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## The Guardian, Week of August 3, 2020

Wright State Student Body

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Retro Rewind: “London Calling” by The Clash

Maxwell Patton

August 3, 2020

Rock music in its various styles would in no way, shape, or form be what it is today without the influence of a certain British punk icon known as The Clash.

Even though the band lays claim to one of the shortest lifespans in my Retro Rewind reviews (being active for only a decade), they have had a massive amount of influence on the rock realm with their distinctly political lyrics and driving, guitar-centered instrumentals.

Their third record, by far their most popular, is the subject of my review today: the 1979 double album “London Calling,” which is viewed by many as a definitive album in the punk genre.

Released on Dec. 14, 1979, the record contains 19 songs of varying styles and was supported by three singles: the title track “London Calling,” “Clampdown,” and “Train in Vain (Stand by Me).” The themes delved into throughout the album include unemployment, the usage of drugs, paranoia, and depression.

## **The band**

The Clash, a British rock band, was founded in London in 1976. At the time of this album’s release, the group comprised of singer/rhythm guitarist Joe Strummer, singer/lead guitarist Mick Jones, bassist Paul Simonon, and drummer Topper Headon.

An extremely influential act in the British punk scene, The Clash released a total of six albums between 1977 and 1985 before disbanding a year later. A highly influential in the British punk scene, lyrics from the band were often charged with a radical political flair, describing subjects such as bleak city life, consumerism, and draft policies with a liberalistic attitude.

Rolling Stone magazine ranks The Clash at number 28 on their list of the 100 greatest artists of all time. The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2003.

## **The tracklist**

Opening the album is its title track, “London Calling” which was inspired by events such as the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, and painted a disastrous portrait of reality.

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Strummer mentioned to the magazine Melody Maker in 1998 that he'd "read about 10 news reports in one day calling down all variety of plagues on us."

"Brand New Cadillac" is a cover of a tune originally performed by Vince Taylor and His Playboys in 1959, and was the first song recorded for "London Calling." "Jimmy Jazz" is a bluesy track that regales the listener with the story of the titular outlaw.

"Hateful" tells about the delights and consequences of drug use, while "Rudie Can't Fail" applies its reggae roots to a tune about a Jamaican boy behaving irresponsibly in the eyes of his elders.

Side two starts with "Spanish Bombs," which gained lyrical inspiration from news reports of terrorist bombings of hotels on the Spanish coast. "The Right Profile" opens with a light guitar and drum introduction before descending into a rousing rock track about troubled actor Montgomery Cliff. The track also features a heavy Irish horn section.

"Lost in the Supermarket" was originally written on the back of an Ernie Ball pack of guitar strings, and plays on consumerism. "Clampdown" began as an instrumental entitled "Working and Waiting" and encourages the youth to rebel against their oppressors. Paul Simonon's composition "The Guns of Brixton" features an iconic bassline and became a fixture of the band's live shows.

Side three commences with "Wrong 'Em Boyo," which was originally performed by The Rulers. "Death or Glory" features Strummer reflecting on his life and the difficulties of adulthood, while "Kola Kola" is an anti-corporate anthem riffing on the advertising of past and present.

"The Card Cheat" begins with a soft piano introduction into a slower melody. Interestingly, each instrumental and vocal part was recorded twice to produce "a sound as big as possible."

Side four closes out the record. "Lover's Rock" is a satire of reggae songs containing rather sexual lyrics, and deals with sex and the difference between having it for pleasure and having it for reproductive purposes.

"Four Horsemen" portrayed the band members as the titular apocalyptic figures with humorous lyrics. The tune was only played once live, at Finland's Russrock Festival, due to the nature of said lyrics.

"I'm Not Down" was sung by Mick Jones and describes a narrator who has been bruised and beaten up by the trials he has faced, standing tall in defiance of these events. "Revolution Rock" is a reggae-infused cover of a Danny Ray song, and was going to be the closing track of

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“London Calling,” but the following track was chosen at the last minute while the album’s sleeve was being created.

