History 411-011 Seminar in American History
Popular Music in the United States, 1890-1980

Fall 2010, Thursdays 3:30PM - 6:30PM, Memorial Hall 126

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Course Description

This course will explore the politics, culture, and economics of popular music in the United States in the twentieth century. Themes will include genre, technology, intellectual property, identity, and commercialism.

Assignments and Requirements

Four short papers (35%; the first paper 5%, the others 10% each) — Each of these papers should be 350-500 words and will be handed in at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Late papers will not be accepted.

Due dates for Short Paper: Sep. 9, Oct. 14, Nov. 4, and Dec. 2

Long Paper (50%) - For this course you will write a 12-15 original research paper on a topic of your choosing. (I will hand out a list of possible topics and would be happy to discuss any ideas you have.) You will work on this paper throughout the semester, and you will be expected to demonstrate progress on this project as you go. The following is a calendar of requirements related to this paper:

Idea paper + preliminary source list (5%): Sept. 16 – Approx. 150-200 words for idea paper; 3 primary and 3 secondary sources

Prospectus, including bibliography: Sept. 30 (5%) – Sources list must include at least 2-3 different *kinds* of sources (newspaper articles, advertisements, sheet music, sound recordings, letters, photographs, etc.)

Introduction and full outline: Oct. 28 (5%)

Complete rough draft due: Nov. 18 -- to be submitted *electronically*, as an email attachment

In-class presentation: Dec. 2 (5%)

Final draft: Dec. 10, noon (30%)

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be submitted in hard copy.

Class Participation (15%): You are expected not just to come to class but also to come *prepared*. That means having done the reading and having thought about it too. Attendance is required at all classes (and that means the whole class, not arriving late or leaving early), and failure to attend class will adversely affect your participation grade.

Required Readings

The following books have been ordered at the UD Bookstore and are also on 2-hour reserve at the Reserves Desk in Morris Library:

1. David Suisman, *Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music*, 1st ed. (Harvard University Press, 2009).
2. LeRoi Jones (Imamu Amiri Baraka), *Blues People: Negro Music in White America* (New York: W. Morrow, 1963).
3. Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
4. Diane Pecknold, *The Selling Sound: The Rise of the Country Music Industry* (Duke University Press, 2007).
5. Suzanne E. Smith, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit* (Harvard University Press, 2001).
6. Elijah Wald, *How the Beatles Destroyed Rock n Roll: An Alternative History of American Popular Music*, 1st ed. (Oxford University Press, 2009).
7. Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Harvard University Press, 2006).

Additional readings will be available to download from the Sakai site: https://sakai.udel.edu/portal - They will be available in the Resources section, in the folder Readings. These additional readings are indicated on the course schedule below as "(Sakai)"

Required Listening

Most the music you will be reading about is likely to be unfamiliar to you. In order to give you a better idea what the music you're studying *sounded* like, I will make several recordings available each week for you to listen to, along with some very brief notes about the recordings.

Policies: Email, Attendance, Grading and Plagiarism

EMAIL: I will communicate--occasionally at least, perhaps often--via email. You will be responsible for reading and responding accordingly to these emails. If you have questions about them (or any other aspect of the course) it is your responsibility to ask.(Some of you may prefer to use outside email accounts--gmail or whatever--instead of your UD address. However, because I will be emailing the class only through the UD email addresses, you will need to insure that your UD email is forwarded to whatever account

you use. Instructions for email forwarding can be found at http://www.it.udel.edu/help/accessing-ud-services/udelnet-account#forwarding)

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Papers and other assignments are due at the beginning of class, on whatever date has been indicated. At the discretion of the instructor, late papers will be downgraded one full letter grade for the first day they're due and a third of a letter grade for every day thereafter. The only exception to this is the Short Papers, which will not be accepted at all after they are due.

Also: unless you make prior arrangements with the instructor to submit your work electronically (or it is indicated you do so on the syllabus), all your work must be submitted in hard copy.

GRADE SCALE: Written work will be graded according to the following scale.

