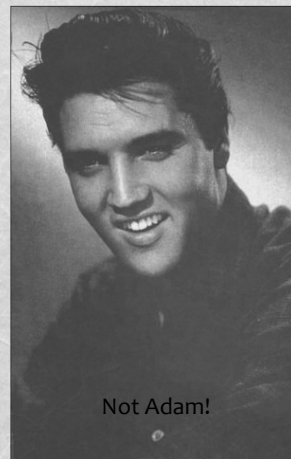


# ROCK HISTORY

THE ROOTS OF ROCK  
The Blues, Country & Mainstream Pop

## Rock Music & Culture

- ◆ Welcome!
- ◆ Instructor:
  - ◆ Adam Roberts
- ◆ Course Website:
  - ◆ [www.AdamRobertsMusic.com](http://www.AdamRobertsMusic.com)
- ◆ Course Policies
  - ◆ General information
  - ◆ Course outline
  - ◆ Project guides



Not Adam!

# American Culture in the Early 1900s

The world before Rock, Musical Forms, and the Radio

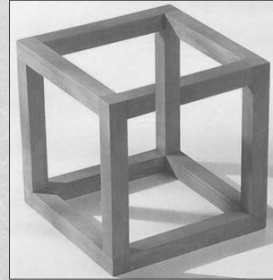
## The World Before Rock

- ♦ Culture in the early 1900's
  - ♦ Regional
  - ♦ Personal
- ♦ Early popular music
  - ♦ Simple form
  - ♦ In 4/4 (4 beats to a bar)
  - ♦ Folkloric lyrics
- ♦ Rock comes from 3 styles
  - ♦ Rhythm & Blues
  - ♦ Mainstream Pop
  - ♦ Country & Western



## Form in Rock Music

- ♦ **Form** – a song’s structure
- ♦ Common types:
  - ♦ **Blues**
    - ♦ Usually 12 repeated bars
  - ♦ **Verse-Chorus (VC)**
    - ♦ A verse, then a chorus, repeat...
  - ♦ **Verse-Refrain (VR)**
    - ♦ A VC variation common to Rap & Folk
    - ♦ **Refrain** – a short melody or lyric that ends a verse
  - ♦ **Song Form** (AABA or ABAC)
    - ♦ Letters label sections of a song



## The Radio

- ♦ Radio... a brief history:
  - ♦ 1920: local stations
  - ♦ 1928: national networks
    - ♦ Talk radio, variety shows
  - ♦ 1940s: shifts to music
    - ♦ To differentiate from TV
- ♦ Radio programming pre-1955
  - ♦ National shows targeted Upper Class Whites
    - ♦ Big Bands, Crooners
  - ♦ Local shows targeted Minorities, Lower Class Whites
    - ♦ R&B, Country & Western



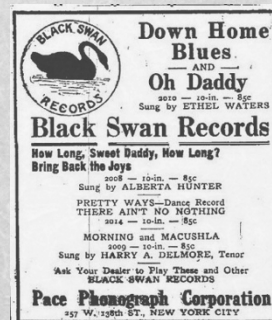
## The Blues



Robert Johnson

## The Blues

- ♦ Origins:
  - ♦ Work Songs
  - ♦ Gospel Music & Spirituals
- ♦ Highly improvised music
- ♦ Very emotional, soulful
  - ♦ About getting rid of “the blues”
- ♦ 1900s to 1940s: popular mostly with minorities
  - ♦ **Race records** – 40s Blues and R&B recordings



## The Blues Form

- ♦ Just a few chords: I, IV & V
- ♦ 12 bars/measures long, repeated for each verse
- ♦ Lyrics in an AAB form
- ♦ Ex. “Got My Mojo Workin’” by Muddy Waters

A. Got my mojo workin’, but it just don’ work on you.			
IV	IV	I	I
A. Got my mojo workin’, but it just don’ work on you.			
V	IV	I	V
B. I wanna love you so bad, just don’ know what to do.			

## Hokum Blues

- ♦ Songs with suggestive **double entendre** lyrics
  - ♦ “I Want a Hot Dog for My Roll”
    - ♦ Butterbeans & Suzie
  - ♦ “Black Snake Moan”
    - ♦ Blind Lemon Jefferson
- ♦ Modern Hokum songs
  - ♦ “Cherry Pie”
    - ♦ Warrant
  - ♦ “Hold It Against Me”
    - ♦ Brittany Spears



Butterbeans & Suzie

## Country Blues

- ♦ Oldest known Blues style
- ♦ Loose, improvised form
- ♦ Usually just a man and a guitar
- ♦ The Stars:
  - ♦ Lead Belly
  - ♦ Robert Johnson
    - ♦ Pioneer of **bottleneck**
    - ♦ Legendary ties to the Devil
  - ♦ Blind Lemon Jefferson



Robert Johnson

## Classic Blues

- ♦ Structured, clear form
- ♦ Women singers, jazz bands
- ♦ Professional vaudeville troupes
- ♦ The Stars:
  - ♦ Ma Rainey
  - ♦ W.C. Handy
  - ♦ Bessie Smith
    - ♦ #1 Black entertainer of 1924
    - ♦ Clear, expressive voice



