TOPICS IN POPULAR MUSIC
MU2640 A3   3(3-0-0) Winter 2004

This course is UT to Athabasca University, and to Universities of Alberta, Calgary, & Lethbridge.

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Topics in Popular Music provides the opportunity to study several aspects of popular music, and the society and culture that surrounds it. Using DD1021 as a jumping-off point, MU 2640 will explore some of several possible topics, and subject matter changes each year. Topics will be chosen from a number of subjects, relevant to both the academic and non-academic aspects of popular music study and experience. Possible topics for 2003 include gender and sex issues, propaganda and politics, issues of race and prejudice, identity, and music video.

Because much of the class will be organized as a seminar, it is vital that assigned readings be done and studied before the date for which they are due. Participation in discussions in class will make up a significant part of all class sessions, and also a portion of the final grade for this course. Therefore, attendance is not an option…

Prerequisite: DD 1021 History of Popular Music in the Twentieth Century, or consent of the Instructor.

Evaluation:

Class Contribution	10%
Article Abstracts and other assignments	25%
Mid-term examination (March 1)	15%
Research project	25%
Final examination	25%

Both assigned readings and critical listening/viewing are important aspects of the course, and exams will reflect material from readings and recordings and videos, along with content from our discussions. Recordings and videos will be related to, and reflect, information covered in the readings. Over the duration of the course, you will be asked several times to submit an abstract of an article that we are currently reading. That abstract will be due *before* we discuss the article in class, so *nothing* will be accepted late.

Research Project: You will demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of an aspect of the course through a research project involving a paper and class presentation.   Topics should be chosen before March 3 in consultation with the instructor, and the written paper will be due April 12, the second-last day of class. The paper should be a minimum of 2500 words (roughly 10 typed pages) in length, and must be typed. Presentations will occupy the final two or three days of the semester.   They should be approximately 20 minutes in length, and will share the content of the paper with the class. You may use any combination of available audio and visual tools, but it is expected that the main part of the presentation will be performed "live" by you.

Progression Policy: All students who are absent from more then 20% of this class may be told to leave this class. Further, if students fail to complete and submit 85% of the graded

requirements of the term mark, they will not be allowed to write the final exam, or complete the course. In such a case, the student will automatically receive a failing grade of "0" on the final exam. This means that students MUST submit the research project to pass the course. See P. 35 of the 2003-2004 Calendar for details.

Required Materials:
> Shuker, Roy. 2001. Understanding Popular Music, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
> Various Authors and Dates. MU 2640 Coursepack: A Collection of Selected Readings
>> Dealing with the Culture(s) of Popular Music.

(Readings may change as necessary, or as we get sidetracked, or news breaks…

Unit One   What is Popular Music? An Introduction to Terminology and Ideology
>   **Readings:**
Shuker, Roy. 2001. "Preface" and "What's Goin' On?: Popular Culture, Popular Music, and
>   Media Literacy" in Understanding Popular Music. New York: Routledge.
Williams, Raymond. 1976. "Popular" in Keywords: a Vocabulary of Culture and Society. Oxford
>   and New York: Oxford University Press.
Kassabian, Anahid. 1999. "Popular" in Key Terms in Popular Music and Culture. Bruce Horner,
>   Bruce and Thomas Swiss, eds. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
Shuker, Roy. 1998. "Frankfurt School, " "Listening," and "Postmodernism, Postmodern Rock" in
>   Key Concepts in Popular Music. New York and Oxford: Routledge.

**Unit Two   Giving Us the Business. The Global Pop Industry: Why We Hear What We
>   Hear.**
>   **Readings:**
Shuker, Roy. 2001. "Every 1's a Winner: The Music Industry" in Understanding Popular Music.
>   New York: Routledge.
Burnett, Robert. 1996. "The Consumption of Popular Music" in The Global Jukebox: The
>   International Music Industry. London and New York: Routledge.
Copyright Board of Canada. December 12, 2003. "News Release." http://www.cb-
>   cda.gc.ca/news/c20032004nr-e.html
Einhardt, Nancy. 2003. "The MP3 Economy" in Business 2.0 (June 2003)
>   www.business2.com/b2/subscribers/articles/0,17863,515703,00.html
Orlowski, Andrew. 2003. "Your 99¢ Belong to the RIAA–Steve Jobs" in The Register, posted
>   07/11/2003. http://www.theregister.co.uk/content/6/33850.html
Love, Courtney. 2000. "Courtney Love Does the Math" in Salon.com (June 14, 2000).
>   http://archive.salon.com/tech/feature/2000/06/14/love/
Albini, Steve. ND. "The Problem with Music" at Negativland.com
>   http://www.negativland.com/albini.html
Whittall, Geoff. 2003. Music Digitalization Issues.
Mayfield, Kendra. 2002. "Making Copy Right for All" in Wired.com May 17, 2002).
>   http://www.wired.com/news/business/0,1367,52556,00.html

