

You Can Stop and You Must Stop

There are many songs or artists people consider “bad”, take Rebecca Black for example. When Rebecca Black, came out with her hit single *Friday* on YouTube, it became the one song everyone loved to hate. The bad reviews exploded, and since then, she was never taken seriously. Some people make a bad name for themselves early on in their career, but in some situations, you start out with promise, and end with failure.

When Miley Cyrus started out in Hollywood, she became a role model to every little kid watching her on TV. It all started when she was cast as the main character for *Disney Channel's* hit series, *Hannah Montana*. From the show she gained a fan base, record labels, movies, and more. When she turned fifteen years old, she was put on *People's* Richest Kids in America list. Her numbers showed that she made an estimated \$1 million per week on tour, sold 6.5 million albums, and was projected to sell \$1 billion worth of *Hannah Montana* merchandise (Wang). I wondered, how does someone who I believe has no talent become a multimillionaire pop star. Why do people find her music good? And even when I find out why people like her, how does lyrics like “We like to party, dancing with molly, doing whatever we want, this is our house, this is our rules” constitute good

music? I cannot fathom how an someone can sing about meaningless things and expect people to call her an artist.

Miley Cyrus' success catapulted during her role in *Hannah Montana*. the humble story of a young girl being a normal kid going to a normal school while living a double life as a superstar. Cyrus was only eleven years old when she auditioned, and was thirteen when the show first aired. When the show first debuted, the fans could not get enough. Then her first official soundtrack *Hannah Montana* came out, debuting at quadruple platinum, selling four million copies. Songs like "Best of Both Worlds", and "Nobody's Perfect" became the anthems for kids all over the world. In 2007, her second album *Hannah Montana Two* released, and it debuted as number one on the Billboard album charts (Burke, QCTimes). As innocent and sweet as Miley appeared in her adolescence, that all quickly changed for the worse.

Miley Cyrus went from all American girl to vulgar and distasteful in the span of a year. In 2008, Miley posed for the cover of *Vanity Fair* wearing nothing but a blanket. You may ask why this is so awful, so let me remind you that Miley is 21 present day, which means in 2008 she was only fifteen years old. Though she apologized for the photos, she came back strong in 2009 when she pole danced on stage at the Teen Choice Awards which shocked millions. In 2010, a video of Miley smoking salvia out of a bong leaked all over the Internet creating much controversy for the then 17 year old. Last but definitely not least, in 2013 Miley performed with Robin Thicke at the MTV Video

Music Awards creating nothing but negative reviews, as she was “twerking” on stage (E!). Her image had failed through the years, and created nothing but a bad reputation.

Despite all the negative press, Miley is also seen as a good role model. Small clothing and acting provocatively should not make you a “slut”. “Slut” being a negative and demeaning word. Women all around the world participate in the “Slut Walk” which is a movement of protest marches calling an end to rape culture that began in Toronto in 2011 (Jarvis). This movement started after a Toronto police officer said, “Women should avoid dressing like sluts in order to not be victimized” (Jones). This began this movement to let women know that they should not care what they wear. No matter how much or how little clothing you wear, it has nothing to do with being a victim. People all over see Miley as a girl who wears “slutty” outfits, and she in the end is looked down on.

Women have looked up to Miley and see her as a feminist figure. During an interview Miley said, “It’s so much easier to know who you are when there aren’t a thousand people telling you who they think you are” (Brady). Somehow this sounds all so empowering and in a way inspiring for people of all ages. Through all the negative backlash, Miley still looks at herself as a kid who is doing whatever she feels like doing. Picture yourself as a twenty one year old girl who has been called a child your entire life, living life according to what people expect you to think. Everyone is allowed to be who they want to be. Some people sit in an office all day wondering what they could do if they had the ability or chance. Miley just so happens to be living her life the way she wants it to be. and it is admirable.

As Miley's image changed through the years, so did her music. In 2012, Miley Cyrus came out with a YouTube series called the Backyard Sessions, which put her and her band in a backyard setting as she covers some of her favorite songs. Though it may not have been very public or gotten much attention, Cyrus proved to us that she could sing beyond *Hannah Montana*. Personally, I really liked her bluesy take on *Jolene* originally sung by Dolly Parton. I guess Cyrus thought otherwise, because in only a few months she came out with her album *Bangerz* featuring her single, *We Can't Stop*. In this song she sings about partying, drugs, sex, and basically anything that I think proves a song is awful. Somehow *Bangerz* debuted at number one on the Billboard Top 200, selling around 300,000 copies in only the first week (Billboard, Caulfield). I don't think I will ever understand why 300,000 people went out within the first week to buy this album. Do I have bad taste in music if 300,000 people think something is good, but I don't think it's good enough to even make an album?

I explored this question by listening to Miley Cyrus' *We Can't Stop* on repeat. I read up on her lyrics, and watched her music video until my YouTube home page's recommended video section consisted of Miley's discography. Soon enough my head was filled with Miley singing, "We can't stop, and we won't stop". My process consisted of a lot of questioning and trying to appreciate certain aspects of her song. In the end I decided I could not be a fan of her music. I do not think I could ever find myself choosing to listen to *We Can't Stop* over anything else on my iTunes. People always say hate is a strong word, and I agree. It's a harsh word and should not be used lightly. In this

situation I find myself using the word *dislike*. I can't help but find myself thinking that she's young and doesn't know any better. In no way am I defending her, but instead I hope to come off understanding. Musically wise, her songs and lyrics are terrible, but as a person I find myself being able to call her energetic and independent. She really does not seem interested in what people think of her, and for that I applaud her. If she is truly this girl who like running around on stage half naked, while sticking her tongue and ass out then good for her for being herself. Like Hannah Montana once said, *Nobody's Perfect*.

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