

Many Different Spectrums of Culture  
Model Student  
Humanities 1500  
Dr. Doug Davis  
3,222 Words

Davis, Miles. Birth of the Cool. Capitol Records, 2001.

Claude Monet, Woman with a Parasol – Madame Monet and Her Son, National Gallery of Art,  
Washington, DC

Dickens, Charles. “The Trial for Murder.” Read Book Online. 2007. Read Book. 1 April 2007  
<http://www.readbookonline.net/readOnLine/584/>.

Dickens, Charles. “Three Detective Anecdotes.” Read Book Online. 2007. Read Book. 1 April  
2007 <http://www.readbookonline.net/readOnLine/2526/>.

American Graffiti. Dir. George Lucas. Perf. Richard Dreyfuss, Ronny Howard, Cindy Williams.  
Universal Pictures, 1973.

Miles Davis’ Birth of the Cool

**Summary:**

In listening to the Miles Davis’ CD, Birth of the Cool, one is immediately transformed back into a time warp to the post-World War II days when a revitalized form of jazz was taking shape. In the Birth of the Cool, you are immediately taken to a relaxed state of mind where one can close their eyes and open their ears to a smooth blend of horns accompanied with the beats of a drum in harmony with the ever apparent saxophones and bass that are able to add to the rhythm of the listener’s heart. Within the 12 cuts on the CD, the listener is able to take in the best that Miles Davis has to offer, while making them an instant fan with the ability to realize why he was

such a pivotal person in the jazz movement of that time period. The record was originally released in 1957, and contained many of Davis' most famous pieces that he recorded between 1949 and 1950, with the CD being re-released in 2001. The record is truly the culmination of a new form of jazz that was called "cool", and is able to show the transition away from the traditional aggressive tempos that many jazz artists prior to Davis used commonly, towards a lighter and smoother sound. With the transformational sounds of cool jazz one finds themselves lost in the sounds of the horns and clarinet, as their heart begins to beat along with the steady beat of the drum.

**Evaluation:**

In listening to the "cool" sounds of Miles Davis, one is found to ponder what this particular gentleman had to go through during his years in order to get his music out to the public, as well as the power that he had over his followers during that time in history. Davis seems to have a way into the locked doors of his listener's souls and is able to unlock them without trouble, doing so within myself. I found myself in a relaxed and thoughtless state as I listened to track after track on the CD, which allows you to forget about the hustle and bustle that one may face in everyday life while taking in a new experience, that I personally could not relate to any other. It is amazing how one can learn a little about their selves as they relax to take in less than forty five minutes of masterful artwork by one of the most renowned jazz musicians of his time or any other time for that matter. After listening to the CD, one might find their self asking how such beauty comes together as well as asking how the artists were able to come together and coexisted to form such culturally enriching music which remains timeless for other generations to enjoy. I found Mr. Davis' work to be personally enriching and powerful in its ability to bring one's mind to piece as well as allowing it to be transformed to a smoky night club

that finds couples dancing to the enriching sounds of a trumpet, clarinet, horns and other instruments as they enjoy the evening with others.

Claude Monet's Woman with a Parasol – Madame Monet and Her Son

**Summary:**

During a recent trip to Washington, DC, I had the distinct honor of visiting the National Gallery of Art, which is home to hundreds of paintings, prints and sculptures which were produced by some of the world's most renowned artists over many centuries. One such painting is that of Woman with a Parasol – Madame Monet and Her Son, 1875 which is painted by the famous French Impressionist, Claude Monet as an oil on canvas during the Modern Era. In the painting Monet is able to capture a serene experience of a walk between a mother and a son that is held in a field full of flowers with the blue skies over head. When one is viewing the painting they are able to make notice of many different details as to the type of day this walk took place on. With the flowing of her dress as well as her veil, we can assume that the day was windy, but bright enough that a parasol and hat were needed to help shade their eyes away from the sun. Additionally, Monet is also able to capture the beauty of the field in which they walk in that is flowing with flowers of various shades of yellow as well as the warm green grass that adds to the shadowing of the young mother as her son looks to her from the back ground. Also, when viewing this particular painting the viewer is able to make note of the way Monet was able to capture light within his painting, and this is most noticeable at the top of the green parasol, where you are able to notice the bright white color which helps you to envision the sunlight that might have been present that afternoon. With it hard to notice in pictures of such paintings, it is

amazing how Monet's brushstrokes are able to aid in the beauty of allowing the white clouds and blue sky to move overhead on such a beautiful day.

