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## TRAX ON THE TRAIL:

An Interactive Campaign Music Website for Educators, Scholars, and the Public  
Sponsored by Georgia College

Trax on the Trail is a website where scholars, educators, journalists, students, and the general public can learn about American presidential campaign music and gain insight into how sound participates in forming candidate identity. Our interdisciplinary team includes academic experts from the fields of political science, musicology, sociology, history, communications, and ethnomusicology, as well as industry professionals and students. Trax on the Trail has published thirty essays that address multiple facets of the 2016 campaign soundscape. With public education and outreach as its goal, Trax on the Trail collaborated with [WRGC 88.3](#) radio to create a podcast series, and with the [Rock & Roll Hall of Fame](#) in Cleveland to produce a course unit on intersections between rock music and presidential politics. *Trail Trax*, the campaign music database developed in conjunction with the site, allows users to research the music strategy of a particular candidate, create a snapshot of the soundscape on a given day, investigate the evolution of the soundscape over the course of the election, or create a catalogue of sounds heard in a particular city. The first attempt to document and catalogue the soundscape of a campaign, *Trail Trax* is a resource used by scholars, students, educators, and journalists. Trax on the Trail has been cited by various media outlets, including the [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#), [Slate](#), [The Boston Herald](#), [Elite Daily](#), and [Variety](#). The Trax team has presented their work in conferences, classrooms, and community spaces across the country, and our work appears in [Journal of Popular Music Studies](#) and [American Music](#), and [Music & Politics](#). At present Trax on the Trail is preparing to roll out their 2020 website.

## Trax on the Trail Website Contents

### Essays

- Bañagale, Ryan Raul. "[30 Days, 30 Songs: Puncturing that inflated horror of an ego.](#)" Trax on the Trail, October 17, 2016.
- Barnard, Christianna. "[Dancing Around the Double-Bind: Gender Identity, Likability, and the Musical Rebranding of Hillary Clinton.](#)" Trax on the Trail, November 28, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "[Feeling the Bern or Just Feeling Burned? Musical Parody and the Contest for the 2016 Democratic Nomination.](#)" Trax on the Trail, April 17, 2016.
- Barone, Brian. "[I've Been Everywhere: Martin O'Malley and the Many Meanings of the Guitar.](#)" Trax on the Trail, January 8, 2016.
- Christiansen, Paul. "[Musical Yearning in Bernie Sanders's Presidential Primary Ad 'America.'](#)" Trax on the Trail, February 2, 2016.
- Deaville, James. "[Un-conventional Music.](#)" Trax on the Trail, November 25, 2016.
- Dewberry, David R. and Jonathan Millen. "[Hillary Clinton's 2016 Presidential Campaign Spotify Playlist.](#)" Trax on the Trail, May 25, 2016.
- Graber, Naomi. "[The President Takes the Stage: On Theatre and Safe Spaces for Politicians.](#)" Trax on the Trail, December 8, 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "[Seeing Double: Presidential Parodies and the Art of the Musical.](#)" Trax on the Trail, July 21, 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "[Staging the Nation.](#)" Trax on the Trail, March 31, 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "[Terror at the Townhall.](#)" Trax on the Trail, October 19, 2016.
- Hung, Eric. "[The Clinton-Trump Debate: A Dirty Dancing Fantasy.](#)" Trax on the Trail, October 19, 2016.
- Kasper, Eric T. and Benjamin S. Schoening, "[The Unwelcome Use of Musical Artists and Their Songs by Presidential Candidates.](#)" Trax on the Trail, December 18, 2016.
- Kennedy, Michael. "[This Land Is \(Once Again\) Your Land: Woody Guthrie and the 2015–16 US Presidential Race.](#)" Trax on the Trail, October 24, 2016.
- Love, Joanna. "[Political Pop and Commercials that Flopped: Early Lessons from the 2016 Presidential Race.](#)" Trax on the Trail, January 14, 2016.
- Manela, Aaron. "[Everyone is a Snowth: Trump Sings 'Mah Nà Ma Nà.'](#)" Trax on the Trail, October 19, 2016.
- Murph, Megan. "[Korean Drumming at the Women's March in Lexington, KY.](#)" Trax on the Trail, February 17 2017.
- Patch, Justin. "[Deconstructing the Populism: Pop Music on the Modern Campaign Trail.](#)" Trax on the Trail, August 8, 2016.

