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A Critical Analysis of the Rerecordings of Taylor Swift's First Six Albums

Introduction

In recent years, Taylor Swift has undertaken a groundbreaking project by rerecording her first six studio albums: *Fearless (Taylor's Version)* (2021), *Red (Taylor's Version)* (2021), *Speak Now (Taylor's Version)* (2023), *1989 (Taylor's Version)* (2023), *Reputation (Taylor's Version)* (expected unreleased), and *Taylor Swift (Taylor's Version)* (expected unreleased). Swift has expressed that this endeavor is a strategic act: a reclamation of power, artistry, and executive control over her content, signifying a powerful rhetorical artifact. Rather than discussing each album individually, this paper will examine the exigence of Swift's re-recordings as it affects the entire body of rhetoric. By creating and publicizing these artifacts, Swift challenges traditional power dynamics within the music industry and leverages her unique connection with her audience to not only reclaim her work but also redefine her influence and legacy. This analysis will review how Swift's strategic use of rhetoric, audience engagement, and cultural nostalgia has led to the unprecedented success of her rerecordings, offering insights into the broader implications for rhetorical studies and the music industry.

Literature Review

This analysis will incorporate several rhetorical devices to explain the success of the recorded versions of Taylor Swift's first six albums. One of the principles explored in this paper is Maurice Charland's concept of audience identity; or the idea that rhetoric does not only persuade but also creates a "we" (Charland). This analysis aligns with Charland's constitutive rhetoric, providing insight into how Swift's fans, or "Swifties," have developed a strong communal identity that actively provides support to her endeavors. Furthermore, Hagerty's ideas on warmth appeals further demonstrate how Swift's personal and emotionally resonant interactions with her fans build loyalty and trust. Swift's strategic use of personal narratives and direct engagement with her fanbase, such as secret sessions and social media interactions, exemplify how warmth appeals work to foster both inclusion and trust among audiences. Zannoni's concepts of reflective and restorative nostalgia are also addressed, as it shows how Swift's re-recordings not only evoke a longing for the past amongst her fans but also resonate with their contemporary identities. This combination of the old and the new promotes a strong emotional connection and makes it easier to appreciate the present by reflecting on the past. Fitch's cultural persuadables theory is also discussed, as it demonstrates that because Swift's music draws from shared cultural experiences, it forms a personal bond with her listeners. Furthermore, this theory notes that cultural premises often revolve around shared understandings of personhood and relationships, confirming the universality of Swift's songs. The sophist principles of kairos, to prepon, and to dynaton were applied to evaluate how Swift's timing and culturally sensitive messages ensured she remained sufficiently mainstream and uncontroversial. Finally, to review the multifacetedness of the situation, we will conclude with Biesecker's application of rhetorical différance.

The need to analyze the effectiveness of Swift's multifaceted rhetorical approach is evident in the discourse surrounding her re-recordings. Through the integration of these rhetorical theories, this analysis will show how Swift's strategic communication interacts with her audience's reception. Charland's and Fitch's theories of audience identity and cultural persuadables create a framework to assist in understanding the deeply entwined relationship that exists between Swift and her fans. Furthermore, Hagerty's warmth appeals and Zannoni's nostalgia demonstrate the emotional attachment and loyalty that drive her fans to support the re-recordings so ardently. Additionally, the sophist principles of kairos, to prepon, and to dynaton clarify Swift's ability to masterfully navigate, engage with, and shape public discourse within the constraints of her position. These rhetorical strategies are necessary in analyzing the broader implications of her actions, including the intersection of gender and business practices in the music industry. The inclusion of non-scholarly sources, such as pop-culture news outlets, ensures a clear timeline and comprehensive understanding of the events, providing context to the scholarly analysis. This combination of theories and sources offers a framework for examining how Swift's rhetorical strategies contribute to the success of the recordings.

Swift's desire to have full rights to her own catalog is not a new one in the music industry. Prince battled with Warner Bros. for years over the ownership of his music, The Beatles had long-term disputes with EMI, and Def Leppard struggled for control from Universal Music Group over many of their biggest hits. These artists tried various methods to address this issue, from unique music distribution approaches to legal action, but all were fighting the same uphill battle. As Rick Beato, musical educator and social media personality, stated in his YouTube video on the topic, "This has happened forever. People lose their rights, they get sold to these investment groups and things like that. They have no say... Some venture capital company has

bought them and sold them... and then another company's bought them, and you don't even know who owns the rights."

