

UNIT 1 ASSIGNMENTS:

- PLEASE DO BY October 15, at Noon (FINAL DEADLINE, OCTOBER 15) -- do 4 total this quarter, out of 5
 - ▶ Brief Discussion of what you hear, in *one* of the listening examples. (Follow directions in the “Discussion Section, under the UNIT 1 Folder.)
 - ▶ Early birds (get it in by Sunday at noon!) get TA feedback to help with essays.
 - ▶ Full credit requires you to respond to the TA discussion leadership and comment on classmates’ posts, before October 20.
- OCTOBER 15:
 - ▶ 600-800 word essay (do 2 total in the quarter, out of 5)

BASIC MUSICAL TERMS

pitch: the experience of a note being high or low, and (sometimes) the experience of its quality in relationship to other notes.

rhythm: the way notes are proportioned in time, combining long and short in distinctive patterns.

melody: a tune, a string of notes with distinctive rhythm and shape.

- Usually melody is what you remember about a song, and what you use to recall it distinctively to others.

accompaniment: everything besides the melody ... usually a steady texture of notes, chords and repeated rhythms that supports a melody.



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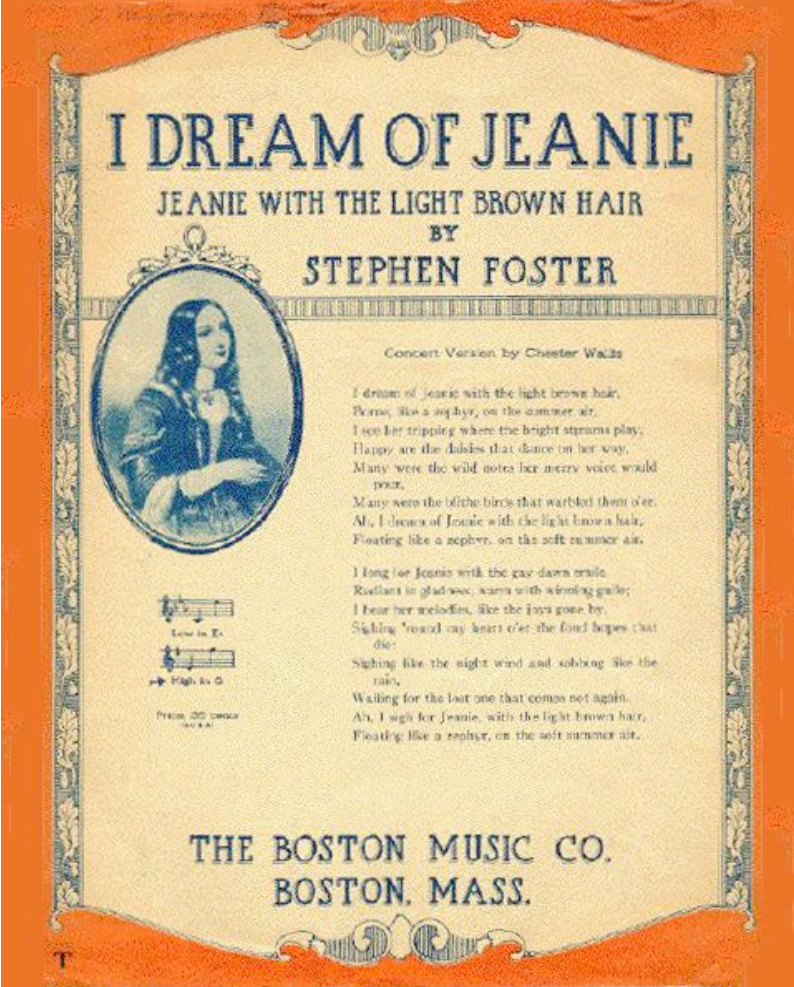
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- His music demonstrates the influence of the art song tradition, the Irish folk music tradition, and the *minstrel* tradition, on the birth of popular music.
- All Foster's songs are "Parlor songs":
 - intended for middle-class consumption in mass-distributed sheet music form, for performance on pianos.

REVIEW: Oh Susanna! = A “Parlor Song” interpretation of Minstrelsy

- *Oh Susannah!*
 - reflects African-American tradition in its reference to the banjo (an instrument at least partly connected to African origins, and commonly played by former slaves)
 - its plaintive, declamatory melody, and its (sometimes absurd) comic lyrics reflect any number of folk music traditions
 - Brought a minstrel-song aesthetic to the middle-class consumer at a time when minstrel songs were considered either in poor taste or immoral.

