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Rockin' Around the Clock:  
An Exploratory Study of Music Teachers'  
Personal Listening Choices

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the personal music listening choices of music teachers. Specifically, in which formats do teachers listen to music for personal pleasure, how do they obtain the music they choose, and how frequently do they choose to listen to certain genres of music. Using an online survey, music teachers answered questions about their listening and purchasing habits. Results were then analyzed using simple statistics and Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) to discover listening preferences for the group as a whole, as well as what differences may occur with regards to age, teaching situation or other factors. Through this analysis, it was shown that although music teachers chose a

variety of music for personal listening, they tended to listen to “Classical” art music with the most frequency. Younger teachers also chose some popular styles more frequently than older teachers and some listening choices tended to align with teachers’ job types, such as choral teachers’ frequent choice of vocal art music. Music teachers also embraced online technology in their listening, frequently selecting formats such as computer downloads, streaming services, and mp3 players.

### Introduction

For music teachers, contact with music is a total embrace. Described as “surround sound” by Shehan-Campbell (2005), music teachers immerse themselves in music daily within their classrooms; many also practice and perform music in after-school endeavors. As a field that for many teachers serves as both vocation (employment) and avocation (an activity done as a hobby rather than a job), music has a way of permeating all aspects of a musician’s life. With all this career-related music exposure, it stands to reason that some “off-duty” listening may also be career-related: preparation of scores for rehearsal or exploration of new music for classroom use, for example. But because music can be a source of pleasure in addition to a career, music teachers’ listening choices may serve other purposes. Perhaps music teachers choose music as a sort of “antidote” to their career-oriented music exposure: a way to unwind and leave the work day behind. Or maybe the music chosen for personal listening still relates to teachers’ jobs—with interest in a musical genre leading them to their chosen teaching situation. For still other teachers, even silence may be preferable to additional music listening after work.

Of additional interest are the music acquisition pathways of music teachers. Although many teachers teach and perform music written in the distant past, using traditional acoustic instruments, technology outside the rehearsal room marches forward. Teachers and their students frequently straddle two realities: one world in which many voices combine to balance, blend, and shape musical ideas, and a second contrasting one where music can be purchased and consumed with a touch of a button. How much do music teachers participate in music streaming, downloading, and other modern methods of consumption—and are these methods of acquiring music supplanting more traditional approaches such as attending recitals and concerts?

Preference can be defined as “an act of choosing, esteeming, or giving advantage to one thing over another” (Price, 1986, p. 154). For example, a person could have a preference for Coke over Pepsi, or chocolate ice cream over vanilla. These preferences are also unlikely to change by gaining knowledge or education about the item (Cutietta, 1992): a tour of the Pepsi bottling company factory complete with a history of Pepsi, while interesting, is unlikely to sway a die-hard Coke drinker away from her soda of choice. Similarly, a person’s musical preference, their act of choosing to which music they listen, is a personal decision that cannot be taught. Instead, preferences appear to be the result of a complex network of influences (Finns, 1989) such as the listener’s current affective state, complexity of the music, situational factors, quality of the performance, and the listener’s age, sex, or ethnic group (LeBlanc, 1980).

In the past several decades, music listening preferences have been a common subject for researchers. Studies regarding listening preferences of students of different ages and levels of musical training, for example, are common. Musical preferences can

be measured through both verbal means such as stating a choice, or behavioral or operant means: actions such as concert attendance and purchases of recordings (Cutietta, 1992). Geringer (1982) found that popular music was preferred by both elementary children and college-age education majors, while music majors preferred classical music. Numerous other studies also support the assertion that music majors enjoy “classical” or Western art music more than their non-musician counterparts (Geringer & McManus, 1979; Price & Yarbrough, 1987; Brittin, 1995). To explain this finding, North and Hargreaves (1995b) point to Berlyne’s 1971 theory regarding music complexity and preference: they argue that “the minds of musically trained people are more habituated to musically-evoked arousal than are the minds of others,” predisposing trained musicians toward more complex musical styles such as art music. Also, the effect of repeated exposure to Western classical music may allow music majors to develop the expectations needed for increased aesthetic response to this music (Meyer, 1956), making this music a likely choice.

