

= Queer ( song ) =

" Queer " is a song written and produced by alternative rock band Garbage for the band 's self @-@ titled debut album . The song started as a demo during sessions between band members Butch Vig , Duke Erikson and Steve Marker , and had its composition finished after singer Shirley Manson joined the band . Manson rewrote the sexualized lyrics to be more ambiguous , and rearranged the song into a subdued trip hop and rock crossover structure .

In 1995 , " Queer " was issued as the band 's fourth single in the United Kingdom and second internationally . The song quickly became a modern rock success for the fledgling band , with positive reviews from music journalists , and becoming their first top 20 hit in both the UK Singles Chart and Billboard 's Hot Modern Rock Tracks chart . It also earned attention with its music video by Stéphane Sednaoui , which featured Manson detaining , stripping and shaving a man from a first @-@ person perspective . The video earned much airplay on MTV and was nominated for Breakthrough Video at the 1996 MTV Video Music Awards .

= = Composition = =

" Queer " began as a rough demo around January 1994 , recorded during informal studio sessions between Butch Vig , Duke Erikson and Steve Marker in Marker 's home basement recording studio in Madison , Wisconsin . The band had been jamming using an ADAT eight @-@ track , AKAI samplers , and a small drum kit . The band had written around five songs that they felt were pretentious and lyrically simple and literal . They did not want Erikson to sing , even though he was a competent singer , because they wanted to avoid sounding like their previous band Spooner . Vig and Marker were uncomfortable with their vocals so tended to bury them deep in the mix or distort them with effects ; on " Queer " , Vig recorded a " scratch vocal " consisting of him screaming his way through . The recorded work was later discarded , which Vig explained was because the trio discovered that the musical experiments they were attempting " [ don 't ] work when you 're trying to write a song and put it in a context that works " . Vig 's inspiration for " Queer " came from a novel he had read about " about this woman who was hired to go and make this guy 's son a ' man ' . The kid is missing a few marbles . But then he realizes that the women [ sic ] who came to his room is also fucking his father . "

After Marker saw Shirley Manson 's group Angelfish on 120 Minutes , the band invited her to Vig and Marker 's Smart Studios to sing on a couple of songs . One of the compositions was " Queer " , whose incomplete lyrics forced Manson to ad @-@ lib in an audition that was described as " dreadful " . The singer afterwards returned to Angelfish , which folded shortly later . Manson eventually returned to Smart for a successful second audition and then began working on the songs Vig , Marker and Erikson had created . Manson rewrote " Queer " into a trip hop arrangement and added ambiguous lyrics that allowed the listener to make up their own mind about what the song was about . She also re @-@ sang the " Queer " vocal in an understated style . It was then that the band knew that Garbage was going to work .

Garbage incorporated a sample of the drumline from Australian band Single Gun Theory 's track " Man of Straw " on " Queer " ; this loop was layered with an additional drum part performed by Madison percussionist Clyde Stubblefield , who was known for being the most sampled drummer in history for his uncredited part on James Brown 's " Funky Drummer " . Vig opted to hire Stubblefield to play on the record rather than sample him as " you don 't use a sample when the genius who played the sample lives down the street from you " , and the drummer also contributed to album cut " Not My Idea " . Bass guitar parts were completed by Milwaukee session bassist Mike Kashou . The band wanted to sample a clarinet part from a Frank Sinatra record , but the licensing for the sample would have been prohibitively expensive . Mulling over some options , such as having a session musician interpolate the part themselves still led to having to pay a large royalties . The idea was dropped . The band still liked the idea of using a clarinet , and recorded a part by Les Thimming on the final mix .

Manson later explained , " It 's not , as you might think , to do with being gay , but tolerance . My

granny has the expression ' Or 's queer , except thee and me , and sometimes even thee 's queer ' , that is that you think you are normal and the rest of the world is freaky , but we 're all equally to blame " . Garbage did not write the song to particularly appeal to the gay community , however Erikson stated : " As musicians , we 're totally open to [ the song 's gay appeal ] . There 's been enough exposure to gay issues in the mainstream media that people are finally ready to deal with it . Even if it 's something controversial , people are still beginning to open up " . Erikson added : " The song isn 't about sex at all , it 's about the loss of innocence " .