Stephen Foster: Irish influence, art music influence, and minstrelsy influence:

Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair



I DREAM OF JEANIE
JEANIE WITH THE LIGHT BROWN HAIR
BY
STEPHEN FOSTER

Concert Version by Chester Walts

I dream of Jeannie with the light brown hair,
Perme, like a zephyr, on the summer air,
I see her tripping where the bright streams play,
Happy are the daisies that dance on her way,
Many were the wild notes her merry voice would pour,
Many were the lil the birds that warbled them o'er,
Ah, I dream of Jeannie with the light brown hair,
Floating like a sapphire, on the soft summer air.

I long for Jeannie with the gay daisy trail,
Radiant in gladness, warm with winning gale;
I hear her melodies, like the joys gone by,
Sighing 'round my heart o'er the fond hopes that die,
Sighing like the night wind and sobbing like the rain,
Waiting for the lost one that comes not again,
Ah, I sigh for Jeannie, with the light brown hair,
Floating like a sapphire, on the soft summer air.

THE BOSTON MUSIC CO.
BOSTON, MASS.

Stephen Foster: Irish influence, art music influence, and minstrelsy influence:

Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair

- Jeanie's beauty = compared to pastoral & natural scenery
 - ▶ common feature of Irish poetry
 - ▶ idealizes rural origins of Irish diaspora
- **Art music influence**
 - ▶ reflected in soaring, memorably "composed" melody
 - ▶ sound of the melody and emotions of the lyrics seem to go together
 - ▶ Irish-Americans loved hearing tribute to (or caricature of) their culture in this "modern", "artful" style.

REVIEW

- ★ **American Popular Music is a complex topic**
 - ▶ "American," = related to the diasporic and globalized story of the United States.
 - ▶ "Popular Music" = music carrying identity and meaning for a wide variety of people, rather than just one group (i.e., not folk music, not 'high art' music)
- ★ ***American Studies* describes our main scholarly approach to the subject matter:**
 - ▶ "Interdisciplinary" (like Environmental Studies or Gender Studies) -- we draw on methods from aesthetics, economics, politics, anthropology, and music theory, to study one thing.

REVIEW

- **Diaspora affects American music**

(because U.S. history is filled with upheavals that produce dispersed and transformed cultures)

- **Media affects American music**

(because 20th c. media technology tended to transform American musical life sooner, and more pervasively, than elsewhere in the world)

- **Commodification affects American music**

(music linked to TV, film, and other media becomes "cultural capital" in the U.S. -- this means that music isn't merely a thing to be enjoyed and understood, but a source of profit and a tool for shaping consumer identity.)

REVIEW

★ **DIASPORA**, MEDIA, and COMMODIFICATION in "IRISH-AMERICAN" MUSIC

- ▶ Irish folk music ("Sun and Moon," "The Devil and Bailiff McGlynn") is rooted in centuries-old oral tradition
- ▶ But the tradition is *dynamic* -- meanings change and evolve in cultural context
- ▶ In new surroundings, Irish settler's relationship to tradition changes --
 - tradition now expresses a relationship to something remote, idealized, and lost

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 - tradition now expresses a relationship to something remote, idealized, and lost
 - must coexist in modern, Industrialized Anglo-America

REVIEW

- ★ DIASPORA, **MEDIA**, and COMMODIFICATION in "IRISH-AMERICAN" MUSIC
 - ▶ 19th-c households in the U.S. valued music through the medium of the piano, used for education and entertainment
 - ▶ The printing industry established "sheet music" as the first media for popular music. Popular sheet music (including "*Parlor Songs*") had to be
 - simple steady rhythm, to be suitable for amateurs
 - Romantic and memorable tunes, to suit the piano-voice tradition of art songs
 - ▶ Which plays a stronger role in Stephen Foster's music: Irish **folklore**, or the contemporary **media** of American Popular culture?

REVIEW

- ★ DIASPORA, MEDIA, and **COMMODIFICATION** in "IRISH-AMERICAN" MUSIC
 - ▶ Immediately after the civil war, both Irish and Black communities were "racialized"--caste to be different and inferior (although in different ways) to Anglo-American society
 - ▶ Irish middle-class consumers aspired to the same status as Anglo-Americans. The new concept of "race" increasingly implies white superiority, and a simpler divide between white and black.
 - ▶ Stephen Foster's songs "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair" and "Oh Susannah!" **commodify** a developing Irish diaspora, by selling a Romantic white Irish identity, and using humor to distance his audience from blackness

- First and Last name
(neatly, please)

- Student I.D. #

QUIZ: What distinguishes
Minstrelsy in its original
form from Minstrelsy as it is
popularized in the late 19th-
c?