

Artistic Crucibles of Social and Political Change

Interdisciplinary course in Art, History, and Literature



COURSE OVERVIEW

This course examines the transformative power of art, music, performance, and literature within global struggles against imperial power and institutional tyranny. Spanning antiquity to the digital age, students will investigate how creative expression transitions from an instrument of total state and religious control into a weapon of public defiance. By analyzing foundational texts and tactical aesthetics, this course explores how creators cultivate collective will, expose structural violence, and build global counter-spaces to dismantle failing empires.

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. L.S. McLeod-Simmons

PREREQUISITES

World History I and II
English: I, II, III

HS COURSE CREDIT

1 hr (year long course)

The course will develop students' understanding of art, music, and literature not only as forms of creative expression, but also as forces within history and society. Through interdisciplinary study, students will examine how creative works can document injustice, challenge prevailing ideas, give voice to individuals and communities, influence public opinion, and contribute to social and political change.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the relationship between creative expression and social change by examining how art, music, and literature have reflected, challenged, and influenced social values, political policies, and public opinion.
2. Analyze historical and cultural context to understand how major works of art, music, and literature emerged in response to specific social, political, economic, and cultural conditions.
3. Identify examples of creative works that contributed to social or political movements, including movements related to civil rights, human rights, war and peace, labor, gender equality, environmental issues, and political reform.
4. Evaluate how artists, musicians, and writers use creative expression to communicate social and political ideas, including symbolism, imagery, narrative, satire, protest, persuasion, and emotional appeal.
5. Compare the effectiveness of different artistic media—visual art, music, poetry, fiction, drama, and other forms of literature—as methods of communicating ideas and encouraging social or political action.
6. Distinguish between art that reflects social change and art that actively seeks to produce change, recognizing that creative works can document events, challenge established ideas, shape public discourse, or encourage action.
7. Analyze multiple perspectives on controversial social and political issues and evaluate how creative works may represent competing viewpoints, experiences, and interpretations.

8. Examine the role of censorship, artistic freedom, and freedom of expression in societies experiencing political conflict, social movements, or cultural change.
9. Assess the influence of audience and communication technologies on the ability of art, music, and literature to reach the public, from print and public performances to recorded media, television, and digital platforms.
10. Evaluate the impact of selected creative works on society using historical evidence to determine whether and how they influenced public attitudes, political debate, legislation, cultural norms, or social movements.
11. Conduct interdisciplinary research using primary and secondary sources to investigate connections among history, politics, society, and the arts.
12. Critically evaluate sources and interpretations, distinguishing documented historical influence from claims or assumptions about the social or political impact of a creative work.
13. Develop evidence-based interpretations of artistic and literary works through written analysis, discussion, presentations, and comparative study.
14. Explore ethical questions surrounding socially and politically engaged art, including propaganda, censorship, appropriation, representation, artistic responsibility, and the tension between persuasion and creative freedom.
15. Create or analyze a culminating project demonstrating how art, music, or literature can respond to a social issue, communicate a perspective, stimulate public discussion, or serve as a catalyst for change.

ASSESSMENT TYPES

Unit Exams

Quizzes

Reflection / Reaction Papers

Research Paper / Artistic Presentations

LATE SUBMISSIONS

Submissions submitted after the announced due date may receive a 10% per day reduction up to 50% of the final grade. Failure to submit course requirements will result in a grade of zero (0) if it is not submitted two weeks after the announced due date.

GRADING SCALE

<i>Numerical Grade Range</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>
100.00 – 97.00	A+
96.99 – 94.00	A
93.99 – 90.00	A-
89.99 – 87.00	B+
86.99 – 84.00	B
83.99 – 80.00	B-
79.99 – 77.00	C+
76.99 – 74.00	C
73.99 – 70.00	C-
69.99 – 67.00	D+
66.99 – 64.00	D
63.99 – 60.00	D-
59.99 - 0.00	F

LEARNING MATERIALS

Primary Course Texts

- **Main Textbook:** Reed, T. V. (2019). *The Art of Protest: Culture and Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Present* (Second Edition). University of Minnesota Press.
- **Supplemental Readings:** Instructor-provided course packets, media archives, and modern lyric sheets.

Literature & Textual Readings

- **Sophocles** – *Antigone* (Full text)

- **John Calvin** – *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Selections on Images and Idols)
- **Thomas Paine** – *Common Sense* (Selections)
- **Mary Wollstonecraft** – *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Chapters 1 & 2)
- **Charles Dickens** – *Hard Times* (Book the First: Fact)
- **Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels** – *The Communist Manifesto* (Section 1: Bourgeois and Proletarians)
- **George Sand** – *The Devil's Pool* (Author's Preface and introductory chapters)
- **Wilfred Owen** – Selected Poems ("*Dulce et Decorum Est*," "*Anthem for Doomed Youth*")
- **Tristan Tzara** – Early Dadaist Manifestos (Selections)
- **Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o** – *Decolonising the Mind* (Chapter 1: The Language of African Literature)

Visual Art & Graphic Media

- **The Protestant Iconoclasts** – Historical accounts/records of the 1566 *Beeldenstorm*
- **Eugène Delacroix** – *Liberty Leading the People* (Painting)
- **Honoré Daumier** – *The Third-Class Carriage* (Painting)
- **Pablo Picasso** – *Guernica* (Mural)
- **Emory Douglas** – Selected graphic illustrations and newspapers for the Black Panther Party
- **Banksy** – Selected unauthorized public street art and museum interventions
- **Ai Weiwei** – Selected conceptual installations (e.g., backpack and sunflower seed works)

Music & Performance

- **Francesca Caccini & Medici Court Women** – Early Florentine court music scores and recordings
- **Ludwig van Beethoven** – *Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 55 ("Eroica")*
- **Dmitri Shostakovich** – *Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47*
- **Nina Simone** – "*Mississippi Goddam*" (Song lyrics and audio)
- **Bob Dylan** – Selected protest songs ("*Masters of War*," "*A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*")
- **Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young** – "Ohio"
- **Creedence Clearwater Revival** – "Fortunate Son"
- **Donovan** – "The War Drags On"
- **U2** – "Sunday Bloody Sunday"
- **Public Enemy** – "*Fight the Power*" (Song lyrics and audio)
- **N.W.A.** – Selected tracks from early albums
- **Y'en a Marre (Fed Up)** – Selected Senegalese hip-hop recordings, digital media assets, and campaign materials

Secondary Historical & Critical Texts

- **Kelley Harness** – *Echoes of Women's Voices: Music, Art, and Female Patronage in Early Modern Florence*
- **Thomas P. Sipe** – *Beethoven: Eroica Symphony*
- **T. J. Clark** – *The Absolute Bourgeois: Artists and Politics in France, 1848–1851*
- **Linda Nochlin** – *Realism*
- **Anthony Blunt** – *Picasso's Guernica*
- **T. V. Reed** – *The Art of Protest: Culture and Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Present*
- **Jeff Chang** – *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*
- **Manuel Castells** – *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*
- **Fadel Diallo** – Selected journalistic and academic articles on the Y'en a Marre movement

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is at the core of education. All academic assignments are essential to the learning experience and to assessing that learning. When students violate the academic integrity policy (i.e., “cheat”), they commit theft that can cause actual harm to themselves and others, including their classmates, instructors, those from whom they steal, and their family and friends. Academic dishonesty confers an unfair advantage over others, which undermines educational equity and fairness and jeopardizes their educational success and future opportunities.

Definitions and Examples of Academic Dishonesty include the following.

