The Nineteen Sixties

i. The decade saw tremendous turbulence, including John F. Kennedy’s election and assassination; a more forceful youth culture; and social movements that were critical of the government and traditional institutions.

ii. Issues that divided Americans included the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement:
   a. The March on Washington (1963) and the passage of the Civil Rights Act (1964) were important moments in the civil rights movement, but racial tensions persisted.
   b. Antiwar protesters became more vocal and organized, particularly on college campuses.

iii. The feminist, environmentalist, and consumer protection movements also gained national awareness in the 1960s.

iv. The entertainment industry saw a number of changes as radio and television programming, as well as films, reflected shifting values.

Chapter 4: The Beatles and the British Invasion

I. Introduction

i. American youth in the 1960s listened to a variety of musical styles, all of which seemed to be competing for popularity.

ii. The American music industry was taken by surprise when the Beatles, a band from Liverpool, England, became the “next big thing” and launched a fad known as the “British invasion” of American pop; the story of the British invasion has two interrelated threads:
   a. The history of British pop before 1964 and British musicians’ interest in American musical styles
   b. How British music affected American pop beginning in 1964

II. British Pop in the Late 1950s and Early 1960s

i. The Music Business in the United Kingdom
   a. Until 1964, American listeners thought of British music as secondary, and
British artists were more likely to be successful in their home country than in the United States; on the other hand, American music and pop culture had been popular in Britain since the end of World War II.

b. Big companies controlled the music business in Britain—prior to 1964, there were few independent record labels and no independent radio stations.

c. Radio access was controlled by the government, which made it difficult for indie labels to get their records played on the air; rhythm and blues and country and western music—and information about these genres—were scarce.

d. There was a resurgence of American folk and jazz music, which had also been popular in the United Kingdom before World War II.

e. The U.K. music business faced a challenge in trying to place domestic records on the pop charts, where Americans dominated.

III. The Beatles as Students of American Pop, 1960–1963

i. Formation and First Gigs

a. The Beatles were formed in 1957 in Liverpool, playing skiffle at first, then rock and roll in the style of such American artists as Buddy Holly.

b. The group changed its name and lineup several times during its early years.

ii. Hamburg and Liverpool (1960–1962)

a. The Beatles made extended trips to Hamburg, Germany, to perform, and they were also regulars at the Cavern Club in Liverpool; the band frequently played long sets, which helped them to refine their skills.

b. Growing up in Liverpool gave the Beatles greater exposure to American pop music, but limited their access to the London-based music industry.

c. Brian Epstein became the group’s manager; he helped the Beatles to clean up their stage act, land a recording contract with EMI, and place a hit record on the U.K. charts.
d. By 1962, the Beatles had done what no Liverpool band had done before, which opened doors to other bands from the region.

IV. Beatle Influences
   i. Live recordings of the Beatles from their early years demonstrate the band’s influences from American rock and roll; they learned their craft in part by performing cover versions of songs popularized by artists including Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, and Ray Charles.

V. Beatlemania, 1963–1966
   i. Success in England
      a. In 1963, the Beatles recorded their first album, Please Please Me, and toured; three more hit singles in the United Kingdom and enthusiastic fans led the British press to coin the term Beatlemania.
      b. None of this success had any impact in America, where the Beatles’ early singles were licensed to indie labels because Capitol Records (EMI’s subsidiary) presumed that the British group would fail; Epstein arranged for the Beatles to appear on the Ed Sullivan Show, a move that convinced Capitol Records to release “I Want to Hold Your Hand,” which became a number-one hit in the United States.
   ii. The American Experience
      a. The band’s first appearance on Ed Sullivan’s show launched a run of hit records, several number-one albums, and two successful films before 1966.
      b. The Beatles’ last public concert took place in San Francisco in 1966, as the band dealt with the toll of constant work and controversy surrounding comments made by John Lennon.
   iii. The Beatles’ Music Develops: From Craftsmen to Artists
      a. “I Want to Hold Your Hand” is a good example of how the Beatles blended a variety of American musical influences in their early recordings.
      b. The music recorded by the Beatles in 1963 and 1964 can be described as
more craft than art, because they relied on formulas to help them to create songs from a limited number of elements.

c. The song “Tomorrow Never Knows” demonstrates how the Beatles moved toward a more artistic approach between 1964 and 1966.

iv. The Growing Importance of Lyrics
   a. The Beatles’ early lyrics typically dealt with simple teenage love, whereas later songs were more complex and unconventional; this also reflects their tendencies toward a more artistic approach.

ev. Developing Greater Stylistic Range
   a. By 1965, the Beatles began to incorporate a wider range of musical influences; this can be heard in the variety of instruments audible in recordings from this period.

