

Ah Taproot, a nu metal/alternative metal/alternative rock/post-grunge/rap metal band 'influenced by Van Halen'. It's worth pointing out Van Halen played none of those genres whatsoever, ever. It's like saying Slipknot are influenced by my friend Pete, because he plays guitar. And I'm not just saying that, I have two out of six Taproot albums (my understanding is that they're all roughly the same), and I have almost all the VH ones. I'm genuinely trying to spot one shared musical trait. In Taproot, is there any two handed tapping? Maybe some classic, catchy hard rock riffs? Or crazy pinch harmonics and divebombs? No, no, and no again. And it's not just that, it's the bigger picture - Taproot's music is mostly darker and heavier, Van Halen are more fun and rocking. Ok, the latter have released SOME dark songs, such as 'Mean Streets', so well done, the two bands share the same level of darkness on rare occasions. But how many levels are there? There are just two - dark and light, so really if any band only wrote one song, there is a 50/50 chance it would 'sound like Van Halen'.

Do you know what's the only real similarity between VH and Taproot I could think of? This is my honest opinion: Both bands have the letter 'A' in their name. Of course, if someone said she was like respected musician Eddie Van Halen simply because her name was Amaya Buss for example (another name with one letter in common) you'd almost certainly think 'What an idiot.' However, it's not all bad! Whilst Taproot don't seem to understand the concept of the world 'influence' they DO write good music. In the band's defence, that's the main thing, right? If someone criticised you because whilst you seem perfectly intelligent, you misunderstand one word, you'd think they were being ridiculous. Sure it would be weird if a person didn't understand a word they used on numerous occasions, but not completely terrible, that's what I'm saying.

Taproot's sound has been COMPARED to (a much better word than 'inspired' in this case) Deftones (high praise indeed), Fugazi (who???), Helmet (makes sense I suppose), Korn (yes!), and Tool (I presume in their less proggy moments). Obviously it wouldn't be good if they were compared to just one band. In comparison, if someone told you there was a person who spoke exactly like you, but dressed different and acted different, you'd be like 'Ha. No way.' But imagine if someone spoke like you, dressed like you AND acted like you. How would you feel? You MIGHT take it as a compliment, but if you have a more questionable personality like I do, you'd probably feel very scared. Luckily, I wouldn't call any of the bands just listed 'questionable', I'm sure they're all great guys, but it should be noted that Korn are often extremely angry. I forget the point I was trying to make. Oh yes, imagine if Taproot were exactly like Korn. Not sure why you'd want to imagine that, but it did take up a good meaty paragraph. It would just be scary. Maybe. Who knows.

To conclude, it's all about the music, isn't it? If The Beatles released some of the most respected albums of all time and claimed they were heavily influenced by Mozart, yet on closer examination it was proved the pop stars never even heard of them, who cares? Am I implying Taproot have never really heard of Van Halen, they just know they're the right guys to be associated with? Yes. And that doesn't matter! Their album being discussed (called 'Gift', I got there in the end) is fairly decent. All the songs on the release may sound more or less the same, but all their songs are good, so... whatever. Considering the amount of styles they apparently play in, the sameyness may come as a bit of a shock, but at least they don't plagiarise others. Then again, I'm not sure if the band understand what plagiarism is. 8.5/10!