This class explores the many varieties of folk, popular, and art music in American culture. We will focus on the stylistic development of select repertoires beginning with 18th century New England Psalm singing and African American traditions and continuing on through folk, jazz, art, pop, rock, and hip hop music. Throughout the course, music serves as a lens to examine diverse aspects of American culture and history with an emphasis on America’s shifting definition of identity. This course will consider American society’s evolving relationship with music; analyze the adaptation and borrowing between different musical genres; investigate the impact of current music business practices; and account for the evolving relationship between technology and the music industry. Through class discussions, reading, writing, and listening assignments, and concert attendance, this course will help students better understand the culture, politics, and economics that make up the world of American music.

Texts:
Aaron Cohen, *Amazing Grace* (Continuum, 2011)
Supplementary readings are posted on Latte

Learning Goals:
- Understand the stylistic development of American music from the 17th century to the present.
- Recognize the culture, politics, and economics that make up the world of American music.
- Explore America’s evolving relationship with music aesthetically, industrially, and technologically.
- Improve ability to communicate written and verbal responses to both musical and cultural topics.

Grading and Course Requirements:

**Minimum Course Requirements:** 1) a midterm exam 2) a final exam 3) program notes (3-4 pages) 4) podcast/video essay 5) Lead two class discussions 6) reading discussion participation and 7) active awareness and participation in class and all assignments.

**Midterm and Final Exams: 40% Total**

**Midterm: 20%**
The midterm examination will cover material presented from the first half of the course. It will assess your knowledge, comprehension, and retention of the course material presented in class and in assignments. The test is taken in class and you will have the entire course period to complete it. Please contact me within the first two weeks of the course if you have special needs regarding testing. **No early or make-up exams will be given.** If exceptional circumstances arise that force you to miss the midterm exam, please contact me **prior** to the start of the scheduled exam.
Final: 20%
Your final examination follows the same format as the midterm and will cover material from the last half of the course (i.e. material covered after the midterm examination) and will also include some cumulative questions. The exam will take place at the end of the semester and will assess your knowledge, comprehension, and retention of the course material presented in class and in assignments. **No early or make-up exams will be given.** If exceptional circumstances arise that force you to miss the final exam, please contact me prior to the start of the scheduled exam.

Program Notes: 15%
Program notes are an important means of communication that help enhance the audiences’ enjoyment and understanding of a musical performance. For this assignment, you will program 60 minutes worth of American music, from the genre of your choosing. You will decide upon the performance order and provide thorough notes on the music and composers. To ensure an enjoyable concert experience for the audience, give careful consideration to the musical and textual (if applicable) themes, the cultural and historical background, the tempo, and the length of pieces when making these decisions.

When composing your notes, provide background information on the composer(s) (nationality, birth/death dates, other compositions, additional interesting career/personal information), the context of the composition (where/why was the music composed), important social/cultural/historical events, and specific information about the compositions including melody, harmony, texture, form, tempo, instrumentation, etc. Please remember that you are writing for a concert-going audience familiar with music; your job is to provide information so that they better understand and appreciate each piece. Excellent writing skills with no grammatical errors, typos, etc. are essential to successfully communicate your message to the reader.

Your program notes should be submitted via LATTE, 3-4 pages in length (if you need more space, that’s fine!), typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. Your last name and a page number should occupy the header or footer of each page after the first. All citations must be in either MLA or Chicago format.

There are three due dates for this assignment, which are listed in the syllabus. For the first assignment, please upload to LATTE the theme of your concert and which musical selections you will program. For the second assignment, please upload a word file (or Google doc) that outlines the structure of your program notes, main ideas, composers etc. For the third assignment, please upload your final copy.

If you submit your program notes late, your grade will be deducted 1/3 of a letter each day (i.e. if you submit an “A” paper two days late, your grade will drop from A to B+).

