

# More Than a Song

- Liam Reilly

If you have ever attended a Red Sox game at Fenway Park, then you have heard the bouncing and jovial opening chords of Neil Diamond's classic before the bottom of the eighth inning. However, you may not know how it came to be that "Sweet Caroline" became near and dear to the Fenway faithful, most of whom sing along when the song comes on during the game.

It was in 1969 that Neil Diamond first released "Sweet Caroline", a song which he later stated was inspired by the daughter of former president John F Kennedy, Caroline Kennedy. Along with Neil Diamond, the song has seen much success, and has gone platinum in the 44 years since it was conceived. "Sweet Caroline", like many other songs, was casually played in many sporting events, including a select number of Red Sox games in the late nineties to early 2000's. In this time period, the song was most often played later in the games, and only when the Sox were winning. Once John Henry took over the Red Sox in 2002, the song earned a permanent place in the hearts of Sox fans, as the song came to be played at every home game in the eighth inning.

Songs like "Sweet Caroline" that are significant to a sports team carry significant weight in the outside world as well, it has become a trademark of not just "Red Sox Nation", but of the city of Boston as well. In tough times such as the tragic events of the last week, it is songs like "Sweet Caroline" that serve as rally cries to the people of Boston, and show the brave resiliency of a city. In light of the events in Boston, "Sweet Caroline" was played in ballparks across the country in support of the Red Sox and Boston, including Yankee Stadium, an act that put aside the baseball rivalry between two cities and showed unity as a nation. In addition, Neil Diamond himself was present at the Red Sox game on Saturday as the Sox took on the Kansas City Royals, and asked if he could lead those present in his song during the game, a sign of respect to the city that has preserved his relic of a song for the last eleven years. The team agreed, and Diamond went out on to the field before the bottom of the eighth inning and sang; the Red Sox won the game, and "Sweet Caroline" has never sounded better.

In other news, here are some recent releases in the music industry:

## **Fall Out Boy: Save Rock and Roll (4/16/13)**

Fall Out Boy was one of the most successful rock bands of the 2000's, with hits such as "Dance, Dance", and "Thnks Fr Th Mmrs" (Apparently Fall Out Boy has a problem with vowels). However, all good things must come to an end, and so did Fall Out Boy, and after releasing a flop of an album in 2008 (Folie a Deux), and a greatest hits album the year later, it looked as though the band was done. Instead of bowing out from the rock world gracefully, the band apparently has decided to do it kicking and screaming with its new release, Save Rock and Roll. Each song on the album shows the band trying to conform to one, if not more of music's current popular characteristics, featuring rappers such as Big Sean ("The Mighty Fall") and trying their best to replicate Mumford & Sons ("Young Volcanoes). It fails quite badly. The band has clearly lost their somewhat edgy and alternative identity, and not been able to find it again. There are not

any standout tracks on the album, but if you close your eyes very tightly when listening to “Death Valley”, you can hear the genius behind earlier albums like From Under The Cork Tree.  
(3/10)

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