It's Only Juke Box Music

A study of the mechanisms behind the structuring of music consumption

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My warmest thanks to

The respondents who, by giving of their time and experiences, enabled this project in the first place. I am forever grateful.

Árni Sverrisson for posing the right questions

Mom and Dad for parent stuff
Scientia sines ars nihil est. Ergo legeres, diligite, et noscos!
Abstract

How do music consumers come into contact with the music they like? How is music consumption patterns developed? Using a phenomenological approach this master's thesis sets out to answer a number of questions regarding the development of music consumption patterns. To do this in-depth interviews has been carried out with eleven respondents who were interviewed about their experiences of developing a music consumption pattern.

Through this research it is shown how the development of music consumption patterns is a long process which begins with the introduction of the music consumer to an artist or group upon which future consumption will be conditioned and continues through the constant adding of new music and knowledge until the music listener one day stops developing his or her taste further and the music consumption stagnates. This research has also made possible the analysis of how well three influential theoretical models are at explaining music consumption from the perspective of the music consumer.

Key words: Music consumption, gateway artist, taste, phenomenology, cultural capital, art worlds.
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Introduction

“there is probably no other human cultural activity which is so all-pervasive and which reaches into, shapes, and so often controls so much of human behaviour.”

1.1 Prologue

Music, what a fascinating thing it is! Waves of tones, structured by the composer and delivered to the listener, clean and vibrant, swirling through the air before they hit you like a soft breeze flavoured with the salt of the sea, the warmth of the sand and with hints of flowers and seaweed; or distorted, forcing their way through the air like thunder and repeatedly pounding at your stomach as the base drum explodes time after time after time. If I am to be completely honest I would admit that music was one of my first loves, and I am fairly convinced that I am not alone in my passion for music. Most of us listen to music and we listen in the car when we drive, on the subway, at concerts, in our living rooms, in our bedrooms, at festive occasions, at occasions of grief and sorrow, in church, at the gym and many other places and occasions; and music is used to reach goals of emotional control, mass psychosis, motivation, or just as a rhythm to dance to.

Music has long been the subject matter of analyses and many have contributed to our understanding of music and of all the phenomena that surrounds it. Music in itself has been the subject of numerous analyses by hermeneuticists such as Wilhelm Dilthey, aestheticians, art scholars, critics, and not to forget, bloggers and ordinary music consumers. Another field of inquiry is the organisation of knowledge and creativity within record companies which has been studied by Thomas Florén.2 Other examples of studies of aesthetic markets have been carried out by, among others, Patrik Aspers who’s analysis of fashion photographers have provided valuable insight into the field of aesthetic markets.3 Studies have also been carried out, analysing – among other things – the relation between the consumer and the product4 and on the importance of gender in the consumption of “high” culture.5 Other important contributions to the field has been provided by Pierre Bourdieu and

his analyses of the importance of capital and habitus in taste, Paul Hodkinson by his ethnographic study of the goth sub-culture,⁶ Sarah Thornton by her analysis of club cultures and subcultural capital,⁷ Kretzchmar, Halm and other writers within the field of musicology, and many others. I have in this work used Howard S. Becker's concept of the art world, which has been paired with Pierre Bourdieu's insights into the structuring of music consumption and taste by habitus and cultural capital, the development of listener-types by Theodor W. Adorno, and other valuable insight into aesthetic consumption. Another vital contribution lies in the phenomenological understanding of social agency developed by Alfred Schütz. All these contributions will be developed further on in this text.

This text is an attempt to add to our understanding of music, or to be more precise, the consumption of music. It is an inquiry into the formative experiences of music consumption. My hopes for this thesis are that I might be able to shed some light on the personal experience of acquiring a taste, by use of accounts of subjective experiences told to me by respondents in in-depth interviews.

