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Analysis of Rock and Related Styles (MUTH 421/MUTH 521)
Spring 2011, Block 3 – MTWR 11:00-11:50 – room 2201

Course Description: This course provides an overview of current and historic trends in popular music analysis, focusing mainly on “rock.” Course activities include readings, class discussion, presentations by the instructor and by guest lecturers, and student presentations.

REQUIRED MATERIAL

Spicer, Mark and John Covach. *Sounding Out Pop: Analytical Essays in Popular Music* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010). ISBN: 978-0-472-03400-0

GRADING

30% Class participation (live and electronic)
 10% - In-class discussion (1/2 point per discussion contributed to)
 10% - Electronic discussion (1/2 point per discussion contributed to)
 10% - Active participation in one “Analysis symposium”
20% Weekly writing assignments
35% Term paper
15% Presentation

OBJECTIVES

This course will:

- Familiarize you with many of the important issues in rock music scholarship, especially those of concern to music theory scholars
- Familiarize you with analytical methodologies and theories of music applicable to popular music and more broadly
- Familiarize you with publication venues in music scholarship
- Develop your listening and analytical skills
- Develop your writing skills
- Develop your skills in public presentation

Important Dates

February 7 – Choice of piece for final paper	February 3 – Analysis Symposium 1
February 17 – Outline of analysis due	February 14 – Analysis Symposium 2
	February 23 – Analysis Symposium 3

General Schedule (subject to revision):

Dates	Unit	Readings	Guest
January 24-25 [2]	1	Introduction; Why analyze rock music? Moore, "Introduction" Walser, "10 Apothegms" Tagg, "Analyzing Popular Music"	
January 26-27 [2]	2	Form Covach, "Form in Rock Music" Covach, "Dramatic AABA Form" Neal, "Narrative Paradigms"	John Covach (last week)
January 31- February 2 [3]	3	Rhythm Temperley, "Syncopation" Butler, "Turn the Beat Around" Pieslak, "Re-Casting Metal"	
February 3		Analysis Symposium 1	
February 7-10 [4]	4	Harmony Everett, "A Royal Scam" Doll, "Transformation" Holm-Hudson, "Maximally Smooth Voice Leading"	Christopher Doll
February 14		Analysis Symposium 2	
February 15-17 [3]	5	Intertextuality & Style Stephan-Robinson, "Analyzing a Rock Song Pairing" Spicer, "Regatta de Blanc" Leydon, "Recombinant Style Topics"	
February 21-22 [2]	6	Production & Sound Zak, <i>Poetics of Rock</i> (selections) Hughes, "Trapped within the Wheels"	
February 23		Analysis Symposium 3	
February 24- March 1 [3]	7	Gender & Ethnicity Burns, "Vocal Authority" Walser, "Rhyme and Reason"	Robin Attas
March 2-10 [5]		Student presentations	

Bibliography

- Burns, Lori. 2010. "Vocal Authority and Listener Engagement: Musical and Narrative Expressive Strategies in the Songs of Female Pop-Rock Artists, 1993-1995." In *Sounding Out Pop*, ed. Mark Spicer and John Covach, 154-192.
- Butler, Mark. 2001. "Turning the Beat Around: Reinterpretation, Metrical Dissonance, and Asymmetry in Electronic Dance Music," *Music Theory Online* 7, no. 6.
- Covach, John. 2005. "Form in Rock Music: A Primer." In *Engaging Music: Essays in Music Analysis*, ed. Deborah Stein, 65-76.
- Covach, John. 2010. "Lieber and Stoller, the Coasters, and the 'Dramatic AABA Form.'" In *Sounding Out Pop*, ed. Mark Spicer and John Covach.
- Doll, Christopher. 2009. "Transformation in Rock Harmony: An Explanatory Strategy." *Gamut* 2, no. 1.

