



# Mu 102: Principles of Music

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Borough of Manhattan Community College

Fall 2018

Sections 0701 (MW 7:30-8:45a), 2001 (TTh 8:30-9:45p)



# Reading quiz

Governments can play a role in determining which music gets performed or doesn't get performed.

- a) True
- b) False

# Reading quiz

Censorship in music is a 20<sup>th</sup> century invention.

- a) True
- b) False

# Reading quiz

People within the same music-culture all think about music in the exact same way.

- a) True
- b) False

# Reading quiz

Which of the following is an example of the material culture of music?  
Circle all that apply

- a) Musical instruments
- b) Printed music (scores and sheet music)
- c) Physical movements
- d) Genre
- e) Style
- f) Portraits or photographs
- g) Aesthetics

# Reading quiz: Bonus!

There is only one way to tell history.

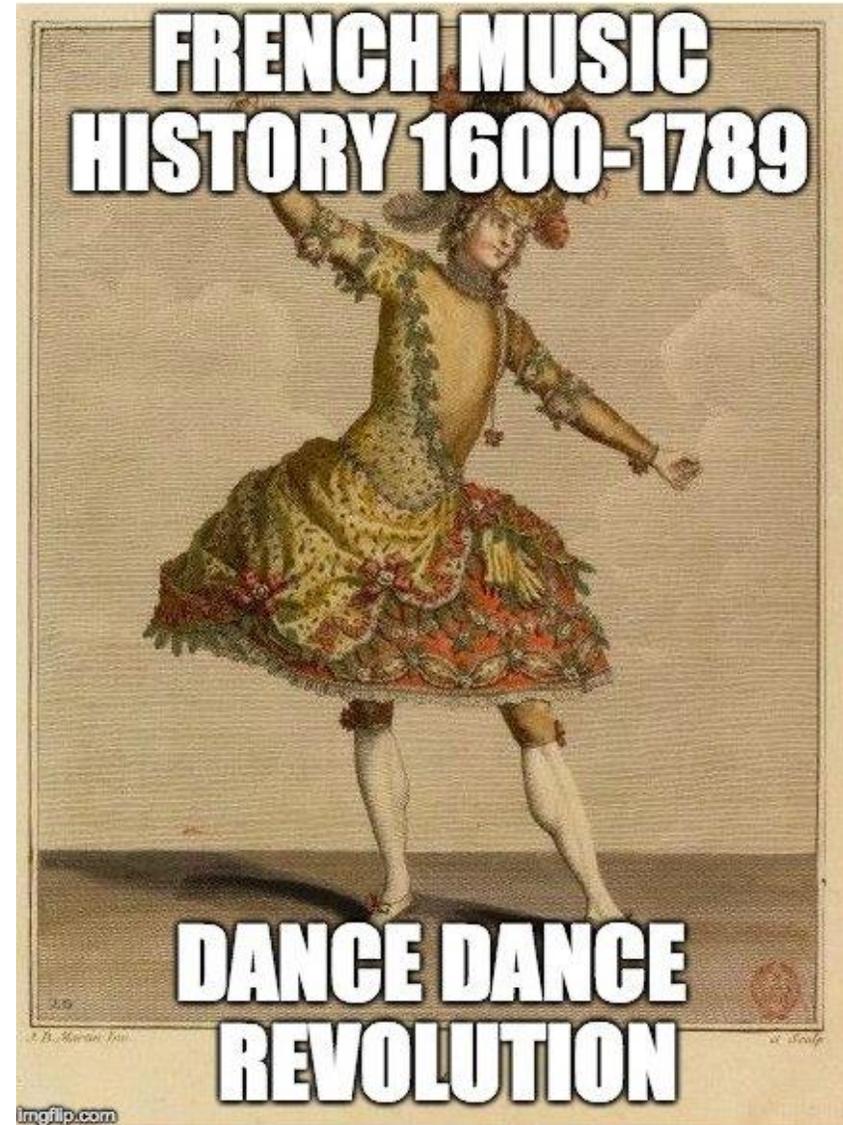
- a) True
- b) False

# Reading quiz

What was the most interesting or surprising thing you learned from the reading(s) this week?

# Recap

- Dance music
  - Purposes
  - Musical features
  - So much dancing in the Baroque period. Just, so much.
- Rhythm
  - Musical time
  - Meter



# Rhythm and meter

Listen for the pulse +  
changes in the bass (lowest parts) +  
accents in the melody +  
events in the percussion = METER

- Organizing musical time
  - Meter – the regular groupings of strong and weak pulses
  - A measure contains a strong beat followed by weak beat(s)
- The beat (pulse) is like the heartbeat of a piece – steady, ongoing, unique for every piece
  - Groove (meter) – predictable rhythmic repetition of strong and weak beats
  - Not every beat is equal in terms of weight (accent)
- Duple (quadruple) meter = Strong-weak, strong-weak
- Triple meter = Strong-weak-weak, strong-weak-weak

# Rhythm: duple or triple meter?

Listen for pulse + changes in the bass (lowest parts) + accents in the melody + events in the percussion = METER



The Village People, *Y.M.C.A.* (1978)



Michael Jackson, *Billie Jean* (1983)



Jimi Hendrix, *Hey Joe* (1966)



John Philip Sousa, *Stars and Stripes Forever* March (1896)

Joseph Haydn, Symphony No. 100, "Military," II. Allegretto (1794)



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, III. Menuetto (1787)



# Rhythm: playing with expectations

- Meter can change
- Syncopation – accented notes occurring in between stronger beats, deliberate upsetting of the meter
  - Playing “against” the beat
  - Lively and temporarily unsettling quality
  - Rhythmic interest and vitality



Band of Horses, *I Go to the Barn Because I Like the* (2006)



Glenn Miller, *Sing Sing Sing* (1936)



Ewe people (Ghana), *Kinka*



Dave Brubeck Quartet, *Unsquare Dance* (1961)

# French court dance music



- Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-87), Gavotte from *Atys* (1676)
- What makes this music good to dance to? What makes it good for entertainment?



# Thinking like a musicologist

- Thinking about music like a musicologist means addressing implicit questions in a text
  - “Text” = written words, a piece of music, an image
- Biases determine how we read a text
  - Power
  - Systems and structures
  - Individual biases (of the author/creator, and your own biases as a listener/reader/viewer)

# Biases

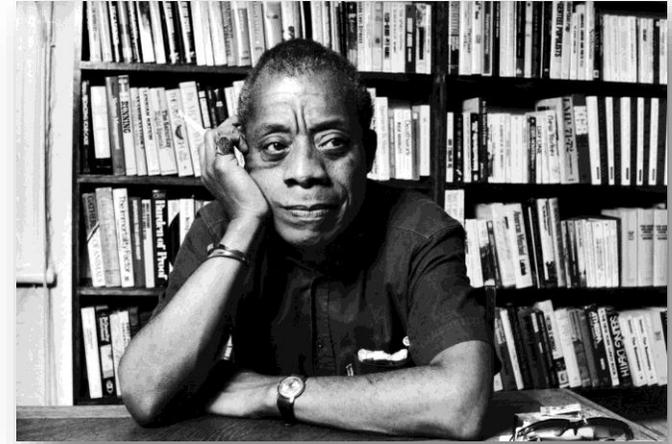
“Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.”

—George Orwell (1903-50),  
*1984* (1949)



“The great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do.”

—James Baldwin (1924-87),  
*The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction 1948-1985*



“We do not see things as they are; we see things as we are.”

—Anaïs Nin (1903-77),  
*The Seduction of the Minotaur* (1961),  
after the Talmud



# An account of dancing at Versailles by Pierre Rameau

- What do we learn from this text?
- Who is there?
  - Who is there but isn't mentioned in the text?
- Who was the intended audience of this text?
- What do we know about the author?
- What questions do we still have (what are the limits of our knowledge)?

