Introduction to Rock Music

Rock ‘n’ Roll Explodes!
In the beginning...

- There is absolutely no agreement as to when Rock ‘n’ Roll began.
  - Why? Explain…!
  - Development over time. Evolutionary process.
  - Definition: What do you define as Rock ‘n’ Roll.
    - Rhythm and Blues?
    - Musical Genre
    - Sexual metaphor

- Some Examples:
  - Bill Haley
    - Crazy Man Crazy
  - The Dominoes
    - Sixty Minute Man
  - Li’l Son Jackson
    - Rockin’ and Rollin’
  - Wynonie Harris
    - Good Rockin’ Tonight
Cultural Diversity

The Roots of Rock ‘n’ Roll

- R&B + C&W = R&R
  - What is wrong with this statement?

- “The clichè is that rock & roll was a melding of country music and blues, and if you are talking about Chuck Berry & Elvis Presley, the description, though simplistic, does fit. But the black inner-city vocal-group sound...had little to do with either blues or country music in their purer forms.”
  - What does this mean?

- In addition to race, ethnicity, musical culture, issues of class and gender must be looked at.

- Fully erupted into the mainstream market in 1956. Had an “integration” type phenomenon. The rock charts were more racially equal than at any other time.
  - Much of early rock ‘n’ roll was based on predominantly African American forms that became more mainstream.
Early rock ‘n’ roll had a large effect on the success of women in the music industry? Why do you think that is?

- Only an average of 2 women in the top 25 records or songs each year.
- Rock ‘n’ Roll had a definite male sexuality at the beginning. Women did not sing, they were sung about. The “baby” syndrome.
The Music Industry Changes

- Chains of Stations vs. the Independent Radio Station
- Market Changes: Not just a regional idea
- Top 40 Radio: An appeal to the youth or teenage market. Treat radio like a jukebox.

What were some of the advantages and disadvantages of this radio format?
Sound of the City: The Differences in Rock Across the USA

- New Orleans
- Los Angeles: Jump Blues to Chicano Rock
- Chicago: Electric Blues
- Cincinnati: Blue & Country at a Crossroads
- R&B: A Gospel Connection
- Doo Wop: Gospel, Jazz, and Pop
- Rockabilly: Country Rock
New Orleans

► Birthplace of Jazz
  ▪ Roy Brown, James Brown, Little Richard, BB King, Jackie Wilson
  ▪ Melting Pot: French, Spanish, African, English, Native American, Cajun, Creole

► Famous for talented session musicians.

► Little Richard
  ▪ Started own band in the late 40’s. Produced and mentored Fats Domino. Joined the ministry in 1958.

► Cosimo Matassa
  ▪ Co Owner of JM Studio between 1940’s-60’s. R & B Records. No over dubbing. Didn’t have many editing techniques.

► Fats Domino
  ▪ Charted 36 top 40 pop hits. (The King!)
  ▪ More hits than anyone besides Elvis Presley.
Los Angeles

- Target market was poor white, latino, black americans working in the shipyards.
- Birthplace of the “Rock Star” Dream
- Many ties to New Orleans
- Integrated Mexican styles of rhythm. “Tequila” #1 on pop charts for 4 weeks!
- Big Band Sound
  - Charles Brown
  - Leon Rene (Rockin’ Robin #2 on pop charts)
- Johnny Otis
  - Embodied racial and political structure.
  - Listen to the Lambs: Watts Rebellion
- Ritchie Valens
  - La Bomba: 1958 & 1959
  - Donna: written for his girlfriend
  - 1959: The Day the Music Died: Ritchie Valens, Buddy Holly, Big Bopper died in a plane crash bringing a slowing to the rock and roll era.
Musicians from Mississippi Delta. African American migrant influences.

2 Independent Labels:
- Chess Records: Looked for Talent
- Vee Jay: Formed in the early 1950’s by African American couple Vivian Carter & James Bracken; hence the name Vee Jay.
- Vee Jay could have been what Motown became.

Racial Tension
- Chuck Berry smoothed things over. (Would have been the King of Rock ‘n’ Roll?)
- Mann Act and sent to Prison back from Mexico with under-aged woman.

Civil Rights Movement
- The Beatles were first issued on VeeJay in the US, when Capitol initially passed on them.
Cincinnati

- Main Publisher: Syd Nathan (King Records)  Henry Glover, Producer.
- Objective was to integrate music using C&W artists to perform R&B and R&B to produce C&W.
- Key Artists: Delmore Brothers, Moon Mulligan, Charms, Ivory Joe Hunter, Little Willy Johnson
- Glover also incorporated gospel, African American R&B and challenged morality gap. Major music styles to establish the Doo Wop Sound.
R&B and the Gospel Connection

- New York and Philidelphia major city centers
- Late 1940’s
  - R&B grew in popularity.
  - Gospel against R&B
  - Market was split into regions
  - Northeast

- New Trend (1950)
  - Gospel Singers Moved into secular market
  - 1951 call and response style

- McPhatter of Dominoes to Drifters
  - 1952 First time to see a member of one group form another group
  - Atlantic Records
  - Ray Charles
    - Writes, records parodies of gospel songs
    - Public played the name change to be with boxer of the time
  - Sam Cooke
    - 1960 Psuedonym worked well for Cooke to switch Genres
    - Cooke has own publishing company; Kags Music
    - Greatest sex symbol in gospel
Doo Wop
Gospel, Jazz & Pop Collide!

- Doo Wop: gospel oriented product of urban vocal harmony groups.
- Background voices, major sound, tonic chords, small jazz background.
- One hit wonders!
  - New York City a major center for Doo Wop
- The Orioles, The Chords, The Drifters, Dion and the Belmonts, The Chantels
- Atlantic Labels
- The ______. (Name a car, bird, or anything else for that matter!)
- Few female groups.
- Phenomenon of the 50’s and 60’s.
Rockabilly (Country Rock)

- Predominantly white, male singers (market, and sales). White person, but a “black voice, black feel.”
- Founded by Sam Phillips. (Sun Records, Memphis, TN 1953).
- Elvis Presley was the first true Rockabilly Artist. Other names included Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Louis, Johnny Cash.
- Characteristics of Rockabilly Music included looser rhythms, no sax, upbeat tempo, slap bass, “twangy” guitar.
- Bill Haley and the Comets
  - Rockabilly took over their career.
Homework Reminder

- Chapters 5 & 6 For Tuesday.
- No Class on Thursday!
- Term Paper proposals are to be approved by Thursday.