

POPULAR MUSIC



Todd Smith

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Popular Music (Smith)

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1.1: Defining Popular Music and Stephen Foster



Figure 1.1 Chuck Berry.

“Popular Music” can be defined as music that has a broad appeal to popular tastes; in other words a large portion of the population appreciate and enjoy it.

Popular Music encompasses an incredibly wide range of styles, some of which are seemingly unrelated. For example, Punk, Country, and Disco all fall under this umbrella term for their wide appeal. These styles can be traced back to earlier styles.

Certain musical characteristics are often times identifiable in the many styles of popular music.

- **Vocals** are often present and at the forefront of the musical texture.
- Along with vocals, **lyrics** (the words set to the music), are also at the forefront of the musical texture.
- Usually, each individual song is relatively **brief**.
- Many popular songs follow certain **formal characteristics**.
- The music is very often structured in **4-beat patterns**.

Origins of Music



Figure 1.2 The Three Musicians, Tomb of Nakht, Thebes.

Humans have been making music for thousands of years as evidenced by the Divje Babe flute pictured here and the above painting of three musicians from the Tomb of Nakht, Thebes ca. 1422-1411 BCE. Of course, this is long before audio recording and musical notation were available. The earliest music notation was first developed around 2000 BC, but didn’t start approaching it’s modern form until the middle ages in Europe.



Figure 1.3 Divje Babe Flute.

Once music was able to be notated and mass produced, popular music began to develop on the scale we know it today. With more families buying pianos, there was higher demand for sheet music of popular songs. Still, most popular songs were passed down from person to person rather than documented in notation. Once audio recording technology was developed in the 19th century, a wide variety of popular music became easily available.

To the right is an image of the Divje Babe flute, discovered in Slovenia in 1995 and it represents how deeply music falls into the timeline of human history. The flute is carved from a cave bear femur and at approximately 43,000 years old represents an example of a relatively sophisticated musical instrument. Such instruments were most certainly predated by percussion and especially by the human voice, both of which, as musical instruments, undoubtedly go back even further into human history.



Figure 1.4 Sheet Music

Quick Music Fundamentals Terms List

Melody: A series of pitches that unfold over a period of time. A melody is like a sentence with a beginning, middle, end, high point, low point, contour, and structure. Often, these elements are linked in some way to the words. Think of a song everyone knows, like “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”. Sing it to yourself and notice the form of the melody. First we sing “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, How I Wonder What You Are” then we sing “Up Above the World So High, Like a Diamond in the Sky” and then finally “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, How I Wonder What You Are”. Notice the first and third sentences are not only the same words, but the same melody. The second line is contrasting not only in the words but in the melody.

Rhythm: Divisions of music into patterns over time. Rhythm is what gives music its dance-ability. Rhythm is made up of a series of accents or pulses called **beats**. Think of a clock for example; it beats 60 times per minute (each second is a beat in this case), and each beat is even. This is an example of **tempo**, also known as the speed of the music. **Meter** is the term for how many pulses or beats make up a phrase of the music. For example, the majority of popular music uses a meter with 4-beat patterns. Other patterns such as 3-beat patterns are often used as well.

Chords: A series of pitches sounding at the same time, most often used to accompany melodies. Can be played with different rhythmic patterns. A chord is simply a way of arranging a series of pitches to provide a background over which a melody can have context. Most often, the chords themselves will contain notes from the melody.

Listening Examples 1.1

A brief demonstration of the concepts of melody, chords, and rhythm demonstrated using “Twinkle Twinkle”. Seemingly childish, but it’s a tune most of us know by heart! I first play the melody alone to give you a sense of the contour/structure, then I apply the chord changes to accompany the melody which gives it a sense of completeness. All the while, the entire tune uses a 4-beat pattern. Try counting 1-2-3-4 on each melody note to get a sense of the 4-beat pattern.

- [Twinkle Twinkle: Melody, Chord, and Rhythm demonstration](#)

Early American Popular Music: Stephen Foster



Figure 1.5 Stephen Foster.

Stephen Foster is often called the “Father of American Music”. Widely considered the first great American songwriter, Foster’s music became well-known and loved by the American public in his brief lifetime. Many of his songs, of which he wrote around 200, have an enduring legacy and timelessness, allowing them to maintain relevancy to the present day. In fact, Foster helped popularize Verse-Chorus song form in American popular song 1., one of the most enduring and popular song forms of all time. The blending of timeless lyrics, enduring song forms, and elements of varied musical styles like opera and parlor songs, has allowed the power of Foster’s artistry to maintain popularity over 150 years after his death. While the details of much of his life are scant, his brother Morrison Foster wrote much about his brother and it’s through the help of these writings from which we can piece together the details of Stephen Foster’s life.

Born in Pennsylvania on the Fourth of July 1826, Foster was the youngest of nine siblings. His family was musical, but Stephen himself was largely self-taught. His brother Morrison Foster wrote, “He had but few teachers. Not only was musical instruction chiefly for females, but by the time Stephen was old enough to profit from lessons, his parents could ill afford them” (Emerson, 1997, p. 325). In childhood and as a young man, Foster learned to play many different instruments including flute, guitar, and piano. His brother Morrison wrote that as early as two years of age, Stephen would lay his sister Ann Eliza’s guitar on the floor “and pick out harmonies from it’s strings. He called it his ‘itty pisano’ (little piano)” (Emerson, 1997, p. 51). By the age of 9, Stephen was already pulled into the world of musical performance. While he didn’t perform regularly as an adult, he was considered a talented and engaging performer as a child. He performed “crude comic songs written in blackface dialect” (Emerson, 1997, p. 55). Blackface dialect is a lyrical style representing a blatant caricature of 19th century African Americans. With its inherent racist content, blackface is not a genre that has aged well, but at the time it was quite simply “in fashion” for songwriters. As we’ll see, Stephen Foster would write songs of his own using blackface dialect such as “Uncle Ned”.

In 19th century America, musical pursuits were generally regarded as the province of women and children. As a teenager, Stephen seemed to lack an interest in anything except music, but was able to find male figures that gave him confidence to pursue his own musical path: Henry Kleber, a German immigrant and classically-trained music teacher and Dan Rice, a minstrel performer (Emerson, 1997, p. 100). By his twenties, Foster was struggling to find direction. Dropping out of college after one week and seemingly disinterested in standard career paths suggested to him by his brother Morrison, he worked menial warehouse jobs while writing songs of his own and, starting in 1844, publishing them (Emerson 1997). By this time, he had become too shy to perform publicly and composition became his primary artistic outlet. He spent time in Cincinnati in 1846 working as a bookkeeper. While there he had a chance to hear and absorb the music of African-Americans as the city was in Ohio, a state free of slavery. Musical and cultural exposure such as this played a role in the development of Foster’s songwriting in songs such as “Old Folks At Home”. Foster is alleged to have written the popular song after hearing enslaved boat workers singing a similar melody and words in New Orleans (Emerson, 1997, p. 121). He continued writing, publishing and organizing performances of his songs into the following year.

On September 11, 1847 Foster debuted his song “[Oh! Susanna](#),” a song that would cement Foster as a household name. The song fit the mold for popular songs of the day with its seemingly silly lyrics in the blackface dialect. The lyrics are more complex, however. A mixture of light-heartedness, blatant racism, and a dreadful anxiety about technology and what it meant for the future, “Oh! Susanna” seemed to appeal to all sorts of listeners and improvised lyrics to the tune were developed to fit the lives of different people. For example, during the Gold Rush to California in 1848, the following verse was routinely sung to the tune of “Oh! Susanna” by travelers:

“Oh California! Thou Land of glittering dreams,

Where the yellow dust and diamond, boys,
Are found in all thy streams”

“Oh Susanna” was published in 1848 and was soon followed by approximately 30 different arrangements by 16 different publishers, hinting at its popularity. It’s unclear if Foster was making any money at all from sales of the sheet music of “Oh! Susanna”. In fact, his brother Morrison wrote that Stephen gave “Oh! Susanna” to W.C. Peters for free, and the publisher subsequently made \$10,000 off the song. Beyond the problems of making money, Foster was definitely making a name for himself.

Listening Examples 1.2

- [Oh Susanna!](#)
- [Hard Times Come Again No More](#)

Eventually Foster fell in love with Jane McDowell, forever immortalized in his song “Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair”. The couple married in 1850 and had one daughter. Stephen began developing a problem with alcohol during the course of the marriage, and the family shared a rented house with Stephen’s parents and adult siblings. These factors certainly caused strain and ultimately resulted in a separation between Stephen and Jane after a decade of marriage. Meanwhile, Foster’s music continued to be performed and published. He was using blackface dialect less and less, though leaving blackface behind meant he was going broke. Ken Emerson, author of the definitive book on Foster “Doo-dah!” (1997), examined Foster’s business ledger books of 1857, noting that the average annual return in royalties for a non-blackface song was \$31.00, while the average return for a blackface song was \$319.44, more than ten times that amount (Emerson p. 174).

By the following decade, Foster was again struggling to make enough money, and his songs became generally more lachrymose. His life ended in poverty at age 37, a result of an accidental wound. He had 38 cents in his pocket. This sad end stands in stark contrast to the fact that his music has ensured his artistic legacy, lasting over 150 years at this point, will continue to endure for some time to come.



Figure 1.6 Sheet Music for “Hard Times Come No More”.

Foster’s use of Verse-Chorus form is one feature that helps his music endure. Verse-Chorus is today the most common structure of popular songs. There are earlier examples of said form, such as the Scottish traditional tune “The Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond” first published in 1841 and written by an unknown composer, but Foster’s regular use of the form and his subsequent influence on other composers helped the form endure. In song’s such as “Oh Susanna!” the chorus is simple and easy to remember.

Left is the sheet music from Foster’s song “[Hard Times Come Again No More.](#)”

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1.2: Early Popular Music Styles in America

Early Popular Music Styles in America



Figure 2.1 New York City, 1899.

Ragtime, Tin Pan Alley, Blues, Jazz

These styles of music in the late 19th century had a profound impact on the development of popular music in the United States and subsequently on the world.

Blues and **Jazz** were improvised styles. Improvisation in this context means the music was ‘composed’ on the spot based on certain stylistic and formal frameworks, without pre-planning. For example, a song could always have the same chord progression, but the melody would be embellished in different ways every time it was performed. Early blues and jazz musicians weren’t recorded, so unfortunately the earliest blues and jazz remain undocumented.

Ragtime and **Tin Pan Alley** music were composed styles. This means they were created ahead of time, written down on paper in musical notation, and sometimes published. This system of composition, notation and publishing was the primary vehicle for popular music distribution until audio recording and records became common place.

Ragtime

Ragtime was primarily an African American style most commonly played on the piano, and became increasingly popular in the late 19th century. It’s named for the “ragged” or *syncopated* rhythms played by the pianists right hand while the left hand played a steady rhythm. This is known as *polyrhythm*. “Ragtime’s direct influence on rock music had to do with its energy, fun, and syncopated rhythms...”(Charlton, pg. 3). Scott Joplin, Joseph Lamb, and James Scott are considered the most important composers of ragtime.

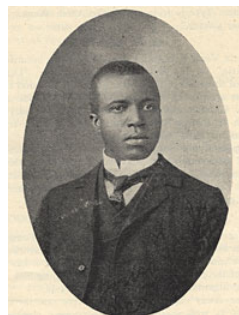


Figure 2.2 Scott Joplin.

Scott Joplin – (1868-1917, pictured above) Joplin is probably the best known ragtime composer; his music is still popular among piano players today. The sheet music for “Maple Leaf Rag” sold more than 1 million copies in Joplin’s lifetime. He earned royalties from the sales of the sheet music in the same way a recording artist today earns money when their records are sold.



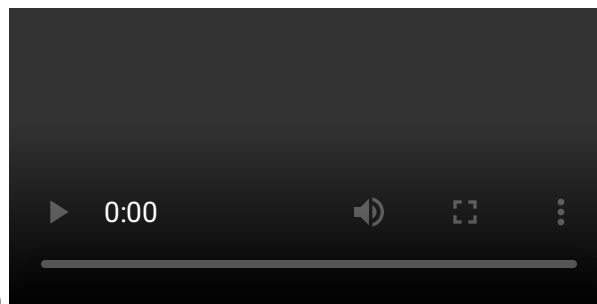
Figure 2.3 Cover sheet for “Maple Leaf Rag.”

Ragtime music wasn’t limited only to the piano. In fact an astounding guitarist named Blind Blake played the same polyrhythms on guitar... while singing! Listen to “Southern Rag” in *Ch. 2 Listening Examples* recorded by Blind Blake in 1927.

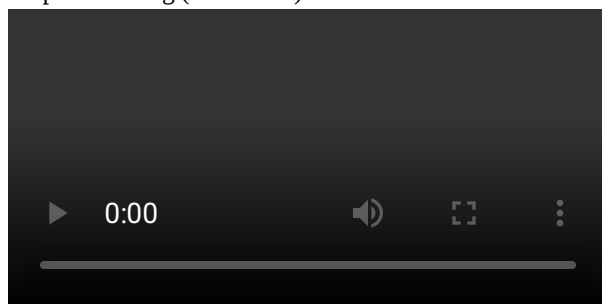
Listening Examples 2.1

To get an idea of the way ragtime uses **polyrhythm**, I have notated the first four bars of “Maple Leaf Rag” by Scott Joplin into notation software and isolated the left hand and the right hands.

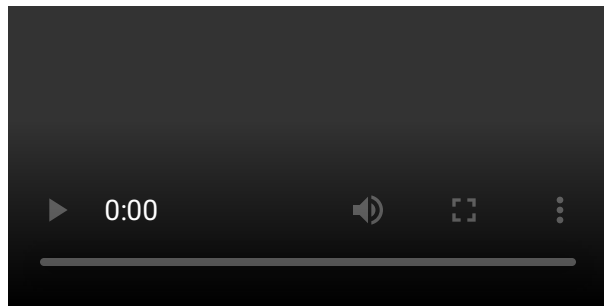
First, listen to the left hand in isolation as it provides a steady pulse, playing very equally on each beat. Next, listen to the right hand in isolation. Notice how this rhythm is more complex and lacks the steady pulse of the left hand. Now, listen to both hands together. The combination of the two distinct parts in each hand creates the “ragged” or syncopated sound of two very different rhythms at the same time (polyrhythm). Finally, listen to Maple Leaf Rag in it’s entirety as played by Scott Joplin. Audio recording didn’t exist at the time, but Mr. Joplin’s playing is documented through piano rolls which were used in player pianos, very popular novelty items in the early 20th century.



- Maple Leaf Rag (Left Hand)



- Maple Leaf Rag (Right Hand)



Maple Leaf Rag (Both Hands)

- [“Maple Leaf Rag” by Scott Joplin \(1899\)](#)

The rhythmic syncopation or polyrhythms of ragtime piano are often applied to the guitar in blues and country guitar playing. I made a short video demonstrating this and then the example by guitarist Blind Blake from 1927 shows just how far the concept can go! The example “Freight Train” by Elizabeth Cotten is one of the most played examples of this guitar approach. The example below is Cotten herself performing “Freight Train”. Other guitarists who use similar techniques are blues guitarists such as Mississippi John Hurt and country guitarists Doc Watson and the great Chet Atkins.

- [Ragtime piano polyrhythm on the guitar](#)
- [“Southern Rag” by Blind Blake \(1927\)](#)
- [“Freight Train” by Elizabeth Cotten](#)

Tin Pan Alley



Figure 2.4 Tin Pan Alley.

Tin Pan Alley was located in New York City. In the late 19th and early 20th c. there were many music publishing offices there. “Tin Pan” allegedly refers to the tinny tone of the pianos used in the offices. The music is varied, as “Tin Pan Alley” music encompasses a variety of composers. Most often it is vocally based, with either sentimental or joyful lyrics. The music itself can be simple and melodic, or can contain the rhythmic complexities of ragtime.

Songwriters traveled there hoping to get their music published, performed by professionals, and, if audiences enjoyed the music enough, eventually mass printed and sold to amateurs. The increasing popularity of Vaudeville performances required more and more new music. The songs were generally sentimental ballads or songs of innocent joy. Popular songs such as “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” and [“Hello My Baby!”](#) were published out of Tin Pan Alley and sold as sheet music. Listen to Max Morath play [“Hello My Baby”](#) and notice that this performance is led by the vocals, but still contains some of the polyrhythms from ragtime.

Jazz



Figure 2.5 Original Dixieland Jazz Band Post Card.

New Orleans Jazz

Jazz evolved out of the parade bands that were popular in New Orleans. The African-American and Creole musicians infused this music with more energy, syncopated African rhythms, and the sound of blues and gospel. This became known as “hot” music. “Hot” bands generally consisted of the front line comprised of a trumpet, a clarinet, and a trombone. The rhythm section was usually a banjo, guitar, or a piano; string bass or tuba; and drums. These bands used collective improvisation to embellish and vary the songs they played with equal emphasis on each instrument/layer of the musical texture. Solo breaks were relatively uncommon. ‘Hot’ bands began performing outside of New Orleans as early as 1908 and began to gain popularity as a vehicle for dances like the “Charleston”.

The first jazz recordings are of the “[Original Dixieland Jazz Band](#)” from 1917. Other groups such as the one led by cornet player King Oliver in which Louis Armstrong played, were even more important in their influence on the course of jazz. Listen to “Livery Stable Blues” in *Ch. 2.2 Listening Examples* for a typical example of New Orleans jazz where many instruments are playing contrasting lines that fit together in a complex web of music. This texture is called “polyphony” (“Many Lines”). The music resembles the polyrhythmic interactions of ragtime, but in a more free flowing, spontaneous way.



Figure 2.6 Louis Armstrong.

No single musician is considered as important to the artistic development and commercial appeal of early jazz as **Louis Armstrong** (1901-1971). Listen to “Cornet Chop Suey” by Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five from 1926 in *Ch. 2.2 Listening Examples*. In this piece, the polyphonic texture has been crystallized with Armstrong’s brilliant trumpet playing taking the lead in the improvisation. The piece has a strong rhythmic backbone created by the piano and banjo, while trumpet, trombone, and clarinet play independent lines. The rhythms played by the piano and banjo consist of accents on each beat through most of the song, and the song again features 4-beat patterns. Try counting 1-2-3-4 along with the music, paying special attention to the pulses played by the piano and banjo. Without a drum set, the rhythm section has to play insistent rhythmic figures to keep the band together and to drive the music forward. A piano solo occurs in the middle of the piece, but Armstrong’s trumpet returns to bring the music to a conclusion.

Listening Examples 2.2

Original Dixieland Jazz Band – “Livery Stable Blues” from 1917. This is a typical example of New Orleans Jazz where many instruments are playing contrasting lines that fit together in a complex web of music. This texture is called “polyphony” (“many lines”). This resembles the polyrhythmic interactions of ragtime, but in a more free flowing, spontaneous way.

- “[Livery Stable Blues](#)” by the [Original Dixieland Jazz Band](#)
- “[Cornet Chop Suey](#)” by [Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five](#)

Swing Jazz

Swing jazz became popular in the 1930's, staying popular through World War II. Swing "Big" bands consisted of 'sections' of trumpets, trombones, saxes, and a rhythm section. The rhythm section almost always consisted of piano, string bass, and drums. These were bands with many musicians that were expensive to run. When World War II began band leaders had trouble paying their musicians, and many of these groups began to dissolve.

They played primarily composed and arranged material with featured solo improvisation. The music included danceable rhythms and relatively simple music to appeal to dancing audiences. Swing bands used walking bass where the bass plays a note on each beat. Walking bass would later be used in rock and rhythm and blues styles.

A new singing style known as crooning became popular. Characterized by a soft and gentle singing style, it developed through the use of the microphone which was needed for singers to cut above the big bands.

One of the most popular band leaders in the swing jazz era was **Benny Goodman** (1909-1986). Listen to "Stompin' At The Savoy" from 1934 in *Ch. 2.3 Listening Examples*. Compare the sound of swing jazz to the jazz of Louis Armstrong above. Notice how the drums and bass drive the music in a stronger and simpler way, and how the melody is much more clear. Many of the complexities of New Orleans jazz have been taken out, and the "swinging" rhythms, dense layers of horns, and melodies are emphasized much more.

As jazz developed, popular songs (referred to as "standards") increasingly became platforms for improvisation and experimentation. In the 1940s a new jazz sub-genre known as **Bebop** developed. In bebop, songs would often be taken at increased tempos and the chord changes would be cycled while a soloist would improvise melody over top. These improvisations could last a long time before the musician felt like they had expressed themselves fully. As jazz continues to develop, new compositions are written, but the old standards from the 1930s and 1940s remained popular among even the most progressive jazz musicians who try exploring them in new ways. Take for example the song "[Stella by Starlight](#)", originally composed by Victor Young for a film in 1944. The song is full of complex chord changes characteristic of many jazz standards, but it also contains a catchy melody and accessible lyrics. Listen to multiple version of the same song in *Ch. 2.3 Listening Examples* and notice how different each example are from one another.

Listening Examples 2.3

- "[Stompin' at the Savoy](#)" by Benny Goodman (1934)

First, Ella Fitzgerald sings the **standard** version of "[Stella by Starlight](#)" presenting the melody, chords, and form in a clear way. Second, The Miles Davis Quintet performs an **improvisational** version of "[Stella by Starlight](#)". Miles adds variation to the original melody, and then soloists (including John Coltrane on saxophone and Bill Evans on piano) improvise melodically over the chord changes. Finally, [I play a solo](#) version on guitar that produces a mixture of the theme with improvised melodies and chord voicings. (Voicings are the particular note choices within a chord). I try to evoke a sense of space with floating rhythm, and eschewing the presence of constant melody and accompaniment.

A Introduction to the Blues

Speculative Origins

The blues are most likely the result of ancient traditions being passed down from generation to generation, but no records exist that can definitively point to its origin. One of the earliest accounts attesting to the existence of the blues comes from African-American composer WC Handy from 1903, discussed later in the chapter. Possible origins exist in Africa, Arabia, the Middle East, and Spain. The most direct predecessor comes from Africa in the music that came to America by the people brought as slaves, though those people came from many different regions of Africa. **Free Town, Sierra Leone** was a city where people who were abducted with the intention of becoming slaves were able to stay and avoid being brought to America. The population there subsequently represents the same mixture of people brought to America, and yet the blues did not develop there. This points to a significant link between the enslavement of Africans in America and the development of the Blues. The Blues seems to have developed in form and style by the late 19th – early 20th century, but the first recordings weren't made until the 1920s.

Griot Songs

Image of a black man seated wearing robe-like clothing.

Figure 2.7

Griots are oral poets who tell the history of their people accompanied by music. An ancient African art form, these Griot songs share characteristics with early blues.

Griot songs feature an expressive and unpolished vocal quality, duple (two beat) rhythmic patterns, vocal lines that sound independent and avoid following the rhythm of the accompaniment (often due to the vast amount of words in an epic poem), and no harmonic changes (meaning no chord changes). Rough, unpolished vocal tone and duple rhythm are found in early American blues music.

The Blues feature many contrasts to Griot song as well. First, unlike Griot singers, early blues singers usually followed the rhythm of the accompaniment. Griot songs are based on historical poems, have more words than the average blues song, and the musical accompaniment is subservient to the text. In the blues, the text is usually much more succinct, direct, and personal. With simple texts it is easier to make them rhythmically related to the rhythm of the accompaniment. Second, the lyrical content of the blues differed from Griot song, as the Blues were a personal expression of the hardships faced by the people who played them rather than the epic historical poetry of griot songs. Lastly, African-Americans were exposed to European music such as church hymns which influenced the idea of harmonic progression (chord changes) and equal length verses (vocal melodies). Listen to the Griot songs in *Ch. 2.4 Listening Examples*. Notice how independent the vocals are from the accompaniment in the first example by [Malamini, Pa Bobo and Bai Jobarteh](#). Oftentimes, Griot vocals are more of a recitation than singing. Also, there are no chord changes throughout the piece, the accompaniment is static, ie. it stays the same or very similar throughout. A slightly more modern take on a [Griot song by Sibob Bangoura](#) is also included where Sibob's vocal melody is more rhythmically linked to the kora accompaniment. Sibob also gives a brief explanation on the Griot tradition after his performance, and makes a distinction between Griot storytellers and Griot musicians.

W.C. Handy



Figure 2.8 W.C. Handy by Carl Van Vechten.

Composer W.C. Handy (pictured) gives us one of the earliest records of the blues in his autobiography *Father of the Blues* (1941). Handy describes waiting for a train in Clarksdale, Mississippi late at night in 1903 when the man next to him began playing a guitar with a knife pressed against the strings (in the manner of slide guitar) and sang the line “Goin’ where the Southern cross the dog” three times. The text essentially was describing the man’s destination, but Handy described the music the man played as “the weirdest music I had ever heard”, and was struck by the newness of the sounds he was hearing (Handy, pg. 74). Today, we think of the blues as an old musical genre, but in 1903, it was new. This may seem obvious but it’s an interesting perspective considering

the Blues was a meld of European and African musical sources, something that simply didn't exist prior, and would have sounded quite striking and fresh even to a seasoned musician like Handy.

The Impact of Slavery on the Blues

Call and Response – Traditional African style of singing during hard labor. The leader sings a phrase and the group sings a “response”; can be traced back to traditional African music.

Field Holler – Instead of a group the field holler is singing done by an individual. Often a lament on the injustice of their circumstances. Usually slower and improvised.

Signifying – Use of double meaning in the text in which the song would seem respectful to the overseer but would really be an expression of discontent. The use of textual double meaning goes back to African tradition and the griot song.

Listen to Lead Belly sing “Pick A Bale Of Cotton” in *Ch. 2.4 Listening Examples*. Formally, this song is made up of two sections “A” (“Me and my wife can pick a bale of cotton”, and variations.) and “B” (Oh Lordy pick a bale of cotton, oh Lordy pick a bale a day”), and these two sections contrast musically as well as lyrically. This AB segment repeats a number of times, increasing in tempo with each iteration. Lyrically this song is literally about work (picking cotton), and the tempo increases are significant, pointing to being a way to speed up and increase production on the cotton field.

Listening Examples 2.4

- “Kelefa Ba” by Malamini, Pa Bobo and Bai Jobarteh
- Griot singer Sibo Bangoura
- “Pick a Bale of Cotton” by Leadbelly

Emerging Technologies 1: Phonograph, Gramophone



Figure 2.9 Thomas Edison with the phonograph ca. 1878.

As we have seen, the primary formats in which music was consumed for entertainment were live performances and sheet music. The piano was a necessary part of musical entertainment at home, and sheet music had to be read and learned by a family member before it was played at the piano. With the emergence of new technologies, part of the goal was almost always to create convenience for the consumer. A machine that could play back music without any effort on the part of the consumer would be a prized commodity, and the time was ripe for invention. The last part of the 19th century and the first part of the 20th century saw unprecedented developments in electronics (telephone, lightbulb, etc.) and music was one of the first art forms to be profoundly affected by the emerging technologies of the time. As we know, music has maintained continuous developments that parallel technological growth.

The first device to “document” sound was the **Phonautograph** (pictured above). Patented in 1857 by French inventor Edwourd-Leon Scott de Martinville, this device transcribed physical sound into visual representations of sound waves by way of etching them onto a prepared surface. There was no way to play the audio back, but the sound waves were visible. In the early 2000s these were optically scanned via computers and the sounds were heard for the first time in 150 years. Listen to the audio in *Ch. 2 Listening Examples*.

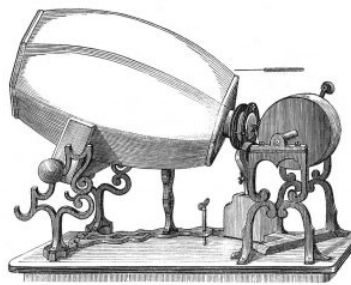


Figure 2.10 Etching of a phonautograph.

Some twenty years later, the famous American inventor Thomas Edison began developing what became known as the phonograph. Having already developed a number of improvements to the telegraph (an early form of electronic communication), Edison turned his focus to audio recording. By age 30, he had developed a machine capable of recording audio by way of etching sound waves with a needle onto a tinfoil wrapped cylinder, spun in circles using a manual hand crank. Edison is most likely to have finished the first working phonograph by the fall of 1877, and the first recording ever made was Edison reciting the nursery rhyme “Mary Had a Little Lamb”. The patent for the device was issued on February 19, 1878 (Gelatt, p. 22). Edison wasted no time putting his invention into the public sphere. A number of phonographs and public demonstrations were given by trained showmen to enraptured audiences around the country. Journalists wrote articles praising the invention, and Edison was becoming a household name. In reality, the quality of the recordings was generally poor and the practical use of such a device was limited. It could only record just over a minute of audio, and gave “only the barest approximation of human speech” (Gelatt, p. 30). The device had been patented before it was perfected, and after less than a year, Edison largely abandoned the phonograph to focus on the electrical light bulb.



Figure 2.11 A 1901 example of Edison’s wax cylinder phonograph.

Inevitably, other inventors picked up where Edison left off. In this case, Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, spent the next decade working on developments to the phonograph. One of the most significant improvements was changing the recording material from tinfoil to wax coated cardboard. The vibrations of sound were recorded/etched into the wax and played back clearer, more defined recordings than the tinfoil. Eventually, the cylinder’s would be able to playback audio for 2-3 minutes. The patent for the new device, called the “graphophone”, was issued on May 4, 1886. Edison by this point had begun to focus once again on his own developments to the phonograph and the two companies were competing.

Both the Graphophone and Edison’s new phonograph used wax cylinders in place of tinfoil, and used electric motors powered by bulky batteries, to maintain a playback of consistent speed unlike the manual crank method of the original. Eventually, both Bell’s and Edison’s inventions were purchased by a businessman named Jesse Lippincott and the inventions were merged into one, called simply phonographs once again. Music was not the intended focus of the phonograph. Rather, Edison himself wanted to focus on phonographs as office dictation machines, touting the ability of the machine to reproduce spoken word. He felt using the phonograph as entertainment diminished its importance. Regardless, the phonograph never really took off in offices, and people indeed began preferring them for entertainment. The most popular use of the phonograph around the turn of the century was “nickel-in-the-slot” machines in places of business where patrons could put a coin in the machine and hear anything from Sousa marches to Stephen Foster songs, or theatrical monologues to comedy routines.



Figure 2.12 Gramophone with circular disk.

While the phonograph was just beginning to take off commercially, another inventor named Emile Berliner was working on an audio recording/playback device that used flat, circular discs rather than cylinders. After some years of competition, it was Berliner's disc that would eventually dominate the world of recorded audio.

The impact of the phonograph on popular music cannot be overstated. Beyond all the opportunities that were opened for musicians, there were plenty of limitations. Sound quality obviously was a considerable compromise, but beyond that, the phonograph had an approximate 3 minute limit, imposing considerable limitations on songwriters. In fact, it's possible that the brevity of recorded examples of 12-bar blues, a form we'll take a detailed look at later in the book, was a byproduct of this time limit. Many published blues lyrics from the 1920s–1930s contain a dozen or more choruses (as opposed to 4-5 choruses on a 3 minute phonograph recording) (Davis, p. 30).

Listening Examples 2.5

- [Recording from a phonograph from 1860](#)
- [1888 recording of Handel's oratorio "Israel in Egypt"](#)

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1.3: The Blues

Country Blues



Figure 3.1 Bunk Johnson and Leadbelly aka Huddie William Ledbetter.

Country blues originated in rural areas of the United States, particularly the south. Characteristics of the country blues are expressive and personal lyrics, usually with accompaniment on a solo acoustic guitar generally played by the singer themselves. This style has a folk-like feel, and during the folk revival of the early 1960s, country blues artists found themselves popular with young listeners.

Artists working in the country blues genre include Big Bill Broonzy and Mississippi John Hurt. Hurt would alternate between gentle spiritual lyrics and raw secular lyrics.

12-Bar Blues Form

A specific formal structure began to appear (in one form or another) in a large portion of blues songs called **twelve-bar blues**. Inspired by European song forms, it uses repeated and contrasting lines of specific lengths.

The formal structure can be outlined as AAB. The A section refers to the first line of melody (4 measures) as well as the first phrase of words. The second A represents a repeat of the words likely the melody. The B section refers to a contrasting line in the text (often rhyming with the A sections) and a contrasting melody (a response)

Essentially, the form has two lines of text, the first of which is repeated once. It could be written like the example below from “Three O’Clock Blues” by BB King:

It’s three o’clock in the morning, and I can’t even close my eyes A

It’s three o’clock in the morning, and I can’t even close my eyes A

I can’t find my baby, and I can’t be satisfied B

Each bar is organized into four beats, and each section (A or B) consists of four bars. A+A+B therefore equals 12 bars. The complete AAB form is alternately called a chorus, verse, or stanza.

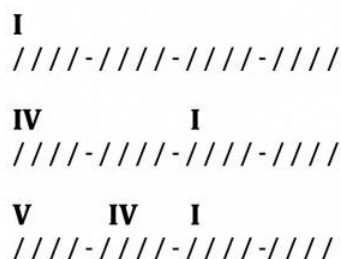


Figure 3.2 12-Bar Blues Form.

Left is a graphic representation of 12-bar blues form. It is divided into 3 lines (AAB) with 4 bars each, totaling 12 bars. The slashes represent beats, in this case four beats per bar. The roman numerals represent the different chords used in 12-bar blues (Don’t worry about the roman numerals).

Listening Examples 3.1

- “Lonesome Valley” by Mississippi John Hurt

- In [this video](#), I play an entire 12 bar section worth of chords. Try follow along with the graphic representation above (figure 3.2). I strum chords on each beat (slash) and I change chords along with the roman numerals.

Other Characteristics of the Blues

Call and response is a very common feature in twelve-bar blues where the singer is the “caller” singing from beat one of bar one to around beat one of bar 3, and “responds” with an instrumental fill for the remainder of the section. In a group setting, the response may be played by any combination of players/instruments.

Beats are usually subdivided unevenly as long-short-long-short. This creates a relaxed and “swinging” feel that is so characteristic of blues and jazz.

Some blues avoid the 12-bar form and the standard chord progression. Some songs had only one chord played through the entire piece with a blues-style chant. This resembles the African griot song in which chord progressions did not traditionally exist.

Classic Blues and Early Recording



Figure 3.3 Mamie Smith.

Classic Blues is characterized by a female singer accompanied by a piano or a jazz band. The resulting music is often a more refined sounding version of the blues, almost “classical” in sound, though the raw lyrics and other characteristics are retained. Classic blues was very popular in the 1920s and was *among the earliest blues to be recorded*. Because they sang with jazz big bands, these singers developed powerful and gutsy vocal styles that could be heard over large groups. One of the first blues recordings was Mamie Smith’s version of “Crazy Blues” in 1920 which sold an astonishing 75,000 copies in its first month. This revealed a new and untapped consumer market in the music business, African-Americans. By 1930, up to a third of the families in poorest most remote areas of the south owned a Victrola, a record player that didn’t require electricity (Davis, pg. 30). The success of “Crazy Blues” also led to the development of a distinction in the record industry of recordings artists and black recording artists. Records by black performers became known as “race records”. By 1927, approximately 500 race records were being released annually. Smith’s innovative success opened the door for a number of black artists such as Charley Patton, Bessie Smith, Blind Lemon Jefferson, and Ma Rainey.



Figure 3.4 Ma Rainey.

Ma Rainey (1886–1939) was an early and very influential classic blues singer. Her style included raw, gutsy moans, dramatic pauses, expressive bends, and use of blue notes. She was a performer most of her life, working with minstrel shows as a singer around the turn of the century. Later she became the star attraction in her own traveling minstrel show. Rainey herself told folklorist

John Work about her first time hearing the blues in 1902 (1 year before W.C.Handy's account). Rainey was traveling with a tent show, singing for audiences throughout the south. In Missouri she recalled hearing a girl who was visiting the tent show singing a song about the man who left her; the song was so interesting to Rainey that she learned it from the girl and incorporated it into her own repertoire, calling it "the blues" to those asking what kind of music it was (Work, pg. 32). Rainey was one of the first musicians to record the blues starting in 1923, and although she may have been past her prime as a vocalist, her recordings still stand the test of time.



Figure 3.5 Bessie Smith by Carl Van Vechten.

Bessie Smith (pictured above, 1894-1937) was in many ways the protégé of Ma Rainey. Smith toured and performed with Rainey as part of the Moses Stokes Minstrel Show in 1912 (Davis pg. 75) and was influenced by Rainey's vocal style, especially the bending of blue notes (dissonant or "ugly" notes that resolve to consonant or "pretty" notes) and dramatic expression. When Smith began recording in 1923, she had almost immediate success. Her recording of a cover version of "Down Hearted Blues" (1923) sold more than 750,000 copies in the first 6 months. Smith was open to covering songs by other singers, and often she seemed to bring new life to the cover songs she sang. Her appeal was unlimited; Smith had white fans and was very popular in northern states as well as the south. Her popularity was due to her vocal abilities, refined sound, and crossover into jazz with collaborations between herself and popular jazz musicians like Louis Armstrong.

Delta Blues



Figure 3.6 Blind Lemon Jefferson ca. 1926.

Country Blues from the Mississippi delta (known as "Delta Blues") was the style that had the most direct influence on the development of the blues and rock and roll, and is likely very closely related to the music W.C. Handy heard at the train station in Clarksdale, Mississippi. Some of the best-known early delta blues musicians are Blind Lemon Jefferson, Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, and Son House. Delta blues differs from other country blues in lyrical content; delta blues were more expressive, personal and raw, a representation of the lives led by the musicians. This pure expression as well as a more pronounced rhythmic vitality helped to gain popularity. Also, new techniques on the guitar and a signature musical form known as "12-Bar Blues" emerged prominently in the Delta blues. These characteristics remain vital musical elements in much of today's popular music.

While the recordings of delta blues artists almost always feature a solo singer/guitarist this may have been simply an economical choice by the record company (it's cheaper to pay one musician than two). We have testimony from Son house that he, Charley Patton, and another musician named Willie Brown (immortalized in Robert Johnson's "Crossroad Blues") often performed together (Davis pg. 31). Blind Lemon Jefferson was one of the earliest of these solo blues stylists to record, and it is likely that he provided a seminal influence on musicians like Robert Johnson.

Listening Examples 3.2

Here are other examples of Robert Johnson, Bessie Smith, and Charley Patton

- [“Pony Blues” by Charley Patton \(recorded 1929\)](#)
- [“Crossroad Blues” by Robert Johnson \(1936\)](#)
- [“Sweet Home Chicago” by Robert Johnson \(1936\)](#)
- [“Lost Your Head Blues” by Bessie Smith \(1926\)](#)

Characteristics of Delta Blues Guitar



Figure 3.7 Slide guitar.

Melodic Fills – The guitar had long been primarily a chordal instrument in early folk styles. This means that usually the guitar served as accompaniment to singers or other instruments through the playing of chords. Delta blues guitarists began to incorporate melodic fills (single note melody lines) in their playing along with their strumming.

Pentatonic Scale – A common scale used in blues consisting of 5-notes, usually omitting the 2nd and 6th degrees of common 7-note scales. (Don’t worry if you’re not sure what this means!)

String Bending – Guitarists began using the technique of string bending where the guitar strings are physically bent. This adds an expressive sound, creating a more vocal-like texture.

Bottlenecks – Delta blues guitarists would saw off the neck of a glass bottle and use it on the strings of the guitar to slide between notes. The sound created with the slide gives a strong vocal character to the guitar.

Blue Notes – An important part of the characteristic sound of blues, blue notes are notes from outside the standard musical scale. Certain notes within a standard scale are altered to create tension and set up a release from dissonance to consonance. (Again, don’t worry if this is unfamiliar)

In the videos below, I demonstrate the delta blues guitar techniques listed above, with an extra video showing a glass slide (like a bottleneck) as opposed to the steel slide. Go back and listen to Robert Johnson or Charley Patton and see if you can hear these techniques in the original recordings.

- [Delta Blues Guitar Techniques](#)
- [Bottleneck Slide Guitar](#)

Robert Johnson

Robert Johnson (1911-1938) is one of the most influential country/delta blues musicians. Died at age 27 and his entire output is only 29 songs.

Not much is known about his life, though in his lyrics he expresses “insatiable desire for wine, women, and song” (Charlton, p. 7). Johnson pursued music with a fervor, leaving home to apprentice with some of the best musicians in the Delta. A brief career led to performances and a handful of recordings that would prove enormously influential on future blues and rock guitarists. The details surrounding his death are highly ambiguous; he apparently died from poisoning by a woman or the jealous husband of a woman with whom he was having an affair.

Johnson’s songs followed the AAB form lyrically and used the same chords as the basic 12-bar blues structure. Though it fits the 12 bar structure, Johnson used greater freedom with rhythm. Extra beats were added to bars, extra bars were added to phrases, and sometimes the rhythms he sang were different than his accompaniment; these polyrhythms are common in traditional African music. When listening to “Crossroad Blues” (above in Listening ex. 3.2) notice Johnson’s use of the bottleneck slide from the very first notes of the recording. The use of the slide provides a vocal-esque counter melody to Johnson’s voice. The use of “call and response” is apparent in the recording as well. Notice how each time Johnson finishes singing a line, his guitar (often with the

slide) provides a musical response, much like a conversation between his voice and his guitar. Again, due to the extra freedom in rhythm, don't bother trying to count 12 bars or 4 beats; Johnson is playing with the rhythms and adding/subtracting at will.

Countless blues and rock musicians were influenced by Johnson's music including: the Rolling Stones, Cream and Eric Clapton, Fleetwood Mac, and many more.

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1.4: Gospel Music and Country Music

Spiritual and Gospel Music



Figure 4.1 an African-American church gathering

Spirituals are religious folk songs developed by African-American people from both the European-American and African-American musical traditions that developed from the middle-18th century through the 19th. With the blues they form the roots of gospel music. They were originally not written down, but rather passed down from memory. They did not include multiple voice parts the way hymns did, and the primary melody wasn't necessarily the same every time.

Improvisation was an important element of the spiritual with singers sliding around and embellishing the notes of an established melody. The lead singer would improvise while other singers stayed in the background, and this became common in gospel music of the 20th century. The music ranged from slow and melancholic to fast and energetic.

Gospel



Figure 4.2 Church choir ca 1920 by Doris Ulmann

In the early 20th century, African American gospel music developed out of the traditions of the Spiritual and the Blues including the call-and-response tradition of west Africa, and the European musical traditions of formal structure, harmonies, regular beat patterns, and the use of instruments like the guitar and the piano. Gospel music was an important element, along with the blues and country music, in the development of rhythm and blues and rock and roll.

Once slavery was abolished, African Americans began building their own churches and developing their own style of church music. The call-and-response tradition was often used in these churches. The preacher would do the 'calling' and the congregation would respond back. The vocal style in gospel began to develop very distinct characteristics steeped in improvisation. Vocal devices such as "turns" (also known as melismas, a type of embellishment) involved sliding around the notes of the melody, adding variety and improvisation in a dramatic way. Lyrically, gospel uses sacred, religious text often directly influenced by the Christian Bible or the Gospels themselves (Gospels are the parts of the bible that tell the story of the life of Jesus Christ). The style of gospel singing remains influential to this day, beyond Gospel music itself.

Gospel groups began to emerge as popular performing and recording artists, often appearing in the form of 4 to 5 singers (usually with one leader and the others backing) sometimes with instrumental accompaniment.

Listening Examples 4.1

To demonstrate what I mean by "embellishing a melody", I play the hymn "Amazing Grace" with embellishments in the melody.

The Soul Stirrers

The **Soul Stirrers** were a gospel group that began recording in 1936 and had an important influence on other gospel groups. The falsetto lead singing of the Soul Stirrers was unique at the time. Also influential was the use of polyrhythms and improvisation on the text of their gospel renditions. The group featured a rotating cast of members. Singers like Sam Cooke got their start as lead singer of the Soul Stirrers. Listen to how Sam Cooke's vocal delivery in the example found in *Ch. 4.1 Listening Examples* resembles that of many modern singers in popular music in the way he uses improvisational devices to embellish the melody.

Mahalia Jackson



Figure 4.3 Mahalia Jackson

Mahalia Jackson – (1911–1972) is called the Queen of Gospel. Born and raised in New Orleans, she grew up singing gospel in church and listening to classic blues singers like Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith. Because of her religious family, she had to listen to the blues in secret because of the secular subject matter. Jackson moved to Chicago at age 16 and began singing gospel professionally, touring with Thomas A. Dorsey, a famous gospel composer. Her music infused elements of classic blues singers into gospel including the pentatonic scale, “blue notes”, and powerful, gutsy vocals. Jackson became famous through her 1947 recording of “Move on Up a Little Higher” featured in *Ch. 4.1 Listening Examples*. The two different listening examples of “Didn’t it Rain” showcase two very different versions of the improvisation-based approach of gospel in *Ch. 4.1 Listening Examples*.

Large Group Gospel Music

Groups of four to five singers remained the most popular, but full choir-sized ensembles began to gain popularity. Thomas A. Dorsey began this style in the early 1930’s, but was popularized by Edwin Hawkins during the 1960’s. The Edwin Hawkins Singers used a large choir accompanied by a rhythm section consisting of keyboards, bass and drums.

On “Oh Happy Day” (1969, featured in *Ch. 4 Listening Examples*) soloist Dorothy Morrison uses the vocal devices of gospel to great effect. Call and response is used extensively in the song. The gospel vocal embellishments used by Morrison stand out from the choir because the choir must sing in a more straight-ahead style to stay together musically as a group.

Doo Wop



Figure 4.4 The Mills Brothers

Doo-Wop developed directly from gospel music, but used *mostly secular topics* like love and relationships rather than religious subject matter. This practice goes back as early as the twenties. Doo-Wop groups usually had a lead singer accompanied by a small

group of singers. These backup singers often sang ‘nonsense’ syllables (from which the name “doo-wop” derives), or repeated a few words from the lead line.

Different groups had different features/characteristics. Groups like the Mills Brothers sang sophisticated jazz inspired four-part harmony and instrumental effects, while groups like the Ink Spots featured a high tenor lead singer and allowed their bass singer to take the lyrics at times.

Listening Examples 4.2

- “Peace in the Valley” by Soul Stirrers (Written by Thomas A. Dorsey)
- “Move on up a Little Higher” by Mahalia Jackson
- “Didn’t it Rain” by Mahalia Jackson version 1
- “Didn’t it Rain” by Mahalia Jackson version 2
- “Down by the Riverside” by Sister Rosetta Tharpe
- “Oh Happy Day” by Edwin Hawkins Singers
- “Tiger Rag” by the Mills Brothers (1932)
- “Sh Sh Sh Boom” by The Chords

Country Music

Country music has its roots in American folk music styles and was formed as a more commercial genre to capitalize on the popularity of said folk styles. Many early rock and roll musicians began as country musicians. The origins of country music come from hillbilly music, named after the large number of British settlers in the mountainous regions of the eastern and southern United States. They brought European dance music such as jigs and waltzes, as well as hymns and ballads. Fiddles, guitars, dulcimers, piano, and banjos were commonplace among these settlers.

With the growth in popularity of the radio as well as the developments in recording in the twenties, this folk music began to broadcast to the rest of the country. The WSM Barn Dance (later to become the Grand Ole Opry), first broadcast in 1926, featured live performances of rural dance music.

Characteristics of Country Music

*Some of these characteristics can be found in the videos below, Listening Examples 4.3

Steady Beat – Beats are regular with the band playing exactly on time. The beats are always patterned in 2, 3 or 4 beats per bar. Notice the lack of polyrhythm/syncopation as compared to ragtime or blues.