- a. Cheating is the unauthorized use or attempted use of material, information, notes, study aids, devices, artificial intelligence (AI) systems, or communication during an academic exercise. Examples of cheating include:
 - Copying from another person or from a generative AI system or allowing others to copy work submitted for credit or a grade. This includes uploading work or submitting class assignments or exams to third party platforms and websites beyond those assigned for the class, such as commercial homework aggregators, without the proper authorization of a professor. Any use of generative AI tools must be in line with the usage policy for specific assignments as defined in the course of the syllabus and/or communicated by the course instructor.
 - Using artificial intelligence tools to generate content for assignments or exams, including but not limited to language models or code generators, without written authorization from the instructor.
 - Unauthorized collaboration on assignments or examinations.
 - Taking an examination or completing an assignment for another person or asking or allowing someone else to take an examination or complete an assignment for you, including exams taken on a home computer.
 - Submitting content generated by another person or an AI tool or any other source as solely your own work as your own, including, but not limited to, material obtained in whole or in part from commercial study or homework help websites, or content generated or altered by AI or digital paraphrasing tools without proper citation.
 - Fabricating and/or falsifying data (in whole or in part).
 - Giving assistance to acts of academic misconduct/dishonesty.
 - Altering a response on a previously graded exam or assignment and then attempting to return it for more credit or a higher grade without permission from the instructor.
 - Submitting substantial portions of a paper or assignment to more than one course for credit without permission from each instructor.
 - Unauthorized use during an examination of notes, prepared answers, or any electronic devices such as cell phones, computers, smart watches, or other technologies to copy, retrieve, generate or send information.
- b. Plagiarism is the act of presenting ideas, research or writing that is not your own as your own. Examples of plagiarism include:
 - Copying another person’s or an AI tool’s actual words, images, video, or audio without the use of quotation marks and/or proper citations attributing the words to their source.
 - Presenting another person’s ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source.
 - Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.

- Internet plagiarism, including submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, or “cutting & pasting” from various sources without proper attribution.
 - Unauthorized use of AI-generated content; or use of AI-generated content, whether in whole or in part, even when paraphrased, without citing the AI as the source.
- c. Obtaining Unfair Advantage is any action taken by a student that gives that student an unfair advantage in his/her academic work over another student, or an action taken by a student through which a student attempts to gain an unfair advantage in his or her academic work over another student. Examples of obtaining unfair advantage include:
- Stealing, reproducing, circulating or otherwise gaining advance access to examination materials.
 - Depriving other students of access to library materials by stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing them.
 - Retaining, using, or circulating examination materials clearly indicates that they should be returned at the end of the exam.
 - Intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student’s work.

Citations used should be a standard and generally recognized style, such as APA.

Questions concerning Academic Integrity and Citations should directed to instructors or the Head of School.

WORLD SCHEDULE

Antiquity to the Industrial Era

Unit 1: Sacred, Secular, and Subversive Power in Early History (Antiquity to c. 1650)

- **Thematic Focus:** How art transitioned from an instrument of total state/religious hegemony to a tool for challenging entrenched authority.
- **Key Concepts:** Iconoclasm, Humanism, divine right versus public critique.
- **Case Studies:**
 - *Literature & Theater:* Sophocles (*Antigone*—the individual conscience versus the tyrannical decree of the state).
 - *Visual Art:* The Protestant Iconoclasts (The destruction and reimagining of political iconography in Reformation Europe).
 - *Music & Patronage:* The Medici Court Women (Utilizing early opera and musical theater to assert alternative political power structures).
- **Weekly Breakdown:**
 - **Week 1: Individual Conscience vs. Tyrannical Decrees**
 - **Summary:** This week explores the clash between divine moral law and rigid state authority through classical Greek tragedy. Students will examine how Sophocles frames the body of a fallen rebel as a political battleground, illustrating the limits of imperial decrees when they confront personal and spiritual duty.
 - **Readings:** Sophocles, *Antigone* (Full text).
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** When the laws of a state conflict with personal moral duties, which authority should an individual obey? How does Creon’s definition of citizenship compress human value into total submission to the crown? How does public performance expose flaws in state decrees?

