The Eurovision Song Contest
Spring Quarter 2019 – Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00–12:20
Logan 901 – Performance Penthouse
Instructor: Philip V. Bohlman (boh6@uchicago.edu)
Course Assistant: Florian Walch

THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST
SYLLABUS

Week 1

INTRODUCTION – ON THE ROAD TO THE GRAND PRIX

April 2 – Introductory Lecture by Philip Bohlman – The Eurovision Song Contest at 64
April 4 – Film presentation created for class – The Grand Tour to the Grand Prix
  • Hands-on acquisition of Eurovision resources – The EBU yesterday and today
  • Phil Bohlman blogposts on the Eurovision (Oxford Univ. Press) – 2011–2018

Week 2

NATIONALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

April 9 – The Eurovision as Nationalist Fantasy and Political Struggle
  • Readings on Eurovision themes - from Tragaki, ed., Empire of Song: Europe and Nation in the Eurovision Song Contest (2012) - Introduction and Chaps. 1, 2, & 9 (Tragaki, P. V. Bohlman, A. F. Bohlman & Polychronakis, Teixeira & Stokes)
April 11 – Team presentations of videos for 1) Annual contests in single years and
  2) star singers and hit songs
  • Annual Contest Team (Teams of three present past ESC conferences) – ______________
  • Star / Hit Song Team – Teams of three present stars or hit songs from past and present
    ______________

Week 3

LOCAL AND REGIONAL IDENTITY – FESTIVALIZING EUROPEAN NATIONALISM

April 16 – Whose Eurovision Is This?
  • Reading Assignment – 1) Anderson, Imagined Communities, Chaps. 4–6
April 18 – Other Eurovisions – Sopot, Doro, Intervision
  • Reading assignment: Vuletic, Chap. 3, “A Contest for Communism,” from Postwar Europe and the Eurovision Song Contest
  • Annual Contest Team – ____________________________________________
  • Star / Hit Song Team – ____________________________________________

Week 4

STARDOM

April 23 – Winners and Losers
  • Reading Assignment – Tim Moore, Nul Points
April 25 – Breakthrough Biographies – Is There Life after Eurovision?
• First CD or MP3 compilation due (National Run-Up Competition – ca. 5 tracks)
• Annual Contest Team – ________________________________________________
• Star / Hit Song Team – ________________________________________________

Week 5

FANDOM – EUROVISION COMMUNITIES
April 30 – The Everyday Worlds of Eurovision Fans
• Reading Assignment – Anderson, Imagined Communities, Chaps. 7–9
May 2 – DIY (Do It Yourself) Eurovision Production
• Reading Assignment – Raykoff & Tobin 2007: Chaps. 9–11 (Ingvoldstad, Heller, Lemish)
• Annual Contest Team – ________________________________________________
• Star / Hit Song Team – ________________________________________________

Week 6

THE EU, THE EBU, AND THE MAKING OR EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
May 7 – The Political, the Apolitical, the Media, the Immediate
• Reading Assignment – Anderson, Imagined Communities, Chaps. 10, 11, &
  “Travel and Traffic”
May 9 – Imperial Eurovision – Competitors beyond Europe’s Borders
  2) From Raykoff and Tobin 2007: Chaps. 6–8 (Mutsaers, Pajala, Vuletic)
• Annual Contest Team – ________________________________________________
• Star / Hit Song Team – ________________________________________________

Week 7 – EUROVISION WEEK!