It has been determined, however, that musical training alone does not appear responsible for a preference for art music (Geringer & McManus, 1979; Haack, 1982; Price, 1985 & 1988; Price & Swanson, 1990) and in fact, musical training may actually broaden students’ preferences for *different* musical styles (Gregory, 1994). Indeed, researchers have found that no consistent correlation exists between the enjoyment of playing or studying music and the actual content of the music itself (Gregory, 1994). Therefore, one may not assume that an opera singer’s car radio may be tuned to the Metropolitan Opera channel, or that a jazz teacher has a jazz CD in his home stereo. Music that is intellectually stimulating for the performer may not be the same music

chosen for relaxation or socializing.

Age differences may also account for the music preferences of music teachers, according to Holbrook & Schindler (1989), who found that listeners tend to prefer music heard frequently in their adolescence and early adulthood. Hargreaves and North (1999a) also found that younger people tended to like pop music more than their older counterparts, while older listeners tended to prefer classical music and jazz, and noted that different age groups likely have their own musical preferences. Music teachers may show more similarities in music listening choices with their age-group peers rather than with their similarly-trained colleagues of different generations.

Preferences also exist in *how* people obtain and listen to music. In the current age of the ubiquitous internet, digital means of obtaining music is common (Crappell, 2011). People download music via personal computers and wireless devices, listen to internet radio stations such as Pandora, and share music with friends via social media sites such as Facebook. According to the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), permanent digital music sales (including albums, single tracks, videos, and kiosk sales) topping \$2.8 billion in 2013, down a bit from 2012, still account for about 40% total revenues for the United States' music industry (RIAA, 2013).

As “cloud” services emerge, which use internet storage for music, the process of accessing music continues to change. Music listeners may be less interested in “ownership” of music than in the past, using services such as Spotify to choose from a wide variety of options to fit their current mood or situation. Subscription streaming services such as Spotify, Pandora, and other internet radio services are increasing rapidly. Streaming and subscription services accounted for 21% of music sales in 2013, whereas

even as recently as 2009, 95% of sales were in traditional (mostly physical) formats (RIAA, 2013). Even with all these changes, however, physical sales of music (87% of which are in the form of CDs) still account for 35% of music industry revenues (RIAA 2013).

With all the available choices, music teachers must not only choose to what music they prefer to listen, but also what delivery systems they prefer to use. Are music teachers' listening profiles similar to those of other Americans—and are music teachers staying current with available means of music acquisition? The purpose of this study, then, is to investigate the personal listening preferences of music teachers. How do music teachers acquire music for personal listening, and what kind of music do they choose? Do these choices relate to their careers and training? The research questions are: 1) In which formats do teachers prefer to listen to music? 2) How do music teachers choose and purchase music for listening, and how frequently? 3) To what genres of music do music teachers prefer to listen? and 4) What differences in these, if any, exist with regards to age or teaching situation?

### Method

In order to determine the music listening choices of music teachers, music teachers ( $N = 227$ ) were surveyed via an online survey posted on the site SurveyMonkey.com. Using a snowball sampling procedure in which respondents help recruit others by sharing the link with their contacts, music teachers were recruited to voluntarily take the survey via links shared on Facebook.com and posted to the message boards on the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) website. This method

of collection may find younger and more internet-savvy teachers more strongly represented, which should be considered in interpreting the results.

The instrument was created by the researcher and featured 23 questions pertaining to music listening and purchasing. Genres were chosen initially by using Apple iTunes genre categories, and were then augmented and adapted using the website *allmusic.com* (*n.d.*). The website *allmusic.com* was also used to help provide the artist examples used in the survey to further designate each genre. Listening formats were adapted from the RIAA shipment statistics (RIAA, 2013). The instrument was piloted with a small group of colleagues and revised shortly before it was disseminated.

