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**Bob Marley's Spiritual Rhetoric, the Spread of Jamaican Culture and
Rastafarianism**

By

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Professor John L. Rector
Western Oregon University
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The spread of Jamaican culture and Rastafarianism can be accredited to many events and technical advances in communication. Bob Marley is one of the main influences the spread of Jamaican culture and Rastafarianism due to the lyrical rhetoric used in his popular music. Growing up as an impoverished youth, Marley struggled to create a music career where his voice as well as others could be heard globally.

Bob Marley's lyrics contributed to the spread of Jamaican culture and Rastafarianism because the messages in these songs display the areas of class and Marley's life in the Jamaica ghetto, Trenchtown. The nation's capital city, Kingston and its largest ghetto, Trenchtown, was home to Marley for many years. Today it still retains much poverty and corruption, both politically and socially. The messages Marley sends out in his music brings forward his memories of Trenchtown with its racism, oppression, violence, and poverty.

The religious messages portrayed by the lyrics of Marley's music also explore his beliefs in the religion of Ras Tafari; a religion that sprung up in Jamaica in the 1930's. Rastafarianism helped lead a movement of cultural renewal among Africans. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, Marley truly begins to accept this religion and incorporate its beliefs in his songs.

Bob Marley's lyrics spread his spiritual and political messages. The rhetorical strategies Marley used to persuade the audience are simple language, words, and relaxing sounds. They publicize important, and very intense political and social issues. These issues include the living conditions of Trenchtown as well as the oppression he witnessed

during his years with the “Rude Boys” or street gang of Trenchtown by using this informative lyrical persuasion technique. Marley is able to capture an audience who may not be particularly interested in or aware of politics or social issues.

Bob Marley presents himself and his beliefs in a way that attracts a great range of listeners. They include those that enjoy his musical performances, as well as those who completely understand and appreciate his lyrical messages. For many people around the world, Marley’s characteristics and person became Jamaican and Rastafarian culture.

Originally from Jamaica, a country very dependent on tourism, Marley captured the attention of audiences with different political and social views and offered his message to them subtly. The article titled *Walk Good: West Indian Oratorical Traditions in Bob Marley’s Uprising*¹ compares and relates this to the oral traditions used in the West Indies as well as in West Africa, as tribal leaders used words, strategies, and rhetoric to capture the attention of their audiences. “In the West Indies as well as in West Africa, the aesthetic appeal of an argument guarantees its validity. And because, controversially, a truth presented without skill is hardly the truth at all.”² The lyrics in the music Marley wrote and sang are much like these speeches and stories tribal leaders tell. Marley’s music has an aesthetic appeal with soothing and sometimes driving reggae tones and beats. Many people who may not comprehend or even listen to the lyrics Marley sings, may still enjoy his music and the talent he displays with his instrumentation.

¹ Hodges, Hugh. “Walk Good: West Indian Oratorical Traditions in Bob Marley’s Uprising.” *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 40.2 (2005).

² Hodges pp. 43.

Marley and the traditional Rastafarianism lifestyle, as well as his rhetoric, are similar to those of tribes in other parts of the world. This creates a “tribal mystic” or person whom is one with the world around him, his spirituality, and appreciates life more than others.

This study connects Marley and the West Indies because they are both very spiritual. Bob Marley, a believer in the religion of Rasta, uses many “Biblical” messages as well as folk proverbs, sayings and turns of speech from Jamaican heritage, to connect himself with his audience. “Anand Prahlad has likened Marley’s live performances to those of ‘fire-and-brimstone-style Jamaican preachers.’”³ This is debatable, however, in a literal sense due to Marley’s passive nature and sound. As an artist Marley was not dogmatic but rather an advocate for his values of peace, justice, and equality.

Marley made a remarkable impact on many regions of the world. The spread of the Rasta religion is partly due to his music and his ability to spread his music to communities of Rastafarians in Britain, Canada, the United States, and the Caribbean. His death in 1981 caused a remarkable impact on the music world. On Thursday May 21, 1981, the people of Jamaica gave Robert Nesta Marley an official funeral. Following the service, Marley's body was taken to his birthplace at Nine Mile, on the north side of the island of Jamaica, where it now rests in a mausoleum. Both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition attended the funeral.

