

Social Criticism in John Lennon's Selected Songs: A Genetic Structuralism Analysis

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ABSTRACT

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This research aims to examine the social criticism in John Lennon's selected songs, namely "Imagine," "Gimme Some Truth," and "Give Peace a Chance." The study explores how John Lennon navigated his worldview and personal experiences, shaped by the issues he faced, to create songs that serve as a form of social criticism addressing societal problems. The primary research question focuses on identifying the social criticisms embedded in John Lennon's selected songs. By analyzing the relationship between the reasons behind the creation of these works and their intrinsic elements, such as lyrics, song structure, and diction. The finding of this research shows that there are three forms of social critics found in John Lennon selected songs, namely, social and political critics, anti-war sentiment and human rights.

Keywords: Social Criticism, John Lennon, Social Issues, Genetic Structuralism, Political Issues.

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Introduction

Songs are not merely about harmony and melody; they also serve as a powerful medium for conveying messages, including social criticism. Similar to poetry, song lyrics express the writer's emotions, perspectives, and ideologies. Social criticism in song lyrics has long been a form of communication, reflecting societal conditions and even protesting government policies. Over time, music has evolved beyond entertainment into a platform for reformation, activism, and social change.

Rock music, in particular, has played a significant role in social criticism. As a countercultural movement, rock challenges societal norms and political issues. According to Kotarba (2002), rock music transcends its status as a genre, becoming a cultural phenomenon that resonates deeply with youth. It is a platform for defiance and change, and John Lennon, a legendary figure in rock, used his music as a tool to advocate for peace and social justice. His songs, such as *Imagine*, *Gimme Some Truth*, and *Give Peace a Chance*, are iconic examples of social commentary through music (Kotarba, 2002).

Lennon's influence on rock culture was profound. As a member of The Beatles, he helped shape the musical landscape and inspired a generation to reject war and embrace peace. His music contributed to the counterculture movement of the 1960s, encouraging activism, social reform, and nonviolent protest. Beyond music, his impact extended to civil rights, anti-war movements, and global efforts for social justice. His work continues to resonate as a powerful example of how music can drive social change.

This research explores the connection social criticism using genetic structuralism, focusing on Lennon's selected songs. By applying Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism theory, the study aims to analyze how Lennon's worldview and personal experiences shaped his lyrics. Goldmann's theory connects literature to the social and ideological background of its creator, suggesting that works of art are a reflection of the author's social context. This theory serves as a valuable lens for understanding the deeper meanings behind Lennon's music, especially in terms of his political and social ideologies through his world view. Lennon's songs *Imagine* and *Gimme Some Truth* exemplify genetic structuralism. They address themes of peace, unity, and political hypocrisy. The lyrics of *Imagine* envision a world without war, borders, or divisions, reflecting Lennon's hope for a peaceful, unified world. In contrast, *Gimme Some Truth* critiques the false narratives spread by political leaders, challenging the status quo. Both songs illustrate Lennon's desire for a better world, one grounded in honesty, equality, and social justice.

Similarly, *Give Peace a Chance* was written as a direct protest against the Vietnam War. It became an anthem for the anti-war movement, advocating for peace and social change. The song also references various cultural and political figures, reinforcing its message of unity and activism. Created during Lennon and Yoko Ono's "bed-in" protests, the song symbolized their commitment to peace and their belief in the power of nonviolent activism. The couple used their fame to promote messages of peace, highlighting the potential of music to serve as a tool for social protest.

Songs that contain social criticism have the power to influence society by promoting awareness and shaping public opinion. Music that addresses political corruption, human rights, inequality, or war encourages listeners to reflect on the world around them. Lennon's songs exemplify how music can serve as both artistic expression and a call to action, inspiring listeners to engage with and challenge societal issues.

Previous research has explored the role of music in conveying social criticism. For instance, Puspitasari's (2019) thesis, *Pesan Perdamaian Pada Lagu Imagine John Lennon*, analyzes *Imagine* using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. Puspitasari's study reveals how Lennon's song communicates peace through symbolism and semiotics. This research contributes to understanding how Lennon's music communicates complex social messages. In contrast, this study focuses on multiple songs, particularly *Imagine*, *Gimme Some Truth*, and *Give Peace a Chance*, and their connection to Lennon's worldview.