Bessie Smith

## Chess Records

- ♦ 1950: Founded by Leonard & Phil Chess
  - ♦ Chicago **indie label**
  - ♦ Electric guitars, gritty harmonica
- ♦ The Early Stars:
  - ♦ **Muddy Waters**
    - ♦ “Mannish Boy”, “Rollin’ Stone”
  - ♦ **Howlin’ Wolf**
    - ♦ “Smokestack Lightning”
  - ♦ **Bo Diddley**
    - ♦ “Bo Diddley”

Muddy Waters



## Country & Western



Roy Rogers



The Carter Family



Hank Williams

## Country & Western

- ♦ A brief history:
  - ♦ 1923
    - ♦ Ralph Peer records early Country, calling it “**Hillbilly**”
  - ♦ By 1935
    - ♦ Country is 25% of all music sold in the South
  - ♦ 1939
    - ♦ *Stagecoach* launches the Western film genre
      - ♦ The soundtracks feature **Western** music
    - ♦ *The Grand Ole Opry* – a nationally broadcast **Barn Dance**
  - ♦ 1949
    - ♦ Billboard names 2 musical styles – Country & Western

## Country Music

- ♦ Popular in the South in the 20’s & 30’s
  - ♦ Originally called **Hillbilly**
- ♦ Simple, folk-like style
- ♦ Religion, family values, hard times
- ♦ The Stars:
  - ♦ **The Carter Family**
    - ♦ “Keep on the Sunny Side”
  - ♦ **Roy Acuff**
    - ♦ “The Great Speckled Bird”
  - ♦ **Jimmie Rodgers**
    - ♦ “In the Jailhouse Now”



Jimmie Rodgers



The Carter Family

## Western

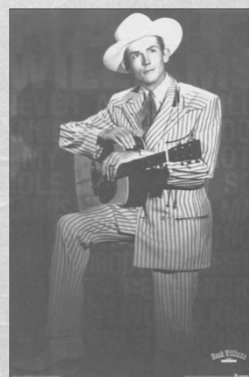
- ♦ Western film soundtrack music
- ♦ A pop style written by pros
- ♦ A sub-style, **Western Swing**
  - ♦ Elements of Swing, Big Band
- ♦ The Stars:
  - ♦ **Roy Rogers**
    - ♦ “Happy Trails”
  - ♦ **Gene Autry**
    - ♦ “Back In the Saddle”
  - ♦ **Bob Willis & The Texas Playboys**
    - ♦ “San Antonio Rose”, “Nails In My Coffin”



Gene Autry

## Hank Williams

- ♦ 1947: Launched by MGM
  - ♦ From Gospel to Honky Tonk
- ♦ Biggest singles:
  - ♦ “Hey, Good Looking” (1951)
  - ♦ “Your Cheating Heart” (1952)
- ♦ Most influential early Country Star
  - ♦ Brought the styles together
  - ♦ Widely imitated



## Mainstream Pop



From L to R: Peter Lawford, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr. & Frank Sinatra

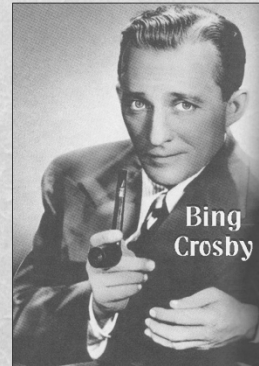
## Tin Pan Alley

- ♦ Publishing hub of NY in early 1900s
- ♦ ... and the “nickname” for the style
- ♦ “The Great American Songbook”
- ♦ Business model
  - ♦ The \$\$\$ was in sheet music
  - ♦ “The Song, not the Singer”
    - ♦ More versions, more profit
      - ♦ **Royalties** – usage fees
  - ♦ Used **Song Form**, which was easy to write quickly



## Big Bands & Star Singers

- ♦ 1935 to 1945: The Big Band Era
  - ♦ The **popular** music of the era
  - ♦ Instrumental dance music
    - ♦ Tin Pan Alley “Arrangements”
  - ♦ The stars:
    - ♦ **Glenn Miller**
    - ♦ **Benny Goodman**
- ♦ The Star Singers
  - ♦ Singers became the stars in the 40s
  - ♦ **Bing Crosby** – the 1<sup>st</sup> star singer



## Frank Sinatra

- ♦ A **crooner**
  - ♦ A singer of smooth pop ballads
- ♦ Went solo in 1943
  - ♦ ...signaling the end of Big Band
- ♦ The 1<sup>st</sup> **Teen Idol**
  - ♦ A new kind of celebrity
  - ♦ Teens worshipped & imitated him
  - ♦ The model for future Rock Icons



## Pop of the Early 50's

- ♦ Three main types of Pop:
  - ♦ Novelty songs
  - ♦ Crooner ballads
  - ♦ Big Band instrumentals
- ♦ Aimed at Upper-Class Whites
  - ♦ Catered to adults
  - ♦ Primed the music scene for teen rebellion



Patti Page