

**Professor:**

**Dr. Scott A. Sandage, Ph.D.**

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Office: Baker Hall 236B

Hours: Tue 12-1pm / Thu 11am-noon

**Assistant Instructors (TAs):**

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**(History 79-345) — The Roots of Rock & Roll**

This is a course about musical and social innovation. In a casual lecture-discussion format, we will trace the evolution of rock music from its roots before the Civil War in slave songs, Irish-American music, and blackface minstrelsy, to blues, folk, and country in the 1920s-1950s, before turning (in the last third of the semester) to the 1960s revolutions of Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, and Jimi Hendrix. Our main themes will be how technology and commodification change music, how race and gender relations shape (and are shaped by) music, and how something we'll call the "logic" of rock has been a model for open-source, collaborative innovation in creativity, technology, and business.

Each week's assignments include readings and listening to music. The course page on Canvas includes short assigned readings in PDF form and corresponding music playlists in streaming format.

Grading reflects how well you meet these learning objectives:

- Demonstrate knowledge of how American society and music have changed since the Civil War, with reference to key voices, genres, collaborations, controversies, and innovations;
- Demonstrate an ability to read both closely and critically, in order to contextualize diverse genres of music, from different historical eras, within the themes of the course;
- Improve and master the skill of writing analytically, by integrating multiple sources into formal essays that develop your own arguments about the content, meaning, and significance of the roots of rock & roll.
- Deconstruct inherited arguments (ideas, concepts, prejudices) on how American music developed.

We will pursue these objectives through the following assignments (for point breakdowns, see page 10):

- Three short essays (1000-1500 words, 4-6 pages) = 20% + 25% + 35%
- Participation = 18% (attendance is required and taken daily)
- Ungraded submissions: student information form and musical autobiography (2%)

***If permitted by your major department, you may elect to convert your enrollment for my course to "PASS/FAIL." Under this option, you could pass by earning 60 out of 100 possible points for the term. However, you cannot use the pass/fail option to satisfy any GenEd requirement.***

Required books and music albums are listed on the next page; other required readings and required music listening are on the course website at <https://canvas.cmu.edu/courses/24735>

### REQUIRED BOOKS

W.E.B. Du Bois, [\*The Souls of Black Folk\*](#) (Dover Thrift edition, ISBN: 0486280411 or 978-0486280417), list price, \$7.99

David Wondrich, [\*Stomp and Swerve: American Music Gets Hot, 1843-1924\*](#) (Chicago Review Press, ISBN: 0155652496X or 978-1556524967), list price, \$17.95

- Available as an e-book through Hunt Library [here](#)

Bob Dylan, [\*Chronicles, Volume One\*](#) (Simon & Schuster paperback, ISBN: 0743244583 or 978-0743244589), list price, \$17.00

- *If you prefer not to purchase this book, copies will be on reserve at Hunt Library*

### REQUIRED MUSIC

“Stomp and Swerve”

Label: Archeophone

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

“Elvis at Sun”

Label: BMG Heritage

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

“The Essential Bessie Smith”

Label: Columbia

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

“Best of Chess”

Label: Chess

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

The Carter Family

“Can the Circle Be Unbroken?”

Label: Sony

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

Bob Dylan

“Highway 61 Revisited”

Label: Sony

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

“Son House: The Original Delta Blues”

Label: Columbia

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

“Janis Joplin’s Greatest Hits”

Label: Sony

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

“Folkways: The Original Vision”

Label: Smithsonian Folkways

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

Jimi Hendrix

“Electric Ladyland”

Label: Experience Hendrix

[Amazon](#) / [iTunes](#) / [Spotify](#)

**WEEK ONE: WHERE DID YOU SLEEP LAST NIGHT?**

Tue, 31 Aug: Introduction

Thu, 2 Sep: Readings on Canvas: Eksteins, "Rites of Spring: Paris, May 29, 1913"; Miller, "July 25, 1965: Dylan Goes Electric"; and [CNN, "Lawsuit Alleges Bob Dylan Sexually Abused a 12-Year-Old in 1965"](#)

**WEEK TWO: WHAT NEEDS THE TALE YOU'RE TELLIN'?**

Tue, 7 Sep: Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk* (book), "Forethought" and chapters 1, 5, 10, and 14

>> **Info sheet & "Musical Autobiography" due @Canvas by 11:59pm** <<

Thu, 9 Sep: Canvas: Sparks, "Pretty Polly"; and Child, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (excerpt);

**WEEK THREE: JIM CROW, WHY DO YOU WALK SO SLOW?**

Tue, 14 Sep: Wondrich, *Stomp and Swerve* (book), Preface and pp. 1-42; and Canvas: Chanan, "Record Culture"

Thu, 16 Sep: Wondrich, pp. 43-111

**WEEK FOUR: DANCIN' FOOLS, AIN'T THEY SYNCOPATIN'?**

Tue, 21 Sep: Wondrich, pp. 113-188

Thu, 23 Sep: Wondrich, pp. 189-250 (finish the book!)

