CAT 2D: In the Groove: A Cultural History of the Phonograph

TU-TH 3:30-4:50 PM, Center Hall 105
Professor Emily Thompson
HSS 4059, 858.822.1532, emilyt@ucsd.edu Office Hours:

This course will investigate some of the different connections it is possible to forge between culture, art, and technology by exploring the history of the phonograph in America, from its invention in 1877 up to the present day.

The first unit of the course will consider the early history of the phonograph, when its social function was not clear and when it was applied in numerous fields, from science to business to ethnography to entertainment. The second unit focuses on the early-mid twentieth century, when the phonograph was assigned the primary task of providing domestic reproductions of musical performances. The final unit considers the transformation of the phonograph, by contemporary DJs, into a musical instrument itself.

BOOKS: Available for purchase at the UCSD Bookstore. You are welcome to purchase them from any other source you choose. The books are also on reserve at Geisel Library.


COURSE READER: Additional required course readings are compiled in a course reader available for purchase from University Readers. See their website, www.universityreaders.com, or call 800.200.3908 for instructions on how to purchase the reader. A copy of the reader is also available on reserve at Geisel Library.

ASSIGNMENTS: Bi-weekly section meetings will be devoted both to reviewing/discussing the course materials (lectures and readings) and to improving students’ writing skills. Three essays will be assigned as indicated on the course schedule. The first essay will be 3 pages long; the second (which requires both a draft and a revision) will be 5 pages long and the third essay will be 6 pages long. There will additionally be a final exam during finals week, and students’ active participation in their section meetings will also be factored into their final grade. Students must complete and submit all assignments, must attend and participate in section discussions, and must take the final exam in order to pass the course.

GRADING:
10 % PAPER 1 (3 pp)  
15 % PAPER 2 (5 pp, draft)  
20 % PAPER 2 (5 pp, revision)  
30 % PAPER 3 (6 pp)  
10 % FINAL EXAM  
15 % PARTICIPATION

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: All students must adhere to UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, a copy of which is included for reference in the course reader.

SPECIAL NEEDS: Any student with special needs must discuss their situation with the Professor immediately. All such needs will be met to the best of the Professor’s and the University’s abilities, but only when such needs are identified at the start of the quarter. No last minute or after-the-fact accommodations will be made.

SCHEDULE: (NOTE: Since this is a new course, the Professor may be required to make some last-minute adjustments to the scheduling and/or defining of lecture topics. Reading and essay assignments will not be affected by any such changes.)

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<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNIT ONE: WHAT IS IT?</td>
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| 1 | T 10 JAN | Course Introduction  
H 12 JAN Thinking About Sound and Listening |
| 2 | T 17 JAN | Invention of the Phonograph  ESSAY 1 ASSIGNED (3 pp)  
H 19 JAN Phonograph as Business Tool |
| 3 | T 24 JAN | Memory Machine  
H 26 JAN Capturing Culture  ESSAY 1 DUE |
| UNIT TWO: REPRODUCING MUSIC | | |
| 4 | T 31 JAN | Musical Culture in America  ESSAY 2 ASSIGNED (5 pp)  
H 2 FEB Cultures of Collecting |
| 5 | T 7 FEB | Origins of High Fidelity  
H 9 FEB Intellectual Property I  ESSAY 2 DRAFT DUE |
| 6 | T 14 FEB | Black Wax: Race and Records  
H 16 FEB Recording Becomes Electric  ESSAY 2 DRAFT RETURNED |
H 23 FEB Multitracking  ESSAY 2 REVISION DUE |
| UNIT THREE: MAKING MUSIC | | |
| 8 | T 28 FEB | MOVIE: Scratch (2002)  ESSAY 3 ASSIGNED (6 pp)  
H 2 MAR History of the DJ |
9    T 7 MAR  Turntablism  
    H 9 MAR  Intellectual Property II
10    T 14 MAR  Vinyl Lives!  
    H 16 MAR  Course Conclusion            ESSAY 3 DUE

FINALS WEEK: 20-25 MAR:  FINAL EXAM ON FRIDAY 24 MARCH, 3-6 PM.

READINGS: Reading should be completed by the first section meeting of the subsequent week. That is, Week 1 readings should be completed in time for your first section meeting during Week 2, etc. The Week 10 reading assignment (which is very brief) should be completed in time for your final section meeting during Week 10.

WEEK 1:

Attali, Chs 1 and 4, pp. 1-20 and 87-132.


WEEK 2:


Brady, Intro and Chs 1-2, pp. 1-51.

WEEK 3:

Brady, Chs 3-5, pp. 52-125.

WEEK 4:


Katz, Intro and Ch 1, pp 1-47.

WEEK 5:

Katz, Ch 2, pp. 48-71 + CD Track 1.

Benson, Allan. "Edison's Dream of New Music." *Cosmopolitan* 54 (May 1913): 797-800.


WEEK 6:

Katz, Ch 3, pp. 72-84 + CD Track 2.


WEEK 7:

Katz, Ch 4, pp. 85-98 + CD Tracks 3-7.


WEEK 8:


Miller, Paul D., pp. 1-60.

WEEK 9:


Miller, pp. 61-113.

WEEK 10:

Attali, Ch 5 and Afterword, pp. 133-158.