History of Rock
and Roll

Lecture Eight:
Changing Directions

Changing Landscape

- 1960s: A decade of dramatic change that ended with incredible emotional upheaval
- Political assassinations: JFK (1963), RFK & MLK Jr. (1968)
- Vietnam War and Invasion of Cambodia
- Student/youth protests across the country
- 1970s began mirroring much of that drama in rock music
- December 1969: Concert at Altamont (CA) that ended in one homicide and three accidental deaths
- The Beatles broke up in early 1970
- Jimi Hendrix overdosed in London in September; Janis Joplin overdosed October 1970, both at age 27
- Jim Morrison overdosed in Paris in July 1971 at age of 27
- The culmination of this mayhem forced rock industry and audiences into retreat and reevaluation

Fragmentation

- Listening audiences looked to music to find solace from an out-of-touch government and political and human strife in Vietnam
- Niche radio stations were being developed to targeted audiences
- Soft Rock - young to middle-aged women
- Urban Contemporary - blacks
- Oldies - mature adults
- AOR (Album-Oriented Rock) - young white males
- These audiences and format gave birth to new genres we will explore:
  - Folk Rock
  - Singer/songwriters
  - Country/Southern Rock
  - Progressive or Art Rock

Folk Rock

Characteristics of Folk Rock

- Commercial pop oriented - combined rock and folk elements
- Stories told through music - romantic love, social or political themes, traditional folk/myth songs
- Traditional rock band instrumentation; emphasis on strummed guitar
- Generally softer dynamics
- Emphasis on vocal harmony; often three- or four-part

Confluence of events in 1964-5

- 1964: Bob Dylan records Bringing It All Back Home
- June 1965: Byrds cover Dylan’s “Mr. Tambourine Man”
- July 1965: Dylan appears at Newport (RI) Folk Festival with Butterfield Blues Band; later records Highway 61 Revisited
Bob Dylan

- Born Robert Allen Zimmerman May 24, 1941 in Duluth, Minnesota; moved to Hibbing at age 6
- Jewish upbringing but had significant knowledge of New Testament
- Early inspirations included Hank Williams, Little Richard, Elvis Presley
- Settled on Bob Dylan as a performing name, in honor of idol Welsh poet, Dylan Thomas after a slew of pseudonyms:
  - Blind Boy Grunt
  - Bob Landy
  - Robert Milkwood Thomas
- Enrolled at University of Minnesota, became fixture in trendy-Bohemian section, Dinkytown.
  - Learned traditional folk songs; performing in an idiosyncratic, humorous style
  - Inspired by local beat writers
- Dylan further defined his sound after reading Woody Guthrie’s memoir *Bound for Glory*
- Unusual speech patterns: double negatives, clipped words, non sequiturs
  - Dylan incorporated these into his vernacular

Listening Example:
*The Times They Are A-Changing* by R. Dylan; performed by Bob Dylan

Bob Dylan

- Key Dylan recordings:
  - *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, 1963
  - *The Times They Are A-Changin’*, 1964
  - *Bringing It All Back Home*, 1965
  - *“Like a Rolling Stone”, 1965
  - *John Wesley Harding*, 1968
- Most controversial moment: Newport Folk Festival; July 25, 1965
  - Dylan performs with Paul Butterfield Blues Band
  - His electric material gets booed
  - Audience is stunned and angry, electric guitar is representative of “selling out”
  - Dylan continues to experiment electrically in following albums
  - Importance merging folk and rock music
  - Lyrics as poetry, call to action, political commentary, personal statement - either or all at once
  - Raw, take-it-as-it-is performing style rebelled against stylized commercialism

Listening Example:
*Knockin’ On Heaven’s Door* by R. Dylan; performed by Bob Dylan

The Byrds

- Led by Chicago native Roger (Jim) McGuinn, singer/guitarist
- Meets Gene Clark (singer/guitarist of New Christy Minstrels) and folksinger David Crosby
- Upon seeing *A Hard Day’s Night*, they decide to form an electric folk band
- Enlist help from Chris Hillman (bass) and Michael Clarke (drums)
- November 1964: Sign with Columbia Records as The Byrds (misspelled in homage to the Beatles)
  - Cover Dylan’s “Mr. Tambourine Man”; that smooths out rough edges and has impressive vocal harmonies; goes to #1, June 1965
  - November 1965: “Turn! Turn! Turn!” - folksinger/songwriter Pete Seeger tune with lyrics adapted from Ecclesiastes hits #1
  - Early 1966: “Eight Miles High” peaks at #14, features 12-string guitar solo inspired by John Coltrane
  - Clark and Crosby leave group, later versions attempted remakes of country rock, officially disbands in 1973

