Facilitating Discovery of Historic Sound Recordings: Classroom and Research Strategies

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Facilitating Discovery of Historic Sound Recordings: Classroom and Research Strategies

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IAML-IMS JOINT CONGRESS, NEW YORK, NY, JUNE 23, 2015
TRF 530  Radio, Musics, and Audio Cultures

Objective: to teach communications and audio arts students about music’s dissemination through radio and audio cultures today

Communication students:
- strong musical interests, but no formal musical training
- little or no experience with audio recording or audio editing
Soundscape No. 1

- Illustrate some aspect of music or sound in the world today using the sounds from recordings of nearly a century ago.
- Focus on 2+ pre-1940 recordings.
- Prepare a script, including researched information and original thoughts.
- Learn to use a recording studio to record voice-over narrative.
- Create a 2-3 minute audio essay. Submissions include a “time-chart” and a resource list with full citations.
Belfer Cylinders Digital Connection

http://library.syr.edu/splash/cylinders/

ABOUT

The Belfer Cylinders Digital Connection provides online access to digital audio files of cylinders in the Belfer Audio Archive. Belfer's cylinder collection includes over 22,000 cylinders, 12,000 of which are unique titles.

With initial funding from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, Syracuse University Libraries have been able to digitize over 1,400 cylinders. Work is ongoing, so please check back regularly for newly added titles.

The digital recordings, provided in both MP3 and WAV formats, are part of the Library's efforts to preserve and make available this important historical resource. For more information, visit the Belfer Cylinder Archive.

ADVANCED SEARCH

By Subject / Genre...
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Accordion and piano music
Accordion music
Agriculture
Aircraft accidents
Airplanes
American wit and humor
Animals
Argentina
Arrangements
Australia
Automobiles
Balalaika music
Ballads
Ballets
Ballets, Excerpts
Ballets, Excerpts, Arranged
Band music
Band music, Arranged

American wit and humor

BROWSE
Guide for researching sound recordings

**Using this Guide**

The guide is organized into the following set of pages, able to be navigated using the tabs above.

- **Writing for Sound Beat** features information from Sound Beat producer Jim O'Connor, including example Sound Beat episodes and date tools for choosing themed episodes.
- **Artist Biographies & Discographies** features links to both print and online reference sources for performer biographies.
- **Historical Research** features links to selected library databases as well as some background on the history of recorded sound.
- **Lyrics and Lyric Notes** provides links to many useful free historic sheet music collections online as well as instructions for locating recordings and liner notes in SU Libraries' circulating collections.

**Audio Selections**

Explore the Belfer Digital Cylinders Collection
Soundscape No. 2

Illustrate some aspect of music dissemination via radio as it occurred and achieved influence during war

- Focus on 3+ sound tracks, one of which is derived from radio
- Research the topic and the music, consulting as many authoritative, signed resources as unsigned resources
- Conduct an oral history interview with a veteran
- Prepare a script, including researched information and original thoughts
- Create a 5 minute audio essay. Submissions include a “time-chart” and a resource list with full citations.
TRF 530 - Radio, Music, and Audio Cultures, Spring 2015

About This Guide

This guide provides both library and free internet resources for researching music and sound recordings for Soundscape No. 2.

Library research is a wide, wonderful, and overwhelming experience, so have fun! If you find a cool resource that you want to share with others, leave it in the comments below, and I will add it to the guide.

Research well, and if you have questions, ask me!

-Rachel rsfoxvon@syr.edu

Music During Wars: Selected Books

The Vietnam War: Its History, Literature and Music - Kenton J. Clymer (Editor)
Call Number: DS557.3 .V53 1998
ISBN: 0780874042771
Publication Date: 1999-01-01

The Songs That Fought the War: Popular Music and the Home Front, 1939-1945 - John Bush Jones
Call Number: ML3477 .J68 2006
ISBN: 9781564564438
Publication Date: 2006-06-30

Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War - Jonathan Pieslak
Call Number: ML3477 .P54 2009
ISBN: 0780265363238
Publication Date: 2009-04-01
Activity-Based Library Guide Tabs

- Selecting Music
- Understanding Music Genres
- Researching Musicians
- Researching People, Events, and Wars
- Researching Radio Shows & Playlists
Instructional Goals

- Demonstrate tools for browsing and discovering unfamiliar music
- Familiarize students with how to research a piece of music
- Introduce sources for researching popular culture, history, and radio
Source Selection

- Quality of content
- Online availability
- Breadth of coverage
- Accessible to non-musicians
Websites, Charts, Discographies
Websites, Charts, Discographies

Black Recording Artists, 1877–1926
An Annotated Discography
Compiled by CRAIG MARTIN GIBBS
Copyrighted Material

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

Discogs™
Music Reference

- Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World
- Oxford Music Online
- The Grove Dictionary of American Music
Article Indexes

- Music: IIIMP, RILM
- American History & Life Full Text
- Communication Source
- ProQuest Newspaper Archive
- Popular Journalism:
  - Entertainment Industry Magazine Archive
  - Rock’s Backpages
What the students produced …

- Five students interviewed veterans of the Vietnam War
  - music: Jimi Hendrix and Bob Dylan
    - The Guess Who and Creedence Clearwater Revival
    - Bobby Bare and The Beatles
    - Marvin Gaye and Dion
    - Country Joe & the Fish and The Hollies

- One student focused on World War II
  - music: Doris Day, Vera Lynn, Dinah Shore, and Bing Crosby

- One student focused on a period between wars
  - music: Run DMC, and Common and John Legend
Soundscape No. 2

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- Conduct an oral history interview with a veteran.
- Create a 5 minute audio essay.

Soundscape No. 2 (excerpt)
by Jordan Robinson
Assessing Source Use

- Student feedback session
- Review of both soundscapes, including sources cited
Websites, Charts, Discographies

- All tools were used ... plus others
- Combined multiple approaches
- YouTube recommended videos
- Unexpected use of music journalism

[Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org), [Discogs](https://www.discogs.com), [Billboard](https://www.billboard.com)
Music Reference

- Soundscape 1? Yes
- Soundscape 2? Not as much
- Used music titles within Credo Reference
Article Indexes

- Not used:
  - Scholarly journal indexes in all disciplines
  - Newspaper indexes

- Used somewhat:
  - Entertainment Industry Magazine Archive
Other Sources

- Used heavily:
  - Credo Reference
  - Pre-filled library catalog searches

- Not used:
  - Radio logs and lists
Sources for Next Time

- More online browsing by theme
- Curated list of websites for spoken word recordings
- Online dictionary of music terms
Questions?

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