

## ***1/2 Planned, 1/2 Spontaneous***

### **Transcription by Evernote**

Ever since sixth grade, I have listened to music a whole lot. Before then, I was not especially crazy about music. Certainly, my preferences have changed since then, but I still love music. I remember remarking to my dad while playing cards in a hotel room, "I've never liked anything this much."

These days, I listen to punk primarily, even some country music. Back then, I preferred heavy metal and hard rock. Although I still listen to some heavy metal and hard rock, I do not listen to a whole lot of it. I've grown out of some of it. Some of it still is great.

However, When I was in high school, I tried to get my peers to sign this petition against censorship of music. I inquired as to why one of my cross country teammates did not sign the petition. I said, "We cross-country runners need to stick together." I also gave her some arguments I heard about stickering and censorship. She commented, "that's secular music." She said, "she only listened to Christian music."

There are indeed people like that. Some people believe all secular music is bad. The only good music is Christian music. Also in high school, I did something awesome with a couple of my friends. One who happened to be the sister of that girl who is now a woman I just mentioned. [A Zine I corresponded with called *REBT Monkeys* recommended the idea of swapping music with other people, so I did such with her and then later I did this with others] Since they listened to almost exclusively, if not entirely exclusively, Christian music, I thought it was good to expose them to something else. They gave me some Christian music to listen to. I gave them some music I enjoyed listening to. They were fundamentalists, but at least they were open enough to do that. My friend from high school, Aaron, said, "some Christian music

fans even say It's wrong when even Christian artists sing about anything besides God." He said, for example, "if you're singing about how much you love your romantic partner, that's wrong." You hear about crossover artists sometimes.

One of the most often cited examples of this is Amy Grant. Amy Grant started out, I hear, as a Christian artist. She has also dabbled quite extensively in rock music. Just because an artist is considered secular, one should not assume there's no religious or spiritual content to the lyrics. Sometimes there is indeed such content. Country music seems to have more of this than maybe other types. In the song, *The River*, Garth Brooks talks about the "good Lord being his captain". which is a line from the song. He also has a song called *Unanswered Prayers*. He is considered a secular artist.

Randy Travis has one song on his album *High Lonesome* Something to the effect of talking to Jesus. On his album, *A Man Ain't Made of Stone*, he has a song called *The Family Bible and the Farmer's Almanac*. Very secular. Billy Joel, secular artist, has a song called *River of Dreams*, which is a spiritual song [like he admitted]. Also, *It's All About Soul*, a spiritual song as well. He's secular.

When I was in high school, our parents took us for a while to Faith Wesleyan Church. The church was small, so we got to know other people very well. It was one of those closer-knit places. Because of that, in Sunday school class, participation was hard to avoid. Once, the leader of our age group which was high school age, told us that "some people believe that certain types of music are inherently bad due to the beat". He said, "some people were so passionate about that they even stopped going to that church just because of that". Some people say, "it doesn't matter what the music is as long as the lyrics are good.": This is the whole premise behind Christian metal, Christian punk, Christian hardcore, and

similar type music. “These forms of music are fast, loud, harsh, aggressive, soundy. But the lyrics can be Christian lyrics.” [Christian music people say].

Other people say certain beats bring out these horrible emotional states in folks and causes them to do terrible deeds or at least act horrendously. Although I do think people who say all music is bad because of the rhythm, there may be a kernel of truth, if just a kernel of truth, in what these people say. Eastern thinkers, Buddhists, and contemporary psychologists are big on the whole idea of controlling our emotions and even getting rid of some emotions. When I was in seventh grade, our music teacher said, “all music conveys emotion.” She taught us that certain types of music convey certain types of emotion, while other types of music convey other types of emotion. It's not that asinine to suggest loud, fast music conveys emotion and promotes different emotions than does slow, mellow music. I don't imagine these Eastern thinkers, Buddhists, and contemporary psychologists liking loud, fast music. They often are extremely mellow to a fault, I would say.