Additionally, Rizky's (2022) thesis, *Women's Oppression Represented in Rupi Kaur's Selected Poems*, uses Goldmann's genetic structuralism theory to explore how women's oppression is depicted in poetry. This research serves as a comparison, as it also uses genetic structuralism to analyze how societal and social contexts influence an artist's work. However, this research highlighted Lennon's influential world view on his work.

Through an in-depth analysis of Lennon's lyrics, this research aims to provide a better understanding of how Lennon used his music to advocate for peace, truth, and social change. By applying genetic structuralism, the study explores the broader implications of Lennon's work, revealing how music can both reflect and shape societal ideologies.

Method

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative method to analyze social criticism within the selected songs of John Lennon: "Imagine (1971)," Gimme Some Truth (1971)", and 'Give Peace a Chance (1969)". The research focuses on lyrical analysis, examining diction, key lyrics, and thematic elements that contribute to the depiction of social criticism. Furthermore, the socio-historical context surrounding the creation of these songs will be considered to contextualize Lennon's critiques. This qualitative approach aims to uncover the meaning, interpretation, and potential impact of Lennon's social commentary on his audience and broader social consciousness.

The primary data of this research was taken from John Lennon's selected songs: "Imagine (1971)," Gimme Some Truth (1971)", and 'Give Peace a Chance (1969)". The secondary data includes books, articles, and other relevant publications related to the analysis of John Lennon. These sources provide supporting information and enrich the analysis

In this research, there were several steps that were conducted to collect the data, they are: (1) The researcher engages in the process of listening to the previous referenced music while simultaneously reading the corresponding lyrics. This dual approach allows for a comprehensive examination. (2) Highlighting the significant diction, key lyrics, and messages, as well as providing insights about social criticisms that are delivered through the songs. (3) Relevant theories, particularly Goldmann's genetic structuralism such as his world view, and existing literature on John Lennon were reviewed to provide theoretical and contextual depth. (4) Collected data were categorized into subgroups to facilitate analysis.

There are also several steps to analyze the data, they were: (1) Relevant data sources, including song lyrics, scholarly articles, and contextual analyses of John Lennon's worldview, were compiled. (2) Goldmann's theory of genetic structuralism was applied to analyze the data. This involved a qualitative analysis of lyrical expression, diction, figurative language, and imagery within the song lyrics. This approach facilitates understanding of Lennon's worldview and the socio-cultural context of his work. (3) The researcher remained vigilant for potential biases or limitations. Diverse perspectives were considered, and the reliability and correctness of the data analysis procedure were critically evaluated. (4) The data analysis procedures were executed to provide insights into social criticism in John Lennon's songs, encompassing literary, emotional, and historical dimensions. This methodology aims to explore the relationship between musical composition, social commentary, and artistic expression. Lennon's personal experiences, including his relationship with Yoko Ono and his background, are considered as factors shaping his worldview.

Results and Discussion

John Lennon Worldview

John Winston Lennon, born in Liverpool on October 9, 1940, is widely regarded as one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century. His worldview, shaped by his personal experiences, social environment, and growing political consciousness, led him to become an outspoken advocate for peace, social justice, and human rights. Lennon's life and music reflect his evolving understanding of the world, which ultimately helped him convey messages of equality, freedom, and peace through his art.

Lennon's early life was marked by neglect and emotional turmoil. Born to Alfred Lennon and Julia Stanley, his father was often absent, leaving his mother to raise him alone. His mother struggled with her own issues, including relationships and social engagements, and Lennon was largely raised by his aunt Mimi, who offered a more structured and disciplined environment. Though Mimi was strict, she supported Lennon's education and musical interests, which would eventually shape his career. However, Lennon's early years left deep

emotional scars, as he longed for the affection and security he lacked from his parents. These experiences likely influenced his rebellious and outspoken nature, which would be a defining feature of his personality and music throughout his life (Goldmann, 1988).