The final song on the album, “Train in Vain,” appeared as a hidden track before its addition to the sleeve, and is a rather upbeat breakup song. It’s also the most-covered Clash track, with artists such as Third Eye Blind, Annie Lennox, and The Black Crowes creating their own versions.

## **The production**

The band arrived at Vanilla Studios in London in May 1979 with no new material for their third studio album, as Jones and Strummer were both experiencing intense writer’s block. Holding private rehearsals at the studio over the next few months, the band mostly played covers while writing and recording demos for what would become “London Calling.”

Strummer created much of the lyrical content for the album, while Jones handled the musical arrangements. Simonon’s contribution, “The Guns of Brixton,” was his first song written for The Clash and his first lead vocal. He wasn’t too confident about the lyrics, but Strummer encouraged him to keep working on the track.

The Clash started recording songs for the record at London’s Wessex Studios in August 1979. Producer Guy Stevens was asked by the band to help create the album, but their label, CBS Records, wasn’t too keen on it. Still, Stevens’ unconventional methods helped enrich the atmosphere in the studio, and the group hit it off with Stevens easily.

The first song recorded for the album was “Brand New Cadillac,” a tune often used to warm the band up. Recording the entire album took five to six weeks of 18-hour workdays, and many of the songs were successfully recorded in a single take or two.

The iconic artwork of “London Calling” features Simonon smashing a Fender Precision Bass during a concert at the Palladium in New York City on Sep. 20, 1979. The image was captured by photographer Pennie Smith and Q magazine deemed it the greatest rock and roll photograph ever taken.

They commented that the photo “captures the ultimate rock’n’roll moment – total loss of control.” Smith didn’t want to use the photo originally because she figured it was too blurry, but Strummer and designer Ray Lowry thought that it’d make a stunning album cover.

The artwork, featuring the aforementioned photograph and the title in pink and green letters, was an homage to the cover of Elvis Presley’s eponymous debut album.

Simonon later explained that he regretted destroying the instrument because it was his best-sounding bass guitar and the one he used to record “London Calling.”

“The show had gone quite well, but for me, inside it just wasn’t working well, so I suppose I took it out on the bass,” Simonon said in interviews. “If I was smart, I would have got the spare bass and used that one, because it wasn’t as good as the one as I smashed up.” The broken bass guitar was briefly on display at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame but is now back in Simonon’s possession.

### **What critics thought of “London Calling”**

During its initial release as well as in more recent reviews, “London Calling” has been lauded as one of the best rock albums ever made. John Rockwell for the New York Times said in his 1980 review that “London Calling” “is an album that captures all the Clash’s primal energy, combines it with a brilliant production job by Guy Stevens and reveals depths of invention and creativity barely suggested by the band’s previous work.”

Michael Goldberg, writing for the magazine Down Beat, mentioned that it is “a classic rock album which, literally, defines the state of rock and roll and against which the very best of [the 1980s] will have to be judged.” Sounds writer Garry Bushell, however, explained that he believed that The Clash had reverted to using “tired rock cliches” with “London Calling.”

In a retrospective review, PopMatters writer Sal Cioffi deemed the album a “big, loud, beautiful collection of hurt, anger, restless thought, and, above all, hope.” Music journalist Robert Christgau echoed this sentiment, saying that the album extended The Clash’s guitar-focused punk sound in a “warm, angry, and thoughtful, confident, melodic, and hard-rocking” manner.

NME has ranked “London Calling” at number six on their list of the greatest records of the 1970s. Rolling Stone, meanwhile, placed it as the eighth-best album ever made in a list of 500 candidates.

The record was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2007 and was included in the book “1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die.”

### **What I think of the album**

“London Calling” is one of the most masterfully produced albums I have ever heard, period. Guy Stevens did a top-notch job of bringing out the band’s talents as they experimented with a few different styles while still staying incredibly cohesive, making each instrumental pop.

