
Glam Essay Prompts



Left: David Bowie (photo by Bob Gruen); Right: Alice Cooper (photo by Hunter Desportes)

Write a response essay focusing on two of the following three criticisms of Glam Rock. Your essay should include summaries of your chosen quotes and should examine ideas that you agree with, ideas you disagree with, and supporting examples from the materials viewed in class.

Criticism 1

"[David Bowie is] a genuine married man dressing up as a woman. The impact is not on people like myself or those in my age group but on youngsters who will be tomorrow's people. What will those ten- and eleven-year-olds think of someone who's a man dressing up as a woman at a Pop show? He upsets me as a man."

-- British Pop singer Cliff Richard, 1973
Quoted in Glam Rock chapter essay by Barney Hoskyns

Criticism 2

"What gets everybody uptight with Alice Cooper is the sacrifice he makes of shame. Confessing fantasies most people would sooner die than reveal, he becomes the scapegoat for everybody's guilts and repressions. People project on him, revile him, ridicule him and some would doubtless like to kill him. At the same time, he knocks out the young boys with the daring of his act and the rebelliousness of his image. After all, the ultimate rebellion of our time is the simple refusal to be a man."

-- Albert Goldman, *LIFE Magazine*, July 30, 1971

Criticism 3

"Go to any concert, and you'll be amazed at the sudden change in American youth, who are now as far from last year's organic coveralls and bushy hanks of hair as they are from the madras shirts and slacks of 1963; teenagers of both sexes are piling on clots of make-up and swaddling themselves in flashily indeterminate glad rags...they're working very hard at it nonetheless, and embracing as well a whole new set of pop idols consonant with this all-out sprint toward chic degeneracy: the actually rather tame showman Alice Cooper, David Bowie, the fey mime with a brilliant publicity machine, and rafts of kohled-eyed stragglers mincing in their wake. Somehow, though, it all comes off as synthetic and as ultimately emotionless as the audience's gingerly experimentation with their own sexual identities."

-- Lester Bangs, *Stereo Review*, July 1973