Lennon's passion for music began in his youth, and he was heavily influenced by American rock and roll. His early years were marked by a creative drive, where he engaged in artistic pursuits such as drawing, writing poetry, and playing music. By 16, Lennon formed a band, The Quarrymen, which later evolved into The Beatles after Paul McCartney joined. His music, initially focused on pop songs, began to reflect deeper themes of social and political concern as the Beatles rose to fame.

The influence of his early experiences, particularly his emotional struggles and feelings of abandonment, began to seep into his music. His dissatisfaction with the rigid structure of formal education and his growing disinterest in academics only intensified during this period, and he turned to music as an outlet for his personal frustrations and rebellious spirit (Zimmerman & Goldmann, 2013: 158).

Lennon's worldview was strongly shaped by his commitment to equality, freedom, and global peace. His songs often critiqued political systems and societal structures, expressing a desire for social change. Lennon viewed traditional systems of power as repressive, often criticizing them for perpetuating inequality and injustice. For example, his song "*Gimme Some Truth*" critiques the dishonesty of politicians and the systemic failures of political institutions (Zimmerman & Goldmann, 2013: 158). In this song, Lennon directly addresses the hypocrisy of political figures, encapsulating his skepticism of the political establishment.

Lennon's anti-war stance was another key element of his worldview. His song "*Give Peace a Chance*" became an anthem for the anti-Vietnam War movement, reflecting his belief that peace was not just the absence of war, but the presence of equality, freedom, and respect for all individuals. His activism was not limited to politics; he also championed social freedoms, advocating for personal expression and a society free from judgment, discrimination, and repression. This broader concept of human rights was central to Lennon's worldview, as he believed that true peace could only be achieved when individuals reflected on and changed their own mindset toward compassion and understanding (Zimmerman & Goldmann, 2013: 153).

Lennon's song "*Imagine*" is perhaps the most iconic expression of his worldview. In this song, he invited listeners to envision a world where divisions based on religion, nationality, or material wealth no longer existed. Lennon believed these divisions were not only the root of global conflict but also reflected internal divisions within the human psyche. "*Imagine*" called for the dismantling of these barriers, promoting a vision of a world built on shared humanity and understanding (Faruk, 1988: 70). Lennon's desire for peace was not just about ending wars but about fostering a collective transformation toward greater social harmony.

A significant turning point in Lennon's personal and artistic life came through his relationship with artist Yoko Ono. Ono's influence on Lennon was profound, as she encouraged him to explore deeper, more intimate themes in his music. Prior to meeting Ono, Lennon had often felt constrained by the pressures of fame and the expectations of being a member of The Beatles (Burns, 1973: 110).

His public persona clashed with his private self, and he struggled with feelings of depression and disillusionment (Burns, 1973: 118).

However, Ono helped Lennon break free from traditional songwriting structures, encouraging him to embrace vulnerability and express his innermost thoughts. Through their relationship, Lennon's music became more introspective, and his activism grew more direct and unfiltered. Songs like "*Imagine*" and "*Give Peace a Chance*" reflected a shift in his artistic style, as he began to address themes of love, peace, and social justice in a more profound and personal way (Goldmann, 1970: 100). His music, once focused on love and romance, now carried bold messages about the state of the world and the need for change.

Lennon's outspoken political views were a defining feature of his later career. His opposition to the Vietnam War, his critiques of political leaders, and his advocacy for peace made him a controversial figure, particularly in the United States. His famous remark that The Beatles were "more famous than Jesus" led to public outrage, and he spent months clarifying his statement. For Lennon, this comment reflected his belief that, in the media age, celebrities like The Beatles wielded unprecedented influence, a statement that was misunderstood by many (Lawrence, 2011: 14).