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The lyrics are far from pretentious and show a realistic portrayal of life in 1970s Britain and exploring the themes with enough substance that nothing really ever felt hollow, while excellent bass and guitar riffs are present throughout the album's runtime.

"London Calling" also doesn't shy away from displaying its influences, with a few of the tracks being covers of early rock and reggae tunes while many of the remaining tracks utilizing that influence to create a stellar product.

Nothing on this album feels recycled; it all feels fresh and holds up marvelously four decades after the original release. This is The Clash at the top of their game, and should be in every punk fan's playlist.

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Opinion: Even at a Distance We Are Still Face to Face

Roxanne Roessner

August 4, 2020

University may be more virtual, but it can still be face to face through WebEx, Zoom, Skype and Facetime.

The changes that Wright State University is facing are ones that will shape how the 2020 school year will go. Each and every challenge that we face as a community and as a college are difficult, but we are still able to have face to face communication with people who care.

Now more than ever, those who were less inclined to interact with technology platforms are not only willing, but also excited, to hop online and communicate.

## **Zoom and WebEx**

Both Zoom and WebEx are free services that can range from \$19.99 and \$26.95 + per month respectively. While the two platforms offer relatively the same services, there are a few differences between them.

This includes total number of participants, conferencing features, web features and supported integrations according to DGI Communications.

Luckily for students, a great free version of WebEx is linked to their Wings account through Wright State University.

Universities are taking advantage of these services and are conducting virtual college visits to their campus.

Olivia Milligan, a Senior at Coldwater High School, had the chance to experience a virtual college visit of Wright State University.

“The college visit was good. We were able to go on the website and go through it with ease. There were pictures of campus and they went through the map, explaining everything,” said Milligan

## **Changing times**

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From meetings with your academic advisor, office hours with professors, and open houses, students are able to interact with the university relatively the same way as before.

One of the better parts about this semester is that professors and students are familiar with online classes and remote learning. Professors who had never taught online before have now experienced what it is like and how to help students.

“I’ve been working a lot this summer on making my fully online classes more interactive so that we can foster that engagement that I love about literature classes, even if we’re doing it from a distance,” said Professor Christine Junker.

While Spring Semester 2020 was one semester that several students and professors struggled with handling, there is hope that Fall Semester 2020 will be our best yet!

Because we went to remote learning on such short notice in the Spring, students and faculty alike were thrown into a whirlwind of technological problems.

However, with help from campus IT faculty members, most problems can be solved remotely. Courses that required the campus computers were able to be accessed at home through VPN connections.

## **What to expect**

This upcoming semester will be completed with a mixture of face to face and remote learning.

With this, there are still things for students to keep in mind. Students should feel free to always contact their professors and academic advisors if they are having trouble with courses.

“Virtual chat has always been apart of the services WSU Libraries offer to students. We are also discussing the continuation of virtual tutoring appointments as well in the Fall due to the coronavirus. It is our mission to ensure we match the quality of services virtually, as we did in our face-to-face exchanges”, said Jamon Flowers, the Student Success Center and Library & Technology Center Director.

Students are entitled to receiving the best education while also being comfortable with their health and surroundings. Students are top priority and should be treated as such.

From meetings to discussing projects, to catching up with family on zoom calls, people are able to come together in newer and better ways.



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Students Eager to Stay Involved on Campus

Kyle Jackson

August 5, 2020

Many students are still planning to stay involved on campus this fall by continuing to participate in their organizations and by using the library and dining services.

## **Overall involvement**

The fall semester may look different this year, but many students are planning on being involved the best they can while staying safe.

“I’m going to do everything in my power to stay as involved as possible, potentially even more since this will be my last fall on campus,” said Jackson Cornwell, SGA college of liberal arts senator. “I trust that everyone from students, faculty, staff, and administration [are] taking the current crisis seriously and so long as everyone continues to practice safe measures I have no issues being on campus.”

