Allies in Music- Accepting and Embracing the Identity of Homosexuality

Historically, the subject of homosexuality has been a delicate matter, to say the least. As we as a society progressed, the matter of same-sex relationships has become much more addressed. Regrettably, a lot of the attention towards the LGBT+ community is negative, despite the tremendous improvements we have achieved compared to at the beginning of the LGBT movement. Fortunately, along with all the negativity, acceptance for what once was considered a sin is also present and is very prominent in one of the biggest influences on general public: music. Specifically, the songs Same Love by *Macklemore* and *Ryan Lewis* featuring *Mary Lambert* and Make it Stop (September's Children) by *Rise Against* (written by Tim McIlrath) highlight the theme of accepting one’s own sexual identity and accepting it in others. **Although these two songs are both broaching the subject of society’s relationship with same-sex relations, after some speculation, it is apparent that they are very different in their mood and their theme.**

Initially, there seems to be a strong contrast between the **moods** of these two songs. While Make it Stop has a much darker theme, Macklemore’s lyrics are much lighter in mood while still being serious. In Make it Stop, there are many references to suicide and self-harm. Take, for instance, the chorus:

*“Make it stop, let this end*

*Eighteen years pushed to the ledge.*

*It comes to this,*

*A weightless step.”* (Tim McIlrath,12)

McIlrath says that kids are being literally “pushed to the ledge” by bullying. By writing: “And too much blood has flown from the wrists of the children shamed for those they chose to kiss” he’s pointing out that so many people are mutilating themselves for all sorts of reasons leading back to homophobia. The use of words such as “blood” and “shame” set the solemn mood. Macklemore, however, does not mention much about suicide and self-harm. He talks more about lighter issues (lighter, not unimportant) like how “’Man, that’s gay’ gets dropped on the daily” (Macklemore, 21) and “’gay’ is synonymous with the lesser” (29). It is evident that while both poems are speaking of a serious topic, their authors have approached it in degrees of solemnity.

Furthermore, the **theme** of the songs are different. The song Same Love concentrates on society’s relationship with homosexuality, whereas McIlrath writes about the effects of homophobia and bullying. Macklemore in many instances relates other historical disputes to do with equality with the LGBT movement. He references oppression in this situation and from the founding of America: “Our culture founded from oppression, yet we don’t have acceptance for them ” (23). He says:

*“It’s the same hate that’s caused wars from religion. Gender to skin color, the complexion of your pigment, the same fight that led people to walk-outs and sit-ins.”* (40-44)

He’s saying that the fighting for LGBT rights is just like fighting for many of the large issues in history such as racial equality and eliminating religious discrimination. On the other hand, in Make it Stop, McIlrath focuses mostly on bullying and homophobia around teenagers and the aftermath. The bridge in particular stands out as it makes such a powerful statement by including names of past victims of bullying that have taken their own lives,

*“Tyler Clementi, age 18,*

 *Billy Lucas, age 15,*

 *Harrison Chase Brown, age 15,*

 *Cody J. Barker, age 17,*

*Seth Walsh, age 13.”* (34-38)

This passage is especially remarkable as it is so moving. McIlrath doesn’t require eloquent words, figurative language, or vivid imagery to help us understand the horrid impact homophobia can have on kids.

Admittedly, there are many differences between these two poems. Regardless, both songs do their best to draw attention to difficulties that people of the LGBT community. Whether you prioritize little things like eliminating negative slang, or raising awareness towards LGBT youth at risk of self-harm, both poems are excellent example of how the world is moving forward and accepting other people’s homosexuality and possibly one’s own.

