

ASSOCIATION FOR TECHNOLOGY IN MUSIC INSTRUCTION  
AND THE COLLEGE MUSIC SOCIETY

# National Conferences

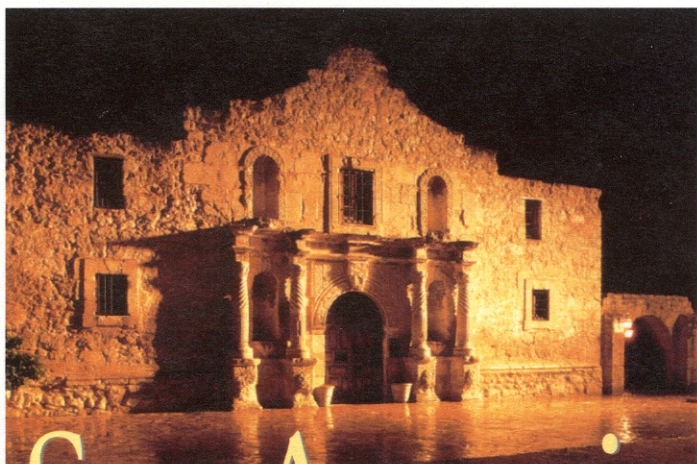
September 14 -17, 2006



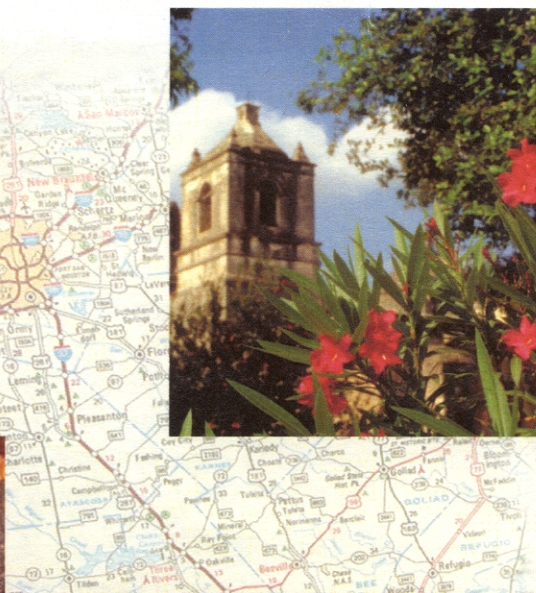
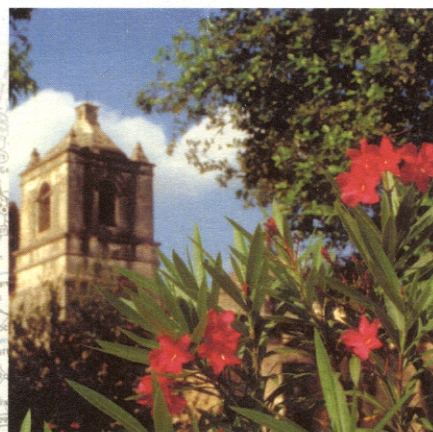
THE COLLEGE MUSIC SOCIETY

## ATMI

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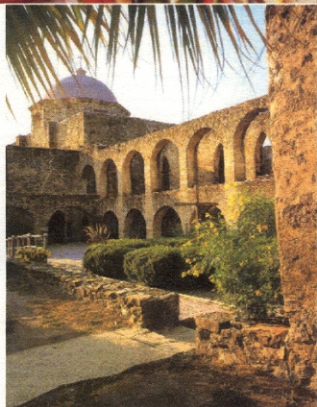
# San Antonio TEXAS



**PROGRAM  
SCHEDULE**

**PRE-REGISTRANTS**

**EXHIBITORS**



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**1:30 PM–4:55 PM**

Texas Ballroom A

**Multicultural Adaptations**1:30 PM *Multiple-paper Session: Musical Inclusiveness: The Catawba College Initiative*

Renee McCachren (Catawba College), David Fish (Catawba College), and Julie Chamberlain (Catawba College)

3:00 PM *Negotiating Tradition and Innovation: Recordings of Children's Music from Latino America*

Isabel Barbara O'Hagin (Central Michigan University)

3:30 PM *Something's Gotta Go, What Is It?*

Brenda M. Romero (University of Colorado at Boulder)

4:00 PM *workshop: Career Services Initiative—Teaching Creatively in the Trenches: Looking Back to the Future*

Arthur Joseph Houle (International Festival for Creative Pianists)

**1:30 PM–4:55 PM**

San Antonio Ballroom

**What's New?**1:30 PM *lecture-recital: New Music From Lee Hoiby*

Scott LaGraff (Stephen F. Austin State University) and Andrew Hudson (McLennan Community College)

