

Starr-Waterman

American Popular Music

Chapter 1: Themes and Streams of American Popular Music

Student Study Outline

- I. Theme One: Listening
 - a. Listening critically
 - b. Box 1.1: What kind of story is History?: You are there vs. We are Here
 - i. “Objective” vs. “subjective” viewpoints
 - c. **Formal analysis**
 - i. **Musical process**
 - ii. Concepts directly relevant to popular music
 1. **Riff**
 2. **Hook**
 3. **Groove**
 - iii. **Timbre**
 - iv. **Lyrics**
 - v. **Dialect**
- II. Theme Two: Music and Identity
 - a. Music as a means of expressing identity
 - b. Music plays an important role in bringing narratives to life
- III. Theme Three: Music and Technology
- IV. Theme Four: The Music Business
 - a. Mainstream pop music
 - i. **Composer and Lyricist**
 - ii. **Arranger**
 - iii. **A&R**
 - iv. **Producer**
 - b. Changes with digital distribution
 - c. Unpredictable nature of music business
- V. Theme Five: Centers and Peripheries
 - a. Center: geographical centers: New York, Los Angeles, Nashville
 - b. Periphery: smaller institutions and those historically excluded from the political and economic mainstream
 - c. Streams of Tradition: The Sources of Popular Music
 - i. The European American Stream
 - a. **Ballads**
 - i. **Verses**
 - ii. **Strophic**
 - iii. **Broadsides**
 - iv. **Chorus**
 2. **Dance music**
 3. **Folk music**

4. Many traditions of religious music
 - a. **Spirituals**
 - b. **Call and-response**
 - c. **Gospel music**
 - d. **Cantillation**
- ii. **Listening Guide: Old-Time Music**
 1. **Old-time music**
 2. **British ballad tradition**
 3. “Barbara Allen”
 - a. **Jean Ritchie** (1922-2015)
 4. **String band tradition**
 - a. **“Soldier’s Joy”**
 - b. **Skillet Lickers**
 - c. **James Gideon (Gid) Tanner** (1885–1960)
 - d. **Tommy Jarrell** (1901–1985)
- iii. The African American Stream
 1. Transatlantic traffic in slaves
 - i. **Black spirituals**
 - ii. **Polyrhythmic** textures
 1. **Rhythm**: musical organization of time
 - iii. Syncopation
 1. **Backbeat**
- iv. Listening Guide: “Long John”
 1. **Lighting Washington**
- v. Listening Guide: “Coo Coo”
 1. **Dink Roberts** (1894–1984)
- vi. Listening Guide: “Stagolee” (“Stack O’Lee”)
 1. **Sharecroppers**
 2. **Mississippi John Hurt** (1892–1966)
- d. The Latin American Stream
 - i. Cuban *contradanza*
 - ii. Rumba
 - iii. Brazilian samba
 - iv. Mexican Music
 - v. Listening Guide: The Tango
 1. **Carlos Gardel** (1890–1935)
 2. **José “El Negro” Ricardo** (1888–1937)
 3. **Francisco Canaro** (1888–1964)
 - vi. Listening Guide: Afro-Cuban Rumba
 1. Rumba
 2. **Montuno**
 - vii. Listening Guide: Mexican Mariachi Music

VI. Key Terms

A&R (artists and repertoire) A Cappella Arranger Backbeat Ballad “Barbara Allen” Black spirituals British ballad tradition Broadsides Call-and-response Cantillation Chorus Composer	Dance music Dialect Folk music Formal analysis Gospel music Groove Hook Lyricist Lyrics Montuno Musical process Old-time music	Polyrhythmic Producer Rhythm Riff Sharecroppers “Soldier’s Joy” Spirituals String band tradition Strophic Timbre Tune families Verses
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VII. Key People

Carlos Gardel Dink Robers Francisco Canaro James Gideon (Gid) Tanner	Jean Ritchie José (“El Negro”) Ricardo Lightning Washington Mississippi John Hurt	Skillet Lickers Tommy Jarrell
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