## Music under the Sun King

During the seventeenth century, which the French still call their "grand siècle," music attended the French kings everywhere. They rose in the morning to the sound of the oboes and brasses of the Great Stable (Grande Écurie), they danced to the music of their famous "twenty-four violins" (also known as the Grande Bande), and were regaled at meals by a smaller band of fiddlers, known as the Petits Violons. In the Royal Chapel they heard the crowning musical expressions of their majesty and power: the *grands motets*, often sung by a choir of sixty, accompanied by an orchestra to match. At its height under Louis XIV, the royal musical establishment at Versailles numbered some 120 musicians. The description given by Pierre Rameau, dancing master to Louis XV, of a court ball suggests some of this splendor, and also the rigid formality that governed the proceedings. The dances came in a prescribed order, as in the standardized instrumental dance suite established by the lutenists and harpsichordists of Louis XIV's time.

## Of the Ceremonial Observed at the King's Grand Ball

I believed it impossible to give a description more likely to inspire regard for the ceremonies and rules of private balls than first to attempt some brief account of the King's Grand Ball, since it is the most important of all such functions and should serve as a model for private balls in regard to the order of the proceedings, and the respect and politeness to be observed thereat.

In the first place, none is admitted to the royal circle save Princes and Princesses of the Blood Royal, the Dukes and Peers, and Duchesses, and afterwards the other Lords and Ladies of the Court according to their rank. The Ladies are seated in front, while the Lords are placed behind them. Nevertheless, I have ventured to represent the latter standing [see the illustration], to avoid confusion in my figures, and to make them more easily seen.

Everyone being thus placed in order, when His Majesty wishes the ball to begin he rises, and the whole company does likewise.

The King takes up his position at that end of the room where the dancing is to begin, which is near the musicians. In the time of the late King [Louis XIV], the Queen

# Thinking like a musicologist: Questions to ask yourself



Judith Leyster, *Boy Playing the Flute* (1660)

- Who is in power?
  - What is the author's/artist's relationship to that power?
  - Why is *this* story being told and not another one?
- What historical/structural forces are influencing *this particular* telling of history?
  - What long-term changes or forces are at play that we know about but the author might not see or articulate?
  - What/who is left out of this depiction?
  - What perspectives are missing?
- What are *my limitations* as a reader/viewer/listener?



Jean-Baptiste Lully,  
Gavotte from *Atys* (1676)

# Listening for musical details: Texture, dynamics, and tempo

Edvard Grieg, *Peer Gynt* Suite No. 1, Op. 46 (1875)

I. Morning Mood

IV. In the Hall of the Mountain King



<b>Bassoon and <i>pizzicato</i> strings (6 times)</b>	<b>Violins and woodwinds with syncopated accents (6 times) Gradual <i>accelerando</i></b>	<b>Tutti, <i>forte</i> (6 times) “Whirling” accompaniment Adds cymbals and brass <i>Accelerando</i></b>	<b><u>Coda</u>  Sudden chords</b>
Creepy, dark Not pretty Tempo: <i>moderato</i>	Gathering forces – more insistent and scary	Increasingly unsettling, disorienting, out of control Tempo: <i>prestissimo</i>	Theatrical ending (the mountain crashes on the trolls)

# Homework and reminders

- The current Online Discussion (Musical educations and the education of music) ends Sunday, Sep 23
  - Meaningful conversation = (1) Respond to the content of the post; (2) Pose questions your classmates can answer; (3) Respond to your classmates' ideas
  - Do at least 2 of these during each discussion to earn full credit
- Next online discussion: Musicking (September 24-30)
- Assigned reading for next class is available online: musical form, review of melody/harmony/rhythm
- See you Tuesday—have a great weekend!



# End write

Today, we learned about three things that influence how history gets told (including how music gets made):

- Power
- Historical social systems/structures
- Personal bias

Imagine you're listening to a piece of music that is unfamiliar to you. Write down three questions you could ask about what you hear if you're thinking about it like a musicologist would (one question per idea listed above).