

In depth analysis of two songs research paper sample

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Village People and Bee Gees are some of the most active and popular bands we know. These bands may be old but clearly, their legacy is not yet ready to die. More and more people are still listening to their songs. This is actually quite a surprising thing to find considering that there are a lot of highly skilled and competitive singers and groups of singers that music listeners can find these days. Another thing that makes that fact surprising is the highly diverse music industry we have now. There are a lot of types of music to choose on these days. We have new types of music that did not exist during the time of Village People and Bee Gees' peak. We now have punk rock, alternative rock, alternative music, and all other types of music that people in the past could not have imagined.

In the past—a few decades ago at the least, the choices of people who likes listening to music were fairly limited compared to the choices they have today. That may be attributed to a wide range of factors; some of which would most likely fall outside the scope of this paper. To be able to know what these bands or what these bands' songs have that makes the current generation of music lovers still attached to them or to their songs, we are going to analyze or if not, interpret two of their most popular songs, one song for each band. After conducting a careful selection of songs, we have finally selected the songs YMCA by Village People, and Stayin' Alive by Bee Gees.

YMCA by Village People

The pioneering members of the Village People did not really intend to create a recording group. They were actually planning to put up a disco group in the early 1977. This theory can probably be best evidenced by the members'

appearance and costumes during their on-stage performance. They look lively but still fashionable, at least for the people living in the late 1970s. This group was classically known for their stereotypical Native American costumes.

They were not just standing on the stage and singing their songs for the sake of doing it; they most likely have a background purpose or it could also be that they like to add a dash of anything-under-the-sun on their stage performances. One of their most popular songs and their biggest hit actually is their song entitled YMCA, selling somewhere around 100 million record copies worldwide.

One thing we have noticed about this song is that it somewhat contains or is able to elicit a powerful amount of positive energy. Not everyone is completely familiar of a club or a disco hub named YMCA but we saw millions of people listening to the song. There must be something on the lyrics or the tune of the song then. Having a look at the song's lyrics, we noticed that the term " Young Man" was used liberally and it clearly has not been used sparingly throughout the entire song. YMCA stands for Young Men's Christian Association. Having looked at that mnemonic, it would really seem logical to use the term Young Man for members of the YMC Association. If it is your first time to hear that name, you would probably have imagined an energetic group of Christian Youths, singing praises for the Lord. But the way how this Young Man was presented in the song seems to be contradictory to our initial perceptions. It appears that the Young Man being talked about in the song is

one who is lively, outgoing, and loves to eat, party, and to simply enjoy his life.

YMCA or the Young Men's Christian Association was intended to be an organization that could provide temporary modes of accommodation and other types of resources for its members featuring and emphasizing a wholesome environment, hence its name. Later on, the organization grew bigger and bigger. It expanded until they reached a point wherein they could already offer a larger range of amenities and services such as swimming pools, all-purpose gyms and accompanying equipment, lecture halls, and lots of learning opportunities for members, at a cost of a relatively cheap price. The association was actually able to provide cheap and sometimes free housing not only for its members but also for homeless people. YMCA was a very large and successful organization during that time and what was good about it is that many people benefited because of its existence.

There is a possibility that the song was intended to show how successful YMCA has become; how people enjoys staying in YMCA hubs. It does not sound nor look like a song that was meant to advertise but after analyzing the lyrics, anybody could think that this was just another advertisement scheme meant to promote the business and all. Anyhow, a lot of people enjoyed listening to the song without thinking of possibilities such as the song being overly liberal or just another advertisement scheme funded by businesses just so they can further benefit from increased profits and revenues.

Stayin' Alive

Not all songs are meant to be dissected and be searched for a meaning.

There are songs that are made so that people can have some funky and lively music to dance to and there are also songs that contain a lot of hidden meanings and sometimes agenda such as persuasion and in more severe cases, propaganda. Stayin' Alive belongs to the former. It was meant to be a disco song.

There are a lot of people who love this song by Bee Gees. It is really astonishing to know that when asked the question "how do you interpret the song (Stayin' Alive) you just heard and love?" majority of the people you would have asked will say "I do not know, I just love the song and I simply do not care about its meaning." Stayin' Alive was composed and released during the disco era—the time when disco bars can be found almost anywhere. Therefore, a vast majority of the songs during that era should have something to do with going to the disco or dancing so that it could sell. Well, this song has the ability to make everyone go dance.

However, we were still able to find some hidden meanings behind the lyrics and the message that this song is trying to convey. There is a possibility that this song was intended for the disco haters during the disco era. Disco, as how most music enthusiasts would describe it, is a love it-or-hate it type of music. Even the most prolific disco-goers in the past have admitted that not all disco songs are good. There is only a selected few that could get the vibrant mood out of them and Stayin' Alive is one of that selected few.

This is actually one of the main reasons why there are many people who

criticize the disco culture especially the act of going every night just to dance. Disco reached its peak in terms of popularity in the late 70s and it has gathered enough attention. Criticisms against disco were present almost everywhere—some people even wanted to kill the culture of going to a disco but these did not stop the people from doing what makes them happy.

Perhaps this song was meant to keep the spirit of going to the disco to chill, perk up, and to ultimately have fun after a tiring day or week at work alive, hence the title “ Stayin’ Alive.” It could also be that the man narrating the song is the personification of the disco. For example, the line “ I’ve been kicked around since I was born” perfectly fits the description of a disco.

Establishment of discos in towns and neighborhoods has always been deemed as a wrong move because of the noise and other disadvantages that disco critics promote. Although some of them were real, some of those were just made up to make the image of discos bad. Another example would be the line “ Stayin’ Alive,” the very title of the song.

Despite the criticisms, the disco culture continued to thrive worldwide until the late 90s. Of course, everything has its ups and downs. It just happened that the disco culture’s up came first before it went down. There is actually another line in the song “ I’ll live to see another day. We can try to understand the New York Times’ effect on man” which kind of explains the effect of media on the image of disco. Well, it’s like the song tells us the story of the disco culture. Nevertheless, although going to the disco is not as popular and common as it was in the past decades (70s-90s), it was able to stay alive.

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