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The Rock radio online

**Townshend: Rolling Stones inspired "Substitute"**

Pete Townshend of The Who credits legendary songs by the Rolling Stones and Smokey Robinson and the Miracles as the inspiration for the Who's classic 1966 single "Substitute."

Townshend has been posting excerpts from his upcoming autobiography, titled *Who He?*, on his blog ([petetownshend-whohe.blogspot.com](http://petetownshend-whohe.blogspot.com)), and detailed the origin of the song, recalling that, "(The Rolling Stones' manager) Andrew Oldham played me a white label (test pressing) of the Stones' '19th Nervous Breakdown.' I found the track inspiring... The word 'substitute' had become a sublime buzzword since Smokey Robinson had used it in his masterpiece 'The Tracks Of My Tears.'"

Townshend went on to explain that, "My song began as homage to Smokey Robinson inspired by the Rolling Stones. As the song lyric unraveled before me, yet another thesis emerged: the voice of a young man who appeared to be someone he was not, who was playing a role, uneasily, perhaps hypocritically, playing R&B (black) music, relying on silly gimmicky outfits and pretending to be wild and free when in reality he needed to be looked after by his mother."

Although Townshend has collaborated with Robinson, he has teamed up with Jagger a number of times, most notably supplying guitar on the Rolling Stones song "Slave" on their 1981 *Tattoo You* album.

Townshend says that although he and Jagger have never written together, it's not something that's entirely out of the question: "You know, even very, very intimate friends like Mick Jagger, and I'm a great fan of his solo work, I think it's incredibly underestimated. You know, he's asked me to work on several records with him and I've very much enjoyed doing it. But he's never suggested that we write together. Now, his ex-wife Jerry (Hall) used to say all the time, 'You and Pete should write together.' And we would kind of go, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah. It may happen, it may not.'"

The Who performed on Wednesday, May 30th, on the Isle Of Man at the Peel Bay Festival.