A - Superb work: clear, focused thesis - thorough and persuasive use of evidence - lucid, polished writing (well-organized, with clear transitions - free of grammatical, syntactical and typographic errors) - thoughtful, original ideas - sophisticated appreciation of complexities and ambiguities in evidence and analysis

B - Good work: clear thesis, supported by appropriate evidence - solid writing skills, with clear transitions and few grammatical, syntactical or typographical errors - good research and relevant analysis

C - Acceptable but undistinguished work: lacking a clear argument - thesis inadequately supported by evidence - ideas are unclear, contradictory, inaccurate, obvious - quotations are left hanging without analysis or exposition - weak organization - awkward or nonexistent transitions - careless reading, superficial research - numerous stylistic errors (grammar, syntax, spelling; typos)

D / F - Unacceptable work: fails to fulfill the assignment in significant ways - no thesis at all - inadequate research, total absence of evidence - lacking analysis, includes only cursory summary of sources - serious reading problems or comprehension of sources - too short - poor organization - no transitions between ideas - severe problems with language skills (syntax, grammar, spelling) - sloppy, overrun with typographical errors

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work as your own. It is a form of dishonesty--a form of cheating, in fact--and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Plagiarism is not limited to using another person's exact words; using someone else's ideas without attribution is also a form of plagiarism. The amount you plagiarize doesn't matter: cheating is cheating. The good news about plagiarism is that it is easily avoided by clearly citing your sources. If you do, you can safely avoid even the hint of improper usage of someone else's work. If you are found to have plagiarized on any assignment, you will not be permitted to pass the course. If you have any questions about plagiarism, do not hesitate to ask.

Date	Topic	Reading	Listening	Assgt. due
9/2	Introduction: What Is Popular Music?			
9/9	"Which Came First, the Music or the Music Business?"	David Suisman, *Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music* (Harvard University Press, 2009) – Introduction, chaps. 1-3, 5, 6, and Conclusion	"After the Ball" "Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven" "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (2 versions)	Short Paper #1 due + work on paper topic
9/16	American Music in Black and White	LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), *Blues People: Negro Music in White America* (Morrow Quill, 1963)	The United Southern Prayer Band of Baltimore, Washington, and Virginia, "I Am a Soldier in the Army of the Lord" "Early in the Mornin'," a worksong sung by inmates in a Southern prison, probably ca. late 1940s Bessie Smith and Louis Armstrong, "St. Louis Blues" Louis Armstrong, "S.O.L. Blues"	Idea paper + prelim. bibliography due
9/23 * MEET IN MORRIS LIBRARY, RM. 200B, with librarian David Langenberg	Gender and Popular Music	Hazel Carby, "It Jus Be's Dat Way Sometime: The Sexual Politics of Womens' Blues [1986]," in *Keeping Time: Readings in Jazz History*, ed. Robert Walser (Oxford University Press, 1999), 351-65 – SAKAI Sherrie Tucker, "Telling Performances: Jazz History Remembered and Remade by the Women in the Band," *Oral History Review* 26, no. 1 (1999): 67-84 – SAKAI Gayle Wald, "From Spirituals to Swing: Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Gospel Crossover," *American*	Bessie Smith "Wild About that Thing" (1929) Ma Rainey, "Prove It on Me Blues" The International Sweethearts of Rhythm, four numbers on youtube.com/ Sister Rosetta Tharpe, "Pure Religion"	

