

Homework Assignment: Song Analysis

This course has included lectures by Steve Korn on the roots of modern popular music: the blues (July 2), early rock (July 10), and early rap & hip hop (July 17).

Your assignment is to select a piece of popular music written within the last 13 years and compare it to one of the genres listed above (the blues, early rock, or early rap). You should choose a song for which you can identify both similarities and differences relative to the chosen genre. Consider such aspects as the lyrical structure, chord progression, topics and attitudes addressed, instruments used, style of singing/rapping, background of the performer, etc. Consult Steve Korn's slides (available from the course website: <http://faculty.washington.edu/crowther/Teaching/UB/>) as needed.

Your essay should be between 300 and 600 words long. I recommend using a computer for easy editing and length-checking, but hand-written essays will be accepted as well.

You may organize the essay in any format that is clear and coherent. A couple of possible formats are as follows:

Sample Format A

- Paragraph 1: ways in which my song resembles genre X
- Paragraph 2: ways in which my song differs from genre X

Sample Format B

- Paragraph 1: background information on genre X
- Paragraph 2: background information on my song
- Paragraph 3: ways in which my song resembles and differs from genre X

Although your essay should represent your own analysis, you are welcome to support your statements with outside sources. *Be sure to cite any sources (other than Steve Korn and this class) that provided you with information you did not already know.* If you use someone else's exact words, they must be put in quotation marks, but even if you reword someone else's facts or ideas you still need to credit them.

Please do not choose a song that you know is being analyzed by someone else in this class. You can discuss the assignment with classmates or friends, but the essay should be in your own words.

Please include a link to a YouTube video or other online source of the song so that I can listen to it if I am not already familiar with it.

This assignment is due on Thursday, July 25 at the start of class (10:50am).