THE EUROVISION SONG
May 14 – The Eurosong Formula
• NB: The First Semi-Final takes place in the evening (European time).
• Review Essay Due (National Culture and Identity in the New Europe – 3 pages)
May 16 – Breaking the Rules
• NB: The Second Semi-Final takes place in the evening (European time).
• Annual Contest Team – ________________________________________________
• Star / Hit Song Team – ________________________________________________
• Class meets on Saturday, May 18th, in the afternoon for a live broadcast of the
  Grand Finale of the 64th Eurovision Song Contest, Logan Film Screening Center.
  Students are required to attend this “Eurovision Party.” •

Week 8

POST-EUROVISION EUROPE – ECHOES AND ALTERNATIVES
May 21 – A Eurovision for Every Europe
• Reading Assignment – From Raykoff and Tobin: Chaps. 12, 14, 15 (Solomon, Meizel,
  Brunt)
May 23 – The Eurovision Wannabe Phenomenon – Globalizing Talent
• In-class presentations of the second CD or MP3 compilation due (Alternative
  Eurovisions 2019 – Sámi, Jr. Eurovision, Sanremo, Arab Icon, etc. – 3 tracks)
• Annual Contest Team – _________________________________
• Star / Hit Song Team – _________________________________

Week 9

SOUNDING THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

May 28 – The Rise of the Right, Brexit, and the End of Europe as We Know It
• Reading Assignment – From Tragaki 2013, Chaps. 6, 10, and 12 (Lampropoulos, Tragaki, A. F. Bohlman and Rehding)

May 29 – When Difference Makes a Difference
• Annual Contest Team – _________________________________
• Star / Hit Song Team – _________________________________

Week 10

GRAND FINALE

June 4 – The Chicagovision 2019 Press Conference and Dress Rehearsal
June 6 – The Performance of the Grand Finale of Chicagovision 2019
• Collective staging and performance of Chicagovision 2019, Performance Penthouse •
• June 12 – Three-page analysis of student’s role in the Grand Finale due at 5:00 pm •

Grade Requirements

1) 2 CD or MP3 compilations – 20% each
2) Review essay – 20%
3) Grand Prix – Participation + three-page analysis of role or creative component – 40%


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Bohlman, Philip V. – Blogposts, Oxford University Press.

2012 – Europe in Spite of Itself
http://blog.oup.com/2012/06/europe-in-spite-of-itself/

2013 – Europa borealis: Reflections on the 2013 Eurovision Song Contest Malmö
http://blog.oup.com/2013/05/europa-borealis/

2014 – “There Is Hope for Europe” – The ESC 2014 and the Return to Europe
http://blog.oup.com/2014/05/eurovision-hope-for-europe/

2015 – Tales of two Europes: Sameness and Difference at the Eurovision Song Contest 2015 Vienna

2016 – “We Could Build a Future Where People Are Free”: Reflections on the Eurovision Song Contest
https://blog.oup.com/2016/05/eurovision-2016-reflections/


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Tuhkanen, Mikko, and Annamari Vänskä, eds. 2007. *Queer Eurovision* (= Special edition of *SQS: Journal of Queer Studies in Finland*).


WEB BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Semi)-Official Information Hubs
2. Independent ESC news reporting: [http://esctoday.com/](http://esctoday.com/) (e.g., [www.esctime.com](http://www.esctime.com); [www.eurovision-09.com](http://www.eurovision-09.com); [www.oikotimes.com](http://www.oikotimes.com))
3. BBC official site: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/eurovision/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/eurovision/)
4. Wikipedia is pretty good for up-to-date news

Historical Information
2. mp3 archive: http://www.eurovisionsongs.net/index.htm

Eurovision-esque Contests
2. Eurovision Dance Contest: http://www.eurovisiondance.tv/
4. Sanremo: www.sanremo.rai.it
5. Sopot Festival: http://sopotfestival.onet.pl/
6. And the myriad idols: http://www.realityblurred.com/realitytv/archives/international_idols/

Blogs
1. http://eurovisionexpress.blogspot.com/
8. Philip V. Bohlman, see above.
Etc. forever to infinity.

Ephemera
1. The musical: www.eurobeatthemusical.com
2. The campaign for Scotland: http://www.scotlandineurovision.eu/
3. Another kind of cover: http://www.eurovisioncovers.co.uk/
4. Father Ted’s spoof: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzYzVMcgWhg