

INTRODUCTION

The world of music is vast. There have been many attempts to analyze and describe music's ability to touch one's soul and stir our deepest thoughts, emotions, and feelings. Research and investigation have answered many of our questions regarding our conceptions of music and its effects on our daily lives. But still, it will take quite a while to figure out how this yet indescribable mixture of sounds and rhythms play a fundamental role in our existence.

As we begin a new century, our knowledge of music is such that there are numbers of books dedicated to this subject, each with its own input on a specific theme or themes on it. The purpose of this thesis is also specific. Throughout history we have been witnesses to major steps taken by humanity and society. And although we have conquered so many obstacles as human beings (technology for example) we have been carrying with us still a great deal of ideals and ways of thinking that are still hindering us from becoming united as a single race of creative individuals that are just looking for a place in this immense thing called life.

We are still limiting each other based on race, color, sex, creed, sexual orientation etc. instead of setting aside these self-imposed barriers to create an adequate environment for us to live in. As we know, being a woman has not always been easy, and though we have come a long way from the days when women were inferior to men, they still face discrimination and many forms of abuse in some countries.

In the world of music, women have also dealt with this "discrimination" through time. Fortunately for us this is all changing for the better as years go by. Women have

demonstrated how they play a fundamental part in music, whether as performers, investigators, and specially, as composers or singer-songwriters. Their work has proved to be just as good as that of their male peers and has had a great impact in the lives of many millions of people.

The point of the thesis is to explore this “impact” that music created by women has or has had on people. I will examine the “creative” process and the difficulties that women have faced through history in both academic and popular music and how the experiences of a woman can come out in the form of songs, and at the same time, have an impact on people, and serve as a “healing process”. The main focus will be on singer-songwriter Tori Amos and two of her most controversial songs, “Me and a Gun”, which deals with her horrific experience of rape, and “Icicle”, which explores religious taboos surrounding female masturbation.