

MUS 3308, Topic 3

Industry and Commercialization

The Music Industry

- Consists of sound recording companies who develop and market artists and their music
- Other industries include:
 - Publishing
 - Music retail
 - Music press
 - Music hardware
 - Sound recording and reproduction technology
 - Tours and concerts
 - Merchandising
 - Royalties and rights

The economic structure of the popular music industry

- Power centered in the hands of larger, international companies, such as:

- Universal Music Group

currently dominated by a small number of companies (only a few companies, not small companies)

- Sony/BMG





- AOL Time-Warner

now called warner

The economic structure of the popular music industry

■ Concentration

DEFINITION QUESTION ON THE MIDTERM!!!!

- The ownership of popular music production is concentrated in the hands of a small number of companies  



■ Vertical Integration



- Where concentration of the music and media industries lead to control of the total production flow, from raw materials to wholesale

Large record companies vs. Independent labels



profit

form of creativity

standardization vs. creativity

- Some critics have observed that periods of concentration have produced a lot of similar music 
- Some have observed that this has led to bursts of creativity by the public
 - Innovation is therefore linked to independent record labels indie labels
 - A cycle of innovations and consolidation 

Large record companies vs. Independent labels

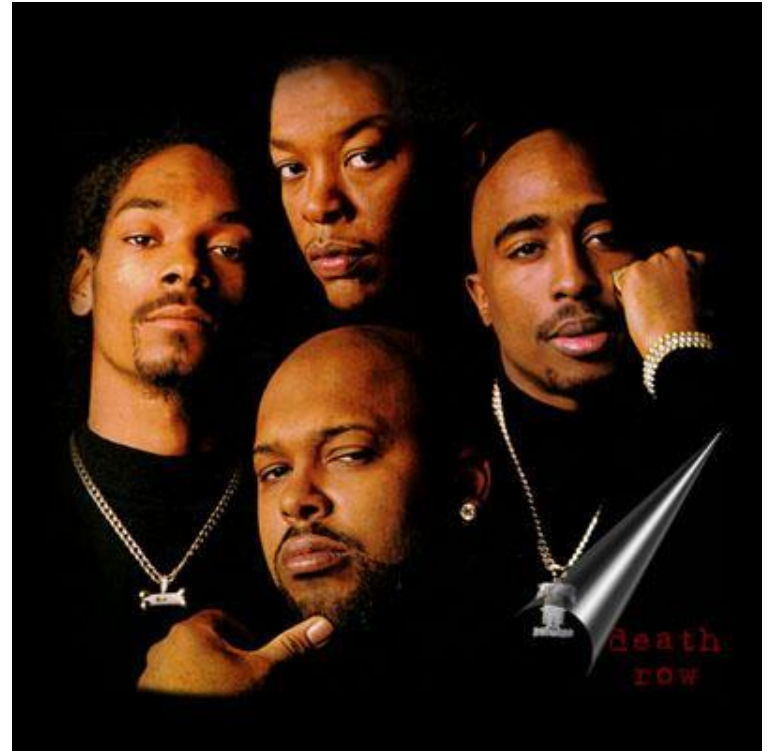
- This framework has been argued against
 - Music production is more complicated 
 - Webs and networks operating within the music industry
 - Interconnections between large and small companies
 - Some “independents” have **distribution deals** through major labels 

Majors vs. Indies: Two brief case studies

Die Antwoord 🗨️



Death Row records 🗨️



Income from rights

- Copyright (intellectual property right)
 - Performing rights 
 - For the use of musical material collected on behalf of writers and publishers when music is performed or broadcast
 - Public performance rights 
 - Paid for the privilege of broadcasting or playing the actual recording in public
 - Mechanical rights 
 - Paid to the copyright holder every time a particular song or piece of music is recorded

Income from rights

- Trademark
 - A trademark provides a legal shield around the name, slogan, shape, or character image, and in conjunction with product licensing, makes it possible for the original proprietor to transfer this sign to second and third parties for a limited period of time in exchange for royalties