VI. The British Invade
   i. Haircuts, Accents, and Guitars
      a. After the Beatles, a number of British bands appeared on American charts, many of which were either modeled after the Beatles or the Rolling Stones.
      b. The term British invasion is generally used to describe bands that featured guitars and long-haired musicians, but these groups were musically diverse.
   
   ii. Gerry and the Pacemakers, the Dave Clark Five, and Other Beatles-type Bands
      a. Gerry and the Pacemakers were nearly as popular as the Beatles in the United Kingdom, but they were never quite as successful in America; the Dave Clark Five had a number of Top 40 hits in 1964 and 1965.

   iii. Herman’s Hermits, Freddy and the Dreamers, and the Hollies
      a. Three Beatles-type bands from Manchester, England—Herman’s Hermits, Freddy and the Dreamers, and the Hollies—had hits on American charts beginning in 1965.

VII. The Rolling Stones and the British Blues Revival
i. Bad Boys, Blues, and Rhythm and Blues
   a. Some British bands drew on the Chicago electric blues as opposed to pop, and projected a more rebellious image.

ii. Blues Enthusiasts
   a. In London, a British blues revival was sparked by guitarist Alexis Korner and harmonica player Cyril Davies; many important rock musicians came up through this scene, in which members traded hard-to-find American blues records and produced cover versions of them.

iii. The Rolling Stones
   a. The Rolling Stones were formed by guitarist Brian Jones to play American blues; soon, they were under management and performing weekly at the Crawdaddy Club in Richmond.
   b. Manager Andrew Loog Oldham negotiated an unprecedented record deal with Decca that allowed the Rolling Stones to retain ownership of their recordings, and he also began acting as the group’s producer.
   c. Initially, the Rolling Stones did not write their own songs, but with financial gains in mind, Oldham encouraged Mick Jagger and Keith Richards to collaborate on songwriting.
   d. The Stones cultivated a “bad boy” image that was the antithesis of the Beatles, a look that increased their appeal in the United Kingdom but may have made Americans more reluctant to accept them at first.
   e. “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction” went to number one on both American and British charts in 1965, and helped to solidify a rebel image that sometimes encouraged riots at the band’s shows.

iv. The Stones and the Blues Tradition
   a. The songs that Jagger and Richards wrote together reflect a greater influence from Chuck Berry or Motown than the electric blues.

v. The Yardbirds and Other U.K. Blues Revivalists
   a. The Yardbirds took over for the Rolling Stones at the Crawdaddy Club;
lead guitarist Eric Clapton was particularly dedicated to the blues tradition.

b. Jeff Beck became lead guitarist when Clapton, feeling that the band made too many concessions to pop music, left in 1965.

c. The Yardbirds recorded at Chess studios and at Sam Phillips’s new recording studio; guitarist Jimmy Page joined the band in 1966, and when the group disbanded two years later, he formed Led Zeppelin to play the Yardbirds’ remaining bookings.

d. Other blues-based bands active in London included Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames, the Graham Bond Organization, and Zoot Money’s Big Roll Band.

vi. The Kinks and the Who: Raw Power and Ambitious Lyrics

a. Other British bands from this era such as the Kinks and the Who defy simple Beatles- and Stones-type categorization.

b. Members of the Kinks played in blues-oriented bands, but they also produced aggressive and ambitious pop music.

c. The Who did not have much influence in the United States until the late 1960s, but they had several hits in the United Kingdom and were particularly popular with youths in London’s Mod subculture.

d. The Mods defined themselves by the music they listened to and the ways that they dressed and behaved.

VIII. The Mop Tops Threaten the Big Wigs

i. The rise of the Beatles transformed popular music in at least two significant ways:

a. British artists were able to reclaim the pop music charts in their own country.

b. There were more opportunities for British musicians in other countries, particularly the United States.