

# Announcements

- **Grade policy change:** your higher-scoring mid-term will be worth 22%, while the lower-scoring test will be worth only 11%
- **Full participation in Unit 2:** requires that you *comment*, in response to online conversation opportunities, before Thursday. [The posting deadline was October 29]
- The Unit 3 discussion post deadline, and Mid-term 2, are both November 12.
- **Unit 3 essay deadline** is extended 2 days to **November 14**. Discussion ends November 17.

"...books aren't real...Thank God for that. You can shut them, say, 'Hold on a moment.' You play God to books. But who has ever torn himself from the claw that encloses you when you drop a seed in a 'TV parlor?' It grows you any shape it wishes! It is an environment as real as the world. It becomes and is the truth. Books can be beaten down with reason. But with all my knowledge and skepticism, I have never been able to argue with...an orchestra, colour, three dimensions...as you see, my parlour is nothing but four plaster walls."

Ray Bradbury, in *Fahrenheit 451* (1953)

# Rock and Roll

A term coined by NY radio personality Alan Freed



What does it mean?

# Rock and Roll

- **Term coined by NY radio personality Alan Freed**
  - loose collection of styles, regardless of race, attractive to teen consumers
  - related to cultural practices:
    - spontaneous parties / unprecedented leisure,
    - tying *recorded music on radio*, to individuals' record purchases
- **Teen consumers are a new demographic, new market**
  - First "baby boomers" born 1945-1946 become teens in the late 1950s
  - Post-war economic boom is financially empowering to a demographic that is also searching for identity
    - unprecedented gender integration in schools
    - unprecedented freedom (automobiles, bourgeois domestic life)

# Sister Rosetta Tharpe (1915-1973)



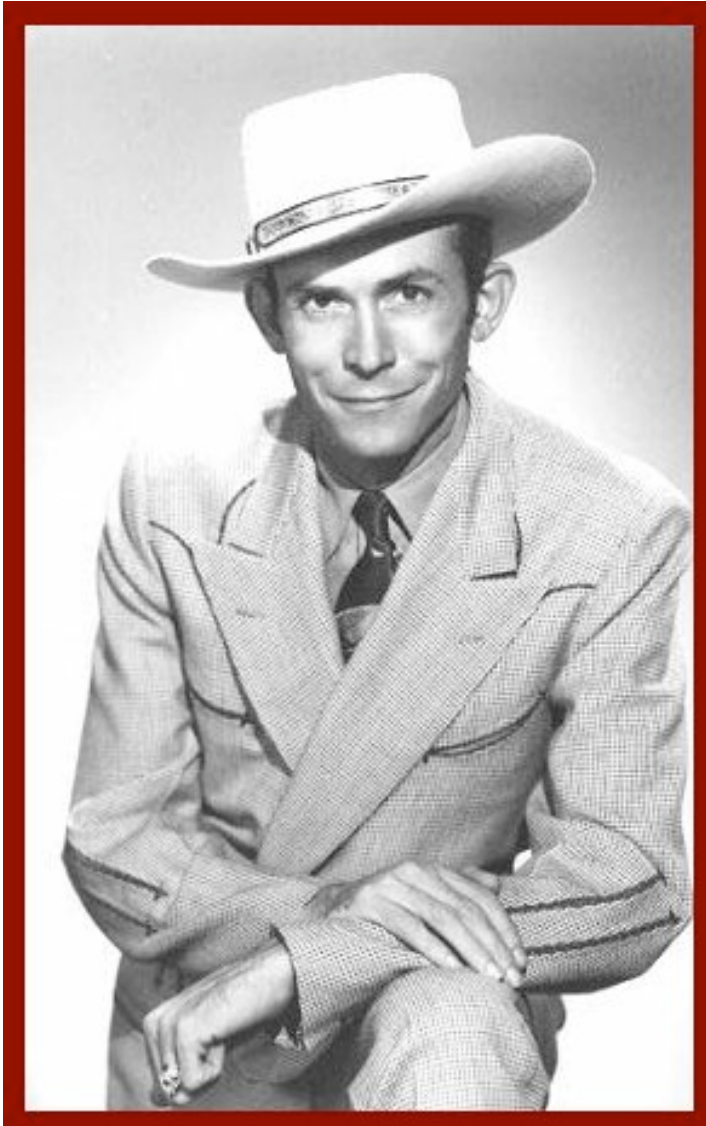
- Brought up singing Gospel in Arkansas
- Moved to Chicago as a young woman, and developed her traditional guitar style to include aspects of jazz and the blues
- **“Secularization” of Gospel style:**
  - 1930s joined Benny Goodman, Cab Calloway and Count Basie's bands as a guest soloist
  - Borrowed Memphis Minnie's rhythmically intense, repetitive improvisation style
  - Added complex syncopation & jazz harmony

