

## Week Two

### Unit One: *Poetry and Lyrics*

#### **Monday: 4/10/06 (Computer Lab)**

- Reading: Sample essay for our collection by Chris—**on our webpage**. “Writing About a Poem” from *An Introduction to Poetry* by X.J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. (**The piece is in our course reader**).
- Assignments: **Blog creation—in class. Start first draft of your piece—due on 4-17-06. (Bring paper and electronic copy).**
- Class activities: Creating Your Blog. Deconstructing Chris’ essay. Start on first essay.

#### **1) Meet in Classroom/Writing (7 min)**

- a) Writing Prompt: What images do you see while listening to this music **or another favorite piece of music**? Feel free to use the metaphor/simile machine to create the images, or simply write them down for the next seven minutes or so. (**Play “Welcome to the Machine” by Pink Floyd**).
- b) Metaphor/Simile Machine: a \_\_\_\_\_ (concrete noun) of \_\_\_\_\_ (abstract noun). As \_\_\_\_\_ (adjective) as a \_\_\_\_\_ (concrete noun).

#### **2) Move to the Lab (7 minutes)**

#### **3) Livejournal (25 min)**

- a) Have folks go to <http://deanc1.livejournal.com>, and then respond to the “Class Poem on Songs Prompt.”
- b) Create a poem, in ten minutes, from the images that folks give you. If you need a topic, then focus your topic on “what music means to me.” (In fact, you can even start with that phrase.)
- c) Post, then create their poems—three people at a computer.
- d) Ask students to look for the following in their poem: ideas that resonate, images that compel, and turns of phrase that move. **Identify one of each, and be prepared to talk about it. (Discussion to last ten minutes).**

#### **4) Thinking About Your First Paper and Writing It (20 min)**

- a) Give out the rubric and the assignment sheet, put in the due dates:
  - i) Monday: 4/17/06 for Draft One, or Tuesday 4/18/06
  - ii) Final: 4/24/06 or 4/25/06 for final draft.
- b) Ask them to read—take questions.
- c) Pre-writing Prompt:
  - i) Who do you plan to write about, and why do you plan to write about this lyricist or poet?
    - (1) Have them underline the most important thing they wrote about why they planned to write about a given person, then have them answer this question: what are three things you will need to show your reader to help them see why your poet is so important? What are three subtopics of the most important thing you just underlined?
  - ii) **Have a couple of people share, so that folks can get ideas.**

#### **5) Creating Your Own Blog (25 min)**

- a) Show them your blog, and walk them through your response to the first post: What makes the band, musician, genre of music, or music technology that you are going to center your blog on so interesting to you?
- b) Your blog: <http://social-d-blog.blogspot.com/>
- c) Show them how to:
  - i) Post
  - ii) Insert Pictures
  - iii) Insert links
- d) Have everyone go to <http://www.blogger.com>.
- e) Have them click on the “create your blog now” link.
- f) Have them create their own blog, and write some sort of opening here in class.
- g) **Next Blog Assignment:** Find something on the web, link to it, and then (before class on Monday of next week) post a 250 word response to it. See a model on my blog: <http://social-d-blog.blogspot.com/>

## 6) Breaking Down the Sample Paper (15 min)

- a) Have them annotate the opening paragraph.
  - i) Where's the thesis, underline it.
  - ii) Where are the subtopics—circle them.
  - iii) What other information do I add—describe it in a couple of sentences.
- b) Take answers, ask questions:
  - i) What worked for you?
  - ii) What would you change?
  - iii) **Key Question:** What, after reading it, do you remember about Social Distortion?
- c) Go over how to cite, for MLA and APA, a sound recording and a website with lyrics.
- d) **Sound Recording:**
  - i) **APA: Social Distortion (1990). Story of my life. On *Social distortion* [CD]. Laguna Beach, CA: Time Bomb Recordings.**
  - ii) **MLA: Social Distortion. "Story of My Life." Social Distortion. Time Bomb Records, 1990.**
- e) **Website:**
  - i) **APA: Social distortion (1990). Story of my life. Laguna Beach, CA: Time Bomb Records. Retrieved April 9, 2006, from Sing365.com Web site: <http://www.sing365.com/music/lyric.nsf/Story-Of-My-Life-lyrics-Social-Distortion/E3AB69CE31CC4BA448256C790016A15B>**
  - ii) **MLA: Social Distortion. "Story of My Life." Social Distortion. Time Bomb Records, 1990. Sing365.com. 2002. 9 Apr. 2006 <<http://www.sing365.com/music/lyric.nsf/Story-Of-My-Life-lyrics-Social-Distortion/E3AB69CE31CC4BA448256C790016A15B>>.**

