

Through the Television Screen

I have always had an interest in music. This installation explores protest music throughout American history and, more specifically, protest music during the Vietnam War. The Vietnam War was a controversial time period in terms of the music being made and the political climate in the United States.

These two sculptures are made to look like TVs from the 1960s because the Vietnam War was the first televised war and the drawings depict two famous photos taken during the Vietnam War. Each drawing is paired with a song, as indicated by the lyrics written on the image. Each song was chosen based on what it was about and how it matches the drawing. The lyrics on the right are from "Masters of War" by Bob Dylan and was written to show how stupid the American government was for fighting this war and for wasting thousands of American soldiers' lives. The lyrics on the left are from "Universal Soldier" by Buffy Sainte-Marie which is "about individual responsibility for war and how the old feudal thinking kills us all" (Buffy Sainte-Marie).

With this sculpture, I am transforming the impact that protest music had on American involvement in the Vietnam War into a physical presence. It also depicts the impact that the Vietnam War had on the American populace by it being the first televised war and, thereby, allowing American citizens to see the horrors of war unlike they had ever seen it before. What type of music do you listen to and how could it affect a political movement?

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Protest Music Throughout American History and Its Connection to Politics

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My grandmother has Alzheimer's and can't remember anything for more than a minute or two. Whenever my family and I go to visit her in Los Angeles, she always has to be reminded how my family and I are related to her. She also always asks how old I am or comments on how tall I am compared to her. For a time when we visited her, she would always say "You're almost as tall as me (in Japanese)" even though I would be at least five or six inches taller than her. Over the past few years, whenever I head down with my parents to see my extended family in Los Angeles, we usually have at least one gathering with a bunch of people and usually end up playing some music from Japan during World War II. Even though my grandmother can't remember anything else, whenever she hears some of these songs, she starts to sing or hum along. When this happens, my mom and her brother are usually surprised because they did not expect her to remember that specific song. For the older generations, music is a way to remember things about their past and can even bring back memories from times they did not even think they remember. Along with this, it is a way for younger generations to understand the generations that came before them through the music of the different generations.

Music can be quite emotional if it's about a specific topic or if the time you listen to the song it is really relevant. According to Lois J. McCloskey, "Music is a means of expression, music connects emotions — hope, regret, love — and our stories. As a form of communication, music connects us with other human beings, our inner spirits, and our history in a way that words alone cannot. Music is the human language that bridges cultures, genders, and generations" (Lois J. McCloskey). Since the Revolutionary War, protest music has been a major part of American Culture. For this reason, we need to understand where the protest part of protest music comes from so we can better understand protest music as a genre. "It becomes necessary and possible, given the wide range and variety that exists, to argue for the legitimacy of protest music as meriting analysis on its own terms, as music" (Sumangala Damodaran). No matter what type of music genres you listen to, every song you listen to will be sending a message that is political, cultural or controversial in some way. This is because songs with any type of lyrics, will be sending some sort of controversial message in some way. Some of these songs, you have to search very deeply for the true meaning. While they may have some surface level meaning, the real meaning comes in when you take a deep dive into understanding what is actually spoken in the song.

There has been little research into the relationship that connects music and politics as well as music and protest. While there has been little research into both of these fields, there have been many examples of both music and politics along with music and protest being used together to send a message. Even though there has been little investment into figuring out the relationship of music on culture or society, there has been even less on understanding how music and politics or music and protest work so well together (Sumangala Damodaran). Even though there have been many years where music and politics have been connected, "in the role of music as a medium or an instrument of political communication, in critiquing existing social contexts and norms or in expressing protest against those norms, the corpus of work on music and politics has been scant" (Sumangala Damodaran). Though little work has been put into understanding