But what does it mean to own a master recording, and why do artists value it so highly? Under U.S. copyright law, master recordings are original sound recordings of music or spoken word. They are typically owned by record labels under traditional contracts that grant the label licensing rights and profits from sales and streaming of that specific recording of the song. The entity that owns the master recording has the exclusive right to reproduce, distribute, or publicly perform the specific recorded performance. If the artist does not own the master recording, they cannot control or license the use of that audio file without the label's permission. Therefore, owning a master recording gives an artist a significant amount of creative and executive autonomy. However, other avenues do exist for an artist to legally possess their work. In addition to master recordings, another aspect of musical copyright is the ownership of the composition, or the actual song itself. Because these copyrights are protected separately, the owner of a musical composition can legally create a new recording of the same song (Giles). This method of recreation was the one that Swift decided to embrace. When asked in April 2019 if the rumors about her planning to re-record her masters were true, she responded, "Yeah, that's true and it's something that I'm very excited about doing because my contract says that starting... next year, I can record albums one through five all over again. I'm very excited about it. Because I think that artists deserve to own their work. I feel very passionate about that."

Re-records have been used by artists in the past as a method of reclaiming ownership, but the new versions of songs typically do not reach the same level of success as the originals, and there was public skepticism towards Swift's plans. However, when they finally began to release to the public, the performance of the albums was unprecedented. *Fearless (Taylor's Version)*

became the first-ever rerecorded album to top the Billboard charts, and *Red (Taylor's Version)* broke Spotify's record for most-streamed album in a day by a female artist. *1989 (Taylor's Version)* outsold its original recording within a week of its release (Giles). This paper will examine the factors that contributed to the immense success of these albums, including the gender roles and power structures surrounding their creation and Swift's unique connection with her audience.

To begin this analysis, a closer inspection must be given to the history and events leading up to Swift's plan to re record. Swift signed with Scott Borchetta and Big Machine Records in 2005 and released her first six albums: *Taylor Swift* (2006), *Fearless* (2008), *Speak Now* (2010), *Red* (2012), *1989* (2014), and *Reputation* (2017). Throughout this twelve-year period, her popularity grew exponentially as she crossed genres and created a global presence— despite a few highly publicized scandals. At the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards (VMAs), pop culture history was made when, during Swift's acceptance of the award for Best Female Video for her song "You Belong with Me," Kanye West unexpectedly took the stage and her microphone to protest to the audience and the panel that Beyoncé should have been the recipient of the award instead. This event marked the beginning of a long-running and highly publicized feud between Swift and West, which again caught public attention in 2016 when West released his album *The Life of Pablo*, which included the track "Famous." The lyrics of this song included the line "I feel like me and Taylor might still have sex / Why? I made that bitch famous." As People reported, "West claimed that he had previously gotten permission from Swift to name-drop her during a phone conversation, and Swift released a statement denying it. The drama was further escalated months later when Kim Kardashian released footage from the phone call between West and Swift (which was later found to be an incomplete record of the conversation)," seeming to prove that Swift

had, indeed, given consent to the use of her name (Gibson). This resulted in an intense social media backlash against Swift, with the hashtag #KimExposedTaylorParty trending and the comments on Swift's posts being flooded with snake emojis. In response, Swift retreated from the spotlight and broke her previously established pattern of releasing an album every two years, with a gap of three years between *1989* and *Reputation*. When finally released, *Reputation* themed itself as a response to the vitriol and included lyrics that emphasized Swift's pain and vulnerability during this time. The relevance of this situation to Swift's decision to re-record her masters, however, lies within a connection that West made during the height of this controversy. Shortly after the release of "Famous," West announced a new manager: Scott Samuel "Scooter" Braun. Braun was a talent manager, entrepreneur, and investor. He was best known for discovering and managing Justin Bieber, but his presence in the music industry extended far beyond one artist. At the time of West's signing, he also managed other high-profile artists, including Ariana Grande, Carly Rae Jepsen, and Tori Kelly. He owned a diversified entertainment and media company and was involved in various investment ventures, including early-stage investments in technology companies such as Spotify, Uber, and Pinterest (Picotti). Braun was pictured with West many times over the course of the feud and seemed to participate in exacerbating the conflict. Most notably, Bieber posted an image of himself, Braun, and West captioned "Taylor Swift what up," seeming to imply that the group was mocking or challenging her (Gibson).

