

The Wondrous Wit & Scintillating Songs of Tom Lehrer

Instructor: Bonnie Weiss

Syllabus Update 2025

Week 1:

- An Overview of Course Coverage
- A Brief Early Bio: From Birth to those “Bright College Days”
- Poking Fun at the Rarified Air of Academia
- Sending Up Society at Large

Week 2:

- The Psychology of Humor – and It’s Application to Lehrer’s Songs
- Saluting the Rewards of War and Mass Destruction
- Merrily Mocking Our Winter Holidays
- Playfully Educating Tots and School Kids

Week 3:

- A Crash Course in Rhyme & It’s Reasons
- Rhyming Revelry: A Close Look at Lehrer’s Inventive Word Play
- Lampooning the Lunacy of Love & Lust
- Mirthfully Marketing Motor Vehicles

Week 4:

- Remarks from Tom’s Fans: From the Insightful to the Inane
- Teaching Mathematics & Musical Theatre at UC Santa Cruz
- Looking Back: How Tom Views Songwriting, Performing & Retiring
- Looking Ahead: Lehrer’s Lasting Legacy
- Signing Off: Slyly Skewering Songwriting Styles