Of the 227 participants, the majority ( $n = 183$ ) taught music full-time (44 taught part-time), in a variety of settings: 187 in public school music programs, 25 in private schools, 12 in private lessons, and 3 in church music programs. A majority of survey respondents were trained as instrumentalists ( $n = 161$ ) while the rest were trained in vocal music ( $n = 66$ ). Certified music teachers numbered 199.

Educators who taught band (34 %) and elementary music (35%) had the largest number of participants, followed by choral educators (16%) and string orchestra educators (6%). A smattering of other teaching situations, including piano, applied voice, percussion and other instruments were included as well. The teachers taught in a variety of levels (with many teaching in 2 or more levels): 137 respondents teaching elementary ages, 121 in middle school, 91 in high school, along with 30 teaching Pre-K and 28 teaching adult. Age groups of respondents included 88 teachers age 21 – 30, 81 teachers age 31 – 40, 31 teachers age 41 – 50, 21 teachers age 51 – 60, 3 age 61 – 70 and 3 teachers over 70.



To determine what formats for listening were preferred by music teachers, the survey respondents were asked to select how often (*Daily, Weekly, Monthly, A few times per year, Yearly or less, or Never*) they listened to each of thirteen formats. Formats included on the survey were: local radio; Sirius/XM satellite radio; CDs; Mp3 players such as iPods; vinyl records; cassette tapes; internet radio stations such as Pandora and Spotify; internet video sites such as YouTube; music imported into their computer; radio stations from other cities via internet; live concerts/recitals; televised concerts; and music videos.

To answer the research question regarding how the music teachers preferred to purchase their music, teachers were asked to select all of the purchasing methods they use from the following list: buy a hard copy at a physical retail store; buy a hard copy through an online store such as Amazon.com; download via computer or tablet; and download via smartphone. Respondents were also asked to specify which of these activities they have performed in the last month: bought a hard copy of an entire album, downloaded a digital copy of an entire album, downloaded one or more single songs, or purchased no music.

To specify the preferred musical genres of music teachers, the survey respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they listened to each of 33 genres of music. The survey respondents indicated their frequency of listening to each of the styles using a Likert-type scale with the following titles: *Frequently, Sometimes, Occasionally, Rarely, Never (Dislike) and Never (Unfamiliar)*.

## Results

Looking at the group as a whole, the music teachers reported listening to a variety of genres in their personal time. Among the notable results on this topic: the genre most often listed as a “frequent” listening choice was *classical–orchestral* (46% listened frequently) followed by *classical- chamber* (34%), *jazz*, and *1970s classic rock* (each with 23% listening frequently). Among the least frequent listening choices (respondents indicated they “Never” listened, either because they disliked the music or were unfamiliar with it) were *electronica* (55% never listened), *metal* (48%), *religious rock/rap* (48%), and *hip-hop/rap* (41%). Myriad other styles, however, were chosen for occasional listening, indicating that music teachers do select a wide variety of music for personal listening. For information regarding all musical genres surveyed, see Table 1.

