

2018

A Logical Conclusion: Not For 'EVERYBODY'

Ted Lin-Cereghino

University of the Pacific, t_lincereghino@u.pacific.edu

Ted Lin-Cereghino (2019) is pursuing a degree in Arts & Entertainment.

This article was written as part of the curriculum for the Bachelor of Music in Music Management and the Bachelor of Science in Music Industry Studies at University of the Pacific. Each student conducted research based on his or her own areas of interest and study.

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Recommended Citation

Lin-Cereghino, Ted (2018) "A Logical Conclusion: Not For 'EVERYBODY'," *Backstage Pass*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 9.

Available at: <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/backstage-pass/vol1/iss1/9>

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A Logical Conclusion: Not For 'EVERYBODY' By Ted Lin-Cereghino

Vaulting clear of the crime-ridden streets of Maryland's Gaithersburg, Sir Robert Bryson Hall II's (better known by the mononym "Logic") career in rapping had such a glorified grassroots ascent that he drew comparisons to urban hip hop legend Nasir Jones. His first release ('Under Pressure') was an epic backstory about his flawed hero persona set to the tune of soul

samples and boom bap drums. Maybe not as fascinating as his first effort, but just as exhilarating, his dystopian sci-fi sophomore album ('Incredible True Story') provided a Tarantino-esque nonlinear narrative and an abundance of braggadocio rhymes. Both of these albums featured slick 90's-inspired production and rapid fire lyricism. The only major problem I had with Logic's 2 standout albums was that he was borrowing an accepted sound of his colleagues. It is this Achilles' Heel that fractures Logic on his third release 'EVERYBODY.'

Logic has become such a conglomerate of influences that it's hard to find what is truly him on 'EVERYBODY.' His approach is like hijacking a boat for wakeboarding. Sure, you can drive and people will happily ride your wave, but you're ultimately using someone else's property. Standout tracks like the titular 'Everybody' borrow so much from Kendrick Lamar's "Alright," that they're basically the same songs with different vocal cadences. But some of his song structures seem "illogical." I mean, why waste Alessia Cara or Khalid's rich vocals for 20-second cameos? The album's premise is supposed to be a sizzling portrait of racial tensions and politics, yet the theme is lost within the album's pacing and production decisions.

Although Logic salvages his Thompson gun flow, his project's contents char most of the album's potential. For example, the humorous skits compromise a glaring 13 of the 70 minute runtime. The trap-techno banger of "Take It Back" leaves much to be desired as Logic raps for two minutes and talks for four over a monstrously punchy instrumental. Unfortunately, his foray into the modern trap sound goes awry on songs like "Killing Spree" where uninteresting, lackluster beats put listeners on sleeping sprees. Luckily the best cut, the No I.D.-helmed "America," is a sprawling posse cut of ricochet deliveries buttressed by a growling bassline.

Trying to paint a picture of a flawed hero, Logic's album is simply more flaw than actual hero.