

Black Pioneers of Rock and Roll

- 1950s Rock: Stylistic Generalizations
 - General — Joyful musical expression of youthful energy and independence
 - Rhythm — Fast with a backbeat
 - Melody — Tuneful, easy-to-sing short phrases and narrow ranges
 - Lyrics — Uncomplicated; teen-related subject matter
 - Instrumentation — Rock combo established: vocals, electric guitar, bass, drums
 - Harmony & Form — 12-bar blues format, but sometimes slightly modified...
 - "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" has no instrumental responses to the vocalist's calls
 - "Johnny B. Goode" modifies the AAB lyrical structure and crams extra call and response structures into its chorus (the presence of a chorus is in itself a modification of the strophic blues format)
- Major Black Pioneers
 - Fats Domino (b. 1929)
 - Singer/Pianist
 - Relaxed style with non-confrontational persona
 - Rhythms w/triple-division of the beat or "shuffle" feel
 - Sales: 65 Million Records
 - "Blueberry Hill," 1956
 - "I'm Walkin'," 1956
 - Little Richard (b. 1935)
 - Singer/Pianist
 - Shouting, Gospel-Style Vocals
 - Androgynous Stage Appearance
 - Hits
 - "Tutti-Fruitti," 1955
 - "Long Tall Sally," 1956
 - "Good Golly Miss Molly," 1958
 - Chuck Berry (b. 1926)
 - Singer/Guitarist/Composer
 - Widely-imitated guitar picking technique drawing upon twangy country sound
 - Hits
 - "Maybeline," 1955
 - "Roll Over, Beethoven," 1956
 - "Jonny B. Goode," 1958
 - Other Black Rock Pioneers
 - Ray Charles (1930-2004): "What'd I Say," 1959
 - Sam Cooke (1935-64), "You Send Me," 1957
- The Teen Idols
 - White, clean-cut, good-looking vocalists
 - "Crooner" vocal style a la Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby
 - Output
 - Soft rock originals w/lyrics addressing teen romance
 - Homogenized covers of R&B, Rock and Roll songs
 - Fabian, Frankie Avalon ("Venus"), Bobby Rydell
 - Case study: Fats Domino vs. Pat Boone performing "Ain't That a Shame"