Table 1: Percentages and number of respondents for each frequency category

"Of the music you choose to listen to for personal enjoyment, how frequently do you listen to these styles of music?"	Frequently	Sometimes	Occasionally	Rarely	Never (Dislike)	Never (Unfamiliar)
Classical- (Orchestral)	<b>45.8% (103)</b>	33.8% (76)	15.6% (35)	4.9% (11)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Classical- (Chamber or Solo)	<b>33.9% (76)</b>	31.3% (70)	17.4% (39)	16.5% (37)	0.9% (2)	0% (0)
Classical- Vocal ( <i>Opera, Choral</i> )	23.1% (52)	24.4% (55)	20.9% (47)	<b>26.2% (59)</b>	4.9% (11)	0.4% (1)
Children's Music ( <i>Laurie Berkner, Lynn Kleiner</i> )	10.8% (24)	9.0% (20)	11.7% (26)	<b>36.3% (81)</b>	16.6% (37)	15.7% (35)
Easy Listening ( <i>Ray Conniff, Herb Alpert</i> )	2.7% (6)	3.6% (8)	20.6% (46)	<b>32.3% (72)</b>	26.9% (60)	13.9% (31)
Electronica ( <i>Massive Attack, Daft Punk</i> )	2.7% (6)	3.2% (7)	10.4% (23)	29% (64)	<b>33.5% (74)</b>	21.3% (47)
Dance ( <i>Erasure, C+C Music Factory</i> )	2.7% (6)	6.8% (15)	13.6% (30)	<b>36.2% (80)</b>	26.2% (58)	14.5% (32)
Folk ( <i>Bob Dylan, John Prine</i> )	12.5 (28)	22.8% (51)	22.3% (50)	<b>30.4% (68)</b>	6.7% (15)	5.4% (12)
Gospel & Traditional Religious ( <i>Mahalia Jackson, Blind Boys of Alabama</i> )	3.1% (7)	13.9% (31)	27.4% (61)	<b>31.4% (70)</b>	14.8% (33)	9.4% (21)
Religious Rock and/or Rap ( <i>Third Day, Disciple</i> )	11.7% (26)	10.8% (24)	7.2% (16)	<b>22.4% (50)</b>	32.7% (73)	15.2% (34)
Country ( <i>Garth Brooks, Carrie Underwood</i> )	8.9% (20)	16.9% (38)	20.4% (46)	23.1% (52)	<b>28% (63)</b>	2.7% (6)
Punk ( <i>The Ramones, Green Day</i> )	5.8% (13)	16.1% (36)	22.9% (51)	<b>28.3% (63)</b>	18.4% (41)	8.5% (19)
Blues ( <i>John Lee Hooker, B.B. King</i> )	4.9% (11)	19.1% (43)	31.1% (70)	<b>31.6% (71)</b>	8% (18)	5.3% (12)
Hip-Hop/Rap ( <i>Jay-Z, Kanye West</i> )	3.6% (8)	10.9% (24)	17.2% (38)	27.6% (61)	<b>32.6% (72)</b>	8.1% (18)
Alternative ( <i>The White Stripes, Radiohead</i> )	13.4% (30)	<b>24.1% (54)</b>	16.1% (36)	21% (47)	16.1% (36)	9.4% (21)
Industrial ( <i>Nine Inch Nails, Ministry</i> )	1.8% (4)	10.3% (23)	17.4% (39)	<b>31.3% (70)</b>	26.8% (60)	12.5% (28)
Reggae ( <i>Bob Marley, Black Uhuru</i> )	4.1% (9)	12.2% (27)	23.1% (51)	<b>32.6% (72)</b>	18.1% (40)	10% (22)
Jazz ( <i>Charlie Parker, Miles Davis</i> )	23.1% (52)	<b>32% (72)</b>	26.2% (59)	13.8% (31)	4% (9)	0.9% (2)
Soundtrack ( <i>Danny Elfman, John Williams</i> )	15.7% (35)	27.8% (62)	<b>29.1% (65)</b>	20.6% (46)	4.9% (11)	1.8% (4)
World ( <i>Gipsy Kings, Ravi Shankar</i> )	8.1% (18)	16.6% (37)	20.2% (45)	<b>27.4% (61)</b>	10.8% (24)	17% (38)
Latin ( <i>Enrique Iglesias, Juan Gabriel</i> )	3.6% (8)	9% (20)	24% (53)	<b>35.7% (79)</b>	14.5% (32)	13.1% (29)
Metal ( <i>Lamb of God, Metallica</i> )	2.2% (5)	7.6% (17)	15.2% (34)	26.9% (60)	<b>35.4% (79)</b>	12.6% (28)
New Age ( <i>Enya, John Tesh</i> )	4.0% (9)	13.4% (30)	17% (38)	27.2% (61)	<b>29% (65)</b>	9.4% (21)
Current Top-40 Pop ( <i>Katy Perry, Lady Gaga</i> )	15.9% (36)	<b>28.8% (65)</b>	21.7% (49)	19.5% (44)	10.2% (23)	4% (9)
Rock- current ( <i>Foo Fighters, Staind</i> )	17.5% (39)	<b>30.5% (68)</b>	20.2% (45)	18.8% (42)	5.4% (12)	7.6% (17)
R&B- current ( <i>Lil Wayne, Beyonce</i> )	5.4% (12)	19% (42)	18.6% (41)	<b>30.3% (67)</b>	18.1% (40)	8.6% (19)
1940s popular music ( <i>Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra</i> )	12.1% (27)	23.7% (53)	<b>29% (65)</b>	25.4% (57)	6.3% (14)	3.6% (8)
1950s popular music ( <i>Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly</i> )	5.4% (12)	21% (47)	<b>33.9% (76)</b>	26.3% (59)	10.3% (23)	3.1% (7)
1960s popular music ( <i>Beatles, Rolling Stones</i> )	20.4% (46)	30.5% (68)	<b>31% (70)</b>	11.9% (27)	3.5% (8)	2.7% (6)
1970s "Classic" Rock ( <i>Led Zeppelin, Fleetwood Mac</i> )	23.2% (52)	24.1% (54)	<b>31% (70)</b>	12.9% (29)	6.3% (14)	2.2% (5)
1970s Disco ( <i>Bee Gees, Donna Summer</i> )	6.3% (14)	17% (38)	29.6% (66)	<b>30.5% (68)</b>	10.8% (24)	5.8% (13)
1980s Pop ( <i>Madonna, Culture Club</i> )	12.9% (29)	<b>28% (63)</b>	26.7% (60)	18.2% (41)	8.9% (20)	5.3% (12)
1980s Rock ( <i>U2, Van Halen</i> )	18.3% (41)	<b>33% (74)</b>	23.7% (53)	16.1% (36)	4% (9)	4.9% (11)