1.2 Purpose

According to analytical sociologists such as Peter Hedström, large phenomena on the societal level, such as music consumption, are brought about by social mechanisms on the micro level.⁸ Using this notion as a point of departure I have here sought to add to our understanding of the consumption of music by analysing the development of music consumption patterns, or if you will, taste. In doing so I will take my starting point in the respondents experience of how they became interested in the music that came to be the initial step towards a development of their music consumption, the development that followed after this first initial phase and the strategies used by the respondents in searching for new music to add to their taste. This is done using a phenomenological approach when analysing the empirical material generated in collaboration with the respondents through in-depth interviews. The results from said analysis will then be studied in relation to previous results of studies of music consumption on the macro level as an attempt to further develop our understanding of how the structure of music consumption arise.

In short I will therefore take as my point of departure the following questions:

1. How did the respondents come into contact with the music they like?
2. How did their consumption develop over time?
3. What is it they like about the music they listen to? How does it make sense to them?
4. What strategies do they employ in seeking for new music?

1.3 Disposition

After this introductory chapter will follow a section in which I account for and develop the theoretical frameworks that lay the foundation for my analysis; and give an overview of previous research into music consumption, using an approach influenced by the approach used in systematic reviews. Thereafter will follow a section on the methodological approach used during the research, ethical concerns and a section in which the practical implementation of this project is described. The latter part will contain accounts for how respondents were contacted, how the interviews were carried out, how the data was analysed and what strategies was used to ensure the validity of the results. The section following after this is an account of the results after which a subsequent section in which I discuss the results and their connection to the theoretical frameworks that inform and guide this work. After the discussion comes a concluding part in which I reflect upon the strengths and drawbacks of this inquiry and reflect upon possible future inquiries.

Theoretical frameworks

2.1 Some introductory thoughts

In this research I have chosen to focus upon the theoretical works of three of the, from my perspective, most important theorists on the subject of culture consumption. These three theorists are Theodor W. Adorno, Howard S. Becker and Pierre Bourdieu, who's theories make of the core of this section. Before heading further I would however wish to dwell, for just a moment, upon a question I encountered at the offset of this project. The question was posed by one of my fellow students who wondered whether or not I planed to make use of any economic theories centred on explaining consumption or consumption patterns. Including such theoretical perspectives, I must admit, seemed perfectly reasonable at first glance. However, after some consideration I arrived at the opinion that this research project mainly concerns music consumers' experiences of developing a music consumption pattern in collaboration with the social world. Thus I am here not interested mainly in how music consumers assess and evaluate different musical products, but how they interact with these products and others producing and distributing them. Therefore I have chosen to focus upon the theoretical works presented bellow as they focus upon music consumption as a social phenomenon and leave any economically oriented theories on music consumption be for now.
2.2 Art worlds

According to Howard S. Becker all consumption of music, no matter the form, take place within an art world. These worlds are intersubjective worlds made up by artists, distributers, aestheticians and audiences. It is also worlds of manufacturers who participate in these worlds by supplying the artists with the tools and materials needed in their practice, or production. A paper manufacturer for example, participate in an art world by supplying the paper upon which the poet lays down his or her world of words, and upon which the painter makes the sketches that later become the painting painted upon a canvas, which in turn has been provided by a canvas manufacturer. Art worlds are, therefore, worlds of cooperation between a great number of participants who are all dependent on each other as the artist, to paraphrase Becker, depend upon the manufacturer for materials, be it paper, canvases, electric guitars or cellos; on distributors, museum curators and collectors for exhibition space and financial support; aestheticians and critics for a rationale for what they do; polity for copyright laws, patronage or "advantageous tax laws which persuade collectors to buy works and donate them to the public"; on audiences to experience and respond to their works; and on other artists, past and present, who create the background against which any work is reflected and made sense of.\(^9\)

