

Chapter 2

From Elvis to the Beatles

Rock 'n' Rock becomes Rock

Sidebar: Populuxe

Pop historian Thomas Hine has coined the term populuxe to describe the period between 1955 to 1964. Also called the Atomic Age and the Push-button age, it was not only important that products were convenient; they also had to be modern and automatic. Cars had push-button transmissions and the atom logo was ubiquitous. Everything had to be new and disposable.

Googie architecture style with its boomerang and tail fins motives are typical of the period.

It has been pointed out that Disneyland is a good example of the aesthetics of the period. The division into four kingdoms; Frontierland, Adventureland, Fantasyland and Tomorrow-land, approximated the attitudes of the period. For instance, the neo-pioneer spirit translated to fads such as coon-skin caps, and interest in Daniel Boone and increased sales of early American furniture. Each of the kingdoms represented an aspect of the 1950's American dream; prosperity and affluence, hope for a better future, and Camelot.

The effect on teenagers was that they treasured everything that was new; new records, new transistor radios, new dances, new and disposable music.

The populuxe vision begins to fade in the early 1960's. The assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963 was a sure sign that the optimism of populuxe had vanished.

Billboard US Chart August 1960		
Title	Performer	Style
It's Now or Never	Elvis Presley	Pop
Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polka Dot Bikini	Brian Hyland (16)	Teen Idol
I'm Sorry	Brenda Lee (15)	Pop
Only The Lonely	Roy Orbison	Pop Ballad
Walk-Don't Run	Ventures	Proto-Surf
The Twist re-charts 1962	Chubby Checker (19)	Dance
Walkin' To New Orleans	Fats Domino	R &B cross-over
Tell Laura I Love Her	Ray Peterson	Pop
Volare	Bobby Rydell	Pop
Alley-Oop	Hollywood Argyles	Pop novelty
Everybody's Somebody's Fool	Connie Francis	Pop

Billboard US Chart September 1963		
Title	Performer	Style
Blue Velvet	Bobby Vinton	Teen Idol
My Boyfriend's Back	Angels	Girl Group Brill
If I Had a Hammer	Trini Lopez	Folk
Heat Wave	Martha and the Vandellas	Girl Group Motown
Hello Mudduh, Hello Fadduh	Allan Sherman	Pop novelty
Then He Kissed Me	Crystals	Girl Group Spector
Sally, Go 'Round the Roses	Jayettes	Girl Group
Surfer Girl	Beach Boys	Surf-Rock
Be My Baby	Ronettes	Girl Group Spector
Candy Girl	Four Seasons	Pop Brill
Blowin' In The Wind	Peter, Paul and Mary	Folk

The 1960's Dance Craze

In 1944, the U.S. levied a 30% federal excise tax on "dancing" night clubs. The Jitterbug was a popular dance with early rock and rollers and prominent on American Bandstand.

The Jitterbug (1944)

The Madison (1959)

The Twist (1960)

The Peppermint Twist (1961)

The Hully Gully (1960)

The Pony (1961)

The Watusi (1962)

Mashed Potato (1962)

The Loco-Motion (1962)

The Frug 1963)

The Hitchhike (1963)

The Monkey (1963)

The Swim (1964)

The Jerk (1966)

Early 1960's Rock Centers





The Chantels, “Maybe”, 1958



**The Shirelles
“Dedicated to the
One I Love” 1959**

The Brill Building (1958- through 1970's)

The Brill Building is located at 1619 Broadway in New York. In the 1940's it had housed composers from what was then known as Tin Pan Alley. Tin Pan Alley composers wrote for film, Broadway musicals, and the home sheet music trade. Their writing style became outdated in the mid 1950's. The changing music market brought difficult times for these songsmiths. Brill became more irrelevant as the 1950's came to an end.

Across the street from the Brill Building at 1650 Broadway was Aldon Music Publishers owned by Al Nevins and Don Kirshner. They were determined that they could return Brill to a center for writing and producing new pop music. With their guidance, Brill began collecting songwriters, arrangers and artists and began producing music for the emerging rock and roll market. It was the spirit of competition (and thin walls) that helped Brill composers and artists produce literally thousands of hits during this period. In the early 1960's there were over 160 music businesses located in the Brill Building; writers, publishers, music printers and promoters.

