Course Information

Professor: Rick Olsen
Office: 231 Leutze Hall
Phone: 962-3710
Office Hours: MWF 11-12, TR 9-11
Email: olsenr@uncw.edu
Feel free to drop by or schedule an appointment.
Class Time: Tuesday: 4-4:50
Class Location: RLHP 2

Syllabus

Course Description: This course explores what is commonly called “protest music.” However, we will take a broad view of music as a rhetorical phenomenon. Our central question is “how do various aspects of music such as lyrics, rhythm, instrumentation, melody, etc. combine to produce a message that shapes values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors?” To do this we will look at some historical examples as well as contemporary examples.

Course Objectives: After completing this course the successful student will:
1. define rhetoric and its relationship with music
2. analyze musical artifacts for their rhetorical dimensions
3. appreciate the ubiquity of rhetorical messages in music and society

Course Policies: You are expected to attend every class period. However, since life happens, you are allowed two absences without automatic penalty as a personal day. Use it wisely if at all. Any plagiarism will result in failure for the course. You are expected to check your email regularly.

Honor Code: “It shall be the responsibility of every faculty member, student, administrator and staff member of the university community to uphold and maintain the academic standards and integrity of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington” (1997-1998 Student Handbook and Code of Student Life p. 91). All student work and conduct must in accordance with the academic honor code and other codes informing the university community.

Readings: There will be a variety of readings either on electronic reserve in the library or that are accessible electronically. Your input in class will help determine readings. Failure to pick challenging readings or websites to visit in preparation for sessions you may help lead will result in my assigning of readings.
Assignments and Grading: There are 100 points available for the course. I will be using a standard ten percent breakdown: 90% = A, 80-89% = B, etc. The assignments are as follows:

- Leading class discussion: 40
- Term Project: 50
- Class Participation: 10

Assignment Descriptions

Leading Class Discussion: We will create teams to address some of the many possible topics and artifacts within rhetoric and music. You have three obligations for your session:

1) **Pick some reading(s).** Find an academic or popular reading of at least 8 pages (or a combination of shorter readings) that help us gain a greater understanding of rhetoric and music. Readings for ALL groups are due in class Feb. 14th. Ideally we should be able to access them on line or have photocopies ready the week before. Feel free to collaborate with me on this if needed. Some high quality websites may be used as readings, others may be better suited to be used as artifacts (see 2) below)

2) **Bring in an artifact and plan activities.** I do NOT want the session to be a summary of the reading! Have us DO something with that reading as background: apply it, discuss it, debate it, etc. The most obvious way to do that is to bring in an artifact of some kind. For instance you may decide to have us listen to some Tupac songs while looking for specific rhetorical or musical techniques or themes that were essential to the success of the song. The readings might be academic analysis of Tupac, interviews with Tupac, or a general reading about rap as a genre of protest music, etc. Or you might have us read about hip hop and then have to work in teams to create a rap about a university issue worthy of commentary or protest (I’ve got a drum machine!).

3) **Lead discussion/activity with intention and enthusiasm.** Work out GOOD discussion questions and directions for activities ahead of time and put them on slides or a handout so we can have a worthwhile, elevated discussion and activity. Each member of your team should speak and play a role in the class session.

I will grade on: 1) apparent preparation, 2) quality of readings and your integration of them into your session, 3) quality of activities—do they get at core themes of this class: protest music, rhetoric of music and the like, 4) energy and perceived commitment of group members—did all members have an active role and did they carry it out with gusto, 5) supporting materials: handouts, slides, video clips, activity supplies, etc. Are these of good quality and were they used well?