One important feature of any art world is the conventions that are carried out in the routine activities of the art world. These conventions are made up by the patterns of cooperation within the art world, and it is knowledge of the conventions that enables participation in each specific art world.\(^10\) Another important feature of any art world is that the value it produces is regarded as being valuable just because the participants in the art world agrees upon said value being valuable.\(^11\) Thus any audience will have to be familiar with what conventions there are in order to be able to partake in an art world. The audience, furthermore, is made up by segments of differently involved groups. Becker presents three groups, one which is made up by an inner circle who have insights into “the technical problems of the craft and the difficult problems (…) of utilizing\(^{sic!}\) the technical means and abilities to provoke an emotional and aesthetical response from the audience” and who “serves as a distant, early-warning system for less advanced audience segments.”\(^12\) These lesser involved audience segments are in turn made up by the serious audience members who know just enough about the history, development and practices of the arts, to play their part;\(^13\) and the well socialised members of society who knows nothing more than the widespread conventions, known to any well-socialised member of a society, which enable them to partake in the most “basic and important forms of cooperation characteristics of an art world.”\(^14\) It is the knowledge of the well-socialised members of society that make up the outer boundaries of an art world. Furthermore, Becker writes

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10 Ibid.
11 Ibid. p. 306 ff.
12 Ibid. p. 54.
13 Ibid. p. 48 ff.
14 Ibid. p. 46.
that it is the knowledge of the well-socialised members of society, that is the audience members of whom no specialist knowledge can be expected, that is utilised in the production of artistic products aimed at reaching an as large audience as possible.15

2.3 The forms of consumption

In one of his lectures – featured in the book Musiksoziologie16 – Theodor W. Adorno presents eight ideal types of music consumers which are based on the different forms of behaviour related to music consumption. The first of these ideal types is the expert; who is the knowledgeable listener who “perceive everything and in each moment, to himself, report of what he is hearing.”17 The expert can spontaneously follow the development of any piece of music, no matter how complex it is, to the degree that the musical development is “crystallised into a context of meaning of previous, present and future operations.”18 Within this ideal type Adorno places professional musicians and other educated individuals who have the ability to a “technical listening”. The second ideal type presented by Adorno is the good listener. A good listener is an individual who have the ability to “spontaneously complete contexts, and make informed judgements [of what he or she is listening to] that is not only related to prestige or taste.”19; but lacks the awareness of the technical and structural elements of music. The good listener understands music “in the same way as one understand ones native language, even though one does not have deeper knowledge into its grammatical structure and syntax.”20 and is what one would call a musical person or somebody with an ear for music, something that according to Adorno relates to the ability to listen to music in an “immediate and meaningful” fashion; and not merely enjoying music. Turning to the third ideal type which Adorno calls the cultivation consumer (Bildung Verbraucher), who “listens a lot, sometimes insatiably, is well informed and collects records.”21 The cultivation consumer holds music in high regards and is highly respectful of its cultural value and the need of knowledge of music in relation to social prestige. This ideal type listens to music in an “atomical” fashion, consuming selected pieces, not seldom because of the social prestige that comes from knowing them. The fourth of Adornos ideal types is the emotional listener who's consumption in many aspects is similar to the consumption of the cultivation consumer. The emotional listener is, however, first and foremost guided by his or hers own mentality. In the consumption of music this ideal type seeks to provide him- or herself with an outlet for “repressed or by norms suppressed impulses.”22 Thus this ideal type seeks emotional outlet through musical consumption and is therefore, according to Adorno, prone to consume

19 Ibid. p. 15.
20 Ibid. p. 15.
21 Ibid. p. 16.
22 Ibid. p. 18.
highly emotional music; such as the works of Peter Tchaikovsky. The *ressentiment listener* is the fifth of Adorno's ideal types and could be described as being an ideal type who's musical consumption is reactionary in it's nature. The ressentiment listener embraces the “emotional constrains of the modern society and makes them the norm for his or her own musical consumption.”

Within this category Adorno places Bach-lovers and other groups mainly concerned with authentic representation of music, that is liberating classical works from modernity and performing and consuming them in accordance with how they are thought to have been performed and consumed in their own time. The sixth of Adorno's ideal types are the *jazz enthusiast*. According to Adorno the jazz enthusiast shares “the contempt for the classical-romantic music ideal; but lacks the [ressentiment listener's] sacral pose.”

The jazz enthusiast sees the high arts as being the culture of the public society; and as being old fashioned and unwieldy. Now turning to the seventh ideal type – and perhaps the ideal type most in line with the subject matter of this analysis – namely the ideal type who consumes *music for entertainment's sake*. The behaviour of this ideal type is by Adorno described as being close to a morbid request and as being the holder of an “empty, abstract and indeterminate inner life.”

