

## Taylor Swift's 'Midnights' combines old-school lyrics, poetry, to go deep

Written by 'Grammar Guy' By Curtis Honeycutt Guest Columnist  
Friday, 18 November 2022 06:15

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If there is one thing I love more than grammar, it's The Beatles. In April 1964, the Fab Four held all five songs in the top five songs on the Billboard Hot 100 charts. This record held until Drake occupied nine out of the top ten songs in 2021 when his album "Certified Lover Boy" dominated streaming services.

Now with Taylor Swift's "Midnights" and "Midnights (3am Edition)" albums, she's accomplished a first in music history — her hits occupy all of the top ten songs on Billboard's list. The only caveat I'll bring to this accomplishment is that The Beatles didn't have the same streaming opportunities available to them back in the days of Beatlemania.

When I encounter a challenge to The Beatles' chart dominance, I have to check it out. And when I began listening to Swift's "Midnights," I was struck by her lyrics.

Sure, she uses terms such as "ghosting" and her fair share of profanity, but I want to suggest that Swift's "Midnights" achieves poetry whose lyrical evolution has brought back lesser-used words and intricately weaves them into her modern experience.

Take the album's opening track "Lavender Haze." Not only does the title evoke parallels to Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze," but Swift's use of the word "melancholia" evokes a deeper emotion than a word as common as "depression."

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In "Snow on the Beach," Swift breaks out "unbeknownst" and "'til" in a song that describes the strange experience of falling in love. Incorporating these lesser-used words gives her songs a sense of weightiness and importance that I think hold up alongside the stylistic diversity of "Midnights."

While Swift continues to pen deeply personal songs, many directed at one man who has wronged her in some way, her star singer/songwriter experience combines the loneliness of Elvis (who didn't write most of his songs) with the pensiveness of Bob Dylan. All the while she enjoys the commercial success of The Beatles, who, like Swift, also fell victim to losing the rights to their music.

I know Grammar Guy doesn't usually cover music, but I'm suggesting poetry and language from a bygone era contribute to Swift's pensive pop music.

If you're unwilling to hear four-letter words, then this isn't the album for you; however, if you want to hear an exploration of "would've," "could've" and "should've" (and who doesn't?), then check out Swift's exceptional lyrical exploration in "Midnights."

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