Week 1: Introduction
Listening experiment:
Comparing performances

• Performance A
• Performance B
Listening Experiment: Comparing Performances

• The tempo of performance B was:
  Faster than A  Slower than A  The same as A

• The dynamics of performance B were:
  More varied than A  Less varied than A  The same as A

• The tone quality of performance B was:
  Better than A  Worse than A  The same as A

• Which performer played more accurately (pitch, rhythm, etc.)?
  A was more accurate  B was more accurate  A and B were the same

• Which performer’s expressive choices were more exaggerated or idiosyncratic?
  A was more exaggerated  B was more exaggerated  A and B were the same

• Overall, which performance was more enjoyable to you?
  A was more enjoyable  B was more enjoyable than A  A and B were the same

• Was performance A or performance B the professional pianist?
Instructor

• Professor Farbood
  – Email: mfarbood@nyu.edu
  – Office hours: Tuesday 10:00-11:30am
    Sign-up sheet (Google doc):
    https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1c_ECxE1Wt9vFS7gBoUmOH1QwP9oaeFVqVy0YuxC3is/edit#gid=0
  – Location: Rm. 630
  – Web: http://www.nyu.edu/projects/farbood
Intro

• Introduce yourself: name, year, program, musical experience
• Why are you taking this class?
• What do you hope to get out of it?
• Is there something particular you’re interested in exploring/learning about?
What is psychology of music?

• Why music? What are all the things we use music for?
• Interdisciplinary field: intersects with music theory, psychology, neuroscience, computer science.
• Research methodologies are primarily drawn from the cognitive sciences.
Typical questions in music psychology

• Some questions:
  – How is the brain organized to handle the many aspects of music such as rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, and timbre?
  – Does each musical quality such as rhythm and melody have a unique effect on us, or do they combine to produce “emergent” experiences?
  – What is the link between music and emotion as well as links between other abilities such as speech and mathematics?

• What do you think are the interesting questions in music psychology?
Course overview: Topics covered

• Evolution and origins (next week)
• Psychoacoustics and pitch
• Development
• Rhythm, beat, meter, timing, tempo
• Melody
• Harmony and tonality
• Emotion and expectation
• Music and the brain
• Performing
• Composing and improvising
Course overview: Grading breakdown

- Class attendance and participation: 10%
- Weekly reading questions: 30%
- Discussion leading 15%
- Research Project 45%
Research project

- Topic choice 2%
- Annotated bibliography 10%
- Literature review 18%
- Experiment design 15%
- Experiment participation 10%
- Oral presentation 5%
- Final written report 30%
- Peer evaluation 10%
Weekly readings

• Overview/survey of the topic area
• Research papers that cover a specific aspect of the topic
• Background reading on experimental methodology and statistics
• Optional readings that provide more background or additional perspectives
Weekly reading questions

• Two discussion questions for each article submitted by email (NO ATTACHMENTS – just regular email text) by midnight on the Monday before it is discussed in class.

• Assignments are scored out of 4 points.

• All of the assigned articles should be read critically—you should not accept the authors’ claims at face value.
  – Are their hypotheses warranted?
  – Do they do a good job of designing an experiment to test their hypotheses?
  – Are their interpretations of the data justified? Can some other theory also explain the results?
  – How might you improve the experiment?
  – What is the next experiment that should be done to further test the theory in question?
Discussion leading

• Students are required to lead one discussion session for an article during the course of the semester; you will be partnered with one or two students for the session.
• Leading a discussion is not only about summarizing the key issues, hypotheses, methodology, results, and interpretation. You will also be expected to stimulate discussion among your peers.
• You should be open to differing interpretations of the subject matter and encourage vigorous discussion on the topic.
• Be prepared to bring up insightful or provocative questions to spur debate.
• It is up to you how you organize the discussion leading with your partner(s).
Background questionnaire

• If you haven’t filled out the background questionnaire yet, please do so as soon as possible:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XZv09HR1rWZJpiyA7bnWwzikGwWpXttvloC7rsi0eYQ/
Course website

• You can find all course materials here: https://wp.nyu.edu/psychmus2042

• Note that the NYU Classes site for the course is only for submitting assignments