Bibliography

* *“Rise Against – Make it Stop Lyrics ”|Genius. N.p., n.d Web. 07 Dec. 2014*
* *“Macklemore and Ryan Lewis ft. Mary Lambert – Same Love Lyrics ”|Genius. N.p., n.d Web. 07 Dec. 2014*

*Make it Stop – Rise Against*

[Verse 1]
[Bang bang go the coffin nails
Like a breath exhaled, then gone forever](http://genius.com/977965/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Bang-bang-go-the-coffin-nails-like-a-breath-exhaled-then-gone-forever)
[It seems like just yesterday
How did I miss the red flags raised?](http://genius.com/1880235/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/It-seems-like-just-yesterday-how-did-i-miss-the-red-flags-raised)
[Think back to the days we laughed
We braved these bitter storms together](http://genius.com/1880238/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Think-back-to-the-days-we-laughed-we-braved-these-bitter-storms-together)
[Brought to his knees he cried
But on his feet he died](http://genius.com/1911053/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Brought-to-his-knees-he-cried-but-on-his-feet-he-died)
[What god would damn a heart?
And what god drove us apart?
What god could?](http://genius.com/1916323/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/What-god-would-damn-a-heart-and-what-god-drove-us-apart-what-god-could)

[[Hook]](http://genius.com/3208795/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Hook)
[Make it stop, let this end
Eighteen years pushed to the ledge](http://genius.com/2516669/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Make-it-stop-let-this-end-eighteen-years-pushed-to-the-ledge)
[It's come to this, a weightless step
On the way down singing
Woah, woah](http://genius.com/2797401/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Its-come-to-this-a-weightless-step-on-the-way-down-singing-woah-woah)

[Verse 2]
[Bang bang from the closet walls
The schoolhouse halls, the shotgun's loaded
Push me and I'll push back
I'm done asking, I demand](http://genius.com/1053771/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Bang-bang-from-the-closet-walls-the-schoolhouse-halls-the-shotguns-loaded-push-me-and-ill-push-back-im-done-asking-i-demand)
[From the nation under God
I feel its love like a cattle prod
Born free but still they hate
Born me, no I can't change](http://genius.com/2378746/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/From-the-nation-under-god-i-feel-its-love-like-a-cattle-prod-born-free-but-still-they-hate-born-me-no-i-cant-change)
[It's always darkest just before the dawn
So stay awake with me, let's prove them wrong](http://genius.com/1911090/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Its-always-darkest-just-before-the-dawn-so-stay-awake-with-me-lets-prove-them-wrong)

[[Hook]](http://genius.com/3208795/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Hook)

[Verse 3]
[The cold river washed him away
But how could we forget?](http://genius.com/2797389/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/The-cold-river-washed-him-away-but-how-could-we-forget)
[The gatherings hold candles, but not their tongues](http://genius.com/1992189/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/The-gatherings-hold-candles-but-not-their-tongues)
[And too much blood has flown from the wrists
Of the children shamed for those they chose to kiss
Who will rise to stop the blood?](http://genius.com/998025/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/And-too-much-blood-has-flown-from-the-wrists-of-the-children-shamed-for-those-they-chose-to-kiss-who-will-rise-to-stop-the-blood)
[We're calling for, insisting on
A different beat, yeah
A brand new song](http://genius.com/2423487/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Were-calling-for-insisting-on-a-different-beat-yeah-a-brand-new-song)

[Bridge]
[Tyler Clementi, age 18](http://genius.com/956685/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Tyler-clementi-age-18)
[Billy Lucas, age 15](http://genius.com/956703/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Billy-lucas-age-15)
[Harrison Chase Brown, age 15](http://genius.com/956705/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Harrison-chase-brown-age-15)
[Cody J. Barker, age 17](http://genius.com/956708/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Cody-j-barker-age-17)
[Seth Walsh, age 13](http://genius.com/956710/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Seth-walsh-age-13)

[[Hook]](http://genius.com/3208795/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/Hook)
Make it stop, let this end
[This life chose me, I’m not lost in sin](http://genius.com/2516679/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/This-life-chose-me-im-not-lost-in-sin)
[But proud i stand of who i am
I plan to go on living](http://genius.com/3147439/Rise-against-make-it-stop-septembers-children/But-proud-i-stand-of-who-i-am-i-plan-to-go-on-living)
Make this stop, make this end
All these years pushed to the ledge
But proud i stand of who i am
I plan to go on living

