

Facharbeit im Leistungskurs Englisch  
**The Lifestyle in New York and its  
reflection in pop songs**



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## **1. Introduction**

When you hear the words “New York” you have got two different pictures in front of your inner eyes. On the one hand there is this modern, rich city with business men in suits who are always in hurry, and on the other hand there is the rough city with a huge number of social hotspots, homeless people and criminal gangs. But in spite of all these prejudices people from all over the world dream of living in this city. I myself dream of starting a career in New York City although I cannot explain exactly why but I really know that I want to make the experience to live and to work there. This is the reason why I have chose this topic. I want to learn more about this fantastic city and its residents and I want to fathom why I am so fascinated by this and no other big city. At least I want to find an answer to the question if the representation of New York in pop songs is correct or not.

## **2. The lifestyle in New York and its reflection in pop songs**

### 2.1 Origin and development of the American dream

#### 2.1.1 Representation of life in New York in film and television

You have to ask where this fascination comes from and what it is, that attracts the people to immigrate to New York. The first thing that came into my mind was the big number of movies which are set in the streets of New York. Because of all the comedies, thrillers, superhero films, and romances set in New York the people may have gotten the wrong impression of living there, especially by the much fined romances and comedies. Of course this cannot be the only reason why more than 36 percent of the population was not born in America and immigrated to New York to start a new life there, but this could be a first explanation. Also cult series like “Friends” (1994-2004)<sup>1</sup> and “How I met your mother” (2005-2014)<sup>2</sup> which took place in New York City might have a great influence on the picture of the city in the mind of people from other countries. In this series the characters often have a big flat, a good job and much time to meet with friends and last but not least to enjoy the benefits the city offers its residents.

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<sup>1</sup> tv.com, friends

<sup>2</sup> Himym.co, How I Met Your Mother fan site

### 2.1.2 Real advantages of New York

Of course there are many advantages if you live in one of the biggest cities in the world where people from every country and culture live. You have got for example the chance to meet people from parts of the world some people have never heard from and there are restaurants and districts where you feel like being in another country. Residents also benefit from the excellent infrastructure in this globalized city because the underground network is one of the biggest in the world and there are four airports near the city center (Newark, Teterboro, LaGuardia, and John F. Kennedy).<sup>3</sup> But the most interesting thing is the big number of sights. In New York City there are so many sights that you are not able to name all of them, but the most famous ones of course are the “Statue of Liberty” or the “Empire State Building”.

### 2.1.3 The American Dream in the past

The “Statue of Liberty” was built in 1875<sup>4</sup> and the building in 1930 and that was also the time where most immigrants came to the USA and the majority arrived in New York City. The period was marked by the industrial revolution and the fast-growing companies who needed more and more workers. These workers usually came from Europe, for the most part from Italy, Ireland and Germany. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century they all first arrived on Ellis Island to pass the hard health and immigration tests. But the coast of New York did not just symbolize a wall between the immigrants and their new life, it also reflects their hopes and wishes which were connected with their migration to the USA. Another island shows this contradiction extremely well: Liberty Island with the “Statue of Liberty” on it. You can already recognize that by the inscription “Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free”.<sup>5</sup> This is from a poem by the American poet Emma Lazarus from 1883. All the immigrants from this time came from countries with more citizens than jobs so most of these people had no job, were extremely poor and hoped for a better life in America where the economy boomed and many companies looked up for new workers. It follows that Lazarus was very right with this statement in her poem and the fact that the whole poem is the inscription of the pedestal underlines thesis, that

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<sup>3</sup> Google maps, 2016

<sup>4</sup> Philippe Paul & Peter Kränzle & Margit Brinke, 2006, p. 128

<sup>5</sup> Emma Lazarus, 1883

America welcomed the immigrants in the past. But there is still the question what the people were hoping to reach in the US. Everyone knows the proverb that you are able to rise up from a dishwasher to a millionaire in New York and probably this is why the people still immigrate to the city in moderation. But this American dream from the writer James Tuslow Adams was always attached to conditions. So it was just possible to rise up if you were willing to work very hard, to be confident and ambitious.

#### 2.1.4 Famous people who realized the American Dream

The fact that this dream is still in the minds of people from all over the world proves that there had to be humans who got it and who raised up from poor immigrant to a successful person. Therefore I am going to present some people who really got it and tell their history and explain the role of New York. One person embodies the American dream like no other famous one: Jennifer Lopez. Her parents both came from Puerto-Rico and moved to the New York Bronx in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Bronx was a rougher place than the other parts of the city because this district was known for its high crime rate at the time like today. But so Lopez developed a strong character. Her parents always told her that she was able to reach everything she wanted if she worked hard for this. As she wanted to be an actress and a singer since she was a girl she was taking dancing and music lessons to make her dream come true. She moved to Manhattan and took part in many castings and played a few minor roles, but that was not enough for the very ambitious woman and so she worked harder and wrote more songs until she got her first recording contract with Sony Records in 1998. Many following songs got big hits like "If you had my love" and "Jenny from the Blog". So Jennifer Lopez had lived the American dream so many people are dreaming of, because she worked hard to rise up from a poor immigration child to one of America's richest woman in history.<sup>6</sup>

A second example is the popular actor Robert De Niro whose parents has an Italian-Irish and German immigrant background. After the divorce of his parents he grew up with his mother in the New Yorker district "Little Italy". His mother and his father were both artists, but they did not earn so much money and so De Niro also grew up

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<sup>6</sup> Gala.de, Jennifer Lopez

in not very rich conditions. Just with talent, endurance and hard work he made a big career.<sup>7</sup> Robert De Niro and Jennifer Lopez have one thing in common: They grew up in poor conditions but through hard work and discipline they made their dreams come true and got rich. This is exactly the result the American Dream promises you. They also prove that there are still people who live the Dream from a “dishwasher to a millionaire” and so this could be the explanation why so many people still believe in that and still want to go to New York to try their luck.