2:30 PM *lecture-recital: A Century of New and Renewed Music by Women Composers*

Laura Kobayashi (West Virginia University) and Susan Keith Gray (University of South Dakota)

3:15 PM *performance: Music for the Cello by Twentieth-Century American Women*

Julie Bevan (Brigham Young University) and Jeff Shumway (Brigham Young University)

4:30 PM *performance: Blue Isomorph: Multi-Media Performance Slides, Dance and Music*

Darleen Mitchell (University of Nebraska-Kearney), Garry Schaaf (University of Nebraska - Kearney), and Marleen Hoover (San Antonio College)

**1:30 PM–4:55 PM**

Executive Salon 3

**A Closer Look at U.S. Culture***Session chair: Barbara Bowker (William Rainey Harper College)*1:30 PM *Roll Over Beethoven: Valuing Popular Music in the University Curriculum*

David Bruenger (University of Texas San Antonio)

2:00 PM *Why Tapestry?: Carole King's 1971 Breakthrough Album*

James E. Perone (Mount Union College)

2:30 PM *Rush and Rush: Bumper Music in Conservative Talk Radio*

Richard Steven Repp (Georgia Southern University)

3:00 PM *Panel: Implementing Change in Music History Teaching: An Interdisciplinary Panel*

James R. Briscoe (Butler University, musicology), moderator, Jeanne Halley (University of Texas at San Antonio) music and sociology, Gavin Douglas (University of North Carolina at Greensboro), ethnomusicology, Sandra Stauffer (Arizona State University), music education, and Wade Weast (Director, School of Music, University of South Florida), administration

4:00 PM *Open Forum on Musicology and Cultural Inclusion*

Discussion leaders: James R. Briscoe (Butler University), James P. Parakilas (Bates College), and Sang-Hie Lee (University of South Florida)



## RUSH AND RUSH: BUMPER MUSIC IN CONSERVATIVE TALK RADIO

Richard Repp, Ph.D.

College Music Society 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

San Antonio, TX. September 15, 2006

rrepp@richardrepp.com

### **NEW SLIDE**

#### INTRODUCTION: THE SPIRIT OF THE RADIO

Driving down the interstate one weekday afternoon the unmistakable opening riff of a half-forgotten song poured from a radio station on the AM dial. The searing sixteenth note guitar opening, punctuated by staccato drum and bass licks, brought back memories of progressive rock music of the 1970s. Then the music of the progressive rock band Rush was interrupted by the familiar voice of quite another “Rush”—conservative commentator Rush Limbaugh. Limbaugh had chosen “The Spirit of the Radio” (Peart, 1980c) as bumper music to introduce a segment on his daily talk show.

### **NEW SLIDE**

Begin the day with a friendly voice

A companion unobtrusive

Plays the song that’s so elusive

And the magic music makes your morning mood (Peart, 1980c)

After the first shock of surprise at hearing the music of a Canadian rock band on the Rush Limbaugh show, thoughts turned to the appropriateness of using such a song for this politically charged setting. After all, the music predated Limbaugh’s version of conservatism; and personal memories of the music had no connection to politics at all. But when observed dispassionately, there did seem to be reasons why the song is highlighted in the show.

The song *is* about the radio; and no other person is more associated with radio of today (at least the AM band) than Rush Limbaugh. Top 40 stations playing the hits of today have long ago moved to the FM band, and talk radio and news dominate the AM. Add to the topic of the radio the pun on the name Rush (the band) and Rush (the commentator). Perhaps the coincidence was too much for an ego whose refers to himself having “talent on loan from God.”

**NEW SLIDE**

Invisible airwaves crackle with life  
Bright antennae bristle with the energy  
Emotional feedback on timeless wavelength  
Bearing a gift beyond price, almost free (Peart, 1980c)  
All this machinery making modern music  
Can still be open-hearted  
Not so coldly charted  
It’s really just a question of your honesty, yeah,  
Your honesty (Peart, 1980c)

But surface issues such as the title of the song and similarities in name belie the possible true nature of the music. Rush (the band) is a Canadian, and not a source of American pride. In fact, the band shows its Canadian influences by having French song titles and lyrics such as *Entres Nous* (Peart, 1980a). Their early French Revolution-themed song *Bastille Day* relishes the descent of the powerful nobles to *la guillotine*:

**NEW SLIDE**

There’s no bread, let them eat cake



There's no end to what they'll take  
Flaunt the fruits of noble birth  
Wash the salt into the earth...  
Bloodstained velvet, dirty lace  
Naked fear on every face  
See them bow their heads to die  
As we would bow as they rode by...  
For they marched up to Bastille Day  
*La guillotine* claimed her bloody prize  
Hear the echoes of the centuries  
Power isn't all that money buys (Peart, 1975b)

“Bastille Day” and another early Rush song “Working Man” (Rush, 1974) at first suggest a populist influence from the band and not Limbaugh’s conservative philosophy. The band’s nationality and Jewish heritage—singer Geddy Lee was born Gary Lee Weinrib, and guitarist Alex Lifeson was born Alexander Zivojinovich (Grinspan, n.d.) — might on the surface place them more in the category of Limbaugh’s “media elite” than as a conservative ally.

