
B. Lee Cooper and Rebecca A. Condon
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Acknowledgments

Students and teachers dwell together in a culture bristling with popular music. Integration of sound recording lyrics and pop performers and composers during classroom discussions, in writing assignments, or as co-curricular pursuits are increasingly common practices in schools and colleges. Debates about contemporary music quality and lyrical censorship also abound. Former notions of banning the examination of popular music topics from classes have yielded to the reality of cross-disciplinary involvement concerning audio products of the commercial recording industry. Art students investigate rock poster designs; business classes ponder performer contract packages and music marketing techniques; geographers investigate the impact of radio-signal power on the sales and distribution of various recorded cultural contexts; historians trace the backgrounds of financial scandals (“payola”) and commercial successes (rags-to-riches tales about record labels and their artists); and social studies students look for trends in songs concerning military involvement, urban life, and even baseball heroes. The ubiquitous song lyric is the new teacher’s pet. This compilation of bibliographic resources features hundreds of books, articles, anthologies, and other sources that speak to the integration of popular music and classroom teaching. This volume also enumerates specific resources and recommended instructional approaches designed to increase the utilization of sound recordings. We are grateful to Libraries Unlimited for their support in publishing this study. The opportunity to extol and illustrate the extensive cultural influence of popular music in American life is genuinely appreciated.

Teachers and writers are highlighted throughout this study. Pedagogical scholarship informs every page, every instructional interpretation featured here, and we wish to acknowledge intellectual debts. In the realm of lyric theme identification, trailblazers of merit include Bill Ayres, Peter Fornatale, Jeff Green, Bob Macken, Anthony and Ann Stecheson, and Larry Stidom. In the field of teaching about popular culture, key thinkers are Carl Bode, Ray B. Browne, John Cawelti, Marshall W. Fishwick, H. L. Goodall, Jr., Charles F. Gritzner, Lawrence Grossberg, M. Thomas Inge, Lawrence W. Levine, George Lipsitz, Russel B. Nye, Charles Panati, William D. Romanowski, and Fred E. H. Schroeder. In the area of using popular music as cultural commentary, insightful intellectuals include Michael Bane, Stephen Barnard, Stanley Booth, Lee Cotton, Howard DeWitt, Philip H. Ennis, Colin Escott, Simon Frith, Reebee Garafalo, Charlie Gillett, Theodore Gracyk, Peter Guralnick, Jeff Hannusch (aka Almost Slim), David Hatch, George H. Lewis, Stephen Millward, Richard A. Peterson, George Plasketes, Robert Pruter, Jerome L. Rodnitzky, Timothy
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Introduction

Nearly two decades have passed since The Popular Music Handbook: A Resource Guide for Teachers, Librarians, and Media Specialists (Libraries Unlimited, 1984) first appeared in print. Since then, a host of thorough bibliographic guides focusing on contemporary music resources have been published. These reference compendiums detail lengthy lists of artist profiles, general and critical discographies, dictionaries and encyclopedias, almanacs and chronologies, and alphabetical lists of scholarly periodicals and popular music magazines. A Guide to Popular Music Reference Books (Greenwood, 1995) by Gary Haggerty and The Rock and Roll Reader’s Guide (Billboard, 1997) by Gary M. Krebs are fine examples of the general bibliographic resources currently on the market. The best biographical compilations are Rock Stars/Pop Stars: A Comprehensive Bibliography, 1955-1994 (Greenwood, 1994) by Brady J. Leyser and Popular Singers of the Twentieth Century (Greenwood, 1999) by Robert H. Cowden. Finally, the most outstanding study on music-related research and writing within the academic disciplines of communication, education, ethnomusicology, history, literature and the arts, music, politics, psychology, religion, and sociology is Rock Music Scholarship: An Interdisciplinary Bibliography (Greenwood, 1995) by Jeffrey N. Gatten.

This concise volume from Libraries Unlimited fills a bibliographic void. It addresses the function of print resources as instructional guides and descriptors of popular music pedagogy. The motivation for assembling this compilation of books and articles is the realization that more and more public school teachers and college-level faculty members are introducing and utilizing music-related educational approaches in their classrooms. I documented this trend in two recent publications: “Teaching with Popular Music Resources: A Bibliography of Interdisciplinary Instructional Approaches, Popular Music and Society XXII (summer 1998), 85–115 and American Culture Interpreted Through Popular Music: Interdisciplinary Teaching Approaches (Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 2000). This Libraries Unlimited volume enhances these two studies by focusing directly on the growing spectrum of published scholarship that is available to instructors in specific teaching fields (art, geography, social studies, urban studies, and so on) as well as on the multitude of general resources (including biographical directories and encyclopedias of artist profiles) that are especially appropriate for fueling classroom investigations.
The Popular Music Teaching Handbook is limited in scope. There are no audiovisual or computer database resources identified. It focuses on print resources only. It also champions a pedagogical perspective within rock and educational literature with an eye toward assisting teachers, professors, researchers, reference librarians, media specialists, and their students. Sound recordings from 1920 through the present day are deemed to be reasonable tools for study. Rock era students and their post–World War II era instructors are already integrating music and many other popular media resources into multidisciplinary teaching styles and reflective learning pursuits. Items omitted from this volume are the following:

