

## Abstract

The following thesis creates an academic discourse in order to prove that the lyrics on Arctic Monkeys' debut album *Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not* (2006) should be considered as literature and referred to as indie-rock poetry. The argument in favor of the lyrics being literature is based on the theoretical framework proposed by Terry Eagleton, Stanley Fish and Anthony Easthope: literature is a construct, with literary value being impossible to identify in universal terms. Literary value exists within an interpretative medium, in the context of which the value can only be artificially assigned. To prove that *Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not* has literary value, the thesis functions as an interpretive medium within which the value is assigned. It begins by presenting Eagleton's and Fish's notions about the nature of literary value, supported by Easthope's idea of the denouncement of literary value as a concept. It is then supported by the notion of the vanishment of the split between high culture and popular culture, which makes the academic study of *Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not* possible, since it is an item of popular culture. The next chapter provides a sociocultural framework for the literary analysis of the lyrics in the later chapters. It introduces the notions of indie culture, northern English identity and rock poetry, as well as outlines the criteria that constitute literary value for the context of this thesis: an effective use of literary devices with regards to content and form with the aim of depicting the feelings and experiences of a specific generational and regional group, as well as portraying certain qualities which make it possible to connect the lyrics to indie culture, northern English identity and rock poetry. The remaining chapters provide a detailed analysis of the selected lyrics from the album, focusing on content and form, demonstrating the effect that the use of literary devices has, as well as showing how the lyrics connect to indie, northern English identity and rock poetry, forming a new category of indie-rock poetry. The thesis concludes with the statement that the

lyrics on *Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not* are literature, since all of the aforementioned criteria of literary value are fulfilled. Selected parts of lyrics are used for analysis, whereas the full text of the analyzed lyrics is included in the appendices for possible further references.

**Key Words:** Indie-rock poetry, Northern England, British culture