In the U.S., Lennon became a target for government scrutiny due to his anti-war activism. The Nixon administration saw Lennon as a threat, fearing his influence over the growing anti-war movement. His decision to move to New York City with Ono in 1971 was, in part, motivated by a desire to escape the media frenzy in England and immerse himself in the heart of the U.S. counterculture. However, his vocal opposition to the Vietnam War and his support for progressive causes made him a controversial figure in the eyes of many (Edmondson, 2010: 15).

Lennon's activism extended beyond his music. He and Ono used their celebrity to rally media attention for peace and social justice causes, organizing events like the bed-ins, where they staged peaceful protests in hotel rooms. These events helped amplify their message of peace, and Lennon's song "*Give Peace a Chance*" became a rallying cry for anti-war activists around the world. His music became more than just entertainment; it became a tool for social change, using his platform to challenge the political establishment and call for a more just and compassionate world.

Despite the turbulence in his personal life, including the dissolution of his first marriage and the controversy surrounding his relationship with Ono, Lennon's music continued to inspire millions. His personal struggles were reflected in his music, which often explored themes of loneliness, love, and identity. Lennon's emotional pain, stemming from his difficult childhood and tumultuous relationships, informed much of his work, but he channeled this pain into art that resonated deeply with listeners.

In the 1970s, after the birth of his son Sean, Lennon chose to take a break from music and focus on fatherhood. This period of quiet reflection allowed him to regain a sense of peace and balance in his life, and he returned to music in 1980 with the album *Double Fantasy*, which celebrated his relationship with Ono and his role as a father. Tragically, Lennon's life was cut short when he was murdered outside his New York City home on December 8, 1980 (Edmondson, 2010: 18).

John Lennon's worldview was one of compassion, activism, and social justice. His personal experiences, including his troubled childhood, his relationships, and his growing awareness of societal issues, shaped his worldview and were reflected in his music. Lennon's songs, particularly in his post-Beatles career, addressed themes of peace, love, and equality, urging listeners to imagine a world free from divisions and conflict. His music remains a powerful testament to his belief in the power of art and activism to inspire social change, and his legacy continues to resonate with those who share his vision of a more just and compassionate world.

Equality, Freedom, and Global Harmony in Imagine song

The connection between song and social criticism is rooted in the idea that music is an integral part of culture, shaped by and reflective of the society in which it exists. Social criticism serves as a tool for artists to express their worldviews, addressing societal issues such as inequality, injustice, and human rights (Siswantoro, 2010: 23). This emotional connection in music makes social criticism more accessible and impactful. John Lennon, for example, used his music to challenge societal norms and advocate for change, embedding his critical perspective in the melodies and lyrics of his songs. His 1971 song *Imagine* is a notable example, urging listeners to envision a world of peace, unity, and understanding, free from the societal divisions that often lead to conflict.

The first stanza of *Imagine* sets the stage by inviting listeners to consider concepts like heaven and hell. Lennon uses these to suggest that harmony is possible if we are willing to change. The imagery in "Above us, only sky" creates a sense of endless possibilities, indicating an openness to change. By encouraging listeners to imagine a world without countries or religions, Lennon critiques societal divisions, such as nationalism and religious conflict. This reflects his belief that these traditional structures contribute to inequality, conflict, and injustice. In urging people to "imagine all the people living for today," Lennon highlights the importance of embracing the present moment and prioritizing peace over the divisions of the past or future. The repeated use of "imagine" reinforces this hopeful vision, emphasizing the role of collective dreaming in driving social change (Goldmann in Boelhower, 1980: 28).

The second stanza continues this message by removing the concept of countries, which Lennon believed fueled conflict and division. Written during the Vietnam War (1955-1975), the song served as a protest against the political and social divides of that era. The line "Nothing to kill or die for" emphasizes Lennon's anti-war stance, critiquing nationalism and the harmful ideologies that often lead to war. By imagining a world without these divisions, Lennon invites listeners to reflect on the value of human connection over nationalistic pride and conflict (Faruk, 1988:70). His message suggests that peace and unity are achievable through global collaboration, and that human empathy should guide the creation of a more just and thriving world.

