

HIST 371: SOCIETY, CULTURE, AND ROCK AND ROLL
TUESDAY & THURSDAY, 1:30PM-2:45PM,
FRNY G140

Professor: David C. Atkinson
Email: atkinsod@purdue.edu
Office: University Hall 25
Office Hours: Mon., 2:00pm-3:00pm
Wed. 10:00am-11:00am
 Or by appointment

Teaching Assistant
Lama El Sharief
lelhari@purdue.edu

Office Hours
Recitation 402
 Tues. 12:00pm-1:00pm
 Thurs. 12:00pm-1:00pm
 Or by appointment

STUDENT'S LAST NAME
A-Ho

Teaching Assistant
Jonathan Soucek
jsoucek@purdue.edu

Office Hours
Recitation 410
 Tues. 3:00pm-5:00pm
 Or by appointment

STUDENT'S LAST NAME:
Hu-Po

Teaching Assistant
Phillip Voglewede
pvoglewe@purdue.edu

Office Hours
Recitation 420
 Tues. 4:00pm-5:00pm
 Thurs. 4:00pm-5:00pm
 Or by appointment

STUDENT'S LAST NAME:
Pr-Z

COURSE OVERVIEW

This class will survey the social, cultural, political, and economic history of the post-World War II United States through the prism of music – rock and roll music. At one level the class will survey trends and styles in rock, focusing first on the artists and groups who gave rise to this hybrid form of music from its country and blues roots. It will then track the rise of rock and roll in the 1950s and the corporate, political, and social backlash against it. The focus on the 1960s will be on music as an expression and extension of the social, cultural, and political changes of that decade. Finally, the class will examine the paradoxical developments of the evolution of “corporate rock and roll” with the emergence of an abrasive, often angry music (punk/grunge/rap) by the end of the 1970s and into the 1980s. In the end, this class will examine and explain the technological, business, and social forces that helped cement rock’s position in Western popular culture.

There are five major themes around which the class turns. The first is the importance of African-American culture to the origin and development of rock and roll. The second is the effect of demographic shifts and in particular the dramatic population growth during the postwar era (both in the United States and Britain). Economic issues – prosperity and major and independent record companies – form a third prism through which we will look at rock and roll. Technological innovations that

both spread popular music and, in the 1950s, became part of making music, are a fourth theme. Finally youth culture and experiences are central to this class. This class will empower students to use a medium with which they are somewhat familiar (popular music) to examine less well-known issues and historical forces that are intrinsic to the American and British postwar experience.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the origins of rock and roll music in the United States and trace its diffusion around the world.
- Examine, interpret, and explain how personal, political, cultural, economic, and social experiences and/or structures shaped the history of rock & roll in the 20th century.
- Analyze primary sources to evaluate causal arguments and analyze assertions, assumptions, and evidence related to the history of rock & roll in the 20th century.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *The Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader: Histories and Debates* Fourth Edition, David Brackett (Oxford University Press, 2020)
- *What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and It's History* Fifth Edition, John Covach and Andrew Flory (Norton, 2018)

Both of the books are available at the University Bookstores and online. The most cost-effective option is to rent them from Amazon. **All of the reading assignments listed in the course syllabus are required** and it is important that you complete each week's reading before you come to class. Exams and assignments will draw on the material in these readings as well as from my lectures.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

GRADE BREAKDOWN: The following elements will constitute your final grade:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Reading Responses x3 | (30%) |
| Exam One | (20%) |
| Exam Two | (20%) |
| Final Exam | (30%) |

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Although we will take attendance in this class, you will not receive a grade for simply showing up. We keep roll only to identify students who repeatedly miss class and therefore may need assistance. Nevertheless, you are expected to come to class. You are responsible for all of the material covered in lectures, music clips, and videos, and you will find it very difficult to pass this course without regular attendance in lecture. I will not post my lecture notes or presentations online. Consistent lateness or missed

classes will negatively affect your overall grade. You should email me in advance if there is a legitimate reason why you will be consistently late to class.

You must turn off your cell phone before class begins. Laptop computers are permitted for note-taking only. Persistent texting, internet browsing, and other disruptive behavior will result in a reduction of your overall participation and attendance grade. We will be happy to answer any questions you have so do not hesitate to email us (after class...), or better yet, come to our office hours.