## 7) What to Look for When Looking for Lyrics (15 min)

- a) Create a list: 5 minutes.
- b) Then have them look at the following sites and find the three sets of lyrics that they will be working with.
  - i) **Poetry**
    - (1) [www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org)
    - (2) <http://poetry.eserver.org/default.html>
    - (3) <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/>
  - ii) **Lyrics**
    - (1) <http://www.lyrics.com/>
    - (2) <http://www.azlyrics.com/>
    - (3) <http://lyricsdot.com/>

## Wednesday: 4/12/06

- Reading: Glossary from Teachlit. (**The piece is in our course reader**).
- Assignments: Bring in 3 lyrics or poems into class to discuss.
- Class Activities: Discussion of your lyrics or poems in literature circles. In-class lyric or poetry creation: as group and singly. **Start of our dictionary of terms for poetry and music.**

### Lesson for Wednesday: 4/12/06

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#### 1) **Glossary from Teachlit and Freewrite (10 min)**

- a) Look at the glossary that you read, and see if you can't come up with two terms that you will use to help you write your piece (i.e. rhyme and metaphor). Using these two terms as topics, freewrite for five minutes on each and how they might help you write about the poems you brought with you today.
- b) Get a couple of folks to share.

#### 2) **Glossary of Terms Work (20 min)**

- a) You have a glossary of poetic terms, and now, I'd like for you to spend a little time in groups of three starting to create a glossary of important terms that have something to do with music. Choose any musical terms you know, in the next ten minutes, and define them. **Remember that these terms can really help you write about your pieces.** If you are stuck, then check out the list of terms below:

- i) Melody
- ii) Harmony
- iii) Rhythm
- iv) Beat
- v) Chord
- vi) Sample
- vii) Lyrics
- viii) Ballad
- ix) Chorus
- x) Verse

- b) Create a master list, with definitions. Tell them that we are going to come back to this, and, at times, I will define terms and ask them to add to this list—thus **hand onto this**.

#### 3) **Lyrics Circle Work (30 min)**

- a) Get into your groups, with your lyrics, and start your discussion. Remembering the roles that you have to take on: leader, recorder, and reporter.
- b) Work through the questions below:
  - i) What is significant about the titles of your song?
  - ii) What are some "great images" from the lyrics you brought, and why are they great?
  - iii) How do, or don't, the lyrics and music "mesh" in your songs? How would you describe the relationship between the lyrics and the music?
  - iv) What are the similarities and differences between the songs that you group brought in?
  - v) What terms, both poetic and musical, do you see coming up in your pieces, and how do these "technical elements" affect the meaning of the lyrics for you?
  - vi) If the lyrics, or poems, are from different points in the artists' career, how are they different?
  - vii) What is **one dominant theme or idea** that goes through your songs?
  - viii) What is the one thing that you are most interested in writing about in terms of the lyrics that you brought in?
  - ix) **Final Task:** Help someone, or everyone, in your group brainstorm for what he or she will be writing about—try to help him or her come up with some sort of thesis statement, guiding question, or main point that they could put at the center of a paper. If you want to, use this form: In this paper, I will (**choose one**) show/prove/demonstrate that the (**choose one**) lyrics/poetry of \_\_\_\_\_ (**artist's name here**) show that \_\_\_\_\_ (**put main point here**).

#### 4) Essay QandA (10-15 min)

- a) Have folks write down any questions they have about the essay on paper.
- b) Have them throw the pieces of paper into the trash can.
- c) Answer their questions.

