Jose M. Garza, Jr., Ph.D.
Texas State University
jg1579@txstate.edu

Questioning the Tidy Pairings of Inverse Binaries: The Case for Progressive Punk

This paper will demonstrate:

- Punk rock is not uniformly simplistic.
- Musically progressive elements reinforce politically progressive lyrics.
- A connection between progressivism in two dimensions provides opportunities for exploring musical meaning.

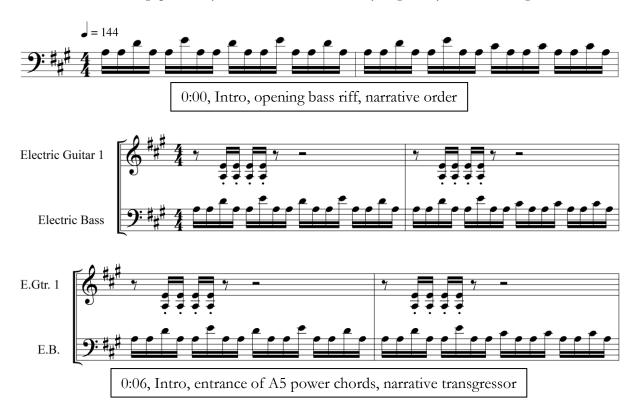|	Uppercase 'P' Progressive	Lowercase 'p' progressive
Music (following Stump)	Specific style or formula	Innovative
Politics	Specific to a political climate	Stimulate progress

Comparison of uppercase/lowercase distinction for music and politics

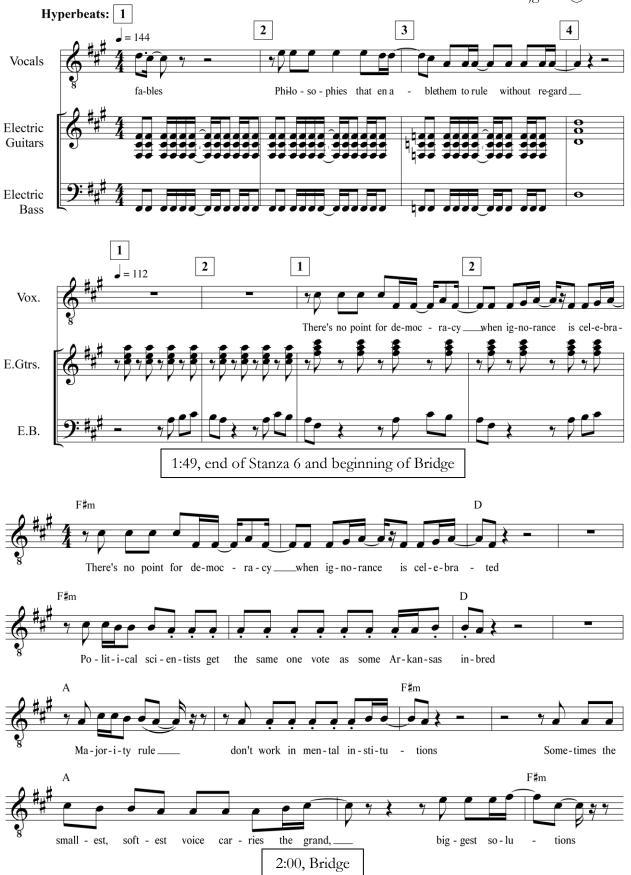|	Positively Viewed Entity	Negatively Viewed Entity	Victor
Comedy	Transgression	Order	Transgression
Romance	Order	Transgression	Order
Irony	Order	Transgression	Transgression
Tragedy	Transgression	Order	Order

Breakdown of narrative archetypes (Almén 2008, following Frye)

Analysis 1: NOFX, "The Idiots Are Taking Over"

Ironic reading: positively viewed order defeated by negatively viewed transgression

0:00, Intro, opening bass riff, narrative order

0:06, Intro, entrance of A5 power chords, narrative transgressor

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Vocals: It's not the right time to be so-ber ___ Now the i-di-ots ___ have

