

# We are undivided

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We stand undivided “ It is not light that we need, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake,” were the words Frederick Douglass used to describe how traumatic events affecting groups of people can stir them to action. In his song “ Undivided” written in the aftermath of the horrific events of September 11, 2001, Jon Bon Jovi also showed his understanding for the power of large global events to bond people together through palpable expressions of great emotion.

Both Frederick Douglass and Jon Bon Jovi demonstrated their belief that nothing is more powerful than the determination to act by people who are united in a cause. Back in the nineteenth century, singing helped slaves bond with one another. The slaves were subjected to many harsh cruelties. They were beaten by their masters, had no rights, and were hectorated. Working in the fields was excruciatingly difficult and singing was one of the few activities they were allowed to do that helped them release their emotions. In other words, when a slave sang, other slaves could join in and they could connect with each other during work hours.

Since slaves had to look as though they were working and not jargoning, songs were the perfect way to express how they were feeling to other slaves, almost like a completely new language. Odious slave owners thought that the singing helped a slave work harder so, they often didn’t do anything about it. Similarly, the song “ Undivided” by Bon Jovi, is imbued with the power of human bonding: “ Where we once were divided, now we stand united We stand as one... undivided.

” After 9/11, the United States bound together to help pull each other out of the dread that everyone had been feeling for the fellow citizens who had been killed during the attacks. Singing also allowed slaves to express their feelings of sadness and loneliness. When slaves sang they felt closer to their God. Singing lifted their spirits and gave them courage, taking a little pain away from the predicament they were in. The slaves fueled themselves on the hope found in their songs.

Bon Jovi captures the same notion in “ Undivided,” I found spirit, they couldn’t ruin it I found courage in the smoke and dust I found faith in the songs you silenced Deep down it’s ringing out in each of us Singing also gave the slaves a way to connect with each other when words couldn’t be spoken. When working, slaves could not speak because slave owners thought talking slowed their work. Singing was a way to get around that; slave owners thought that the rhythm of songs actually helped the slaves work harder. When singing, slaves were able to get to know each other without using words, almost like having a conversation that allowed them to draw strength from each other. Following the plane crashes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the field in Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001, strangers joined hands and also drew strength from one another.

Bon Jovi’s lyrics reverberate with the powers of the human bond: “ A million tears make an ocean of... One for love; one for truth one for me, one for you.” Traumatic events can bring people together to form an immutable and invincible force. In Frederick Douglass’ time, the harshness and cruelty experienced by slaves bonded them together to form one all-powerful group that was strong enough to eventually abolish slavery. In his Narrative of the <https://assignbuster.com/we-are-undivided/>

Life of Frederick Douglass, Douglass expressed the connection he felt with his fellow slaves: "...I never loved any or confided in any people more than my fellow slaves...We were one; and as much so by our tempers and dispositions as by the mutual hardships to which we were necessarily subjected by our conditions as slaves." (page 92). Bon Jovi manifests this same spirit in his song "Undivided" following the horrific events of September 11, 2001 knowing that songs have the power to bond and help people to connect with one another.

Clearly, when people are bonded in pursuit of a single cause, there is enormous strength that can overcome just about any obstacle.