Renard, Stan, and Courtney Blankenship. “[Pop Songs on Political Platforms.](#)” Trax on the Trail, November 2, 2017.

Richardson, Glenn W. “[Trial, Transformation, and Redemption: Hillary Clinton, Elizabeth Banks, and Women in Competition—Popular Culture and the Audiovisual Transformation of My “Fight Song” into Our ‘Fight Song.’](#)” Trax on the Trail, September 13, 2016.

Ridout, Travis. “[The Use of Background Music in Political Advertising.](#)” Trax on the Trail, June 19, 2016.

Saffle, Michael. “[The Trump Bump 2016: User-generated Campaign Music about Donald Trump and His Political Opponents.](#)” Trax on the Trail, February 20, 2016.

Saffle, Michael. “[The Trump Bump II: Satire, Remix Culture, and User-generated Campaign Musical Posts.](#)” Trax on the Trail, January 10, 2017.

Shaw, Rebecca. “[Belva Lockwood for President, 1884: A Woman in a Man’s World.](#)” Trax on the Trail, July 7, 2016.

Vernallis, Carol. “[A Media Scholar's Response to Trax, Trump, and a Strange New World.](#)” Trax on the Trail, July 31, 2017.

Wissner, Reba. “[Just Sing No: 30 Days, 50 Songs and the Musical Campaign for a Trump-Free America.](#)” Trax on the Trail, December 19, 2016.

Wissner, Reba. “[Not Another Term: Music as Persuasion in the Campaign Against the Re-Election of George W. Bush.](#)” Trax on the Trail, October 5, 2016.

### **Interviews**

“[On the Inside Trax: John Balduzzi, Political Consultant.](#)” Trax on the Trail, March 15, 2016.

“[On the Inside Trax: Kraig Moss, A Modern Day Troubadour for Trump.](#)” Trax on the Trail, September 2, 2016.

“[On the Inside Trax: Stuart Schimler, Founder, American Pioneer Music.](#)” Trax on the Trail, September 20, 2016.

### **Podcasts**

Trax on the Trail Podcast Series in collaboration with WRGC 88.3

Trax on the Trail Podcast, Pt. 1 “[Super Tuesday Edition,](#)” featuring Dana Gorzelany-Mostak and James Deaville WRGC 88.3FM (aired March 1, 2016)

Trax on the Trail Podcast, Pt. 2 “[The Candidate Takes the Mic,](#)” featuring Brian Barone, James Deaville, Cannon McClain, and Dana Gorzelany-Mostak WRGC 88.3FM (aired April 26, 2016)

Trax on the Trail Podcast, Pt. 3 “[Parodying the Presidency,](#)” featuring Christianna Barnard, Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, and Sarah Kitts WRGC 88.3FM (aired June 9, 2016)

Trax on the Trail Podcast, Pt. 4 “[The Candidates Take On Broadway,](#)” featuring Naomi Graber, Elissa Harbert, James Deaville, Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, and Sarah Kitts WRGC 88.3FM (aired July 25, 2016)

Trax on the Trail Podcast, Pt. 5 “[The Soundtrack of Populism](#),” featuring Justin Patch, Matthew Jordan, Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, James Deaville, and Cannon McClain WRGC 88.3FM (aired September 22, 2016)

Trax on the Trail Podcast, Pt. 6 “[The Empire Strikes Trax](#),” featuring Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Cannon McClain, Sarah Kitts, and Aly “Sam” Campbell WRGC 88.3FM (aired November 11, 2017)

### **Trax in the Classroom Podcast Series**

(in collaboration with Dr. Emily Ansari and Western University)

Gleason-Mercier, Caroline. “[An Unknown Legacy: The 1840 Election and Political Campaign Songs](#).” Trax on the Trail, March 3, 2016.

Jackson, Gary. “[Saddam Hussein Will Always Love You?](#)” Trax on the Trail, May 5 2016.