Of this ideal type Adorno also writes that

“One can imagine that [this ideal type] extends from those who cannot work without having the relentless stream of music pouring out of the radio, over those who seek to paralyse their loneliness and kill time through their listening (...) furthermore over the pot-pourri- and operetta lovers and those who enjoy music as a mean to relaxation, all the way to the substantial group of genuinely musical, whom through their exclusion from education in general and musical education in particular, and who through their position in the production process are not involved in the genuine music but allows themselves to be fed staple:”

The eighth and last of Adorno's ideal types is the *musically indifferent*, non-musical or anti-musical, a group who Adorno more or less leaves aside, not giving any accord of any characteristics or patterns of consumption, or perhaps non-consumption, besides stating that the reason behind musical indifference are to be found in childhood experiences and not in, as is, according to Adorno, popular belief within the bourgeoisie, in natural predisposition; or in exclusion from bourgeois culture and education – thus placing the reasons for musical indifference or non-musicality within the area of psycho analysis and class structure.

Now, one could argue – and I believe rightly so – that Adorno's ideal types are – to say the least – some what coloured by Adorno's positions in time and within the musical field. The problem is first and foremost that the thoughts of Adorno were forged in what would seem to be a uncritical relationship to the belief in the supremacy of what today is referred to as “classical” music or “art”

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24 Ibid. p. 22.
25 Ibid. p. 25.
26 Ibid. p. 25 (my translation).
27 Ibid. p. 27.
music, rendering the ideal types flavoured with elitism. Looking at contemporary literature however, there are some support for the general principles behind Adorno's ideal types. Wayne D. Hoyer and Nicola E. Stokburger-Sauer – in their *The Role of Aesthetic Taste in Consumer Behaviour* – presents an analysis using three ideal types based on the amounts of cognition and affect used in judging aesthetic products. These three ideal types are, according to Hoyer and Stokburger-Sauer, to be understood as positions along a continuum ranging from judgements based solely on cognition to judgements based solely on affect reflecting a person's interaction with the product. The product interaction is therefore to be understood as one of the key concepts in understanding why “the use of cognition versus affect and expertise versus taste varies across products and persons.”28 Using these three ideal types to exemplify this statement Hoyer and Stokburger-Sauer positions authors, fine art artists and automobile engineers within the ideal type characterised by cognitive judgements and expertise; in the second ideal type – the middle range ideal type – characterised by a mixture of cognitive and affective judgements, we find literature critics, fine art critics and automobile producers; and in the last ideal type, where affect and taste are the common way of judgement, Hoyer and Stockburger-Sauer positions literature connoisseurs, fine art connoisseurs and automobile connoisseurs. Lastly Hoyer and Stokburger-Sauer write, in developing the differences between the two extremes, that the experts (the first ideal type) “have developed more specialized knowledge that allows them to interpret aesthetic stimuli on a higher level”;29 and that, regarding the third ideal type, “We know that consumers employ innate preferences, emotions and experiences, and social/cultural influences in making these decisions in a more holistic process.”30 This means that musical – or aesthetical – consumption is not merely guided through individual taste that just happens to be present and working ex nihil ortus; and it is in regard to this that the resemblance between the analysis by Hoyer and Stokburger-Sauer and the analysis by Adorno really becomes visible in the following passage by Adorno:

“Not even the human characteristics that predispose one individual to become a zitherist and the other a Bach listener, is natural, but stem from societal conditions. What, to the investigative eye, seem to be a colour-full richness in musical manifestations, is primarily the result of the socially deterministic privilege of education.”31

As we study these two models and their respective ideal types, we understand consumption, or interaction by the subject with the object of consumption, as a continuum ranging from that of cognitive, expertise, consumption, to emotionally and entertainment based consumption, and plain non-consumption.

