


Article

# Blue Öyster Cult's "Godzilla": An American Kaiju Anthem

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**Abstract:** In 1978, the American hard rock band Blue Öyster Cult released the song "Godzilla" as the first single from the fifth studio album *Spectres*. Despite not registering on popular charts, it would eventually evolve into an iconic song of its era. "Godzilla" continues to receive airplay on classic rock stations, and it remains a staple of the band's touring performances. In 2019, a cover of the song, more than forty years after its release, made its film debut in *Godzilla: King of the Monsters*. Though the song is primarily a tribute to the Japanese monster from which it gets its name, "Godzilla" also reflects the nuclear fear and paranoia of the 1970s Cold War era. "Godzilla's" cultural impact, the song's lyrics, the Cold War context in which it was written, and its connection to the kaiju films featuring the famous monster are examined. While this is the most popular and well-known song dedicated to Godzilla, it is not the only one. Other compositions have, but they have failed to achieve the iconic status that Blue Öyster Cult's version has attained. This song has evolved into an unofficial anthem for the great monster.

**Keywords:** Godzilla; Blue Öyster Cult; *Spectres*; kaiju; monster; song; American

## 1. Introduction

In 1978, the American hard rock band Blue Öyster Cult released the song "Godzilla" as the first single from their fifth studio album, *Spectres*. Despite not registering on the popular charts, it would eventually evolve into an iconic song of its era. The song differed from previous Blue Öyster Cult tracks by engaging directly with popular culture. "Godzilla" continues to receive airplay on classic rock stations, and it remains a staple of the band's touring performances. "Godzilla" is described by fans and critics as a "tongue-in-cheek tribute to the movie monster" ("*BÖC 'Godzilla' Live*" 2023). In 2019, a cover of the song, more than forty years after its release, appeared in a Godzilla film: *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* (Michael Dougherty 2019). The song is primarily a tribute to the great Japanese monster, kaiju, which has appeared in many Japanese and American films since the 1950s. Translated to English as "strange beast", *kaiju* has become synonymous with Japanese monster films of the post-World War II era. The song "Godzilla" also reflects these nuclear fears and paranoia. Other more modern, prominent musicians like Eminem and lesser-known acts like The Creatures and The Flaming Lips have also released tracks referencing Godzilla. Still, they have failed to achieve the iconic status that Blue Öyster Cult's version has attained.

Blue Öyster Cult's song has become an unofficial anthem for the great monster. The song's lyrics, the Cold War context in which it was written, and its connection to the kaiju films featuring the famous monster all contribute to "Godzilla's" immense cultural impact. Despite numerous other compositions influenced by Godzilla, Blue Öyster Cult's song has the strongest connection to the original Japanese films. Stephen Thompson (2014), a music reviewer for National Public Radio, states that for a song to become an anthem, a song should "speak to a specific generation, sure, but it could also reflect a single moment, or an important movement... or some combination of the above." Like the movies on which it is based, "Godzilla" captures the anxieties of the post-World War II world while simultaneously incorporating an element of campiness.



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## 2. Background of the Band

To fully appreciate how “Godzilla” fits into the Blue Öyster Cult catalog, it is important to examine the band and its well-earned reputation as intellectual hard rock. Formed in 1967 in Stony Brook, New York, under the moniker of Soft White Underbelly, Blue Öyster Cult has been recording and touring for over fifty years. At the time of their first studio album release in 1972, the band was comprised of Eric Bloom (lead vocals, guitar, keyboard), Donald “Buck Dharma” Roeser (lead guitar and vocals), Allen Lanier (keyboard and rhythm guitar), and brothers Albert (drums) and Joe Bouchard (bass). Despite numerous changes to band membership and periods of waning popularity, the band has endured, often recognized by fans and critics as “thinking man’s heavy metal” (Brissey 2012). The band members shared an interest in intellectual science fiction, collaborating with American science fiction writers John Shirley and Eric Van Lustbader. Bloom also established a collaborative relationship with British science fiction writer Michael Moorcock, who became a prominent songwriter for the band, co-writing the band’s hit “Veteran of the Psychic Wars. (McParland 2017, p. 63). “All of this made Blue Öyster Cult a band apart, a group of hard rock intellectuals removed from the bread and butter common ground of the genre” (Holm-Lupo 2019, p. 7). Much of their catalog incorporates complex science fiction themes and imagery, and “Godzilla” certainly follows this tradition, albeit much less so than some of their other work.

