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THE BRITISH INVASION AND COLONIALISM

Fall 2022 Semester Tennenbaum Scholars Research

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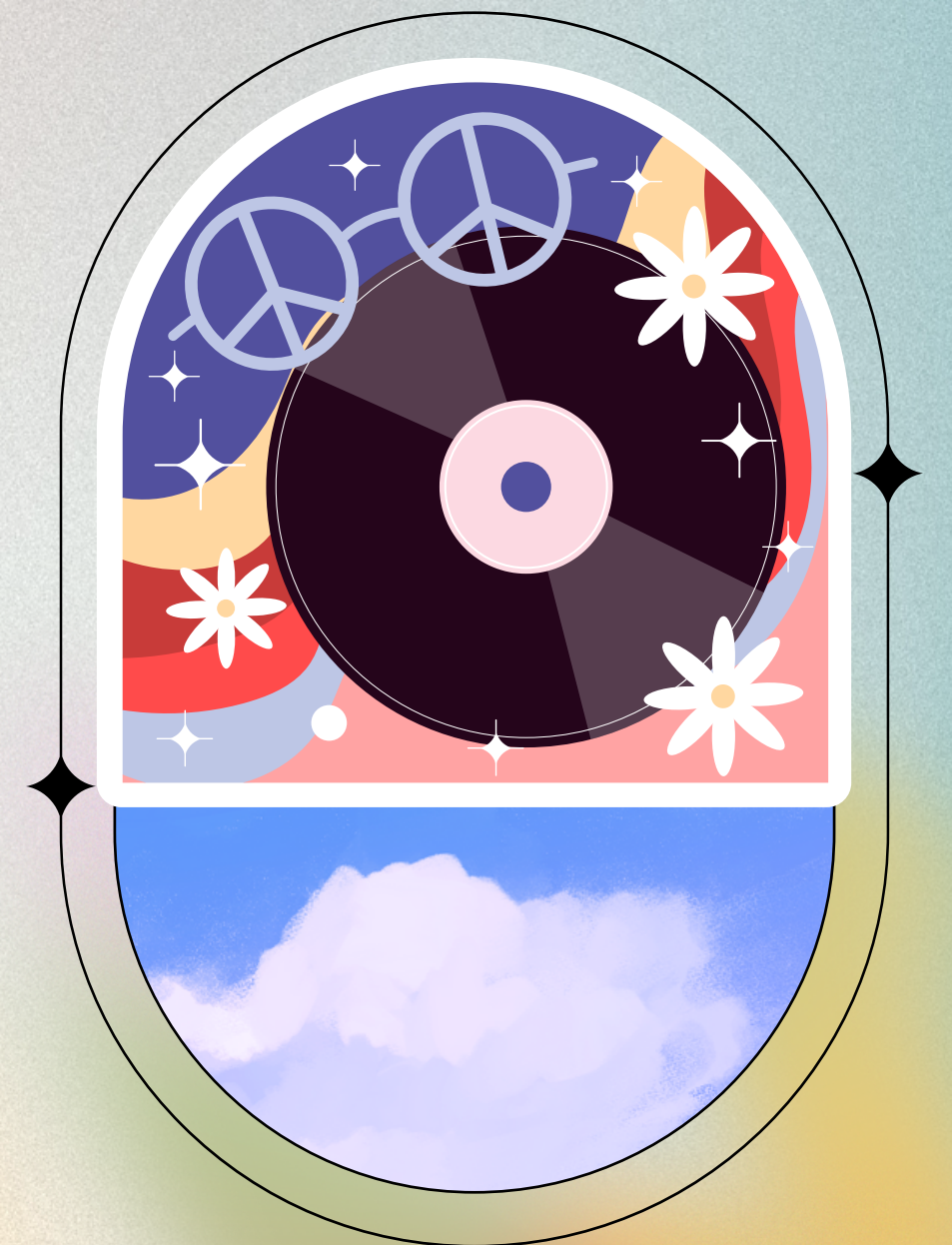
MY RESEARCH