Some students have been impacted by the pandemic more than others and have a greater respect for the importance of guidelines and changes like Jennie Berrien, a student at Wright State.

“This fall will be very different. People are afraid (and rightly so),” said Berrien. “One of my family members is in the ICU right now with coronavirus. This virus is real and needs to be taken seriously.”

Other students may be like Jonathan Ciero, orientation peer mentor, who plans to stay involved but not any more than before.

“I think my involvement will be the same or slightly less,” said Ciero. “I don’t mind wearing a mask and staying away from others if it means I can go to class, study in the fishbowl (a study room in Russ), eat on campus, etc.”

## **Organization involvement**

Many students still plan to participate in their organizations this fall regardless if they continue meeting virtually or if they decided to meet face to face.

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"I absolutely plan on staying involved in student organizations, they are my favorite part of my college experience and it wouldn't be nearly as fun without them," said Cornwell. "I'm so excited to be back in person though, to see other students and be back in the saddle of campus life."

Some students are excited to start seeing members of their organization in person rather than through a webcam.

"I will participate in face-to-face meetings if that is an option," said Berrien. "I believe meeting in person is more impactful than virtual meetings."

"I do plan on living on campus, and if student orgs will be meeting in person, I will most likely attend," said Ciero. "I'll definitely be wearing a mask during these meetings and keeping my social distance during the meetings."

## **Dining Involvement**

Many students trust that WSU will provide a safe way for students to dine this fall.

"I will plan on dining on campus," said Ciero. "I have faith in WSU to be a clean place for eating, and again, I will keep my distance from others I do not know, use a card or touch-less payment methods when I can, and not spend more time than I need in the public areas."

Some students will be spending less time on campus this fall, so they may not visit dining services as often.

"It'll depend on what's happening in my day, I won't be living on campus so it'll just depend on when and how long I'm on campus," Cornwell.

"If I am on campus, I will dine there," Said Berrien. "I like eating in a social setting and not just by myself all the time,"

## **Library involvement**

Many students who regularly use the library on campus still plan to use its services this coming semester, but maybe a little less due to a decrease of in-person classes.

"I plan to, probably not as frequently as I would, but will be because of not being on campus as frequently," said Cornwell.

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“Most people use the Library to study, and I think I will find myself using the library to study still,” said Ciero. “On the flip side, I will try to study more at home when I can, study at the library during hours that less people are there, or study somewhere less crowded on campus.”

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Men's basketball recognized for academics

William Baptist

August 6, 2020

The National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) recognizes basketball programs that achieve academic excellence. The Wright State men's basketball team earned the NABC Team Academic Excellence Award.

The award recognizes programs that have excelled in academics during the previous season. A program must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better during that season.

This is the third consecutive season under Head Coach, Scott Nagy, that WSU has earned this award.

"It comes down to who you recruit, our assistant coaches recruit guys that are serious about their education," said Nagy.

This is becoming the standard for the basketball team. Showing student-athletes the importance of education is truly part of what being a coach entails.

"They're not going to play basketball forever, and if we're not stressing academics to them then we're failing them," according to Nagy.

## **Support from WSU**

Coach Nagy has a tremendous staff around him, and putting academics first is very important to the entire staff.

Supporting student athletes in their academic pursuits is something that Nagy will always strive to do.

"Our support staff that works with our guys is amazing, and that all starts with Bob Grant at the top and all the way down," said Nagy.

Nagy stresses the importance of academics to his players, and wants them to give all their effort in the classroom.

"We're not about results, we're more about guys just doing their best," said Nagy.

## **NABC Honors Court**

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The NABC also recognizes student athletes that have achieved academic excellence in the previous season. Loudon Love and Andy Neff play for WSU and both were named to the NABC Honors Court.

“The NABC Honors Court celebrates the talents and gifts that these men possess off the court, and the hard work they exhibit in the classroom,” according to the NABC’s website.