Term Project: You will have three options for the term project. **Option One:** Write an original protest song of at least 3 minutes that demonstrates your understanding of the key concepts in this course. Your song must make a point beyond just being interesting to listen to. Provide a lead sheet with the lyrics and chords along with 1-2 pages of self analysis that explicitly links course concepts to your choices in the song(s). **Option Two:** Select one or more concepts from this course and offer a more in-depth exploration of the concept then we have time for in class. For instance, you may want to dive more deeply into music and propaganda. **Option Three:** Using one or two of the concepts discussed in class, analyze a musical artist or artifact and offered a clear argument for what essentially makes it (him/her) effective in making a persuasive point. We will talk more about this and as we read some examples the paper will become clearer. Papers for options two and three will not be long, but should be polished. My basic expectations are 5-7 sources and 4-6 pages for the body of the paper. Follow APA or MLA style guide.
**Class Participation**: Participation is a factor of two things: Did you attend class? Was the class better in some respects due to your membership? In the answer to these two questions lies your participation grade. This grade is not a given! Habitual silence/passivity will result in a grade of 0.
Hey there listeners! Here at WHON (“We’re on the air and way over your heads”) we’ve got the hottest topics in music and rhetoric on the planet. All your old favorites and new ones too! All coming at you with no commercial interruption or filler. We’re going to play some hits to get you started but if you don’t hear your special topic on the list, call it in our request line: 1-800 ASK RICK.

Artists-based analysis
- Bob Dylan
- Bruce Springsteen
- Neil Young
- Bob Marley
- Phil Ochs
- Joan Baez
- Pete Seeger
- Tupac
- Marvin Gaye
- Billie Holliday
- Public Enemy
- Dead Kennedys
- ETC.!!!!!!

Song or Album-based analysis
- Strange Fruit
- Fortunate Son
- Cop Killer
- Born in the USA
- What’s Goin’ On?
- Sun City
- For What it’s Worth
- And MANY MANY more!

Era-based analysis
- Slavery/Spirituals
- Labor Movement
- Civil Rights
- Vietnam Protest
- Contemporary Protest

International Topics
- Reggae
- Protest Music of other countries or regions

Concept-based analysis
- Metaphors in protest music
- Musical strategies
- Identification
- Fear appeals

Humor as rhetorical strategy

Other random topics
- Religious music as rhetorical
- Christmas/Anti-Christmas music
- Musical debate on Iraq
- Environmental movement in song
- Fan reaction to protest music/events
- Analysis of music-based events such as
  - Rock the vote, 2004 vote for change event
  - and others
- Album covers or liner notes
- CB4, 8 Mile, etc.

Examples of combined topics
- Rap and Slave spirituals—what’s changed what hasn’t?
- Metaphors in Punk Protest
- Role of religion in Bruce Springsteen’s music

Reminder: This is just a “starter kit” a brief brainstorm by your professor to get your creative juices flowing. Do some outside research on what interests YOU and go from there. There are some good websites and lots of resources in our library in books, journal articles, audio CDs and DVDs, etc.
Some Sources to Consider

These are some sources to consider assigning us to read before a session you lead. They are also sources to consider using in your papers. Some are a bit “stuffy” and dense but try and enjoy the mental workout and pull out a nugget or two that are meaningful to you. Then again, some are not stuffy, very insightful and good models to follow for your term project! Many of these can be found in full text through the EBSCOHost database (activate the following databases: Academic Search Premier; MasterFILE Premier; American Humanities Index; Communication & Mass Media Complete


## Schedule of Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Homework Due</th>
<th>Class Session Focus</th>
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| 1-17   | Visit the following website listen to the song, poke around some other pages on the site and write down one reaction you have to the site and one or two questions the site raises for you about protest music. http://www.countryjoe.com/rag.htm | Course overview and definition of some key terms  
Discussion of the Country Joe site. |
| 1-24   | Visit the website you are assigned and come in with a 1-2 sentence insight regarding the history of protest music, one question you have about protest music in light of its history.  
A-K you will explore the following site: http://www.pbs.org/wnet/getupstandup/about.html  
L-Z you will explore the following site: http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/strangefruit/message.html | Discussion of your thoughts and the following:  
1) What seems to have changed or evolved in the history of protest music?  
2) What does the future hold for protest music  
Video excerpt: We Shall Overcome |
Come in prepared to help teach the most practical aspects of your reading to the other folks in class! | Some basic rhetorical terms to help us analyze musical artifacts. You’ll briefly team teach the highlights from each reading and I’ll bring in some ideas from another reading. |
<p>| 2-7    | TBA                                                                                 | Work with at least one other group brainstorming your session ideas and write up a 1 page summary of outcomes with names of all who attended at the top |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Reading/Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>2-28</td>
<td>Workshop for your sessions.</td>
<td>Spring Break—Pedro Says “Come back rested, not arrested!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-21</td>
<td>Read and discuss one article on music and culture.</td>
<td>Akshay Menon, Mary Patman, and Robert Blackmon</td>
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<td>Read these two articles/interviews, regarding the phase of protest music in modern times.</td>
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<td>Using the information gathered from the article, critically examine the lyrics of the following three Radiohead songs, and summarize the meaning and argument seemingly made in each song.</td>
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<td>Fake Plastic Trees</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.greenplastic.com/lyrics/fakeplastictrees.php">http://www.greenplastic.com/lyrics/fakeplastictrees.php</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fitter Happier</td>
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<td>2+2=5</td>
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### 3-28

