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Daily OPINION

NO HOME. NO HEARING. NO CHOICE.

by Calli Ross
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There's a man in Liberia. He isn't from there. He doesn't know anybody there. He has no money, no phone, no extra clothes and no knowledge whatsoever of the country. He was forced off the plane into Liberia and left there. He is one of many immigrants being deported to countries unfamiliar to them as a part of third-country deportations. Many of such immigrants are sent to countries where they are imprisoned, beaten or left homeless with little to no rights. Horrifyingly, the United States Supreme Court just voted that subjecting them to such treatment is allowed.

Third country deportation has been a concept in immigration for many years, but legally, immigrants who aren't able to return to their home countries out of fear of persecution or violence have 30 days to designate the country they will be deported to. Under Trump's immigration policy, they no longer have this right. Trump decided to ignore that right in a revolting attempt to further harm immigrants, and what's worse is that the Supreme Court went along with it.

This policy is especially disgusting because third country deportations are being used to evade international provisions and find a way to mass remove immigrants. Many of the immigrants who are facing deportations to a third country are protected under the UN Convention Against Torture or in the middle of an asylum plea, meaning they can't be sent to their home country. These immigrants should be granted a temporary stay in the United States, but in a desperate attempt to rid our country of diversity, Trump's immigration office has found a way to remove them.

Since Trump took office in his second term, more than 25,000 immigrants have been deported to 35 different countries. They have no connection to those countries, often no identification or any help once they step foot off the plane.

This means immigrants can be shipped off to any of the 35 countries, which generally take them in exchange for large sums of money. They could end up on a foreign continent, in a place where they don't speak the language, in a country that is formally recognized as a dictatorship or in a place where they will be immediately jailed, and the United States government is literally paying millions of dollars to send them there.

In one such instance, immigrants from Venezuela refused to get off a place in Liberia, fearing the unknown land and situation. Federal agents attempted to force them off the plane, before they agreed to supposedly take them back to America. Later they were thrown off the plane in Equatorial Guinea, a known dictatorship, where they were jailed for the next few months.

In third country deportations, like the one described above, there is little to no hope for the immigrants. They are not legal citizens of the countries they reside in. They don't understand the immigration laws and policies in those countries, and even if they did, they don't have money for lawyers. They are indefinitely stuck in another country with no idea when they will be able to leave or see their families again.

If the literal abandonment and mass removal of an entire ethnicity of people wasn't enough, when a lawsuit arose against third country deportations without choice, the Supreme Court ruled to allow them.

This ruling is quite frankly a disgrace.

The judiciary branch does not swear an oath to the president, or to a political agenda. The Supreme Court swears an oath to uphold the Constitution and to administer justice with respect to persons, grant equal right to the poor and the rich within the borders of the United States. They do not swear an oath to protect the rights of only citizens. They do not swear an oath to protect the rights of people of certain ethnicities. They swear an oath to protect the rights of all people living within the borders of the US, but in practice, they do not.

This a major violation of the rights of immigrants. The government won't even give them the dignity of deciding where they will be forced out to after imprisoning and mistreating them, but this comes in a long line of situations in which the Supreme Court isn't protecting people, they're protecting their own self-interest.

Thousands more people will be left stranded in foreign land. Thousands more people will be imprisoned. Thousands more people will have their fundamental rights ignored. Thousands more families will be ripped apart.

How much more must happen before the Supreme Court decides they care?

MODERN SONGS MAY BE SHORTER, BUT THEY AREN'T WORSE

by Dria Rybczyk
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When it released on Sept. 18, I made sure to listen to Orville Peck's newest album, "Mule." I'm a big fan of his work, and I enjoyed "Mule" more than most of his recent output. However, despite how much I loved the latter half of the album, my biggest takeaway overall was how short three of the songs ended up, namely "Big Ol' House," "Ring the Bell" and "Blue Skies." All three of these songs sit at around two minutes and 30 seconds long and left me disappointed as a result. My initial reaction echoed a sentiment shared by many others bemoaning the future of the music industry: that songs are getting shorter along with our attention spans.

All a song needs to be successful in the present day is a single, small section of it to blow up on Instagram or TikTok. The deluxe album rerelease has become standard to keep people coming back to the same songs and pumping up view numbers on streaming platforms.

The 2026 Brit Award winner for Best Producer, PinkPantheress, said in an interview with ABC, "We don't need a repeat verse. We don't need a bridge... We don't need a long outro."

With all of this change in the last decade of music, it's easy to feel upset. Past generations had a similar hesitancy to songs with electronic instruments, more explicit topics and new genres. I'm one person in a generational cycle of thinking music was just better, somehow, when I was growing up.

But, of course, this gut reaction is misguided. Short songs have always existed, and long songs are still being made. Music has always changed in response to modern technological advances, just as any artistic medium has. This doesn't indicate a decline in the artform of music, just a new direction.

According to Vice, songs made before the invention of the seven-inch single in 1949 were limited in length to about three minutes by the physical size of shellac phonograph records. After the seven-inch vinyl record became ubiquitous, the five-minute song became more common.

Genre can also influence length. Dance music, for example, tends to be longer on average than a typical pop song. This serves its audience of clubs and parties by allowing people to dance to a consistent beat for longer periods, while pop music focuses on catchy, easy-to-sing tunes and delivering a concise but memorable experience.

My issue with the shorter songs on "Mule," therefore, does not come down to being different from what I'm used to. Instead, "Mule" failed to adapt to a shorter length. Some of my favorite songs are similarly short but utilize their length very well in comparison to the songs on "Mule."

One avenue is modifying speed and emotion. Punk music tends to be shorter and faster than other genres, emphasizing anger and unrest. Jeff Rosenstock's "HEAD" is only one minute and 30 seconds long but balances this very short length with a blazing fast tempo of 234 BPM. The song also justifies its length with Rosenstock's energetic vocals and anti-authoritarian lyrics, evoking a very high level of emotion.

The structure of two-minute songs can also be quite different from songs that sit around four to five minutes. The standard structure seen in a typical pop or rock song is Intro — Verse — Chorus — Verse — Chorus — Bridge — Chorus. This allows the artist to iterate on a single idea while still providing variety with a bridge.

Sabrina Carpenter's "When Did You Get Hot?" at two minutes and 25 seconds, displays many of the structural trends we see in modern music. Overall, "When Did You Get Hot?" is built almost entirely around the chorus. The intro is only four seconds long, and the following pre-verse, verse, and pre-chorus flow into each other as one long buildup to a prominent drop into the chorus itself. This is followed by another buildup and chorus combo, ending with a simple outro. Every section of the song differs from one another, providing the variety that a bridge would have otherwise provided.

With all of this in mind, the reason I had such a negative reaction to the shorter songs in"Mule" was mainly because it failed to effectively capitalize on their shorter lengths. They're all as slow as Peck's previous country-rock albums, with "Blue Skies" being particularly slow at around 80 BPM. The verses and choruses in "Big Ol' House" sound almost exactly the same, without the runtime to add a bridge for variety. "Ring the Bell" uses the standard pop formula I previously outlined, but shortens each section to fit within two minutes and 21 seconds, preventing me from enjoying each section as they each ended prematurely.

If "Mule" used any of the techniques I outlined, I probably would have liked them more, because short songs are not inherently worse.



close-up on vintage vinyl records at a music store. The invention of the seven-inch vinyl in 1949 allowed for longer songs to become more common.

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