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English 102

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Critiquing Badge

Part 1:

1. Tom Barnes’ “Scientists Just Discovered Why All Pop Music Sounds Exactly the Same” is about all pop music following the same structure to find success.
2. Pop artists have found a formula for making music that is sonically pleasing, and many artists are copying this formula.
3. Barnes uses a study from the Medical University of Vienna, which studied 15 genres and 374 subgenres. The study was done in 2015.
4. He chooses to mention very specific, popular artists that are following this formula.
5. I think Barnes’ seems to be a bit biased in his examples, as well as not seeming to properly understand music as a musical journalist.
6. I hope Barnes’ would be willing to listen to my side as someone that knows how to play multiple instruments, because with the way modern music works there are only so many ways to combine the same seven basic chords.

Part 2:

As somebody that listens to just about every genre of music and plays multiple instruments, I would say music is one of the most important parts of my life. Because of this, I find Tom Barnes’ article “Scientists Just Discovered Why All Pop Music Sounds Exactly the Same” a bit odd. In the article, he saying that modern pop artists have found a formula to make a hit songs and are force feeding them to the public, in a way. He backs up his claims with a 2015 study from the Medical University of Vienna in Austria. As this study is from 2015, it is a bit outdated.

He chooses to mention very specific, popular artists that are following this formula. being Taylor Swift, Iggy Azalea and Meghan Trainor. These are all solo artists. He mentions The Lumineers as well as Mumford and Sons for artists that are breaking away from this formula. These two are bands and are also less popular than the other three. Speaking from experience, it is much easier for a band or group to sound more “unique” than a solo artist, as you multiple that have their own style of playing their instrument. This all comes together to make the core sound of the band. Also, with the way modern music is structured, there are only seven basic chords:

A B C D E F and G. There are different variations of these chords, but after a while, of course people are going to find the “best” or most sonically pleasing way to order these chords. Pop music is usually happy or uplifting, and the chords they use go along with that.

If I were debating with him, I hope Barnes’ would be willing to listen to my side as there are many popular artists today that are breaking away from the “formula” and still sound great, but this “formula” is never going to leave. Music is, in my opinion, evoking emotions in the listener.

Part 3:

I think this badge was fun. Maybe it was because I got talk about music, and music is an extremely important part of my life. This badge was a bit different than the analyzing badge. The analyzing badge was more about reading into what the text is saying and pulling out examples. This was more about figuring out what the writer did right or wrong.