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Rock and roll's first decade - - a history and a claim

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Rock and Roll's First Decade

A History and a Claim

NOTE



Rock and roll's source

- Alan Freed's "river of music which has absorbed many streams . . . all contributing to the big beat"
 - Ragtime
 - Jump Blues of the '40s
 - Gospel
 - Jazz
 - Blues
 - Rhythm and Blues
 - Country
- A stew (meat, vegetables, bay leaf) of different types of music
- Rock continues to roll along, add ingredients, evolve
 - Hip-hop; sampling



Key Words: Rhythm and blues; big beat

- Louis Jordan, top R&B artist of the 1940s
 - Is You Is or Is You Ain't (Ma Baby) 1944
 - **Choo Choo Ch'Boogie** 1946 18 weeks at R&B #1; reached #7 on pop charts
 - Ain't Nobody Here but Us Chickens 1946 R&B #1
 - Saturday Night Fish Fry 1949 R&B #1
- Cab Calloway
 - The Honeydripper 1946 #3 R&B
 - Minnie the Moocher in The Blues Brothers movie
- Lionel Hampton
 - Hey! Ba-Ba-Re-Bop 1946 #1 25 weeks R&B; #9 pop



Additional early R&B artists setting the stage

- Arthur “Big Boy” Crudup
 - **That’s All Right** 1946 re-released 1949 as RCA’s first R&B 45
- 2017 Rock Hall of Fame Inductee Sister Rosetta Tharpe
 - **Up Above My Head** 1948 R&B #6
- John Lee Hooker
 - Boogie Chillen 1949 R&B #1
- The Treniers
 - “Raucous stage show anticipated rock ‘n’ roll in the early ‘50s” according to Joel Whitburn’s book Top R&B Singles 1942-1988
- Johnny Otis
 - Greek American band leader and composer in Los Angeles



Other influences in the late '40s, early '50s

- Technology
 - Les Paul and the development of the electric guitar
 - Les Paul and multi-track recording
 - The transistor in late '40s
- The 45-rpm record from RCA in 1949
 - Favored format for teens in the '50s
- The transistor radio in the '50s
 - Billions sold in the '60s and '70s
- Guitar manufacturers
 - Gibson, Fender, Gretsch, others



NOTE

Rock and Roll emerges

- The first rock and roll record ?
 - **Rocket 88** 1951 #1 R&B 5 weeks
 - Considered by some to be the first rock and roll recording
 - By Jackie Brentson with His Delta Cats
 - Brentson was credited rather than saxophonist Ike Turner and his band
 - Recorded at Sam Phillips' studio in Memphis
 - Phillips later becomes a central figure as owner of Sun Records



Early 1950s rock pioneers

- The Dominoes Sixty Minute Man 1951 14 weeks at R&B #1
- Lloyd Price **Lawdy Miss Clawdy** 1952 R&B #1
- Big Mama Thornton **Hound Dog** 1953 #1
 - Her only R&B chart hit reached #1 on Juke Box and Best Seller charts
 - Backed by “Kansas City Bill” Orchestra (aka Johnny Otis who hit with Willie and the Hand Jive 1958)
- Hank Ballard and the Midnighters
Work with Me Annie 1954 R&B #1
 - Later wrote and had the original recording of The Twist 1960 Billboard #29



1955 and rockin' 'round the clock

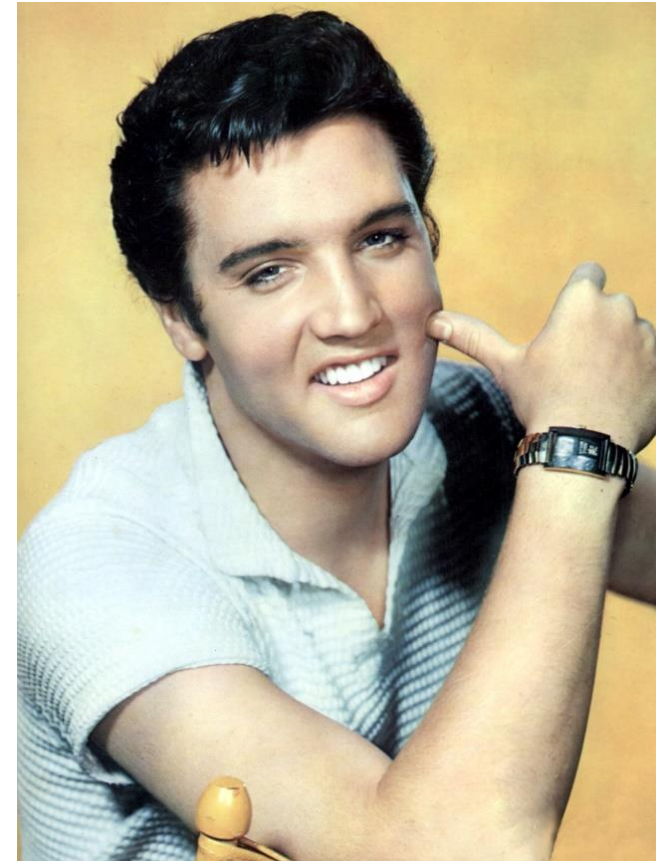
- Bill Haley and His Comets
 - **Rock Around the Clock** May 1955 Billboard #1 8 weeks
 - Considered by Fred Bronson in his Book of Number One Hits to be the first rock and roll record
- Followed at #1 on Billboard Best Seller charts by 8 pop artists
 - Mitch Miller **The Yellow Rose of Texas** 6 weeks
 - The Four Aces Love Is a Many Splendor Thing 2 weeks
 - Dean Martin Memories Are Made of This 5 weeks
 - Tennessee Ernie Ford Sixteen Tons 7 weeks (also #1 country hit)
 - Roger Williams, Nelson Riddle, Kay Starr, Les Baxter



