

COURSE SYLLABUS

Catalogue number:	PRE-CLASS	Popular Music: Selling Rebellion
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Location: Online	Term: Spring 2021
	Day:
	Time:

The Instructor:	
Name:	Dr Carlos Roos
Availability	TBD
Email:	c.m.roos.munoz@umail.leidenuniv.nl
About the instructor	
Carlos Roos holds a PhD in Creative and Performing Arts from Leiden University (NL). His current research revolves around global music, media theory, metaphysics and aesthetics. Roos is the executive editor of <i>Empedocles: European Journal for the Philosophy of Communication</i> .	

THE COURSE

Course Description
Singer-songwriters, punk headbangers, sharp-tongued rappers: what all of them have in common is a history of social commitment that defines their musical styles. Incidentally, they also share a complicated relationship with the commercial apparatus that produces and distributes their musical work. This course offers a unique opportunity to explore the popular music world from the point of view of its relation to both politics and the industry. There is a sense in which 'popular' means that which is liked by the majority, but sometimes it also means that which runs against the grain of 'adult' cultures and other expressions of the mainstream. The development of subcultures and musical scenes in resistance to the 'status quo' is intertwined with a powerful element of defiance and rebellion that is worth discussing at length. To that end, students will explore issues of identity, meaning, inequality and political economy to better understand the various facets of popular music as a field. This course provides new insights into these matters by listening to popular songs with a critical ear, by tuning into current trends and actual cases in light of key cultural theories.

Learning Outcomes
As a result of this course, students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Become familiar with the history and social significance of popular music.• Discern how popular music affects our cultures, identities and everyday lives.• Engage with existing theories on the nature of popular music as both a cultural and a commercial product.• Define their own critical position about popular music.

Reading Materials

- Bennett, A. (2012), Reappraising « Counterculture », Volume ! [Online], 9:1, Online since 15 June 2014, connection on 06 February 2017. URL : <http://volume.revues.org/3499> ; DOI : 10.4000/volume.3499
- Frith, S. (2001), Pop Music. In Frith, S., Straw, W. and Street, J., (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 91-108
- Hall, S. (1997), The work of representation. In Hall, S., (ed.) *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*, London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage in association with the Open University. pp. 13-30
- Jarniewicz, J. (2010), 'The Beatles - Prophets or fools of the counterculture', in J. Jarniewicz and A. Kwiatkowska (eds.), *Fifty Years with The Beatles: The Impact of The Beatles on Contemporary Culture*, Lodz: Lodz University Press, pp. 71-78
- Novoselic, K. (2014), 'With the lights on, it's less useless', in Wilson, C., *Let's Talk About Love: Why Other People Have Such Bad Taste*, New York; London: Bloomsbury.
- Park, A. (2017), Modern Folksong and People's Song (Minjung Kayo). In Sin, H. and Li, S.-A., (eds.), *Made in Korea: Studies in popular music*, New York; Oxon: Routledge.

Required Material

Musical samples provided by the instructor.

Recommended Reading Material

- Frith, S. and Goodwin, A., (eds.) (1990), *On Record: Rock, Pop and the Written Word*, London: Routledge.
- Blanning, L. (2017), Critical Sonics: Political voices in electronic music [web]. <https://www.ableton.com/en/blog/political-voices-in-electronic-music/>

DELIVERABLES

'ID Playlist' presentation

Throughout this course, we will talk about popular music and identity formation in terms of cultural and subcultural theories. For this assessment, you will create a **playlist** that is representative of your own identity along the same theoretical lines. Based on it, you will give a short **presentation** about your relationship with the songs. You will receive detailed instructions in session 5.

'ID Playlist' podcast

This assignment is a continuation of the *'ID Playlist' presentation*. First, you will select one song from your ID Playlist and write a short text about your relationship with it in terms of (sub) cultural identity (based on the content of your presentation). Then, you will produce an audio record of the text and mix it with the song, which will serve as the background to your voice. You will receive detailed instructions in session 6

Final paper

This concluding assignment aims to synthesise what you have learned throughout this course. Therefore, you will choose to answer in writing one of the following questions:

- Can popular music be a tool for rebellion?
- How does popular music affect our culture?