- **Engagement Assignment:** Write a 250-word modern legal brief from the perspective of Antigone, justifying your civil disobedience using arguments based on human rights rather than religious decrees.
- **Week 2: Shattering the Images of Imperial Power**
 - **Summary:** This week examines the visual politics of the Reformation. Students will analyze how early modern protest groups used iconoclasm—the physical destruction of sacred art—to challenge the political power and economic exploitation of the Catholic Church.
 - **Readings:** Selections from John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (On Images and Idols); archived accounts of the 1566 *Beeldenstorm* (Great Iconoclasm) in the Low Countries.
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** Why do revolutionary movements target physical statues and religious paintings during times of political crisis? Is destroying an image an act of censorship, or is it a radical liberation from the visual control of an empire?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Select a contemporary public monument that has been a target of modern protest. Write a 1-page analysis comparing the goals of modern protesters to the actions of 16th-century European iconoclasts.
- **Week 3: Musical Patronage and Subversive Court Politics**
 - **Summary:** This week investigates how elite women used the birth of opera to challenge male-dominated political spaces. Students will explore how female patrons and composers in the Medici court funded and designed musical performances to subtly criticize patriarchal authority and model alternative structures of governance.
 - **Readings:** Harness, K. (2006). *Echoes of Women's Voices: Music, Art, and Female Patronage in Early Modern Florence* (Selected chapters).
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How can marginalized individuals use elite art forms like opera to challenge power structures without triggering retaliation from the rulers who fund them? In what ways do the plots of early musical theater subvert traditional gender hierarchies?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Listen to the assigned recordings of Francesca Caccini’s early court music. Annotate a copy of the score or lyrics to highlight how the musical themes assert power and independence.
- **Unit 1 Assessment: Iconoclasm Debate and Analytical Synthesis.** A 3-page written brief evaluating whether the destruction of political symbols accelerates structural reform or hardens state resistance.

Unit 2: The Age of Democratic Revolutions (c. 1775–1850)

- **Thematic Focus:** The mobilization of the masses through romantic idealism, political pamphlets, and nationalist symphonies.
- **Key Concepts:** Liberty, the collective will, class consciousness, romantic nationalism.
- **Case Studies:**
 - *Music:* Ludwig van Beethoven (*Symphony No. 3, "Eroica"*—originally dedicated to Napoleon, exploring the tension between revolutionary liberation and imperial tyranny).
 - *Visual Art:* Eugène Delacroix (*Liberty Leading the People*—the iconic democratization of visual propaganda).
 - *Literature:* Thomas Paine (*Common Sense*) and Mary Wollstonecraft (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*).
- **Weekly Breakdown:**
 - **Week 4: The Soundtrack of Shattered Ideals**
 - **Summary:** This week explores the tension between revolutionary ideals and imperial tyranny through symphonic music. Students will trace how Beethoven altered his third symphony

after Napoleon crowned himself Emperor, transforming a celebration of a political leader into an exploration of heroism and public liberty.

- **Readings:** Sipe, T. (1998). *Beethoven: Eroica Symphony* (Historical context chapters); selected letters from Beethoven regarding Napoleon Bonaparte.
- **Guiding "Think" Points:** How can instrumental music convey political arguments without using explicit spoken words? What happens to a revolutionary artwork when its real-world inspiration turns into a tyrant?
- **Engagement Assignment:** Listen to the second movement (Marcia funebre) of the *Eroica*. Write a 200-word reflection explaining how the music evokes a sense of collective loss and democratic grief.
- **Week 5: The Visual Architecture of Mass Mobilization**
 - **Summary:** This week focuses on the use of romantic allegories to spark political action. Students will analyze Delacroix's classic painting to see how it blends different social classes into a unified revolutionary force, turning street violence into a heroic pursuit of freedom.
 - **Readings:** Extracts from Delacroix's personal journals; Clark, T. J. (1973). *The Absolute Bourgeois: Artists and Politics in France, 1848–1851* (Selections).
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How does Delacroix combine elite artistic styles with gritty street realities to appeal to both wealthy patrons and working-class citizens? Why is liberty depicted as a personified human figure rather than an abstract concept?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Complete a visual mapping template detailing how three different social classes are represented by the clothing and weapons of the figures in *Liberty Leading the People*.
- **Week 6: The Written Spark of Human Rights**
 - **Summary:** This week examines the literature of the democratic revolutions. Students will look at how plain-language print media and feminist arguments dismantled the legitimacy of hereditary rule, expanding the definition of universal liberty to include marginalized groups.
 - **Readings:** Paine, T. (1776). *Common Sense* (Selections); Wollstonecraft, M. (1792). *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Chapter 1 and 2).
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How does Thomas Paine strip away the myth of divine right to make monarchy seem absurd to everyday readers? Why did Mary Wollstonecraft argue that denying women an education was a direct threat to the democratic goals of society?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Select a paragraph from *Common Sense* and translate its 18th-century phrasing into a modern social media post designed to go viral.
- **Unit 2 Assessment: Revolutionary Pamphlet Design.** Create a 2-page historical pamphlet advocating for a specific reform from this period, using the rhetorical styles of Paine and the visual ideas of Delacroix.

