

The Fab Four and the Stones: a 6-Week Music History Course with Pete Elman

Thursdays, 7:00 - 9:00pm at Rhythmix Cultural Works

January 6th - February 10th | Instructor: Pete Elman

How America surrendered to the advance guard of the British Invasion, weaponized by our own roots music.

Course Syllabus:

The following materials are suggested---not required--for this class:

Reading: This reading is not week-specific to the class; it is for the entire course.

Viewing: These are not week-specific to the class; they are for the entire course.

Listening: The albums listed here are week-specific, reflecting each period.

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Reading:

The Beatles Anthology, by the Beatles: Chronicle Books, 2000. This is a large hardback that is a must for every serious Beatle aficionado out there. It is “*The Beatles story, told for the first time, in their own words and pictures.*” It is comprehensive, and not that daunting to get through.

The Birth of the Beatles, by Sam Leach, Pharaoh Press, 1999.

[The Beatles: The Authorized Biography](#) by [Hunter Davies](#), Random House, 1968

Lennon remembers: by Rolling Stone magazine, the original interview, 1970: The complete text of the interview that Jann Wenner did with John and Yoko.

The Playboy Interview, John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Putnam, 1980----a decade later and right before his death, this is a fascinating insight into how John’s view of the band kept evolving.

The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions: The Official Story of the Abbey Road Years 1962-70, by Mark Lewisohn, Harmony Books, 1989: the definitive guide to every recording session done by the Beatles at EMI's Abbey Road recording studio

Symphony for the Devil, the Rolling Stones Story, by Philip Norman, Dell 1984

The True Adventures of the Rolling Stones, by Stanley Booth, Vintage, 1985

[Life by Keith Richards](#), W&N books, 2011

The Rolling Stones 50, by Mick Jagger, Hatchette, 2012

Viewing:

A Hard Day's Night, dir. by Richard Lester, 1964

The four complete Ed Sullivan Shows starring The Beatles, 1964

Help, directed by Richard Lester 1965

Magical Mystery Tour (TV film) directed by the Beatles, 1967

Yellow Submarine, directed by George Dunning, 1968.

Let it Be (contains rooftop concert), 1970, directed by Michael Lindsay-Hogg

The T.A.M.I. Show, dir. by Steve Binder, television special 1964

Born Under A Bad Sign, dist. By Silver and Gold, 1964. This documentary chronicles the early years of the Stones, 1962-66.1964

Charlie is my Darling, 1966, directed by Peter Whitehead, a fascinating documentary of the Stones 1965 Ireland tour

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Rolling Stones, dir. by Rollin Binzer, 1974

Gimme Shelter, dir. by the Albert and David Maysles, 1970

Shine a Light, dir. by Martin Scorsese, 2008

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Week-by-Week Class Outline, with accompanying suggested listening

Week 1: The early days, 1960-62: How a couple of groups of British kids found their dream without looking for it. London, Liverpool and Hamburg: importing r&b and rockabilly from the States. The Beatles emulate their heroes from across the pond: Elvis, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, and the Everlys. Germany beckons, as the nascent band pays its dues and hones their chops to a razor's edge playing midnight to 5AM in the Kaiserkeller and the Star Club. *"I grew up in Hamburg, not Liverpool,"* ... John Lennon. **London, May 1962;** Brian Jones, 20, the brilliant, blues and jazz-obsessed rebellious son of amateur musicians, puts an ad in *Jazz News*, and the Rolling Stones are formed. Within a few months, they are playing gigs.

Listening:

Beatles Anthology I; includes 5 songs from their 1962 15-song one-hour Decca audition, as well as live performances from the period 1958–1964.

Live at the Star-Club in Hamburg, Germany; 1962: includes *Long Tall Sally*, *Kansas City* and 5 Chuck Berry songs—*this is the real raw Beatles as cover band album!*

Here's Little Richard, (Specialty, 1957)

The Sun Sessions, Elvis Presley, 1954-55, (RCA Victor, 1976)

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Muddy Waters: "Hoochie Coochie Man," "I Just Want to Make Love to You," "I'm Ready."
"I'm a Man."

Howlin' Wolf: "Smokestack Lightnin'", "Back Door Man", "Killing Floor"

Stone Roots: the records that inspired the Rolling Stones 2012, Ideal Music

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Week 2: Watch out, world! The heady days of 1963: For the Fab Four—“Hey, we can write songs!” As for the Stones-- “you know, these guys just might be more than a great bar band”. How two really tight bands parlayed their respective images into record deals. Brian Epstein and Andrew Loog Oldham take a chance, and turn them into England’s heartthrobs.

Listening:

Please, Please Me, Parlophone, 1963: “the self-contained rock band, writing their own hits and playing their own instruments” Rolling Stone

I Wanna be Your Man, single, 1963 (written by Lennon-McCartney)

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Week 3: The insanity that was 1964 and “Mersey beaucoup!” The rock and roll band as a creative force; John and Paul realize that two heads are better than one; Mick and Keith start to write songs, Brian Jones experiments. Conquering America, one hit at a time. Battle lines are drawn; the pretty boys vs. the bad boys.

“...on tour that year (1964) it was crazy. Not within the band. In the band we were normal--the rest of the world was crazy.” ...George Harrison

Listening:

Introducing the Beatles, 1964/With many of the same songs on “*Please, Please Me*”

Meet the Beatles, 1964, Contains many of the same songs on “*With the Beatles*”

The Beatles’ Second Album, Capitol, 1964

A Hard Day’s Night, United Artists, 1964

Something New, Capitol, 1964

Beatles ’65, Capitol, 1964

The Rolling Stones, Decca 1964: Their debut album, all covers

12X5, London, 1964; 5 originals, 7 covers

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Week 4: Help! We Need Somebody, Because We Are Out of our Heads. Superstardom--

1965: A whole bunch of brilliant albums that will last forever—every cut a winner. The Stones continue to honor their idols, cutting two covers for every original, but finally breaking through with their artistic triumph, their first all-original record, recorded in America, while the Beatles surge into creative overdrive, deciding that they’re done with gigs, thus establishing themselves as the greatest studio band of all time, with help from George Martin.

Listening:

Beatles VI, Capitol 1965

Help, Capitol 1965

Rubber Soul, Capitol 1965

Yesterday and Today 1966

Out of Our Heads, Decca 1965; “the culmination of the Stones’ early soul/R&B sound” Rock and roll and soul merged, and this was the result.

December’s Children, London 1965

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Week 5: Prisoners of their own success 1966-67: The Beatles continue to write great songs and set up shop in the studio, creating classic albums at a breakneck pace, and eventually pay the

price; while the Stones make a great record, followed by a psychedelic bust, and then record their classic *Beggars Banquet*, signaling a return to roots rock, led by the ascent of Keith to the role of unquestioned leader.

Listening:

Revolver, Capitol 1966

Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, Capitol 1967

Aftermath, London, 1966: the Stones' first all-original album.

Between the Buttons Decca, 1967

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Week 6: The game changes: 1968-69. For one group, the long farewell; for the other, the long haul. The end was not pretty for the Beatles, hastened by the schism between John and Paul. As the Fab Four broke up, the Stones, now minus Brian Jones, asserted their dominance as the world's greatest rock and roll band through a quartet of masterpiece albums and unforgettable live shows. How their respective popularity drove them to great heights—and lowered them to awful depths...

“...as a band we were always tight...we could argue a lot, but we were very, very close to each other...” George Harrison

Listening:

The White Album, Apple, 1968

Abbey Road, Apple, 1969

Let It Be, Apple, 1970

Beggars Banquet, London, 1968

Let It Bleed, London, 1969