

School of Fine Art and Music
Winter Semester 2007
MUSC*3740
ISSUES IN POPULAR MUSIC STUDIES

Instructor: Dr. Durrell Bowman
Time: Tues. and Thurs. 10:00 – 11:20 p.m.
Location: MacKinnon 103
Office: MacKinnon 213 (Phone Ext. 53331)
Email: db@durrellbowman.com
Office Hours: Tues. and Thurs. 11:30 – 12:30 p.m.



CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the rise and impact of the cultural industries on production and consumption of music, the development of transnational popular music, and the role popular music plays in the politics of social identity.

PREREQUISITE: 1 of MUSC*1120, MUSC*1130, MUSC*1180, MUSC*2180

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar examines selected writings about popular music by recent music scholars. The writings (and related listening examples) cover a wide range of 20th-century popular music. They also address various interpretive issues of identity, mediation, and analysis.

Popular Music Studies emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as an interdisciplinary field. At first, this largely involved scholarly work in non-Music areas, such as Sociology, English, Media and Communications Studies, and Cultural Studies. By the 1990s, a greater number of scholars in Musicology, Ethnomusicology, and Music Theory also began to participate in this field. This seminar introduces various tensions and issues resulting not only from such a wide variety of scholarly approaches being applied to this music, but also from the fact that most people respond to music on the basis of whether they “like” or “dislike” it. The seminar is thus “historiographical” in nature—covering the development of how scholars approach the task of writing about popular music. However, it is also “interpretive” in nature—often dealing with actual pieces of music.

From January 9 to March 6, selected readings (organized into a course reader, plus several photocopied articles) and listening (provided online) explore various types of popular music. The material is arranged historically by topic and spans from the roots of popular music in genres such as 19th-century minstrelsy, parlour songs, ragtime, and early Tin Pan Alley pop songs through 20th-century developments in genres such as the blues, country-and-western, rhythm-and-blues, rock ‘n’ roll, pop, various types of rock, and hip hop. The readings comprise scholarly book chapters and include such interpretive areas as: (1) “identity” issues (e.g., gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age, class, and place), (2) “mediation” issues (e.g., recordings, broadcasting, and other technology), and (3) “analytical” issues (e.g., music theory approaches and musicological interpretations).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

(1) Course Reading Kit (available at the bookstore)

EVALUATION:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (1) Reading Overviews for two of the six readings, between Jan. 11 and Feb. 1 | 10% |
| (2) Open-Book Tests on Jan. 23, Feb. 6, Feb. 27, and March 13 (10% each) | 40% |
| (3) In-Class Group Presentation (on one of the readings); between Feb. 8 and March 8 | 15% |
| (4) Individual Presentation (on an approved topic); between March 15 and April 5 | 10% |
| (5) Term Paper (on the same topic as #4); submitted on April 5 | 25% |

REQUIREMENTS:

Jan. 9 – March 13 (8.5 weeks)

Read the scheduled articles (about two per week, most included in the course reader from the bookstore), listen to the music (provided on CourseLink—about ten songs per week), participate in the in-class discussions, and write the four **Tests (40% total)**. On each of Jan. 30 and Feb. 8, hand in a **Reading Overview (5% each)** for one article covered from Jan. 11 to 18 and for one article covered from Jan 23 to Feb. 1. One should be a 1-2 page point-form overview, and the other should be a 3-page prose overview. From February 8 to March 8, a **Group Presentation (15%, 25 minutes, including a 1-2 page handout)** covers each of the next six readings. Each group will consist of four people. The presentation will include a brief overview (3-4 minutes, based on a published book review) of the book in which the reading appears. Present the book overview first, then discuss the main article’s approach and the music covered within it, and end with at least one provocative question for further class discussion. Do not plan on playing more than about five or six minutes of song (and/or visual) excerpts during your 25 minutes. There will be additional class time for further material, discussions, listening, and so on.

Feb. 20/22—no class: Reading Week.

Establish your individual presentation/paper topic and begin to research and develop it.

Everyone should tell me at least their basic presentation and term paper topic by March 1.

