

**Mini-Lab 4: Listening In****Due: Thurs 4/22/10**

For this paper, choose one of the following options to explore cultural episodes from the 1920s and 1930s using audio recordings as your historical evidence. You'll want to allow at least an hour for listening (the sound quality varies, some will take longer to listen to) and then write a clearly argued 2-3 page double-spaced paper. (Remember, an argument means you're not just telling a story or summarizing content, but also proving a point). Be sure to cite your sources thoroughly and correctly, and give your paper a title.

***Option 1: Popular Music of the Jazz Age***

Write a paper based on 4-5 different selections (either instrumental recordings, blues singer performances, or a combination of the two) from the archive of 1920s/1930s jazz recordings below. **Check to make sure that each of your chosen songs was actually recorded before 1940.** Analyze the music and/or lyrics. Why do you think the 1920s was called the "Jazz Age"?

<http://www.redhotjazz.com/> or <http://www.jazz-on-line.com/>

***Option 2: The Golden Age of Radio***

The 1930s-1940s is often referred to as the "golden age" of radio: radio ownership was at its highest, television hadn't gotten started, and three or four national networks provided virtually all of the programming. Radio was the main source of broadcast entertainment and news in the home, and there were a wide variety of program types, from news to variety shows, dramatic series, comedy, soap operas, musical performances, radio plays, sports, and religious programs. Many of these programs exist as old recordings that have been posted online. Listen to at least 30 minutes of an old-time radio program **FROM THE 1930s** (if a program is 15 minutes long, then try to listen to two from the same series), and then write a well-organized 2-3 page double-spaced essay about that show. (It's fine to do a little outside research in case you need more information about the show, but don't use Wikipedia as the only source). It's America in the 1930s talking... what/whom do you hear?

**America in the 1930s** – this site has one entire "broadcast day" from 21 September 1939 with all the shows that would have been heard that day.

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s2/Radio/day/radio.html>

**Old-Time Radio**

<http://www.archive.org/details/oldtimeradio>

and

<http://www.otr.net/>

\*both of these have lots of programs free for the listening & some can be downloaded. **But check to make sure your program came from the 1930s!**

**Mercury Theater of the Air** - includes the famous "War of the Worlds" broadcast from October 30, 1938, but the Mercury Theater was a weekly program and here is a complete archive of all its shows.

<http://www.mercurytheatre.info/>