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## Identity in Music

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# Research + Scholarship SYMPOSIUM



## **Identity in Music**

Whether consciously or not, every person answers the question, “Who am I?” Every mundane action, every syllable spoken, and even every event that affects someone, contribute to the realization of “who I am.” The answer to this question is always an individual’s identity. Identity helps a person achieve a desired social acceptance or success in a certain field. Much of the same can be said for the identity of a group. Different groups throughout history have constantly been fighting for their place in history. The identity of a group is based on the values that they hold, their ideals, actions, and involvement with society. Each group, whether it is Christians or vegetarians, is assimilated into society. In order for the assimilation to be successful, the values of the group must be either tolerated or accepted by the majority of outsiders. This is usually not a problem; however, when a minority group is trying to find its place in society, there must be a shift in the ideals that are shared by society. Because society’s ideas are constantly shifting, it is clear that there are agents of this change. One of these agents is music. This piece will examine the civil rights movement of the 1950s and ’60s and the gay rights movement to exemplify how music has been used to advance a minority group.