Pasqualini, Nikki. “[Vote for Change: John Kerry Will Not Surrender](#).” Trax on the Trail, January 21, 2016.

### **Educational Materials**

#### [Sounding Out the Presidency](#)

Handout and instructions  
Dana Gorzelany-Mostak

#### [Songs in the Key of President C: A Short History of Music on the Campaign Trail](#)

Digital Lecture  
Dana Gorzelany-Mostak

#### [Campaign Music 101 in the Music History Classroom](#)

Handout and slides  
Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Naomi Graber, Hanna Lisa Stefansson, Cameron Steuart, Mary Helen Hoque, Sarah Kitts, and Kassie Kelly

#### [The History of Presidential Campaign Music](#)

*Lecture notes and slides*  
Eric T. Kasper and Benjamin S. Schoening

#### [Popular Music in U.S. Presidential Commercials](#)

*Course unit on analyzing popular music in campaign ads*  
Joanne Love

#### [Rock & Roll to the White House](#)

*Course unit on rock and electoral politics created in collaboration with the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame*  
Kassie Kelly, Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Leah Branstetter, Mandy Smith, Kathryn Metz, and Deanna Nebel

### **Research Resources**

[Campaign Music Bibliography](#) (A database containing bibliographic data for over 1,300 articles on the topic of campaign music)

[Trail Trax](#) (A campaign music database containing over 8000 tracked instances of music on the 2016 presidential campaign trail)

## Trax on the Trail Outreach

### Performances

- “Trailblazing Tunes and Didactic Ditties from U.S. Presidential Campaigns, 1840-1964” Lectures recital as part of Constitution Week at Georgia College, Magnolia Ballroom, Georgia College, September 17, 2018.
- “E pluribus unum: A Programme of Genuine and Grand Musical Gems from American Presidential Campaigns Past and Present.” Lecture recital at the Constitution Day Festival at Georgia College, September 18, 2017 (featuring Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Doug Bassett, Cliff Towner, Jennifer Flory, the Max Noah Singers, and Haley Strassburger).
- “A Short History of the Campaign Song (from Tippecanoe to Trump and Clinton Too)” Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Lecturer, with Sarah Kitts, soprano and Douglas Bassett, guitar, Linger Longer Series, Reynolds Plantation, Reynolds, GA (Dana Gorzelany-Mostak)
- “A Short History of the Campaign Song (from Tippecanoe to Trump and Clinton Too).” Lecture recital presented at The Old Governor’s Mansion (in conjunction with the Election of 1860 exhibition, which is on loan from the Smithsonian Institute) Milledgeville, GA, October 20, 2016 (featuring Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Sarah Kitts, soprano and Doug Bassett, guitar).
- “A Programme of Veritable and Variegated Musical Gems from American Presidential Campaigns Past and Present.” Lecture recital at the Constitution Day Festival at Georgia College, September 16, 2016 (featuring Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Sarah Kitts, Doug Bassett, Victoriana Lord, Aly Watson, Bonnie Von Hoff, Ellen Denham, Amanda Boundy, Jennifer Flory, and the Max Noah Singers).

### Presentations

- Ansari, Emily Abrams, James Deaville, Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Travis L. Gosa, and Justin Patch (chair). Panel: 2016: Electoral Echoes and Musical Reverberations. To be presented at the American Musicological Society Conference, Rochester, NY, November 11, 2017.
- Gorzelany-Mostak, Dana, Sarah Kitts, Naomi Graber, Mary Helen Hoque, Hanna Lisa Stefansson, Cameron Steuart, and Kassie Kelly. Workshop: “Campaign Music 101 in the Music History Classroom.” Teaching Music History Conference, Berklee College of Music, Boston MA, June 11, 2017.
- Gorzelany-Mostak, Dana, Sarah Kitts, Naomi Graber, Mary Helen Hoque, Hanna Lisa Stefansson, Cameron Steuart, and Kassie Kelly. “Teaching the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election through Music and Sound.” Presented at The University System of Georgia Teaching and Learning Conference, Center for Continuing Education Hotel & Conference Center, Athens, GA, April 7, 2017.
- “Perspectives on Trax on the Trail.” Presented at the Music, Media, and Sound Interest Group Meeting at the Society for American Music Conference, Montreal, QC, March 23, 2017.
- “To campaign song while female.” Panel: Making Sense of 2016: Perspectives on Popular Music and the Presidential Campaigns. Presented at the International Association for the Study of Popular Music Conference, Cleveland, OH, February 25, 2017.
- Gorzelany-Mostak, Dana, Sarah Kitts, Cannon McClain, and Mark Misinco. “Trail Trax: A Campaign Music Database.” Poster presented at the American Musicological Society Conference, Vancouver, BC, November 4, 2016.

