

## CHAPTER TEN: “PAPA’S GOT A BRAND NEW BAG”: COUNTRY, SOUL, URBAN FOLK, AND THE RISE OF ROCK, 1960s

### Chapter Outline

#### I. Country and Western and R&B Crossovers

A. Much of the significantly popular R&B and country music did not cross over into the mainstream pop market during the late 1950s and 1960s.

B. Artists and records that appealed to select or regional audiences were much less likely to find their way onto the pop charts than those that managed to cut across such distinctions.

C. During the 1960s, country musicians opted for a new, sophisticated approach to the vocal presentation and instrumental arrangement of country music.

1. This approach came to be known as “countryopolitan”—a fusion of “country” and “cosmopolitan.”

2. Nashville was at the center of this development, and the style was also often called the “Nashville sound.”

#### II. Patsy Cline and the Nashville Sound

##### A. Patsy Cline (1932–63)

1. Began her career as a hit maker in 1957 with her recording of “Walkin’ after Midnight,” which was successful on both the country and pop charts

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2. Had two big hits in 1961, “I Fall to Pieces” and “Crazy,” which were successful on both the country and pop charts

**B. Listening: “Crazy”**

1. Cline’s songs reflected a particular sensibility:
  - a) Ballads of broad appeal—not “teen” records
  - b) Her vocal style, while sophisticated, still retained hints of rural bluesy inflections.
    - (1) Crooning backup vocals sounded like pop music.
    - (2) High-register piano sounded like honky-tonk country music.
    - (3) She was a significant presence in pop and country until her premature death in a plane crash in 1963.

**III. Soul Music**

- A. The term “rhythm & blues” disappeared from pop music vocabulary during the early 1960s and was replaced by the term “soul.”
- B. Soul became the symbol of the black community’s effort to achieve cultural definition during the 1960s.
- C. Stylistically, soul music combined the following elements:

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1. Gospel singing

- a) High, soaring vocals
- b) Highly decorated, emotional vocal techniques
- c) Call and response between lead singer and backup singers
- d) Smooth, choreographed dance movements
- e) Hand clapping

2. Rock 'n' roll

- a) Drumming patterns
- b) Rebellious attitudes
- c) Songs directed at younger audiences

3. Rhythm & blues

- a) Lyric style
- b) Dialect
- c) Instrumentation
- d) Blues form

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IV. Ray Charles (born Ray Charles Robinson, 1930–2004)

A. Born in Albany, Georgia

1. Blind from age six
2. Originally got into music in Seattle during the 1940s, leading a jazz trio in the clubs on Jackson Street
3. The sound of his trio was based on the sound of the Nat King Cole trio.
4. He signed with Atlantic Records and scored several R&B hits in 1954.

B. Charles’s recordings stood out from other R&B hits.

1. Played the piano with unmatched brilliance
2. Used the best available studio musicians to accompany him
3. Demanded the best out of everyone involved in his recordings; the consummate professional, a perfectionist

C. Although Charles was a constant presence on the R&B charts during the 1950s, major crossover success eluded him until 1959.

1. “What’d I Say” (Number Six pop, Number One R&B, 1959)

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2. His first Number One pop hit was his version of the old Tin Pan Alley standard “Georgia on My Mind,” which also made it to Number Three on the R&B chart.

D. Charles recorded an album of soul interpretations of country songs in 1962, *Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music*.

E. The “Genius of Soul”

1. Charles was a fine songwriter, having written R&B classics like “I’ve Got a Woman” and “Hallelujah I Love Her So.”
2. Highly skilled arranger
3. Exceptionally fine keyboard player, fluent in jazz as well as mainstream pop
4. Outstanding vocalist, distinctive timbre

F. Charles is now widely acknowledged as the first important soul artist, and his work had incalculable influence on James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Curtis Mayfield, Otis Redding, Sly Stone, and innumerable others.