		Quarterly 55 (September 2003): 387-416 – SAKAI		
9/30	Inventing the Folk	Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000). – Intro + chaps 2-5	"Gallis Pole" and "Bourgeois Blues" by Lead Belly "I Be's Troubled" and "Feel Like Going Home" by Muddy Waters "After the Ball Is Over" by Sid Hemphill's Band Pete Seeger, "Which Side Are You On" Bob Dylan, "I Shall Be Free"	Prospectus due
10/7	All Shook Up: The Coming of Rock & Roll	David Brackett, ed., *The Pop, Rock and Soul Reader: Histories and Debates*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press,, 2008). – Pt. 1, ch. 11; Pt. 2, ch. 20-27 – SAKAI Richard A. Peterson, "Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music," *Popular Music* 9, no. 01 (2008): 97–116 – SAKAI George Lipsitz, "Land of a Thousand Dances: Youth, Minorities, and the Rise of Rock and Roll," in *Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the Age of Cold War*, ed. Lary May (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1989), 267–84 – SAKAI	Johnny Otis, "I'm Living OK" Big Mama Thornton, "Hound Dog" Elvis Presley, "That's All Right," Little Richard, "Good Golly Miss Molly" Don Tosti Band, "Pachuco Boogie"	
10/14	Rock and Pop in the '60s	Richard Crawford, "From Accessibility to Transcendence: The Beatles, Rock, and Popular Music," in *America's Musical Life: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 799-812 – SAKAI (more)	The Beatles, "I Saw Her Standing There" and "Help!" The Shirelles, "Will You Love Me Tomorrow"	Short Paper # 2 due

		Susan J. Douglas, "Why the Shirelles Mattered," in *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (Three Rivers Press, 1995), 83-98 – SAKAI Steve Waksman, "Black Sound, Black Body: Jimi Hendrix, the Electric Guitar and the Meaning of Blackness," in *Instruments of Desire: The Electric Guitar and the Shaping of Musical Experience* (Harvard University Press, 2001), 167-206 – SAKAI Michael J. Kramer, ""Can't Forget the Motor City": *Creem* Magazine, Rock Music, Detroit Identity, Mass Consumerism, and the Counterculture," *Michigan Historical Review* 28 (Fall 2002): 42-77 – SAKAI	Jimi Hendrix, "Star Spangled Banner" MC5, "Kick Out the Jams" – audio + youtube	
10/21	Music and the Politics of Place I	Suzanne Smith, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit* (Harvard University Press, 1999)	The Supremes, "You Can't Hurry Love" Martin Luther King, Jr., excerpts from The Great March to Freedom - recorded Detroit, June 23, 1963 Malcolm X, "Message to the Grass Roots" Marvin Gaye, "What's Going On"	
10/28	Music and the Politics of Place II	Diane Pecknold, *The Selling Sound: The Rise of the Country Music Industry* (Duke University Press, 2007).	Jimmie Rodgers, "Blue Yodel, No. 2" Tex Ritter, "Get Along, Little Doggies" Ernest Tubb, "Walking the Floor	Introductory Paragraph + Full Outline due

			Over You” Hank Williams, “Move It on Over” Merle Haggard, “Okie from Muskogee”	
11/4	Music as Foreign Policy	Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Harvard University Press, 2004).	Louis Armstrong (with Ella Fitzgerald), “Summertime” Duke Ellington, “Take the A Train” Dave Brubeck, “Take Five” Dizzy Gillespie, “Manteca” James Brown, “Intro / The Payback”	Short Paper # 3 due
11/11	Rethinking “Popular”	Elijah Wald, *How the Beatles Destroyed Rock ’n’ Roll: An Alternative History of American Popular Music* (Oxford University Press, 2009)	Paul Whiteman, “Whispering” Guy Lombardo, “The Band Played On” Frank Sinatra, “In the Wee, Small Hours of the Morning” Connie Francis, “Who’s Sorry Now?”	
11/18	NO CLASS	NO ASSIGNED READING		Complete draft due – submit *electron-ically*
11//25	NO CLASS	(THANKSGIVING)		
12/2	Punk / Hiphop	Bernard Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-Garde*	The Ramones, “Blitzkrieg Bop”	Short Paper #4 + Oral

		(University of Chicago Press, 2002), chaps. 10-12 – SAKAI Mark Anthony Neal, *What the Music Said: Black Popular Music and Black Public Culture* (Routledge, 1999), ch. 5 – SAKAI David Toop, "Uptown Throwdown," in *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*, ed. Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal (Routledge, 2004), pp. 233-246 – SAKAI	Television, "See No Evil" Blondie, "Rapture" Grandmaster Flash, "The Message" Afrika Bambaataa, "Looking for the Perfect Beat" Public Enemy, "911 Is a Joke" NWA, "Fuck the Police"	Presentation
12/10		Final draft due, noon		