#### 2.1.5 The American Dream in the present

Many people say that the American Dream is an old and outdated way of thinking because the time when the USA allowed 98 percent of the immigrants to enter is over. The companies don't need workers anymore and so many Americans see the immigrants just as a burden for the social system and the society. In fact the chance to realize the typical old American Dream has got smaller than years ago but however many people still try it. For me it is not just the old vision of the American Dream, it is an inexplicable attraction that makes New York so attractive for me and for many others.

### 2.2 The New Yorkers themselves and their lifestyle

#### 2.2.1 The boroughs and the different types of New Yorkers

I think it is the mentality of the New Yorkers and the New Yorker society that attracts people from all over the world. In the introduction I wrote about the two different kinds of New Yorkers: The businessman or women and the big number of criminals. But there is another type of humans there, the people, who went their own way, who did something that other people maybe just dream about. This could be a job, a hobby or just the realizing of a wish or a project they always wanted to do. In the following I will take a look at the typical life of a New Yorker businessman and after that at people who live in the New Yorker borough Bronx, one of the biggest criminal hotspots in the whole city, and at the life of someone who just went his own way.

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<sup>7</sup> Geboren.am, Robert De Niro

Most of this busy trade takes place in Manhattan and if people talk about New York they often mean just this 21 kilometers long and three kilometers wide island in the center of the Hudson-bay, but many and maybe the most interesting things happen into the boroughs Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx and Staten Island.<sup>8</sup> Here is where the largest number of the New Yorkers live because here is much more space and the property prices are payable. Every borough has got its own prejudices, so Manhattan is the rich middle of the City where all the money is made. Brooklyn is the aspiring backyard of the city after its expiration till the late 1990s<sup>9</sup>. Queens is geographically the largest borough. It is famous for art and sport because it is the venue of the "US Opens" and the home of the Baseball Team "Mets". The Bronx has got the worst reputations as a place to live. After World War II many poor families came there and big apartment blocks were built. As a result the crime rate got higher and higher but for a few years the politicians and the police have tried to counteract this development. In contrast to this "Staten Island" has always been a mainly rural island with less than 500.000 inhabitants. But now more and more New Yorkers, especially the "weiße Mittelklasse", the white middle class rediscover this borough as a place of retreat or safe place to live<sup>10</sup>.

### 2.2.2 New Yorker businessmen

New York is one of the biggest global trade cities because many big companies settled down here in the past. This already began when the first Dutchmen came to New York in 1624 to trade with furs and skins. So you have to say that New York City was a capitalist trade city from the start<sup>11</sup>. An interesting fact is that many people think that the famous skyline with its many skyscrapers was a response to the lack of space, but in reality all the skyscrapers are just a symbol for power by individuals or companies<sup>12</sup>. "For New York and the USA the stock exchange is a symbol just like Lady Liberty". Hundreds of tourists come to the Wall Street every day to take a picture of the place where shares worth \$ 80 billion change their owners. Allan Valdes, one of the operator working in the stock exchange regards his

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<sup>8</sup> Philippe Paul & Peter Kränzle & Margit Brinke, 2006, p. 18

<sup>9</sup> Philippe Paul & Peter Kränzle & Margit Brinke, 2006, p. 110

<sup>10</sup> Philippe Paul & Peter Kränzle & Margit Brinke, 2006, p. 124

<sup>11</sup> Alexander Marengo, Und der Mensch schuf...New York, 2015

<sup>12</sup> Alrun Steinrueck, 2014, p. 20

workplace as the heart of capitalism<sup>13</sup>. He looks like the typical businessmen as we imagine them: combed back hair, elegant, gray tailored suit, light shirt, silk tie. A 70-hour week is nothing special. Nevertheless many hard working people in New York are not able to live in a big flat alone. So most of these men and women are living into the outlying districts like New Jersey or Kentucky, or they are sharing their flat with other people. This is due to the extremely high property prices, which lead to the fact that even proficient workers are not able to afford a big flat in New York City, especially in Manhattan where most of these people work, and so they have to drive to the city by subway or taxi every morning up to two hours.

### 2.2.3 Life in the Bronx

The Bronx is an exception in many ways because this borough is known for the highest crime rate of the city.<sup>14</sup> Most of the people live in huge social housings that shape the cityscape, especially of the South Bronx.<sup>15</sup> This part of New York has the reputation of being the “Slum” of the city. In the past the streets of this borough looked as if there was just waged a war.<sup>16</sup> Many street gangs rival in entire New York City but their centers are located far away from Manhattan but in the so-called “projects” (the brick high-rise, social housing blocks) in the South Bronx<sup>17</sup>. The police officers often have got big problems to stop the crime in these troubled districts because it is difficult to find one's way between the houses and the people who live there often regard the police as an enemy<sup>18</sup>. They always have to be watchful because sometimes the victims are less sympathetic than the perpetrators<sup>19</sup>, or even children are part of the crime.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Meike Kirsch, *Geo Special New York 2011*, p. 94

<sup>14</sup> neighborhoodscout.com, Crime rates for Bronx, NY

<sup>15</sup> Meike Kirsch, 2011, p. 84

<sup>16</sup> Jessica Braun, 2009, Stern Online

<sup>17</sup> Hannes Stein, 2016, Die Welt Online

<sup>18</sup> Meike Kirsch, 2011, p. 82 f.