Unit Three   Identity, Subculture, and Race

Readings:

Shuker, Roy. 2001. "My Generation: Audiences, Fans, and Subcultures" in <u>Understanding Popular Music</u>. New York: Routledge.

Hebdige, Dick. 1990. "Style as Homology and Signifying Practice" in <u>On Record</u>, Frith, Simon, and Andrew Goodwin, ed's. New York: Pantheon.

Griffiths, Dai. 2002. "Cover Versions and the Sound of Identity in Motion" in <u>Popular Music Studies</u>, Hesmondhalgh and Negus, eds. London: Arnold Publishers.

Unit Four   Gender Issues in Popular Music
        Readings:

McClary, Susan. 1991. "Living to Tell: Madonna's Resurrection of the Fleshly." In <u>Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality</u>. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Cohen, Sara. 1997. Men Making a Scene: Rock Music and the Production of Gender." In <u>Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender</u>, Sheila Whiteley, ed. New York and London: Routledge.

Unit Five   Music Video: Meshing Sound, Image, and Meaning
        Readings:

Shuker, Roy. 2001. "Sweet Dreams (are Made of This)" and "U Got the Look: Music Video" in <u>Understanding Popular Music</u>. New York: Routledge.

*Kaplan, E. Ann. 1987. "Ideology, Adolescent Desire, and the Five Types of Video on MTV." In <u>Rocking Around the Clock: Music Television, Postmodernism, and Consumer Culture</u>. New York and London: Routledge. (*discussion topic only)

Cook, Nicholas. 1998. Credit Where It's Due: Madonna's 'Material Girl': A Musicology of the Image?" in <u>Analysing Musical Multimedia.</u> Oxford; Oxford University Press.

Mercer, Kobena. 1993. "Monster Metaphor: Notes on Michael Jackson's <u>Thriller</u>." In <u>Sound and Vision</u>, Simon Frith, Andrew Goodwin, and Lawrence Grossberg, ed's. London: Routledge.

Walser, Robert. 1993. "Forging Masculinity: Heavy Metal Sounds and Images of Gender." In <u>Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music</u>. Hanover, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Unit Six   Politics and Popular Music:
        Readings:

Shuker, Roy. 2001. "We Are the World" and "Pushin' Too Hard: Rock and Cultural Politics" in <u>Understanding Popular Music</u>. New York: Routledge.

Taylor, Timothy D. 1997."Nothin' but the Same Old Story: Old Hegemonies, New Musics." In <u>Global Pop: World Music, World Markets</u>. New York: Routledge.

Goodwin, Andrew, and Joe Gore. 1995. World Beat and the Cultural Imperialism Debate." In <u>Sounding Off! Music as Subversion/Resistance/Revolution</u>, Ron Sakolsky, and Fred Wei-Han Ho, ed's, New York: Autonomedia.

Chastagner, Claude. 1999. "The Parents' Music Resource Center: From Information to Censorship." <u>Popular Music</u>18(2):179-192.

Unit Seven   Authority and Ownership:
       Readings:
Frith, Simon. 1996. "Technology and Authority." In <u>Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music</u>. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Sloop, John, and Andrew Herman. 1998. "Negativland, Out-law Judgments, and the Politics of Cyberspace." In <u>Mapping the Beat: Popular Music and Contemporary Theory</u>. New York: Blackwell

(Maybe)
Unit Eight   Cultural Capital and Literacy: Decoding "Texts" in Popular Music.
Reiner, Rob. 1984. This Is Spinal Tap.
MacLean, Don. "American Pie." (And also Madonna's version…)

…and other materials…