Podcast or Video Essay: 20%
This assignment involves creating a 10-minute podcast or video that analyzes a piece of your choice, and presents an interpretive argument. In this project, you will analyze how musical, historical, cultural, economic, and/or technological aspects impact the composition, performance, and reception of the piece. As you learn about and analyze the work, you might find it helpful to approach it from a variety of perspectives: social/cultural, stylistic, historical etc. Build upon this analysis by interpreting the work. Ask yourself: How does the piece relate to or depict a specific historical event? How does it present or depict places or spaces? What emotions does this piece evoke and why? Feel free to generate your own questions as well – let your analysis guide you. This project involves both peer review and a final presentation at the end of the semester. Greater details provided later in the semester.
Lead Class Discussion: 10%
Each week one or two students will lead our class discussion on the day’s assigned readings. The student(s) will present an overview of each reading’s main arguments, propose relevant and thought-provoking discussion questions, and guide the class dialogue for 15–20 minutes. Each student will lead two class discussions.

Reading Responses: 10%
Completing readings prior to each class is expected of all students. Before class by 9:00 a.m., please post one question, criticism, OR point of interest for each reading assigned on the Latte discussion board. This is required for every class with an assigned reading.

Class Participation and Attendance: 5%
Classroom discussion is a key component in this course; therefore, please attend class regularly, arrive on time, complete the appropriate assignments, and actively participate in the discussions and lectures. I do not post my lecture slides online. Be sure to take good notes.

Attendance is taken at every class. If you need to miss class due to illness, a family emergency, or for religious observances, you must contact me beforehand via e-mail or make prior arrangements with me in class. More than three absences will adversely affect your final grade; every absence following your first three will drop your grade by 1/3 (A to A-). If you arrive more than ten minutes after the beginning of class, it will count as an unexcused absence.

Grading Policy:
Your grade is contingent on the completion of the following parts of this course:
- Midterm: 20%
- Final: 20%
- Program Notes: 15%
- Podcast or Video Essay: 20%
- Class Discussion: 10%
- Reading Responses 10%
- Class Participation and Attendance: 5%

Laptops:
Please leave your laptops in your bags or at home for this class. They are distracting not only for you, but for others around you. If you feel that your learning will be hampered by not having access to your laptop for note-taking or other legitimate purposes, please speak to me.
Academic Integrity:
In an academic setting it is critical that the work you present is original, and that when you use outside sources, you cite them appropriately. This course is no different. The Brandeis policy on academic integrity is available in Section 3 of the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (available at http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/rr/). Faculty will refer any suspected instances of alleged dishonesty to the Office of Student Development and Conduct. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in sanctions including but not limited to failure on the assignment in question, failure in the course, or suspension from the University and/or educational programs. If you have any questions or concerns about citation, plagiarism, or academic standards of originality, please ask; I am happy to discuss them with you. It is always better to ask if you are not sure about quoting, citing, or referring to another person’s work.

Disabilities:
If you are a student who requires academic accommodations because of a documented disability, please contact me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as possible. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting academic accommodations, please contact Beth Rodgers-Kay in Academic Services (x63470 or brodgers@brandeis.edu) Letters of accommodation should be presented at the start of the semester to ensure provision of accommodations, and absolutely before the day of an exam or test. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively.

Four-Credit Course (with three hours of class-time per week):
Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).

Course Schedule

**Syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Students are responsible for making note of any schedule or assignment changes announced in class, even when they are absent.**

- **9/1: Introduction – An Overview of the Semester**
- **9/5: Psalm Singing in America**
  - Readings: “Colonial Nationalism in the Music of William Billings” from The Choral Journal By Joshua Armenta. (Latte)
  - "Ye Sons of Harmony": Politics, Masculinity, and the Music of William Billings in Revolutionary Boston.” From The William and Mary Quarterly by Elizabeth Christ. (Latte)
  - From the Preface of the First Edition of the Bay Psalm Book. Tick, 11-15
  - Listening: On Latte
- **9/8: Secular Music in the New World**
  - Readings: “The First Hundred Years of the American Lyric Theater” in American Music. By Julian Mates. (Latte)
  - “Early American Military Music” in American Music. By Warren P. Howe (Latte)
  - Turn of the Century Theater Songs. Tick, 78-84
  - Listening: On Latte
- **9/12: African Music in Early America – Maintaining an Oral Tradition**
- "Black Spirituals: Their Emergence into Public Knowledge" from *Black Music Research Journal* by Dena J. Epstein (Latte)
- **Listening:** On Latte