V. James Brown and Aretha Franklin

A. James Brown (1933–2006)

1. Known as the “Godfather of Soul” and “Soul Brother Number One”

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2. From the late 1960s through the disco of the 1970s, from the beginnings of rap to hip-hop in the 1990s, no other single musician influenced the sound and style of black music like James Brown.
3. Rough, unrestrained vocals; relentless rhythms; active, open textures
4. His first record, “Please, Please, Please” (Number Five R&B, 1956), which Brown wrote himself, is indicative:
  - a) Although the song is in the general format of a strophic 1950s R&B ballad, Brown’s vocals cling obsessively to repetitions of individual words (e.g., “please” or even a simple “I”).
  - b) Sometimes, the activity of an entire strophe will center on the syncopated, violently accented reiterations of a single syllable.
5. “Say It Loud—I’m Black and I’m Proud”
  - a) Reached Number One on the R&B charts and Number Ten on the pop charts in 1968
  - b) Is, for all intents and purposes, a *rap* number, a striking anticipation of important black music to come

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6. Brown’s records are sampled by hip-hop artists more than those of any other musician—which is not surprising, given his achievement as a pioneer of rap style.

7. Brown exulted and excelled in live performance; his acrobatic physicality and remarkable charisma added great excitement to his vocal improvisations.

**B. Listening: “Papa’s Got a Brand New Bag”**

1. Brown’s most successful pop record—Number Nine on the pop charts

2. Established the mature “James Brown sound”

a) Riffs in brass

b) Syncopation

c) Percussive style of playing guitar, bass, and brass

d) Call and response

e) Twelve-bar blues form broken up with an eight-bar bridge

f) Complex interlocking polyrhythms

**C. Aretha Franklin (b. 1942)**

1. The “Queen of Soul”

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2. Daughter of 1950s evangelist and singer Reverend C. L. Franklin
3. Sang in her father’s gospel church choir
4. Was discovered by John Hammond and signed a record contract with Columbia Records in 1960
  - a) Columbia (against Hammond’s wishes) recorded jazzy, popular Tin Pan Alley songs.
  - b) Franklin was let go by Columbia in 1966 after failing to draw much interest.
5. Signed by Atlantic Records
  - a) Atlantic producers Ahmet Ertegun and Jerry Wexler encouraged Franklin to record strong material well suited to her particular voice.
  - b) Ertegun and Wexler teamed her with the Stax/Volt production team and musicians to record gospel-laced soul music.
6. Beginning in 1967, Franklin produced an extraordinary and virtually uninterrupted stream of hit records over five years, including thirteen million-sellers and thirteen Top 10 pop hits.
7. Overwhelming power and intensity of vocal delivery

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8. Wrote or co-wrote a significant portion of her repertoire
9. Powerful keyboard player
10. Franklin not only symbolized female empowerment in the sound of her records but also actualized empowerment in the process of making them.

**D. Listening: “Respect”**

1. Composed by Otis Redding
2. Cover of a 1965 hit by Otis Redding
3. Number One pop and Number One R&B in 1967
4. Each strophe of the song builds effectively to the crucial word “respect,” at which point the backing group joins in call and response with Franklin.

**VI. Urban Folk Music in the 1960s: Bob Dylan**

**A. Folk music is usually defined as**

1. the music of the common people and
2. expressing the feelings of the people of a particular region.

**B. The lyrics hold more significance than the music, although the melodies of some folk songs are very beautiful.**

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C. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, interest in folk music grew.

1. Elvis and early rock 'n' roll fans were maturing; rock was juvenile.
2. Folk music offered a more serious look at society and culture.
3. Folk music encouraged group singing—a new way to participate.
4. Protest folk songs offered lyrics that were relevant to newly discovered social and political ideals of maturing rock 'n' roll audiences.

