

ENGLISH 196 – Reading Literature

Dr. Richard R. Guzman ❖❖ North Central College ❖❖ Fall 2017

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(Best to use Google Chrome)

“The great thing about human language is that it prevents us from sticking to the matter at hand.”

“The capacity to blunder slightly is the real marvel of DNA. Without this special attribute, we would still be anaerobic bacteria and there would be no music.”

—Lewis Thomas

Lives of a Cell

“Do you like to fool around with words?” —W.H. Auden

When asked what **one** question he would ask a would-be writer to determine whether he would succeed. See Supplement 3 below.

TEXTS: Czeslaw Milosz, *A Book of Luminous Things* (LT)

Daniel Halpern, *The Art of the Story* (SS)

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis* (P)

...and other stories, poems, and films as assigned.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Sept.	11	Introduction. The importance of contrasts.
	13	Continue intro. Divide into Groups
	15	Read SS: Chamoisea, Beattie
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	18	SS: Barker, Yoshimoto
	20	Formal/Intrinsic analysis intro. Group 1 meeting for “Exercises”
	22	Group 2, 3 meetings. <u>“Tweet” 1 and 2 Due</u>
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	25	Revising “Tweets.” Group 3 meeting.
	27	SS: Murakami. Groups 1, 2 present “Exercises.”
	29	SS: Kureishi. Group 3 presents. <u>Tweet 3 Due</u>
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Oct.	2	SS: Thu Hong, Eisenberg. <u>Tweet 4 Due.</u> <u>Group “Exercise Paper” Due</u>
	4	Begin Reading-Writing poetry/flash. Bring LT. Groups 1, 2 meetings.
	6	Continue poetry/flash. Bring LT. Group 3 meeting.
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	9	SS: Luisa Valenzuela, Eduardo Galeano
	11	Group “Flash” presentations.
	13	No class

16 SS: Ford, Moore. Tweet 5 Due
18 SS: Witcomb. Formal/Extrinsic analysis intro
20 SS: Xue. Tweet “compilation” Due

23 Group meetings on analysis paper
25 Bring LT
27 Bring LT. Analysis paper 1 Due

Nov. 31 Group meetings on poetry project
1 Bring LT
3 SS: Del Guidice. Poetry Project Due

6 Satrapi, *Persepolis*.
8 Finish *Persepolis*.
10 *Persepolis*, second half of film.

13 SS: Reinaldo Arenas, E.P. Jones
15 Bring LT
17 Wrap Up.

* Analysis paper 2 DUE at beginning of our Final Exam time: Wednesday, Nov. 22, 10:00 a.m.

GRADES WILL BE BASED ON...

1) Class Participation.

Please come to class having read assignments *with care*, and *be part of the conversation*—willing to share comments and insights, and to ask questions. Also, be present at group meetings and contribute your fair share to group projects (75 pts.)

Among several things, “*with care*,” as we shall discuss more fully in class, means wrestling your mind and heart into the core of everything we read, listen to, or watch. I judge your level of engagement every day. I see you. If you feel you may be being misperceived, come see me. And any devices must be used only for note taking or grabbing anything we need for the discussion going on at the moment...

2) Five (5) “Tweets” (10 pts. each), and a “tweets” compilation (10 pts.)

“Tweets” should be under 240 characters (excluding spaces). The object is to help you develop the important ability to focus on what you think is the “core,” or “heart” of something, or simply what struck you most strongly about it, and then to

write briefly *and vividly* about that. You want to try to convey a central contrast, or tension, or “weirdness” about the work. We’ll practice on works of literature, but this ability extends to *anything* you want to analyze and express yourself about. The compilation will give you a chance to revise some of your tweets. If you change them, include the original. (See [Supplement 9](#) below)

3) Two (2) short (2-page, 25 pts.) group presentations and “outline papers” on one of the “Exercises” below (Supplement 7), and on “Flash Fictions.” Everyone should look at the contents of all “Exercises” below, but we’ll assign groups to work on a specific one. These papers will help you develop the ability to formally analyze a work, especially for its major logical moves. See [Supplement 5](#) below, “Four basic logical forms.”

