

# Facilitating Discovery of Historic Sound Recordings: Classroom and Research Strategies

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IAML-IMS JOINT CONGRESS, NEW YORK, NY, JUNE 23, 2015

# Belfer Audio Archive



Diane and Arthur B. Belfer Audio Laboratory and Archive

# TRF 530 Radio, Music, and Audio Cultures

- ▶ Objective: to teach communications and audio arts students about music's dissemination through radio and audio cultures today
- ▶ Communication students:
  - strong musical interests, but no formal musical training
  - little or no experience with audio recording or audio editing



# Soundscape No. 1



- ▶ Illustrate some aspect of music or sound in the world today using the sounds from recordings of nearly a century ago
- ▶ Focus on 2+ pre-1940 recordings
- ▶ Prepare a script, including researched information and original thoughts
- ▶ Learn to use a recording studio to record voice-over narrative
- ▶ Create a 2-3 minute audio essay. Submissions include a "time-chart" and a resource list with full citations.

# Belfer Cylinders Digital Connection

<http://library.syr.edu/splash/cylinders/>

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [library.syr.edu/splash/cylinders/](http://library.syr.edu/splash/cylinders/). The browser's address bar and tabs are visible at the top. Below the browser, the website header features the text "SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY Digital Library Collections". A central image displays three vintage Edison cylinders: one labeled "EDISON BELL RECORDS", another "EDISON AMBEROL RECORDS", and a third "EDISON OLD MOULDER RECORDS".

On the left side, under the heading "ABOUT", the text reads: "The Belfer Cylinders Digital Connection provides online access to digital audio files of cylinders in the Belfer Audio Archive. Belfer's cylinder collection includes over 22,000 cylinders, 12,000 of which are unique titles." Below this, it states: "With initial funding from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, Syracuse University Libraries have been able to digitize over 1,400 cylinders. Work is ongoing, so please check back regularly for newly added titles." At the bottom left, it notes: "The digital recordings, provided in both MP3".

In the center, a dropdown menu titled "By Subject / Genre ..." is open, listing various categories. The category "American wit and humor" is highlighted in blue. Below the list is a "BROWSE" button.

On the right side, there is a section titled "Intellectual Property" with a "Statement" link. Below it are several links: "» Belfer Audio Archive", "» Special Collections Research Center", and "» Syracuse University Libraries".

# Guide for researching sound recordings

## SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES Subject Guides

Library » Subject Guides » Sound Beat Class Partnership

Admin Sign In

### Sound Beat Class Partnership

URL: <http://syr.v1.libguides.com/SoundBeat> [Print Guide](#) [RSS Updates](#)

Home

Writing For Sound Beat

Artist Biographies & Discographies

Historical Research

Lyrics and Liner Notes

#### Librarian for Writing



Patrick Williams

##### Contact Info

210 E.S. Bird Library  
222 Waverly Avenue  
Syracuse, NY 13244  
315-443-9520  
[Send Email](#)

##### Links:

[Profile & Guides](#)

##### Subjects:

English, Communication & Rhetorical  
Studies, Linguistics, Writing, Composition  
and Cultural Rhetoric, Drama

Comments (0)

#### Using this Guide

The guide is organized into the following set of pages, able to be navigated using the tabs above.

- ▶ **Writing for Sound Beat** features information from Sound Beat producer Jim O'Connor, including example Sound Beat episodes and date tools for choosing themed episodes.
- ▶ **Artist Biographies & Discographies** features links to both print and online reference sources for performer biographies.
- ▶ **Historical Research** features links to selected library databases as well as some background on the history of recorded sound.
- ▶ **Lyrics and Liner Notes** provides links to many useful free historic sheet music collections online as well as instructions for locating recordings and liner notes in SU Libraries' circulating collections.