Unit 3: Industrial Realism and Class Warfare (c. 1840–1900)

- **Thematic Focus:** Creative responses to the brutal human costs of the Industrial Revolution and unbridled capitalism.
- **Key Concepts:** Socialism, proletariat exploitation, industrial alienation, social critique.
- **Case Studies:**
 - *Literature:* Charles Dickens (*Hard Times*—critiquing industrial utilitarianism) and Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels (*The Communist Manifesto*).
 - *Visual Art:* Honoré Daumier (*The Third-Class Carriage*—shining a harsh light on industrial class stratification).
 - *Literature/Society:* George Sand (Using narrative strategies and musical themes to advocate for humanist reform and feminist statements).

- *Music*: Traditional Black gospel spirituals (focus on freedom on earth and in heaven)
- **Weekly Breakdown:**
 - **Week 7: Mechanization, Alienation, and the Working Poor**
 - **Summary:** This week looks at the human impact of rapid industrial growth. Students will read Dickens' critique of a society obsessed with data and factory efficiency, and pair it with Marx's analysis of how factory work isolates laborers from their own humanity.
 - **Readings:** Dickens, C. (1854). *Hard Times* (Book the First: Fact); Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1848). *The Communist Manifesto* (Section 1: Bourgeois and Proletarians).
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How does a factory-driven economy turn human beings into simple cogs in a machine? In what ways does Dickens use satire to challenge the idea that human happiness can be measured entirely by numbers and financial profit?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Write a 300-word diary entry from the perspective of a character in *Hard Times*, describing how the factory landscape shapes your daily emotions.
 - **Week 8: Framing the Realities of Class Separation**
 - **Summary:** This week explores how early realist art challenged the polished, elite paintings favored by traditional salons. Students will study Daumier's art to see how everyday urban transit can expose systemic economic inequality and industrial isolation.
 - **Readings:** Nochlin, L. (1971). *Realism* (Chapter 1: The Nature of Realism); contemporary art reviews of Daumier's underground political caricatures.
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How does Daumier use lighting and composition to make passengers in a third-class train car look noble yet exhausted? Why is showing unvarnished poverty considered an act of political defiance against an empire?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Sketch a basic layout diagram of *The Third-Class Carriage*. Label how the arrangement of figures isolates the lower-class travelers from the wealthier passengers in the background.
 - **Week 9: Narrative Strategies for Humanist and Feminist Reform**
 - **Summary:** This week focuses on George Sand's work. Students will examine how she used pen names and stories about rural life and music to advocate for working-class rights, female independence, and social reform.
 - **Readings:** Sand, G. (1846). *The Devil's Pool* (Author's Preface and introductory chapters); selected biographical essays on Sand's political activism in the 1848 French Revolution.
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** Why did George Sand use a male pseudonym, and how did that choice help her ideas enter mainstream political debates? How can stories about folk culture challenge the elite assumptions of urban industrial empires?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Write a 250-word critique analyzing how George Sand uses depictions of rural folk art as an alternative to the gray world of industrial factories.
- **Unit 3 Assessment: Industrial Realism Comparative Matrix.** Complete a structured 3-page matrix comparing how Dickens, Marx, and Daumier critique the human costs of industrialization.