But the band Rush’s primary lyrical influences come from the writings of its lyricist and drummer, Neil Peart (Price & Price, 1998). Peart’s fascination with the philosophy of Ayn Rand is well established, and this fascination is apparent in albums such as *2112* (Rush, 1976) and *Hemispheres* (Rush, 1978).

Some of Rand’s philosophies may have appeal to a conservative like Limbaugh. Rand writes,



**NEW SLIDE**

My philosophy, in essence, is the concept of man as a heroic being, with his own happiness as the moral purpose of his life, with productive achievement as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute. (Rand, 1996)

In fact, Rand has been an influence on the Libertarian movement in America—even though she would quibble with the movement, accusing them of stealing her ideas (Rand, 2005).

Lyrics from the Rush song “Anthem” (Peart, 1975a)—with the same title as a Rand (1966) novel—seem to reflect an attitude toward the welfare state with which Limbaugh would certainly agree:

**NEW SLIDE**

Live for yourself, there's no one else  
More worth living for  
Begging hands and bleeding hearts will  
Only cry out for more (Peart, 1975a)

However, even though Peart is no doubt a Libertarian, Libertarianism and Conservatism only overlap to a certain extent. Sciabarra (2002) writes, “... the fact that Peart is equally at odds with established religion suggests that ... description of his politics as ‘conservative’ is woefully inadequate.”

Peart's animosity toward established religion is clear in his song “Something for Nothing,” which contains a direct counterargument to the Lord's Prayer:

**NEW SLIDE**

What you own is your own kingdom



What you do is your own glory

What you love is your own power

What you live is your own story (Peart, 1976)

The Rush song “Free Will” also attacks established religion:

**NEW SLIDE**

You can choose a ready guide in some celestial voice

If you choose not to decide, you still have made a choice

You can choose from phantom fears and kindness that can kill

I will choose a path that’s clear

I will choose Free Will (Peart, 1980b)

The Libertarian ideals that Peart espouses only match Limbaugh’s philosophies in certain areas. Libertarianism also has appeal to extreme left-wing ideologies wishing to be free of religious dogma and government interference. Bowman (2003) writes that Peart’s lyrics “suggest ‘left-wing libertarianism,’ random contingencies, science, nature, the environment, relationships, and even humor.”

**NEW SLIDE**

**MY CITY WAS GONE**

So the music of Rush could have at least a tangential relationship to the politics of Rush Limbaugh. But “The Spirit of the Radio” is not a major part of the Rush Limbaugh show. The song that has become the de facto theme of the Limbaugh show is “My City Was Gone” by The Pretenders (Hynde, 1983). Every Limbaugh show features the pounding bass introduction to this 1980s hit.

**NEW SLIDE**



The music of the Pretenders reflects not the intellectual Rand-influenced music of Neil Peart, but the lyrics of the ideologically liberal animal rights activist Chrissy Hynde.

NEW SLIDE

I went back to Ohio  
But my pretty countryside  
Had been paved down the middle  
By a government that had no pride  
The farms of Ohio  
Had been replaced by shopping malls  
And Muzak filled the air (Hynde, 1983)

The song was clearly chosen for its unmistakable groove on its introduction, and not for any political leanings of the band or lyrics. In fact, Limbaugh not only knows that the song does not fit his ideology, but he seems to relish the apparent contradiction. He stated that

NEW SLIDE

It was icing on the cake that it was [written by] an environmentalist, animal-rights wacko—and an anti-conservative song. ... It is anti-development, anti-capitalist. ... Here I am going to take a liberal song and make fun of [liberals] at the same time. (Corn & Munger, 1997)

Hynde herself lives in England, and was not aware of the controversy until her fans relayed it to her.