*Same Love – Macklemore & Ryan Lewis ft. Mary Lambert*

[[Verse 1: Macklemore]](http://genius.com/2149892/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Verse-1-macklemore)
[When I was in the 3rd grade
I thought that I was gay
Cause I could draw,](http://genius.com/915835/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/When-i-was-in-the-3rd-grade-i-thought-that-i-was-gay-cause-i-could-draw) [my uncle was](http://genius.com/916096/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/My-uncle-was)
[And I kept my room straight](http://genius.com/916446/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/And-i-kept-my-room-straight)
[I told my mom, tears rushing down my face
She's like, "Ben, you've loved girls since before Pre-K!"
Tripping, yeah, I guess she had a point, didn't she?
A bunch of stereotypes all in my head
I remember doing the math, like
"Yeah, I'm good at little league"](http://genius.com/2149804/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/I-told-my-mom-tears-rushing-down-my-face-shes-like-ben-youve-loved-girls-since-before-pre-k-tripping-yeah-i-guess-she-had-a-point-didnt-she-a-bunch-of-stereotypes-all-in-my-head-i-remember-doing-the-math-like-yeah-im-good-at-little-league)
[A pre-conceived idea of what it all meant
For those that like the same sex had the characteristics](http://genius.com/916457/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/A-pre-conceived-idea-of-what-it-all-meant-for-those-that-like-the-same-sex-had-the-characteristics)
[The right-wing conservatives think it's a decision
And you can be cured with some treatment and religion](http://genius.com/915919/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/The-right-wing-conservatives-think-its-a-decision-and-you-can-be-cured-with-some-treatment-and-religion)
[Man-made, rewiring of a pre-disposition, playing God](http://genius.com/918932/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Man-made-rewiring-of-a-pre-disposition-playing-god)
[Ahh, nah, here we go
America the brave still fears what we don't know](http://genius.com/918943/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Ahh-nah-here-we-go-america-the-brave-still-fears-what-we-dont-know)
[And "God loves all his children" is somehow forgotten](http://genius.com/1198516/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/And-god-loves-all-his-children-is-somehow-forgotten)
[But we paraphrase a book written thirty-five hundred years ago
I don't know](http://genius.com/1198610/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/But-we-paraphrase-a-book-written-thirty-five-hundred-years-ago-i-dont-know)

[[Hook: Mary Lambert]](http://genius.com/1130250/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Hook-mary-lambert)
[And I can't change
Even if I tried
Even if I wanted to
And I can't change
Even if I tried
Even if I wanted to
My love, my love, my love
She keeps me warm [x4]](http://genius.com/2184659/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/And-i-cant-change-even-if-i-tried-even-if-i-wanted-to-and-i-cant-change-even-if-i-tried-even-if-i-wanted-to-my-love-my-love-my-love-she-keeps-me-warm-x4)