Harmony – Simple and straightforward

Form – Most often the music follows a repeating pattern of eight-bar periods, each composed of two four-bar phrases.

Bass Line –The bass often plays on the first and third beat in a 4 beat pattern. This regular pattern is known as **two-beat bass**.

Lyrics – Often tell stories or reflect the singer’s feelings, and are meant to be the focus of the music.

Vocals – Will often have a nasal quality and a southern accent.

Pedal/Lap Steel Guitars – One of the most distinctive instruments in Country music is the Pedal Steel guitar and the more simplified version, the lap steel guitar. These instruments use a type of steel bar slide, somewhat similar to bottle-necks, to play chords and melodies in a sliding fashion.

Listening Examples 4.3

I demonstrate a two-beat bass pattern. Watch the thumb of my right hand as it is playing the two note bass line on beats 1 and 3 of a four beat pattern.

Bellingham musician Christopher Stainback demonstrates lap steel guitar with an original composition. Notice how the instrument is laid flat with the strings facing upward. The right hand uses finger picks to pluck the strings while the left hand uses a steel bar slide to slide across the strings.

Popularization of country music: Radio, WSM and the Grand Ole Opry



Figure 4.5 WSM Barn Dance ca. 1940

As we've discussed, country music began as a rural musical style. In the 1920s, this music was described as "hillbilly music". The music underwent a remarkable transition, evolving into a national musical style by the 1930s, during the great depression, largely due to the growth of radio and a particular station that happened upon hillbilly music. By 1925, radio was out of its infancy and becoming more widespread almost daily. As technology developed, ever more powerful radio transmitters were being built, reaching people further and further away from cities into rural America. In Nashville, Tennessee, in 1925, the National Life and Accident Insurance Company, under the direction of Edwin Craig, developed its own radio station with the call sign WSM. Craig had a passionate interest in radio, and believed that National Life could better advertise their company through radio. Owning a radio station would mean advertising to whoever was listening at any given time, which could be thousands or more. After some heavy leg work, Craig convinced his superiors at National Life to go through with the development of a company-owned station. The station began transmitting on October 5, 1925.

Craig had brought aboard popular radio-personality George Hays, best known at the time for his National Barn Dance, a radio program of "hillbilly music" transmitting out of Chicago and reaching much of the American Midwest. With Hay a well known and likable on-air personality, WSM was immediately on a path to popularity, and Hay's background with Hillbilly music would create a direct connection to the musical direction of WSM before long. While day programming was primarily news, evenings were often oriented around music or other forms of entertainment. The early music programs featured a variety of artists and styles including pop or swing orchestras such as the Andrew Jackson Hotel Orchestra, or gospel groups such as the Fisk Jubilee Singers. The crucial broadcast came on November 28, 1925 when George Hay invited a country fiddler named Uncle Jimmy Thompson to play for an hour on a Saturday night. According to Craig Havighurst, "His old time fiddling struck a chord. Telegrams, calls, and letters poured in from rural Tennessee and beyond, cheering and begging for more of the same" (Havighurst, p. 25). At this point, WSM began moving toward country music as its primary focus, but there were internal debates about the merits of the music itself, some feeling it wasn't sophisticated enough for a powerful and professional radio station. Nonetheless, within a number of years, the Grand Ole Opry was born and WSM was the most important delegate of what became known as **country music** to the rest of the country.



Figure 4.6 WSM Transmitter by Garrett A. Wollman

By the early 1930s, WSM had a 5,000 watt, clear channel signal reaching remarkable distances, and they were receiving letters from Honolulu New Zealand, and Northern Ontario (Havighurst, p. 41). A short time later, WSM was cleared to construct a new 50,000 watt transmitter that would reach even more listeners. Around the same time, George Hay began to engineer an particular image for the performers of hillbilly music at WSM. He "took notion that an "authentic" hillbilly music ought to feature musicians who looked like authentic hillbillies. He put them in floppy hats and overalls, loose work shirts, and bandannas around the neck. Even band names were being changed to reflect the hillbilly character such as **Fruit Jar Drinkers** or the **Possum Hunters** (Havighurst, p. 74). While the image would continue to evolve, the seeds for country attire were planted by George Hay then and

there. Meanwhile, the music itself was still being presented Saturday evenings and these broadcasts were typically live with studio audiences. Soon, the demand for tickets pushed WSM to move their Saturday evening music presentations to larger and larger venues. By the mid-1930s the broadcasts were being held in the Dixie Tabernacle which held around 3,000 people, and many of the attendees were in fact out-of-towners no doubt hoping to witness the stars they'd only heard on the radio. These Saturday WSM broadcast concerts became known as the Grand Ole Opry, still popular to this day.

By the time of the great depression (1929-1939) country music seemed to reflect the economic hardship the average American faced. Artists themselves utilized radio to earn a living through the economic downturn. Some proved effective at selling products (from laxatives to farm equipment) over the air, others like the Carter Family worked across the border in Mexico, where American radio law didn't apply, using ultra-powerful transmitters of 500,000 watts to reach most of the United States, and some like Gene Autry were popular enough to star in movies (Havighurst, p. 85).

Jimmy Rogers



Figure 4.7 Jimmie Rodgers

Jimmie Rodgers – (1897–1933) called the “Father of Country Music”. His distinctive vocal style was called “Blue Yodeling”. Yodeling is a nimble alternation between high and low notes, while the blue refers to Rodger’s use of the twelve-bar blues form. Rogers broke away from tradition by writing new songs instead of sticking mainly to traditional songs, establishing a new tradition for the singers that would follow, such as Hank Williams and Johnny Cash. In “Blue Yodel No. 1” found in Listening Examples 4.4 below, notice the use of two-beat bass in Rodgers’ thumb, and how the rhythm is even and steady. This steady beat is common throughout much of the country music that came after and provides, in its lack of syncopation, a core musical distinction from blues, jazz, ragtime, and gospel.

The Carter Family



Figure 4.8 The Carter Family 1927

The Carter Family was an influential folk trio that began recording in the 1920's, influencing countless folk and country musicians. The Carter family was made up of cousins Sara and Maybelle Carter, as well as Sara's husband A.P. Carter. Sara sang most of the lead vocals, Maybelle provided backup vocals and played accompaniment on guitar, and A.P. provided occasional backup vocals. A.P. was also responsible for collecting and arranging their song repertoire, as they mostly adapted older songs in the American folk tradition including hymns and songs resembling the music of Tin Pan Alley. One of the most influential aspects of the group lies in the guitar technique of Maybelle Carter. Her playing showcased an advance finger-picking approach where she simultaneously played bass lines, chords, and melodies all at the same time, essentially handling the work of an instrumental trio on one guitar. The group first recorded in 1927 in Bristol, Tennessee at an audition for a new record company. These sessions, later

known as the Bristol Sessions, resulted in enormous success for the trio and they sold many records. The original group broke up when A.P. And Sara Carter divorced in 1944.

Hank Williams



Figure 4.9 Hank Williams

Hank Williams – (1923–1953) Had a number one hit on the country charts with “I’ll Never Get Out of This World Alive” (1952, featured in *Ch. 4.2 Listening Examples*). He wrote many other songs which were successful in his lifetime and have endured as classics of country music; his songs have been rerecorded countless times by country artists since his death. Williams’ lyrics are characterized by their personal nature as well as their wit and humor. His voice had the classic nasal quality that would serve as a model for many future country singers. Williams struggled alcohol and drug addiction, which led to his untimely death at age 29.

Below: Notice the wit and humor in the otherwise depressing lyrics for Williams’ song “I’ll Never Get Out of this World Alive”

Now you’re lookin’ at a man that’s gettin’ kinda mad
I had lot’s of luck but it’s all been bad
No matter how I struggle and strive
I’ll never get out of this world alive

My fishin’ pole’s broke, the creek is full of sand
My woman run away with another man
No matter how I struggle and strive
I’ll never get out of this world alive

A distant uncle passed away and left me quite a batch
And I was living high until that fatal day
A lawyer proved I wasn’t born
I was only hatched

Ev’rything’s agin’ me and it’s got me down
If I jumped in the river, I would prob’ly drown
No matter how I struggle and strive
I’ll never get out of this world alive

These shabby shoes I’m wearin’ all the time
Are full of holes and nails
And brother if I stepped on a worn out dime
I bet a nickel, I could tell you if it was heads or tails

I’m not gonna worry wrinkles in my brow
‘Cause nothin’s ever gonna be alright nohow
No matter how I struggle and strive
I’ll never get out of this world alive

Johnny Cash



Figure 4.10 Johnny Cash, 1964

Johnny Cash – (1932–2003) Country artist that was successful in country and other fields of popular music. His early career included gospel and rockabilly, but he became famous as one of the most influential musicians in country music.

Cash achieved great crossover success with many of his country hits also reaching the pop charts. Such hits include “Cry Cry Cry” (1955), “I Walk the Line” and “Folsom Prison Blues (1956), and “Boy Named Sue (1969). He was not afraid to work with musicians of vastly different genres and successfully covered a Nine Inch Nails song (“Hurt”) late in his career.

George Jones

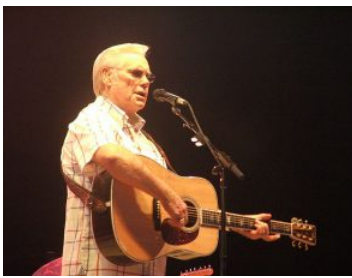


Figure 4.11 George Jones

George Jones – (1931-2013) Was an influential singer/songwriter in country music. Jones wrote and sang many songs of a personal nature, reflecting his own troubled life and difficulties in his relationships with others. The timbre of Jones’ voice was pure, and his range was such that he could sing quite low as well as high, and many of his melodies traverse a wide range of pitch.

Jones career began playing music publicly in his teens after leaving home. His biggest influence was Hank Williams, providing him with the inspiration to write his own music. In the 1950s he joined the Grand Ol’ Opry. Jones’ first No. 1 hit was “White Lightnin’” in 1959, but trouble with alcohol began around this time and would plague him throughout his career. In 1962 he scored one of his biggest hits, “She Thinks I Still Care”. The song features an AABA form and lyrics that say one thing but seem to mean the opposite (featured in *Ch. 4.2 Listening Examples*).

Through the later 1960s into the 1970s, Jones’ struggled with alcoholism and would miss concert dates, recording sessions, and proved all-around unreliable. By the 1980s, however, he was able to make a comeback and quit drinking (with the exception of a few brief relapses) and continued a successful career until his death in 2013. Jones is considered by many to be one of the most important and influential performers in country music history.

Listening Examples 4.4

Jimmie Rodgers: Notice the clear, storytelling lyrics that Rodgers is using in “[I’m in the Jailhouse Now](#)”. Also, though it may be difficult to hear, Rodgers is incorporating **two-beat bass** which creates a simple yet strong rhythmic foundation. Listen for a familiar song form in the lyrical scheme in A video document of Jimmie Rodgers performing “[Blue Yodel No. 1](#)”.

Carter Family: I demonstrate “[Wildwood Flower](#)” in a way that approximates Maybelle Carter’s sound by incorporating the melody of the song, interspersing it with chords and bass lines. The sound of strings ringing with a melody playing at the same time creates a rich, full musical texture. I play three variations on the main theme.

- “[Bury Me Under the Weeping Willow](#)” by the Carter Family from the Bristol Sessions, 1927
- “[Wildwood Flower](#)” by the Carter Family
- “[Wildwood Flower](#)” performed by Maybelle Carter and the Carter Sisters

Hank Williams:

- [“I’ll Never Get Out of This World Alive”](#) by Hank Williams
- [\(Video\) “Hey Good Lookin’”](#) by Hank Williams

Johnny Cash:

- [“I walk the Line”](#) by Johnny Cash

George Jones: “[The Grand Tour](#)”, like many songs in the country traditions, tells a story of heartbreak. Jones sings from the perspective of a man whose wife has left him, taking the listener on a “tour” of his now empty house, telling a tale of the idyllic life he once had. Melodically, Jones traverses a wide range of pitch, occasionally dipping deep into his low, bass range. The song is set at a slow tempo, allowing room for an expansive vocal melody.

- [“She Thinks I Still Care”](#) by George Jones

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1.5: Urban Blues



Figure 5.1 Chicago skyline ca. 1940s.

Urban Blues developed in urban environments such as Chicago and New York. During World War I many African Americans migrated to northern cities for industrial jobs, some whom were musicians trained in country/delta blues. Urban blues developed when these musicians began forming groups with other musicians instead of only accompanying themselves on solo guitar.

Groups included rhythm sections with drums, bass, guitar or piano, and solo instruments (usually saxophones or some other wind instrument). These emerging groups were loud, and the acoustic guitar could not match the volume and power of horns and drums. Simultaneously, electronic amplification was being developed to remedy this issue, and soon the electric guitar was born.

The Electric Guitar



Figure 5.2 Prototype of the "Frying Pan" guitar, the first electric guitar. Photo by Museum of Making Music

Perhaps no other piece of technology shaped 20th century popular music more than the electric guitar. A peripheral curiosity at first, by the 1950s the electric guitar had become an indispensable tool for guitarists wishing to be heard among the louder instruments of popular music such as drums and horns. Designed for the express purpose of more volume in a group context, guitarists were relatively slow to adopt this new instrument that required being plugged into a wall outlet at all times. However, the potential of this instrument was eventually realized. When the phenomenal jazz guitarist Charlie Christian began playing an electric guitar, the music world could, for the first time, actually hear a single-note guitar solo among the *loud* big band texture. It didn't take long before most guitarists followed suit.

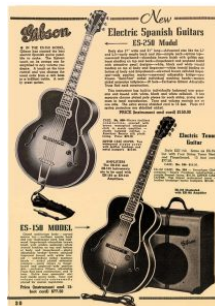


Figure 5.3 Advertisement for Gibson guitars.

The acoustic guitar relies on the natural resonance of a hollow body constructed out of hard wood. The resulting sound is beautifully rich and full, but lacking in volume when compared to other acoustic instruments like horns, drums, and piano. The first solution to this problem was to build larger bodied guitars, but there was still a threshold of volume that limited guitarists from being heard clearly in a musical group context. By the 1920s and 1930s, some guitar makers and inventors were toying with the

idea of adding an electro-magnetic pickup on the guitar body to convert the vibrations of the steel strings into electrical signal. This signal could be electrically amplified, converted back into sound, and transmitted through a loudspeaker. This breakthrough was the beginning of a major change in the sound of popular music.



Figure 5.4 Gibson Les Paul photo by TT Zop

For the first decade-plus of commercial electric guitar production, most guitars were simply acoustic guitars with electromagnetic pickups mounted to the body. As resonant and beautiful sounding these guitars are, the louder you get, the more they are prone to electronic *feedback* (demonstrated below). As rhythm and blues became more popular in the 1940s (eventually morphing into Rock & Roll) bands became more energetic (ie. LOUDER) and guitarists were again running into problems. This was rectified by two companies: Gibson and Fender. At Gibson, the popular guitarist/inventor Les Paul had invented what he termed “The Log”, a guitar with a solid block in the middle to dampen the vibrations that led to *feedback*. This eventually led to the 1952 introduction of the Gibson Les Paul (pictured below). An elegant design and the first signature guitar ever, the Les Paul model used a completely solid body to dampen the resonance and increase the instrument’s resistance to feedback.



Figure 5.5 Fender Telecaster photo by Massimo Barbieri

Around the same time (1950) Leo Fender was working on a similar design. Originally called the *Broadcaster*, the **Telecaster** became the first commercially available solid body guitar. This guitar was a simple design, built from modules that could be screwed together and disassembled with relative ease. The body was a solid plank of wood, and it was equipped with bright sounding pickups. Both the Telecaster and the Les Paul became mainstays of popular music, and remain among the best selling guitars on the market to this day.



Figure 5.6 1950s Tweed Fender amp. 5 watts, quiet and great sounding.

The electric guitar can’t make much sound without an amplifier. The amplifier is the device that takes the electric signal from the guitar’s pickups and powers it. The electric signal travels through transformers and vacuum tubes, the same devices used in radios

and televisions at the time. The signal is then converted back to audio and travels out of the speaker. The evolution of guitar amplifiers from the 1940s-1970s is a long and complex story, but can be summarized very simply by this: they started as relatively quiet devices and became louder and louder over time.



Figure 5.7 My 1967 Dual Showman. 85 watts, LOUD!

Listening Examples 5.1

First, review the “[12 Bar blues form](#)” and “[Delta Blues guitar techniques](#)”. I play through many of the characteristics listed in the class notes on Delta Blues Techniques to give you an idea what they sound like in isolation.

Second, [listen as I play an electric guitar](#) to show the difference in sound from an acoustic guitar. As I show, this particular model is a solid body, meaning it has no hollow cavity or sound hole to naturally amplify such as an acoustic guitar has. This means that, unplugged, this guitar is very quiet. I demonstrate the sound unplugged first, then gradually turn the volume up, and I play some blues-style melodic fills. Notice how the notes sustain for a longer time than those played on the acoustic guitar. Electric guitars enabled guitarists to play melodic lines comparable to those played by saxophones.

Third, listen to the following examples:

- [Electric Guitar Amplifier](#)
- [Amplifier Overdrive](#) (I play an excerpt of “Rumble” by Link Wray, and early example of electric guitar overdrive)
- “[I’m Gonna Murder My Baby](#)” by Pat Hare (1954), an early example of very overdriven electric guitar.
- [Electronic Feedback](#)
- [Electric Slide Guitar](#)

T-Bone Walker



Image 5.9 T-Bone Walker

T-Bone Walker – (1910–1975) One of the earliest blues musicians to use electric guitar as a solo instrument. Walker grew up playing country blues guitar and was influenced by Blind Lemon Jefferson who played long and complex melodic fills between his vocal lines. This style transferred naturally to electric guitar. His music would be very influential on future performers including B.B. King and Jimi Hendrix.

Walker developed a flashy guitar style playing embellished versions of the melody on guitar. He would often solo for an entire ‘chorus’ (an entire AAB section in 12 bar blues form) or more and improvise melodic ‘lead’ lines. Also, these lead lines often served as a response to his vocal lines, much like the call and response that Robert Johnson utilized. In his early years, his stage performance was extremely colorful. Walker would play the guitar behind his head and back, perform wild dance moves including the splits.

Chicago Blues

Chicago would become one of the most important single areas in the development of urban blues and even had a particular style so associated with it that it was named “Chicago Blues”. Chicago Blues often combined swing jazz and “boogie woogie” piano with delta blues. The music was played by bands and consequently required the new electric guitar.

Chess Recording Studios – Run by brothers Phil and Leonard Chess, this company was responsible for much of the blues recorded in the 1950’s. Many musicians with a background in country blues came to Chess and were given backup musicians/amplification forming urban blues.

Muddy Waters



Figure 5.10 Muddy Waters photo by Lionel Decoster

Muddy Waters – (1913–1983) was an urban blues musician whose rustic style was more closely related to his delta blues roots than many other urban blues musicians. Waters began playing in a rural delta blues style on acoustic guitar. He was ‘discovered’ and recorded by renowned American musicologist Alan Lomax. When Waters heard himself on record for the first time it provided confidence for him to pursue a career in music and move to Chicago where he formed a group.

He often utilized the sound of a bottleneck slide with electric guitar much in the way delta blues players like Robert Johnson had done on acoustic guitars, retaining much of the spirit of delta blues into his new full band electric style.

His song “Rollin’ Stone (Catfish Blues)” (1948, featured in *Ch. 5.2 Listening Examples*) was an early hit for Waters. It is a reworking of a song called “Catfish Blues” by songwriter Robert Petway. Rather than use a standard 12-bar form, the song uses only a single chord and single bass note throughout, while short, repetitive lines are repeated on the electric guitar and the piano. This approach to blues song form can be called a “riff-driven blues vamp”. Formally, there are multiple sub-sections with slight variations (some vocal, some instrumental) that flow into one another and then repeat.

Though it deviates from standard blues forms, many musical characteristics of the blues are retained. The vocal lines use blue notes and the pentatonic scale. Rhythmically, the uneven beat subdivisions so common in blues and jazz permeate the music. Waters’ guitar work is minimal, but uses the technique of string bending which adds to the expressiveness.

Elmore James

Elmore James – (1918–1963) Is considered one of the early modernizers of delta blues. Originally from Mississippi, James claimed to have played with Robert Johnson who apparently suggested using a metal pipe (rather than the standard glass bottleneck) as a slide. Like Muddy Waters, he began playing in the delta blues style and moved from Mississippi to Chicago to perform and record.

He was among the first delta blues musicians to work with groups that included saxophone, piano, and drums on a regular basis. James was also one of the most influential electric slide players, providing important influence on later electric slide players such as Duane Allman.

B.B. King



Figure 5.11 B.B. King photo by Heinrich Klaffs

B.B. King – (1925-2015) Was one of the best known blues musicians, and one of the most influential as well, with Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Jimi Hendrix, and many others citing him as a key influence. Many rock guitarists of the 1960s and beyond have emulated the sophisticated melodic work of King.

King grew up in Mississippi delta where he absorbed the blues from delta blues musicians and was influenced by gospel music through singing in church as a child. Beginning in the 1940s, King began playing professionally and maintained an extremely busy schedule usually involving playing over 300 shows a year.

King's approach to playing the electric guitar is based in melodic phrasing more than accompaniment work, and the guitar lines have equal importance with the vocal lines. This is a product of having the increased volume capabilities of the electric guitar. He rarely plays chords while singing, but instead fills the space between vocal sections with lead guitar lines, ie. call and response. Compare this to the call and response found in the example by Robert Johnson, "Crossroad Blues" (3.2 Listening Examples) In this way, King's guitar style can be seen an extension of his voice. The use of string bending and wide vibrato ('shaking' of the notes similar to vibration) resemble the sound of the voice.

Part of the "urbanization" of urban blues in contrast to delta blues is the formal regularity of even beat patterns and bar lengths in the song structure. The work of B.B. King displays this newer, tight-knit "urban" formal structure. King's music is a very refined and clean sounding blues, with every player improvising within their well-defined roles. In other words, you can count to 12 bars here, every time! That being said, King's voice and guitar work manage to maintain a degree of rawness, spontaneity, and improvisational ingenuity into his refined-sounding music.

Howlin' Wolf



Figure 5.12 Howlin' Wolf

Howlin' Wolf – (1910–1976) Born Chester Arthur Burnett, his nickname derived from the growl and timbre of his distinctive voice. In addition to vocals, he played guitar and harmonica. Wolf also claimed to have played with Robert Johnson who had an influence on his guitar style, and Sonny Boy Williamson No. 1 (the original) from whom he learned to play harmonica. Many songs and recordings by Howlin' Wolf were not traditional blues form, but still retained many blues characteristics.

His rough style kept him away from the pop charts, but his influence was important on musicians as diverse as the Rolling Stones, the Grateful Dead, the Yardbirds, Led Zeppelin, Cream, the Doors, Captain Beefheart and Frank Zappa.

Sonny Boy Williamson

Sonny Boy Williamson – (1899–1965) One of the most influential blues harmonica (blues "harp") players. Williamson is sometimes called "Sonny Boy No. 2" because it was the same stage name as another established musician. Considered by many as one of the best and most influential blues harmonica players, Williamson toured Britain in 1963, recorded live albums with the

Yardbirds. Williamson had a strong influence on young British musicians at the beginning of the British Blues Boom because he was willing to play with and teach them.

Willie Dixon



Figure 5.13 Willie Dixon

Willie Dixon – (1915-1992) was a composer, producer, talent scout, bass player, and singer at Chess Recording Studios. Best known as a blues songwriter who wrote hits for other artists such as “You Shook Me”, “I Can’t Quit You Baby”, “Little Red Rooster”, and “(I’m Your) Hoochie Coochie Man”. His association with Muddy Waters is particularly notable, as many of Muddy Waters’s most well known songs he performed were written by Dixon. His songs have since become classics and have been covered by many blues and rock musicians such as Howlin’ Wolf and later, Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, and Led Zeppelin.

Listening Examples 5.2

T-Bone Walker: T-Bone Walker Live, performing “[Stormy Monday](#)” on electric guitar. The song is in 12-bar blues form, so try and identify the different sections. Listening to the lyrics may be the easiest way to identify the form (remember, 12-bar blues form uses an AAB lyrical scheme where A is the same line of text, and B is a contrasting line of text). Also, notice the use of call and response between his voice and his guitar lines. This is a common feature in Urban Blues. “[Baby You Broke My Heart](#)” by T-Bone Walker. Try to identify on your own whether or not the song is in 12-bar blues form. Remember to listen for the lyrics.

Muddy Waters:

- “[Manish Boy](#)” by Muddy Waters
- “[Manish Boy](#)” by Muddy Waters (Live 1971)

Elmore James: “[I’ll Dust My Broom](#)” represents a synthesis of delta and urban blues, featuring delta blues guitar techniques played on an electric guitar with a full group. Listen to the example below, and try to identify whether the song is in 12-bar blues form or some other form. Again, listening for AAB in the lyrics (Two lines of the same text, one line of contrasting text) is the easiest way to identify 12 -bar blues.

B.B. King: Listen to “[Three O’Clock Blues](#).” The formal regularity in the music of B.B. King should make it easier to identify the form.

Howlin’ Wolf: Listen to Howlin’ Wolf’s, “[Smokestack Lightning](#)” (Starts around 1:00). Is this song in 12-bar blues form, or a riff-driven blues vamp similar to “Rollin’ Stone” by Muddy Waters?

Sonny Boy Williamson: Listen to Sonny Boy Williamson’s “[Nine Below Zero](#)” Live. Williamson makes great use of the harmonica’s melodic capabilities. Notice how he emulates vocal effects such as shaking the notes (aka “vibrato”), and bending notes. This is similar to what Robert Johnson was doing in the 1930s when he utilized slide guitar as a way to emulate the fluid sound of the voice (see “Crossroads Blues” by Robert Johnson)

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1.6: A Changing Nation- Rhythm and Blues

A Changing Nation: Rhythm and Blues

The period of the 1950s saw many changes in the United States, and there developed an important relationship between popular music and these changes.

The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union had begun to escalate and people were constantly aware of the possibility of nuclear attack. Nation-wide paranoia led to “McCarthyism” in which people suspected of being communist were questioned, and many people working in Hollywood were targeted. Despite this, the nation entered a very prosperous time period, and the baby boom was in full swing. Young kids had their own money to spend on their own interests. The rebellious image portrayed in movies by actors such as James Dean and Marlon Brando was very popular among young people in movies and music.

This period also saw the breaking down of segregation in *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) in which segregated schools were forced to integrate. The 50’s began the bringing together of people regardless of race, and part of this was through popular music.

Rhythm and Blues

Listening Examples 6.1

“Roll em Pete” by Big Joe Turner (1938)

Rhythm and blues is a type of high energy, rhythmic dance music most often featuring saxophones, and is the earliest form of rock and roll (before the term had been invented). Its origins lie in the music of both swing jazz bands and the blues, coalescing in a style first known as Jump Blues. (A notable example of early jump blues is the song “Roll ‘Em Pete” from 1938, found in *Ch. 6.1 Listening Examples*) Rather than using the guitar, rhythm and blues was often dominated by saxophone sections and other horns. Rhythmically, the music is characterized by accents on every second and fourth beat (in a four-beat pattern), whereas it was more common in other types of music to accent the first and third beats. This accenting of the second and fourth beat is known as the **back beat**. Though used in some blues music, the back beat was given even more importance with rhythm and blues, adding to its appeal as a dance music. Rock and pop music afterwards, and up to the present, very often feature a back beat.

In contrast to the blues, which reflected the hardships of African-American life, rhythm and blues expressed joy. Live shows would be high energy and full of dancing. Some saxophone players would dance and roll on their backs while playing and singers shouted the lyrics. This energy combined with the rhythms and backbeat formed the basis of early Rock and Roll.

Formally, rhythm and blues brought fresh innovation to blues as well. While the AAB lyrical scheme of 12-bar blues form had permeated many blues songs as well as “jump blues” songs (See “Roll Em’ Pete” in Listening Example 6.1), many rhythm and blues songs began using three lines of contrasting text over the same 12 bars of music. This would enable a songwriter to have more lyrics within a song. This new approach to blues song form is something I call, “**Modified 12-Bar Blues Form**“, and we will hear it frequently in rhythm and blues as well as rock and roll. However, aside from speeding the music up, adding riffs and backbeats, and changing the lyrical scheme from AAB to ABC, the music was still essentially rooted in blues.

Though often regarded as a separate genre from Rock and Roll, the distinction between the two styles is ambiguous. Rock and Roll became the de facto term for the Rhythm and Blues-based music that white musicians such as Bill Haley and Elvis Presley began playing in the mid-1950s, but the music itself is heavily indebted to Rhythm and Blues.

Exercise 1

Please read through the article “[Rock! It’s Still Rhythm and Blues](#)” by Lawrence Redd from the publication *The Black Perspective in Music* (Found in Week 2 “modules”). The article explores the distinction (or lack thereof) between rock and r&b, and it’s implications on race issues in America.

Louis Jordan



Figure 6.1 Louis Jordan

Louis Jordan – (1908–1975) Saxophone player who played in jazz big bands originally in the 1930's and 40's and eventually became one of the earliest performers of Rhythm and Blues.

Forming his own group, the saxophone-driven **Tympani Five**, Jordan gained a following for the group's high energy and danceable sound. His engaging stage personality and sense of humor, and the band's musical ability all led to his popularity. His music took the form and basic language of the blues and added the energy of swing jazz and a positive, sometimes humorous, approach to lyrics. This blues-based music was now danceable and positive, and led directly to rock and roll.

Jordan's music was groundbreaking because it began destroying racial barriers; his music was equally popular with white as audiences as it was with black audiences. This was a very rare feat at the time, but as time went on it became more common that music would serve to break racial or other boundaries. White musician Bill Haley imitated the rhythms and energy of Jordan's band with his own rock and roll group The Comets, and Jordan's influence on early rock is very apparent.

Roy Brown



Figure 6.2 Roy Brown

Roy Brown – (1925–1981) Rhythm and Blues singer that had a strong influence on the development of rock and roll. Brown brought gospel influenced singing into his upbeat rhythm and blues, influencing B.B. King, Little Richard, and Elvis Presley.

His hit "Good Rockin' Tonight" (1947, featured in *Ch. 6 Listening Examples*) with its music as well as its title anticipated the arrival of rock and roll, and his record became a No. 1 hit. The music is blues-based, but in a faster danceable tempo with lighter lyrics than the average blues song. In essence, it is a happier, more danceable version of the blues. The song was covered by Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and many others.

"Hard Luck Blues" (1950, featured in *Ch. 6 Listening Examples*) showcases Brown's gospel influence. Notice how improvisation the embellished vocal melodies sound. The song reflects Brown's blues roots as the tempo is a bit slower and the lyrics are very depressing. Lastly, listen for the song form; is this an example of pure 12-bar blues form or modified 12-bar blues form? (It will be one or the other...)

Bo Diddley



Figure 6.3 Bo Diddley photo by Masao Nakagami

Bo Diddley – (1928–2008) Born Elias Bates, it is not definitively known how Bo Diddley acquired his stage name. Diddley is known for his distinctive guitar style in which he strummed in a constant percussive strumming style. (“I’m a rhythm fanatic. I played the guitar as if I were playing the drums.” Bo Diddley)

Diddley was very influential on American and British rock musicians in the 1960’s, especially the British blues revivalist rock groups, though he isn’t considered a blues musician. His songs were covered by the Yardbirds (“I’m a Man”), the Rolling Stones (“Mona”), and the Animals (“Bo Diddley”).

Another important feature in the song “Bo Diddley” (Named after his own name) is the “Bo Diddley” beat. The beat is a syncopated rhythmic motive that serves to enhance a simple 4-beat pattern. Though he wasn’t the first to play it, he popularized it and it became characteristic enough of his music that it became so-called. Many popular songs have used this beat such as Buddy Holly’s “Not Fade Away”, the Who’s “Magic Bus”, and many others.

Professor Longhair

Professor Longhair – (1918–1980) Born Henry Roeland Byrd, one of the most important New Orleans pianists in rhythm and blues. He played in a style known as Boogie Woogie.

Boogie Woogie generally used the twelve-bar blues harmonic form. It was developed by African American piano players in the south in the 1920’s, and became the basis for rock and roll piano playing. Professor Longhair also used pop song forms including his rhythm and blues hit “Bald Head” (1949)

Boogie Woogie is characterized by a fast, repeated note pattern in the left hand with two notes played during each beat to create the effect of doubling the basic beat, creating a fast motoristic, driving rhythm. The right hand most often played **riffs**, short fragmentary melodic patterns that are repeated multiple times.

Listening Examples 6.2

Louis Jordan: In “**Caldonia**” The music should sound much like a faster, more energetic version of the blues. This song is a modified 12-bar blues form; it doesn’t use the repeated lyrics for the A sections, but rather three contrasting lines of text. It does, however, use the same harmonic scheme, ie. the same chords and is essentially blues.

Roy Brown:

- “**Good Rockin’ Tonight**” (1947)
- “**Hard Luck Blues**” (1950)



Figure 6.4 Bo Diddley Beat in music notation.

Bo Diddley: The “**Bo Diddley beat**” is featured in the song “Bo Diddley” from 1955 (below), written by Bo Diddley. **I clap four bars** worth of a “Bo Diddley Beat”. When you hear it, chances are you’ll recognize it.

Johnny Otis:

- “**Willie and the Hand Jive**” (1958)

Professor Longhair:

- “**Boogie Woogie**”
- “**Mardi Gras in New Orleans**”

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1.7: Rock and Roll

Rock & Roll

The term “Rock & Roll” comes primarily from sources in Rhythm & Blues songs. The words “rockin” and “rollin” both appear in song titles and song lyrics (think “Good Rockin’ Tonight” by **Roy Brown**). The term was popularized in the mid-1950s, being used to identify *Rhythm and Blues* by disc jockey **Alan Freed** who used it incessantly on his radio programs (he even attempted to copyright the term), and it quickly found its way into the vernacular of popular American culture. Indeed, many rock historians consider both the Blues and Rhythm & Blues of the 1940’s to be inextricably linked, and often times nearly identical in form and style to Rock & Roll.

It is difficult to decide when Rock & Roll becomes a distinct style from Blues and Rhythm & Blues. There are, however, a few characteristics that differ between the two. One difference is the fact that Rock didn’t use horns as often as R&B; rather, Rock would often feature the electric guitar, the primary instrument in Urban Blues (and often featured in Country music). Also, many white Rock musicians brought a background in Country music into Rock and Roll. One non-musical difference is that R&B musicians were primarily black, and when white musicians began playing the same music the term Rock & Roll was introduced. To many historians, this seems a case where the music was rebranded to distinguish it from a thoroughly African-American art form in order to make it more acceptable to a 1950s mainstream white culture accustomed to segregation.

Big Joe Turner



Figure 7.1 Big Joe Turner.

Joe Turner – (1911–1985) Was a blues vocalist that pioneered early rock and roll. He began singing jazz in the 1920’s, and became an accomplished singer of jazz-styled blues and jump blues. He is often referred to as a “blues shouter” because in performance he would often shout to make his voice match the honking sound of the saxophones.

Turner wrote “Shake, Rattle and Roll”, recording it before Bill Haley recorded the much more famous version. Turner’s recording contains alleged sexual references which prevented it from receiving much radio play, while Haley’s recording used a “cleaned up” version of the lyrics in which these references were subdued. This “Sanitizing” of lyrics became a common practice for white recording artists covering songs by black Rhythm and Blues artists and ultimately led to greater record sales in the relatively conservative social climate of 1950s America, though as time has passed many listeners began to seek and ultimately preferred the songs as they were originally written. Haley’s version was also faster with fewer jazz characteristics such as improvisation. Haley’s version was No. 1 on the Pop charts while Turner’s was No. 1 on the Rhythm and Blues charts. To a certain extent these two different charts provide a reflection of the listening habits of white (pop) versus black (R&B) listeners, though there was certainly a good deal of crossover.

Examine the first two vocal sections of the song (the example in *Ch. 7 Listening Examples* has altered lyrics) and try to identify the song form. Based on what we know of common blues song forms, this lyrical scheme should be familiar.

Well get out of that bed, wash your face and hands

Get out of that bed, wash your face and hands

Well get in that kitchen, make some noise with the pots and pans

I believe it to my soul you’re the devil in nylon hose

I believe it to my soul you’re the devil in nylon hose

For the harder I work the faster my money goes

Bill Haley

Bill Haley – (1925–1981) Started out as a country singer/guitarist who played western swing, became one of the first rock stylists.

In the late 1940's, Haley worked as a disc jockey where he was no doubt exposed to Blues and Rhythm and Blues. He formed a western swing group to play on his program. In 1951, Haley covered "Rocket 88", a blues song written by Jackie Brenston. Though the record did not sell well, Haley saw that white teens very much enjoyed Rhythm and Blues. The next year, Haley dropped his country image, changed his group's name to the Comets (as in Haley's Comet), and began recording Blues and Rhythm and Blues songs.

In 1954 the Comets signed to Decca records and recorded two blues covers that became particularly successful: "(We're Gonna) Rock Around the Clock" written by the songwriting team of Freedman/Myers, and Big Joe Turner's "Shake, Rattle and Roll". The latter proved an early success for Haley who was showcasing rhythm and blues to a new audience. The song reached #7 on the pop charts and eventually sold over a million copies. "Rock Around the Clock" initially did not sell as well until the following year when it was featured in a film called *Blackboard Jungle*. After the film was released the song reached No. 1 for 8 weeks on the pop charts, proving that the combination of "clean" lyrics and high-energy blues was a formula for success. Notice when listening that the song, like so many rhythm and blues songs, is a joyful, fast, happy version of the blues, ie. it is in a *modified 12 Bar Blues Form* that uses 3 different lines of text rather than the standard AAB lyrical scheme.

Sam Phillips and Sun Record



Figure 7.2 Sun Studio Building.

Sam Phillips – (1923–2003) worked as a disc jockey in Alabama while a teenager. In 1944, moved to Memphis, Tennessee at the age of 21 and started the Memphis Recording Service. Phillips was a blues fan and mostly recorded southern African American musicians. He recorded Jackie Brenston's "Rocket 88" (the same covered by Haley) as well as blues musicians like Howlin' Wolf. In 1951, Phillips formed the Sun Record Company in order to release his recordings himself. At Sun, Phillips was an innovative producer, developing unique studio effects such as "slapback echo" that characterized many of the records released by Sun. In addition to his production talents, Phillips was responsible for starting the careers of important early Rock pioneers Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins.

Phillips was aware of the growing interest of young white Americans in Rhythm and Blues, but also to the fact that the tendency was for them to buy recordings by white musicians. He decided a white performer who could capture the style of African American singers would be a success. He also felt the need to adapt the lyrics to more conservative tastes because they often contained sexual references which parents would disapprove of. In 1954, he found a young singer he thought could fill this role successfully whose name was Elvis Presley.

Listening Examples 7.1

Big Joe Turner: "Shake Rattle and Roll" with alternate lyrics, likely changed because of TV censors.

Bill Haley and the Comets: Bill Haley performing "Rock Around the Clock" live on the Ed Sullivan show on August 7th, 1955. Although he appeared on the Milton Berle Show earlier, his appearance on Ed Sullivan provided an equally important nudge into popular culture following the success of *Blackboard Jungle*. Elvis Presley would follow suit in 1956, appearing on both Berle's and Sullivan's programs. Here is the studio version of "Rock Around the Clock".

Jackie Brenston:

- "Rocket 88"

Elvis Presley: Early Years and Rockabilly

Elvis Presley – (1935–1977) Began recording with Sam Phillips in 1954 and introduced a new style known as Rockabilly (Rock+Hillbilly). Elvis was a multi-talented star that brought Rock & Roll to millions of Americans. While Elvis only co-wrote a handful of songs and wasn't known for songwriting, his artistry lied in the performing arts, with his singing, his dancing, and even his acting gaining him a legendary stature in the music world.

Elvis' backing band included guitarist Scotty Moore, who played with a country style (steady beat) and sliding of strings giving the effect of a pedal steel (also characteristic of country music). Moore also had a background with jazz music, and the complex lead lines are more reminiscent of Chet Atkins (country-jazz-classical) or Charlie Christian (jazz-blues) than pure blues guitar. The blues influences are not as apparent as the country influences in the playing of Moore. Bassist Bill Black slapped the strings against the fingerboard which is now the characteristic rockabilly bass sound. The bass would usually play on beats one and three (two-beat bass, common in Country music) or on all four beats (walking bass, common in Jazz music) while the drums accented the backbeat with a rhythm and blues style shuffle. Sam Phillips incorporated the “slapback” echo to the recordings, a sound effect that added a unique ambiance to the recordings. The effect is characterized by a short repeat or “echo” especially apparent on the vocals.



Figure 7.3 Elvis Presley Live.

Many of Presley's Sun recordings are in twelve-bar blues form, but the tempos are almost always faster than those of blues or rhythm and blues recordings. This high level of energy is characteristic of rockabilly. Two examples from Presley's early recordings at Sun Records are below. The first, “That's Alright Mama” is a rhythm and blues cover by musician Arthur Crudup and the second is a country/bluegrass song called “Blue Moon of Kentucky” by Bill Monroe. Presley and company interpret both songs in the rockabilly fashion.

Elvis Presley and RCA



Figure 7.4 Elvis Presley with award.

Elvis left Sun records in 1955 when RCA bought his contract for \$35,000. RCA offered a more polished sound and much greater publicity. Sam Phillips was upset to see Presley leave his record label, but he felt that rising Sun Records star Carl Perkins could be an even more popular artist. Within a year at RCA records, Presley was a national star and household name. His new record company brought in professional songwriters (Presley was a stellar performing artist and singer, but only occasionally dabbled in songwriting) and recorded with a clean studio production including doo wop style vocals, Fats Domino-style piano accompaniment, and full size bands.

In 1956 Elvis was brought into the homes of Americans all over the country through Television, which by this time was becoming more important than the radio as the source of home entertainment in America. Through his appearances on TV, Elvis was seen by

millions of Americans for the first time. He appeared on the TV programs of Ed Sullivan, Milton Berle, and others which, more than radio or concert performances, brought him fame as the first Rock Star. It was on network television that one could reach, simultaneously, a large portion of the country. The sexually suggestive dancing, the sensuality of the voice, and handsome appearance of Elvis had an immediate effect on the youth in America. As a performer, he was utterly captivating.

His recordings around this time began to fit the clean image for the teenage audience. One blues song that did become a hit for Presley was “Hound Dog”, originally recorded by “Big Mama” Thornton and written by Jerry Leiber, Mike Stoller, and Johnny Otis. Thornton’s version used the term “hound dog” as a reference to a man who cheated on a woman, while Presley’s version took a completely different meaning. In it, he complains about a woman by saying she was of “no more use than a hound dog that was no good at catching rabbits” which suits his tough-guy image.

Lyrics to “Hound Dog” by Elvis Presley

You ain’t nothin’ but a hound dog, Cryin’ all the time
You ain’t nothin’ but a hound dog, Cryin’ all the time
Well, you ain’t never caught a rabbit and you ain’t no friend of mine
Well they said you was high-classed, Well, that was just a lie
Yeah they said you was high-classed, Well, that was just a lie
Well, you ain’t never caught a rabbit and you ain’t no friend of mine

Elvis Presley: Military Service and Movie Stardom

Elvis received a draft notice in 1958 while shooting a movie, *King Creole*. At, arguably, the height of his popularity he was forced to join the army and attend basic training. Just after beginning basic training, Elvis’ mother passed away. His mother was the closest person to him and he called her death the worst loss of his life. His manager, Colonel Tom Parker, managed Presley’s career while he was away, releasing prerecorded songs so the fans wouldn’t be pressed to find a new star in his absence. From 1958-60, Presley had to put his career on hiatus.

Before leaving for basic training, Presley had begun starring in feature films, becoming a movie star in 1956 with the release of *Love Me Tender*. He would release many more, and with each movie came a stream of hit songs. In 1957 the movies *Loving You* and *Jailhouse Rock* featured more hits including “Teddy Bear” and “Jailhouse Rock”.



Figure 7.5 Elvis in the army.

After returning from military service in 1960, Presley, influenced by Parker, focused most of his energy on making movies. Most of his musical output came from these movies. He entered a period of semi-retirement from live performance that would last until his comeback in 1968. With the money he made from film he took care of his parents, buying them both cadillacs. He bought the Graceland estate in 1957.

Elvis Presley: Later Years

In 1968, after years of starring in movies and staying away from live performance, Elvis made a comeback TV special where he performed in an intimate setting with a group of friends, ushering in a new stage of his career. The “Comeback Special” harkened back to his roots with only a few guitars and simple percussion backing Elvis’ vocals. The special was very popular and Elvis earned praise from fans and critics who had wanted him to focus on music again. From that point on he concentrated on live performance and recording. He continued to release hit singles until the year he died, his newer pop style having a popular appeal. He was able to adapt his music to current trends and often covered songs by younger artists making them into his own inimitable versions.

Presley’s life was difficult for the last few years of his life; his wife Priscilla divorced him, and he spent most of his private time alone as a recluse at Graceland. Presley developed drug habits, made worse by the fact that there were many “hangers-on” that provided Elvis with whatever he wanted so they could take advantage of either his friendship or his money, and this contributed to his death in 1977 at the age of only 42.

Exercises 1 and 2

Please listen to the following [podcast](#) features an interview with Elvis' guitar player Scotty Moore about his early years with Elvis, specifically the evening of their first recording session and DJ Fontana, Elvis' drummer.

This [Western Front PDF](#) contains a short, entertaining article entitle “All My Love, Elvis” regarding Elvis on page 3 of the WWU campus newspaper, the Western Washington Collegian (Now called the ‘Western Front’) from February 8, 1957. Enjoy!

Listening Examples 7.2

- “[That’s Alright Mama](#)” (1954)
- “[Blue Moon of Kentucky](#)” (1954)

Elvis Presley making his television debut with “[Hound Dog](#)”, performed on The Milton Berle Show on June 5th, 1956. “Hound Dog” was No. 1 on the pop charts for 11 weeks and No. 1 on the rhythm & blues charts for 6 weeks. The song was written by the R&B songwriting team of Lieber/Stoller for Big Momma Thornton. Elvis covered the song with a faster, lighter sound and many of the lyrics altered so they made more sense as the song was originally written from a female perspective. Listen to the lyrics and try to determine the song form (see lyrics above). The original version of “[Hound Dog](#)” performed by Big Momma Thornton. Recorded August 13, 1952 it predates Elvis’ version by 4 years.

- The original trailer for [Jailhouse Rock](#)
- “[That’s Alright Mama](#)” 1968

Carl Perkins

Listening Exercises 7.3

Carl Perkins performs “[Blue Suede Shoes](#)” live on the Perry Como Show on May 26, 1956.

Elvis Presley covering Carl Perkin’s “[Blue Suede Shoes](#)”.

Carl Perkins – (1932–1998) was an early rock and roll/rockabilly guitarist and composer. A fan of the blues and rhythm and blues, he patterned his style after the rockabilly stylings of Elvis Presley. Perkins auditioned and was signed to Sun records in 1955. Unlike Elvis, Perkins wrote his own songs. One reason Phillips let Elvis go to RCA was because he felt Perkins could be a bigger star. This ultimately didn’t occur as popular tastes continued to change, and the versatility of Elvis meant he could adapt his talents into a film career as well as continuing to perform his own hits as well as contemporary popular songs. Perkins remained a major influence and successful performer in his own right. Bands such as the Beatles cite Carl Perkins as a key influence and the group even recorded two of Perkins’ songs on the album *Beatles for Sale* in 1964.