NEW SLIDE

I'm sure if I heard this show it would piss me off, and I would say, get my song off right away. ... He's obviously very clever. If he just played the Carpenters, it wouldn't cause any controversy. So now he plays rock, and he's bold and a rebel. I probably should have done more when people were rushing at me in the airports. But since I had not heard the show, I said, 'Oh fuck it.' That's a lazy attitude, I know. I only wanted to be a rock singer, but I am associated with speaking my mind. (Corn & Munger, 1997)

Other bands have been more active in voicing their aversion to having their music associate with political views. The liberal-minded Bottle Rockets were incensed when their song "Radar Gun" (Henneman, 1994) was used as bumper music for the Limbaugh show. Limbaugh was again unimpressed with the controversy, and the *Los Angeles Times* reported that

#### **NEW SLIDE**

When Limbaugh got wind of that, he went on the air to say that he didn't care what the band thought, he would keep playing it, adding that the song "kinda sucks"—even though in the past he had commented that he liked its sound. (Hochman, 1996)

Even if the bands were to pursue legal action, there would be little hope of success. Radio shows pay a flat fee to the recording industry to use music as they see fit. The exception was Limbaugh's adaptation of *My City Was Gone* into a repeating loop of the bass introduction. Limbaugh was not allowed to manipulate the song without permission,



and looping the introduction without permission is illegal editing. The Pretenders seem to have chosen not to sue on this point.

So the Rush Limbaugh show continues to use music from The Pretenders, Rush, and other artists such as T. Rex, Jimi Hendrix, Garbage, Bob Marley, Depeche Mode, Stone Temple Pilots, Dave Matthews Band (fronted by an admitted marijuana user), Pearl Jam (abortion rights activists), and The Rolling Stones (Corn & Munger, 1997). But the fact that many of these artists do not share the political leanings of the radio programs begs the point of whether these songs are inappropriate. Bumper music often does not contain any lyrical content; what is political about a bass line? Many people enjoy the music of Richard Wagner even though they would be sickened by his political views, so why should rock music be any different?

### **NEW SLIDE**

### **TURN, TURN, TURN**

Early rock music was clearly most associated with liberal thought in race relations, sexual freedom, and the peace movement. Paul Stump (1997) calls progressive rock “the soundtrack to the counter-cultural upheavals of the late 1960s, and the period’s gallant pipedream of thoroughgoing societal and cultural transformation.” But is rock music still associated with liberal thought, or has it simply become the soundtrack of many people’s lives? As people grow older, many tend to become more conservative in their ideology. These same people may still enjoy the music of their youth even though the philosophies behind the music have become quaint.

Indeed, some popular songs can be read with a conservative view, even if the original artists were not conservatives. The Byrd's hit "Turn, Turn, Turn" is a direct quotation from the Biblical Book of Ecclesiastes.

**NEW SLIDE**

To everything (turn, turn, turn)

There is a season (turn, turn, turn)

And a time for every purpose, under Heaven (Seeger, 1965)

Even pop star Madonna wrote a song, "Papa Don't Preach," trumpeted by conservatives. The heroine exhorts her father to support her in her decision not to abort her unplanned child.

**NEW SLIDE**

Papa don't preach, I'm in trouble deep

Papa don't preach, I've been losing sleep

But I made up my mind; I'm keeping my baby (Madonna, 1986)

Several versions of a "Conservative Top 40" have been written, including not only expected tunes like Lee Greenwood's (1992) "God Bless the USA (Proud to be an American)," but also unexpected songs like Elton John's (1975) "Philadelphia Freedom." "Philadelphia Freedom" is often interpreted as a tribute to tennis star Billie Jean King, but on its surface it celebrates the American Bicentennial of 1776. Even though John is openly homosexual (he recently married his long-time partner), some conservatives look beyond the politics of the songwriter, and can concentrate on the intrinsic value of the music. Certainly songs such as "Taxman" (Harrison, 1966) by the Beatles do have a conservative mindset, even from an indisputably liberal source.



Limbaugh's own recommended listening list, known as the Limbaugh Library (n.d.), contains some surprising choices. Clearly some of the titles are tongue-in-cheek references to inside jokes from the show, such as Clarence "Frogman" Henry's (1956) song "A'int Got No Home," a song Limbaugh brags about using at Washington parties to openly mock the homeless. Other titles have a tenuous conservative connection such as Ted Nugent's (1977a) "Cat Scratch Fever." The song's lyrical content is hardly conservative, including

**NEW SLIDE-Parental Advisory**

**NEW SLIDE**

I make the pussy purr with  
 The stroke of my hand  
 They know they gettin' it from me  
 They know just where to go  
 When they need their lovin' man  
 They know I do it for free  
 They give me Cat Scratch Fever

Nugent's politics are very conservative—he is an avid hunter and gun advocate—but his music is misogynistic even to a point that might make Limbaugh (author of the term "feminazi") blush, including songs such as "Wang Dang Sweet Poontang":

**NEW SLIDE-Parental Advisory (even Worse!)**

**NEW SLIDE**

That Nadine, what a teenage queen  
 She lookin' so clean, espec'i'lly down in between; what I like ...

She's so sweet when she yanks on my meat

Down on the street you know she can't be beat (Nugent, 1977b)

So conservative street credibility can land an artist on Limbaugh's listening list, but other titles do not seem to have any apparent connection. Other titles on the list include "Under My Thumb" by The Rolling Stones (Jagger, 1972) and "Raspberry Beret" by Prince (1990).