= = Single release = =

Almo Sounds released " Queer " as the band 's second single to alternative radio in the United States at the end of August 1995 , upfront of August 15 North American release date of Garbage . The song debuted at the end of September on the Modern Rock Tracks chart at number 30 . The following week , Garbage debuted on the Billboard 200 at number 193 , having spent the previous four weeks as a rising Heatseekers title . At the beginning of October , " Queer " debuted at number 62 on the Hot 100 Airplay chart , peaking a week later at number 57 . In mid @-@ November , remixes of " Queer " were sent to clubs . " Queer " peaked at 12th on the Modern Rock chart in its ninth week , but did not earn enough airplay to chart in the Billboard Hot 100 . The song eventually finished its run on the Modern Rock chart in December 1995 , for a total of 14 weeks .

On October 23 , 1995 , " Queer " was issued as the band 's second single in Australia and New Zealand . White issued a three @-@ track CD single and cassette single backed with two newly recorded tracks , " Girl Don 't Come " and " Sleep " , which had been recorded for the UK release of " Only Happy When It Rains " . " Queer " peaked at number 55 in Australia , spending twelve weeks on the ARIA top 100 singles chart . In New Zealand , " Queer " debuted on the RIANZ charts at number 45 at the start of November , rising to a number 37 peak three weeks later . Across Europe , " Queer " was issued by BMG in a similarly configured CD single ; a three @-@ track release backed with " Girl Don 't Come " and " Sleep " . In Belgium 's Wallonia @-@ region , " Queer " peaked at number 24 at the end of January 1996 . " Queer " debuted and peaked at 7th in Iceland the following month . In Spain , " Queer " peaked at number 33 on the airplay chart . In April 1996 , performed " Queer " live on French television show Nulle Part Ailleurs and headlined a show at the Élysée Montmartre in Paris ; BMG France released a three @-@ track CD single of " Queer " featuring " Trip My Wire " and the Rabbit in the Moon remix .

Initially , Mushroom Records had scheduled " Queer " to be the lead single for the UK release of the debut album Garbage , matching the international single release strategy . At last minute , it was decided to release " Only Happy When It Rains " upfront of the album , with " Queer " rescheduled to later in 1995 to coincide with the band 's first UK live show . " Queer " was quickly picked up by radio , and was B @-@ listed by Radio One , whose breakfast slot DJ Chris Evans championed it as his " Single of the Week " , and playlisted by Virgin Radio . " Queer " reached number 35 on the airplay chart . Mushroom issued the single on a limited edition 7 " vinyl and a gold and silver CD single set on November 20 , 1995 . Each CD single was backed with a newly recorded track ; " Trip My Wire " on the first and a cover version of The Jam 's " Butterfly Collector " on the second ( the cover later featured in The Jam compilation album Fire and Skill ) . Four remixes of the title track were spread out across the CDs , with one also appearing on the flipside of the vinyl . Early indications showed that the single had a midweek position of 10 , however at the end of its first week on @-@ sale , " Queer " debuted on the UK Singles Chart at number 13 . That week , Garbage made a live appearance to perform the single on Top of The Pops , and performed both " Queer " and " Only Happy When it Rains " on MTV 's Most Wanted .

= = = Collector 's format = = =

As the band had received significant attention from the special packaging of their first three releases , " Queer " was also released in this manner . Mushroom 's product manager had a longer time to design the package than the other singles ; this was a result of " Queer " being held back

three months so that " Only Happy When It Rains " could launch the album . Garbage 's original suggestion for " Queer " was to create a jade velvet box , but Mushroom vetoed the idea over the cost . The label sourced a plastics company to create the case , which was made from injection @-@ molded polystyrene , similar to the process of manufacturing jewel cases . The company charged Mushroom £ 10 @,@ 000 to have the mould created . The end product was finished with frosted effect for the " G " logo , which was stickered , and within placed the vinyl record in a card picture sleeve ; this cost Mushroom £ 2 @.@ 21 per unit ( a loss of 95p for each sale ) . This special single had only 5 @,@ 000 copies issued .