4) A poetry project (100 pts.). A portfolio of five poems. Four *must* be imitations, the fifth can be, or it can be “original.” This project develops the ability to understand creative language and the relationship between creativity and form. It also helps us to explore traditional notions of literary language, especially its “tropes” (see [Supplement 6](#) below). Models for this project are in [Supplement 8](#).

5) Two (2) short papers (3-4 pages, 100 pts. each), the first analyzing a story “intrinsically,” the second “extrinsically.” It’s formal, college-level essay writing. See [Supplement 4](#) for a definition of “intrinsic” vs. “extrinsic.” You may use any story in the *Art of the Story* book, **except** the ones we have already covered. You may use ones we *will* be covering, not ones we have covered.

6) Completion of any short assignments the class “needs” (various points depending on length).

Advice on writing

In this literature class we’ll lean towards more vivid, expressive language, even when we’re writing analysis. *Write something you would be excited to read yourself.* Following these guidelines will help you write more readable prose—and poetry. At least 30% of grades for written assignments will be based on writing quality.

A. Vary your sentence lengths structures

- Rule of thumb: Don’t write more than three sentences in a row that have roughly the same length or structure.

B. Eliminate the following words *as much as possible* (can’t get rid of them all). Doing so usually cures 70% of wordiness and awkwardness.

- “To be” verbs (*is, was, were...*)
- Prepositions (*in, of, up...*)
- Relative pronouns (*that, which, who...*)

(You can read about these techniques and more in Richard R. Guzman’s *Writing Well Wherever You Work*, available on his website.)

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM. Do your own work and give credit when you use other peoples' words and ideas. Punishment for plagiarism is serious, including failing the class and even possible dismissal from the college.

SUPPLEMENTS

1. A poem by William Carlos Williams

THIS IS JUST TO SAY

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold

2. The beginning of a poem by T.S. Eliot

The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

*S'io credisssi che mia reposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,
Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse.
Ma per cio che giammai diquestio fondo
Non torno viva alcun, s'I'odo il vero,
Senza tema diinfamia ti respondo.*

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky**STOP reading here!**
What do you think should follow?

Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question.
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo...

3. A structure of creation and "reading"

CONNECTING

To culture, history, suffering, joy...Beauty

CREATING

Exploration, *Lateral* Thinking,
Chaos-Randomness-Letting Go,
Playing, Finding *Content*

ORDERING

Logical forms, Traditional
story and poem structures and
"tropes," Finding *Form*

COMPRESSING

Finding vivid, expressive language

4. An outline of “literary methods”

(Adapted in part from Steven Lynn’s *Text and Contexts*)

A. “INTRINSIC” methods of “Reading” a “Text”

1. New Criticism

Major assumptions:

- a. The work itself should be the focus, not author’s intention or audience’s response.
- b. Purpose is to explain works organic unity.
- c. Great works are complex, having tension, ambiguity, irony, levels of meaning.

Major techniques/questions:

- a. Read closely, assuming everything has been carefully calculated. What formal elements does this work have (structure, imagery, diction)?
- b. Find oppositions, tensions, ambiguities, ironies. How can these formal elements be arranged in opposing pairs or groups?
- c. Indicate how all these are *unified* by an idea or system of symbols. What unifying idea holds these opposing elements together?

2. Reader Response

Major assumptions:

- a. The reader’s response is what counts.
- b. Readers actively create meaning guided by goals and rules personal and communal.
- c. Responding to a text is a process, and describing that process is valuable because different responses may enrich one another.

Major questions/techniques:

- a. Move through the text carefully, in slow motion, describing the expectations and the actual experiences of an “ideal” reader. What is your response to the text?
- b. Move through the text slowly, describing *your* response. If the text were changed in some specific way, how would that change your response?
- c. Focus on how particular details shape readers’ expectations and responses. To what extent is your response personal and idiosyncratic vs. shaped by shared norms?

3. Deconstruction

Major assumptions:

- a. Meaning is made by binary oppositions, and in every binary relationship one item is favored or privileged.
- b. This favoring can be reversed and questioned through imaginative and playful reading.
- c. Such reversals undermine dogmatic thinking, opening up new ideas and suggesting that meaning is ultimately unstable and open-ended.

Major questions/techniques:

- a. Identify the oppositions and determine which ones are favored. What does the text most obviously seem to say?
- b. Identify what seems central to the text and what seems marginal or excluded. Based on this, how can the text be turned against itself, even saying the opposite of what it seems to want to say?
- c. Reverse the text's hierarchy, arguing that what appears marginal is actually central. How can something apparently marginal be brought to the center of attention?

