

## Sample Student Outline #2

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English 103

M/W 9a

October 3, 2007

Outline:

Nirvana: This could be Heaven or this could be Hell!

By Pastor Joe Schimmel

Thesis: So strong was Cobain's desire to be respected and accepted, that Cobain would sell his soul to the Devil for the price of fame."

I. Claim: Cobain worshipped Satan.

Evidence:

- a. Cobain possessed a headless statue of Mary.
- b. Cobain spray-painted "GOD IS GAY" and "ABORT CHRIST" on church buildings.
- c. His apartment was decorated with bloody baby dolls hanging from the ceiling by their neck.
- d. Cobain sought out relationships with occultist, William Burroughs, and *Church of Satan* founder, Anton LaVey.

- e. His musical inspiration came from Satan, who channeled his evil through Cobain to negatively affect society.

Conclusion: Schimmel's evidence to the claim that Cobain was in fact a devil worshipper is somewhat inconclusive because many of Cobain's actions portray rebelliousness rather than devil worship. Schimmel also assumes that because does not follow the Christian religion, that he is a Satanist.

- II. Claim: Cobain's drug addiction was the cause of his stomach problems and would have killed him if it weren't for the shotgun blast to the head.

Evidence:

- a. Cobain was addicted to heroin as well as pain pills and codeine.
- b. Cobain would nod off in 'mid-sentence'; 'pinned pupils, sunken cheeks, and scabbed, sallow skin suggest something more serious than fatigue.'
- c. His stomach problems were caused by heavy drug use which punished his intestines.
- d. Results from autopsy concluded that along with trace amounts of valium, he had 1.52 milligrams of heroin in his blood, three times the normal fatal dose.
- e. Cobain allegedly sold drugs to support his addiction.

Conclusion: The evidence presented by Schimmel likely supports his claim that Cobain was a heavy drug user. However, it does not accurately support his claim that Cobain was addicted and that the drugs did in fact lead to his stomach problems.

III. Claim: Kurt Cobain was an outspoken homosexual.

Evidence:

- a. Cobain stated “I’m definitely gay in spirit” and “I probably could be bisexual”.
- b. Cobain admitted to having sex with three or four men.
- c. Courtney Love said that Cobain had numerous gay encounters that went beyond these three or four men.
- d. Courtney Love states Cobain “made out with half the guys in Seattle”.
- e. Cobain would French kiss his bass player on stage during public performances.

Conclusion: Schimmel’s evidence is highly improbable since we all know that rock stars say and do things simply for the shock value that these things create. Many of the quotes from Cobain could be taken out of their original context, and Schimmel does not offer any valid sources as to some of the confessions of Cobain.

IV. Claim: Kurt Cobain’s large ego and murderous heart caused him to lash out at those who questioned him.

Evidence:

- a. Cobain had an enormous ego, even for the standards of those in the performing arts.

- b. His ego caused him to threaten to stab *Vanity Fair* journalist, Lynn Hirschberg, for speaking negatively about Courtney Love.
- c. Cobain used calculations from a magic book of numbers to cast spells onto Hirschberg and others he despised.

Conclusion: Schimmel's argument here is highly inconclusive. People say things all the time that they do not sincerely mean, especially when they are angry or under the influence of some substance. As for Schimmel's claim that Cobain harnessed the power of some magic book to torment Hirschberg, he merely states this claim without offering any evidence which makes it highly unlikely.

- V. Claim: Cobain had a hatred for everyone, including his wife, fans, and himself.

Evidence:

- a. Cobain had to be persuaded to not kill Love, his wife.
- b. "Ninety-nine percent of humanity could be shot if it was up to me".
- c. "I've become hateful toward all humans in general".
- d. Cobain demonstrated his hatred towards his fans by spitting on them and making derogatory statements to them at performances.
- e. The most harm that Cobain's hatred did was influencing his followers to take the same path through life as him.
- f. Cobain's posturing as a feminist was not accurate as he displayed a deep hatred towards women.

- g. One woman states that Cobain almost raped her.
- h. Cobain's personality went from "Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde" as a result of his Satan-worshipping.
- i. Cobain's numerous attempts at suicide were a result of the force of the demons controlling him.
- j. His suicide was the only way he could exorcize the demons from within him.

Conclusion: Again, many of Cobain's statements or statements about Cobain could be taken out of context and the sources could be suspect. We also again have Schimmel's conclusions about relations between the devil and Cobain without any real evidence to support the claim.

VI. Claim: Cobain's search for Nirvana was a lost cause since the true meaning of Nirvana is a counterfeit heaven.

Evidence:

- a. Nirvana is a Hindu term used to bind people to the demonic forces here on Earth
- b. Cobain's concept of Nirvana was hell.
- c. Cobain's rejection of Christ and his drug use was his "Hindu Nirvana".
- d. Nirvana means "a blowing out" or "extinction".
- e. Cobain simply wanted to cease to exist.

Conclusion: Schimmel has obviously manipulated the terms of other religions to try to support his own claim. Because of Schimmel's religious affiliations, these claims are highly inconclusive since they are based on bias.

VII. Claim: Cobain's suicide was a result of the devil no longer delivering musical inspiration through Cobain.

Evidence:

- a. Cobain's suicide note says that he has not felt excitement about listening or creating music for a long time now.
- b. His "muse has flown south".
- c. "Satan seeks out those lonely hearts who are seeking fame, recognition, acceptance, affluence, power, ..."
- d. Cobain is just one person in a long line of those who have committed suicide after being used by Satan for his evil deeds.

Conclusion: Schimmel at this point has obviously set out to only have his belief supported. Many of these claims are unwarranted since they do not portray any real relationship between the devil and Cobain. Schimmel is assuming that because Cobain is at a roadblock artistically, he is obviously no longer being used for his evil ways. This discredits the rest of his evidence along with most of his claims.

VIII. Claim: Cobain's suicide-laden lyrics and cult following caused many of his followers to follow in his footsteps and commit suicide.

Evidence:

- a. His lyrics include “Monkey see monkey do/I don’t know why I’d rather be dead than cool”.
- b. Increased suicides occurred following Cobain’s death.
- c. Daniel Casper shoots himself in the head after returning from Cobain’s vigil.
- d. A 16 year old girl shoots herself in the head while listening to Nirvana.
- e. Andy Rooney: “When the spokesman for his generation blows his head off, what is the generation supposed to think?”
- f. Rock music is responsible for increased suicide rates since its beginning in the 50’s and 60’s.

Conclusion: Schimmel’s claim is uncertain because there is no definitive evidence that Cobain’s suicide led to an increased number of suicide amongst his fans. And even so, who is to say that this does not occur with other musicians who have died at young age? Most musicians are going to have some fans that are a little emotionally unstable. There are many avenues to take when discussing this claim, but Schimmel only chooses the one that will support his claims.

IX. Claim: “It would have been better that he was never born” would be a fitting epitaph for Cobain.

Evidence:

- a. “It would have been better that he was never born” would be a fitting epitaph for all those who do not accept and worship God and Jesus Christ.

- b. Cobain's description of the "lake of fire" as being something like the fourth of July is different from Christ's description as an unending torment against all those that rebelled against him.
- c. Cobain's rejection of Christ from day one was his ticket to the "lake of fire".

Conclusion: Schimmel's claim that it would've been better had Cobain never been born is not supported with any facts. This is merely a religious tirade against rock music in general. Here, Schimmel does not even mention other ways that Cobain could have affected the lives of his fans in a positive way.