

Title:

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Summary:

Music is experienced by individuals in a range of social settings ranging from being alone to attending a large concert. Musical performances take different forms in different cultures and socioeconomic milieus. In Europe and North America, there is often a divide between what types of music are viewed as a "high culture" and "low culture."

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Music is experienced by individuals in a range of social settings ranging from being alone to attending a large concert. Musical performances take different forms in different cultures and socioeconomic milieus. In Europe and North America, there is often a divide between what types of music are viewed as a "high culture" and "low culture." "High culture" types of music typically include Western art music such as Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and modern-era symphonies, concertos, and solo works, and are typically heard in formal concerts in concert halls and churches, with the audience sitting quietly in seats.

Other types of music such as jazz, blues, soul, and country are often performed in bars, nightclubs, and theatres, where the audience may be able to drink, dance, and express themselves by cheering. Until the later 20th century, the division between "high" and "low" musical forms was widely accepted as a valid distinction that separated out better quality, more advanced "art music" from the popular styles of music heard in bars and dance halls.

However, in the 1980s and 1990s, musicologists studying this perceived divide between "high" and "low" musical genres argued that this distinction is not based on the musical value or quality of the different types of music. Rather, they argued that this distinction was based largely on the socioeconomic standing or social class of the performers or audience of the different types of music. For example, whereas the audience for Classical symphony concerts typically have above-average incomes, the audience for a Rap concert in an

inner-city area may have below-average incomes. Even though the performers, audience, or venue where non-"art" music is performed may have a lower socioeconomic status, the music that is performed, such as blues, rap, punk, funk, or ska may be very complex and sophisticated.

When composers introduce styles of music which break with convention, there can be a strong resistance from academic music experts and popular culture. Late-period Beethoven string quartets, Stravinsky ballet scores, serialism, bebop-era jazz, hip hop, punk rock, and electronica have all been considered non-music by some critics when they were first introduced.

Such themes are examined in the sociology of music. The sociological study of music, sometimes called sociomusicology, is often pursued in departments of sociology, media studies, or music, and is closely related to the field of ethnomusicology.