B. "EXTRINSIC" methods of "Reading" a "Text" (a small sample)

1. Historical, Post-Colonial, and Cultural Studies

Major assumptions:

- a. It matters when, where, and by whom something was written.
- b. Important considerations include facts about the author's life and status, the larger history around the author and the work, and the intellectual paradigms available to the author and readers.
- c. Although we must be careful to distinguish literature and "real life," the two and illuminate each other powerfully.

Major questions/techniques:

- a. Research the author's life and relate that information, carefully, to the work. Are there common issues between the work and the author's life?
- b. Research the author's time (political, economic, intellectual history, etc.) and relate these, carefully, to the work. How can these, including literary context, be connected to the work?
- c. Research how people reasoned during the author's lifetime. What were the patterns and limits to how they made sense of things? Is the author part of a dominant, colonial, or post-colonial culture, and how does that status affect the work?

2. Psychological Criticism

Major assumptions:

- a. Creative writing—like dreaming—represents the disguised fulfillment of a repressed wish or fear.
- b. Though everyone's formative history differs in particulars, there are basic patterns of development for most people. These patterns and particulars have lasting effects.
- c. In reading literature we can make educated guesses about what has been repressed and transformed.

Major questions/techniques:

- a. Apply a developmental concept to the work (various complexes (Oedipal, for example), anxieties, confusions). What appears to be motivating the author, character, or even reader?
- b. Relate the work to psychologically significant events in the author's life. What other motivations, repressed or disguised, might be at work?

- c. Consider how repressed material may be expressed in the work's pattern of imagery or symbols. What developmental concepts might help explain this behavior or patterning?

3. Feminist Criticism, Post-Feminism, Queer Theory

Major assumptions:

- a. Your interpretation is influenced by your own status, including gender, class, race, sexual orientation, religion, and much more.
- b. In the production and reception of literature, all people have not had equal access to writing, publishing, and reading. People of color, women, working-class people, etc., have often been excluded.
- c. Literature can influence social change.

Major questions/techniques:

- a. Identify qualities of gender, class, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc., and say how these are used to portray members of some group. How does the work advance or question a particular political agenda?
- b. Consider whether the text promotes or undermines stereotypes? How are individuals in this work portrayed as a part of a group or class?
- c. Imagine how the text might be read—or neglected—by a certain type of reader. How would readers of different political stances read this work differently?

5. Four basic logical forms

The logic of **CONTRAST**
 The logic of **ILLUSION / REALITY**
 The logic of **COMPARISON** (Metaphor, Similie—see *Tropes* below)
 The logic of **CLASSIFICATION and DIVISION**

6. The four major literary “tropes” and their “consequences”

METAPHOR. Comparing two unlike things: Love [tenor] is a Rose [vehicle].

Season: Spring Plot: Romance Explanation: Idiographic Ideology: Anarchist

METONYMY. Substituting something not an actual part of: White House for Presidency

Season: Fall Plot: Tragedy Explanation: Mechanistic Ideology: Radical

SYNECDOCHE. Representing with an actual part of: Wheels for Car

Season: Summer Plot: Romance Explanation: Organicist Ideology: Conservative

IRONY. Conveying the opposite of what's literal: Verbal, Situational, Dramatic

Season: Winter Plot: Satire Explanation: Contextualist Ideology: Liberal

7. Exercises

A. The Rolling Stones, “You Can’t Always Get What You Want”



Listen to this first track from what many believe to be the Stones’ finest album, *Let It Bleed*, at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OagFIQMs1tw>

- 1) What are the major oppositions in this recording?
- 2) Pick a binary relationship. Which item is favored?
- 3) How does this song relate to the times in which it was written?
- 4) What is the song’s theme, or moral, or “lesson”? How is this important to the time in which it was written?
- 5) What are the patterns of imagery in the song?

B. Vincent Van Gogh and Anne Sexton



“Read” both this famous painting by Van Gogh, and Anne Sexton’s poetic response to it called “Starry Night.” Find Sexton’s poem at:

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/171273>

Again, ask similar questions as above of BOTH art forms: Major oppositions? What’s favored in a particular binary? How does the painting and poem relate to their respective artists or the times in which the works were made? What are the patterns in each?

