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J Cole - “Lost Ones” Song Analysis

The song “Lost Ones” by J. Cole is categorized in the Hip-Hop/Rap genre and was released in 2011. The song provides both the perspectives of a teenage girl who just realized she is pregnant and the reaction of the unborn child’s father. The teenage boy does not accept this pregnancy to the extent of suggesting an abortion which is immediately refuted by the girl carrying the pregnancy. Cole takes a step further into providing general advice to the audience which seems to be focused on teenagers on how abortion is not the appropriate solution in such a circumstance considering the unborn child whose existence is unplanned and should be without blame. Also, he further tries to shed light on the need to break the cycle of irresponsible fatherhood when he sings, “cause he left your mama when she had you and he ain’t sh*t, and here you go doin’ the same sh*t”

Based on the lyrics, it is evident that the song focuses on the concept of teenage pregnancy. This is exemplified when Cole raps, “how we gonna raise a kid by our self? Handle biz by our self? A ni**a barely over twenty Where the hell we gon live?” (J. Cole, 2011). From listening to the entire song, listeners can derive a myriad of messages communicated by the artist. The first one being, young teenagers need to understand the relevance of taking responsibility for their actions. It is not right to engage in unprotected sex leading to getting a young woman pregnant and abandoning the responsibility which is self-endowed. The next message would be discouraging the acts of abortion. The artist mentions the concept of abortion twice in the song

while in both instances he ridicules the act. The first instance is when the artist sings, “I got you pregnant, now inside there is a life in you, I know you are wondering if this gon make me think ‘bout wifin’ you” (J. Cole, 2011). From my understanding, the warning being passed across concerning teenage pregnancies is that it will not make a man become responsible or admit his loyalty to you to an extent of marrying you hoping to start a family together. The second instance that J. Cole (2011) ridicules pregnancy is when he sings, “Man, if that bi**h really pregnant, tell her to get an abortion (uh).” This line illustrates teenagers are not ready for marital or parental responsibility. Normally, childbirth brings joy in most grown-ups but can bring fear and regret in adolescents/teenagers.

One of the reasons that led to my liking and choice of the song “Lost Ones” by J. Cole is based on a previous liking of the message conveyed in the song. Despite the song coming out almost a decade ago, the same message applies to the constant increase in teenage pregnancies and a high number of young single mothers. Also, the relevant discussion of abortions occurring in our nation on a daily basis makes the need for social awareness of despising teenage pregnancies relevant.

The climax of the song where J. Cole (2011) sings, “What about your seed, ni**?” strikes me the most. Considering that the entire song has been showing a sense of responsibility being showcased by the woman, it is surprising that the artist provides advice to the young male who is responsible for the pregnancy. By referring to the fetus as seed, provides an entire overview of the young man’s lineage and the generation that comes after him. This is intended to deprive the thought of abortion which has clouded the boy’s mind the entire time as the only probable solution.

Some relevant critique that could've been made is to have the verse that is written from a feminine perspective being sung by an actual female. It would have been more realistic if the artist J. Cole collaborated with a female rapper or singer to present the verse from a real young woman's perspective. This way, the song would have truly captured the listeners' attention and the songs' essence.

Reference

Cole, Jermaine. "J. Cole – Lost Ones." *Genius*, 27 Sept. 2011, genius.com/J-cole-lost-ones-lyrics.