

Broderic Duncan

Intermediate Composition

Professor Kerley

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### Oasis: Genre and Discourse Analysis

Oasis was a band both created and destroyed by two brothers named Liam and Noel Gallagher. In the UK they would become household names and culture icons. The band would rise to stardom in the mid-90's and come crashing down in the late 2000s. Oasis was a band filled with drama and stupidity. From the very beginning of band's inception, the brothers Liam and Noel created drama that the rest of the band would have to deal with. All this drama created article after article reporting on their latest antics. Authors are still publishing articles on both Liam and Noel even after more than 10 years since the band's breakup. Some could argue that Oasis wasn't even a band, it was really just the Gallagher show.

There's no argument that Oasis was the biggest band of the mid-90's. Their Knebworth 1996 concert was the biggest concert at the time with a record attendance of 145,000 on day one and 135,000 on day two. It was reported that around 2.6 million people applied for tickets to the gig. At the time this would've equated to roughly 5% of the British population.

When it comes to the discourse of Oasis, it is all over the place. Just like any band, there're articles on reviews of albums, drama within the band, and updates on their day to day life. What makes Oasis special is that they created this feedback loop with the press that convinced the masses that they were the biggest band in the world. Step one of Oasis' plan was to put out amazing music that topped the charts. Once you have successful music, rock critics and the media are going to want to interview you and publish some stories on you. Oasis knew

this (More specifically, Liam and Noel) and took full advantage of any press they were given.

The Gallagher brothers were both very blunt and weren't afraid to speak their mind. Here's an example from a Rolling Stone article when asked about their recent drug usage: "We've been on the front page of the paper, where it said, Oasis in drug shock," says Noel. "Shock to who? It would be a bigger shock if we all went to church: Oasis in Religious Shock." These are the kind of comments Liam and Noel would make all the time. To their credit they were both great interviewees and this would bolster their popularity. The final step would be to create your own press. Do something dumb or stupid that would convince the media to write about you.

Unintentionally or not Liam and Noel were really good at this. They would get into fights with each other all the time that would result in multiple tours cancelled. They did copious amounts of drugs that ruined concerts and even their third album. To put it bluntly, they were a bunch of attention seeking whores that always had to be in "rock star" mode and unable to act like normal human beings. Oasis created this vicious cycle with the press. One where they became popular so the press would write about them, which made them more popular, then Oasis would do something stupid, so the press would write about them again, which would make them even more popular, and thus this incentivized the press to write about Oasis even more. It was like Oasis was famous for being famous. Oasis' combination of popularity, ego, and antics led to the press obsessing over them non-stop.

Oasis as a band died out about as quickly as they rose to fame. In a span of just a couple years they became the UK's biggest band. Their rise and fall can be explained using just their first three albums. This analysis will be going over just those three albums. It will entirely focus on Liam and Noel. The rest of the bandmates were treated as movie extras by the press and both the Gallagher brothers themselves. They were easily replaceable as can be seen just looking at a

timeline of Oasis' bandmates through the years. Right when one of the brothers quit the band, Oasis instantly dissolved. Oasis was not Oasis without both Liam and Noel Gallagher.

Oasis started out incredibly strong with their debut album "*Definitely Maybe*." They first released three singles, all of which topped the charts. They then released *Definitely Maybe* and it instantly became the number one fastest selling album in the UK at the time. The singles that Oasis had released had convinced the UK as a whole that this was a must-have album. During my research I literally couldn't find one negative contemporary review of *Definitely Maybe*. Of course, right now there are plenty of negative reviews of album, but none written during the album's release, only decades after. The lowest score this album got was a 3 and a half star out of five for the album from the Fort-Worth Star-Telegram. Equating to a 70 percent. The next lowest are 8/10 ratings. Not only was the album rated well during its inception, but also years after. NME put it in 3rd place when ranking its greatest British albums ever. To say the album did well would be an understatement. This album had taken over the UK.

Oasis would go on to tour both Europe and North America, while of course creating some drama for the press to write about. Here are some examples during their North American tour. They were thrown out of the KROQ radio station for swearing on air. Next, they got into a fight with bouncers at the coveted Viper Room Club. And finally, they somehow confused crystal meth for cocaine and completely screwed up their entire concert at the Whisky-A-Go-Go. Liam would go onto say during the *Supersonic* film: "I don't know who fucking got it but it was there and we all thought it was coke. We're doing big fucking lines of it and it just kept us up for fucking days."

A year later Oasis would go onto release their second album, (*What's the Story*) *Morning Glory*? Once again, the singles topped the charts and the album sold like wildfire, just like their

debut album did. The only difference being that the press wasn't giving it gleaming 5/5 reviews. The reviews were positive just not as positive. They were being a little more critical. Take for example this review from Melody Maker, who said "“What's the Story...” is occasionally sublime but too often labored and lazy.” And then goes down the list of each song on the album critiquing them each. Spin Magazine went onto say “(*What's the Story*) *Morning Glory* feels less tuneful and more complacent than Oasis' first CD; generic classics rock replaces the old Bowie glitter, like a prep-school version of Soul Asylum, though sometimes with a thick Urge Overkill '70s highway roll to it. Other than those two examples most other critiques were positive, giving the album an overall positive reception.

For the next two years Oasis would ride the waves of success their albums created. Touring both Europe and the States. The press would of course continue to follow the pattern of writing about all the antics Oasis was up to, while praising their music. Two years later in 1997 Oasis would release their third album, *Be Here Now*. This album, just like their last two, sold like crazy. Critics were once again giving it gleaming reviews as well. There was just one problem, although fans had bought the album, they were starting to return it. Just weeks after the official release of *Be Here Now*, fans were returning the album, putting it back on store shelves. *Be Here Now* would go on to become one of the most returned albums in UK history. The question then was how come the press gave this album, that everyone was returning, positive reviews? One reason is that there were some critics that gave Oasis' previous album (*What's the Story*) *Morning Glory*? negative reviews, thinking it wasn't as good as their first album. But to their surprise fans loved it and it was as if everyone had unanimously decided that *Morning Glory* was a masterpiece and anyone who didn't think that was wrong. The press, not wanting to embarrass

themselves again, decided that since the album was selling really well that this was going to be a repeat of *Morning Glory*.

For rock critics in the UK, this destroyed their integrity. The critics were scared to give their true opinions on an album and decided it'd be easier to just give it a positive review since the album was selling so well. They didn't want to put out a negative review, no one was going to read that. It's hard to blame them either, if you listen to Oasis' first three albums, they all sound the same. Oasis was like a one trick pony and didn't really change their sound too much between albums. The press probably observed how the album was selling well and that it sounded pretty similar to the last two albums, so of course they had to give the album a positive review.

In conclusion, the split between the critical discourse and public opinion demonstrated how out of touch critics were. That they were just blindly giving positive reviews to whatever they saw as popular. When fans started returning *Be Here Now*, it exposed rock critics and the press that they had no integrity. Oasis would never be able to recover from their disappointing third album. Their fame peaked after the release of *Morning Glory* and came crashing down with the release of *Be Here Now*.

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