how music helps political movements or protests, enough insight has been made that it is generally accepted that protest music takes two main forms: those that are meant for one specific event and those that are there to show the general disarray and chaos American citizens are living in at the time that the song was written. These protest songs are usually either about an individual, a group or a specific community affected by the event that the song is addressing. "Another dimension of the relationship between music, politics, and identity comes across when identities of particular groups are asserted through the difference between them and the dominant groups in their own societies through the adoption of genres of "others" who might be nationally, ethnically, or socially removed from them" (Sumangala Damodaran). Some examples of protest songs about a specific event are "Ohio" by Neil Young which was about a shooting at Kent University during an anti-war protest during the Vietnam War. Several of the lyrics were, "Four dead in Ohio" and "What if you knew her and found her dead on the ground" (Neil Young). Another example of a song about a specific event is "Vietnam" by Jimmy Cliff which is about his specific experience during the Vietnam War. One of the lyrics in "Vietnam" is "It was just the next day, his mother got a telegram it was addressed from Vietnam... "But mistress Brown your son is dead" (Jimmy Cliff). Some examples of protest songs about the general disarray with America is "Wake Up" by Rage Against the Machine, which is about racism in America and the FBI's counter-intelligence programs. Several of the lyrics are, "20/20 visions and murals with metaphors, networks at work, keepin' people calm ya know they murdered X and tried to blame it on Islam" and "Leaders speak movements cease when their heads are flown cause all these punks got bullets in their heads. Departments of police, (what!) the judges (what!), the feds" (RAtM). A final example is "War Pigs" by Black Sabbath, which is about how rich people and higher ups get to start wars and then it's the poorer people who have to fight, die and suffer through those wars. Two of the lyrics in "War Pigs" are, "Evil minds that plot destruction. Sorcerers of death's construction" and "Politicians hide themselves away they only started the war, why should they go out to fight?" (Black Sabbath).

Since there has been little insight into how vast the genre of protest songs is, the stereotyped group of songs that are considered protest songs is very small and most other protest songs are written off as little more than a song about whatever event the song is about. "Many forms of popular music, such as jazz, rock, rap, and so on, which have contained within their history and practice strong elements of protest, have been dismissed as inferior music and often dangerous, using ostensibly objective criteria of structure, style, skills, and techniques" (Sumangala Damodaran). These different genres of music have been classified as inferior music and dangerous because of how they can send a direct message or specifically target one or several groups. This way of songwriting can be "dangerous" because it calls into question, the injustice many people face and also disrupts the social order that the authority has put in place.

One major reason why there has not been much research in the field of how music and politics/protest work is because of the Western nature of Music Scholarship, which is the study of music through an academic lens. According to Serge Denisoff, who is an author of many books on music and is the founder and was the editor of the Journal of Popular Music and

Society, “this reflects a decline in class-consciousness, political organization in the politics of protest over time, and an accompanying ineffectiveness, in large mobilizational terms, of protest music” (Serge Denisoff). One reason for this argument is because of how many different forms of music protest songs have emerged from. “The music of protest has been used to transform consciousness, stir emotions, impose ideology, arouse courage, mobilize forces, ameliorate anger, incriminate power, organize workers, provoke outrage, inspire reflection, express fear, ...” (Edmondson, 2013, p. 902). Protest music among many other genres is one of inspiration and can bring about any type of emotion depending on the time you are listening to the song and depending on the subject matter the song is talking about.

There are two different types of protest songs, magnetic and rhetoric. Magnetic protest songs with a form of simple melody and lyrics that is able to easily capture the attention of people listening and is also able to convey a type of political message very directly towards the listener. Rhetorical protest songs are not as direct and use more subtle language that will capture the listeners attention on an emotional level (Sumangala Damodaran). Over the years, American protest songs have started to become more rhetorical than magnetic. Stereotypical protest songs are more along the veins of magnetic protest songs because they have simple and easy to understand lyrics, they are able to get their message through easily.