EXAMINATIONS

There will be **three** examinations this semester. The first examination will be administered in class on **Thursday, September 19**, and will be 1 hour and 15 minutes long. The second examination will be administered in class on **Thursday, October 17**, and will be 1 hour and 15 minutes long. The date of the final examination **will be announced** once the schedule is available, and it will be 2 hours long. Each examination will consist of short identification questions reflecting upon the significance of specific individuals or events from the class readings and a longer analytical essay on a broader theme. I will provide further guidelines and information as the semester progresses. If you miss an examination, you must contact me as soon as possible.

In order to prepare for these exams I strongly advise you to take legible, constructive notes throughout the semester, to regularly attend class, and to consistently reflect upon the main themes and issues raised in the course readings and lectures.

READING RESPONSE ESSAY ASSIGNMENTS

Over the course of the semester, you will write **three** (3) informal essays responding to questions based primarily on the reading material and lectures. **You will select one option from each of the three major sections of the course.** The essays should be submitted on Blackboard before MIDNIGHT on the date indicated. Each essay is worth 0-10 points. These are informal writing assignments. The purpose of these essays is not to improve your writing skills but to stimulate thinking about issues, questions, and problems raised by your study of American history in the twentieth century viewed through the lens of popular culture, specifically music. Your responses will be assessed on things like the process, clarity, insight, and quality of thought. Read-and-respond questions for the informal essay options are indicated in the outline of class topics below. Again, you will submit them before class on the due date through Blackboard Learn's Assignment tool.

CHEATING / PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism refers to the reproduction of another's words or ideas without proper attribution. University Regulations contain further information on dishonesty. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses, and will be treated as such in this class. **You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials.** Cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest practices will be punished as harshly as Purdue University policies allow. Any instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the course

and notification of the Dean of Students Office. Please make sure that you are familiar with Purdue's academic integrity policies:

<https://www.purdue.edu/provost/teachinglearning/honor-pledge.html>

“As a boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue.”

DISCLAIMER

In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines, and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted once the course resumes on Blackboard or can be obtained by contacting me via email at atkinsod@purdue.edu.

LECTURE TOPICS & READING ASSIGNMENTS

PART ONE: THE ORIGINS OF ROCK & ROLL

- Tues. Aug. 20: **Introduction: Society, Culture, & Rock and Roll**
- Thurs. Aug. 22: **Rock & Roll Origins Part 1, 19th Century-1940s**
What's That Sound? pp 3-32
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. xii-43 (Chapters 1-7)
- Tues. Aug. 27: **Rock & Roll Origins part 2, 1940s-1950s**
What's That Sound? pp 33-54; 62-68
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 43-60 (Chapters 8-11)
- Thurs. Aug. 29: **R&B Becomes Rock & Roll, 1950s**
What's That Sound? pp. 55-62; 75-104
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 60-112 (Chapters 12-21)

ESSAY OPTION ONE DUE BEFORE MIDNIGHT

- Tues. Sept. 3: **Backlash, 1950s**
What's That Sound? pp 69-74;
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 112-123 (Chapters 22-24)
- Thurs. Sept. 5: **The Fall & Rise of Rock & Roll, 1958-1963**
What's That Sound? pp 105-109
- Tues. Sept. 10: **The British Invasion of America, 1963-1970**
What's That Sound? pp 151-187
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 193-226 (Chapters 35-39)
- Thurs. Sept. 12: **The American Response, 1963-1970**
What's That Sound? pp 111-150
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 125-138 (Chapters 25-26)

ESSAY OPTION TWO DUE BEFORE MIDNIGHT

- Tues. Sept. 17: **Cold War Rock & Roll Part I, 1950s-1960s**
The Jazz Ambassadors (2018)
- Thurs. Sept. 19: **FIRST EXAM**

PART TWO: POPULAR MUSIC & POPULIST POLITICS: THE 1960s-70s

Tues. Sept. 24: **Motown, Soul, and Civil Rights, 1959-1972**
What's That Sound? pp 217-247
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 163-192 (Chapters 30-34)

Thurs. Sept. 26: **Folk Revival, Folk Rock, & Protest, 1930s-1969**
What's That Sound? pp 189-215
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 138-162 (Chapters 27-29)

ESSAY OPTION ONE DUE BEFORE MIDNIGHT

Tues. Oct. 1: **Rock & Roll and the Counterculture, Part I, 1960-1967**
What's That Sound? pp 249-254
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 226-245 (Chapters 40-43)

Thurs. Oct. 3: **Rock & Roll and the Counterculture, Part II, 1967-1969**
What's That Sound? pp 254-282

ESSAY OPTION TWO DUE BEFORE MIDNIGHT

Tues. Oct. 8: **OCTOBER BREAK: NO CLASS**

Thurs. Oct. 10: **The Rise of Hard Rock & Heavy Metal**
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 288-305 (Chapters 51-52)

Tues. Oct. 15: **Woodstock, Altamont, & The Rest, 1969-1972**
What's That Sound? pp. 283-288
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 245-251 (Chapter 44)

Thurs. Oct. 17: **SECOND EXAM**

**PART THREE: PRIMA DONNAS, PUNKS,
AND THE PROMISE OF ROCK AND ROLL, 1970s-2000s**

- Tues. Oct. 22: **Consolidation & Fragmentation, 1968-1980**
What's That Sound? pp 289-333
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 253-269 (Chapters 45-47)
- Thurs. Oct. 24: **Prog, Glam, Funk, & Disco, 1968-1980**
What's That Sound? pp 334-365
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 269-288; 305-334 (Chapters 48-50; 53-56)
- Tues. Oct. 29: **Satirizing Corporate Rock & Roll**
This is Spinal Tap (1984)
- Thurs. Oct. 31: **Punk Rock & New Wave, 1966-1980**
What's That Sound? pp 366-400; 457-463
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 334-355; 420-424 (Chapters 57-60; 69)

ESSAY OPTION ONE DUE BEFORE MIDNIGHT

- Tues. Nov. 5: **Rock & Roll Activism, 1970s-1980s**
- Thurs. Nov. 7: **New Wave of British Heavy Metal & Hair Metal in the 1980s**
What's That Sound? pp 436-447
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 401-410 (Chapter 66-67)
- Tues. Nov. 12: **MTV & The Return of Corporate Rock & Roll**
What's That Sound? pp 401-435
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 357-400 (Chapters 61-65)
- Thurs. Nov. 14: **Hip Hop, & Rap, 1970s-1980s**
What's That Sound? pp 447-457
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 430-473 (Chapters 71-77)
- Tues. Nov. 19: **The PMRC & Another Backlash, 1980s**
Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 411-420 (Chapter 68)
- Thurs. Nov. 21: **Cold War Rock and Roll Part II, 1970s-1980s**
Free to Rock (2017)
- Tues. Nov. 26: **NO CLASS**
- Thurs. Nov. 28: **THANKSGIVING BREAK-NO CLASS**

Tues. Dec. 3: **Indie, Grunge, & Britpop**
 What's That Sound? pp 463-528
 Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader, pp. 474-491 (Chapters 78-80)

ESSAY OPTION TWO DUE BEFORE MIDNIGHT

Thurs. Dec. 5: **TBD**

FINAL EXAM: TBD

GRADE SCALE

| | |
|-----------|---------------|
| A | 93-100 |
| A- | 92-90 |
| B+ | 88-89 |
| B | 83-87 |
| B- | 82-80 |
| C+ | 78-79 |
| C | 73-77 |
| C- | 72-70 |
| D | 60-69 |
| F | 0-59 |

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

GRIEF ABSENCE POLICY

Purdue University recognizes that a time of bereavement is very difficult for a student. The University therefore provides the following rights to students facing the loss of a family member through the Grief Absence Policy for Students (GAPS). Students will be excused from classes for funeral leave and given the opportunity to complete missed assignments or assessments in the event of the death of a member of the student's family.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Accessibility and Accommodations Syllabus Statement: The DRC recommends the following statement be included in your syllabus. "Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247."

<http://www.purdue.edu/drc/faculty/syllabus.html>

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life.

Purdue University prohibits discrimination against any member of the University community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a veteran.

The University will conduct its programs, services and activities consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and orders and in conformance with the procedures and limitations as set forth in Executive Memorandum No. D-1, which provides specific contractual rights and remedies.

