

The Somerville Council on Aging  
Presents:

Foundations of Knowledge Lecture Series

**INAUGURAL LECTURE:**

***Sin to Swing: The Evolution of Jazz in America***

**MONDAY, MAY 18TH AT 9:30 A.M.**

**Holland Street Atrium**

**featuring Instructor Kevin Comtois**



An exploration of the history and musical culture of New Orleans, the birth of a new music called Jazz, the many colorful songwriters of this music, and its evolution to Swing and Big Band music.

Using recorded music, film clips and still images, Mr. Comtois helps participants examine how the politics and social conditions of late 19th Century New Orleans were integral in the creation of a whole new musical culture, and how that culture spread throughout the United States. An emphasis will be placed on the musicians who created Jazz, how that music spread rapidly throughout the United States, the conditions that led young people of the 30s and 40s to embrace it, and its patriotic use for a war-weary nation.



***About The Instructor:*** Kevin Comtois is an *Adjunct Instructor, History and Government, Northern Essex Community College*, where he has been teaching History and Government since 1999. He has taught at Quincy College and Central Catholic High School where he also served as Social Studies Department Chair. Kevin earned his B.A. in Political Science from Westfield State College and his M.A in American Civilization from the University of Massachusetts Boston. In 2005 Kevin was a recipient of a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to study Jazz with Dr. Gerald Early (an expert on the evolution of Jazz in America) at Washington University, St Louis. Kevin is also an amateur musician and songwriter. In 2011 Kevin taught an Honors Colloquium at NECC titled the Social and Political History of American music.

***Foundations of Knowledge*** is an educational program that brings a series of low-cost, themed lectures to you each month. A nominal fee of \$20 will include five, one-hour long lectures in any one subject area. Or, if you prefer to take in a variety of different subjects, each lecture we present costs \$5.

For details and information, please contact Janine Lotti at (617) 625-6600, ext. 2300.