D. Bob Dylan (b. 1941): First poet of the mass media

1. Born Robert Zimmerman in Duluth, Minnesota
2. Took his stage name from his favorite poet, Dylan Thomas
3. Traveled to New York in 1960; settled in to the coffeehouse folk music scene in Greenwich Village
4. Stood out from his contemporaries in folk music for two basic reasons:
  - a) The remarkable quality of his original songs, which reflected from the beginning a strong gift for poetic imagery and metaphor and a frequently searing intensity of feeling, sometimes moderated by a quirky sense of irony

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- b) His rough-hewn, occasionally aggressive vocal, guitar, and harmonica style, which demonstrated strong affinities for rural models in blues and earlier country music

E. Listening: “Blowin’ in the Wind” performed by Bob Dylan

1. Nasal, cutting, harsh vocal style
2. Melody—simple, functional, and immediately memorable setting for the words
3. Strophic form
4. Dylan’s syncopation of the lyrics adds rhythmic weight to the most pointed words in the song.

F. Listening: “Blowin’ in the Wind” performed by Peter, Paul, and Mary

1. The folk trio performance has a sense of touching serenity and simplicity.
2. The various questions posed by the lyrics are sung by different numbers and combinations of voices, at various levels of intensity, while the answer is always provided by Mary’s gentle solo sound.
3. Their performance lacks the syncopation and rhythmic angularity heard in Dylan’s recording.

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G. 1965 was the pivotal year in Bob Dylan’s career.

1. Dylan’s song “Mr. Tambourine Man” was covered by the fledgling California rock group the Byrds

a) Their truncated version of “Mr. Tambourine Man” soared to Number One in June 1965, becoming the first folk-rock hit.

2. Dylan entered the recording studio with a rock band to cut his own breakthrough single, “Like a Rolling Stone.”

a) Reached Number Two on the charts

3. In July 1965, Dylan appeared at the famous Newport Folk Festival with an electric band and was booed off the stage by folk purists.

H. Suddenly, it was all right—expected, even—for rock ’n’ roll to be as “adult” as its baby boomer audience was now becoming itself, and rock ’n’ roll abruptly grew up into rock.

I. Listening: “Like a Rolling Stone”

1. Composed and performed by Bob Dylan (1965)

2. The timbre and overall sound were unique for the time

a) Two keyboard instruments, the piano and organ, dominate the texture, rather than guitars, bass, and drums.

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3. Dylan’s vocal cuts aggressively through this thick instrumental texture like a knife.

4. This song is one of a handful of watershed recordings in the history of American popular music.

a) It effectively put an end to previous restrictions on length, subject matter, and poetic diction that had been the controlling influence on pop records.

b) After the huge acceptance of this song, nothing was the same again.

5. Form

a) Strophic verse-chorus pattern

b) Strophes are extremely long, giving the song a sense of great intensity and expansion.

c) The verse portions of the song are forty bars long. The chorus varies in length (twenty bars in the first chorus and twenty-four in successive choruses).

d) At six minutes, the song was by far the longest 45 r.p.m. pop single ever released up to that time.

J. Simon and Garfunkel

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1. When folk rock hit the scene in midyear and Bob Dylan went electric, Simon and Garfunkel’s producer, Tom Wilson, turned to one of Simon’s original compositions, “The Sound of Silence.”

a) Overdubbed a rock band accompaniment of electric guitars, bass, and drums onto the original recording

b) Increased the tempo very slightly

c) Changed the title to “The Sounds of Silence”

d) Released it as a single

e) Did this all without Simon or Garfunkel’s prior knowledge or permission

2. It became a Number One pop hit in 1966.

**K. The counterculture and psychedelic rock**

1. The explosive entrance of folk rock into American popular culture coincided with the development of innovative approaches to rock ’n’ roll

a) The maturation into early adulthood of the baby boomer audience

b) The maturation of many of those actually making the music

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2. This was also a period of increasing political restlessness and ferment in the United States.

a) America’s engagement in the Vietnamese civil war was steadily escalating.

b) The civil rights movement was challenging the persistence of racial segregation and inequality on the home front.

c) The youth audience for pop culture was directly implicated in the politics of the Vietnam War, as American men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six were eligible to be drafted into the armed forces.

d) Antiwar groups and organizations began to multiply, attracting large numbers of young—especially college-aged—men and women.

e) In addition, a significant number of young people were involved in various ways with the many organizations, demonstrations, and legal initiatives that formed the civil rights movement.