Rock takes off

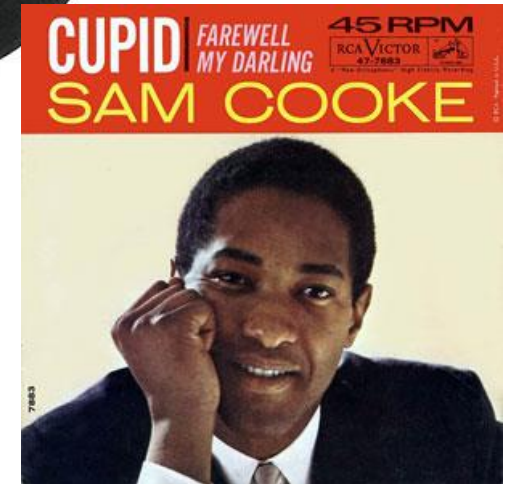
- Elvis Presley records his first song at Sun Records in Memphis
 - That's All Right Mama 1954 (Arthur Crudup's R&B tune also recorded in '54 by Marty Robbins and in 1963 by the Beatles)
 - Elvis has his first #1 hit April 21, 1956 with **Heartbreak Hotel** 8 weeks at Billboard #1
- Sun Records' Million Dollar Quartet
 - Brought together by Sam Phillips
 - December 1956
 - Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Elvis Presley
 - Blends country, rockabilly and pounding piano styles

NOTE



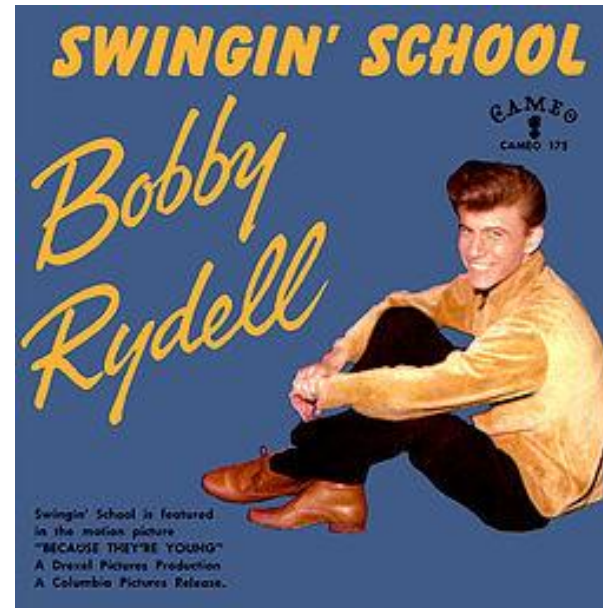
Rock becomes firmly established

- The Crickets That'll Be the Day 1957 #1
- Everly Brothers **Bye Bye Love** 1957
 - #2 Billboard; #1 on country charts; #5 R&B
- Sam Cooke You Send Me 1957 R&B #1; Billboard #1
 - Born in Clarksdale, Mississippi, home of the blues
 - Sang with the Soul Stirrers gospel group in Chicago
 - 9 Top 40 hits in the 1950s, 17 through Summer 1962
- Lloyd Price Stagger Lee 1959 R&B #1; Billboard #1



Where the boys are

- Teen idols
 - Frankie Avalon, Fabian, Bobby Rydell
 - Few women stars 1955-59
 - 62 #1 hits in the late 1950s
 - Only three women hit #1
 - Kay Starr Rock and Roll Waltz 1956 (where she sang about catching her parents trying to one-two-three, one-two-three to a rock and roll song), Gogi Grant The Wayward Wind 1956, Debbie Reynolds Tammy 1957



