**Social Identity and Popular Music, MU 127**

Contact information:

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Required Texts and Materials:

1) *What’s That Sound: An Introduction to Rock and its History* by John Covach This is only for basic historical background and use other sources for new music, so a new edition is unnecessary.

2) Journal or chapter readings: These will be found on Moodle.

Departmental Outcomes:

Upon completion of the music major, students will be able to

1) Hear, identify, and work with musical elements – rhythm, pitch, harmony, structure, timbre, texture,

2) Read and apply musical notation through performance,

3) Recognize and articulate an understanding of compositional process and musical style with reference to artists, technologies, events, and cultural forces through the major periods of history,

4) Use research tools and analysis to defend judgments and write about music,

5) Demonstrate competence in applied skills in performance, apply pedagogical skills to teach others.

Course Outcomes and Competencies: Upon completion of this course students will:

1) Be able to discuss how musical and cultural identity is both reflected and is forged by musical experiences

2) Be able to discuss gender roles within song paradigms and the use of image

3) Be able to consider the role of music within the Civil Rights Movement

4) Learn to listen to music and write logistically about their experience from multiple perspectives

Class Format:

This course is taught through lecture, class discussion, presentations, and in-class activities.

Class Participation:

When you come to class, be prepared to participate in discussions and other activities involving the assigned readings, exercises, etc. Bring your questions to class! Students who have not brought their materials, are sleeping in class, are not paying attention, or are disrupting the learning environment in any way may be asked to leave class and will be counted absent for that class period.

Attendance and Tardy Policy:

Regular and punctual attendance is expected throughout the semester. Students are given 3 classroom hours of unexcused absence without penalty per semester. For each additional unexcused absence, 3% points will be deducted from your final grade. Being late to class 3 times equals an unexcused absence. Excused absences include: official college functions or illness with appropriate documentation.

**NOTE:** In addition to forgoing the joy of experiencing to a wide variety of music, missing class is the largest predictor of student failure—regardless whether or not the absences are excused or unexcused. Therefore, even if you find moments, however brief, when you may wish to be elsewhere, simply showing up and paying attention drastically increases your chances of a good grade.

Classroom Etiquette and Nature of the Course:

While the focus of this course tends towards archetypes, generally discussions of identity can be intensely personal and sensitive. Accordingly, students should be respectful and sensitive aware of the feelings of others in the course on theses on these subject. Students may not use offensive language or be disrespectful to other members in the class. Disruptive students may be asked to leave the class for that day and will be counted absent.

Homework Policy:

Homework should be turned in by the end of the school day. I will give you specific procedural information. Late assignments will not be accepted unless you have received advanced permission from me. Missed tests: missed tests will be made up at my discretion.

Final Grade Calculation for Course:

Components:

Weekly Quizzes or Chapter Reviews Due every Monday 40%

Final Essay 15% (6-8 Pages)

Midterm 20%

Final Exam 20%

Class Participation 5%

College Honor Code:

You are expected be familiar with the college honor code and to follow it. How my course policy fits within this paradigm: Both in and out of academia, careers and reputations are ruined by plagiarism and cheating. In these instances, the intention to plagiarize is typically of secondary importance. Therefore, an important skill you will learn in this class is how to use sources responsibly and how to cite them accordingly. All wisdom and knowledge is built upon the shoulders of giants; therefore, your challenge is to learn how to responsibly cite borrowed material and yet still let your voice to be heard.

Infractions within this course include: plagiarizing papers (this includes negligent citations, copy and pasting), doing the homework of another student, giving another student answers to tests, and cheating on tests. With this in mind, collaboration is often an important part of scholarship. Open discussion, working on class notes together, proofreading each other’s papers, and working in study groups is not only allowed, but also encouraged. The fine line; however, is the extent. Proofreading a friend’s work is fine, but rewriting their paper is not. Group study is good, but helping each other during the exams or quizzes is cheating.

American with Disabilities Act:

BSC adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in the class, you are encouraged to register with the BSC Counseling Center and to talk with your instructor how best we can serve you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

Changes in Schedule:

The dynamic of each class is different; therefore I may change readings, assignments, and presentations to fit the needs of the particular class. The overall grade breakdown will not change, but I do reserve the right to change the schedule as needed.

About the Readings and Discussions:

The textbook is used to provide historical background, while the journal readings are to discuss various aspects of identity. Accordingly, we will openly discuss some sensitive issues related to race, gender, religion, and sexuality from various viewpoints. Some readings will provide direct quotes from artists, interviews, and study groups that include frank language and sometimes delve into controversial subjects. I expect that students will be mature about the subject matter, use language suitable for the classroom, and to be respectful of all points of view—especially those one might not agree. If we hit on a controversial topic, plan to argue both for and against your positions—whatever your position may be. Reading schedule is tentative and is subject to change, but you will be given ample advanced notice.