#### Audio Selections



Explore the  
**Belfer Digital Cylinders Collection**

#### Music Librarian



Rachel Fox von Swearingen

##### Contact Info

Bird Library, second floor, room 200  
315-443-9779  
[rsfoxvon@syr.edu](mailto:rsfoxvon@syr.edu)  
[Send Email](#)

##### Links:

[Profile & Guides](#)

##### Subjects:

Dance, Music, Musical Theater

Comments (0)

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SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

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fax 315-443-2060

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# Soundscape No. 2

Illustrate some aspect of music dissemination via radio as it occurred and achieved influence during war



- ▶ Focus on 3+ sound tracks, one of which is derived from radio
- ▶ Research the topic and the music, consulting as many authoritative, signed resources as unsigned resources
- ▶ Conduct an oral history interview with a veteran
- ▶ Prepare a script, including researched information and original thoughts
- ▶ Create a 5 minute audio essay. Submissions include a "time-chart" and a resource list with full citations.

## TRF 530 - Radio, Music, and Audio Cultures, Spring 2015

URL: <http://syr.v1.libguides.com/musicradio> [Print Guide](#) [RSS Updates](#)

- [Home](#)
- [Selecting Music](#)
- [Understanding Music Genres](#)
- [Researching Musicians](#)
- [More About Music: Journal Articles & Reviews](#)
- [Locating Lyrics and Liner Notes](#)
- [Researching People, Events, Wars](#)
- [Intersection of Music, Radio, War](#)
- [Researching Radio Shows & Playlists](#)

### NAVIGATION

[Home](#)

[Selecting Music](#)

[Understanding Music Genres](#)

[Researching Musicians](#)

- ▶ [Early Recordings, 1880-1930](#)
- ▶ [Popular Music, 1920-1950](#)
- ▶ [Rock & Pop, 1950-present](#)
- ▶ [Jazz, Blues & Gospel](#)
- ▶ [Folk & Country](#)
- ▶ [Classical](#)

[More About Music: Journal Articles & Reviews](#)

[Locating Lyrics and Liner Notes](#)

[Researching People, Events, Wars](#)

[Intersection of Music, Radio, War](#)

[Researching Radio Shows & Playlists](#)

### About This Guide

This guide provides both library and free internet resources for researching music and sound recordings for Soundscape No. 2.

Library research is a wide, wonderful, and overwhelming experience, so have fun! If you find a cool resource that you want to share with others, leave it in the comments below, and I will add it to the guide.

Research well, and if you have questions, ask me!

–Rachel [rsfoxvon@syr.edu](mailto:rsfoxvon@syr.edu)

Comments (0)

### Music During Wars: Selected Books



**The Vietnam War: Its History, Literature and Music** -  
 Kenton J. Clymer (Editor)  
 Call Number: DS557.3 .V53 1998  
 ISBN: 9780874042771  
 Publication Date: 1999-01-01



**The Songs That Fought the War: Popular Music and the Home Front, 1939-1945** - John Bush Jones  
 Call Number: ML3477 .J68 2006  
 ISBN: 9781584654438  
 Publication Date: 2006-09-30



**Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War** - Jonathan Pieslak  
 Call Number: ML3477 .P54 2009  
 ISBN: 9780253353238  
 Publication Date: 2009-04-01

### Ask Your Librarian!



Rachel Fox VonSwearingen

#### Contact Info

Bird Library, second floor, room 200  
 315-443-9779  
[rsfoxvon@syr.edu](mailto:rsfoxvon@syr.edu)  
[Send Email](#)

#### Links:

[Profile & Guides](#)

#### Subjects:

[Dance, Music, Musical Theater](#)



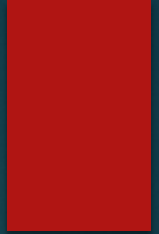
# Activity-Based Library Guide Tabs

- ▶ Selecting Music
- ▶ Understanding Music Genres
- ▶ Researching Musicians
- ▶ Researching People, Events, and Wars
- ▶ Researching Radio Shows & Playlists

