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**Global Media Industries**  
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Assignment 2 – Critical Reflection, 800-1000 words	Weight 30%
<b>How is my media consumption affected by globalization and/or cultural representation?</b>	Due date: 9 Jun 2024

*Word count: 998 words*

## **I can't be without counterculture**

*My music consumption is affected by globalization.*

"In Los Ageless, the waves, they never break  
They build and build until you don't have no escape  
But how can I leave?  
I just follow my hood to the sea, go to sleep"  
—Los Ageless, St. Vincent

"It's understood that Hollywood sells Californication  
Pay your surgeon very well to break the spell of aging  
Celebrity skin, is this your chin, or is that war you're waging?  
First born unicorn/ Hardcore soft porn  
Dream of Californication/ Dream of Californication"  
—Californication, Red Hot Chilli Peppers

Because of globalization, I have heard of these American rock musicians. And because of worldwide popular streaming platforms like Apple Music and Spotify, I have access to their music. My expanding collection of rock music has saved my life over and over again.

twenty one pilots' consistent theme is that they criticize their government and the music industry very loudly and creatively—and they call for a youthful collective fandom full of outcasts and broken heads standing in solidarity. Songs like Car Radio, Lane Boy, Tear In My Heart, and The Hype are prime examples.

With the fourth studio album *Blurryface* (2015), twenty one pilots received awards and mainstream global success—that was when I heard of them. The album is the first in the US to have every track "gone gold, platinum, or in some cases, multi-platinum" (McIntyre,

2018). It topped weekly charts all over the world: 2nd in New Zealand Albums in 2015 (Hung, n.d.), 13th in Italian Albums in 2016 (Hung, n.d.), and 61st in Japanese Albums in 2015 (Oricon, n.d.),... twenty one pilots has since become a global name, they tour around the world to South Korea, Japan, Canada, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and more (Graff, 2015).

In America, high culture (such as classical music, and opera) and low culture (such as rock 'n' roll, blues, and soul) are no longer distinctly separated, the barriers are broken down and merged—which brings about exciting possibilities and opportunities (Edmondson, 2013, p.xxv). As it is crucial to democracy to hear new voices, their stories are truths told that receive massive support. As it takes guts to speak up against dominant groups in society, they once again made counterculture popular.

The idea that leaders and governments are currently not doing a good job and that we, as a people, have a fearless say onto how we are governed—is constructive and worth embracing. Because it's simply a practice of free speech. As we speak up and reach out to those who can empathize, we're together building a better future for ourselves.

Globalization has culturally and politically made me a world citizen, who sees nation-states as part of the complex diversity we've got—not solely competitors in some rankings. I'm for democracy and human rights worldwide.

In response to globalization, nation-states seek to strategically and legitimately secure their national identity and own culture. Instead of an authentic expression or a scream from the heart, music can be viewed as cultural products backed by governmental interests. Musicians are not only seen as individuals but as part of a global situation, as chess players on the global play stage.

This led us to the concept of pushed music and pulled music by Danielle Fosler-Lussier (2012):

“Music was not only pushed across borders by nation-states seeking to impose their influence: music was also pulled across borders by people who actively wanted it.”

Fosler-Lussier (2012) also points out that the United States made cultural diplomacy efforts to advance globalization during Cold War. Many people in the Soviet Union wanted political freedom and imported the music art, which was officially unavailable there. The music fans did not necessarily see themselves as receiving US propaganda but as “people actively seeking an international connection on the basis of a common musical interest.” (Fosler-Lussier, 2012)

Today, on the streets of Vietnam, in fashion stores, and in the banned There's No One At All MV by Sơn Tùng M-TP, Nirvana t-shirt is on display.

Nirvana is a legendary American grunge rock band in the 90s. The band has three studio albums: *Bleach* (1989), *Nevermind* (1991), and *In Utero* (1993). The songwriter of Nirvana, Kurt Cobain was forever known to be one of the greatest songwriters. He wrote punk songs and crafted noise to express the theme of abjection and social alienation. Nirvana means a lot to me. I needed this music then—and I need this music in my life forever on.

Of course, I wear the t-shirt and happily be seen on the streets. This wearing-a-Nirvana-t-shirt identity here now seems promising something new in our Vietnamese culture, could it be a palpable counterculture? I'm aware that Nirvana's music can sound incomprehensively like trash—But it's not trash! "Music has famously become a refuge for the more creative and sensitive young people, who often experience intense alienation from social institutions," Ryan Moore (2009) stresses the importance of this rebelliously at-odds-with-the-world music and style in *Sells Like Teen Spirit: Music, Youth Culture, and Social Crisis*.

In retrospect, when I was in America during the George Floyd protests, Killing In The Name by Rage Against The Machine was the number-one trending song—it's a countercultural song about police brutality and not letting authorities control you. My two years (2019-2020) studying in America did concrete my critical countercultural attitude: in my public life and private life, on the streets and in the classroom, it's not wrong to curse, to blame, and to protest against society's ills. And now at Swinburne University, I believe I can embrace this worldview while learning more. Though in different territories, we're world citizens.

Yet, there are the music's appeal and the political motivations behind it—and its wide spread. Also, on the world map, there are capitalist labor markets and authoritarian systems that constantly tell us who to be. Under punches, the music that gets you through and gets you out of whatever nihilistic mayhem—is the one you should uphold, no matter the distance.

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