



More Than Just The Music: Essays in Lyric Analysis and Topical Identification

By B. Lee Cooper, Frank W. Hoffmann, Stephen D. Briggs, William L. Schurk

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This investigation of public memory and popular music assesses sound recordings from a thematic perspective. Lyric analysis is utilized to identify and interpret several persistent topics that resonate in the words of hundreds of popular recordings. The specific topics highlighted in this study include answer songs, bridges, bees, Christmas recordings, coffee, obesity, tears and weeping, technological innovations, teenage imagery, and the Vietnam War. Thematic diversity prevails. As the audio lens provides numerous lyrical snapshot of American life, each chapter in this volume becomes a topical gallery.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

B. Lee Cooper is a freelance writer and popular music critic. Over the past 40 years he has been a professor of history and American culture, a dean of students, a provost and vice president for academic affairs, and a university president. He holds degrees from Bowling Green State University (B.S., 1964), Michigan State University (M.A., 1965), Ohio State University (Ph.D., 1971), and Newman University (D.H.L., 2009). He also studied at the Institute for Educational Management (I.E.M., 1980) at Harvard University. Dr. Cooper has an avid interest in 20th Century American popular music. He collects blues, doo-wop, novelty, rockabilly, and rock 'n' roll recordings. His scholarly pursuits in popular music include bibliography, discography, lyric analysis, song theme identification, and biographical studies. Dr. Cooper has authored more than 500 book and record reviews and over 150 articles that have appeared in 40 different scholarly journals and music magazines. He has also published 15 books, including *A RESOURCE GUIDE TO THEMES IN CONTEMPORARY SONG LYRICS, 1950-1985* (Greenwood Press, 1986), *ROCK MUSIC IN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE -- 3 Volumes* (Haworth, 1995, 1997, 1999), *THE POPULAR MUSIC HANDBOOK* (Libraries Unlimited, 2004), and *NEW ORLEANS MUSIC: LEGACY AND SURVIVAL* (Routledge, 2008). In 1983 he received the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award for excellence in music research after publication of *IMAGES OF AMERICAN SOCIETY IN POPULAR MUSIC* (Nelson-Hall, 1982). Dr. Cooper is currently President and CEO of Popular Music Research, Ltd., a voluntary association of scholars and teachers who assist young writers with music-related projects.

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