3. In the later 1960s, the meeting of the culture surrounding new rock music with the political and social discontents that largely defined the era

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resulted in a famous, if slippery, phenomenon: the emergence of what was called the counterculture.

L. Changing the world: The Beatles

1. *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*

- a) Clearly and cleverly organized performance that reflects an awareness of, and actually addresses, its audience
- b) Sold eight million copies and remained on *Billboard’s* album charts for more than three years
- c) Redirected attention from the single-song recording to the record album
- d) None of the songs on the album were released as singles.
- e) It was the first album to present itself to the public as a complete and unified marketing package with a distinctive and interrelated collection of parts.

VII. San Francisco Rock: Jefferson Airplane, Janis Joplin, and the Grateful Dead

A. During the late 1960s, an “alternative” rock music scene established itself in San Francisco.

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1. “Psychedelic rock” encompassed a variety of styles and musical influences, including folk rock, blues, “hard rock,” Latin music, and Indian classical music.
2. San Francisco’s psychedelic music scene was focused on the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, center of the hippie movement.

B. Jefferson Airplane was the first nationally successful band to emerge out of the San Francisco psychedelic scene.

1. Founded in 1965, the Airplane was originally a semiacoustic folk-rock band, performing blues and songs by Bob Dylan.
2. Along with the Quicksilver Messenger Service and the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane was one of the original triumvirate of San Francisco “acid rock” bands, playing at the Matrix Club (center of the San Francisco alternative nightclub scene), larger concert venues such as the Avalon Ballroom and Fillmore, and at communal outdoor events such as happenings and be-ins.
3. The biggest celebrity in the group was vocalist Grace Slick (b. 1939), who—along with Janis Joplin—was one of the most important female musicians on the San Francisco scene.
4. Jefferson Airplane were introduced to a national audience by their recording of “Somebody to Love.”

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- a) Reached Number Five on the national pop charts in 1967
- b) Exemplifies the acid rock approach
- c) Dense musical texture
- d) Plenty of volume and lots of electronic distortion

**C. Janis Joplin (1943–70)**

1. The most successful white blues singer of the 1960s
2. Born in Port Arthur, Texas
3. Came to San Francisco in the mid-1960s and joined a band called Big Brother and the Holding Company
4. Big Brother’s appearance at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967 led to a contract with Columbia Records, eager to cash in on RCA’s success with Jefferson Airplane, and on the growing national audience for acid rock.
5. The band’s 1968 album *Cheap Thrills*—graced with a cover design by the underground comic book artist Robert Crumb—reached Number One on the pop charts and included a Number Twelve hit single (the song “Piece of My Heart,” a cover version of a 1960s R&B hit by Erma Franklin).

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6. Joplin’s full-tilt singing style and directness of expression were inspired by blues singers such as Bessie Smith and by the R&B recordings of Big Mama Thornton.
7. She pushed her voice unmercifully, reportedly saying that she would prefer a short, exceptional career to a long career as an unexceptional performer.
8. One of Joplin’s most moving performances is her rendition of the George and Ira Gershwin composition “Summertime,” written in 1935 for the American folk opera *Porgy and Bess*.

**D. The Grateful Dead**

1. Their career spanned more than three decades.
2. “The Dead,” as they are known to their passionately devoted followers, grew out of a series of bands involving Jerry Garcia (1942–95), a guitarist, banjoist, and singer who had played in various urban folk groups during the early 1960s.
3. This shifting collective of musicians gradually took firmer shape and in 1967 was christened the Grateful Dead (a phrase Garcia liked from an ancient Egyptian prayer book).
4. The Dead helped pioneer the transition from urban folk music to folk rock to acid rock.