An early song that best exemplifies this penchant for intellectualism is “Astronomy,” a science fiction-themed narrative ballad, versions of which have appeared on several Blue Öyster Cult albums, including *Imaginos* (1988), a concept album focusing on an alien conspiracy and an evil being named Imaginos. Famed horror author Stephen King provided a spoken narration for the 1988 music video that illustrates the complexity of the song:

Imaginos (performed by Blue Öyster Cult)—A bedtime story for the children of the damned. From a dream world, paralleling our earth in time and space, the invisible ones have sent an agent who will dream the dream of history. With limitless power he becomes the greatest actor of the 19th century. Taking on many ingenious disguises, he places himself at pivotal junctures in history, continually altering its course and testing our ability to respond to the challenge of evil. His name is ‘Imaginos’ (Blue Öyster Cult 1978).

Blue Öyster Cult fashioned their reputation by incorporating complex themes and imagery into their music: “Their songs combined intelligence, power, and intimations of darkness” (Luhrsen and Larson 2017, p. 38). Their most iconic hit, “Do not Fear the Reaper,” exemplifies their use of darkness, incorporating imagery of love and death to relate a narrative of acceptance. Donald Roeser describes it as “a love song that imagines there is something after death and that, once in a while, you can bridge that gap to the other side” (Simpson 2019). While not as narratively complex as a song like “Astronomy,” “Reaper’s” use of imagery elevates the track into a more cerebral realm.<sup>1</sup>

Comparatively, “Godzilla” represents somewhat of an outlier for the band, lacking the intricate weaving of narrative and imagery that some of their other music employs. Historian Martin Popoff calls it “an uncharacteristically lunk-headed but lovable rocker” (Popoff 2016, p. 84). Keyboardist Allen Lanier says the song is “all about monsters and the atom bomb controversy; very sociological as well as humorous” (Popoff 2016, p. 85). It had been well established by the time the song was written that, as prominent physicist Spencer Weart states, “Godzilla and his numerous monstrous kin obviously stand in for atomic bombs” (cited in Matthews 2012). Like the films that inspired it, the song reflects the nuclear paranoia of the post-World War II world. Scholar Morris Low relates that “Godzilla and the Japanese monster movies represent an attempt by the Japanese to come to terms with nuclear history and its effects on Japanese society” (Low 1993, p. 53). The song, then, reflects prominent world issues and even contains a moral reflected in the original 1954 movie: “that scientists should not tamper with nature” (p. 52). As complex as this notion can be, given the numerous variables related to nuclear power and weapons,

the moral itself is relatively simple. Despite the links to prominent science fiction and important world issues, the song was not intellectually deep enough for some Blue Öyster Cult fans.

With its catchy beat and relatively simple lyrics, the track represented a drift toward more popular music, and, as a result, the reactions from fans and critics were mixed. Blue Öyster Cult's reputation had been built on operating outside the mainstream. "Godzilla" did not become the radio hit the band hoped for, and it was different enough from other entries in their catalog to generate a negative reaction from some of the band's followers. One of *Spectres'* producers, Sandy Pearlman, acknowledges that some of the band's most ardent fans even hated it (Popoff 2016, p. 86). At the time of the song's release in 1977, John Milward, in a review for *Rolling Stone*, praised the album but was less enthusiastic about the opening track, "Godzilla":

On its first album, the Cult sang about "Cities on Flame with Rock & Roll", and the theme is the same here: Godzilla rips apart Tokyo with the same monstrous bravado of the riffing guitars that destroyed the kids. In this case, though, the idea is more attractive than the song (Milward 1977, p. 66).