There has been some form of protest music/songs in every war America has fought in. Throughout the American Revolutionary War, music was primarily spread to different locations via printed media. Those who wrote the songs were usually either well educated and those who were being affected by the war had no real say in the matter. “Although both songs could be considered propaganda since they were written by army elites, they also reflected the anti-war sentiment relatable to much of the populace” (Frankie Hill). The two songs mentioned at the beginning of the quote were “To Britain” and “The Rebels.” Some lyrics which showed the anti-war sentiment were in “The Rebels” with such lyrics as, “For one lawful ruler, many tyrants we've got, who force young and old to their wars, to be shot, with their hunting shirts and rifle guns” (Digital History), and, “May commerce and peace again be restored, and Americans own their true sovereign lord. Then oblivion to shirts and rifle guns” (Digital History). Even “Yankee Doodle” was a song that was mocking American soldiers. After British defeat at the Battle of Bunker Hill, the American soldiers sang this song to make fun of the British after they lost.

While there was little to no conventional (for the time period) protest music/songs made at all during the American Civil War due to songs either not being made at all or the music/songs were being censored by the press there was still a lot of Black music being made. Some of the songs made during the American Civil War were “Follow the Drinking Gourd” and “Promised Land,” there were also a lot of different Gospel Songs being made during this time. Not a lot of conventional protest music/songs were being made because “According to the OHC, many of [the] Peace Democrats were silenced under General Order No. 38, which stated, ‘The habit of declaring sympathy for the enemy will not be allowed in this department.’ Violations of the order could be punishable by death. This hostile climate made expressing dissent difficult” (Frankie Hill). Even though people wanted to speak their mind about the American Civil War, they could

not because they were being threatened by death if they were to speak out. This is very similar to the Patriot Act of 2001 while the consequences were not as harsh, it was a way for the government to control what was said through the use of fear. It was also a way to prevent betrayal to the “other side” of the fight, in the case of the Patriot Act, the “other side” was Terrorism. The songs that were written during the American Civil War were mainly centered around anti-war and not protesting the war that was currently going on at the time. Many of these songs such as “When Johnny Come Marching Home” is about what the lives of the soldiers will be once the war is over and they come home after all the fighting they have gone through not about the actual fighting.

Several of the best known protest songs were written by slaves. These songs were used as a form of self expression and as a way to escape slavery. “Go Down Moses,” which Harriet Tubman sang was a code when the Underground Railroad was in use. Several of the lyrics were, “Oppressed so hard they could not stand, let my people go!” and “Tell all pharaohs to let my people go” (Harriet Tubman)! Conventional anti-war songs that we know about today first started to pop up before World War I. “The advent of photography towards the end of the Civil War forced the nation to come to terms with the reality of the devastation the war caused, leaving a bad taste in the mouths of many Americans. This contributed to an anti-war sentiment that extended from commoners to composers to congressmen” (Frankie Hill). Due to the general populous both living through a civil war and being exposed to what war was actually like for both those who fought in it and those who had to survive through it, many citizens did not have warm feelings towards this type of conflict. Along with this, cameras were just starting to get their foothold in America and even if citizens did not see directly the outcome of war before, they could now by seeing these photographs of dead bodies lying on the ground and all the destruction that war causes. This use of photography also added to the general anti-war sentiment shared by many of America’s citizens. One of the first anti-war songs after the Revolutionary War according to Mariana Whitmer was, “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier,” which was made during World War I. While the first conventional anti-war songs started showing up during World War I, the first folk revolution happened in America during the Dust Bowl of the 1930s.

When the attack on Pearl Harbor happened, many American citizens thought that it was necessary to take military action and so most did not have a problem with America going to war against Imperial Japan. Due to the National Wartime Music Committee, many songs went to the same format used during the American Civil War and became about how life would be better when the soldiers got back. The National Wartime Music Committee was supposed to find songs that boosted the morale of soldiers.