Listening Example:
*Mr. Tambourine Man* by R. Dylan; performed by The Byrds

The Mamas and the Papas

- Originally known as The New Journeymen, all matured in the New York folk scene, before moving to the Virgin Islands, then basing in southern California
  - Denny Doherty
  - “Mama” Cass Elliot
  - John Phillips
  - Michelle (Gilliam) Phillips
- Between 1965 and 1968, the group released five albums and ten Top 20 singles
  - “California Dreamin’” - 1965, #4
  - “Monday, Monday” - 1966, #1
  - “Dedicated to the One I Love” - 1967, #2
  - “Creeque Alley” - 1967, #5
- Known for their four-part multi-tracked vocals
  - Marital problems between John & Michelle led to the group’s disbanding in late 1968; Cass Elliot died of a heart condition in 1974

Listening Example:
*Monday, Monday* by J. Phillips; performed by The Mamas & the Papas
Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young

- May 1968: Creation of folk rock’s supergroup
  - David Crosby - former Byrd
  - Stephen Stills - formerly of Buffalo Springfield
  - Graham Nash - former of the Hollies
  - Neil Young - formerly of Buffalo Springfield
- 1969:
  - Crosby, Stills & Nash goes to #6; singles “Marrakech Express” and “Suite: Judy Blues Eyes” (written by Stills for singer Judy Collins)
  - Young joins the band for Déjà Vu, goes to #1 on strength of singles “Woodstock” (#11) and “Teach Your Children” (#16)
- Soon after release of Déjà Vu, National Guard shootings at Kent State University claim four students’ lives; Neil Young writes, group releases singles “Ohio”
  - “It’s still hard to believe I had to write this song. It’s ironic that I capitalized on the death of these American students. Probably the biggest lesson ever learned at an American place of learning. My best CSN&Y effort. Recorded totally live in Los Angeles. David Crosby cried after this take” - Neil Young
  - Broke up soon after release of “Ohio” due to internal struggles
  - Greatest hits compilations have produced tours since; mostly without Neil Young’s involvement

Simon & Garfunkel

- Sixth grade classmates in Forest Hills, New York; started calling themselves “Tom and Jerry”
- Released Wednesday Morning, Three A.M. in 1962
- Re-released “The Sounds of Silence” in 1964 following hits of “Mr. Tambourine Man,” and Dylan’s “Like A Rolling Stone”; in six months, “Silence” hits #1
- In 1966, duo places five singles and three albums in Top Thirty; “Homeward Bound” (#5) and “I Am a Rock” (#3)
- Success came from two important attributes:
  - The almost-perfect blend of their voices
  - Simon’s songwriting skills, mixing pop-oriented melodies with intelligent, poignant and thoughtful lyrics
- 1968: The Graduate soundtrack, filled with Simon and Garfunkel originals, goes to #1; “Mrs Robinson” #1 single; Bookends released it goes to #1
- 1970: Bridge Over Troubled Water - last studio album
  - Singles: “The Boxer” (#7); “Bridge Over Troubled Water” (#1)
  - Grammy Award for Album of the Year

Singer-Songwriters

- By the end of the 1960s, a new breed of performers developed; those would write and perform their own material: the era of singer-songwriter was born
- Built upon the popularity of Chuck Berry, Bob Dylan, Buddy Holly, Lennon & McCartney, and Paul Simon
- Lyrics were personal, confessional, reflective, narcissistic
- Soothing instrumentation: piano, acoustic guitar
- Experimentation with variety of styles infused into rock: jazz, R&B, folk,
- Important female voices emerged