Jello Biafra former lead singer of the Dead Kennedys and now lecturer often talks about music and its censorship. He has lectures called *Talk on Censorship*, for example. One of his problems with censorship of music is that he believes it's often done in a racist way. He says, for example, rap music, which is in our society has more black artists is way more often censored than music which in our society has more white artists. Even though, he tells us, the lyrics may be just as bad. He describes how historically groups such as the KKK were big on the racial theme to condemn rock and roll. I do think there is a lot of validity in what he's saying. He's right. People do criticize rap music all the time. Think about someone like Stephen King. Lots of people love his books, including people who condemn rap music. His books

are twisted, scary, gruesome, even demented. Yet, I don't recall ever hearing that his books were censored.

Joe Biafra also has a problem with the critics of rock music because he believes they are crazed in their interpretation of song lyrics. He believes they go way overboard suggesting that song lyrics cause all these social traumas.

While I believe in many cases the critics do go too far, I'm not quite in his same position. I am strongly against censorship, but I don't believe all music is okay. Sometimes he goes to the opposite extreme and acts as if just because the critics go overboard, then all music is benign and harmless. He talks about how music is often misinterpreted. He has told that his music has been misinterpreted. He said people have accused him of being in favor of Nazis, even though he wrote a very anti-Nazi song, I read a book which also made this point about the Dead Kennedys and its critics.

He shows how in some cases people who criticize rock music do not know what they are talking about. He shows that sometimes they don't even listen to the music they are criticizing. I can entirely sympathize with his concern about misinterpretation. He has shown how sometimes when an artist composes a song lyric about something controversial, people misconstrue it to be promoting the very social ill they are trying to get rid of.

My art has been misinterpreted as negative. He's even said, "people say, your music is all negative." So some of the exact same criticisms that have been leveled against him have been leveled against me. I was once even wearing the Dead Kennedys anti-Swastika patch. One idiot in my English class in college said, "What are you representing?" The professor pointed out, "There's a slash through that". One of my activist friends said, "People often assume discussion of something is advocacy of it." Very true.

While on a bus, I was reading a book about all the stupid comments Bush has made. One idiot said, "I can't believe you're reading that." Then he lectured me on how bad Bush was. This fool assumed because Bush was on the cover of the book, the book was extolling Bush.

Once I was protesting a liquor shop. On the leaflet, I was trying to appeal to Marxists. I was saying something to the effect, since you Marxists are against corporations, come be against alcohol corporations with me. One cop saw that and said, "I don't agree with that." The other cop said, "that's his belief." That dumb cop picked out the word Marxist. He did not bother to try to understand what I was saying otherwise. He just saw the one word and that word alone provoked something.

Once I was holding up a sign that said, "Boycott French wine." Although not explicitly pro-war, it does appeal to sentiments of pro-war people. One absolute moron stopped his car. He said, "Why should I boycott French wine?" I said, "Don't you disagree with what France is doing, trying to prevent the United States from going into Iraq?" [many pro-war people have used this argument]. He told me, "We should kill them all." This fool just assumed without bothering to think in the least that because I was holding a sign, I looked like a protester, I was protesting the war. How about trying to grasp the message!

In the book, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, Neil Postman says "there is a telegraphic mind which is based on images where people view the world in pictures, since they watched so much television, rather than more sophisticatedly understanding concepts and words." That fool had a telegraphic mind.

It's not just fundamentalists who have problems with rock music. Wayne Dyer, who is far from fundamentalist, has criticized rock music. In the book, *Your Erroneous Zones*, he made a unique

criticism. He was talking about what he calls “approval-seeking messages.” He says, “these are all over our society.” He listed some popular... rock song titles of the day which was the mid 70s he said these all in common the message that “you have to be approved of by someone else to be okay he listed songs that had titles along the lines I am nothing without you my world is empty when you are gone. I cannot live without you.”