Income from rights

- Branding branding involves creating a consistent idea surrounding a product that will aid in marketing that product to the public
 - multi-faceted process centred on the core element of Brand Identity (David Aaker 1991) - the brand is the public and packaged identity of the person or product that you are trying to market The forging of links of image and perception between a range of products
 - Images are transferable between different media






How are artist's branded

- Considerations include: 
- Image 
- Public persona 
- Genre of music
- Performance characteristics
- Links to products 
- Links to other media

social media presence - should not downplay this
twitter tweets
instagram posts

Case studies/Examples: Jessica Simpson

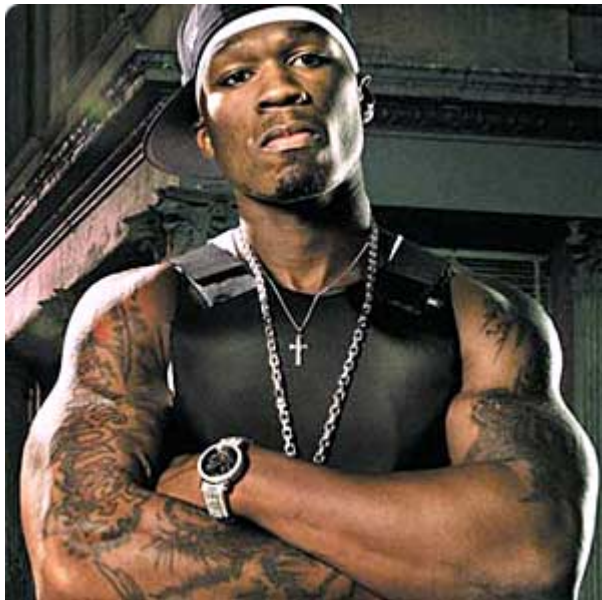


- Initially branded as “girl next door”
- Pop singer 
-  ■ Later transitioned to television and film
-  ■ Hyper-sexualized in video for “These Boots are Made for Walking”

Tied to a range of products



Case Studies/Examples: 50 Cent



- “Gangsta”/ street persona
- Contrasted with more recent turn to “serious” businessman and actor

Tied to a range of products and media



Questions in relation to major labels:

- 1) How does concentration affect the range of opportunities available to musicians and others involved in the production of popular music?
- 2) How does concentration affect the range and nature of products available to consumers of popular music?
- 3) What role does this play in the creation of meaning in popular music?

“Auteur” (See Shuker Ch. 4)

- Ideological construct
- “Auteur theory attributes meaning in cultural texts to the intentions of an individual creative source” (Shuker, 68)
- It is applied to creative works that are thought to have value
- Typically associated with high culture

Stars

- “Stars are individuals who, as a consequence of their public performances or appearances in the mass media, become widely recognized and acquire symbolic status.” (Shuker 2008, 70)
- Function:
 - They represent a form of escapism
 - The present illusion and appeal to the fantasies of the audience
 - They are economic entities
 - They represent a unique commodity form which is both a labour process and a product

Stars as “Auteurs”

Through a case-study approach Shuker discusses the contributions of a number of musicians, including:

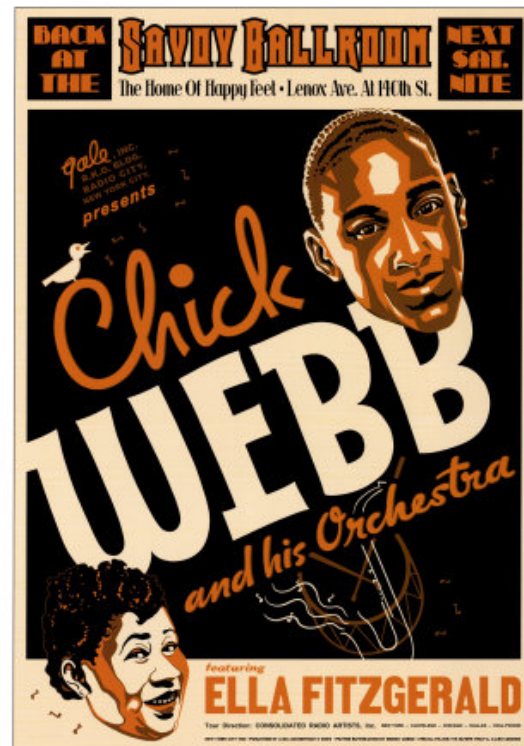
- Robert Johnson
- Phil Spector
- The Spice Girls
- Shania Twain
- Norman Cook (Fatboy Slim)
- Lady Gaga