<sup>19</sup> Meike Kirsch, 2011, p. 90

<sup>20</sup> Meike Kirsch, 2011, p. 89

### 2.2.5 Dropouts and dreamers

New York is famous for individuals who just made their dreams come true and who did not just live a normal life or do what others do. An example for this group of people is Oleg Voss who worked for a big investment bank in Vienna. After the financial crisis in 2009 he lost his job but instead of going to another bank he decided to buy a food truck and sell "Wiener schnitzel" on the streets of Manhattan. Most of his customers are businessmen who want to eat something fast in their lunch break. His current position is always to be seen on Twitter or Facebook . He had such a huge success with his idea that he opened a restaurant in Midtown-Manhattan, one of the most expensive areas of New York<sup>21</sup>.

But there are also people who got lucky with less economic success and without having reached their previous goals. Heather Muller is one of these people because she studied law at the New York University to achieve prosperity. After having worked in a law firm for three years she decided to start a courier service because she has always been fascinated by the freedom of the bicycle couriers she saw when driving to work by bike. With circa \$ 100 per day she probably will never get rich, but she is satisfied with looking after herself. These two individual fates show impressively how many opportunities the New Yorkers have and their courage to do what they want to be happy.

## 2.3 Songs about New York

### 2.3.1 Frank Sinatra's "Theme from New York"

#### 2.3.1.1 Introducing "Theme from New York"

The Song "Theme from New York, New York" (or "New York, New York") was originally written for the movie "New York New York" in 1977 by John Kander, with lyrics by Fred Ebb. In the movie the actress Lisa Minnelli performed the song. Although the movie was not a big success Frank Sinatra covered the song three years later for his album "Trilogy: Past Present Future". His version is a little bit faster and sounds, especially because most of the time a saxophone plays in the background, more like typical jazz. This version of the song got more and more associated with

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<sup>21</sup> Meike Kirsch, 2011, p. 154

the “feelings” and the lifestyle of the people of New York so that many people say that it is the informal anthem of the city.<sup>22</sup> In the following I’m going to analyze the lyrics and the reference of the verses to New York City taking into account the information collected in part 2.1. and 2.2.

#### 2.3.1.2 Analyzing the lyrics of “Theme from New York”

The song starts with the words “Start spreading the news, I am leaving today”. This is an apt introduction because it could be an allusion to the immigration history and maybe present situation of New York, because if you decide to move to New York this is a great story and everyone should know. The expression that he wants to leave “today” symbolizes the fact, that many immigrants go to New York spontaneously and sometimes much unprepared, just like Oleg Voss who has never planned to go to New York City. The following two lines explain his anticipation about going to the city (“I want to be a part of it, New York, New York”). He calls the city “it”, like a thing or an event. It fits to a statement of an “phoenix”-documentary called the city “one big social experiment”<sup>23</sup> because there are so many different cultures and foreigners live side by side. The protagonist describes himself as a vagabond what could symbolize that he has not got a real home or that he just did not feel at home on any other place. The next important line (“through the very heart of it”) shows that the lyrical I does not want to go to one of the boroughs but to Manhattan, the “heart” of the city where all the action happens. Of course it cannot be the dream of the people to move to boroughs like the Bronx where everyday life is much harder than in other boroughs. The lines “I wanna wake up, in a city that doesn’t sleep” sounds like a inconsistency because it would be strange to sleep in a city that never sleeps but of course humans have to sleep although the city around them is busy and in a hurry the whole night. It is hard to find a concrete answer where this proverb comes from but it is likely that is connected to the many shops which open 24 hours a day to give the people who have to work very late the opportunity to buy important things at night. With the words “And find I’m king of the hill, top of the heap” he wants to express that he has got the dream to rise up to the most powerful of

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<sup>22</sup> Daily News

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Marengo, Und der Mensch schuf...New York, 2015

everyone and maybe also the richest. The hill and the heap stands for the other people on the one hand and for the City New York itself on the other hand. “My little town blues, they are melting away” characterize the protagonist as somebody who needs the bustle around him to feel happy. The word “melting” is also an allusion to the nickname of the City “Melting pot”. In the present this name is hotly debated about because melting pot means that all the different cultures that come together in the streets of New York form one new culture. In reality most of the people from different cultures stick together and maintain their own way of life like in their home countries. He wants to make “a brand new start of it”, so he wants to start a completely new life in the city like thousands of people from all over the world. The latter is strengthened by the following expression “in old New York” because this could show that New York was always the place where the people try to realize their dreams and start a new life and so it gets old and experienced. “If I can make it there, I’ll make it anywhere” is the most famous line of the song because it expresses the positive and the negative side of the city in a few words: The selfish and aggressive mindset<sup>24</sup> that you need to consist in this city but also the success that you can have all over the world if you got it in the toughest town of all. The decision whether you succeed or not is taken by the city (“It’s up to you, New York, New York”) which is meant of course metaphorically.