# Instructional Goals

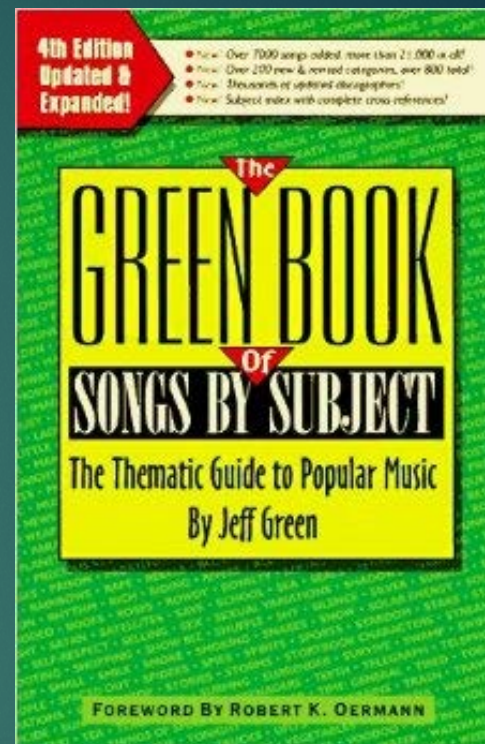
- ▶ Demonstrate tools for browsing and discovering unfamiliar music
- ▶ Familiarize students with how to research a piece of music
- ▶ Introduce sources for researching popular culture, history, and radio

# Source Selection

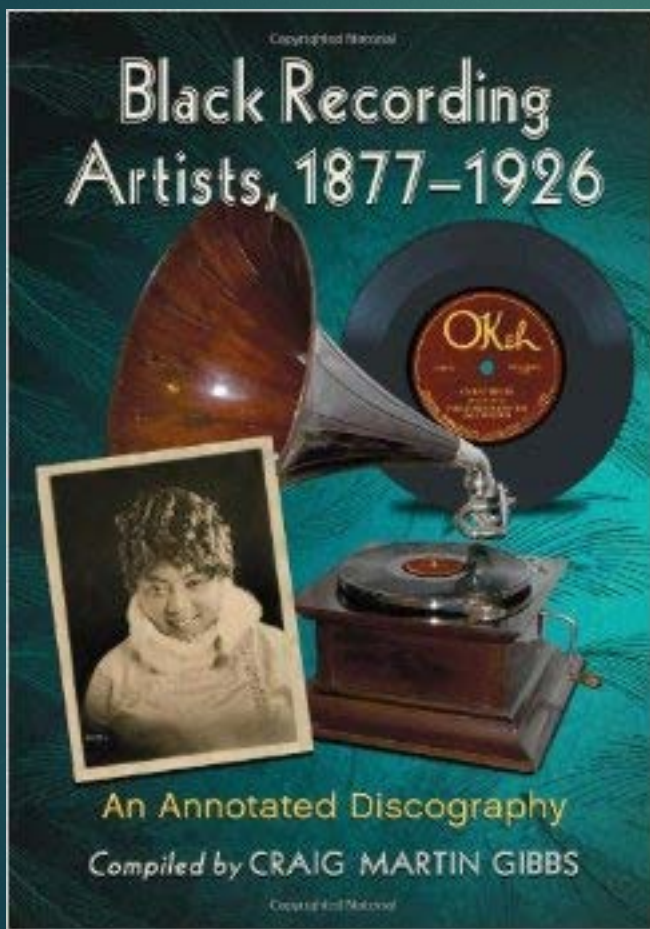


- ▶ Quality of content
- ▶ Online availability
- ▶ Breadth of coverage
- ▶ Accessible to non-musicians