C. George Carl on Johnny Carson



Watch George Carl do his major routine at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJdNs0fbO1o>

Ask all the “Intrinsic” questions about structure and “tone,” then go to the “Extrinsic” ones, especially about the times in which such routines were popular. Who is Johnny Carson and what did his show mean to America? When, at the end, Carson says he “loves Vaudeville,” what does he mean? What important cultural and artistic figure also wore a bowler hat and little black suit? What do you make of the differences between Carl’s kind of entertainment and the entertainment we have today? Are there any similarities?

8. “MODELS” for Poetry Project

Rules for using these “models” for your projects:

1. You must use at least three of the following models.
2. No more than two poems for any one model.
3. Write your poems of about this shape and structure. We’ll discuss *themes* in class.

A. William Carlos Williams’ “This is just to say” (Supplement 1 above).

B. To A Poor Old Woman

munching a plum on
the street a paper bag
of them in her hand

They taste good to her
They taste good
to her. They taste
good to her

You can see it by
the way she gives herself
to the one half
sucked out in her hand

Comforted
a solace of ripe plums
seeming to fill the air
They taste good to her.

—William Carlos Williams

D. Disillusionment of Ten O’Clock

The houses are haunted
By white night-gowns
None are green,
Or purple with green rings,
Or green with hellow rings,
Or yellow with blue rings.
None of them are strange,
With socks of lace
And beaded ceintures.
People are not going
To dream of baboons and periwinkles.
Only here and there, an old sailor,
Drunk and asleep in his boots,
Catches tigers
In red weather.

—Wallace Stevens

C. The Moon Rises

When the moon comes up
the bells are lost
and there appear
impenetrable paths.

When the moon comes up
the sea blankets the earth
and the heart feels
like an island in infinity

No one eats oranges
under the full moon.
One must eat
cold green fruit.

When the moon comes up
with a hundred equal faces,
silver money
sobs in the pocket.

—Federico Garcia Lorca

E. Flowering

*An acrostic for JERRIE LEA HOPF
and her great flower gardens, upon her
deciding to chance early retirement
to enjoy life...*

Jonquils break out early
Even though winter threatens
Reclamations by frost every night
Reruns of ice all day long.
Intuition knows to start planning
Escapes—whispering to every fear:

Leave the enfolding earth anyway.
Enter that emptiness where souls breathe
Air from the open, open sky.

—Richard R. Guzman

F. The Sestina

(Example:)

In old Calcutta the streets are lined (1)
 With men in gold turbans, and elephants (2)
 In gold turbans, and the legless beggars (3)
 Who roam the neighborhood in packs of ten (4)
 Or twelve, they wear them too, and shout (5)
 As they swing through on their arms (6)

. arms (6)
 lined (1)
 shout (5)
 elephants (2)
 ten (4)
 beggars (3)

. beggars (3)
 arms (6)
 ten (4)
 lined (1)
 elephants (2)
 shout (5)

. shout (5)
 beggars (3)
 elephants (2)
 arms (6)
 lined (1)
 ten (4)

. ten (4)
 shout (5)
 lined (1)
 beggars (3)
 arms (6)
 elephants (2)

. elephants (2)
 ten (4)
 arms (6)
 shout (5)
 beggars (3)
 lined (1)

. . . . lined (1) elephants (2)
 beggars (3) ten (4)
 shout (5) arms (6)

—first stanza of example by Richard R. Guzman

The Painter

Sitting between the sea and the buildings
 He enjoyed painting the sea's portrait.
 But just as children imagine a prayer
 Is merely silence, he expected his subject
 To rush up the sand, and, seizing the brush,
 Plaster its own portrait on the canvas.

So there was never any paint on his canvas
 Until the people who lived in the buildings
 Put him to work: "Try using the brush
 As a means to an end. Select, for a portrait,
 Something less angry and large, and more subject
 To a painter's mood, or, perhaps to a prayer.

How could he explain to them his prayer
 That nature, not art, might usurp the canvas?
 He chose his wife for a new subject,
 Making her vast, like ruined buildings,
 As if, forgetting itself, the portrait
 Had expressed itself without a brush.

