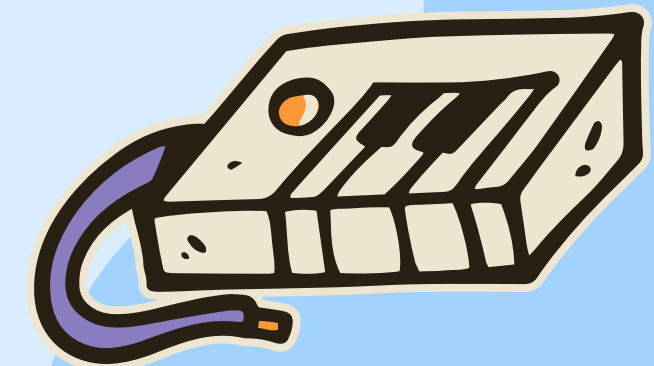
Answer the Question

How did censorship affect the way African American artists expressed their experiences and identities through music?



This Answer is

Censorship limited African American musicians' ability to freely express themes of resistance, racial pride, and social struggles. As a result, many artists had to find subtle or coded ways to address topics like racism, poverty, and injustice in their songs.



THANK YOU