Van Morrison

- George Ivan Morrison born August 31, 1945 in Belfast, Northern Ireland
- Shortened his performing name to Van
- Quit school at 16, toured Europe with an R&B band
- Returned to form group Them (“Here Comes the Night,” “Gloria”)
- 1968 - Released Astral Weeks with a jazz rhythm section, vibraphone, woodwind section and string quartet; critically acclaimed, sold poorly
- Early 1970s - String of successful albums: Moondance, His Band and the Street Choir, Tupelo Honey, Saint Dominic’s Preview, Hard Nose on the Highway
- Highest charting single: #9 “Domino”
- Covers of his songs have charted for others: “Have I Told You Lately That I Love You”, Rod Stewart, #5, 1993; “Wild Night”, John Mellencamp, #3, 1994

Listening Example:
- Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young: “Ohio”
- Simon & Garfunkel: “The Sounds of Silence”
- Van Morrison: “Brown-Eyed Girl”
Joni Mitchell

- Roberta Joan Anderson born in 1943 in Alberta, Canada; married folk singer Chuck Mitchell
- Learned to play guitar and sing while recuperating from polio at age 9
- Chuck and Joni moved to Detroit in 1965 and quickly gained a following; they divorced during the same year
- Popularity in Motor City led to notice from New York with many engagements; signed contract with Reprise Records
- Self-titled debut album (1968), Clouds (1969), developed quite a niche following; Ladies of the Canyon (1970) broke through to commercial success
- Releases more albums showing more experimentation:
  - Blue (1971) with confessional lyrics, and collaborations with Stephen Stills and James Taylor
  - The Hissing of Summer Lawns (1975) with African rhythmic influences; collaborations with David Crosby, Graham Nash, and James Taylor
  - Hejira (1976), Mingus (1979) with jazz collaborations with Jaco Pastorius and Charlie Mingus

James Taylor

- Boston-born, raised in North Carolina, James Taylor has had a successful recording career and tumultuous personal life
- Quintessential soft-rock performer; perform and record in variety of musical styles that defy a stereotypical categorization
- Begin writing music while a resident at a mental institution at age 18
- Moved to New York; formed Flying Machine with guitarist Danny Kortchmar, splitting up in 1967 due to Taylor’s heroin addiction
- Signed to Apple Records in London in 1968; recorded “Carolina In My Mind”
- After visit to rehabilitation facility, plays Newport Folk Festival in 1969 and signs with Warner Bros.
- 1970 - Sweet Baby James goes to #3 on album chart; “Fire and Rain” #3 single
- Taylor recorded more than fifteen Top 40 albums, thirteen more Top 40 singles:
  - Cover of Carole King’s “You’ve Got A Friend,” #1, 1971
  - Cover of Marvin Gaye’s hit “How Sweet It Is,” #5, 1975
  - “Handy Man,” #4, 1977
- Ten-year marriage to Carly Simon; collaborated on “Mockingbird” #5 1974
- Continues to perform and record

Carole King

- Born February 2, 1942, started as a songwriter in the Brill Building, Tin Pan Alley, NYC
- Formed a group, The City that never toured due to stage fright; released one album on ill-fated label Tomorrow Records; contained “Hi-De-Ho” and “You’ve Got A Friend”
- Encouraged by James Taylor to begin solo career
- Best selling album, her first Tapestry, set record as longest run on album charts for female artist at 306 weeks (5 yrs, 10 mos, 3 wks); sold 15 million copies
- Follow-up albums:
  - Music - 1971, #1
  - Rhymes & Reasons - 1972, #2
  - Fantasy - 1973, #6
  - Wrap Around Joy - 1974, #1
- Listed in Billboard as the most successful female songwriter of all-time, with 118 charting songs

Country & Southern Rock

Characteristics of Country Rock
- Use of pedal steel guitar and other instruments closely associated with country music
- Two-beat country rhythm
- “Twangy” vocal delivery, harmonies closely associated with country music
- Rock rhythm section
- Representative performers
  - The Band
  - Creedence Clearwater Revival
  - The Eagles

Characteristics of Southern Rock
- Heavier instrumentation: two drummers, 2 or 3 lead guitarists
- Middle ground between hard rock and country rock
- Significant influence from the blues
- Themes identifying “good old boy” imagery: young male swagger, drinking, cheating, fighting
- Representative performers
  - Allman Brothers Band
  - Lynyrd Skynyrd