Despite this lukewarm reception from fans and critics, the song has lived on as a classic and is undoubtedly more popular now than it was then. "Godzilla" and *Spectres* were not very successful then, with the album failing to generate any hits. Despite their best efforts to get the song onto the airwaves, Joe Bouchard admits that they "did not get much-hit play on "Godzilla"" (Popoff 2016, p. 85). Albert Bouchard, however, is more critical in his assessment of the entire *Spectres* project, acknowledging that "there was too much variety in the material" and even felt that the band might not produce a hit song again (Roeser and Gregmar 1996, p. 80). While the album in general, and "Godzilla" specifically, represented a departure from their catalog at the time, given their reputation as an intellectual band, "Godzilla" became a central part of their touring performance, with Albert Bouchard donning a store-bought Godzilla head while performing his drum solo and a twenty-foot, animatronic, smoke-breathing monster appearing on stage. Adding this visual component further connected the song to the monster, and it became an on-stage spectacle that captured the campiness of some of the later Godzilla films.

### 3. Inspiration

The obvious inspiration for the song is the great Japanese *kaiju*, Godzilla, who began terrorizing Tokyo in 1954 and has, to date, appeared in thirty-eight films: thirty-three in the Japanese market and five in the United States. The original film was released in America in 1956 as *Godzilla, King of the Monsters!* Edited considerably for the U.S. market, *King of the Monsters!* featured Raymond Burr in the starring role of reporter Steve Martin. Since his footage was shot after the original film, some scenes were entirely reshot, with Burr having to interact with body doubles. The original Japanese version of *Godzilla* was not readily available in the United States until 2004, so the 1956 United States release is the one that inspired the song. The U.S. version has a more optimistic ending in which Burr posits that "the whole world could wake up and live again" (*Godzilla, King of the Monsters!* 1956). This positivity contrasts with Dr. Kyohei Yamane's statement at the end of the 1954 version, "I cannot believe that Gojira was the last of its species. If nuclear testing continues, then someday, somewhere in the world... another Gojira may appear" (Honda 1954). Had the band been aware of the somber vision of the Japanese version, perhaps the song may not have been created with the levity for which it is known.

Donald Roeser admits to being "a huge fan of the original 'Godzilla' movie and all of the Toho<sup>2</sup> monster movies, everything that came out of Japan through the '1960s and up to the '1970s" (Mills 2014). The first film had quite an impact on the band, as Roeser further points out:

We're all huge fans of the original movie where they dubbed Raymond Burr into the movie for the American release... With the lyrics what I did was just reprise

the moral lesson that Godzilla was basically man's fault. In the movie it was nuclear energy that was blamed for Godzilla's unleashing (Mills 2014).

At the time of the song's creation, the band recognized that "the original *Godzilla* symbolized the continuing concerns of nuclear tests around the Japanese mainland" (Barr 2023, p. 9). Godzilla is more than a monster in both the film and the song. The great *kaiju* reflects deeply rooted cultural fears and how Japanese society deals with societal trauma. "The monsters have been used to redefine the bomb in terms of natural phenomena that are more digestible to the movie-going public" (Low 1993, p. 51). By drawing upon Japanese portrayals of Godzilla for inspiration, Blue Öyster Cult's "Godzilla" also reflects these same concerns, albeit in a simpler, less serious fashion. The song draws upon the image of Godzilla from the entire catalog of films up to and including the 1970s. By that time, many of the Godzilla films had become decidedly less serious in tone, and the song reflects that. The initial movie reflected nuclear paranoia, but many subsequent films portrayed Godzilla as Japan's protector rather than its antagonist. Blue Öyster Cult's track captures both the original message with its lyrics and the less threatening elements with its composition and concert performances.