Clearly Limbaugh is using some other means than political purity to choose music. The reason Limbaugh selects particular songs may be simply utilitarian. Hill (2004) writes:

**NEW SLIDE**

Limbaugh is a master of production technique. Rush started in the radio business as a record-spinning disc jockey and understands the value of using punchy "bumper music" to open his segments, for example. Though Rush cares most about the message, he understands that the packaging is essential to the communication process.

In fact, Limbaugh is the perceived master of using bumper music to frame his show. Some can not even define the term "bumper music" without referring to Limbaugh, as evidenced in this *Wikipedia* (2005) entry:

**NEW SLIDE**

Bumper music is a term used in the radio broadcasting industry. It refers to the short clips of music used to buffer transitions between programming elements, such as when a syndicated program takes a break for local station identification or "goes to commercial." Bumper

music was first used heavily by Rush Limbaugh, who pioneered conservative AM talk radio in the United States.

Politicians have long used music to identify their ideology, from Soviet limitations on art to church music. But Limbaugh, unlike Soviets or the church, is not as interested in the content of the music as he is interested in the groove, or the feeling the music evokes. The main purpose of bumper music is to tell the listener that the commercials are over and the show is about to resume. This tradition predates the radio; opera overtures evolved from music that indicated to the audience that the drama was about to begin (before lights that could be dimmed had been invented).

**NEW SLIDE**

INDEPENDENCE DAY

But why rock music? The conservative movement in America rejects the traditions of rock and roll in many areas. Many of Limbaugh's listeners are more associated politically and musically with country artists such as Toby Keith, Lee Greenwood, or Charlie Daniels than Rush or the Pretenders. Conservative host Sean Hannity uses the country song "Independence Day" extremely effectively in his theme music.

**NEW SLIDE**

Let Freedom Ring, Let the white dove sing

Let the whole world know that today is a

Day of reckoning

Let the weak be strong, let the right be wrong

Roll the stone away, let the guilty pay, it's

Independence Day (McBride, 2001)



From a cursory listening of this isolated chorus in Hannity's opening, the song appears to be a stirring patriotic anthem with all the power of *God Bless America*. But further inspection of the verses of the song—not played on Hannity's show—reveals a darker song whose main theme is about domestic abuse, and not patriotism.

**NEW SLIDE**

Well she seemed all right by dawn's early light  
Though she looked a little worried and weak  
She tried to pretend he wasn't drinkin' again  
But daddy left the proof on her cheek  
and I was only eight years old that summer  
And I always seemed to be in the way  
So I took myself down to the fair in town  
On Independence Day (McBride, 2001)

The final verse is even more striking (and even less appropriate as the theme of a radio show), as the heroine commits arson as a form of vengeance:

**NEW SLIDE**

Well she lit up the sky that Fourth of July  
By the time that the firemen come  
They just put out the flames,  
and took down some names  
and sent me to the county home  
Now I ain't sayin' it's right or it's wrong  
but maybe it's the only way

Talk about your revolution

It's Independence Day (McBride, 2001)

Is the theme of domestic abuse and vengeance simply overlooked by Hannity, or is vengeance a subtext of the show? Conservative talk show hosts gain much of their popularity by playing on the anger of their listeners, or the phenomena of “white rage” (Kazin, 1997). Hannity (2004) has made a point of comparing liberals to despots and terrorists, and the exploitation of the subtext in “Independence Day” may be intentional. However, rage against domestic abuse is usually associated with feminist movement of the left, and not a conservative talk show host.

#### **NEW SLIDE**

#### **LOOKS THAT KILL**

The conservative commentator who most clearly utilizes rage in his bumper music is Michael Savage. Savage begins his radio show with “Warning: The Savage Nation contains adult language, adult content, psychological nudity. Listener discretion is advised” (answers.com, n.d.). The introduction continues with the beginning of Metallica's (1986) “Master of Puppets”—

#### **NEW SLIDE**

Master of puppets I'm pulling your strings

Twisting your mind and smashing your dreams

Blinded by me, you can't see a thing

Just call my name, 'cause I'll hear you scream

—followed by Mötley Crüe's (1983) “Looks that Kill,” and Metallica's (1988c) “The Shortest Straw”—

**NEW SLIDE**

Shortest straw

Challenge liberty

Downed by law

Live in infamy

Rub you raw

Witch-hunt riding through

Shortest straw

This shortest straw has been pulled for you

—songs which neither represent conservative ideology nor the surface good spirit of the Limbaugh show, but rather pander to a sense of rage.

Savage's bumper music has also included Metallica's "Eye of the Beholder" (1988a), "The Frayed Ends of Sanity" (1988b), and "Holier Than Thou" (1991).

