

Skirting the Issues

by Kimberly Gadette

“SOUND JUDGEMENT”

70's glam rocker Gary Glitter is currently doing time in a Vietnamese jail. Earlier this year, he was pronounced guilty of “committing obscene acts with minors.” If he hadn't paid off the families of the little girls he allegedly molested, his sentence could have been far more severe. He could have been sentenced to death ... or worse. He could have been forced to listen to his own composition, “Rock and Roll Part 2 (The Hey Song),” as much as we have.

He loudly proclaims his innocence. Perhaps he did nothing more felonious than creating an addictive tribal chant in 1971. (Well that, and donning a Liberace lizard green lamé jumpsuit, wide open to the waist, on his “Greatest Hits” album cover.) But maybe the pre-Avalanche, Colorado Rockies Hockey Club should share some of the blame, since they were the first team who introduced Glitter's anthem into the sports arena in the late 1970's. Big Foam Finger-pointing aside, ever since this particular riff with its single syllabic utterance of “Hey!” made it onto the playing field, any playing field, it's been one hey!-nous auditory attack after another.



I admit that it was great fun the first time I heard it played full blast over the loudspeakers at a hockey game. But I was a little surprised to also get an earful of it at a Denver Broncos game. And the Chicago Bulls ... and the Kansas City Chiefs. And then, in incredulous succession, at a minor league ballpark in Vegas, a winner-take-all spelling bee in Missoula, and an unpredictably suspenseful supermarket opening in Dubuque. (What can I say? I get around. But not as much as “The Hey Song.”)

Which leads me to wonder: what if Glitter never touched those young girls? What if his jail sentence is just payback for overexposure? (Um, the song, not Glitter's chest). Given the fact that the NFL has recently announced a ban on his tune, and all 32 teams have complied ... hey! there could be more to this than meets the ear.

Glitter or no, there's still discord in the chords. Let us turn the page in

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our pro ball hymnal, and take a long hard look at the canon of Queen, namely “Another One Bites the Dust,” “We Are the Champions” and “We Will Rock You.” In every sports venue, in every town, every American mother’s son goes balls-out batty over these melodies. Fellas, other than a flying spherical object, hasn’t something crossed your heads? At least once?

If not, here’s the literal kicker: in this, our national playing field, the most hetero of environs outside of happy hour at Hooters—how is it that Freddie Mercury, front man for the appropriately-named Queen and one of the most blatantly homosexual men of his time—how did Freddie’s songs become the representative anthems of Jock Nation?

I must say I applaud your inclusive behavior. Wow. You men are a whole lot more tolerant than even you thought you were. For the record, and to save any of you from immediate crisis intervention, of the three Queen anthems, Freddie only wrote “We Are the Champions.” Bassist John Deacon wrote “Another One Bites the Dust” and guitarist Brian May wrote “We Will Rock You.” Feel better? Thought so.

But here comes the bigger question (and no, it’s not “Will Bud Selig ever cough up a dime for a decent hairpiece?”). Why must every sport spit out the same soundtrack? Baseball shouldn’t evoke the same carnage as football and hockey—unless, of course, Barry Bonds comes up to bat. Shuffleboard needs to stand alone, as does poker. Wait—that’s not a sport. Silly me, I’ve been confused ever since poker has commandeered endless hours of airtime on most of our fine sports channels. I hear palm reading is next, followed by competitive cake design and then, whoo-hoo, thumb races between the fastest text-messaging teens in the land.

Back to the sound and how it bytes: What if Hollywood decided to follow suit, and no matter what the picture, Celine Dion always screeched out the theme song from *The Titanic*? You can do the math, but let me help: Ms. Dion plus Quentin Tarentino’s “*Kill Bill*” would equal carnage in the millions. Brutal.

But things are looking up. Correction: Things are sounding better. As of this date, I hear that the Avalanche fans are voting on one of four new themes, and the Broncos are kicking around Big Bad Voodoo’s “Go Daddy O.” The Nuggets and the Rockies will hopefully follow suit. (Just because the Rockies had a difficult year, there’s no need to turn to The

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Ramones' "I Don't Want to Go Down to the Basement." That's unnecessary ... unlike, in all probability, Glitter's prison sentence.)

Here's to the nation following in Colorado's babysteps. New themes! New tunes! Let's lead the country in rugged individualism—it's the dawn of the Do-Re-Me Generation!

One last thing still needs to be done. Quietly, calmly, Queen needs to voluntarily end its reign. Otherwise, given the fate of Gary Glitter, I feel I must warn Brian May and John Deacon before it's too late: Watch your back. And for God's sake, stay out of Vietnam. ❁