Starr-Waterman

American Popular Music, Sixth Edition

Chapter 14: “Smells Like Teen Spirit”: Hip-Hop, Alternative Music, and the Entertainment Business

Lecture Outline

1. End of the 20th century: impossible to sustain a clear-cut dichotomy between the center of American popular music and its margins
   1. Economically successful popular music no longer presented a coherent stylistic thumbprint
   2. Albums by new artists: very successful as record companies sought to promote a new generation of pop superstars
      1. Five bestselling albums of the 1990s were debut albums by previously unknown stars
   3. Established older artists held devotion of many fans and able to expand their fan base to include new, younger listeners
      1. **Johnny Cash (**1932‒2003) began his career in the mid-1950s as a rockabilly star, was an acclaimed country artist in the 1960s and 1970s, and in the 1990s had a resurgence with his series of “American Recordings”
         1. Garnered critical raves and popular attention; inclusion of contemporary rock material, country-oriented and traditional folk repertoire
         2. *Walk the Line* (2005)
   4. Singles market continued to shrink
   5. Popular music of the 1990s: jumble of old and new styles
      1. Notion of the outsider, alternative, or marginal music has become a means of promoting music to a mass audience hungry for novelty, excitement, and a sense of authenticity
         1. Genres that originated outside the mainstream
            1. Hip-hop
            2. Alternative music: term used across a wide range of popular genres, including rock, rap, adult contemporary, dance, folk, and country music

