

As is always the case at the beginning of the semester, I am digging out of a hole immediately, and this semester has been no different. At the annual meeting of the AALS in January in NYC, we went to see A NIGHT WITH JANIS JOPLIN with the incomparable Mary Bridget Davies, who channels Janis and sound eerily like her. I find it hard to believe, but it closes on Broadway tonight. See it if the national tour comes to your town. The four women who play the roles of Odetta, Nina Simone, Aretha, and others, are also quite extraordinary.

I have been caught up in all the 50 years + events concerning the Beatles, and soon to be the Stones, Beach Boys, Dylan, Kinks, and all those glorious black groups that sprang up in the 1963-64 period (not that they did not exist before, it is just that they began to enter our consciousness then and began to produce their key records). REMINDER: on CBS tonight (Sunday), a 2 hour look at the Beatles, including unseen film footage. There is a video preview on the homepage at the network website: [www.cbs.com](http://www.cbs.com) .

But as soon as Pete Seeger and Philip Seymour Hoffman died so close together, I knew I had to acknowledge them. Seeger is being remembered, but it is almost hard to imagine the lineage to Dylan and beyond without him and Woody Guthrie. Absent that strong folk music influence, the early rock and roll protest provenance would have not existed, almost unimaginably so. To put this in perspective, see the various songs in this great NY Times story, with Pete who inspired all the others. The pieces with Bruce and then with Elvis Costello are just riveting: <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/28/booming/protest-songs-from-seeger-to-sting-to-springsteen.html>

And PSH as Lester Bangs in Almost Famous is the way I shall always remember him—of all his so many strong characterizations, noted in the RS piece I pass on here:

[http://www.rollingstone.com/movies/news/cameron-crowe-on-philip-seymour-hoffmans-magic-in-almost-famous-20140203?utm\\_source=dailynewsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=newsletter](http://www.rollingstone.com/movies/news/cameron-crowe-on-philip-seymour-hoffmans-magic-in-almost-famous-20140203?utm_source=dailynewsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter)

And, of course, I started my new NPR radio program, the Law of Rock and Roll, at KANW, 89.1 on your FM dial, in Albuquerque, NM, where it plays on the morning drive in time, 8:20 am on Fridays. The inaugural Class was Losing my Religion Over Noise Ordinances, and while I ask you not to pass this on, I want to share my first show with my Posse members—it is attached. I will have more details about how to bring it to your own local station, so watch this space. You are

on your Posse honor not to forward it, until I can work out the details. Last Friday was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Class, Don't Mess With Downloads.

I hope that 2014 is good for all of you. I am sad to note that I pruned 7 Posse members who passed in the last 18 months and whose emails I had not yet removed. They were all good and close friends, and I know they would have been very happy for me and my new NPR show. The trick will be to keep it in its sideline place and not let it take over my life.

Losing my religion much of the time,

Michael