VIOLENT BEHAVIOR POLICY

Purdue University is committed to providing a safe and secure campus environment. Purdue strives to create an educational environment for students and work environment for employees that promote educational and career goals. Violent behavior impedes such goals. Therefore, violent behavior is prohibited in or on any university facility or while participating in any university activity.

CAPS INFORMATION

Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (765)494-6995 and <http://www.purdue.edu/caps/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES are based on a simple concept – if you hear a fire alarm inside, proceed outside. If you hear a siren outside, proceed inside.

Indoor Fire Alarms mean to stop class or research and immediately **evacuate** the building. Proceed to your Emergency Assembly Area away from building doors. **Remain outside** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

All Hazards Outdoor Emergency Warning Sirens mean to immediately seek shelter (**Shelter in Place**) in a safe location within the closest building. o “Shelter in place” means seeking immediate shelter inside a building or University residence. This course of action may need to be taken during a tornado, a civil disturbance including a shooting or release of hazardous materials in the outside air. Once safely inside, find out more details about the emergency*. **Remain in place** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

**In both cases, you should seek additional clarifying information by all means possible...Purdue Home page, email alert, TV, radio, etc...review the Purdue Emergency Warning Notification System multi-communication layers at http://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency_preparedness/warning-system.html*

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES:

- Review the **Emergency Procedures Guidelines**
https://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/flipchart/index.html
- Review the **Building Emergency Plan** (available from the building deputy) for:
 - o evacuation routes, exit points, and emergency assembly area
 - o when and how to evacuate the building.
 - o shelter in place procedures and locations
 - o additional building specific procedures and requirements.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AWARENESS VIDEOS

- "Shots Fired on Campus: When Lightning Strikes," is a 20-minute active shooter awareness video that illustrates what to look for and how to prepare and react to this type of incident. See:
<http://www.purdue.edu/securePurdue/news/2010/emergency-preparedness-shots-fired-on-campus-video.cfm> (Link is also located on the EP website)

MORE INFORMATION

Reference the Emergency Preparedness web site for additional information:
http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness

READING RESPONSE ESSAY ASSIGNMENTS

Over the course of the semester, you will write three essays, each one 375-500 words in length, and each one worth 0-10 points. The essays are due through the Blackboard Assignment tool before class on the day they are assigned. You decide which three of six dates you will submit essays, but keep in mind that:

- a) **You must pick one option from each of the three major sections**, and
- b) There will be no extensions granted or backtracking allowed.

These are informal writing assignments. The purpose of these essays is not to improve your writing skills but to stimulate thinking about issues, questions, and problems raised by your study of the interconnection between society and culture on the one hand, and, on the other, rock and roll. The goal is for you to discover, develop, and clarify your own ideas. You should do the appropriate reading; then sit down and write in response to the question for 20-30 minutes. You will not be assessed on things like spelling, organization, and grammar. But we will be looking for evidence that you are thinking seriously about the course materials. Your essays should show that you are wrestling with concepts explained in the reading and in lectures and that you have done your reading and thinking before attempting your essays. For the most part, you will be rewarded for the process of thinking rather than for the end product you deliver.

PART I: THE ORIGINS OF ROCK AND ROLL

Essay Option 1. Select **one** of the following three questions.

Due before **MIDNIGHT** on **Thursday, August 29**

1. Imagine that you are a serious student of this new phenomenon called rock and roll. You are writing an essay for *Billboard Magazine* that is going to try to explain the influences that shaped it. Write a brief summary of that essay explaining the influence of one of the following on Fifties rock and roll:
 - Blues
 - R&B
 - Country Music
2. Imagine that you were 14 in 1954, and consider how you might have reacted to Cab Calloway, Little Richard, or Louis Jordan.
3. What is the most surprising thing you have learned about the origins and background to rock and roll? How is your sense of what rock is different from the music—especially R&B music—you have heard or seen in class?

Essay Option 2. Select **one** of the following three questions.