“alternative” applied to rock and other genres

1. Hip-Hop Breaks Out (1980s‒1990s)
   1. Mid-1980s: rapid acceleration of rap’s movement into the popular mainstream
   2. 1986: release of first two multiplatinum rap albums
      1. Run-D.M.C, *Raising Hell*
      2. Beastie Boys, *Licensed to Ill*
         1. Success of these two albums tied to the expansion of the audience for hip-hop: young white fans attracted to the transgressive, rebellious sense
   3. **Run D.M.C.:** trio consisting of MCs **Run** (Joseph Simmons, b. 1964), and **D.M.C.** (Darryl McDaniels, b. 1964), and the DJ **Jam Master Jay** (Jason Mizell, 1965‒2002)
      1. Perhaps the most influential act in the history of rap music
      2. College educated, raised in a middle-class neighborhood in Queens
      3. Established a hard-edged, rock-influenced style that profoundly influenced the sound and sensibility of later rap music
      4. Recordings released by Def Jam records
         1. Raps were literate and rhythmically skilled
         2. “Beats” produced by Rubin and Jam Master Jay: stark and powerful, mixing digitized loops of hard-rock drumming with searing guitar sounds from heavy metal
         3. First rap group to headline a national tour and appear on MTV
      5. Listening Guide: “Walk This Way”
         1. Written by Joe Perry and Steven Tyler; performed by Run-D.M.C. with Perry and Tyler (from Aerosmith) (recorded 1986)
         2. Million-selling single
         3. Recording opens with sample of rock drumming from the original recording, interrupted by the sound of a turntable scratching and the main riff of the song, played by Aerosmith’s guitarist Joe Perry
         4. Run and D.M.C. trade lines of the song’s verses in aggressive, shouted style
         5. Video: first rap video put into heavy rotation by MTV
         6. Played a pivotal role in the mainstreaming of rap music
   4. **Beastie Boys**: rap trio that was the first commercially successful white act in hip-hop
      1. Recordings produced by Rick Rubin and released on Def Jam Records; distribution deal signed by Russell Simmons with industry giant Columbia
      2. Early recordings: fusion of youth-oriented rebelliousness of hardcore punk rock with the sensibility and techniques of hip-hop
      3. Experimented with combinations of rap, heavy metal, pink, psychedelic rock
         1. 1998: *Hello Nasty*
   5. 1987: series of million-selling singles had proven rap’s commercial potential on the pop and R&B charts
      1. Rap ballads, women’s rap, humorous party records, rap targeted at a young adolescent audience
   6. 1988: emergence of new markets for hip-hop; launching of MTV’s first show dedicated entirely to hip-hop music
      1. *Yo! MTV Raps*, hosted by Fab Five Freddie Braithwaite
         1. Attracted the largest audience in the network’s history and began to be broadcasted daily
      2. *The Source*: first magazine devoted solely to hip-hop music and fashion
         1. Became the largest-selling periodical in America
      3. Rap category added to the Grammy Awards
      4. *Billboard* added a rap singles chart
         1. Consequences of mainstreaming:
            1. Some rappers and producers focused on creating multiplatinum crossover hits
            2. Others reacted against the commercialism of “pop rap,” creating more hardcore sound (paradoxically ended up generating some of the biggest crossover hits)
   7. **Public Enemy:** founded in 1982, organized around a core set of members who met as college students, drawn together by their interest in hip-hop culture and political activism
      1. Two MCs: **Chuck D** (Carlton Ridenhour, b. 1960), **Flavor Flav** (William Drayton, b. 1959)
      2. DJ: **Terminator X** (Norman Lee Rogers, b. 1966)
      3. “Minster of Information”: **Professor Griff** (Richard Griffin, b. 1960)
      4. Security of the First World (S1W): dancers dressed in paramilitary uniforms who carried Uzi submachine guns and performed martial arts inspired choreography
      5. 1988: *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* fused trenchant social and political analyses of Chuck D with streetwise interjections of Flavor Flav in a dense sonic web created by production team, the Bomb Squad
      6. Listening Guide: “Night of the Living Baseheads”
         1. Written by Hank Shocklee, Eric Sadler, and Chuck D; performed by Public Enemy; recorded 1988
         2. Lyrics combine images of zombies with commentary on the crack cocaine epidemic in inner cities during the 1980s
         3. Complexly textured groove
         4. Double meaning of the term “dope”
         5. Grim message enveloped in jagged and stark sonic landscape
            1. Producers incorporated digital samples from 13 different recorded sources
            2. Philosophy of approach similar to art music composers who used tape recorders, digital technology, and noise in their works
2. Commercialization, Diversification, and the Rise of Gangsta Rap (1990s)
   1. **Gangsta rap:** marginal variant of hip-hop featuring highly stylized narratives of dilemmas faced by urban communities: poverty, drug addiction, and violence, from a first-person, present tense viewpoint that combines a grim survivalist outlook on life with a gleeful celebration of the gangster lifestyle
   2. 1990: watershed year for mainstreaming of hip-hop
      1. **M.C. Hammer** (Stanley Kirk Burrell, b. 1962): rapper from Oakland, CA, whose *Please Hammer Don’t Hurt ‘Em* became the bestselling rap album of all time
         1. Hammer’s celebrity: impressive abilities as a dancer, appearances in soft drink advertisements, children’s cartoon show
         2. Pushed rap fully into the mainstream
      2. **Vanilla Ice** (Robert Van Winkle, b. 1968): white rapper considered hip-hop’s icon of “wackness” (weakness)
         1. *To the Extreme* (1990): album sold 11 million copies
         2. Raised in middle-class neighborhood, essentially invented a gangster persona for himself—“perpetrating,” a form of misrepresentation in hip-hop parlance
            1. Race and misrepresentation factors in fans turning their backs on him
      3. Late 1980s: distinctive regional variations on the formula of hip-hop music established in cities
         1. Southern California: primary center of hip-hop innovation—independent labels, and commercial AM station featuring hip-hop programming, KDAY
         2. “new school” West Coast rap differed from “old school” New York hip-hop
            1. Edgy, rapid-fire delivery remained influential but was augmented by a smoother, more laid-back style of rapping
            2. Dialects of Southern California rappers, many the children of migrants from Louisiana and Texas; distinctive
            3. Content became angrier, darker, more menacing

Outlaw swagger in artists

**Ice-T** (Tracy Marrow, b. 1958): recorded the theme song for *Colors*, Dennis Hopper’s violent film about gang-police warfare in South Central Los Angeles

* + - * 1. Emergence of West Coast gangsta rap

**N.WA.** (Niggaz With Attitude)

Group formed in 1986 with **O’Shea “Ice Cube” Jackson** (b. 1969), **Andre “Dr. Dre” Young** (b. 1965) and **Eric “Easy-E” Wright** (1973‒1995)

Recordings that expressed the gangsta lifestyle and saturated with images of sex and violence straight out of the prison toast tradition

*Straight Outta Compton* (1989): attitude, sound, and sensibility indebted to earlier hip-hop recordings, but unlike anything heard before

Tracks “F--- the Police” and “Gangsta Gangsta” underlain by soundtrack mixing sound of automatic weapon fire and police sirens with samples from funk masters, bouncy drum machine-generated dance groove called new jack swing, high-pitched, thin-sounding synthesizer lines

Raps were harrowing, egocentric accounts of gang life

Cover of CD: reinforced aura of danger

Breakup of group in 1989: members sold solo albums

Dr. Dre: most influential and economically successful member, founded independent label, Death Row/Interscope