Gorzelay-Mostak, Dana. "State of Play: Musical Anomalies and Oddities on the 2016 Presidential Campaign Trail," Southern Methodist University, Dallas TX October 27, 2016.

Gorzelay-Mostak, Dana. "Musical Anomalies on the 2016 Presidential Campaign Trail," sponsored by the American Democracy Project and the Georgia College Honors Program, Ina Dillard Russell Library at Georgia College, Milledgeville, GA, October 17, 2016.

Gorzelay-Mostak, Dana. "What is Trax on the Trail?" Georgia College Alumni Meeting, Macon, GA, October 13, 2016.

Gorzelay-Mostak, "Pop Goes the Weasel?: The Art of Musical Attack Ads." Presentation at the Milledgeville Music Club, Milledgeville, GA, April 24, 2016.

Gorzelay-Mostak, Dana. "I think, therefore I sound?: (De)constructing the 2016 Presidential Soundscape." Presentation sponsored by the Center for Georgia Studies, Georgia College, Milledgeville, GA, March 31, 2016.

Gorzelay-Mostak, Dana. "Whose American Tune Is It Anyways?: Patriotic Pop and the Formation of Presidential Identity." Presentation at Wesleyan College, Macon, GA, March 22, 2016.

#### **Classroom Lectures/Demonstrations**

Arizona State University with Dr. Chris Wells

Wesleyan College University with Dr. Kate Galloway

Western University with Dr. Emily Abrams Ansari

Merrimack College with Dr. Laura Moore Pruett

Southern Methodist University with Dr. Peter Kupfer

University of Windsor with Dr. Sally Bick

North Carolina State University with Dr. Kristen Turner

Auburn University with Dr. Matthew Hoch

Oklahoma State University with Dr. Tammy Younce

Trinity University with Dr. Carl Leafstedt

Georgia College with Carrie Cook, Bradley Koch, Jennifer Flory, and Anita Thompson

#### **Trax on the Trail in the News**

Shepherd, Katherine. "Georgia College Kicks Off Constitution Week Celebrations," [WGXA](#), September 18, 2017.

"How to Pick the Right Song for the Moment," [CASBO](#), January 24, 2017.

Brown, Carson Leigh. "Celine Dion, Kiss, and the Totally Epic Soundscape That Trump Won't Be Hearing at His Inauguration." [Pacific Standard](#), January 20, 2017.

"Culture and the Trump Presidency." The Cultural Frontline, [BBC World Service](#), January 14, 2017.

Wisinski, Rachel. "Music Matters." *Indiana University Alumni Magazine* (Winter 2016): 54–55.

Pound, Gill. "GC Professor Tracks Candidates' Tunes." [The Union Recorder](#), October 25, 2016.

"Georgia College Researchers Track Strategic Shifts in Campaign Music." [Valdosta Daily Times](#), October 20, 2016.

Bosch, Saskia. "Hillary kiest voor jong en hip, Donald voor rebelse muziek." [Trouw](#), October 19, 2016.

McGlamry, Maggie. "GCSU Professor Tracks Trump, Clinton Campaign Music." [WGXA](#), October 19, 2016.

"Georgia College Researchers Track Strategic Shifts in Campaign Music." [Arts & Sciences Newsletter](#) (Fall 2016): 29.

"Georgia College Researchers Track Strategic Shifts in Campaign Music." [Middle Georgia CEO](#), October 19, 2016.

O'Donnell, Cindy. "Georgia College Researchers Track Strategic Shifts in Campaign Music." [Georgia College Front Page](#), October 17, 2016.