³ Hodges pp 43.

Paul Gilroy's article "Could You Be Loved? Bob Marley, Anti-Politics and Universal Sufferation,"⁴ gives a detailed biography on Marley from his birth on February 6, 1945 and background. His father who was white and his mother who was black. The article covers Marley's amazingly fruitful career in which he had many top hits around the world with his largest audiences being in the United Kingdom as well as the Caribbean.

Gilroy defines Marley calling him the greatest man in reggae music and the greatest leader and proponent of the spread of the Rasta religion. This article poses Marley "as an icon for the struggle for justice, peace and human rights"⁵ not just another musician or pop icon.

Although opposed to many established governmental policies, Marley was not an anti-establishment advocate. He was an individual that believed governments and everyday people, such as those who may not be involved in politics, needed to look out for their fellow humans and treat all people equally regardless of ethnicity and income. Marley used his music to bring many social issues to the forefront that had previously been suppressed. Many of these issues were not suppressed because of their nature, but because of the lack of influence Jamaica had on the world.

The country of Jamaica is highly dependant on tourism and agricultural exports such as raw sugar. By-products of the raw sugar production are molasses and rum. Due to these limited industries, most citizens of Jamaica are of the working class and this

⁴ Gilroy, Paul. "Could You Be Loved? Bob Marley, Anti-Politics and Universal Sufferation." Critical Quarterly 47.1/(Spring 2005): 226-245.

⁵ Gilroy, 232.

creates a service and now, product-based economy typical of the developing world. Marley focuses on the situations he experienced both in his hometown of Kingston while living in Trenchtown and through his travels in his career. The article analyzes the political messages Marley sends out and relates them to the real life situations, such as poverty, oppression, and political corruption. Like Martin Luther King, Bob Marley fought against social injustice using a non violent method. "I have a duty to tell the truth as I have been told it. I will keep on doing it until I am satisfied the people have the message that Rastafari is the almighty and all we black people have redemption just like anyone else. Not for money will I do anything man, but because I have something to do."⁶

A work which focuses primarily on the political aspects of Bob Marley's ideology and his portrayal of his beliefs in his music is by Angelica Gallardo, and is titled "Get up, Stand up"⁸. Through these descriptions, Gallardo shows that Marley lead a musical revolution and through that revolution, brought the political realm into his music, with the steadfast attachment to his ideas of poverty, oppression, and political corruption.

Bob Marley began recording songs very early at the age of seventeen, with two songs called *Judge Not (Unless You Judge Yourself)* and *One Cup of Coffee*. Throughout the lyrics in his music, the messages of his Rastafarian beliefs are spelled out in musical form. In the song titled *Exodus*⁹ Marley sings about a movement of "Jah" people or God's people. He asks for the listener to open his eyes and hear Jah's words because he

⁶ Gallardo pp. 202.

⁸ Gallardo, Angelica. "Get up, Stand up." *Peace Review* 15.2 (June 2003).

⁹ Marley, Bob Nesta. *The Best of Bob Marley and the Wailers*. N.p.: Hal-Leonard, 1995. pp. 43.

has important things to say. Marley warns of the fact that many people will try to fight you for your beliefs and faith, but if you persevere, you will be successful and see “the light.” Marley states that his generation is the one that will “trode” through great tribulations and fight through adversities to complete this movement towards Africa of the Rastafaris. Marley, in the next verse, questions the listener about their happiness and their own internal image. He reminds the listener that they know their roots and their future due to their faithful reverence. He also says that they should stay strong their reverence and faithfulness, and continue in this Rasta movement. This song serves as a reminder to keep listeners close to the faith and to remind them that others are enduring the same type of hard times and tribulations. Marley believes that if these people move together they can create a great change and move out of Babylon. To the Rasta religion, Babylon refers to Western Civilization and capitalism. In the Rasta faith, the believers are not to work in Babylonian corrupt society, which is built on the sufferings of the World’s oppressed. Rastafaris are to wait passively for the fall of Babylon. They are not to cut their hair, allowing them to form “nappy” dreadlocks.