**Snoop Doggy Dogg** (Calvin Broadus, b. 1972)

* 1. Listening Guide: “What’s My Name?”
     1. Written by George Clinton, Gary Shider, Snoop Dogg, and David Spradley; produced by Dr. Dre; performed by Snoop Doggy Dogg (recorded 1993)
     2. Sense of Snoop Doggy Dogg’s prowess as a rapper and Dr. Dre’s distinctive G-funk production style
     3. Released on its album in original, and as a “clean” version on a single designed for radio airplay and mass distribution
     4. Relaxed, medium-tempo dance groove with drum machine and keyboard synthesizers, digitally processed, nasal-sounding human voice
        1. Treble choir, repeating phrase “Snoop Doggy Dogg” in soul music style
     5. Divorced of musical content: updated version of “Staggolee”
     6. G-funk sound: different aesthetic and commercial goal than Public Enemy’s approach; Dr. Dre uses only three pre-recorded sources
  2. Mid-1990s: violent eruption of conflicts between East and West Coast factions within the hip-hop business
     1. Marion “Suge” Knight, CEP of Death Row Records (Los Angeles)
        1. **Tupac (2Pac) Shakur** (1971‒1996):
     2. **“Sean “Puffy” Combs** (also called Puff Daddy or P. Diddy), CEP of New York based Bad Boy Records
        1. **Notorious B.I.G.** (Christopher Wallace, also called Biggie Smalls, 1972‒1997)
     3. Tupac Shakur and Christopher Wallace shot to death; Suge Knight reincarcerated after an attack on two rappers; Tupac Shakur’s mother sued Death Row records for rights to her son’s tapes; Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg severed ties with the label
        1. Shakur and Wallace: recorded prophetic raps that ended with the narrator speaking from the grave rather than standing in bloody triumph over his victims
     4. Gangsta rap: chronicled dilemmas of urban communities: poverty, drug addiction, violence from a first-person, present-tense viewpoint
        1. Celebratory nihilism: propelled by funk-derived, digitally sampled grooves and surrounded in video versions with a continual flow of images of hip-hop fashion, champagne, expensive chars, and sexy women
           1. Understandable ambivalence on the part of observers genuinely sympathetic to the plight of people struggling for economic and cultural survival
           2. Rap music: part of African American culture and American culture as a whole

Positive qualities: creative energy, regional diversity, technological acumen

Dark side: obsession with guns and violence, preoccupation with material wealth and status symbols; long-standing traditions of racism, homophobia, and sexism

Unvarnished view of dystopia of many urban communities

Gangsta recordings: promoted by huge entertainment corporations to predominantly white mass audience’ may have reinforced old and pernicious stereotypes of black masculinity that date back to the 19th-century minstrel show