# Websites, Charts, Discographies



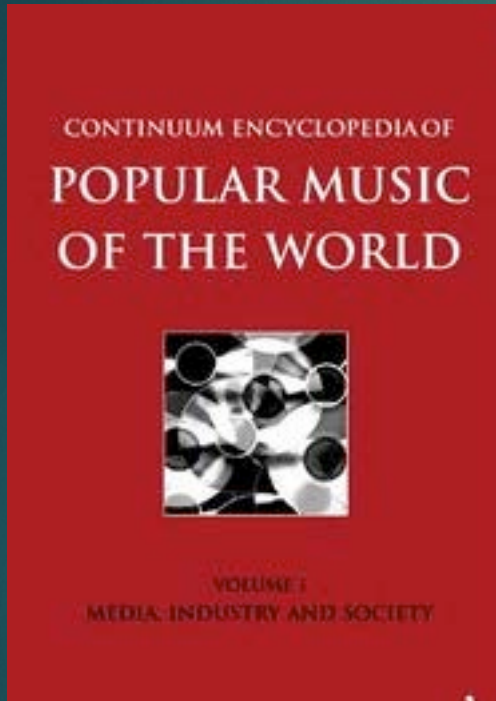
# Websites, Charts, Discographies



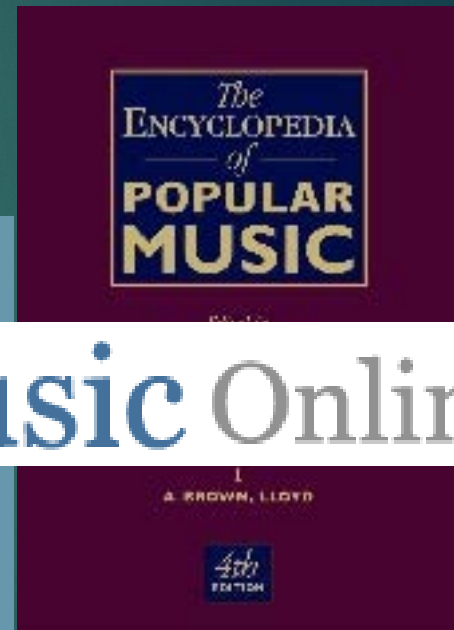
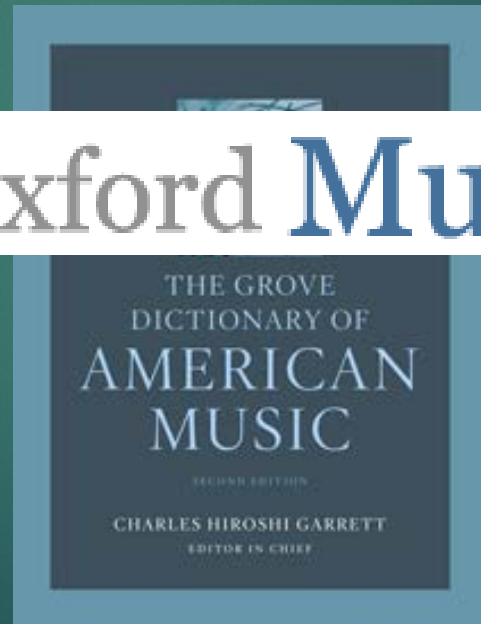
WIKIPEDIA  
*The Free Encyclopedia*

Discogs<sup>TM</sup>

# Music Reference



Oxford **Music** Online



# History Sources



## SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES Classic Catalog

[Summon](#) | [Syracuse University Libraries](#) | [Syracuse University College of Law Library](#) | [M.L. King Library](#) | [SUNY-ESF Library](#)

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### Advanced Search

Basic Search

**Advanced Search**

Subject

Name

Course Reserve

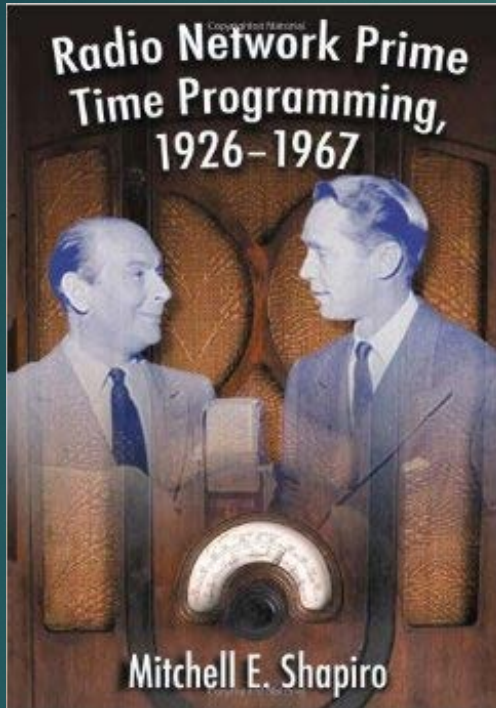
New Titles

Search:   within

within

within

# Radio Sources



Radio Times (Incorporating World Radio) September 27, 1946, Vol. 92, No. 1200. Approved by the C.P.O. as a Newspaper

