

## MDIA 305 A Social History of Popular Music

**Trimester 1 2016**

29 February to 29 June 2016

**20 Points**

### IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 29 February to 5 June 2016

Easter break: 24 to 30 March 2016

Mid-trimester break: 25 April to 1 May 2016

Last assessment item due: 13 June 2016

Withdrawal dates: Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds).

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats)).

### CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

#### Lectures

Monday 3.10pm-5pm Murphy MYLT220

#### Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the MDIA 305 site on Blackboard: go to “Tutorial instructions” and then follow the instructions carefully. Remember to record your tutorial time, day and room for future reference. Tutorial rooms will be listed on myAllocator, Blackboard and on the noticeboard outside the administration office, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

### NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Staff: Dr Geoff Stahl

Email: [geoff.stahl@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:geoff.stahl@vuw.ac.nz)

Phone: (04) 463 7472

Room: 81 Fairlie Terrace, Room 205

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm, or by appointment

### COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Abridged lecture notes, in the form of Powerpoint slides, will be posted on Blackboard, PRIOR to each lecture.

If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

## PRESCRIPTION

A social history of popular music, from the appearance of the gramophone in the nineteenth century to the laptop in the twenty-first. Topics will include changes in technology, historical dimensions of the production, distribution and consumption of popular music, as well as considerations of the emergence of new musical genres and related cultural politics including race, gender and sexuality.

## COURSE CONTENT

This course explores the role of technology in shaping popular music. Production, distribution and consumption will be addressed, as will race, gender and sexuality. This course will also take an historical approach to the uses of technology in relation to music, examining recording, studio spaces, hi-fi stereos and digitalisation.

## COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

- 1 Summarise key theories in relation to technology and popular music.
- 2 Apply key theories and concepts in the analysis of technology and popular music..
- 3 Formulate an argument around the relationship between technology and popular music.

## TEACHING FORMAT

The course delivery will consist of one weekly lecture (2 hours) and one weekly tutorial (1 hour). Tutorials are mandatory and will begin in Week Two.

## MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of at least 50%, students must:

- Submit all 6 pieces of assessment.
- Attend at least 7 tutorials (out of 9 total).

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

## WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20-point course is 200 hours over the trimester or 13 hours per teaching week.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLO(s)	Due date
1   Response Papers (40%): 4 X 600-750 words	40%	1,	Various Dates btwn Wks 3-10
2   Research Proposal (20%) 750-1000 words	20%	1, 2, 3	Friday, May 6 <sup>th</sup> @ 2 PM
3   Final Research Paper (40%) 2500-3000 words	40%	1, 2, 3	Monday, June 13 <sup>th</sup> @ 2 PM

There are three pieces of assessment for this course.

**1. Response Papers (40%): 4 X 600-750 words**

Short papers critically responding to four course readings, beginning Week Three and up to and including Week Ten. More details will be discussed in the first tutorial, in Week Two. Reports to be handed in the week the reading is scheduled, in tutorial. (Learning Objectives 1, 2, 4)

**2. Research Proposal (20%) 750-1000 words**

Outline of final research paper. Includes research question, object of study, key ideas and/or concepts being used and a rationale as to why they are being used, as well as a short bibliography (at least six entries). (Learning Objectives 1, 3, 4)

DUE DATE: Friday May 6th at 2.00pm

**3. Final Research Paper (40%) 2500-3000 words**

An in-depth examination of one key theme and building on the research proposal. The student should demonstrate an ability to critically engage with a specific issue discussed in the course, as well as an ability to analyse and argue coherently. (Learning Objectives 1, 3, 4)

DUE DATE: June 13<sup>th</sup>, at 2.00pm

NB: Further details and expectations regarding each piece of assessment will be handed out in class, posted on Blackboard, and discussed in lectures as well as tutorials.

### SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin. Follow the instructions provided in the "Assignments and Turnitin" section of Blackboard.

Hardcopy assignments are submitted in the drop slot outside the administration office: 83 Fairlie Terrace. Attach an assignment cover sheet found on Blackboard or outside the administration office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

Your marked assignment will be handed back by your tutor in tutorials or during their office hours. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of teaching. Assignments will be held in the administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the administration office.

### EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

#### Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Friday 24 June 2016**

#### Penalties

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

### SET TEXTS

MDIA 305 Student Notes

You can order student notes online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz).

### RECOMMENDED READING

Recommended readings are supplied in the student notes. Optional readings will be made available on Blackboard, under their respective weeks.

## CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

Student feedback on University courses may be found at

[www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php).

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at [www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)

- School website: [www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms)

**COURSE PROGRAMME**

Week 1	29 February	<p><b><u>Introduction: Getting Technical</u></b></p> <p>Th��berge, Paul. "Plugged In': Technology and Popular Music." <i>The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock</i>. Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street, Eds. London: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 3-25. Print.</p> <p>*OPTIONAL READING:          Bryan Pfaffenberger. "Fetishised Objects and Humanised Nature: Towards an Anthropology of Technology." <i>Man, New Series</i>. 23.2 (Jun., 1988): 236-252. Print.</p>
Week 2	7 March	<p><b><u>Early Recording Technologies and Techniques</u></b></p> <p>Chanan, Michael. "Record Culture." <i>Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and Its Effects on Music</i>. London: Verso, 1-22. Print.</p> <p>Lockheart, Paula. "A History of Early Microphone Singing, 1925-1939: American Mainstream Popular Singing at the Advent of Electronic Microphone Amplification." <i>Popular Music and Society</i>. 26.3 (2003): 367-385. Print.</p>
Week 3	14 March	<p><b><u>Spatializing Sound and the Emergence of the Studio</u></b></p> <p>Doyle, Peter. "Introduction." <i>Echo and Reverb: Fabricating Space in Popular Music Recording 1900-1961</i>. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press. 2005. 1-37. Print.</p> <p>Julien, Olivier. "The Diverting of Musical Technology by Rock Musicians: The Example of Double- Tracking." <i>Popular Music</i>. 18.3 (1999): 357-365. Print.</p> <p>Excerpts from <i>Les Paul: Chasing Sound</i> (John Paulson, 2007)</p>
Week 4	21 March	<p><b><u>Format Wars Part 1: 45 vs. 33 Pop vs. Rock</u></b></p> <p>Keightley, Keir. "Long Play: Adult-Oriented Popular Music and the Temporal Logics of the Post-War Sound Recording Industry in the USA." <i>Media, Culture &amp; Society</i> 26.3 (2004): 375-391. Print.</p>
<b>Easter Break:</b> Thursday 24 to Wednesday 30 March 2016		
Week 5	28 March	No Lecture
Week 6	4 April	<p><b><u>Noise, Distortion &amp; Volume</u></b></p> <p>Attali, Jacques. "Noise: The Political Economy of Music." <i>Sound Studies Reader</i>. Jonathan Sterne, Ed. Taylor and Francis: London, 2012. 29-39. Print.</p>