**WEEK FIVE: WHAT'S THE MATTER, PAPA?**

Tue, 28 Sep: Canvas: Davis, "I Used to Be Your Sweet Mama: Ideology, Sexuality, and Domesticity"

Thu, 30 Sep: Canvas: Hamilton, "Sexuality, Authenticity, and the Making of the Blues Tradition"

>> **First Essay due @Canvas on Saturday, 10/2, by 11:59pm** <<

**WEEK SIX: WHO COMPOSED THIS SONG?**

Tue, 5 Oct: Canvas: Reagon, "'Nobody Knows the Trouble I See'"

Thu, 7 Oct: Canvas: Peterson, "Renewable Tradition: The Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers"

**WEEK SEVEN: WHO MADE UP THIS SONG?**

Tue, 12 Oct: Canvas: Barker & Taylor, "Where Did You Sleep Last Night? Nirvana, Leadbelly ..."

Thu, 14 Oct: MID-SEMESTER BREAK / NO CLASS

**WEEK EIGHT: WHY CAN'T YOU BE TRUE?**

Tue, 19 Oct: Canvas: Santoro, "Woody Guthrie"

Thu, 21 Oct: Canvas: Waksman, "Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, and the Electric Guitar"

**WEEK NINE: SHALL I STAY, WOULD IT BE A SIN?**

Tue, 26 Oct: Canvas: Ennis, "The King and His Court"

Thu, 28 Oct: Canvas: Sanjek, "Can a Fujiyama Mama Be the Female Elvis?"

**>> Second Essay due @Canvas on Saturday, 10/30, by 11:59pm <<**

**WEEK TEN: STACKALEE, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?**

Tue, 2 Nov: Canvas: Lévi-Strauss, "The Science of the Concrete"

Thu, 4 Nov: Dylan, *Chronicles* (book), ch. 1-2; and  
Canvas: Marcus, "The Old, Weird America";

**WEEK ELEVEN: HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE ON YOUR OWN?**

Tue, 9 Nov: Dylan, chs. 3-4

Thu, 11 Nov: Dylan, ch. 5; and  
Canvas: Brooks & Wald, "Women Do Dylan"

**WEEK TWELVE: WHERE DID OUR LOVE GO?**

Tue, 16 Nov: Canvas: Gilmore, "Beatles Now, Beatles Then" and "The Rolling Stones" and Smith, "Rise of the Sacred Monsters"

Thu, 18 Nov: Canvas: Smith, "'African American Music, without Apology'"

**WEEK THIRTEEN: DIDN'T I GIVE YOU EVERYTHING?**

Tue, 23 Nov: Canvas: Whiteley, "Try, Just a Little Bit Harder: Janis Joplin..."

Thu, 25 Nov: THANKSGIVING / NO CLASS

**WEEK FOURTEEN: ARE YOU EXPERIENCED?**

Tue, 30 Nov: Canvas: Waksman, "Black Sound, Black Body: Jimi Hendrix..."

Thu, 2 Dec: Canvas: Excerpt from Johnson, *Everything Bad is Good for You*

**>> Third Essay due @Canvas on Saturday, 12/4, by 11:59pm <<**

### **Your One and Only Warning on Cheating & Plagiarism**

Plagiarism means using words, ideas, or arguments from another person or source without acknowledgment. Cite all sources consulted to any extent (including material from the internet), whether or not assigned and whether or not quoted directly. For quotations, four or more words used in sequence must be set off in quotation marks *and* the source must be identified by both a citation within the paper and on a separate page identifying all “Sources Consulted” -- *not* “Works Cited” (notice the distinction?).