### 2.3.1.3 Evaluation of “Theme from New York”

You have to say that Frank Sinatra’s “Theme from New York” has a quintessentially positive view to the city. Fred Ebb wrote the song from the perspective of an entertainer who moves to New York City and who sees the problems as challenges<sup>25</sup>. Just the writer Joseph O’Neill says that the term “If I can make it there, I’ll make it everywhere” is wrong because it means that it is incredibly difficult to realize your dream but in his opinion there are a lot of chances in New York to get successful.<sup>26</sup> However, it is undisputed that “Theme from New York” is thanks to Frank Sinatra the most characterizing song about New York. A symbol for that is for example the fact that it is tradition for the Yankees to play the song after each won game<sup>27</sup>. But

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<sup>24</sup> Philippe Paul & Peter Kränzle & Margit Brinke, 2006, p. 11

<sup>14</sup> Songfacts LLC, 2016, Theme from New York, New York

<sup>26</sup> Joseph O’Neill cited by Meike Kirsch, 2011, p. 28

<sup>27</sup> Joe Nocera, The New York Times Online, 2015

symbolic acts like this can not completely overshadow the circumstance that it is wrong what the song suggests: that everyone has got the chance to be successful. This is proved by people like Heather Muller who had to reduce her aims and dreams. Also the children who grow up in the Bronx have got a less chance to get rich although they live in New York because their social environment makes it difficult for them. The song also ignores the fact that many people from other countries are not allowed to immigrate into the US because they have little education or they have not enough money to pay the entry fee.

### 2.3.2 Alicia Keys “Empire State of Mind”

#### 2.3.2.1 Introducing “Empire State of Mind”

The song “Empire State of Mind” was performed by the American singer Alicia Keys in 2009 for the album “The Element of Freedom”. The full name is “Empire State of mind (Part II) Broken Down”. The “Part II” shows that the song is a “solo sequel”<sup>28</sup> to another song that was performed by Alicia Keys and the rapper Jay-Z for his album “The Blueprint 3”. “I wanted to do it for my style – more broken down, more on piano, more voice and intimacy” (The Scotsman, 2010, Interview: Alicia Keys) she said. The other song was faster and had some rap influences than the solo one from Keys. The first one with Jay-Z won 2010 Grammy Awards for Best Rap/Sung Collaboration and Best Rap Song<sup>29</sup>, but Alicia Keys' version got known as another informal anthem for the City.<sup>30</sup>

#### 2.3.2.2 Analyzing the lyrics of “Empire state of Mind”

“Grew up in a town that is famous as a place of movie scenes” are the first two lines of the song and it gives the information that the narrator or singer grew up in New York which strikes to Alicia Keys because was born in Manhattan. The “movie scenes” stands for the many films which took place in New York and what the City is famous for since many years. The following line “Noise is always loud, there are sirens all around, and the streets are mean” also pictures the negative site of New

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<sup>28</sup> Songfacts LLC, 2016

<sup>29</sup> Songfacts LLC, 2016, Empire State of Mind

<sup>30</sup> The Scotsman, 2010, Interview: Alicia Keys

York, with a high crime rate and the bustle of this huge city. The word “mean” could also express that it is hard to preserve in New York City because you have to be better than the big number of competitors. The third line shows how popular the saying from “Theme from New York, New York” “If I can make it there, I’ll make it anywhere” is, because “Empire State of Mind” quotes this line, but Alicia Keys' song also says that this is what “they say” so it could also be wrong or that there are doubts about the truth, although many people say that. The person dreams of a successful career as a Broadway artist like many other people who come to New York (“Seeing my face in lights, and my name in marquee found down on Broadway”). The singer also knows that in New York not everything is so easy and great how it looks like (“Even if it ain't all it seems”) but she is still proud of living in New York because in her opinion this is the place where “dreams are made of”. The city is described as “concrete jungle” referring to the skyscrapers that shape the famous skyline. Some lines speak to the listener or to people who want to go to New York because the personal pronoun “you” is used (“There's nothing you can't do, Now you're in New York, These streets will make you feel brand new, Big lights will inspire you”). They should show the listener how great New York is because a city where is nothing you can't do is the perfect place to realize your dreams. The “big lights” are an allusion to the Times Square where the huge billboards are always shining but also the complete city because also at night New York is very bright due to the huge amount of electric lights. The second stanza connects positive and negative aspects of the city: “Someone sleeps tonight with a hunger for more than an empty fridge” and “ladies work so hard” shows that there is much poverty and that you have to work very hard but the lines “Such a melting pot, On the corner selling rock, preachers pray to God, Hail a gypsee cab, takes me down to Harlem to the Brooklyn Bridge” show that you can live your way of life for example your religion open to public and without being marginalized or discriminated against.

#### 2.3.2.3 Evaluating “Empire State of Mind”

Alicia Keys' song deals with the positive and the negative sides of New York City equally. However, her song sounds always friendly and not too sad. The song shows that New York is the right place where you can make your dreams come true but also

that you have to work for it very hard. On the one hand this big and rich city can be mean and hard but on the other hand it can be a joyful place in which dreams might come true.