Categories with the largest percentage are in Bold type.

The most common formats in which teachers listened to music were local radio (81% listen daily or weekly), music on their computers (77% listen daily or weekly), and mp3 players such as iPods (73% use daily or weekly). Least common formats used by music teachers included Sirius/XM satellite radio, vinyl records and cassette tapes, and radio stations from other cities via the internet, with large percentages of teachers indicating that they “never” utilize these formats. For information regarding frequency of use of all listening formats, see Table 2.

Table 2: Percentages and numbers of respondents for each listening format

“In what formats do you listen to music?”	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	A few times per year	Yearly or less	Never	Response Count (n)
Local Radio	<b>56.2% (127)</b>	24.8% (56)	7.1% (16)	7.1% (16)	1.3% (3)	3.5% (8)	226
Sirius/XM satellite radio	11.2% (23)	4.4% (9)	2.4% (5)	9.2% (19)	7.8% (16)	<b>65% (134)</b>	206
CDs	21.4% (47)	<b>35% (77)</b>	20.9% (46)	15% (33)	3.6% (8)	4.1% (9)	220
Mp3 player (iPod, etc.)	<b>46.6% (102)</b>	26.5% (58)	8.7% (19)	6.8% (15)	2.7% (6)	8.7% (19)	219
Vinyl records	1.4% (3)	3.3% (7)	4.2% (9)	13.5% (29)	20.5% (44)	<b>57.2% (123)</b>	215
Cassette tapes	0.0% (0)	0.5% (1)	4.2% (9)	13.7% (29)	20.8% (44)	<b>60.8% (129)</b>	212
Internet radio stations (Pandora)	12.6% (28)	<b>26% (58)</b>	22.4% (50)	15.2% (34)	4.9% (11)	18.8% (42)	223
Internet video sites (YouTube)	23.3% (51)	<b>42% (92)</b>	21.5% (47)	7.8% (17)	2.3% (5)	3.2% (7)	219
Music imported into my personal computer (iTunes)	<b>40.8% (91)</b>	35.9% (80)	11.7% (26)	4.5% (10)	2.3% (5)	4.9% (11)	223
Radio stations from other cities via internet	2.3% (5)	7.9% (17)	12% (26)	14.4% (31)	13% (28)	<b>50.5% (109)</b>	216
Live concerts/recitals	1.4% (3)	9.9% (22)	<b>40.5% (90)</b>	<b>40.5% (90)</b>	7.2% (16)	0.5% (1)	222
Televised concerts	0.9% (2)	3.6% (8)	27.3% (60)	<b>37.3% (82)</b>	19.1% (42)	11.8% (26)	220
Music videos	2.3% (5)	11.1% (24)	17.1% (37)	22.6% (49)	20.7% (45)	<b>26.3% (57)</b>	217