1. Box 14.1: Hip-Hop, Sampling, and the Law
   1. Increasing sophistication and affordability of digital sampling technology made it possible for rap producers to weave sound textures out of pre-recorded materials
   2. 1989: Miami-based rap group 2 Live Crew: “Pretty Woman” that borrowed from the 1964 rock ‘n’ roll hit “Oh, Pretty Woman”
      1. Tried to get permission from the music publisher, which was denied
      2. Lawsuit ensued over raunchy version of the tune by rapper Luther R. Campbell (Luke Skyywalker)
         1. Decision upheld the rights of rap musicians and producers to parody preexisting recorded material
   3. 1990s: control over digital sampling tightened as a result of a few well-publicized court cases
      1. 1991: “You Showed Me” (The Turtles) in “Transmitting Lives from Mars” (De La Soul); out of court settlement
      2. 1991: “Alone Again (Naturally)” (Gilbert O’Sullivan) in a song by Biz Markie; forced Warner Brothers to remove album from the market until the song was removed from the album
2. Queen Latifah
   1. **Queen Latifah** (b. 1970): most important woman in this history of hip-hop, in terms of both her commercial success and her effectiveness in establishing a feminist beachhead on the male-dominated field of rap music
      1. Provided an alternative to misogynist braggadocio of gangsta rappers like Snoop Doggy Dogg
      2. Born in Newark, NJ, received the nickname Latifah (Arabic word for “gentle” or “pleasant”)
      3. Began rapping in high school, and in college participated in Afrika Bambaataa’s Native Tongues collective, a group dedicated to raising political consciousness of hip-hop
      4. *All Hail the Queen* (1989): debut album, song “Ladies First”
         1. R&B, reggae, house music influences
      5. Listening Guide: “U.N.I.T.Y.”
         1. Written by Queen Latifah and Kier “Kay Gee” Gist (released 1994)
         2. Opens with a sample of jazz tenor saxophone with guitar, string bass, and drum set accompaniment
         3. Slow, reggae-influenced groove with bass riff and digitized snare backbeat
         4. Latifah performs in Jamaican patois, interrupted by more aggressive responses in an American dialect
         5. Chorus’s idealistic message: black men and women should treat one another with love and respect
         6. Structure: alternation of chorus with series of rapped verses; focus on verbal performance while music functions to set the mood, create a temporal flow, and evoke a range of associations
      6. Established a precedent for sustainable hip-hop careers
         1. Appeared on television and films, including *Chicago* (2002)
         2. 2004: released an album of Tin Pan Alley and soul standards
         3. Appeared in the film version of *Hairspray* (2007) and *Life Support*
3. Eminem
   1. **Marshall “Eminem” Mathers** (b. 1972): embodies blurred line between rock and hip-hop; first white rapper to achieve mainstream success while also being accepted by the hip-hop community
      1. Raised by single mother in predominantly African-American Detroit neighborhood
      2. Honed rapping skills at open-mic contests at clubs on West Seven Mile Road
      3. Rose to fame in 1999 with *The Slim Shady LP*, produced by Dr. Dre
      4. Impressive rhythmic sensibility, use of word sounds as musical elements, and use of compound rhymes
      5. Lyrics explore Eminem’s own identity and experiences, embracing his whiteness as symbol of working-class anxiety
      6. Third album, *The Marshall Mathers LP* (2002), brought superstar status
         1. Won the Grammy Award for best album
         2. Until 2015, was the fastest-selling solo artist album of all time
      7. String of successes followed
         1. Second Grammy for *The Eminem Show* (2002)
         2. Four simultaneous Top 20 singles in 2010
         3. Seventh Best Rap Album Grammy in 2013
      8. Movie Career: *8 Mile* (2002) in which he starred and for which he provided the soundtrack
      9. Unique Figure in the history of rap music
         1. Reviled by critics across the spectrum for his controversial lyrics
         2. Both a rap and a rock star, thanks, in part, to being arguably the first rapper to be played on rock radio.
         3. Lyrics embrace intensely personal themes atypical of the genre
4. EDM: Dance Music in the Digital Age
   1. **EDM (electronic dance music)**: broad term encompassing new forms of up-tempo, repetitive, electronic music developed in the club scenes of cities such as New York, Chicago, Detroit, and European cities; can be traced to early 1980s genres such as garage and house music
      1. Genre encompasses dozens of subcategories
      2. Musical dimension of a youth culture: arguments about good music and bad music informed by a set of shared assumptions and shared knowledge of the genre’s history
      3. EDM culture: focused on DJ/producers, who often attempt to remain anonymous
   2. **Raves**: dance club and semipublic events partly modeled on the be-ins of the 1960s counterculture
      1. Prevalent use of psychoactive drug Ecstasy
         1. Side effect: alteration of brain chemistry that makes it harder and harder to get high, leading to severe depression
         2. Mid-1990s: increasing numbers of DJs and fans had rejected the use of Ecstasy
   3. Roots of techno: often traced to Detroit area
      1. Early 1980s: Derrick May, pioneer of the genre
      2. Detroit techno: different cultural scene than Motown sound
         1. Electronic dance music that featured futuristic imagery, samples from European records, dry, minimalist sound underlain by subliminal funk pulse
   4. **House music**: (named after the Warehouse, a popular gay dance club) developed in Chicago
      1. Frankie Knuckles: DJ from New York who worked at the Warehouse from 1979 to 1983
         1. Introduced New York turntable technique to Chicago; emphasized dance beat more strongly
      2. Many house recordings were purely instrumental
   5. 1990s: EDM began to diversify; branches distinguished by their relative “hardness”—tempo or beats per minute of recordings
   6. By late 1990s, EDM had transitioned from underground dance genre to commercial and mainstream pop, frequently included in the soundtracks to commercials and movies.
   7. In the 2000s, EDM producers became celebrities, creating massive hits in collaboration with mainstream pop stars.
5. Alternate Currents
   1. Hundreds of named genres: splintering of genres that exceeded anything previously experienced in American popular music
      1. End of the 1990s: almost every major genre had sprouted an alternative subcategory
         1. Some recorded for major record labels, some for small, independent labels