3. Second Semester: The 20th Century to the Digital Era

Unit 4: Modernism, Totalitarianism, and War (1914–1945)

- **Thematic Focus:** The shattering of classical forms in response to global industrialized warfare; art as state-sponsored control versus underground resistance.
- **Key Concepts:** Dadaism, "Degenerate Art," socialist realism, totalitarian aesthetic control.
- **Case Studies:**

- **Visual Art:** Pablo Picasso (*Guernica*—the ultimate avant-garde indictment of fascist military atrocities).
- **Music:** Dmitri Shostakovich (*Symphony No. 5*—a masterclass in political double-speak, appeasing Soviet censors while expressing deep public mourning).
- **Poetry:** Wilfred Owen (*Dulce et Decorum Est*—dismantling patriotic myths of military glory).
- **Weekly Breakdown:**
 - **Week 10: Dismantling the Myth of Glorious Warfare**
 - **Summary:** This week looks at the collapse of traditional art and poetry during World War I. Students will examine how Wilfred Owen used stark, realistic imagery to dismantle long-standing patriotic myths about the glory of war.
 - **Readings:** Owen, W. (Selected poems: "*Dulce et Decorum Est*," "*Anthem for Doomed Youth*"); selections from Tristan Tzara's early Dadaist manifestos.
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** Why did the scale of industrialized warfare make traditional, romantic poetry feel dishonest? How does Owen use sensory language to force civilian readers to confront the horrific realities of the front lines?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Scan the rhythm and structure of "*Dulce et Decorum Est*". Write a paragraph explaining how its uneven pace mirrors the physical exhaustion of a chemical weapons attack.
 - **Week 11: Fractured Aesthetics as an Indictment of Fascism**
 - **Summary:** This week focuses on Picasso's *Guernica*. Students will explore how cubism and abstraction became powerful tools for documenting the trauma of aerial bombing, directly challenging fascist efforts to censor the human costs of war.
 - **Readings:** Blunt, A. (1969). *Picasso's Guernica* (Historical Context context selections); contemporary news dispatches from the 1937 bombing of Guernica.
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** Why did Picasso use abstract shapes and a black-and-white color scheme instead of a realistic style to depict this military attack? How does a public mural serve as a counter-space to state-controlled wartime propaganda?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Choose two prominent figures in *Guernica* (e.g., the weeping mother, the horse, the fallen soldier). Write a 250-word analysis of how their distorted anatomy communicates terror.
 - **Week 12: Subversive Double-Speak Under Totalitarian Censors**
 - **Summary:** This week investigates how artists survived under intense state control. Students will analyze Shostakovich's fifth symphony to discover how a composer can satisfy state censors on the surface while embedding coded messages of mourning for a public living under state terror.
 - **Readings:** Volkov, S. (Selections from *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich*); Soviet state decrees on "Degenerate Art" and Socialist Realism.
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How can a piece of music sound triumphant to a state censor but tragic to an audience of citizens? What are the ethical dilemmas an artist faces when working within a system of total state censorship?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Listen to the final movement of Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 5*. Write a 300-word reflection explaining whether you hear the ending as a genuine celebration of power or a forced march.
- **Unit 4 Assessment: Totalitarian Aesthetics Research Paper.** A 1,000-word analytical paper exploring how a chosen avant-garde artwork actively resisted state-mandated artistic styles under 20th-century regimes.

Unit 5: Post-Colonialism, Civil Rights, and Counterculture (1945–1980)