**Evaluation:**

When viewing the painting Monet's wife and son, you are able to capture the admiration that the painter had for his two loved ones as well as the beautiful and serene outdoor setting that Monet is able to capture in vivid details. With this visit being my first to a major art gallery of this magnitude, I found myself fully being able to take into consideration topics that had previously been discussed within my Humanities and Art Appreciation classes. With having the ability to see the painting from an unobstructed view, I found myself being able to notice the brushstrokes that seem flawless and add the greatest of detail to the piece. Out of all the paintings and sculptures in this particular museum, I found this particular Monet to be my favorite for its ability to capture a simple moment between a young boy and his mother on a beautiful spring day with rich blue skies above and colorful flowers at their feet. This work is similar to his previous works that he completed while living at Argenteuil, where he was able to produce some of his most popular paintings. If having to relate Monet's work to that of another Impressionist artist of his time, I would have to reference his abilities in being able to capture the human form within nature to the work of Manet.

Charles Dickens' "The Trial for Murder" and "The Detective Anecdotes"

**Summary:**

During the Victorian Era, the writings of one of the world's most renowned authors took shape in the form of Charles Dickens' novels and short stories that he would pen during this life time. Mr. Dickens became very well known for his works such as, Oliver Twist and David

Copperfield, but many tend to forget about the short stories and mysteries that he seemed to enjoy writing. Two such stories are, “The Trial for Murder” and “Three Detective Anecdotes” that depict stories of murder and mystery, under the watchful eyes of an upper class British gentleman and a blood hound of a detective.

In “The Trial for Murder”, a young gentleman is troubled by a sight that he has witnessed taking place outside his window at home. The sight is of two men scurrying down a busy street, with one chasing after the other, with the chaser seeming to be a dead man trying to chase down his murderer, is a surprising shock to the business man who seems to be the only witness to this odd sight. At first the man does not realize what he is seeing until the days following produce an announcement of murder in the local paper, he quickly recognizes the men in the paper as being the two men he saw running that autumn day. With the murder trial coming up the man does not come forth with what he witnessed for fear of being laughed at, but is surprised one morning when he is greeted with a jury summons. Thinking that surely he will not be appointed to the jury for the murder trial he is sadly mistaken, as he walks in the courtroom to find one of the men he witnessed that morning running down the street. Both men (the business man and the murderer) are shocked when they find the business man will now serve as the jury foreman. The gentleman settles into his new position as fore-person, only to be haunted by the dead man as the jury tries to put the pieces of the murder case together. The story takes a humorous tone as you read how the victim haunts the dreams of the entire jury and how they are all able to recount the same dream the very next morning. The ghost seems to be determined to encourage the jury that the man standing accused needs to be punished for his crime, and will stop at nothing in seeing that the defendant is found guilty.

In the second short story read, "Three Detective Anecdotes", the reader is treated to three short stories within one larger short detective story. The first seemed to be more entertaining than the others as you meet, Inspector Wield, as he is investigating the murder of a young woman who is found to have a strange pair of gloves under her bed pillow. Inspector Wield seems to take to task more the history of the gloves than he does the actual murder of Ms. Eliza Grimwood, as he tracks down every known glove cleaner in the city only to find no one is the wiser of who the gloves belong to. About to give up on his search the inspector decides to take in the enjoyment of the opera only to luckily have been sat next to a young man who is able to recognize the gloves and sends the Inspector on his way to track down the real owner, only to realize that after questioning the man that he is not the killer just the owner of the gloves, leaving the murder unsolved. The second anecdote is that of three old detectives meeting to drink sherry as one is noticeably wearing a very expensive shirt pin that becomes the object that thieves desire in trying to steal. After a large brawl ensues the pin has been taken, but is later found when the thieves are taken to the local police station, while none of the thieves are found to be holding the pin, the reader is shocked to find that one of the other detectives was able to trick the thief in giving him the pin during the scuffle, and the thief did so believing it was his friends' hand that he had put the pin into for safe keeping. The third anecdote is clearly the icing on the cake when Inspector Wield is back to investigate at the hospital who could be stealing the money and belongs of some of the student doctors while on the job. The Inspector is able to create an elaborate plan to coax the thief out of hiding while using an old sofa. The Inspector has the sofa placed in the room containing the student's possessions and is able to hide within its cushions, until he is able to jump out and catch the thief red handed.