After releasing *Reputation*, Swift ultimately left Big Machine Records to sign with Universal Music Group in 2018, emphasizing when she made her announcement that her new record deal allowed her to own the rights to all of her master recordings moving forward. Less than a year after this decision, news broke publicly that Borchetta had sold Big Machine to

Braun in a reported \$300 million deal. Swift immediately took to social media, writing a post that said she had “pleaded for a chance to own (her) work,” but only “was given an opportunity to sign back up to Big Machine Records and ‘earn’ one album back at a time, one for every new one (she) turned in” (Swift). In the post, she detailed how much her work has meant to her over her lifetime and described her shock and immense disappointment upon finding out, allegedly with the rest of the public via news outlet, that Braun was the one in control of her work. She says of the purchase, “This is my worst-case scenario.” Per Swift, it was due to this distress that she made the decision to re-record these albums and regain a measure of control over them.

It would be easy to assume that, following the success of their predecessors, these works would end up competing with the originals for airtime and ultimately falling short. However, all expectations were exceeded, and it could even be argued that a new standard was set in the industry. To ascertain what caused this stellar performance and immense support, one crucial aspect of Swift’s fame must be considered: her audience. When looking at demographics alone, Swift’s audience tends to lean white, millennial, and female, with a 2023 poll estimating that “29% of Americans hold Taylor Swift in high esteem” (Shah). However, demographics alone do not paint a full picture of the community that this fanbase has become. Fans of Swift are known in online spaces as “Swifties.” Wikipedia defines them as follows: “Regarded by journalists as one of the largest, most devoted and influential fan bases, Swifties are known for their high levels of participation, creativity, community, and fanaticism.” Through her highly personal and relatable lyrics, impressive social media presence, and cultural relevance, she has forged a deep connection with her audience and transformed them into a close-knit community, despite the limitations of physical space. Research has even indicated that the unique language and expressions used by her fans resemble a distinct dialect. Swift nurtures this dynamic with her

‘secret sessions,’ where she invites select fans to her home to listen to her new albums before they are released. Her unique way of interacting with the audience through hidden messages and Easter eggs in her music videos, lyrics, and social media posts has created a culture where fans spend hours eagerly decoding and sharing their findings. They actively engage in discussions and theories about Swift's music and personal life, creating elaborate narratives that enhance their experience and engagement. The fans, inspired by her philanthropic deeds, organize fundraisers and participate in charitable events that emphasize the sense of community and shared values. The fanbase is also heavily involved in the creation and purchase of fan art and merchandise relevant to Swift's brand and music. At her live concerts, there are expected “call-and-response” moments, and a social media trend of making friendship bracelets to take to the concert has extended to local events and serves as a way for Swifties to visually identify each other. The influence that Swift has over her audience is enormous, and this relationship has played an integral role in the success of her rerecordings.

It is this interplay between the exigency of the rerecordings and Swift’s ability to influence her audience that will inform further rhetorical analysis. Taylor Swift’s re-recordings strategically subvert traditional power dynamics and gender roles in the music industry by constructing a relatable rhetorical identity. This identity taps into cultural constructs of femininity and interpersonal relationships, making her an influential figure and amplifying her commercial success, which reshapes industry norms and fan engagement. Studying this phenomenon offers crucial insights into how modern rhetorical strategies can redefine cultural narratives and influence public discourse.