March 13 – April 5 (3.5 weeks)

Contribute (between March 15 and April 5) an **Individual Presentation (10%, 16-18 minutes)** on an agreed-upon topic that is not otherwise covered in the course. Hand in a preliminary 1-2 page handout (and audio of 3-4 songs from which you will choose your two main songs) two weeks before your presentation, so I will have a chance to give you some feedback. The presentation must include your first of two song discussions (the second will be added within your term paper). Your 3-page presentation handout (based on the preliminary handout) must include a one-page table outlining the lyrics, structure, etc. of your first selected song. Include some relevant audio and/or visual clips within the time limit of your presentation.

April 5 (last class meeting)

Submit a **Term Paper (25%, 8-10 pages, including supplemental materials)** on the same topic. The paper must include both of your song discussions. Please include relevant tables, images, examples, and references as a part of your total number of pages (but not more about 3-4 pages total).

SCHEDULE:

Jan. 9	Intros; Issues Overview; What is Popular Music? 1820s-1920s—Origins: “backdrop” lecture	Rice, Foster, Sousa, Joplin, Harris, etc.
Jan. 11	Technology: Katz (copy not in reader)	Beatles, Radiohead
Jan. 16	1920s/'30s— Classic Blues Katz cont. & McClary (1 st part) 2 Reading Overviews	
Jan. 18	McClary (1 st part) cont. (Jan. 11 to Feb. 1)	B. Smith and R. Johnson
Jan. 23	T1	
Jan. 25	'40s/'50s— Electric Blues/Rock 'n' Roll: Waksman	M. Waters, B. Diddley, C. Berry
Jan. 30	'40s/'50s— Country-Western: Brackett	H. Williams, T. Bennett
Feb. 1	'60s— Pop: Warwick (not in reader) + overview #1 Warwick cont., then '60s— Blues-Rock McClary (last section) & Headlam (not in reader)	Exciters, Shirelles, Ronettes, Shangri-Las Cream (& R. Johnson, M. Waters, H. Wolf)
Feb. 6	T2	
Feb. 8	'60s— Psychedelic Rock: Negus Group Pres. A + overview #2	Beatles (especially <i>Sgt Pepper's</i>)
Feb. 13	'70s— Progressive/Art Rock: Sheinbaum (GPB)	Yes
Feb. 15	'70s— Progressive/Art Rock: Holm-Hudson (GPC)	Emerson Lake & Palmer
Feb. 20/22	Reading Week - establish your presentation/paper topic	
Feb. 27	T3	
Mar. 1	'70s— Heavy Metal: Fast (GPD) + topic due	Led Zeppelin
Mar. 6	'80s— Heavy Metal: Walser (GPE)	Judas Priest, Dokken, Bon Jovi, Poison
Mar. 8	'80s/'90s— Hip Hop: Rose (GPF)	Salt 'N' Pepa, MC Lyte, Queen Latifah
Mar. 13 to Apr. 5	T4 , then Individual Presentation (Mar. 15 – Apr. 5) and expanded version in your Term Paper	3 (occasionally 4) students per class meeting Term Paper due on April 5

Items or Books Excerpted for the Course Reader (or for similar photocopied materials)

[The specific course reader items are indicated in square brackets.]

- Bowman, Durrell. "Genre, Demographics, and the Music of the Rock Band Rush" (2001/05)
(The "book overview" for this will be based on my dissertation summary materials.)
- Brackett, David. *Interpreting Popular Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1995 (+). [*Ch. 3]
- Covach, John and Graeme M. Boone, eds. *Understanding Rock: Essays in Musical Analysis*.
New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. [#Headlam article, copy not in course reader]
- Fast, Susan. *In the Houses of the Holy: Led Zeppelin and the Power of Rock Music*.
New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. [#Ch. 2]
- Holm-Hudson, Kevin, ed. *Progressive Rock Reconsidered*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
[#Sheinbaum and #Holm-Hudson articles; also includes an article by D. Bowman]
- Katz, Mark. *Capturing Sound: How Technology Changed Music*.
Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004. [Ch. 1, copy not in course reader]
- McClary, Susan. *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form*.
Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. [*Ch. 2]
- Negus, Keith. *Popular Music in Theory: An Introduction*. London: Polity, 1996;
reprint, Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1997. [#Ch. 5]
- Rose, Tricia. *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*.
Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1994. [#Ch. 5 and Epilogue]
- Waksman, Steve. *Instruments of Desire: The Electric Guitar and the Shaping of Musical Experience*.
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999. [*Ch. 4]
- Walser, Robert. *Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*.
Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1993. [#Ch. 4]
- _____, editor. *Keeping Time: Readings in Jazz History*.
New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. [*Carby article, copy not in course reader]
- Whiteley, Sheila, Andy Bennett, and Stan Hawkins, editors. *Music, Space and Place:
Popular Music and Cultural Identity*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004.
[*Warwick article, copy not in course reader]