The beginning for Bob Marley’s interest in the Rasta movement, began in 1966, while he was visiting his mother in Delaware. While Marley was there, he missed the visit of the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie to Jamaica. Emperor Selassie represents the “prophet” of the Rasta Movement in the eyes of most Jamaicans. and his presence brought throngs of Jamaican Rastafaris to see him. Marley’s wife Rita, witnessed Selassie passing through Jamaica in his motorcade. She swore she saw the mark of

stigmata on his palm and from that moment on, swore her unwavering faith to the religion of Rasta.

When Marley returned to Jamaica to hear this observation from his wife, he began to explore the religion himself and began his path to becoming a Rastafari. “According to some accounts, he adopted the religion as early as 1967 or 1968. But according to Timothy White’s meticulous biography, *Catch a Fire*,¹⁰ Marley’s conversion wasn’t complete until the early seventies.”¹¹ Based on interviews with Rita and his many children, White’s biography explores the intimate details of Marley’s life including the great details of life on tour as an international reggae icon. White refrains from any opinion about Marley himself but prefers that the facts to decide whether the reader favors or disapproves of him.

In Marley’s song *Africa Unite*,¹² he begins with the lyrics that the Rastafaris are moving out of Babylon in the land of their father or Africa. He then sings about the greatness and the beauty of the African unification and the children of the Rasta man and higher man. These lyrics voice the basis for the Rasta religion.

¹⁰ White, Timothy. *Catch A Fire*. New York City: Henry Holt Company LLC, 2000.

¹¹ Gilmore, Mikal. "The Life and Times of Bob Marley: How He Changed the World." *Rolling Stone* 10 Mar. 2005: 25-30.

¹² Marley pp 10.

Rasta believers consider their religion to be the purest form of Christianity as well as the purest form of Judaism.¹³ Their reference to God often comes with the synonymous use of the word “Jah”. The land of the true Zion is Ethiopia and Emperor Haile Selassie is their “prophet.” The holy sacraments as laid out in their holy book of folklore, “The Holy Piby,” although they have no true holy book. They believe that smoking of marijuana, “Weed of Wisdom,” or “Ganja,” enlightens them spiritually. Though many people view Rastafaris as avid smokers, in their defense, they believe that it brings a person closer to himself or herself and allows for a deeper self-discovery.

Rasta leaders urged that it be smoked as a religious rite, alleging that it was found growing on the grave of King Solomon and citing biblical passages, such as Psalms 104:14, to attest to its sacramental properties: ‘He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth.’¹⁴

Bob Marley overused many of drugs like many other popular musicians. Not only did Marley use marijuana as a sacrament, but also as a recreational drug. Ganja became such an addiction and important part of Marley’s life that when he was buried with his guitar, and a wig made out of his dread locks that he lost with his cancer treatments, his family also included a substantial amount of marijuana in his casket. While on tours, not only did he smoke ganja but he used many other drugs, such as cocaine, heroine and methamphetamines. If Rita caught band

¹³ "His Life and Legacy." Bob Marley's Official Website. Winter 2007. The Family of Robert Nesta Marley. 22 Feb. 2007 <<http://web.bobmarley.com/index.jsp>>.

¹⁴ Web.bobmarley.com

members using drugs on tour, she often got upset with Marley.¹⁵ When drug use by Marley and his band members began to cause problems between Marley and his family, he eventually quit using them except marijuana.

Rastafaris have some strict limitations on what they consume. They are advised to abstain from alcohol, tobacco, shellfish, scale less fish, snails predatory and scavenging marine life, and many day to day comforts such as salt, as well as meats, especially pork. These are all items that are not considered to be “Ital” or impure and unclean. The word “Ital” is a word similar to the word “kosher” in the Jewish faith and is a word that denotes an acceptable food source. Although an import part of the faith of Marley, the food and “ital” idea is not sang about as much as concepts such as praise, in his songs.

The song titled *Thank You Lord*¹⁶ resembles a hymn because it speaks about praising the Lord directly.

