

Mu 101: Introduction to Music

Queensborough Community College

Instructor: Dr. Alice Jones

Spring 2018

Sections H2 (T 2:10-5), H3 (W 2:10-5), L3 (W 5:10-8)



Reading quiz

People who study the sociology of music use which of the following sources/methodologies to understand how music functions in people's lives? Circle all that apply.

- a) Musical analysis
- b) Interviews, questionnaires, and statistical surveys
- c) Memoirs, photographs, advertising materials, press reports, and film footage

Reading quiz

We can be sure that the pieces of music we hear in a concert hall are the absolute best works by the best composers that ever lived.

- a) True
- b) False

Reading quiz

A person can describe or critique a piece of music as conveying a particular philosophy without describing the actual sound of the music.

- a) True
- b) False

Reading quiz

What do the terms “enculturation” and “socialization” refer to, with regard to music?

- a) Germs that are shared in social settings or public spaces
- b) The assumption that all people of a particular gender are the same or ought to be the same
- c) The shaping of group tastes that happens through social structures, family life, and media
- d) The claiming of something for one’s own group, possibly through reinterpreting its established social meaning or symbolism

Reading quiz

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

Recap: sonata form

- 3 main sections:
 - Exposition – presents the main musical ideas of the piece
 - Development – plays with those ideas in new, surprising, and unexpected ways
 - Recapitulation – return to “home”, repeats the material from the exposition and feels more stable than the development



- 4 musical functions/purposes for the themes in the exposition:
primary theme, transition, secondary theme, closing

Recap: End quiz

Johannes Brahms, Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115 (1891)

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Andantino
- IV. Con moto [with motion]

- Concert programs
 - “Quintet” = how many people?
 - Form
 - Genre vs. time period

Warm-up writing

What are kinds (genres) of music that people make but don't write down (compose or notate)?

Why isn't all music composed or written down?

Unwritten music

- Lullabies
- Children's play
- Work songs
- Entertainment / Storytelling

Forms we'll hear today

Strophic
Call and response
Rondo
Ostinato + melody

Most of the music we'll hear today was recorded by ethnomusicologists (musicologists who do anthropological field work).

Not everyone has the means to compose and/or record in a studio. (Lead-in to Online Discussion #8)

Folk music – Music with no specific composer that is passed down orally and used for dance, entertainment, and communal gatherings

Musical identity



- Identity: place, time, socio-economic class, gender, sexual orientation
- A musician's musical choices tell an astute listener about the musician's identity
 - Style
 - Accompaniment
 - Text content (language, word choice, allusions)
- People use music to portray an identity, create an identity, pretend an identity, claim an identity
 - Music is a product of a community, its values, its hopes, and its fears
 - Music influences that same community, its values, its hopes, and its fears
 - Music gives a community a public face – it acts as an emissary or ambassador to people outside that community

Lullabies: “Bebi notsi”

- Performed by Margaret in 1943 in Kansas
- The Muscogee lived in what is now southern Tennessee, Alabama, western Georgia, and northern Florida
- The ethnomusicologist who recorded this lullaby was employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to record as much Native American musical culture as possible before it was lost forever



Lullabies: “A la nana”

- Sephardic
- Language: Lindo (Judeo-Spanish, a language that is dying out)
- Simple and repetitive: could be sung while doing other household chores
- Voice and qanun