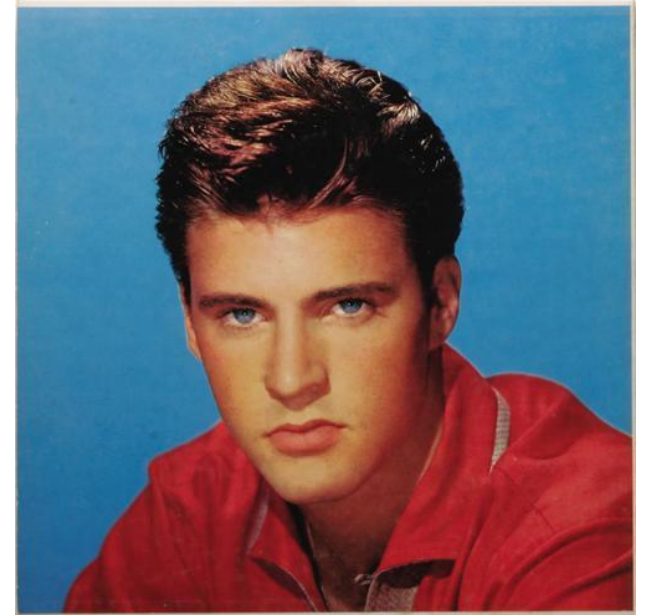
The night the music died

- Plane crash on February 3, 1959
- A major event in rock history
- Kills Buddy Holly of the Crickets, Richie Valens, the Big Bopper
- Provides opportunity for Bobby Vee in Moorhead, Minnesota
 - 14 Top 40 hits
 - **Devil or Angel** 1960 #6 was his first hit



Influence of television

- Rock artists on the Ed Sullivan Show on Sunday night
 - Elvis Presley
 - Connie Francis **Everybody's Somebody's Fool** 1960 #1
 - Paul Anka, Jackie Wilson, Bo Diddley, others
- Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet
 - 1950s through the fall of 1966
 - Ricky Nelson's **Travelin' Man** 1961 #1



American Bandstand on Saturday afternoon

- Originally broadcast daily through 1963
- Hosted originally by Bob Horn and later Dick Clark
- Featured guest performers, rate-a-record
- Teenage regulars on the dance floor
- Other TV shows
 - Hootenany April 1963 through September 1964
 - Shindig! September 1964 through January 1966
 - Hullabaloo January 1965 through April 1966
 - Regional TV; e.g., Ed Hurst Steel Pier Show from Atlantic City (Philadelphia)



Rock's continued growth in the early 1960s

- Baby Boomers become consumers of 45s and LPs
- Tradition of touring big bands, singers, “revues”; popular venues
 - Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake, Iowa
 - New Munich Ballroom in rural Stearns County, Minnesota
 - The Lambertville Music Circus with its theater in the round in New Jersey transitioned from Liberace and Duke Ellington in 1961 to **Chubby Checker** in 1965
- Baby Boomers themselves become musicians / singers /songwriters
 - James Taylor, Donna Summer, Jackson Browne, Glenn Frey born in 1948; Billy Joel, Bruce Springsteen, Bonnie Raitt in '49
- Radio stations with rock formats and their own regional “Top 40”
 - Portable music thanks to the transistor radio

NOTE

Bold claim: September 1962 - June '66 represents rock and roll's greatest era

- Mostly gone from Billboard charts – but not forgotten
 - Sam Cooke, Neil Sedaka, Bobby Darin, Ray Charles
 - Brenda Lee I'm Sorry 1960 #1, I Want to Be Wanted 1960 #1
 - Elvis Presley: No #1 hits from Good Luck Charm April 1962 until Suspicious Minds November 1969
 - Chubby Checker The Twist, The Hucklebuck, Pony Time, Let's Twist Again, The Fly, The Twist, Slow Twistin' all before Fall '62
- Anecdotal evidence
- Supportive statistics for the greatest four years in rock history
 - There were 84 different #1 hits over that four-year school calendar
 - Experts' list of the best artists and songs of all time



