

WEEKLY ENGLISH PRACTICE

Musicians Who Despise Their Own Hit Songs

12/05/22 / Keyword: Song

While every musician must be pleased with the royalties they receive from having a hit song, sometimes they aren't that happy with the song itself.



I was recently back home in Ireland for a week and decided to go on a day trip down to a small town called Cobh. Standing outside the Titanic Museum, I heard a **busker** on the other side of the street singing 'Where Is My Mind' by the Pixies. It immediately gave me a sense of happiness and brought me back to my teenage years.

Later that evening, when I got back to my mother's house I decided to **stick on** some music I used to listen to back in those days. The first song on my playlist was 'Creep' by Radiohead.

As I listened to the opening lines of the song, "When you were here before, couldn't look you in the eye", I **chuckled** to myself remembering a battle of the bands I went to when I was about sixteen years old. There was a small stage set up in a car park and every band played three songs in their set. All the bands performed 'Creep'. It was huge at the time. I can't remember how many times I heard the song that evening but even the bad versions didn't put me off it. I still love it now.

However, the same can't be said for Thom Yorke who wrote the song. While at university, Thom **spotted** a beautiful girl

who he started to follow around. Being too shy to approach her, it began **to take its toll** on his self-esteem, making him feel like a **creep** and a **weirdo**. So he decided to get drunk to build up the courage to speak to the girl, but instead he ended up frightening her. Then, unexpectedly, the girl turned up at a Radiohead concert and Thom was mortified. This became the inspiration for the song and although it brought them fame, Radiohead were never comfortable with being **pigeonholed** by it and didn't include it in live concerts for years.

But this is not the only example - there are many more from Kurt Cobain of Nirvana hating 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' to Liam Gallagher's dislike of 'Wonderwall'. The Beastie Boys loathe their song 'You Gotta Fight For Your Right To Party', going so far as to label the song "shit". The hip-hop group wrote the song as a satire, parodying what would today be called 'bro culture' and the guys who take part in it. Unfortunately, the satire got lost in translation and people took it as a song honouring the people they were making fun of. 📖 📖 page 2

Useful vocabulary

busker: a person who performs music or other entertainment in the street or another public place for monetary donations
stick on: phrasal verb for playing music from a CD, MP3 or iPod
chuckle: to laugh quietly
take its toll: to have a serious, bad effect on someone or something; to cause harm or damage
spot: to see
creep: an unpleasant or obnoxious person
weirdo: a person who is extraordinarily strange or eccentric
pigeonhole: to put s.o. or s.t. into an overly restrictive category
'em: them

Let's chat about that!

1. Do you know another artist not mentioned in the text who hated one or more of their songs?
2. Is there a musician who you really like but dislike one of their hits?
3. Do you agree that not all music is good? Give reasons for your answer.
4. If you could listen to a song right now, what song would you choose and why?
5. When you listen to a song, what do you appreciate most, the lyrics or simply the music? Or both?

10 Hit Songs That Artists Hate

- 1 Madonna - Like a Virgin
2. Frank Sinatra - Strangers in the Night
3. Radiohead - Creep
4. Led Zeppelin - Stairway to Heaven
5. Tina Turner - What's Love Got To Do With It
6. Guns N' Roses - Sweet Child O' Mine
7. Beastie Boys - Fight For Your Right
8. Vanilla Ice - Ice Ice Baby
9. REM - Shiny Happy People
10. Neil Young - Heart of Gold

Radiohead Creep

*But I'm a creep, I'm a weirdo
What the hell am I doing here?
I don't belong here...*

Check out the lyrics here:

<https://genius.com/Radiohead-creep-lyrics>

To write a hit song is, well, to my mind, an extraordinary talent, so it's incredible that the artists themselves sometimes refer to their work as "a piece of shit", which is exactly how Frank Sinatra referred to 'Strangers In The Night'. But I want to say, keep 'em coming.

Written by ECP Coach Darren Lynch



Coffee Saturdays

(a free
LIVE!English
event)



2nd April
7th May
4th June

Panadería Bertiz
c/ Francia 10
Vitoria-Gasteiz

10:30 - 11:30



Coming soon! ECP's Playlist Party

Celebrate masks off with our PLAYLIST PARTY - Join the Whatsapp group to add your favourite songs to the ECP playlist.

Party details coming soon...



ECP Party Playlist
WhatsApp group



[https://chat.whatsapp.com/
KWK2ROnesTV5OgRaWYmb1r](https://chat.whatsapp.com/KWK2ROnesTV5OgRaWYmb1r)

**Click on the link
or scan the QR code**