Schedule

Week 1

**Why Study Identity in Music and What is it?**

* Reading Assignments:
  + Articles (Read in order)
    - Theodor Adorno, “Some Ideas on the Sociology of Music,” from *Sound Figures*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Sanford: CA: Sanford University Press, 1992): 2–14.
    - Simon Frith, “Culture and Identity,” in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (SAGE Publications, 1996): 108–150.
  + Book
    - Begin reading chapter 1 in Covach.
* Writing Assignments (2-3 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, 12-point font)
  + 1) Briefly summarize the two articles
  + 2) Discuss the differences Adorno and Frith’s views on identity and culture. In your discussion you must defend each position and then argue against it. In the end, present your opinion. You are free (if not encouraged) to consult external sources to support your opinion. As long as your opinion is supported and logical, you will do well. In other words, do not try to placate me—this is YOUR opinion; just make sure it is defendable.
* Class Lecture
  + Syllabus
  + Introduction to musical terms
  + Discussion of course topics
  + Discussion of articles

Week 2:

**What is American Music?: Early American Minstrelsy, Congo Square, and complexities and contradictions in the Southern Musical Identity**

* Reading Assignments:
  + Book Chapters
    - Ted Gioia, “Chapter 1: A Prehistory of Jazz” from *The History of Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997): 3–28.
    - Bill Malone and David Stricklin, “Chapter 1, 2, and 3” from *Southern Music/American Music* (Lexington: KY: University of Kentucky Press): 5–57.
* Writing Assignment: 2-3 pages
  + What are some of the elements that form the “Southern Identity”? In other words, where does Southern music come from (Europe, African, the Caribbean etc.) and how has it formed a regional identity?
  + Discuss some of the contradictions within this period in regards to race and religion. For example, this may include the view of jazz as the music of the brothels, yet there is an important religious influence. In another example, the complex story of minstrelsy and how it was viewed by different audiences—sometimes being loved and despised among both black and white audiences.
* Class Lecture
  + Chapter 1 Covach
  + Discussion of articles
  + Student debates

Week 3:

**The assimilation of African American music into Tin Pan Alley Compositions, Be-Bop, and Social Defiance**

* Reading Assignment:
  + Ted Gioia, “Jazz and the Primitivist Myth,” *The Musical Quarterly* 73 (1989): 130–43.
  + Louis Menand, “Drive, He Wrote: What the Beats were About,” *The New Yorker* (October 1, 2007). <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2007/10/01/drive-he-wrote>
  + Pond, Stephen F. “Jamming the Reception: Ken Burns, Jazz, and the Problem of ‘America’s Music,’” *MLA Notes* (Sept. 2003): 11–45.
* Writing Assignment
  + (2-3 pages) While jazz was popular among audiences, it had a mixed reception among classical critics. While jazz has always had the aura of the dangerous vagabond, discuss how in the 1940s jazz helps to encourage the new view of jazz as the music of the intellectual vagabond in the form of the be bop musician and the beat poet. Focus on some element of this, such as the emerging intellectual African American rebel, the Beat writer who tries capture this in mood, or the Beat writer who tries to create a new style of writing in which the pentameter is directly influenced by jazz.
* Lecture
  + Classical Music, Jazz and “The Primitivist Myth”
  + Be Bop and the African American Identity
  + Jazz and the Beat Poets—the Rebel Intellectual

Week 4:

**Early Country Music: Gender Roles and the Southern Identity**

* Reading Assignments:
  + Articles (Read in order)
    - Allison McCracken, “‘God’s Gift to Us Girls’: Crooning, Gender, and the Re-Creation of American Popular Song: 1928–1933” *American Music* 17 (1999): 365–395
    - Jocelyn Neal, “‘Why Ladies Love Country Boys’: Gender, Class, and Economics in Contemporary Country Music,” in *Country Boys and Redneck Women*, ed. Kristine M. McCusker (Jackson: MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2016): 3–25.
    - Start Reading Covach, 2-3
* Writing Assignments (2-3 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, 12-point font)
  + 1) Briefly summarize the two articles
  + 2) Discuss how gender roles are presented in these types of music. Are these views still presented in today’s music? In at least one paragraph you must defend the continuation of these gender roles and in another you must argue against it. In the final paragraph, you can present your own opinion. External sources will strengthen your arguments—be prepared to defend them in-class.
  + Include a 1-page summary of chapter 1 Covach.
* Lectures
  + Brief history of country music: Roots and figures
  + Gender roles, regional identity, racial identity
  + Musical borrowing
  + Review

Week Five

**1950s Rock**

* Writing Assignment
  + Summarize Chapters 2-3.
  + Open topic of discussion related to identity: The 1950s are a time with many cultures: assimilation/appropriation of African American music into the mainstream, traditional gender roles reflected in songs—yet an increasing openness in regards to sexuality, and Rock n’ Roll, while tame by today’s standards, reflects a new rebellion of youth. Discuss some aspect of identity in music during the 1950s.
* Reading Assignment
  + Covach Chapters 2-3

Week Six

**Say it Loud: 1960s: Race and Identity**

* Writing Assignment:
  + Discuss signifyin’: What is it and where is it derived from?
  + Talk about how racial identity changed in the 1960s
  + Discuss a few artists that directly reflect these changes.
* Reading Assignment
  + Henry Louis Gates, *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), TBD.
  + Ruth Feldstein, “‘I Don't Trust You Anymore’: Nina Simone, Culture, and Black Activism in the 1960s.” *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005): 1349­–379.