Figure 7.6 Carl Perkins.

Perkins’ hit “Blue Suede Shoes” was the song that launched his career. Written and recorded in 1955 while rock was just beginning to emerge, the song uses a form of 12-bar blues that extends the first A section using “Stop-Time” where the accompaniment plays brief rhythmic punctuations then the music pauses. This unique and creative approach to 12-bar blues offers for more tension and excitement as most of the popular music at the time was using standard 12-bar form. As in most of the rhythm and blues and rock and roll music, the lyrics use three contrasting lines of text (ABC) rather than using two lines of repeated text and one line of contrasting text (AAB) commonly found in pure 12-bar blues form.

A *One for the money (pause) two for the show (pause) three to get ready now go cat go*

B *But don’t you step on my blue suede shoes*

C You can do anything but stay off of my blue suede shoes

Remember, when we take what is essentially 12-bar blues form, but alter the lyrical scheme to three contrasting lines of text, we call this **modified 12-bar blues form**. When listening to “Blue Suede Shoes” in Ex. 7.3, notice the use of “stop-time” and slapped bass for a rhythmic effect (We can note the influence of Elvis’ bass player Bill Black here.)

Jerry Lee Lewis



Figure 7.7 Jerry Lee Lewis.

Jerry Lee Lewis – (born 1935) is a pianist and singer who has had an influential career in early rock and roll. He grew up listening to and playing blues, country, and gospel music.

Like Perkins, after hearing Elvis he went to Sun records and signed a contract. At Sun, Lewis covered blues songs first recorded by African American musicians such as “Whole Lotta Shakin Goin On”. Unlike Elvis and Haley, Lewis chose not to clean up the lyrics. Lewis’ signature performing style is one of extreme energy. His right hand flew across the keyboard making use of the glissando (sliding run) and his left hand smashed the keys like a drum keeping time. He often pushed the piano bench away and stood, dancing while playing, and would sometimes play with his feet or jump on top of the piano while singing.

His career took a downturn when it was made public that Lewis had married his 13-year old cousin. This resulted in a boycott of his records and performances. Lewis continued to record with Sun making country music and also continued to perform live, which he continues to this day.

One of Lewis’ most popular songs was “Whole Lotta Shakin’ Going On” written by a songwriter named Dave “Curlee” Williams about whom not much seems to be well-known. When listening below, notice the motoristic boogie-woogie style piano playing as well as the clear accents on the back beat (beats 2 and 4). The song is a standard rhythm and blues number using a modified 12-bar blues form, though the second section shows how similar the first two lines (A & B) are (“Come along baby...”). Again, look at the lyrical scheme of two vocal sections from the song while listening in *Ch. 7 Listening Examples*:

A Come along my baby, whole lotta shakin’ goin’ on

B Yes, I said come along my baby, baby you can’t go wrong

C We ain’t fakin’, whole lotta shakin’ goin’ on

A Well, I said come along my baby, we got chicken in the barn

B Woo-huh, come along my baby, really got the bull by the horn

C We ain’t fakin’, whole lotta shakin’ goin’ on

Eddie Cochran



Figure 7.8 Eddie Cochran.

Eddie Cochran – (1938–1960) was a rockabilly guitarist, songwriter, and singer as well as actor who continued the rockabilly style, pioneered early rock and roll, and left a lasting influence which is notable for having such a brief career. Cochran's musical style had lyrics that young people could relate to and the simplicity, catchiness, and power to influence musicians that later played blues, rock, heavy metal, and even punk music. His song "Summertime Blues" became his biggest hit, reaching No. 8 on the Billboard pop charts. Cochran also had success overseas, particularly in England where his single "C'Mon Everybody" charted at No. 6. "C'Mon Everybody" saw Cochran experimenting with the new recording technique called "overdubbing" which he became well known for. Overdubbing allows multiple layers to be recorded over top of one another. In this way Cochran could record multiple instrumental and vocal lines over top of each other by himself. After completing a tour in England with Gene Vincent, Cochran was killed in an automobile accident on the way to the airport at the age of only 21.

Buddy Holly



Figure 7.9 Buddy Holiday

Buddy Holly – (1936–1959) Born Charles Hardin Holley, was a very important innovator in early rock and roll. Holly's career was cut short by an accidental death at the age of 22. Holly learned fiddle, guitar, banjo, and piano as a child and played bluegrass. He was converted to rock after seeing Elvis perform in 1955.

In 1956, Holly gained a recording contract with Decca records in Nashville playing country music. Unsuccessful, Holly returned to Texas and formed his band, The Crickets, to play rock and roll and recorded their first hit "That'll Be the Day" in 1957. Holly didn't have the "dangerous" appeal of Elvis. In fact, he was distinctly different from Elvis; he wrote most of his own music, his vocal style was light, and he used a trademark hiccup on certain parts of the phrase. He wore suits, thick rimmed glasses, and didn't exemplify a tough guy image.

The Crickets featured the rockabilly instrumentation, but Holly used a solid body Fender Stratocaster. The solid body had a more aggressive, biting tone quality. Drummer Jerry Allison had a much more important role than other rockabilly drummers, including incorporating things like Latin rhythms into the Crickets sound. Their hit "Peggy Sue" (1957) shows their blend of country and blues. The Crickets stayed together until 1958 when Holly left the Crickets to go solo, working on a more pop-oriented style. Holly died in a plane crash while on tour in 1959 that also killed musicians Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper.

The Solid Body Electric Guitar

The solid body electric guitar possesses quite a different tone quality from acoustic guitars or the hollow body electrics that had been used by guitarists through the 1940's. Guitarist and inventor Les Paul developed a solid body guitar because he was concerned with the short sustain and feedback problems inherent in hollow body designs. With the solid body, increasing volumes were used

and natural amp overdrive would result. The solid body and overdriven tones soon became embraced in rock music. In the late 1950s and early 1960s guitarists such as Buddy Holly began using the solid body, utilizing its more aggressive tone.

Chuck Berry



Figure 7.10 Chuck Berry

Chuck Berry – (1926–2017) Rock and roll guitarist and singer whose music is rooted in the blues and rhythm and blues. His guitar style and performance style were greatly influenced by T-Bone Walker and Muddy Waters while his singing style was influenced by white country and western singers. It was this fusion of the two sounds that makes Berry’s music a pure and excellent example of early rock and roll.

Berry wrote most of his own music, sang and was an excellent lead guitarist. His songs rang true with teens including songs making fun of classical music, songs about fast cars, laments about school, and others. Berry’s performances were extremely energetic with dance moves like the “Duckwalk”, and his guitar solos would become influential on the course of rock music.

The Everly Brothers



Figure 7.11 The Everly Brothers.

The Everly Brothers were a country influenced rock group made up of brothers Don and Phil, the sons of country musicians. Their music is characterized by closely harmonized tenor voices accompanied by their own rhythm guitars, lead guitarist Chet Atkins, piano, bass, and drums. Their sound was much more smooth, less aggressive than standard rockabilly, and their closely harmonized vocal style had an influence on groups like the Beatles. Compare the vocal sound in the song “All I Have to Do is Dream” by the Everly Brothers and “All My Loving” by the Beatles for example, to see how this influential vocal sound transfers.

Little Richard



Figure 7.12 Little Richard.

Little Richard – (Born in 1932 as Richard Penniman) is an important rock and roll singer/pianist. He learned to play piano in church where he also learned to sing using gospel characteristics like vocal slides and embellishments.

Richard wrote many of his own songs, sang and played piano on his own recordings. His hits include “Tutti-Frutti”, “Long Tall Sally”, and “Good Golly Miss Molly”. Many of these early songs had lyrics consisting of veiled or not-so-veiled sexual innuendo. Richard’s piano style was based on the boogie woogie style, with a boogie woogie bass line and chords pounding in the right hand. The fast tempos and aggressive vocals are what set his music apart. Most of his songs deal with sex as the primary topic, and his androgynous looks combined with this were shocking. Artists such as Pat Boone, a teen pop idol, covered “Tutti Frutti” and as Bill Haley and Elvis did earlier, Boone recorded a “Clean version” that compromised the lyrics of the original version. In 1957, Little Richard quit rock and roll to become a preacher.

Listening Examples 7.4

Jerry Lee Lewis:

- “[Whole Lotta Shakin’](#)” Live 1957

Eddie Cochran

- “[C’Mon Everybody](#)”

Buddy Holiday: “[Peggy Sue](#)” features a modified 12-bar blues form with country/folk style guitar strumming and unique drumming from Crickets drummer Jerry Allison where, instead of accenting backbeats he energetic drum rolls. Listen for Holly’s trademark ‘hiccups’ throughout.

Chuck Berry: “[School Days](#)”, a hit of Berry’s from 1957. Notice what happens every time Berry finishes a vocal line: he plays his guitar in “response” to his voice. This is a textbook example (pun intended) of “Call and response”. The song uses a version of 12-bar blues form. Is it standard 12-bar blues or a modified version of 12-bar blues?

Everly Brothers: Notice the influence of the Everly Brothers in “[All My Loving](#)” by the Beatles vocal sound starting at 1:14 into the song “All I Have to Do is Dream”.

- “[All I Have to Do is Dream](#)”

Little Richard: Notice the aggressive vocal sound in “[Tutti Frutti](#)”. Richard combines aggression with the improvisational, embellished vocal approach of gospel music. His vocal style is reminiscent of Sister Rosetta Tharpe in it’s aggression and it’s gospel roots.

Another example of Little Richard’s music is the song “[Lucille](#)” which is a showcase for almost all the musical features we’ve discussed in the last few chapters. The song is dominated by a riff in the saxophones and electric guitar. Richards’ piano style is rooted in Boogie Woogie. The first :56 seconds feature pure 12-bar blues form (AAB Lyrical scheme). At :57, we hear “Stop-time” which turns into a modified 12-bar blues form (ABC lyrical scheme)

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1.8: Teen Idols and Surf

Changes to the Music Industry: Payola Scandal

Payola – The paying for airplay or other publicity by composers/musicians to publishers or radio programmers. It had been a music business practice in some form or another since the 19th century. By the late 1950's payola meant a payment to radio programmers to “encourage” them to give more airtime to a particular song. Independent record companies would pay for airplay in a town and make profit from the record sale in that town as a result of the airplay. They would then move to another town and repeat the process.

In 1958, the Special Committee on Legislative Oversight formed. ASCAP requested this committee look into the bribing of DJs for airplay (the Payola Scandal). The result was that Payola was deemed illegal and many small, independent record companies that relied on payola for airplay went out of business.

Disc Jockeys



Figure 8.1 Alan Freed.

Alan Freed – (1921–1965) Disc jockey who fought against racism in the music industry, promoting music by African American artists. Freed had a TV show on ABC called *Dance Party* showcasing rhythm and blues. He also had accepted payola, and once the investigations into payola began his career was investigated. When Freed was found guilty of charges of accepting bribery/payola, he lost his television show.

Dick Clark – (1929–2012) Another important disc jockey and television personality, Clark avoided ruin during the payola scandal. Clark was the host of the show *American Bandstand*. *American Bandstand* would occasionally showcase a rock and roll or rhythm and blues artist, but was generally more conservative in its choices. More often clean cut teen idols were featured.

The *Ed Sullivan Show* was also an important television program that provided a variety of entertainment. Sullivan realized that booking rock and roll acts attracted the teenage audience and began regularly featuring musical performances.

Pat Boone and Teen Idol Pop



Figure 8.2 Pat Boone.

The image of teen idols and the content of their music was very clean cut, acceptable by the most conservative parent. The themes of teen idol songs were “as youthful and wholesome as the performer’s image”. Musically, teen idol pop represented a departure from many aspects of Rock & Roll, with softer singing styles, a significantly less use of electric guitar and saxophones, and

orchestral instrumentals often replacing guitar/saxophone solos. Elements of the Blues were often absent, but not entirely. The performers were often well known for their clean cut and safe image, sometimes more than their music. Popular music seemed to leave Rock behind by the early 1960s, but it would come back in a big way within a few years, only with different artists leading the charge.

Pat Boone – (Born 1934) Singer of popular music, became a “teen idol”. He primarily sang pop ballads but also sang blues and rhythm and blues covers. Boone’s image was very boy-next-door. This was a contrast to the rebellious image of Elvis. In his cover version of Little Richard’s “Tutti Frutti” from 1956 (*Ch. 8 Listening Examples*), he attempted to achieve a similar rhythmic singing style to Little Richard but without the aggressive growling tone quality. Boone, like Elvis, was involved in movies including *April Love* (1957) and *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1959).

On average, teen idol singers were successful more for their clean-cut, popular image than their musical talents. They often lip-synched their lip movements to recordings on TV, in movies, and even live. Rarely did any of them play an instrument and generally didn’t write their own songs. Other “teen idols” include Frankie Avalon, Fabian, Bobbie Rydell, and Ritchie Valens who had a hit with “La Bamba” (1959). Valens was unique in that he was a talented singer, guitarist, and wrote his own music. Chubby Checker (his name is a very obvious variation on Fats Domino) covered a song called “The Twist” by blues singer Hank Ballard, and it turned into a hit record, starting a dance craze in the United States.

Listening Examples 8.1

Listen Boone’s version of Little Richard’s “[Tutti Frutti](#)” and notice the contrast in style between this and [Richard’s version](#). Boone’s version still has elements of rock and gospel even, but the aggressive elements from Richards’ version are played down a bit. More apparent are the lyrical differences. Notice in the following verse the subtle lyrical change in Boone’s version from “rock to the east” to “I been to the east”. The word “Rock” often had sexual connotations, so just to be safe the Boone version leaves it out.

Richards’ version:

Got a girl named Sue, she knows just what to do
Got a girl named Sue, she knows just what to do
She rocks to the east, she rocks to the west
She’s the girl that I know best

Boone’s version:

I got a girl, named Sue, she knows just what to do
I got a gal, named Sue, she knows just what to do
I’ve been to the east, I’ve been to the west, but
She’s the gal that I love the best

Here is Pat Boone singing a more typical song in his style, “[Moody River](#)” from June 1961 which reached No. 1 on the Billboard Top 100 charts.

[The Brill Building](#)



Figure 8.3 The Brill Building

Many pop hits in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s were written in the Brill Building, located on Broadway in New York City. There were numerous music offices and studios in this one building. Professional songwriters were used because in many cases of pop

musicians, they didn't write their own music. Manager Don Kirshner had many of these songwriters under contract and was responsible for giving many of them their first breaks. Some of the songwriters who later found fame in their own performance careers included Neil Diamond, Paul Simon, and Carole King.

Carole King and then-husband Gerry Goffin wrote many hits including the song "Will You Love Me Tomorrow?" for the girl group the Shirelles (*Listening Examples 8.2*). This song is in AABAA form, a departure from the many early rock songs in 12-bar blues form. One advantage in having professional songwriters was that the songs had more complex arrangements, forms, and instrumentation, adding to the variety of sounds on a given record. Lyrically, the song is from a female perspective, the context being a romantic encounter between lovers where the singer is cautious about the motives of her lover. We get a set up of a seemingly perfect new relationship, but the singer wants to make sure that the encounter is part of a "lasting treasure" and not simply a "moments' pleasure", and asks, as a refrain at the end of each A section, "Will you still love me tomorrow?". At the time of the songs' release in 1960, this was a powerful message from a female perspective, something of an assertion of female independence at a time when women were generally expected to remain reserved and not overly opinionated.

Tonight you're mine, completely
 You give your love so sweetly
 Tonight the light of love is in your eyes
 But will you love me tomorrow?
 Is this a lasting treasure
 Or just a moment's pleasure
 Can I believe the magic in your sighs
 Will you love me tomorrow?
 Tonight with words unspoken
 You say that I'm the only one
 But will my heart be broken
 When the night meets the morning sun
 I'd like to know that your love
 Is a love I can be sure of
 So tell me now and I won't ask again
 Can I believe the magic in your sighs
 Will you love me tomorrow?
 So tell me now and I won't ask again
 Will you still love me tomorrow
 Will you still love me tomorrow
 Will you still love me tomorrow

Phil Spector



Figure 8.4 Phil Spector by John Mathew Smith.

Phil Spector – (Born 1940) Producer whose distinctive style became known as the "Wall of Sound". The term is derived from the fact that Spector's productions were full of instruments, overdubs, and mixed so well that many of his recordings had an orchestral quality and power to them, unique in popular music. One of Spector's influences was the classical composer Richard Wagner, known for his massive orchestral works featuring huge instrumentation including percussion instruments like timpani, gong, etc. Indeed, Spector called his records "symphonies for teens." In the late 1960's, Spector worked with the Beatles, producing Let It Be, and with George Harrison and John Lennon on their solo records after the breakup of the Beatles.

Listening Examples 8.3

Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons:

- [“Medley Live on TV”](#)

The Shirelles: (See lyrics above) Here is a live version of [“Will You Love Me Tomorrow?”](#) by the Shirelles in 1964. [Here](#) is another version. The song uses a relatively new form (for us) called AABA form. Simply put, the A sections always use the same music with different lyrics in each iteration. For contrast, the B section provides different music and often leads back to one last A section in a satisfying way. Sometimes the B section is called a “bridge” section as it bridges two A sections together. In this version, an orchestral break adds an instrumental A section as well. This replaces what would have been a guitar or saxophone solo in a Rock & Roll song.

The Ronnettes: [“Be My Baby”](#) This song uses another new form (for us) called Verse-Chorus form. This a two part form (the verse and the chorus being the two parts). The verses and choruses usually have distinct music. Lyrically, the verse features different lyrics each iteration, while the chorus (Sometimes called a refrain) features the same words every iteration. Here is a video outlining the new form along with the song itself: [“Be My Baby” Formal Outline Video](#) Again, you’ll notice an orchestral break where a guitar or saxophone solo would have likely been if this were a Rock & Roll song.

Spring Reverb was an important element of the surf guitar sound. In a nutshell, on certain amplifiers from the 1960s and later, the signal from the guitar can be transmitted through a metal spring which vibrates and extends the length of a given sound, giving the effect of the ambience of a hall. A knob on the amplifier allows the guitarist to dial in the amount of reverb, and the length of decay (how long the ambience lingers). In [this video](#) below I demonstrate various levels of reverb as well as a “vibrato” effect on a 1965 Reissue amplifier that is modeled after the ones used by many surf guitarists.

Duane Eddy

Duane Eddy – (born 1938) Guitarist who developed a distinctive style the epitomized surf music. The style is described as “twang” where the guitar strings were plucked close to the bridge where they are tightest, resulting in a bright, punchy sound.

Eddy’s use of echo and vibrato effects as well as his repetitive picking style resulted in a wavering sound that may have given rise to the inclusion of surfing topics into the music. His music such as the instrumental “Rebel-Rouser” (1958) used call and response techniques like those used in gospel music and jazz.

Surf Music

Musicians on the west coast began developing their own brand of danceable pop music known as **Surf Rock**. The music was different in a number of ways. For one, the vocals weren’t based on the crooner vocal tradition the way many pop singers of the day were; in fact, many popular surf hits were instrumental, a rare phenomenon in popular music. Other differences were the fact that many groups wrote their own material, the music was often more simple than the songs written by trained professionals at places like the Brill Building, and the bands played their own instruments, unlike pop stars of the day. The instrumentation of guitars, bass, and drums was very common. The surf instrumentation holds similarity to the older rock traditions, but much of the music was lighter and less aggressive. (That’s why it is considered in the pop tradition). The electric guitar (particular the solid body) became the primary lead instrument, and often replaced the vocals as the primary melodic voice for instrumentals.

The link between Surfing and Music described by Paul Johnson of the Bel-Airs

Paul Johnson, guitarist for The Bel-Airs who had one of the earliest Surf hit songs with “Mr. Moto” released January 1962, describes the link between the instrumental pop known as Surf Music as coincidental. Simply, surfers showed up to their gigs sheerly by proximity/geography. He attributes this primarily to the association between the music and surfing. Later on, the advent of *spring reverb* at Fender (discussed in a video in *Ch. 8.2 Listening Examples*) became a sound inextricably linked to these groups. To hear Johnson discuss the first time he heard the term “Surf Music” and how the genre developed, listen to the podcast linked [here](#) from ca. 5:00. Particularly interesting is the reaction of surfers themselves to the Beach Boys at 8:15 into the Podcast. Surfers seemed to associate instrumental music with their sport much more so than vocal music with surf-based lyrics.

Dick Dale



Figure 8.5 Dick Dale.

Dick Dale – (Born Richard Monsour 1937-2019) Known as the “King of Surf Guitar” because he originated the style that was to be copied by many of the surf groups of the 1960’s. His group, Dick Dale and the Del-Tones had a string of successful singles and albums in the early 1960s until Dale was sidelined by a cancer diagnosis in the mid 1960s. Dale began using a guitar style similar Duane Eddy, but took it one step further when he incorporated a technique inspired by the tremolo picking of the Middle Eastern and Greek instruments like the bouzouki. **Tremolo picking** refers to fast repetitions of a note which sustains the note and adds a level of intensity to the sound.

Dale’s music was led by his innovative guitar sound, but he also sang and featured other instrumentalists such as horns or even orchestras ala Phil Spector’s wall of sound. Many of his songs featured a mix of all of the above features, but he is best remembered for his forceful guitar playing and the signature Fender sound featuring a Fender Stratocaster guitar, Fender Spring Reverb, and the Fender Showman Amp, the most advanced and most powerful (ie. Loudest) guitar amplifier available in the early 1960s which Dale helped develop with Leo Fender. His most enduring composition is “Misirlou” which features his unique guitar tone combined with “tremelo” picking and a middle eastern scale, all featured in the main theme of the song. The song was featured in the film Pulp Fiction in 1994 and led to a minor resurgence of Dale’s career.

The Beach Boys



Figure 8.6 The Beach Boys.

The Beach Boys were formed by the Wilson Brothers Carl, Brian, and Dennis, their cousin, and a neighbor. The early hits were about surfing and teenage issues, though they later developed far beyond their initial image, much like the Beatles.

From the beginning they were not strictly a surf group. Brian Wilson, the primary songwriter, often used the group vocal harmony style of jazz groups. Their guitarist Carl Wilson did use the twang guitar style of Duane Eddy but also used the riff-based style of Chuck Berry. In fact, “Surfin’ USA” (1963) had the same melody, chord progression, and form as Berry’s “Sweet Little Sixteen” (1958).

The groups serene vocal sound was apparent in many of their early songs such as “Surfer Girl” and “In My Room” (both 1963). A testament to their live performance abilities, the group was able to successfully perform these complex vocals in concert.

By 1966, Brian Wilson’s songwriting had matured considerably but he suffered a nervous breakdown and was forced to stop touring. He kept writing and recording though, and that year they released *Pet Sounds*, their most important and influential album. “Pet Sounds” is notable as an early concept album in pop music where all the songs are thematically related. This predates “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band”, the Beatles’ concept album and magnum opus, which was inspired by the album. The concept was “an expression of hopes, dreams, and anxiety about the present and future felt by a young person growing up”. *Pet Sounds* features songs written primarily by Brian Wilson as well as his arrangements which featured unusual instruments such as orchestral instruments like strings and percussion, and unusual studio productions such as echoes and reverberation which give the music a haunting yet full and colorful sound. Simple pop-oriented songs such as “Wouldn’t it Be Nice” featured these complex

arrangements much like the productions of Phil Spector did earlier in the decade. (Listen to “Wouldn’t it Be Nice” in *Ch. 8.3 Listening Examples*)

Listening Examples 8.3

Duane Eddy:

- [“Rebel Rouser”](#)

Dick Dale: Here is [Dick Dale](#) Live on Ed Sullivan. I demonstrate the “Twang” of surf guitar by playing close to the bridge, then I demonstrate the tremolo picking style of Dick Dale.

The Beach Boys: First, listen to [“In My Room”](#) by the Beach Boys performed live (NOT lip-syncing). The Beach Boys recreate their vocal sound nearly-perfectly (with the exception of the screaming fans). In the song [“Wouldn’t it Be Nice”](#), the form features a bridge (middle section) that brings back the intro theme on the piano, but places it in a brand new context including a different key, effectively creating a moment of “Bitonality” (Music in 2 different keys at once) from around 1:05-1:30. The keys are closely related, so the music sounds OK to our ears, but the concept is quite advanced. The song [“Good Vibrations”](#) was a number one hit and also featured Phil Spector-influenced production. As well, the song introduced the electric-theremin into pop music, building on the haunting, colorful sounds from *Pet Sounds*.

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1.9: Soul Music

Soul Music

Soul music has its roots most firmly implanted in gospel music, both in lyrical content (messages of love and relationships, though not necessarily spiritual) and especially in the emotional and embellished vocal style. Like Gospel, Soul vocal styles incorporate many notes per syllable in an embellished and improvisational approach. The lyrical content, with roots in Gospel, was intertwined with the civil rights movement, singing of equality, love, and respect for your fellow human being.

The soul styles of the northern and southern USA had differing qualities. Southern styles often had a gritty and energetic vocal quality, and the instrumental playing was usually intense and energetic. Northern styles would usually have a more refined sound with improvisation and embellishments less pronounced. One possible reason for this is that gospel singing varied from church to church and region to region, developing in isolation without the aid/influence of radio.

Atlantic Records



Figure 9.1 Atlantic Records Logo.

Atlantic Records was formed in 1947 and was largely responsible for the success of soul artists like Ray Charles, Otis Redding, Aretha Franklin, and others. Later on, Atlantic would distribute recordings from a very diverse group of artists. But early on they were best known as a primary distributor of soul music. Atlantic's recording studio was in New York but they would move artists to different studios (such as Stax studios in Memphis using Booker T and the MGs) depending on what kind of soul music they wanted to produce.

Ray Charles



Figure 9.2 Ray Charles.

Ray Charles – (1930–2004) Blind since the age of 6, Ray Charles nevertheless learned piano, trumpet, saxophone, and clarinet. He also learned to read and write music in braille as well as studying composition. Charles never actually sang gospel in church, but incorporated it into his rhythm and blues music. He was unique in his ability to synthesize country, jazz, rhythm and blues, blues, and gospel, sometimes using the story line lyrics of country and even recording albums of country covers.

Charles spent a few years starting in the late 1940s performing around the country with his group the McSon Trio. The group made their first recordings in 1948–49. Charles was eventually signed to Swingtime Records, and later Atlantic Records where he had his first great commercial success. Songs like "I've Got a Woman" (1954) provided Charles with radio play and wide exposure, and he

quickly became one of the best known names in Soul. By 1959, Charles' reached a new commercial high point with the single, "What'd I Say?" which became a top 10 hit on the pop charts. "I've Got a Woman" and "What'd I Say?" are examined in more detail below in Listening Examples 9.1.

In 1962, Charles released his groundbreaking album **Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music** where he integrated the sounds of soul and blues with country and folk music in a revolutionary way. He blends the song forms and melodies of country and folk with stylistic norms from soul such as embellished vocal melodies and uneven beat subdivisions from blues.

Otis Redding



Figure 9.3 Otis Redding.

Otis Redding (1941–1967) was the biggest selling singer at Stax records whose emotional vocal style was a mixture of the rock aggressiveness of Little Richards and the smoother gospel style of Sam Cooke. He was also a hit songwriter, writing many of his own songs including "Respect", the song that became best known in the version recorded by Aretha Franklin. Redding used gospel techniques like melismas that built tension, and put on energetic live performances as evidenced by the album *Live in Europe* from 1967 which includes a high-energy version of his hit "Can't Turn You Loose" (1965) and an intense, soul-infused cover version of "Satisfaction" by The Rolling Stones. He died in a plane crash in 1967, only 3 days after recording what would become his biggest hit, "(Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay", co-written with Steve Cropper. More on that song in Listening Examples 9.1 below.

Aretha Franklin



Figure 9.4 Aretha Franklin.

Aretha Franklin (1942–2018) was one of the most influential and well known soul singers in American popular music. The daughter of a minister, Franklin spent her youth singing gospel music in her father's church. In her teens she began traveling to other churches and concert halls, performing and meeting gospel singers like Mahalia Jackson, Sam Cooke, and others.

She moved to New York at age 18 to sing secular music like the blues. She was encouraged by producers to tone down the gospel influence for a more restrained approach. This changed in 1966 when Franklin was signed to Atlantic records and was encouraged to put that energy and emotion back into her music. At Atlantic Franklin had many hits including "Respect" (1967) which was No. 1 on both the pop and Rhythm and Blues charts.

"Respect" (Found in *Listening Examples 9.1*) was written by Otis Redding, but Franklin's version became even more popular than Redding's. The lyrics gained new meaning when sung from a female perspective. Initially a song about a troubled relationship between two people, Franklin's version of "Respect" became an anthem for gender equality at a time when the discrepancy between males and females was heavily in the advantage of the male. The use of the horn section is apparent, and the vocal style of Franklin is reminiscent of the style of gospel singers like Mahalia Jackson and the blues styles of Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey. The form is comprised of an instrumental opening, three vocal sections (A section), an instrumental section (B), another A section, the C section (the R-E-S-P-E-C-T breakdown), followed by a fragment of another A section.

Listening Examples 9.1

Ray Charles: “[Confession Blues](#)” (1949) is Ray Charles’ first recording and features the McSon Trio. Listen to the lyrics and try to identify the form. Stylistically, what does this song closely resemble?

Ray Charles: “[I’ve Got A Woman](#)” (1954) was an early hit song by Ray Charles. Lyrically, it is a reflection of attitudes on gender roles in the 1950s with lines like “*She’s there to love me, Both day and night. Never grumbles or fusses, Always treats me right. Never runnin’ in the streets, Leavin’ me alone. She knows a woman’s place, Is right there, now, in her home*”. Lyrics here: [I Got a Woman Lyrics](#) It presents the listener with an interesting hybrid form, blending elements of 12-bar blues form with an overall AABA structure. The A sections use elements of the AAB lyrical scheme, but bring back the A line one more time after the B line, such as the following from the first A section:

A – Well, I got a woman, way over town, That’s good to me, oh yeah

A – Said I got a woman, way over town, Good to me, oh yeah

B – She gives me money when I’m in need, Yeah, she’s a kind of friend indeed

A – I got a woman, way over town, That’s good to me, oh yeah

Ray Charles: “[What’d I Say?](#)” (1959) was a No. 1 hit on the rhythm and blues charts and No. 6 on the pop charts. The single release included two separate versions on each side. Side A was a standard rhythm and blues version with Charles accompanied by a band, while side B features a soul version with call and response between Charles and a gospel-style vocal group as well as Jazz styled nonsense syllables. Formally, it is a 12-bar blues that incorporates “stop-time” where the bass and drums will cut out and let the electric piano play solo for a brief period.

“[Careless Love](#)” is a traditional country/folk song reinterpreted by Charles with gospel-style vocals and a horn section, taken at a slow tempo reminiscent of brooding blues songs by performers like B.B. King. It was released on Charles’ album “Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music” (1962).

Otis Redding: “[Sittin’ on the Dock of the Bay](#)” by Otis Redding. I play the chords to an entire section of “[Sittin’ on the Dock of the Bay](#)” (including the short intro). Notice how many chords are being played as opposed to a form like 12-bar blues. There are five different chords being played multiple times (compared to 3 in 12 bar blues form) and the entire section is 16 bars long.

Aretha Franklin:

- “[Respect](#)”
- “[Respect](#)” live

Sam Cooke



Figure 9.5 Sam Cooke.

Sam Cooke – (1935–1964) was the son of a Baptist minister, surrounded by gospel music as a child. He began working as a professional singer in 1951 taking the lead vocal duties in the gospel group, the Soul Stirrers. In 1956 he left the Soul Stirrers and branched out into secular music, releasing “You Send Me” in 1957, launching a pop music career in which he would blossom into a hit songwriter. When listening to “You Send Me” in Listening Examples 9.2 below, notice how Cooke embellishes certain syllables with many notes in an improvisation style. Formally, there are two contrasting sections that make up the entire piece; the A section (“You Send Me...”etc), two B sections (“At first I thought it was infatuation...”) incorporated in between, and it is laid out as follows: AABAAABA. Cooke takes some gospel influenced improvisational liberties during the 4th and 5th iterations of the A section.

Cooke's recorded output was often smooth and pop-friendly. Songs such as "Cupid", "Chain Gang", and "Twistin' the Night Away" were generally toned-down, and the gospel vocal embellishments are rare ("You Send Me" is an exception to this generalization). By contrast, the 1963 live recording *Live at the Harlem Square Club* showcased a looser, more raw Sam Cooke; high energy, heavily embellished vocal melodies, and an almost scream-like vocal timbre. Cooke was tragically shot and killed under mysterious circumstances in 1964.

James Brown



Figure 9.6 James Brown.

James Brown – (1933–2006) Began performing as a child dancing on the streets for tips to save money for his aunt who was left to raise him after his parents left. Brown learned to sing gospel in a local church, and joined a gospel group in his twenties, becoming the lead singer. A change to secular music brought a name change to the Famous Flames.

Brown had his first hit with "Please Please Please" (1956) as the leader of the Famous Flames. The music featured a **triplet** pattern in the piano common in gospel and doo wop (dividing the beat into 3 parts instead of 2 parts) and doo wop-style backing-vocals (featuring nonsense syllables and echoes of the lyrics).

The stage act developed by Brown became legendary, with dramatic and intense vocal embellishments and complex dancing including dance steps, the splits, and drops to his knees. His vocal sound had a large expressive range: it could be soft and tender, or aggressive and growly like Little Richard. He also gave vocal cues to his band; each time he gave a certain "call", horns or backing vocals would respond with a riff or short vocal phrase.

By the 70's his music developed to include high energy funk alongside his earlier rhythm and blues. Brown developed drug problems (he had long been anti-drug), and these drug problems resulted in domestic violence charges and other legal troubles in the late 80's that landed him in prison for two years. Nevertheless, he was popular with fans of rhythm and blues and funk his entire career.

Stax and Volt Records



Figure 9.7 Stax Logo.

Stax records (and its subsidiary, Volt) became the starting point for many soul artists' careers. Based in Memphis Tennessee, this company attracted performers of Memphis Soul, a brand of soul music that combined the energy of Little Richard with gospel based singers like James Brown. The records that came out of Stax were often consistent because the studio group, Booker T and the MGs, played on many of the records. The group was named after their organist/arranger Booker T. Jones. They were also creatively involved in the songwriting and arranging process. In particular, guitarist Steve Cropper was a songwriter that co-wrote many hit songs at Stax with artists like Otis Redding and Wilson Pickett.

Wilson Pickett (1941-2006) Singer who began working at Stax, co-wrote "In the Midnight Hour" with Steve Cropper, became a No. 1 hit on the Rhythm and Blues charts in 1965. Cropper was an important songwriter for Stax. "In the Midnight Hour" used a

parallel movement where multiple horns playing lines that move higher or lower in tandem, that became a signature sound of Memphis soul known as the “Memphis Horn Sound”.

Exercise 1

The first part of the article [linked](#) provides a short background into Berry Gordy and Motown. Later it contains a detailed analysis of some of the rhythmic characteristics of the Soul music from Motown and how these rhythms led to funk music. This analysis is, in part, a response to critics who were disapproving of the repetitive nature of popular music styles that didn’t fully comprehend it’s subtlety and nuance. Please read pgs. 1-5 (short bio of Gordy and Motown) and “Theorizing the Groove”, pgs. 14-20.

Listening Examples 9.2

Sam Cooke:

- [“You Send Me”](#) A section played by Todd Smith
- [“You Send Me”](#) B section played by Todd Smith
- [“You Send Me”](#) original recording by Sam Cooke

James Brown:

- [“Please Please Please”](#) live from the TAMI show in 1964. Notice the theatrical style of Brown as he performs the famous “cape routine”. The routine goes as follows: He performs in such a passionate way that he collapses from exhaustion and is assisted offstage by a bandmate, but as he’s being led off he has a change of heart. He throws the cape off his back and hobbles back to the microphone to finish the song. He repeats this a number of times, and the audience goes wild each time! Formally, the song uses a relatively new (for us) song form: Repeated A sections. This form allows for James Brown to improvise musically and theatrically over top of the form as it simply cycles the same music over and over.

Wilson Pickett:

- [“In the Midnight Hour”](#)

Motown Records



Figure 9.8 Motown Records Logo.

Motown was a record company that created a specific brand of soul music (known aptly as “Motown”) that sought to gain the respect of white audiences for African Americans, not simply acceptance of the music. Motown represents the northern variety of soul music with it’s emphasis on refined imagery and arrangements.

Founded by songwriter **Berry Gordy Jr.** (born 1929) who named Motown after Detroit which is known as the Motor City. Motown artists sang of love and other subjects that a broad spectrum of humanity could identify with. With Motown one can see many No. 1 hits in both the Pop and R&B charts.

Gordy emphasized a sophisticated, refined image for his performers. Performers were molded through training in ‘sophisticated’ ways of walking, speaking and dancing. Musically, producers at Motown used refined background arrangements including orchestral strings, jazz bands, and other instruments. Compared to the singers at Stax records, Motown singers sang in a polished and conservative style. Blue notes and improvisational gospel-style singing were rarely used, and the music was often aimed specifically at a white audience. To draw listeners in, Motown producers often used catchy, repetitive rhythms and bass lines. Gordy, for the most part, had complete control over the artists working at Motown, and very few were in control of their own work.

The Funk Brothers

The regular studio group for Motown records was the **Funk Brothers**. This group was unique in that they had a background in jazz and rhythm and blues and had highly developed instrumental skills. Like Stax records with Booker T and the MGs, Motown recordings with the Funk Brothers feature more active contributions from the studio band than most other studio groups, many of whom were there simply to provide straightforward background music for the singers.

The Funk Brothers used three guitarists, each with their own role and style. Robert White played full chords on the beats with a warm tone, Eddie Willis played blues-styled melodic fills, and Joe Messina would stress the backbeat (beats 2 & 4) with bright percussive chords. Bassist James Jamerson played walking bass lines on his electric bass guitar with chromatic notes and syncopated rhythms instead of the usual overly simplified bass patterns. Earl Van Dyke was the leader and keyboardist, often playing a grand piano. Organ, horns, vibraphone, and other percussion instruments were often incorporated into the texture.

Smokey Robinson



Figure 9.9 Smokey Robinson and the Miracles.

Smokey Robinson – (Born 1940) Singer and highly successful songwriter. Robinson and his group, The Miracles, were one of the first groups signed to Motown by Gordy who was most impressed with Robinson's songwriting abilities. Robinson wrote songs for Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, and other groups at Motown. In addition to his song-writing duties he produced many of Motown's recordings and eventually became the vice-president of Motown.

The Temptations



Figure 9.10 The Temptations.

The Temptations were an all male group, and were one of the most popular on the Motown label. Smokey Robinson was their primary songwriter for their early hits. He also produced many of their recordings including "My Girl" (1965) which Robinson co-wrote, becoming one of their biggest hits. It used a polished and lush background with a variety of instruments including orchestral brass and strings, similar to a Phil Spector recording. It reached No. 1 on *both* the Pop and Rhythm and Blues charts.

The Temptations' sound changed over the years, and as the lineup was constantly changing, so was the lead vocalist. Up to 1965, the lead vocalist was a tenor (higher-range male singer) named Eddie Kendricks, but starting with "My Girl" it became baritone (lower-range male singer) David Ruffin. In the later 1960's Ruffin left the group and Norman Whitfield became their producer. With Whitfield, their sound evolved into the funk stylings of James Brown and Sly and the Family Stone.

The Supremes



Figure 9.11 The Supremes.

The Supremes were one of the most popular girl groups at Motown, led by lead singer Diana Ross. Their refined sound and image was characteristic of Motown groups, and they were highly successful, appealing to more mature audiences. Most of their hits were written by the song-writing team of Holland-Dozier-Holland. The songs from this team often featured a “hook” (a simple and very catchy melody) over and over again. The form of these songs often followed a format of **“Repeated A Sections”** that would reinforce these melodic hooks. Put simply, a section of music is repeated over and over, while the lyrics would change

Stevie Wonder



Figure 9.12 Stevie Wonder.

Stevie Wonder – (Born 1950) Began his career as a child. At age 13, he already had his first hit song (Motown’s second hit) “Fingertips (Part II)” in 1963. It reached No. 1 in both the Rhythm and Blues and Pop charts. Born blind and singing with a gospel-styled voice, he became known as a child prodigy and a young Ray Charles. Wonder learned many instruments as a child including harmonica, percussion, and piano.

When he turned 21, Wonder renegotiated his contract with Motown and gained complete control over his recordings, something that most Motown artists would never have. This period marked a significant change in his music that saw him embrace funk, gospel, and jazz, as well as Latin and African rhythms.

The “classic period” of Wonder’s music began with *Music of My Mind* (1972) and culminated with *Songs in the Key of Life* (1976). This period saw Wonder embrace new music technology such as synthesizers.

Jackson 5



Figure 9.13 Jackson 5.

When Stevie Wonder grew out of the child star image, Berry Gordy Jr. began looking for another similar performer. He found what he was looking for in **Michael Jackson** (1958-2009) and his brothers. The group became the Jackson Five. Gordy and Motown writers created songs that fit the youthful image and would attract the attention of teens and preteens. These young fans became the Jackson 5's primary audience.

The Jackson's father had been their manager and remained so when they signed to Motown. However, he was denied complete control the way Stevie Wonder had and so he moved the group to a different label. Later on, Michael Jackson had an enormously successful solo career after leaving the group.

Listening Examples 9.3

Smokey Robinson and the Miracles: In [“You Really Got a Hold on Me”](#) the triplet-pattern (three accents per beat) in the piano and the drums are very common in Soul music and pop music in general around this time. Notice the use of “stop time”, reminiscent of early rock and roll, during the section where Robinson sings “Hold Me! Hold Me! Hold Me!” etc. Also, the song features the relatively new form (see ch. 8) called verse-chorus form.

The Supremes: [“Where Did Our Love Go?”](#) became The Supremes' first No. 1 hit on the pop charts. The music resonated with Americans struggling to understand the JFK assassination, the Cold War, and the emerging Vietnam War. Formally, the song is simple; 16-bar A sections repeated over and over until the song fades out, also known as *Repeated A sections*. The chord sequence consists of 5 chords that continuously repeat over each A section throughout the song. The “hook” featured in this song is the vocal melody that continually repeats over every A section throughout the entire song (with the exception of a brief baritone saxophone solo). Try listening to the entire song and see if the vocal melody gets stuck in your head (“Hooked”).

The Temptations: [“My Girl”](#) Uses a new song form. Look at the lyrics here: [My Girl – Lyrics](#) What form is it?

Stevie Wonder: A young Stevie Wonder plays [“Fingertips”](#) showcasing his skill as a performer and harmonica player. [“Sir Duke”](#) uses complex chord changes from jazz, long complex gospel/soul/blues style melodies influenced by in part by African music, horn sections, electric instruments, and funk grooves inspired by artists like James Brown. The “Duke” would be Duke Ellington, and the song is a celebration of music history and the important figures that have contributed to a positive evolution of music. Finally listen to [“Signed, Sealed, Delivered”](#) live (1973).

Jackson 5: [“I Want You Back”](#) was the debut and first hit by the Jackson Five, reaching No. 1 on the pop charts.

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1.10: The Beatles



Figure 10.1 The Beatles in concert.

The Beatles remain one of the most influential and acclaimed bands in the history of popular music. No other group has ever had quite the same affect on young listeners. Possessing a combination of musical gifts, good timing, and an ability to reflect, and change with, the evolution of popular culture in the 1960s, the Beatles generated excitement around the world. Despite this, the group began like any other rock & roll group. Guitarist/singer **John Lennon** (1940-1980) formed a “skiffle” group called **The Quarry Men** in Liverpool, England in 1957, and he was soon joined by **Paul McCartney** (born 1942) on guitar and vocals. Later, **George Harrison** (1943-2001) joined on guitar and vocals and they changed their name to Johnny and the Moondogs.

Skiffle – a type of simple folk music with African American origins, usually with shades of jazz and blues and often performed on homemade or improvised instruments. In 1950’s UK, skiffle boomed in popularity, and this is the music the Beatles began playing.

The lineup grew and they changed their name to the Silver Beatles. By 1960, the name changed for the last time to simply the Beatles. This was a nod to Buddy Holly and the Crickets, an important influence. Pete Best joined on drums in 1960 and the group was hired to perform in clubs in Hamburg, Germany. At this point their repertoire consisted mostly of covers by Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Buddy Holly, others. In Hamburg, the group worked long hours, playing in dingy after-hours clubs for long stretches. This period of constant performance took it’s toll on the group, and the band began taking “uppers” (pills) supplied by club owners that kept their energy at an artificially high level all night. This rigorous performing schedule did benefit the band in their tightness as a group and their comfort level on stage however. After several trips to Hamburg, the Beatles returned to Liverpool. Stuart Sutcliffe decided to stay in Hamburg with his girlfriend in 1961. This left a hole in the group as they were left without a bass player. After a discussion, Paul McCartney acquiesced and moved to bass.



Figure 10.2 The Cavern Club by George Groutas.

Upon returning to Liverpool in 1961 the Beatles began regular performances at an underground cellar converted into a performance venue called the Cavern Club and became an ever-popular live act there. Also in 1961, the Beatles recorded “My Bonnie” with singer Tony Sheridan. It became a much requested record at the shop of record store owner Brian Epstein. Epstein, on a whim, approached the group and offered to manage them, and they agreed, marking the beginning of a very prosperous relationship. One of the first things Epstein did was to clean up the group’s leather-clad image, and put them into matching suits, which the group reluctantly agreed to. Eventually Epstein got the Beatles a recording contract with EMI records, a major label in England.



Figure 10.3 Beatles practicing.

At EMI they worked with producer **George Martin** (Above in the studio with the Beatles ca. 1965) who had experience producing and arranging classical music as well as producing comedy records. This unusual background proved a blessing as Martin and the Beatles developed a highly creative working relationship. Martin's influence through the use of experimental sound effects known as *music concrete*, and the use of classical instruments/arrangements led to him being known as the "fifth Beatle". One of the first and most important moments of their early working relationship came when Martin advised them that Pete Best was not suitable for recording sessions and he would only record them if he could bring in a professional drummer, though he said he did not care if they kept Best for their live performances. The Beatles realized it was time to fire Best and find a permanent replacement. Soon after this, Pete Best was replaced by **Ringo Starr** (born Richard Starkey 1940), a well-known drummer in Liverpool who had played in another popular band, *Rory Storm and the Hurricanes* in the clubs of Hamburg at the same time as the Beatles.

Listening Examples 10.1

"That'll Be the Day" (Buddy Holly cover) recorded in 1958, this is the first recording the Beatles (then called The Quarrymen) made.

"Some Other Guy" Live at the Cavern Club August 22, 1962.

The Beatles: On the Rise

In September 1962, the Beatles recorded "Love Me Do", their first single. It appeared on their first album, *Please Please Me* (1963). Already at this early stage in their career, the Beatles displayed a natural musical sophistication compared to many other songwriters. Songs such as "Please Please Me" featured sophisticated vocal harmonies such as the Beach Boys had done, and many chords beyond standard 3-4 chord pop songs. The form of the song is also quite unusual, bearing more of a resemblance to songs written by professionals at the Brill Building rather than amateurs. As you listen to the song multiple times, examine the form which I've provided an analysis of in the formal diagram (found in *Ch. 10.2 Listening Examples*).



Figure 10.4 The Beatles at JFK Airport on their first trip to America, February 1964.

Their popularity grew in Britain, but EMI in America (Capitol Records) was not interested in releasing their recordings. After some convincing and a publicity campaign EMI and Capitol released their 2nd album, *With the Beatles* (1964, the American version was entitled *Meet the Beatles*). The single "I Want to Hold Your Hand" became their first No. 1 hit on the American charts.



