

“Music, Media, Modernity”

MS-9325/PMC-9733

Fall 2015, Weds., 1:30-4:20, Middlesex MC-15

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Cicero: “Not to know what happened before one was born is always to be a child”
Oscar Wilde: “The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it”
Mark Twain (attr.): “History doesn’t repeat itself, but it does rhyme”

This course explores the recent efflorescence of historical research on modernity. While there will be an emphasis on sound media, attention will also be paid to intersections with the visual dimensions of the modern. Topics will include minstrelsy, Tin Pan Alley, vaudeville, advertising, journalism and comics, the rise of sound recording, radio and cinema, and the new forms of intermediality that characterize the period between roughly 1850 and 1970. A key focus of the course will be the advent of mass media culture and its relationship to “the popular.”

Readings

Assigned readings will be available in the Graduate Resource Centre on the second floor of the North Campus Building or online. I have ordered copies of the required course text, Raymond Williams’s Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society, at the UWO bookstore.

Evaluation

Participation (20%):

Students will be expected to do the readings, attend the seminars, participate in discussions.

Seminar Presentation (20%):

Depending on class size students will present one brief seminar presentation (approx. 20 mins.) based on one reading from that week’s required readings; dates TBA.

Digital Research Assignment (10%):

Students will write a 3-5 pp. paper outlining the results of researching a keyword concept via digital periodical databases; details (including due date) will be circulated on a separate handout.

Final paper (50%):

Students will conceive, research and write a final course paper in consultation with the instructor, 20-25 pp., due January 13th, 2016.

Outline of Topics and Readings

Sept. 9th Intro Q: Where's Popular Music? A: Always Already Intermedial

Recommended Readings:

Keir Keightley "Tin Pan Allegory" Modernism/Modernity 19.4 (2012) pp. 719-38.

Alison Kibler "Pigs, Green Whiskers, and Drunken Widows: Irish Nationalists and the 'Practical Censorship of McFadden's Row of Flats in 1902 and 1903.'" *Journal of American Studies* 42.3 (December 2008): 489-514.

Sept. 16th Moderns

Friedman, Susan Stanford. "Definitional Excursions: The Meanings of Modern/Modernity/Modernism." Modernism/Modernity 8.3 (2001): 493-513.

John B. Thompson "The Media and the Development of Modern Societies" The Media and Modernity: a social theory of the media. Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1995, pp. 44-80.

James Naremore and Patrick Brantlinger "Introduction: Six Artistic Cultures" and Richard Ohmann "History and Literary History: The Case of Mass Culture", pp. 1-41 Modernity and Mass Culture Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Marshall Berman "Introduction" All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity N.Y.: Penguin, 1988, pp. 15-36.

Sept. 23rd Historicizing

Georg Simmel "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903) On Individuality and Social Forms Chicago: U. of Chicago P., 1971, pp. 324-39.

Raymond Williams (1961) "The Analysis of Culture" The Long Revolution London: Pelican, pp. 57-88.

Stuart Hall "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'" (1981) People's History and Socialist Theory Ed. R. Samuel. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Michel Foucault "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" The Foucault Reader ed. Paul Rabinowitz, N.Y.: Random House, 1984, pp. 76-100.

Recommended Reading:

Franco Moretti "Graphs" New Left Review 24 (Nov.-Dec. 2003) pp. 67-93 (available at www.newleftreview.org)

Sept. 30th The Sacred and the Kitsch

John Storey Inventing Popular Culture chapters 1-3, pp. 1-47, Malden: Blackwell, 2003.

Lawrence Levine, "Prologue" pp. 1-9, and "The Sacralization of Culture" pp. 85-168, Highbrow/Lowbrow (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1988)

Clement Greenberg, "Avant Garde and Kitsch," Partisan Review 6.5 (1939)

Walter Benjamin "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" Illuminations: Essays and Reflections ed. Hannah Arendt, N.Y.: Schocken, 1968, pp. 217-252

Siegfried Kracauer "The Mass Ornament" The Mass Ornament. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard U.P. 1995, pp. 75-88.

Recommended Readings:

Winifried Menninghaus, "On the 'Vital Significance' of Kitsch: Walter Benjamin's Politics of 'Bad Taste'" in Walter Benjamin and the Architecture of Modernity, ed. Andrew Benjamin, (Melbourne: re.press, 2009) pp. 39-57, via Google Books

Sam Binkley "Kitsch as a Repetitive System: A Problem for the Theory of Taste Hierarchy" Journal of Material Culture July 2000 vol. 5 no. 2 131-152

Andrew Ross "Containing Culture in the Cold War," pp. 42-64 No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture London: Routledge, 1989.