**The “Brill Building Sound” is an extension of the
Tin Pan Alley Songwriting tradition**

Brill Building Song-writers

Jerry Leiber and Michael Stoller

*Hound Dog, Jailhouse Rock, Yakety Yak, Love Potion #9,
Kansas City, Stand By Me*

Gerry Goffin and Carole King

*Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow,
Take Good Care Of My Baby, Up On The Roof*

Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil

You’ve Lost That Lovin’ Feeling, On Broadway

More Brill Building Composers

Ellie Greenwich and Jeff Barry

*Be My Baby, Chapel Of Love,
Do Wah Diddy Diddy, Leader of the Pack*

Neil Sedaka

Calendar Girl, Breaking Up Is Hard To Do

Burt Bacharach and Hal David

These Magic Moments, Wishin' and Hopin', Blue on Blue

Song Form (AABA)

Optional introduction

A=Verse: usually 8 bars, sometimes 16 bars

A=Verse: same musical idea, different lyrics

B=Bridge/Chorus/Refrain/Middle 8: contrasting musical idea

A=Verse: first musical idea, different lyrics

Ending; fade endings common

Typical Style Features:

- **Song form (Verse-Verse-Chorus-Verse) rather than the blues**
- **Danceable**
- **Short songs: 2 minutes, 30 seconds**
- **Well-produced, polished studio sound**
- **Violins and other orchestral instruments**
- **Simple, rhyming lyrics**
- **Backup vocals**

- **Insignificant back-beat**
- **No blues or rhythm and blues influence**
- **No twangy guitar, slap bass or honking horns**
- **No strong regional accents**

Phil Spector (1939-)

The “Tycoon of Teen,” Phil Spector is something of an enigma. At nineteen, he was active as a Brill Building producer. At thirty, he was a semi-retired recluse. In between those years he was known as one of the most creative, innovative producers in the history of pop music. He started Goldstar Studios in Los Angeles where he wrote, arranged, and produced for such groups as The Crystals, The Blossoms, Bobby Soxx and the Bluejeans, Darlene Love, and the Ronettes. He also produced cuts for the Righteous Brothers, Gene Pitney, Ike and Tina Turner, and Connie Francis.

Phil Spector is best known for his “Wall of Sound” concept: doubling and tripling instruments for a very dense, orchestrated sound. He frequently added additional instruments such as timpani. He also made heavy use of echo and other production techniques.

The 1970’s found him working with the Beatles on the *Let It Be* Album. Also, Spector worked on George Harrison’s *All Things Must Pass*, John Lennon’s *Imagine*, and the Ramones *End of the Century* album.



The Wrecking Crew circa 1962. Notable members included Carole Kaye bass, Tommy Tedesco guitar, Hal Blaine drums, Leon Russell piano and Glen Campbell guitar



Phil Spector: “Wall of Sound”
Doubling, and tripling instruments for a heavy, saturated sound.
Orchestrated, written-out arrangements.

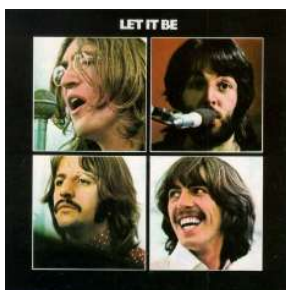
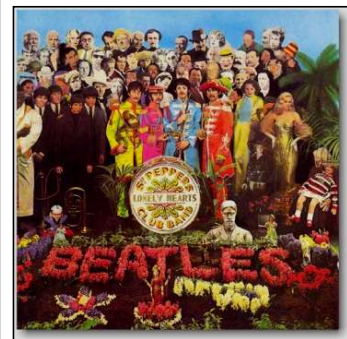
Beatles release Rubber Soul Album
(Dec 1965) The album is more introspective and uses non-rock instruments



Brian Wilson, influenced by Spector’s production style, composes Pet Sounds (1966) It marks the beginning of **Album Oriented Rock**

The Beatles:
Sgt Pepper’s Lonely Hearts
Club Band(1967)

An eclectic concept album.
It redefined the boundaries of
Pop music



The Beatles: Let It Be (1970)
The Beatles “swan song” produced by Phil Spector

Motown (1961 through Late '60's)

After establishing himself as a prominent Detroit songwriter in the late 1950's, Berry Gordy, Jr. borrowed eight hundred dollars from his sister to start his own recording studio in Detroit which he named Hitsville U.S.A. Gordy capitalized on the fact that Detroit had a huge untapped black music market without a viable black recording label or record production facility. Aided by a great studio band, the Funk Brothers, the studio released its recordings under the Motown, Tamla, Soul, and Gordy record labels.