## 2.4 Summary

Of course I have just investigated two of the thousands of songs about New York but I think that you have to be careful with the messages of these songs. Some are written from a very objective point of view but some songs can be embellished or important facts are missing. You always have to keep in mind that pop songs are written to be entertaining. My fascination of New York City is still great and maybe greater than before because although I knew many things about the city before I have learned much for myself for example that it is okay if you do not reach all that you dreamed of. Nevertheless you can be happy like Heather Muller. I have also learned that New York is afflicted with prejudices and that you have to be careful with some statements. All in all I still believe that New York is a wonderful place to live and the songs even contribute to this belief.

## **3. Literature**

\* picture taken from <https://newyorkwomen.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/t-nyc-brochure-skyline-2.gif> on 3rd of april, 2016

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## 4. Appendix

### 4.1 Song texts

Frank Sinatra – New  
York

Start spreading the  
news  
I am leaving today  
I want to be a part of it  
New York, New York

These vagabond shoes  
They are longing to  
stray  
Right through the very  
heart of it  
New York, New York

I wanna wake up,  
in that city that doesn't  
sleep  
And find I'm king of the  
hill  
Top of the heap

My little town blues  
They are melting away  
I gonna make a brand  
new start of it  
In old New York

If I can make it there  
I'll make it anywhere

It's up to you  
New York, New York  
  
New York, New York  
I want to wake up in  
that city  
That never sleeps  
And find I'm king of the  
hill  
Top of the list  
Head of the heap  
King of the hill

These are little town  
blues  
They have all melted  
away  
I am about to make a  
brand new start of it  
Right there in old New  
York

And you bet baby  
If I can make it there  
You know, I'm gonna  
make it just about  
anywhere  
Come on, come through  
New York, New York,  
New York

Alicia Keys, Empire State of mind (Part II) Broken Down:

Oooooohh, New York

Oooooohh, New York

Grew up in a town that is famous as a place of movie scenes  
Noise is always loud, there are sirens all around, and the streets are mean.

If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere, that's what they say  
Seeing my face in lights, and my name in marquees found down on Broadway

Even if it ain't all it seems,

I got a pocketful of dreams

Baby I'm from New York,

Concrete jungle where dreams are made of

There's nothing you can't do.

Now you're in New York,

These streets will make you feel brand new

Big lights will inspire you.

Hear it for New York, New York, New Yooork

avenue,

On the there ain't never a curfew, ladies work so hard  
Such a melting pot, On the corner selling rock, preachers pray to God  
Hail a gypsee cab, takes me down to Harlem to the Brooklyn Bridge  
Someone sleeps tonight with a hunger for more than an empty fridge

I'm gonna make it by any means,

I've got a pocketful of dreams

Baby I'm from New York,

Concrete jungle where dreams are made of

There's nothing you can't do.

Now you're in New York,

These streets will make you feel brand new

Big lights will inspire you.

Hear it for New York, New York, New Yooork

One hand in the air for the big city

Street lights, big dreams, all looking pretty,  
 No place in the world that can compare,  
 Put our lights up in the air, everybody say  
 Yeaaaahhh, Yeeaaahh

In New York  
 Concrete jungle where dreams are made of  
 There's nothing you can't do.  
 Now you're in New York,  
 These streets will make you feel brand new  
 Big lights will inspire you.  
 Hear it for New Yooooork

#### 4.2 Internet texts

1. "How I Met Your Mother" fan site. (n.d.). Retrieved 03 01, 2016, from <http://himym.co/about/>

### About The Show



*How I Met Your Mother* is the story of how Ted Mosby ([Josh Radnor](#)) met his wife and mother of his children as told in the year 2030 to his son and daughter. Future Ted (voiced by Bob Saget) is recounting the trials, tribulations and antics of him and his four twenty-something friends in New York City. The show uses a unique combination of narration and flashbacks to tell a love story in reverse.

2. Braun, J. (2009). *Stern Online, Ein Slum wird Touristenziel*. Retrieved 3 14, 2016, from <http://www.stern.de/reise/fernreisen/ratgeber-new-york/die-bronx-ein-slum-wird-touristenziel-3534422.html>

## Die Bronx

# Ein Slum wird Touristenziel

Lange war der nördlichste Bezirk New Yorks eine Gegend, die von Reisenden gemieden wurde. Das hat sich geändert. Die Bronx erblüht. Die Entdeckung eines einst verpönten Stadtteils.

Von Jessica Braun

- **Jessica Braun**

Hügelig und Grün, so wie einst die ganze Stadt gewesen sein muss, präsentiert sich Riverdale am Ufer des Hudson River. Hier sind die Grundstückspreise hoch: Ein Zeichen für die Begehrtheit des Bezirks. Und auch, wenn es nicht so aussieht. Riverdale ist ein Teil der Bronx. Und nicht der einzige, in dem es sich gut leben lässt. Ursprünglich war die Bronx Farmland: Hier hatte sich in der Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts die schwedische Familie Bronck angesiedelt. Wer hier hinausfuhr, besuchte die Broncks, weswegen es der einzige New Yorker Bezirk ist, der heute immer noch in Verbindung mit einem Artikel genannt wird.

