

Comparing the Medieval/Renaissance periods and 2020 – In-class writing follow-up, Feb 24/26

Common features

- Music/art/poetry exists in both time periods and people listen to it
- Existence of similar professions: jester/clown or comedian, dancers, actors
- People practiced religious faiths and music is part of that expression
- Musical elements are found in all music: music has texture, melody, rhythm, form/structure; music can be created with instruments and with voices
- Not all music is “deep”
- Philosophy exists and people express their “big picture” thoughts
- The Church/religion is an influential force
- Presence of war/violence, natural disasters
- Some of the same music that was used in the Medieval period is used in 2020
- People use music in many ways: they dance to it; they express themselves through it; leisure; entertainment; to express political statements; to reflect on the current political climate; to understand, explore, and learn
- How music is used depends on the setting
- Music impacts and is impacted by society
- Music can unify people

Different features

- Different styles of music or musical preferences (e.g., monophonic textures were more common in the Medieval period than in 2020)
- Different styles of clothing
- Different means of transportation
- Music making in the Medieval period was often done in Latin/Greek, but in 2020 most artists create art in their vernacular (spoken) language
- Music is made with different means (e.g., autotune and non-acoustic instruments exist in 2020 but didn’t exist in the Medieval period)
- Different instruments are used in different time periods
- How much influence/power different groups have changes over time; distribution of rights (e.g., women generally have the right to vote, work, and join the military in 2020); who has access to education (e.g., fewer people outside nobility/royalty could study music in the Medieval period compared with 2020)
- How music is categorized
- How people view/think about music

Things that seem different but might be common features

- Medieval period had courtly love
- Music was used in courts as entertainment during the Medieval period
- We don't live under a monarch
- Many Medieval composers remain anonymous through time
- The Medieval period had the bubonic plague ("The Black Death")
- Artists today have something to go back to and inspire them to make their music
- Musicians in the Medieval period were popular if they were white men
- Back then, scribes and artists were hired to notate and illustrate a musical piece. Now we use computers to notate sheet music.
- There's more catchy urban music in 2020

Comparisons we *cannot* make

- Music is more soulful today than in the Medieval period
- There are more mainstream listeners in 2020 than in the Medieval period
- Medieval music has 1% of listeners
- Music in 2020 is more hip