- Works of rock-related literary fiction, both short stories and novels
- Comics and cartoon format studies about rock artists
- Studies on classical performers or art music personalities
- References to Internet teaching functions and Web site locations of music sources
- Specialized discography lists of artists or record labels
- “Opening Day Collection” recommendations of books and compact discs for music archives
- Articles describing record collecting techniques, sound recording price guides, or popular music memorabilia materials
- Pop magazine and fanzine identifications or fan club lists
- Tourbooks
- Quiz books, trivia question volumes, or rock star birthday lists

Despite these omissions, the topical bibliographies in this volume are well populated with references to art (photographs, album covers, and poster drawings), biographical references (autobiographies, interviews, and critical character studies), history (chronologies, timelines, and almanacs), journalism (rock writers, music periodicals, and cultural critics), and speech communications (protest, humor, novelty tunes, and song parodies).

This volume is divided into four sections. The first chapter lists resources that illustrate various applications of music-related topics within traditional academic areas. More than thirty educational fields—from architecture to women’s studies—are included. The second chapter provides an array of encyclopedia and biographical directory references, along with a selected listing of influential popular music performers and composers. At least ten references on the careers and musical contributions of each person or group are listed. The third chapter offers selected references related to the vast array of popular musical styles and
dance crazes that have surfaced during the past sixty years. Finally, the fourth chapter is an extended bibliographic section that denotes key music teaching resources found in books, articles, songbooks, lyric anthologies, and archival collections.

The relative brevity of this reference work is by design. No annotations are provided. All citations are consistent, but minimal. For books, references include author, title, place of publication, publishing company, and year of release. Citations for periodicals are similarly concise, listing author, title of the article, journal name, volume number, month and year of release, and page numbers. The goal of this resource guide is not to duplicate the more expansive works of other fine general music bibliographers. Instead, *The Popular Music Teaching Handbook* is a clearly delineated instructional reference to other guidebooks, essays, and book-length commentaries on educational approaches that integrate sound recordings, popular music performers, or other music-related materials with traditional disciplinary teaching methodologies.

*B. Lee Cooper*
Interdisciplinary Applications of Popular Music for Classroom Teaching Activities and Student Research Projects

Popular recordings are pieces of oral history. Of course, contemporary lyrics offer only partial, fragmented visions of American society. The limited perspective provided in recorded songs is magnified by several factors. First, the physical nature of a single sound recording restricts the duration of a singer’s commentary to an extremely brief time. An average tune is less than three minutes long. Second, the achievement of “popularity” for a specific recording indicates broad public acceptance for a particular song. This market-oriented reality tends to limit extremes of lyrical deviance. Third, the radio-play life span for most songs is quite brief. A particular tune may be a frequently played, much discussed commodity for six to ten weeks, then it can disappear from the music charts forever. Finally, songs may either consciously or unconsciously address significant historical conditions or personal concerns. Various listening audiences may accept, reject, ignore, or be totally unaware of the lyrical commentary being presented. This means that intent, content, and influence via recorded music are rarely synonymous.

Recognizing these limitations in assessing the impact of sound recording communications, why should songs be considered valuable instructional resources? As a communication medium, lyrics do not systematically propagate listeners. Likewise, they do not function as flawless historical mirrors. Such polarized perspectives on songs ignore the inherent pluralism of contemporary
lyrics, a pluralism that is a logical by-product of the intellectual (and sometimes anti-intellectual) variety found in modern society. Popular songs replicate in un-systematic, segmented fashions a multiplicity of facts, ideas, and values. In contemporary culture, they form an unpredictable, ever-changing audio collage. Lyrics resemble the historical remnants available in an Indian burial mound. Just as an archeologist must reconstruct cultural reality from innumerable fragments left by a former Native American civilization—pieces of pottery, projectile points, tools for building, stone drawings, ancient toys and games, eating utensils, religious tokens, and death masks—contemporary soundscape researchers must examine many, many recordings produced over an extended time span to identify persistent ideas, attitudes, themes, and patterns.