Motown songs were mass-produced and designed to be hits. Motown groups developed highly polished stage routines and elaborate vocal harmony. Professional, in-house songwriting teams and choreographers produced groups in a start-to-finish product. By 1967, Motown was the largest black-owned business in America.



Detroit had the fourth largest black population in America without a viable label to galvanize the market.

Motown was the racial integration of Pop music in the 1960's

Berry Gordy, Jr. borrowed \$800 from his sister to start a recording studio named **Hitsville, U.S.A.**

By the late 1960's it was the largest black owned business in America

The studio was open 22 hours a day





Holland Dozier Holland's Greatest Hits

Heat Wave

How Sweet It Is (Being Loved By You)

Baby, I Need Your Loving

I Can't Help Myself

Reach Out, I'll Be There

Standing In The Shadow Of Love

This Old Heart of Mine

Where Did Our Love Go

Baby Love

Come See About Me

Stop, In The Name Of Love

Back In His Arms Again

I Hear A Symphony

You Can't Hurry Love

You Keep Me Hangin' On

HEAVEN MUST HAVE SENT YOU

Stax Records (Memphis, 1959-1968)

Stax Records, also called Soulsville, U.S.A., was the birthplace of soul music in the 1960's. Founded by brother and sister Jim STewart and Marge AXton, Stax captured the southern soul market.

Unlike Motown's written-down arrangements, the Stax house band, Booker T and the MG's used head arrangements (skeletal outlines with only chords and melody). Heavy use of the delayed back-beat and honking horns became a STAX signature.



Otis Redding



Sam and Dave

The Stax House band was
Booker T and the MG's
They recorded many
instrumentals
Here's one that we've all heard:
Green Onions



ISAAC HAYES AND DAVID PORTER



Stax Songwriters

How is the Motown production style different from Stax?

- 1.Motown uses written, scored arrangements**
- 2.Motown makes use of orchestral instruments; strings, flutes, etc.**
- 3.The Motown beat pattern often uses “straight-four” rhythm**
- 4.Motown uses choreographed and highly polished stage acts**

How is the Motown production style different from Stax?

- 1. Stax uses “head arrangements” or lead sheets**
- 2. There is very little use of orchestral instruments**
- 3. The songs have an improvised feel**
- 4. The rhythm section emphasizes the delayed back-beat sound**
- 5. Big horn sections**

It doesn't look like much, but some of the biggest soul hits of the era came out of this studio. Artists included Wilson Pickett, Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, and The Allman Brothers Band. Fame released much of its work under the Atlantic Label.



Surf-Rock (Early '60's)

Popularized by the 1959 Film Gidget, the California surfing craze in the early 1960's produced its own subculture: more surfing films, California surfboard manufacturers, "woodies," (wood paneled cars) Pendleton shirts, and its own music. Surf-rock became the first "life style" rock. Two distinct styles of surf-rock emerged: industry driven vocal surf-rock bands like Jan and Dean and the Beach Boys, and hundreds of garage-band types playing instrumental surf-rock.

Vocal Surf-Rock

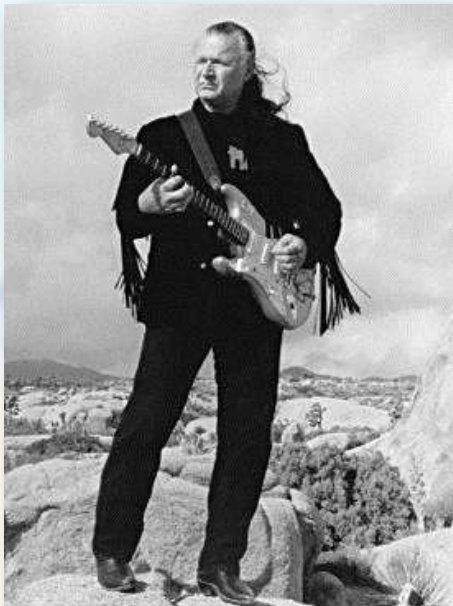
Vocal Surf rock had a commercial, sweet sound. Bands often used vocal harmony. Many of the songs used a falsetto singing style. Lyrics were about the beach, girls, hot rods, and the perfect wave. The surf-rock "sound" was brought into the mainstream of pop by the Beach Boys by including broader subject matter with songs such as "In My Room" and "God Only Knows".