Figure 10.5 The Beatles with Ed Sullivan

When the Beatles came to America in February 1964, they were followed by the press and thousands of ecstatic fans. They weren't expecting anything even close to the reaction they received there. They appeared on the Ed Sullivan show in performance bringing them into homes across the country, and with this "Beatlemania" began.

The Beatles: Musical Growth

With each subsequent album the Beatles released, the music grew deeper and more introspective, beyond the early lighthearted songs such as "She Loves You" and "Love Me Do". The Beatles met Bob Dylan in 1964. Dylan was an established American folk singer whose songs displayed a lyrical and musical depth about subjects such as death, war, restriction of freedom, and political topics that was greatly influential on them. After meeting Dylan, their lyrics began to mature and they began using acoustic instruments more often. Also, George Harrison introduced the electric 12-string guitar, a new invention, on the Beatles 3rd album, *A Hard Days Night* (1964). This sound became influential on many musicians.

Formally, a "Hard Day's Night" uses a similar structure as many other Beatles hit songs (found in *Listening Examples 10.2*). Try identifying it on your own. Listen to the music but pay attention to the lyrics as they might give you the best clues to the form. Is there a chorus/refrain? In other words, is there a section of music where Paul and John sing the same words every time? Is this contrasted with a section that uses different words every time?

Listening Examples 10.2

- "Please Please Me"
- "I Want to Hold Your Hand" live on Ed Sullivan (1964)
- "Hard Days Night"

The Beatles: Movies

The Beatles made their first film, *A Hard Days Night*, which showcased their music and their humor in a parody on the lives of the Beatles. The film was directed by Richard Lester and met with financial success and positive reviews.

Their next film, also directed by Richard Lester, involved a more elaborate plot line where the group was up against an evil cult, and was filmed in color. The soundtrack of the film showcased the Beatles' growing creative depth. "[You've Got to Hide Your Love Away](#)" shows the influence of Bob Dylan in its use of prominent acoustic guitars and greater lyrical depth. The lyrics showcase the form in its use of [Verses](#) and [Choruses](#):

Here I stand head in hand
Turn my face to the wall
If she's gone I can't go on
Feeling two-foot small

Everywhere people stare
Each and every day
I can see them laugh at me
And I hear them say

Hey you've got to hide your love away
Hey you've got to hide your love away

How can I even try
I can never win
Hearing them, seeing them
In the state I'm in

How could she say to me
Love will find a way
Gather round all you clowns
Let me hear you say

Hey you've got to hide your love away
Hey you've got to hide your love away

"Yesterday" (found in *Ch. 10.3 Listening Examples*) represents one of the first instances where a song was written and performed by only one member of the group. Paul McCartney wrote and sang lead vocals on the song, and the backing instruments featured a string quartet and McCartney on acoustic guitar alone instead of standard rock instruments. The song represents a departure from the electric, full band sound the Beatles had been known for up to that point.

Listening Examples 10.3

- "A Hard Days Night" trailer
- "You've Got to Hide Your Love Away"
- "Yesterday"
- Scene from "Help!"

Rubber Soul and Revolver

Rubber Soul and *Revolver*, released in 1965 and 1966, reveal a considerable leap in maturity from everything the Beatles had done before. New instruments began to be introduced as well. Lyrics to songs such as "Norwegian Wood" (from *Rubber Soul*) showcase a modern and surreal approach to lyrical content. "Norwegian Wood" also features the first appearance of many on Beatles albums of the Sitar, an Indian classical instrument. George Harrison at this time was becoming interested in the music and culture of India. He would study Indian music and began incorporating it into Beatles records.

Due to the sophisticated structure many Beatles' studio recordings, many new songs were too complex to perform live. This fact was coupled with growing weariness towards constant touring and live performances where the band members were so high profile and popular that simply leaving a hotel to go perform was complex ordeal. Also, the constant screaming of fans made it nearly impossible to hear what they were playing. The Beatles decided to stop touring/performing in 1966, choosing to work in the studio in seclusion and peace.

Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band

After deciding to stop touring, the Beatles began recording their next album. Released in 1967, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* is considered by many to be the greatest Beatles album and also the greatest album of all time. The album is a concept album of sorts; the Beatles organized the music into a circus-like concert atmosphere utilizing sound effects, animal noises, orchestral instruments, segues between songs, and live-concert-style announcements. It does not, however, have a unified lyrical concept/theme as other concept albums such as the Beach Boys *Pet Sounds*. In fact, lyrical themes are quite varied throughout the album, with many songs containing allusions to psychedelic drugs, spirituality, loneliness, and the surreal. Also were more music concrete techniques on "Being For the Benefit of Mr. Kite" which used spliced pieces of tape of a steam calliope.

This album represents the last unified creative effort between the members. Subsequent albums featured much more independence in songwriting. "A Day in the Life" (in *Ch. 10.4 Listening Examples*) features two distinct sections, an A section written and sung by John Lennon, and a middle B section written and sung by Paul McCartney. The song also makes use of an orchestral crescendo that builds and builds to a climax of such intensity rarely heard in popular music at that point.

After the success of *Sgt. Pepper*, the group began to experience hardship. The Beatles manager Brian Epstein died in 1967 and this contributed to the growing distance between the members. The TV film *Magical Mystery Tour* and its soundtrack were released the same year, and while the music was well regarded, the film represents the first critical failure of the Beatles.

Listening Example 10.4

- “Norwegian Wood”
- “Nowhere Man” live 1966
- “Eleanor Rigby” from Revolver dispensed altogether with standard rock instruments and used a string quartet or orchestra for accompaniment.
- “Tomorrow Never Knows” from Revolver is an early example of psychedelic music. It includes many innovations including reverse guitar, tape loops, surreal lyrics, “field recordings”, and was played over a single chord (unusual in 60’s pop music).
- “A Day in the Life”

The “White Album”

The Beatles "White Album" cover, featuring the text "The BEATLES" in a simple, sans-serif font.

Figure 10.6 The Beatles “White Album” cover.

The Beatles (self-titled, but widely known as “*The White Album*”) was released in 1968 as the Beatles first double album, and represents a departure from previous efforts into more individual creative domains. It also represents the first indication that the band was no longer working as a cohesive unit and frustrations/tensions were beginning to show themselves.

The influence of Lennon’s new partner, American artist Yoko Ono, is reflected in the use of sound effects in many songs. A wide variety of instrumentation and styles are represented, from straight rock and roll, to folk song, to complex horn arrangements, to avant-garde electroacoustic music.

The White Album is indicative of the individual directions of the different group members. Often each Beatles was in a different studio working on their own song, and many songs only feature some members, not all four. Most of the songs were written individually by the individual members instead of collaborations. This is a departure from their previous albums and working methods.

The End

The Beatles entered Twickenham studios in late 1968 to begin a project that would eventually turn into their album “Let it Be”. The original idea was to film the writing of material for an album which would be performed and recorded at a live concert, though this didn’t materialize as intended. Let it Be was produced by Phil Spector instead of George Martin, a break with the usual routine for the group, but was not released until 1970.

“Abbey Road” was the final recording by the Beatles and the group again worked with George Martin. It is notable for the conceptual second half that features songs the segue into each other. It has a more collective and collaborative sound than the White Album or Let it Be, but the group was already beyond the point of staying together, and a break up was very near at this point.

“Something” was written by George Harrison, who by this point had matured into an excellent songwriter but was nevertheless only featured through 2 or 3 songs per album. The song features many interesting chords changes, descending bass lines, orchestral strings, and a sophisticated vocal melody. Formally, the song consists of a verse and chorus/refrain repeated multiple times with George as the solo vocalist, a dramatic bridge section of contrasting music where Paul sings a high harmony with George’s lead vocal and the orchestral strings rise dynamically, followed by a guitar solo and then a final verse where Paul sings the harmony over the original melody. (See *Ch. 10 Listening Examples* for a formal diagram and audio)

John Lennon quit the group in September 1969, but the decision wasn’t made public as Abbey Road was to be released days later. Paul McCartney publicly announced his own departure from the group in April 1970, a week before the release of his solo album. “Let it Be” was finally released in May 1970, becoming the final Beatles album to be released. The members all went on to have successful solo careers.

Listening Examples 10.5

- “[Dear Prudence](#)” was written primarily by John Lennon. It features a descending bass line throughout, and slowly builds in intensity with the introductions of more instruments and harmonized vocals as the song goes on.
- “[Yer Blues](#)” also by John Lennon showcases a back-to-roots sound that was evocative of the Beatles early days. The song uses a form we know a lot about. Listen to the lyrical scheme and see if you can identify the form. The lyrics themselves represent the frustrated and depressed state of mind John Lennon must have been in, possibly due to the difficulties in working with the other Beatles around this time.
- “[Martha My Dear](#)” by Paul McCartney showcases yet another stylistic thread from the White Album. The song uses piano and horns throughout to accompany Paul’s voice. The band themselves only play for part of the song. A sophisticated arrangement and catchy melodies characterize this song.
- “[Don’t Let Me Down](#)” live at the Apple Rooftop concert January 1969
- “[Something](#)”

“*Something*” *Formal Diagram*:

Intro AB AB C *AB* AB

Intro – Short electric guitar line acting as a pickup into the verse. It also serves as the final musical statement of the song.

A (Verse) - “Something in the Way...”

B (Chorus/Refrain) - “Don’t want to leave her now...”

C (Bridge) – “Your Asking me will my love grow?”

AB – A variation on the verse and chorus/refrain with a guitar solo instead of vocals

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1.11: British Invasion

The Rolling Stones



Figure 11.1 The Rolling Stones.

The Rolling Stones emerged at the same time as the Beatles, but epitomized the rebellious side of youth and were unconcerned with appealing to conventions. They played primarily rhythm and blues at the beginning of their career, but have since branched out. Still active today, they are one of the longest lived groups in popular music history.

Founded in 1962 by the original leader Brian Jones, the group took their name from the lyrics of Muddy Waters songs “Rollin’ Stone” and “Mannish Boy”. The members were Mick Jagger (Vocals, Harmonica), Keith Richards (Guitar), Brian Jones (Guitar), Bill Wyman (Bass), and Charlie Watts (Drums).

Most of their early hits were rock covers, including Chuck Berry’s “Come On”, the Beatles’ “I Wanna Be Your Man”, and Buddy Holly’s “Not Fade Away”. In addition to musical inspiration from American blues, the Stones covered soul and Motown songs, and Jagger’s dance moves were inspired by James Brown.

The Beatles came to America in 1964, and the Rolling Stones soon followed. They gained a reputation as bad boys, the opposite of the Beatles relatively safe image. The Stones’ manager, Andrew Oldham, was aware that groups able to write their own music tended to be more successful, and he encouraged them to write their own material. Jagger and Richards in particular became a strong songwriting team.

An early hit was “I Can’t Get No Satisfaction” (1965). Inspired by soul music, it was written by Jagger and Richards. Their original material indeed became more successful than their covers, and from this point on the Stones concentrated on writing. Listen below to ‘Satisfaction’ and in particular to the short guitar line that opens the song. This is an example of a **Riff**, a short, catchy musical item that is repeated throughout a song. Riffs have always been important in Rhythm and Blues, but British groups began to emphasize loud, distorted guitar riffs to help drive the music forward. In “Satisfaction”, Keith Richards famously used a **fuzz pedal** to create a rich, lightly distorted tone to add a horn-like timbre to his guitar. Fuzz pedals were among the very first sound processing effects ever created for electric guitar, and are known for adding a “fuzzy” distorted tone very popular in rock and roll. Though the Stones were heavily indebted to blues, “Satisfaction” uses **verse-chorus** form. Examine the lyrics of the first few sections below and notice the refrain:

I can’t get no satisfaction
 I can’t get me no satisfaction
 And I try and I try and I try, t-t-t-try, try
 I can’t get no
 I can’t get me no
 When I’m riding in my car
 And a man comes on the radio
 He’s tellin’ me more and more
 About some useless information
 Supposed to fire my imagination
 I can’t get no
 No, no, no
 Hey, hey, hey
 That’s what I say
 I can’t get no satisfaction
 I can’t get me no girly action
 And I try and I try and I try, t-t-t-try, try
 I can’t get no

I can't get me no
When I'm watchin' my TV
And a man comes on to tell me
How white my shirts could be
But it can't be a man 'cause he does not smoke
Same cigarettes as me
I can't get no
No, no, no
Hey, hey, hey
That's what I say

Aftermath (1966) was their first album to feature all-original compositions. Also, the diverse musical talents of Brian Jones became evident. In addition to guitar, Jones contributed on instruments such as sitar, marimba, dulcimer, and many others. In 1967, they released *Their Satanic Majesties Request* which featured psychedelic artwork, exploratory experimental music, and drug influenced concepts. Seemingly at first an attempt to capitalize on the success of the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper*, the album turned out to be much more experimental and strange than anything the Stones have done before or since. Many see the album as an interesting and unique point in the Stones' career, but the band themselves don't reflect as kindly on it. Around this time, the group was running into trouble with the law because of drug-related issues. In 1969, Brian Jones left the group and died in July of that year. He was replaced by guitarist Mick Taylor who stayed on until 1975.



Figure 11.2 Mick Jagger.

In late 1969, the Stones decided to put on a free concert at Altamont speedway in California, modeled after Woodstock. The decision to use members of the Hell's Angels (a biker gang...) as security instead of professionals turned the event into a disaster. Audience members were rowdy, with many under the influence of a variety of drugs; the 'security' themselves were drinking beer while working security. The audience members at the front were being pushed forward, many were beaten with pool cues, and one person was stabbed to death by the Hell's Angels. Jagger attempted to control the audience, but the concert fell apart.



Figure 11.3 The Rolling Stones performing.

Their music began to branch further away from their rhythm and blues roots with the albums *Let It Bleed* (1969), *Sticky Fingers* (1971), and *Exile on Main St.* (1972). These albums are considered a classic period for the Stones as so many memorable songs came from them. This period saw the group incorporate country and folk influences, ballads, and a variety of instruments. "Wild Horses" from *Exile on Main St.*, *Sticky Fingers* is one of the Stones most popular songs from this period (see *Ch. 11 Listening Examples* to listen)

By 1975, Mick Taylor left the group, partially out of frustration that the creative output of the group was so dominated by Jagger-Richards, and was replaced by Ron Wood who remains with the group today. The group continued to absorb outside influences, including disco with their 1978 album *Some Girls*. The band has continued to perform live and occasionally release albums, now into their 6th decade.

Listening Examples 11.1

The Rolling Stones:

- “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction”
- “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction” live
- “Sympathy for the Devil” live at the disastrous Altamont Festival
- “Wild Horses” is one of their most famous country-folk influenced ballads and comes from *Sticky Fingers*. The music opens with a rich texture featuring three different guitar parts before the drums, bass, and backing vocals join in at the B section (‘chorus’). The form follows an ABAB (verse-chorus) pattern with an instrumental middle C section featuring piano, no drums, and an understated electric guitar solo. This middle C guitar solo section returns immediately before the final B section.
- “Miss You” showcases the group incorporating elements of disco into their rhythm and blues. The disco influence lies mainly in the drums and bass, while the gritty blues sounds of the electric guitar and blues-style harmonica retain a strong link to their roots.

The British Invasion

In addition to the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, there were many more bands that emerged from England to become popular abroad. Manchester, a neighboring city of Liverpool, was home to the groups the **Hollies**, named after Buddy Holly, and **Herman’s Hermits**, the most commercially successful Manchester group. The Hermits appealed to a younger audience than the Beatles with more of a pop music aesthetic. London group **The Kinks** also became popular with their hit “You Really Got Me” (1964). They experimented with new sounds such as “fuzz” tone by cutting their amplifier speakers.

Listening Examples 11.2

Herman’s Hermits: “I’m Into Something Good”

The Kinks: “You Really Got Me”

Finally, I demonstrate an approximation of the **Kinks’ “Fuzztone” sound**. I first play a chord with a completely clean guitar sound before kicking on the distorted sound and playing the riff to “You Really Got Me”. A more in-depth discussion of fuzz tone.

The Who



Figure 11.4 The Who Hamburg (1972).

The Who formed in the early 1960’s, made up of Roger Daltrey (Vocals), Pete Townshend (Guitar), John Entwistle (Bass), and Keith Moon (Drums).

The Who brought performance intensity to a new level, with Townshend strumming chords (sometimes using distortion or fuzz like many rock guitarists) with wild windmill arm movements, Daltrey swinging his microphone around, and Moon playing drums as violently as possible, while Entwistle stood virtually motionless with a unique bass approach that was melodic, percussive, and and blindingly fast. They would often, in the early phase of their career, smash all their instruments as a climax to their performance.

In 1969, the “rock opera” *Tommy* was released as a double album. This expands the idea of the concept album to epic proportions, telling the story of a boy turned deaf, dumb and blind, but has a talent for playing pinball that “brings about a miraculous healing

and return to the world of sight and sound.” Afterwards, they released other successful albums such as *Who’s Next?* (1971) and *Who Are You?* (1978) that incorporated many influences including classical minimalist music and synthesizers.

Drummer Keith Moon died in 1978, and John Entwistle died in 2002, but the band continues to tour and record.

Listening Examples 11.3

The Who:

- “[My Generation](#)” live at Monterey Pop Festival (June 1967)
- An [excerpt](#) from a documentary that highlights The Who’s performance on the Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour in 1967 where The Who smashed their instruments and Keith Moon blew up his drum kit (literally).
- “[Baba O’Reilly](#)” (1971) from *Who’s Next*. The song incorporates fast polyrhythmic repeated figures in a synthesizer combined with The Who’s signature powerful riff-driven rock.

The British Blues Revival

The British Blues Revival of the 1960’s brought a number of talented musicians and bands into the spotlight. After Rock and Roll became popular in Britain and it began to be commercialized, some fans searched the roots of rock music and found the blues. **Chris Barber** was one of the early British musicians to form a band that incorporated blues into its music.

The blues covers played by British bands were not “cleaned up” the way they often were in America. Often, guitarists used bottleneck slides, string bending, and melodic phrasing similar to American blues performers. One feature that tends to distinguish British Blues vs Urban American blues is a heavier reliance on riffs, short, simple repeated ideas (a prime example is the riff from “[Satisfaction](#)” by The Rolling Stones, see Listening Examples 1.1) Another important leader in the revival was singer/harmonica player **Cyril Davies** whose band was a training ground for musicians such as Charlie Watts, Ginger Baker, Mick Jagger, and Jack Bruce.

John Mayall's Bluesbreakers

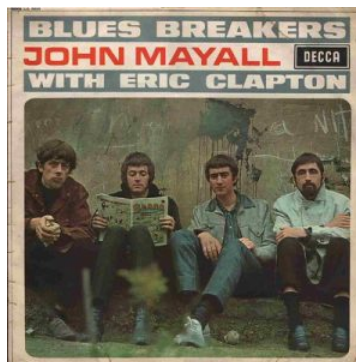


Figure 11.5 Blues Breakers (1966).

One of the most important blues revival groups was the one led by John Mayall (born 1933). This group served as another important jumping off point for many blues-rock musicians, one of the most notable being Eric Clapton. Mayall is often called the “Father of British Blues” because of his role in the British Blues Revival.

Mayall’s playing was true to blues tradition. Though many of the players who played in his band went on to have more commercial success, they were heavily influenced by their experience with Mayall. Some of the important musicians who played with the Blues Breakers include guitarists Eric Clapton, Mick Taylor, and Peter Green; bassists John McVie, and Jack Bruce; and drummers Aynsley Dunbar and Mick Fleetwood.

Perhaps the most famous album by John Mayall is *Bluesbreakers with Eric Clapton* (1966, album cover above) which featured a young Eric Clapton providing groundbreaking electric guitar playing. Clapton’s style was heavily indebted to Urban Blues guitarists like B.B. King, but his sound was enhanced by a thick, throaty overdriven sound that proved influential on hard rock guitarists that followed, including Peter Green, Mick Taylor, Jimi Hendrix, and Jimmy Page. The opening song, “All Your Love” (Listening Examples 11.4), features a riff that drives much of the song. This is an example of the heavy use of guitar riffs in British Blues. Additionally, the song uses a traditional blues song form. Examine the lyrics below and see if you can tell what form it is.

[All the loving is loving, all the kissin is kissing](#)
[All the loving is loving, all the kissin is kissing](#)

Before I met you baby, never knew what I was missing

All your love, pretty baby, that I got in store for you

All your love, pretty baby, that I got in store for you

I love you pretty baby, well I say you love me too

All your loving, pretty baby, all your loving, pretty baby

All your loving, pretty baby, all your loving, pretty baby

Since I first met you baby, I never knew what I was missing

Hey, hey baby, hey, hey baby

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, baby, oh, oh, baby

Since I first met you baby, never knew what I was missing

The Yardbirds

The Yardbirds were an important group in the blues revival that achieved crossover success in the pop world. Formed in 1963, Eric Clapton replaced their original guitarist and the band was chosen by harpist Sonny Boy Williamson (No. 2) to be his backup band when he performed in England.

The Yardbirds covered many blues classics, but once the Beatles and others achieved pop success, the group decided to try the same. They scored a hit with “For Your Love” (1965), but Eric Clapton left the group, intent on playing the blues he loved. After Clapton left, rock guitar legends Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page filled the vacant lead guitar spot gaining their first widespread exposure. When Clapton left, he first joined the Blues Breakers, then left them to form his supergroup, Cream. Beck’s contributions to the group led to a more stylistically diverse approach, incorporating elements of psychedelic rock, Indian music, and jazz into the blues-based sound of the group. The song “Over Under Sideways Down” showcases an embellished lead guitar melody from Beck throughout.

Cream



Figure 11.6 Cream: Baker, Bruce, Clapton.

Cream was made up of Eric Clapton (Guitar, Vocals), Jack Bruce (Bass, Vocals), and Ginger Baker (Drums). Bruce and Clapton were alumni of John Mayall’s Blues Breakers. Clapton particularly liked their playing and put the band together himself, but Bruce and Baker had a previously volatile relationship and were reluctant to play together, though they eventually agreed. Their personal problems would eventually lead to a break only 2 years later.

Cream took the blues to a more intense volume, cranking the most powerful amplifiers to their limits, pointing the way towards harder rock styles. An example of Cream’s approach to the blues is evident in their version of Robert Johnson’s “Crossroad Blues” in which they take a traditional formal approach to the blues but stretch the piece out with improvisation for chorus after chorus. Their original songs showcase a number of influences and some reach far beyond their blues influence. Cream’s version of “Crossroads” also showcases the tendency for British Blues groups to use heavy, distorted riffs, as the song features a driving guitar riff right from the start. Notice the lyrical scheme of the first two sections below and compare to the Robert Johnson original:

I went down to the crossroads, Fell down on my knees

Down to the crossroads, Fell down on my knees

Asked the Lord above for mercy, “Take me, if you please”

I went down to the crossroads, Tried to flag a ride

Down to the crossroads, Tried to flag a ride

Nobody seemed to know me, Everybody passed me by

Cream disbanded after little more than two years together, and Clapton went on to have a highly successful solo career.



Figure 11.7 Fleetwood Mac by Peter Green.

Fleetwood Mac is known now primarily for the version that achieved commercial success in the 1970's, but it in fact started out as a blues revival group led by guitarist/singer Peter Green.

Green got his start with the Blues Breakers, filling Clapton's vacancy. There he met bassist Jon McVie and drummer Mick Fleetwood. Eventually, Green went out on his own with McVie and Fleetwood joining up. Joined by guitarist/singer Jeremy Spencer, and later guitarist/singer Danny Kirwan, the group played authentic blues classics and original compositions, some of which were in the blues tradition, and others that pointed in a new direction.

Fleetwood Mac had some successful hits, but Green was profoundly uncomfortable with fame and the amount of money they were making. In a fragile mental state made worse by excessive drug use, Green left the band. After a few years of shifting members, the group came back with a completely different sound and became hugely successful.

Listening Examples 11.4

John Mayall's Bluesbreakers: "[All Your Love](#)"

The Yardbirds: "[Louise](#)" featuring Eric Clapton, "[For Your Love](#)" Live featuring Jeff Beck

Cream: Listen to the live recording of "[Crossroads](#)", and compare it to the original [Robert Johnson](#) recording from the week 1 lecture. Notice how extensive improvisation for chorus after chorus takes an important role. Cream's interpretation of the song has much in common with the urban blues of performers such as BB King, albeit with more intense volume and harder hitting drums. Now listen as I play through an entire section of "Crossroads" in the style of Cream. Try and follow/count the section in this new, distorted and rock-oriented style.

Fleetwood Mac: "[The World Keeps Turning](#)" is a blues original by Peter Green that evokes the early blues of Robert Johnson, featuring uneven bar and phrase lengths.

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1.12: American Folk Music

1960s and American Folk Music

The 1960's were a time of turmoil in the U.S, and folk music served as an important voice against racism, the Vietnam War, and spread through many college campuses. Lyrics became the most important element of the art form, with many folk singers of the 1960s singing out against the Vietnam War, segregation, and other political/social issues. American folk music wasn't notated; rather, it was passed down through an oral tradition until audio recording began. Each song would differ depending on the performer. It came from a variety of old world sources depending on where in Europe settlers of a given region had come from.

Musicologists Charles Seeger, John Lomax, and Alan Lomax were responsible for researching, analyzing, notating, and recording a large amount of American folk music. This preserved many folk songs that could have been lost otherwise, and the music was collected for the Library of Congress.

American folk is primarily vocal music and the instruments are usually used to accompany the vocals, though instruments like fiddle and recorder supplied melody. Folk musicians tended to avoid using electric instruments for the most part even after they became standard in popular music. Acoustic instruments are very important to the rural tradition of folk music.

Pete Seeger



Figure 12.1 Pete Seeger.

Pete Seeger – (1919 – 2014) Pioneering American folk singer and the son of Charles Seeger, American composer and musicologist. He played guitar and banjo, and, incorporating his father's scholarly work, began playing American folk music, bringing it to the attention of many in the 1940's. He remained a vital and active performer into his early 90's.

He began performing many of the songs his father documented as well as writing his own songs. Seeger formed the Almanac Singers in 1941. This group, which included Woody Guthrie, took traditional folk music and incorporated texts that spoke of the social and political concerns of the time, such as civil rights, labor unions, and the need to end war.

He formed the Weavers in 1948, whose harmonized vocals and energetic performance style became popular with Americans. They continued incorporating lyrics of social concerns, and their left wing tendencies in songs such as "I Don't Want Your Millions Mister" (found in Ch. 12 Listening Examples) caused them to lose some of their audience in the early 1950's when they were investigated by the House of Un-American Activities committee. While the songs were lyrically controversial, formally they were traditional and conservative "I Don't Want Your Millions Mister" features two A sections repeated throughout the entire song. It alternates a chorus/refrain 'A' with the whole group harmonizing and singing the same lyrics in each iteration, and a verse 'A' with Pete Seeger singing solo, with different lyrics each iteration. The reason I call both sections 'A' is because the music itself (chords and vocal melodies) are virtually identical between the sections.

After the Weavers disbanded, Seeger continued with a solo career until his death in 2014, all the while supporting various social causes.

Woody Guthrie



Figure 12.2 Woody Guthrie.

Woody Guthrie – (1912–1967) Had spent many years traveling and performing before joining the Almanacs with Pete Seeger. Inspired by American folk and blues singers such as Leadbelly, he sang of modern concerns by putting new text to traditional melodies as well as composing his own folk-styled compositions.

Alan Lomax saw Guthrie as an important folk artist and recorded a collection of his songs for the Library of Congress. He was a folk singer for modern times; Guthrie sang war songs in support of WWII, painting “This machine kills fascists” on his guitar. Some of his original songs have become classics, including “This Land Is Your Land” and “So Long, it’s Been Good to Know You”.

Below are lyrics from the first three sections of “This Land is Your Land”. Notice the arrangement of the lyrics; each section ends with the same line, “This land was made for you and me.” The form is a common one in folk and can be described as repeated A sections with a refrain at the end of each section.

This land is your land, and this land is my land
 From the California, to the New York Island
 From the Redwood Forest, to the Gulf stream waters
 This land was made for you and me
 As I went walking that ribbon of highway
 I saw above me that endless skyway
 Saw below me the golden valley
 This land was made for you and me
 I roamed and rambled, and I’ve followed my footsteps
 To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts
 All around me a voice was sounding
 This land was made for you and me

Guthrie was diagnosed with a degenerative disease of the nervous system, and was unable to perform from the mid 1950’s, but his influence on American folk music (Bob Dylan was a Guthrie devotee) was profound.

Listening Examples 12.1

Pete Seeger and the Almanac Singers: Pay attention to the lyrics in “[I Don’t Want Your Millions Mister](#)”, which take a left-leaning, somewhat anti-capitalist view point. Songs such as this did not help their popularity in the climate of 1950s United States, but they did appeal to a growing segment of the country’s youth who would have a greater role into the 1960s.

Woody Guthrie: Guthrie wrote “[This Land in Your Land](#)” (1940) as an honest and inclusive patriotic song and was supposedly written as a reaction upon hearing a recording of “God Bless America”. Notice how the song uses the same section of music repeatedly. This includes the same melody and accompaniment, but the lyrics change with each section. Another example of his work is “[Greenback Dollar](#)”. Finally listen as he sings “[Tear the Fascist Down](#)”. Lyrically, the song is actually pro-war (unusual in folk music!) protesting American non-involvement at a time in World War II when Germany appeared to be taking control of the entire European continent.

[Bob Dylan](#)



Figure 12.3 Bob Dylan.

Bob Dylan (Born Robert Zimmerman in 1941) Was a follower of Woody Guthrie and went on to become a leading figure for the youth culture of the 1960's. Dylan's impact was enormous and changed the course of popular music around the world. As a young man he visited Guthrie in the hospital, learning from him and playing music in coffee houses in New York. Here he attracted a following and was noticed by Columbia Records where he was given a contract. His first album, *Bob Dylan*, was released in March 1962 and consisted mainly of traditional folk songs, arrangements by Dylan, and only two original compositions.

With his 2nd album, *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* (1963) he used primarily original material including traditional folk melodies with new text added. In these songs Dylan sang of relevant issues affecting the people of the time of which there were many; the Cold War and all the paranoia associated with it, segregation and other racial inequalities, gender inequality, the emerging Vietnam war, and the emerging cultural revolution in the United States. These topics are sometimes discussed outright in the lyrics, other times they are presented in a poetic fashion with metaphor and surreal imagery. This level of lyrical depth had rarely been seen in popular music, the precedents being singers like Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger.

The opening track on the album, "Blowin' in the Wind", became a popular anti-war statement of peace and equality, especially after it was recorded by **Peter, Paul, and Mary**, another popular folk group. Lyrically, the song uses creative imagery in the form of questions to evoke it's statement. The questions form the verse (A) and are different each iteration. The refrain shows up the same each time as the ambiguous "answer". The form features multiple verses with these short refrains at the end each time. As with any interpretation of lyrics/poetry, it is always good to remind the readers that an analysis is subjective. Below are the complete lyrics including verses and refrains of "Blowin' in the Wind" by Bob Dylan. (Music can be found in *Ch. 12 Listening Examples*)

How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
How many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, and how many times must the cannonballs fly
Before they're forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind
The answer is blowin' in the wind
Yes, and how many years must a mountain exist
Before it is washed to the sea?
And how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head
And pretend that he just doesn't see?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind
The answer is blowin' in the wind
Yes, and how many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
And how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, and how many deaths will it take 'til he knows
That too many people have died?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind
The answer is blowin' in the wind

The first question seems to deal with maturity, growth, age, perhaps the reluctance of the older generations and those in power at the time to take the contrasting (and sometimes radical) views of the younger generations of the 1960s seriously. It could also be interpreted as a question on civil rights, in other words how long will it take for people to treat each other as equals, regardless of their race, nationality, etc. The second question contains the image of the white dove, traditionally associated with peace. This question could be asking how long can the idea of peace exist in the hearts and minds across the oceans of world before it finally becomes accepted and practiced by all. The third question makes it obvious that Dylan is questioning human nature, and asking how long will it take until humanity can grow beyond violence, greed, and perpetual conflict. The ambiguity of the refrain that “The answer is blowin’ in the wind” is an honest answer from Dylan. He admits he doesn’t know the answers to the questions, but realizes the importance of posing the questions in the first place to get people thinking about the answer.



Figure 12.4 Dylan with folk singer Joan Baez.

Dylan released *The Times They Are A-Changin’* in 1964 which contained more songs of a socially conscious nature. The title track (music can be found in *Ch. 12 Listening Examples*) captures the mood of the times, one of changing social attitudes and frustration at the inequities in American society. In the song Dylan sings of this change in mood, urging people to evolve and grow. Each of the five verses end with the same short refrain “For the times they are a-changin’”. The first two verses are as follows:

Come gather 'round people
Wherever you roam
And admit that the waters
Around you have grown
And accept it that soon
You'll be drenched to the bone
If your time to you is worth savin'
And you better start swimmin'
Or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'

Come writers and critics
Who prophesize with your pen
And keep your eyes wide
The chance won't come again
And don't speak too soon
For the wheel's still in spin
And there's no tellin' who
That it's namin'
For the loser now
Will be later to win
For the times they are a-changin'

Also in 1964, Dylan released the album *Another Side of Bob Dylan*. As the title suggests, the album marks a shift from the protest songs of his previous work to a more personal realm in which poetics, metaphor, and surreal imagery begin to play a bigger role. The music reflects some of the personal shifts in Dylan’s life including his first use of psychedelic drugs and his growing knowledge and appreciation for poetry, literature, and music outside of the folk genre including the **Beatles**. The song “It Ain’t Me Babe” is an example of Dylan’s shift to personal topics. In the song he sings to a woman explaining he is not nor can he ever be the type of man she’s looking for. The lyrics are alternately cold and compassionate; Dylan is apologetic but he’s not trying to pretend

to be a better person than he really is. Again, the music features multiple verses with a refrain at the end. (see *Ch. 12 Listening Examples*)

The first verse:

*Go 'way from my window
Leave at your own chosen speed
I'm not the one you want, babe
I'm not the one you need
You say you're lookin' for someone
Who's never weak but always strong
To protect you an' defend you
Whether you are right or wrong
Someone to open each and every door
But it ain't me, babe
No, no, no, it ain't me, babe
It ain't me you're lookin' for, babe*

In 1965 he shocked and angered his folk base by turning to more rock oriented sounds on his live appearances and albums. The album *Bringing It All Back Home* (1965) showcased this new sound. This move helped create a new genre called "Folk Rock". The first side of the album featured an electric band backing Dylan while the second side featured his normal acoustic sound. Lyrically, the music continues in the direction of personal and abstract poetics. The opening track "Subterranean Homesick Blues" features an electric band, strange and and abstract lyrics, and a vague reference to the blues in the chords of the song. The lyrics are abstract, but there are references to relevant contemporary subject matter such as recreational drugs as well as the emergence of the emerging counter culture in America and it's clash with mainstream society.

The first verse:

*Johnny's in the basement
Mixing up the medicine
I'm on the pavement
Thinking about the government
The man in the trench coat
Badge out, laid off
Says he's got a bad cough
Wants to get it paid off
Look out kid
It's somethin' you did
God knows when
But you're doin' it again
You better duck down the alley way
Lookin' for a new friend
The man in the coon-skin cap
By the big pen
Wants eleven dollar bills*

You only got ten

(see Ch. 12 Listening Examples)

Also in 1965 Dylan released *Highway 61 Revisited*, one of his most highly regarded albums. Throughout, Dylan's lyrics continue the personal and abstract poetic tone from previous albums, but also begin to take on a more cynical and angry tone. This likely has to do with some of the criticisms thrown at him from the press and critics as well as "fans" who were angered by Dylan's move to electric music. The first song off the album is one of Dylan's most well known and influential, called "Like a Rolling Stone". The song actually proved to be a hit single for Dylan, proving he was still popular and respected even though he was being criticized by a small but vocal minority. "Like a Rolling Stone" features an angry lyric about a woman who was at one time a person of means and money, and looked down upon the poor and non-conformists, and is then thrust into the very life she looked down on, confronted with the realities and difficulties faced by those she didn't understand before. The song is in Verse-Chorus form and the lyrics of the first verse and chorus are as follows:

Verse 1:

Once upon a time you dressed so fine

You threw the bums a dime in your prime, didn't you?

People'd call, say, "Beware doll, you're bound to fall." You thought they were all kiddin' you

You used to laugh about Everybody that was hangin' out Now you don't talk so loud Now you don't seem so proud About having to be scrounging for your next meal

Chorus/Refrain: *How does it feel? How does it feel? To be without a home Like a complete unknown Like a rolling stone?*

Verse 2: *Ahh you've gone to the finest schools, alright Miss Lonely*

But you know you only used to get juiced in it. Nobody's ever taught you how to live out on the street, And now you're gonna have to get used to it. You say you never compromise, With the mystery tramp, but now you realize

He's not selling any alibis, As you stare into the vacuum of his eyes, And say do you want to make a deal?

Chorus/Refrain: *How does it feel? How does it feel? To be without a home Like a complete unknown Like a rolling stone?*

(see Ch. 12 Listening Examples)

Notice how in songs such as "Blowin' in the Wind" and "The Times They are A-Changin'" the refrain is a short, single line that is musically "attached" to the main A section (verse). The difference in "Like a Rolling Stone" is that the chorus/refrain is longer and musically distinct from the verse. It feels like a new, independent section of music. This is why we call it verse-chorus form in this case.

In 1965, Dylan went on tour with a band performing music in the electric format. Throughout the tour, Dylan and co. encountered hostile audiences who for some reason felt that Dylan was insulting them by presenting the electric sound. This was a particular problem on the tour of England where some bootleg recordings showcase an audible conflict between Dylan and audience members.

In 1966, Dylan released *Blonde on Blonde*, a double album (2 records) frequently lauded as one of the best albums in popular music history. The album continues the inclusion of rock-oriented sounds via an electric backing band as well as Dylan's continued lyrical growth. The album was recorded in both New York City and Nashville, and the Nashville sessions featured expert studio musicians normally associated with country music, adding a sense of authentic Americana to the album. One of the most well known and critically acclaimed songs from the album is "Just Like a Woman". Though accused of misogyny at times, the song is part of Dylan's growing cynicism and distance from people in general. The song features Verse-Chorus form, and also features a bridge (a third, contrasting section of music).

In 1967, Dylan took an extended break from touring, retreating to Woodstock New York to relax and write new material. During this time he was involved in a motorcycle accident which contributed to the extended nature of the break, though some believe the stress of fame and the rigors of his 1965-66 tours pushed him away from the spotlight. While recovering from a motorcycle accident, Dylan's backup band decided to try touring on their own, calling themselves **The Band** and became an creative and influential group on their own. When he returned to the studio Dylan began to return to his acoustic folk roots and also began working in a country music style, releasing the albums *John Wesley Harding* (1967) and *Nashville Skyline* (1969) the latter which featured a new sound; a change in his vocal tone, dispensing with the gritty speech-singing style for a more pure, country-based sound. Lyrically, the songs on *Nashville Skyline* offer a more simple, approachable lyric style than some of his previous work.



Figure 12.6 Bob Dylan and the Band by Jim Summeria.

Throughout the 1970s Dylan resumed touring, including appearances with Joan Baez, The Band, and George Harrison. He continued producing work in folk and country genres, having a hit in 1973 with “Knocking on Heaven’s Door”. In the late 1970’s Dylan became a born-again Christian, and his music began reflecting that. Lyrically, one can find frequent biblical references among his poetic tendencies. The song “Every Grain of Sand” (see *Ch. 12 Listening Examples*) from *Shot of Love* (1981) is one of his most beautiful songs, musically and poetically. While certainly related to his particular conversion to Christianity, the lyrics can be interpreted universally.

In the 1980s, Dylan joined The Traveling Wilburys along with George Harrison, Jeff Lynne, Roy Orbison, and Tom Petty. Also around this time, he began a heavy touring schedule that has continued uninterrupted to this day. Dylan continues to release a steady stream of albums of high quality, though always unpredictable. He released the highly acclaimed album *Tempest* in 2012, consisting almost entirely of original songs, while his latest releases *Shadows in the Night* (2015), *Fallen Angels* (2016) and *Triplicate* (2017) consist of cover versions of traditional pop songs.

Listening Examples 12.2

- “Blowin’ in the Wind”, “Blowin’ in the Wind” live, [lyrics](#)
- “The Times They Are A-Changin’”, “The Times They Are A-Changin’” live, [lyrics](#)
- “Like a Rollin’ Stone”, “Like a Rollin’ Stone” live in England 1966
- “I Shall Be Released” w/ The Band, “I Shall be Released” live from The Last Waltz, [lyrics](#)
- “Every Grain of Sand”, [Lyrics](#) to “Every Grain of Sand

Folk Rock

The Byrds

The Byrds were a rock group that formed in 1964 and adopted a folk repertoire. The combination of rock instruments and folk songs helped start the genre known as “folk-rock”. They created a highly distinctive sound with their complex, closely harmonized vocals and singer-guitarist Roger McGuinn’s use of the 12-string electric guitar. The group was heavily indebted to folk artists like Bob Dylan and Pete Seeger; 1/4 of the 12 songs on their debut were written by Bob Dylan and the album title was *Mr. Tambourine Man*, after the Bob Dylan song. The Byrds’ cover version of the song “Mr. Tambourine Man” was a hit for the group and featured some changes to the original version (see *Ch. 12.3 Listening Examples*). The song was expedited: the Dylan version was 5-6 minutes long, while the Byrds’ version was a radio-friendly 2:29, leaving out much of the lyrical content of the original. It was also a slower tempo and made use of the Rickenbacker 12-string electric guitar mentioned earlier, an instrument George Harrison of the Beatles had helped to popularize. The acoustic 12-string guitar was a popular folk instrument, and the electric 12-string was a way to retain a thoroughly “Folk” sound in electric music.

“Turn Turn Turn!” from their second album of the same name became one of the Byrds’ most well known recordings (see *Ch. 12.3 Listening Examples*). The song was written by Pete Seeger originally and feature words from the Bible (Ecclesiastes). Seeger used the biblical words to relate to the modern world as a plea for peace. The Byrds transformed the song from an acoustic folk song into a twangy anthem of beautifully harmonized group vocals and chimney electric 12 string guitars. The song uses *mixed meter*, where multiple bar lengths are used. Most of the song uses 4 beat bars (as in 12- bar blues for example), but a 6 beat bar is used as well. Try counting the beats for the first vocal section: “To everything turn, turn, turn” should come out to 10 beats (one 4-beat bar and one 6-beat bar). This seems complex, but it fits the phrase of the vocal melody perfectly and in fact a mix of 4 and 6 beat bars was used by the Carter Family in the song “You Are My Flower” from 1927, so it is actually a relatively common feature in folk music.

The group later experimented with innovative psychedelic rock on songs such as “8 Miles High” from their third album *5th Dimension* (1966) (see *Ch. 12.3 Listening Examples*). This song is often mentioned as being one of the earliest examples of psychedelic rock. The music is influenced by the drones and melodic tendencies of classical Indian music by artists such as Ravi Shankar and experimental jazz artists like American saxophonist John Coltrane. In 1968 the group began experimenting with country music. (see ch. 14)

Other Developments in Folk

Some folk musicians such as Tom Paxton, Barry McGuire, and Phil Ochs continued developing socially conscious lyrics in the Woody Guthrie tradition. They sang in protest of war and the glorification that society put on it, and of a need for peace and unification.



Figure 12.7 Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.

The supergroup **Crosby, Stills and Nash** became popular with many hit songs and an utterly unique vocal harmony style. The group was formed by David Crosby (of The Byrds) Steven Stills (of Buffalo Springfield) and Graham Nash (of The Hollies). Their style can be described as folk-rock in that they would mix purely acoustic sounds with full band electric ensembles. They were occasionally joined by **Neil Young** at which times they would be known as **Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young**.

CSNY sang a mixture of protest songs and personal songs. Each member brought a unique songwriting style and vocal style to their sound. One of their best known songs, “Ohio” (1970) was written by Neil Young and is a powerful commentary on the killing of four students by national guardsmen during a protest on an Ohio college campus. “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes”, written by Steven Stills, is a song that displays the groups signature vocal harmonies (see Ch. 12 Listening Examples). The song defies our standard pop song forms by going through a number of different, contrasting sections, culminating in the upbeat and very catchy final section. “Guinnevere”, written by David Crosby, is a hauntingly beautiful love song that is remarkably progressive in its use of alternate guitar tunings and chords, as well as the complex mixtures of rhythms and melodic patterns. The opening guitar pattern features a rhythmic pattern of 3+3+2 or 1-2-3 1-2-3 1-2. “Teach Your Children”, written by Graham Nash, is one of the group’s most enduring compositions. Featuring the groups classic vocal harmonies, a wonderful melody that is simple and memorable, and pedal steel lines by none other than Jerry Garcia of The Grateful Dead (see Ch. 13), the song is best known for it’s universal message to “Teach your children well”.

Singer/Songwriter **James Taylor** sings of personal struggles, relationships, and other topics of personal nature (which was to become more common after the 1960’s), and has a characteristically gentle singing style and intricate guitar style. In 1970 he had a hit with the song “Fire and Rain” (Ch. 12 Listening Examples).

[Joni Mitchell](#)



Figure 12.8 Joni Mitchell.

Singer/Songwriter **Joni Mitchell** has had one of the most creative and diverse careers in American folk music. She sings with a very unique voice that changes timbre in different registers, and incorporates pop, jazz, and other influences into the folk style. Her band members change from time to time, and can be comprised of folk musicians, rock musicians, jazz musicians, or just Mitchell herself on guitar or piano. Mitchell also experiments with new tunings on her guitar, creating brand new sonorities to accompany her voice. Lyrically, Mitchell's songs generally feature a highly personal perspective.

Mitchell was born in Canada but moved to the United States to pursue a career in music. Her unique voice and prolific, innovative songwriting helped her release a steady stream of albums. *Ladies of the Canyon* (1970) featured one of Mitchell's most enduring songs, "Big Yellow Taxi" which featured socially conscious lyrics (somewhat uncommon for Mitchell) on the topic of the environment. *Blue* (released in 1971) is one of her best loved albums, exploring themes on the complexities and difficulties of love. Mitchell's lyrics are painfully personal, giving the listener a sense of reading a diary meant for the writer's eyes/ears only. The song "Little Green" is a song about a child given up for adoption; Mitchell is writing from personal experience as she gave up her daughter many years before (they would later reconnect). Without a band or electric instruments, these emotions are laid naked in the raw context of such spare instrumentation. Conversely, at certain times Mitchell creates beautifully lush and dense textures on piano and guitar to accompany her voice, such as the piano playing on the song "Blue".

On the album *Court and Spark* (1974) Mitchell began an association with jazz that endured through the rest of the 1970s, blossoming an experimental style in which the guitar was tuned in brand new ways, new chords were used, and unusual or abstract lyrics were employed. On the song "Don't Interrupt the Sorrow" from *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* (1975) utilizes these unusual characteristics: Abstract lyrics, open tuned guitar, and unusual chords. The song also showcases an expanded instrumentation featuring a plethora of percussion instruments and electric rock instruments.