Metallica is hardly a liberal or progressive band, though. DeRogatis (2004) writes in the *Chicago Sun-Times*,

**NEW SLIDE**

Although most modern music bands are known to be politically liberal, Metallica seems to have some conservative leanings—their lead guitarist Kirk Hammett has called into Savage's show to say "We support what you're doing," and James Hetfield, Metallica's lead singer, reportedly despises liberals. ... [Hetfield] apparently hates Democrats more than he hates the rest of his bandmates.

Another ditty included as Savage bumper music is “*Du hast*” by Rammstein (1998).

The song is written in an ambiguous manner; the first line (“*Du hast mich*”) can be translated as “You have me,” but when sung, it is indecipherable from *Du hasst mich*, or “You hate me.” The song, a manipulation of German wedding vows, continues later with another ambiguous line, “*Willst zu bis zum Tod, der scheide.*” This line can be translated as “Do you want, until death, which would separate” or, with a change in punctuation, *Willst zu bis zum Tod der Scheide* as “Do you want until death of the vagina.”

Rage is an integral part of Savage’s show, to the point where he occasionally threatens violence to callers who disagree with him. Savage once commented to a homosexual caller,

#### NEW SLIDE

Oh, you’re one of the sodomites. You should only get AIDS and die, you pig. How’s that? Why don’t you see if you can sue me, you pig. You got nothing better than to put me down, you piece of garbage. You have got nothing to do today, go eat a sausage and choke on it. Get trichinosis.

OK, do we have another nice caller here who’s busy because he didn’t have a nice night in the bathhouse who’s angry at me today? Get me another one, put another sodomite on. No more calls out of—let’s go to the next scene. I don’t care about these bums. They mean nothing to me. They’re all sausages. (*Democracy Now*, 2003)

Savage is clearly using heavy metal music to heighten the sense of rage within his listeners. While music purists may find Limbaugh’s use of rock music as hypocritical,



using music to heighten violent emotions is a more serious matter. Before September 11, 2001, right-wing hate mongers such as the Aryan Nations and the Christian Identity Movement committed much of the domestic terrorism in the United States. When Timothy McVeigh bombed the Oklahoma City Federal Building on April 19, 1995, the right-wing militia groups lost most of their support. Conservatives then began to gain control of the government, and the radical fringes conservative movement tended to be more supportive than destructive. However, white rage still exists, and playing upon potentially lethal emotions to improve ratings is dangerous and unconscionable.

**NEW SLIDE**

**THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE**

So two possible sources of hypocrisy are apparent. One, conservatives are using music that upon deeper analysis does not fit with conservative ideology. Two, liberal musicians are not clamoring for their music to be removed from shows they may disdain. The resolution to this apparent cognitive dissonance becomes apparent when the amount of money involved with these shows comes into play. When Neil Peart wrote “the words of the profits were written on the studio wall” he was not only referring to Simon and Garfunkel’s (1966) “The Sound of Silence”—“the words of the prophets are written on the subway walls, and tenement halls, and whispered in the sounds of silence”—he was also prophetic about the influence of money in the creative process.

**NEW SLIDE**

For the words of the profits were written on the studio wall, concert hall

And echo with the sounds of salesmen. (Peart, 1980c)

Conservative talk shows dominate AM radio at this time in history. Rush Limbaugh has approximately 14 million weekly listeners, followed by Sean Hannity with 12 million and Michael Savage with eight million (*Talkers Magazine*, 2003). Each time an excerpt from a song is played, millions of people are reminded of music that has disappeared off the radio charts (interestingly, current popular songs are seldom heard as bumper music). Aging rock stars, whose music may be controlled by a corporation, may be less likely to criticize radio hosts who are propagating their music. Music may be copyrighted, but many musicians believe that anyone who plays their songs is a friend.

The reason that conservatives use rock music is more subtle, but still clear. Rock music produces the atmosphere the hosts want to portray for their show. One reason Limbaugh reigns as the master of the airways is because he understands pitfalls to avoid in framing his show. One stereotype of conservatives is that they are beholden to the “religious right.” Since rock music is anathema to many traditional Christians, use of the music in the shows adds a sense of rebelliousness. Country music would only reinforce the stereotype of conservatives as rural. The other end of the spectrum is the cliché of the conservative as an elitist. Since rock has been associated as the music of the people, Limbaugh can subconsciously show he is speaking for the ordinary citizen, and then lambaste his political foes as “liberal elites.” Use of positive rock songs also helps Limbaugh create a jovial atmosphere and counteract the perception of the “angry conservative” (an atmosphere ironically enhanced by music chosen by Michael Savage). Limbaugh is a master of making his most searing commentary in the form of biting humor.

But clearly the reason these commentators use rock music is that rock music *rocks*.