## **Unterwegs in der Bronx**

Besonders bequem lässt sich die Bronx mit dem "Bronx Trolley", einem roten Bus erkunden. Entweder mit öffentlicher Tour oder zur Miete für Kleingruppen. [www.bronxtrolley.com](http://www.bronxtrolley.com)

Ein absolutes Muss auf der Tour ist der "Wave Hill Park". Hier lernt man viel über die Besonderheiten der

verschiedenen Pflanzen und die Geschichte der Anlage. [www.wavehill.org](http://www.wavehill.org)

Beim Yankee-Stadiums gibt es viele Ort zum Essengehen. Diese Gegend ist für ihre hispanischen Restaurants bekannt. Rund um die Arthur Avenue wartet "Little Italy" mit italienischen Köstlichkeiten. [www.arthuravenue.com](http://www.arthuravenue.com)

Sehr zu empfehlen ist ein kulinarischer Rundgang mit Susan Birnbaum. Sie ist in der Bronx aufgewachsen und verdankt ihre laute Stimme der Tatsache, dass ihr Elternhaus nahe der Eisenbahnlinie stand. Eine Tour kostet 45 Dollar. [www.susansez.com](http://www.susansez.com)

Die Bronx hat allerdings ein Problem: Es gibt zu viele Vorurteile, die Touristen davon abhalten, den Bezirk überhaupt zu betreten. Diese sind nicht ganz unbegründet, denn bis vor zehn Jahren sahen manche der Straßen dort aus, als wäre "hier gerade ein Krieg ausgetragen worden", wie es die Bewohner ausdrücken. Bekannt geworden ist die Bronx durch ihre Kriminalität. In den 60ern gehörten Schießereien, besonders in der South Bronx, zum Alltag. Banden regierten die Straßen, Prostitution und Drogen machten die Gegend zu einem gefährlichen Ort. Für jeden, der seine Kindheit dort verbracht hatte, ohne selbst straffällig zu werden, war die Bronx daher auch ein Gütesiegel. Ein "Bronxite" zu sein bedeutete: Ich hatte es nicht leicht, aber habe es trotzdem geschafft.

3. *Daily News Online*. (n.d.). Retrieved 03 30, 2016, from <http://www.nydailynews.com/entertainment/music-arts/jay-z-sinatra-10-best-songs-new-york-gallery-1.51535>

5. 'Theme from New York, New York' -  
Frank Sinatra  
Trilogy (1980)

Of course, of course. Sinatra's swinging ode to 'the city that doesn't sleep' is the city's unofficial anthem, beloved by everyone from your grandmother to that drunk guy in the karaoke bar. It's good to be king of the hill, top of the heap.

Above, Sinatra celebrates his 75th birthday at a New Jersey concert in 1990.

4. Gala. (2016). *Gala*. Retrieved 03 02, 2016, from Starporträt Jennifer Lopez: [http://www.gala.de/stars/starportraits/jennifer-lopez\\_1027174.html](http://www.gala.de/stars/starportraits/jennifer-lopez_1027174.html)

### Was Sie wissen sollten - Biografie

Viele kleine Mädchen, die später zu ganz großen Stars werden, tönen bereits in jungen Jahren: "Ich werde Sängerin!" Oder Schauspielerin. Oder Model. Damit gab sich die kleine Jennifer Lynn Lopez aber nicht zufrieden. Denn sie wusste ganz genau, dass sie gleich alles auf einmal werden wollte. Und zwar nicht aus mangelnder Entscheidungsfreude, sondern weil die hyperaktive Latina in einer Sparte einfach nicht ausgelastet wäre: "Ich war schon immer Sängerin und Tänzerin und ich wollte schon immer Schauspielerin sein. Für mich ist das alles letztendlich dasselbe."

### Kindheit in der Bronx

Ihre puerto-ricanischen Eltern David (Computerfachmann) und Guadalupe (Erzieherin) mussten Jennifer als mittlere von drei Töchtern in der New Yorker Bronx großziehen. Doch vermittelten sie ihr von Anfang an: "Du kannst alles erreichen. Wenn du nur willst und hart dafür arbeitest." Schon als Kind schrieb sich Jennifer das hinter die Ohren. Trotzdem ist sie extrem leidenschaftlich und mitunter aufbrausend, woran auch ihre zwölfjährige Laufbahn in einer katholischen Mädchenschule nichts ändern konnte.

### Der Beginn einer ganz großen Karriere

Mit 18 zog Jennifer nach Manhattan, um nicht in einer Anwaltskanzlei - Mamas Wunsch - zu enden. Dort tanzt sie sich durch mehrere Musicals und schließlich in ein Musikvideo von Janet Jackson. Sie wurde entdeckt, doch einen Vertrag für eine Fernsehserie mit dem Sender CBS schlug die resolute Dame aus. Selbstbewusster Kommentar: "Ich will zum Kino". Selbst als dort kurz darauf an der Seite von [George Clooney](#) in "Out of Sight" (1998) der Durchbruch kommt,

reicht ihr das nicht aus. Sie möchte auch als Musikerin Fuß fassen, arbeitet fleißig an eigenen Songs.

### Mit Hit-Songs nach ganz oben

Mit Erfolg: Ihre erste Single "If You Had My Love" eroberte Platz 1 der amerikanischen Charts. Ihr dazugehöriges erstes Album "On the 6" wurde danach nicht nur zehn Millionen Mal verkauft, sondern war auch eine Hommage an ihre Herkunft von "ganz unten". Die U-Bahnlinie 6 hatte Jennifer nämlich immer von der Bronx nach Manhattan genommen und darin vom großen Erfolg geträumt. Seitdem ist J.Lo, wie sie gern genannt wird, nicht mehr aufzuhalten. Mit Hit-Songs wie "Love Don't Cost a Thing", "Jenny from the Block" oder "I Luh Ya Papi" stürmt sie regelmäßig die Charts und ihre Filme, darunter "Plan B für die Liebe" (2010) und "The Boy Next Door" (2015), füllen weiterhin die Kinosäle.