The Instrumental Surf-Rock

The self-proclaimed father of instrumental surf-rock is Dick Dale. Influenced by “twangy” guitarists such as Duane Eddy and Link Wray, Dale claims to have started playing surf rock in 1958. Dick Dale was soon followed by legions of similar instrumental surf rock bands. The style became popular as far away as London. (Keith Moon, drummer for The Who had previously been in a London Surf rock band)

Mostly dance music, the instrumental surf rock has a hypnotic quality with an aloof, cool sound. The style has several trademark riffs; “Spatty” reverb bass, descending chromatic bass tremolo, obligatory drum solos, thin, clean guitar solos.

Later, the style came to include the raunchier aspects of British invasion rock acts such as the Rolling Stones. Around 1965, as thousands of would-be guitarists start bands, the style becomes crude and amateurish and is referred to as fraternity rock or garage band.



Dick Dale

Dick Dale (1937-2019) plays guitar left-handed and upside down. He claims to have invented surf-rock in 1958.

This makes bass melodies more obvious and easier to play.

***Misirlou* is an example of his trademark tremolo pick style repeated notes**

***Misirlou* 1962**

***Pipeline* 1963, by the Chantays**

Dick Dale and The Deltones

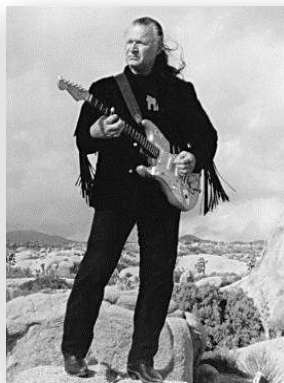
The acknowledged “king of the surf guitar”, Dick Dale started playing surf guitar in the late 1950’s. His playing style is influenced by his upside-down backwards left-handed guitar technique.

His musical influenced were the drumming style of Gene Krupa and flamenco guitar playing. His biggest hit was Miserlou used in any number of movies, television shows and commercials.

The Significance of Instrumental Surf-Rock



Link Wray & His
Raymen
experimented with
distortion



Dick Dale



London blues bands



1960's Surf Rock Bands

From Surf-Rock to Garage Band

- Massive importation of cheap, affordable electric guitars in the early 1960s
 - Baby boomers, mostly boys, bought guitars
 - Teenagers started surf-rock **bands** in droves
 - Surf-rock was easy to play and required little musical instruction
 - Guitar amplifiers were under-powered and not loud enough
 - Under-powered amplifiers were pushed to the limits creating distortion. They bought bigger amplifiers.
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- Bands usually only had one amplifier. The guitars were always louder than the singers.
 - Singers, in competition with guitars, started screaming or getting too close to the microphone.
 - It's easier to sound "bad" than "good"
 - "We're trying to sound this way"



**1964-1965
American Garage
Bands**



**1966 - Psychedelic
Garage bands**



**1967 Detroit
Proto-punk bands**



New York Art Rock



L.A. Surf Punks



New York Punk

The Beach Boys (1961)

Using the 1950's vocal group the Four Freshman as their vocal model, the Beach Boys (Brian, Dennis, and Carl Wilson, Mike Love and Al Jardine) began their career at the Ritchie Valens Memorial Concert, in Long Beach, CA. in December 1961. After co-founding vocal surf-rock with Jan and Dean, they went on to expand the rock genre with their *Pet Sounds* album (1966), a highly influential concept album unfortunately upstaged by the Beatles soon-to-be *Sgt Pepper* Album (1967).

They used elaborate vocal harmony and unexpected, ingenious instrumentation in many of their songs. Their hits include "I Get Around", "Help Me Rhonda", "Barbara Ann", "God Only Knows", and "Good Vibrations".



**The Beach Boys in their early years.
Their vocal style is based on the Four Freshmen.**



Why the Pet Sounds album matters:

The album contains no surf-rock based lyrics

It is not designed around the “45 single” hit

The songs are not primarily dance music

The songs are orchestrated with many non-rock instruments

The songs feature more intricate harmony and counterpoint

The songs are longer and more serious

The album anticipates the music for listening vs. dancing era

The album is a song cycle or concept album about growing up