- **Thematic Focus:** Global liberation movements utilizing music and text to dismantle colonial empires and racial segregation. In the US, the civil rights movement and anti-Vietnam War protests. Independence movements in Ireland and Scotland
- **Key Concepts:** Decolonization, systemic oppression, the anti-war movement, civil rights.
- **Case Studies:**
 - **Literature:** Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (*Decolonising the Mind*—challenging the linguistic hegemony of colonial empires).
 - **Music:** Nina Simone ("*Mississippi Goddam*"—harnessing jazz and soul as an unyielding weapon for Black liberation) and Bob Dylan (Injecting complex poetic dictions into popular music to fuel anti-war sentiment).
 - Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young – "Ohio"
 - Creedence Clearwater Revival – "Fortunate Son"
 - Donovan – "The War Drags On"
 - U2 – "Sunday Bloody Sunday"
 - Dougie Maclean – "Scots Wa Hae"
 - Full Rugby Squad Choir – "Flower of Scotland"
 - **Visual Art:** Emory Douglas (Graphic artist for the Black Panther Party, redefining revolutionary community media).
- **Weekly Breakdown:**
 - **Week 13: Language as a Colonial Weapon and Tool for Freedom**
 - **Summary:** This week explores the cultural impact of post-colonial movements. Students will read Ngũgĩ's argument on how language can enforce colonial control, examining why reclaiming native languages is central to dismantling imperial legacies.
 - **Readings:** Thiong'o, N. w. (1986). *Decolonising the Mind* (Chapter 1: The Language of African Literature).
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** Why do empires force colonized people to use the imperial language instead of their native tongues? How does writing and performing literature in a native language serve as an act of political resistance?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Write a short reflection on how your own education and vocabulary shape your view of historical events and cultural authority.
 - **Week 14: The Anthems of Black Liberation and Global Anti-War Protest**
 - **Summary:** This week investigates how jazz, soul, and folk music became central to civil rights and anti-war movements. Students will analyze how Nina Simone and Bob Dylan used popular music to challenge racial violence and state-sponsored foreign conflicts.
 - **Readings:** Simone, N. (Selected interviews and lyrics to "*Mississippi Goddam*"); Dylan, B. (Lyrics to "*Masters of War*" and "*A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*").
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How does Nina Simone use an upbeat, theatrical musical style to deliver a searing critique of racial violence? How does Bob Dylan use complex poetic imagery to critique military leaders and defense contractors?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Transcribe a verse from "*Mississippi Goddam*". Write a 200-word analysis showing how its lyrics directly confront the slow, state-mandated timeline for civil rights reform.
 - **Week 15: Branding a Community Revolution**
 - **Summary:** This week focuses on the visual art of the Black Power movement. Students will study Emory Douglas's print illustrations to see how his art dignified urban poverty, critiqued

police brutality, and provided a clear visual identity for grassroots community survival programs.

- **Readings:** Douglas, E. (Selected graphic portfolios from *The Black Panther* newspaper); Reed, T. V. (2019). *The Art of Protest* (Chapter 4: The Black Arts Movement).
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** What makes a visual style easily accessible and clear to everyday working-class people? How did Douglas use simple print media to build political solidarity within urban neighborhoods?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Choose an illustration by Emory Douglas. Write a 1-page visual review analyzing how his use of heavy lines and bold colors projects strength and community resilience.
- **Unit 5 Assessment: Protest Music and Graphic Analysis.** A written 3-page comparison analyzing how a selected song and a graphic illustration from this period collaborated to support a shared political movement.
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Unit 6: The Contemporary Landscape: Digital Disruption and Global Protest (1980–Present)

- **Thematic Focus:** Subverting state surveillance, systemic injustice, and global capitalism via corporate counter-spaces, street art, and digital viral performance.
- **Key Concepts:** Globalization, democratization of tools, street intervention, systemic critique.
- **Case Studies:**
 - *Music:* Public Enemy and N.W.A. (Transforming hip-hop into an unfiltered, audio-documentary critique of systemic racism and police brutality).
 - *Visual Art:* Banksy and Ai Weiwei (Using public street art and conceptual installations to mock authoritarian state control).
 - *Multidisciplinary Performance:* Y'en a Marre (*Fed Up*) (Senegalese hip-hop creators and journalists organizing mass socio-political youth movements).
- **Weekly Breakdown:**
 - **Week 16: Hip-Hop as an Auditory Document of Systemic Racism**
 - **Summary:** This week looks at the rise of hip-hop as a powerful form of street journalism. Students will explore how artists turned sampling and rhythmic poetry into a raw critique of systemic racism, urban neglect, and police misconduct.
 - **Readings:** Chang, J. (2005). *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation* (Selected chapters); lyrics from Public Enemy's "*Fight the Power*" and N.W.A.'s early albums.
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How does using musical sampling allow hip-hop artists to build a sonic archive of Black history and political struggle? In what ways do these lyrics challenge mainstream media narratives about urban communities?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Choose an early track by Public Enemy or N.W.A. Write a 250-word breakdown identifying the political events, historical speeches, or news media clips sampled within the song.
 - **Week 17: Street Intervention and Conceptual Mockery of the State**
 - **Summary:** This week investigates how street art and conceptual installations disrupt public spaces and state institutions. Students will examine Banksy's uncommissioned public stencils and Ai Weiwei's massive installations to see how they expose corporate greed and authoritarian control.
 - **Readings:** Ai, W. (Selected essays and manifestos on digital freedom); creative reviews of Banksy's unsanctioned museum interventions.
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How does placing art in unauthorized public spaces change its meaning compared to displaying it inside a traditional museum? How can satire and irony be used to undermine the authority of a powerful government?

