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MUS 1104  
THE IDEA OF DANGEROUS MUSIC  
Spring 2013  
Tues/Thurs 10:00am-11:15am  
Academic 118 -- Mount Vernon Campus

DESCRIPTION:
Music from many times and places has been accused of being dangerous to social norms and to political regimes. Even “classical music” has found occasion to be considered dangerous enough to be banned. Theories from law, psychology and philosophy shed light on both the human urge to censorship, and the benefits of exposure to challenging ideas. By studying music which genuinely changed society, and by studying music which was unfairly accused of being dangerous, we look at music which mattered very much to people, and we come to better understand the many ways in which music has meaning and power.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:
1. Two short papers – 1 or 2 pages of your reflections on issues central to the course. Please submit papers to my email address above, not to Blackboard.  
   due Jan. 24 and Feb. 12 (see assignments in the schedule below)
2. midterm February 28
3. 5-7 page paper comparing one classical music topic with another topic, as a way of summarizing the main points of the course discussions, readings, and listenings (what is art/music; how does music encode values; (how) can music bring about social and political change; can music harm people; who gets to say what music means; how does the quality of the music affect the message etc.) Details to follow. Due April 25.
4. Classroom presentations – Each student will take a turn starting a discussion or doing a presentation, which might include leading a discussion about a philosophy reading, or bringing in recordings and outlining issues about a particular genre and its issues of “danger.” Guidelines will be determined individually through consultation with the professor.

READINGS: Required readings will be found either at the GW Bookstore in Marvin Center, on Blackboard, or distributed in class.

- Alex Ross, The Rest is Noise – Listening to the Twentieth Century paperback edition  
  (Ross has an audio guide and glossary on his blog site, www.therestisnoise.com On the right side of the opening screen, click on the yellow rectangle.)
- Aesthetics – The Classic Readings, edited by David E. Cooper  
- Milton, Areopagitica (at the GW bookstore in the Oxford U. Press The Major Works)  
- Dorian Linskey, 33 Revolutions Per Minute

GRADING:  
Short papers 10%  
Midterm 30%  
5-page paper 30%  
Discussion leadership/presentation 10%  
Attendance and participation 20%
LATE WORK: No late work will be accepted unless the instructor grants prior approval.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is required. This is a discussion course and the quality of education for everyone in the class depends on your regular attendance and participation in discussion. Every four absences will lower the attendance grade one letter. Readings should be done prior to the date due as preparation for discussion. Bring the readings to class when possible – we will study the difficult readings together. Recordings and films will be presented in class which are not all easily available on-line or in the library – it’s essential that you be present to hear and see these.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: As a result of completing this course, students will:
1. recognize and describe ways that music has power and meaning, for the individual, for society, and in the relationship between the two
2. recognize and articulate the importance and problems of free speech, and issues in the communication of difficult and disturbing ideas (and be familiar with significant texts on the topic by Milton, Brandeis, and the analytic psychologists).
3. improve their skills for analyzing music without lyrics, and then look at the chemistry between music and lyrics
4. be familiar with a number of significant music pieces and genres.
5. be familiar with some of the central writings on aesthetics.

CALENDAR
Jan.15 and 17 Introductions and Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring*
readings: Ross, “Dance of the Earth,” p. 80-84; 93-101 in *The Rest is Noise*
Garafola, *Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes*, p. 63-75 (on Blackboard)

Jan. 22 and 24 Shostakovich and the Soviet Union; serialism
readings: Schonberg, from “Prokofiev and Shostakovich,” *The Lives of the Great Composers*,
p. 546-553
Ross, “The Art of Fear” in *The Rest is Noise*, p.235-283

SHORT PAPER #1 DUE January 24: Write one or two pages discussing: when and how does music cause harm, and what should be done about it?

Jan. 29 The Cold War in the US: racism, early rock-and-roll, the CIA and modernism
Lynskey, “Nina Simone’/Mississippi Goddam’” and “James Brown/Say it Loud- I’m Black and I’m Proud”

Jan. 31 Rock behind the Iron Curtain, contemporary Russia, and beginning our discussion of philosophers for and against music. Does music aid or distract from the improvement of society?
readings: Plato, “The Republic, Book 10” in Cooper’s *Aesthetics*, p. 11-30
Mo Tzu, “Against Music” and Hsun Tzu, “A discussion of music,” in Cooper’s *Aesthetics*, p. 45-54

Feb. 5 Music banned by the Nazis, German musicians banned in the US, Wagner banned in Israel; serialism again
readings: Levi, “*Entartete Music: the War Against Modernism,“* in Music in the Third Reich, p.82-123. Skim through this reading, enough to get a sense of the energy and inconsistency the Nazis put into censoring music.