Slightly encouraged, he dipped his brush
 In the sea, murmuring a heartfelt prayer:
 "My soul, when I paint this next portrait
 Let it be you who wrecks the canvas."
 The news spread like wildfire through the buildings:
 He had gone back to the sea for his subject.

Imagine a painter crucified by his subject!
 Too exhausted even to lift his brush,
 He provoked some artists leaning from the buildings
 To malicious mirth: "We haven't a prayer
 Now, of putting ourselves on canvas,
 Or getting thje sea to sit for a portrait!"

Others declared it a self-portrait.
 Finally all indications of a subject
 Began to fade, leaving the canvas
 Perfectly white. He put down the brush.
 At once a howl, that was also a prayer,
 Arose from the overcrowded buildings.

They tossed him, the portrait, from the tallest of
 the buildings
 And the sea devoured the canvas and the brush
 As though his subject had decided to remain a
 prayer.

—John Ashberry

G. The Sonnet

tHE oRDER oF dISORDERS LIES WITHIN

i gUESS iT wOULD bE cRAZY, yOU mIGHT sAY,
tO wRITE A pOEM aLL iN bACKWARD cAPS,
mAYBE, aND nOT jUST tHE uSUAL wAY.
hOWEVER iT wOULD dO mE gOOD tO lAPSE

oUT oF nORMALCY aND oUT tO tHE eDGE.
iT wOULD bE A bREAK, A bREAK fROM tHE wAY
wE aRE fORCED iNTO aTTEMPTING tO dREDGE
uP tHE mERE fORM iN oUR lIVES Everyday.

iF yOU aSKED mE, i'D LOVE tO jUST gET rID
oF oRDER aND cONCENTRATE oN sUBSTANCE.
bUT eVEN tHE wORLD sITS uPON A gRID
sO wHY eVEN sTART oN tHIS sONG aND dANCE

sINCE iT IS iMPOSSIBLE tO bEGIN?
fOR tHE oRDER oF dISORDER LIES WITHIN.

—Pete Hallam

Jacob on Isaac, Dying

The other time his fingers turned this blue
Was the day he chased me up the cellar stair
And I, to lock the zombie in his lair,
Slammed the door on his talons reaching through;

Was the only other time I let him scare
Me so, as if that cellar held some clue
To outer darkness; as if that blood I drew
Had clotted like the thick of this black air—

See how, again, he reaches through the gloom
With palsied claws that want to stroke, to clutch,
And I must slam the door that seals his doom,
For I, false son, cannot endure his touch...

Who does it see, the last benighted stare
Of baffled love and undeceived despair?

—Mike Haley

H. *from* Someone Puts A Pineapple Together

I

O juvenes, o filii, he contemplates
A wholly artificial nature, in which
The profusion of metaphor has been increased.

It is something on a table that he sees,
The root of a form, as of this fruit, a fund,
The angel at the centre of this rind,

This husk of Cuba, tufted emerald,
Himself, may be, the irreducible X
At the bottom of imagined artifice,

Its inhabit and elect expositor.
It is as if there were three planets: the sun,
The moon and the imagination...

II

...Divest reality
Of its propriety. Admit the shaft
Of that third planet to the table and then:

1. The hut stands by itself beneath the palms.
2. Out of their bottle the green genii come.
3. A vine has climbed the other side of the wall.
4. The sea is sprouting upwards out of rocks.
5. The symbol of feasts and oblivion.
6. White sky, pink sun, trees on a distant peak.
7. These lozenges are nailed up lattices.
8. The owl sits humped. It has a hundred eyes.
9. The coconut and cockerel in one.
10. This is how yesterday's volcano looks.
11. There is an island Palahude by name—
12. An uncivil shape like a gigantic haw.