The initial film's influence on the song is evident, but other Godzilla films also influenced the band. For example, during touring performances after leaving the band, drummer Albert Bouchard had a Godzilla head custom-made fashioned based on the creature from later films, "when Godzilla was really funny, with Godzilla baby<sup>3</sup> and all of that (laughs)" (Popoff 2016, p. 86). In the decades following the original film's release, the "Godzilla films declined in popularity and seriousness" (Hall 2017, p. 145). Integrating the mask into live performances carried on the tradition of Bouchard wearing a Godzilla mask while performing his drum solo. As a result, the song and the band's performances capture the essence of the entire run of Godzilla films up to that point.

The band would also be inspired to release another song based on the great *kaiju*. When their famous song was not included on the soundtrack for the 1998 American revision of *Godzilla* (Roland Emmerich), the band released a parody of their own work titled "NoZilla". This track was released only to radio stations then, but versions of it can still be found on YouTube. It uses the same structure as their original song "Godzilla", but substitutes many lines that express their displeasure:

Oh no! Say it isn't so! There's no Godzilla!  
 Oh no! The director says "no go"! No go Godzilla!  
 Oh no! Think I'll stay at home. There's no Godzilla!  
 Everyone's saying it's already made but  
 Roland Emmerich said "no way!"  
 Godzilla.  
 Millions spent on special effects but  
 Our tune just ain't getting no respect (ET13 Productions n.d.)

This certainly is not the type of inspiration the original film generated; nevertheless, "NoZilla" has become part of Blue Öyster Cult lore and represents just one of the negative monikers ascribed to this film's monster. Film critic Richard Pusateria dubbed this creature GINO (Godzilla in Name Only) since the portrayal differed so significantly from the Japanese Toho versions (Crispino 2023). When the track was also not included on the soundtrack for *Godzilla* (Gareth Edwards 2014), Roeser believes "the tune was overlooked because it presents a whimsical and affectionate view of the creature, whereas the latest movies... tried to represent Godzilla as a terrifying creature having its first encounter with man" (Mills 2014). A cover of Blue Öyster Cult's classic song, produced by prominent television and film composer Bear McCreary<sup>4</sup> and performed by System of a Down's Serj Tankian, finally appeared in the Godzilla movie *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* (2019), forty-two years after its release.<sup>5</sup> Heavier than Blue Öyster Cult's version, it pays homage to the original but moves slightly away from its campiness.

According to the second issue of *Morning Final*, the official Blue Öyster Cult newsletter during the early 1990s,<sup>6</sup> “Godzilla” was the Cult’s only attempt at reaching into the Japanese market. While the track has increased in popularity over the years, it was created without much consideration of Japanese culture. *Morning Final* editor Bolle Gregmar (1990) indicates that the band “fail[ed] on simple points like A: the movie Godzilla is something most people in Japan are quite embarrassed by, and B: in Japanese, the name of the creature is GOJIRA<sup>7</sup>, and Godzilla did not mean anything to most people there.” Nevertheless, the *kaiju* films served as a tremendous influence not just on the song but on the band’s performances as well. Even though the song was not initially a hit, the band would forever be associated with the great Japanese monster.

#### 4. Analysis of the Song

“Godzilla” begins with a narrative portion that tells a simple story of the monster’s destruction of Tokyo. It is an “early example of pop metal, heavy and catchy all at once” (Holm-Lupo 2019, p. 56). With a slow, steady, ominous beat, the song serves as an appropriate metaphor for a monster approaching a major city. The guitar riff, however, came first and partially inspired the song’s subject matter. According to Roeser, “That was just a heavy riff created in a Dallas hotel room... What came to my mind was Godzilla, because what is heavier than Godzilla? Nothing (laughs)” (Popoff 2016, p. 85). The titular creature is not mentioned by name during the opening, but the lyrics describe the great kaiju’s rampage through Tokyo:

With a purposeful grimace and a terrible sound  
He pulls the spitting high tension wires down  
Helpless people on a subway train  
Scream bug-eyed as he looks in on them  
He picks up a bus and he throws it back down  
As he wades through the buildings toward the center of town (Blue Öyster Cult 1977)