         2. “Alternative”: used to describe music that, in one regard or another, challenges the status quo
            1. Used to denote choices available to consumers via record stores, radio, cable television, Internet
            2. Major record labels: creating fake independent label to satisfy audience hungry for musical expressions of authenticity and rebellion; culmination of decades old trend within the music business
   2. Alternative Rock, 1980s‒1990s
      1. Underground scenes in communities with large populations of college students and student-programmed college radio stations
         1. Started out as local phenomena: local, anticommercial, guitar-based music blending the abrasive, do-it-yourself sensibility of 1970s punk with the thick, heavy textures of heavy metal
         2. Some groups went on to achieve commercial success on an international scale, signing deals with major record companies and moving toward a more pop-influenced sound
         3. Other groups driven by ideology of nonconformity, remained small, local, and close to their fan base
      2. Most influential indie rock bands:
         1. R.E.M.: reinterpretation of the punk aesthetic with folk rock
            1. Grew to attract large national audience
            2. Became one of the first underground bands to receive an agreement with Warner Brothers
         2. Sonic Youth: pushed underground rock music in a direction influenced by avant-garde experimentalists
            1. Experimented with more conventional pop song forms while maintaining discordant sound
            2. Signed with major label DGC
      3. **Hardcore**: extreme variation of punk pioneered during the 1980s by bands in San Francisco and Los Angeles; took the frenzied energy of the Ramones and the Sex Pistols and pushed it to the limit, playing simple riff-based songs at impossibly fast tempos and screaming nihilistic lyrics over a chaotic wall of guitar chords
         1. Listening Guide: “Holiday in Cambodia”
            1. Written and performed by the Dead Kennedys (recorded 1980)
            2. Good example of early 1980s hardcore punk rock
            3. **Jello Biafra** (Eric Boucher, b. 1959): lead singer
            4. Song directed to spoiled children of suburban yuppies
            5. Guitar pyrotechnics
            6. Political stance: opposed American imperialism overseas, destruction of human rights and the environment, and hypocritical and soulless suburban lifestyle
      4. **Thrash:** blended the fast tempos and rebellious attitude of hardcore with the technical virtuosity of heavy metal guitar playing
         1. Harder, faster version of commercially successful speed metal style
         2. Did not produce any superstars
      5. Nirvana: band from Pacific Northwest made up of singer and guitarist **Kurt Cobain** (1967‒1994), bassist **Krist Novoselic** (b. 1965), drummer **Dave Grohl** (b. 1969)
         1. Released two multiplatinum albums that moved alternative rock’s blend of hardcore punk and metal into the commercial mainstream
         2. **Grunge rock**
         3. Cobain and Novoselic: met in 1985 in economically depressed town Aberdeen; inspired by records of underground rock, hardcore bands, and the creativity of the Beatles; formed Nirvana in 1987
         4. Success destroyed Nirvana: *Nevermind* rose in charts and began to attract mass audience from genres to which their own music was explicitly opposed; outrageous behavior that gender theorists characterize as the creation of an “alternative” approach to masculinity; rumors that Cobain and his wife Courtney Love were using heroin
         5. 1994: Cobain overdosed on champagne and tranquilizers, an event described as an accident, though a suicide note was found later; entered a detox program after coming out of a coma; died of a self-inflicted shotgun wound
         6. Listening Guide: “Smells Like Teen Spirit”
            1. Music by Nirvana; lyrics by Kurt Cobain; performed by Nirvana (recorded 1991)
            2. Combination of heavy metal instrumental textures and pop songwriting techniques; memorable verbal and melodic hooks
            3. Combines four-chord heavy metal harmonic progression with conventional formal structure made up of 4, 8, and 12 bar sections—ABC
            4. First alternative rock single of the 1990s to enter the Top 10; carefully crafted pop record
      6. Phish: created a loyal following by extending the approach of the Grateful Dead; embraced eclectic tastes and influences; devoted to improvisation
         1. Inspired by counterculture of the 1960s and improvisational work of jazz musicians
         2. Optimistic, energetic, and open-minded alternative to the nihilism and self-absorption of many alternative rock bands
         3. Popularity as a touring group never translated into massive record sales
         4. “Stash”: 12-½ minute track from concert album *Phish: A Live One* (1995): loose-jointed, freewheeling approach to collective improvisation
            1. Verse-chorus structure with fixed melody and lyrics along with an extended collective exploration of the improvisational possibilities of a minor-key chord progression with a rhythmic groove indebted to Latin American music
   3. Box 14.2: The “Seattle Sound”
      1. Regional sounds have played an important part in the history of popular music
      2. Seattle: Nirvana honed their sound and built a local fan base; thriving alternative rock scene by the late 1990s
      3. Green River: 1988 album *Rehab Doll* helped popularize grunge rock, blending heavy metal guitar textures with hardcore punk
      4. Push to define regional style often comes from promotion departments of record companies as much as the local artists and fans themselves
   4. Women’s Voices: Alternative Folk, Hip-Hop, Country, and Punk
      1. Music industry’s application of the term “alternative” to these performers: women’s perspectives and feminist values play an important role in their recorded work
         1. **Ani DiFranco** (b. 1970): spent career resisting the lure of the corporate music business, releasing an album, and playing approx. 200 live performances per year while building up a successful independent record label and substantial grassroots following
            1. 1989: recorded a demo and pressed copies to sell at shows; quickly sold out and founded Righteous Babe Records in 1990
            2. Mid-1990s: mainstream media began to take notice: released all albums on the Righteous Babe label, despite many offers from major record companies
            3. “Not a Pretty Girl” from *Not a Pretty Girl:* self-revealing lyrics, minimalist studio sound that focuses on DiFranco’s voice and acoustic guitar; lyrics—man who wronged the singer, and general indictment of society’s treatment of women

