

Eye on Editorials

Dissecting the Music Staples of U2

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Photo courtesy of flickr.com

From the Northern side of Dublin, Ireland came a band that changed the world of music and ingrained songs into the staples of music today. Their songs are so celebrated that many rock enthusiasts would be able to name them off the top of their heads. In this article, I will dissect the songs that made U2 famous.

First of all, a little background on the band. Like many bands starting out, they were strapped for money and needed the help of their parents. They were able to get their parents to shell out 500 pounds (English currency) at the time of their start in the mid 1970s, they sure have made that back over the years. At the time, Bono was already well-known. The other members are lead guitarist simply named The Edge, the bass guitarist is Adam Clayton, and the drummer is the youngest of the band, Larry Mullen Jr.

In their first major hit, *Sunday Bloody Sunday* from the War album, the song takes listeners on a historical journey through Ireland. The song is especially important to the nationality of the Irish. The song is about the Irish revolt of 1690 which is well known in Irish heritage as a great day for the Irish because the English Empire had taken over the North portion of the country of Ireland and was making its way to take over the capital and the band's hometown: Dublin.

All of a sudden, the Irish stood up to the English empire, who had murdered thousands of Irish men, women, and children, firing squad style, to make Ireland its next colony, hence the name Sunday Bloody Sunday. But when the empire made it to the south side of Dublin, the Irish men that lived in the lower portion of Dublin, decided to take on the England, and the mighty empire was not able to

take over the revolting southern Dublin, hence the great day in Irish history. Why is this U2 song a staple in music? Because simply put, some people can identify with the song, from past experience or present experience.

The next song, *Pride (In The Name of Love)*, from the album *Unforgettable Fire* was before their major breakout, in the album called *The Joshua Tree*. The love in this song has to do with the price that one man paid to give a whole discriminatory race their freedom, and that man is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. One particular lyric, stands out in this song: "Early morning, April 4, shots rang out in the Memphis sky."

The person that Bono is singing about changed the world as we know it. Bono pays tribute to him in all of their concerts by saying his name and showing clips of him. This song is a staple in music because in my opinion, we should always pay tribute to someone that did something extraordinary for this country.

The band's next major staple in music came with *The Joshua Tree* album in 1987. The album was the highest grossing album that the band has released to date, and it was just re-released in 2007 for its 20th anniversary. Some of the greatest songs of U2's career came from this album. Songs like *I Still Haven't Found What I am Looking For*, *Where the Streets Have No Name* and *With or Without You* are seminal songs of the late 1980's. *I Still Haven't Found What I am Looking For* is about the soul searching that people go through in trying to figure out what really gives someone joy in both life and relationships. Some of the lyrics make it seem like a love song, which is an overall staple of U2, but this song has

lyrics like, "I have climbed highest mountains, I have run through the fields, only to be with you, But I still haven't found what I'm looking for." Other lyrics say that you can believe in whatever you want, these lyrics are, "I believe in the Kingdom Come. Then all the colours will bleed into one."

The next song is *Where the Streets Have No Name*. This song is about Africa, where the streets have no name and are just roads of a simple people and a simple time. Bono writes this song drawing comparisons to America, where streets are named after presidents and stars, and we are able to immortalize the great celebrities on a walk of fame, when people in a lower country can not raise the money to name their roads.

Finally, the song *With or Without You* tends to evoke strong emotions from people when they hear it, and it is interesting to note that Bono wrote this song about a person that was dear to the band. That woman, the love of Bono's life, came back to him and eventually became his current wife.

These songs are staples in U2 music and music is general because of the issues that they deal with. *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For* deals with the happiness that a person is longing for, *Where The Streets Have No Name* deals with the horrible conditions of some people's lives, and *With or Without You* deals with love and loss.

The final song that is a staple for U2 is probably a song that most people in our generation remember as the first U2 song they learned, and that song is *One* from the album *Achtung Baby*. This song is important to me in that it was the first taste of U2 that I ever heard. The song is

about the person that you are with and the relationship problems that you may be going through.

A lyric that backs up this is, "Have you come here for forgiveness, have you come to raise the dead. Have you come here to play Jesus, to the lepers in your head, did I ask to much, more than a lot, you gave me nothing, now it's all I've got."

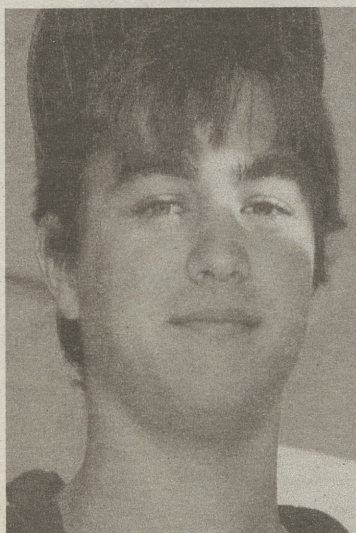
As I stated earlier in my argument, U2 is band that takes experiences, especially in love and uses them to bring in the masses. This song is about family, in general.

The song is specifically for Bono's wife and the troubles that they had throughout their relationship, and they made it work, which shows that not all relationships have to end like Britney Spears' car wreck of a marriage. This song is a staple in music because it is the most well known song of theirs from our generation, and many people can identify a person that they are in love with, a person that is hard to get along with. As well as the person can not get the relationship to work out the way that they see it in the movies.

In the end, the band U2 has had many staples of songs that many people can identify with and love to listen to. So I ask you, when you hear a U2 song, like, *One* or *Where the Streets Have No Name* on the radio next time, you stop on the station and listen to the lyrics that are being sung, because you will most likely identify with the song in some shape or form.

People Poll with Caitlin Olszewski

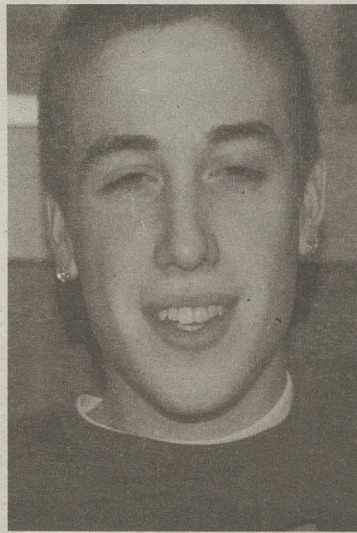
What Do You Want For Christmas?



Colton Phillips
Communications
"Red rider BB gun"



Spencer Graves
Broadcast Journalism
"Play Station 3"



Mike Eggers
Undecided
"Ugg Moccasins"



Maggie Hearn
Animal Science
"A miniature cow"



Kate Tracy
Undecided
"Free tuition for next semester"