

Paper 1

- Compare/contrast song that influenced Bowie with song made by Bowie
- Consider:
 - style of music
 - performer's perspective
 - authenticity
 - intention
- 3 pages + bibliography
 - cite songs
 - cite 2 or more other works (e.g. class reading materials)
- Rubric:
 - 2 songs from lists
 - 3 pages long
 - bibliography (2 songs + 2 works)
 - compare/contrast songs
 - equal opinion and insight
 - proper support for info

The Biz

- In 60's, old executives were more open to experimental or financially risky music
- Hip new executives were less willing to take chances

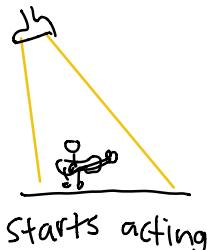
David Bowie and the Lower Third

- In Fall '65, Bowie gets guitar and tries to write songs
- Someone who writes own songs can make more money for recording company (company convinces songwriter to give them a share of the royalties)
- Bowie had his own songs, mostly they were terrible

- Money was channeled through Bowie's manager Ralph Horton. Bowie's band became disgruntled with meager pay. However, the band weren't great musicians, particularly when it came to recording. In 1966, band demanded to be paid more right before gig, Horton refused, **band quit**, Bowie cried.
- Bowie was left hanging, now he had to **compete w/** **musicians who had bands**, e.g. Beatles, Stones, Kinks, The Who, etc.
- "Can't Help Thinking About Me" was Bowie's first modest hit; recorded w/ band, but song would've functioned well w/o band

David Bowie and The Buzz

- Solo singer/guitarist worked in American folk circuit, but it didn't work in London
(stones + other bands dominated)
- Bowie formed **The Buzz**, but they had no creative spark; Bowie just liked hanging out with them. They were **eventually dropped**.
- While Bowie and Lower third had some minor chemistry, Bowie and The Buzz had none.
- Kenneth Pitt is about to walk out of gig when Bowie plays one last song (^{Broadway} show tune). Like w/ Les Kahn, he **sees magic in Bowie's performance**. Still,



managers can't figure out how to take advantage of Bowie's talent because the genre hasn't been invented yet.

- Pitt buys Bowie's contract.

Brian Wilson and Anthony Newley

- mid-'66, Bowie loses interest in what he's doing. He gets absorbed in an idea, then moves on.
 - loses interest in idea of band
 - He's only 19, already had 5 bands
- Loved "Pet Sounds" by Beach Boys because it was concept album.
- Brian Wilson became mentally ill, didn't want to perform w/ Beach boys, instead stayed home

and wrote all the songs. wanted to write concept album, Beatles beat him to it with Rubber Soul and Revolver.

- Brian wilson recorded entire "Pet Sounds" album by himself. It wasn't meant to be played live.
- Bowie was drawn to concept album and the idea of the aloof mad genius who creates music all on his own.
- Bowie also was really into actor, Anthony Newley. He did show tunes. In a sense, Newley was performing his songs in an inauthentic way ; he was being someone else.
 - 6. Newley is always moving, always acting ; brings lots of emotion to act. Even when he's not singing, he's acting (unlike what would

have been common among lead vocalists like Mick Jagger, they would take break and let guitarists "act").

The Velvet Underground

- Kenneth Pitt brought Velvet Underground album back from [↗] NYC, shows it to Bowie,
American band Bowie loves the music and idea of Andy Warhol's fabricated band.
 - Point of V.U. was to create band that encompassed idea of rock (it was fake band, not authentic)
 - "**The medium is the message**"
 - It wasn't about communicating "we don't need no education"; it was about communicating idea of rock itself
- Post-modern idea**

- Bowie was first British musician to hear the album, Pitt had a test printing
- this postmodern idea will become very important in 6 years
- **psychedelic scene** was also very popular in London at this time (e.g. **Arthur Brown**)
 - Cabaret scene
 - It wasn't really unique enough to be exportable
 - characterized by crazy stage shows, costumes, painted face

The Laughing Gnome

- One of first singles released as solo artist (at least solo in name)
- we see **two traits** that would serve Bowie's entire career
 - ① Acceptance of creative challenges
 - ② Ability to delegate
- Big album productions with lots of instruments was popular at that time (e.g. Brian Wilson's "Pet Sounds")
- Bowie had to learn how to arrange music for band
- "bad-taste period piece and example of artistic courage"
- Released in April 1967.

