

TEACHER GUIDE

2000 DOC. #1: Music Performances at Conventions

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Party nominating conventions have become big business in recent times. Corporations spend huge amounts of money during the conventions to get access to the politicians who will make decisions that will affect their business in the next four years. In 2000 *Business Week Online Magazine* criticized the enormous cost of these conventions - \$50 million for the Republicans and \$45 million for the Democrats. It quoted Fred Wertheimer, president of Democracy 21, a nonpartisan watchdog group: "It's going to reach high levels of obscenity. This is about purchasing access, and it comes at the expense of 250 million Americans who can't do it" (Woellert and Dwyer 2000).

Music has been a part of presidential campaigns in the United States since the early 19th century. In the 21st century music is used at the Party conventions to rouse the delegates before the long-awaited arrival of the nominee.

The following documents are brief clips of the musical performances that preceded the introductions of George W. Bush and Al Gore on the last day of their respective conventions. The Republican convention that you will see first featured country-western stars Brooks and Dunn performing their song "Hard Workin' Man." The second clip shows the Democratic convention, which featured Grateful Dead drummer, Mickey Hart, accompanied by Poncho Sanchez and Teri Lynn Carrington on large surdo drums, and 200 school children with small hand drums. They performed the Vicki Sue Robinson tune, "Turn the Beat Around." The woman in the blue dress is Tipper Gore, the wife of Democratic nominee Al Gore.

As you watch these clips think about the choice of musical styles, lyrics, and performers as a means to persuade certain groups of voters.

> **Play** the video clip, 2000 doc. #1a.

**Excerpt from "Hard Workin' Man"
performed by Brooks & Dunn**

*Come Friday night
I like to party hard
I carry on with the Cadillac cuties
Spend my whole week's pay on some weekend beauty
Come Monday mornin' I'm the first to arrive
I ain't nothin' but business from nine till five*

*I'm a hard, hard workin' man
I got it all on the line
For a piece of the promised land
I'm burnin' my candle at both ends
'Bout the only way to keep the fire goin'
Is to outrun the wind*

*I can't wait to get up in the mornin'
And do it all over again
Well I'm a hard livin', hard workin' man
And women too*

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**Republican Convention
Brooks & Dunn Music**

Video Clip

1 min. 30 sec.