Some subjects of rock lyrics are overwhelmingly available for scrutiny. For example, the standard courtship theme—boy meets girl, boy dates girl, love blooms, marriage beckons, and a wedding occurs—is ubiquitous in popular music. Numerous variations on this typical love-and-marriage scenario have also appeared, however. Women’s liberation, birth control, generation gaps, social mobility, economic independence, the sexual revolution, and dozens of other social trends and personal situations in post-1950 U.S. history have dramatically altered and complicated the previously simple courtship theme. These same social and political realities have generated an enlarged spectrum of lyrical commentary within many popular music themes.

Since 1950, U.S. society has been verbally photographed by innumerable itinerant tunesmiths and displayed in audio galleries across this continent and throughout the world. Radios, jukeboxes, cable television (MTV), cassette recordings, motion picture soundtracks, compact discs, and millions and millions of records sound a clarion call to students and teachers. The irony is that so few educators utilize recorded resources. Just as armies of archeologists have successfully reconstructed the fabric of ancient cultures by carefully examining buried relics, it is vital that modern teachers apply their logical analyses and reasoned perspectives to the audio remnants of the American music industry.

Is popular music a legitimate resource for investigating contemporary society? For Dick Clark, Wolfman Jack, and Casey Kasem, maybe so; but what about for the thousands of teachers and millions of students in secondary schools and college classrooms across this country? The answer should be a resounding “Yes!” This does not imply that rock music is either the only or the best resource for examining contemporary social and political events. Televised speeches, printed articles from newspapers and magazines, lectures by teachers, scholars, politicians, and businessmen, and innumerable other oral and written communication vehicles can stimulate student thought, reflection, decision making, and action. In contrast, rock lyrics are “ear candy” to most youngsters, offering relief from the bland pabulum they perceive traditional textbooks to be.

Because few teachers consider rock to be “serious music”—let alone “serious history”—few classes have explored the sociopolitical imagery contained in songs by Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, or the Coasters. Beyond these early rockers,
though, the idea of Mick Jagger, John Lennon, Burton Cummings, Pete Townsend, Carole King, Bob Dylan, Elvis Costello, Tracy Chapman, or John Cougar Mellencamp making political and social declarations is not nearly as unexpected. Popular music is, after all, the rhythmic voice of the young. Obviously, love themes, dancing, partying, and other less-than-polemic ideas dominate rock’s frantic media message. Yet individuals such as Bruce Springsteen, Paul Simon, David Bowie, and Billy Joel and groups like the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Who, the Cure, and U2 defy traditional society and explain modern history with statements of meaning and substance in their hit recordings.

The most productive approach to examining U.S. history through popular music is to focus on specific ideas and themes that have been identified and explored by innovative, creative classroom teachers. The following pedagogical bibliography is designed to be illustrative rather than comprehensive. The focus is on specific academic areas—art, business, geography, history, language arts, philosophy, speech, and women’s studies. Thirty-two fields of study are represented. The goal of presenting a listing of reports dealing with popular music resources as classroom teaching materials is to stimulate further thought among students and teachers. This extensive bibliography will not have fulfilled its mission unless readers conclude that the soundscape of American life is a worthy field for further educational investigation.

**General Teaching Commentaries**


4 \ 1—Interdisciplinary Applications of Popular Music


Andrew Goodwin, “Pop Goes the Academy: On Teaching, DJing, and What’s in Between,” *Pulse* CLIV (November 1996), 20, 64.


6 \ 1—Interdisciplinary Applications of Popular Music


Phil Jochem, “Some Popular Songs Rip into Teachers,” Instructor LXXXV (October 1975), 40–42.


Thomas J. Meyer, “In This Course, ‘Dare to Be Stupid’ Can Be the Route to Intellectual Growth,” Chronicle of Higher Education XXX (November 6, 1985), 1, 35.


Jane Scott, “Rock Goes to College,” *The [Cleveland] Plain Dealer* (March 29, 1987), 2H.


8 \ 1—Interdisciplinary Applications of Popular Music


Dick Thompson, “Plugged into Pop at the Junior High Level,” *Music Educators Journal* LXVI (December 1979), 54–59.


**Architecture**


Art and Photography


10 \ 1—Interdisciplinary Applications of Popular Music


**Audio Technology**


Oliver Read and Walter Welch, *From Tin Foil to Stereo: Evolution of the Phonograph*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959.


**Black Studies**


14 \ 1—Interdisciplinary Applications of Popular Music


**Business and Economics**


Peter Doggett, “The Apple Label,” Record Collector, no. 46 (June 1983), 4–12.


20 \ 1—Interdisciplinary Applications of Popular Music


Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement


Burnett Anderson, “Counterfeits, Bootlegs, the Law and You,” Goldmine, no. 258 (June 1, 1990), 6–7.


**Culinary Arts**


### Drama, Film, and Theatre Studies


**Education**


**Geography and Environmental Studies**