By the 1950s, both the anti-war movement and anti-war music were both booming due to how you could see the horrors of warfare right in your living room on the television. When people in America finally understood what these poor men had to go through, they started to question the American governments reasons for joining the Vietnam war. “There was a ‘far larger pool [of protestors] than at any other [point] in history,’ Tausig explained. Simultaneously, there was a general feeling that young people wanted ‘to change the world, [and] the Vietnam

War became a rallying point for [that] energy.' The mobilization of the nation's youth, combined with staggering death tolls and unexpected mission creep helped to turn Americans against the war" (Frankie Hill). Because of these factors, there were many artists such as Edwin Starr and Jimi Hendrix among others who were uniting to send a message to the United States government to end the war in Vietnam. "This coalescence of youthful exuberance and free speech helped to define the 1960s as the decade of disobedience" (Frankie Hill). Through the uniting of all these youth, it sparked many artists to also unite to try and fight against the government and against the Vietnam War. One prominent artist during this time was Bob Dylan who made many folk songs that were very political during the 1960s.

Throughout the first several years of the Vietnam war, the United States actually had quite a bit of public support mainly due to the threat of the Cold War. However some people did not like the war from the very beginning. By 1967, it was still mostly pro war with the Viet Cong but support was starting to waiver because of the way Lyndon Johnson was handling the war. In fact, displeasure in the way Lyndon Johnson was handling the Vietnam War had started showing up as early as 1965 and some even earlier than that.

When Bob Dylan wrote and released Master of War, he stated, "I've never really written anything like that before. I don't sing songs which hope people will die, but I couldn't help it with this one. The song is a soft of striking out, a reaction to the last straw, a feeling of what can you do?" (Bob Dylan) Bob Dylan's main reason for writing this song was in order to criticize the government and America's leaders as to how stupid it was that they were fighting a war in Vietnam. Another artist who wanted to criticize the government and the political issues going on in America during the 60's was Barry McGuire when he wrote Eve of Destruction. This song was so controversial that many radio stations would not play this song due to it being antigovernment and criticizing the government. This song was not specifically written about the Vietnam War but was only more relevant because of the Vietnam War when it addressed political issues in America. Eve of Destruction talks about problems during this unstable period of American history such as injustice, racism and hypocrisy. Eventually, Eve of Destruction became the largest protest song during the 60's for both its message and what topics it was addressing. One of the lyrics in the song, "you're old enough to kill, but not for voting," is about how the voting age in America at the time was 21 but the draft age was 18. Many Americans were not alright with this which is why throughout the Vietnam war, there was a bunch of support to lower the voting age to 18. By the time 1968 rolled around, the support for Lyndon Johnson was at its lowest point during his presidency due in no small part by Bob Dylan, Barry McGuire and everyone else making music during the early stages of the Vietnam War.

By 1967-69, anti-war movements had started to increase year by year. Anti-war organizations had started popping up even as early as the early 1960's but was mostly on school campuses, churches and some radical political groups. Between 1965-66 there were two major marches against war that took place. Both marches had about 25,000 people totaling around 50,000. The first major anti-war march happened in April of 1965 in Washington. The second major anti-war march happened in March of 1966 in New York City. There were also numerous

anti-war protests in cities in countries outside of the United States such as “London, Paris, Rome and Melbourne” (Alpha History). These protests were against US involvement in Vietnam.

“In March 1967 almost 6,800 academics and teachers put their signature to a three-page advertisement in the *New York Times*, condemning the war and calling for an immediate American withdrawal from Vietnam” (Alpha History). There were also many notable people around the world who spoke out against the United States involvement in the Vietnam War. Some of these people included, “Philosophers Bertrand Russell and Jean-Paul Sartre, who claimed that the US had breached international and human rights law with regard to Vietnam” (Alpha History).

There were a bunch of other notable figure who spoke out against the United States involvement in the Vietnam war. One of them was Martin Luther King Jr. Martin Luther King Jr. thought that the United States should be spending the billions that were being shoved into the war effort to be put to something more useful such as social services for American citizens who could really use the support. During the month of April 1967, Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech that was titled “Beyond Vietnam.” This speech was asking for the questioning of the spiritual and moral reasons for America’s foreign and domestic policies. One other notable person who stood up against America's involvement in Vietnam was Muhammad Ali. He identified himself as a conscientious objector and was even given a five year jail sentence when he refused to be drafted but that sentence was overturned by the Supreme Court. Ali even stated, he had no intention to travel “10,000 miles to help murder, kill, and burn other people to simply help continue the domination of white slave masters over dark people the world over” (Alpha History). Some other people who were outspoken about the United States involvement in the Vietnam War were, “Joan Baez, Noam Chomsky, Judy Collins, Bob Dylan, John Fogerty, Jane Fonda, Allen Ginsberg, Charlton Heston, Albert Kahn, Norman Mailer, Joni Mitchell, Carl Sagan, Susan Sontag, Benjamin Spock, Donald Sutherland and Howard Zinn” (Alpha History).

