

HISTORY 2134A
“Talkin’ ‘Bout My Generation”: Youth, Rebellion and Rock’n’Roll

Fall Term 2023

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Photos: (1) Elvis Presley (Scotty Moore Papers, <http://www.rockhall.com>); (2) Beatlemania (aarp.org/Redux); (3) Jimi Hendrix (Fred Straub, cincinnati.com); (4) Janis Joplin (<http://www.rockhall.com>)

This is a draft syllabus. Please see your OWL course site for the final syllabus.

Course Description

This course uses the cultural phenomenon of rock'n'roll as a lens to explore the connections between youth and rebellion and societal change in the latter half of the twentieth century. The spectacle of the performers and their lyrics will be used as historical texts to understand this change.

Antirequisite(s):

History 2706E

Course Syllabus

Learning outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have:

- Developed a general knowledge of key personalities and events in the evolution of rock'n'roll, from its creation in the 1950s to the rock styles of today;
- Learned to understand the historical and social contexts in which rock'n'roll began and developed;
- Learned to understand the role of the Baby Boom generation in the evolution of rock'n'roll, and the role of rock music as a symbol of identity for successive generations of young people;
- Familiarized themselves with a number of key primary documents of the period and evaluated their historical value and significance, alone and in relation to other sources;
- Examined some of the cultural artifacts of the period and learned to understand their significance (*egs.*, song lyrics, album covers, reviews, films, photographs, and media coverage).

Expectations:

- Attendance at all lectures.
- Completion of each week's assigned readings, before the start of that week's lecture.
- Courtesy and respect towards other members of the class.
- Be present! Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices. Laptops are allowed if used to take notes and/or to refer to online course materials; they are NOT to be used for any other purpose during class
- Completion and prompt submission of all written assignments.
- Academic integrity.

Course Materials

Required texts:

- David Brackett, *The Pop, Rock and Soul Reader: Histories and Debates* (4th edition) (Oxford University Press, 2020). This book will be available for purchase in the Book Store at Western.

- One book (of the student's choice) about a rock musician or band. The book can be biographical, autobiographical, or an exploration of the artist's/band's music. You will be asked to write a short paper based on this book.
- Additional weekly articles and other materials will be assigned and made available online on the OWL course website.

Methods of Evaluation

Assignments and marks distribution:

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|---|-----|
| • Short paper (4-5 typed, double-spaced pages) (due November 22 nd) | 20% |
| • 4-5 response papers (1-2 pages each) | 15% |
| • Midterm exam (in class, October 18 th) | 30% |
| • Final exam (during April exam period) | 35% |

Midterm exam:

There will be a 2-hour midterm exam that will be written in class on October 18th. It will consist of short answer and essay questions.

Final exam:

There will be a 2-hour final exam that will take place during the December exam period. It will focus on material covered since the midterm exam, and will consist of short answer and essay questions.

Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Counselling. Please see https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

Written assignments:

Written assignments must be submitted at the specified time on the due date. Some assignments will be assigned during class, with time allotted for completion during class time. Other assignments are to be completed at home, and submitted electronically, in Word format, via the submission link on the OWL course website. (By using the submission link on the course website, your paper will automatically be submitted to Turnitin.com.)

Further instructions regarding the above assignments will be provided in class.

Absences and late assignments:

In the event you must miss a lecture, due to illness or other reason, it is your responsibility to obtain a copy of the day's lecture notes from a fellow student, and to review these notes before the next lecture.

Late assignments: A late penalty of 2% for each day (including Saturdays and Sundays) will be incurred for all written work submitted after the due date and time. Papers submitted on the due date but after the due time will be considered late and will be penalized 2%. Keep a copy of each of your written assignments until you receive the grade for it. Late papers will **not** be accepted more than 10 days after the due date of the assignment.

Additional Statements

Communications policies:

The best way to contact me is by e-mail. (Please write “HIS 2134” or “Rock’n’Roll” as the subject line of your e-mail.) It is unlikely that I will be able to answer your e-mail immediately, but I will do my best to respond within 48 hours. You are also welcome to speak with me in person after class, or to drop by my office to see me during my office hours. You can also e-mail me to request a meeting over Zoom.

I am available to answer your questions about the course, review your assignments with you, etc.—but I am also happy to chat with you about your favourite rock bands, concert experiences, *etc.*! So don’t be shy about dropping by! I appreciate the opportunity to get to know each of you better.

Use of electronic devices:

Students may use laptops during class to access course readings and to take notes, but not for any other purposes. The use of other electronic devices (*e.g.*, cell phones) is not permitted during class. No electronic devices are permitted during the midterm exam or the final exam.

Use of generative AI tools:

All work submitted in this course must be your own. You may not make use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT for any assignments in this course.

Additional information:

Please review the Department of History’s shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.