#### 5) Reading Lyrics Closely: Mini-lecture and Discussion (20-25 min)

- a) The Revolution Will Not Be Televised Context and References.
  - i) **Context:** It first appeared on the 1970 [album](#) *Small Talk at 125th and Lenox*, on which Scott-Heron recited the piece, was accompanied only by [congas](#) and [bongo drums](#). A re-recorded version, this time with a full band, appeared on the 1971 album *Pieces Of A Man*, and on the double A-sided [single](#) "Home Is Where The Hatred Is"/"The Revolution Will Not Be Televised". All of these releases were issued on the Flying Dutchman Productions [label](#). The piece's name was also used as the title to Scott-Heron's "Best of" album, issued in 1998 by [RCA](#)
  - ii) **Who is Gil Scott-Heron?**
    - (1) A poet, a jazz musician, and someone who hasn't made much in the way of music since 1992. A key person to think about when thinking about 1970s revolutionary poetry (Amiri Baraka, Nikki Giovanni, and others).
  - iii) **References:**
    - (1) Skip: Heroin/Perhaps sex (urban Dictionary and OED).
    - (2) Skag: Heroin (OED).
    - (3) Nixon: President of the United States from 1969-1974.
    - (4) John Mitchell: The Attorney General for Nixon.
    - (5) General Abrams: GENERAL CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS, Commander in the field of all troops in Vietnam from 1968-1972.
    - (6) Spiro Agnew: Nixon's Vice President from 1969-1973—nailed for taking bribes.
    - (7) Schaefer Award Theatre: Television Program of the 1970s, as I remember it.
    - (8) Nataile Wood: America's sweetheart—mid 60s through mid 70s, think of Sandra Bullock circa 1998.
    - (9) Steve McQueen: Star of *the Great Escape*, and great action hero of the 1960s and 1970s.
    - (10) Bullwinkle: Greatest cartoon moose ever—created by blacklisted artists in the late 1950s, a staple of 1960s cartoons.
    - (11) "NBC will not be able predict the winner at 8:32/or report from 29 districts": We weren't the first people to hear about early election results—started really taking off in 1960 election (Nixon vs. JFK)
    - (12) Whitney Young: executive director of the National Urban League and one of the big four civil rights leaders of the 1960's, along with Martin Luther King Jr., Roy Wilkins and James Farmer. He drowned at the absurdly young age of 49 during a visit to Nigeria in 1971.
    - (13) Roy Wilkins: 1955-1977 Head of the NAACP, not a big fan of violent revolution.
    - (14) "Green Acres, The Beverly Hillbillies, and Hooterville/Junction will no longer be so damned relevant, and/ women will not care if Dick finally gets down with/Jane on Search for Tomorrow": Lots of 1970s, late 1960s T.V. shows
    - (15) Jackie Onassis: The wife of JFK and shipping magnate Aristotle Onasis. Queen of style, and one of the larger celebrities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
    - (16) "The theme song will not be written by Jim Webb,/Francis Scott Key, nor sung by Glen Campbell, Tom/Jones, Johnny Cash, Englebert Humperdink, or the Rare Earth.": All big acts through the 1970s—all white.
  - iv) **Why it Still Matters:** The hip-hop group [Public Enemy](#) used the phrase "The revolution will not be televised" in the opening to its 1987 album, "It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back," and hip-hop artist [Common](#) used the term as an intro to his 2000 single "The 6th Sense" ("The revolution will not be televised; the revolution is here."). Pop star [Prince](#) also made extensive reference to this poem in his 1998 single "The War", a 26 minute noise jam/spoken word piece, in which a chant of "evolution will be colorized" is heard.

- b) Mini-lecture and Listening.
- c) Discussion: Making Sense of “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised.”
  - i) Writing: Why might this piece, with more than 16 fairly obscure references to 1960s and 70s pop culture, still be popular today? What about it might resonate with Public Enemy, Common, and Prince.
  - ii) Get them to share their responses.
  - iii) **My Questions:**
    - (1) What do you make of the title—what ideas do you see in it? (Web it out)
    - (2) What does the repetition of this line do?
    - (3) Why does this stick around? What ideas did you have?
    - (4) Is the reason for its popularity the lyrics? The music? How would you describe both?
    - (5) **Key Question:** If you were going to write about this piece, what would you focus on and why? (Don't worry, it's not a trick question.)

**Week Three**  
*Unit One: Poetry and Lyrics*  
**CONFERENCE WEEK**

**Monday: 4/17/06 (Computer Lab)**

- Reading: Your essay. **READ IT BEFORE YOU COME TO CLASS AND EDIT IT.** Also, bring in your **handbook** for editing and reference work.
- Assignments: **Blog. Bring in AN ELECTRONIC AND PAPER COPY for peer review.**
- Class Activities: Peer review. Mix-mastering work, using Big break ([http://www.shockwave.com/sw/musicphotos/music mixers](http://www.shockwave.com/sw/musicphotos/music_mixers)). Debate: topic TBA. **Selection of a poem or song for discussion in class on Wednesday.**

**Wednesday: 4/19/06**

- Reading: Jim Burke's piece on how to read a poem. (**The piece is in our course reader**). Lyrics or poem chosen in class on Monday.
- Class Activities: Actual debate. Discussion of poem—using Burke's method. **Work on dictionary of terms.**