NOTE

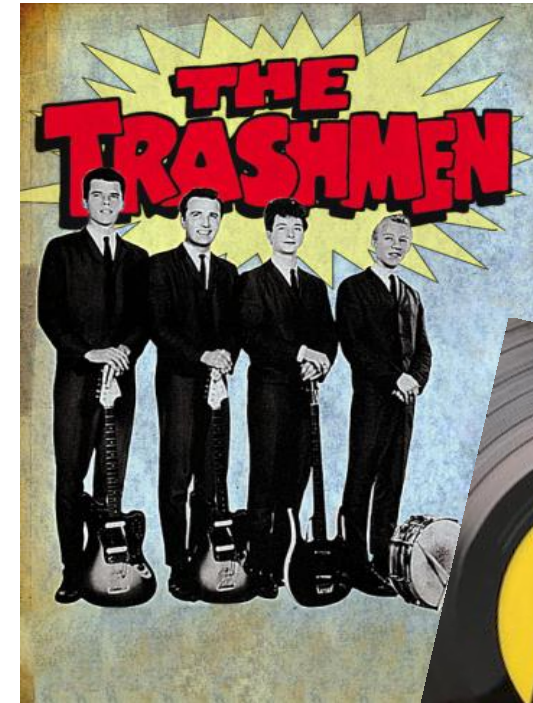
Rocks acts and artists from both coasts

- “The Jersey Boys”
 - The Four Seasons
 - **Walk Like a Man** 1963 Billboard #1 for 3 weeks
 - 4 #1 hits from September 1962 - June 1966 (5 total; 1 more for Frankie Valli)
 - 13 Top 40 hits September '62 – June '66
- California's Surf Sound
 - Beach Boys first hit Billboard charts in Fall '62 and scored 2 #1 hits, 18 Top 40 hits 1962-66
 - Jan and Dean had 1 #1, 11 Top 40 hits
 - Dick Dale, “King of the Surf Guitar”; The Surfaris; The Ventures from Washington



Regional garage bands with nation-wide hits

- The Kingsmen Louie Louie 1963 #2
- Trashmen **Surfin' Bird** 1963 #4
- The Premiers Farmer John 1964 #19
- Cannibal and the Headhunters
Land of 1000 Dances 1965 #30
- The Castaways Liar, Liar 1965 #12
 - Twin Cities group featured on Philadelphia disc jockey's compilation LP on the Lost-Nite label
- Swinging Medallions Double Shot 1966 #17
- The Leaves Hey Joe 1966 #31



Minnesota rocks

- The Elegants at Saint John's 1959 through the mid-'60s
 - Johnnies help introduce rock and roll to Central Minnesota
 - First song: A cover of A White Sport Coat and a Pink Carnation #3 hit by Marty Robbins in 1957
- Other Minnesota groups
 - The Greenmen, The Gestures, T.C. Atlantic, Gregory Dee and the Avantis, **The Underbeats**, The Stillroven, others
- Concerts and dances
 - Minneapolis Auditorium, Ascension Parish Clubhouse, Kato Ballroom, Granite City Coliseum, small town ballrooms
 - Beatles' Met Stadium performance in 1965



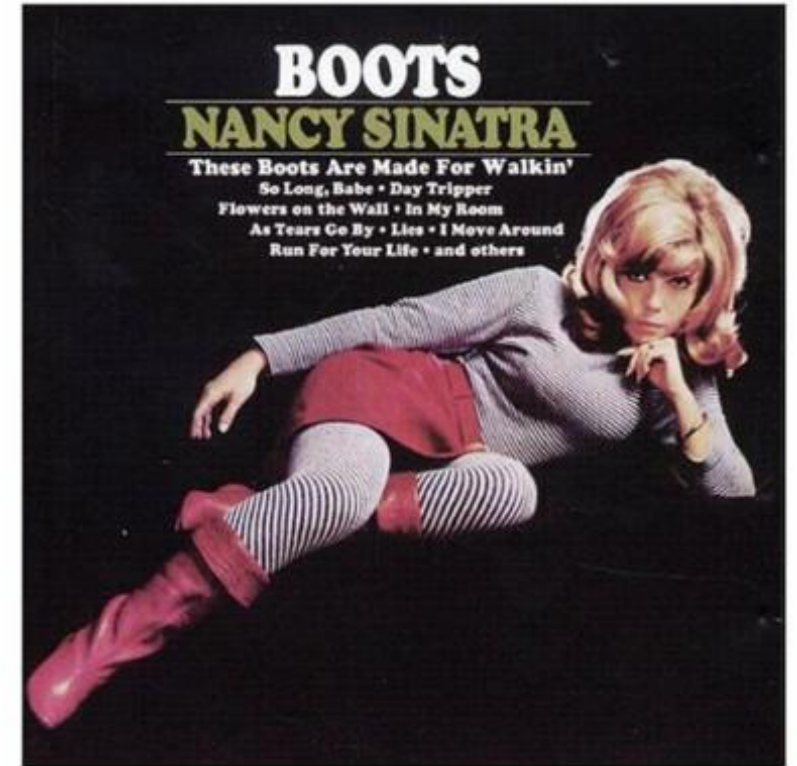
The girl groups

- The Crystals He's a Rebel 1962 #1
- The Chiffons He's So Fine 1963 #1
- The Orlons **South Street** 1963 #1
- The Angels My Boyfriend's Back 1963 #1
 - And there's gonna be trouble
- The Dixie Cups Chapel of Love 1964 #1
- The Shangri-Las Leader of the Pack 1964 #1
- The Ronnettes, Rosie and the Originals, Ruby and the Romantics



