

Why did groups like Beatles and the Rolling Stones have such a great impact during the 60's?

The Beatles were a new band with a difference and this led to their impact in the sixties. They were different because they were producing real music and stepping away from sounding 'like just another band trying to imitate American stars'. Beatles music was 'totally unique, a mixture of rock and roll, Rhythm and Blues and Tamla Motown'. British music had always been dominated from American produced goods but the Beatles introduced a bit of their own lives into their music. They talked about where they grew up 'Penny Lane' and brought back some real music for British teenagers, something they could relate to. The Beatles were very good at relating to teenager issues. They talked about many teenager troubles in their songs- love and other issues (such as new issues of manly heartache). Lyrics such as 'I want to hold your hand' and 'I'll cry instead'. The lyrics in 'I want to hold your hand' tell us about a man pleading to a woman 'let me be your man'. Lyrics in 'I'll cry instead' deal with a man who has 'lost the only girl I've had' and in turn cries about this. John Lennon & Paul McCartney wrote all these lyrics so they were more pure and real. They were real with 'youthful energy, style, individuality and distinct personality'.

The Beatles also had a unique appearance. In the early years they dressed smartly (in plain black suits with ties) and had the 'squeaky clean image' which made them respectable to the older generation too. They all had mop top hair cuts which were slightly longer hair cuts but were accepted as they were a clean cut style. Earlier lyrics like 'I want to hold your hand' had innocent lyrics and so older generation accepted them too.

Their fan base developed quickly and created Beatlemania by the start of the mid-sixties. When they appeared on stage 'all the girls started screaming', 'a few fainted' and from this we can see that Beatlemania brought about insania. The Beatles were so exposed to the public by doing numerous tours '32 shows in 24 cities within 34 days' that this increased their popularity. Mainly girls would follow them to airports and on tours. My teacher told me that 'girls would often bunk school to go see the Beatles'. When on tours they developed a 'dynamic stage presence' and 'stunned British audience'. On a video I watched I could see that they were welcomed by 'crowds of rampaging fans everywhere they went'. They had a great impact on people as hysteria heightened. By 1964 they were making more money from merchandise than from music because people brought into the commercial side of the band. After visits to America their '16 bedsheets and eight pillowcases...were sold to two Chicago businessmen for \$750.' It seemed people just couldn't get enough of the Beatles- they wanted anything and everything touched by them. They were role models. The sheer personality that The Beatles exuded on and off stage, as much as to do with their musical style or material made them extremely popular worldwide.

The Beatles because of their uniqueness influenced other groups as they created a 'can do' atmosphere in Britain.

By the end of the sixties people had changed and new music was coming in. To gain back status the Beatles changed their image they began to take drugs and wear more Indian, spiritual clothing. Their songs from the Album 'Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band' contained lyrics created on the usage of drugs. 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds' talks about a imaginary world with 'tangerine trees and marmalade skies' and 'newspaper taxis appear on the shore'. Of course we know none of these things to actually exist but they were the hallucinations from taking LSD. These lyrics brought good and bad publicity for them. The older generation began to turn away from them, as they did not like their new promotion of 'the legalization of marijuana' but to their 'own generation it just added to their credibility'.

Over all they were a 'versatile group with culture and music. They didn't keep drumming out the same music'. I believe this is one reason they had such a great impact on the 60's. They had a further impact because of good promotion from Brian Epstein that made sure that they appeared on shows such as the Ed Sullivan show (which promoted them globally as all of American watched the 'Fab four'). Brian made sure that they had merchandise and that the hysteria was kept heightened. The Beatles were carried by the hysteria swept by fans but not forgetting their hard work and talent. They made sure they stayed in the papers by making promotional tours continuously and even producing a film that 'oversold'. These all made the Beatles have such an impact, meshed together with real individual personality, they set the waves.

The Rolling Stones came as the rebels of the sixties. Formed in 1962 they were the original bad boys of rock and roll. They had a great impact because they were the true rebels- outrageously different in their style & behavior.

Their appearance was new and unacceptable! This is because they wore casual and often camp clothing. Once on stage Mike Jagger wore a top that showed his chest and this was very inappropriate. They were a total contrast to the 'squeaky clean Beatles'. They had 'unkempt hair' and Jagger's 'doorstep mouth' gave us all we needed to say about their appearance. Unacceptable. Their manager wanted this 'after all it kept them in the public eye!' As the famous saying goes, any publicity is good publicity and the teenagers loved this rebellion.

Their music was very original too. Many people would still say they are 'the best rock and roll band in the world'. As their appearance showed a rebellion so did their lyrics. They were often abusive to women and very suggestive – 'I wanna make love to you' and 'Bitch'. They also discussed issues such as mental health in songs such as 'Nervous Breakdown', this kind of issue had been ignored before but because of their outrageous rebellion they sang about it. Some were even racist 'Brown Sugar'. Everyone was outraged with lyrics like 'Now I need you more than ever let's spend the night together now'. Nevertheless they became the 'voice of the teenagers'.

Their performance was exaggerated and Jagger often was 'camping it up for the audience'. Something that would get bad publicity but would gain publicity that they wanted it to! The music prompted hysteria and my teacher recalls being at a concert. 'The police had to use water to move the crowd along and everything was always wrecked at the end. In the end people didn't want to provide the Rolling Stones with halls because they would get trashed!' but the Rolling Stones encouraged this bad behavior. Their music was banned from the Ed Sullivan Show, some lyrics were deemed inappropriate but this did not stop Jagger. He simply 'murmured the words' that were inappropriate. As they broke through in the Ed Sullivan Show they became transatlantic and their demand increased because of this and so their income increased.

And so began their lives as celebrities. They had rich lives- full of overall 'sex, drugs & rock 'n' roll.' In one incident they were found 'urinating against a wall of a service station' which heightened publicity, even if it portrayed a bad picture- that's what they wanted. As a result of their drug takings they were charged for 'possessing four tablets containing 'illegal stimulants'. They also were arrested for 'assaulting a photographer at Warwick.'

Overall they took advantage of bad publicity and as their manager was 'best at exploiting this bad view' they were nearly always in the public eye. This pushed them to go global and the young fan's hysteria also aided to them making a difference. They promoted a rebellion that the teens wanted, and they got. When I asked my teacher her opinions on the band she commented 'they were different, wild. I think I liked them because of their music- whenever I listen to their music it makes me come alive.'

<http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Limo/3518/lucy.htm>

<http://www.nostalgiacentral.com/60/60music.htm>

<http://www.lyricsfreak.com/r/rolling-stones/117886.html>