The song contains a great deal of intertextuality with the entire catalog of Godzilla films, depicting his rampage through Tokyo. However, it is best known for its rhythmic chorus, which, according to Popoff, may have been inspired by a song called “Go Go Gorilla” (Popoff 2016, p. 84). Searches for this track indicate that it was variously known as “Gorilla” and “Go Go Gorilla.” The most popular version was released by the Shandells in 1964. The song may have served as an inspiration, but with its fast, peppy beat, aside from repeating the words go go, it bears no resemblance to Blue Öyster Cult’s “Godzilla.” Blue Öyster Cult’s chorus contains the following lyrics:

Oh, no, they say he’s got to go  
Go, go, Godzilla (yeah)  
Oh, no, there goes Tokyo  
Go, go, Godzilla (yeah) (Blue Öyster Cult 1977)

The refrain, repeated numerous times throughout, is both catchy and humorous. Drummer Albert Bouchard, who would dress up in a Godzilla costume while performing the song, acknowledges that the song is indeed “funny” (Popoff 2016, p. 86). This contrasted somewhat with the band’s intellectual reputation at the time, but as “NoZilla” proves more explicitly, the band members possess a sense of humor and, perhaps, somewhat sensitive egos. Though “Godzilla” possesses a campy element, “No-Zilla” is simply farcical.

“Godzilla” is not one of the band’s most complex songs, but that does not mean it lacks thought-provoking content. Despite the beat’s and theme’s relative simplicity, the band incorporates some of their trademark intellectualism into the piece. During the song’s second half, singer Eric Bloom includes a brief, spoken Japanese passage.

臨時ニュースを申し上げます  
臨時ニュースを申し上げます  
ゴジラが銀座方面に向かっていきます

大至急避難してください  
大至急避難してください (“Godzilla”: Blue Öyster Cult 2024)

Bloom’s pronunciation of this passage reads as follows:

*Rinji news o moshiaemasu!*  
*Rinji news o moshiaemasu!*  
*Gojira ga Ginza hoomen e mukatte imasu!*  
*Daishikyu hinan shite kudasai! Daishikyu hinan shite kudasai!* (Bolle Gregmar 1990)

Various sources provide differing translations to English. Popoff reports that it says, “Attention, emergency news! Attention, emergency news! Godzilla is going toward the Ginza area! Immediately escape, catch up, and find shelter, please! Immediately escape, catch up, and find shelter, please” (Popoff 2016, p. 84). In a 2014 interview with *Goldmine* magazine, Eric Bloom provided a simplified translation: “Attention. Attention. Godzilla is entering the Ginza area. Evacuate immediately. Evacuate immediately” (Wright 2013). Regardless, integrating spoken Japanese into an American song was no small feat. Bloom, a language major in college and a fluent speaker of both French and Spanish, took a 60 h course in Japanese in 1979 just to be able to perform the lines in concert (Popoff 2016, p. 84). The song may lack the intellectual heft of some of their other work, but it reflects Bloom’s dedication to his craft.

The track ends with a simple moral, repeated four times:

History shows again and again  
How nature points up the folly of men  
Godzilla

Unlike many of Blue Öyster Cult songs, such as the aforementioned “Astronomy”, the moral here is simply stated: Man is responsible for the creation of Godzilla and, by extension, the damage the creature causes.<sup>8</sup> It may lack the depth and complexity of some of their other work, but it contains some moralistic content and reflects science fiction’s influence on the band’s catalog.