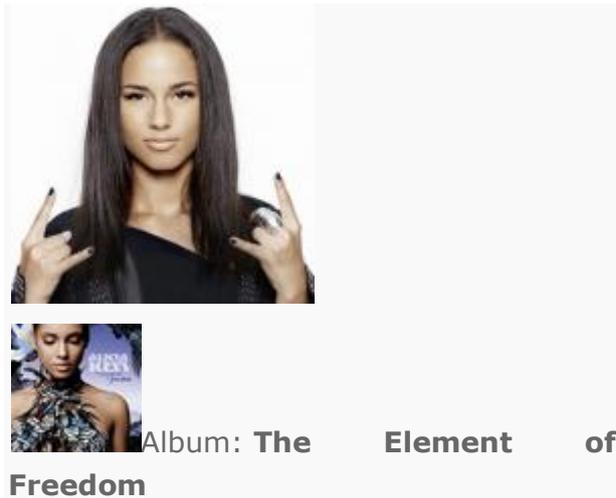
5. Geboren.am. (n.d.). *geboren.am*. Retrieved 03 02, 2016, from <http://geboren.am/person/robert-de-niro>

### Kind der 1940er: De Niro und seine Zeitgenossen

Robert De Niro wird in der Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts geboren. Er kommt 1943 zur Zeit des Zweiten Weltkrieges zur Welt. Bekannte Zeitgenossen seiner Generation sind Muhammad Ali (1942) und Harrison Ford (1942). Seine Kindheit und Jugend erlebt er in den 1940er- und 1950er-Jahren.

6. Songfacts.de, A. K. (n.d.). *Songfacts.de, Empire State of Mind (Part II) Broken Down*. Retrieved 04 01, 2016, from <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=17969>

**EMPIRE STATE OF MIND (PART II) BROKEN DOWN** BY [ALICIA KEYS](#)



- **ARTISTFACTS**

- **SONGFACTS**

- This is a soulfully soaring solo sequel to Jay-Z and Alicia Keys hometown anthem, "[Empire State of Mind](#)." Jay-Z was originally scheduled to contribute a new verse to the remake but the rapper does not appear on the final version.
- Keys told *The Sun* November 13, 2009: "It's just exciting to be able to put together a song about the city I was born and raised in and then to be able to make it an anthem the world can feel. I just love the energy that's behind it."
- When this debuted at #55 on the Hot 100 chart dated January 2, 2010, it marked the first chart appearance of a sequel to a #1 since Usher followed "[Love In This Club](#)" with "[Love in This Club Part II](#)" (#18) in 2008.

7. *Songfacts.de*, *Frank Sinatra: Theme from New York, New York*. (n.d.). Retrieved 03 30, 2016, from <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=9755>

[NEW YORK, NEW YORK](#) BY [FRANK SINATRA](#)



Album: **Trilogy: Past, Present and Future**  
Released: **1977**

- ARTISTFACTS

- LYRICS

- SONGFACTS

- Although many people associate this song with Frank Sinatra, it was Liza Minnelli who sang it in the 1977 film of the same name, which was directed by Martin Scorsese and starred Minnelli and Robert De Niro as musicians and lovers. It was written for the film by John Kander and Fred Ebb, who wrote many songs for her including the *Cabaret* songs "Maybe This Time" and "Yes." (thanks, Sara - Silver Spring, MD)
- Frank Sinatra began performing this in 1978 at concerts in New York's Radio City Music Hall. His version was released on his 1980 triple album **Trilogy: Past, Present and Future**, which was highly acclaimed and brought the singer back in the public eye. "New York, New York" quickly became one of Sinatra's signature songs.
- While many songs have been written about New York City, no song has captured the pride and elegance of the city quite like this one. The lyrics, "If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere" sum up what many New Yorkers feel about their city: competition is intense, but success there is richly rewarded and very satisfying. The song stresses personal responsibility in the line, "It's up to you, New York, New York," as it's a place where you can't expect a handout but have an opportunity to succeed no matter who you are. This song also popularized New York as the "City that never sleeps," which is true in the literal sense that many businesses are open 24 hours but also in the figurative sense that you are expected to always be at your best.
- The song is written from the perspective of an entertainer who leaves a small town and tries to make it in the city. Instead of obsessing over the difficulties he will face, he embraces the challenges in anticipation of a new life in a vibrant city.
- Sinatra is from Hoboken, New Jersey, which is a suburb of New York City. By 1978 he had established himself as a legend in the entertainment industry, and his performance of this song gave it a credibility that no other singer could have brought (Tony Bennett had already aligned himself with [San Francisco](#)). Sinatra was very popular in Las Vegas, but he made it clear with this song that you needed to be even better to perform in New York. He carried himself with a swagger and was known as a leader with lots of connections. If anyone could sing about winning, and doing it in style, it was Sinatra.
- New York has two major league baseball teams: The Mets and The Yankees. The Mets are considered more a working-class team and tend to represent areas like Queens, Long Island and to some extent, New Jersey. The Yankees are more associated with Manhattan, which is the hub of activity in New York City. The Yankees consistently have the biggest payroll in baseball and have won the most championships. They, of course, appropriated "New York, New York," which they play after every home game, win or lose.

- In 1993, Sinatra recorded this with Tony Bennett for Sinatra's album **Duets**. In 2006, Michael Bolton covered this for his tribute album **Bolton Swings Sinatra**.
- Sinatra's version was nominated for a Grammy Award for Record Of The Year. It lost to "[Sailing](#)" by Christopher Cross. "Someone joked that I beat Sinatra, so I'd better watch my back," Cross told us.
- In February 1985, New York's Mayor Edward I. Koch proclaimed this song as the city's official anthem, though it was never actually made official. The song played at Koch's funeral service in 2013.
- Teri Hatcher sang this karaoke style on the TV series *Desperate Housewives* in the 2005 episode "Move On." Her character, Susan Mayer, also used the opportunity to bash her ex-husband, who was seated in the audience.
- Released in 1980, this song came 40 years after Sinatra sang "I'll Never Smile Again" with Tommy Dorsey's band, the first #1 hit on Billboard's newly established number-one singles chart (predecessor of the Hot 100).

8. Stein, H. (2016). *Die Welt Online, So morden die Gangs von New York heute*. Retrieved 03 14, 2016, from <http://www.welt.de/vermischtes/article151317614/So-morden-die-Gangs-von-New-York-heute.html>

Ein Blick auf die [Landkarte](#) zeigt, dass es im Wesentlichen fünf Brennpunkte des Gewaltverbrechens gibt: im Zentrum von Brooklyn, im Westen und Osten von Queens, in Harlem und in der Südbronx. Die meisten Gangs konzentrieren sich in den "Projects" (den Ziegelhochhausklötzen, die in New York als sozialer Wohnungsbau gelten) und um sie herum. Die meisten Mitglieder der Gangs sind junge Erwachsene um die 20 herum.

Es gibt aber auch Mitglieder von Gangs, die erst zehn Jahre alt sind. Wer mit 30 Jahren noch dabei ist, kann als hartgesotten gelten und hat meistens schon mehrere Gefängnisstrafen hinter sich. Die meisten Banden sind winzig und haben fantasievolle, manchmal beinahe poetische Namen: Da ist die "Snow Gang", da ist "Always Banging Kids", da sind die "Morris Ave Gunnaz", da ist die "Seven Crew", da sind "Brooklyn's Most Wanted". Eine größere Bande sind die "Latin Kings". Außerdem gibt es auch noch die New Yorker Ableger der "Bloods" und der "Crips", zweier besonders gefährlicher Gangs, die ungefähr Anfang der Siebzigerjahre in Los Angeles gegründet wurden.

9. *The Scotsman Online, Interview: Alicia Keys*. (2010). Retrieved 04 02, 2016, from <http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/interview-alicia-keys-1-473646>

The Element of Freedom also continues Keys' relationship with Empire State of Mind in the form of Empire State of Mind (Part II) Broken Down, which she recorded as a sung musical piece, without Jay-Z's rapping, for a decidedly different kind of song.

"I love, love, love that record, the original, and to be able to be part of what people are calling the new New York anthem is unbelievable," says Keys, who performed the song with Jay-Z before the second game of the 2009 World Series at Yankee Stadium and also during the American Music Awards. "And then to be able to see the way that it affects the world everywhere I go is just insane. It's beautiful.

"So I definitely wanted to give my version of it and my vision of how I see New York and how it feels to me," she continues. "I wanted to do it for my style – more broken down, more on piano, more voice and intimacy – so that's what I did. I imagined, 'If I was able to sing this whole song, how would I do it?' So I just sat down at my piano and I kind of broke it down and started singing about New York as I see it, and it turned out great."

In March, Keys plans to start touring to support *The Element of Freedom*, and she promises a show that will play both arenas and theatres and be "visual, but in a sense that it doesn't overshadow the musical side of it. I think freedom comes from spontaneity and freedom comes from musicality and from really being able to express in every way."

10. *tv.com*. (n.d.). Retrieved 03 01, 2016, from friends: <http://www.tv.com/shows/friends/>

## SHOW SUMMARY

EDIT

"With a Little Help From My Friends" is a song written by the Beatles (and expertly covered by Joe Cocker) and it could easily be the subtitle for the thirty minute comedy, "Friends". In 1994, the idea was created for "Friends": a show about six friends in New York as they navigate their way through life and learn to grow up as they approach their thirties. All, with the help from each other to get them through the obstacles that life naturally has for us. Monica is the excessively neat and organized "older sister" of the group, who works as a chef while yearning to find her ideal love. Ross, Monica's older brother, is a paleontologist with a lifelong crush on Rachel. He is a laid-back man with low self esteem and a recent divorcee. Rachel is the pretty, bubbly girl who spent most of her life as a spoiled rich princess. Now she must learn to face the real world. Chandler is Ross' college buddy and the guy who will crack jokes at a moment's notice. Phoebe is a lovable eccentric masseuse who easily could have fit in with Haight Ashbury in the 1960s. And then there's Joey, the friend who has an inverse relationship between his good looks and his intelligence. He dreams of becoming an actor. These six individuals make up the cast of Friends.

In May 2004, Friends officially ended its phenomenal 10 year run. The show's time slot was taken over by a spin-off called Joey.

## **5. Erklärung**

Ich erkläre, dass ich die Facharbeit ohne fremde Hilfe angefertigt und nur die im Literatur- und Quellenverzeichnis angeführten Quellen und Hilfsmittel benutzt habe.