Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

Recognize the chronology of the major songs, albums, criticism, and novels of the songwriter and novelist Wesley Stace (a.k.a John Wesley Harding);

Explain some of the specific influences (literary, musical, historical, and artistic) on his songs and novels;

Discuss the literary techniques characteristic of the writer’s lyrics and novels; and

Write coherent and cogent analyses, using textual support and appropriate academic conventions and language, about the writer’s novels, songs, and criticism.

Syllabus

M Jan 14   Introduction to class: Syllabus, Expectations, and Requirements
Outline of career of John Wesley Harding/Wesley Stace
www.wesleystace.com
Bob Dylan, “John Wesley Harding” (1967)
John Wesley Harding, “Top of the Bottom” (2009)
   “Window Seat” (1998)

W Jan 16   Mike Tony, “John Wesley Harding: How Not to Be a Dick” (2012)
Rolling Stones, “Sympathy for the Devil” (1968)
JWH, “The Devil in Me” (1989)
JWH, “Nothing at All” (2004)

M Jan 21    Martin Luther King Day   No Class

W Jan 23   Bob Dylan, “Song to Woody” (1962)
   “Talking John Birch Paranoid Blues” (1964)
JWH, “Phil Ochs, Bob Dylan, Steve Goodman, David Blue and Me” (1986)
   “Bastard Son” (1989)
   “Making Love to Bob Dylan” (2012)
“Musical Influence” assignment due
**M Jan 28**  *   John Lennon, “Mother” (1970)
JWH, “Famous Man” (1988)
Band Aid, “Do They Know It’s Christmas” (1985)
JWH, “Election Night” (1994)
JWH, “There’s a Starbucks Where the Starbucks Used to Be” (2011)

**W Jan 30**  Martial, *De Spectaculis Liber* I (81 c.e.)
*Epigrammaton, Liber* I x-xii, xxxvii-xl; II.xx-xxviii; III. Lxix-lxxi
(86-88 c.e.)
JWH, “Skyscrapers of Memphis” (1993)
“Humble Bee” (2000)

**M Feb 4**  *   Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 42-106 (c.700 b.c.e.)
*Theogony*, 561-616 (c.700 b.c.e.)
JWH, “Oh, Pandora” (2009)

**W Feb 6**  Apuleius, Cupid and Psyche from *The Golden Ass* (2nd Century c.e.)
JWH, “Cupid and Psycho” (1996)

**M Feb 11**  **Paper 1 due**

**W Feb 13**  Wesley Stace, *By George* (2007)

**M Feb 18**  **Presidents’ Day**   No Class

**W Feb 20**  *   By George

**M Feb 25**  *   By George

**W Feb 27**  *   By George

**R Feb 28**  **Evening Appearance of John Wesley Harding/Wesley Stace at CCSU! Attendance Required**

**M Mar 4**  **Paper II due: Reflection on the Visit or Album Cover/Title Paper**
“Little Musgrave” (1999)

**W Mar 6**  Wesley Stace, *Charles Jessold, Considered as a Murderer* (2010)

**M Mar 11**  *   Charles Jessold, Considered as a Murderer

**W Mar 13**  *   Charles Jessold, Considered as a Murderer
M Mar 18  

*Charles Jessold, Considered as a Murderer*

W Mar 20  

* Erasmus, *Abbatis et eruditae* (1518)  
  JWH, “The Colloquy of Mole and Mr. Eye” (1999/2011)  
  John, 11:1-44 (c. 90-100 c.e.)  
  JWH, “Sorry, Lazarus” (2001)

M Mar 25  

}  

**Spring Break! No Class**

W Mar 27

M Apr 1  

No class (in exchange for February 28th concert event)

W Apr 3  

* John Donne, “Negative Love” (c.1600)  

M Apr 8  

  JWH, “My Favourite Angel” (2009)

W Apr 10  

JWH, “Miss Fortune” (1998)  
  “The Ballad of Miss Fortune” (2006)  

M Apr 15  


W Apr 17  

*Misfortune*

M Apr 22  

*Misfortune*

W Apr 24  

*Misfortune*

M Apr 29  

*Misfortune*

W May 1  

JWH, “The End” (2009)

W May 8  

**Paper III due by 1:00 PM**

*Required Texts*  


Grading Breakdown
Musical Influence Gloss 5%
In-Class Writings (4) 20%
Paper I 15%
Paper II 15%
Paper III: 25%
Reading/Listening Quizzes (unannounced) 10%
Attendance and participation 10%

Description of Assignments
Musical Influence Gloss (5%)
Joan Baez
The Band
Elizabeth Barraclough
David Blue
Leonard Cohen
Ramblin’ Jack Elliott
Steve Goodman
Nic Jones
Joni Mitchell
Phil Ochs
John Prine
Townes Van Zandt
Suzanne Vega
Neil Young
Warren Zevon