- **Engagement Assignment:** Find an image of an installation by Ai Weiwei. Write a short analysis explaining how his choice of everyday materials (like backpacks or sunflower seeds) honors human lives lost to state neglect.
- **Week 18: Digital Networks and Youth-Led Street Performance**
 - **Summary:** This week explores the intersection of hip-hop, citizen journalism, and decentralized digital organizing. Students will focus on the Senegalese youth movement *Y'en a Marre* to see how modern coalitions use music and digital media to registering voters and resist corrupt regimes.
 - **Readings:** Diallo, F. (Selected articles on the *Y'en a Marre* movement); Castells, M. (2012). *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age* (Selections).
 - **Guiding "Think" Points:** How do digital platforms alter the speed and reach of grassroots movements compared to historical print media? What are the challenges of using commercial digital networks to organize real-world political resistance?
 - **Engagement Assignment:** Find a modern social media infographic or digital campaign asset. Write a 200-word analysis evaluating how its layout, use of typography, and hashtags are designed to encourage quick, viral sharing.
- **Unit 6 Assessment: Digital Protest Assessment.** A comprehensive online essay exam requiring students to synthesize modern digital trends with the foundational frameworks of hegemony and counter-spaces studied in Unit 1.

Grading Criteria & Major Assessments

Assessment Category	Weight	Description
Quarterly Analytical Essays	30%	Comprehensive research essays using the primary frameworks to trace a creative motif across two historical eras.
Socratic Seminars & Text Analysis	25%	Active, evidence-based participation in analytical discussions comparing unit readings to their socio-political historical contexts.
Capstone "Propaganda" Project	25%	Students create an original political artifact addressing a current societal crisis, accompanied by a rigorous 5-page defense paper.
Comparative Visual/Audio Matrix	20%	Structural technical analyses tracing how specific forms (e.g., polyphony or abstraction) convey distinct political subversion.

Project 1: Quarterly Analytical Essay 1 & 2 (30% total — 15% each)

- **Objective:** Trace a creative technique or political motif across different eras using course frameworks.
- **Deliverables:** Two formal 5-to-6 page research papers (Essay 1 due mid-first semester; Essay 2 due mid-second semester).
- **Description:** Students will write two major research essays over the course of the academic year. Each paper must select a specific artistic strategy—such as the personification of liberty, the use of coded double-speak, or the destruction of historical imagery—and track its evolution across two distinct historical periods. Your arguments must be supported by direct analysis of the primary case studies and peer-reviewed historical sources.

Project 2: Comparative Visual/Audio Matrix (20% total)

- **Objective:** Conduct technical analyses of how artistic forms carry and communicate political messages.
- **Deliverables:** A detailed 4-page analytical spreadsheet and a 1,000-word structural summary (Due end of the first semester).

- **Description:** Students will complete a structured matrix analyzing the technical elements of six different artifacts from Units 1 through 3. You will examine specific artistic choices—such as musical polyphony, visual perspective, line weight, and poetic meter—to explain how these formal elements help subvert entrenched power, independent of any text or spoken words.

Project 3: "Propaganda" Project & Defense Paper (25% total)

- **Objective:** Apply the creative strategies studied throughout the year to design an original political artifact and provide a rigorous academic defense of its choices.
- **Format:** An original creative artifact along with a 3-5-page formal defense paper (Due during finals week of the second semester).
- **Description:** For this final project, students will design an original political artifact (such as a poem, song recording, visual print, installation plan, or manifesto) that addresses a contemporary societal crisis. The accompanying defense paper must justify every aesthetic choice you made—including color palettes, structural layout, symbolic language, and delivery media—by directly linking your decisions to historical precedents and creative theories studied throughout the year.