To join the Honors Court, the student-athlete must be a junior or senior, a varsity player, earn a GPA of 3.2 or higher and be at the university for at least one year.

“We’re very proud of them and it’s not just about academics, it’s how they carry themselves off the court,” according to Nagy.

Achieving academic excellence is a crucial aspect of being on the WSU basketball team.

On-Campus Housing: What You Need To Know

Makenzie Hoeflerlin

August 7, 2020

On-campus housing will see many changes this fall in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus and to keep residents safe.

Students living in residential housing can expect a different move-in day experience, additional gathering rules and increased cleaning.

### **Move in day drive-through style**

Move in day is usually characterized by numerous volunteers, golf carts, and Rowdy Raider, but it will look a bit different this year.

There will be no golf carts and volunteers will not help students move their personal belongings.

“In the past, we’ve had hundreds of upperclassmen come and help freshmen move in... but because of social distancing rules students will need to move in their own things,” said Dan Bertso, director of Residence Life and Housing.

Students are permitted to bring a maximum of two people with them to assist on move in day.

Additionally, move in day will be spread out and staggered over four days. Residential housing students will move in on Aug. 20-21 and students living in on-campus apartments will move in on Aug. 22-23, according to Bertso.

Students will receive a welcome kit with a variety of items in a drive through style fashion in order to maintain social distancing.

“We’re passing out a very expensive welcome kit called a ‘Wright Start Kit’ with everything from the student’s keys to hand sanitizer,” said Bertso. “It’s going to look a lot like driving through a fast food window where you pick up some food.”

The welcome kits will also include a mask, thermometer and a voter registration form, according to Bertso.

### **Additional rules and guidelines**

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Usually students have the opportunity to choose whether they want to live in a single, double or triple, but this fall all students in residence housing will be living in a single by themselves.

Apartments will remain the same occupancy as before.

Due to low enrollment numbers, Wright State has the space to provide single rooms for all students in housing.

“Right now we have 1,500 people living on campus this year. Our normal capacity is 3000,” said Bertson. “Last year at this time we had 1,800 students living on campus.”

However, there is a larger percentage of the first year class living on campus, according to Bertson.

Students in housing will be expected to follow university protocols such as wearing a mask and maintaining social distancing.

“If [a student] is in a room by themselves then, of course, they don’t need to wear a mask. We are also going to limit any kind of casual gathering to four individuals so we can assure proper social distancing at least in a smaller number,” said Bertson.

Visitation to campus housing will also be limited. Visitors and guests will not be permitted in student housing, according to [Wright State’s website](#).

“We are trying to do what we can to create that bubble on campus, especially on individual floors,” said Bertson.

If students do not follow the new housing protocols, one of the consequences may be losing their housing, according to Bertson.

“Initially, like with any conduct situation, I think we are going to make an effort to explain why we need to have them conform to the kind of regulation,” said Bertson. “For the student who chooses not to do so, the potential for some kind of student conduct approach may exist. We’ve got to watch out for the greater good of the community.”

## **Positive tests on campus**

When a student tests positive, the first step is connecting with a physician to get a prescription for a test. If students do not have a physician, WSU will connect the student with Wright State Physicians to get them a prescription.

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The student will then be monitored daily until the test results come back to see how they are doing, according to Bertson.

“If it turns out that it is positive, again in compliance with the Center for Disease Control (CDC), they require that we have student housing or some other location available to move that student to so they can isolate,” said Bertson. “In our case, we have housing on campus set aside for that purpose.”

## **Cleaning practices**

“With CDC guidelines, they require a minimum that we’re getting common spaces, like bathrooms for example, and what is referred to as a ‘touch point’ ... at least twice a day, and we are planning on doing more than that,” said Bertson.

Hand sanitizer and Wipes will also be available in and around commonly used housing areas.

“Common areas will be closed off to general use of residents. This includes most floor lounges, Honors Community fitness center and recreation room, and Forest Lane and Honors Community kitchens,” according to Wright State’s website.