**BBC PROGRAMMES FOR  
Sept. 29 — Oct. 5**

**NORTH OF ENGLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND EDITION**

# RADIO TIMES

JOURNAL OF THE BBC PRICE TWOPENCE

## Home Service

**SIR THOMAS BEECHAM**  
and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. First broadcast on Sunday

**THE BRAINS TRUST**  
returns on Tuesday

**NEW TUESDAY SERENADE**  
conducted by Walter Goetz

**'CROWNER'S QUEST'**  
Eric Barber's Elizabethan detective play on Thursday

**WORLD HARVEST**  
A comprehensive survey on Friday

## Light Programme

**IRVING BERLIN**  
introduces songs and scenes from the film 'Blue Skies' on Wednesday

**FASHION BALL**  
A visit to the Royal Albert Hall on Wednesday

**THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE**  
New series begins on Friday

**'THE BARBER OF SEVILLE'**  
Act 2 of Rossini's comic opera on Saturday

## Third Programme

**SUNDAY CONCERT**  
Britten, Handel, Purcell, Vaughan Williams, Bliss, and Parry

**SIR MAX BEERBOHM**  
'London Revisited'. Recorded 'Best Talk' on Sunday

**'COMUS'**  
A masque by John Miskin and Henry Lawes on Monday and Saturday

**'MAN AND SUPERMAN'**  
Bernard Shaw's famous play in full on Tuesday; repeated on Wednesday

**'DON PASQUALE'**  
Donizetti's opera on Friday

**BOULANGER**  
**KODALY and WALTON**  
conduct the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Saturday-Evening Concert

## THE THIRD PROGRAMME

**An Introduction by the Director-General of the BBC,  
SIR WILLIAM HALEY, K.C.M.G.**

WITH the opening of the Third Programme on Sunday the pattern of the BBC's post-war broadcasting for listeners in the United Kingdom will be complete. Within that pattern there will, we hope, be many alterations and improvements. Each of the three separate services must continually seek an experience, an innovation, and so raise the general broadcasting standards in its particular field. But the overall pattern itself should be a considerable step in itself. The complications of radio engineering, the difficulties over wavelengths, and indeed the convenience of listeners all demand a careful system of programmes to bring it all well-coordinated and adequate.

This matter of adequacy is important. There are many conceptions of the functions of broadcasting, none of them narrowly limited. But a public service such as the BBC has no doubt that it is covering the whole range of its possibilities, that it is providing for all classes of its listeners, and that it is, among its other functions, presenting the great classical repertoire in music and drama, and—so far as they are broadcastable—in literature, and the other arts.

To do this within the two services already existing, the reorganised Home Service and the Light Programme, is not possible. Quite apart from the already great pressure upon their time, the basic conception of ordinary broadcasting with its news bulletins and other fixed points, its device, in the course of the limited peak listening hours every evening to give some service to every possible taste, restricts to a hampering extent the possibility of devoting the necessary time to the full and frequent performance of great works in their entirety or to the development of those highest forms of music and drama which, while they have a major importance here, as yet, only a minority audience.

The range of the Home Service and the Light Programme is admitted by all who have studied broadcasting programmes throughout the world to be outstanding. But in view of all this, it is not enough. The Third Programme will have its own points. It will devote to the great works the time they require. It will seek every evening to do something that is culturally satisfying and significant. It will cover occasional series of evenings to some related masterpiece, a Shakespeare historical cycle, all the Beethoven quartets, or a series of Mozart operas. It will, so far as circumstances permit, be international. Concerts, operas, plays will be taken from abroad as leading conditions improve. Its talks will include contributions from the great European thinkers that in too often class but that is perhaps the most important. It is declared here standards the BBC neither that it is aiming high. It may be proved because time for time, but it is determined to break the new ground. And it believes that the outcome will prove that of all post-war developments in the field of sound broadcasting the Third Programme has the greatest value both to the individual and to the community as a whole.

**Programmes begin on page two . . .**

Broadcasting has reached its post-war pattern sooner than the lifting of restrictions on the consumption of alcohol. In this Radio Times, restricted to a third of its pre-war size, we publish comprehensive details of a week's broadcasting in the BBC's Home Service, the Light Programme, and the new Third Programme. And we have aimed to present those programmes in the way that we believe will satisfy the needs of listeners and meet with their approval.

