Music and Politics: Designing a College Level Course

User Report prepared for Dr. Carol Shansky

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Principles of Searching [17:610:530:90]

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Executive Summary

Research Question

This report presents findings related to your interest in procuring materials for an undergraduate course you are designing at Iona College in New Rochelle, New York. You plan to teach this course, entitled “Music and Politics,” in the spring semester of 2013. My research covers areas from a list of parameters you presented to me during our discussions about this project.

I will first present you with some background information and list the resources I used in my research. Then I will present some of the major results I found, with abstracts of those articles. Next I will list my findings by category, and finally I list the 87 articles and websites I found that I hope will be helpful to you in the development of your course.

Background Information

There is no textbook that covers this topic, so you have decided to create one on your own. After several discussions of possible areas to cover, you sent me a list of topics you would like me to explore. They are as follows:

- Nationalism
  - Third Reich
  - National Anthems
    - Grieg, Smetana, Copland
- Music of Revolution
  - American (1776)
  - French (1789)
  - Russian (1917)
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- Italian (1848)
- Rock and the 1960s
  - Primarily USA, but could include some Western Europe
- Political Campaign Music: Use and Controversies
  - Primarily USA
- Marginalization: Punk, Hip-Hop (Rap), and Native American Music
  - Origins in political protest
- The Position/Role of Music Today
  - Occupy music movement
  - Conservative/Republican use of music as part of discourse
    - Krista Branch, Hank Williams, Jr., etc.
- Music and War
  - L’Homme Arme, Battle Hymn of the Republic, Over There, etc.

Resources Used

My searches focused mainly on the databases available to me through the Rutgers University Library system. Much of the information I have collected is in the form of scholarly articles drawn from journals, although I have retrieved web articles and web sites as well.

Academic Search Premier, a wide-reaching multidisciplinary database, was the source for a significant portion of my earliest searching. In an effort to thoroughly cover the topics you presented, I examined these themes further through multiple databases, including JSTOR, Humanities Full Text, Social Sciences Full Text, Scopus, Google Scholar, America History & Life, and Dissertations & Theses. In addition, I searched the Web using several search engines, including Dogpile.com, a search engine that covers Google, Yahoo! and Bing. That generated
some of the more current information, such as political music in the Occupy Wall Street Movement. I also searched for information using Infomine.ucr.edu, Ask.com and Ixquick.com. Wikipedia, while not considered an authoritative scholarly resource due to its open editing, provided some relevant information as well. I found a few appropriate articles by examining reference sources listed in relevant Wikipedia articles.

**Major Results Including Abstracts**

It is clear that music and politics are intertwined in many ways, and the topics you presented to me are well represented in the scholarly world. I have downloaded virtually all the PDF articles cited, which I can share with you at a later date. I have listed several articles below with abstracts for your review.


This article describes a ten-week, two-unit elective course (in the category of “Freshman Discovery Seminar”) offered at the University of California, Santa Cruz, during the winter quarter of 2005. Starting with the era of the Revolutionary War and proceeding through post-9/11 clashes between art, government, and the culture of political activism, the seminar described in this article traces both mainstream and radical musical responses to key events in American history.


Hip-hop permeates modern global society, and yet there remains remain various divisions within it. Following up on an interdisciplinary academic conference - the Lehman
Conference on Hip-Hop - this article highlights a number of aspects in hip-hop's development, and looks toward an ever increasing globalization of what was initially a neighborhood based cultural practice. The authors examine hip-hop within such contexts as social protest, entertainment, and identity formation, and also as a response to dominant structures such as race, gender inequality, and capitalism. Their investigations consider hip-hop's roots and branches, and its connections to politics, culture and consumption.


The article discusses the use of music in physical and psychological torture, including the U.S.'s use of music for torture in the punishment of detainees at the Guantánamo Bay detention center in Cuba. The author discusses the development of "biomusic" as a method of "no touch" torture, tracing its origins to a 1968 paper by Manford L. Eaton. It also discusses the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency's use of stimulation techniques in torture.


This article explores how music played an integral role in the lives of both victim and oppressor during the Third Reich. Nazi policy and musical activities of the prisoners in the Theresienstadt concentration camp are discussed. Use of the arts and music as instruments for indoctrinating and controlling the German nation with an ideology of national superiority, suppression and racial hatred are also explored.

In this article the author considers aspects of music under the Nazi regime in Germany. It is noted that for much of the post-World War II era music has been considered a commodity that was carefully and brutally controlled by the Nazis and yielded no compositions of significance, worth or value. A number of topics are addressed including the position of music in the German cultural legacy, the historiography of music under the Nazis, and an examination of the music of the Third Reich period.


Seeking to determine what the average Union soldier was fighting for and was willing to risk his life for in the Civil War, the writers explore what the soldiers did to boost their morale during the war. They state that one piece of conventional wisdom holds that the soldiers of the Union army fought strictly to preserve the Union and were unconcerned with freeing slaves. Noting the importance of anti-slavery songs in sustaining the troops, however, and reflecting on sentiments expressed by the soldiers in what they wrote, they stress that the soldiers of the Union army were concerned with the issue of slavery and were willing to die to liberate the slaves.


It is common to hear talk of how music can inspire crowds, move individuals and mobilize movements. It is also known how governments can live in fear of its effects, censor its sounds and imprison its creators. At the same time, there are governments that use music for propaganda or for torture. All these examples speak of music's political importance. While we may share these assumptions about music's power, we rarely stop to analyze what it is about organized sound - notes and rhythms - that has these effects.
This book examines music's political power. It shows how music has been at the heart of accounts of political order, how musicians from Bono to Blue have claimed to speak for peoples and political causes. It looks at the emergence of music as an object of public policy, in the classroom or in the copyright courts, as the focus of national pride or employment opportunities. The book brings together ideas about music's political significance (from Aristotle, via Rousseau, to Adorno and beyond) to tell of the extraordinary potency of music across time and space. At its heart lies the argument that music and politics are inseparably linked, and that each animates the other.

Results by Category

Music and Nationalism

Aaron Copland (1900-90). Retrieved on 5/1/12 from Music Academy Online.


Bedrich Smetana. Retrieved on 5/1/12 from New World Encyclopedia.

http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bed%25C5%2599ich_Smetana


Burlington, VT: Ashgate.


Edvard Grieg (1834-1907). Retrieved on 5/1/12 from *Music Academy Online.*


Music nationalism. Retrieved May 1, 2012 from

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical_nationalism

Musical Nationalsim. Retrieved May 1, 2012 from

https://sites.google.com/site/musicalnationalism/home


**Music of Revolution**


**Rock and the 1960s**


**Political Campaign Music: Use and Controversies**


**Marginalization: Punk, Hip-Hop (Rap), and Native American Music**


**The Position/Role of Music Today**


Music and War


L’homme arme. Retrieved April 24, 2012 from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%27homme_arm%C3%A9


**In the Classroom: Courses on Music and Politics**


**Other Relevant Articles and Web Sites**


**Complete Search Results**

Aaron Copland (1900-90). Retrieved on 5/1/12 from *Music Academy Online*.


Bedrich Smetana. Retrieved on 5/1/12 from *New World Encyclopedia.*

http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bed%C5%99ich_Smetana


L’homme arme. Retrieved April 24, 2012 from
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%27homme_arm%C3%A9


Music nationalism. Retrieved May 1, 2012 from
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical_nationalism

Musical nationalism. Retrieved May 1, 2012 from
https://sites.google.com/site/musicalnationalism/home