* = the six items for your three Reading Overviews

= items for Group Presentations

Each Group Presentation (#) also incorporates a provided book review related to these larger books.
The Sheinbaum/Holm-Hudson articles are from the same book, so two different reviews will be provided.

Preliminary Listening List (provided on Courselink/WebCT; order based on readings)

Related to Class #1 “backdrop” lecture:

“Jim Crow” (1829, Thomas Dartmouth Rice, performed by Bob Extrand)
“Oh! Susanna” (1847, Stephen Foster, performed by Douglas Jimerson)
“Old Folks at Home” (1851, Stephen Foster, performed by Douglas Jimerson)
“Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” (1854, Stephen Foster, performed by Thomas Hampson)
“Stars and Stripes Forever” (1896, John Philip Sousa, performed by the J.P. Sousa Band)
“Maple Leaf Rag” (1898, Scott Joplin, performed by Scott Joplin for player piano)
“After the Ball” (1892, Charles K. Harris, performed by Gerald Adams)
“Castle House Rag” (1914, James Reese Europe’s Society Orchestra)
“Livery Stable Blues” (1917, the Original Dixieland Jazz Band)
“Heebie Jeebies” (1926, Louis Armstrong’s Hot Five)

Katz: “Strawberry Fields Forever” (1967, the Beatles), “Creep” (1993, Radiohead)

McClary (excerpt 1):

“St. Louis Blues” (1914, W.C. Handy, performed by Bessie Smith w. Louis Armstrong),
“Thinking Blues” (1928, Bessie Smith); “Cross Road Blues” (1936, Robert Johnson)

Waksman: Muddy Waters: “I Be’s Troubled” (1941), “I Can’t be Satisfied” (1948), “Rollin’ Stone” (1950),
“Rollin’ and Tumblin’” (1950), “Louisiana Blues” (1950), “I Want You to Love Me” (1953)
Bo Diddley: “Bo Diddley” (1955) / Chuck Berry: “Maybellene” (1955), “Johnny B. Goode” (1957)

Brackett Ch. 3:

“Hey Good Lookin’” (1951, Hank Williams), “Cold, Cold Heart” (1950, Williams & 1951, Bennett),
“Move It On Over” (1947, Williams), “Lovesick Blues” (1949, Williams)

Warwick: “He’s Got the Power” (1963, the Exciters), “Will You Love Me Tomorrow” (1960, the Shirelles)
“Be My Baby” (1963, the Ronettes), “Leader of the Pack” (1964, the Shangri-Las)

McClary (excerpt 2) & Headlam:

“Crossroads” (R. Johnson & 1968, Cream), “Rollin’ and Tumblin’” (M. Waters & 1966, Cream),
“Sittin’ on Top of the World” (1957, Howlin’ Wolf & 1968, Cream), “Sunshine of Your Love” (1967, Cream)

Negus: Beatles: *Sgt. Pepper’s...* (1967), “Strawberry Fields Forever” (1967), and “Penny Lane” (1967)

Sheinbaum: “Roundabout” (1971, Yes)—single (3:24) and album (8:35) versions

Holm-Hudson: “Trilogy” (1972, Emerson, Lake & Palmer)

Fast: Led Zeppelin: “Stairway to Heaven” (1971) & “Tangerine” (1970)

Walser: “Heading out to the Highway” (1981, Judas Priest), “Heaven Sent” (1987, Dokken),
“Livin’ on a Prayer” (1986, Bon Jovi), “Nothin’ but a Good Time” (1988, Poison)

Rose: “Tramp” (1986, Salt ’N’ Pepa), “Paper Thin” (1988, MC Lyte), “Ladies First” (1989, Q. Latifah)