

The Life and Music of Led Zeppelin

Music 1247
University of Pittsburgh
Spring 2023

Wednesdays, 1-320pm

Office Hours
Tuesdays, 12-1pm
[or by appointment]

Instructor: Andrew Weintraub

This course will focus on the life and music of the band Led Zeppelin and the social and cultural conditions of the 1970s. Recipients of a Kennedy Center Honor for “lifetime contributions to American culture through the performing arts,” Led Zeppelin is widely considered to be one of the most innovative, successful, and influential bands in the history of rock music. We will consider the band’s formative influences; stylistic cross-influences with contemporary artists; and the song-writing and musical styles of individual band members. In this course, the band serves as a lightning rod for analyzing social issues of musical appropriation and race; gender and sexuality; Orientalism; and cultural rights and copyrights. We will pay close attention to the band’s repertoire of songs (87 in all), which are astonishing for their variety and innovation. As progenitors of heavy metal, the course will assess the influence of Led Zeppelin during the last fifty years, and their place in the history of rock music. During the semester, students will write six 3-page papers that embrace critical thinking about music from analytical, historical, cultural, and multi-disciplinary perspectives. There are no prerequisites for this course; everyone is welcome.

Course Requirements

This course involves listening, reading, writing, and discussion. There is one required textbook for the course. All other course materials will be made available through Canvas. It is therefore essential that you are familiar with Canvas and regularly check your Canvas portals (24/7/365 support within Canvas). You will need to absorb reading, listening, and viewing material on your own, and put in consistent effort throughout the whole term.

1. Attendance and Participation (70 points). Students are responsible for all course materials, which will cover essential biographical, contextual, and stylistic information about the music (Note: if you find apparent inconsistencies between written sources, and the lecture material, I invite you to ask me about them at any time). Participation grades will be based on participation in discussions and overall engagement with the course. Class time will be set aside during each session to listen as a group and to discuss the material. Participation is an important part of

learning. Arrive prepared and ready to think out loud and share your ideas and questions. All students are expected to actively listen to one another in order to participate in discussions.

2. Listening Assignments (LA) (30 points each, 180 points total). There will be six listening assignments during the semester. Most of these are 3-page written papers on different ways of listening and understanding music. Some demonstrate your ability to correlate verbal “stylistic characteristics” (e.g., rhythm, melody, harmony, form, texture, and so on) with the actual sound of the music, while others demonstrate your ability to understand music in culture and society. No late assignments will be accepted. Students who complete the listening assignments at the proper time should have no difficulty with this requirement.
3. Exams (100 points each, 200 points total). Exams will be a mix of short answer, essay, and listening identification questions. For recordings by Led Zeppelin, you will be expected to know the following information: (1) title of song; (2) title of the original LP on which the song appeared (if applicable); (3) year of the record release. For recordings by artists other than Led Zeppelin, you should be able to identify the title of the song, the name of the recording artist or group, and the year of the record’s release. There are no make-up exams for this class.

GRADING & SCALE

Attendance & Participation: 70 points

Listening Assignments: 180 points (30 points each, 6 assignments)

Exams: 200 points (100 points each, 2 exams)

TOTAL: 450 points

440 - 450 points = A+

418 - 439 points = A

405 - 417 points = A-

391 - 404 points = B+

373 - 390 points = B

360 - 372 points = B-

346 - 359 points = C+

328 - 345 points = C

315 - 327 points = C-

301 - 314 points = D+

283 - 300 points = D

0 - 283 points = F

ALL REQUIREMENTS, DATES, AND DEADLINES ARE FIRM: THERE CAN BE NO “MAKE UPS” OR END-OF-THE-SEMESTER WORK FOR EXTRA CREDIT. EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE ONLY RARELY AND ONLY IN CASES OF SERIOUS HARDSHIP FOR WHICH DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN ADVANCE.

HOW TO JOIN SPOTIFY

Go to <spotify.com/signup>. Click “Sign up with Facebook” to use Facebook details or fill in details to “Sign up with email address.” Create a username/password. Fill out the other details. Click “Sign up.” Once joined, please find and “follow” the professor’s Spotify account. It can be found by typing in “Andrew Weintraub,” typing in my username (anwein2016), or following this link <<https://open.spotify.com/user/anwein2016>>

Reading

- Required Texts

Wall, Mick. 2008 (any edition). *A Biography of Led Zeppelin: When Giants Walked the Earth*. New York: St. Martin’s Griffin.

- Highly Recommended

Hoskyns, Barney. 2012. *Led Zeppelin: The Oral History of the World’s Greatest Rock Band*. New Jersey: Wiley & Sons.

Tolinski, Brad. *Light And Shade: Conversations with Jimmy Page*. New York: Crown.

Listening and Viewing

- Required Listening on Spotify Playlist (TBA)

- Studio Albums

1. Led Zeppelin
2. Led Zeppelin II
3. Led Zeppelin III
4. Led Zeppelin IV
5. Houses of the Holy
6. Physical Graffiti
7. Presence
8. In through the Out Door
9. Coda

- Live Albums

1. The Song Remains the Same (1976)
2. BBC Sessions (1997)
3. How the West Was Won (2003)
4. Celebration Day (2012)

- Videos (selected)

1. The Song Remains the Same (1984)
2. This is Spinal Tap (1984)
3. Led Zeppelin DVD (2003)
3. Celebration Day (2012)
4. Knebworth, August 11, 1979 (concert film on youtube)

Other Films (required; some will be viewed in class)

1. This is Spinal Tap (1984)
2. Almost Famous (2000)
3. Mad Dogs and Englishmen (1971)
4. Dazed and Confused (1993)
5. It Might Get Loud (2008)

•On-line Music Dictionary

New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians Database (University Library System Digital Library—"find articles")

•Additional on-line resources (timeline; discography; photos; etc)

<http://www.ledzeppelin.com>

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

NOTE: Reading, Viewing and Listening Assignments are due in class on the date of the lecture; for example, LA 1 is due on Jan. 25. Additional reading and viewing will be assigned as necessary.

M=Module

LA=Listening Assignment

January

11 Introduction: A Brief Musical History of Blues and Rock Music (M1)

-format of the course; musical terms and concepts; Influences; Blues; Rock 'n' Roll

Lecture 1 (Week 1)

18 Background: Musical Training and Formation (M2)

-Great Britain; Bios of the Band; Yardbirds; Formation

Read and discuss in class: Schloss, Starr, and Waterman, pp. 1-16;21;24-26 (M2)

Listen: Blues and Rock 'n' Roll

Assignment: Early Rock 'n' Roll (terms and definitions)

25 Led Zeppelin I (1969) (M3)

Read and discuss in class: Schloss, Starr, and Waterman, pp. 139-157 and 172-178 (M3)

Listen: Blues and 60s Rock
Assignment: LA 1 (Blues)

February

1 Led Zeppelin II (1969) (M4)
Read: Wall, chapters 1-3
Listen: Led Zeppelin I

8 Led Zeppelin III (1970) (M5)
Read: Fast 1999 and Walser 1993
Listen: Led Zeppelin II
Assignment: LA 2 (Gender)

15 Led Zeppelin IV (1971) (M6)
Read: Wall, chapters 4-6
Listen: Led Zeppelin III

22 Midterm
Read: Wall chapters 7-9
Listen: Led Zeppelin IV

March

1 Houses of the Holy (1973) (M7)
Read: Wall, chapter 10
Listen: TBA

8 Spring Break (no class)

15 Rockumentary and *This is Spinal Tap* (1984) (M8)
Read: Wall, chapter 11
Listen: Houses of the Holy
Assignment: LA 3 (Genre)

22 Physical Graffiti (1975) (M9)
Read: Wall, Chapter 12

29 Presence (1976) (M10)
Read: Waksman 1999
Listen: Physical Graffiti
Assignment: LA 4 (LZ and me)

April

5 In Through the Out Door (1979) (M11)
Read: Wall, chapter 13

Listen: Presence

12 Coda (1982) (M12)

Read: Wall, chapter 14-15

Listen: In Through the Out Door

Assignment: LA 5 (Response to PG and Presence)

19 Led Zeppelin's Legacy: hard rock, heavy metal, punk, grunge (M13)

Read: Wall, chapter 16

Listen: Coda

Assignment: LA 6 (legacy - group project, due on **April 21 @ 5pm**)

[final exam]

Additional Resources

- Books and Articles (selected)

Blake, Mark. 2018. *Bring It On Home: Peter Grant, Led Zeppelin, and Beyond--The Story of Rock's Greatest Manager*. New York: Da Capo Press.

Burroughs, William. 1975. "Rock Magic: Jimmy Page, Led Zeppelin and a Search for the Elusive Stairway to Heaven." *Crawdaddy* 49: 34-40.

Crowe, Cameron. 1975. "The Durable Led Zeppelin: a Conversation with Jimmy Page and Robert Plant." *Rolling Stone* (13 March 1975)

Davis, Erik. 2005. *Led Zeppelin IV*. New York: Bloomsbury.

Fast, Susan. 2001. *In the Houses of the Holy: Led Zeppelin and the Power of Rock Music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fast, Susan. 1999. "Rethinking Issues of Gender and Sexuality in Led Zeppelin: A Woman's View of Pleasure and Power in Hard Rock." *American Music* 17(3): 245-299.

