

MU 120 – Fall 2009
History of American Song
Dr. Laura Nash, Donnarumma 219, x2638
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CNS 1 - TF 11:00-12:15

The final is Tuesday, December 15, 9:00 am

This course fulfills the V&PA core requirement for the history of a performing art.

Goal of Course

The goal of this course is to give you a sound musical, historical, and critical sense of the role of song in American society, of the changes in style and role that characterized songs over the years, and of the various kinds of responses they have generated. Questions we will consider include:

1) musical ones: In what ways is it useful to discuss the musical characteristics of songs - their history? their structure? the various styles and mediums that made use of such songs? the identity of the artists who presented them? How might we assign musical value to this general category of song, and how might we evaluate individual songs within this category?

2) cultural ones: What artistic, social, and economic needs did songs serve? What effect did differences in mediums of distribution—e.g. sheet music, phonograph records, shows, radio—have on the aims, content, and effect of such songs? How did their role differ in different communities? How did the function and perception of such songs change over time?

Testing/evaluating methods

The class grade is based upon the following point system:

Attendance	20 points
Class Participation	20 points
Research papers, 2 @ 20 pts each	40 points
Portfolio/journal	20 points
Final – research component	30 points
Final – portfolio summation	10 points

CELL PHONES - use one in class, in any way - including checking the time, and your final grade will be lowered one degree. For example: A to A- for the first offense, A to B+ for a second offence, and so on.

Another thing: don't go in and out of class during class

Attendance:

- Attendance will be recorded for every class

- Up to 2 classes may be missed without it affecting your grade. This includes missing for any and all reasons including sickness, family emergency, over-sleeping an alarm, studying for a test, taking a roommate to the hospital...
 - 0-2 missed classes = 20 points
 - 3 missed classes = 18 points
 - 4 missed classes = 16 points
 - 5 missed classes = 14 points and so on
- I do not need to know why you miss a class. If you're not here, you're not here.

Participation:

- Participation means reading the material, doing the assignments, and being prepared to say something about them that will add to our group learning experience.

Research papers:

- Each paper must be at least 10-pages long. Bibliography must include at least 12 sources and must include primary materials, ideally from the Library of Congress (see below).
- Graded on strong thesis statement, supporting paragraphs, well-thought out transitions, and conclusion.
- Papers will be discussed in more detail in class.
- 1st due on or before Friday, October 15
- 2nd due on or before Tuesday, Nov 24

Portfolio/Journal

- Each student will have an online journal on Angel. Other than yourself, I am the only person who will have access to your journal.
- I will read all the journals weekly and will try to comment on all of them.
- There are three primary purposes of the journal:
 - To give you an opportunity to further reflect on class discussions
 - To post homework that is a written response to an article
 - To provide a place for you to post articles or links that you are assigned to find

Make-ups, Extensions, and Extra-Credit

- Without an excuse from your dean, there are no make-ups of missing assignments or extensions of due dates.
- Assignments cannot be redone, so do a good job the first time!
- Extra-credit may be offered to the class as a whole if a relevant opportunity arises. I do not provide extra-credit assignments on an individual basis.

Big Band Music of Benny Goodman

Tue, Sep. 29, 2009 at 8 pm

Morse Recital Hall in Sprague Memorial Hall / 470 College Street, New Haven

\$10 / Students \$5

Materials:

Itunes University – for music and pdf files of reading materials

Angel course software

Online subscription to *The New York Times* (it's free!)
Online databases in the DiMenna-Nyselius Library
Primary Source Materials, Library of Congress, *et al*, see below

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

WEEK 1

Introduction, define "History" "American" and "Song"
Is Popular Song an Oxymoron?
A really quick historical survey of songs

WEEK 2

Same time, different place – Music in Early America. How and why is the culture in America different from Europe and how does that impact the development of music?

WEEK 3

Social and political protest
Abolition and temperance

WEEK 4

Stephen Foster, American Nationalism in music, Do we have folk music?
Minstral shows – good or bad?