"David Bowie" (Perum Records)

- "What I wanted was an album that would act as a CV."
- Producers wanted to market Bowie as an all-around entertainer like Anthony Newley or Sammy Davis Jr.
 - The "big show", he'd dance, sing, cry, laugh, act
- Released June 1, 1967, same day as Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.
- All the attention was given to Beatles, Bowie's album went mostly unnoticed.

- Bowie didn't really promote album because he was distracted with new band the Riot Squad, who were heavily influenced by the Velvet Underground.

In the Riot Squad's own song → "Toy Soldier", Bowie channels V.U.'s Lou Reed half-way through

- Played lots of V.U. covers, disaffectionate singing
- Managers didn't know Bowie was playing w/ R.S., R.S. and Bowie were also really into psychedelic scene, opposite of Bowie's first album's vibe.

- First album tanked, Bowie said he wanted to become dancer and wanted out of contract, producers thought it was all a ruse and that

Bowie was holding out some great songs to be recorded with someone else.

- Company let him out of contract.
- Bowie didn't have anything else lined up, was done being singer, didn't want to be dancer, moved back in w/ parents

Bowie the Mime

- Bowie is now 21 yrs old
- Gets into miming & acting, playing characters
- Bowie's miming director approaches art form in Andy Warhol / postmodern kind of way
- Bowie got really into miming

- His "Pierrot En Turquoise" act was moderate success.
- **Mentally ill older brother** (31) also moved back in w/ parents. Bowie and bro listen to avant-garde jazz music together (e.g. Coltrane)
- disturbed and distraught by bro's worsening illness, looked to music as a way to alter mind and improve situation
- At this time, Bowie also **acted in movie** "The Image".
- Fell in love and moved in w/ Hermione Farthingale
- Hermione suggested Bowie write new music for music video Bowie and Pitt were making, rather than use old music from first album.

"Space Oddity"

- Bowie still friends with Mark Boland (Feld), guy who did glam rock,
 - Feld gave Bowie electronic **stylaphone** instrument
 - Hermione told Bowie to write new song.
 - Bowie used stylaphone to write song where he **imagined himself in space**.
 - **Moonwalk** was on July 16, 1969 (Apollo 11)
 - Pulled in theatrical influences

- Pitt tried to get song out fast so as to take advantage of space hype; shopped song around, Mercury-Phillips bought
- Rushed process, so sounded more sparse than first album
- Tony Visconti, who would remain Bowie's long-time friend, produced song (Tony also would later produce Blackstar)
- Ziggy Stardust was heavily influenced by Bowie's work as a mime, his stage presence, his acting on stage, his subtlety of movement.

"David Bowie" Redux (Phillips-Mercury)

- Phillips-Mercury (British company, just "mercury" in America) was pleased w/ success of single, gives Bowie \$ to record album.
- Bowie gave lackluster performance on tour of album
- Single was popular, but album didn't sell.
- Other songs like Janine were poorly performed on album, forgettable performance / melody

The Man who Sold the World

- Space Oddity earned Bowie \$\$, Bowie moved in w/ Angie (gf) and Tony in 1970
- Bowie was getting into **classic rock** music
- Formed band w/ Mick Ronson & Tony, played hard rock; per Angie's suggestion, each played diff. character on stage.
- Bowie **fired Pitt** during making of album (**The Man who Sold the World**) this breaks up production company, so company can't promote album, **band breaks up**, Bowie has no income
- Bowie imitates Syd Barret (and Pink Floyd more generally)

- "All the Madmen" is about Bowie's brother Terry, Bowie assumes some other character

Bowie in New York

- Bowie wanted out of contract
- Bowie was working on piano songs
- Bowie invented fake band The Arnold Corns, he wrote all the music.
- Mercury in U.S. discover The Man who Sold the World and really love it, They invite Bowie to tour it in U.S. (NYC) in Jan 1971

- Bowie negotiates better deal w/ RCA while still under contract w/ Mercury
- Bowie meets Andy Warhol and Lou Reed
- Bowie discovers Iggy Pop and The Stooges while in NYC. Bowie likes how Iggy Pop is possessed by some force/power
- Goes back to UK w:
 - ① New recording contract w/ RCA
 - ② Plans to record new songs written on piano previously
 - ③ New idea about what he wanted to do w/ music/career

Fashion
Sense
inspired
by New York
Dolls???

Hunky Dory

- Brings Mick Ronson back to record Hunky Dory songs
- Bowie's objective in bringing Ronson back is to form Ziggy Stardust band (in addition to recording Hunky Dory)