Originally the media coverage was mostly neutral or in favor of the government. However, United States military commanders gave strict orders to the news crews about what they could report about. “Reporters in Vietnam came to refer to daily briefings as “the five-o’clock follies”, since they contained nothing of substance other than successful battle reports and optimistic stories” (Alpha History).

By the time that summer of 1967 rolled around, the Vietnam war was on about 3/4ths of the television bulletins and there were usually a few pages in the newspaper just about the Vietnam War. By 1967, 16,000 American soldiers had died. Because of the events that had been happening over the past few years, this inspired Country Joe & the Fish to sing, “I Feel Like I’m Fixin’ to Die,” during Woodstock. This song is a parody of what the United States government was like during the Vietnam War. Including lyrics such as, “What are we fighting for? Don't ask me, I don't give a damn. Next stop is Vietnam;... Open up the pearly gates. Well there ain't no time to wonder why whoopee! we're all gonna die” and “Come on mothers throughout the land pack your boys off to Vietnam. Come on fathers, and don't hesitate to send your sons off before it's too late and you can be the first ones in your block to have your boy come home in a box.”

Country Joe had been recently discharged from the United States Navy and decided to release this during the height of the Vietnam War. This song puts the blame of the whole Vietnam War squarely on “the politicians and leaders of the US military and the industry that makes its money from war, but not upon those who had to fight the war... the soldiers” (Song Facts). Country Joe communicates the reality of the type of system the United States had to get people into the military system, conscription. Conscription forced those chosen to join the United States Army and it forced many families apart. As one of the lyrics in the song is, “Well, come on mothers throughout the land,... have your boy come home in a box” (Song Facts). Many mothers and fathers had to unwillingly give up their sons to this utterly pointless war and have their sons come home dead if they were lucky as many dead soldiers could not be brought back home. Conscription was tough because if you did not conform and join the army, you would either face jail time or you try to “dodge the draft” whether it was for religious reasons or if you were mentally or physically hindered in some way. Even if you tried to “dodge the draft,” you would still most likely have to join the army anyway because so many soldiers were being killed that the United States Army had to have some way of replenishing all those casualties. Overall, country Joe & the Fish were able to replicate the craziness of the Vietnam War through all the different participants directly and indirectly involved in the Vietnam War.

By late 1969, the anti-war movement reached its peak. Of the many artists that were making songs during this time, one of them was Jimi Hendrix. One of Jimi Hendrix’s many songs was “All Along the Watchtower” which was a cover of Bob Dylan’s song of the same name. There were many different sections of this song which related to the Vietnam War and the anti-war movement even though the song is not specifically about the Vietnam War. One of these lines was “There must be some kind of way out of here,’ Said the joker to the thief” (Jimi Hendrix). This line implies that there is someone/a group of people who are trying to find a way to get out of the line of fire when it comes to why the United States joined the Vietnam War (Jimi Hendrix version). In the first verse (with the context of the Vietnam War), Jimi Hendrix is explaining the confusion many American citizens felt when it came to the reason why the United States had joined the Vietnam War. He is also being a spokesperson for those citizens who have zero idea what's happening and why. With the context of the Vietnam War, the second verse is talking about what the soldiers who are fighting in the Vietnam War are thinking about the war. There were many soldiers who were not happy about how they were drafted into a war that was not necessary. Many soldiers did not want this war to be the sealing of their fate, sadly, a good sized portion did figure it was their fate to fight in this war (American Experience Museum). In the end, many soldiers thought this whole war was one big practical joke because of how it made no sense to them as to why they had to be fighting this war putting their lives in danger each day for basically no reason at all. The final verse again talks about the soldiers experience fighting the Vietnam War. They are forced to serve which basically makes them servants to the United States who have to do whatever they are told to do. “The Watchtower is the war: The entire time they kept the prize in view. When they return home they expect to be greeted with princesses, women, and praise. Instead, they are met with distaste from the public because they for in this

