

The Golden Age of Rock 'n' Roll

Week 6, April 2, 2018

1957, Part 1: Jerry Lee, Buddy Holly, Everly Bros.

Assignment:

Testimony of Mae Axton in the Payola Hearings

<http://ruml.com/goldenage/pdfs/AxtonTestimony.pdf>

Listen to:

Come Go With Me, Del Vikings (first integrated group), 1957

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psOHQ-gfZ3I>

Interesting background at 7:06:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MP9WKLLZfyY>

Party Doll, Buddy Knox, 1957

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofkhZNWFr0M>

Little Darlin', Gladiolas (Maurice Williams), 1957 (#11 R&B)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c6mhFG5ISs8>

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Darlin%27

covered by The Diamonds, 1957 (#2 Pop)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCrpUsLd5kE>

50+ years later:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKfgin_EFos

All Shook Up, Elvis Presley, 1957

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNPTwk8NAYE>

written by Otis Blackwell; his demo recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-rr0PYeR7M>

by Dolly Parton as her idea of a “female Elvis”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JA3JfsD6s4Y>

Searchin’, Coasters, 1957 (#1 R&B, #3 Pop)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D38frYvUCvg>

flip side: **Young Blood**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRdRRn-bW4k>

Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Searchin%27>

Bye Bye Love, Everly Brothers, 1957 (#1 Pop, #1 Country)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRyrWN-fftE>

live: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUoN50lkRi4>

Whole Lot of Shakin’ Goin’ On, Jerry Lee Lewis, 1957

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Rl4ZxPR3EE>

live on the Steve Allen Show (1957):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fw7SBF-35Es>

with the E Street Band (1995)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olkLoobwp_s

Teddy Bear, Elvis Presley, 1957

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89MihWd6zKk>

Diana, Paul Anka, 1957 (#1 Pop)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83AA3CW9ago>

Long Lonely Nights, Lee Andrews and the Hearts, 1957

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L54kAAsEDhg>

That'll Be the Day, Crickets (Buddy Holly), 1957

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rk6YDzmqZ0I>

on the Ed Sullivan Show (not lip-synched,1957)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVGM86XIilw>

Extra Songs:

It's Not For Me To Say, Johnny Mathis

Lucille, Little Richard

Love Letters in the Sand, Pat Boone

Over the Mountain, Johnnie and Joe

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Some notes (to be discussed in class):

THE SECOND WAVE

-Impact of American Bandstand in molding a national market.

-In August 1957 Bandstand debuted as the first national media entity to play hit RnR recordings simultaneously nationwide. Dick Clark became an important arbiter of airplay.

-Elvis' emergence as a white superstar singing black music opened the way for white radio stations, reluctant to play black performers, to get on the booming new music wave.

-This led to the search for the next Elvis, a white performer who sounded black and could build upon Elvis' success.

Jerry Lee Lewis

- One of the classic early bad boys of Rock n Roll, His act was pure energy.
- Born in Ferriday, Louisiana in 1935.
- First cousins Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swaggart.
- His mother enrolled him in The Southwest Bible Institute in Waxahachie, Tx.
- He was expelled for playing a boogie-woogie version of "My God Is Real".
- First contract was with Sun Records in 1956.
- Was the first big star of Rockabilly to play piano. In the wake of his success many others began to include the instrument in their recordings. His boogie-woogie piano style has influenced Rock n Roll pianists ever since.
- In addition to recording he served as a backup player for Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash.
- First hit was Crazy Arms, a regional C&W hit in 1956
- Then hit big nationally in 1957 with "Whole Lotta Shaking Going On" and "Great Balls of Fire"
 - Tell story of his recording Great Balls recording.
- While playing as a session musician in late 1956 for Carl Perkins, Elvis Presley and Johnny Cash (also Sun Record performers) joined Jerry Lee and Carl to record an impromptu jam , which was caught on tape, cleaned up and released many years later (in 1981) as an album entitled "The Million Dollar Quartet".
- In 1958 while on tour in England the news broke that the 22 year old Lewis had married his third wife, Myra Gale Brown, who was his 13 year old cousin, once removed.
https://youtu.be/P_0_nXbmAhM Interview with Jerry Lee and Myra
- He was booed at his first three concerts and cancelled the balance of the tour.
- When he returned to the States many disk jockeys refused to play his records.

-He continued to record, but his career remained in eclipse till he launched a comeback as a C&W in 1968.

-He became the most bankable performer in Country.