Analysis

If Swift's goal in rerecording her albums was to regain artistic control, then her success can be measured through performance numbers- such as sales and streaming. Therefore, the concept of "success" directly correlates to the audience's reaction. If the audience refuses to commit to consuming the new versions of the songs, then she will not obtain any additional financial or artistic benefit by releasing them. So, the question for Swift then becomes how to ensure audience participation. A significant part of this problem had already solved by how she had historically cultivated her intended audience. Maurice Charland's perspective on audience identity provides a crucial insight: Rhetoric "ultimately results in an act of recognition of the 'rightness' of a discourse and of one's identity with its reconfigured subject position." The existence of the term "Swiftie" exemplifies this idea, carrying with it a sense of identity and belonging. As Charland further explains that "because the constitutive nature of rhetoric establishes the boundary of a subject's motives and experience, a truly ideological rhetoric must rework or transform subjects." This means that Swift's fans are not just passive listeners of her music but, by their very self-identification as "Swifties," feel compelled to support her work, including the recordings. This strong loyalty is part of what leads them to buy and stream the new versions of songs, ensuring their success.

The creation of this audience-identity matrix was informed by many features of Swift's distinctive rhetorical style. One of the key methods Swift has employed to build her following is through the use of warmth appeals. According to Hagerty, warmth is "a positive, mild, volatile emotion involving physiological arousal and precipitated by experiencing directly or vicariously a love, family, or friendship relationship." His studies of consumers show that there are "significant correlations between warmth and purchase likelihood." Swift's interactions with her

fans are often characterized by a sense of warmth and personal connection, which enhances their ability to form connections and produce loyalty in her audience. For instance, Swift's 'secret sessions,' where she invites select fans to her home to listen to her new albums before they are released, foster a sense of exclusivity and personal connection. Swift has managed to establish a deep, authentic bond with her followers by candidly expressing her own personal experiences while also treating the audience as if they were intimate friends. She strengthens this bond through her actions, such as frequently communicating with fans on social media, sending them personal presents, and even financially aiding those in need. Fan reaction to Swift's application of warmth appeals seems to indicate that it is an effective rhetorical tactic. Swift has built an exceptionally dedicated fanbase by regularly engaging with her audience on a personal level, making them feel intimately connected to her and driven to support her ambitions.

Swift's warmth appeals also extend to her use of social media, where she regularly interacts with her supporters in a personal and genuine manner. Platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok allow Swift to engage directly with her audience, breaking down conventional barriers between celebrities and fans and creating a sense of intimacy and immediacy. For example, Swift frequently likes and comments on fan posts, promotes fan-created content, and shares updates on new projects, helping to establish a collaborative and supportive digital community. Swift's active social media presence makes her more approachable and personable. Additionally, her sophisticated use of online spaces to communicate relevant professional actions, such as rerecorded album release dates or new project details, keeps her fan base interested in and committed to her brand. Swift's dedication to maintaining a real-time relationship with her supporters supports Hagerty's insight that demonstrating warmth can be an effective strategy to persuade audiences. By positioning her fans as participants in the narrative

of her professional and personal accomplishments, Swift ensures their support and participation. This ongoing relationship highlights the value of social media in contemporary fan interaction and validates the effectiveness of warmth appeals in building and retaining a devoted fan base.

Swift also employs nostalgia to create and reinforce a sense of identity in her listeners. According to Zannoni, “Nostalgia is a complex emotion produced by the individual and collective processes of remembering” that “produces motions of affection for fragments of an idealized past, deprived of its negative connotations.” Swift demonstrated immense skill in integrating innovation and nostalgia with her nuanced understanding of the emotional landscape of her audience. Zannoni's concepts of reflective and restorative nostalgia are crucial to understanding this relevance. Reflective nostalgia “favours fragments of memory, retraces the past to savour its details and commemorative signs and temporalises the space,” while restorative nostalgia “responds to a yearning to reproduce in the present a past that is not perceived as concluded... but as a constitutive value of the present.” Swift inspires a strong sense of reflective nostalgia by tapping in to both longing and belonging and giving her fans the opportunity to re-listen to the music associated with their youth. However, Swift also utilized restorative nostalgia by aiming, with new tracks and a massive tour, to provide a fresh experience that speaks to her listeners' modern identities rather than simply reprising familiar songs. As Zannoni notes, “nostalgia gives the impulse and certainties necessary to face the uncertainty of the present time, fuelling a constant dialogue with the past, and with oneself in the past.” The way fans engage with the re-recorded albums—by recounting and sharing anecdotes and experiences from the original releases—demonstrates this reinforcement and encourages them to feel more emotionally invested in both Swift and their own histories.