**Katy Marie Luquire, Samantha Grace Jacobs and Katherine Alyse Hunsucker**


Protest Music is Alive and Kicking
By Laura McDowell, Wire Tap
[http://www.alternet.org/story/15518](http://www.alternet.org/story/15518)

**Homework:** Look up and bring in lyrics from one modern and one older protest songs. Write your own protest verse and bring it to class. Be prepared to share!

### 4-4

**Lauren Osborne and Megan Rains**

Follow the links below to websites concerning Bob Dylan. After looking through each link answer the questions following and be prepared to discuss them in class.

1. [http://bobdylan.com/songs](http://bobdylan.com/songs) --- click on the link to the album list and then under the album "The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan" click on the links to the song lyrics for "Master's of War" and "I Shall Be Free" and think about the similarities and differences between these two songs. How does Bob Dylan incorporate so many different aspects of life of the times into the songs.

2. [http://interferenza.com/bcs/interw/63-jan.htm](http://interferenza.com/bcs/interw/63-jan.htm) --- Just read over the description that the interviewer gives about Dylan. What type of influence do you think this appearance gives to the music. Does it attract or turn people away from the music? Are you more interested in the music because of the type of man that Bob Dylan is or less?

3. [http://www.vh1.com/artists/news/144019/05242001/dylan_bob.jhtm](http://www.vh1.com/artists/news/144019/05242001/dylan_bob.jhtm) --- Read over the information about Dylan's style in his performances. What kind of variety and originality do you think that brings to Dylan's style and lyrics?

From the first link look through all of the songs that are on the album "The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan" and find a song that you really like and you would consider persuasive or rhetorical on some level. Please be prepared to speak about the song you choose.

### Comparison of Modern and Past Protest Music Social Injustice Various Genres will be explored

### Peer-lead session on Bob Dylan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-11</td>
<td>Conor Buckley, Jenni Pesci and Jenna Ready</td>
<td>Please read a Review of Reggae Roots. <a href="http://www.jstor.org/view/07401558/ap030020/03a00320/0">http://www.jstor.org/view/07401558/ap030020/03a00320/0</a> And poke around this website: <a href="http://hemi.es.its.nyu.edu/journal/2_1/lacey.html">http://hemi.es.its.nyu.edu/journal/2_1/lacey.html</a> For homework: go to the following website and write down what you feel are the five most interesting facts about reggae <a href="http://debate.uvm.edu/dreadlibrary/carlis02.htm">http://debate.uvm.edu/dreadlibrary/carlis02.htm</a> Candy to those you dress up for the occasion!</td>
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<td>4-18</td>
<td>Amanda Johnson, Lauren Deibel and Bobby Adden</td>
<td>Reading assignment: <a href="http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGACT300232005">http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGACT300232005</a> (gives an overview on Lennon's bed-ins, music, and involvement in the fight for peace) and <a href="http://www.pbs.org/wnet/getupstandup/music_peace2.html">http://www.pbs.org/wnet/getupstandup/music_peace2.html</a> Homework: search the lyrics for or listen to the following: A-K: Imagine, Power to the People, Instant Karma, or War Is Over Based on the two songs you look at, come in with insights on what you think Lennon is trying to say, what is the song about? or what is it referring to in a historical sense? What is he arguing for and HOW does he make these arguments? What about the song really sends the message home?</td>
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<td>4-25</td>
<td>TBA—we will use this for make up presentation should we need it or for final paper workshop, etc.</td>
<td>Be prepared to bring a good working DRAFT of your paper to class.</td>
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<td>5-9</td>
<td>Exam Period 3-6 pm</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
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Feel free to suggest movie clips, or other activities that you think might enhance our exploration. This is a collaborative experience.