## **Evaluation:**

For myself when reading Charles Dickens, I find myself thoroughly entertained, amused, as well as intrigued at how masterful this artist seemed to be able to write. Dickens is a master at the ability to transform his readers to the scenes which he vividly captures in the readers imagination as he tells humorous and thoughtful accounts of events that his characters seem to find themselves within. It is hard to find reading any of his short stories or novels as just an assignment that needs to be conquered, because the reader is able to enjoy the stories as the writer fully intended them to. Having previously read Mr. Dickens' intriguing novel Great Expectations, I found myself laughing out loud at the mystery stories and characters that he writes about in "The Trial for Murder" and "Three Detective Anecdotes". I also found myself wanting to search out other stories that the author penned during his time in order to enjoy them on a beach somewhere over the summer break. Mr. Dickens seems to be able to write not only about the under privileged, but also about the working man and the aristocrats of England, this detail is intriguing to me, as to how he managed to write with such knowledge and insight about so many different classes of society. It begs me to wonder what types of research he completed before picking up his pen to write.

George Lucas's American Graffiti

## **Summary:**

In 1973, George Lucas directed the run away hit American Graffiti, about four recent high school graduates who spend one very interesting night in a small California town set in 1962. The movie is filmed almost entirely at night allowing for most of the scenes to be overly dark and seemingly only lighted by the nearby street lights, with just the last scene of the movie

taking place in the morning and has various settings that you might find in such as small town, such as the local drive-in restaurant, liquor store, school dance, car dealership and the downtown strip where everybody that is anybody cruises around to show off their car or their girlfriend. As the movie unfolds it finds four young friends at different places in life. The two main characters are very young actors, Richard Dreyfuss (Curt) and Ronny Howard (Steve), who play best friends who are about to leave the small town for college, with one who is openly excited about the new prospect of a different world but has to contend with his reluctant girlfriend, while the other young man begins to question if he should go at all and sets out to have the most memorable night he can find. The third young man is known as the local drag strip king that is hunted each week in order to test his skills behind his beefed-up, bright yellow truck, where the movie finds him looking for girl to ride around with, only to end up with her baby sister whom he is embarrassed to be seen with and makes him feel as though he is babysitting. The fourth young man is quite different from the other three, as he has difficulty talking to women and is excited at his future prospects when Steve leaves his car with him as he is to head off to college in the morning. With his new found freedom of having a car, young Terry takes his new ride to the streets in order to impress his future lady hopefuls only to have a small accident within the first few minutes of having the car and then after he does meet a girl, he has the car stolen. As the night progresses, it finds Steve and Curt splitting up so that Steve can spend time with his girlfriend who wants to discuss the future of their relationship, allowing them to fight and break up more times than they actually make-up. Curt now finds himself on a journey to have the most memorable night he can possibly have as the Pharrohs (the local street gang) try to recruit him, which ends up with a police cruiser losing its rear axle in the process. Through all their journeys the young men find themselves on, they all seem to be in search of what the future

might have in store for them, which seems to always leave the viewer laughing in hysterics while listening to some of the most popular songs of the time.

### **Evaluation:**

When viewing the film, American Graffiti the viewer is constantly treated to laugh out loud moments from the actions of the foursome of main characters. For myself in viewing the film I think back to possibly how my parents' teenage years were and wonder if some of the situations were similar to something that they might have encountered during this period of time before the seventies. The movie is also an easy way to reflect back on the rich history that the early sixties had on popular culture of more modern times, especially the soundtrack that accompanies the movie, with features songs like Rock Around the Clock, Runaway and Ain't That a Shame. I came to really enjoy the movie and the antics of the four main characters, as well as how it seemed to capture in great tribute to the culture that was the sixties, where you truly enjoyed hanging out with your friends and listening to great music. I am curious though at how there really seemed to be no real reference to the war in Vietnam which was being fought during this time, with the only mention I found being that at the end of the movie when the credits were about to run and they listed what happened to the four main characters later in life and stated that one perished in Vietnam. I would almost reference it some ways to the movie Forrest Gump, a film made in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which tells the story of a young man forced into making difficult decisions in life, and having his story told with the add of popular music of the time.

### **Compare and Contrast:**

In working on this project is easy to allow your mind to escape the reality of your current world towards the worlds occupied by Davis, Monet, Dickens and the world of the early sixties.

