Facilitating Discovery of Historic Sound Recordings: Classroom and Research Strategies

JENNY DOCTOR
DIRECTOR OF THE BELFER AUDIO ARCHIVE, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, NEWHOUSE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

RACHEL FOX VON SWEARINGEN
SUBJECT LIBRARIAN FOR MUSIC, DANCE & MUSICAL THEATER, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

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Belfer Audio Archive

Diane and Arthur B. Belfer Audio Laboratory and Archive
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 Krible 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, include a variety of genres such as 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.
Guide for researching sound recordings

Sound Beat Class Partnership

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 Liner 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

Music Librarian
Rachel Fox von Swearingen
Contact Info
Bird Library, second floor, room 200
315.443-9779
rfoxvon@syr.edu
Send Email
Links:
Profile & Guides
Subjects:
Dance, Music, Musical Theater
Comments (0)
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

Comments (0)

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: 978156666438
Publication Date: 2006-06-30

Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War - Jonathan Pieslak
Call Number: ML3477 .P54 2009
ISBN: 078025363238
Publication Date: 2009-04-01

Ask Your Librarian!

Rachel Fox Von Swearingen

Contact Info
Bird Library, second floor, room 200
315-443-3776
rsfoxvon@syr.edu
Send Email

Links:
Profile & Guides

Subjects:
Dance, Music, Musical Theater
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
Radio Sources


Mitchell E. Shapiro

AmericanRadioHistory.com

Three million pages of AM FM & TV Broadcasting history online
Article Indexes

- Music: IIMP, 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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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
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?

- Jenny Doctor
  jrddoctor@syr.edu

- Rachel Fox Von Swearingen
  rsfoxvon@syr.edu