# Sister Rosetta Tharpe (1915-1973)



- 1930s: drew spiritual crowds of 20,000 or more
- 1940s: switched to electric guitar to reach larger audiences outdoors and in big churches
- 1950s: Future in Gospel was jeopardized:
  - by popularity with secular audiences
  - & “unfamiliar” mixture of sounds
  - once Rock and Roll was on television (1956->) Tharpe was almost completely spurned by Christian audiences.
- Never regained her original status; estranged from the Gospel community

# Hank Williams (1923-1953)



- Raised in rural, depression-era Alabama
- Mother managed a boarding house, met traveling musicians from diverse backgrounds
- Apprenticed himself at age 10 to Rufus "Tee-tot" Payne (Greenville, AL blues singer).
- 1934-1942: broke through in Roy-Rodgers/Gene-Autry-style call-in radio program
- Career frequently interrupted (alcoholism, high turnover among bandmembers)

# Hank Williams (1923-1953)



- At his peak, recorded 66 songs in just three years; 37 = hits
- Songs anticipate Rock and Roll
  - simple melodies
  - lyrics expressing emotions directly and succinctly.

# Principle origins of Rock & Roll

- "Jump Blues" "Blues Shouters" and "Boogie Woogie"



# Principle origins of Rock & Roll

- **"Jump Blues" "Blues Shouters" and "Boogie Woogie"**
  - interchangeable terms
    - artists who shortened and simplified the "swing" genre,
    - shift focus from complex arrangements to memorable tunes
    - used both tin-pan alley and blues forms
  - sometimes there's a back-beat, other times not
  - use of *novelty songs* that appeal to youth culture, prominently combined with images and comic "characters" in 1940s black cinema
  - Examples: Louis Jordan, Big Joe Turner, Fats Domino

# Principle origins of Rock & Roll: anything missing?

- **"Jump Blues" "Blues Shouters" and "Boogie Woogie"**
  - emphasis on musicality of 7-10 players, rather than personality of 1.
- **Electric Blues**
  - white audience alienates itself, through investment in authenticity
  - emphasis on complex, specific, personal identity, rather than simple, universal emotions
- **Country & Western**
  - white audience alienates itself, through investment in authenticity
  - male personalities tend to be paternal, authoritative, rather than rebellious or rowdy

# R&B / Rock and Roll

- **New Orleans/Kansas City artists** [often called “JUMP BLUES” or “BLUES SHOUTERS” -- Atlantic & Decca Records]
  - ▶ 1949-1951: Professor Longhair, Big Joe Turner, and Fats Domino = “R&B” artists
  - ▶ 1953: Etta James' "Wallflower (Dance with me Henry)" = novelty song, responding to Hank Ballard' "Work with me Annie."
    - AABA w/12-bar blues A section shuffle w/ strong backbeat
    - R&B hit Feb. 1955, undercut by white swing singer Georgia Gibb's cover
  - ▶ Nov. 1955: Little Richard's 1st hit "Tutti Frutti"

# R&B / Rock and Roll

- **Chicago artists** [Chess Records]
  - Howlin' Wolf, Bo Diddley, and Chuck Berry are "next generation" Chicago blues artists influenced by country & western
  - Chuck Berry
    - aka "the black hillbilly" among local St. Louis jump blues artists
    - May 1955: recorded "Maybellene" w/ Willie Dixon and members of Bo Diddley's band; reaches #1 / sells one million copies
  - Nov. 1955: Bo Diddley's "stealth breakthrough" on Ed Sullivan
- **Memphis artists** [Sam Philips & Sun Records, RCA]
  - Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis recruited to bring the "energy" and "attitude" of Race music to white audiences.
  - 1953-1954: add syncopation, swing or shuffle rhythms to country and old-timey music
  - 1955: Chance recording of Elvis Presley's "All Right Mama"