Listening Examples 12.3

The Byrds:

- "Turn Turn Turn"
- "Mr. Tambourine Man" Now, listen to [Bob Dylan's version](#) in contrast to the Byrd's.
- "Eight Miles high"

Crosby Stills and Nash:

- "Ohio"
- "Judy Blue Eyes" – Notice the dense and complex vocal harmonies
- "Guinnevere" – Unconventional chords and a 3+3+2 rhythmic scheme
- "Teach Your Children"

James Taylor: "Fire and Rain"

Joni Mitchell:

- "Little Green" from *Blue*
- "Big Yellow Taxi"
- "Don't Interrupt the Sorrow"
- "Coyote"

I compare standard guitar tuning vs. a tuning used by Joni Mitchell on the song "Coyote" (from *Hejira*, released 1976) followed by the opening chords from "Coyote". Standard guitar tuning is structured in a way that many chords in many keys can be played relatively easily. The tuning used by Mitchell (which I'm calling an "open C" tuning) is tuned to a particular chord, and even

though it is not as versatile as standard tuning, it opens up possibilities for new chords that are impossible to play in standard tuning. It is a similar tuning as that used on “[Don’t Interrupt the Sorrow](#)”, different by a couple of notes.

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1.13: Psychedelic Music and the 1960s

Psychedelic Music and the 1960s

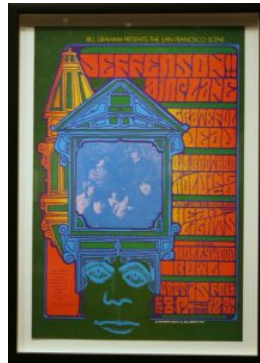


Figure 13.1 Psychedelic concert poster feat. Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, and Big Brother and the Holding Company.

The 1960s were a time of rapid and dramatic change in American culture, and a counter-culture emerged with a major epicenter in San Francisco, CA. Inspired by the writers of the Beats like Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, the youth of the 1960s began looking for inspiration beyond those of materialism and money-making that were seen as emphasized by 1950s society. For many, a cultural rift had formed between young people and their parent's generation. Some of the youth that identified as part of this new subculture became known as "hippies". Characterized by casual clothing and long hair as well as simple and communal lifestyles, hippies created an alternative way of living that was reflected in the music of the counter culture. Another important aspect of this new subculture was the use of psychedelic drugs such as LSD which inspired the music of many bands. In attempt to achieve an exploratory quality comparable to the drug experience, some bands would perform lengthy improvisations that drifted into many different musical territories. Also, the Beatles early psychedelic musical experiments as well as developments in experimental classical music pointed the direction music was taking, providing inspiration for rock and pop groups that came from alternative sources. Many groups were inspired by Indian classical, jazz, experimental modern classical, as well as traditional American folk music unencumbered by commercialism. San Francisco became the mecca of the hippie movement as the city had a very relaxed and non-authoritarian atmosphere and had become the home of choice for many beat writers.

Exercise 1

Please read pgs. 35-45 in the article "[‘Go Ask Alice’: Remembering the Summer of Love Forty Years On](#)" by Anthony Ashbalt linked below. It gives an excellent overview of San Francisco and the burgeoning hippie culture during the period of 1965-68, and the role of the seminal figures like the Beats, music groups, specific events, psychedelic substances, concert promoters, etc, and the eventual diminishing of the movement.

Jefferson Airplane



Figure 13.2 Jefferson Airplane.

More commercially successful than most other psychedelic groups in the 1960s was **Jefferson Airplane**. The group was fronted by vocalist Grace Slick. Their success was a result of shorter songs that often had standard rock beats as well as subject matter that emerged as statements of the hippie counterculture. "Somebody to Love" (1967) was a song about "free love" that became one of their early hits. Very simply put, free love is the concept of romantic relationships not tied by marriage, something that was new in

the conservative cultural environment of the U.S. at the time. “White Rabbit” was more controversial. Based on Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland, the lyrics (featured below) contain many allusions to psychedelic drugs. The song consists of a gradual build in intensity, strange, chant-like vocals, and minimal accompaniment by the instruments that serve the vocals. The song features a well worn song form to provide something familiar to the listener, AABA.

One pill makes you larger
And one pill makes you small
And the ones that mother gives you
Don’t do anything at all
Go ask Alice
When she’s ten feet tall
And if you go chasing rabbits
And you know you’re going to fall
Tell ’em a hookah-smoking caterpillar
Has given you the call
Call Alice
When she was just small
When the men on the chessboard
Get up and tell you where to go
And you’ve just had some kind of mushroom
And your mind is moving low
Go ask Alice
I think she’ll know
When logic and proportion
Have fallen sloppy dead
And the White Knight is talking backwards
And the Red Queen’s off with her head
Remember what the dormouse said
Feed your head
Feed your head

Grateful Dead



Figure 13.3 The Grateful Dead in 1970.

The **Grateful Dead** were formed in 1965 by Jerry Garcia (Lead Guitar), Bob Weir, (Rhythm Guitar), Pigpen (Keyboards), Phil Lesh (Bass) and Bill Kreutzman (Drums) in San Francisco. Originally an acoustic folk styled group, they eventually switched to electric instruments and became the epitome of psychedelic rock. Truly, no other group in 1960s popular music emphasized

exploratory collective improvisation and live performance as much as the Grateful Dead. They blended many different types of music (folk, country, jazz, bluegrass, classical, free improvisation, etc.), creating a kaleidoscopic variety. Through improvisation when performing live they created smooth flowing and spontaneous sets of music, and every show was a unique performance, much like jazz.

One of the first opportunities for the Dead came from performing at the Acid Tests. The Acid Tests were a series of free form performance events organized by author Ken Kesey in which the participants (this included band members as well as audience members) were given LSD. Also, the Dead would often perform free concerts around San Francisco as well, setting up their gear on a flatbed truck in the middle of the street or a park and performing for whoever happened to be there. Gradually, through word-of-mouth, the group grew in popularity.

As the group became more popular, they were eventually signed to Warner Brothers and released their first album in 1967. By the time of their second and third albums, *Anthem of the Sun* (1968) and *Aoxomoxoa* (1969), the Dead were spending lots of time and money crafting complex and unusual sounds in the studio. Two new members joined around this time, Mickey Hart (2nd drummer) and Tom Constanten (keyboards), adding to the density of the sound. While their live performances were revered, these early studio efforts tended to lack the excitement of their performances. Also, the Grateful Dead's experimental recordings were sometimes much longer than the average 'radio-friendly' song. "New Potato Caboose" (in *Ch. 13 Listening Examples*) features elaborate studio recordings mixed with a full band improvisation recorded live and spliced in as a second section to the song.

The studio albums had left the band owing money to Warner Brothers, so in 1970 they released the double live album *Live Dead*. This was in part to make back money they owed, but also to showcase the unique quality of a Grateful Dead concert. The first side of the double album showcased a single performance of a song called "Dark Star", a piece with room for lengthy improvisation. A total of six minutes and four seconds of improvisation open the piece before the first vocal section occurs. Once the vocal section finishes, the band proceeds to experiment with sound, texture, loud and soft dynamics, rhythm/tempo, and tonality. The music is a far cry from the improvisation of a group such as Cream performing a 12-bar blues song like "Crossroads". The dynamics of the music range from near silence to blistering intensity; Notice the slow yet intense build up of tension from about 7:10 to the release at about 8:07. The group is very active with their accompaniment behind Jerry Garcia's lead guitar lines. Listen to the way the band is playing from around 17:00 to about 18:00. During this section, the accompanying players move to the forefront of the texture, and Garcia modifies his lines to a more interactive role. Most often, accompanying players will play somewhat repetitive music beneath an improvising soloist; not in this case. This music is purely improvised and the band has developed the ability to communicate with each other through their instruments and ears. Another vocal section (a variation on the first) comes back towards the end of the recording. The form of "Dark Star" really defies analysis, but it could be described simply as two vocal sections or verses amidst a large form improvisation.

With the albums *Workingman's Dead* and *American Beauty* (both 1970), the Grateful Dead showcased new elements including acoustic folk and country influences, vocal harmonies inspired by Crosby, Stills and Nash, and especially the superb songwriting partnership of Jerry Garcia and lyricist Robert Hunter. This added to the stylistic variety of the group and was a marked departure from their psychedelic roots, though they continued to incorporate lengthy improvisation into their performances which often ran at least 3 hours, but could, in a few cases, go as long as 4-5 hours.

"Friend of the Devil" by the Grateful Dead from *American Beauty* represents the new side of the Grateful Dead. Like the rest of the album, the song uses acoustic guitars and other acoustic instruments such as mandolin. This song uses ideas from the lexicon of American folk and country such as storyline lyrics. The song is telling the tale of a man accused of a crime who is on the run from the law, along with mention of many women in his life. The form is more along the lines of contemporary 1960s pop in that it uses verse-chorus form. However, it is unusual in that it uses two bridges and one of the verse sections are repeated twice. Lyrics below:

I lit up from Reno

I was trailed by twenty hounds

Didn't get to sleep that night

Till the morning came around

I set out running but I'll take my time

A friend of the Devil is a friend of mine

If I get home before daylight

I just might get some sleep tonight

I ran into the Devil, babe

He loaned me twenty bills

I spent that night in Utah

In a cave up in the hills

I set out running but I'll take my time

A friend of the Devil is a friend of mine

If I get home before daylight

I just might get some sleep tonight

I ran down to the levee

But the Devil caught me there

He took my twenty dollar bill

And he vanished in the air

I set out running but I'll take my time

A friend of the Devil is a friend of mine

If I get home before daylight

I just might get some sleep tonight

Got two reasons why I cry

Away each lonely night

The first one's named sweet Anne Marie

And she's my heart's delight

Second one is prison, baby

The sheriff's on my trail

And if he catches up with me

I'll spend my life in jail

Got a wife in Chino, babe

And one in Cherokee

First one says she's got my child

But it don't look like me

I set out running but I take my time

A friend of the Devil is a friend of mine

If I get home before daylight

I just might get some sleep tonight

Got two reasons why I cry

Away each lonely night

The first one's named sweet Anne Marie

And she's my heart's delight

Second one is prison, baby

The sheriff's on my trail
And if he catches up with me
I'll spend my life in jail
Got a wife in Chino, babe
The one in Cherokee
The first one says she's got my child
But it don't look like me
I set out running but I'll take my time
A friend of the Devil is a friend of mine
If I get home before daylight
I just might get some sleep tonight



Figure 13.4 Grateful Dead at the Warfield Theater, San Francisco in 1980.

The Dead began in the early 70's to develop a cult following (known as "Deadheads") that grew to huge proportions. Many of these fans spent years of their lives following the band on tour, some of them making a living by selling Grateful Dead merchandise in the parking lots of the venues where the band played. The band also allowed bootlegging (audience recording) and certain concert tapes of especially brilliant live performances were sometimes prized more than the actual albums. While most artists were not fond of bootlegging, this proved a way for the band to advertise their music and live performances for free, and often new fans were born out of hearing a friend's live tape. The Dead, almost from the beginning, emphasized live performance as their primary vessel for artistic expression much more than studio recordings, and this was not lost on their fans.

The group was dealt a blow in 1986 when Jerry Garcia nearly died after falling into a coma. Garcia had to relearn how to play guitar before they could continue touring. Though the Grateful Dead continued to successfully tour and release albums with a huge live following, Jerry Garcia struggled with health problems and drug addiction until his death in 1995.

Listening Examples 13.1

Jefferson Airplane:

- "White Rabbit"
- "White Rabbit" live

Grateful Dead:

- "Dark Star" live February 1969
- "Dark Star" live from 1974
- "Friend of the Devil" (from *American Beauty* 1970)
- "Friend of the Devil" live 1990
- [Musical characteristics of the Grateful Dead](#) by Todd Smith

The Doors



Figure 13.5 The Doors.

The Doors were an important psychedelic rock band from Los Angeles. The group consisted of Jim Morrison (Vocals), Ray Manzarek (Keyboards), Robby Krieger (Guitar), and John Densmore (Drums). Their name comes from *The Doors of Perception*, a book about the influence of drugs. Morrison was primarily a poet rather than a singer, and the band would set his poetry to music.

Though they gained a large fanbase, Morrison's behavior was too erratic and influenced by drugs and alcohol to tour reliably. He was arrested in 1969 for lewd behavior onstage, and the band was forced to take a break. When they returned, they performed occasionally, but after releasing their final album *LA Woman*, Morrison left for Paris where he died of a heart attack.

Jimi Hendrix



Figure 13.6 Jimi Hendrix in 1967.

Jimi Hendrix – (1942-1970) Was equally important to the blues revival of the 1960s as he was to psychedelic rock. He emphasized a blues based guitar style coupled with innovative sounds such as intentional use of feedback and use of the whammy bar on the Fender Stratocaster guitar to create “Dive bomb” effects. The timbre of his instrument utilized “overdrive”, the sound where the tone of the guitar begins to break up and distort, somewhat similar to the “fuzz tone” effect used by groups like the Kinks and the Rolling Stones. This sound was being utilized by many different bluesmen but Hendrix increased the intensity by simply using louder amplifiers and turning them up louder.

Hendrix was inspired by blues guitarists like B.B. King, T-Bone Walker, and Muddy Waters. He played in various bands (including Little Richard's band) until Chas Chandler of The Animals heard him in 1966 and took him back to England to help him expose his talents to a new audience. There Hendrix formed the **Jimi Hendrix Experience**, a trio with English players Noel Redding (Bass) and Mitch Mitchell (Drums). As he gained success in England, impressing Eric Clapton among many others, he came back to America to perform at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967. This performance was the first time most Americans had seen him, and his popularity boosted as a result. He finished the performance by lighting his guitar on fire.

Hendrix dissolved the Experience in 1968 and moved to New York City to build his own studio which was called Electric Ladyland. A variety of musicians filtered in and out of Hendrix's band around this time, including the members of the Band of Gypsys.

His performance is often cited as the peak of the Woodstock festival in 1969, specifically his rendition of the Star Spangled Banner, which made innovative use of feedback and squeals (Featured below). Hendrix died in September 1970, overdosing on barbiturate drugs. His legacy remains as one of the most influential musicians of all time.

Listen to Jimi Hendrix's version of the Star Spangled Banner below. Notice specifically the unusual and intense sounds he gets from his instrument. Hendrix controls the electronic feedback and incorporates the sound into the music. Feedback is an electronic squeal inherent in amplified electronics that was for decades considered undesirable until artists like the Beatles, the Who, and Hendrix began using in a purposeful way. Also notice the way he uses the “Whammy Bar”, a bar that, when pressed down, loosens

the guitar strings and lowers the pitch of the instrument. Originally intended for subtle variations in the pitch, Hendrix uses the bar in a very dramatic and extreme fashion. These sounds reflect the chaotic state of the nation in 1969, emulating the sounds of screams, protests, war, etc.

Listening Examples 13.2

Jimi Hendrix: First, listen to the what is known as the height of Hendrix's performance at Monterey where he performs "[Wild Thing](#)" and he sets his guitar on fire! "[Rock Me Baby](#)" (live at Monterey Pop in 1967) is a blues standard by B.B. King that showcases Jimi's heavy riff-based interpretation of the blues. Finally, listen to him perform "[Star Spangled Banner](#)" live at Woodstock August 1969.

Janis Joplin



Figure 13.7 Janis Joplin in 1970.

Janis Joplin – (1943-1970) was a singer/songwriter and important part of the blues revival in America. Originally from Texas, she eventually moved to San Francisco in the 1960s. Joplin was influenced by blues, gospel, and soul music, and her voice was utterly unique, rough and somewhat like a female version of Howlin' Wolf.

In 1966 she joined the psychedelic rock band **Big Brother and the Holding Company**. Like many other groups such as the Who, the Jimi Hendrix Experience, and the Grateful Dead, Big Brother and the Holding Company had their breakthrough performance at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967. The band released their second album *Cheap Thrills* in 1968 and it went to No. 1 on the pop charts.



Figure 13.8 Janis Joplin in 1969.

Joplin left the group in late 1968 and formed a new backing group called the **Kozmic Blues Band** which included a horn section. This group was less psychedelic and experimental. Rather, it was much more rooted in blues and soul music. Around this time Joplin was deep into a heroin addiction, among other drug addictions such as alcohol. In fall of 1970 she died of an overdose of heroin.

The Band



Figure 13.9 The Band in 1969.

The Band began as the backing band for Ronnie Hawkins, a rock and roll singer around 1960. The group was called **The Hawks**. Hawkins met drummer Levon Helm in Arkansas and Helm soon joined the Hawks. The band moved to Ontario, Canada where the rest of the members (who, with the exception of Helm, are all Canadian) eventually joined the Hawks. The members were: Robbie Robertson (guitar/primary songwriter), Richard Manuel (piano/drums/vocals), Levon Helm (drums/mandolin/vocals), Rick Danko (bass/violin/vocals) and Garth Hudson (organ/saxophone).

In 1964, the group left to perform on their own, and came to fame when Bob Dylan hired them as his backing band when he began playing electric music. They performed with Dylan in 1965-66, often to angry audiences who felt Dylan had betrayed them, and tainted the 'purity' of folk music. When Dylan was injured in a motorcycle accident in 1966, the group began working on their own material and releasing albums under the name "The Band".

They soon settled into a style of their own blend of Americana combining folk, country and rock, and the first album includes the classic song "The Weight". The band is notable for having 3 distinct lead singers who shared vocal duties which wasn't common at the time with the exception of a few groups including the Beatles. The group performed at Woodstock and continued to tour and release albums through the first half of the 1970s, but began to grow weary of life on the road. Eventually the decision was reached to stop performing/touring.

They stopped performing together in 1976 after a massive farewell concert filmed by Martin Scorsese they called *The Last Waltz*. The film is considered by many to be one of the finest concert films of all time. The guests were abundant and showed the respect felt in the music community for The Band. They included Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Joni Mitchell, Neil Diamond, Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton, and Muddy Waters among many others.

Pink Floyd



Figure 13.10 Pink Floyd.

Pink Floyd initially gained success as a psychedelic rock group from England in the mid-1960s before their progressive rock heyday. Originally led by singer/guitarist and primary songwriter Syd Barret, they had a unique dreamy sounding brand of psychedelic rock. The music combines catchy melodies and danceable beats with surreal lyrics and unique instrumental sounds/effects including echo, fuzz tone guitars, pitch modulated pianos/keyboards, and spacey slide guitar.

In 1967 they released their first album *Piper at the Gates of Dawn*, but around this time Syd Barret began exhibiting bizarre and erratic behavior due to emerging mental illness exacerbated by frequent drug use. Barret left the group in 1968 and David Gilmour took his place, and the band took a new direction though much of their lyrical content was inspired by Barret's mental illness. Barret released some solo material soon after, but spent most of the rest of his life as a recluse.

The song "See Emily Play" is one of their best known from the Barret-led era of the band. The lyrics are featured below and the song can be found in Listening Examples 13.3.

Emily tries but misunderstands, ah ooh

She's often inclined to borrow somebody's dreams till tomorrow

There is no other day

Let's try it another way

You'll lose your mind and play

Free games for May

See Emily play

Soon after dark Emily cries, ah ooh

Gazing through trees in sorrow hardly a sound till tomorrow

There is no other day

Let's try it another way

You'll lose your mind and play

Free games for May

See Emily play

Put on a gown that touches the ground, ah ooh

Float on a river forever and ever, Emily (Emily)

There is no other day

Let's try it another way

You'll lose your mind and play

Free games for May

See Emily play

Listening Examples 13.3

Janis Joplin: Notice the aggressive raspiness of Joplin's voice in "[Maybe](#)", reminiscent of Howlin' Wolf and Little Richard, and also notice the gospel and soul characteristics of her singing. Here is the same song [live](#).

The Band: "[The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down](#)" features lead vocals by Levon Helm, whose unmistakable Arkansas accent adds a feeling of authenticity to the music in relation to the lyrics. Lyrically, the song explores the hardships during the Civil War of a person from the Southern perspective.

Pink Floyd: "[See Emily Play](#)" (1967)

Mothers of Invention: "[Who Needs the Peace Corps?](#)" A cynical commentary on the counter culture from the Mothers of Invention led by Frank Zappa. Not all young musicians were singing the praises of the counter-culture, as Zappa saw hypocrisy in the behavior of many young people at the time.

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1.14: Country Rock, Southern Rock and Jazz Rock

Country

Willie Nelson



Figure 14.1 Willie Nelson in 2009.

Willie Nelson – (born 1933) Singer/songwriter in country music. He is known for making his own brand of country music outside the confines of the conservative Nashville sound. Nashville was/is the hub of country music, hosting many recording studios, record labels, and venues associated with country. The music coming out of Nashville in the 1960s was conservative, utilizing similar sets of instruments, vocal timbres, song forms, etc. The labels generally would not allow experimentation such as the incorporation of rock and roll sounds.



Figure 14.2 Willie Nelson early in his career, 1965.

Nelson worked as a songwriter in Nashville in this conservative climate. His first hit song was “Crazy”, written in 1961. The song was recorded the following year by country star Patsy Cline, whose superb recording of the song reached No. 2 on the country charts. While he had a number of other country hits there through the 1960s, he retired from performing in 1972 due to frustration with the creative restrictions he felt from the Nashville community. He moved to Austin, Texas around the same time, and he found a thriving music scene and hippie movement there. This gave him the confidence to return to music, writing songs without restrictions. He soon returned with his new “outlaw” country sound on the album *Shotgun Willie* (1973). Outlaw country had broader appeal, reaching rock audiences and country audiences alike, and made Nelson a much more famous performer than he had been as a conservative Nashville country musician.

Outlaw country was less conservative lyrically, and more raw sonically (meaning a less polished production quality, grittier guitars) and featured rock elements such as rock oriented drums. In many songs, the musical elements will blend in a way that bridges the gap between rock and country. In the song “Whiskey River” (from *Shotgun Willie*), Nelson plays in two distinct styles in the two contrasting sections. In the A section, the rhythm is loose, bluesy and syncopated. The instruments improvise bluesy counter melodies, and the music is very dissimilar to traditional country. This all changes in the B section (starting at :51 in the recording in Listening Examples 14.1) when the band completely alters the rhythm and playing style, morphing into a very traditional country style. The bass begins playing in a two-beat style, and the drums go into a straight rhythm, with very little syncopation.

Nelson has continued recording and performing through to the present day. He is at the center of musical events such as Farm Aid which use music to help raise awareness and money for family farms struggling against factory farms. Nelson is now a major

spokesman for many liberal causes, and he has a biodiesel company that makes fuel from vegetable oil.

Waylon Jennings



Figure 14.3 Waylon Jennings.

Waylon Jennings – (1937-2002) Was a country singer/songwriter important in the development of the music. He played bass in Buddy Holly's band that he formed upon dissolving the Crickets. Jennings gave up his seat on the plane that killed Holly after losing a bet, a fact which haunted him his entire life.

Jennings was signed to RCA Victor in 1965 where he began releasing country albums. His sound is distinctive; his voice is very powerful, low, and rough. This deep vocal sound was, along with that of George Jones, very influential on the singers that came after them.



Figure 14.4 Waylon Jennings in 1976.

Dissatisfied with the restrictions of Nashville country, he followed the example of Willie Nelson and began exerting more of his own creative control on his music, helping to develop the “Outlaw Country” sound. This, like Willie Nelson, improved Jennings' success; he had 11 No. 1 albums and 16 No. 1 singles in his career. His success was hampered by drug addictions which he was able to beat in the 1980's. The effects on his health were permanent though, and his live performances became very rare in the last years of his life.

Gram Parsons

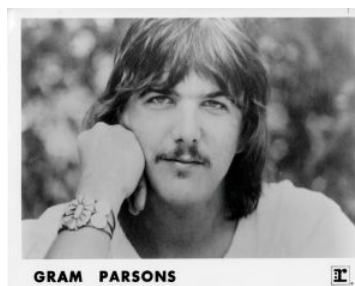


Figure 14.5 Gram Parsons.

Gram Parsons – (1946-1973) Was a singer/songwriter that was instrumental in the development of country-rock. He played with the **International Submarine Band** before joining the **Byrds** in 1968. The Byrds were primarily a folk-rock group but Parsons brought in country influences and their album *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* is a synthesis of country and rock. He left the Byrds the

same year, refusing to go on tour with the band in South Africa due to its policy of racial segregation. He and former Byrds bass player Chris Hillman formed **The Flying Burrito Brothers**. This group was a more successful synthesis of country and rock using pedal steel guitar, rock beats, and Everly Brothers style harmonies. The vocal style lacked the nasal quality and accent of singers like Hank Williams. Parsons left the group in 1970 to pursue a solo career, often playing with Emmylou Harris. He died in 1973 at age 26.

Listening Examples 14.1

Willie Nelson: “[Crazy](#)” was written by Willie Nelson and performed by Patsy Cline (1962). “[Whisky River](#)” features a combination of rock and country elements. While pedal steel guitar sounds are heard and Nelson’s voice is characteristically country, rock drum beats are used and bluesy guitar melodies are featured.

Waylon Jennings: Notice the mixture of Country and Rock elements in “[Lonesome, On’ry and Mean](#)”. The drums are rock oriented, while the bass is still identifiable as “two-beat bass” and pedal steel guitar (a traditional country instrument) is featured alongside bluesy harmonica.

The Byrds: “[Hickory Wind](#)” was written by Gram Parsons. While many country and even bluegrass elements are present such as pedal-steel guitar, banjo, fiddle, and occasional two-beat bass, Parsons’ vocal quality is still very much folk/rock oriented. Listen as the Byrds play two Bob Dylan songs “[You Ain’t goin Nowhere](#)” and “[This Wheels on Fire](#)” live.

Southern Rock

Allman Brothers Band

The **Allman Brothers Band** was one of the first groups known as southern rock. The band consisted of two lead guitarists, Duane Allman and Dickey Betts creating a very unique sound. They were fronted by keyboardist and singer Gregg Allman, and also had two drummers. The sound combined rock, blues, jazz, and country into a unique fusion of styles.

The two lead guitars would often **harmonize** with each other which gave them their signature sound. Harmonizing in this context is the combination of two or more musical lines moving in parallel with each other but using different notes from each other to add depth to the melody. The group emphasized improvisation which would often include “Trading Twos” where the lead guitars would alternate improvising back and forth much like a call and response.

Inspired by players like Elmore James, Duane Allman brought bottleneck slide on electric guitar to a new level of dexterity and musicality. His slide lines were rich and sustaining due to the overdriven amp sound, and had a vocal quality and dexterity beyond most previous slide guitarists. In 1971, Duane Allman died in a motorcycle accident. The group continued on with Dickey Betts and Greg Allman leading. They had hits including “Ramblin’ Man” and the instrumental “Jessica”, but personal problems led to a series of breakups and reformations throughout the late 1970s and 1980s. While never achieving the same level of commercial success they had in the 1970s, the group continued as one of the most popular live acts in the U.S. (even after founder Dickey Betts was fired in 2000) until Gregg Allman’s health forced him to quit performing in 2016. He passed away in May of 2017.

Listening Examples 14.2

Allman Brothers Band: First, listen to “[Statesboro Blues](#)” feat. Duane Allman on slide guitar (featuring animation and background on the song’s origins). The sound of Duane Allman’s guitar is a showcase of his mastery of the slide. Notice how fluid the lines sound, much more akin to a human voice. Compare this sound to that of Elmore James and Robert Johnson before that to hear the way slide guitar has evolved. Also, Gregg Allman displays his lead vocal skills which are influenced greatly by blues and gospel music. Try to identify the song form.

“[Ramblin’ Man](#)” was one of the Allman Brothers biggest hits, featuring two-guitar harmonized lines throughout as well as memorable lyrics and vocal line. Released in 1973, the song reached No. 2 on the Billboard pop charts and remains the group’s only top 10 single. Also, guitarist Dickey Betts takes lead vocals on the song. Notice that the quality of his voice is much different from that of Gregg Allman’s, being influenced much more by country music rather than gospel or blues.

Finally, listen as I play electric guitar with a slide. Notice that the sound is overdriven but sweet, somewhat evocative of the human voice. To achieve a warmer sound like this, I roll the “Tone Knob” down on the guitar, cutting out some of the harsher high frequencies. Also, I demonstrate the ability to play notes beyond the fingerboard of the guitar. It’s quite difficult to control the pitches that high up on the guitar, so don’t expect anything particularly pretty!

Other Southern Rock Groups

Southern rock continued to grow with a variety of groups. The **Charlie Daniels Band** worked with the style the Allman Brothers Band had pioneered. Charlie Daniels is a multi-instrumentalist who plays fiddle, electric guitar, and slide guitar. His songs include “The South’s Gonna Do It (Again)” and “The Devil Went Down to Georgia” (below).

Lynyrd Skynyrd was a southern rock group that was immensely popular with the general rock audience. Boasting three lead guitars, they were influenced by the Allman Brothers with regards to lead guitar harmonies and included long jams on songs like “Free Bird”. Their recording “Sweet Home Alabama” reached No. 8 on the pop charts. This song includes a variety of characteristics from other styles, including a female vocal group responding to singer Ronnie Van Zant’s vocals in a gospel style, Allman Brothers style multiple-lead-guitars, and honkey tonk style piano.

In 1977, a plane crash killed singer Ronnie Van Zant, guitarist Steve Gaines, and backing singer Cassie Gaines. A new version of the group formed with Van Zant’s brother on vocals, and continue to tour today.

Listening Examples 14.3

Charlie Daniels: “[Devil Went Down to Georgia](#)”

Lynyrd Skynyrd: “[Free Bird](#)”

Jazz Rock and Fusion

Rock musicians had been incorporating jazz into the music from the beginning in a variety of ways, and since both genres are American, they share common ancestors. Blues was important to the development of both jazz and rock, though jazz began long before rock and therefore emerged much different.

Instruments associated with jazz such as the saxophone had long been a part of rock and rhythm and blues, and often played jazz-styled improvisations. Two distinct approaches to the blend of jazz and rock emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. For the purposes of this course, we’ll designate them as **Jazz-Rock** and **Fusion**.

Jazz-Rock will be considered a rock-based style. It almost always uses *vocals* as the primary focus, essential to rock music. It was more rock-oriented with very few of the complex chord changes of jazz, and was more often played by rock musicians experimenting with elements of jazz. Jazz-Rock often combines the horn section sound of swing jazz with rock beats and rock rhythm sections, giving it a strong relationship to rock music.

Fusion will be considered a jazz-based style, not a rock style. It uses rock instrumentation and some rock beats or rhythmic patterns. Primarily instrumental music, like most jazz, fusion rarely featured vocals and in those cases they weren’t given any more prominence than the instruments. This style was mostly musicians from jazz backgrounds experimenting with elements of rock music.

Jazz-Rock

Electric Flag

Electric Flag formed in 1967 in San Francisco and was led by blues guitarist Mike Bloomfield, who formerly played with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. Bloomfield, who was born in Chicago, was an important part of the blues revival of the 1960s, bringing an authentic blues guitar sound to wider audiences of pop music. Electric Flag used the standard rock rhythm section plus a big band style horn section including trumpet, tenor sax, and baritone sax. Vocals were at the forefront of the music, and blues was the primary influence on the music. The group only played for a year and a half but served as a template for the jazz-rock groups that would follow.

Chicago

Chicago formed in 1967 (in Chicago) by guitarist/singer Terry Kath and woodwind player Walter Parazaider. Like other jazz-rock groups, Chicago consisted of a horn section of trumpet, trombone, and sax and a rock rhythm section of guitar, bass, keyboard, and drums.

Chicago was unique because most of the players were singers as well, and group vocals were featured. Their early style featured more jazz-styled improvisations by the individual soloists and extended instrumental arrangements. Later on their style would become more pop-oriented in order to reach a larger audience. Still going, they released their latest album in July 2014 and continue to tour today.

Blood Sweat and Tears



Figure 14.6 Blood, Sweat & Tears.

Blood, Sweat and Tears was formed by singer/keyboard player Al Kooper. Though the personnel of the group changed often, their brass-driven sound was always maintained. The group merged pop, rock and rhythm and blues styles with jazz-styled horn arrangements which epitomize the ‘jazz-rock’ sound.

Kooper left due to creative differences and singer David Clayton-Thomas replaced him for the recording of their second album (self titled). *Blood, Sweat and Tears* subsequently won a grammy and has gone quadruple platinum. This album displayed a much more commercial-oriented but still retained many of the same jazz elements. “Spinning Wheel” (below), written by their new singer David Clayton-Thomas, is their most popular song. It uses a repeating cycle of four chords in the A section that can be seen as resembling a spinning wheel.

Steely Dan



Figure 14.7 Becker and Fagen of Steely Dan.

Steely Dan was formed by pianist Donald Fagen and guitarist Walter Becker. Originally a foursome, the band was reduced to a duo with Fagen and Becker by 1974 due to their dislike for touring. Because they didn’t bother touring, the duo concentrated on recording and writing, all the while bringing in whatever musicians they felt would best add to the track.

Both were jazz lovers and incorporated elements of jazz into their pop/rock songwriting including horns, jazz-styled chord progressions, and guest musicians with extensive jazz backgrounds. They covered jazz standards such as Duke Ellington’s “East St. Louis Toodle-oo”, copying the 1927 recording precisely while adding rock elements such as electric guitar and pedal steel guitar where horns had been originally.

They had many successful albums and songs including “Rikki Don’t Lose That Number” from *Pretzel Logic*. Other albums include *The Royal Scam* and *Aja*. By the 1980s, Fagen and Becker pursued solo careers in the 1980s but reunited in the 1990s and 2000s.

Listening Examples 14.4

Electric Flag: “[Drinkin’ Wine](#)” Live at Monterey Pop Festival

Chicago:

- “[Saturday in the Park](#)”
- “[Saturday in the Park](#)” live
- “[Make Me Smile](#)”

Blood Sweat and Tears: I play the chord cycle from “Spinning Wheel” a number of times to demonstrate the cyclical sound inherent in the progression.

- “[Spinning Wheel](#)”
- “[Spinning Wheel](#)” live

Steely Dan: “[Rikki Don’t Lose That Number](#)” features verse-chorus form and many chord changes, giving it a sense of complexity similar to jazz. I play the chords from the verse and the chorus of “Rikki Don’t Lose That Number” in isolation to give you a better feel for the complexity of the song’s structure.

Fusion

Miles Davis



Figure 14.8 Miles Davis.

Miles Davis – (1926-1991) was one of the early pioneers of what became known as fusion jazz. Davis was a revolutionary jazz musician who began playing professionally in the 1940s. Always on the cutting edge of jazz, Davis began incorporating elements of rock into his music in the late 1960s. The rock elements he began adding were 1) Evenly subdivided rock drum beats; 2) short, repetitive bass lines; 3) rock instruments like electric guitar, electric piano, and electric bass.

On the albums *In a Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew* Davis used rock drum patterns, electric pianos, and an electric guitar. The music, however, is far from resembling the songs heard in rock music. Rather, structured improvisation is the primary musical component. A prime example is “Miles Runs the Voodoo Down” from *Bitches Brew* (1969), which features a drum beat with elements of rock and funk, while the instruments improvise extensively over top. An 11-minute instrumental, this music is not something we would consider radio-friendly. Yet the embracing of rock elements expanded Davis’ reach to younger listeners.

In live performance, Davis used effects similar to Jimi Hendrix such as wah-wah on his trumpet and began incorporating elements of funk music like that of James Brown and Sly and the Family Stone into his music.

John McLaughlin & Mahavishnu Orchestra



Figure 14.9 John McLaughlin.

The Mahavishnu Orchestra played a very different version of fusion music from Miles Davis. There were strictly composed sections of music as well as purely improvised sections. All the players were instrumental virtuosos, playing complex lines extremely fast.

Led by composer/jazz guitarist John McLaughlin (who played with Miles Davis on his fusion albums), the group included violin, keyboard, electric bass, and drums. The group emphasized instrumental virtuosity and overwhelming flurries of notes and rhythms that excited audiences alongside unusual harmonies and dissonance, rock style drum beats, and heavily distorted guitars. The group lasted from 1971-73 at which point McLaughlin reformed with an all new group that included a string quartet and occasional vocals.

Weather Report

Weather Report was formed by Miles Davis alumni keyboardist Joseph Zawinul and saxophonist Wayne Shorter. Their brand of fusion used funk styled beats, a rock rhythm section with saxophone and an additional percussionist who added a Latin touch,

complex compositions, and improvisation. Zawinul made use of the synthesizer which became a signature part of Weather Report's sound. Virtuoso bass player Jaco Pastorius joined the group in 1976 and played bass at a technical level very few others had attained at that point. Though they went through many personnel changes, the group lasted from 1970-1986 with Zawinul and Shorter always remaining as co-leaders.

Allan Holdsworth

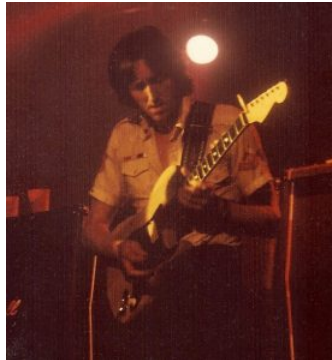


Figure 14. 10 AH in 1975.

Allan Holdsworth (1946-2017) was an English-American guitarist credited with both expanding the possibilities of what the guitar can do and with bringing jazz to a wider audience. Often described as one of the most individual and unique guitarists in history, his playing is characterized by unorthodox, complex chords and a smooth, saxophone-like melodic technique executed extremely fast. In fact, Holdsworth has mentioned that he would have preferred to play a horn instrument instead of guitar, but his family couldn't afford one so he chose guitar instead. His music includes a great deal of improvisation, and he is not afraid of *free* improvisation in which standard scales and chord changes are dropped in favor of a freely melodic, dissonant sound.

Holdsworth's use of new technology in the 1980s such as the "SynthAxe" was unprecedented. The SynthAxe is a completely electronic synthesizer meant to respond to guitar player's technique while having the same advantages as keyboard synthesizers.

Listening Examples 14.5

Miles Davis: Notice the funk-rock beats that emphasize the back beats rather than the swinging, uneven beat subdivisions so common in jazz in "[Miles Runs the Voodoo Down](#)". Also, notice the minimal nature of all the instruments including sparse guitar and electric piano chords, repetitive bass lines, and sparse soloing (with use of space) from Davis on trumpet. Now, listen to the [live version](#) with some modifications to the groove.

Mahavishnu Orchestra: [This video](#) includes excerpts from the Mahavishnu Orchestra's concert live at Paramount Theater in Seattle 1973. The first 2:20 features a good example of McLaughlin's fusion of jazz and rock. "[The Noonward Race](#)" (Music starts around 1:15).

Weather Report: "Black Market"

Allan Holdsworth: Listen starting at 26:07 to "[Letters of Marque](#)" live in Tokyo. "[Looking Glass](#)" on the Synthaxe guitar synthesizer.

Finally, watch this short [video](#) I made about **John McLaughlin** and **Allan Holdsworth** on fusion guitar.

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1.15: Hard Rock and Heavy Metal

Hard Rock and Heavy Metal

Hard Rock and Heavy Metal represent two somewhat distinguishable styles that emerged out of the rock music of the 1960s. Both styles of music brought levels of volume, distortion and overall intensity to unprecedented heights. The riff-based blues sound of groups like Cream and Led Zeppelin was instrumental in the development of both genres. It is important to note that both “styles” use the riff (a short, repeated musical line) as the basic building block for much of their repertoire.

Hard Rock maintains more of a connection to blues-rock and folk-rock by including blues forms and covers as well as acoustic music. Often the singers were capable of singing softer folk-styled ballads as well as loud and heavy riff-based songs. Occasionally these groups would use synthesizers or other somewhat rare (in rock) instruments as well. Their songs would often be about love and relationships

Heavy Metal can be described as having a stronger emphasis on aggressive timbres and darker lyrics. Features include heavily distorted guitar sounds, aggressive, hard-hitting drumming, and aggressive singing styles. Often times, the singing features screaming that sometimes obscure the intelligibility of the lyrics, yet add intensity and depth to the overall sound. This style is based more on the intensity of sound. The music and lyrics often contain references to dark subject matter such as anger and violence and serve as an outlet for those emotions in what has traditionally been a primarily male audience, though this has changed more and more through the years.

Led Zeppelin



Figure 15.1 Led Zeppelin.

Led Zeppelin was made up of guitarist Jimmy Page, vocalist Robert Plant, bassist/multi-instrumentalist John Paul Jones, and drummer John Bonham. The group is seen by many as one of the most influential groups of all time, and certainly one of the most influential on the development of hard rock and heavy metal. All the musicians had been part of the *British Blues Revival*, and the importance of blues in their music lasted through their entire career.

Jimmy Page was an important session guitarist who became a member of the Yardbirds in 1966 alongside Jeff Beck. The group slowly dwindled until 1968 when Page was the only remaining member and was contractually obligated to fulfill performances for a Scandinavian tour. He contacted Robert Plant, John Paul Jones, and John Bonham to join him for the tour, billed as the “New Yardbirds”. Eventually, the group felt good enough to leave the Yardbirds’ legacy behind them and came up with a new name, Led Zeppelin.

The group began performing concerts and put together a list of songs that mixed blues classics and heavy blues influenced originals. Early songs such as “Dazed and Confused” feature a descending riff in the bass and distorted guitar. Their first album, *Led Zeppelin* (1969), features a mixture of heavy, riff-based sound as the core of their music with some traditional blues songs (including two written by Willie Dixon) and even some acoustic music. Robert Plant’s intense, high pitched screaming vocal style was featured on the heavier songs, and his style was enormously influential on heavy metal singers that came after him. In the song “Good Times Bad Times” (*Ch. 15 Listening Examples*), the use of space within the primary riff during the A section allows gaps where John Bonham provides drum fills. The vocal line follows this sense of space, so that significant chunks of the A section showcase these drum fills. The B section provides the “chorus” where the title is stated, sung via group vocals. This is followed by a brief C section that provides contrast and features Robert Plant singing in an uncharacteristically low vocal register. Formally, the song can be described as ABCB>Guitar Solo>BA(with guitar solo), an interesting and somewhat atypical song form. The guitar

work of Jimmy Page during these solos show his blues influence filtered through his distorted amplifier and his high energy, fast, frantic style.

An instrumental piece for acoustic guitar and written by Jimmy Page called “Black Mountain Side” was included on the album, demonstrating a softer dynamic and representing a blend of American Blues and Folk with Eastern musical styles such as Indian music. The piece uses a non-standard tuning. This tuning is occasionally used by Country blues musicians, but Page evokes atypical rock sounds from this tuning.

On their second album, *Led Zeppelin II* (1969), the group continued on the path of heavy, guitar riff-based songs. The influence of the blues is not as apparent on this album though they use elements of classic blues songs in their originals. Unlike the first album, original songs took up almost the entire album. They began to explore acoustic and folk-based sounds in their music on this album in combination with the increasingly heavy sounds. “Ramble On” features an acoustic A section that has a folk/country feel with acoustic guitars and light percussion, though Plant’s vocals become increasingly aggressive as the section goes on. The B section is dynamically contrasting with heavy, distorted guitars, heavy drums, and screaming vocals. A brief C section features a line played by two distorted guitars over the backdrop of the folk-style A section and leads back into another B section. The full form is laid out as follows: ABACBAB.

The song “Whole Lotta Love” is one of the band’s most popular, featuring an iconic opening riff and sexually suggestive lyrics. It is also the source of some controversy as the band was successfully sued by blues composer Willie Dixon as the song contained elements of a blues written by Dixon called “You Need Love”.

On *Led Zeppelin III* (1970) the group began exploring acoustic music to an even greater extent than before. The cover design was innovative and featured a revolving cardboard disc behind the main cover that featured a collage of images. The disc could be rotated and as it rotated a variety of these images would show up in cut out holes in the front cover.



Figure 15.2 Led Zeppelin in 1973.

Many of the songs on *III* were acoustic and featured alongside the band’s heavy songs, making for an eclectic and varied listening experience. Many of these songs were written by Plant and Page at a cottage in the English countryside which likely inspired the acoustic direction that dominates the music. The album opens with the incredibly intense and heavy “Immigrant Song” which features a short, repetitive riff and pounding drums. A vocal howl adds to the intensity of the groove the band has set up. The second song is called “Friends” and introduces the acoustic side of the album. This song uses acoustic guitar as the primary accompaniment (rather than distorted electric guitar) with orchestral strings occasionally providing the melody. It also utilizes a musical scale that is often used in Eastern European and Middle Eastern folk music adding a unique, worldly atmosphere. It is sometimes referred to as the “Gypsy Scale”, and I demonstrate it below (Listening Examples 15.1).

In the live setting, improvisations were incorporated into their sound, and Robert Plant’s vocals played an important part in these. Page and Plant would often use call and response where they would go back and forth, sometimes imitating one another. See the interesting example below from a concert at Royal Albert Hall in 1970. Also, often in live performance the group would incorporate their acoustic material into sets devoted to the acoustic songs. This created a huge dynamic range and exciting peaks and valleys for the listener.

Led Zeppelin began work on their fourth album, commonly referred to as *Led Zeppelin IV* (1971), and it would turn out to be their most popular and successful album. The album continued to integrate acoustic sounds and a variety of influences, but, compared to *III*, their hard rock sound returned to its previous dominance. Classic rock songs such as “Black Dog”, “Rock and Roll”, and the stylistically diverse epic “Stairway to Heaven” came from this album. Folk-inspired songs which featured acoustic instruments such as “Going to California” were also featured. The song “Rock and Roll” is a heavy, fast, energetic number that serves as a return to form for the group in a way as it features a variant on the classic 12-bar blues form which was displayed so heavily on their first release. The guitar riffs are seemingly classic blues or early rock, but filtered through Page’s hard rock distorted guitar

sound. Lyrically, the line “It’s been a long time since I rock and rolled” harkens back to the band’s roots as well, though the lyrics themselves don’t follow the standard AAB pattern of 12-bar blues.

The best known song off the album (and one of the most revered compositions in rock history) is “Stairway to Heaven”. The song is an 8 minute epic that runs the band’s stylistic gamut, building slowly and gradually from quiet, folk-based acoustic sounds to heavy, distorted and loud, giving it a wide dynamic range. This form resembles movements from classical works more than standard pop song forms which often feature either one repeating section or two contrasting sections. The music starts as a simple folk-style acoustic guitar melody which serves to accompany a soft vocal melody. The instrumentation includes a choir of recorders (played by John Paul Jones) which evoke a medieval folk music atmosphere. The second section of the music begins around 2:15 when electric piano and electric 12-string guitar join the musical texture. Plant’s voice continues to grow in intensity as the sections build. Finally, the drums and bass join in around 4:20, or just over halfway into the song. Around 5:33, the transition into the final section begins. A guitar solo (completely improvised at that) takes over for the vocals and the music is a simple descending three-chord pattern that repeats underneath the guitar solo. Around 6:45 the music has completely transformed into classic Zeppelin hard rock with Plant’s voice returning in a high-pitched scream. The tempo slows down into a last statement by Plant’s voice unaccompanied by the band singing a line from the first section.

The group continued touring around the world, selling out practically everywhere they played. The constant touring lasted into 1973 before the band finally took an extended respite from live performance. In 1973 the band released *Houses of the Holy*, continuing the mixture of styles from their previous albums. John Paul Jones began taking a larger role within the productions, particularly through his use of the Mellotron to emulate the sounds of orchestral instruments. The band was also exploring funk (see “The Crunge” in *Ch. 15.1 Listening Examples*) and reggae in addition to hard rock, blues, folk, and country. Acoustic instruments are featured alongside as usual, but the hard-edge tone of the electric guitars and drums are retained. This is the sound of a band experimenting without abandoning their roots.

After releasing *Physical Graffiti* in 1975, the band embarked on another tour of the U.S. and Europe before taking another extended break from the rigors of touring, lasting until 1977. *Graffiti* includes new songs as well as outtakes from albums dating all the way back to the sessions for *Led Zeppelin III*. The album was very successful and represents a culmination of almost everything the band had done stylistically at that point. The song Kashmir (*Ch. 15.1 Listening Examples*) blends rock instruments with orchestral strings, and uses two rhythmic patterns simultaneously; the drums play a 4 beat pattern while the instruments play a riff in a 3 beat pattern.

