

# **Music, Media, and the Counterculture 1950-80**

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November 3, 2023

This class is derived from a memoir about coming of age during the post-War years. It's an impressionistic history, experiential rather than academic, in the form of a personal narrative. We look at the forces that shaped a generation of Americans and provoked a period of astonishing creativity. You are encouraged to remember and record your own impressions of that time.

## Week One: Overview

What was the relationship between the Classic Era of Rock Music, the emergence of Freeform Radio, and growth of the Counterculture? What elements did they have in common that facilitated their prominence? How did traditional culture and the counterculture cross-pollinate? How did the struggle between art and commerce play out? What was gained and lost? Why does it matter?

## Week Two: The Music and Me

My personal experience coming of age during that time, the pathway that took me to music, media and the counterculture, and insight into the perspective I bring to the subject. It also asks you to recall some of the seminal events of your life and posits that our personal narratives may be the true history of our time.

## Week Three: Music and the Media

How and why did broadcast media evolve during the subject timeframe, how did television create Top 40 radio, and subsequently what forces coalesced that unleashed an unprecedented period of creativity in FM radio? How did it affect society, particularly the counterculture, and what does it suggest about use of public airwaves?

## Week Four: Music and the Counterculture

What was the relationship between the counterculture and the music that gave it voice. What forces changed the music industry resoundingly (so to speak) and generated the Classic Era of Rock Music? Why does it matter, what does it suggest about the struggle between art and commerce, and control of the artistic process?

## Week Five: Summary Then and Now

Assessment of a brief moment in time when artistry and freedom of expression took precedent over commercial interest, what came of it, and what was gained and lost when commerce reasserted its traditional primacy. What values remain with us after the movement declined? What currency does it have in today's environment?