Many of these do not fit stereotypical notions of an “auteur”



“The Music Industry Fight Against Rock ‘n’ Roll”: Some Historical Context:

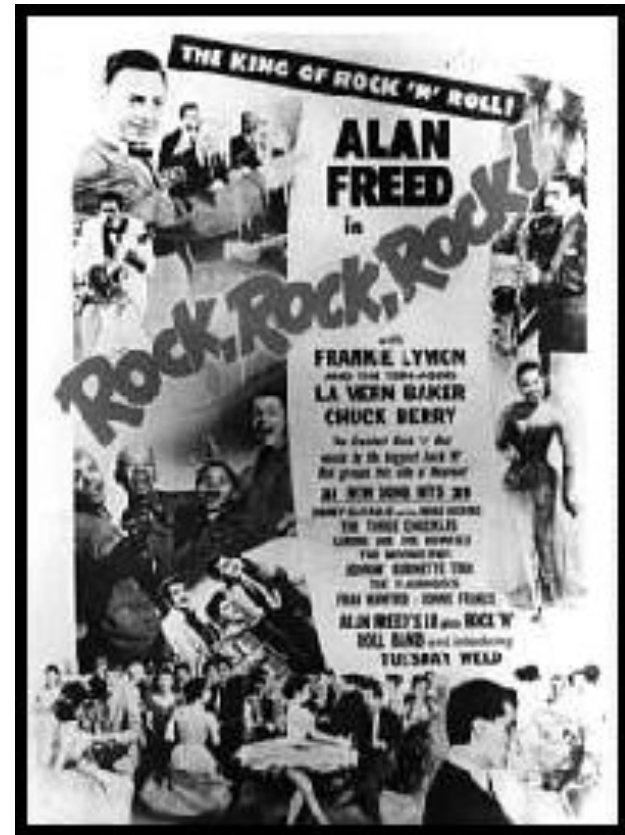
- What music influenced rock ‘n’ roll?
 - Swing jazz
 - the blues
 - Country blues
 - “Rhythm and blues”
 - Ragtime
- Some early pairings of “rock” and “roll”
 - “The Camp Meeting Jubilee” (1912)
 - Trixie Smith, “My Man Rocks Me” (1922)
 - Chick Webb and Ella Fitzgerald “Rock it for Me” (1937)



“The Music Industry Fight Against Rock ‘n’ Roll”: Some Historical Context:

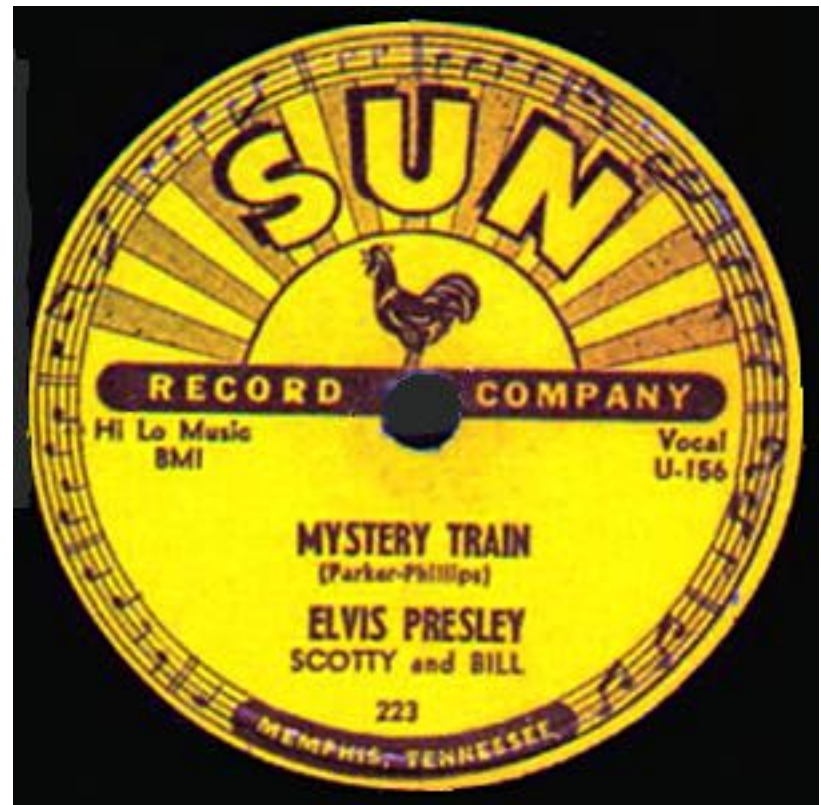
The term “rock ‘n’ roll” used to describe the musical style from 1956 onwards

