

Changes in the 1980s



THE SELLING OF ROCK

6 Major Companies



- By the end of the 1970s, the Rock market would be controlled by just six major companies.
 - ✦ CBS
 - ✦ Warner Communications
 - ✦ Polygram
 - ✦ RCA
 - ✦ MCA
 - ✦ Capitol – EMI
- Negative Side-Effect: Music was not an Art, It was a Product.

Mainstream Rock of the 1980's



- **Bruce Springsteen**
 - One of the only iconic Rock & Roll stars of the 1980s
 - Not an overnight success (paid his dues during the 1970s)
 - Raw, Unsophisticated voice like Dylan, Joplin, Hendrix
 - Lyrics reference to the frustrations, confusions, dreams of the average person.

- *Born to Run (1975) – Showed a multi-faceted musicians*
 - “Born to Run” -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3t9SfrfDZM>
 - ✦ *Instrumental breaks – sax solo*



- Went through several albums with relative success:
 - *The River* (1980)
 - *Nebraska* (1982)
- Biggest Success came with *Born in The U.S.A.* (1984)
 - “Born In The U.S.A.” -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZD4ezDbbu4>
 - “Dancing in The Dark” -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYtwQ7DCWAo>

U2



- Irish Rock Group formed in 1976
- Began by opening for several groups touring in England and Ireland for four years.
- Signed by Island Records in 1980
 - Had several underwhelming albums for over 7 years.
- *The Joshua Tree (1987) Grammy for AOY*
 - “With or Without You” -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmSdTa9kaiQ>
 - “I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For” -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gY75dw64sqI>

The Music Video



- Until the 1980s, TV played a small part in the promotion of rock music. (Ed Sullivan Show, American Bandstand, etc.)
- Cable TV created an opportunity for specialized formats. (all weather stations, all movie stations, etc.)
- A few experiments with music videos
 - Nickelodeon – Popclips (origin of the VeeJay)

MTV



- Music Television (MTV) debuted on August 1, 1981 at 12:01am
 - ✦ [MTV Debut](#)
- Startup cost of \$20 million
- Operated under the same format that radio stations had for years
 - Artists/Record labels provided their rock videos at no charge
 - Copied the same format – chatter & play; interviews; news and contests
- The Video added an extra weapon to the record label arsenal
 - Great promotion tool



- Artists and Companies scrambled to create imaginative and technically innovative videos to go with new releases.
- Often times the videos had nothing to do with the lyrics or were not very elaborate.
 - “Dancing in the Street” – David Bowie & Mick Jagger
- Some bands owed their success largely to the video format (e.g. Duran, Duran)
 - “Come Undone” – Duran, Duran -



- By the mid-1980s, Rock Videos – specifically MTV – were the hottest new thing in rock.
- Other Stations began to program Rock Videos into their programming.
 - - USA Network – Night Flight (1990)
 - - NBC – Friday Night Videos
 - - WTBS – Night Tracks
 - - Other Cable Stations (CMT, NN, BET, VH-1)

Negatives of MTV



- **Some of the complaints of MTV**
 - Mainly featured white mainstream rock (until Michael Jackson's rise and, the introduction of Rap)
 - Majority of Music Videos focused on sex and violence
 - Image became more important than the music
 - ✦ The Hot 100 dominated by pretty faces/well-shaped bodies (Paula Abdul & Janet Jackson vs. Aretha Franklin & Luther Vandross)
 - ✦ Artists being compared to their finely crafted videos and trying to reproduce the product (dancing, theatrics, etc.)

Lip Syncing



- **Milli Vanilli Scandal –**
 - [“Girl You Know It’s True”](#)
 - - Rob Pilatus – (Out of Work Dancer/Model)
 - - Fabrice Morvan – (a Gymnast)



- Charles Shaw (US Army Veteran)
- John Davis (2nd) / Brad Howell (3rd)
- The Aftermath



Michael Jackson



- Started out performing with his family group – “The Jackson Five” under the Motown Label during the 1970s
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3Q8omk7bxE>
- Left Motown and began working with Quincy Jones
- His solo career started out very successful (unlike Bruce Springsteen & U2)
 - 1st Album – *Off The Wall* (1979)
 - ✦ - sold over 8 million copies
 - ✦ - four Top 10 songs (two No. 1 hits)

Success



- *Signed a 1 Billion Dollar Contract – Sony*
- *Inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame (Twice)*
- *Multiple Guinness World Records*
- *13 Grammy Awards (Grammy Legend Award & Lifetime Achievement Award)*
- *Most Awarded Recording Artist in Pop Music*
- *As of 2010, The Most Downloaded Artist of All Time*



- *Thriller (1982)*
 - - *Considered the Best-Selling Album of All Time*
- **Combination of:**
 - Art Rock
 - R&B
 - Jazz Rock – Horns
 - Disco & Dance Music



- **Several Personal Life Issues**
 - Changing Appearance, Personal Relationships. Child Abuse Scandals
- **Died of Propofol & Benzodiazepine Intoxication – June 25, 2009**

Madonna



- Considered the most successful female star of the Mid to Late 1980s
- Was also moderately successful from the beginning of her career.
 - - *Madonna (1983)* – two Top 10 singles “Borderline” and “Lucky Star”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThHz9wlBeLU>
- *Like a Virgin (1984) & Like a Prayer (1989)*
 - Both albums had several hits and were considered controversial



- *Multi-Faceted Star*
 - *Music*
 - *Movies*
 - *Artist*
 - *Writer*

The Importance of Jackson & Madonna



- Michael Jackson's popularity paved the way for MTV to diversify their programming.
 - Pop and Dance – moving to Hip Hop & Rap
- Several female artists built upon Madonna's career success
 - Christina Aguilera
 - Jessica Simpson
 - Britney Spears
 - Lady Gaga