These questions follow from the learning outcomes of the course. You will provide your answer in 500 words (maximum). After handing in your work to the instructor and receiving feedback, you will submit it to Kennislink for publication. Kennislink is a popular science website based on quality schoolwork, produced by NEMO Science Museum (<https://www.nemokennislink.nl/>). All the students in this course will be competing and only one paper will be published. Notice that this is a course requirement, which means that you must submit to Kennislink in order to receive your PRE-Class certificate at the closing event. You will receive detailed instructions in session 8.

GRADING

The Instructor will evaluate students' work as follows:

Description:	Weight	Notes
'ID Playlist' presentation	25%	Playlist due: Presentation due:
'ID Playlist' podcast	25%	Recording on [date] Showcase on [date] (at the Closing PRE-Classes).
Final paper	25%	Paper due: Kennislinc deadline:
Active Participation	25%	Comprised of attendance, punctuality and active participation in class activities.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Homework, subjects to be dealt with in the lesson, assignments, presentations, and examinations

Date:		Time:	
Session 1	Introduction		
Notes	PRE-Class opening. Reading and discussing the syllabus: overview of contents and evaluation methods, basic concepts, preparation for the field trip on Jan. 20 th .		

Date:		Time:	
Session 2	The popular music industry		
Notes	Reading due: Novoselic, K. (2014) Listening due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lynyrd Skynyrd – Saturday Night Special • Nirvana – Smell Like Teen Spirit • Celine Dion – My Heart Will Go On Virtual Field trip: <i>Eurosonic Noorderslag Conference</i> in Groningen. This event 'offers a daytime conference programme featuring panels, keynote speakers, interviews, workshops and meetings covering the latest developments in the international music, media, production and interactive industries (https://esns.nl/).		

Date:		Time:	
Session 3	Representation and Identity		
Notes	Reading due: Hall (1997) Listening due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bob Marley – Get Up, Stand Up: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F69PBQ4ZyNw • Lion Beat – Más Que Vencedor: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1805XVvOtw In-class activity: listening exercise about representation in reggae music and related genera.		

Date:		Time:	
Session 4	Pop Music		
Notes	<p>Reading due: Frith, S. (2001)</p> <p>Listening due: will be available via cloud service (multiple files)</p> <p>In-class activity: Be prepared to answer the following question: what points did you find the most unclear in the reading? It is not necessary to write it down, just think about it and share your ideas with the class. Your answer will be the starting point to work on the text. For additional discussion, ask yourself what points were the clearest, and why.</p>		

Date:		Time:	
Session 5	Countercultures		
Notes	<p>Readings due: Bennett, A. (2012)</p> <p>Listening due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rage Against the Machine – Bulls on Parade: https://genius.com/Rage-against-the-machine-bulls-on-parade-lyrics • The Beatles – All You Need Is Love <p>Q&A about upcoming assignments: handing in and presenting your 'ID Playlist'.</p>		

Date:		Time:	
Session 6	Complex Identities		
Notes	<p>Readings due: Park (2017).</p> <p>Listening due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Minjung Kayo</i> samples: http://www.globalpopularmusic.net/?page_id=1524 • Musical samples for this article available on the publisher's website <p>Assignment due: hand in your 'ID Playlist'</p> <p>Q&A about upcoming assignments: 'ID Playlist' <i>podcast</i></p>		

Date:		Time:	
Lesson 7	Rock Music and Rebellion		
Notes	<p>Readings due: Jarniewicz, J. (2010).</p> <p>Assignment due: 'ID Playlist' presentation</p>		

Date:		Time:	
Session 8	Recording session: <i>Mixtape Identity Podcast</i>		
Notes	Assignment due: script of the <i>podcast</i> (500 words, a printout)		

	In-class activity: audio recording your script and mixing it with the song you refer to in the podcast.
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Date:		Time:	
Extra	Closing event PRE-Class		
Notes	Assignment due: Display your <i>Mixtape Identity Podcast</i> .		