WEEK 5

Music of the Civil War

WEEK 6

Music of the Civil War

WEEK 7 – Friday only

Post-war music, immigration and its impact on music

WEEK 8

Early Tin Pan Alley

WEEK 9

Irving Berlin, Music of World War I
George and Ira Gershwin, Popular vs. Classical, the influence of jazz

WEEK 10

Cole Porter, Music of World War II
Rogers and Hammerstein, confronting stereotypes

WEEK 11

Music of Hollywood, mass distribution, visual music

WEEK 12

Social protest – Civil Rights

WEEK 13

Social protest – Civil Rights

WEEK 14

Rock and Roll – what is it exactly? Musical themes after Vietnam

WEEK 15 - Tuesday only

Last Day of Class, summary

Academic & Disability Support

Fairfield University complies with the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Any student who may require an accommodation under such provisions should contact Aimee Tiu at Academic & Disability Support x2615 or atiu@fairfield.edu

Academic Integrity

“All members of the Fairfield University Community share responsibility for establishing and maintaining appropriate standards for academic honesty and integrity. As such, faculty members have an obligation to set high standards of honesty and integrity through personal example and the learning communities they create. Such integrity is fundamental to, and an inherent part of, a Jesuit education, in which teaching and learning are based on mutual respect. It is further expected that students will follow these standards and encourage others to do so... Students are sometimes unsure about what constitutes academic dishonesty. In all academic work, students are expected to submit materials that are their own and are to include attribution for any ideas or language that are not their own.” Examples of academic dishonesty can be found in the Course Catalog and the Student Handbook. In the event of dishonesty, “professors are to award a grade of zero for the project, paper, or examination in question, and may record an F for the course itself. When appropriate, expulsion may be recommended. A notation of the event is made in the student’s file in the academic dean’s office. The student will receive a copy.” (Source: Academic Policies, Fairfield University Undergraduate Course Catalog.)

Fairfield University Writing Center

The Fairfield University Writing Center is a free resource available to all Fairfield University students. At the Writing Center, a trained peer tutor will work individually with a student on anything he or she is writing, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing.

Tutors have special training to work with students for whom English is a second language. The tutoring conference is collaborative; peer tutors do not write, proofread, or grade papers for students. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the website at www.fairfield.edu/writingcenter or stop by DMH 255.

Examples of Available Resources

Library of Congress American Memory

[America Singing: Nineteenth Century Song Sheets](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amsshtml/amsshhome.html)
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amsshtml/amsshhome.html>

[African-American Sheet Music, 1850-1920:](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/rpbhtml/aasmhome.html)
Selected from the Collections of Brown University
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/rpbhtml/aasmhome.html>

[The Development of an African-American Musical Theatre 1865-1910](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/rpbhtml/aasmsprs1.html)
Brown University Library
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/rpbhtml/aasmsprs1.html>

[Historic American Sheet Music, 1850-1920:](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/ncdhtml/hasmhome.html)
Selected from the Collections at Duke University

[Historic American Sheet Music Timeline: 1850-1920](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/ncdhtml/hasmhome.html)
Duke University <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/ncdhtml/hasmhome.html>

[Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/smhtml/smhome.html)
Library of Congress
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/smhtml/smhome.html>

["We'll Sing to Abe Our Song!": Sheet Music about Lincoln, Emancipation, and the Civil War](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/scsmhtml/scsmhome.html)
The Alfred Whital Stern Collection of Lincolniana, Library of Congress
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/scsmhtml/scsmhome.html>

Other Institutional Collections

[Dreams of the Past: 19th Century Color Lithographic Sheet Music.](#)
Brown University

[The Lester S. Levy Collection of Sheet Music.](#)
Johns Hopkins University

[19th Century California Sheet Music.](#)
University of California, Berkeley

[Center for Popular Music Research Special Collection Databases](#)
Middle Tennessee State University

[Sheet Music Index](#)
Duke University Libraries

American Music Resources

[Selected Music Resources on the Internet](#)
Music Division, New York Public Library

[Internet Resources for Music Scholars](#)
Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library, Harvard University

[Worldwide Internet Music Resources](#)
William and Gayle Cook Music Library
Indiana University School of Music

[Tin Pan Alley](#)
Eastern Kentucky University

[The Red Hot Jazz Archive: A History of Jazz Before 1930](#)

[Tom Morgan's Jazz and Blues](#)

[Theatre Library Association](#)

[Theatre Library Association: Internet Resources](#)

Some Interdisciplinary Databases with Music Citations

[America: History and Life](#)
1954-present; article abstracts and citations of reviews and dissertations on the history and culture of the United States and Canada.