More than just being a simple call-back, Swift's re-recordings are masterfully constructed to showcase her development as an artist while still maintaining the integrity of the original versions. The previously unheard "vault tracks" (tracks written at the same time as the original album but not released) and superior production quality offer a new context for beloved classics, appealing to both casual listeners and die-hard aficionados alike. The strategy of providing new material while preserving familiarity has resulted in a unique combination of innovation and nostalgia. It allows listeners to appreciate the subtleties and advancements that have come with Swift's growing talent while still enjoying the songs they have loved for years. Zannoni claims that "It is precisely in nostalgia that memory finds its most effective emotional vehicle," and Swift utilizes this tactic in her rerecordings by providing fans with an opportunity to meaningfully reconnect with the music.

Beyond the feelings evoked by the music itself, the use of nostalgia is powerful because it has influenced the greater cultural and societal narrative around Swift's career. Swift has essentially reinvented her relationship with her audience through the rerecording process. The re-discovery of her early music presented an opportunity for mutual personal growth and self-discovery for both Swift and her fans, strengthening their relationship. Swift's expert use of nostalgia emphasizes the value of emotional appeal in audience connection and demonstrates how nostalgia can be a powerful tool for attracting and retaining a committed following. Nostalgia has allowed Swift to emphasize her legacy, honoring her history while simultaneously strengthening her present and future.

Fundamentally, Swift's music is about shared experiences and interpersonal relationships. Fitch explains that "Cultural premises are organized around shared understandings about personhood and relationships." Swift's lyrics excel at expressing these personal connections, and

she frequently explores universal themes in her music— such as friendship, love, heartbreak, and personal development. Her audience is able to easily relate to and identify with these subjects because they reflect near-universal human experiences. Most, if not all, of her followers would have first-hand experience with conflict in relationships, exclusionary attitudes amongst their peers, and the challenges of growing up. By responding to these overarching experiences, Swift's songs become intimately entwined with her listeners' personal experiences, transforming her music into more than just a soundtrack—these lyrics become an integral part of her fan's perception of their own lives.

Swift's widespread appeal was largely formed by her ability to provide relatable, enjoyable language for these common cultural experiences. While the inspiration for her songs tends to derive from her personal experiences, she carefully composes them to remain vague enough to retain their relatability. Her songs reflect emotions and circumstances already present in the lives of her audience, whether it's the grief of a breakup in "All Too Well" or the thrill of youthful romance in "Love Story." Swift's capacity to connect with a large audience on a personal level keeps her fans engaged with her music and motivated to support her endeavors.

At the time she made the decision to produce the re records, Swift had already leveraged the rhetorical ideas of audience identity, warmth appeals, and nostalgia to cultivate a devoted fan base. "Swifties," or members of Swift's fan base, identify with her music because they relate it to their shared experiences, causing them to feel understood. The listeners' personal identities and experiences provide the foundation for this unexpectedly intimate relationship Swift shares with her fans. Because of this, Swift's followers are more than just miscellaneous individual listeners; they are members of a group that shares a common identity and a deep bond with her music. Whether through purchasing her CDs, attending her shows, or streaming her rerecordings, this

close, intimate relationship translates directly to support—monetary, social, emotional, and more. Her devoted following is proof of the ability of relevant music to create strong, long-lasting bonds between a performer and their audience. Swift's pre-establishment of a substantial fan base of loyal fans who integrate their identity with her music and are committed to supporting her significantly boosted her sales.

However, another crucial factor that heightened the audience's motivation should be examined. A considerable portion of Swift's audience identify as feminists, a sentiment that Swift herself has actively fostered. Whether an intentional strategy or not, her participation in this ideological movement plays a key factor in her credibility with her majority-female fan base. Swift effectively appeals to the cultural and social ideals of her audience by showing her public support for gender equality. The feeling of solidarity in a cause strengthens fans' allegiance and support, which enhances the emotional bond between Swift and her followers and inspires them to back her projects.