Vox.: ta-ken o-ver ___ Spread-ing like ___ a so-cial can-cer ___ Is there an an-

Vox.: -swer? ___

0:26, Stanza 1

Negatively viewed transgressor

Positively viewed order

Hyperbeats: 2   3=1   2   3

In-dus-trial re-vo-lu - tion   Has flipped the bitch on ev-o-lu - tion

4   1   2

The be - nev-o-lent and wise ___ are be-ing   thwart-ed, os-tra-cized ___ what a

3   4   1   2

bum-mer   The world keeps get-ting dumb-er ___   In-sen-si-ti-vi-ty ___ is

3   4

stan - dard ___   And faith is be-ing fan - cied o - ver rea -

1   2   1   2

(Solo bass riff)

- son ___   Dar - win's rol-lin' o - ver in his cof - fin

0:49, end of Stanza 3 and beginning of Stanza 4

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Hyperbeats: 1

fa-bles

Phi-lo-so-phies that en a - ble them to rule without re-gard

There's no point for de-moc - ra-cy ___ when ig-no-rance is cel-e-bra-

1:49, end of Stanza 6 and beginning of Bridge

F#m   D

There's no point for de-moc - ra-cy ___ when ig-no-rance is cel-e-bra - ted

F#m   D

Po - lit-i-cal sci - en-tists get the same one vote as some Ar-kan-sas in-bred

A   F#m

Ma - jor-i-ty rule ___ don't work in men-tal in-sti-tu - tions Some-times the

A   F#m

small - est, soft - est voice car - ries the grand, ___ big - gest so-lu - tions

2:00, Bridge

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Stanza Group at 0:26		Stanza Group at 1:12		Stanza Group at 2:30	
Lyrics	Chords	Lyrics	Chords	Lyrics	Chords
It's not the right time	F#m D A B D Bm A A (with solo)	Darwin's rollin' over	F#m D A B D Bm A A (with solo)	~~N/A~~	~~F#m D A B~~ ~~D Bm A A~~ ~~(with solo)~~
Mensa membership	F#m D A B D Bm	Someone flipped	F#m D A B D Bm	What are we left with?	F#m D A B D Bm
Industrial revolution	A A F#m F#m D Dm A A F#m F#m F D A A (with solo)	Charlton Heston	A A F#m F#m D Dm A A F#m F#m F D (no solo)	Populate the homeland	A A F#m F#m ~~D Dm A A~~ ~~F#m F#m~~ F D A A (no solo)

Comparison of stanza groups, omissions highlighted

Analysis 2: Propagandhi, "Cognitive Suicide"

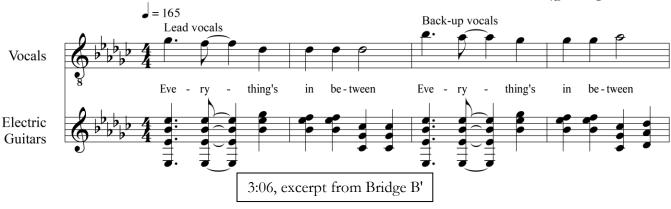Comedic reading: Positively viewed protagonists defeat negatively viewed order

0:00, Intro A, narrative order

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0:15, Intro B, narrative transgressor (protagonists)

There was a brief surge of pan-ic   Their eyes____pressed tight

You brought a   swarm of con-fu-sion to their bleak   but sim - ple lives

0:47, second part of Verse 1

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♩ = 165

Vocals

E♭5　　　　　C♭　　Db　　E♭m E♭5　　　　C♭　　Db　C♭　Db

Cog - ni - tive su - i - cide____ In - su - lar, pa - the - tic minds Try to

Vox.

E♭5　　　　　C♭　　Db　　E♭m　　　C♭

cut you off at the knees____ So they won't be left____ be - hind

Vox.

E♭5　　C♭　　Db　　　E♭m E♭5　　C♭　　Db　C♭　E♭m7

Eve - ry - thing is bland, Un - am - bi - gu - ous____

Vox.

E♭5　　　　　C♭　　Db　　E♭m C♭　　Db

May - be they can un - der - stand How they fit in - to this place

0:58, Chorus

♩ = 165

Vocals

Eve - ry - time they fail,____ they seek a vic -

Electric
Guitars

Vox.

tim for their____ spite

E.Gtrs.

1:15, first part of Verse 2

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Live your life____ and don't a-po - lo-gize

To the cow-ards of this ____ world   They're a waste of time ____

2:02, second part of Bridge A

2:26, excerpt from solo passages

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3:06, excerpt from Bridge B'

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