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### **Breathing With No Air: Black Orality and the Music Industry during Protest Movements**

It is said that music is a reflection of the society around us. It is the memory of the great times, and a guiding light during the dark times. It is the textbook of the past worlds, the snapshot of the present, and the telescopic view of the future. Not only has music been an integral part of the history of this nation, but the world as well. It's the voice of the people.

Music has always been a staple in the black community. During times of despair and tribulations, black people have been known to turn to music as their refuge. Throughout history, music has been known as a form of communication for the community. This can be seen during slavery, the Civil Rights Movement (1950s and 1960s), and even the Black Power Movement (1965-1974). The music was a way of speaking up and bringing awareness to the truth about discrimination in America. It was also a commercial commodity used to communicate pride, hope and prosperity to all who listened. In this paper, I will look at music's role in the Black Power Movement and the current Black Lives Matter Movement. Through qualitative research, I was able to look into the ways that black music artists have/are orating politics, protests, and aspirations through music during both eras. I also took a quantitative approach to evaluate the structure of record labels, comparing and contrasting their control over music being produced, and how labels responded to and reflected the current events.