In the lecture seminar, *the Seekers of the Power of Intention*, he describes an interesting incident with his son: He was with his son. They both heard some rap music. His son made some comments about how great it was. Wayne Dyer thought it was a bad influence. His son was not convinced. So he used what he calls “a strength test” on his son. He said his son is big, bigger than he is. He had his son extend a fist out. Dyer tried to move it. He could not. Then he told his son, “to hold a banana against his heart with one hand and then extend the opposite arm.” Wayne Dyer tried to move it. He could not. He told his son, “that's because the banana is strengthening you.” Then he had his son hold a rap CD against his chest while also extending the opposite fist. and the arm of that fist. According to Wayne Dyer, then he could move the arm. He told us, son, “that was a sign that rap music is, as he said, weakening him.”

It sounds goofy to me that such a strength test would work. I do believe his overall point is good. He's suggesting that certain influences may zap you of energy. He talks a lot about “energy.” He even says, “it's all energy.” [In his books,] I have a hard time believing this would work. So what you're telling me is if one of the kindergartners I work with would hold a banana against his or her chest, I would not be able to move his or her opposite fist. Again, it sounds goofy, but its underlying point is a great one.

There are some songs I just do not want to listen to anymore, even when these songs have great music. Two examples are Alice

Cooper's *Roses on White Lace* and Good Charlotte's *Bloody Valentine*. The former appears to be about a rape, while the latter appears to be about an obsessive love affair. [In his audio talks,] Jello Biafra says, "some of these artists are trying to discuss a social issue." Critics say sometimes these artists are really glorifying Rottenness. In both those cases, it seems to be glorified Rottenness.

Jello Biafra was censored himself. He describes the ordeal of his *FrankenChrist* album being censored on his spoken word CD, *High Priest of Harmful Matter*.

I have been censored myself, so I can relate. When I was 15, I operated a ham radio without a license [influenced by the pirate radio station tapes I listened to such as Tangerine Radio and Radio Free America, as well as the book *Pirate Radio Stations: Tuning into Underground Broadcasts*].

I was tracked down by two radio amateurs I was violating the law. I read about pirate radio. I was persuaded by the argument that freedom of speech is a right. Thus, any of us should be able to get on the airwaves and express ourselves.

When I was in college, I had a radio program that only lasted less than two shows. On the second show, I read a poem I wrote called *I Hate the FCC*. This poem is influenced by Dead Kennedy's lyric style. The poem is similar to something like [Dead Kennedys'] *MTV Get Off the Air*. The station manager [said she] "was afraid the chancellor would hear." She did not like me speaking out against the FCC in that way. My point was made. Pirate radio people argue [can't be] on mainstream radio because the FCC controls it; you cannot speak out against it. Although, in this case, the FCC itself did not come in and stop the speech. People were very afraid of the FCC and consequently stopped me.

In graduate school, I tried to submit an anti-abortion petition letter to the editor to the school newspaper. I was denied. I talked to the editor. He said, "He didn't have to print it." I accused him of being too liberal. I even got campus Republicans on my side.

I went to student government. I complained about it. Student government worked. There was a staff member from the newspaper there who listened to what I had to say. Soon enough, the letter was indeed printed.

While protesting a liquor shop in Mankato, I was charged with disorderly conduct. Thus, my freedom of speech was taken away. I defended myself and was ultimately acquitted. I have talked about this in greater detail on other occasions. Listen to the lecture, *The State of Minnesota vs. Andrew Bushard*, T8-034176, for more information about that.

Disorderly conduct laws make you responsible for how someone else responds to what you're saying at a criminal level. Contemporary psychologists are very big on telling people, "we choose our reactions; we choose our responses." Thus, according to disorderly conduct laws, if you make someone as the Minnesota law says, "reasonably alarmed", then it's disorderly conduct. Thus, if you alarm someone, it's disorderly conduct. The courts have ruled free speech is usually protected, but if "fighting words" are involved, it's not protected. Even though certain words, according to the court, provoke fight, to me it's still odd to make someone else responsible for someone's reaction at the criminal level.