In the fourth verse, Lennon challenges the relevance of religious divisions with the line "And no religion too." Although born a Christian, Lennon was skeptical of organized religion, aligning more with secular humanism and spirituality. His infamous 1966 comment, "The Beatles are more popular than Jesus," reflected his criticism of religious institutions. In *Imagine*, Lennon imagines a world where religious conflict is absent, and humanity lives in peace. The line "Living life in peace" further reinforces this idea, suggesting that true harmony transcends religious differences. Lennon acknowledges the skepticism and criticism idealists often face with the refrain, "You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one," while inviting others to join him in striving for unity and peace (Muniroch, 2007: 91).

The final stanza introduces the concept of a world free from materialism, as seen in the line "Imagine no possessions." Lennon critiques consumerism and the inequalities it creates, challenging listeners to envision a society where wealth and personal property do not define a person's value. He critiques the American Dream, which often breeds greed and envy, and advocates for a more communal approach to living. The idea of "A brotherhood of man" serves as a metaphor for unity and interconnectedness, promoting the idea of a shared responsibility for building a more equitable world (Goldmann in Sonolet, 2022). While Lennon was not a Marxist, his critique of consumerism and support for social justice align with leftist and progressive ideas, emphasizing human connection over material wealth.

His criticism of capitalism and advocacy for a system focused on the well-being of the majority, rather than the wealth of the few, embodies his broader call for social justice and peace. His songs, particularly *Imagine*, are an invitation to shift societal priorities towards compassion, understanding, and global unity. By challenging his audience to imagine a world where material possessions do not determine happiness or worth, Lennon envisions a society that values human connection above all else. In this way, *Imagine* calls listeners to participate in creating a more just and harmonious world (Zimmerman & Goldmann, 2013: 158)..

Hypocrisy of Political World in Gimme Some Truth song

John Lennon's song "*Gimme Some Truth*" critiques the political world, focusing on the hypocrisy, corruption, and dishonesty of government officials. Through the song, Lennon expresses his frustration with politicians who deceive the public with lies and maintain power

through manipulation. This critique reflects Lennon's worldview, aiming to encourage transparency, honesty, and integrity in politics.

In the first stanza, Lennon uses vivid imagery to describe the politicians he criticizes. Phrases like "uptight, short-sighted, narrow-minded, hypocrites" paint a clear picture of politicians as inflexible, limited in vision, and morally flawed. This imagery helps to emphasize the frustration that many people feel toward politicians who act in their own interests rather than serving the public. By calling them "hypocrites," Lennon underscores their dishonesty. This depiction sets the tone for the song, which demands truth and transparency in politics (Riccitelli, M. J, 1965: 54). The tone is also reinforced by the demanding phrases "sick and tired" and "just gimme some truth," which convey Lennon's anger and impatience. The song's tone, characterized by sarcasm and frustration, helps make the message more direct and impactful.

Lennon's critique goes beyond just describing the political world. He uses the song to argue that transparency is crucial for a healthy political environment. Citing political theorist Charles Frye (1966), Lennon aligns with the idea that openness in politics can reduce the distrust between the public and leaders, encouraging active participation and leading to better decision-making. According to Lennon, this openness would also reduce corruption and misallocation of resources, allowing a more just and peaceful society to emerge.

In the second stanza, Lennon uses repetition and imagery to reinforce his message. The phrase "neurotic, psychotic, pig-headed politicians" vividly describes the irrational and stubborn nature of those in power. Through repetition, such as the lines "All I want is the truth" and "Just gimme some truth," Lennon emphasizes the urgency of his plea for honesty in politics. This repetition reflects his frustration with the lack of transparency and the continuous lies from leaders. He believes that openness would allow the public to make informed decisions and create a more just society. Lennon argues that transparency will not only reduce distrust but also encourage public involvement in the democratic process, making people feel they have a voice in shaping policies (Lawrence, 2011:120).