Week Seven

**1960s Psychedelic Music and Political Rebellion**

* Writing Assignment
  + Discuss the role of music in the burgeoning hippy identity and changing views on gender roles and sexuality, as well as politics.
  + In the 1960s, most people were not “hippies,” therefore, discuss how the hippy identity may have influenced today’s concepts of identity. In addition, reflect on how both today and in the 1960s people may have rejected these changes. Again, the point here is not to advocate for a subjective determination if this is good or bad, but rather to be objective.
  + After you have outlined the changes, argue the positive impact these changes may have had, then argue the opposite. None of this has to be your opinion, your job is simply to be critical and argue both sides.
* Reading Assignment
  + Covach: Chapter 7

Week Eight

**1970s Progressive Rock, Glam/Glitter Rock, Disco, and Gender roles**

* Reading Assignment
  + Covach: Chapter 8
  + Philip Auslander, “Glamology: Glam Rock and the Politics of Identity,” in *Performing Glam Rock: Gender and Theatricality in Popular Music* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 227-235.
  + Philip Auslander, “I Wanna Be Your Man: Suzi Quatro's Musical Androgyny” *Popular Music* 23 (Jan., 2004): 1–16.

Week Nine

**1970s and 1980s Punk and New Wave, Political rebellion in 1970s and 80s punk and New Wave Gender roles**

* Reading Assignment
  + Covach: Chapters 10 and 11
  + Philip Lewin and J. Patrick Williams, “The Ideology and Practice of Authenticity in Punk Subculture,” in *Authenticity in Culture, Self, and Society*, ed. Phillip Vannini and J. Patrick Williams (Ashgate, 2016), 65–81.
  + Thomas Geyrhalter, “Effeminacy, Camp and Sexual Subversion in Rock: The Cure and Suede,” *Popular Music* 15 (May, 1996): 217–224.

Week Ten:

**Hyper-masculinity and Androgyny within 1980s Hard Rock and Thrash Metal: The Rebirth of Glam**

* Writing Assignment
  + First, give a brief summary of heavy metal (Covach chapter 12)
  + Second, describe the social identity surrounding heavy metal
  + Third, discuss how women are portrayed in heavy metal music. Specifically, what are the gender roles that are assumed as culture?
  + How do you think these roles have impacted today’s music and views on women? (You may not think they are relevant or have other perspectives on it—the point is to build a convincing argument.)
* Reading Assignment
  + Covach: Start Chapter 12
  + Robert Walser, “Forging Masculinity: Heavy Metal Sounds and Images of Gender,” in *Sound and Vision: The Music Video Reader* (1993): 153–81.

Week Eleven

**1980s and 1990s Hip Hop and EDM: Gangster Rap, Street Identity, and Misogyny; and 1990s EDM.**

* Writing Assignment
  + Briefly summarize gangsta rap scene and discuss the social identity often associated with it.
  + Based on your reading of the Adams/Fuller article, discuss the roles the women in hip hop. Flash-forward to today: How have these views have changed how society views women, how women are portrayed, how women view themselves, and/or how has it changed the definition of feminism? This is opinion, so you it is entirely possible that you do or do not think that any of these changes have happened. Your job is to create a logical argument for your position.
* Reading Assignment
  + Covach: Finish Chapter 12
  + Charis E. Kubrin, “Gangstas, Thugs, and Hustlas: Identity and the Code of the Street in Rap Music,” Social Problems 52 (August 2005): 360­–378.
  + Terri M. Adams and Douglas B. Fuller, “The Words Have Changed But the Ideology Remains the Same: Misogynistic Lyrics in Rap Music,” Journal of Black Studies 36 (July 2006): 938­–957.

Week Twelve:

**1990s Grunge and Teenage Angst and Alienation**

* Writing Assignment
  + Summarize the identities associated with grunge and EDM.
  + How do you think these movements have or have not influenced today’s millennials?
* Reading Assignment
  + Covach: Chapter 13
  + Philip R. Kavanaugh and Tammy L. Anderson, “Solidarity and Drug Use in the Electronic Dance Music Scene” *The Sociological Quarterly* 49: 181–208.
  + Rupa Huq, *Beyond subculture: Pop,Youth and Identity in a Postcolonial World* (Routledge, 2007), 135–155.

Week Thirteen

**Feminism and Fanaticism: Feminist Rock, Hate Rock, Youth Movements.**

* Writing Assignment
  + How does the White Power Music Scene create a sense of community and identity? How is this similar and different from any of the other cultural identities we have discussed?
  + Has the Riot Grrrl movement been influential in the modern views on women and feminism? If so, how? If not, explain.
* Reading Assignment
  + Jessica Rosenberg and Gitana Garofalo, “Riot Grrrl: Revolutions from Within,” *Signs*: *Feminisms and Youth Cultures* 23 (Spring, 1998): 809–841.
  + Robert Futrell, Pete Simi and Simon Gottschalk, “Understanding Music in Movements: The White Power Music Scene,” *The Sociological Quarterly* 47 (Spring, 2006): 275­­–304.