These songs are quite effective in creating a mood; that is why they were hits in the first place. The music helps a wider audience feel more at home with the show, and a wider audience means more people available for advertisers. Conservatives tend to be capitalists; if the music of the Devil will help them earn money, then all is fair in business.

### **NEW SLIDE**

#### **CONCLUSION: THE SPIRIT OF THE RADIO REVISITED**

Many with differing viewpoints may have usurped music of the rebelliousness of youth. This widespread use of rock music by conservatives is hardly surprising upon close inspection. Times change, and the music of the times is not closely confined to its original time period. People change, and their political views change more than their musical tastes—why not have both? Rock music is by no means monolithic. Christian rock, rock with Christian themes such as *Jesus Christ Superstar*, rock influenced by country music, and country music influenced by rock, all show that no ideology or political movement has control over a musical genre. Yet, the musical purist's mind may wander back again to the words of that half-forgotten song, when Peart wrote:

### **NEW SLIDE**

One likes to believe in the freedom of music,

But glittering prizes and endless compromises

Shatter the illusion of integrity (Peart, 1980b)

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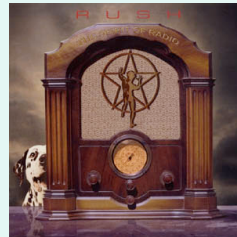
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RUSH AND RUSH: BUMPER MUSIC IN CONSERVATIVE TALK RADIO  
Richard Repp, Ph.D.

RUSH AND RUSH: BUMPER  
MUSIC IN CONSERVATIVE  
TALK RADIO

Richard Repp, Ph.D.  
College Music Society 49<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Conference, San Antonio, TX  
September 15, 2006

INTRODUCTION:  
THE SPIRIT OF THE RADIO



Begin the day with a friendly voice  
A companion unobtrusive  
Plays the song that's so elusive  
And the magic music makes your morning mood  
(Peart, 1980c)



Invisible airwaves crackle with life  
Bright antennae bristle with the energy  
Emotional feedback on timeless wavelength  
Bearing a gift beyond price, almost free  
All this machinery making modern music  
Can still be open-hearted  
Not so coldly charted  
It's really just a question of your honesty, yeah,  
Your honesty... (Peart, 1980c)



Bastille Day (Rush)

There's no bread, let them eat cake	See them bow their heads to die
There's no end to what they'll take	As we would bow when they rode by...
Flaunt the fruits of noble birth	For they marched up to Bastille Day
Wash the salt into the earth...	<i>La guillotine</i> claimed her bloody prize
Bloodstained velvet, dirty lace	Hear the echoes of the centuries
Naked fear on every face	Power isn't all that money buys



(Peart, 1975b)

My philosophy, in essence, is the concept of man as a heroic being, with his own happiness as the moral purpose of his life, with productive achievement as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute. (Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged* 35th anniversary edition appendix)





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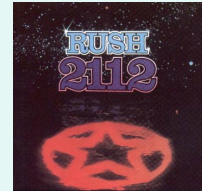
### Anthem (Rush)

Live for yourself, there's no one else  
More worth living for  
Begging hands and bleeding hearts will  
Only cry out for more (Peart, 1975a)



### Something for Nothing (Rush)

What you own is your own kingdom  
What you do is your own glory  
What you love is your own power  
What you live is your own story  
(Peart, 1976)



### Free Will (Rush)

You can choose a ready guide in some celestial voice  
If you choose not to decide, you still have made a choice  
You can choose from phantom fears and kindness that can kill  
I will choose a path that's clear  
I will choose Free Will (Peart, 1980b)



### MY CITY WAS GONE

### Limbaugh Comments

It was icing on the cake that it was [written by] an environmentalist,  
animal-rights wacko—and an anti-conservative song. ... It is anti-  
development, anti-capitalist. ... Here I am going to take a liberal song  
and make fun of [liberals] at the same time. (Corn & Munger, 1997)



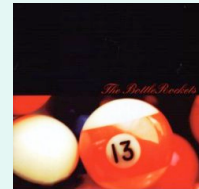
RUSH AND RUSH: BUMPER MUSIC IN CONSERVATIVE TALK RADIO  
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## Hynde Comments

I'm sure if I heard this show it would piss me off, and I would say, get my song off right away. ... He's obviously very clever. If he just played the Carpenters, it wouldn't cause any controversy. So now he plays rock, and he's bold and a rebel. I probably should have done more when people were rushing at me in the airports. But since I had not heard the show, I said, 'Oh fuck it.' That's a lazy attitude, I know. I only wanted to be a rock singer, but I am associated with speaking my mind. (Corn & Munger, 1997)



When Limbaugh got wind of that, he went on the air to say that he didn't care what the band thought, he would keep playing it, adding that the song "kinda sucks"—even though in the past he had commented that he liked its sound. (Hochman, 1996)



## TURN, TURN, TURN

## The Byrds

For everything (turn, turn, turn)

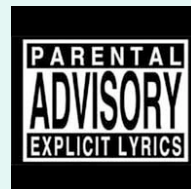
There is a season (turn, turn, turn)

And a time to every purpose, under Heaven

(Seeger, 1965, Paraphrase of the Biblical Book of Ecclesiastes)



Papa don't preach, I'm in trouble deep  
Papa don't preach, I've been losing sleep  
But I made up my mind; I'm keeping my baby (Madonna, 1986)



Some people may find the following slide offensive!