		<p>Ostburg, Jacob and Benjamin J. Hartmann. "The Electric Guitar: Marketplace Icon." <i>Consumption Markets &amp; Culture</i>. 18.5 (2015): 402-410.</p> <p>Devine, Kyle. "A Mysterious Music in the Air: Cultural Origins of the Loudspeaker." <i>Popular Music History</i>. 8.1 (2013): 5-28. Print.</p>
Week 7	11 April	<p><b><u>Avant-Garde Meets Pop: Theremin vs. Moog</u></b></p> <p>Hayward, Phil. "Danger! Retro-Affectivity: The Cultural Career of the Theremin." <i>Convergence</i>. 3 (1997): 28-53. Print.</p> <p>Pinch, Trevor. "Emulating Sound: What Synthesizers Can and Can't Do: Explorations in the Social Construction of Sound." Berlin: Akademie Verlag. 1-18. Print.</p> <p>*OPTIONAL READING: Taylor, Timothy D. "Postwar Music and the Technoscientific Imaginary." <i>Strange Sounds: Music, Technology and Culture</i>. New York: Routledge. 41-71. Print. Excerpts from <i>Theremin: An Electronic Odyssey</i> (Steven M. Martin, 1994) &amp; <i>Moog</i> (Hans Fjellestad, 2004).</p>
Week 8	18 April	<p><b><u>Die Mensch-Maschine</u></b></p> <p>Pattie, David. "Kraftwerk: Playing the Machines." <i>Kraftwerk: Music Non-Stop</i>. Sean Albiez and David Pattie, Eds. London: Continuum. 119-135. Print.</p> <p>Biddle, Ian. "Vox Electronica: Nostalgia, Irony and Cyborgian Vocalities in Kraftwerk's <i>Radioaktivität</i> and <i>Autobahn</i>." <i>Twentieth-Century Music</i>. 1.1 (2004): 81-100. Print.</p> <p>*OPTIONAL READING: Pattie, David. Introduction: The (Ger)man Machines." <i>Kraftwerk: Music Non-Stop</i>. Sean Albiez and David Pattie, Eds. London: Continuum. 1-12. Print.</p> <p>Excerpts from <i>Kraftwerk and the Electronic Revolution</i> (Director Unknown, 2008)</p>
<p><b>Mid-trimester Break:</b> Monday 25 April to Sunday 1 May</p>		
Week 9	2 May	<p><b><u>Sounding Out Race: Afrofuturism</u></b></p> <p>Weheylie, Alexander. "'Feenin': Posthuman Voices in Contemporary Black Popular Music." <i>Social Text</i> 71. 20.2 (Summer 2002): 21-47. Print.</p> <p>James, Robin. "'Robo-Diva R&amp;B': Aesthetics, Politics, and Black Female Robots in Contemporary Popular Music." <i>Journal of Popular Music Studies</i>. 20.4 (2009): 402-423.</p>

\*OPTIONAL READINGS:

Fisher, Mark. "The Metaphysics of Crackle: Afrofuturism and Hauntology." *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*. 5.2 (2013): 42-55. Print.

Rose, Tricia. "Soul Sonic Forces: Technology, Orality, and Black Cultural Practice in Rap Music." *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. New England: Wesleyan University Press. 1994. 62-98. Print.

Excerpts from *Sun Ra: Space is the Place* (John Coney, 1974)

**\*NB: RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE FRIDAY MAY 6<sup>TH</sup> @ 2 PM.**

Week 10 9 May

**Gender Matters**

Harasser, Karin. "Switched-On Vulnerability: Designability, Gender, and Technology with Laurie Anderson and Wendy Carlos." *Artists as Inventors, Inventors as Artists*. Dieter Daniels and Barbara U. Schmidt, Eds. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2008: 196-207.

Rodgers, Tara. "Toward a Feminist Historiography of Electronic Music." *Sound Studies Reader*. Jonathan Sterne, Ed. Taylor and Francis. London: 2012. 475-489. Print.

Week 11 16 May

**Voices: Queering the Pitch**

Dickinson, Kay. "'Believe'? Vocoders, Digitalised Female Identity and Camp." *Popular Music*. 20.3 (2001): 333-347. Print.

Cvejic, Zarko. "'Do You Nomi?' Klaus Nomi and the Politics of (Non)Identification." *Women and Music*. 13 (2009): 66-75. Print.

\*OPTIONAL READING:

Barthes, Roland. "The Grain of the Voice." *Image/Music/Text*. Fontana Press: London, 1977. 179-189. Print.

Excerpts from *The Nomi Song* (Andrew Horn, 2004)

Week 12 23 May

**Format Wars Part 2: Analog vs. Digital**

Fikentscher, Kai. "'There's Not a Problem I Can't Fix, 'Cause I Do It in the Mix': On the Performative Technology of 12-Inch Vinyl." *Music and Technoculture*. René T. A. Lysloff and Leslie C. Gay, Jr. (Eds). Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2003. 290-316. Print.

Sterne, Jonathan. "The Mp3 as Cultural Artifact." *New Media and Society*. 8.5 (2006): 825-842. Print.

Week 13 30 May

**The Cloud and Beyond**

Burkart, Patrick. "Music in the Cloud and the Digital Sublime." *Popular Music and Society*. 37.4 (2014): 393-407. Print.



Marshall, Lee. "Let's Keep Music Special. F—Spotify': On-Demand Streaming and the Controversy Over Artist Royalties." *Creative Industries Journal*. 8.2 (2015): 177-189. Print.

**\*NB: FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE, 13 JUNE @ 2.00 PM.**