French 5403: Topics in French-Speaking Cultures and Literatures (3 credits)
Danielle Marx-Scouras
Spring 2018
Wednesday/Friday 2:20-3:40 pm

“MINOR ART” from GAINSBOURG to STROMAE:
Popular Music as a Political Act

“L’évolution de la langue française/Ça vient de la rue…” (IAM)  “Poète... circulez!” (Léo Ferré)

The iconoclast, Serge Gainsbourg, considered popular music a “minor art.” In his course, open to advanced undergraduate and graduate students, we shall examine how a “minor art” can subvert language, transgress cultural norms, and rock identity politics. Our musical repertoire will take us from the 1950s to the present. Songs and clips will be studied in conjunction with film and media materials, as well as historical and critical texts. This course will be taught in French.

Prerequisites: Graduate students need the permission of the graduate advisor (this course fulfills a culture requirement). Undergraduates need to have taken two or more literature/culture courses at the 3000, 4000, or 5000 levels (ideally at least one at the 4000 or 5000 level). Please note that you will be expected to learn a lot of new vocabulary (I recommend that you purchase a slang dictionary such as the Larousse Dictionnaire du Français Argotique et Populaire by Caradec and Pouy). You also will be expected to be an active and engaged participant in this class. French 5403 is repeatable three times for a total of 9 credits. If, upon registering, this course defaults to one credit instead of three, please email Ms. Sonya Afanasyeva (afanasyeva.1@osu.edu)