Children's play: Byhalia, Mississippi, 1939

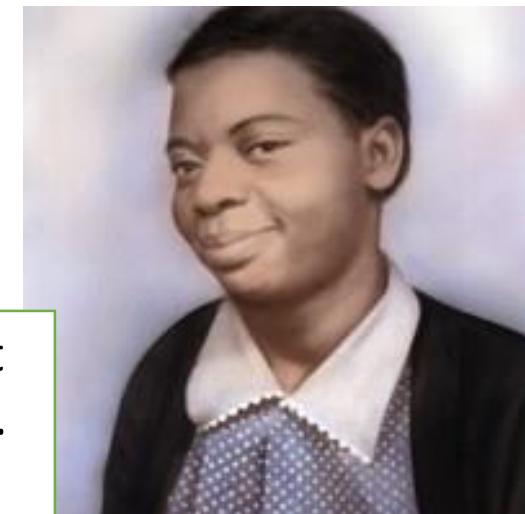
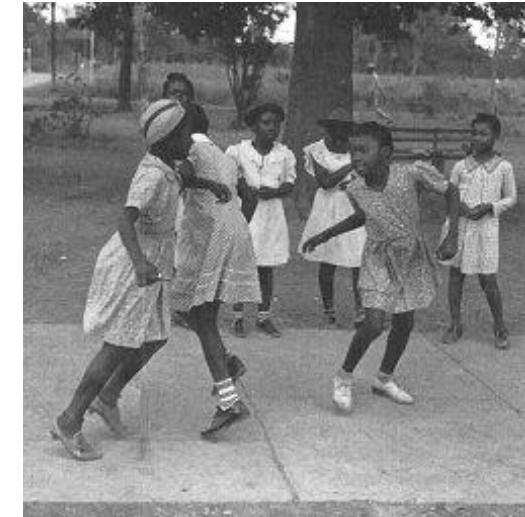
- “Sea Lion Woman”
- Performed by Christine and Katherine Shipp
 - Their father was a sharecropping minister and their mother was a choir director
- Word play of “sea lion,” “see-line,” “sea-la,” and “c-line”
- John Avery Lomax (1867-1948) made 10,000+ recordings for the Archive of American Folksong at the Library of Congress



Children's play: Drew, Mississippi, 1940

- Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress : “The Library of Congress should possess all books and other materials ... which express and record the life and achievements of the people of the United States.”
- “Shortenin’ Bread”
- Performed by Ora Dell Graham, age 12, in her school auditorium
- Repurposes a (white) popular song that made fun of black food

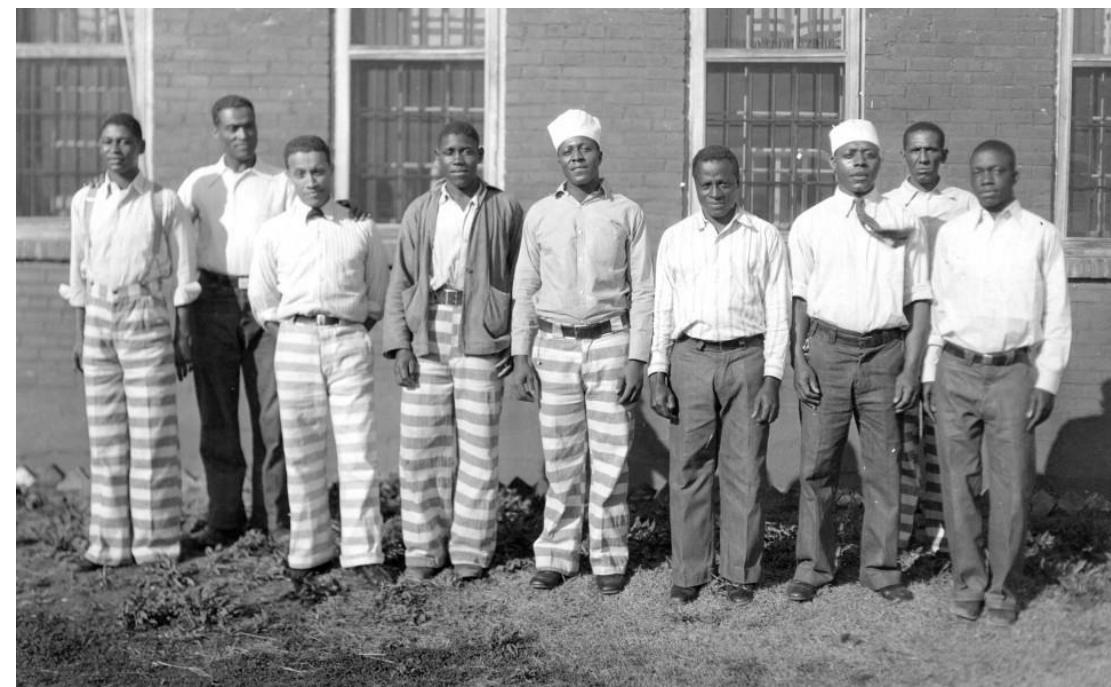
“She loved to go, she always loved to go. She was what you call a night person. She loved to have a ball. She loved to dance. She loved to sing. That was her thing, you know.” —Sonny Milton, Graham’s nephew



Work songs: “No More, My Lord”

These recordings were made by Alan Lomax at a prison in Mississippi in 1947. The singers are all prisoners at Parchman Farm State Penitentiary, and the songs they sing have been passed down among prisoners since its founding in 1901 and before.