Categories with the largest percentage are in Bold type

Of the 92% of respondents who indicated that they purchased music for their personal listening, various means of obtaining music were used, with some teachers using two or more methods: 90% of respondents downloaded music via internet onto their computer or tablet device, 50% purchased hard copies of albums in a retail store, 50% bought hard copies online, and 22% downloaded music using their smart-phones.

To first determine what, if any, significant difference ( $p \leq .05$ ) in listening format might occur by age group, an ANOVA was performed, followed by a post-hoc Tukey HSD test. Significant differences by age group were found, with younger teachers choosing the following formats more frequently than older teachers: Mp3 ( $p = .005$ ), internet radio sites such as Pandora and Spotify ( $p = .000$ ), internet video sites like YouTube ( $p = .016$ ), music imported into a personal computer ( $p = .001$ ), and radio stations from other cities accessed via internet ( $p = .007$ ). Mp3 use was significantly more frequent with teachers between the ages of 21-30 and 31-40 than those teachers aged 51 – 60. Internet radio stations were chosen significantly more frequently by teachers age 21 – 30 than those age 41 – 50 and 51 – 60, and teachers 31 – 40 were also shown to listen to internet radio stations significantly more frequently than teachers 41 – 50. A difference also occurred in internet video site use, again with teachers 21 – 30 using the format significantly more than teachers age 41 – 50. For music imported into and accessed from the teacher's computer, listeners age 21 – 30 and 31 – 40 chose this format significantly more frequently than those aged 51 – 60. Lastly, radio stations from other cities via internet was chosen as a listening format significantly more frequently by teachers age 61 – 70 than all four of the younger age groups. Due to the unequal  $n$  for each group, including much lower numbers for teachers in the 61 – 70 and the “over 70” age groups,

these results should be interpreted with caution. In addition, because the method of data collection was via internet, results may not be representative of the music teaching population as a whole: those music teachers without internet access or skills are not represented. No significant differences in preferred listening format were found between teaching situation (Band, Choir, Orchestra, Elementary, etc.).

To determine what significant differences in preferred genre occurred with regards to age group, a one-way ANOVA was calculated, followed by a post-hoc Tukey HSD test. Significant differences by age group were found in the following genres: *easy listening* ( $p = .037$ ) was preferred by listeners age 51 – 60 significantly more than those 31 – 40, and *dance* music ( $p = .038$ ) showed the opposite trend, preferred by listeners 31 – 40 more than those 51 – 60. Not surprisingly, *rap* music ( $p < .001$ ) was chosen more frequently by teachers age 21 – 30 than all other age groups over 41. Interestingly however, those same teachers age 21 – 30 also listened to *jazz* ( $p = .023$ ) more frequently than teachers over 41. *Soundtrack* music ( $p = .008$ ) was chosen more frequently by all age groups than those teachers over 70 ( $n = 3$ ). *Rock* music ( $p = .002$ ) showed high means for teachers under 50, but teachers 31 – 40 listened significantly more frequently than those 51 and older. *Pop music from the 1980s* ( $p = .001$ ) was more frequently chosen by teachers 31 – 40 than teachers 21 – 30 and 51 and older. Similarly, *rock* music from the 1980s was also more frequently chosen by teachers 31 – 40 than those 61 and older.