Headlam, D. 1995. "Does the song remain the same? Questions of authorship and identification in the music of Led Zeppelin." In *Concert Music, Rock, and Jazz since 1945: Essays and Analytical Studies*, ed. E. West Marvin and R. Hermann. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, pp. 313-63.

Page, Jimmy. *Jimmy Page*. 2010. England: Genesis Publications.

Schloss, Joseph, Larry Starr, and Christopher Waterman. 2012. *Rock: Music, Culture, and Business*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Smith, Erin Sweeney. 2017. "Post-imperialism, Imaginary Geography and the Women of Led Zeppelin's IV." *Popular Music* 36(3): 410-426.

Tolinski, Brad. 2012. *Light and Shade: Conversations with Jimmy Page*.

Waksman, Steve. 1999. "Heavy Music: Cock Rock, Colonialism, and the Music of Led Zeppelin." In *Instruments of Desire*, 237-276. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Walser, Robert. 1993. "Forging Masculinity: Heavy Metal Sounds and Images of Gender." In *Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*, 108-136. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Welch, Chris. 1970. "Jimmy Page: Paganini of the Seventies." *Melody Maker* (14–28 Feb 1970) [three-part interview].
Yorke, Ritchie. 2015. *Led Zeppelin The Definitive Biography: Led to Gold 1967 – 1989*.

Citing Sources

Citing sources in paper body:

In text, cite the author's last name, year, and page(s) from which the information was derived. The note will be enclosed in parentheses and will be located immediately following the sentence in which the information was presented, as the following example demonstrates:

While Doreen Massey has argued for the importance of place, her position accords with those arguing against essentialized or static notions of place (Massey 1994: 56).

Citing sources in a bibliography:

Your paper should include a bibliography at the end of the paper. See the course syllabus for examples of how to write a proper bibliographic entry (for book, book chapter, journal article, etc.). There is no required number of sources because the availability and relevance of sources depends on the chosen specificity of the paper topic.

For a book, a citation should look like this:

Bose, Sugatha and Ayesha Jalal. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

For a chapter in a book, a citation should look like this:

Turino, Thomas. 2008. "Introduction: Why Music Matters." in *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 1-22.

For an article/periodical, a citation should look like this:

Farrell, Gerry. 2002. "The Senia Style of Sitar Playing in Contemporary India," *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 11(2): 29-60.

For a film, a citation should look like this:

Raga. 1991. Dir. Howard Worth. Mystic Fire Video. VHS. 42 min.

For a song, a citation should look like this:

Banerjee, Nikhil. 1970. "Bhimpalasri Alap." *Afternoon Ragas*. Raga Records.

COURSE RESOURCES & POLICIES

Academic Support. If you experience difficulty in the course for any reason, please do not hesitate to consult with the professor. In addition to the Music Department resources, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to learn and meet the course requirements.

Disability Services. If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your professor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. 140 William Pitt Union (412.648.7890, 412.228.5347 for P3 ASL users). DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Health & Safety Statement. In the midst of this Coronavirus pandemic, it is extremely important that you abide by public health regulations and University of Pittsburgh health standards and guidelines. While in class, at a minimum this means that you must wear a face covering and comply with physical distancing requirements; other requirements may be added by the University during the semester. These rules have been developed to protect the health and safety of all community members. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in you not being permitted to attend class in person and could result in a Student Conduct violation. For the most up-to-date information and guidance, please visit <coronavirus.pitt.edu>, and check your Pitt email for updates before each class.

Accessibility. The Canvas LMS platform was built using the most modern HTML and CSS technologies, and is committed to W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative and Section 508 guidelines. Specific details regarding individual feature compliance are documented and updated regularly.

Diversity & Inclusion. The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, see: <<http://diversity.pitt.edu/affirmative-action/policies-procedures-and-practices>>. I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that all members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing <titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu>. Reports can also be filed online: <<https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/make-report/report-form>>. You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity (<http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/02/02-03-02.html>). Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Students suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the Academic Integrity Guide (<https://pitt.libguides.com/academicintegrity>). A minimum sanction of a zero score for the assignment/quiz/exam will be imposed. Please see the professor for more information or clarification. View the Academic Integrity Code at: <https://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policies-and-procedures/academic-integrity-code>.

E-mail Communication Policy

*Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address. To forward e-mail sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on **Edit Forwarding Addresses**, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished. (For the full E-mail Communication Policy, go to www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html.)*

General Education Requirement Goals

If the course fulfills one or more General Education Requirements, the goals of each Gen Ed should appear in the syllabus.

Turnitin

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com page service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on the Turnitin.com site.