By 1976, the band began running into problems and setbacks. Plant was injured in a car accident that contributed to the decision to take a break from touring. During the 1977 tour, there were fan riots, fights between promoters and Zeppelin’s crew, Bonham and Page were running into substance abuse problems, and then Plant received news that his young son, Karac, had become ill and died while Plant was on the road. At this point the band cancelled the tour.



Figure 15.3 Led Zeppelin in 1977.

The band released *In Through the Out Door* in 1978 to mixed reviews and embarked on a short European tour in 1980. Though they were scheduled to perform a North American tour, this never materialized as John Bonham died an alcohol-related death. At this point the band declined to continue as Led Zeppelin. They released one more album consisting mainly of unreleased material, *Coda*, in 1982 and have reunited a handful of times since. The most notable reunion occurred in 2007 when the group reunited with John Bonham’s son, Jason Bonham, performing on drums. Led Zeppelin remains one of the most popular and influential in popular music.

Listening Examples 15.1

Jimmy Page [playing skiffle music](#) live on TV 1958.

Led Zeppelin:

- “Good Times Bad Times”
- “Black Mountain Side”
- “Dazed and Confused” live 1969
- “Ramble On”
- “Whole Lotta Love”
- “Stairway to Heaven” from *Led Zeppelin IV* (1971)
- “Stairway to Heaven” from *Led Zeppelin IV* (1971) Live at Earl’s Court, 1975:
- “Kashmir” from *Physical Graffiti* (1976)
- “Kashmir” live
- The song “Friends” from *Led Zeppelin III* uses an eastern musical scale. [I demonstrate the scale](#), then the tuning and the opening figure below.

Black Sabbath



Figure 15.4 Black Sabbath.

Black Sabbath is a British group which formed in 1968 and pioneered Heavy Metal. Their vocalist Ozzy Osbourne was their central attraction because of his passionate and energetic performance style while the band members (guitarist Tony Iommi, bassist Geezer Butler, and drummer Bill Ward) provided a heavy, stripped down distortion-drenched backdrop for Osbourne’s voice. Black Sabbath effectively created the sound of heavy metal through combining the heavy, riff-based sound of artists like Cream, Jimi Hendrix, and Led Zeppelin with dark imagery in their lyrics and their look. This dark imagery in particular was in stark contrast to popular music in the climate of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and set the group apart from anyone else at the time.

Their self-titled debut album (recorded in 1969, released in 1970) displays this heavy sound and dark imagery through the music, lyrics, and even the eerie cover art. On the song “Black Sabbath”, the group makes extensive use of the interval of a tritone, which in medieval times was considered “the Devil’s Interval”. (An interval is any combination of two pitches). The song opens with the sound of thunder and rain, combined with church bells which continue as the band begins to play. The primary riff consists of three notes, contains the “tritone”, and is repeated through most of the song. Formally, The A section is the loud and distorted version of this riff, and the B section features the same riff at a quieter dynamic with Osbourne contributing vocals. Around 4:35 the music changes to a C section, featuring a faster tempo and the introduction of a new riff. The C section also features a guitar solo before the song finishes.

The group’s second album, *Paranoid*, was their most successful and contains some of their most popular and iconic songs including “Paranoid”, “Iron Man”, and “War Pigs”. The music on this album continued to develop the heavy metal sound they had begun cultivating. “Paranoid” is a good example of the heavy, stripped down sound that characterizes heavy metal. The guitar plays riffs and power chords (a two-note combination that sounds particularly heavy on a distorted electric guitar) and is heavily distorted, while the drum beat is relentless and full of energy. Osbourne’s vocals have a tortured quality that reflect the lyrical content, describing paranoia and mental illness consuming one’s thoughts. Page 186 of the text provides a formal analysis to accompany listening.

While Black Sabbath’s dark image (lyrical, visual, and musical) was a large part of their success, they began drifting away from it. The group began incorporating occasional ballads and synthesizers into their sound, and subsequently this time period saw a decline in their popularity. Osbourne left the group in 1978, and from that point many singers went in and out of Black Sabbath. Osbourne had a successful solo career that was most likely helped by his bizarre behavior such as biting the head off a live dove, urinating on the Alamo, and biting the head off a dead bat that a fan threw onstage (he’s a unique fellow). The original lineup of the group reunited in the late 1990s and have been active recently, releasing their first new album with Osbourne since the 1970s with *13* (released 2013). The group undertook a farewell tour in 2017, but rumors of a possible reunion have persisted.

Listening Examples 15.2

Black Sabbath:

- “Black Sabbath” from *Black Sabbath* (1970)
- Tritone riff
- “Paranoid” from *Paranoid* (1970)
- Paranoid riff
- “Spiral Architect” from *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath* (1973)
- “Heaven and Hell” from *Heaven and Hell* (1980) with Ronnie James Dio

Deep Purple



Figure 15.5 Deep Purple in 1971.

Deep Purple was a band that fused elements of classical music with heavy, riff-based rock. The group formed in 1968 and is considered, along with Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, among the earliest and most influential bands to play music that contains elements of hard rock and heavy metal. Keyboardist Jon Lord was classically trained, and his influence plus Ritchie Blackmore’s high volume riffs and blues stylings created Deep Purple’s unique sound. The group went through a number of changes in members throughout their career. The second lineup is arguably their most famous, featuring singer Ian Gillan, keyboardist Jon Lord, guitarist Ritchie Blackmore, bassist Roger Glover, and drummer Ian Paice

Before fully committing to a heavy metal sound, Deep Purple played a lighter, psychedelic rock on their first three albums and also experimented with classical influences in 1969 when they recorded with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The music featured the band alongside an orchestra performing a large-scale piece (around one hour long) written by keyboardist Jon Lord. The music features alternating sections, pitting the band and orchestra against each other. As the music goes on the Deep Purple and the Royal Philharmonic become texturally intertwined. Vocals are featured in the second movement.

After recording with the Royal Philharmonic, the group began to move away from classical influences, closer towards a heavy metal style based on riffs, distortion, and high volumes. The first album to showcase this new approach is their 4th album, *In Rock* (1970). With their 6th album, *Machine Head* (1972), was their most successful featuring the hit song “Smoke on the Water”. The song features an iconic guitar riff and the lyrics are about the group’s experience recording in Montreux, Switzerland.

Lineup changes began in the mid-1970s and included David Coverdale replacing Ian Gillan as vocalist. This group released an album called *Burn* in 1974. The title track (in Listening Examples 15.3 below) features a return to classical influences, blending a hard rock riff and an instrumental section in the middle based on a classical chord progression. Blackmore left the group in 1975 and formed a new group called Rainbow. The classic early seventies lineup regrouped in 1984 and stayed together into the early 1990s. They continue to tour today with Dixie Dregs guitarist Steve Morse replacing Blackmore and keyboardist Don Airey replacing Jon Lord.

Listening Examples 15.3

Deep Purple:

- “Concerto for group and orchestra”
- “Smoke on the Water” from *Machine Head* (1972)
- “Burn” from *Burn* (1974)

British Heavy Metal: Judas Priest and Iron Maiden

Judas Priest and Iron Maiden are among the first groups completely identifiable (by the definition given above) as heavy metal. **Judas Priest** formed in 1971, slowly building a following in England. They added a second lead guitar in 1974 and this addition added power to the sound and enabled dual lead lines much like the Allman Brothers Band had done, albeit with a much different sound. Their hardcore image was showcased by their leather outfitted biker look. Their song “Breaking the Law” from the album *British Steel* (1980, featured in Listening Examples 15.4 below) features a signature guitar riff that opens the track and a familiar

song form. See if you can identify it by the lyrical excerpt below. Notice also the emotional lyrical content expressing disaffection, frustration, and depression.

There I was completely wasted, out of work and down
All inside it's so frustrating as I drift from town to town
Feel as though nobody cares if I live or die
So I might as well begin to put some action in my life
Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law
So much for the golden future I can't even start
I've had every promise broken, there's anger in my heart
You don't know what it's like, you don't have a clue
If you did you'd find yourselves doing the same thing too
Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law

Iron Maiden adopted the dual lead guitar approach and took the themes of violence and destruction as their image. They stressed an anti-war philosophy through their descriptions of violence and terror. The song “Run to the Hills” (in Listening Examples 15.4, below) features social commentary on the clash of culture between Native Americans and European settlers. See if you can identify the form by examining the lyrics below. The green text refers to an introduction section before the main part of the song comes in.

Intro

White man came across the sea
He brought us pain and misery
He killed our tribes killed our creed
He took our game for his own need
We fought him hard we fought him well
Out on the plains we gave him hell
But many came too much for Cree
Oh will we ever be set free?
Riding through dust clouds and barren wastes
Gallop hard on the plains
Chasing the redskins back to their holes
Fighting them at their own game
Murder for freedom the stab in the back
Women and children are cowards attack
Run to the hills, run for your lives
Run to the hills, run for your lives
Soldier blue in the barren wastes
Hunting and killing their game
Raping the women and wasting the men
The only good Indians are tame
Selling them whiskey and taking their gold
Enslaving the young and destroying the old
Run to the hills, run for your lives
Run to the hills, run for your lives

Van Halen



Figure 15.6 Van Halen.

Van Halen formed in 1974 by brothers Edward and Alex Van Halen. Originally from the Netherlands, they moved to California as teens. As children they were trained on classical piano. This classical training was a benefit as Eddie Van Halen was a disciplined guitarist who devoted many hours to perfecting his guitar technique and became one of the most revolutionary rock guitarists of all time. Special techniques he introduced into hard rock were extensive use of harmonics, and tapping the strings with both hands.

Singer David Lee Roth developed a highly entertaining and energetic performance style at a similar level to James Brown. His entertaining approach combined with Eddie's guitar pyrotechnics made for explosive live performances. The group's sixth album, *1984* (1984), was a tremendous success reaching No. 2 on the album charts and featured their only No. 1 single, "Jump" (see Listening Examples 15.4 below). Formally, the song is verse-chorus form but features a section (highlighted in purple) right before the chorus that acts as a bridge to lead into the chorus. This section is called the "prechorus". See the lyrical excerpt below:

I get up, and nothin' gets me down
 You got it tough, I've seen the toughest around
 And I know, baby, just how you feel
 You got to roll with the punches and get to what's real
 Ah, can't you see me standin' here
 I got my back against the record machine
 I ain't the worst that you've seen
 Ah, can't you see what I mean?
 Ah, might as well jump
 (Jump)
 Might as well jump
 Go ahead an' jump (jump)
 Go ahead and jump

A troubled relationship as well as different musical interests between Roth and Eddie Van Halen led to Roth's leaving the group to pursue a solo career. He was replaced by singer Sammy Hagar and the band maintained their success with the album *5150* (1986) reaching No. 1 on the album charts. Sammy Hagar perhaps lacked some of the humor of Roth's entertaining style, but Hagar was a superb vocalist that brought a new musical range to the band (See "Summer Nights" from *5150* in Listening Examples 15.4 below). The Hagar-era band is sometimes referred to as "Van Hagar" and Van Halen fans are still in debate to this day on whether they prefer Roth or Hagar. Roth returned as the lead singer in 1996, but not for long. A number of singers came in and out of the group until the 2000s when Roth returned again. Their final album was released in 2012, and Eddie Van Halen passed away in 2020 effectively ending the group.

Metallica



Figure 15.7 Metallica.

Metallica formed in the early 1980s and became one of the biggest heavy metal acts of all time. Their early music could be defined as Speed Metal, a genre of heavy metal pioneered by the group Motorhead. Speed metal took the fast tempo and energy of punk music with the vocals and extremely heavy sound of heavy metal. They incorporated slower music and acoustic elements on songs

such as “Fade to Black” though at no expense of the intensity and heavy quality. Their self-titled album from 1991 went to No. 1 its first week and contained many hit singles including the ever-popular “Enter Sandman”. They are still active today.

Slayer

Inspired by the dark imagery of groups like Black Sabbath and Iron Maiden, many bands took those ideas to the next level by incorporating real-life murderers and massacres into their lyrics and gave off a “sense of a ‘real presence’ of Satan”.

One of the most important early thrash metal bands is **Slayer** whose lyrics are often graphic, taking real accounts of atrocity and incorporating it into their music. They use the energy and fast/erratic tempos of punk music combined with the extreme heavy sound of heavy metal. Death metal is not a commercial form of music, because cleaning up the lyrics or adding “Catchy” elements would negate the very characteristics of the genre. The sound is too intense for the majority of listeners.

The song “Angel of Death” off the *Reign in Blood* album (1986) uses extreme speeds, dark lyrics, atonality, and call and response between the dual lead guitars. Lyrically, the song refers to Nazi doctor Josef Mengele and the atrocities he was responsible for during the holocaust. The song “Reborn” talks of a witch burned at the stake rising from the dead to exact revenge on those who killed him or her.

Extreme Metal Subgenres: Black Metal and Grindcore

Metal has been the inspiration for a number of sub-genres or offshoots combining the heavy riff-based approach and generally aggressive sound with various other musical elements. One sub-genre, **Black Metal**, developed primarily in Europe and features sinister, demonic sounding vocals, “Corpse Paint” on the musician’s faces, and often low tuning on the instruments (See the group Mayhem in Listening Examples 15.4 below).

Another sub-genre called **Grindcore**, is perhaps the most extreme and intense form of metal ever developed. It features extremes in just about every musical aspect and is truly at the outer limits of popular music. Song lengths are generally short (sometimes extremely short), tempos are extremely fast, riffs are dissonant and complex, the guitars are often tuned lower for a heavier sound, and the vocals are so guttural and scream-drenched that it’s impossible to understand the words. The group Napalm Death featuring vocalist Lee Dorrian (one of the greatest “growlers” in metal) represents grindcore and are featured in Listening Examples 15.4 below.

Listening Examples 15.4

Iron Maiden: “[Run to the Hills](#)” (1982)

Judas Priest:

- “[Dying to Meet You](#)” (1974)
- “[Breaking the Law](#)” (1980)

Van Halen: First, listen to “[Eruption](#)”/“[You Really Got Me](#)” from *Van Halen* (1978). [Two-Handed tapping](#) is one of the most innovative techniques/sounds that Eddie Van Halen popularized. I tap a 3-note figure slowly to demonstrate the mechanics of how it works which involves tapping a note with my right hand, pulling the string away to sound a second note held by my left hand, and “hammering on” a third note with my left hand. With this technique, one can play three notes very fast without too much effort. Then I play an excerpt from “Eruption” that uses tapping in 3-note patterns. [Here](#) is a 10 minute guitar solo by Eddie Van Halen!

Van Halen: “[Jump](#)” (1984)

Van Halen: “[Summer Nights](#)” (1986)

Metallica: “[Battery](#)” from *Master of Puppets* (1986)

Slayer: “[Reborn](#)” from *Reign in Blood* (1986)

Napalm Death:

- “[You Suffer](#)” (Guinness World Record Holder for the shortest song recorded)
- “[From Enslavement to Obliteration](#)” (1988)
- [Napalm Death on TV](#) 1989 (Skip to 1:10 for “You Suffer” and “From Enslavement to Obliteration”)

Mayhem: [Live](#)

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1.16: Progressive Rock

Progressive Rock

Progressive Rock music is a form of rock in which elements of ‘art music’ such as classical music are incorporated in with rock elements. Though each progressive rock group vary widely from one to the next, they fall very roughly into three categories.

- 1) The most basic type of progressive rock is simply the addition of classical orchestral instruments (violins, cellos, etc.) into a rock setting, an extension of what producers George Martin and Phil Spector had been doing. Groups such as the **Moody Blues** used the mellotron (a keyboard that emulates the sound of orchestral instruments) to recreate the recordings they made with full orchestras.
- 2) A more advanced style came through groups such as **Yes** that wrote complex multi-movement works common in the classical music world. These pieces were often quite elaborate and intricately composed, and it was not uncommon for a complete ‘piece’ to take up an entire side of a vinyl record.
- 3) A more experimental style of prog rock was the use of “musique concrète”, or “concrete music”, based on ideas from modern classical composers in the avant-garde and electronic areas. The idea is that composers would use tape recordings of non-musical sound and organize them, via audio tape, into a musical composition. Sounds such as trains, clocks ticking, animal noises, or cash registers were all fair game. **Pink Floyd** explored this with the electronic sound collage work that permeated many of their albums, notably on *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973).

Rock Groups with Orchestra and the Mellotron

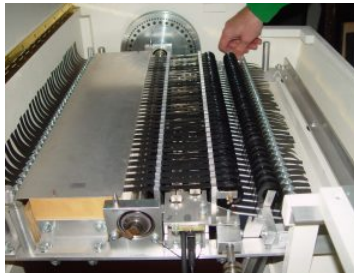


Figure 16.1 Changing the Tape Cartridge on a Mellotron.

The Moody Blues incorporated the classical orchestra into their sound in 1967, featured on recordings such as “Nights in White Satin”. They used an electronic instrument called the Mellotron to emulate the orchestral timbres on their recordings. Soon after, the Mellotron showed up throughout popular recordings and was picked up, in particular, by progressive rock groups.

Genesis



Figure 16.2 Peter Gabriel with Genesis in 1974.

Genesis also incorporated orchestral effects via the mellotron into their music. Additionally, they performed elaborate music and developed elaborate an stage act involving costume and character changes for singer Peter Gabriel. Genesis reached their theatrical peak with the double concept album *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway* in which Gabriel plays a character that goes on a surrealistic journey of self-discovery. Gabriel left the group to pursue a solo career shortly afterwards, encountering great commercial and artistic success through the 1980s.

Drummer Phil Collins replaced Gabriel on vocals, continuing in the progressive rock vein with the album *Trick of the Tail* (1976). As time went on, the theatrical element of Genesis as well as the progressive nature of the music became less important as the

group pursued a more commercial pop direction into the 1980s and encountered enormous success with Phil Collins as their primary vocalist. “Invisible Touch” (Listening Examples 16.2) from 1986 was one of the group’s biggest commercial successes, being their first and only No. 1 hit in the United States. Formally the song is not representative of their progressive rock style; rather, it uses a tried and true popular song form we are very familiar with at this point. Examine an excerpt of the [lyrics](#) below:

Well I’ve been waiting, waiting here so long
But thinking nothing, nothing could go wrong, ooh now I know
She has a built in ability
To take everything she sees
And now it seems I’m falling, falling for her
She seems to have an invisible touch, yeah
She reaches in, and grabs right hold of your heart
She seems to have an invisible touch, yeah
It takes control and slowly tears you apart
Well I don’t really know her, I only know her name
But she crawls under your skin
You’re never quite the same, and now I know
She’s got something you just can’t trust
And it’s something mysterious
And now it seems I’m falling, falling for her
She seems to have an invisible touch, yeah
She reaches in, and grabs right hold of your heart
She seems to have an invisible touch, yeah
It takes control and slowly tears you apart

The live version of “Watcher of the Skies” by Genesis in *Ch. 16 Listening Examples* is a perfect example progressive rock, featuring the use of synthesized orchestral sounds combined with rock instruments and a theatrical performance by lead singer Peter Dinklage. Listen as to how the vocals have a different feel rhythmically when compared to the rhythmic figure the band plays to accompany Gabriel.

[Yes](#)



Figure 16.3 Yes.

Yes formed in 1968 and became one of the first and longest lasting progressive rock groups. They used multi-movement classical structures in their works, virtuosic instrumental playing, and used full group vocal harmonies. Early on, the group used synthesizers to emulate an orchestral sound, but their music developed to focus on the members’ technical skills.

Their fourth album *Fragile* featured each member taking turns as the featured performer on different tracks in addition to full group tracks. Their fifth and sixth albums, *Close to the Edge* and *Relayer* made use of the classical “suite” form in which a single piece was made up of multiple movements, and lasted much longer than a standard rock song.

Many personnel changes occurred, and the group broke up and reformed many times. They have been back together since 2008.

Listening Examples 16.2

Genesis: “[Watcher of the Skies](#)” (1973). “[Invisible Touch](#)” (1986) indicative of the band’s pop direction in the 1980s. “[Entangled](#)” (from *Trick of the Tail*) is an example of the beginning of the Phil Collins-led era of Genesis and showcases the interesting musical textures the group was capable of. The music features three guitars and glockenspiel (a metallic pitched percussion instrument). Bass sounds are produced through organ bass pedals played with the feet. Collins still performed on drums periodically, but for the most part became primarily a vocalist.

Yes: “[And You And I](#)” live 1972. Listen for how the band goes through a number of contrasting musical sections. Some of these sections are purely instrumental while others feature vocals. The instrumental sections maybe be slow and minimal with a keyboard

playing a single sustaining chord, or they may be complex and full of pre-written parts. The vocal sections sometimes feature the lead vocals of Jon Anderson and sometimes feature full sounding group vocals. Another example is of [“Close to the Edge”](#).

King Crimson



Figure 16.4 King Crimson.

King Crimson formed in 1969 by the leader and only constant member guitarist Robert Fripp. Fripp brought together instrumental virtuosity, avant-garde electronics, atonality, jazz and improvisation, and colorful instrumentation into a very intense and dark version of progressive rock. The group went through many lineup changes throughout the 1970s until Fripp disbanded Crimson in 1974 to focus on his experimental electronic music with composer Brian Eno until reforming the group in 1981.

The new version of the group featured Bill Bruford (who had been in the 70s group) on drums, guitarist/vocalist Adrian Belew, and bass/stick player Tony Levin. This group had an updated sound which they combined with the dark intensity of the 70s sound. The dual guitars and the new “Stick” (an instrument which uses two handed tapping on the strings) created complex rhythmic interplay reminiscent of classical minimalism. Belew added new life to the group as an energetic frontman/vocalist, and Fripp used new technology such as the guitar synthesizer in this new version of the group. Fripp disbanded the group again in 1984, and regrouped again in the mid 1990s. As of 2013 they have reformed with a new lineup featuring three drummers, woodwinds, and a new singer who has replaced Adrian Belew.

Listening Examples 16.2

King Crimson: “Red” (1974) is instrumental, relying on the electric guitar for the primary theme of the music. It is dissonant and reminiscent in some ways of modern classical works but features distorted electric guitars and rock aggression.

- [“Elephant Talk”](#) 1981
- [“Frame by Frame”](#) live 1984

Emerson, Lake, and Palmer

Emerson, Lake, and Palmer formed in 1970 as a progressive rock “power trio” of sorts. Consisting of keyboards/synths, guitar/bass, and drums, this trio made a sound much larger than most trios could make through the use of multiple keyboards and a plethora of percussion, obtaining an almost orchestral sound. ELP is well known for their reinterpretations of extended classical works and filtering them through rock instrumentation and rock aggression. Keith Emerson was classically trained on piano and brought an authentic touch to the music. “Fanfare for the Common Man” is a rock variation on the classic and timeless composition written by American composer Aaron Copland. ELP performs sections of the melody and intersperses rock and roll sections throughout, including an extended synthesizer solo.

Rush



Figure 16.5 Rush in Concert.

Rush formed in Canada in the early 1970s as a power trio (Guitar, Bass, Drums) to play Cream and Led Zeppelin style hard rock. Originally formed by Alex Lifeson (Guitar), and Geddy Lee (Bass and vocals), drummer/lyricist Neil Peart joined later in 1974. With the album *Fly By Night* (1975) they began to incorporate extended multi-movement classical forms into their hard rock.

Their music was distinct from other progressive rock groups in that it was considerably heavier and rooted in the riff-based style of groups such as Led Zeppelin. Also, the voice of Geddy Lee is highly distinct for its high range. Although they occasionally use synthesizers and different percussion instruments such as the glockenspiel, Rush sticks primarily to the basic guitar, bass, and drums sound.

Pink Floyd



Figure 16.6 Pink Floyd in 1971.

Originally a psychedelic rock group, **Pink Floyd** was forced into a new direction with the departure of singer/guitarist/primary songwriter Syd Barrett. The remaining members were Roger Waters (bass), Richard Wright (keyboards) and Nick Mason (Drums). Waters would grow to become the group's primary creative force, though all members gave creative contributions. Barrett was replaced by guitarist/singer David Gilmour, and the band's sound changed as the other members became more creatively competent.

Important features of Pink Floyd's music was their use of sound effects and the construction of sound collages with prerecorded sounds in combination with their songs, and the long form compositions comprised of multiple smaller parts. Pieces such as "Saucerful of Secrets" (1968), "Atom Heart Mother" (1970) and "Echoes" (1971) would take up an entire side of a record (or most of it), and were often epic in scope. "Atom Heart Mother" was structured into multiple movements much like the suite-style forms used by Yes and other groups and utilizes an orchestra along with the band, while "Saucerful of Secrets" makes extensive use of studio effects and unusual electronic sounds.

Waters had the idea for a concept album based on his own experience growing up without a father, and the album turned into one of the biggest selling albums of all time, *The Dark Side of the Moon*. (1973) The album makes use of prerecorded, non-musical sounds, called *musique concrète* (concrete music) that relate thematically to the lyrics. "Time" includes the sounds of clocks ticking and alarms ringing, while "Money" (Listening Examples 16.3, below) features rhythmically organized cash registers clicking and coins falling. "Money" also happens to be one of the most popular tracks on the album, notable for the fact that it features a seven-beat pattern in the bass riff rather than the usual three or four beat patterns. Many of the songs on the album feature spine-tingling blues-based guitar solos from David Gilmour, a guitarist who focuses more on lyricism and voice-like expression on his guitar.

Their next album *Wish You Were Here* (1975) was a tribute to Syd Barrett who had since been living as a recluse due to mental illness. *Animals* (1977) takes a cynical view of humanity based on George Orwell's book *Animal Farm* (1945) and features a mix of epic, heavy songs including the guitar-led epic "Dogs". *The Wall* (1979) took a pessimistic view on modern society. "Another Brick in the Wall (Part 2)" talks of an education system that restricts freedom of thought. Both *Animals* and *The Wall* were primarily composed by Roger Waters, who by this time was exerting more and more creative control over the band's output.

After *The Final Cut* (1983) Waters separated from the band and a legal war ensued over the use of the name Pink Floyd and of other elements. The other band members continued, however, using the name and remained very successful. The group reunited for one concert in 2005 at Live 8 before Richard Wright passed away in 2008.

Frank Zappa



Figure 16.7 Frank Zappa.

Frank Zappa (1940-1993) was a Los Angeles-based composer, songwriter, producer, guitarist, vocalist, businessman, filmmaker, and leader of many groups including the Mothers of Invention. He stands alone in the world of popular music as an artist that crossed between genres, from classical to rock, jazz to humor, Doo-Wop to Avant-Garde electronic music. He was an extremely prolific artist with an incessant energy devoted to creating, and his body of work is vast.

Zappa incorporated a huge variety of instruments (think Phil Spector) and made productions that to this day remain completely unique. Sound effects are prominent, segues between songs occur often, and meticulously composed material is evident. Often vocals are modulated to sound high pitched, or otherwise bizarre.

Unusual instruments are showcased in the music of the Mothers. Orchestral percussion augments the sound of the drum set, wind instruments such as oboe or bassoon are not uncommon, and electronic sounds created in the studio are utilized. Some members of the group were highly accomplished, classically trained instrumentalists. In the live setting, Zappa served as conductor and leader as well as a guitarist, composer, and singer. Often times, Zappa conducted the band in an improvised context, telling them through hand signals what kind of sounds to play, how fast or slow, and when to transition into a composed section of music.



Figure 16.8 Frank Zappa conducts his band through a humorous improvisation in 1968.

Zappa disbanded the original Mothers of Invention in 1969 mainly because Zappa was unable to continue paying the band member's salaries, but also due to the fact that he wanted players who could read music and play some of the more difficult parts he was writing. The first album he released as a solo artist was *Hot Rats* (1969), a largely instrumental album that showcased both Zappa's compositions and his unique guitar solos. It also featured the skills of keyboard/wind player Ian Underwood, a member of the original Mothers. The first track from the album is "Peaches en Regalia" and features layers over overdubbed guitar, keyboard, and saxophone lines. The music is instrumental, upbeat, and complex, though it is full of melodic hooks and has an upbeat, joyous feeling.

Zappa's band again continued to evolve into the mid to late 1970s to include younger musicians such as drummer Terry Bozzio and singers Ray White and Ike Willis. His song "The Black Page" (see Listening Examples 16.3 below) became notorious for its complexity of rhythm, requiring considerable practice and technique. The song features extremely complex rhythms over top of a 4-beat pattern, and Zappa even made a danceable "Disco" version called "The Black Page No. 2" which highlights the 4-beat pattern and simplifies some of the complex rhythms. He continued writing satirical and crude pop songs as well. Around this time,

business relations with Warner Brothers (with whom Zappa had been with for a number of years) began to deteriorate. He intended to release a 4-Disc record that included works for orchestra, complex instrumentals, and standard rock songs, but WB refused, instead releasing a number of single albums without Zappa's consent. By the early 80s he was running his own label Barking Pumpkin Records and releasing his own music as an independent recording artist.

David Bowie



Figure 16.9 David Bowie.

David Bowie – (Born David Jones, 1947-2016) Was inspired by the Beats as a teenager and began playing jazz and rhythm and blues. Inspired by beat poet Allen Ginsberg who demanded equality for homosexuals, Jones developed an androgynous image. He changed his name to David Bowie to distinguish himself from popular singer Davy Jones, and he developed a glittery space-age character known as Ziggy Stardust. Bowie doesn't stick to one particular style, and his image is the primary reason for his "glitter rock" association.

Queen



Figure 16.10 Queen with a standard hard-rock lineup of Freddie Mercury (vocals), Brian May (guitar), John Deacon (bass), and Roger Meadows-Taylor (drums) from 1971.

Queen formed in 1971 with a standard hard-rock lineup of Freddie Mercury (vocals), Brian May (guitar), John Deacon (bass), and Roger Meadows-Taylor (drums).

Associated with "glitter rock" more for their androgynous visual image than for their music (like David Bowie), with vocalist Freddie Mercury wearing makeup and glittery outfits, and the band's name itself suggests the androgynous association. While their music was hard-rock, the sound approached progressive rock with the use of sophisticated classical-style arrangements in the overdubbed guitar and vocal lines. The effect is of a string section or a choir and adds to the power of the music without actually using an orchestra or a choir. Freddie Mercury died in 1991, effectively ending the group, though they reunited in 2004 with different members.

The song "Bohemian Rhapsody" (*Ch. 16 Listening Examples*) is modeled after the operetta, and is structured as such with many sections, going beyond the standard rock song format. At one point the piece uses antiphonal choruses, a classical technique that is essentially call and response between a solo singer and a group of singers.

Listening Examples 16.3

Pink Floyd:

- "Time"

- [“Echoes”](#) Live in Pompeii 1972
- [“Money”](#)

Rush: [“Tom Sawyer”](#). Notice the unusual rhythm of the melodic “hook” played by the Geddy Lee on the synthesizer at 1:33. The line uses an unusual time: 7/8. A practical way to think about this unusual timing would be to describe it as a standard 4 beat pattern where the second half of the beat is deleted. So if standard 4/4 time is **1& 2& 3& 4&** – **1& 2& 3& 4&** etc, 7/8 would go as follows: **1& 2& 3& 4** – **1& 2& 3& 4** (Notice that the count goes directly from 4 to 1, no & is present, so the offbeat of the 4th beat is removed.)

Frank Zappa: [“The Black Page”](#) live and [played by me](#) on guitar to show the unusual technique required

Queen: [“Bohemian Rhapsody”](#)

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1.17: Punk, New Wave, Reggae, and Ska

Punk: Beginnings

Punk Rock developed out of the aggressive and musically minimal styles of groups such as Iggy Pop and the Stooges, MC5, and the themes of alienation and anger of groups such as the Velvet Underground. Punk is characterized by the “garage band” sound. Tempos are often fast and erratic, vocals are often shouted or speech-like, with little indication of traditional melody (often on one pitch, known as monotone), the guitars are distorted, and most often the songs are based on 3 or 4 simple chords rather than riffs or melodic hooks. These chords themselves are usually simple 2-note chords known as “**Power Chords**” for the simple yet strong sound. Power chords are the musical building blocks of punk rock much in the way riffs were the musical building blocks of heavy metal and hard rock.

Beyond purely musical characteristics, Punk Rock is associated with a feeling of “Authenticity”, where the performers are trying to be as real as possible, without shame or censorship. This was the new generation’s way of continuing the tradition of rock & roll risk taking and danger. Remember, musicians like Elvis and Little Richard were innovators that were considered dangerous at the time they came out. Rock and Roll by the early 1970s was viewed by many punk rockers as complacent and bloated, fake, a big business that had little to do with its origins. Punk sought to bring the real and the dangerous back to the stage. Groups like the Velvet Underground accomplished this with the content of their music, singing about drug use, taboo sexual tendencies, and prostitution on their groundbreaking debut album *Velvet Underground and Nico* from 1967.

Iggy Pop and The Stooges



Figure 17.1 Iggy Pop.

Originally from Detroit, Michigan, Iggy Pop is often referred to as the “Godfather of Punk” for the music he made with his group The Stooges as well as his wild performance style where he brought real danger, not the illusion of danger, into rock performance. He invented the stage dive where the performer jumps straight into the audience. When performances were especially rowdy and glass bottles were broken onstage, Pop rolled around in the broken glass then got back up, cut up and bloody, and continued singing. It is probably Iggy Pop, more than any other performer, that developed the style and approach most influential on Punk Rock. The Stooges’ music was similarly aggressive, featuring the distorted guitar work of Ron Asheton. The Stooges were initially together from 1967-1974, and reformed in 2003.

Iggy Pop was originally a drummer and had an interest in the blues musicians like Muddy Waters and John Lee Hooker. Pop’s interest in the blues had him going so far as to move to Chicago to learn from blues drummers. This period led to a realization that in order to be authentic he couldn’t study and copy blues, he had to come up with his own version of simple blues and be true to himself. “So that’s what I did. I appropriated a lot of their vocal forms and their turns of phrase—either heard or misheard or twisted from blues songs. So “I Wanna Be Your Dog” is probably my mishearing of “Baby Please Don’t Go” (McNeil pg. 38). Other artists that influenced Pop’s performance style were Jim Morrison of The Doors and Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones. He was impressed with Morrison’s nonchalant attitude to appeasing his fans and in fact his confrontational approach to the audience and Jagger’s half-spoken way of singing. On Morrison and the Doors, “I loved the antagonism; I loved that he was pissing them off... and not only was Morrison pissing them off, but he mesmerizing them at the same time” (McNeil, pg. 40). This eventually led to the formation of the Stooges with brothers Ron and Scott Asheton, guitarist and drummer.

The Stooges music set the template for Punk Rock with the distorted fuzzy power chords, monotone vocals, and confrontational performances in songs such as “I Wanna Be Your Dog”. The lyrics below are essentially a love song from the singer to the

admired, offering a slavish devotion. The form is verse-chorus form lyrically, but a closer listen reveals the verse and the chorus are very nearly the same and could be described as Repeated A sections when referring to the music.

So messed up, I want you here
 In my room, I want you here
 Now we're gonna be face-to-face
 And I'll lay right down in my favorite place
 And now I want to be your dog
 Now I want to be your dog
 Now I want to be your dog
 Well, come on
 Now I'm ready to close my eyes
 And now I'm ready to close my mind
 And now I'm ready to feel your hand
 And lose my heart on the burning sands
 And now I want to be your dog
 And now I wanna be your dog
 Now I want to be your dog
 Well, come on

Listening Examples 17.1

Iggy Pop and the Stooges: In “I Wanna Be Your Dog” the use of the aggressive, throbbing pulse and the shouted, nearly monotone vocals (monotone is a single unvaried pitch) hints toward punk music. [Here](#) is the band live.

American Punk



Figure 17.2 New York Dolls in 1973.

The **New York Dolls** were one of the first of these early groups to break into the mainstream. With an androgynous look, the Dolls were shocking to audiences in the early 1970s. Additionally, they adopted the confrontational approach of Iggy and the Stooges. “The audiences were pretty depraved,” says David Johansen, singer of the New York Dolls, “We couldn’t come out in three-piece suits and entertain that bunch. They wanted something more for their money. And we were very confrontational. We were very raw. We were really into confronting the audience: ‘HEY YOU STUPID BASTARDS, GET UP AND DANCE!’ We were not polite.” On the influence of the Dolls on punk rock and the simplicity of their music, Johansen adds “People who saw the Dolls said, ‘Hell, anybody can do this.’ I think what the Dolls did as far being an influence on punk was that we showed that anybody could do it.” (McNiel, pg. 128)

Many of the popular early punk groups in America originated in New York City and the NYC club CBGB’s was a starting place for many of these groups to perform, including the group **Television**. Television combined the simple punk sensibility of the Velvet Underground, melodic guitar lines, and psychedelic improvisations. Their bass player, Richard Hell, was innovative in his punk fashion through torn clothing and spiked hair. Unlike many punk groups, Television put an emphasis on quality musicianship in combination with raw instrumental timbres. Television was one of the first groups to play at CBGB’s, in early 1974.

Patti Smith (Born 1946) was a poet and writer who moved to New York to pursue poetry. She published a book of her own poetry called “Seventh Heaven” in 1972. Smith would perform live poetry readings and began to incorporate music by way of poetry readings blending with simple guitar accompaniment by guitarist Lenny Kaye who would go on to collaborate with Smith for years. Even her poetry readings had a sensibility anticipating punk rock. Author Victor Bockris says of a poetry reading in which Smith read an early version of the forgot, “Her sound combined the musical simplicity of the Velvet Underground with her own

energetic vocals. The song “Horses” (*Ch. 17 Listening Examples*) begins with a spoken-word introduction reflecting Smith’s poetic background before delving into a simple 3-chord rock song. Vocally, Smith sings in a largely monotone fashion. The music is aggressive, driving, and distorted.



Figure 17.4 The Ramones live in 1976.

The Ramones formed in 1974 and had a large influence on the development of British punk through their performances in England. Growing up in the Forest Hills neighborhood in Queens, NYC, Tommy, Joey, Johnny and Dee Dee Ramone all lived in the same area and bonded over a mutual love for The Stooges and the New York Dolls. They put together a band, deciding on the name The Ramones and came up with monikers for themselves. They played a high energy punk in which songs rarely lasted more than 2 minutes. Most often the songs use no more than 3 or 4 simple “power chords” on the guitar, while the vocals were often simple melodies rather than a straight-forward monotone approach. “Blitzkrieg Bop” fits all the parameters of punk with fast tempos, 3 chords, minimally melodic vocals, and overall a very short length.

Listening Examples 17.2

Velvet Underground: “[Heroin](#)”

New York Dolls: “[Personality Crisis](#)” live 1973

Patti Smith:

- “[Horses](#)”
- “[Horses](#)” live
- “[Because the Night](#)” co-written with Bruce Springsteen

The Ramones:

- “[Blitzkrieg Bop](#)”
- “[Blitzkrieg Bop](#)” live

British Punk

Punk appealed to lower and middle class teenagers in Britain who grew up detesting the lifestyles and traditions of their parents. They felt they had no control over their lives and were destined to stay in poverty because of a class-ridden social system. The youth saw rock as being played by wealthy stars and weren’t interested. They were anti-fashion, wearing torn clothes with safety pins holding them together. Anarchy was enthusiastically supported by many British punk fans.

An important and diverse British punk group was the Clash. They were notable for exploring lyrical subjects of youth unemployment, racism, and police brutality. They often combined musical characteristics of punk with the hesitation beats and socially conscious lyrical approach of Jamaican reggae and ska. Singer Joe Strummer had a more melodic approach to his vocals, combining this melodic sensibility with a rough, unpolished vocal timbre, fitting to the aggressive tone of the music.

The Sex Pistols



Figure 17.5 Live Performance of The Sex Pistols.

The Sex Pistols became the biggest British Punk group, starting controversy everywhere they went. They used distorted guitars, monotone vocals, and their high energy performances were often associated with violence with the band even getting in fights with the audience occasionally! The music was fast, simple, and aggressive. The group was successful in a short time before breaking up in 1978, and then bassist Sid Vicious died of a drug overdose in 1979.

The Dead Kennedys



Figure 17.6 The Dead Kennedys.

The Dead Kennedys formed in San Francisco in 1978, using the punk sound and monotone vocals criticizing the US government and other institutions with a sense of humor. The lead singer and lyricist Jello Biafra took his name when he heard the government sent a shipment of Jell-O to the starving people in Biafra, Africa as “foreign aid”.

The song “Kill the Poor” (*Ch. 17.3 Listening Examples*) makes a darkly humorous statement of the fact that US politicians put money towards weapons research for things such as the neutron bomb (a theoretical weapon which could kill people and destroy organic matter but leave physical structures like roads and buildings intact), while money to aid America’s poor and mentally ill was refused.

Listening Examples 17.3

Clash: “[I Fought the Law](#)”, originally written by Sonny Curtis who played with Buddy Holly and the Crickets. The Clash reworked the song into an aggressive, punk, anti-authoritarian statement.

The Sex Pistols: “[God Save the Queen](#)” became commercially successful proving that the punk movement represented a large part of the youth. Like “Blitzkreig Bop”, the song uses 3 chords, is vocally monotone-based, and lyrically controversial, criticizing the Queen and England’s love for the monarchy.

The Dead Kennedy’s: “[Kill the Poor](#)”

New Wave

Since punk was such an aggressive style of music, it didn’t create a wide appeal to general population. The revitalized energy was appealing though, and many characteristics of it were integrated into a new style called New Wave. New Wave used the pulse-based rhythms of punk, monotone vocals, and emotional alienation of punk music, but also used a wider variety of instruments such as synthesizers, and generally had a clean and slick sound. **Devo** was a new wave group who created an image that took a humorous look on the de-humanization of modern society. Their robotic music and image conveyed this de-humanization. Other groups such as **Blondie**, the **B52s** and **The Cars** represent the New Wave style.

Talking Heads



Figure 17.7 The Talking Heads.

The Talking Heads were a New Wave band from New York City that initially used the energy and simplicity of punk music but would later incorporate a wide variety of styles and instruments into their sound. Led by singer/guitarist/songwriter David Byrne,

the band was made up of guitarist and keyboardist Jerry Harrison, bassist Tina Weymouth, and drummer Chris Frantz. Their early style featured a simple, pounding rhythmic pulse and Byrne's signature near-monotone singing style.

Elvis Costello



Figure 17.8 Elvis Costello.

Elvis Costello (Born 1955) is an important English musician who became popular through new wave. He began playing a back to roots form of rock called “pub rock” and adopted a Buddy Holly-esque image, changed his name to Elvis, but represented an updated version of the traditional rock star. Costello's music represented his neurotic image, often singing of insecurities in relationships, but also sang of political subjects.

He moved into the new wave sound with the album *This Year's Model* (1978) which introduced his new backup band, the Attractions. His new wave style used some of the energy of punk while incorporating the clean slick sound of American new wave. Costello didn't stick to new wave strictly though, and with the album *Almost Blue* (1981) he began exploring American country music.

Listening Examples 17.4

Devo:

- “[Jocko Homo](#)” live
- “[Whip It](#)” (1980), Devo's biggest hit

Talking Heads: “[Psycho Killer](#)” features a Verse-Chorus form in which David Byrne sings monotone in the verse and melodically in the chorus. [Here](#) is the live version. Later albums such as [Remain in Light](#) saw the band incorporate funk, African rhythms, and new musicians as well. Horns, synthesizers, and new percussion were incorporated into the music with musicians such as Bernie Worrell (Parliament Funkadelic) and Adrian Belew (Frank Zappa, King Crimson) joining the group for periods.

Elvis Costello: “[Radio Radio](#)”

Ska and Reggae

The island nation of Jamaica was responsible for the emergence of two new genres of music known as Ska and Reggae. These styles were the result of the blending of popular American music of the 1940s and 1950s, particularly Rhythm and Blues, and the Jamaican folk music known as Mento. This music used an English dialect, but dialects could vary from song to song because many languages were spoken in Jamaica. Mento music used Cuban rumba rhythms at a slower tempo and other African-derived rhythms, played occasionally on European instruments, and more often on homemade instruments.

Ska developed out of the popularity of rhythm and blues in Jamaica with musicians adding characteristics of Mento to the rhythm and blues beats. The most characteristic element of ska is the accenting of a subdivision just after each beat (most often structured in 4-beat patterns), often called a **hesitation beat**. Ska also made use of horns the way rhythm and blues had.

Reggae formed out of rocksteady, a slowed down version of ska. Eventually this music became reggae. It featured more African-styled drumming, modern amplified instruments, less horns, more present and bright offbeat guitar chords, and socially conscious lyrics with the hesitation beat feel of ska.

Desmond Dekker



Figure 17.9 Desmond Dekker.

Desmond Dekker – (1941-2006) was a Jamaican musician who performed ska music as well as rocksteady and reggae. He was one of the first Jamaican musicians to become internationally popular. He knew Bob Marley when they were teenagers, and Marley recommended Dekker to a producer who helped him organize his backing group, the Aces. Much of his music glorified the “rude boy” culture. The “rude boys” were a young and rough criminal element in Jamaica.

The song “007 (Shanty Town)” (*Ch. 17.5 Listening Examples*) was a hit on the British pop charts where his music remained popular into the 1970s. Many of his songs were revived in the late 1970s “2-tone” music movement which combined ska, punk, and new wave styles. The song uses many characteristics of the ska style such as even beat subdivisions, stressed hesitation beats (1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &), and a relaxed feel.

Bob Marley and the Wailers



Figure 17.10 Bob Marley.

Bob Marley (1945-1981) Began recording as a member of vocal group The Wailers with Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer in the mid 1960s. The three expanded their sound by learning instruments and forming a group which they led still called the Wailers. Their albums were successful in Jamaica, but when they signed to Island Records, a British run record company, that their music became known internationally.

When Eric Clapton covered the song “I Shot the Sheriff” it made the song internationally famous and turned many fans on to the infectious beat of reggae. Tosh and Wailer left in 1974 and Marley continued performing with his own group for the remainder of the 1970s. Marley’s music was socially conscious and he protested against corruption and the oppression of the poor.

The song “Stir it Up” by The Wailers is a prime example of reggae. It uses a blend of musical features common in reggae, including hesitation beats (primarily in the off beat guitar accompaniment), melodic bass lines (the bass plays a melody, an uncommon role for the bass in popular music), and standard song forms. Look at the lyrical excerpt below to discover the song form based on what you know.

Stir it up, little darlin', stir it up. Come on, baby
 Come on and stir it up, little darlin', stir it up. O-oh!
 It's been a long, long time, yeah! (Stir it, stir it, stir it together)
 Since I've got you on my mind (oh-oh-oh-oh) Oh-oh!
 Now you are here (stir it, stir it, stir it together), I said
 It's so clear
 To see what we could do, baby, (oh-oh-oh-oh)
 Just me and you
 Come on and stir it up, little darlin'! Stir it up, come on, baby!
 Come on and stir it up, yeah! Little darlin', stir it up! O-oh!
 I'll push the wood (stir it, stir it, stir it together)
 Then I blaze ya fire
 Then I'll satisfy your heart's desire. (Oh-oh-oh-oh)
 Said, I stir it together (stir it, stir it, stir it together)

Every minute
All you got to do, baby, (oh-oh-oh-oh)
Is keep it in, and
oh, little darlin'
Stir it up, baby! Come on and stir it up, oh-oh-oh!
Little darlin', stir it up! Wo-oh! Mm, now, now

Listening Examples 17.5

Desmond Dekker: “007”

[Bob Marley explains rhythmic differences](#) between Ska, Rocksteady, and Reggae. Here [I demonstrate](#) the Reggae hesitation beat.