Feb. 7 Intoxicating Music: Drugs, 1960’s and 1970’s rock and the Vietnam War; Woody
Guthrie, unions, and mid-20th century folk music
readings: Ricks, Dylan’s Visions of Sin, p. 320-329
Lynskey, as much as you can of “Part II, 1965-1973”

Feb. 12 Form vs. content and also the devil in music, including blues and heavy metal, the marketing of badness, and maybe a few Baroque era arguments about tuning.
readings: Rothstein, Emblems of Mind, p. 20-31
Aristotle, in Cooper’s Aesthetics, p. 29-44
Bell, “The aesthetic hypothesis,” in Cooper’s Aesthetics, p. 177-192
Hume, “Of the standard of taste” in Cooper’s Aesthetics, p. 76-93

SHORT PAPER #2 DUE Feb. 12: Write one or two pages discussing how quality affects the power of music. Does a piece of music have a stronger meaning or message when it is better made?

Feb. 14 guest speaker: Dr. David Freeman, psychologist at Community Connections and in private practice, will speak about sources and dynamics of anxiety from a psychological perspective including a look at the positive value of anxiety. Bring the readings to class.
readings: Erikson, “Beyond Anxiety,” Childhood and Society, p. 408-410
Klein and Riviere, “Hate, Greed and Aggression,” Love, Hate, and Reparation, p. 11-16
Frankl, Man’s Search for Meaning, p. 106-111
Keen, Faces of the Enemy, “Preface and Introduction,” p.6-14

Feb. 19 Drug and anti-war music from the classical tradition, continuing our discussion of control, lack of control, and protest:
Berlioz’ Symphony Fantastique, Thomas Ades’ Ecstasio, Mark-Anthony Turnage’s Blood on the Floor; J.S. Bach’s Coffee Cantata; and anti-war music from the classical tradition: Phil Kline’s Zippo Songs, Rumsfeld Songs, Crumb’s Black Angels, and Britten’s War Requiem. What others can you think of?
recommended reading: Alex Ross’s “Listen to This” – on Alex Ross’s website under “Essays” at www.therestisnoise.com/2004/05/more_to_come_6.html

Feb. 21 High art vs. low art; punk and nihilism and do-it-yourself
readings: Tolstoy “On Art,” in Cooper’s Aesthetics, p. 164-176
Ross: “Music for All,” p. 284-290; 293-297 in The Rest is Noise
Marcus, “The Question – Prologue,” Lipstick Traces, p. 5-19
Lawrence Levine, Highbrow/Lowbrow, p. 1-5, 85-93


Feb. 28 MIDTERM

March 5 Rap, hip hop, rhyme, rhythm and tone
readings: George, “gangsters – real and unreal,” hip hop america, p. 34-49
Glassner, The Culture of Fear, p.121-127
Kelefa Sanneh, “Word,” from The New Yorker, Dec. 6, 2010, p. 82-88

March 7 Reggae
reading: Hebdige, Subculture, p. 30-70

March 19 Issues of Gender and Voice
readings: Carson, “The Gender of Sound,” p. 119-137, in Glass, Irony and God
McClary, Feminine Endings, p. 3-31
McClary, excerpt from “What Was Tonality?” in Conventional Wisdom, p. 63-82.
first pages will be useful for all students. Subsequent pages will make more sense to those with some background in music theory.
Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity – Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-siècle Culture, p. 3-24

March 21  Censorship
readings: Milton, Areopagitica, p. 236-273
Brandeis Whitney vs. California, sections 373-380

March 26 – No class

March 28  Latin America

April 2   Sturm und Drang – fear and overwhelming emotion in the 18th century.
Selected pieces by Haydn, CPE Bach, Mozart’s Queen of the Night from The Magic Flute and other “dangerous” women

April 4  Issues of “dangerous” music in Islam
reading: Mansouri, “The Underground Rises” in Best Music Writing 2011

April 9  Reformation/Counter Reformation and the restricting of music in church in the 16th century
Martin Luther in Weiss and Taruskin, p. 100-107
“The Counter Reformation” in Weiss and Taruskin, p. 135-143

April 11  Fela Kuti, Afrobeat in Nigerian politics
reading: Lynskey, “Fela Kuti and Afrika 70/‘Zombie’/1976”

April 16  Music in the South African anti-apartheid movement

April 18  Discussion of final presentation topics – be prepared to discuss your topic for several minutes for suggestions on connections to the readings.

April 23  Questions of arts funding
reading: Ross, “New Deal Music,” p. 302-310 in The Rest is Noise

April 25  Conclusions.
Reading: Lynskey, “epilogue,” p. 535-538

DUE April 25: 5-7 page paper comparing one classical music topic with another topic, as a way of summarizing the course, with reference to the readings and discussions. A more specific written assignment will be provided mid-semester.

Information from the university
University Policy on Religious Holidays:
1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance;
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations;
3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
I personally support the GW Code of Academic Integrity. It states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html
SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

SECURITY
In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.