



Introduction: Dream baby dream: Bruce springsteen's american serenade

Kenneth Womack, Jerry Zolten

Division of Arts & Humanities (Altoona)

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Abstract

There was a time when rock and roll was new, when the genre was not taken seriously in any quarter-not by parents, not by music critics, and certainly not by scholars. In a 1959 period piece, highly regarded jazz critic and historian Leonard Feather dismissed rock and roll as "coarse-grained" and "vulgar"-a genre that "said so much, so loudly, to so little artistic effect" and that, in the end, was a "passing fad" with "very few of the attributes of a valid art form" (66-67). Yet within a few years the winds would shift. A case in point is critic Robert Shelton's thoughtful 1961 New York Times review of a Bob Dylan performance that helped propel Dylan's career and signaled that pop music fare could and should be taken seriously.

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