Significant genre preference differences were also seen with regards to teaching situation, following a predictable pattern. *Jazz* was a common listening choice for all teachers, but a significant difference did occur ( $p = .010$ ), showing band directors listened more frequently than elementary, orchestra, and “other” teaching situations. *Vocal art*

*music* ( $p < .001$ ) such as opera and choral music was chosen most frequently by choral educators, significantly more than by band directors and elementary educators. Finally, *children's music* ( $p < .001$ ) was chosen significantly more frequently by elementary educators than teachers of band and choir.

## Discussion

Initial findings showed interesting trends in the listening habits of the music teachers surveyed. As music teachers spend their days surrounded by music in various forms, it is notable that these music teachers continue to choose music for pleasure during their non-work hours. Though teaching music is a job, it may be somewhat reassuring that music teachers are not “worn out” on music at the end of the work day. Indeed, music teachers rather consistently chose music that mirrored their chosen teaching areas, in addition to a myriad of popular styles.

The music teachers surveyed utilized a variety of formats for listening, the most common being local radio and digital music files by way of computer or mp3 player. These formats show a preference for convenience in listening—music that is readily available at the push of a button in their homes, cars, or offices. The music is portable, as well: radio may soothe tired ears on the drive home from work or a teacher might listen to his or her iPod while exercising or doing chores. These formats keep music constantly on hand, taking a teacher through the end of the school day and into the evening hours.

These formats and others such as internet radio and video sites were favored more by younger teachers, who may be more familiar with these newer technologies as are others in their peer group. Younger teachers have grown up surrounded by digital music

and computer technology, so it is no surprise that they utilize these pathways to listen to their favorite music and discover new music for listening. These pathways are also evident in how teachers purchase music. A majority of them use digital downloads to obtain music, and although hard copies of recorded music are still purchased, digital means of procurement appear to be preferred.

As predicted by past research literature, music teachers tended to prefer “classical” art music to other genres. Teachers of all ages and teaching situations indicated frequent contact with Western art music styles, particularly orchestral, chamber, and solo works. As with listening formats, however, it appears that younger teachers are more likely to “branch out” into other genres, perhaps because of exposure in adolescence or having been introduced to the music by a student. Also, younger teachers’ own musical education may have included more focus on popular or world music styles as they become more common in public school and university curricula, allowing these musicians to become more omnivorous listeners. Several young teachers mentioned frequent use of the internet radio services such as Pandora, which attempt to predict and suggest new music for listening, based on a listener’s stated preferences for certain artists or songs. Use of these services may also help listeners broaden their taste spectrum and desire to discover new artists.

Some predictable results were found in the genre preferences of teachers in different teaching situations. Band teachers listened to jazz more frequently than did other teachers, as did choral teachers with vocal art music, and elementary teachers with children’s music. Whether these differences occurred as teachers interpreted the question to include music heard at work, or whether the teachers continued to enjoy these styles



outside of work remains to be seen, as does the question of “which came first?” For example, do band teachers enjoy jazz more because they are knowledgeable about the music, more familiar with its inner-workings and subtleties, or did a love for jazz precede a desire to become a band director? Whatever the causality, it does seem heartening that teachers do not appear to be tired of music due to the constant exposure—suggesting that interaction with music for pleasure is still a desired activity.

Directions for future research include comparing teachers’ personal listening habits with listening activities used in their classrooms, to discover how much of teachers’ own genre or format preferences shape how they listen with students. Do teachers with more omnivorous listening preferences also use a wider variety of music in the classroom? Do students of omnivorous teachers show more omnivorous listening tastes themselves?

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