People tell me "today is the first day of spring." I love spring. I hate winter. Spring is my favorite season. Then comes summer, then autumn. During one Toastmasters meeting, during the table topics portion of the meeting. Other people were saying "how much they loved autumn." While autumn is better than winter,

most definitely, it's still not the best season. Although Part of the year here is considered autumn.

It's really winter because it can get very cold. Autumn starts on September 20th, 21st, somewhere around there. But around later October and November, it starts to get very cold. For all intents and purposes, it really is winter. Winter does not officially start until December 21st.

In fact, I was riding on a bus. Someone said, "It's not winter yet. "The person said, "this is just a prelude." It was really, really cold right before winter officially happened.

The other day on the bus, the driver was an idiot. Most of the drivers are great or at least decent. He was asking me, "what the deal was with my beard?" He bluntly said, "I was like people from the 60s." I did explain why I do not cut my beard. I said, "I believe, like many others do, that it's wrong to interfere with the body, therefore I try to interfere with it as little as possible." He asked me, "How long am I going to let my hair grow?" I said, "I've been growing it for a while and it's not getting any longer." Then he made a stupid comment asking me "if I eat enough protein." I said, "I do."

Since I have read people who say you should not interfere with nature, people such as Herbert M. Shelton and the MOVE organization, I have integrated that into my life practice. That's part of a religion I founded called Frelsun.

Once I was up in Canada staying at a hostel. This one guest and I had a good talk. He said, "I was the first person he met who had started his or her own religion." He also asked me about my long hair, but I didn't find it offensive. Much of the time, I don't like it when people point out my hair or beard. But sometimes it's okay.

I really hate being stereotyped. Especially because I am the exact opposite. As I told that bus driver, "I don't even use caffeine."

I believe we should have bathrooms every 650 meters. At least. I really hate when I go out running. There are no places or at least very few places to go to the bathroom. My options are often very limited. Either I keep going in stores upsetting management or I try to find some secluded place or sometimes just semi-secluded place. That can be hard.

Fortunately, over by the Paul Mitchell Haircutting School on Burns Suburban, there's this wooded area where I go while I'm ready to go to the bathroom. You go down this little hill and then you are pretty concealed. There's not enough places like that.

On Minnehaha Street, a street I often run, there are few places to go to the bathroom. Thus, if you really need to go, it can suck. A big part of that is because it's residential.

Crestview is a new street in Maplewood. It is between Bartle me admire. There's not that many houses on that street yet, but there's some.

I am trying to visit all of the libraries in the metropolitan area. The libraries in the metropolitan area are part of what is called the Metropolitan Library System area. There are 100 plus libraries in this system. So far, I have visited 60 of them. assuming a correct count.

Spring break is very near. I hope to visit a good number over spring break. The good deal about spring break is I'm off during the week. Some of these libraries are accessible by buses which are mostly commuter buses. which may not operate at all or at least not nearly as much during the weekend.

I am beginning to think the Hennepin County library system may be the best of the lot. The Hennepin County libraries I have went to seem to have great selections of books. Better than some of the others, it seems.

Once, Federation Without Television had one of our general meeting topics called *Hennepin County*.

How often do you use the word cathoid?

I have liked living in a metropolitan area. I like living here better than any place I've ever lived before, as the city's environment goes. more numbers of cool people in other places. So my experiences in other places were experiences I'm not having here. But as the overall environment goes, this is the best place. I like a metropolitan area as such goes.

This seems fairly safe. I wonder if some other metropolitan areas are more exciting and still relatively safe. The Twin Cities is not as exciting as I thought it would be. Besides the libraries, there's really not much that's super-duper exciting.

I think homeschooling has promise. I even like the free school idea better. I work in a public school, so I see how some of the criticisms of the public schools are entirely valid. I also consequently see how some of them are invalid. Overall, I believe these critics of the schools are right that the schools are bad and the school system needs to be