unpopular war. They are growled at, scolded and shamed” (American Experience Museum). The two characters, the joker and the thief are two different types of soldiers who fought in the Vietnam war. The joker is a guy who is pretty lighthearted and can see the positives in just about each situation he finds himself in but when faced with the Vietnam war, he is absolutely terrified. The thief is the guy who knows how much s**t they are in and how he just has to go along with it because he has realized what his fate is and has come to terms with it. His only goal now it to get it done with as soon as possible.

Jimi Hendrix overall was not anti-war, he just had a huge amount of respect and compassion for those who were fighting in Vietnam as he was previously part of the 101st Airborne before he got dispatched. When he performed the “Star-Spangled Banner” at Woodstock in 1969, he was able to capture the true horrors of war with simulations of people screaming, bomb dropping, machine guns firing, and much more while still being able to show his love for his country. With this rendition of the “Star-Spangled Banner, “Hendrix tells a [story] about the devastating events happening abroad in Vietnam” (Jennifer Liu). He was able to show everyone (whether they knew about it or not) the true horrors of war and still respect those fighting in Vietnam as he was quite patriotic this being shown by his choice to perform the United States National Anthem instead of many other songs. He showed that you can still love your country and still think that something they are doing is completely wrong. The time that he played the Star Spangled Banner at Woodstock is by many thought to be the best rendition he ever did. “Hendrix tapped into the whole Vietnam experience. He is in it, completely immersed, and it is beyond playing. Even the feedback sounds like people crying and it sounds like napalmed villages... he plugged into something deep, beyond good or bad” (Murray 1991, 23). As stated before, Jimi Hendrix is able to get a message across that many people would have trouble getting across with a whole song or a group of songs, Hendrix was able to do it with a wordless performance of the US National Anthem with nothing but a guitar.

There was one national protest that had an estimated 2 million participants with over 400,000 in just Washington alone. By 1970, the anti-war movement had died out a bit but was reignited when US troops had invaded Cambodia. In Jimi Hendrix’s “Machine Gun,” the song is inspired by the Vietnam War and the Black Panther Party. Along with this, the song is from the perspective of a soldier trapped by war. Several of the lyrics in this song that were important to get the message across were, “I'd like to dedicate this one to, uh the draggy scene that's going on all the soldiers that are fighting in Chicago and Milwaukee and New York oh yes, and all the soldiers fighting in Vietnam” (Jimi Hendrix). Along with, “Evil man make me kill you evil man make you kill me evil man make me kill you even though we're only families apart” (Jimi Hendrix).

Even though this song is not specifically about the Vietnam War, there is a lot that the Vietnam War through the eyes of the soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War. In Bob Seger’s song, “2+2=?”, he was explaining how everyone realized that what was happening in Vietnam was a complete failure except for the politicians. In the song, Seger communicates with the listener that while he is no genius, he understands how easy it is to add 2+2 and how easy it is to

understand that sending soldiers to Vietnam is a bad idea (Song Facts). When this song was initially released, it was a relatively unknown protest song against the Vietnam War until the mid 1970's where it became a huge song and had an impact on the nation.