Pierre Bourdieu "Distinction & the Aristocracy of Culture" (1984) Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste. Trans. Richard Nice. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P.

Paul DiMaggio "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America" (1982) Media Culture and Society 4.1.

NOTE: Above two readings excerpted in Cultural Theory & Popular Culture: A Reader Ed. John Storey. N.Y.: Prentice-Hall, 1998.)

Oct. 7th Charivari and Carnival Noise

E.P. Thompson "Rough Music" Annales 27.2 (1972): 285-312

Peter Stallybrass and Allon White "Introduction" The Politics and Poetics of Transgression. Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 1986, pp. 1-26

Peter Burke "The Discovery of the People" pp. 23-48 and "The World of Carnival" pp. 255-88, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe 3rd edition, Surrey: Ashgate, 2001.

Peter Bailey, "Breaking the Sound Barrier" in Hearing History, ed. Mark Michael Smith, 23-35 (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2004).

Recommended Readings:

Natalie Zemon-Davis, "The Reasons of Misrule: Youth Groups and Charivaris in Sixteenth-Century France," Past and Present 50 (1971): 41-75

Bryan Palmer "Discordant Music," Labour/Le Travail, (1978)

Matthew Denning, William Percale and Simon P. Newman, eds. Riot and Revelry in Early America (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

Oct. 14th Minstrels and Coons

Eric Lott "Part 1", Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, pp. 1-107,

Dale Cockrell "Blackface in the Streets" Demons of Disorder Cambridge: Cambridge U.P. 1997, pp. 30-61

W.T. Lhamon "Whittling on Dynamite" Listen Again: A Momentary History of Pop Music ed. Eric Weisbard, 2007, pp. 7-25

Patricia R. Schroeder "Passing for Black: Coon Songs and the Performance of Race" Journal of American Culture 33.2, pages 139-153, June 2010

Oct. 21st Tin Pan Alley

Daniel Goldmark "Creating Desire on Tin Pan Alley" Musical Quarterly (2007) 90.2: 197-229.

David Suisman, "When Songs Became a Business" pp. 18-55, and "Making Hits" pp. 56-89, from Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Ruotolo, Cristina. "*Whence The Song*": Voice And Audience In *Dreiser's* Sister Carrie." American Literary Realism 2002 35(1): 39-58.

Ann Douglas "Ragging and Slanging" pp. 346-86, and "Singing the Blues" pp. 387-433 Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s NY: Noonday, 1995.

Recommended Readings:

Nicholas Tawa, The Way to Tin Pan Alley (New York: Schirmer, 1990)

Charles Hamm, chaps. 13 and 14: "After the Ball"; or, The Birth of Tin Pan Alley" and "It's Only a Paper Moon"; or, The Golden Age of Tin Pan Alley" Yesterdays: Popular Song in America. (1983) N.Y.: W.W. Norton. pp. 284-390. (UWO Music Library)

Isaac Goldberg Tin Pan Alley: A Chronicle of the American Popular Music Racket (New York: John Day, 1930)

Russell Sanjek American Popular Music and Its Business Vol. 2, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988

Craig Roell, The Piano in America, 1890-1940 (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1989)

Oct. 28th Vaudeville into Cinema

Robert W. Snyder, "Big Time, Small Time, All Around the Town: New York Vaudeville in the Early Twentieth Century," For Fun and Profit, ed. Richard Butsch (Philadelphia: Temple U.P., 1990)

Alison Kibler, "Ladies and Nuts: Cultural Hierarchy and Mass Appeal in Keith's Vaudeville Audiences" Rank Ladies: Gender and Cultural Hierarchy in American Vaudeville (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 23-54

Peter Bailey "Conspiracies of Meaning: Music-Hall and the Knowingness of Popular Culture" Past & Present 144 (Aug., 1994), pp. 138-170.

Tim Anderson "Reforming 'Jackass Music'" Cinema Journal 37.1: 3-22, 1997.

Rick Altman "Nickelodeon Music" Silent Film Sound Columbia University Press, 2004, pp. 203-26.

Recommended Readings:

Benjamin Singer. "Modernity, Hyperstimulus, and the Rise of Popular Sensationalism" Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life. eds. Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 72-99.

James Naremore "Introduction: This Is Where I Came In" pp. 1 -8 and "The History of an Idea" pp. 9-39 More Than Night: Film Noir in its Contexts Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008.