- Everett, Walter. 2004. "A Royal Scam: The Abstruse and Ironic Bop-Rock Harmony of Steely Dan." *Music Theory Spectrum* 26, no. 2, 201-235.
- Holm-Hudson, Kevin. 2010. "A Study of Maximally Smooth Voice Leading in the Mid-1970s Music of Genesis." In *Sounding Out Pop*, ed. Mark Spicer and John Covach.
- Hughes, Timothy. 2007. "Trapped within the Wheels: Flow and Repetition, Modernism and Tradition in Stevie Wonder's 'Living for the City.'" In *Expression in Pop-Rock Music: Critical and Analytical Essays*, 2nd Edition, ed. Walter Everett.
- Leydon, Rebecca. 2010. "Recombinant Style Topics: The Past and Future of Sampling." In *Sounding Out Pop*, ed. Mark Spicer and John Covach, 193-213.
- Moore, Allan. 2003. "Introduction." In *Analyzing Popular Music*, ed. Allan Moore, 1-15.
- Neal, Jocelyn. 2007. "Narrative Paradigms, Musical Signifiers, and Form as Function in Country Music." *Music Theory Spectrum* 29, no. 1, 41-72.
- Pieslak, Jonathan. 2007. "Re-casting Metal: Rhythm and Meter in the Music of Meshuggah." *Music Theory Spectrum* 29, no. 2, 219-245.
- Tagg, Philip. 1982. "Analysing Popular Music: Theory, Method and Practice." *Popular Music* 2, 37-67.
- Temperley, David. 1999. "Syncopation in Rock: A Perceptual Perspective." *Popular Music* 18, no. 2, 19-40.
- Spicer, "Reggatta de Blanc: Analyzing Style in the Music of the Police." In *Sounding Out Pop*, ed. Mark Spicer and John Covach, 124-153.
- Stephan-Robinson, 2011. "Analyzing a Rock Song Pairing: Music, Text, and Intertextuality in Paul Simon's 'Darling Lorraine' and 'You're the One.'" Unpublished Manuscript.
- Walser, Robert. 2003. "Popular Music Analysis: Ten Apothegms and Four Instances." In *Analyzing Popular Music*, ed. Allan Moore, 16-38.
- Walser, Robert. 1995. "Rhythm, Rhyme, and Rhetoric in the Music of Public Enemy." *Ethnomusicology* 39, no. 2, 193-217.
- Zak, Albin. 2001. *The Poetics of Rock* (selections)

POLICIES

Attendance and promptness. There is no attendance policy for this class. However, class participation is expected (see grading above), and you cannot participate if you are not present. Therefore, it is highly likely that absences will affect your grade negatively. It is also expected that you will be ready for class at 11:00 promptly; lateness is disruptive to your instructor and fellow students.

Major assignments. Your work this block will culminate with a term paper (ca. 12-15 pages) and presentation (10 minutes) in which you analyze a rock song of your choosing. More information on these will follow.

Weekly Writing Assignments. In addition to the major project, there are also weekly brief papers (2-3 pages) due at the beginning of class each Monday. Each weekly assignment consists of two parts. First, you should write your reaction to two articles assigned the previous week. This should not be a mere summary, but a more critical engagement with the work, demonstrating your understanding. This might take several forms. One possibility would be to focus on one issue in the article, explain the author's approach to that issue, and offer your own reaction. A second option would be to address some question the article brought up to you. The second part of the weekly assignment is a paragraph summarizing your own contributions to class discussions the previous week.

Academic Integrity. Principles of academic integrity regarding individual class work are of utmost importance in this and other courses offered under the music theory curriculum. As in other courses, you are expected to do your own work on all assignments and in-class work that is to be handed in (unless explicitly otherwise instructed). Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against violators. If you are in doubt about specific procedures you may or may not follow, it is your responsibility to ask. Academic integrity is governed by Sections 7.1.4 and 7.1.2.6 of the Ithaca College Policy Manual.

Ithaca College Policy on Disabilities. In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodation will be provided to students with documented disabilities on a case by case basis. Students must register with the Office of Academic Support Services and provide appropriate documentation to the college before any academic adjustment will be provided.

Mental Health Statement. Diminished mental health, including significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with optimal academic performance. The source of symptoms might be strictly related to your course work; if so, please speak with me. However, problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or a personal struggle or crisis can also contribute to decreased academic performance.

Ithaca College provides a Counseling Center to support the academic success of students. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides cost-free services to help you manage personal challenges that threaten your academic success and/or well-being.

In the event I suspect you need additional support, expect that I will express my concerns (and the reasons for them) to you and remind you of resources (e.g., CAPS, Health Center, Chaplains, etc.) that might be helpful. It is not my intention to know the details of what might be bothering you, but simply to let you know I am concerned and that help, if needed, is available.

General Comments. I am here to help you succeed! If you are experiencing trouble with the coursework or assignments, please start by discussing your issues with me. I am available for weekly office hours. If you cannot make office hours, email me, phone me, or leave a note on my bulletin board. I am happy to help you, but you need to take the initiative. Additionally, in case of a chronic medical problem, medical emergency, or personal crisis that may affect your performance in class, it is vital to keep me informed as appropriate, so that we can work together to minimize any negative impact.