Any form of cheating on assignments will immediately earn you an ‘R’ grade for *the entire course*. **By choosing to remain in my course, you consent to this policy.**

In addition, I will pursue official penalties under CMU’s cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized assistance policies at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/ocsi/academic-integrity/index.html>

*and*

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/ocsi/academic-integrity/statement-AI.html>

*and*

<http://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html>

*and*

<https://cms-staging.andrew.cmu.edu/theword/academic/standards-for-academic-and-creative-life.html>

Many students are surprised that CMU's definition of cheating encompasses a wide range of actions that you might not expect to be prohibited. *One example is unauthorized collaboration with others.*

If you have never taken time to read these guidelines in the student handbook, it is in your best interest to do so today. Save us both a lot of time and grief, OK?

Student Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: University and course integrity policies will be discussed in class prior to the deadline for the first paper, when all students must complete and sign the integrity pledge below. This pledge will apply to all three papers. (This page is a sample; an electronic version will be available on Canvas in Week 5.)**

Yes No

- I understand that uploading to Canvas triggers a plagiarism check by [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com).
- The words and ideas of others are clearly identified as such in my paper, by the use of quotation marks and citations of the sources of ideas, quotations, and paraphrases.
- My paper includes a page entitled "Sources Consulted" (*not* "Works Cited"), disclosing all sources consulted (not just those actually quoted) including libraries, internet, friends, parents, GCC, etc.
- I have read the plagiarism warning on page 6 of the syllabus and I accept the definitions and penalties as explained there, discussed in class, and outlined by the linked university policies.
- This paper is entirely my own work and adheres to CMU policies linked from syllabus page 6.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**A personal note from Scott:** As I will share with you in class, I've been treated for mental illness all my life, from 1975 (when I was 11 years old) to fall 2021 (you do the math). In class and out, I will do my best to let you know me as a person and to get to know you. Please visit my office hours to share or ask whatever you wish (on any subject including but not limited to coursework, music, history, or everything else you can think of).

**Course content/triggers:** History is full of conflicting stories about bad and good people, of all descriptions, who did and said bad and good things; bad things for good reasons, good things for bad reasons. Rock history includes painful songs and stories of enslavement, poverty, structural racism, sexual violence, cultural appropriation, and economic exploitation. I will try always to present difficult content sensitively and respectfully, and I will always be glad to consult with you individually about this content or my teaching of it.

#### **University Syllabus Statement on Student Wellness**

**Take care of yourself.** *Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.*

*All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.*

*You might also like to try mindfulness meditation and other wellness techniques supported by free access for all CMU community members at <https://www.headspace.com/cmu>.*

*If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is here to help: call 412-268-2922 and visit their website at <http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for help getting connected to the support that can help.*

*If you or someone you know is suicidal or in danger of self-harm, call immediately, day or night:*

**CaPS: 412-268-2922**

**Re:solve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226**

**If the situation is life threatening, call the police:**

**On campus: CMU Police: 412-268-2323**

**Off campus: 911**



**Student Information (complete front & back, submit @Canvas by next Tuesday, September 7)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Major(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Disabilities or special needs: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Class year: \_\_\_\_\_ Hometown: \_\_\_\_\_

Your hero(es): \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite book(s): \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*\* Some preliminary musical questions \*\*\**

Best singer/group ever: \_\_\_\_\_ Worst ever: \_\_\_\_\_

Best song ever: \_\_\_\_\_ Worst ever: \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite radio/web station/music service(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Current song(s) you love: \_\_\_\_\_

Current song(s) you hate: \_\_\_\_\_

Greatest album ever: \_\_\_\_\_ Worst ever: \_\_\_\_\_

First recording you bought yourself: \_\_\_\_\_

Most recent song/album you acquired: \_\_\_\_\_

Most embarrassing recording you ever liked: \_\_\_\_\_

Type(s) of music you know/love best: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Type(s) of music you *don't* know but wish you *did*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you sing or play an instrument? (Explain) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Please answer the above questions and submit this sheet along with a one- or two-page "musical autobiography" @Canvas by next Tuesday, September 7.**

\* \* \* \* \*

GRADE RECORD

Info form \_\_\_\_\_ out of 1 point  
Autobiography \_\_\_\_\_ out of 1 point  
First essay: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 20 points  
  
Mid-semester letter grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Second essay: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 25 points  
  
Third essay: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 35 points  
  
Participation: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 18 points

*Notes on participation:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Dates absent:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Total points earned: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 100 points**

*[A = 90+ points; B = 80+ points; C = 70+ points; D = 60+ points]*

**SEMESTER LETTER GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_**