- Performed by Jimpson



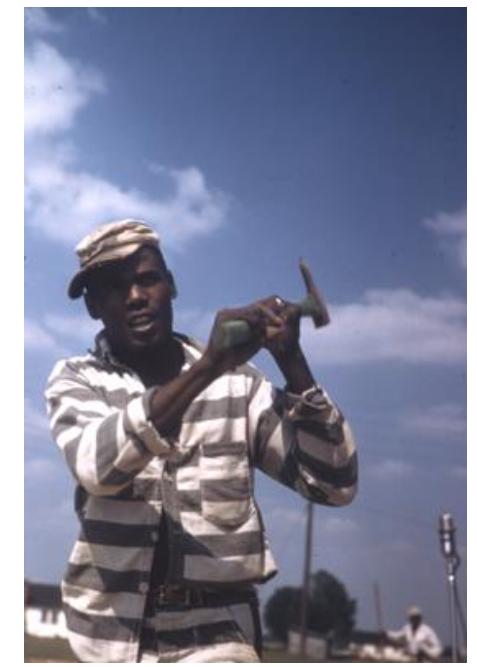
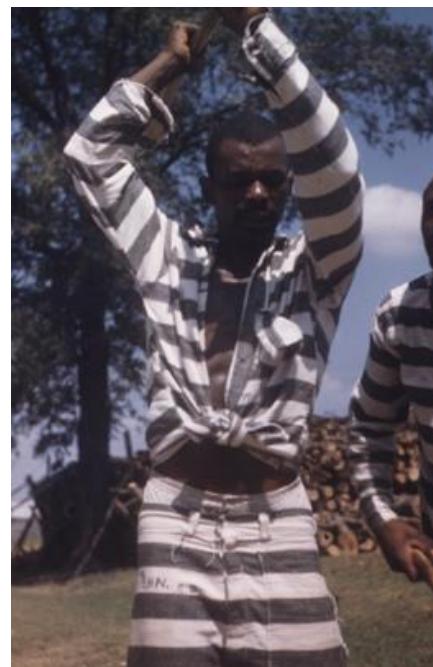
Work songs: “Rosie”

- Performed by C.B. and group



Work songs: “Early in the Mornin”

- Performed by 22, Little Red, Tangle Eye, and Hard Hair



Entertainment: Appalachian fiddle playing

- “Billy in the Lowground”
- Performed by The Lonesome Strangers (fiddle, guitar, banjo), 1961, at the 37th Old Time Fiddle Convention in North Carolina
- Style of music that immigrated to the US from Ireland/Scotland
 - Fell out of favor in the 19th century
 - Revived in the 1920s and 1930s



Entertainment/storytelling: Sardinia

- “Sa cella umidosa”
- Performed by Tenores di Bitti
- Language: Sardo
- Style of ensemble singing developed over the last 5,000 years (sung by shepherds)
- Each voice has a different characteristic: high and nasal, wind, bleating sheep, and cows mooing (lowing)



Robert Johnson, *Cross Roads Blues* (1936)

- Musical story-telling
 - Captures a state of mind or a feeling
 - Personal but universal
 - The text is a series of related but not necessarily chronological events consisting of vivid but non-specific metaphors and allusions
- Often melancholy; seemingly simple but wise
- Improvisatory
 - Words, melody, accompaniment can be made up on the spot to be expressive, extend a song, or shorten a song
- Sound quality – rough around the edges (voice and guitar)



Robert Johnson (1911-37)

Break



Béla Bartók recording Slovakian folk songs on an acoustic cylinder machine in the Hungarian village of Zobordázs, in 1907.

Homework and reminders



- Due tonight by midnight via email: Creative Writing final draft
- Reading for next class is available online (the psychology of music)
- Our final (!) instructor-led online discussion ends on Sunday, April 22
- April 21: Final drafts of SBP are due to your section website AND revision reflections are due via email (attach as .doc, .docx, or .pdf)
 - I will not post your SBP without an RR, and your SBP is late without it
- April 23-May 14: the Student Blog Posts!
- Course Response Essay due May 15 (H2) / May 16 (H3 and L3)
 - Optional first draft: May 1 / May 2
- Concert Response Essay due at the final exam, but you may turn it in anytime before: May 22 (H2) / May 23 (H3 and L3)

End write

1. If you were to invent a song today that you and your community would sing or play, what would it be about? What would it sound like?
2. Who's in your "community" for question #1?