Listening & Analysis #2 - The Clash, *London Calling*

As the Clash’s ‘breakout’ record, *London Calling* transcends many of the conventions of punk music and expands into different musical territory, including reggae, dub, early American R&B, and even hints of disco. Overall, it’s a really interesting and expressive album. *But what does it express or communicate to you?*

Listen to *London Calling* and choose three songs that are particularly interesting to you, for whatever reasons. Spend roughly half a page (single-spaced) writing about each song. You may choose to focus on how the songs sound, how they make you feel, the way they’re played, the kinds of imagery or ideas that are tossed around, the lyrics, the mood they convey, the way they mix genres of music, the instrumentation, and so on…it’s really up to you.

Regardless of which approach you take, I want everyone to keep these things in mind:
- Avoid making evaluative claims (like, dislike, hate, etc.) without supporting your opinion. It’s not enough to tell me that you “really liked” the vocals….I also want to know *why* you feel that particular way. Reminding yourself you use the word *because* will work wonders for you.
- Try to be as specific as possible when it comes to discussing specific parts of a song. For example, rather than referencing “the beginning” or “middle” of a song, tell me what specific point in the song you’re talking about. For example, you could say: *the part that begins at 2:43*. Or, if you happen to have more knowledge about song structure, you could say something like: *at the end of the first verse*, or, *in the last measure of the bridge* (but this is certainly not required).
- Try to be as specific as possible when it comes to discussing the members of the band and the instruments they play. This means you need to know the names of the folks on the recording and what instruments they play. In addition, it’s also important for you to be able to distinguish between the different singers (which is very easy once you’ve watched the documentary or checked out live videos of the Clash performing).

**Due Week 5 (Sept 21) by 6pm**