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“Ballad of the Green Berets” by Sergeant Barry Saddler

The purpose of this essay is to explore and analyze the song, “Ballad of the Green Berets” by Sgt Barry Sadler. The Ballad came out in 1966. This song was made at the same time the United States were fighting as a part of the Vietnam War. The war lasted from 1955 to 1975. This song was made to be a victory song for the United States about the U.S Army. The song by Sgt Barry Sadler quickly became the number 1 song in the pop market in 1966. According to (<https://www.history.com/>) Sgt Sadler served as a medic for the Special Services during the Vietnam war. Unfortunately, Barry Saddler got injured during the war. He decided to play another role and made the song while recovering from his injury. Saddler made this song as a tribute to the troops who served in the United States Special Services. Just a few of many questions I will be answering in this writing assignment are, what was the intended message for this song? What style does it have, and why does it have the style that it does? And in what ways does it respond or reflect on an event going on during its time frame? What exactly is a Green Beret and why are they so important?

In this paragraph I will explain what the intended message and the impact the song “Ballad of the Green Berets” had. The song was written for those who served in the United States Special Forces, also known as the Green Berets. This song was also released during the time that the Hippie movement was going on. The hippies were heavily opposed to the war back in the 1960’s. So, there was a lot of animosity and back and forth between the more conservative older people of that time and the youth with different thinking during that time frame. But with all this being said, I feel like the “Ballad of the Green Berets” had a pretty decent impact on the people and the music industry back in its time. The song quickly rose to the number 1 spot in the American pop market, when rock music was the most popular and celebrated genre of that time frame. Sgt Sadler and the “Ballad of the Green Berets” held the top spot in the industry over popular artists such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, and many other popular artists back in the 60’s. So, I believe that this song had a special message about the people serving in the United States Special Forces and had a pretty big impact on not only the people, but the music industry as well.

The next thing I will be talking about in this paragraph is the kind of style that the song “Ballad of the Green Berets” by Barry Saddler has. This song has more of a simple military kind of sound to it, Barry was more like talking rather than singing, and there were not many instruments going at once. The main instrument you hear in this song is the snare drum, the snare drum in this song was playing more of a rhythm that the soldiers would march to instead of all the other popular rock songs in the 60’s. As a result of the simple style and sound of the song, the words and message become the highlight. Also in the video of Sgt Barry Saddler performing his song “Ballad of the green Berets” (https://youtu.be/m5WJJVSE_BE) he is seen wearing his soldier uniform and his green beret on his head. The uniform brings even more meaning to the special words he is singing. These are all the reasons why I believe this song by Saddler was more of a military style kind of song with a true message behind it.

The next thing I will be discussing in this essay about this song by Sgt Barry Saddler, is in what ways this song reflects an event that was happening during its time frame. The first thing I noticed how this song reflects on an event that was taking place during the 1960's is the Vietnam War. Before this song was made, the United States was fighting in the Vietnam war that started on November 1, 1955 and ended on April 30, 1975. According to (<https://www.songfacts.com/>) it says that "Saddler wrote this song to boost the morale of the U.S soldiers who were fighting in Vietnam when the public opinion was low". As I listened to the song, I realized that Barry says a good bit of stuff relating to United States soldiers of that time. In the song Sgt Barry Saddler says "Fighting soldiers from the sky, fearless men who jump and die." In my opinion this sounds like he is referring to soldiers who are fighting in Vietnam at the time. Another reason why I feel like he wrote this song is because he had suffered a leg injury that put an end to his military career. Another thing this song reflects on is the Green Berets, the Green Berets are a group of elite U.S soldiers who were fighting in the war who were also known as the Special Forces. I believe that he is reflecting on the Green Berets, not only because of the song title "Ballad of the Green Berets" but also because in the song Sgt Barry Saddler quotes "100 men will test today, but only 3 win the green beret" (<https://youtu.be/UEDYLcSLHol>). These are a few reasons backing up why I believe this song was reflecting on the United States soldiers who were fighting in the Vietnam War and that it was a historical event that was taking place back when this song by Sgt Barry Saddler was published in 1966.

It is important to know the significance of the Green Beret. The Green Berets are another name for the United States Army's Special Forces. The Special Forces of the Army are a distinctive and unorthodox combat arms unit. They are the most adaptable Special Operations soldiers in the world and are highly trained, seasoned professionals. Special Forces is an elite, versatile force for the most important operations targets of strategic importance. Their past spans more than 200 years of unconventional warfare history, including prominent forebears such as the Alamo Scouts, the Office of Strategic Services Jedburgh Teams, and Swamp Fox Francis Marion from the Revolutionary War. Special Forces members have made notable contributions since their founding in 1952 in places like Vietnam, El Salvador, Panama, Desert Shield/Storm, Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Most recently, Special Forces has been key in the destruction of the Taliban and al-Qaida in Afghanistan, the hunt for insurgents in Iraq, the training of foreign soldiers to combat terrorists or drug warlords, and the travel of oppressed people around the world. Their missions frequently call for swift and discrete reactions to different global events. The Special Forces are the U.S. military's Global Scouts, and their constant presence virtually ensures that they are the first on the scene or present at a crisis area as it develops. They have extensive understanding of foreign languages, customs, and cultures, and are professional in unilateral direct-action operations and unconventional warfare as a result. Also, they are experts at organizing and training foreign militaries, indigenous forces, proxy fighters, and insurgents to promote American national goals. Members of the Special Forces team collaborate closely and depend on one another for extended periods of time, both during deployments and in garrison. As a result, they form deep friendships and links that promote a sense of camaraderie and brotherhood that is uncommon in the military (<https://www.military.com/>).

"Ballad of the Green Berets" was a significant song during the year 1966. The singer, Sergeant Barry Saddler, gave even more meaning to the song. Not only did he put his life on the line to serve as a medic during the Vietnam War but he still tried to make a difference after being

injured during the war. A song written as a tribute to the troops, the ballad was intended to boost morale for the ongoing war. Although many citizens were opposed to the war at the time, the song was still able to gain great popularity and bring some Americans together. The simple style song was able to easily convey the message and it also had a large impact on the music industry at the time. The song served as a great reminder to the people of the United States of the bravery that the troops had in fighting as a part of the military at that time. The song was especially representative of the Green Berets. They were the men on the front lines and the most brave of them all. It was a great honor for the men of the Army to become a part of the Special Forces and still is today.