Nov. 4th Jazz

Gerald Early "Pulp and Circumstance: the Story of Jazz in High Places" (1994) in The Jazz Cadence of American Culture, ed. Robert G. O'Meally. N.Y.: Columbia U.P. (1998) pp. 393-430.

Ryan Jerving. "Jazz Language and Ethnic Novelty." Modernism/Modernity, vol. 10, no. 2 (2003), pp. 239-268.

Bernard Gendron "Moldy Figs and Modernists: Jazz at War (1942-1946)" Discourse Vol. 15, No. 3 (Spring 1993), pp. 130-157

John Gennari, "Hearing the 'Noisy Lostness': Telling the Story of Jazz" Blowin' Hot and Cool: Jazz and its Critics Chicago: U. of Chicago P., 2006, pp. 117-63.

David Ake "Jazz Historiography and the Problem of Louis Jordan" (2002) Jazz Cultures L.A.: University of California Press. pp. 42-61.

Recommended Readings:

Scott DeVeaux "Constructing the Jazz Tradition: Jazz Historiography" (1991) Black American Literature Forum (Autumn) 25. 3, pp. 525-560 (Available via J-Stor, UWO Libraries)

Lewis Erenberg "The Crowd Goes Wild: The Youth Culture of Swing" (1998) Swingin' the Dream Chicago: Chicago U.P. pp. 35-64.

Paul Gilroy "'Jewels Brought From Bondage': Black Music and the Politics of Authenticity," The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard U.P., 1993. pp. 72-110

Nov. 11th Phonograph, Microphone, Crooner

Lisa Gitelman, "New Media Users" Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture. Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 2006, pp. 59-86.

Jonathan Sterne "Hello!" (pp. 1-29) and "A Resonant Tomb" (pp. 287-333) The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.

Patrick Warfield "John Philip Sousa and "The Menace of Mechanical Music"." Journal of the Society for American Music 3.04 (2009): 431-463.

Allison McCracken. "God's Gift to Us Girls": Crooning, Gender, and the Re-Creation of American Popular Song, 1928-1933." American Music, Vol. 17, No. 4. (Winter, 1999), pp. 365-395.

Michael Thomas Carroll, "The Disembodied Voice: Coughlin, Crosby, and Other Crooners," Popular Modernity in America. Albany: SUNY P., 2000. pp. 33-59.

Recommended Readings:

Tom Gunning "Doing for the Eye What the Phonograph Does for the Ear" The Sounds of Early Cinema eds. Richard Abel, Rick Altman, Bloomington: Indiana U.P., 2001, pp. 13-31

Gary Giddins "Of Cabbages and Kings" (pp. 186-217), "Prosperity is just around the Crooner" (pp. 243-257), "Big Broadcast" (pp. 259-281) and "The Crosby Clause" (pp. 282-296) Bing Crosby: A Pocketful of Dreams, The Early Years, 1903-1940. Boston: Little Brown. (2001).

Nov. 18th Chinese Musical Modernity

Andrew F. Jones Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age Durham: Duke U.P., 2001, pp. 1-136

Nov. 25th Brazilian Musical Modernity

Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy" Modernity at Large U. of Minnesota P., 1996, pp. 27-47

David Treece "Guns and Roses: Bossa Nova and Brazil's Music of Popular Protest, 1958-68" (pp. 1-29) Popular Music Vol. 16, No. 1, Jan., 1997

Charles A. Perrone and Christopher Dunn "Chiclete com Banana" Brazilian Popular Music and Globalization London: Routledge, 2001, pp. 1-39.

Keir Keightley "Un voyage via barquinho...: Global Circulation, Musical Hybridization, and Adult Modernity, 1961-69." Migrating Music. Eds. Jason Toynbee and Byron Dueck. London: Routledge (2011), pp. 112-126.

Recommended Reading:

Cristina Magaldi "Cosmopolitanisma and World Music in Rio de Janeiro at the Turn of the Twentieth Century" Musical Quarterly 2009.

Dec. 2nd Singing, Dancing, Reflecting

Jane Feuer "The Self-Reflective Musical and the Myth of Entertainment" (1981) Genre: The Musical Ed. Rick Altman. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul/BFI. pp. 159-74.

Carol J. Clover "Dancin' in the Rain" (2002) Hollywood Musicals: The Film Reader. Ed. Steve Cohan. London: Routledge. pp. 157-74

Keir Keightley (2003) "Manufacturing Authenticity: Imagining the Music Industry in Anglo-American Cinema, 1956-62." Movie Music: The Film Reader. Ed. Kay Dickinson. London: Routledge. pp. 145-160.

Dec. 9th Conclusions