Thank you, Lord, for what you've done for me.
Thank you, Lord, for what you're doing now.
Thank you, Lord, for ev'ry little thing.
Thank you, Lord, for you made me sing.
Say I'm in no competition,
But I made my decision.
You can keep your opinion.
I'm just calling on the wise man's communion.¹⁷

Bob Marley begins by thanking the Lord for what he has done for him personally, and thanks him for what he continues to do. Marley credits the Lord for his singing

¹⁵ White.

¹⁶ Marley pp 187.

¹⁷ Marley pp 187.

ability because he based his career on the Lord. What is most interesting about the lyrics in this song is the fact that Marley calls him “Lord” and not “Jah” even though this song was composed in 1976 by Marley himself. The next verse Marley denounces any competition in his career with any other artists, and calls on the wise man’s (lord’s) communication and guidance. After the chorus, Marley lets the listener know that he is unafraid of the humiliation he may endure due to his faith and that he is determined to not give into temptation. This song praises the Lord and thanks him for the career that he has given Marley and gives all the glory to the Lord. Similar to many of his songs about religion, the temptations and toil a Rastafari will endure are also mentioned as well as the steadfast goal that each has to not waiver from their faith.

The sincerity of Marley’s beliefs and preaching have been questioned by people around the world and even by some Rastafaris. These questions rise from his participation in the capitalistic world. He continued to make and sell his albums on an international scale and therefore was actively involved in capitalism. He also wrote and performed over 200 songs with nearly two-thirds of those songs making references to the Rasta religion. Through his performances he spread the ideas and influences of the Rasta religion to form numerous communities in places such as Britain, Canada, and the United States.

After fully committing himself into Rastafarianism, Bob Marley formed his musical group “The Wailers.” They included other avid believers, Neville Livingston or Bunny Wailer and Peter McIntosh or Peter Tosh. They performed together and released

their debut album called “Soul Rebel” in 1970. Bob Marley and the Wailers had previously recorded and released albums separately, but none were ever as successful as the ones these two talented musicians produced together.

The life of Bob Marley began in a rural Jamaican village known as Nine Miles, which is in the St. Ann Parish. Captain Norval Marley, a white overseer on British government land, met Cedella, a black woman only seventeen years old at the time. After Captain Marley had relations with Cedella he promised her marriage, but within hours of the birth of Robert Nesta Marley on February 6, 1945,¹⁸ He deserted her. Marley’s songs of the ghetto relate how his upbringing in Trenchtown affected his life and that of his friends.

The song, *Trenchtown Rock*,¹⁹ relates the pains that come from living in the ghetto.

One good thing about music, when it hits you fell no pain (repeat)
So hit me with music, hit me with music
Hit me with music, hit me with music now
I got to say trench town rock
I say don't watch that
Trench town rock, big fish or sprat
Trench town rock, you reap what you sow
Trench town rock, and everyone know now
Trench town rock, don't turn your back
Trench town rock, give the slum a try
Trench town rock, never let the children cry
Trench town rock, cause you got to tell jah, jah why.²⁰

These pains may come from hunger, or sadness of the current living situation, or even from the fact that the local government will do nothing to improve the area of

¹⁸ www.bobmarley.com

¹⁹ [Find your favorite song lyrics! Search over 100,000 songs!](http://www.lyricsearch.net) 3 May 2007 <<http://www.lyricsearch.net>>.

²⁰ <http://www.lyricsearch.net>

Trenchtown. Marley then moves on to say to the listener that even though he has left Trenchtown, he will not turn his back on his roots and he will always “give the slum a try.”²¹ In not turning his back, he will not let the children cry and he will be continually praying to Jah for those people who are still in the slum and can not get out. This song recognizes that people who live in Trenchtown have no voice on a national or global scale. In 1950, Cedella moved herself and her five-year-old son to Kingstown’s Trenchtown. Trenchtown, deriving its name from the large sewer trench, which runs through the center of the ghetto or slum, became notorious during this time for the “rude boys” or gangs of young men who were very violent.

Trenchtown has houses made mostly of corrugated metals and tarpaper roofs. At a young age, Bob Marley became involved with the “rude boys” being a target of their teasing and bullying, due to his multi-racial background. It was not long however, until these thugs began to respect and look to Marley as a leader. “To Cedella’s dismay, her son began to come into his own there – to find a sense of community and purpose amid rough conditions and rough company, including the local street gangs.”²²

Enveloped within the harsh streets of Trenchtown, Marley discovered the Kingston electric rhythm and blues genre of music and the scene in which this musical sound inhibited. Marley entered this scene right at the time of its transformation from the acceptance of the American sound coming from New Orleans, but had a Jamaican twist that shifted the focus of the music to the offbeat. The up and coming artists of this new

²¹ <http://www.lyricsearch.net>

²² Gilmore.

Jamaican sound began singing of their life stories and of the troubles and joys of being who they were as people much like calypso and mento. Quickly a community surrounded this music due to its great ability to relate to these true and personal stories through music. This music, which became known as ska after the rhythms it used, was not accepted by all however. Much like the rock and roll music of America, the Jamaican politicians and ministers viewed this music as disruptive and felt that it fueled the violence and disorderliness of the “rude boys.” “But the Rude Boys would soon receive an unexpected jolt of validation.”²³

Belly Full also known as *Them Belly Full (But We Hungry)*²⁴ is a call by Marley for the government to help the poor, starving people of Trenchtown as well as the world’s impoverished people.

Them belly full, but we hungry;
A hungry mob is a angry mob.
A rain a-fall, but the dirt it tough;
A yot a-yook, but d' yood no 'nough.

You're gonna dance to jah music, dance;
We're gonna dance to jah music, dance, oh-ooh!

Forget your troubles and dance!
Forget your sorrows and dance!
Forget your sickness and dance!
Forget your weakness and dance!

Cost of livin' gets so high,
Rich and poor they start to cry:
Now the weak must get strong;
They say, "oh, what a tribulation!"²⁵

²³ Gilmore.

²⁴ Marley pp 15.

²⁵ Marley pp 15.

The song sings of the hungry people around the world and how a hungry mob is an angry mob. Marley then tells the listener to forget their troubles, sorrow, sickness, and weakness and dance because this will remove the pain temporarily and take their mind off their sad situation. He reminds the people to be strong and informs them that this is nothing more than another tribulation that is bringing them closer to Jah. In singing this song, Marley is being positive and taking on the role of a helpful big brother to those oppressed. He is soothing their sadness and weakness through his song, which gave their misery company and also gave them a way to temporarily relieve their pain and suffering.

*Three Little Birds*²⁶ is a song that brings a happy light onto the bad situation of the Trenchtown lifestyle.

"don't worry about a thing,
'cause every little thing gonna be all right.
Singin': "don't worry about a thing,
'cause every little thing gonna be all right!"

Rise up this mornin',
Smiled with the risin' sun,
Three little birds
Pitch by my doorstep
Singin' sweet songs
Of melodies pure and true,
Sayin', ("this is my message to you-ou-ou:")²⁷

Bob Marley begins by singing about the sun shining and three birds singing outside on his doorstep. The birds are singing a message that is telling him and the listener not to worry, that everything is going to be alright. Songs such as this one bring people closer to the things that matter most, allowing the troubles in their lives to fade into the

²⁶ www.bobmarley.com

²⁷ <http://www.lyricsearch.net>

background. In Trenchtown, drugs and alcohol are used excessively due to the depression that results from the impoverished lives lived in this slum. Songs such as *Three Little Birds* help soothe the pain oppressed people endure daily.

Through the music Bob Marley writes and the references he makes on the lifestyles in places such as Trenchtown and impoverished areas of the world, people who have little influence on the worldly scale are able to send out their cries for help. His lyrics inform people of areas, such as parts of the United States and Europe, where people may not know about the horrendous living situations in the places like Trenchtown. Marley gives these people a chance to make a difference and possibly act to improve the conditions they live in.

Not only did Bob Marley sing about Rasta and the poor social class, but he sang about racism and oppression in politics. Marley lived through many political experiences while growing up in the political war grounds of Trenchtown.

In the song *Concrete Jungle*²⁸ Marley speaks of the surroundings he lives in as totally urban and insufficient.

No sun will shine in my day today; (no sun will shine)
The high yellow moon won't come out to play:
(that high yellow moon won't come out to play)
I said (darkness) darkness has covered my light,
(and the stage) and the stage my day into night, yeah.
Where is the love to be found? (oo-oo-oo)
Won't someone tell me?
'cause my (sweet life) life must be somewhere to be found -
(must be somewhere for me)
Instead of concrete jungle (la la-la!),
Where the living is harder (la-la!).

²⁸ [Lyrics Freak](http://www.lyricsfreak.com). 3 May 2007 < <http://www.lyricsfreak.com> >.

Concrete jungle (la la-la!):
 Man you got to do your (la la-la!) best. wo-ooh, yeah.
 No chains around my feet,
 But i'm not free, oh-ooh!
 I know I am bound here in captivity;
 G'yeah, now - (never, never) I've never known happiness;
 (never, never) I've never known what sweet caress is -
 Still, I'll be always laughing like a clown;
 Won't someone help me? 'cause i (sweet life) -
 I've got to pick myself from off the ground
 (must be somewhere for me), he-yeah! -
 In this a concrete jungle (la la-la!):
 I said, what do you cry for me (la-la!) now, o-oh!
 Concrete jungle (la la-la!), ah, won't you let me be (la la-la!), now.
 Hey! oh, now!²⁹

He begins with telling the listener that no sun or moon will shine on him today. Living is harder, Marley states in the Concrete Jungle. Marley tells the listener to do their best to keep chains from their feet and to not be bound by the captivity of the Concrete Jungle because if you do, you will not know happiness or a sweet life. This song informs the listeners that no matter how bad your surroundings are inside of the political ghettos, you can make the best out of it by not letting those politicians bind your mind and will. If the listener wants to be happy, they must make themselves happy and not rely on anyone else.

*Rebel Music*³⁰ is a song about the restrictions placed on the poor black people of Jamaica and how they were controlled through various laws and statues such as curfews, and restrictions of travel about the country.

I rebel music;
 I rebel music.)
 Why can't we roam (oh-oh-oh-oh) this open country? (open country)
 Oh, why can't we be what we wanna be? (oh-oh-oh-oh)

²⁹ <http://www.lyricsfreak.com>.

³⁰ Marley pp 26.

We want to be free. (wanna be free)

3 o'clock roadblock - curfew,
And I've got to throw away -
Yes, I've got to throw away -
A yes-a, but I've got to throw away
My little herb stalk!

I (rebel music) - yeah, i'm tellin' you! -
(i) i rebel music (rebel music). oh-ooh!

Take my soul (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)
And suss - and suss me out (suss me out). oh-ooh!
Check my life (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh),
If i am in doubt (i'm in doubt); i'm tellin':
3 o'clock roadblock - roadblock - roadblock,
And "hey, mr. cop! ain't got no - (hey) hey! (hey, mr cop) -
(what ya sayin' down there?) - (hey) hey! (hey, mr cop) -
Ain't got no birth certificate on me now."³¹

Marley begins the song by stating that he is rebel music and questions why the people cannot roam the open country at will. He then goes on to state that he and his people want to be free and that they are going to throw away the three o'clock curfew. The tactic of not having a birth certificate made it so that police cannot trace him nor prove him to be one of the local people not allowed to travel at will.

*So Much Trouble in the World*³² sends a message just as the title signifies. The world has so much trouble and corruption in it, Jah is the sunlight that keeps Marley happy.

Bless my eyes this morning
Jah sun is on the rise once again
The way earthly thin's are goin'
Anything can happen.

You see men sailing on their ego trip,

³¹ Marley, pp. 26

³² www.lyricsearch.net

Blast off on their spaceship,
Million miles from reality:
No care for you, no care for me.

So much trouble in the world;
So much trouble in the world.
All you got to do: give a little (give a little),
Give a little (give a little), give a little (give a little)!
One more time, ye-ah! (give a little) ye-ah! (give a little)
Ye-ah! (give a little) yeah!

So you think you've found the solution,
But it's just another illusion!
(so before you check out this tide),
Don't leave another cornerstone
Standing there behind, eh-eh-eh-eh!
We've got to face the day;
(ooh) ooh-wee, come what may:
We the street people talkin',
Yeah, we the people strugglin'.