For their assigned musical influence, students need to submit the following:

a) Artist's (real where applicable) name and dates (birth, death and/or floruit) or, in the case of a group, all members' names and dates

b) Titles and years of release of his/her/their most popular and/or influential songs (and/or albums)

c) A link to and title of a video from youtube (or some other similar website) of a representative song by the artist accompanied by

d) a sentence explaining why the song is representative of the artist.

e) Works cited list (not including Wikipedia)

In-class Writings (20%)
Four (4) in-class responses to a specific question about the assigned texts/songs for that class. The answers, to be assessed using the attached rubric, should directly address the question by offering textual evidence.
Possible Paper I Topics (15%)

I. Compare/Contrast some significant aspect(s) of designated JWH’s lyric with the proposed short story/essay/poem/film
   a) “The Fall of the House of Harding” with E. A. Poe’s “Fall of the House of Usher” (1839)
   b) “The Celestial Shuttle” with N. Hawthorne’s “Celestial Railroad” (1843)
   c) “Goth Girl” and Sarah Vowell’s “American Goth” (from Take the Cannoli, 2001)
   d) “Orpheus Must Die” Tuatara (with JWH) and Vergil’s “Orpheus and Eurydice” from Georgics, Book IV (29 BCE)
   e) “Sleeper Awake” and “The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood” (1697)
   f) “Humankind” and the film One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (1975)
   g) “For an Actress” and the film Rear Window (1954)

II. The “Why?” Question
   a) “The Examiners” – why was JWH attracted to this poem as a lyric for a song?
   b) “Roy Orbison Knows” – why Roy Orbison?
   c) “The Robert Frost Rag” – why Robert Frost?

III. Criticism
    What are some of the representative themes in Wesley Stace’s reviews of biographies of Prince, Neil Young, David Bowie and Bob Dylan?

Possible Paper II Topics (15%)


II. Research and discuss a particular aspect of one of the following JWH album covers (and titles)

   Why We Fight
   Confessions of St. Ace
   Who was Changed and Who was Dead

III. Write a reflection on the visit to/performance at CCSU by John Wesley Harding/Wesley Stace

IV. Answer Question 3, 4, or 10 in the back section of By George.
V. Create a Youtube video for any of the John Wesley Harding songs on the syllabus thus far.

**Paper III (25%)**

An analysis of either:

a) one song from *Songs of Misfortune* within the context of the novel or

b) one myth from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* within the context of the novel

**Reading/Listening Quizzes (unannounced) 10%**

**Participation and Attendance (10%)**

Students can miss up to two classes during the course of the semester, *but, given the timeliness of the assignment, not on the day of an in-class essay*. These absences may be related to illness, “better offers,” or even sloth, with little penalty. If students miss three or more, however, their grades may well be affected negatively. The other half of this grade is participation (i.e., *what students do after showing up for class*: demonstrating their preparation by asking pertinent questions, answering questions, respectfully challenging the professor’s and fellow students’ interpretations, volunteering to read aloud, etc.). Even attending every class is still only half this grade. **Nota bene: Students cannot receive full credit for this grade without attending the JWH/Wesley Stace event on 2/28/13.**

**Accommodations**

Please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs if you believe you need course accommodations based on the impact of a disability, medical condition, or if you have any emergency medical information to share. I will need a copy of the accommodation letter from Student Disability Services in order to arrange any accommodations. Contact Student Disability Services, The Learning Center, Willard Hall if you are not already registered with them. Student Disability Services maintains the confidential documentation of your disability and assists you in coordinating reasonable accommodations with your faculty.

**Academic Honesty policy**

The CCSU homepage contains an extensive section on academic honesty and plagiarism that you should read thoroughly (www.ccsu.edu/AcademicIntegrity/). Appropriating someone else’s ideas or words without giving them credit, whether intentionally or not, is unethical and is subject to the penalties described in the guide. You are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism and for avoiding both deliberate and unintended plagiarizing.

**A Final Word**

PLAGIARISM is the un-attributed use of another’s ideas and/or words (EITHER intentional OR accidental). Don’t do it. If you are at all unsure, ask me or another English professor. Remember: People’s academic careers have ended because of plagiarism.
Contact Information
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Office hours:
Monday and Wednesday 1:00-3:00
Tuesday 11:00-12:00
(or by appointment)

Blog: www.connecticuthalfwit.blogspot.com

Weekly radio show:
“Frank, Gil, and Friends,”
Tuesdays 8-10 AM
On-air: WFCS 107.7 FM
### THE DIEDERICH SCALE

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<tr>
<td>Organization, Relevance, Movement</td>
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<td>Style, Flavor, and Individuality</td>
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**Subtotal x 5 = _________**

**Subtotal x 3 = _________**

**Subtotal x 1 = _________**

**Paper Grade = _________**

**Override factor:** If there are more than 15 different errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, usage, and/or sentence sense, the paper must be rewritten or will receive a grade of “F.”