Lennon further critiques the political world by connecting the lack of transparency with the persistence of corruption. His criticism of politicians who hide the truth underscores the damage that dishonesty causes in society. He believes that only when leaders are open about their actions will society be able to heal and progress. Lennon's commitment to peace is central to his worldview, and he believes that honesty in politics is key to building a more harmonious world. This theme of honesty and integrity is reflected in his personal experiences, including his opposition to the Vietnam War and his activism against the Nixon administration.

In the third stanza, Lennon uses an allusion to criticize U.S. President Richard Nixon, calling him the "son of tricky dicky." This reference attacks Nixon's character and the dishonest nature of his policies. The allusion not only critiques Nixon personally but also highlights the broader issue of political corruption and the abuse of power. By invoking Nixon's name, Lennon connects his criticism of individual politicians to the wider problem of dishonesty and lack of transparency in government (Platoff, 2005: 244). Through this allusion, Lennon encourages listeners to challenge unjust systems and recognize the flaws in the political structure (Frye, C. E, 1966: 801).

Lennon's criticism of Nixon was part of a larger campaign of activism during the late 1960s and early 1970s. His public statements and music, including *Imagine* (1971), reflected his frustration with political leaders and his desire for a more peaceful and just world. Lennon saw Nixon's policies, especially regarding the Vietnam War, as emblematic of the failure of political leaders to act in the best interests of the people (Frye, C. E, 1966: 801). He was outspoken in his opposition, believing that those in power were more concerned with maintaining their control than with addressing social issues or ensuring peace.

The metaphor in the line "mother hubbard soft soap me" criticizes politicians who try to deceive the public with empty words. The reference to "Mother Hubbard" evokes the image of something that appears comforting but is ultimately empty and meaningless. The phrase "soft soap" is a metaphor for manipulative persuasion, showing how politicians try to sway the public with false promises. Lennon's rejection of these empty persuasions reflects his belief that honesty is vital for effective governance. He also uses symbolism to criticize the

misallocation of resources, with phrases like “pocketful of hope” symbolizing empty promises and “money for dope” representing the misdirection of public funds.

In the fourth stanza, Lennon uses various literary devices to critique those in power. Phrases like “tight-lipped, condescendin', mama's little chauvinist” characterize politicians as arrogant, closed-minded, and self-important. These descriptors highlight their refusal to engage with the truth and their tendency to dismiss the concerns of others. The repetition of the line “All I want is the truth, Give me the truth now” intensifies the urgency of Lennon's message. Strong diction like “sick to death” and “chauvinist” adds emotional weight, conveying Lennon's frustration with the narrow-mindedness and hypocrisy of those in charge.

In the final stanza, Lennon uses metaphors and imagery to describe the self-serving attitudes of the people he criticizes. The phrase “schizophrenic, egocentric, paranoiac prima donnas” metaphorically portrays politicians as erratic, self-absorbed, and paranoid. These descriptors emphasize their untrustworthy nature and the chaotic, self-centered behaviors that prevent them from being effective leaders. Through phrases like “watchin' scenes,” Lennon compares these politicians to actors in a play, suggesting that their actions are mere performances intended to deceive the public (Goldmann in Boelhower, 1980: 28). This metaphor underscores his belief that political leaders are more focused on their own image than on serving the people.

Lennon's lyrics reflect his desire for a world where honesty, integrity, and transparency are prioritized. He argues that without truth, society will be filled with deceit and corruption, leading to a world governed by selfish leaders who care more about their own power than the well-being of others. Through his music and activism, Lennon called for a transformation of the political world, urging leaders to be more accountable and to work toward a peaceful, just society. His critique of the political system in “*Gimme Some Truth*” remains relevant today, serving as a reminder of the importance of honesty and transparency in leadership.

