

*What genre of music do you listen to? Do you like hip-hop? Do you know Childish Gambino? Have you listened to his recent and controversial hit?*

On May 2018, Childish Gambino released his rousing hit: ['This is America'](#) that left the nation in shock. This song was released after a controversial issue that involved black lives: the racism that encompasses around police brutality and diverse violence. Throughout the music video, he danced with exaggerated faces and cool dance moves to distract us from the barbaric backgrounds that are the depiction of realities of many Americans.

To describe this music video as a whole: it's just madness; he's basically described racism towards American black lives in 4 minutes. Everything in the video is intentional and conveys strong messages. For instance, in 0:55 seconds, after he shot the man, the gun was then placed on a red cloth. Same as at 1:58 seconds in which he put the rifle on a red cloth. This showed how some Americans value weapons more than human lives. Toward the end of the video, when Gambino did a finger gun, there were 17 seconds of silence that referred to the 17 lives that had been taken away from the shooting in Parkland, Florida. Many more scenes were shown throughout the video; although disturbing, all portrayed harsh realities.

But, why does he choose to tackle this controversial issue through song? Why music? Why not other ways?

The answer is not just that he's a singer, but that through music, it's effective especially for an eminent artist like him. In music, we can express a variety of feelings because as words fail, music speaks. We've always thought of music as a form of entertainment and use it for relaxation. But, we haven't really thought of how it can be used to convey critical messages in order to create change.

When you listen to a song, have you ever feel so emotionally attached that it makes you cry? The same thing, do you think critically of America than you ever did after watching *'This is*

*America*”? The music video is released for people to let that sink in, to scrutinize and form their own opinions. Above all that, when people listen to the song, it entertains them, and they keep repeating that song all over and over again. People, including me, would sing along, “*This is America....This is America, don’t catch you slippin’ now...*” Therefore, for every time they repeat those lines, we are at once reminded ourselves the need of black lives movement. Those messages will last.

Furthermore, those aesthetics of music can communicate with a wider audience. Music is universal, so there’s no language barrier. I believed that even for people who barely know English, by just watching Gambino’s music video, they can get a sense, a new perspective of America.

So, why not music? What is that you want people to hear, go and jot that down!