- Popular Films:
 - “Don’t Knock the Rock” (1956)
 - “Rock, Rock, Rock” (1956)
 - “Mister Rock and Roll” (1957)



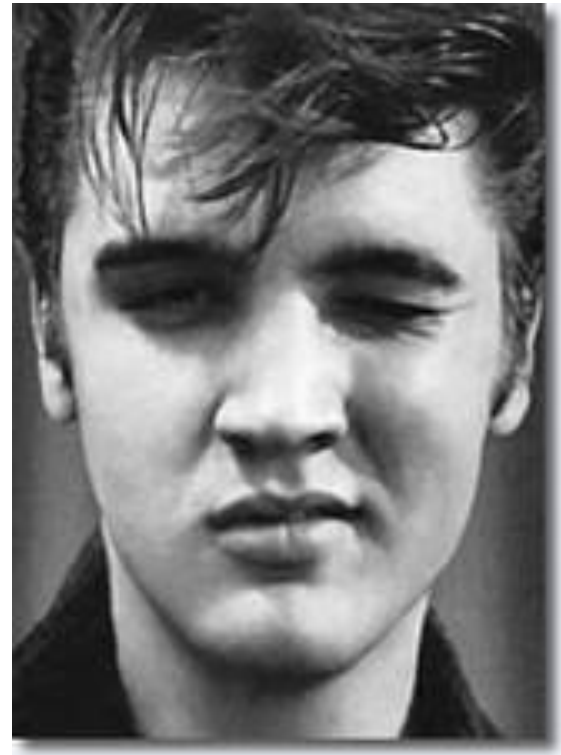
“The Music Industry Fight Against Rock ‘n’ Roll”: Some Historical Context:

- The role of promoters was important in finding a mainstream audience for the new genre
 - Alan Freed
 - D.J. Dewey
 - Sam Phillips (of Sun Records)



“The Music Industry Fight Against Rock ‘n’ Roll”: Some Historical Context:

- Elvis Presley “All Shook Up” (1957)
- Jerry Lee Lewis “Great Balls of Fire” (1957)
- Buddy Holly “That’ll Be the Day” (1958)



Brackett, “The Music Industry Fight Against Rock ‘n’ Roll”

- Emergence of rock n’ roll in the 1950s
- ASCAP vs. BMI
- Payola
- Dick Clark
- Alan Freed
- “teen pop” in late 50s/early 60s

Brackett, "The Music Industry Fight Against Rock 'n' Roll"

- Rock 'n' Roll

- Little Richard "Good Golly Miss Molly" (1958)
- Chuck Berry "Johnny Be Good" (1958)

Vs.

- Teen Pop

- The Crests "Sixteen Candles" (1958)
- The Platters "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" (1958)

Relevance to current industry practices:

- 1) What effect does the music industry have in shaping public taste?
- 2) Is the promotion of certain artists and restriction of others political?
- 3) Who has control of current radio programming?