The models of Adorno and Hoyer and Stokburger-Sauer thus emphasise the role of know-

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29 Ibid. p. 175.
30 Ibid. p. 176.
ledge in music consumption as only the knowledgeable music consumer has the ability to form and express cognitive judgements and thus become an expert music listener. Therefore I will now turn to Pierre Bourdieu and his concepts cultural capital and habitus, concepts that further develops the notion of the roles of cognition and affect in art consumption.32

2.4 To understand music – Bourdieu revisited

The externalised products that are the works of art produced within the art world could be described as being objectified cultural capital, a term coined by Bourdieu to describe cultural capital in its objective form. Cultural capital is, as is all forms of capital, the result of “accumulated labour” and exists in three forms; the already mentioned objectified cultural capital, such as paintings, sculptures, books or CDs; institutionalised cultural capital, of which education and diplomas are two examples; and in a third form as embodied cultural capital, which is described by Bourdieu as being the “long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body”73 (i.e. the ability to interpret certain things and behave in an appropriate manner).

The importance of cultural capital – in combination with other forms of capital (i.e. social and economic capital) – in judgements of aesthetic products (i.e. art and music), has been studied by Bourdieu who presents the results of these studies in Distinction. Turning to one of these studies, which exemplifies the relation between capital and the ability to make cognitive judgements, Bourdieu found that those lacking greater amounts of embodied cultural capital were, when confronted with different pictures, prone to make non-aesthetic judgements based on emotions or ethical arguments. For example, when confronted with a photograph of an old woman's hands, individuals with a low amount of cultural capital made statements regarding how hard the woman must have worked in her life as her hands were “terribly deformed”. However as the amount of possessed embodied cultural capital increased those confronted with the photograph were prone to make aesthetic statements regarding resemblances between the photograph and well known paintings; and as the amount of embodied cultural capital increased further the remarks about the photograph became “increasingly abstract, with (other people's) hands, labour and old age functioning as allegories or symbols which serve as pretexts for general reflections on general problems.”34 Thus, judgements about cultural products, and thereby the consumption of the same (given that the enjoyment of something is correlated with the consumption of the same), is guided by the amount of embodied

32 I do realise that placing the theories formulated by Pierre Bourdieu in, among other works, Distinction and The Forms of Capital in relation to the thoughts of Hoyer and Stokburger-Sauer is somewhat complicated as they position the importance of symbolic capital, such as cultural capital, within the realms of the third, and to some extent the second, ideal type, thus leaving the cognitive judgements performed by the experts of the first ideal type outside the play and importance of symbolic capital. However, I am convinced that this strategy is misleading as a high level of cultural capital is needed in order to perform any cognitive judgement (Cf. Bourdieu, Pierre (2010 [1984])).


cultural capital available to the agent when he or she is confronted with a work of art, or as Bourdieu puts it:

“The aesthetic disposition, understood as the aptitude for perceiving and deciphering specifically stylistic characteristics, is thus inseparable from specifically artistic competence. The latter may be acquired by explicit learning or simply by regular contact with works of art, especially those assembled in museums and galleries, where the diversity of their original functions is neutralized by their being displayed in a place consecrated to art, so that they invite pure interest in form. This practical mastery enables its possessor to situate each element of a universe of artistic representations in a class defined in relation to the class composed of all the artistic representations consciously or unconsciously excluded. Thus, an awareness of the stylistic features which make up the stylistic originality of all the works of a period relative to those of another period, or, within this class, of the works of one school relative to another, or the works of one artist relative to the works of his school or period, or even of an artist's particular period or work relative to his whole oeuvre, is inseparable from an awareness of the stylistic redundancies, i.e., the typical treatments of the pictorial matter which define a style.”

Another dimension of Bourdieu's research into the field of cultural consumption and cultural capital is the link between the amount of capital individual actors, and in the extension different collectives, i.e. classes, can acquire and the individual's or the collective's position in the class-system. Thus class is an important factor within the field of aesthetic consumption and aesthetic appreciation as “the appropriation of cultural products presupposes dispositions and competences which are not distributed universally,” and this in turn has effects on the class-system itself as cultural products “are subject to exclusive appropriation, material or symbolic, and, functioning as cultural capital (...) they yield a profit in distinction, proportionate to the rarity of the means required to appropriate them,” which in turn, according to Bourdieu, yield legitimacy and in fact legitimise the educated classes' domination of the lesser educated (i.e. the bourgeoisie's domination of the working classes).