In Creedence Clearwater Revival's song, "Fortunate Son," they intended this song is an anti-establishment song about anti-Washington and also against the Vietnam War. Two of the group members, John Fogerty and Doug Clifford both were enlisted into the army reserves in 1966 because they both wanted to avoid being drafted and sent to fight in Vietnam. By 1968, they had both served their military commitments and were discharged from the army. "The song speaks more to the unfairness of class than war itself," Fogerty said. "It's the old saying about rich men making war and poor men having to fight them" (Song Facts). When John Fogerty wrote this song, it was during Nixon's presidency and Fogerty did not really like Nixon at all. John Fogerty did not like Nixon because he seemed to give those who were close to him preferential treatment and by that, those who were eligible, such as Nixon's son were not drafted and forced into service in Vietnam which to Fogerty was really unfair as everyone else's sons were at risk of getting drafted. The song was 100% anti-Vietnam War but was still supportive of those soldiers who did have to fight in Vietnam because it was not their choice. Many soldiers who were drafted came from working class families meaning they had nobody who could get them out of being drafted. The song is in the perspective of those soldiers who get drafted because and who have to fight in Vietnam because they are "not a 'senator's son'" (Song Facts). Creedence Clearwater Revival ended up playing this song on the Ed Sullivan Show most likely because the producers of the show did not understand that it was an anti-war song and not a pro-war song. This is similar to Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." because they are both seen as patriotic songs or pro-war songs when in fact, they are the exact opposite, they are anti-war. This song is often misused by different companies because Fogerty does not own the rights to it, he is always extremely upset when the song is always misused in a pro-war setting.

Several other artists who were really active during this time were John Lennon and Jimmy Cliff. In John Lennon's "Give Peace a Chance," he is talking to leaders of America during the Vietnam War and gives them advice. That advice was, "All we are saying is give peace a chance" (John Lennon). In Jimmy Cliff's "Vietnam" the song is anti-war and about a letter sent to the narrator of the song from his friend in Vietnam. Jimmy Cliff once said in an interview, "maybe that stems back to church and Sam Cooke, but I was socially conscious and sensitive to things going in that war. A friend I went to school with, he was a great artist, he went to live with his family in America, he got drafted, went to Vietnam, and it blew his mind. He came back, he didn't recognize me, it was as if he was dead" (Jimmy Cliff). This protest song was so good and inspirational, that Bob Dylan once referred to this song as "the best protest song ever written" (Bob Dylan). He thought this because the lyrics were incredibly powerful yet so simple. Some of these lyrics included, "Tell all my friends that I'll be coming home soon my time it'll be up sometime in June. Don't forget, he said to tell my sweet Mary her golden lips as sweet as cherries" (Jimmy Cliff). And, "Don't be alarmed, she told me the telegram said but mistress Brown your son is dead" (Jimmy Cliff).

Edwin Starr's "War" is 100% anti-war with lyrics such as, "War, huh, yeah, What is it good for, Absolutely nothing" (Edwin Starr). And, "War means tears, To thousands of mothers eyes, When their sons go to fight, And lose their lives" (Edwin Starr). This song does not like either the Truman Doctrine or Domino Theory. The Truman Doctrine is about how the United States must help countries threatened by Communism. The Domino Theory is about how if one country falls, then another will and another and another. He furthers this message with the line, "They say we must fight to keep our freedom, But Lord knows there's got to be a better way" (Edwin Starr).

Due to this action by the United States army, this sparked an uproar of protests across the face of America. One of the more infamous protests during this time was at Kent State University where a protest had been raging for four days and had destroyed a fair amount of infrastructure. The Ohio governor decided to call the National Guard and on the 4th of May, the National Guard stood in front of the 2,000 students protesting and started to open fire. In the aftermath of the shooting, four students were killed, nine others were injured with one being paralyzed after being struck in the back (Alpha History). After what happened at Kent State, many Americans it was "evidence of a government out of control, a government more willing to shoot its own citizens than withdraw from a disastrous foreign war" (Alpha History).