Bob Marley and the Wailers:

- “[Stir It Up](#)”
- “[Stir It Up](#)” live

Influence of Reggae on Rock and the Ska Revival

Ska and reggae had an influence on other types of popular music, first with Eric Clapton’s cover of “I Shot the Sheriff”, and later influencing the sound of bands such as the Clash and the Police.

The Clash used reggae beats and bass lines as well as the political messages, combining those traits with punk characteristics.

The Police combined the punk style with elements of reggae such as the beats and melodic styles, but without the political messages. They became very successful with their blending of punk, reggae, and pop.

Former punk group **The Specials** began a Ska revival in England in the late 1970s. This new style merged the pulse and shouted vocals of punk and the **hesitation beat** of ska. They spoke out against racism and were a racially mixed group. They formed their own record company, 2-Tone Records. 2-Tone became the name for this ska revival.

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1.18: Funk and Disco

Funk Music

Funk music is characterized by its use of polyrhythms, syncopated bass lines, short vocal phrases, and a considerable amount of repetition of these rhythmic patterns and phrases. It represents an evolution of soul music with greater emphasis on interactive rhythmic layers.

Polyrhythm has been discussed in our class before, but to reiterate, it means that musically there are multiple layers of rhythmic patterns happening at once. In ragtime, this meant two rhythms: one in the left hand (usually simple) and one in the right hand (usually the more complex of the two). When they interacted, the two rhythms created a complex rhythmic texture containing two rhythmic patterns. In funk music, this idea is further explored through the use of 4 or 5 or more distinct rhythmic patterns in different instruments such as drums, various other percussion instruments, bass, electric guitar, keyboards, horns, and vocals.

Listening Examples 18.1

I demonstrate [layering](#) 4 different rhythmic patterns in a funk style. I play the first three in isolation, then I use an electronic device to record each pattern and play them together while putting a 4th pattern on top. Notice the simplicity and space in each part, but when played together it creates a complex web of patterns.

James Brown



Figure 18.1 James Brown live in Hamburg in 1973.

The first musician to play funk music was **James Brown**. While his soul music was influenced by African American gospel, his funk was derived from African polyrhythmic music. Brown's backing group maintained constant rhythmic accompaniment with clear accents on the downbeat and polyrhythms in the drums, bass, guitar, keys, and horns. Uniquely, the horns were less often used for melodic lines. Rather, they punctuated rhythmic figures. Chord changes were relatively minimal, and single chord vamps were most common, bringing more attention to the rhythms. The song "Out of Sight" (1964) introduced this style, but funk gained popularity with "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag" (1965) which also happens to use 12-bar blues form.

The song "Payback" is a fantastic example of the funk genre, structured as a single chord vamp with layers of funky polyrhythm in all the instruments. The drumbeat is relatively straightforward and the bass plays for about half the bar and rests for the other half, creating space that enhances the groove. The guitar plays a very simple pattern that repeats almost exactly throughout, and the horns play only when JB calls out "Hit Me!". Likewise, the female backing vocalists only respond to certain vocal calls from Brown. The keyboards have the most liberty, improvising throughout to give JB's voice a break or to showcase dancing. The song is structured ABA, with both A and B as separate single chord vamps with their own individual characteristics such as different rhythms, different lyrics, and a different key. The transition to the B section occurs around 3:29 in the example in *Ch. 18 Listening Examples*, featuring the backup singers, and the B section officially begins at 3:59, featuring JB on lead vocals again. JB signals a hint to transition back to the A section around 4:50, and by 5:00 the music is back to A where it closes out. Much of the music of James Brown is structured in this way or in a similar way, but with the element of improvisation thrown in, no two performances were exactly alike.

Sly and the Family Stone

Sly and the Family Stone was one of the first groups to use James Brown's new style. Formed by two brothers Sylvester and Freddie Stewart, and led by Sylvester (Sly). The Family referred to the fact that Sly Stone's siblings were in the group and that it

was a racially mixed group, representing an important statement of unity in support of the civil rights movement. The group also had female musicians that played instruments at a time when female instrumentalists were not common in popular music.

Songs like “Dance to the Music” (1968) took the polyrhythmic vamping style of James Brown while songs such as “Everyday People” were more rock styled with heavy backbeats, call and response vocals, and the even beat subdivisions common in Motown recordings. The song with perhaps the biggest influence on the development of funk music was “Thank You (Fallettinme Be Mice Elf Agin)” (1969, featured in *Ch. 18 Listening Examples*) which featured fuzz tone guitars, polyrhythms, and minimal chord changes. The video below includes an opening improvisation that adds new rhythmic layers one at a time, illustrating the dense polyrhythmic web characteristic of funk.

Funk could also be commercially friendly and indebted to pop music in certain ways. The song “Tell Me Something Good” by Rufus uses a standard pop song form in combination with the rhythms of funk. Examine the lyrical excerpt below to get an idea of the form:

You ain't got no kind of feeling inside
I got something that will sho' 'nuff set your stuff on fire
You refuse to put anything before your pride
What I got will knock all your pride aside
Tell me something good
Tell me that you love me, yeah
Tell me something good
Tell me that you like it, yeah
“Got no time” is what you're known to say
(Got no time, no, got no time)
I'll make you wish there was 48 hours to each day
Your problem is you ain't been loved like you should
What I got to give will sho' 'nuff do you good
Tell me something good
(Tell me, tell me, tell me)
Tell me that you love me, yeah
Tell me something good
(Tell me, tell me, tell me)
Tell me that you like it, yeah

Slap Bass



Figure 18.2 Larry Graham.

Slap bass is a unique technique of playing the bass guitar that funk bass players began using after *Larry Graham* (pictured above) of **Sly and the Family Stone** began pioneering and popularizing the technique in the early days of the group. Mechanically, it involves three basic elements, though many players have added other techniques to it since. The first element involves slapping a low string with the thumb, sometimes referred to as the “thump”. Second, a finger (usually the index) pulls back with some force a higher string so that it bounces back against the fingerboard. This is referred to as the “pluck” or “popping”. Usually these two sounds alternate in some fashion. The third element involves what are called “ghost notes” or “dead notes” which refers to the fact that no pitches actually sound. Rather, the player rests their finger on the string to achieve a brief rhythmic noise that fills in the musical phrase with little rhythmic punctuations. It’s difficult to put into words, so I demonstrate all these things in the *Ch. 18 Listening Examples*.

Listening Examples 18.2

James Brown: “Payback” live 1981

Sly and the Family Stone – “Jam/Thank You” Live on Soul Train, May 1974

Slap Bass Example

The Gap Band: “Yearning for You Love”

Rufus: “Tell Me Something Good”

Curtis Mayfield



Figure 18.3 Curtis Mayfield.

Curtis Mayfield – (1942-1999) Got his start with soul group the Impressions, with which he sang lead for eleven years. The group recorded gospel songs and songs in support of civil rights. In 1972 Mayfield created his biggest success when writing and producing the soundtrack for the film *Superfly*. By this time he was playing funk music. The film soundtrack explored anti-drug themes as did the movie. The song “Freddie’s Dead” is named after the character “Fat Freddie”, a drug dealer from the movie. The song has many characteristics of funk, including even beat subdivisions in the drums, syncopated bass guitar, as well as including flute and orchestra. Like certain other styles such as hard rock and heavy metal, many funk songs contain riffs (simple, short, memorable musical phrases) as the primary building blocks of the music. Most of “Freddie’s Dead” is driven by a bass riff that stands in contrast, rhythmically and stylistically, to the orchestral accompaniment. This contrast creates a unique song that sounds at the same time funky/danceable and refined.

George Clinton and Parliament/Funkadelic



Figure 18.4 The Parliaments.

George Clinton – (Born 1941) Is a singer/songwriter/producer who formed the group Parliament as a vocal group styled after the Temptations. Though he was hired as a writer at Motown, he never recorded for them, likely due to his bizarre stage persona. Parliament had science fiction characters and stage sets created by Clinton and many of their songs explored themes of space.

He created a new group in 1968 called Funkadelic which shared membership between it and Parliament but recorded on a different label. Funkadelic’s music was built more around a horror movie image. Both groups used the funk polyrhythms and distorted guitars of Sly and the Family Stone and the vocal stylings of doo-wop. Both had bizarre outfits and stage sets, consisted of a large number of players who were consistently changing. One unique musical feature in the music of the group was that it occasionally used synthesizers for bass lines as in the song “Flash Light” (*Ch. 18 Listening Examples*).

Bernie Worrell

Parliament/Funkadelic keyboard player Bernie Worrell was one of the most distinctive musicians in the group through his use of a variety of keyboard instruments and his shifting role where he might handle the melody, the accompaniment (chords) or the bass line. He used pianos, organs, and synthesizers. He has performed in other styles than funk music, playing with groups like the Talking Heads and Les Claypool from the group Primus. Worrell resided in Bellingham, the hometown of Western Washington

University, during his last few months before his death from cancer. In that short time he managed to collaborate musically with many young local musicians such as the local funk-soul group Snug Harbor in the video below. He also performed at local Bellingham venues such as the Wild Buffalo.

Listening Examples 18.3

Curtis Mayfield: “Freddie’s Dead”

Parliament: “Mothership Connection” live 1976. Notice the use of repeated riffs in the instruments similar to “Payback” by James Brown. Funk music is often structured in this way to allow a degree of improvisation, often by the vocalist, and the repetition of the riffs plus the groove of the rhythm section make a very danceable style. “Flash Light” from 1978 features a bass riff, but the riff is performed on a synthesizer instead of a bass guitar.

“Flash Light” (Live)

Disco



Figure 18.5 Disco ball.

Disco emerged when soul styles became popular in dance clubs. Instead of live bands, disc jockeys would play back recordings for people to dance to. Often these disco records came with a bpm indication (beats per minute) which allowed DJs to seamlessly segue between songs of the same or related tempos and the dancers could keep dancing. Other recordings would begin with rhythmically free introductions to allow for tempo changes from previous songs. Many songs were longer than normal singles, again for the purpose allowing dancers a continuous flow of music. The DJ in disco was as important as a band in rock music. The techniques that DJs developed in disco were essential to the development of hip hop.

The music is characterized by similar features found in funk music, with some notable differences. Disco is engineered to inspire movement and dancing, so rhythm is emphasized as it is in funk. Bass and drums are prominent in the overall mix of instruments which often feature pounding bass drums and catchy bass lines. The most notable difference in the two genres is the complexity of the rhythm. In funk, rhythms are layered to create a texture of syncopated, interlocking rhythmic patterns called polyrhythm. These patterns all have their own specific rhythms and are rarely straightforward. In disco, the rhythmic patterns are much more simple, and polyrhythm is kept to a minimum. Often the bass drum will either play on beats 1 and 3 of a four beat pattern, or simply play on all 4 beats. The bass is similarly straightforward. Formally, songs were most often standard forms such as verse-chorus form.



Figure 18.6 The Bee Gees in 1973.

Disco became a dance craze in the US around the mid to late 1970s. It became so popular that a hit movie was released about the phenomenon called *Saturday Night Fever* starring John Travolta. Disco was portrayed as an escape from everyday life through dancing. The soundtrack included disco songs by the Bee Gees, Kool and the Gang, and KC and the Sunshine Band.

Chic

Chic was a popular disco group in the late 1970s that used the simple, infectious dance beats so popular in disco with simple, positive lyrics and catchy vocal hooks. The song “Good Times” (1978) features orchestral strings, a very straightforward drumbeat,

group vocals, and a rhythmically interesting bass part that is more active than the average disco bass line. The accompaniment stays largely static between the verse (A) section and the chorus (B) sections. The song's simple and catchy groove served as the basis for one of the first hip hop recordings, "Rapper's Delight" by the Sugar Hill Gang in 1979.

Listening Examples 18.4

"Saturday Night Fever" clip showcasing Travolta's dance moves and featuring ["You Should Be Dancing"](#) (1977) by the Bee Gees. Notice in the music that the bass and drums are playing in a more straightforward and simplified way than in the funk examples above. This stripped down rhythmic approach is common in many disco songs, though not all.

Chic: ["Good Times"](#)

Chic: ["Good Times" \(Live\)](#)

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1.19: Hip Hop

Hip Hop



Figure 19.1 The Bronx, New York City in 1973.

Hip Hop is the name for a cultural movement which originated in the 1970s and encompasses Deejaying, MC'ing, B-Boying, graffiti art, style, and other elements. While beginning firmly as an African American cultural movement, it has gained popularity throughout the entire world. With origins in the approaches and techniques of Jamaican Dub, centered on the DJ and the playback of portions of existing records (often called "Sampling") built on a backbone of African-American Funk and Disco, hip hop blended existing styles to create a brand new, unheard of approach to popular music. Amazingly, this worldwide phenomenon came out of the most inconspicuous time and place: The Bronx, New York City in the 1970s.

By the 1970s, the Bronx was in a cultural and economic crisis. The South Bronx was hit particularly hard as it had lost 600,000 jobs, the average income had dropped to half the NYC average, and the official youth unemployment rate hit 60% (Chang pg. 13). A mixture of neglect and the aforementioned economic depression caused building after building to become abandoned and vacant, and this led to arson; fires that became a regular occurrence throughout the city. These fires grew to massive proportions. Between 1973 and 1977, 30,000 fires were set in the South Bronx alone and on one single day in June 1975, 40 individual fires were set in a single 3 hour period. (Chang pg. 15). On July 13-14 1977 New York City experienced a blackout affecting most of the city. Widespread looting and arson (over 1,000 fires were set) plagued the city and especially the Bronx during the blackout. Inadvertently, this blackout may have jumpstarted the growth of hip hop. Grandmaster Caz, an MC and DJ of early hip hop, admits that he took advantage of the blackout and stole DJ equipment from Hi-Fi stores. Caz, claiming of the blackout, "It was like Christmas for black people. The next day there were a thousand new Deejays."

In this climate of chaos, gangs began to thrive, leading to increasing violence but also, unusually, a greater sense of law and order as some residents saw the gangs as the real law on the streets (Chang pg. 49). Gangs such as the Savage Skulls, Ghetto Brothers, and the Roman Kings staked out territories within the Bronx. It was in the midst of this upheaval that Hip Hop emerged. The lyrics of much early Hip Hop is a socially conscious reflection of the turmoil of inner city life at the time.

DJ Kool Herc



Figure 19.2 DJ Kool Herc.

DJ Kool Herc, born Clive Campbell in 1955, was a Jamaican-American living in the Bronx when he began providing music for parties. His reputation for massive, crystal clear sound (due to his modifications to his sound system) made him well-known and in demand, and soon he was making money as a DJ. His parties were positive environments for youth at the time, and while deejaying he made a point of diffusing any violence or altercations he happened to see. Influenced by Dub music and artists such as King Tubby from his native Jamaica, Herc began looking for new ways to hype people up and get them dancing. His biggest innovation began with recognition of the fact that audiences responded excitedly to "the break", the instrumental middle sections found in

many songs from funk to disco. Herc began using two turntables so he could play the breaks the dancers enjoyed most, and quickly and seamlessly transition between breaks on two or more separate records. This led to what became known as the “Merry Go Round” technique where the breaks are repeated as “loops”. Using two copies of the same record, back-cueing a record to the beginning of the break as the other reached the end, Herc could extend a 5-second break into a 5-minute loop of fury. (Chang, pg. 79) The use of parts of existing recordings in this fashion paved the way for sampling, an important feature in Hip Hop. Herc also incorporated a practice called “toasting”, a Jamaican style of rhythmic “patter-talk” that radio DJs would commonly practice while reggae and ska records were playing. This proved to be very important to the development of rapping.

B-Boys and Graffiti



Figure 19.3 Graffiti in a New York subway car in 1973.

Along with Herc’s parties came a new development in dance. Break Boys or B-Boys for short began presenting a new showy form of dance in which competition was the name of the game, spoken or unspoken. This atmosphere began to slowly replace the gang culture as an outlet for competition and recognition. Jorge “Popmaster Fabel” Pabon says of the B-Boys at the time, “A lot of times in my neighborhood I didn’t see smiles on their faces. They were on a mission to terrorize the dance floor and to make a reputation, ghetto celebrity status”. (Chang pg. 115) The best dancers became well known local figures in the same way Kool Herc was becoming a star in the Bronx. The style of dance evolved over the course of a decade or so, later becoming known for the gravity-defying “Freezes” and athletic ground-work.

At the same time, graffiti art had already been developing parallel to DJ-led parties and B-boys. Graffiti is defined by an underground and largely illegal practice of “Tagging” or spray painting using various buildings, trains, and other surfaces as the “canvas”. With all the abandoned buildings in the Bronx through the 1970s, it was an environment ripe for the development of graffiti art. Hugo Martinez, the organizer of the first graffiti association, United Graffiti Artists, said this of the early art form, “Graffiti is a way of gaining status in a society where to own property is to have identity.” (Chang pg. 118) In other words, Graffiti artists were staking territories in a sense and also trying to outdo one another with ever more audacious “canvases”.

Afrika Bambaataa



Figure 19.4 Afrika Bambaataa.

DJ Kool Herc and B-Boy culture were part of a general movement at the time to improve the situation for Bronx youth. **Afrika Bambaataa** (born Lance Taylor, 1957) took the momentum and organized the Zulu Nation, a collective of hip hop artists and others centered around positivity and strength in numbers to help avoid the sphere of influence exercised by the gangs. “My vision was to try and organize as many as I could to stop the violence. So I went around different areas telling them to join us and stop your fighting.” Bambaataa says. (Chang pg. 101) Bambaataa himself began Deejaying as well as developing a loose philosophy for his Zulu Nation.

Listening Examples 19.1

DJ Kool Herc describing the first time he developed his “**Merry Go Round**” technique. This revolutionary technique would provide the basis for the accompaniment to break dancers and later, rappers (also known as MCs) who could improvise words over top of the particular section of music indefinitely.

Afrika Bambaataa: “**Planet Rock**”

MC

The DJ is one half of the hip hop sound, the other being the MC. MCs in hip hop are vocalists who “rap” lyrics over top of an accompaniment (usually provided by a DJ) and have their origins in the “Toasting” practiced by Jamaican DJs like Kool Herc and also in live performances of poetry by groups like the **Last Poets**. The Last Poets would recite poetry set to musical accompaniment, and their lyrics were political social commentaries about racial inequality and other social concerns. MCs became popular features along with the DJ at house parties and the musical style eventually became popular enough to reach out to the music industry. These MCs moved beyond the reciting of poetry to integrating the words rhythmically over top of the accompaniment, and the rhythms generated became increasingly sophisticated. In addition to social commentary, a common lyrical feature was “boasting”, the sharing of pride in one’s abilities, possessions, accomplishments, etc. Notably, boasting is something often seen in blues lyrics as well.

Sugar Hill Gang



Figure 19.5 Sugarhill Gang.

In 1979, a follower of Kool Herc named Henry Jackson, known as “**Big Bank Hank**”, would unknowingly play a pivot role in creating the first hip hop hit. According to journalist Jeff Chang, Jackson was working, making pizzas in New Jersey and rapping along to a tape by Grandmaster Caz when Joey Robinson entered, overheard Jackson, and asked him to come and audition for his Mother Sylvia’s record label, Sugarhill records. (Chang pg. 130) Jackson agreed and was joined by MCs “**Master Gee**” Guy O’Brien and “**Wonder Mike**” Michael Wright, and the trio successfully auditioned. Essentially unknown in hip hop circles, this group became known as the **Sugar Hill Gang**.

The newly named trio recorded a track on August 2, 1979 called “**Rapper’s Delight**” (see *Ch. 19 Listening Examples*) that became one of the earliest recordings of rapping and ultimately introduced hip hop to a wider audience, in the United States and around the world. While the original recording of “**Rapper’s Delight**” was nearly 15 minutes long, a shortened version became a hit on the charts, reaching #36 on the pop charts and #4 on the RnB charts. The track features ‘**boasting**’ (especially from Big Hank who talks about his cars, clothes, TVs, etc.) which remains an important element in much of hip hop music. It also features a form of **sampling** which again refers to the taking selected sections from other recordings and repeating them as background music for the rapping. In the case of “**Rapper’s Delight**”, the song sampled was “**Good Times**” (1979) by Chic but actually features a group of live musicians playing a repeated backing track from “**Good Times**”. Later hip hop hits would feature direct sampling: actual selections of a particular recording.

The unexpected success of “**Rapper’s Delight**” opened the door for other hip hop artists including Africa Bambaataa who released “**Planet Rock**” in 1982 (see *Ch. 19 Listening Examples*). Bambaataa intended to use his albums to send messages and try to help on wider scale, going beyond the Bronx. “**Planet Rock**” was a mix of samples (from both the pioneering electronic group Kraftwerk and the British Progressive Rock group Babe Ruth) and original creations on the synthesizer. The song went on to sell 650,000 copies and created many new fans of hip hop, achieving a crossover success.

Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five



Figure 19.6 DJ Grandmaster.

Grandmaster Flash (Born Joseph Saddler 1958) is an innovative DJ that developed and perfected many of the modern techniques now common among Deejays. With these techniques, the DJ wasn't simply playing back records anymore. Rather, they were now creating brand new music through a newly discovered musical instrument. Saddler's boyhood fascination with electronics and sound was partly due to encountering the performance of DJ Kool Herc, and it led him into a lifelong passion for music. He began spending time learning about electronics, modifying his own equipment, and thinking about how he could develop what Kool Herc and other Deejays like Pete "DJ" Jones were doing. After a gestation period of months, in summer 1975 Saddler debuted his new approach to a crowd that more or less ignored him. (Chang pg. 113). He realized he needed to get people excited somehow and that surgical-musical precision wasn't the key. He decided to look for MCs to perform with him and this eventually led to the formation of his own group, The Furious Five. This group featured Saddler, now known as Grand Master Flash, as the DJ and five rappers. They became one of the most influential hip hop groups of the early 1980s. With songs such as "The Message" (1982, see *Ch. 19 Listening Examples*) they expressed and exposed the realities of ghetto life, moving rapping beyond the normal party and boasting topics into the realm of social commentary. This was enormously influential on the course of hip-hop, inspiring genres that talked of urban life such as "Gangsta Rap" and groups with a socially-conscious focus like Public Enemy. "The Message" became the fifth rap single to reach gold-selling status (selling in excess of 500,000 copies). (Chang, pg. 179) The form, a standard pop song form, can be seen by looking at the lyrical excerpt below:

It's like a jungle sometimes
 It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under
 Broken glass everywhere
 People pissin' on the stairs, you know they just don't care
 I can't take the smell, can't take the noise
 Got no money to move out, I guess I got no choice
 Rats in the front room, roaches in the back
 Junkies in the alley with a baseball bat
 I tried to get away but I couldn't get far
 'Cause a man with a tow truck repossessed my car
 Don't push me 'cause I'm close to the edge
 I'm trying not to lose my head
 It's like a jungle sometimes
 It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under
 Standin' on the front stoop hangin' out the window
 Watchin' all the cars go by, roarin' as the breezes blow
 Crazy lady, livin' in a bag
 Eatin' outta garbage pails, used to be a fag hag
 Said she'll dance the tango, skip the light fandango
 A Zircon princess seemed to lost her senses
 Down at the peep show watchin' all the creeps
 So she can tell her stories to the girls back home
 She went to the city and got so so seditty
 She had to get a pimp, she couldn't make it on her own
 Don't push me cause I'm close to the edge
 I'm trying not to lose my head
 It's like a jungle sometimes
 It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under

Some of the techniques developed by Grand Master Flash were:

Backspinning – Using duplicate copies of the same record and replaying the same section of music back and forth between the records creating a loop. This loop could be repeated as long as desired.

Punch Phrasing – Punching in musical elements such as horn hits over top of the existing beat.

Scratching – The manipulation of the record and rhythmic use of record scratching to form new music and musical phrases.

Listening Examples 19.2

Sugar Hill Gang: “[Rapper’s Delight](#)” live 1979

Grandmaster Flash:

- “[Wildstyle](#)”
- “[The Message](#)”

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1.20: MTV and the 1980s

MTV



Figure 20.1 MTV Logo.

Listening Examples 20.1

MTV Original Broadcast from 8/1/1981

MTV (Music Television) began as a TV channel devoted entirely to music. It has its origins in the dance shows and variety shows such as *American Bandstand* and the *Ed Sullivan Show*. Many performers were able to boost sales of their records by making appearances on television. The first program on MTV was aired in August 1981 and began showing music videos, live concerts, and interviews with artists and bands. Artists appearing on MTV saw their record sales expand dramatically as a result, and MTV became the new venue for music promotion. The channel catered to the popular tastes of Americans, and artists such as Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, Madonna, and Prince greatly expanded their careers through appearances and videos on MTV.

Michael Jackson

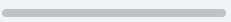


Figure 20.2 Michael Jackson in 1984.

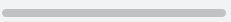
Michael Jackson (1958–2009) was a member of the Jackson 5 at Motown Records as a child. By the early 1980s he had established himself as a successful solo artist. With his album *Thriller* he appeared in numerous music videos which were broadcast on MTV. The video for the song “Thriller” (Ch. 20 Listening Examples) is one of the most memorable and successful videos from the early years of MTV. It is 13 minutes long, with the music only taking up part while the rest plays out like a miniature scary movie. The song itself features simple bass lines, danceable rhythms, and gospel-influenced vocals. With the aid of MTV success, Jackson became an even bigger star. His album *Thriller* went on to become the biggest selling album of all time. It was No. 1 for 37 weeks spawned multiple No. 1 singles.

The song “Billie Jean” was the second single from *Thriller* and spent 7 weeks at No. 1 on the pop charts. Using a simple and danceable beat and a familiar form, the song was catchy and memorable. Formally, the song uses a standard song form with a twist. It’s verse-chorus form with an extra section between the verse and the chorus called a “prechorus” that serves to build the tension up, resolving the tension as we arrive in the chorus. Notice in the audio excerpts below, the effect the prechorus has on building musical and lyrical tension. This is resolved once we reach the chorus. The version with the prechorus removed has a distinct lack of tension and release, illustrating the importance of its place in the song.

Below: Excerpt of the first verse, prechorus, and chorus (follow along with the lyrics below)

▶ 0:00 / 0:00  

Below: same excerpt with the prechorus removed (the prechorus normally happens at :45 into the excerpt)

▶ 0:00 / 0:00  

Verse

She was more like a beauty queen from a movie scene
I said don't mind, but what do you mean, I am the one
Who will dance on the floor in the round?
She said I am the one, who will dance on the floor in the round
She told me her name was Billie Jean, as she caused a scene
Then every head turned with eyes that dreamed of being the one
Who will dance on the floor in the round

Prechorus

People always told me be careful of what you do
And don't go around breaking young girls' hearts
And mother always told me be careful of who you love
And be careful of what you do 'cause the lie becomes the truth

Chorus

Billie Jean is not my lover
She's just a girl who claims that I am the one
But the kid is not my son
She says I am the one, but the kid is not my son

With the release of *Bad* (1987) Jackson broke his own record by having five No. 1 singles. By the early 1990s, Jackson's career began to suffer due to allegations of child abuse. None of the allegations were proven in a court of law nor was he ever convicted, and the cases were settled out of court. As a result of these allegations and a lack of conclusive evidence either way, his career and the public's perception of him were considerably affected. His appearance was consistently changing, speculated to be due to plastic surgeries. He may have also had problems with anorexia and drug addictions, which likely contributed to his early death in 2009. Whatever personal problems he had, Michael Jackson was always a highly respected and influential performer and member of the popular music world. Throughout his career he was honored with numerous music awards including 13 Grammy awards.

Listening Examples 20.2

Michael Jackson:

- "Thriller"
- "Billie Jean" music video
- "Billie Jean" live

Prince



Figure 20.3 Prince.

Prince Rogers Nelson (1958-2016) was an artist whose career and art featured a blend of styles, multi-faceted talents, and was greatly helped by airplay on MTV. His brand of popular music involved the melding of soul and funk with more commercial elements. His music combines funk, rock, rap, disco, and new wave, and much of it toys with eroticism. His album *Dirty Mind* was

too explicit to receive radio airplay, yet his music managed to attract a large audience. Prince's first top ten album was 1999 (1982) which reached No. 6 on the pop charts. The project *Purple Rain* (1984) included an album, a film, and a concert tour and it established Prince as a major star. Five hit singles were released, it won three Grammy awards, and won an Oscar for best original score. In the 1990s Prince changed his name to an unpronounceable symbol, but by 2000 had gone back to Prince. He passed away in 2016.

The opening song from *Purple Rain* is a prime example of Prince's blend of danceable rhythm, catchy melody, and standard song form (compare it to "Billie Jean" above). There is a brief exclamatory section where Prince sings "Are we gonna let the elevator bring us down? Oh no let's go!", that can either be seen as a "prechorus" or as the final segment of the verse. Lyrically, it's less controversial than some of his music.

Verse

If you don't like the world you're living in
Take a look around you
At least you got friends

You see I called my old lady
For a friendly word
She picked up the phone
Dropped it on the floor
"Uh! uh!" was all I heard

Prechorus

Are we gonna let the elevator
Bring us down
Oh, no Let's Go!

Chorus

Let's go crazy!
Let's get nuts!
Let's look for the purple banana
'Til they put us in the truck, let's go!

Listening Examples 20.3

Prince:

- "Little Red Corvette" from 1999 (1982)
- "Let's Go Crazy" from *Purple Rain* (1984)
- Excerpts from Prince's film "Purple Rain" (1984)

Madonna



Figure 20.4 Madonna

Madonna (Born Madonna Louise Ciccone , 1958) became one of the most popular performers of the 1980s with much of her success a result of MTV video exposure. With a background in dance, much of her music was dance oriented, but also prone to controversy either from her challenge to sexual taboos through eroticism (similar to Prince) or her social commentary (see "Papa Don't Preach" below). Her debut album *Madonna* (1983) included a number of hit singles including some "Lucky Star" and

“Holiday” (featured in Listening Examples 20.4). “Holiday” contains similar musical features as we’ve seen with Michael Jackson and Prince: danceable beats, polished productions, and standard song forms. This song in particular is longer than the average radio hit. This perhaps relates to disco as many disco recordings were longer and were meant to be heard in dance clubs. Madonna’s debut album was followed by a succession of hit albums and singles. She also began a career as a movie star with her lead role in *Desperately Seeking Susan* (1985). Much of her music uses synthesizers and synthesized orchestras, and electronic drumbeats. Like Prince, Madonna employed eroticism with her music and especially the dancing in her performances. She consistently created controversy, sparking criticism among conservative and religious Americans.

The music video for “Papa Don’t Preach” (Ch. 20 Listening Examples) follows the form of the song, which happens to be Verse-Chorus form. From her 3rd album *True Blue* (1986) the song was a No. 1 single. The verse section which is the primary source of the narrative, shows Madonna as a daughter of a conservative father and meeting a young man, while the chorus (the “Papa don’t preach” section) switches to a stark black set with Madonna dancing and singing, removed from the narrative. Lyrically, the song addresses teen pregnancy and the asserting of a young woman’s independence from a male authority figure. Some critics said the song encouraged teen pregnancy though if you listen to the lyrics beyond the surface details this accusation doesn’t quite hold up.

Bruce Springsteen



Figure 20.5 Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.

Bruce Springsteen (Born 1949) began his career in the 1970s but he gained worldwide fame when his music videos were shown on MTV. Springsteen’s music developed out of experimenting with many different rock styles, using rockabilly, rhythm and blues, folk rock, garage rock, and more. Lyrically, much of his music displays compassion for the underprivileged and for the working class, average American. Signed to Columbia records in 1972, he released his first album in 1973 in a folk rock style. His second album featured some of the members of what would become Springsteen’s backing band, the E Street Band.

Listening Examples 20.4

Madonna:

- “Holiday” (1983)
- “Papa Don’t Preach” (1986)

Bruce Springsteen:

- “Rosalita” live 1978
- “Born in the USA”

R.E.M.

R.E.M. formed in Atlanta, Georgia in 1980 by Michael Stipe (vocals), Peter Buck (guitar), Mike Mills (bass) and Bill Berry (drums). They combined punk, new wave, southern rock, the minimal textures and drones of the Velvet Underground, and other genres. The resulting sound is noted as one of the earliest examples of “alternative rock”. The band’s early sound was unique; the four instrumentalists blended into a very homogenous sound where the vocals mix with the instruments instead of sound separate from them (See “radio Free Europe, Ch. 20 Listening Examples). Peter Buck’s guitar style is a distinctive “jangly” sound, influenced by the sounds of the Beatles and the Byrds.

Later on Stipe’s vocals became more central and the band expanded their use of instruments to things such as the mellotron, mandolin, pedal steel guitar, and horns (See “Losing My Religion, Ch. 20 Listening Examples). Drummer Bill Berry left the group in 1997, and R.E.M. brought in new members to add to the sound. They broke up in 2011.



Figure 20.6 U2.

U2 formed in Dublin, Ireland in 1976 while the members were teenagers. The members are Bono (vocals), the Edge (guitar), Adam Clayton (bass), and Larry Mullin (drums). They grew up listening to New York punk groups, but also incorporated the rhythm and blues style of Irishman Van Morrison, the social concerns of Bruce Springsteen, and the use of electronics to fill out their sound. They emerged in the 1980s as spokespersons for “peace and optimism” in their music and lyrics. Many of their songs called for peace both personal and political. The guitar style of the Edge is highly distinctive through his use of delay effects that help fill out the sound with a unique ambiance.

As mentioned above, part of the unique sound of U2 is the atmospheric guitar playing of The Edge. One element to his sound is the double delay sound in which he employs two electronic delay units, both of which echo each note he plays. These two units are synchronized to create interesting rhythmic patterns that help drive the music and fill out the sound. In Ch. 20 Listening Examples, I demonstrate this in a video, playing with one delay unit first, then two. Then, I improvise with the 2 delay units for a while.

The Police



Figure 20.7 The Police.

The Police formed in 1977 in London with Sting (bass, vocals), Andy Summer (guitar) and Stewart Copeland (drums). Their music combined the beats and bass lines of reggae and ska with punk and new wave influences and pop as well. The unique vocal style of Sting was influenced by reggae. Andy Summer created a unique atmospheric guitar style influenced by jazz and the drumming of Stewart Copeland was highly sophisticated, being influenced by “world music” styles such as African drumming. They paid homage to their reggae influence with the title of their second album released in 1979, Reggatta de Blanc which means “white reggae”. With their final album Synchronicity (1983) they left behind much of the reggae influence in favor of a more produced sound, more liberal use of synthesizers, and touches of world music. The group broke up 1986 and Sting had a highly successful solo career. They reunited in 2007-2008 for a tour.

One of the group’s most powerful songs, “King of Pain”, is essentially a meditation on depression and despair. With interesting rhythmic lines from the guitar, bass and drums, the backdrop is polyrhythmic. Formally the song features a typical song form (try to ID it) with the inclusion of a “Bridge” section (in green text) to break up the feel.

There’s a little black spot on the sun today
It’s the same old thing as yesterday
There’s a black hat caught in the high tree top
There’s a flag pole rag and the wind won’t stop
I have stood here before inside the pouring rain
With the world turning circles running ’round my brain
I guess I’m always hoping that you’ll end this reign
But it’s my destiny to be the king of pain
There’s a little black spot on the sun today, that’s my soul up there
It’s the same old thing as yesterday, that’s my soul up there
There’s a black hat caught in a high tree top, that’s my soul up there
There’s a flag pole rag and the wind won’t stop, that’s my soul up there
I have stood here before inside the pouring rain
With the world turning circles running ’round my brain

I guess I'm always hoping that you'll end this reign
But it's my destiny to be the king of pain
There's a fossil that's trapped in a high cliff wall, that's my soul up there
There's a dead salmon frozen in a waterfall, that's my soul up there
There's a blue whale beached by a springtide's ebb, that's my soul up there
There's a butterfly trapped in a spider's web, that's my soul up there
I have stood here before inside the pouring rain
With the world turning circles running 'round my brain
I guess I'm always hoping that you'll end this reign
But it's my destiny to be the king of pain
There's a king on a throne with his eyes torn out
There's a blind man looking for a shadow of doubt
There's a rich man sleeping on a golden bed
There's a skeleton choking on a crust of bread
There's a red fox torn by a huntmen's pack, that's my soul up there
There's a black winged gull with a broken back, that's my soul up there
There's a little black spot on the sun today
It's the same old thing as yesterday
I have stood here before inside the pouring rain
With the world turning circles running 'round my brain
I guess I'm always hoping that you'll end this reign
But it's my destiny to be the king of pain
King of pain
King of pain, king of pain, I always be king of pain

Glam Metal and "Hair Bands"



Figure 20.8 Poison.

The androgynous hairdos and makeup of glitter rock began appearing in heavy metal with groups such as Motley Crue, Poison, Twisted Sister, and others. These groups were primarily located in Los Angeles. In contrast to other heavy metal, the songs were often about drinking, partying, and girls which gave the heavy sound a lighter image. Additionally these groups became known as "hair bands" because of their extravagant hair styles. Poison's drummer was actually their hairdresser.

Poison had numerous hits in the 1980s with songs like "Nothin' But a Good Time" and the ballad "Every Rose Has Its Thorns". The group's music was a mixture of the heavy sounds of metal bands like Iron Maiden and Judas Priest with lyrics about girls, parties, and other "joyful" topics. Motley Crue was another glam metal group that sang of their hedonistic lifestyles (which they truly lived) and had a party image. These bands were the most popular in rock music throughout the second half of the 1980s. However, once grunge music began gaining popularity in the early 1990s, the decadent and happy glam metal began losing its popularity.

Examine the lyrical excerpt to "Nothin' But a Good Time" below and try to identify the form based on what we've seen with regard to song form in the 1980s.

Not a dime, I can't pay my rent
I can barely make it through the week
Saturday night I'd like to make my girl
But right now I can't make ends meet
I'm always workin' slavin' every day
Gotta get a break from that same old same old
I need a chance just to get away
If you could hear me think this is what I'd say
Don't need nothin' but a good time
How can I resist

Ain't lookin' for nothin' but a good time
And it don't get better than this
They say I spend my money on women and wine
But I couldn't tell you where I spent last night
I'm really sorry about the shape I'm in
I just like my fun every now and then
I'm always workin' slavin' every day
Gotta get a break from that same old same old
I need a chance just to get away
If you could hear me think this is what I'd say
Don't need nothin' but a good time
How can I resist
Ain't lookin' for nothin' but a good time
And it don't get better than this

Listening Examples 20.5

R.E.M.:

- “Radio Free Europe”
- “Losing My Religion”

The Police: “Roxanne” by The Police. Notice the influence of reggae on the music through the use of hesitation beats accented in the guitar. Sting’s voice has a light and airy quality to it, with the pronunciation of words influenced by Jamaican artists.

Poison: The video for “Nothin’ But a Good Time” by Poison. The music is heavy, but lacks the type of aggression of other types of hard rock or heavy metal such as Metallica, with catchy, upbeat vocal hooks and lyrics. The tempo is slower than other heavy musical styles of the 1980s like Metallica or Slayer, making the music more suitable for dancing. The video is typical for hair metal bands with a variety of outlandish outfits and hairdos, lots of flashing colored lights, and sudden, quick camera changes.

Digital Delay or Echo

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1.21: Alternative Rock

Hüsker Dü

Hüsker Dü began in 1979 as a punk group but pioneered a style that blended punk energy with a pop oriented melodic sound. Remember, originally punk music more often had monotone vocal lines, shouted or screamed. This blend of high energy, aggressive punk with a highly melodic sensibility became the basis for ‘alternative’ rock and ‘pop punk’ that gained popularity in the 1990s. Hüsker Dü served as an important influence on alternative rock groups such as Nirvana. They used heavy guitar sounds (called “buzzsaw”), pounding drums, fast tempos, and melodic vocals. The group disbanded in 1987.

Examine the lyrics to the song “Makes No Sense at All” by Hüsker Dü and try to identify the form.

Walking around with your head in the clouds
It makes no sense at all
Sell yourself short, but you’re walking so tall
It makes no sense at all
Is it important? You’re yelling so loud
It makes no sense at all
Walking around with your head in the clouds
It makes no sense at all
Makes no difference at all
Yeah, it makes no sense at all
Makes no difference at all
Well I don’t know why you wanna tell me
When I’m right or when I’m wrong
It’s the same thing, in your mind,
The only time I’m right is when I play along
When I play along
Walking around with your head in the clouds
It makes no sense at all
Sell yourself short, but you’re walking so tall
It makes no sense at all
Is it important? You’re yelling so loud
It makes no sense at all
Walking around with your head in the clouds
It makes no sense at all
Makes no difference at all
Yeah, it makes no sense at all
Makes no difference at all
You concern yourself with evidence
It’s evident to me
Well you say you’ve got the tiger by the tail
But I don’t see these things that way
See these things that way
Walking around with your head in the clouds
It makes no sense at all
Sell yourself short, but you’re walking so tall
It makes no sense at all
Is it important? You’re yelling so loud
It makes no sense at all
Walking around with your head in the clouds
It makes no sense at all
Makes no difference at all
Yeah, it makes no sense at all
Makes no difference at all
Walking around with your head in the clouds
It makes no sense at all

Sonic Youth



Figure 21.1 Sonic Youth in 2009.

The roots of grunge music can be found in the group Sonic Youth from New York, formed in 1981. They experimented with electronics, alternate guitar tunings, and prepared instruments where they placed different items such as screws into the strings of their guitars to achieve unique timbres. Layers of feedback and dissonances were used by the group's guitarists Lee Ranaldo and Thurston Moore. They helped promote the grunge movement by letting those groups play opening performances for them. Their noise rock sound and DIY approach was influenced by punk music and pointed the way toward grunge.

As the band grew, they began incorporating more melodic material and standard song forms into their music, all the while retaining the unusual and experimental instrumental sounds they are known for. The album *Sister* (1987) successfully displayed this new approach. "Kotton Crown" features a simple melody that repeats over and over, echoing a guitar line.

Throughout, unusual guitar sounds float through the background. Soon after the release of *Sister*, the group was signed to a major label and their popularity continued to grow. After 30 years as a group, the band went on hiatus in 2011.

The Pixies



Figure 21.2 The Pixies live.

The Pixies, along with Hüsker Dü, were one of the earliest "alternative rock" groups that established the sound that groups like Nirvana would later develop. They formed in Boston in 1986, and broke up in 1993. They regrouped in 2004 after gaining much popularity throughout the 1990s and perform world tours with sell out shows. The group combines punk, new wave, surf, and other styles along with large dynamic shifts from soft to loud and vice versa. "Monkey Gone to Heaven" shows a mix of monotone punk style vocals in the quiet Verse or A section (the vocals in this section sound quite similar to the proto-punk vocal style of the Velvet Underground), while the Chorus or B section features a melodic vocal line and the instruments play louder and more intensely. The loud-soft dynamic contrast featured here is a common thread through much of the Pixies music, and would serve as an influence on bands that came after, including Nirvana. Lyrically, the song is a commentary on pollution and the human impact on the environment.

Listening Examples 21.1

Husker Du: "Makes No Sense At All"

Sonic Youth: Notice how the guitars are creating an unorthodox layer of sound/noise as accompaniment for the shouting vocals instead of standard chords/riffs in "Brother James" from *Kill Yr Idols* (1983). Now listen to "Cotton Crown" from *Sister* (1987).

The Pixies: "Gigantic" makes use of the soft-loud-soft-loud form later heavily used by Nirvana and other "grunge" groups. This dynamic contrast is most often a feature that ties in with Verse-Chorus form. Most often in alternative music, the Verse is featured at a soft dynamic, then the chorus kicks in with a sudden dynamic shift to very loud. Now listen to "Monkey Gone to Heaven".

Finally, I demonstrate one simple way to "prepare" a guitar: I put some guitar picks in the strings. I show the sound without any effects first, then I turn on a few effects processors.

Industrial Metal

Industrial metal began in England in the late 1970s and soon made its way to the U.S. It represents an extension of the punk movement in that they felt that there were “intrusive controls on every aspect of their lives” by the government. Musically the genre features an extensive amount of noise that was layered in different textures. In addition to distorted guitars and other distorted drones, synthesizers were often used.

Ministry and Nine Inch Nails

Ministry formed in Chicago in the early 1980s, and became one of the most successful industrial groups with their 1992 album *Psalm 69* which went platinum. The sound features heavy metal style guitar riffs, sampled audio, and synthesizers. Lyrically the group is often critical of modern society and religion. Vocally, singer Al Jorgensen often chants or screams vocals through electronic processing to further distort the timbre of his voice.



Figure 21.3 Nine Inch Nails.

Nine Inch Nails formed in 1988 under the direction of singer/songwriter/instrumentalist/producer Trent Reznor who remains the group’s only official member. NIN incorporates synthesizers, sampled audio, electronic and live drums, and distorted guitars. Lyrically the song themes are often “tortured, angry, and alienated.” Vocally, Reznor incorporates melodic vocals into the aggressive timbre of the music, adding an element of pop in which listeners are drawn in a little more easily than the music of a group like Ministry. Both groups also became fixtures on the annual Lollapalooza festival, the most important festival in the early 1990s alternative rock scene. In the song “Head Like a Hole” by Nine Inch Nails (from the debut album *Pretty Hate Machine*, 1989) we see a further development on the standard verse-chorus song form where the chorus is drawn out into three distinct parts (the verse is fairly short). Part 1 could be considered a prechorus, but parts 2 and 3 are distinctly “Chorus-like” in that part 1 seemed to resolve into them.

Verse

God money I’ll do anything for you.
God money just tell me what you want me to.
God money nail me up against the wall.
God money don’t want everything he wants it all.

Chorus

Part 1

no you can’t take it
no you can’t take it
no you can’t take that away from me
no you can’t take it
no you can’t take it
no you can’t take that away from me

Part 2

head like a hole.
black as your soul.
I’d rather die than give you control.

head like a hole.
black as your soul.
I'd rather die than give you control.

Part 3

bow down before the one you serve.
you're going to get what you deserve.
bow down before the one you serve.
you're going to get what you deserve.

Verse

God money's not looking for the cure.
God money's not concerned with the sick amongst the pure.
God money let's go dancing on the backs of the bruised.
God money's not one to choose

(Chorus)

Listening Examples 21.2

Ministry: “Stigmata”

Nine Inch Nails: “Head Like a Hole”

Grunge

The term “grunge” is an umbrella term loosely applied to the alternative rock groups that came out of Seattle in the late 1980s-early 1990s. The term lumps together groups that exhibit very different musical characteristics from one another. In general, though, Grunge groups tend to have high energy, aggressive sounding music in the punk and metal realms, and a dark/somewhat melancholy lyrical approach.

Soundgarden



Figure 21.4 Soundgarden performing live.

Soundgarden formed in Seattle, Washington in 1984 and became one of the early “grunge” bands to gain a strong following. They took the influence of heavy metal style vocals, and incorporated loud crunching guitars. The guitar approach is riff based and influenced by heavy metal as well. The group was the first of the Seattle-based “grunge” groups to sign with a major record label A&M. With the release of Superunknown in 1994, Soundgarden gained their biggest success. The album was a hit on the pop charts and gained two Grammy awards for the songs “Black Hole Sun” and “Spoonman”. Soundgarden inspired other grunge bands such as Mudhoney and Nirvana.

