



Rock: the early years

Midterm Review

EXAM STRUCTURE

- 16 Short answer: important individuals or concepts
- 6 listening: identify performer and genre (e.g., honky tonk, rockabilly, urban blues, etc.)
- 2 matching:
 - Places: match the city with the individual or institution
 - Ensembles: match the instrumental ensemble with the genre (e.g., honky tonk, rockabilly, urban blues, etc.)
- 24 multiple choice

CONTENT

- **Reading:** up through Chapter 4, Gerald Early, from *One Nation Under a Groove* (New York: Ecco Press, 1995), p. 134.
- Most of the questions come from class, but I will reference the following specific readings:
 - Robert Christgau, “B.E.: A Dozen Moments in the Prehistory of Rock and Roll”
 - Dave Headlam, “Appropriations of blues and gospel in popular music”
 - Peter Guralnick, “Boppin’ the Blues: Sam Phillips & the Sun Sound”
 - Dave Headlam, “Gospel to 1950s and 1960s vocal groups, and 1960s soul”
 - Gerald Early, from *One Nation Under a Groove* (Motown)

MIDTERM LISTENING PLAYLIST

Jimmie Rodgers, “Brakeman’s Blues”

Louis Jordan, “Saturday Night Fish Fry”

Lightnin’ Hopkins, “Tom Moore Blues”

Chuck Berry, “Johnny B. Goode”

Fats Domino, “Ain’t that a Shame”

Bo Diddley, “Bo Diddley”

Little Richard, “Long Tall Sally”

Chords, “Sh-Boom”

Jerry Lee Lewis, “Great Balls of Fire”

Elvis Presley, “Hound Dog”

Carl Perkins, “Blue Suede Shoes”

Eddie Cochran, “Summertime Blues”

Buddy Holly, “That’ll Be the Day”

Sam Cooke, “You Send Me”

Ronettes, “Be My Baby”

Martha and the Vandellas, “Heatwave”

Supremes, “You Can’t Hurry Love”

Smokey Robinson & the Miracles, “The Tracks of My Tears”

GENRES

- Country (early, Jimmie Rodgers, The Carter Family)
- Honky Tonk (Hank Williams: pedal steel guitar, fiddle, drums)
- Western Swing (Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys)
- Classic blues
- Country Blues (Robert Johnson, early **acoustic** blues by Hopkins et. al.)
- Urban Blues (**electric**: Muddy Waters, B.B. King)
- Jump Blues (Louis Jordan, Joe Turner)
- Rhythm & Blues (sometimes this = Rock'n'Roll; "Rocket 88")
- Rock'n'Roll (e.g., Chuck Berry, Little Richard)
- Rockabilly (early Elvis, Carl Perkins, early Roy Orbison, et. al.)
- Doo Wop (**male** vocal groups)
- Girl Groups (early 60s: Shirelles, Ronettes, Marvelettes, et. al)
- Motown (R&B pop)

OTHER TOPICS

- Rock **instrumentation** (I won't quiz you on beats or chords)
- Situation of **mass media** (radio, recording industry) in pre-rock times (40s) and how it changed in the 1950s
- What was the Tin Pan Alley model?
- What was the Pop music style at the dawn of rock and roll?
- The 3 very important figures/group in the early years of country
- No Western Swing on listening list, but know what it is!
- Classic blues, rural blues, urban blues, jump blues: we heard one or two examples of each

BIRTH OF ROCK:THE BUSINESS END

- **Songwriter model** (Leiber & Stoller most important) and the artists for whom they wrote
- **Society & the music business:**
 - small labels vs. large (know **large labels!**)
 - important figures and when they emerged (Alan Freed, Dick Clark)
 - Black artists, White artists, cover songs, crossovers
 - Rock controversies (what were they? cultural context?)
- **Studios: Chess and Sun**
 - Who ran them?
 - When (about) and **where** did they emerge?
 - Who were the **artists** associated with them?

BIRTH OF ROCK: MAJOR FIGURES

- Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, Bo Diddley, Little Richard, Bill Haley, Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis
 - When did they emerge?
 - What were their first hits?
 - What were their most important songs?
 - What were their lasting contributions (in terms of style, instrumentation, image, or crossover potential)?

ROCKABILLY AND DOO WOP

- Rockabilly figures
 - What are they known for?
 - Who were affiliated with Sun, and who came from/recorded elsewhere?
- Doo Wop
 - Where did the style come from?
 - What were the differences between black and white groups?

THE EARLY '60S: ARTISTS AND SONGWRITERS

- The Brill Building/Aldon music
 - Who worked there? (recall at least two people)
 - How was the model similar to and different than the earlier Tin Pan Alley (song forms, expanding role of songwriter, etc.)?
 - How long did the NYC scene last (approximately)?
- Sam Cooke
 - What was Cooke's musical background?
 - Why was his success important?
 - Which of his songs had a lasting impact?

THE EARLY '60S: STUDIOS AND PRODUCERS

➤ **Motown**

- What was revolutionary about Motown as a company
- Which artists and hits were associated with Motown?
- What were characteristics of the Motown sound?

➤ **Leonard Chess and Chess**

- Where were Chess located?
- Who did they record?
- What types of music?