Each day's programmes are grouped together, and each of the seven days follows the same pattern. The Listener's own Home Service and the Light Programme still appear on facing pages, an arrangement that we know is popular: on the next pair of pages there is the Third Programme and a daily summary, giving an overall picture of the individual programmes in all the BBC's regional services, facing a page of reading matter or advertisements. To keep each of the day's programmes in the same pattern we have had to split up the three pages of articles and regular features. There are always separate feature programmes in Radio Times and distribute them throughout the journal—and in the things there is full a page news reading matter. That is why, this week, your programmes begin on page two.

# AmericanRadioHistory.com

Three million pages of AM FM & TV Broadcasting history online





# Article Indexes

- ▶ Music: IIMP, RILM
- ▶ American History & Life Full Text
- ▶ Communication Source
- ▶ ProQuest Newspaper Archive
- ▶ Popular Journalism:
  - ▶ Entertainment Industry Magazine Archive
  - ▶ Rock's Backpages

# What the students produced ...

- ▶ Five students interviewed veterans of the Vietnam War
  - music: Jimi Hendrix and Bob Dylan
  - The Guess Who and Creedence Clearwater Revival
  - Bobby Bare and The Beatles
  - Marvin Gaye and Dion
  - Country Joe & the Fish and The Hollies
- ▶ One student focused on World War II
  - music: Doris Day, Vera Lynn, Dinah Shore, and Bing Crosby
- ▶ One student focused on a period between wars
  - music: Run DMC, and Common and John Legend

# Soundscape No. 2

Illustrate some aspect of music dissemination via radio as it occurred and achieved influence during war



- ▶ Focus on 3+ sound tracks, one of which is derived from radio
- ▶ Research the topic and the music, consulting as many authoritative, signed resources as unsigned resources
- ▶ Conduct an oral history interview with a veteran
- ▶ Create a 5 minute audio essay
  
- ▶ Soundscape No. 2 (excerpt)  
by Jordan Robinson

# Assessing Source Use

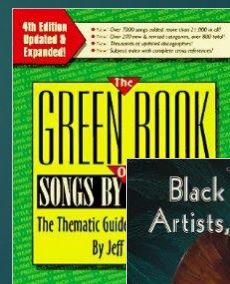
- ▶ Student feedback session
- ▶ Review of both soundscapes, including sources cited



# Websites, Charts, Discographies

- ▶ All tools were used ... plus others
- ▶ Combined multiple approaches
- ▶ YouTube recommended videos
- ▶ Unexpected use of music journalism

Discogs™



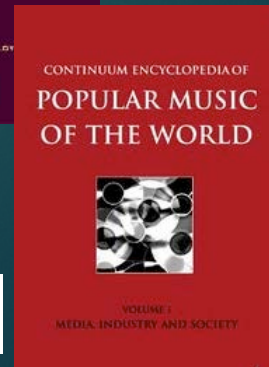
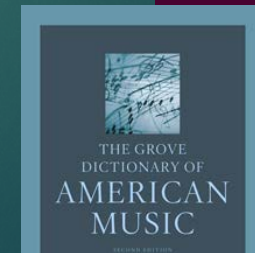
WIKIPEDIA  
The Free Encyclopedia

Billboard  
HOT 100



# Music Reference

- ▶ Soundscape 1? Yes
- ▶ Soundscape 2? Not as much
- ▶ Used music titles within Credo Reference



Oxford Music Online

# Article Indexes



- ▶ Not used:
  - ▶ Scholarly journal indexes in all disciplines
  - ▶ Newspaper indexes
- ▶ Used somewhat:
  - ▶ Entertainment Industry Magazine Archive

# Other Sources

- ▶ Used heavily:
  - ▶ Credo Reference
  - ▶ Pre-filled library catalog searches
  
- ▶ Not used:
  - ▶ Radio logs and lists





# Sources for Next Time



- ▶ More online browsing by theme
- ▶ Curated list of websites for spoken word recordings
- ▶ Online dictionary of music terms

# Questions?

- ▶ Jenny Doctor  
jrdoctor@syr.edu
- ▶ Rachel Fox Von Swearingen  
rsfoxvon@syr.edu