When comparing Davis to the other artist of the paper it is easily said that he was in a class all by himself, but when looking deeper into the spectrum you are able to see similarities of himself, to that of Monet and Dickens as all three men were known for being innovative and bring about new movements in their different forms of expression. With relating George Lucas, the writer and director of American Graffiti, to other noteworthy writers you can clearly point to a connection with Charles Dickens, and how both men were able to write intriguing characters that ultimately were able to sustain the plots of sensational stories, while bringing their profession of writing to a higher level all their own. I can't say that I purposely chose artists from different generations in order to explore those areas more, but am glad that it worked out in that fashion as it allowed me to visit four totally new and different cultures that I had not previous studied in-depth. While researching this paper I found that it is easier than we think in current day society to look to the past for enriching entertainment on different spectrums then what is currently offered in society. It is just as easy to stroll through an art gallery as it is to stroll thru a mall, easier to pick out a classic movie from the 60's and 70's as it is to pick a movie that is filled with sex and violence. And equally as easy to grab the great work of English literature or classical or jazz CD that allows your mind to rest, than it is to pick-up the weekly People magazine or the latest one hit wonder of pop culture.

A Whirlwind of Experiences

Model Student

Humanities 1500

Dr. Doug Davis

1,965 Words

New Sounds Show #2392

Frank Lloyd Wright-A Gatefold Portfolio

Waiting for Godot- Samuel Bekett

St. Patrick's Cathedral

### **Category A**

New Sounds show # 2392 from the New York Public Radio was based on works with the eclectic guitar. The first piece was from the Pat Metheny Group and was title The Way Up. The original piece was in four sections long. The first played had a very up-tempo and jazz feel. It incorporated many other instruments and including the electric guitar. The piece even went as far to have some singing and voice. The piece seemed to get fast and increase tempo towards the end. The second section played was much slower than first but still had the same basic feeling of the first. Both section combined made the piece sixteen minutes long. The Second piece played was from a Group called The Four Bags which are based out of New York. In their piece they incorporated the eclectic guitar, trombone, accordion, and the saxophone. The piece is titled Off Shore and it had a very lonely and sad feel. The piece also seemed very cold but had a lot of emotion. This particular piece was not very long and only lasted about six minutes. The third piece played was by Terje Rypdal from Norway. He titled his piece Odyssey and he himself used both the electric guitar and the saxophone. In the beginning of the piece it had a very spacey, out-

of this world feel. As the electric guitar was played at the end, it gave the song a more modern rock feel. This piece was about twelve minutes long. The final piece play on the show was by Gavin Bryars, and is titled After the Requiem. He uses instruments such as the viola and the cello along with the electric guitar. This piece also had a slow and sad feel, but unlike the second piece it had more of a classical feel. This piece lasted about fifteen minutes. The pieces are very modern and were recorded recently. The use of the electric guitar also gave each piece a more modern feel.

I choose to listen to show #2392 because it was titled Modern Jazz Pop Chamber Rock and each piece included sounds from the electric guitar, which is a favorite instrument of mine. I really liked the first piece because of its jazz feel and is something that I could dance to. The second piece was very emotional because of the slow tempo. It reminded me of song played on a rainy day or a song you play after a couples break up. I did not particularly like the beginning of the third piece because it seem like to much was going on in the song, even though it didn't seem to use a wide rang of instruments. I felt the piece was a success because of the electric guitar which was incorporated towards the end. I found it very interesting that Terje Rypdal, the artist, play both instruments used in the song himself. The last piece reminded me a little of the second because this piece also had a very sad a slow feel. This piece had more of a classical feel and I could imagine this piece being played in a movie or play. I found it interesting how four different artists used the same instrument in four different ways and composed pieces of music that sound nothing alike. I would like to know more about the different techniques thy used to create the different sounds from the electric guitar.

## **Category B**

“Frank Lloyd Wright- A Gatefold Portfolio” is a book that described some of Frank Lloyd Wright’s best work. It contains sixteen full-color renderings of homes and buildings that he designed from 1901 to 1957. Each one has his signature contemporary style, but each design is totally different. Most of the homes he including his own were prairie houses. From 1901-1906 the homes Wright designed were built in the suburbs. In 1906 The Frederick C. Robie House was the first to be built on a narrow corner lot in Chicago. The book also describes how his designs were found all over America, from the cities to the country side to the desert. Some were only one story and others were many stories tall. The book also talks about one of Wright’s most well known homes, Fallingwater, It was designed as a vacation home for the Kaufman family who owned a department store. The home was constructed of reinforced concrete on solid rock. The main feature of the home was the waterfall that ran underneath the house. Some other features of the home are its large amounts of glass and windows used. Wright created a staircase that lead from the living room and suspends over the waterfall below. The home was meant to be apart of the surrounding nature.