Taylor Swift has intentionally and publicly positioned herself firmly in the camp of pro-feminism. In "Articulating Adolescent Girls' Resistance to Patriarchal Discourse in Popular Media," Durham discusses how media for girls can challenge patriarchal norms and advocate for gender equality. Swift's actions to produce media in opposition to patriarchal norms strengthens her credibility and her supporters' sense of collective feminist identity. Durham observes that "challenges to dominant ideologies require positing alternate subjectivities through which patriarchal ideology might be transformed and opposed," and Swift's commitment to releasing media that supports this message has undoubtedly strengthened the audience's involvement and allegiance. For example, her song "The Man" highlights how women's behavior and accomplishments are often scrutinized more severely than men's and tackles the double standards

women face in the music industry. Swift skillfully cultivates a group of supporters that share her dedication to gender equality by addressing topics in her music that resonate with her fans' ideals.

Swift's public statements also demonstrate her identity as a feminist. For example, her open condemnation of sexism in the music industry, support for body-image struggles, and public endorsement of the 'Me Too' campaign illustrate her dedication to her ideology. Swift also ensures that she is clear on her stance with remarks such as "Feminism is probably the most important movement that you could embrace." By candidly addressing behaviors that marginalize women, such as being called out for "oversharing or whining" when they attempt to communicate their emotions, Swift strengthens her feminist identity and humanizes herself.

Furthermore, as Kendall-Fisher notes in relation to Frances Wright's femininity, Swift's audience responds strongly to the way she both embraces and rejects traditional femininity. The description of Wright's "extraordinary gift of eloquence, her almost unequaled command of words, and the wonderful power of her rich and thrilling voice" could easily be mistaken by a review of Swift by a fan. While simultaneously developing appeal in her fanbase through things typically considered feminine, frivolous, and unthreatening (such as friendship bracelets and glitter gel pens), Swift makes at least a partial effort to subvert patriarchal norms through her rejection of overt sexuality that is common in female celebrity spaces and vocal support of female empowerment. In doing this, she seeks to mimic Wright's "high intrinsic ethos with audiences," by utilizing "her demonstrated eloquence and ability to adapt skillfully to the basic moral values of the listeners."

Swift's popularity has undoubtedly increased as a result of her public support of feminist ideology. However, it is equally essential to recognize the limitations she has chosen to place upon herself in this regard. Her brand of feminism is frequently criticized for being consumerist and lacking diversity, and for refusing to exert her influence to its full extent to enact change. Her major audience consists primarily of white, millennial women, and she often targets her advocacy efforts towards themes that appeal specifically to them. Although this approach is not the most intersectional, Swift is able to reach the highest number of individuals by using this strategy. In this way, she maintains a broad appeal and avoids offending any particular group by advocating for women in a general sense. This approach also ties back into Charland's idea of constitutive rhetoric, where keeping the message broad widens the parameters of the audience, ensuring that more people can identify with it.

Swift's strategic use of broad feminism also demonstrates a keen awareness of sophistic rhetorical principles, such as *kairos* (timing), *to prepon* (appropriateness), and *to dynaton* (potentiality), as discussed by Poulakos. By remaining sensitive to the timing and appropriateness of her messages, Swift ensures that her feminist appeals resonate with a wide audience without becoming overly controversial. Poulakos states, "if man's responses are to be effective, they must take into account the temporal and formal structure of the situations he addresses. As such, they must be guided by his sense of time and propriety, and must be formulated in ways consonant with himself." Swift's feminist messages are carefully crafted to align with the cultural moment, maximizing their impact while minimizing the risk of backlash.

Ultimately, Swift's broad feminist appeals appear to be a strategic decision to balance advocacy with relatability. This method allows her to maintain relatability and support among her diverse fanbase without jeopardizing her existing accomplishments. Although some may

argue that her approach is not thorough enough, it is extremely effective in reaching her intended audience. Swift's identification with feminism, along with her achievements within that framework, are enough to persuade her fans to support her. This strategic balance of advocacy and broad appeal is especially critical in the context of her rerecordings, which rely heavily on a loyal fan base for success.