- Conducted during a semester abroad in London, England at the University of Westminster
- Topics of interest
 - The British Invasion and Popular Music of the 60s
 - English as a global language and its impact on colonialism
 - The Beatles as a catalyst for popular music in the 60s and East and Western interactions
 - Eastern influence in popular music
 - Subsequent "Hippie" movements influenced by Eastern culture
- Seventeen-page research paper format, done in conjunction with English professor, Steven Gin
- Uses a variety of literature found by both Professor Gin and myself through The University of Westminster and Tulane University
 - Also included a research trip to Liverpool to discover more about the Beatles and British Invasion



POPULAR MUSIC: ROCK 'N ROLL

- Rock 'n Roll, a subculture around the 50s, predominantly black genre
 - Eventually, music producers saw potential in rock 'n roll and found white artists to fit the sound, such as Elvis (catering to mass audiences)
- Rock 'n Roll spread through the radio
 - A commodity, radio stations are paid by producers to feature certain artists
- Radio became an international phenomenon, with artists from Britain on American radio, and vice versa
 - British invasion started with British artists playing on American radio
- Radio=technology to reproduce and spread English music on a global scale



ENGLISH LANGUAGE

- UK was already a large colonial force, ruling over nations such as Australia, India, Kenya, Uganda, and more
- English literacy was emphasized in education in British colonies such as India
 - English is far-reaching, understood almost on universal level
- In the post-colonial world, debate between usage of native language or English, especially in writing (English meant more global success usually)
- English used as a form of forced assimilation in British colonies



THE BEATLES

- All came from working-class backgrounds in Liverpool, had a strong connection with the city
 - Inspirational to those from similar backgrounds
- Discovered at the Cavern Club venue after they spent long hours performing and crafting a sound
- Became a voice for those underrepresented in mainstream culture (came from Irish descent, also working class)
- Were not inherently political, however, their stances on public policy issues largely influential due to far-reaching fame



THE BEATLES AND EASTERN SOUND

- Beatles' visit to Maharishi Yogi in Rikikesh, India in 1968 influenced their later music
 - Created the White Album here since the ashram was a retreat/break, but also experimented with spirituality
- George Harrison embraced Indian culture the most, learned to play the sitar from Ravi Shankar
- In addition, the Beatles also experimented more with Eastern sound in music to try and recreate the "mystique" and "psychedelic" elements of their visit to India
- A popular example of the use of Eastern sound in pop music is ragas, a unique melody from Indian classical music
 - An example is Norwegian wood

EAST MEETS WEST

- The affair between the Beatles and India was highly publicized, and growing fascination with the East began
- India adapted to their recent independence from Britain, while the British sought our spirituality, guidance, and inspiration from India
 - The sense of cultural identity, or interest in shared history, ancestry, and language is what motivated Indian independence in the first place
- Changed the narrative, from the British imposing their culture to taking aspects of Indian culture to incorporate as their own

THE HIPPIE TRAIL

- Journeys of musicians such as the Beatles eastward inspired ordinary people to seek the “mystical” themselves, fascination with the exotic
 - Journey known as the Hippie Trail, people would go to find themselves, discover spirituality, explore the world, etc.
- Hippie culture is influenced by aspects of Eastern culture, such as drug use
 - Marijuana is an example of a drug incorporated into the hippie culture from Eastern tradition
- Popular artists wrote songs about their experiences with these drugs
 - Hippies inspired by the “adventures” of popular music



CONCLUSION

- The 60s were an interesting time period for both the West and the East
- East recovering from the traumas of colonialism and shaping a new identity for themselves beyond colonialism
- Yet, English media is something globally consumed but also shaped by Eastern influences
- Beatles influential in pioneering the Eastern sound in popular music
- Radio aided in the spread of British music throughout the world

THANK YOU!

Any questions, comments, or suggestions?



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