= = Critical reception = =

Upon both the release of Garbage and the release of " Queer " as a single , the song received a positive reception from music journalists . Leo Finlay , in a Music Week article highlighting the campaign for the debut album 's release wrote , " ' Queer ' is eerily reminiscent of Magazine 's stranger moments " . A reviewer for NME wrote that the single was " an ode to recognising and tolerating those mis @-@ shapen ones among us " , and when reviewing the album , their own Shannon O 'Connell wrote , " there is a bit of Pat Benatar in [ this songs ] back @-@ alley swagger " . A reviewer for VOX described " Queer " as " Voice of the Beehive roughing up L7 " , Jackie Hinden of Hot Press wrote that the song was " a slinky work @-@ out against a restrained work @-@ to @-@ rule industrial backing " , and the publication later made it their Single of the Fortnight , describing it as " Almost indecently brilliant . There 's an intelligence at work here in the lyrics and in the music which makes " Queer " a unique proposition , and Garbage utterly indispensable " . A writer for Melody Maker wrote that " Queer " was " sleek , cultivated perversion ... sinister and menacing " , while Raw 's review described it as " brilliant , Seductive and slow @-@ burning " , and the single reviewer for NME considered that Manson 's performance " elevates a sing @-@ song shuffle into a lullaby to sexual non @-@ conformity " . Rolling Stone described the song as a " more roundly shaped tune orchestrated with this same love of junk and command of finesse . " Kerrang ! rated " Queer " as their Single of the Week , stating " an incredible knee @-@ trembling fuck tune ... the dirtiest pop tune you 'll hear all year . [ You 'll be ] sucked into dark satin sexiness and you 'll never want to leave . Gorgeously decadent and utterly fabulous " ;

= = Track listings and formats = =

" Queer " was the first Garbage single to include remixes as a commercial b @-@ side ; Mushroom spread four across the UK formats . These were completed by producers Adrian Sherwood , Danny Saber , Depeche Mode 's Martin Gore and Florida @-@ based group Rabbit in the Moon . In 2007 , the Heftybag mix by Rabbit in the Moon was remastered and included on the limited edition of greatest hits collection Absolute Garbage .

= = Music video = =

The music video for " Queer " directed by Stéphane Sednaoui for Propaganda Films and was filmed in July 1995 in Los Angeles . Sedanoui 's video concept developed from his own personal experience of being " shredded into pieces " by a beautiful woman . Garbage loved his storyboard for " Queer " , feeling it matched the ambiguous nature of the song . Manson had chosen Sednaoui as director after she saw the " Big Time Sensuality " music video he directed for Björk , and later said that Sednaoui " doesn 't just take an idea and apply it to different artists , he seems to be able to figure out where the artist is coming from and make the photographs and the videos unique to that group . "

The black and white storyline of the video saw a young male 's first person perspective of exiting an elevator onto a Los Angeles street and meeting Manson . She coyly entices him to follow her to her home where the men from Garbage are waiting . They detain him inside , forcing him up onto the second @-@ level of the house , where Manson throws him to the floor , strips him of his clothing

and blinds him with gaffer tape . He recovers to find Manson shaving his head , before she drags him outside by his legs . He is then seen strangely happy , and in full colour , leaving the street .

Sednaoui operated the camera for the whole shoot . To capture the victim 's struggle , Sednaoui positioned the camera at ground @-@ level facing upwards towards Garbage , who were standing on a rotating platform . To suggest the victim was almost hallucinating , strobe lighting was combined with the rotation of the platform , however the effect caused the band to suffer from vertigo after a number of takes . Manson later claimed that the video helped establish her group ; " He really defined for us who we were visually . Stéphane was able to look at the band and listen to the music and figure out what was the perfect visual partner for the band . People think we 're a very stylish band , and it 's all to do with him " . She added , " I 'm really proud of " Queer " , I think it 's one of our best videos . "

The " Queer " video premiered on North American networks on August 14 , 1995 ; where it was given heavy support by MTV , who certified it a Buzz Clip . MTV requested an edit to obscure the shot of Manson blinding the video 's protagonist before playlisting it . The music video for " Queer " was nominated in the Breakthrough Video category at the 1996 MTV Video Music Awards , losing to Smashing Pumpkins ' " Tonight , Tonight " . The silver dress Manson wore in the video was later donated to the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas , Nevada for indefinite display .

The " Queer " video was first commercially released , accompanied with out @-@ take footage from the shoot , on 1996 's Garbage Video VHS and Video @-@ CD . A remastered version was included on Garbage 's 2007 greatest hits DVD Absolute Garbage and made available as a digital download via online music services the same year .

= = Release history = =

= = Comprehensive charts = =