Form: similar to many Anglo-American folk songs, traditional folk ballad with series of stanzas

Waltz rhythm

Artfully blends progressive outlook of urban folk music with the rebellious energy of alternative rock

* + - 1. **Lauryn Hill** (b. 1975): hip-hop artist whose work is a self-conscious alternative to the violence and sexism of rap stars such as Dr. Dre, the Notorious B.I.G., and Tupac Shakur
         1. Female empowerment builds on the work of Queen Latifah
         2. Fugees: New Jersey based hip-hop trio; successful blend of rap, reggae, and R&B
         3. Listening Guide: “Doo Wop (That Thing)”

Written and performed by Lauryn Hill (recorded 198)

Combines aspects of 1950s R&B (soulful lead vocal, four-part harmony, horn section) with observations on male and female behavior

Moral parable, delivered in terms that leaven anger with hip-hop jargon

* + - 1. **k.d. lang** (b. 1961): Canadian recording artist whose early work showcased the influence of Patsy Cline; later recorded successful pop material
         1. 1992: officially announced her homosexuality: *New York* magazine christened her an “icon of lesbian chic”
         2. 1990s: moved in the direction of adult contemporary pop music
         3. Listening Guide: “Nowhere to Stand”

Written by k.d. lang; performed by k.d. lang and the Reclines (recorded 1989)

From 1989 album Absolute Torch and Twang: traditional song with series of four-line verses and a repeated chorus in triple meter

Lyrics: indictment of the “traditional” practice of child abuse

* + - 1. **Bikini Kill**: Feminist punk collective with a DIY aesthetic
         1. At the forefront of the “riot grrrl” movement

Movement encouraged women to make music and distribute feminists zines

Participatory culture with blurred line between artists and fans

Exemplified third-wave feminism’s commitment to sexual empowerment

Alliance with the LGBTQ+ community

* + - * 1. Adopted punk visual aesthetics of women artists who preceded them, but with a harder and faster punk/hardcore sound
        2. “Rebel Girl”: anthem of the riot grrrl movement

Punk musical simplicity

Foregrounds lyrics and vocal delivery

Anthem to same-sex love, an anomoly for 1993

* + - * 1. Limited commercial success due to resistance to mainstream trends; difficult to categorize
        2. Legacy lives on in bands like Pussy Riot
      1. Why these artists achieved status of alternative
         1. DiFranco: introduction of instrumental textures and vocal style from punk rock
         2. Hill: lyric challenges aspects of the materialistic and sexist ideology on most commercially successful rap recordings
         3. lang: public persona and subject matter
         4. Bikini Kill: gender (female in mostly male genre) and lyrics that addressed taboo topics
         5. All four were excluded from the Lilith Fair Festival—the most successful festival for music made by women.

1. Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music: Approaches to Tradition
   1. Country and western: one of the most popular genres of American music
   2. **George Strait** (b. 1952), **Alan Jackson** (b. 1958), **Toby Keith** (b. 1961)
      1. All three from working-class backgrounds, did not establish careers as performers until they were in their 30s
         1. Country: less youth-oriented than other genres; mature, stable, artists with long-standing careers as consistent hit-makers
      2. Recorded songs with lyrics that acknowledge their country backgrounds and country traditions
         1. “Heartland” (Straight, 1993): fiddles, steel guitar
         2. “Midnight in Montgomery” (Jackson, 1992): tribute to Hank Williams
         3. “Should’ve Been a Cowboy” (Keith, 1993): does not retain the fiddle
            1. All three sing in full-voiced manner, without heavy regional accents
            2. No trace of yodeling or “high lonesome” vocal sound
            3. Strong continuity of honky-tonk style updated with stronger backbeat; sound is similar to country-flavored pop-rock of the 1970s
      3. Straight: most traditional sounding; relied on professional songwriters
      4. Keith: leans more toward rock-like sound; songwriter as well as singer
      5. Jackson: most versatile: old-fashioned tear-jerking country waltz, knowing satire; made a stab at rapping on “I Wanna Talk About Me”; songwriter as well as singer
   3. **Taylor Swift** (b. 1989): “teen idol,” singer songwriter pop phenomenon who self-identified as a country artist
      1. Still a teenager when her second album became the longest-running number one album of the 2000s: *Fearless* (2008)
         1. Songs center on teenage romance and heartbreak
         2. First album in 2006: clarify status as country artist
         3. Now a central figure in pop landscape as well as country
   4. **Gretchen Wilson** (b. 1973): country artist known for “Redneck Woman” (2004)
      1. Marketability of that cultural identity
      2. Emerged in her 30s with a fully formed artistic profiled; maintained consistently
      3. Fiddle and steel guitar listed in album credits; instruments usually buried in the mix in favor of a strong, rock-oriented sound
2. Box 14.3: More Country Alternatives: *O Brother Where Art Thou?* and the Resurgence of Bluegrass
   1. *O Brother Where Art Thou?* (2000): Coen brothers’ film with bestselling soundtrack
      1. Soundtrack encompasses several generations of country artists and recordings
      2. Bluegrass music pushed into the limelight
         1. Style modeled on early acoustic string bands, continued to flourish steadily as an “alternative” to western swing, honky-tonk, rockabilly, countrypolitan, and more “modern” country idioms
      3. **Ralph Stanley** (b. 1927): bluegrass veteran who performed with his brother Carter as the Stanley Brothers beginning in 1946 and produced a body of outstanding bluegrass records
      4. **Alison Krauss** (b. 1971): career before she reached the age of 30 reached much further from strict traditionalism
         1. Fiddling champion and bluegrass fan, established her credentials as a bandleader, vocalist, and producer, and a valuable collaborator on numerous recordings by other artists
         2. **Union Station**: band where Krauss demonstrates her close connections to traditional bluegrass and interest in creating a distinctive and original sound that grows out of those connections
3. Latinx Superstars of the 1990s
   1. Worldwide market for Latin music began a rapid expansion during the 1990s
   2. **Gloria Estefan** (b. 1957)
      1. Estefan: born in Havana, her family fled Cuba when Fidel Castro rose to power
         1. 1975: auditioned for the Miami Latin Boys, a local wedding band; group changed its name to Miami Sound Machine; fusion of pop, disco, and salsa
            1. 1985: breakthrough album *Primitive Love*
            2. 1988: *Let It Loose*: sold 6 million copies in the US

Estefan took top billing

* + - 1. Albums: *Cut Both Ways* (1989), *Into the Light* (1991), first Spanish language album: *Mi Tierra* (1993), *Gloria!* (1998)
      2. Sold over 90 million albums worldwide
      3. Formula: alternating among dance-oriented pop, English-language love songs, Spanish-language tracks aimed at an international Latin American audience
      4. “Dr. Pressure” (2005): song that combined techno electronica hit “Drop the Pressure” with “Dr. Beat”
         1. **Mashup**: recording that digitally combines two or more pre-existing tracks, usually by overlaying the vocal track of one song over the music track of another
  1. **Selena** (1971‒1995)
     1. Selena: “The Queen of Tejano (Texas-Mexican) Music”
        1. Born in Lake Jackson, Texas
        2. Father was a working musician, began performing with his band
        3. Family relocated to Corpus Christi; made a living by performing
        4. 1983: Selena recorded her first album for Freddie Records, a local independent label
        5. 1989: signed with the Latin division of EMI
        6. Mid-1990s: series of popular albums drawing on the traditional accordion band style of Texas-Mexican music, romantic ranchera song tradition of Mexico, and a pan-Latin dance music style called cumbia
        7. 1994: played a role in the film *Don Juan DeMarco* and won her first Grammy
        8. 1995: recording first English-language album, she was notified that the president of her Texas fan club was embezzling money and fired her; soon after met with her, and Selena was shot and killed
           1. Death was an event of iconic importance in the lives of millions of her fans
           2. Posthumously characterized as the “Mexican Madonna”
           3. Album *Thinking of You* released after her death: first album by a Hispanic artist to debut at number one on the pop album charts of the US
           4. Film based on her life released in 1997 starring Jennifer Lopez
  2. **Enrique Iglesias** (b. 1975)
     1. Iglesias: son of international star Julio Iglesias
        1. Born in Madrid and then moved to Miami to live with his father
        2. Self-titled debut album in 1995 yielded four #1 singles on *Billboard*’s Hot Latin Tracks Chart
        3. Won a Grammy Award for Best Latin Pop Performance
        4. Songs sung entirely in Spanish
        5. Second album spawned singles that set a record in 1997 for holding the #1 position on the Hot Latin Tracks Chart
        6. Contributed “Bailamos” (#1 on Hot 100 Chart) to soundtrack of 1999 film *Wild Wild West*
           1. Blends Spanish guitar with Europop beat, making it a massive crossover hit world-wide
           2. Part of the “Latin Pop Explosion” of the late 90s
           3. Other chart-topping artists of this movement include Ricky Martin and Shakira