However, to fully grasp the argument accounted for above, we need to turn to habitus. Habitus is described by Bourdieu as a “subjective but non-individual system of internalized structures, common schemes of perception, conception and action” and, in dependency of previous experience, structure new experience at the same time as it modifies previous experience through new experience, which “brings about a unique integration, dominated by the earliest experiences, of the experiences statistically common to members of the same class”, and is present in determining individual and collective practice, illustrated by Bourdieu in the formulae (habitus) (capital) + field

36 Ibid. p. 225.
37 Ibid. p. 225.
39 Ibid. p. 60.
= practice, implying that the the habitus in combination with capital and the field in which they are, so to say, employed, determine individual and collective practices. This could be illustrated by returning to the three ideal types of Hoyer and Stokburger-Sauer where the practice of the ideal types within the field of aesthetic consumption is determined by the habitus and accumulated capital of the ideal types. In other words the experts use cognitive judgements as they are in possession of the capital and habitus that guides their action in accordance with this practice. Thus Bourdieu shows that the possession of cultural capital and thus the ability to consume exclusive (objectified) cultural capital, renders the possessor with advantages not available to those lacking cultural capital. By this the consumption of aesthetic products such as music and arts are not only carried out as an act of personal enjoyment existing in a social vacuum. Instead music consumption is defined in relation to the music consumption of others and is situated within a hierarchically ordered field of tastes. To summarise, music consumption preferences is at the same time a result of the position the human subject has in the field (i.e. one's habitus and possessed capital) and a force in the position taking within the same field.

2.5 Taste as experience – The phenomenological perspective of Alfred Schütz

An alternative perspective on taste and experience (such as the habitus) is provided by sociologist and phenomenologist Alfred Schütz, who wrote that our perception of the life world – and thereby our understanding of music – is guided by our experiences of the same. This is, according to Schütz, because of the inherent complexity of our surroundings, which forces the acting subject to rely on simplifications and models in his or her interaction with, and orientation within, the life world. These models and simplifications are described by Schütz as being ideal types of either an alter-ego, or a collection of alter-egos, or the products produced by the alter-ego, or the production process in which said products are produced. In the acting subjects understanding and interpretation of the surrounding world, the ideal types constructed from previous experiences are used to label the variety of phenomena encountered. The social world is thus a world interpreted by us through experience new and old. It is, after all, true that the intersubjective world that surrounds us has existed for quite some time and that it, during all this time, has been experienced and ascribed meaning by those who we call our ancestors. Thereby the way in which we interact with the surrounding world is situated, not only in place, but also in time. This was elegantly framed by Schütz who wrote that:

“It is merely a small part of my knowledge about the world that descend from my personal experience. The large part has a social origin, told to me by my friends, my parents, my teachers and my teachers teachers. Not only am I taught how to define the surrounding world, id est the typical characteristics of the relatively natural aspect of the world which the insider-group views

42 Ibid.
as the natural, but the potentially questionable sum of everything that is taken for granted for the time being. Also, I get to learn that typical constructions must be forged in accordance with the system of relevance that is accepted from the anonymous, joint perspective of the insider-group.\textsuperscript{43}

According to this, music consumption is, just as our being in the world, a situated practice, a, so to speak, consumption in the world, which is guided by one's own experience of music consumption, and by the experience of others, experience which has been forged and modified through the years and upon which genre definitions and musical canons are constructed. Therefore music consumption and taste is not only a matter of judging music qua music, but rather a question of music qua the social world.

Further, besides being equipped with a knowledge at hand in our interactions with the surrounding life world subjects also have, according to Schütz, a purpose at hand which defines what properties of an object that are of interest to the subject. Say for example that you are looking at a ball, this ball will be given to you in relation to your knowledge at hand, it will therefore be given to you against a horizon of previous experience of balls. Perhaps you will only be interested of this ball as an example of the general ideal type of balls, perhaps you are interested of this ball as being a football, or as being a certain make of ball. Thus the object O, having the properties p\textsubscript{1}, p\textsubscript{2}, p\textsubscript{3} and p\textsubscript{4} will, if it is, as Schütz puts it, taken for granted, appear as being any of the properties depending on what property is of interest to us in our purpose at hand.\textsuperscript{44}

I have here presented, together with the further developments made by other scholars and Alfred Schütz's theoretical writing, three different theoretical perspectives that all seek to describe and explain music consumption and differences in music consumption patterns between individuals and collectives. These three perspectives all provide different approaches to the phenomena as Howard S. Becker locates the core of the differences in music consumption patterns in the differences in involvement in different art worlds and, in extension, differences in knowledge in conventions whilst Theodor W. Adorno on the other hand presents a music consumer who's consumption is largely guided by his or her knowledge and education (or bildung) and the music music consumer in Pierre Bourdieu's theories is rooted in his or her habitus. These differences should however not be exaggerated as concepts such as knowledge, education and cultural capital are closely related to each other and, to some extent, all stem from experience. Thus all theorists provide a different approach to music consumption at the same time as they all locate differences in music consumption patterns to differences in experience.

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid. p. 34.
2.6 Previous research

In this section I present results from previous inquiries into the field of music consumption. The section is structured in such a way that it first gives accounts of the literature found and assessed as valuable insights into the field, taking the research problem of this project as the point of departure. Thereafter follows a section which accounts for the grey literature I have found whilst conducting systematic searches into databases.45 These searches provided three articles that were added to the previously gathered material on previous research into this field as well as the material for the section on grey literature.

In an attempt to analyse the structure of music taste among younger persons in Montreal, John Shepherd conducted a survey of 312 persons aged fifteen to thirty-four, finding that “consumption patterns do follow discernible trends of gender, age, ethnicity and class”, and that different stratified positions tend to render specific tastes in music.46 Among the results from this research it is shown that – within the studied population – men were more prone to favour hard rock, punk and new wave, progressive rock, jazz and blues and mainstream rock, whilst women were more prone to favour chanson français, soul, funk and disco, musical tunes and middle-of-the-road music. At the same time younger persons were more prone to favour hard rock, punk and new wave and mainstream rock. The interest for these genres did however drop as age increased. Classical music proved to be the favourite music of French-speaking individuals older than 30 years of age who held good positions within the field of employment. The study also showed proof of a tendency among individuals placed “advantageously within the social structure [to] (…) favour music that is articulated according to principles of explicitness” whilst “Those who occupy relatively 'agreeable' positions within the social structure, but are less advantageously placed (white-collar workers and housewives), seem to favour music such as the chanson français, middle-of-the-road music and soul/funk/disco, that is neither markedly explicit or implicit in its principles of articulation.”47

Findings similar to those of Shepherd were presented by Erik Bihagen and Tally Katz-Gerro when studying, and trying to recreate the results presented by Pierre Bourdieu in his Distinction, the structure of culture consumption patterns in Sweden using a nationally representative sample48 (n.b these authors focused on the consumption of high- and low-brow culture and high- and low-brow television viewing). In their research Bihagen and Katz-Gerro found that women in Sweden, on average, were more likely to participate in high-brow cultural activities than were men. Men in turn proved more prone to engage in low-brow activities such as television viewing. The research also

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45 The databases searched was ProQuest and EBSO. Additional searches was made using Google Scholar and Google.com and the returned hits were first assessed by relevance reading the titles and keywords, then abstracts and finally the full texts. The search string used was defined using PICOC and Boolean operators to define key words or concepts and variations on these. For more information on the approach from which this approach took its inspiration, please Cf. Petticrew, Mark & Roberts, Helen (2006) “Systematic Reviews in the Social Sciences A Practical Guide”, Blackwell Publishing Ltd: Malden.
47 Ibid. p. 325 ff.
48 The data used was the SOM-survey of 1993.
showed tendencies for high-brow culture consumption to correlate in a positive direction with variables such as class and educational attainment and that educational attainment showed tendencies of being negatively correlated to low-brow television viewing.49