[Arts and Humanities Citation Index](#)
1994-present; source for information in all arts and humanities disciplines. Useful for retrieving recent articles that cite a known earlier article.

[Arts and Humanities Search](#)
Complete access to articles from over 1300 of the world's leading art and humanities journals and to relevant articles in over 5000 social science and science journals.

[Contemporary Women's Issues](#)
1992-present; full-text access to global information on women.

[Education Full Text](#)
Full-text articles from hundreds of journals, included 87 not covered by ERIC's CIJE

[Expanded Academic ASAP](#)
Citations, with 50% full-text, to scholarly and general publications.

Google Scholar

Allows searching across many disciplines and sources.

GPO Catalog of U.S. Government Publications

1976-present; index to United States government publications cataloged by the Government Printing Office.

Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians

Contains all of the information from the 29 volume print version - over 29,000 articles. Also included is the New Grove Dictionary of Opera and the New Grove Dictionary of Jazz.

Historical Abstracts

1954-present; article abstracts and citations of books and dissertations on the history of the world from 1450 to the present. Excludes the U. S. and Canada.

History Resource Center: US

Integrated collection of primary documents, secondary reference sources, and journal articles covering all areas of US History

Humanities Full Text

1984-present. Full text of interviews, obituaries, reviews of opera, plays radio and TV programs and more.

In the First Person

Indexes of oral history collections in English

JSTOR

Searchable scholarly journals, including music

LexisNexis Academic

Current; said to be the world's largest full-text, online database, containing more than a billion full-text articles, citation abstracts, and documents. Emphasis is on current news and legal and business information.

MLA Bibliography

Citations in the areas of literature, language, linguistics, and folklore

New York Times – Historical

1851 – 4 years ago. Full page and article images with searchable full-text back to the first issue

ProQuest Newspapers

Social Sciences Citation Index / Full Text

1994-present; source for information in all major social sciences disciplines. Useful for retrieving recent articles which cite a known earlier article.

Sociological Abstracts

1974-present; information in sociology and related disciplines from journals, book reviews, books, dissertations and conference papers. .

Sample Projects

- 1) Pick a year or a range of 2-3 years 1840-1960: what were the most popular songs? What does this say about the tastes and ideas of the period:
- 2) Look at the songs and plays of Harrigan and Hart. What sort of picture do they give of the immigrant, urban New York of the 1880s and 1890s?
- 3) Choose one of these popular late 19th-20th century composers (most of whose names are not familiar today) and evaluate his/her work.
- 4) Pick a topic and trace it through popular sheet music:
 - Modern inventions (telephone, cars, airplanes, etc.)
 - Comic songs ("Yes, We Have No Bananas," "Mairzy Doats," etc.)
 - Topical songs (fires, disasters, political events)
 - Alcohol and Prohibition
 - Nostalgia for the South
 - Attitudes towards various ethnic groups (African-American, Italian, Irish, German, etc.)
 - "Mother" songs; "Mammy" songs; "Baby" songs.
 - Songs about sports, especially baseball
- 5) Music relating to World Wars I and II is very different. What does this say about the changes in American society over thirty years?
- 6) Film Music. There were many songs written specifically for films. Consider Oscar winners and nominees and/or other original songs from films.
- 7) Look at the earliest published songs by major composers, before their first big hits
- 8) There are two great periods of African-American musical theatre and cabaret: 1898-1911 and the 1920s. Look at some of the works of African-American composers from either period.
- 9) Sheet music cover illustration is often as fascinating as the songs themselves. What is the role of the illustrator in marketing and popularizing the music? Look at the works of illustrators from several periods or follow the work of a single illustrator.