

## Pop Music Styles of the Early 20th Century

- NOTE: Lecture slide notes for the remainder of the semester can be downloaded from [proferickson.com/cke/musc1425.htm](http://proferickson.com/cke/musc1425.htm)
- "Popular Music"
  - Applicable to several styles (e.g. rock, country, jazz, etc.)
  - Stylistically accessible to the average listener
  - Disseminated by one or more of the mass media
  - Vs. "Art" music and "Traditional" music
  - Emphasis on steady **rhythm**, the most basic element of music
  - Rhythm frequently features **syncopation**
- Rhythm
  - Beat - a steady pulsation
  - Meter - repeating pattern a strong beat followed by 1, 2 or 3 weak beats
    - Duple
    - Triple
    - Quadruple
  - Tempo - the speed at which beats occur (a/k/a "BPM")
  - Syncopation - deliberate upsetting of meter by emphasizing a note or chord before the beat
- A Few Popular Styles of the Early 20th Century
  - Ragtime
    - The most popular music style in the U.S. c. 1890-1915
    - Highly-syncopated melody against a steady accompaniment
  - Disseminated through sheet music sales
  - Usually for solo piano
- Jazz
  - Instrumental style with emphasis on...
    - Syncopation
    - Improvisation (spontaneous composition within the parameters of a given style of music)
  - One of the first styles disseminated through recordings
- Two Popular Substyles
  - Dixieland (1890s-1920s)
    - High-energy, fast-tempo, melodically-busy instrumental style
    - Small combos (4 to 7 players); Group improvisation
  - Swing (1930s-1940s)
    - Dance music with "swing rhythm"; the most popular style of music in the U.S. during the 1930s and 40s
    - "Big Bands" (10-20 players); Solo improv alternating with pre-arranged written material

- Blues...What is it?
  - 1:
  - 2:
  - 3:
  - 4:
- Origin of the Blues
  - Post-Civil War Reconstruction Era
    - Sharecropper System
    - Work Music
      - The Work Song
        - A song sung during field work (aka a "field holler")
        - Rhythm of songs coordinated workers
        - Featured "Call & Response" in the melody
- Melody is:
  - Melody in Blues Music
    - Call & Response idea from Work Music used in "fills" and "riffs"
    - A fill is:
    - A riff is:
- Country Blues
  - c. 1900-20
  - Wailing vocals over slide guitar accompaniment
  - Robert Johnson (1911-38)
  - "Hell Hound on My Trail"
- Classic Blues
  - c. 1920-45
  - Bawdy, powerful women singers with small jazz bands
  - Bessie Smith (1894-1937)
  - "Poor Man's Blues"