I enjoyed studying this book because I personally am a big fan of Frank Lloyd Wright and his architecture. The renderings shown in the book provided me with a visual understanding of his style and the type of style he liked to use. Some things I learned from the book were Frank Lloyd Wright’s ability to have a totally different design, but it still maintained his basic style. I also like how he designed his homes and buildings to be more modern than their time. This book gave me more of an understanding for architecture and I would be very interested in learning more about Frank Lloyd Wright and the field of architecture. This book made me realize that architecture is all around us even when we don’t realize it.

## Category C

The play "Waiting for Godot" was about two tramps waiting in the same spot by a tree everyday for someone they were told to meet. Everyday the person never shows but they still continue to comeback and wait. During Act I and Act II the main characters Estragon and Vladimir get into conflict with two other characters Pozzo and Lucky. Vladimir is very determined on waiting for Godot during the play and Estragon isn't so much because he has to be reminded of the goal. Pozzo is a master to Lucky and is very mean to Lucky. He also tries to make it very difficult for Vladimir and Estragon to stay and wait for Godot, as he annoys and picks fights with them. At the end of each act a boy that is a messenger from Godot comes and tells them that Godot can not meet with them today, but the boy insists that he didn't say it that the day before. Once Vladimir and Estragon are expected to leave and come the next day. All they about Godot is that he does nothing all day and he has Shepherds and Goatherds. The plot of the story seemed to be parallel and circular because the same thing happened in both acts and the end of Act II it showed evidence that I was going to happen once again if there were another act. This play is apart of 20<sup>th</sup> century literature. It was first written in Beckett's language, French, and later translated into English. The play seem to have somewhat of a biblical message because to certain thing like the Godot having goatherds and shepherds. Also being that the Godot was unseen throughout the play.

I choose the read the play "Waiting for Godot" because it had an interesting title and I wanted to see what it was about. After reading the play I don't think it is one I have read for a second time. I did particular like it because the story didn't go anywhere and almost seemed pointless. Without the biblical references I would not have knew there may have been a message trying to be conveyed. I wonder what Beckett was trying to describe when he wrote this play.

The plot gave me a better understanding of how parallel plots in literature work. Even though I didn't particularly like this play I would be interested in reading a similar Samuel Beckett play to get a better understanding of this one. This play was unlike no other that I have read.

### **Category D**

The book "St. Patrick's Cathedral- A Centennial History" described the history of the cathedral and its importance to America. It also explained how the cathedral was paid for and even went to detail about the architectural style used. The cathedral was built so that everyone in New York, of all background could come and worship. It took twenty years to complete construction of the cathedral and was constructed on Fifth Avenue. The St. Patrick's Cathedral that we know of today is actually the second St. Patrick's Cathedral. The first was no longer large enough to accommodate the growing population of New York. Construction began on the cathedral in 1858 and open it door in 1879. There was a large fund-raiser to help pay for the interior furnishings such as the pews and some things also had to be rented. The building is based on a geometric style of gothic architecture which many disliked. The plan was based on the Latin cross the main doors facing Fifth Avenue and the body of the church making up the midway and the arms spanning out toward 51<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Street. The exterior has a large gable with two large towers on either side. It has very high points and stipules. The main doors to cathedral were made of bronze. The interior had two rows of piers and six on each side of the cathedral. There were large arches that were supported by the piers. The windows lit up the ceiling and gave dramatic effect of the vaulted ceilings. Another main feature of the church is the stained glass windows. They used very vivid colors and depicted great scenes from the bible. One of the images in the window display a person being burned on a grill and halo surrounding his head. The cathedral is filled art in every direction.

I decided to study this book because I wanted to learn more about different kinds of architecture. I enjoyed learning about the history and the making of the cathedral. I was expecting for the book to discuss more about the gothic architecture. What I got from the book was an understanding of how important the cathedral is to the city New York and the people who live there. I would like to know more about the architectural aspects of the cathedral rather than the history. As a whole the book was very informative and it gave me a opportunity to learn about the cathedral.

### **Compare and Contrast**

As a whole I enjoyed doing this cultural experience report. The part I enjoyed studying the most was Category A-Music because I am a big fan of music and it gave me an opportunity to listen to different musical works that I never heard before. I also enjoyed Category B because it gave me an opportunity to learn more about Frank Lloyd Wright and the great designs he created. I also like Category B because I was actually able to see a visual of the culture. Category C was my least enjoyable to because I didn't fully understand what the author was trying to convey to reader. It almost made the play seem pointless but I allow me to see that not all literature is the same and some literature may not have a message that is easily understood. Category D was interesting because it allow me to learn more about the St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Although I was really interested in learn more about the architectural aspects of the cathedral the history was very informative. This cultural experience report gave me an opportunity to learn about many new things that I could take with me throughout life.