1. Globalization and the Rise of World Music
   1. **World music**: term used in the late 1980s by independent record label owners and concert promoters, replacing terms such as “traditional music,” “international music,” and “ethnic music”
      1. International records: generally purchased by immigrants, cross-cultural music scholars, handful of aficionados
      2. **Ravi Shankar** (1920‒2012): Indian classical musician, whose album *Live at the Monterey Pop Festival* reached number 43 in 1967
      3. Cosmopolitan influences filtered through sensibilities of Western musicians and channeled by strategies of American and European record companies and publishing firms
         1. “The Lion Sleeps Tonight”: based on “Wimoweh”; adaptation of 1939 South African recording by vocal group made up of Zulu mine workers and the Evening Birds
            1. Rip-off of original performers reflected global imbalances of power created by Western colonialism

Paul Simon’s albums and World Music and Dance Festival, recordings by David Byrne and Ry Cooder helped to redress this imbalance, but economic relationship between “the West” and “the rest” continues to haunt cross-cultural collaborations

* + 1. 1980s: international musicians toured the United States with increasing frequency
       1. **King Sunny Adé** (b. 1946): Leader of a Nigerian group called the African Beats who released *Juju Music* in 1982
          1. Infections brand of urban African dance music blending electric guitars, Christian church hymns, Afro-Caribbean rhythms, pulsating sound of the Yoruba “talking drum”
          2. Article in the *Village Voice*: identified Adé as potential replacement for Bob Marley
          3. Developed market for Afro-pop music as well as other non-Anglophone artists
    2. 1990: “World music”: first appeared as a subcategory of the broader heading “adult alternative albums”
       1. Latter category also included New Age music: genre of instrumental music designed to facilitate contemplative and mystical moods that is sometimes loosely linked with the religious and healing practices of Native American, African, and Asian cultures
       2. Category suggests effort on the industry’s part to identify forms of alternative music that would appeal to an affluent baby boomer audience
    3. World music as a genre: pseudo-genre, taking into its sweep diverse styles
       1. Attraction of world music is bound up with stereotyped images of the “exotic”

Key Terms

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Alternative music  Gangsta rap  Grunge rock  Hardcore | House music  Mash-up  Raves  Riot Grrrl  Speed metal | EDM  Techno  Thrash  World music |

Key People

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Alan Jackson  Alison Krauss  Andre “Dr. Dre” Young  Ani DiFranco  Bikini Kill  Chuck D  Dave Grohl  D.M.C.  Eminem  Enrique Iglesias  Eric “Eazy-E” Wright  Flavor Flav  George Strait  Gloria Estefan  Gretchen Wilson  Ice-T | Jam Master Jay  Jello Biafra  Johnny Cash  Kathleen Hanna  k.d. lang  King Sunny Adé  Krist Novoselic  Kurt Cobain  Lauryn Hill  Marshall “Eminem” Mathers  M.C. Hammer  Notorious B.I.G.  N.W.A.  O’Shea “Ice Cube” Jackson  Professor Griff  Public Enemy | Queen Latifah  Ralph Stanley  Ravi Shankar  Ricky Martin  Run  Run-D.M.C.  Sean “Puffy” Combs  Selena  Snoop Doggy Dogg  Taylor Swift  Terminator X  Toby Keith  Tupac (2Pac) Shakur  Union Station  Vanilla Ice |