Pop artists and tunes in rock's river of music

- Bobby Vinton four #1 songs in the era
- Steve Lawrence Go Away Little Girl 1962 #1
- Nat King Cole Those Hazy, Lazy, Crazy Days of Summer 1963 #6
- Louis Armstrong Hello Dolly 1964 #1
- Andy Williams Dear Heart 1964 #24
- Wayne Newton Red Roses 1965 #23
- Frank Sinatra Strangers in the Night 1966 #1
- Nancy Sinatra **These Boots Are Made for Walkin'** 1966 #1



Folk music

- Kingston Trio concluding their run of popular hits
 - Charted 10 times including Tom Dooley 1958 #1
 - Their last hit: Desert Pete 1963 #33
- Johnnie Cyril Paul with his version of The Brothers Four song **Yellow Bird**
- Rooftop Singers Walk Right In 1963 #1
- Peter, Paul and Mary with seven top 40 hits in the era
- Barry McGuire Eve of Destruction
 - Lyrics from the 1965 protest song #1 still resonate



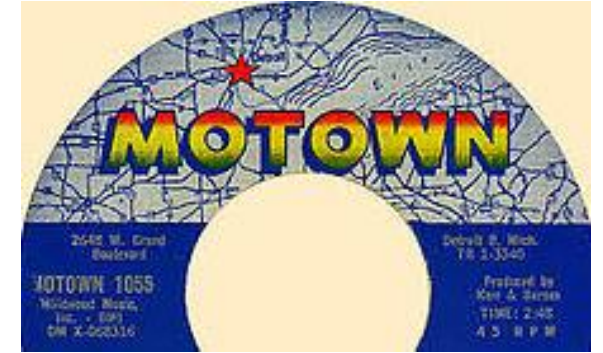
Great sing-along songs

- Do Wah Diddy Diddy by Manfred Mann 1964 #1
 - There she was just a-walkin' down the street singing
do wah diddy diddy dum diddy do
- **Name Game** by Shirley Ellis 1965 #1
 - Shirley Shirley bo birley
bo-nana fanna fo firley
fee fi mo mirley Shirley
- Flowers on the Wall
by the Statler Brothers 1965 #1
 - Countin' flowers on the wall
that don't bother me all
playing solitaire 'til dawn with a deck of 51



Soul

- Pop-orientation of Motown
 - Supremes with five straight Billboard #1 hits 1964-65
 - Temptations **My Girl** 1965 #1
 - The Miracles, The Marvelettes, others
- Memphis-based Stax NOTE
 - Booker T and the MGs mixed-race house band
 - Rufus Thomas Walking the Dog 1963 #10
 - Wilson Pickett In the Midnight Hour 1965 #21 and 634-5789 (Soulsville, USA) 1966 #13; R&B #1
 - Sam and Dave Hold on I'm Coming 1966 #21



Soul

- Chess Label from Chicago
 - Fontella Bass Rescue Me 1965 #4
 - Chuck Berry 1964 with his first three chart hits since 1959
- Others
 - “Godfather of Soul” James Brown
(I Got You) I Feel Good 1965 #3 on the King Records label from Cincinnati
 - Instrumentalist Willie Mitchell on the Hi Record Label from Memphis
 - The Impressions, Martha and the Vandellas, Solomon Burke
- Blue-Eyed Soul
 - Righteous Brothers You’ve Lost That Lovin’ Feelin’ 1964 #1
 - Roy Head Treat Her Right 1965 #2



Artists with great staying power

- Stevie Wonder
 - Fingertips 1963 #1, Uptight 1966 #3
 - Still a major cultural force
- Tom Jones
 - **What's New Pussycat** 1965 #3
 - Booked for April 2019 Stagecoach Festival
- Paul Simon / Simon and Garfunkel
- Singer / Songwriter Smokey Robinson
- Four Tops
 - Retained their original lineup into the 1990s