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- a) Adopting electric instruments
  - b) Living communally in the Haight-Ashbury district
  - c) Participating in public LSD parties (“acid tests”) before the drug was outlawed
5. The Dead were the quintessential “live” rock band, specializing in long jams that wandered through diverse musical styles and grooves and typically terminated in unexpected places.
6. The influence of folk music—prominent on some of their early recordings—was usually just below the surface, and a patient listener may expect to hear a kind of “sketch-map” of American popular music—including folk, blues, R&B, and country music, as well as rock ’n’ roll—with occasional gestures in the direction of African or Asian music.
7. “Deadheads”
- a) The devoted fans of the Grateful Dead; a social phenomenon unparalleled in the history of American popular music
  - b) Traveled incessantly in psychedelically decorated buses and vans
  - c) Set up camp in every town along the tour

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- d) Generally pursued a peaceful mode of coexistence with local authorities
  - e) Hardcore Deadheads lived for their band.
8. Jerry Garcia died in 1995, and the remaining members of the band have gone their separate ways.
- a) The remaining band members periodically assemble to hit the road together, with their huge entourage in tow.
9. In the span of more than three decades, the band placed only one single in the Top 40 (“Touch of Gray,” a Number Nine pop hit in 1987).
10. Their albums continue to sell hundreds of thousands of copies to their loyal fans.

**VIII. Guitar Heroes: Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton**

**A. Jimi Hendrix (1942–70)**

- 1. The most original, inventive, and influential guitarist of the rock era
- 2. The most prominent African American rock musician of the late 1960s
- 3. His early experience as a guitarist was gained through touring with R&B bands.

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4. In 1966, he moved to London, where at the suggestion of the producer Chas Chandler, he joined up with two English musicians, the bassist Noel Redding and the drummer Mitch Mitchell; they eventually formed a band called the Jimi Hendrix Experience.

5. The Experience was first seen in America in 1967 at the Monterey Pop Festival, where Hendrix stunned the audience with his flamboyant performance style.

6. Jimi Hendrix’s creative employment of feedback, distortion, and sound-manipulating devices like the wah-wah pedal and fuzz box, coupled with his fondness for aggressive dissonance and incredibly loud volume, represented important additions to the musical techniques and materials available to guitarists.

7. Hendrix was a sound sculptor; he seemed at times to be consciously exploring the borderline between traditional conceptions of music and noise, a pursuit that links him in certain ways to composers exploring electronic sounds and media in the world of art music at around the same time.

a) Playing the American national anthem at the Woodstock Festival in 1969, Hendrix soared into an elaborate electronic fantasy between each phrase of the melody, imitating “the rockets’ red glare, the bombs bursting in air.”

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b) These effects can be heard on the first album by the Experience, *Are You Experienced?* (1967), and particularly on its famous opening cut, “Purple Haze.”

(1) “Purple Haze” is a strophic song with clear roots in blues-based melodic figures, harmonies, and chord progressions.

(2) The impact of the lyrics, with their reference to “blowin’ my mind” and lines like “scuse me while I kiss the sky,” made Hendrix an iconic figure for the counterculture, as well as a role model for rock musicians.

**B. Eric Clapton (b. 1945)**

1. The most influential of the young British guitarists who emerged during the mid-1960s
2. Influenced by the blues recordings of Robert Johnson and B. B. King
3. A member of the Yardbirds, a band that had little pop success but served as a training ground for young guitarists, including Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page.
4. From 1966 to 1968, Clapton played in the band Cream, featuring the drummer Ginger Baker and the bassist Jack Bruce.

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5. Cream, the first in a line of rock “power trios” that formed during the late 1960s and early 1970s, exerted a major influence on early heavy metal music.

6. Cream took the United States by storm in the late 1960s, selling millions of LPs in the space of three years and placing two singles in the Top 10.

C. Listening: “Crossroads”

1. Written by Robert Johnson; performed by Cream; recorded in 1968

2. In stylistic terms, Cream’s performance is more indebted to postwar urban blues and R&B than to the Delta.

3. The performance opens with Clapton singing a few strophes of Johnson’s song, then launching into an escalating series of improvised twelve-bar choruses.

4. Baker and Bruce play constantly throughout, driving Clapton along to higher and higher emotional peaks.

5. Clapton’s approach involves not only the application of highly developed technical skills but also the use of electronic feedback, which enables him to sustain long notes and create flowing streams of shorter notes.