Emory University

SOCIOLOGY OF MUSIC

Soc 443s; Fall 2004

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:30-3:45, 214 Woodruff Library

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The sociology of music has a long history. Its initial development benefitted from the work of scholars who played central roles in the sociological discipline, including Max Weber and Theodor Adorno. Its subsequent maturation was aided by emergent schools of thought whose respective proponents accumulated systematic analyses of musical life, such as the art-worlds approach of Howard Becker and the production-of-culture approach associated with Richard Peterson. Its recent boom has been fueled by sophisticated use of theories and methods and by thoughtful debate regarding fundamental concepts.

We delve into this important literature and grapple with the social and cultural foundations of music. We do so in three broad sections, considering (1) the production of music (2) the content of music, and (3) the reception and uses of music. Along the way, we address a number of important questions, which include the following: How did we come to have the current system of music, with its particular notes and forms of composition? Why does much music sound so similar? What types of environments foster innovative music and musical diversity? Why are some types of music (e.g., the works of Beethoven) deemed as “high culture” while other types (e.g., rhythm and blues) are classified as “popular culture?” How do issues of race, gender, and class shape the production and consumption of music? How do people use music in their everyday lives?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This advanced course is organized as a seminar, which entails the combination of much class discussion, a fair amount of reading, three examinations and a written assignment. Note that all students must adhere to the Emory College Honor Code when completing both examinations and assignments.

A) Attendance

You are expected to attend class, especially because we use class time to discuss, among other things, the readings and theoretical traditions. Regular attendance, moreover, will raise your final grade. If you miss less than two classes, I will add two points to your final grade.

B) Class Participation and Discussion

Active participation requires adequate preparation. You therefore must read the assigned material before class and develop your own assessment of this material. Such careful preparation will improve the quality of class discussion. Of course,
class discussion should be both informed and respectful; moreover, it should be a forum wherein all can raise questions, explore ideas, and express misgivings. Class participation comprises 20% of your final grade.

C) Examinations

You will take three, non-cumulative examinations – one following each major section (e.g., The Production of Music). These will be take-home exams consisting of short-answer and essay questions. Each exam will be worth 20% of your final grade. I will distribute the first exam on September 23, the second exam on October 28, and the last exam on December 2. You will have the weekend to complete each examination, and you will turn them in during the designated class meeting.

D) Final Paper

You will complete a 12 to 15 page paper (typed and double-spaced). The paper should deal with some aspect of the sociology of music, yet it should also relate to your own substantive interests. Consequently, this paper may take a variety of forms. For example, it can be a review of the literature, a research proposal, or an empirical project. I ask that you discuss your topic with me by October 14 and submit an outline by November 9. The final paper is due on December 14 and comprises 20% of your final grade.

COURSE RESOURCES

The assigned readings are drawn from many sources, so there is no textbook. Instead, the required readings are available at Woodruff Library's on-line reserves (click on “Euclid” and then click on “Reserve Desk”).

If you have any special needs due to learning disabilities, please contact me at the beginning of the semester and we will discuss the necessary arrangements.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Subject to Revision)

SECTION ONE: THE PRODUCTION OF MUSIC

August 26  Introductions

August 31  Musicians – Constraints and Opportunities


September 2  Music Organizations – Conflict and Identity


**September 7**

**Music Firms and Corporations – Commerce and Creativity**


**September 9**

**Music Fields – Individuals, Organizations, and Industries**


**September 14**

**Construction of Music Markets**


**September 16**

**Evolution of Music Markets – The Case of Technology**


**September 21**

**Globalization of Music Production – Issues of Appropriation**


**September 23**

**Globalization of Music Production – Emergent Fields**


First Examination Distributed

September 28

Film Presentation

FIRST EXAMINATION DUE (In Class)

SECTION TWO: THE CONTENT OF MUSIC

September 30

Music Genres – Constructing and Enacting Conventions


October 5

Music Genres – Creating Boundaries and Identity


October 7

Music Genres - Ongoing Projects of Authenticity


October 12

FALL BREAK (No Class)

October 14

Music Genres and Scenes - From the Local to the Virtual


FINAL PAPER TOPIC DUE
October 19  
Consecration of Music – Classical Music


October 21  
Consecration of Music – Beyond Classical Music


October 26  
Change and Conformity in Music Fields – Classical Music


October 28  
Change and Conformity in Music Fields – Beyond Classical Music


Second Examination Distributed

November 2  
Film Presentation

SECOND EXAMINATION DUE (In Class)

November 4  
SOCIIOLOGY OF ARTS MEETINGS (No Class)

SECTION THREE: THE RECEPTION AND CONSUMPTION OF MUSIC

November 9  
Active Listeners – Incorporating Music into Daily Life


FINAL PAPER OUTLINE DUE

November 11

Active Listeners – Using Music Technology


November 16

Patterns of Musical Taste


November 18

Music and Identity Construction


November 23

Music, Ritual and Community


November 25

THANKSGIVING BREAK (No Class)

November 30

Music, Politics and Mobilization


**December 2  Music and Consumer Behavior**


**Third Examination Distributed**

**December 7  Film Presentation**

THIRD EXAMINATION DUE (In Class)

**December 14  FINAL PAPER DUE (5:00 p.m.)**