- **9/15: Blackface Minstrelsy – Early Minstrel Shows**
  - **Readings:** "Same Script, Different Actors" in *Ring Shout, Wheel About* by Katrina Doyonne Thompson
  - Thomas D. Rice Acts Out Jim Crow and Cuff, Tick 107
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **9/19: America’s First Popstar – Stephen Foster**
  - **Readings:** "Sound and Sentimentality: Nostalgia in the Songs of Stephen Foster" from *American Music* by Susan Key Read to page 157 – Stop at First Paragraph Break
    (Latte)
  - "Stephen Foster and American Popular Culture" in *American Music* by Ken Emerson
  - Edwin P. Christy, Stephen Foster, and “Ethiopian Minstrelsy” Tick, 118-120
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **9/22 Rosh Hashanah – No Class**

- **9/26: Stars and Strips and John Philip Sousa**
  - **Readings:** John Philip Sousa's El Capitan: Political Appropriation and the Spanish-American War from *American Music* by Carol A. Hess
  - “The March as Musical Drama and the Spectacle of John Philip Sousa” in *Journal of American Musicological Society* by Patrick Warfield
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **9/29: Scott Joplin and Ragtime**
  - **Readings:** “Scott Joplin, Pioneer” from *The Black Perspective in Music* by Addison W. Reed (Latte)
  - “Scott Joplin and the Quest for Identity” from *Journal of Aesthetic Education* by Earl Stewart and Jane Duran
  - Scott Joplin, Ragtime Visionary: (Scott Joplin, Lottie Joplin). Tick, 366
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **10/3: The Standard Songs of Tin Pan Alley**
  - ***Please upload your program notes theme and musical selections on LATTE***
  - **Readings:** “Creating Desire on Tin Pan Alley” from *The Musical Quarterly* by Daniel Goldmark (Latte)
  - “Tin Pan Alley” (Latte)
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **10/6: Brandeis Thursday – No Class**
• 10/10: The Rise of Classical Music – A Search for Nationalism
  o ***Please upload a document on LATTE that outlines the structure of your program notes, main ideas, composers etc.***
  o **Readings:** “The Search for Identity in American Music, 1890-1920” from *American Music* by Alan Howard Levy (Latte)
  o “Bernstein's Senior Thesis At Harvard: The Roots of a Lifelong Search to Discover an American Identity” by Geoffrey Block (Latte)
  o **Listening:** On Latte

• 10/13: Singing the Blues in Twelve Bars
  o ***Program Notes DUE TODAY***
  o **Readings:** “The Blues Tradition in St. Louis” *Black Music Research Journal* by Harriet Ottenheimer (Latte)
  o “A Sense of Community: Blues Music as Primer for Urbanization” *Don’t Deny My Name: Words and Music and the Black Intellectual Tradition* by Lorenzo Thomas (Latte)
  o Bessie Smith, Artist and Blues Singer, Tick 399-403
  o **Listening:** On Latte

• 10/17: Jazz Beginnings
  o **Readings:** “The Word Jazz” in *The Cambridge Companion to Jazz* by Krin Gabbard (Latte)
  o **Screening:** *Jazz Part 2. The Gift (1917-1929)* Ken Burns Documentary

• 10/20: Mid Term

• 10/24: The Swing Era
  o **Readings:** “Swing” *Concise Guide to Jazz* by Mark C. Gridley (Latte)
  o The Marketing of Duke Ellington: Selling the Strategy for an African American Maestro (Latte)
  o Duke Ellington on Swing as a Way of Life, Tick 532-537
  o **Listening:** On Latte
  o **Screening:** *Jazz Part 5. Swing: Pure Pleasure (1935-1937)* Ken Burns Documentary