Now they sitting on a time bomb; (bomb-bomb-bomb! bomb-bomb-bomb!)
Now i know the time has come: (bomb-bomb-bomb! bomb-bomb-bomb!)
What goes on up is coming on down, (bomb-bomb-bomb! bomb-bomb-bomb!)
Goes around and comes around. (bomb-bomb-bomb! bomb-bomb-bomb!)³³

Men and sailing far above reality on their ego trips but that is not a care for Marley or the listener. If people just give a little bit of themselves and their time the solution will be found and the world will be a better place. Instead of the people that are suppressed now, the people on the ego trip will be sitting on a time bomb and what goes around comes around. The people that give will be on top and the people that hoard all of the goods and money will be the ones suffering. It is in this song that Marley tells the world that if they all come together and give to help their fellow man that they will be a part of a worldly change that will benefit everyone and allow the poverty and oppression to end.

³³ www.lyricsearch.net

Bob Marley sings about topics such as poverty, war, oppression, and religion, which are considered unorthodox for the time period. Many other artists of the time that also produced music that sent out messages to the public as well as governments requesting change and recognition for different groups of people liked Marley. Some of these artists include Bob Dylan, The Beatles, Country Joe McDonald, and Credence Clearwater Revival. All of these groups had popular songs that didn't create as much controversy as Marley. How is it that these artists, including Bob Marley were able to produce and successfully sell so many albums? These artists were able to portray their message as a positive change and desirable outcome through the persuasiveness of music and lyrics.

The music these artists used varied in the form of genres but artists such as Bob Dylan had a popular sound that appealed to massive amounts of young people of the 1960s and 1970s. The Beatles, after long establishing their dominance of the music industry in England, were able to transport their fame to the United States and continue to appeal to one of the largest audiences in the history of popular music. Country Joe McDonald as well as Credence Clearwater Revival, were able to use their more folk style sound which also had hints of a rock and roll sound, to bring in audiences from the older generations as well as the youth of the United States.

The lyrics these artists used also helped "sugar coat" their messages and make them more acceptable. In fact the messages were deep or unorthodox. Politics and social problems are portrayed and led to a greater understanding and acceptance of their music,

ultimately allowing these artists to become extremely popular. A contemporary of Marley, Bob Dylan likewise sang many songs with deeply rooted messages. In the song *Everything is Broken*³⁴ Dylan sings about how every time one looks around the world, something is falling or crashing to the ground in ruin. The message of the song is portraying that unless something is done to save the corruption in this world with the governments, the world will be destroyed by its leaders. Country Joe McDonald also does the same in his acoustic – folk song *Whoopie We're All Gonna Die*³⁵. The song shows how many drafted men felt about going to war because many did not support it and so many were dying daily. This song plays as a satire on the governmental decisions of entering the Viet Nam War. The Credence Clearwater Revival's song *Run Through the Jungle*,³⁶ once again speaks on the Viet Nam War and gives the story of a fighting soldier. This song refers to the officer in charge of the battle group that this singer is in as “Satan” and shows the fear and chaos that was involved with being a drafted soldier in this war. The government would not have endorsed the production of such songs, however, if these songs didn't deliver a softer feel. As a result the public accepted these messages of protest and made them extremely popular. Bob Marley did likewise.

Artists from the United States as well as Bob Marley were able to deliver their messages of social, political, and religious focus to the general public with great success due the lyrics used in their popular music. Bob Marley was able to speak for the people

³⁴ SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT. Bob Dylan. 3 May 2007 <<http://www.bobdylan.com>>.

³⁵ Complete Album Lyrics Your Lyrics and Artist Resource. 3 May 2007 <<http://www.completealbumlyrics.com>>.

³⁶ ST Lyrics Sountrack Lyrics. 3 May 2007 <<http://www.stlyrics.com>>.

who had no voice, locally and globally. With Marley's development of the Rasta religion, he was able to use his experiences from his childhood to deliver insightful messages of sadness, change, and opposition in a successful and tasteful manner throughout the world. Bob Marley is one of the main influences of the spread of Jamaican culture and Rastafarianism due to the lyrical rhetoric used in his popular music. In time, Bob Marley became, for many, an image of Jamaican culture and Rastafarianism.

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