NOTE

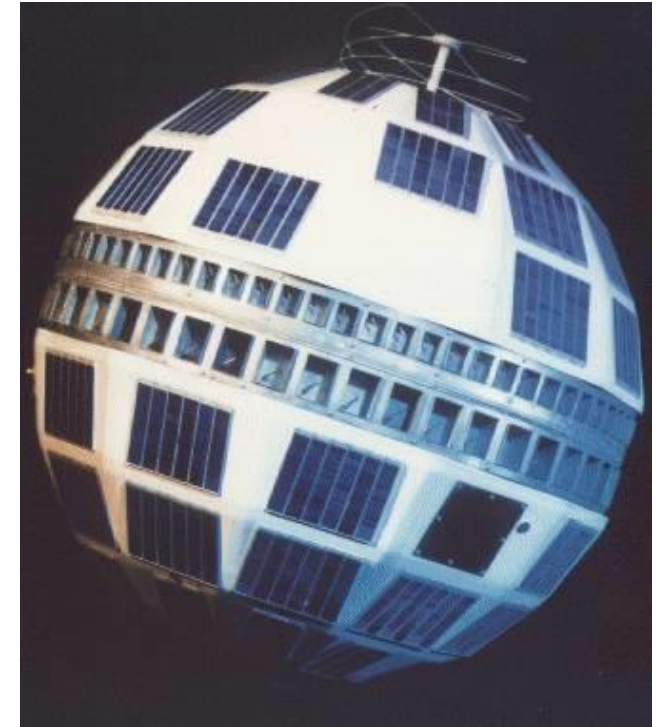
International reach during 1962-66

- The Singing Nun Dominique (Belgium) 1963 #1
- Kyo Sakamoto Sukiyaki (Japan) 1963 #1
- Rolf Harris Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport (Australia) 1963 #3
- The Seekers I'll Never Find Another You (Australia) 1965 #4
 - First Australian group to have sustained success in U.S.



The British Invasion

- The Tornados
 - The first British act to top the Billboard charts with Telstar 1962 #1
- Dusty Springfield **Wishing and Hoping** 1964 #6
- The Animals featuring Eric Burdon
- Billy J. Kramer and the Dakotas
- Gerry and the Pacemakers
- Manfred Mann
- Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames
- Yardbirds with Eric Clapton as a member 1963-66



The British Invasion



- The Searchers
 - Love Potion Number Nine 1964 #3
 - Covered The Clovers 1959 version pop #23, R&B #23
- Herman's Hermits, The Troggs, Freddie and the Dreamers
- Peter and Gordon, Chad and Jeremy, Petula Clark, Kinks, Zombies
- Dave Clark Five
 - First appeared on Billboard charts with Glad All Over 1964
 - 14 top 25 hits 1964-66 (five more than the Rolling Stones)
 - Over and Over was their only #1 hit

NOTE

The Rolling Stones

- 9 top 25 hits 1964-66
- 3 #1 hits
 - (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction
 - Get Off of My Cloud
 - Paint It Black
- Their invasion rocks on
 - 2017 Grammy Award
 - 2019 No Filter world tour



The Beatles

- 24 top 25 hits 1964-65
- 11 #1 hits
- Had all five of the top five during the week of April 4, 1964
 - Can't Buy Me Love at #1
 - Twist and Shout peaked at #2
 - She Loves You had reached #1 in February
 - I Want to Hold Your Hand had reached #1 in January
 - Please Please Me had earlier reached #3