Blue Öyster Cult’s tribute may be the most popular and well-known song dedicated to Godzilla, but it is not the only one inspired by the great *kaiju*. In 2020, Eminem, performing with Juice Wrld, released a rap song titled “Godzilla”, which rose to the top ten on musical charts worldwide. Another rapper, MF DOOM, adopted the moniker of King Geedorah in reference to Godzilla’s nemesis, King Ghidorah, a three-headed monster who appeared in several *kaiju* films. His 2003 album *Take Me to Your Leader* includes samplings of music from various Godzilla films. Earlier musical compositions that reference the great *kaiju* include The Creatures’ “Godzilla!” (2003), a punk\alternate track sung by British singer Siouxsie Sioux, and the psychedelic rock band “The Flaming Lips’ effort “Godzilla Flick” (1986), a softer rock offering based on Singer Wayne Coyne’s brothers’ substance abuse. Method of Destruction’s (M.O.D.’s) “Godzula” (1989) is a thrash metal offering that is much faster and harder than Blue Öyster Cult’s version but also focuses on the great monster and his rampage on Tokyo. Also notable is “Simon Says” (1999) by American rap artist Pharoahe Monch, which illegally samples Akira Ifukube’s theme song, “Gojira Tai Mosura,” from the 1992 film *Godzilla versus Mothra*.<sup>9</sup> Also worthy of mention are parodies and less serious works like “Waltzing Godzilla” (sung to the tune of ‘Waltzing Matilda’ and the predictably pathetic ‘Monsta Rap’ by Elvira, Mistress of the Dark” (Tsutsui 2004, p. 135). The quality of these other versions varies considerably, and they all remain relatively obscure, at least outside these bands’ core audiences. Blue Öyster Cult’s version has become an unofficial anthem for the great monster. Godzilla scholar William Tsutsui acknowledges the song’s place in American culture:

But, lest we forget, all true fans must tip their hats to that most celebrated and popular of Godzilla music memories, the pioneering 1977 rock anthem “Godzilla” by Blue Öyster Cult. The music and lyrics are now so familiar — as much a part of

the American pop culture mythos as the monster himself—that it's easy to overlook the song's sober moral on the folly of humankind, so true to the spirit of the king of the monsters (Tsutsui 2004, p. 136).

Godzilla has inspired many musical compositions, but the great monster will forever be associated with Blue Öyster Cult's track. Despite the tongue-in-cheek nature of the track, it adheres to the original film's message and captures the essence of the series. It represents, through music, Godzilla's legacy. The song reflects the band members' love for the great kaiju films of their era and an understanding of their meaning and origins. The song's association with the monster is so strong that it even appears in Mark Cerasini's (1997) novel *Godzilla 2000*, in which a pilot plays the famous BÖC song before confronting the great *kaiju*. Blue Öyster Cult's "Godzilla" stands out amongst this crowd because it does not simply reference the monster. Rather, the song captures the essence and themes of the *kaiju* films that inspired it, reflecting a deeper understanding of the moral and societal concerns that led to the creation of these movies.

## 5. Conclusions

Blue Öyster Cult's "Godzilla" has been part of the musical landscape for over four decades. Various iterations of the band have performed it thousands of times on stage. Not only has the song become a staple of their touring performances, but it has also helped shape the band's identity. Known as a heady, intellectual band that integrates complex science fiction narratives and themes, "Godzilla's" release in 1977 revealed a lighter side that the group fully embraced.

The sense that Blue Öyster Cult never took themselves 100% seriously, that they had a sort of post-modern self-consciousness about the fact that what they were doing was slightly ridiculous, helped endear them to people far outside the hard rock mainstream (Holm-Lupo 2019, p. 7).

"Godzilla" may not have been their biggest hit upon its release, but it has become one of their most enduring tracks, finding its way into the popular culture mainstream. Despite not containing a complex science fiction narrative, it reflected the same societal concerns as the film inspired it: hydrogen bomb testing in the Pacific (Weart 1987, p. 191). Several bands have covered or sampled the song, the most recent being Serj Tankian for the 2019 film *Godzilla: King of the Monsters*. The song has appeared in various mainstream media platforms, including movies, television, and at least one novel. It has even infiltrated America's pastime: Major League Baseball. During Japanese outfielder Hideki Matsui's tenure with the New York Yankees, the song was played whenever he came to the plate.<sup>10</sup> These cultural references reflect the song's popularity, but it is the fact that it has transcended both Japanese and American culture to speak to people worldwide.