-His RnR career revived as a regular performer with Oldies revival shows. In 1976, Lewis was famously arrested outside Elvis Presley's Graceland home for allegedly intending to shoot him. Lewis had already nearly killed his bass player, Butch Owens, on September 29 (Lewis's 41st birthday) when a .357 accidentally went off in his hand. In Rick Bragg's 2014 authorized biography, *Jerry Lee Lewis: His Own Story*, Lewis explains that the reclusive Presley had been trying to reach him and finally did on November 23, imploring him to "come out to the house." Lewis replied that he would if he had time but that he was busy trying to get his father, Elmo, out of jail in Tunica, for driving under the influence. Later that night, Lewis was at a Memphis nightclub called Vapors drinking champagne when he was given a gun. "Charles Feron, he owned Vapors, he give it to me," Lewis explained to Bragg. "A .38 derringer. Me, pretty well drunk, with that derringer – it ain't somethin' 'strange'." Lewis suddenly remembered that Elvis wanted to see him and, climbing aboard his new Lincoln Continental with the loaded pistol on the dash and a bottle of champagne under his arm, tore off for Graceland. Just before three o'clock in the morning, Lewis accidentally smashed into the famous Graceland gates because "the nose of that Lincoln was a mile long." Presley's astonished cousin Harold Lloyd was manning the gate and watched Lewis attempt to hurl the champagne bottle through the car window, not realizing it was rolled up, smashing both. Bragg reports that Lewis denies ever intending to do Presley harm, that the two were friends, but "Elvis, watching on the closed-circuit television, told guards to call the police. The Memphis police found the gun in the car and put Lewis, protesting, hollering, threatening them, away in handcuffs." Lewis said, "The cops asked Elvis, 'What do you want us to do? And Elvis told 'em, 'Lock him up.' That hurt my feelings. To be scared of me – knowin' me the way he did – was ridiculous." Lewis was charged with carrying a pistol and public drunkenness. Released on a \$250 bond, his defiant mug shot was wired around the world

BUDDY HOLLY

Born in Lubbock, Texas in 1936.

- Brief and undistinguished stint with Decca Records in 1956.
- Career breakthrough began with studio owner Norman Petty in 1956.
- Released "That'll Be the Day" May 1957
- American Bandstand August 1957
- Ed Sullivan Show December 1957
- Fired manager Norman Petty when he discovered that he had been withholding payments to Holly, but continued to record in his Clovis, NM studio till 1958
- February 2, 1958 died in a plane crash while on tour with Richie Valens, and The Big Bopper.
- Had a short, but brilliant career as a writer, performer and innovator.
- pioneered and popularized the now-standard" use of two guitars, bass, and drums by rock bands.
- Early Rock n Roll adopter of overdubbing and reverb.
 - Everyday
 - It's So Easy
 - Love's Made a Fool of You
 - Maybe Baby
 - Not Fade Away <https://youtu.be/NN2L84dvoag>
 - Peggy Sue
 - That'll Be The Day
 - True Love Ways

Jackie Wilson

- Discovered by Johnny Otis
 - Dropped out of school at 15, having already served two terms in Juvenile Detention Center in Lansing, MI where he learned (sort of) how to box. His record in the Golden Gloves was 2-8.
 - Before his discovery Wilson sang informally with other young Black kids in Detroit in a group which included his cousin, Levi Stubbs, later of the Four Tops. The group eventually emerged as The Falcons (Wilson Pickett).
 - Hired by Billy Ward in 1953 to replace Clyde McPhatter as lead singer with the Dominoes.
 - Left the Dominoes in 1957 to begin solo career.
 - Became an enthusiastic admirer and friend of Elvis. Was influenced by Al Jolson!!!
 - Recorded hits with:
 - "Reet Petite" in 1957
 - "Lonely Teardrops", "To Be Loved", "Lonely Teardrops" and "I'm Wandering" in 1958
 - "That is Why I Love You So", "I'll Be Satisfied" and "You Better Know It" in 1959
 - A young Berry Gordy was co-writer on all the hits above, in various combinations with Wilson, his sister Gwen Berry and Tyran Carlo.
 - Wilson was an extremely athletic showman with a four octave range.
 - Berry Gordy called him the standard by which all his singers were judged.
- Lonely Teardrops/That's Why I Love You So
live on Ed Sullivan
https://youtu.be/flAvJe9A_Bo

Sam Cooke

- Born 1931, Clarksdale, Mississippi
- Family moved to Chicago in 1933

- By age 14 joined the Highway QC's, became lead singer.
- Replaced R.H. Harris as lead singer of the Soul Stirrers in 1951.
- 1956 Cooke recorded his first secular record, but under alias "Dale Cooke" to prevent alienating his Gospel fans.
- By 1957 he left Specialty Records, which was pushing him to record in the style of Little Richard, another Specialty artist.
- 1958 signed with Keen Records and released "You Send Me".