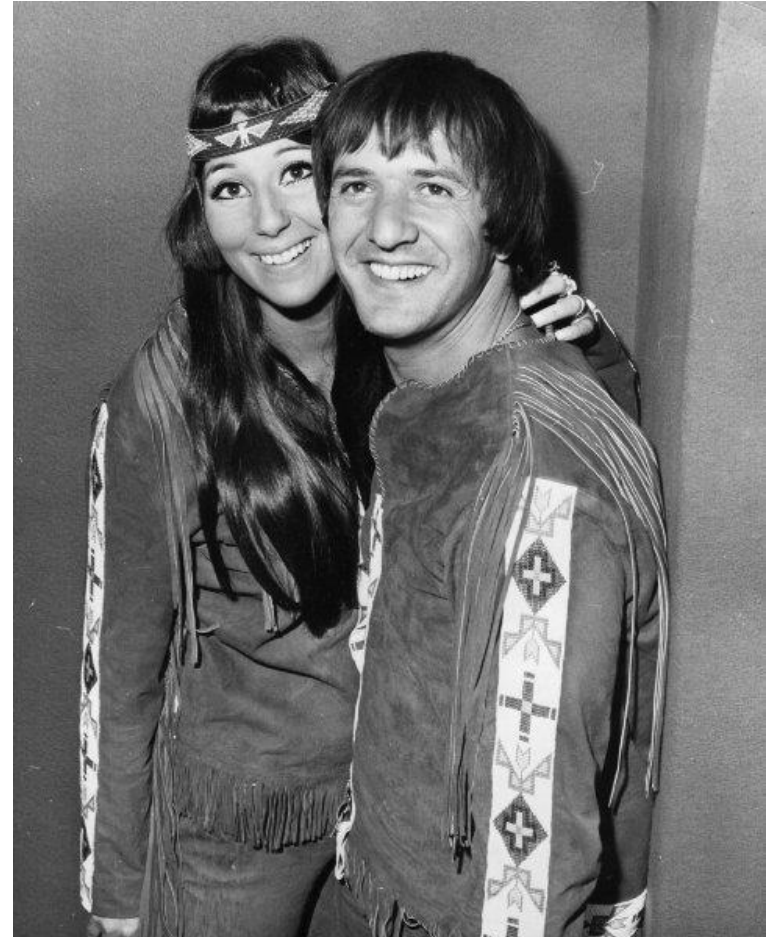


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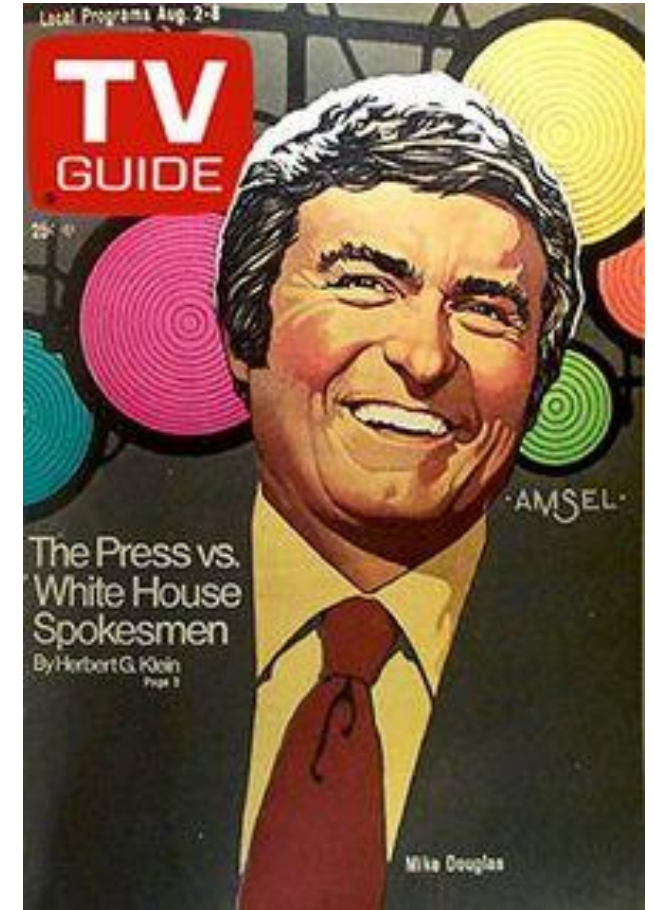
Other stars of the era

- Johnny Rivers
- Mamas and Papas
- Paul Revere and the Raiders
- Roy Orbison **Oh Pretty Woman** 1964 #1
 - Performed in the New Munich Ballroom
- The Young Rascals
- The Byrds
- Sonny and Cher
- The Drifters



One-hit wonders

- Do You Love Me The Contours 1962 #3
- Tell Him The Exciters 1963 #4
 - One of several '60s songs featured in The Big Chill
- Sally Go 'Round the Roses The Jaynetts 1963 #2
- We'll Sing in the Sunshine Gale Garnett 1964 #4
- Ringo from Bonanza's Lorne Greene 1964 #1
- **The Boy from New York City** The Ad Libs 1965 #8
- The Men in My Little Girl's Life by TV's Mike Douglas 1966 #6



As expected, some of my favorite songs

- **Fun Fun Fun** by the Beach Boys
- Barefootin' Robert Parker
- Hold Me Thrill Me Kiss Me Mel Carter
- Elusive Butterfly Bob Lind
- Baby Workout Jackie Wilson
- Baby Scratch My Back Slim Harpo
- We Gotta Get Out of This Place The Animals
- **Come a Little Bit Closer** Jay and the Americans
 - #3 in 1964; #22 in 2017 thanks to Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2 soundtrack



Resources of a rock history compiler



- Music, music, music
 - Juke box; hundreds of 45s and CDs; iTunes
 - Amazon Prime
 - Numerous DVDs including performances on Ed Sullivan; Stax R&B artists; The Tami Show 1964 featuring hosts Jan and Dean, Chuck Berry, **Marvin Gaye**, Leslie Gore, Supremes, Beach Boys, James Brown, Rolling Stones; other DVDs
- Conversation with photographer Ernest Withers in Memphis in 2003
- Live concerts
 - Four Seasons, Righteous Brothers, Four Tops, Temptations, Bobby Vee, Stevie Wonder, Peter and Jeremy (the mishmash of Peter and Gordon and Chad and Jeremy), Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, Peter Noone, Eric Burdon, Lloyd Price

NOTE



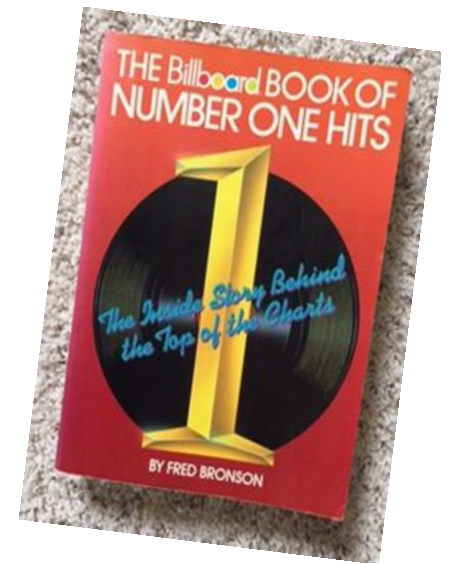
Home library

- Billboard books
- Biographies
 - Louis Jordan
 - Sam Cooke
 - Lieber and Stoller
 - Bobby Darin
 - Ahmet Ertegun
- Other books
 - Norm N. Nite's 1974 Rock On Illustrated Rock Encyclopedia
 - Peter Guralnick's 1986 Sweet Soul Music (...and the Southern Dream of Freedom)
 - Rick Shefchik's 2015 Everybody's Heard About the Bird (1960s Minnesota Rock)



Rock's greatest era: The variety, the statistics and the proof supporting September 1962 - June '66

- 32 different songs stayed at #1 for at least 7 weeks from 1955-91
 - Don't Be Cruel / Hound Dog Elvis Presley 1956 11 weeks
 - Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White, Perez Prado 1955 10 weeks
 - Sincerely The McGuire Sisters 1955
(pre-Bill Haley and the rock era) 10 weeks
 - Singing the Blues Guy Mitchell 1956 10 weeks
 - You Light Up My Life Debbie Boone 1977 10 weeks
 - Physical Olivia Newton-John 1981 10 weeks



The variety, the statistics, the proof (cont.)

- Seven songs at #1 for 9 weeks from the '50s, early '60s, late '60s and in 1981 -- none in the mid-'60s
- Seven songs at #1 for 8 weeks from the '50s, '70s and 1983 -- again, none in the mid-'60s
- Twelve songs at #1 for 7 weeks 1955-91
 - Only one would reach #1 for as long as 7 weeks from Fall 1962 to June 1966
 - **I Want to Hold Your Hand** The Beatles 1964
- The astonishing variety represented in 84 #1 hits from Fall 1962 – Spring 66



Statistical rankings, 1955 - 1992

- Point system found in Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits published in 1992
- Six of the top 10 artists were performing 1962-66
 - Elvis was on top with 7,857 points
 - followed by the Beatles (4,543)
 - Stevie Wonder with the third-highest ranking (3,691)
 - Rolling Stones (3,129; 5th)
 - **Supremes** (2,735; 8th)
 - Marvin Gaye (2,720; 9th)
 - Others in the top 10 had hits before Fall 1962 or after Spring '66:
Elton John (3,542; 4th), Paul McCartney/Wings (2,970; 6th),
Pat Boone (2,826; 7th), Aretha Franklin (2,713; 10th)



Rolling Stone magazine's greatest songs (2004)

- 24 songs from Fall 1962 – Spring 1966 are among the top 100
 - 24% of the top 100 songs over a 50-year period from 1955 with Rock Around the Clock to 2004
- Five songs from 1965 alone are in Rolling Stone's top 30
 - Help by The Beatles is listed at #29
 - People Get Ready The Impressions #24
 - Yesterday The Beatles #13
 - (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction The Rolling Stones #2
 - Like a Rolling Stone Bob Dylan #1



Rolling Stone's 100 top artists (2011)

- Eleven of Rolling Stone magazine's 20 most important performers
 - 1 The Beatles
 - 2 Bob Dylan
 - 3 Elvis Presley
 - 4 Rolling Stones
 - 5 Chuck Berry
 - 7 James Brown
 - 10 Ray Charles
 - 12 Beach Boys
 - 15 Stevie Wonder
 - 16 Sam Cooke
 - 18 Marvin Gaye



DO THE SCHOOL DAYS 1962-66 REPRESENT
THE GREATEST ERA IN ROCK HISTORY?



The proof

- 24 of the top 100 greatest songs of the rock era paralleled the school days of the Class of 1966
 - Five of the all-time top hits from 1965 alone
- Six of the top 10 artists based on points
- 84 different #1 hits Fall 1962 – Spring 1966
- Eleven of Rolling Stone magazine's 20 most important performers
 - 1 The Beatles 2 Bob Dylan 3 Elvis Presley
 - 4 Rolling Stones 5 Chuck Berry 7 James Brown
 - 10 Ray Charles 12 Beach Boys 15 Stevie Wonder
 - 16 Sam Cooke 18 Marvin Gaye



Enough said ... except for a few easy questions and a word from our sponsor

- Senior Citizen Civil Ceremonies with appropriate “church music” to accompany the wedding pronouncements and vows
- Chapel of Love by the Dixie Cups
- Church Bells May Ring by The Willows
- Kyrie by Mr. Mister
- Rock of Ages by Def Leppard