Nirvana



21.5 Nirvana album cover.

Nirvana formed in Aberdeen, Washington in 1987 and went on to become the most popular grunge group of the early 1990s. Their sound combined elements of punk with the melodic sensibility of groups such as the Pixies and Husker Du. They had a hit single with “Smells Like Teen Spirit” off their second album *Nevermind* (1991). This album was immensely popular and brought alternative rock into the mainstream. The MTV Unplugged performance in 1993 showcased a new side of the band as they performed a more dynamically subtle concert that showed their music could stand strongly without the use of extreme volume. Cobain had trouble with the idea of fame and feared that the band’s anti-establishment messages were being overshadowed by their popularity. He took his own life in 1994.

“Sliver” was originally released as a single in 1990 (before the group was internationally famous) and showcases the soft-loud verse-chorus approach inspired by The Pixies and found in later songs such as “Smells Like Teen Spirit”. In the case of “Sliver” however, each verse becomes louder and more musically intense than the previous verse, until the verse actually becomes more intense than the chorus itself.

Listening Examples 21.3

Soundgarden: “Spoonman”

Nirvana:

- “Smells Like Teen Spirit”
- “Sliver”
- “Come As You Are” from the MTV Unplugged performance in 1993. Notice the wide range of the vocal melody over top of the simple accompaniment. The melodies are more apparent in the overall mix of instruments in the minimal and delicate environment of the acoustic set.

Pearl Jam

Pearl Jam formed in Seattle in 1990 and entered the mainstream music scene with their debut album *Ten* in 1991. Their sound was guitar-based with riffs and elements of punk, acoustic music, blues, and psychedelic rock. The vocals of Eddie Vedder were dramatic and passionate and he often sang of intense, personal topics such as depression, suicide, and loneliness. They were at first accused of trying to cash in on the popularity of grunge but have since been noted for refusing certain music industry practices such as letting Ticketmaster control their ticket prices. The group became increasingly uncomfortable with success and began refusing to make music videos, which by the early 1990s had become the most important method of promotion.

Alice in Chains



21.7 Layne Staley of Alice in Chains.

Alice in Chains formed in Seattle in 1987, and became one of the most popular “grunge” bands of the 1990s, along with Soundgarden, Nirvana, and Pearl Jam. The primary songwriters were Layne Staley (vocals) and Jerry Cantrell (vocals and guitar).

Although categorized as “grunge” or alternative rock, the band’s sound does not fit these categories. The sound is more identifiable as heavy metal, though they perform acoustic music and use melodic vocals. One of the most distinctive elements of the group are the harmonized vocals of Layne Staley and guitarist Jerry Cantrell. They often used atypical intervals for their vocal harmonies that added musical depth and a dark, eerie quality to their sound.

Their 1992 album *Dirt* has become quadruple platinum, and their albums *Jar of Flies* (1994) and *Alice in Chains* (1995) both debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard pop charts. After an MTV Unplugged appearance in 1996, the band’s activities dropped off likely due to Staley’s drug addiction. He died in 2002, and the band has since reformed with a new vocalist and continues to tour.

Listening Examples 21.4

Pearl Jam: “Alive”

Alice in Chains: “Rooster” perfectly showcases the dark, eerie yet melodic style of Alice in Chains. Lyrically the song references the experiences in the Vietnam War of Jerry Cantrell’s father. This song features an extended quiet introduction that finally erupts into a heavy sounding section.

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1.22: 1990s and Early Electronic Music

Green Day



Figure 22.1 Billie Joe Armstrong of Green Day live.

Green Day is a pop punk band that formed in California in 1987. The band is led by songwriter/vocalist/guitarist Billy Joe Armstrong. The group was a nationally popular punk groups influenced by the melodic and catchy style of the Replacements and Husker Du. Their style has been imitated by countless pop-punk groups since, specifically their use of simple chord progressions and catchy melodies. Their major label debut *Dookie* (1994) brought them widespread popularity and an infamous appearance at Woodstock 94. “Paper Lantern” (*Listening Examples 22.1*) showcases the “Buzzsaw” guitar tone from groups like Husker Du. The vocal style is a hybrid of classic monotone vocals and melodic vocals.

Phish



Figure 22.2 Phish performing live.

Phish formed in Vermont in 1983. The group is made up of Trey Anastasio (guitar), Page McConnell (piano), Mike Gordon (bass), and Jon Fishman (drums). All four members sing in addition to being highly skilled instrumentalists. Their style combines a dizzying amount of different musical genres such as progressive rock, psychedelic rock, funk, electronica, jazz, bluegrass, folk, and barbershop acapella into a musical kaleidoscope.

All these genres are combined with lengthy and exploratory improvisation such as the Grateful Dead had done, though Phish have forged a completely different sound than the Dead. Phish, like the Grateful Dead, are primarily known as a live band and fans will follow the band on tour. Phish gradually gained popularity through word-of-mouth. Like the Dead, Phish allowed their fans to tape their shows, and the trading of these live tapes led to new converts. In the mid 1990s they grew to become one of the most popular groups in the country with little to no help from MTV or radio. The group broke up in 2004 but reunited in 2009 and have continued to tour since then.

Dave Matthews Band



Figure 22.3 Dave Matthews of Dave Matthews Band.

The Dave Matthews Band formed in Virginia in 1991, led by singer/songwriter/guitarist Dave Matthews. The group consists of electric violin, acoustic and electric guitar, bass, and drums. Saxophonist LeRoi Moore was an important and distinctive member of

group until his sudden death in 2008. The group has an eclectic sound that combines pop, folk, jazz and other genres with live improvisation. Their jams are more tight knit and tend not to stray from the song they are playing, unlike Phish.

Matthews has an intense and dramatic vocal style, and his songwriting is unique. He is notable for the complex guitar parts he plays while simultaneously singing in unrelated rhythms, resembling the style of African griot singers. The fact that

Matthews himself is South African is notable for this reason. Some songs are energetic jam vehicles, some are whimsical folk style tunes. The group maintains an immense popularity, live and on record. They have had five consecutive albums debut at No. 1 and have sold 30-40 million records worldwide, and tour consistently.

Radiohead



Figure 22.4 Headshots of Radiohead members.

Radiohead formed in Oxford, England in 1985. The original lineup has not changed for their 20+ year existence. The group combines sophisticated avant-garde electronics with traditional rock sounds and instruments. That being said, many members are multi-instrumentalists and will play a variety of instruments on their records and on stage. Radiohead consists of Thom Yorke (vocals, guitar), Johnny Greenwood (guitar, keyboards), Ed O'Brien (guitar, vocals), Colin Greenwood (bass, keyboard), and Phil Selway (drums, percussion).

The group began as an alternative rock group with their debut album Pablo Honey (1993) using lyrical themes of angst and alienation. This continued through to their third album, OK Computer (1997) which also saw the incorporation of more electronic sounds, something which has continued to evolve on their subsequent releases.

Listening Examples 22.1

Green Day: "Paper Lanterns"

Phish: First, listen to "Down With Disease." Then, listen to an example of the improvisation of Phish. The 18 minute version of the song "Twist" showcases a minimalist approach to jamming in which a drum groove is maintained for the duration of the improvisation. The other instruments come up with ambient sounds and repeated melodies or gestures that evolve slowly over time. As the jam goes on, the sounds become more noisy and less melodic, resembling the complexity of an orchestra. Notice how the lights interact with the music in the moment.

Dave Matthews Band: First, listen to DMB's version of "Satellite". To illustrate the intricacy of the guitar part to "Satellite", I demonstrate the bass line and melody in isolation, then I play the full part. See if you can identify the bass line and the melody when I play the full guitar part.

Radiohead: "No Surprises"

Developments in Hip Hop

By the early 1990s Hip Hop was a well established musical style growing in popularity. At the same time, different branches of hip hop were emerging utilizing

ever more diverse musical inspirations. Some hip hop began using the music as a way of expressing ideas of peace and love, concepts more common in soul music and 1960s pop. Arrested Development is a prime example of this approach, and their positive hip hop found new listeners that didn't necessarily enjoy or identify with hip hop groups such as NWA. Some groups began fusing hip hop with other musical styles such as heavy metal and hard rock. Bands like Rage Against the Machine, Beastie Boys, and Red Hot Chili Peppers blended, in varying ratios, elements of rock such as live instruments like distorted guitars and aggressive drums instead of samples and electronic beats.

Arrested Development



Figure 22.5 Arrested Development live.

Arrested Development was a hip hop group that formed in 1988. The sound of the group stood in stark contrast to the Gangster Rap which was extremely popular in the early 1990s. The group rapped about topics like spirituality, love, and peace. The music usually retained funk-esque beats/backdrops common in hip-hop, while including members who sang and rapped, as well as a mix of men and women members. They also came from an Afro-centric perspective, often including African folk percussion and vocal stylings.

The Beastie Boys



Figure 22.6 The Beastie Boys

The Beastie Boys formed in 1981 in New York City beginning as a punk group but transitioning to hip hop by the mid-1980s. They became one of the biggest selling hip-hop groups of all time. Their music often combines hip hop beats and samples with live instruments reflecting their rock roots such as distorted electric guitars and live drums.

Listening Examples 22.2

N.W.A.: “Straight Outta Compton” (1988)

Arrested Development: “People Everyday” (1992)

Beastie Boys: “So What Cha Want” (1992)

Nas: “Life’s a Bitch” (1994)

A Tribe Called Quest: “Electric Relaxation” (1994)

Notorious B.I.G.: “Juicy” (1994)

Rap and Metal Fusion

Rage Against the Machine



Figure 22.7 Rage Against the Machine.

Rage Against the Machine formed in 1991 in Los Angeles. The band combines hip hop and metal with political and socially-conscious lyrics often critical of the United States government policies, both foreign and domestic. Zach de la Rocha (vocals)

brings the hip hop element through his rapped vocals, while the band creates a heavy, riff-based sound which includes the unorthodox guitar style of Tom Morello. Morello creates new sounds on his instrument including an emulation of the turntable scratching of DJs. Lyrically the song is political: a paranoid vision of a corrupt government suppressing free speech and a military-industrial complex running rampant.

Listening Examples 22.3

Rage Against the Machine: “Bulls on Parade” (1996)

Electronic Music: Origins

Electronic music uses sounds that originate from electronic instruments, recorded and manipulated tape sounds, and synthesized sounds. The origins of electronic music lie largely in the works of 20th c. classical composers such as Pierre Schaeffer (pictured above) and Karlheinz Stockhausen. Composers used early synthesizers to create electronic timbres and blended those sounds with acoustic instruments and “non-musical” sounds to create “Music Concrete”, a term coined by composer Pierre Schaeffer literally translated as concrete music or music that is permanently documented as a “performance” on tape, set in stone for all time.

We have discussed Music Concrete already in class when we looked at the music of Pink Floyd, for example. In that instance, non-musical sounds such as cash registers, coins, speech, and clocks ticking were used throughout the album *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973). In most cases, these sounds were used as transitions between songs, but created an interesting and unorthodox sound environment for a rock album.

Composers like Pierre Schaeffer use these sounds as the basis for entire compositions. For example, in the first of five pieces using music concrete titled “Etude aux Chemins de Fer” from 1948, Schaeffer recorded a variety of sounds emanating from trains including whistles, screeching, and the rhythmic shuffle of the train’s movement. These recordings were then manipulated in a variety of ways, ultimately organized into a final form (Concrete music!). Schaeffer uses tape looping throughout the work, which involves repeating a particular sound multiple times to create a sense of cohesion, a feeling of a musical phrase, and sometimes to create a rhythmic pulse.

Raymond Scott



Figure 22.8 Raymond Scott

Raymond Scott – (1908-1994) was an American composer of classical, jazz, and electronic music. Scott began focusing on electronic music in the 1940s-50s. He composed music used in a variety of applications including film, commercials, music for soothing babies, and cartoons. Much of his electronic music involves synthesizers, some of which were invented by Scott himself. Rather than music concrete, which involves recording and then manipulating those sounds electronically, synthesis

involves electronics from the start. A synthesizer is an instrument that generates sound purely electronically; it has no acoustic properties. The result is that in early synthesizers the sound was completely foreign to listeners. Later on as synthesizer technology developed, certain manufacturers began developing synthesizers that could emulate acoustic instruments. Scott was also important in the development of sequencers, devices which could be programmed with data that transmitted a musical sequence (melodic and/or rhythmic) to a synthesizer.

Scott composed one of his best known pieces, “The Toy Trumpet”, as a piece for jazz band in the 1930s to showcase the trumpet through a series of sections that undergo a variety of changes, with catchy melodies strung throughout the piece. Decades later Scott chose to arrange this work for synthesizers, drastically altering the sound and mood of the original with the new, futuristic timbre of early synthesizers. Both can be found in Ch. 22 Listening Examples.

Kraftwerk

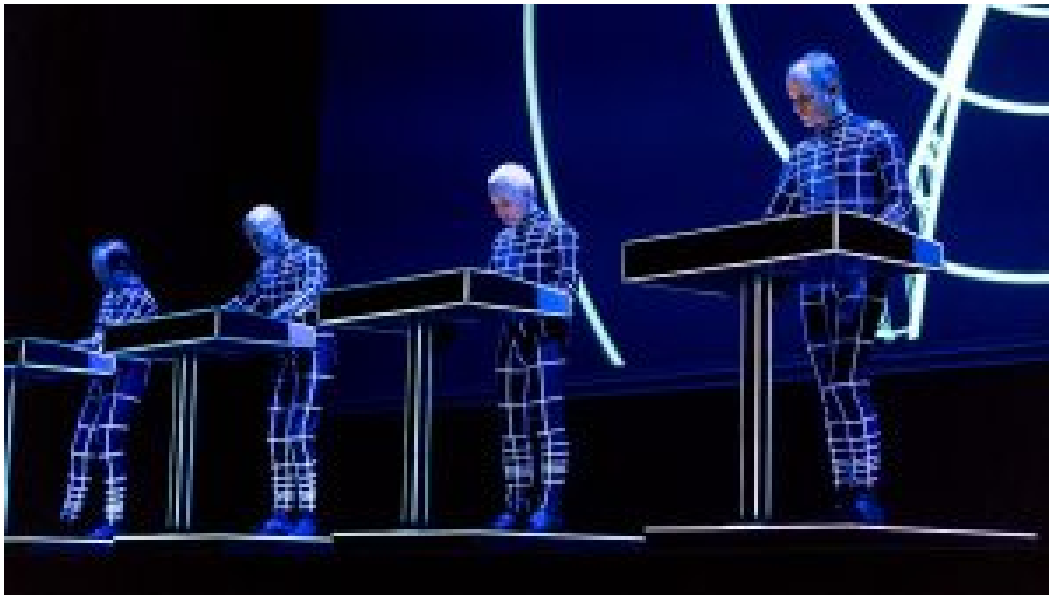


Figure 22.9 Kraftwerk

Kraftwerk is an electronic music group from Germany that formed in 1970. They are credited with popularizing electronic music. The sound of the group began as experimental, improvised rock music, but eventually grew into the electronically-based sound they are known for. They developed a bleak, robotic image and sound

that inspired groups such as Yellow Magic Orchestra. Their sound is almost purely electronic; even vocals are usually processed electronically in some way. In the 1970s, the group utilized the latest technologies including synthesizers and custom electronic percussion instruments. The group continues to perform to the present day.

“Autobahn” (1974, found in Ch. 22 Listening Examples) features mostly electronic sounds and emulates the free feeling of driving fast down the highways of Germany (The Autobahn). There are two primary sections that alternate, A being vocal-based and B being instrumental with an element of improvisation. The entire piece is quite long but the group released a shorter, radio-friendly version as well.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, Kraftwerk had fully matured and developed their approach which had essentially become entirely electronic. The music became less wandering/experimental and had crystallized into shorter pieces, occasionally providing melodic hooks as in the case of “Pocket Calculator” (1981, found in Ch. 22 Listening Examples).

Listening Examples 22.4

Pierre Schaeffer: “*Étude pathétique*”, the fifth of the 5 short pieces using music concrete. Schaeffer uses sounds like speech and coughing to creating repetitive rhythmic pulses.

Karlheinz Stockhausen: “*Studie I*” (1953)

Gyorgy Ligeti: “*Artikulation*” (1958) complete with synchronized visual score

Raymond Scott:

- “Toy Trumpet” Original Version
- “Toy Trumpet” Electronic/Synth Version
- “Lightworks”

Kraftwerk:

- “Autobahn”
- “Robots”
- “Pocket Calculator”
- “Pocket Calculator” live

Synthpop

Yellow Magic Orchestra

The group Yellow Magic Orchestra formed in the late 1970s by Haruomi Hosono (from the band Happy End) and combined elements of pop music (including J-Pop) with electronic music to create synthpop. Electronic music had been explored by groups in Europe such as Kraftwerk, but Yellow Magic Orchestra brought a positive and joyous edge to the genre. Their music is often dance-oriented and nearly always fully electronic in timbre, though occasionally acoustic instruments are used to supplement the electronic sounds. The music was inspired by video game and computer game music as well, and served to inspire future video game composers.

The song “Firecracker” (found in Ch. 22 Listening Examples) opens with one minute of synthesized sounds arranged in a seemingly random way before the main part of the music begins. Many of these sounds, realized on 1970s synthesizers, would form the basis of early video game music. The piece is danceable, melodic and catchy, and resembles mainstream pop music in most ways. “Rydeen” (found in Ch. 22 Listening Examples) featuring an augmented ensemble consisting of guitar, drums, and four synthesizer players. The overall effect is a dense polyrhythmic texture with multiple complementary lines, very much like classical orchestral music.

Aphex Twin



22.10 Aphex Twin

Richard D. James, better known by his stage name Aphex Twin, is a composer of electronic music. The music of Aphex Twin explores ambient dream-like textures, the dance-based electronic genres techno and electronica, glitch and noise, and rock/metal. His music brought a new level of experimentation, creativity and craftsmanship to the genre of electronica. His composition “Come To Daddy” blends fast tempos, electronic beats, a heavy distorted riff and distorted vocals singing darkly humorous and simple lyrics. The piece was intended as a parody and unintentionally became one of Aphex Twin’s most popular compositions.

Listening Examples 22.5

Yellow Magic Orchestra:

- “Tong Poo”
- “Firecracker”
- “Firecracker” live

Brian Eno: “Discreet Music” full album

Juan Atkins/Cybotron: “Clear”

Aphex Twin:

- “Come to Daddy” (Music video)
- “Xtal”, the opening track from Aphex Twin’s debut lp *Selected Ambient Works 85-92* is much more representative of his style: a blend of ambient electronic textures and danceable beats.

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1.23: African Popular Music

The popular music of Africa is greatly varied from region to region and culture to culture. Though most African popular music is influenced, to some degree, by western popular music and Afro Cuban music in one way or another, the traditional music of Africa plays the most important part in this music. North African music is the result of a fusion of the traditional music of Islam and the Middle East with cultures of Africa and the Mediterranean. Much of it incorporates the folk instruments, musical scales, and rhythms of North Africa with elements of western popular music. The music of West Africa is highly distinctive with its use of highly complex rhythms and melodies. This style is known as Afropop. West African popular songs often incorporate a single chord vamp over complex rhythms, much like funk music. Central African popular music took the influence of Cuban music in the mid-20th century with the dance music called Rumba. The guitar-driven Soukous style emerged from this fusion. East Africa is somewhat related to North Africa due to the influence of the middle east and Islamic culture in the region. The traditional folk music is a very important element in the popular music of countries such as Ethiopia. South African popular music offers a blend of Western and African styles. The music of Zimbabwe is perhaps the most unique, and uses the characteristic sound of the Mbira, a hand held percussion instrument that involves playing metal keys with the thumbs. This day's lecture will touch on a few of these regions with a special focus on the popular music of West Africa.

North Africa: Khaled



Figure 23.1 Khaled.

Khaled (Born 1960) is a popular Algerian Rai singer. Rai is a folk music featuring a mixture of traditional Bedouin shepherd music and French, Spanish, African, and Arabic musical forms. Rai has become a form of popular music as well, incorporating the traditional with elements of western popular music. Since the 1990s, funk, hip hop, and club dance music have been incorporated into Rai.

Khaled was the first Rai performer to gain international success, beginning in the 1980s. With his album “Khaled” in 1992 he began to incorporate western sounds into his music, working with an American producer. The sound combined traditional North African instruments with western beats and rhythmic patterns created with computers and keyboards. The popular song “Didi” (1992) is very western-influenced, featuring both traditional North African and western instruments and melodic elements with a rock style beat.

Listening Examples 23.1

“Bakhta” by Khaled displays more North African folk influences including traditional instruments, scales and rhythmic accents. Vocally, he explores a more folk-influenced guttural sound. These sounds set the music apart from standard western popular music. There are elements that can be related back to the music Western listeners are familiar with. First, the vocal phrases themselves are concise and serve as melodic “hooks” that stick to one’s memory relatively quickly. Second, western song forms apparent in the song, as there are two distinct sections that alternate throughout the song.

West Africa

The music of West Africa is highly distinctive with its use of highly complex rhythms and melodies. West African popular songs often incorporate a single-chord vamp over dense layers of multiple rhythmic patterns, much like funk music. The melodies, whether vocal or instrumental, are often much longer and more complex than standard western pop melodies, sounding improvised but usually thoroughly composed and expertly executed. This sound is quite close to the style of African-American gospel singing. In fact, many West African melodies can evoke, in the ear of the western listener, reminders of the blues or gospel, the direct descendants of African music. Harmony (chord progressions) are not emphasized as much, usually incorporating a single chord or occasionally a second or third implied chord. This serves to heighten attention to the already complex rhythms and melodies as complex chord changes could distract from the other elements.

Exercise 23.1

Read through the article, “[Popular Music in Africa](#)” by Edna M. Smith. It’s an older article with certain dated information such as the fact that in 1962 there weren’t very many pianos in the bands of West Africa or that the guitarists at that time were unaccustomed to the chords of American jazz. It is also written by an author from a western classical musical standpoint, containing some subjective/judgmental comments on popular music in general. It is, however, interesting from a historical standpoint, but most importantly, the article describes the blending of certain western styles with traditional African music. Pay special attention to the descriptions of what western musical characteristics were being used by the African musicians, and don’t worry about certain musical terms that you haven’t learned.

King Sunny Ade



Figure 23.2 King Sunny Ade

King Sunny Adé – (born 1946) Is a performer of Nigerian Yoruba Juju music. The music of the Yoruba people is characterized by complex layers of rhythms, and important element in Juju music. Juju music is derived from traditional Yoruba percussion, and since the mid 20th century includes western electric instruments.

The performances of King Sunny Ade are characterized by his elaborate dance steps and his guitar skills. A wide variety of instruments are found in the music including traditional percussion such as talking drums, and western instruments such as electric guitar, pedal steel guitar, and synthesizers.

Afro Beat – Fela Kuti

Fela Kuti – (1938-1997) Was a Nigerian composer, singer, and multi-instrumentalist who was the primary creator of Afro beat. In addition to music, Kuti was a human rights activist and important figure in Nigerian politics. Kuti studied music in London, England and began combining African highlife music and jazz. Afro beat is

characterized by use of call and response, complex interacting rhythms (multiple rhythmic layers), and long, slow developing music. The use of horn sections and multiple guitars add to the density and complexity of the music.

He formed a group in the late 1960s that began playing Afro beat By the early 1970s his music used social topics for the basis of his lyrics. He was endangered at many points in his life for his music and his politics. He died in 1997 and his funeral was attended by over one million people at the site of his former compound.

Ali Farka Toure



Figure 23.3 Ali Farka Toure.

Ali Farka Toure – (1939-2006) Was a Malian guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter whose music represented a blend of traditional African music and American blues. His unique guitar style marks him as an influential guitarist on African popular music. He became well known as one of the first African blues musicians to gain popularity throughout the continent.

The music of Ali Farka Toure blended the traditional west African rhythms and vocal stylings with blues-influenced guitar lines. When listening to the recording in Ch. 23 Listening Examples, compare the guitar style of Toure with the styles of blues guitarists such as T-Bone Walker and B.B. King, noting similarities and differences. His son, Vieux Farka Toure continues to perform and develop the musical style pioneered by his father.

Oumou Sangare



Figure 23.4 Oumou Sangaré.

Oumou Sangare (Born 1968) Is a Grammy award winning Malian singer and composer who performs Wassoulou music. Wassoulou is primarily sung by female singers, and lyrically often addresses woman's rights issues in Africa. Wassoulou music often features call-and-response, passionate vocals, a mixture of traditional instruments such as the Kora, single chord vamps, complex rhythms, and complex melodies.

Her band is a mix of Africa and West, using traditional percussion, a Kora, and Ngoni (a small bowed string instrument) and western instruments such as flute, drums, and electric guitar and bass. In this sense it bears resemblance in some ways to the Afro Pop of Fela Kuti. Sangare's voice is incredibly powerful, reminiscent of the singers of classic blues like Bessie Smith. In addition to her music, she is an advocate for women's rights.

Listening Examples 23.2

King Sunny Ade:

- [King Sunny Ade & His African Beats](#) (Full Album)
- [King Sunny Ade Live 1984](#)

Fela Kuti: The song below, "[Original Sufferhead](#)", explores in it's lyrics the topic of Western countries providing aid to people suffering in Africa even though the continent itself is fertile and full of riches which are largely owned by western corporations and 'developed nations'. Musically, "Original Sufferhead" is composed in a similar way to the music of James Brown and other American funk performers. The music contains a simple groove over which many layers of rhythms (polyrhythm) interact to create a complex web of sound. Here is "[Original Sufferhead: Part 2.](#)"

Ali Farka Toure:

- "[Ketine](#)"
- [Ali Farka Toure live on acoustic guitar](#) with Kora player Toumani Diabate
- [Ali Farka Toure live on electric guitar](#)

Oumou Sangare: Notice in the [performance by Oumou Sangare](#) below how the vocal melodies are lengthy and complex. They don't contain short hooks that are found in many Western pop songs. Also notice the complex interaction between all the instruments; each has a defined role and adds to the overall musical texture. The individual parts within the texture are often repetitive or simple, but, as in funk music, each part contributes to an overall texture that is quite complex.

South Africa: Mbaqanga

Mbaqanga is a style of popular music that developed in the country of South Africa. The style features a blend of western popular music and African folk music. Specifically, it features a blend of South African vocal styles and western instruments such as electric guitars and drum sets. Minimal chord progressions inspired by western pop music are often used to support the full, complex vocal harmonies without overshadowing them. The Makgona Tsohle Band is noted for inventing the instrumental style of Mbaqanga.

One of the earliest and most influential groups performing Mbaqanga was Mahlathini and the Mahotella Queens. The group formed in 1964 and was active into the 1970s until members drifted into other areas. In the late 1980s the group reunited due to the success

of Paul Simon's *Graceland*, an album that combined Simon's folk music with South African music, particularly Mbaqanga, and brought a new interest from western listeners to "world" music.

The group was comprised of three essential, distinctive elements consisting of Mahlathini, the male lead vocalist who sang in a guttural, deep-voiced style known as "groaning"; The Mahotella Queens, female vocalists who sang in rich, complex harmony; and The Makgona Tsohle Band, an instrumental group which used western instruments such as electric guitar, saxophone, and drum sets.

Listening Examples 23.3

Mahlathini and the Mahotella Queens: "[Jabulani Mabungu](#)"

Mbira and Zimbabwe

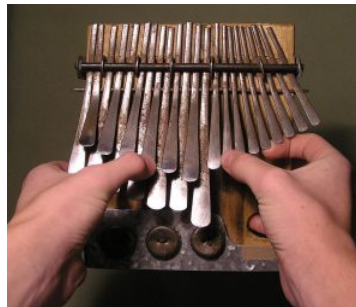


Figure 23.5 A mbira or "thumb piano."

The mbira (also known as "thumb piano, pictured above) is an instrument associated with the music of the southern African nation of Zimbabwe. It features a wooden box with metal keys attached that are played with both thumbs, often in an alternating fashion. The size and shape of these keys determine the pitches associated with each key. Sometimes the keys are tuned to western scales which result in western-sounding melodies, but often they are tuned in a way that is only somewhat close to western scales. The sound of the mbira is soft, percussive, and polyrhythms can be executed with significant complexity using only two thumbs. The instrument is associated with Griot singers who are known to come up with their own tunings and specific rhythmic patterns.

A true master mbira player is Forward Kwenda from the Manicaland region of Zimbabwe. His music is folk-based with socially-conscious lyrics in the tradition of opposing colonial rule. His music also touches on spiritual subjects pertinent to the Zimbabwean culture as well as universal ideas. His playing features a complex improvisational style. Kwenda has done much to bring the music of Zimbabwe and the Mbira to the United States including numerous live appearances. In the recording below, the music features multiple Mbira parts, percussion parts, and a vocal line. Melodic ideas return much like refrains in western popular music. Unlike most western popular music, the melodic phrases are not typical lengths such as 2, 4, or 8 bars. Rather, the vocal phrases are more unpredictable, much like the delta blues approach of Robert Johnson in the 1920s.

Listening Exercises 23.4

Forward Kwenda: "[Tadzungaira](#)"

I play a simple polyrhythmic pattern on a kalimba, an instrument closely related to the Mbira. It is small, tuned to an unusual and haunting pitch set, and is played with the same thumb-based technique as an Mbira. I play a polyrhythm that combines 4 and 6 beat patterns. In other words, I fit a 4 note pattern and a 6 note pattern in the same space: specifically, the 6 note pattern has to be played 1.5 times as fast as the 4 note pattern to make them fit in the same space. I show in isolation the patterns in my left thumb, my right thumb, then the polyrhythm that comes from combining these two patterns. It's a difficult sound to record effectively; I suggest listening with headphones to get the best idea of this sound.

East Africa: Gigi

Gigi is a singer from Ethiopia who has played an important role in bringing the musical style of Ethiopia to the rest of the world. She has collaborated with musicians from the United States, India, Europe, and elsewhere. Her singing features sounds similar to African-American gospel as well as the melodies from Islamic, Indian, and West African folk music styles. The song "Tirut Yebatin Lig" (Ch. 23 Listening Examples) features Gigi singing without instrumental accompaniment, showcasing the insensely dynamic and embellished vocal style she is known for.

Listening Exercises 23.5

Gigi: “Tirut Yebatin Lig”

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1.24: European Folk and Popular Music of South and Central America

Scotland: The Corries

The Corries were a Scottish folk duo that performed from the early 1960s until 1990. Made up of multi-instrumentalists Roy Williamson (1936-1990) and Ronnie Brown (Born 1937), the group achieved a level of success that very few other folk artists have. Their success began with them becoming the house group for a Scottish music television program, allowing them to become full time professional musicians. They would film sea songs on the Scottish coast, effectively pioneering the music video. In the 1970s they reached their peak success, continually releasing top selling albums and appearing on Television programs. The duo is notable for the authenticity of the lyrics used in their renditions of old folk songs as well as the adventurous use of various instruments from song to song. Williamson died in 1990, though Brown continues as a painter and solo performer.

Roy Williamson was also a skilled woodworker and invented an instrument called the “combolin”, combining a guitar, a mandolin, and sympathetic strings like an Indian sitar. Both Williamson and Brown played a multitude of instruments including: guitar, flute, percussion, mandolin, recorder, and many, many others.

Below: The lyrics to “Loch Lomond” with a few alterations such as the Scottish “sae” being modified to it’s translation “so”, and “ain” translated to “own”. A few other words have the approximate translation in parentheses. Notice verse-chorus form in the use of a refrain in the chorus where the lyrics are the same in every iteration, something we’ve seen throughout popular music especially towards the latter 20th century. This is notable given the age of the song.

Verse 1: O *wither away my bonnie may* (which direction)

So late an’ so far in the *gloamin’* (dusk/twilight)

The mist gathers grey o’er moorland and *brae* (hill)

O wither so far are ye roamin’? (To what place are you going?)

Chorus: O ye’ll take the high road an’ I’ll take the low

I’ll be in Scotland afore ye

For me and my true love will never meet again

by the bonnie bonnie banks o’ Loch Lomond

Verse 2: I trusted my own love last night in the *broom* (bush)

My Donald wha’ loves me so dearly

For the morrow he will march for Edinburgh toon (town)

Tae fecht (to fight) for his King and Prince Charlie

O well may I weep for *yestreen* (yesterday)

in my sleep , we stood bride and bridegroom together.

But his arms and his breath were as cold as the death And his heart’s blood ran red in the heather

(Chorus)

Verse 3: As dauntless in battle as tender in love

He’d yield ne’er a foot to the foeman (enemy)

But never again *frae* (from) the field o’ the slain

To his Moira (woman’s name) will he come by Loch Lomond

The thistle may bloom, the King *hae his ain* (have his own)

And fond lovers may meet in the *gloamin’* (dusk/twilight)

And me and my true love will yet meet again

Far above the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond

(Chorus)

Listening Examples 24.1

The Corries perform “[Loch Lomond](#)”, a traditional Scottish lament first published in 1841 but written earlier. Notice the unusual instrumentation of a concertina (A type of accordion without a keyboard) and a chromatic harmonica which provide a minimal, droning accompaniment to the vocals. The song uses a form that is clearly outlined in this case as the audience joins in the singing of the one section while the other section is sung in a very free rhythm. The Corries use an old Scottish dialect to sing the song rather than using English.

Ireland: The Dubliners



Figure 24.1 The Dubliners

The Dubliners were a folk band formed in Dublin, Ireland in 1962 that was important in popularizing Irish folk music. It featured lead singers Ronnie Drew and Luke Kelly along with instruments such as violin, banjo, and acoustic guitars. They sang a mixture of traditional Irish and other folk tunes, modern songs, and instrumentals. Many of their recordings are considered “definitive” versions of classic folk songs.

Listening Examples 24.2

“[In the Rare Old Times](#)” features the band with orchestral strings adding color to a melancholy folk song lamenting the ever-changing and complex modern world. The song was written in the 1970s by Irish folk songwriter Pete St. John reflecting the massive changes to much of the world in the 2nd half of the 20th century. The lyrics display a longing for the simpler times of the past while facing the reality that things will never be the same as they were. The song uses verse-chorus form, in this case fitting with the times it was written in.

Italy – Fabrizio de Andre



Figure 24.2 Fabrizio de Andre

Fabrizio de Andre (1940-1999) was one of Italy’s most popular singer-songwriters, becoming well-known during the 1960’s when his socially conscious lyrics began resonating with Italian youth. His early period focused on a folk style influenced by American folk artists, while later musical endeavors would include innovations in the blending of Western Pop with World Music, contemporaneous with the work of Peter Gabriel and anticipating Paul Simon’s hit album, *Graceland*. Many of de Andre’s lyrics explored unsung, real-life characters; “Eclectic in his choice of subjects, from big-hearted prostitutes to disaffected civil servants, his music reflected a wide range of influences.” (New York Times). This approach to singing in recognition of those generally ignored or worse, de Andre draws parallels to songwriters like Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen.

In 1984, de Andre released *Crueza de Ma*, an album sung entirely in the Genoese dialect (as opposed to Italian) and was named by David Byrne of Talking Heads as one of his favorite albums of the 1980s. The album blends elements of North African, Arabic, and Indian music with western music and was co-written with de Andre's musical collaborator, Mauro Pagani. The title track blends these elements together along with advanced musical phrasing during the choruses which feature mixed meter: a 5-beat pattern followed by a 6-beat pattern followed by two bars of 4-beat patterns.

Listening Examples 24.3

Fabrizio de Andre:

- “Crueza de Ma” by Fabrizio de Andre
- “Crueza de Ma” by Fabrizio de Andre (Live 1998)

Central and South America – Bossa Nova

Antonio Carlos Jobim – (1927-1994) was a Brazilian composer/songwriter who is credited with largely creating the genre of bossa nova. Bossa nova is a blend of Brazilian Samba (a dance oriented folk style) and the complex chord progressions of American jazz. It will often feature the nylon-string guitar, piano, and/or percussion instruments.

His song “The Girl from Ipanema” is one of the most recorded songs of all time. Many of his songs are now considered standards in jazz and pop music. His collaborations with jazz musicians Stan Getz, Charlie Byrd, and singers such as Frank Sinatra brought him to the attention of the English-speaking world. Notice the “stepwise” movement of the vocal melody in the song “How Insensitive” (Ch. 24 Listening Examples), where the melody Sinatra is singing moves very little. The melody goes up or down by small intervals rather than moving around a lot (as in gospel singing) or using leaps (big jumps from a low note to high note, or vice versa).

Listening Examples 24.4

Antonia Carlos Jobim:

- “Girl From Ipanema” by Antonio Carlos Jobim performed by Astrud Gilberto & Stan Getz
- “How Insensitive” by Antonio Carlos Jobim w/ Frank Sinatra

Mexico – Mariachi



Figure 24.3 Members of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán.

Mariachi is the best known style of folk music from Mexico. It began as a rural ceremonial style but gradually spread to urban areas as its popularity grew. Mariachi became widely known through its appearance in Mexican films of the 1930s and 1940s. The primary instruments are those that were introduced by the arrival of the

Spanish including guitars, brass, and violins as well as passionate, harmonized group vocals. The “guitarrón” is a guitar-like instrument that provides the primary rhythmic accompaniment to the music.

The group Mariachi Vargas formed in 1897, but in the 1930s and 1940s began appearing on film and television and brought the music to a new level due to their professional style and formal training. They backed many stars and also were among the first to include female singers. The Vargas continue to perform in the present day and are often considered the best and most well known mariachi group in the world.

Nueva Cancion

Nueva cancion is a musical style that blends Latin folk music with modern, socially conscious messages. The genre first emerged in the 1960s and soon became associated with revolutionary movements in central and south America. Many South American nations in the 1960s and 1970s were under military-led right wing dictatorships restricting free speech. Underground artists/musicians/writers/poets began creating works that criticized governments and endorsed revolution and revolutionary ideas.

Stylistically, Nueva Cancion blends South American rural song forms, simple folk instruments such as guitar and panpipe, and are typically sung in Spanish, not indigenous languages, to help reach a wider audience. Musicians often faced censorship, exile, or even death for their music, which often contained political messages.

Violeta Parra



Figure 24.4 Violette Parra.

Violeta Parra (1917-1967) was a singer/songwriter and folklorist from Chile who was one of the originators of Nueva Cancion when she began incorporating her own socially conscious lyrics into her music. Parra traveled around Chile collecting folk songs in rural places, transcribing the music and lyrics much in the same way American musicologists Alan Lomax and Charles Seeger did in the first half of the 20th century. Parra began writing original songs taking the traditional melodies and song forms from music she collected and updating the lyrics to sing of contemporary issues as well as personal expressions. Her music became more of a personal reflection towards the end of her career, especially on the last recordings she released during her lifetime, *Las Ultimas Composiciones* released in 1966. Her most famous song comes from this recording and is called “Gracias a la Vida” (“Thanks to Life”). The song was made famous to American listeners on folksinger Joan Baez’s Spanish-language album which she titled *Gracias a la Vida* (1974), offering a tribute to the importance of the song itself.

Mercedes Sosa



Figure 24.5 Mercedes Sousa.

Argentinian singer/songwriter Mercedes Sosa (1935-2009) was one of the most recognized and important Nueva Cancion musicians. Her music challenged the military dictatorship of Argentina, and she was eventually arrested at one of her concerts and exiled from the country. Her songs have been featured in films and she won a Latin Grammy award in 2000 for best folk album. “Duerme Negrito” or “Little Black Boy”, is a traditional folk song/lullaby from the perspective of a babysitter to the son of a slave. The song on the surface is relatively harmless, but the lyrics express a lamentation of the oppressed life of a slave, and the fear of the oppressor, and like so many nursery rhymes, it’s slightly disturbing.

“Duerme Negrito” translated to English

Sleep, sleep little black boy

For your mama is in the field, little black boy

Sleep, sleep Mobila

For your mama is in the field, Mobila

She is going to bring quails,

for you

She is going to bring sweet fruit,

for you

She is going to bring pork,

for you

She is going to bring lots of things,

for you

And if the little black boy doesn't go to sleep

Then the white devil will come

and Zhaz!! He will eat your little leg

Chacapumba, chacapumba, acapumba, chacapumba

Sleep, sleep little black boy

For your mama is in the field, little black boy

Working

Working hard (yes, working)

Working, she is mourning (yes, working)

Working, she doesn't get paid (yes, working)

Working, she goes coughing (yes, working)

For the little black boy, little one

For the little black boy

yes, working.

Listening Examples 24.5

Mariachi Vargas: [“Popurri Ranchero”](#)

Excerpt from [“Ay Jalisco No Te Rajes”](#) (1941)

Mercedes Sosa: [“Gracias a la Vida”](#) written by Violetta Parra

Mercedes Sosa: [“Duerme Negrito”](#)

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1.25: Asian Popular Music- Special Focus on Japan and India

Asia includes highly diverse sets of cultures including China, India, Japan, southeast Asia, and the majority of Russia. Each of these regions have unique traditional music that impacts the sound of their popular music. Popular music from each region contains certain elements, more or less, of western pop music. However, in many cultures (specifically Japan) they have developed certain western music industry practices beyond most western popular music.

Japan: Enka

Enka was the first type of popular music in Japan to gain widespread popularity. The music borrows elements from western popular music, infusing those elements into traditional Japanese music. It often uses the pentatonic scale, a traditional source for Japanese folk melodies, for melodic material. Enka is now looked at as a “traditional” genre of popular music, somewhat similar to country music in that it was the first step from traditional folk music into the popular music world.

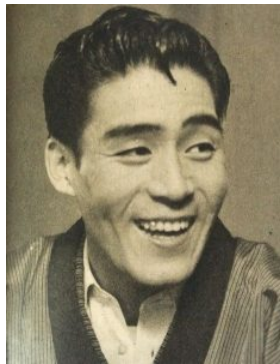


Figure 25.1 Hachiro Kasuga.

Hachiro Kasuga (1924-1991) is often called the “first enka singer” and in his music the influence of American jazz and country music is often heard alongside traditional Japanese folk music. Hibari Misora (1924-1991) was an actress and singer of Enka. In her music one can hear the influence of classical, jazz and country music alongside Japanese traditional music. In the recordings of Enka in Ch. 25 Listening Examples, one can hear traditional Japanese music in the vocal and instrumental melodies, Western instruments such as acoustic guitar and orchestral strings and wind instruments, and Western style chord progressions.

While Enka was popular through the 1970’s, it began to decline in the 1980’s and by the 1990’s Japanese youths were becoming less and less interested in traditional themes and instruments (their parent’s music) and more interested in J-Pop, a much more western influenced sound. The 31 year old American enka singer Jero, who is of African-American and Japanese descent, has started a slight resurgence of enka, though it’s largest demographic in the US is older Japanese-Americans.

Listening Examples 25.1

Hachiro Kasuga: “[別れの一本杉](#)” – translated literally as “Farewell One Cedar”

Hibari Misori: “[Shina No Yoru](#)” (Early Japanese popular music called Enka)

- [Live Song #1](#)
- [Live Song #2](#)

J-Pop: Happy End

J-Pop is a strand of Japanese popular music that more closely resembles western popular music and has its origins in the music of the Beatles and other pop groups from the 1960s. The first J-Pop bands emerged in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s though the term wasn’t coined until the 1990’s. J-Pop stands out from other genres of Japanese pop music in that it uses a pronunciation that is much closer to English. Happy End is regarded as one of the most important and pioneering of Japanese rock bands. Listening to the following example, the western listener probably cannot discern any notable differences between the music of Happy End and western groups other than the fact that it is sung in Japanese. The instrumentation, style, form, and melodic phrases are all western in origin and contain little Japanese influence.

Exercise 1

Please read the article, [“Some Aspects of Japanese Popular Music”](#) by Kitagawa Junko, linked as it explains some of the musical characteristics that were adopted by Japanese popular musicians and gives a brief, easy to read introduction on the development of J-Pop.

Visual Kei



Figure 25.2 Three people wearing outfits from the visual kei movement.

Visual Kei is a Japanese musical movement that uses elaborate costumes, makeup, and hairstyles occasionally forming an androgynous image. Early on, the visual aspects were combined with hard rock music styles and ballads very similar to glam-rock. Presently, the term ‘visual kei’ can be applied to a variety of genres where the performers wear elaborate costumes and makeup. The music usually resembles western popular music styles.

The group X-Japan (formed 1982) are credited as the pioneers of the genre. They are generally considered related to the glam-rock genre with regards to their appearance, but were musically more related to bands such as Metallica. Newer visual-kei groups are sometimes more pop-oriented or heavy metal oriented. These new groups often are themed visually in certain ways, sometimes dark or “Gothic”, sometimes superheros or videogame characters, and sometimes androgynous in the way David Bowie appeared in the 1970s.

Listening Examples 25.2

Happy End: [“Ayakashi No Doubuten”](#) (“Ayaka City Zoo”, 1970; some of the earliest J-Pop)

Visual Kei:

- Psycho le Cemu: [“Roman Hikou”](#)
- Psycho le Cemu: [“Ai no uta”](#)

Blending Tradition with Modern Popular Music: Yoshida Brothers



Figure 25.3 Yoshida Brothers performing live.

The Yoshida Brothers are a duo of shamisen players that add elements of rock such as riffs, synthesizers, and drums into traditional Japanese folk-styled music. Both brothers have studied traditional Shamisen since they were 5 years old. Though the music is performed on traditional instruments based on traditional scales, it is easy to draw parallels to modern pop styles such as rock. Try to imagine the shamisen lines (in the Ch. 25 listening example) played through distorted electric guitars, and perhaps the parallels will be audible to you. One important similarity between traditional Japanese folk and rock is the pentatonic scale, a building block of both musical styles. (See the video example of Delta Blues Guitar Techniques” from Day 2: The Blues if you need a reminder.)

Listening Examples 25.3

Yoshida Brothers: [“Kodo”](#)

Modern Pop Trends: AKB48



Figure 25.4 AKB48.

AKB48 is an all-female Japanese pop group that has become so popular it is now regarded as a “social phenomenon”. The group made over 200 million dollars in record sales in 2011 alone. The most striking feature of the group is the fact that the group is constantly growing. As of November 2013 it consisted of 89 individual members; by December 2015 it had grown to 130 members. The size of the membership is slightly misleading as most often the group breaks off into smaller sub-groups for performances. In this way, “AKB48” can be in many places at once: performing in their theater in Tokyo, touring North America, recording in the studio, appearing on South Korean television, etc. They perform in their own theater every day, alternating sub-groups. Due to the extreme demand for tickets, lotteries are held for each concert. All the members ages range from early teens to mid 20s.

Listening Examples 24.4

“[Sugar Rush](#)” by **AKB48**. The song makes use of our most popular pop song-form, verse-chorus form. The song is sung in Japanese and English, and this is used to illustrate the difference between the verse and the chorus as the verse is sung in Japanese and the chorus is sung in English (S-U-G-A-R, climb into your racing car, Sugar Rush! Sugar Rush!)

Babymetal: “[Gimme Chocolate](#)”

India



Figure 25.5 Ravi Shankar.

Ravi Shankar (1920-2012) Is a classical Indian sitar player and the most important musician to bring Indian classical music into western popular music. Though Shankar himself was primarily a classical musician, his friendship with George Harrison and his appearance at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival brought popularity to the genre. He taught sitar to George Harrison who incorporated the instrument into his songs. Many other musicians followed suit including the Byrds and the Rolling Stones. Many western musicians continue to incorporate Indian classical music into popular songs.



Figure 25.6 Anoushka Shankar.

Anoushka Shankar (Born 1981) is a virtuoso sitar player and the daughter Ravi. Her music is a blend of different styles, classical, folk, and popular. Her music remains rooted in Indian classical music, but she has incorporated western classical, jazz, flamenco (Spanish folk music), electronic, and other genres. She has also performed with her half sister, singer/songwriter Norah Jones.

Listening Examples 25.5

[Ravi Shankar](#) at Monterey Pop Festival 1967 (Excerpt)

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