

In studies of the popular music industry, there has been much interest in the market-share of the leading firms (majors), and the apparent connections between a high level of concentration and musical innovation and diversity. Peterson and Berger argued that in the United States the majors lost market-share to independent companies in 1955-62, then recovered their position to 1973. This paper uses a newly-constructed database and concentration measures to test the proposition in relation to Britain for 1952-75. We find that British majors also lost market-share, but the process started much later, and was not followed by a recovery. Instead, American majors entered the market directly from the late 1960s. The exercise sheds light on the relationship between creativity, entrepreneurship and commercial organisation in one of Britain's most successful creative industries.