—Wallace Stevens

I. The Day Lady Died

It is 12:20 in New York a Friday
three days after Bastille day, yes
it is 1959 and I go get a shoeshine
because I will get off the 4:19 in Easthampton
at 7:15 and then go straight to dinner
and I don't know the people who will feed me

I walk up the muggy street beginning to sun
and have a hamburger and a malted and buy
an ugly NEW WORLD WRITING to see what the poets
in Ghana are doing these days

I go to the bank
and Miss Stillwagon (first name Linda I once heard)
doesn't even look up my balance for once in her life
and in the GOLDEN GRIFFIN I get a little Verlaine
for Patsy with drawings by Bonnard although I do
think of Hesiod, trans. Richmond Lattimore or
Brendan Behan's new play or *Le Balcom* or *Les Negres*
of Genet, but I don't, I stick with Verlaine
after practically going to sleep with quandariness

and for Mike I just stroll into the PARK LANE
Liquor Store and ask for a bottle of Strega and
then I go back where I came from to 6th Avenue
and the tobacconist in the Ziegfeld Theatre and
casually ask for a carton of Gauloises and a carton
of Picayunes, and a NEW YORK POST with her face on it

and I am sweating a lot by now and thinking of
leaning on the john door in the 5 SPOT
while she whispered a song along the keyboard
to Mal Waldron and everyone and I stopped breathing

—Frank O'Hara

J. Kong Turns Critic

The man said, "He is a brilliant
special effect, given the budget
and the film technology of the thirties,
but the story is hopelessly contrived,
even allowing for the strong mythic
element." The woman said, "No,
he looks too much like a stuffed toy,
a huge piece of period kitsch,
ludicrous when he tries for tragedy."

The man shook his hair and made smoke,
insisting, "Verisimilitude is irrelevant
as in any Gothic melodrama."
I marveled at these mammoth words
unfolding from such little brains. I ate
the man first, then the woman, both stringy,
but then what's not these days.

—William Trowbridge

K. IN A STATION OF THE METRO

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

—Ezra Pound

L. The Absolute Bedouin

Is the accomplice of sandstorms
He sniffs like a lion at the sleeping bride
He tacks manifestoes on the windows of waiting rooms
He is the authentic author of all white writing

He climbs the octaves of lobsters
He carries bouquets to the knees of stallions
He excommunicates the armies of dutiful hats

The absolute Bedouin despises genuflection
He throws dice on the catafalques of Bishops
He pours sugar into piety's carburetor

He was born where the four-footed pyramid
Meets the glacier with dirty fingernails
His mother was confetti his father unknown

Someday he will die in the street
His breast laid open by a switchblade
Playing cards fluttering in the open drawer
Where his heart might have been

—George Hitchcock

9. Samples of short responses to works of art

(Most from Greil Marcus' *Stranded: Rock & Roll for a Desert Island*)

On Ray Charles' *Modern Sounds in Country & Western Music* ::: The preeminent black singer in America, he'd always loved Hank Williams, but here he went beyond him. Williams sang about a home in the sky; Charles sang as one who'd been there, and now suffered exile. [168 characters—without spaces]

On James Brown's *Live at the Apollo, Vols. 1 & 2* ::: The Prisoner of Love comes to Harlem and lives up to his name. These albums, the apotheosis of Soul Brother #1, make up a passion play in cold sweat: every moment rehearsed and every moment real. [160 characters]

On Captain Beefheart's *Mirror Man* ::: One night's pursuit of the avante-garde summed up in 19 minutes of "Tarrotplane" (a reference to Robert Johnson's "Terraplane"), a growling, impossibly sustained leap back to the country blues of the thirties—music that was almost as far ahead of its time as it was behind it. [231 characters]

On the Beatles' *Rubber Soul* ::: Exchanging assault for seduction, they delivered the most serious love songs, exploring contingency, ambiguity, pleasure, and guilt. Where before they had taken pop music by storm, here they remade it from the inside out. [188 characters]

On Sam Cooke's "A Change is Gonna Come" ::: The greatest soul record ever made—released just after Cooke was shot to death—and a tender, terrifying prophecy of what the racial changes already at hand would cost; a prophecy, finally, of what they would be worth. [183 characters]

On Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde* ::: The sound of a man trying to stand up in a drunken boat, and, for the moment, succeeding. His tone was sardonic, scared, threatening, as if he'd awakened after paying all his debts to find that nothing was settled. [175 characters]

On The Coasters' *Their Greatest Recordings—The Early Years* ::: Stepin Fetchit as advance man for black revolt, with script by two Jews, Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller. Out of scores still remembered, their best lines: "You're gonna need an ocean / Of calamine lotion." [170 characters]

On the Stooges' *The Stooges* ::: The sound of Chuck Berry's Airmobile—after thieves stripped it for parts. [63 characters]