What makes the song truly anthemic is its ability to connect with films on which it is based, the music world, and, most importantly, people around the world. "Mass appeal is integral to a true anthem because anthems are part of a shared experience" (Thompson 2014). Anyone who has watched a *kaiju* film, heard Blue Öyster Cult's song, or attended one of their concerts has experienced the fun of the movies that served as inspiration. They also received the cultural message about the dangers of nuclear power in post-World War II and Cold War environments. Donald Roeser acknowledges the cultural impact the song has had:

Even though the song's lyrics directly describe Godzilla and his city-flattening rampage, I always felt it was in fact the song's simple, pounding guitar riff that most strongly connected the music to the iconic monster. The guitar always evoked, for me, Godzilla's massive footsteps, the famous guitar riff is often cited as having an even bigger footprint (so to speak) on popular culture (McCreary 2019).

"Godzilla" may have started as an outlier in the band's catalog, but it has come to largely define it. Written during the Cold War and reflecting the nuclear fears of the era, the song

endures primarily because it captures the essence of the films upon which it is based. Five New Yorkers created a song about a Japanese monster that has endured for nearly half a century. The song may be memorable primarily because it possesses a catchy, memorable beat, but the most enduring quality is its ability to capture both the fearsome and campy elements of its source material. It has, and forever will be, a fitting American anthem for the great Japanese *kaiju*, Godzilla.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly, “Don’t Fear the Reaper” is Blue Öyster Cult’s most iconic song. It was named *Rolling Stone’s* Song of the Year in 1976 and has secured a spot on the magazine’s “500 Greatest Songs of All Time” list. It prominently features death imagery and contains the theme of acceptance. Fans have long speculated whether the song relates to drug use or suicide. Despite the song’s dark subject matter, it also inspired the famous “More Cowbell” skit on Saturday Night Live, featuring Will Farrell and Christopher Walken.
- <sup>2</sup> In addition to the Godzilla films, Toho Studios released many other *kaiju* films that eventually entered the American market. Some of the more popular films were *Rodan* (1956), *Mothra* (1961), *Ghidora, the Three-Headed Monster* (1964), and *King Kong Escapes* (1967), all directed by Ishiro Honda.
- <sup>3</sup> The creature referenced here is Minilla, who appeared in *Son of Godzilla* (1967) and *Destroy All Monsters* (1968). He is a recently hatched kaiju whom Godzilla protects. Given that the films were targeted at kids, the portrayal of this creature is quite humorous. Minilla became the kids’ surrogate on screen.
- <sup>4</sup> Bear McCreary was also the 2019 *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* soundtrack composer.
- <sup>5</sup> Despite not appearing in a Godzilla film, Blue Öyster Cult’s “Godzilla” has appeared in other movies, including *Detroit Rock City* (Adam Rifkin 1999) and *Dogtown and Z-Boys* (Stacy Peralta 2001). It was also played during an episode of the long-running series *Supernatural* (2005–2020).
- <sup>6</sup> All fourteen issues of *Morning Final* are housed at [www.BlueOysterCult.com](http://www.BlueOysterCult.com), though they are hidden and inaccessible from any of the menus or links on the page. Direct links to individual issues can be found using a Google search. Though authorship and editorship are unclear in early issues of the journal, Blue Öyster Cult historian and fan club organizer Bolle Gregmar is widely known to have edited all magazine issues. He is cited as the editor of the magazine in Jacob Holm-Lupo’s book *On Track... Blue Öyster Cult: Every Album, Every Song*.
- <sup>7</sup> A heavy metal band in France is also named Gojira.
- <sup>8</sup> This moral, though more prominent in the 1954 version, can still be gleaned from the American revision.
- <sup>9</sup> Pharoahe Monch knowingly sampled the composition but argued that the music was in the public domain. The judge ruled that copyright infringement occurred and awarded damages to Toho Studios (*Toho Co. v. Priority Records* 2002).
- <sup>10</sup> Matsui played for the New York Yankees from 2003 to 2019. Prior to this, he played for the Yomiuri Giants in Japan for ten years. He was nicknamed Godzilla before beginning his Major League Baseball career.

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