# RUSH AND RUSH: BUMPER MUSIC IN CONSERVATIVE TALK RADIO

Richard Repp, Ph.D.

## Cat Scratch Fever (Ted Nugent, 1977a)

I make a pussy purr with  
The stroke of my hand  
They know they gettin' it from me  
They know just where to go  
When they need their lovin' man  
They know I'm doin' it for free  
I give 'em Cat Scratch Fever



## Hill (2004) Comment on Limbaugh

Limbaugh is a master of production technique. Rush started in the radio business as a record-spinning disc jockey and understands the value of using punchy "bumper music" to open his segments, for example. Though Rush cares most about the message, he understands that the packaging is essential to the communication process.

## Wikipedia "Bumper Music"

Bumper music is a term used in the radio broadcasting industry. It refers to the short clips of music used to buffer transitions between programming elements, such as when a syndicated program takes a break for local station identification or "goes to commercial." Bumper music was first used heavily by Rush Limbaugh, who pioneered conservative AM talk radio in the United States.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY

Let Freedom Ring, Let the white dove sing  
Let the whole world know that today is a  
Day of reckoning  
Let the weak be strong, let the right be wrong  
Roll the stone away, let the guilty pay, it's  
Independence Day (McBride, 2001)



Well she seemed all right by dawn's early light  
Though she looked a little worried and weak  
She tried to pretend he wasn't drinkin' again  
But daddy left the proof on her cheek  
and I was only eight years old that summer  
And I always seemed to be in the way  
So I took myself down to the fair in town  
On Independence Day (McBride, 2001)

RUSH AND RUSH: BUMPER MUSIC IN CONSERVATIVE TALK RADIO  
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Well she lit up the sky that Fourth of July  
By the time that the firemen come  
They just put out the flames,  
and took down some names  
and sent me to the county home  
Now I ain't sayin' it's right or it's wrong  
but maybe it's the only way  
Talk about your revolution  
It's Independence Day (McBride, 2001)



LOOKS THAT KILL

Master of Puppets  
(Metallica, 1986)

Master of puppets I'm pulling your strings  
Twisting your mind and smashing your dreams  
Blinded by me, you can't see a thing  
Just call my name, 'cause I'll hear you scream



The Shortest Straw  
(Metallica, 1988c)

Shortest straw  
Challenge liberty  
Downed by law  
Live in infamy  
Rub you raw  
Witch-hunt riding through  
Shortest straw  
This shortest straw has been pulled for you



Chicago Sun Times on  
Metallica

Although most modern music bands are known to be politically liberal, Metallica seems to have some conservative leanings—their lead guitarist Kirk Hammett has called into Savage's show to say "We support what you're doing," and James Hetfield, Metallica's lead singer, reportedly despises liberals. ... [Hetfield] apparently hates Democrats more than he hates the rest of his bandmates.  
(DeRogatis, 2004)



Some people may find the following slide offensive!

RUSH AND RUSH: BUMPER MUSIC IN CONSERVATIVE TALK RADIO  
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## Savage attacks gay caller



Oh, you're one of the sodomites. You should only get AIDS and die, you pig. How's that? Why don't you see if you can sue me, you pig. You got nothing better than to put me down, you piece of garbage. You have got nothing to do today, go eat a sausage and choke on it. Get trichinosis. OK, do we have another nice caller here who's busy because he didn't have a nice night in the bathhouse who's angry at me today? Get me another one, put another sodomite on. No more calls out of — let's go to the next scene. I don't care about these bums. They mean nothing to me. They're all sausages. (*Democracy Now*, 2003)

## THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE



Simon and Garfunkel  
(1966)

- ...the words of the prophets are written on the subway walls, and tenement halls, and whispered in the sounds of silence

Rush (The Spirit of the Radio)

- For the words of the profits were written on the studio wall, concert hall, and echo with the sounds of salesmen



## CONCLUSION: THE SPIRIT OF THE RADIO REVISITED

## Finale

One likes to believe in the freedom of music,  
But glittering prizes and endless compromises  
Shatter the illusion of integrity (Peart, 1980b)



Thank you

rrepp@richardrepp.com  
<http://richardrepp.com>