<https://youtu.be/mrwfB4aAZZc>

- By 1961 Cooke founded his own record and publishing companies.

-Shot to death by the desk clerk at a motel in Los Angeles. December 11, 1964.

-Was a seminal figure in the development of soul music.

-Influenced generations of singers.

-Writer, singer, entrepreneur (SAR Records)

- Ain't That Good News

- Another Saturday Night

- Bring it on Home To Me

<https://youtu.be/gZB4jcPmFGo>

- Chain Gang

- A Change Is Gonna Come

- Cupid

- Having a Party

- Only Sixteen

- Shake

- Twistin' the Night Away

- Wonderful World

- You Send Me

The Everly Brothers

-Phil and Don Everly were in a long, great tradition of singing country brother duo acts.

-The Louvin Brothers, The Delmore Brothers, The Blue Sky Boys (Bill and Earl Bolick), The Monroe Brothers, The Stanley Brothers and Dr. Joyce Brothers.

-Their sweet, tight harmonies set a standard for pop groups which followed.

-Discovered by Chet Atkins of RCA in Nashville, they signed a recording contract with Cadence Records. Released "Bye, Bye Love" in 1957.

-"Bye Bye Love" began a partnership with Felice and Boudleaux Bryant.

-All I Have To Do

-Bird Dog

-Devoted to You

-Poor Jenny

-Problems

-Wake Up Little Susie

-All I Have To Do is Dream

<https://youtu.be/1TYe9eDqxe8>

CATHY'S CLOWN (Clown was written by Don Everly

-Their drug use and personal difficulties led to a spectacular breakup of the act in the middle of a concert at Knott's Berry Farm in 1973.

-They resumed touring together after a ten year hiatus.

The Drifters

-When Clyde McPhatter quit Billy Ward and the Dominoes in 1953 he was immediately signed by Atlantic Records

-Ahmet Ertegun wanted him to front a new vocal ensemble which was named The Drifters.

- McPhatter wanted to blend Gospel with pop music and recruited members of his church choir.
 - Following his experience of working for short money with Billy Ward's Dominoes McPhatter demanded an expanded percentage of the group's earnings.
 - Early recording session didn't work well, so he recruited another group of Gospel performers who gelled in producing "Money Honey" in 1953, which solidified them as a star group.
 - Followed with hits "Such a Night" and "Honey Love" and a version of "White Christmas".
- Such a Night, 1953
<https://youtu.be/hbI5KRYfkho>
- In March 1954 McPhatter was drafted, and thus spent only one year with the group.
 - When he left, he sold his half share of the group to manager George Treadwell, who now owned the group outright.
 - Treadwell was from the same mold as Billy Ward, ruling over the group's finances stingily and frequently replacing personnel as they became disenchanted with low wages.
 - The group experienced modest success until scoring with "Ruby Baby" in 1955, with Johnny Moore as new lead singer.
- Ruby Baby, 1955
https://youtu.be/QdC9S90-D_0
- Kaleidoscopic changes in personnel yielded only one other big hit, "Fools Fall In Love", with Moore singing lead in 1957.
 - In 1958 Treadwell fired the entire group, and hired an existing group, The Five Crowns and introduced them on tour as "The Drifters".
 - Ben E. King was a member, as was Charlie Thomas.
 - The group toured singing the prior Drifters' material, and were often poorly received by fans expecting their performance to sound like their predecessors.

-When Atlantic decided to record this new group for the first time they turned production over to staff producers and writers Leiber and Stoller, who had been very successful in working with The Coasters.

-Beginning in 1959 the group had successive hits with "There Goes My Baby" (Ben E. King), "This Magic Moment" (Ben E. King), "Sweets for my Sweet" (lead: Charlie Thomas) and "Save The Last Dance For Me" (Ben E. King).

Save the Last Dance For Me 1960

<https://youtu.be/n-XQ26KePUQ>

-King left the group in 1960 in a dispute over money and went solo, recording hits with "Stand By Me", "Spanish Harlem" and "Don't Play That Song (You Lied)".

-Was replaced as lead singer by Rudy Lewis, who sang lead on "Some Kind of Wonderful", "Up On The Roof" and "On Broadway".

-On Lewis' death in 1964 he was replaced as lead singer by Johnny Moore (previously with the group which was fired by George Treadwell in 1958) who recorded "Under the Boardwalk".

- "The Drifters" also spawned two groups led by former members (Bill Pinckney's Original Drifters and Charlie Thomas's Drifters).

-In all of their incarnations eventually have included 65 various singers and continue to perform up to the present.