Due before **MIDNIGHT** on **Thursday, September 12**

1. Assume that you are a white teenager growing up in a racially segregated and divided southern town—Tupelo, Ferriday, Lubbock, for example. Music—rock and roll—seems to be your only way out of, and up from, the dirt-poor life that you lead. What kinds of music are you listening to? Or put another way, what are the musical influences—both in terms of music types and musicians—on your own rock music songs?
2. Assume that you are the parent of this rebellious white teenager who is learning to play that caterwauling music called rock and roll. Why are you so angry about that kind of music? Is it just the noise, or are there other reasons that you are so opposed to having your child “get into” rock and rock culture?
3. You are a “hip” Purdue University undergraduate in History 371. Do you buy Tom Petty’s theory that rock and roll got out of control, and that the great artists—Presley, Lewis, Berry, Holly, Little Richard—had to be “neutralized” and disc jockeys like Alan Freed had to be “eliminated” in order to calm things down? Or, in your not-so-humble opinion, does music simply change with the times, and the “rock” of American Bandstand and the Brill Building (Fabian, Neil Sedaka, Bobby Darin, Frankie Avalon) was inevitable?

SECTION II: POPULAR MUSIC AND POPULIST POLITICS: THE 1960s AND 1970s

Essay Option 1. Select **one** of the following three questions.

Due before **MIDNIGHT on Thursday, September 26**

1. Analyze the Motown sound. Explain the role of the label's performers, songwriters, producers, and house band (the "Funk Brothers"). Relate the label's musical and marketing philosophy to the social and racial climate of the 1960s.
2. To what extent did two soul labels—Motown and Stax/Volt represent different trends in the civil rights movement? Which of the two "sounds" had deeper roots in African-American culture? Why?
3. What is the importance of Bob Dylan? Is his influence felt more in the arena of politics (in the 1960s) or did he have a more significant impact on music (e.g., lyrics and the emergence of folk rock) and musicians (e.g., the Beatles)? Give your reasons for selecting one or the other.

Essay Option 2. Select **one** of the following three questions.

Due before **MIDNIGHT on Thursday, October 3**

1. Much has been made in the last two weeks about how music—soul music and electrified folk and blues—reflected larger social and political trends. Well, how about it: *do you believe this or is Professor Atkinson making it up?* When you think about any one of the three trends (soul music, Dylan, or Hendrix), do they affect (or shape) society or do they reflect only trends in rock music?
2. To what extent have the sounds of the 1960s (or at least the music that you have heard) shaped the music of the late 20th century? That is, what connections do you see between the types of soul music of the early 1960s or the electrified sounds of Dylan and Hendrix and more recent groups that you listen to. You must be specific about the connections between the genres (or sounds) of the 1960s and the groups you cite.
3. In *The Hippies and American Values*, Timothy Miller claims that acid rock was "pivotal to the generational rebellion. . . . To hippies, rock was not just sound; it was part and parcel of a way of life, and its ethical dimensions were therefore substantial." Did that revolution—in lifestyle or music—succeed or did it fail? Why?

**SECTION III: PUNKS, PRIMA DONNAS, AND THE PROMISE OF ROCK AND ROLL:
1970s-1990s**

Essay Option 1. Select **one** of the following three questions.

Due before **MIDNIGHT** on **Thursday, October 31**

1. Use the work of specific bands to compare American and British punk music in the 1970s. Describe the musical and cultural impact (and origins) of each.
2. Which of the following groups or artists were more political in their music: Sex Pistols, Clash, or Bob Marley? What examples can you point to in order to substantiate or prove your choice?
3. Many students really don't like punk music, especially that of the 1970s. Fair enough. But why did punks craft that sound (and look) that grates so harshly on your ears? Answer this as if you are either Joey Ramone or Johnny Rotten (whom you choose will affect your answer—somewhat).

Essay Option 2. Select **one** of the following three questions.

Due before **MIDNIGHT** on **Tuesday, December 3**

1. Explore the impact of MTV on the evolution of popular music during the 1980s. Compare the conflicting images and values embodied by “pop” and “rock” performers during this period.
2. Grunge music has been labeled the punk music of the nineties. Test this idea by comparing “Smells Like Teen Spirit” to either a Sex Pistols’ or Ramones’ song. What carries over from seventies punk? What’s new?
3. Is rap music? This has been a hotly debated question since the emergence of rap. To answer this question for yourself, read two or three definitions of music in dictionaries or encyclopedias, then consider rap as music in light of the definitions. What do you discover?