

**Intimacy and Transcendence in the Thick of Life:
Exploring Process Theology through Popular Music**

Summer 2018

TPS-3031

Claremont School of Theology

Professors:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores relations between popular music and process theology, drawing upon resources from NPR music as a primary source for understanding what is going on "musically" in the worlds of popular music. By listening to the music profiled by NPR, reading selected articles on popular music and theology, and short essays from Open Horizons, this course will explore ways in which various genres of popular music, and various artists, communicate key ideas in process theology and can serve to "introduce process theology" to a new generation. Please bring your musical tastes, and get ready to have your ears stretched.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students who successfully complete this class will be able to:

1. Articulate the core features of process theology.
2. Write perceptively about how popular music can serve to introduce process theology to a new generation.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES:

1. **Final Project:** A theological essay exploring how popular music can serve to introduce the core ideas of process theology to a new generation. (assesses SLO #1, 2)

COURSE TEXTS:

- Robin Sylvan, *Traces of the Spirit: The Religious Dimensions of Popular Music* (2002, New York University)
- [*We Learn to Improvise: Miles Davis and Process Theology*](#)
- [*Sounds of the Deep: What God Heard Before the Dawn of Creation*](#)
- [*Why Listen to Country Music?*](#)
- [*The Popular Song as Sacred Text*](#)
- [*Finding Your Inner Banjo*](#)
- [*Four Kinds of Holy: Jamila Woods*](#)
- [*My Life in Music: NPR's Ann Powers*](#)