While criticisms of her lack of intersectionality tend to be genuine, many of the accusations leveled at Taylor Swift and her music are rooted in misogyny. These objections dismiss her content as trivial or irrelevant because of its relatability and focus on typically feminine experiences. Such criticism implies that the hobbies, interests, and emotional experiences of young women are insignificant. Swift herself has pointed out, "Misogyny is ingrained in people from the time they are born. So, to me, feminism is probably the most important movement that you could embrace because it's just basically another word for equality." She contrasts the perception of men and women in the music industry, noting, "A man writing about his feelings from a vulnerable place is brave; a woman writing about her feelings from a vulnerable place is oversharing or whining." This double standard not only undermines the credibility of women's experiences but also reinforces the patriarchal assumption that their voices are unimportant. Swift's feminist mindset thus becomes an integral part of her identity and, by implication, a part of the identity of her audience. When her followers witness her speak out against misogyny and push for equality, it validates their own experiences and strengthens their connection to her. This sense of validation is especially important in a setting where their needs are frequently disregarded.

Swift framed the dispute surrounding Braun's acquisition of her master recordings as a direct assault on her personal character. She presented the incident to her audience and the public

as a betrayal and an example of the industry's maltreatment of female artists. This narrative resonated with her admirers, who saw it as an attack not only on Swift but on women in the music industry, women as a whole, and therefore, themselves. Swift was able to mobilize her audience by openly addressing the problem and emphasizing the gendered power dynamics at play. The intensity with which her followers rallied around her indicates how closely their identities are linked to her public struggles.

The way the audience reacted to the rerecordings demonstrated an immense sense of loyalty. Swift's admirers saw the rerecording endeavor as a form of reclamation and resistance, consistent with the feminist ideas she promotes. The re-recordings were about more than simply music; they were about restoring authority and autonomy to a woman in a traditionally male-dominated industry. Swift's intentional use of her platform to address these concerns has strengthened her position as a feminist icon while also deepening her fanbase's emotional and ideological connection. This dedication is critical to the remarkable success of her rerecordings, as it elevates a commercial enterprise into a communal mission of empowerment and resistance.

Conclusion

Swift's strategic rerecording of her first six albums exemplifies the multifaceted nature of contemporary rhetorical methods. Biesecker views the rhetorical situation as "as an event that makes possible the production of identities and social relations." Through constant engagement and personal interaction with her fans, Swift has created a sense of community and belonging that transcends traditional artist-audience dynamics. This engagement is not just about promoting her music, but about building an emotional connection that encourages her fans to actively support her endeavors. As Biesecker states, "the rhetorical event may be seen as an incident that

produces and reproduces the identities of subjects and constructs and reconstructs linkages between them.” Swift’s creation of an audience-identity that both she and her fanbase participate in creates the tension of difference that has ensured her success. Swift’s ability to navigate and shape public perception underscores the evolving nature of audience engagement in the contemporary cultural landscape.

Swift's plan has implications that extend beyond her personal achievements. Her actions have set a precedent for future artists seeking ownership of their work and provided insight into the complexity of the music industry. Swift's decision to re-record her albums not only validates her artistic independence but also underscores the value of audience loyalty and participation in a rhetor's career. This move highlights broader issues of gender and business practices in the music industry, as Swift's quest for ownership over her music represents the difficulties that many female artists experience. Swift's narrative has evolved prolifically throughout her rise to fame. Her public discourse illustrates how identity and power can be negotiated and redefined through contemporary rhetorical practices, offering valuable lessons for other artists in similar situations.

In conclusion, Taylor Swift's re-recordings of her first six albums are not solely an organized attempt to reclaim artistic control but also a strong rhetorical act that redefines audience interaction, capitalizes on cultural nostalgia, and promotes a broad yet effective feminist identity. This critical analysis demonstrates the intricate relationship between identity, audience loyalty, and contemporary rhetorical methods in the music industry. Swift's ability to adapt to cultural norms while identifying core beliefs and connections with her audience ensures her continued success and serves as a model for other contemporary artists and rhetoricians. This approach emphasizes the importance of comprehending current rhetoric in relation to cultural

movements and the critical role of audience involvement in contemporary cultural and business activities.

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