Watson, Aly. "Research Website Tracking Campaign Music Increases Efforts as Election Approaches." [Georgia College Front Page](#), September 13, 2016.

Tayag, Yasmin. "Science Explains Why People Hate 'Fight Song' So Much." [Inverse](#), August 29, 2016.

Kilkenny, Katie. "People Really, Really Hate 'Fight Song.' Could That Actually Hurt Clinton?" [Pacific Standard](#), August 25, 2016.

Wise, Brian. "I Will Win! Trump Loves Puccini—and New Research Is Showing How Fascism Infused the Composer's Work." [Slate](#), August 1, 2016.

Croatto, Pete. "Campaign Refrains." [Ithaca College View](#), July 22, 2016.

Bradshaw, Kate. "Stump Music: The Campaign Tunage of Trump and Hillary." [Creative Loafing](#), July 14, 2016.

Richards, Dillon. "College Group Tracks Music on Campaign Trail." [WMAZ](#), June 22, 2016.

Dewald, Matthew. "Rockin' in the Free World (Interview with Joanna Love)." [University of Richmond Magazine](#), May 6, 2016.

"Tracking the Music of the 2016 Presidential Campaign." [Georgia College Connection](#), Summer 2016, pg. 8.

"Trax on the Trail – GC Students Create Research Website about Presidential Campaign Music." [Georgia College Blog](#), April 29, 2016.

Ventura, Nick. "A Look at the World of Presidential Playlists." [WFUV 90.7](#), April 18, 2016.

Johnson, Ted. "PopPolitics: Wendell Pierce on Playing Clarence Thomas in 'Confirmation.'" [Variety](#), April 10, 2016.

Johnson, Ted. Interview with Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, [PopPolitics](#) with Ted Johnson, SiriusXM Satellite Radio, Channel 124 POTUS Politics, April 7, 2016.

White, Ryley. "Carleton Prof Tracks Music on American Campaign Trail." [The Charlatan](#), March 10, 2016.

Langston, Patrick. "Musical Tracks on the Campaign Trail." [Ottawa Citizen](#), March 4, 2016.

Mayne, Paul. "Studying the Same Old Song and Dance of Candidates." [Western News](#), March 3, 2016.

Jamieson, Amber. "Pop for Politics: How Candidates Brand Themselves with Music." [The Guardian](#), March 1, 2016.

Watson, Aly. "Student Researchers Coordinate Project to Track Music of 2016 Presidential Campaign." [Georgia College Front Page](#), February 18, 2016.

Watson, Aly. "Research Website about Presidential Campaign Music Continues to Grow." [Georgia College Front Page](#), February 9, 2016.

Baxter, Tom. "The Spottification of Political Music." [Saporta Report](#), February 8, 2016.

Stout, Matt. "Pols & Politics: Candidates' Music Speaks Volumes about Messages." [Boston Herald](#), February 7, 2016.

Hensley, Ellie. "What Songs Do Your Favorite Presidential Candidates Play on the Campaign Trail?" [Atlanta Business Chronicle](#), February 4, 2016.

Pizzimenti, Chiara. "Le star della musica? Tifano Clinton." [Vanity Fair](#), January 27, 2016.

"Rock And Polls: How Music Impacts Politics In The 2016 Presidential Race." [Daily Rover](#), January 26, 2016.

Svokos, Alexandra. "Rock And Polls: How Music Impacts Politics In The 2016 Presidential Race." [Elite Daily](#), January 26, 2016.

AccessWDUN Staff, "Professor at UNG's Gainesville Campus Helps Create Website Devoted to Music, Sound from Presidential Campaign Trails." [WDUN](#), December 19, 2015.

Carson, Sylvia. "UNG Professor Hits the 'Trax' for Presidential Campaign Music Research." [UNG News](#), December 16, 2015.

Watson, Aly. "Campaign Music Website Launched Dec. 1." [Georgia College Front Page](#), December 1, 2015.

Fanning, Rhonda. "How Politicians Use Music As Part of Their Campaign Strategy." [KUT News 90.5](#), September 10, 2015.



### ***Trax on the Trail 2016 Staff***

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