

Course:	MU2640–Topics in Popular Music											
Session:	Winter 2009											
Credit/Hours:	3(3-0-0) 45 Hours	Delivery Mode: Seminar										
Transfer:	AU, UA, UC, UL											
Pre/corequisite:	DD1021 or consent of the instructor											
Instructor:	; L119; 539-2823; gwhittall@gprc.ab.ca; www.fad.gprc.ab.ca/~Geoff/											
Calendar Description:	This course provides the opportunity to study several aspects of popular music, and the society and culture that surround it. Topics may include politics and propaganda; issues of gender, sexuality and race; identity and counterculture; music lyrics, and video analysis.											
Course Content:	<p>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, MU2640 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.</p> <p>Because much of the class will be organized as a seminar, <u>assigned readings must be done before the date for which they are due</u>. 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.</p>											
Evaluation:	<table><tr><td>Class Contribution</td><td>10%</td></tr><tr><td>Article Abstracts and other assignments</td><td>25%</td></tr><tr><td>Mid-term examination (probably March 2)</td><td>15%</td></tr><tr><td>Research project</td><td>25%</td></tr><tr><td>Final examination</td><td>25%</td></tr></table> <p>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 “F” on the final exam. This means that students MUST submit the research project to pass the course.</p>		Class Contribution	10%	Article Abstracts and other assignments	25%	Mid-term examination (probably March 2)	15%	Research project	25%	Final examination	25%
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Final examination	25%											
Timeline:	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 February 25 in consultation with the instructor, and the written paper will be due at the <i>beginning</i> of our second-last class on April 8. The paper must be a minimum of 2500 words (roughly 10 typed pages, depending on your font) in length, and must be typed.											
Required Materials:	<p>Shuker, Roy. <i>Understanding Popular Music</i>, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. 2001.</p> <p>Various Authors and Dates. <i>MU 2640 Coursepack: A Collection of Selected Readings Dealing with the Culture(s) of Popular Music</i></p>											
Additional Costs:												
Attendance:	More than 20% absenteeism may constitute a failure except for medical or extenuating circumstances in which case a doctor’s letter may be required.											
Plagiarism:	Plagiarism is cheating. The instructor reserves the right to use electronic plagiarism detection services. See P. 41-51 of the Calendar for more details, and for explanations of many other policies and regulations.											
Reviewed:	March, 2005											

Readings for each unit of the course are listed below. They may change as necessary, as we get sidetracked, or as 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, editors. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Shuker, Roy. 1998. "Frankfurt School," "Listening," "Popular," 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.
- Einhardt, Nancy. 2003. "The MP3 Economy" in Business 2.0 (June 2003)
www.business2.com/b2/subscribers/articles/0,17863,515703,00.html
- Copyright Board of Canada. December 12, 2003. "News Release." <http://www.cb-cda.gc.ca/news/c20032004nr-e.html> (Link on my website)
- 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> (Link on my website)
- Love, Courtney. 2000. "Courtney Love Does the Math" in Salon.com (June 14, 2000).
<http://archive.salon.com/tech/feature/2000/06/14/love/> (Link on my website)
- Albini, Steve. ND. "The Problem with Music" at Negativland.com <http://www.negativland.com/albini.html> (Link on my website)
- 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> (Link on my website)
- Goldberg, Danny. 2000. The Ballad of the Mid-Level Artist at RapCoIntel.com
<http://www.rapcointelpro.com/Label%20Profitability.htm> (Link on my website)
- Whittall, Geoff. 2006. Music Digitalization Issues.
- Whittall, Geoff. 2005. Who Owns What?

Unit Three Identity, Subculture, and Race

Readings:

- Shuker, Roy. 2001. "My Generation: Audiences, Fans, and Subcultures" in Understanding Popular Music. New York: Routledge.
- Hebdige, Dick. 1990. "Style as Homology and Signifying Practice" in On Record, Frith, Simon, and Andrew Goodwin, editors. New York: Pantheon.
- Griffiths, Dai. 2002. "Cover Versions and the Sound of Identity in Motion" in Popular Music Studies, Hesmondhalgh and Negus, editors. London: Arnold Publishers.

Unit Four Gender Issues in Popular Music

Readings:

- McClary, Susan. 1991. "Living to Tell: Madonna's Resurrection of the Fleshly." In Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Cohen, Sara. 1997. Men Making a Scene: Rock Music and the Production of Gender." In Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender, Sheila Whiteley, editor. New York and London: Routledge.
- Whitely, Sheila. 2000. "'Authenticity, Truthfulness, and Community" in Women and Popular Music: Sexuality, Identity and Subjectivity. London and New York: Routledge.

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

Readings:

- Shuker, Roy. 2001. The *Reading Music Videos* section of "Sweet Dreams (are Made of This)" and "U Got the Look: Music Video" in Understanding Popular Music. New York: Routledge.
- *Kaplan, E. Ann. 1987. "Ideology, Adolescent Desire, and the Five Types of Video on MTV." In Rocking Around the Clock: Music Television, Postmodernism, and Consumer Culture. New York and London: Routledge. (*Discussion topic only)
- Mercer, Kobena. 1993. "Monster Metaphor: Notes on Michael Jackson's Thriller." In Sound and Vision, Simon Frith, Andrew Goodwin, and Lawrence Grossberg, editors. London: Routledge.
- Walser, Robert. 1993. "Forging Masculinity: Heavy Metal Sounds and Images of Gender." In Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music. 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 Understanding Popular Music. New York: Routledge.
- Taylor, Timothy D. 1997. "Nothin' but the Same Old Story: Old Hegemonies, New Musics." In Global Pop: World Music, World Markets. New York: Routledge.
- Goodwin, Andrew, and Joe Gore. 1995. World Beat and the Cultural Imperialism Debate." In Sounding Off! Music as Subversion/Resistance/Revolution, Ron Sakolsky, and Fred Wei-Han Ho, editors, New York: Autonomedia.
- Chastagner, Claude. 1999. "The Parents' Music Resource Center: From Information to Censorship." Popular Music 18(2):179-192.

Unit Seven Authority and Ownership:

Readings:

- Frith, Simon. 1996. "Technology and Authority." In Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Sloop, John, and Andrew Herman. 1998. "Negativland, Out-law Judgments, and the Politics of Cyberspace." In Mapping the Beat: Popular Music and Contemporary Theory. 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...)
- Beatles. 1964. A Hard Day's Night.

...and other materials...