

Sounds of the 1960s: Popular Music, Culture, and History

In the 1960s, demographic, economic, political, social, and technological developments and trends were changing everyday life, sometimes radically. Cultural and social norms routinely were challenged and overturned. To the burgeoning teen-age baby boomers and many others, old norms had lost relevance and justification, and new ones that were in sync with daily experience were needed. In the resulting tumult, popular music played essential roles as a primary cause and effect of the cultural revolution, and one of its most prominent symbols.

This course will survey the popular musical genres of the period by listening to, viewing, and discussing selected songs. The course objective is three-fold: to 1) recall/rediscover, appreciate, and enjoy the music, 2) explore relationships between the music and the times, and 3) interpret meanings and legacies of the music based on our 21st century perspectives and sensibilities. Participants will be encouraged to discuss the music and the readings, and there will be opportunities for participants to select and introduce songs.

Readings: In addition to occasional readings (none for the first class), a list of songs to be played will be distributed each session, and there will be an annotated list of sources for further study.

Course Sessions:

Class 1 (September 26)

a) Introduction and b) Brief review of 1950s popular music

Class 2 (October 3)

Adult Contemporary

Class 3 (October 10)

Broadway and Movie music

Class 4 (October 17)

a) Country/Bluegrass and b) Folk music

Class 5 (October 24)

a) Blues and b) Soul music

Class 6 (October 31)

a) Early 1960s Rock 'n Roll and b) Beatles and British Invasion

Class 7 (November 7)

a) Bob Dylan and b) Folk Rock

Class 8 (November 14)

a) Late Sixties eclectic (1967-1972) and b) Jazz

Leader: Michael Lundy is a tour guide for the Historical Society of Princeton, a docent for the Princeton University Art Museum, and has co-led Evergreen courses on Princeton architecture and a course in Popular Music of the 1950s in Spring 2016.

Tuesdays: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, 8 weeks: September 26 through November 14.

Location: Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville