

English 102
Spring 2008
Dr. Frank Mabee

Inquiry into Music Scenes and Place

Course Description

This course will consider how music scenes emerge from and express an identity specific to a particular time or place. To do so, we will examine punk and post-punk scenes in London, Manchester, New York, Los Angeles, and Knoxville, circa 1976-1985, and the careers of artists such as Sex Pistols, Public Image Ltd., Joy Division, Lydia Lunch, Black Flag, and Terry Hill. Punk and post-punk laid bare the stakes of music production, questioned alienated consumerism, and rejected the notion that skill was necessary to make compelling music, championing instead a 'do it yourself' aesthetic. By examining Knoxville's scene then and now, we will consider our locale and its particular manifestation of these ideas. This course seeks to understand how musicians contribute to a community and articulate the unique experience of an era, as well as to recognize the social and political context that gives rise to scenes and trends.