Anti-war Sentiment in Give Peace a Chance song

In the first stanza, Lennon uses -ism as an effective way of using the term “-ism” to criticize the complexity of ideologies in society, the use of imagery helps Lennon convey his worldview on the importance of unity and collective action in dealing with social problems. Lennon believed that of the many ideologies that were born and developed in society, none of them had a completely positive impact. According to him, ideologies in circulation often cause divisions as individuals are categorized based on their ideological beliefs. By highlighting this diversity, Lennon invites his audience to consider how often we let these ideologies define our identities, creating boundaries that separate one individual from another. Lennon's statement, “I'm a believer in peace, and I don't believe that any of these ideologies, left or right, can provide a solution to our problems,” reflects his belief that this awareness is essential to encourage society to move towards unity (Lawrence, 2011:111). He emphasized the need to prioritize human values that can unite us all, regardless of ideological differences. Lennon called for us to throw off the shackles of divisive ideologies and work together to create a more peaceful and just world, focusing on a greater common goal than simply following a particular ideology. John Lennon uses repetition effectively to emphasize his central message of the importance of peace. The phrase “All we are saying is give peace a chance” is repeated several times, creating a rhythm that urges the audience to reflect on the meaning of the words. This repetition not only strengthens the message, but also gives it emotional power, making it easier to remember and more impactful in the listener's mind. By repeating this phrase, Lennon created a simple yet powerful incantation, calling on everyone to unite their voices in support of peace.

In the second stanza, Lennon uses alliteration to create a rhythm in the song that supports his opinion and at the same time attracts and captivates the listener, this can be seen in the phrase “ministers, sinisters, banisters, and canisters.” The repetition enhances the

musicality of the phrase and makes the song easier to sing, Lennon includes various roles in society both serious and seemingly trivial. Lennon also uses Imagery in this part of the lyrics, he mentions several figures and elements in social, political and religious circles. Lennon uses terms such as "ministers, bishops, rabbis" to refer to religious figures, and he also includes lighter terms as if to show the absurdity of existing social structures. He argues that although these roles, such as religious and political figures, are considered official and important, they can also seem ridiculous in a broader context. Lennon's worldview is evident in his use of alliteration and imagery, as he argues that society is often caught up in divisive ideological categories and appendages. He argues that many people get caught up in the ambiguities of ideology, losing sight of the larger common goal of peace (Zimmerman & Goldmann, 2013: 158).

In the third stanza, In this section of "Give Peace a Chance," John Lennon employs appealing alliterative phrases and imagery to further explore societal themes. The list of terms, which includes phrases like "Revolution, evolution, masturbation, flagellation, regulation, and integrations," uses repetitive sounds to produce a rhythmic flow that makes the lyrics memorable and compelling. In addition to improving the song's musical quality, the alliteration highlights the wide range of ideas and viewpoints that people express regarding peace and social advancement. This stanza's varied imagery captures the intricacy of the topics being discussed.

In contrast to "masturbation" and "flagellation," which introduce more intimate and potentially contentious topics, "revolution" and "evolution" imply significant societal changes. By contrasting these concepts, Lennon draws attention to the variety of subjects that predominate in public conversation and implies that, despite people's obsession with these subjects, the main idea of peace is frequently overlooked. Additionally, the reference to the "United Nations" in conjunction with the phrases "congratulations" and "meditations" draws a sharp distinction between the grandiose aspirations of global collaboration and the banal realities of daily existence. This contrast asks listeners to consider how well international organizations work to advance peace (Goldmann in Sapiro, 2023). By adding "congratulations," Lennon quietly criticizes the propensity to acknowledge successes without discussing the lingering problems that stand in the way of genuine harmony. This passage demonstrates Lennon's worldview, as he appears to support a more comprehensive understanding of the problems confronting society. Although he recognizes the significance of different beliefs and methods, he suggests that if they are only discussed in isolation, none of them will actually bring about peace. Rather, he urges a team effort that goes beyond specific subjects and concentrates on common peace. Lennon creates a provocative story that encourages listeners to consider the intricacies of contemporary society by fusing evocative imagery with alliterative language. In the end, he reminds us that the pursuit of peace is both a personal and a collective duty, pushing us to go beyond superficial discussions and cooperate in the direction of a more cohesive and peaceful world.