Neil Young decided to write a song about the shooting and the song was released ten days after the shooting took place. One witness of the shooting stated, "Nobody believed that the guns were actually loaded with live ammo. They just suddenly formed a row. The first one knelt and the second one stood, and they just shot right into the crowd, shot at all of us, down the hill at all of us. The worst thing about it is that two of the four students killed weren't part of the demonstration, weren't part of an antiwar group. They'd just come out of class from the journalism building at that time and come out on their way to their next class and were looking at the protest, just seeing what the hell's going on, and they got killed" (Song Facts). Nobody thought that the National Guard would fire upon their own citizens but they did. One of the lyrics in "Ohio" by Neil Young, he comments on this action by stating, "A tin soldier is a toy soldier, mindlessly controlled by its owner" (Neil Young). With this statement, Neil Young is conveying that the National Guard troops are similar to tin soldiers because Nixon controls them and they do whatever Nixon wants. When Marvin Gaye released "What's Going On", this was a shock because this song was one of the first Motown songs to become political and have a political statement that was powerful and that was attention grabbing. Along with that, nobody thought that Marvin Gaye would make an anti-war song. Several lines that really resonated with listeners were "Mother, mother. There's too many of you crying. Brother, brother, brother. There's far too many of you dying" (Marvin Gaye). And, "Picket lines and picket signs don't punish me with brutality" (Marvin Gaye).

In May of 1971, Gallup did a poll and it showed that 61% of American citizens were now against the United States involvement in the Vietnam War. In June of 1971, the New York Times started to publish sections of a 7,000 page Department of Defense document that was leaked by Daniel Ellsberg to the press, who used to be an advisor to Robert McNamara. When these papers

from the Pentagon were analyzed, it was confirmed that the United States did not have any real military strategy other than Search and Destroy. Search and Destroy tactics were basically used as a form of attrition where it was measured by body count and not territorial gain. Eventually the United States pulled out of Vietnam because of the amount of public outcry.

“The legacy of Vietnam carried over well into America’s future” (Frankie Hill). There were many bands during the 1980s in the hard rock and metal genre who were stating their opinions through the songs they were writing (if they weren’t already). Some of these bands included “Megadeth, Iron Maiden, Metallica, and Black Sabbath” Many of these songs became super popular and many of these songs had anti-war sentiments (Frankie Hill). One other notable band that had numerous examples of anti-war/anti-government songs was Rage Against the Machine with songs such as Bulls on Parade and Wake Up.

Both Punk and Rap were finally recognized as genres with many anti-war songs around the late 1990s to early 2000s. During George W. Bush’s presidency, war became bit issue once again. When the United States invaded Iraq and Afghanistan, songs started popping up again against both the war and the president himself. Two of these bands were Green Day and Neil Young. Due to Donald Trump’s election and due to all the police killings of African Americans has been the start of a new age of protest songs. No matter at what point there were protest songs being either made or sung, they were always celebrating freedom of speech. Some of the best protest songs and political songs have not mentioned what the song is about directly. This has been a running theme through protest songs and political songs through the years and some of the best throughout all of these years have done this to very good results. Many modern songwriters are targeting our current president when it comes to new songs they are making in protest. “For all the criticism he’s earned for demonizing certain groups, the president’s real talent might be the way he makes his supporters feel seen” (Mikael Wood). Many songwriters are trying to write songs about this and talk about how unfair and how frankly stupid it is that he is able to get away with all of this and not have any repercussions. Similarly to some protest songs during the Vietnam War, chants such as one by Fiona Apple has simple lyrics and gets right to the point with what the chant is about. “We don’t want your tiny hands / Anywhere near our underpants” (Fiona Apple).

Throughout all of American History from the Revolutionary War to current day wars in foreign countries being waged in part by America, there has always been some form of music either against the specific war or against war in general. Protest songs have just about taken every form of genre and have all had a similar vibe. As stated at the beginning of this paper, it could be inferred with a bit of exploration that all genres across all of music have some underlying theme of protest within the different genres. Whether these themes are very noticeable because the song states a political/controversial theme or you really have to go digging for the political/controversial theme, if you look for enough time, you will eventually come across these themes. With these themes explored in every genre in music, it is only a matter of time until we see the impact that these songs have on our different communities. Are

we already seeing some impacts? One final question to leave you with is, What is the type of message the music you listen to trying to send?

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