• 10/27: WWII and Post War Music
  o **Readings:** “War Songs in Boy Girl Terms” *God Bless America* by Kathleen E.R. Smith (Latte)
  o “Yearnful Bellowings” *God Bless America* by Kathleen E.R. Smith (Latte)
  o **Listening:** On Latte

• 10/31: Rock ‘n’ Roll – Music in the 1950s Part 1
  o **Readings:** “Shifting Currents in the Mainstream” Sections 1, 2, and 3. *I Don’t Sound Like Nobody* by Albin J. Zak (Latte)
  o “Sexual Politics and African-American Music; Or, Placing Little Richard in History” in *History Workshop Journal* by Marybeth Hamilton
  o Elvis Presley in the Eye of a Musical Twister, Tick 580-587
- **Listening:** On Latte

- **11/3: Rock ‘n’ Roll – Music in the 1950s Part 2**
  - **Readings:** “Ideology, Trajectory & Stardom: Elvis Presley & The Beatles” in *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* by Ian Inglis
  - “His Name Was in Lights: Chuck Berry's ‘Johnny B. Goode’” in *Popular Music* by Timothy Taylor
  - Chuck Berry in His Own Words, Tick 588-592
  - **Screening:** Get on Up!

- **11/7: American Pop of the 1960s**
  - **Readings:** “Selling an Image: Girl Groups of the 1960s” *Popular Music* by Cynthia J. Cyrus
  - “Sources of American Styles in the Music of the Beatles” *American Music* Charles Gower Price
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **11/10: Urban Folk and Soul of the 1960s Part 1**
  - ***Please upload podcast/video essay thesis statement to LATTE today!***
  - **Readings:** “Roadmaps for the Soul” History and Cartography in Bob Dylan’s Early Songs by Mark Sutton in *Australian Journal of American Studies*
  - Motown Crossover Hits 1963-1966 and the Creative Process by Jon Fitzgerald in *Popular Music*
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **11/14: Urban Folk and Soul of the 1960s Part 2**
  - **Readings:** *Amazing Grace* by Aaron Cohen
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **11/17: From Disco to Punk – Music in the 1970s**
  - **Readings:** “‘I Will Survive’: Musical Mappings of Queer Social Space in a Disco Anthem” *Popular Music* by Nadine Hubbs (Latte)
  - “How You Like Me Now? Rap and the Legacy of the Black Artists Movement” From *Don’t Deny Me My Name* by Lorenzo Thomas
  - **Listening:** On Latte

- **11/21: I want my MTV – Music in the 1980s**
  - ***Please upload outline of project to LATTE and exchange with peer-review partner today!***
  - **Readings:** “The Beastie Boys - Jews in Whiteface” *Popular Music* by Jon Stratton (Latte)
  - **Listening:** On Latte – Be prepared to discuss music videos in class.
• 11/28: “Smells like Teen Spirit” – Music from the 1990s to today
  o ***Be prepared to discuss peer review comments with partner today!***
  o “From Civil Rights to Hip Hop: Toward a Nexus of Ideas” in *The Journal of African American History* by Derrick P. Alridge (Latte)
  o Listening: On Latte

• 12/1: Songs from the South – Country Music in America
  o Readings: “Between Riot Grrrl and Quiet Girl” *Boy Named Sue: Gender and Country Music* Kristine McCusker and Diane Pecknold (Latte)
  o “Striking Back without Missing a Beat: Radical Responses to Domestic Violence in Country Music's The Dixie Chicks and Salsa's Celia Cruz” *Studies in Popular Culture* by Delia Poey
  o Listening: On Latte

• 12/5: Final

• 12/8: Video/Podcast Presentations

• Final Day (Date TBD): Video/Podcast Presentations