[Verse 2: Macklemore]
[If I was gay I would think hip-hop hates me](http://genius.com/916504/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/If-i-was-gay-i-would-think-hip-hop-hates-me)
[Have you read the YouTube comments lately?
"Man, that's gay" gets dropped on the daily](http://genius.com/916513/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Have-you-read-the-youtube-comments-lately-man-thats-gay-gets-dropped-on-the-daily)
[We've become so numb to what we're saying](http://genius.com/916524/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Weve-become-so-numb-to-what-were-saying)
[Our culture founded from oppression
Yet we don't have acceptance for 'em](http://genius.com/918937/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Our-culture-founded-from-oppression-yet-we-dont-have-acceptance-for-em)
[Call each other faggots
Behind the keys of a message board](http://genius.com/916537/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Call-each-other-faggots-behind-the-keys-of-a-message-board)
[A word rooted in hate
Yet our genre still ignores it](http://genius.com/1198659/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/A-word-rooted-in-hate-yet-our-genre-still-ignores-it)
["Gay" is synonymous with the lesser](http://genius.com/916544/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Gay-is-synonymous-with-the-lesser)
[It's the same hate that's caused wars from religion](http://genius.com/992816/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Its-the-same-hate-thats-caused-wars-from-religion)
[Gender to skin color, the complexion of your pigment
The same fight that led people to walk-outs and sit-ins
It's human rights for everybody, there is no difference](http://genius.com/918681/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Gender-to-skin-color-the-complexion-of-your-pigment-the-same-fight-that-led-people-to-walk-outs-and-sit-ins-its-human-rights-for-everybody-there-is-no-difference)
[Live on! And be yourself!](http://genius.com/2164395/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Live-on-and-be-yourself)
[When I was in church they taught me something else
If you preach hate at the service, those words aren't anointed
That Holy Water that you soak in has been poisoned](http://genius.com/967433/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/When-i-was-in-church-they-taught-me-something-else-if-you-preach-hate-at-the-service-those-words-arent-anointed-that-holy-water-that-you-soak-in-has-been-poisoned)
[When everyone else is more comfortable remaining voiceless
Rather than fighting for humans that have had their rights stolen](http://genius.com/967490/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/When-everyone-else-is-more-comfortable-remaining-voiceless-rather-than-fighting-for-humans-that-have-had-their-rights-stolen)
[I might not be the same but that's not important](http://genius.com/2177502/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/I-might-not-be-the-same-but-thats-not-important)
[No freedom til we're equal
Damn right I support it](http://genius.com/967470/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/No-freedom-til-were-equal-damn-right-i-support-it)

[[Trombone Interlude]](http://genius.com/2149780/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Trombone-interlude)
I don't know

[Hook]

[Verse 3: Macklemore]
[We press play, don't press pause
Progress, march on!](http://genius.com/916097/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/We-press-play-dont-press-pause-progress-march-on)
[With a veil over our eyes, we turn our back on the cause](http://genius.com/916553/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/With-a-veil-over-our-eyes-we-turn-our-back-on-the-cause)
['Til the day that my uncles can be united by law](http://genius.com/918949/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Til-the-day-that-my-uncles-can-be-united-by-law)
[Kids are walking around the hallway
Plagued by pain in their heart](http://genius.com/2184661/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Kids-are-walking-around-the-hallway-plagued-by-pain-in-their-heart)
[A world so hateful
Some would rather die
Than be who they are](http://genius.com/916554/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/A-world-so-hateful-some-would-rather-die-than-be-who-they-are)
[And a certificate on paper
Isn't gonna solve it all
But it's a damn good place to start](http://genius.com/916565/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/And-a-certificate-on-paper-isnt-gonna-solve-it-all-but-its-a-damn-good-place-to-start)
[No law's gonna change us
We have to change us](http://genius.com/2292437/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/No-laws-gonna-change-us-we-have-to-change-us)
[Whatever god you believe in
We come from the same one](http://genius.com/916574/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Whatever-god-you-believe-in-we-come-from-the-same-one)
[Strip away the fear, underneath, it's all the same love](http://genius.com/2601240/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Strip-away-the-fear-underneath-its-all-the-same-love)
[About time that we raised up!](http://genius.com/2184663/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/About-time-that-we-raised-up)

[Hook]

[Outro: Mary Lambert]
[Love is patient, love is kind](http://genius.com/916102/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Love-is-patient-love-is-kind)
[Love is patient (not crying on Sundays)
Love is kind (not crying on Sundays)
Love is patient (not crying on Sundays)
Love is kind (not crying on Sundays)
Love is patient (not crying on Sundays)
Love is kind (not crying on Sundays)
Love is patient (not crying on Sundays)
Love is kind (not crying on Sundays)
Love is patient (not crying on Sundays)
Love is kind (not crying on Sundays)](http://genius.com/1560857/Macklemore-and-ryan-lewis-same-love/Love-is-patient-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-kind-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-patient-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-kind-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-patient-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-kind-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-patient-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-kind-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-patient-not-crying-on-sundays-love-is-kind-not-crying-on-sundays)Top of Form