In the last stanza, John Lennon utilizes a series of imagery and cultural references to highlight the social figures and movements of the time. The mention of diverse names and personalities "John and Yoko, Timmy Leary, Rosemary, Tommy Smothers, Bobby Dylan, Tommy Cooper, Derek Taylor, Norman Mailer, Alan Ginsberg, Hare Krishna" paints a bigger picture of the cultural landscape in the 1960s and 1970s (Goldmann in Sonolet, 2022). Each name conjures specific images and associations, reflecting a range of influences from music, literature, politics, and anti-war movements. Thus, imagery is especially dominant as Lennon references well-known peace movement figures like John and Yoko (Lennon and his wife, Yoko Ono), as well as well-known cultural icons like Bob Dylan and authors like Norman Mailer and Alan Ginsberg. These names' inclusion points to a shared awareness and dedication to the principles of social change and peace. It symbolizes the coming together of diverse voices promoting equality and freedom, showing that the fight for peace is a group endeavor involving numerous powerful individuals rather than merely individual endeavors. The final "Hare Krishna" invocation highlights the call for peace's spiritual component. Lennon's belief in the interconnectedness of all people pursuing harmony is further reinforced by the chant-like

quality that is introduced by the repeated phrase "Hare, Hare Krishna," which is reminiscent of the mantras used in Hindu practices.

Lennon suggests that the pursuit of peace transcends politics and social concerns and touches on matters of personal belief and spirituality by making reference to these spiritual and cultural customs. Lennon emphasizes that achieving peace is a collective effort, encapsulating his worldview through this list of significant individuals and cultural icons. The song urges listeners to acknowledge the diversity of voices supporting the peace movement and to value how intertwined their endeavors are. By uniting such a wide range of people, Lennon promotes harmony among various beliefs and customs and supports the notion that everyone can contribute to the promotion of peace (Goldmann in Boelhower, 1980: 28).

Thus, songs like *Imagine*, *Gimme Some Truth*, and *Give Peace a Chance* reflect John Lennon's worldview, which is focused on pursuing a world characterized by harmony, integrity, and peace. Lennon's lyrics called on listeners to see past political differences, reject divisive ideologies, and prioritize respect for one another and our common humanity. He envisioned a world in *Imagine* where people lived in harmony and there were no national or religious boundaries, possessions, or divisions. *Give Peace a Chance* is an appeal for group action against conflict, while *Gimme Some Truth* expresses his annoyance with political deception and his demand for transparency. Lennon's vision merged optimism and realism; he acknowledged limitations but displayed faith in the ability of common people to overcome them in the pursuit of a brighter future. When taken as a whole, these songs make a strong case for a society in which integrity, empathy, and a sincere desire for peace triumph over authority and division.

Conclusions

The finding of this research shows that there are three forms of social critics found in John Lennon selected songs, namely, social and political critics, anti-war sentiment and human rights. Then, these issues are analyzed through Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism theory to find out John Lennon's worldview and also his reasons for writing the song.

The analysis of social criticism in John Lennon's selected songs underline John Lennon's worldview. As a social activist, he always embraces people's right to freedom, peace, and equality, advocating for social justice to common people. Through his songs, John Lennon engages people around the world to connect and stand for each other in fighting social issues in society. Other than that, through employing his songs, John Lennon also helps people's consciousness about their own rights. In this case, Lennon's activism was not limited to his music, he used his fame to speak out against war, inequality, and human rights violations, believing that artists had a responsibility to speak truth to power. His message of hope, peace, and resistance continues to inspire generations, reinforcing the idea that art can be a powerful force for social transformation.

Social criticism serves as a powerful form of resistance, especially when certain groups within the hierarchy of society use their influence to benefit themselves at the expense of others, resulting in social inequality. In contrast, "Imagine" presents a vision rooted in equality, freedom and global harmony. Lennon invites listeners to imagine a world free from national and religious divisions, advocating for a unified humanity where peace can be realized. By emphasizing concepts such as living for today and imagining a world without possessions, Lennon criticizes materialism and calls for a collective commitment to human connection over individual greed. In "Give Peace a Chance", Lennon uses his worldview of anti-war sentiment that resonates with those who are disillusioned with political decisions that lead to conflict.

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