Inquiries have also been made into how different media are perceived by consumers. One such inquiry focused on the re-emergence of vinyl records in the age of digital music. This research was conducted by David Hayes who interviewed young music fanatics, finding that young persons consuming music on vinyl do this in part as acts of resistance, holding vinyl and the music of earlier generations as more authentic than modern music products, as Hayes writes: “while the equation that these music fans assumed to exist between authenticity and format allowed them to circumvent dominant practices and tastes, it also contributed to their understanding of the past as a site free from the tensions impacting the contemporary production and consumption of cultural forms.”50

The research showed that many of the youths interviewed thought of contemporary artists as being “puppets” in the hands of profit-seeking corporations, whereas the pre-CD era was thought of as the time of authentic, free from market-pressure, artists, writing and recording authentic music.

Philip J. Trocchia et al. interviewed CD collectors about their personal motives, and found thirteen reasons for consuming music ranging from auditory stimulation via memory triggers, identification, inspiration and to be able to assert dominance.51 Thus music consumption was showed to be motivated, at least to a degree, by what ends consuming this particular music could bring about.

In the Flanders Henk Roose and Alexander Vander Stichele studied the “interplay between both public and private music consumption” asking whether or not, and to what degree, the music consumed in private overlap with the music consumed at concerts, and whether or not the two differ in breadth. This could also be seen as an attempt to recreate the research of Pierre Bourdieu, using data resembling cultural capital to describe culture participation. Using a large-scale survey and binary logistic regressions the researchers analysed the correlations between the consumption of high-brow genres; middle-brow genres; and low-brow genres, by educational attainment, arts education, parents public arts attendance, the size of the leisure network, age, gender, occupation, income and children living in the household. The results showed no

“effect of income on music consumption – neither on concert attendance nor on listening at home–contrary to Bourdieu’s findings on arts consumption in France in the ‘60s. Perhaps our indicator for income is not a valid measure for available economic capital. Or, it is due to the subsidized character of the Flemish cultural field, resulting in relatively low ticket prizes for arts activities.”52

49 Bihagen, Erik & Katz-Gerro, Tally (2000).
The results also show that educational attainment, having taken arts classes and any participation in public consumption by the parents, is positively correlated with the probability to consume music, showing a decreasing effect going from high-brow genres (in which the strongest positive correlation was observed) to low-brow genres; that concert attendance is in part related to the size of the leisure network; and finally, the researchers found that omnivores was a far more widespread than anticipated and that omnivorous consumption patterns are more prevalent in the private sphere.

What these studies show is different attempts to describe differences in music consumption patterns from a wide array of approaches. The research of John Shepherd, just to pick an example, show how collectives differ in their music consumption patterns depending on the collective's position in society. The research of David Hayes on the other hand, show how individual music consumers make sense of music, assessing the quality of music in a historical perspective whilst taking a stance similar to that of Adorno's idea type the resentment listener. Finally Philip J. Trochcia develops our understanding of music as being more than a mere mediator of aesthetic pleasure or a simple pass time. Instead music consumption as a practice was shown by Trochcia to take place for different reasons depending on what ends the music consumer sought.

In searching for previously established knowledge of the mechanisms and structure of music consumption I also decided to search databases, using a broadly defined search string, for literature on previous research. This resulted in a collection of dissertations that were collected, read and assessed by criteria of relevance.

Using in-depth and focus group interviews Mary Elizabeth Ray studied, among other things, how consumers learn about new artists and releases, finding that social ties such as friends and family, together with the mass media, was vital sources for information; and that less important but still viable information was provided by the artists themselves, terrestrial radio, Internet radio stations and websites. This research was included here as it provides useful information on where music consumers find out about, to them, new music.

Along the lines of John Shepherd and others above, James D. Belcher has analysed the structure of taste and the frequency of music discussions using factor analysis and data from an online survey of 328 respondents. Here a negative correlation between age and the preferences for several music genres such as electronic music, urban music (hiphop, RnB), and alternative (indie and punk) and a positive correlation between age and the preference for religious music were found. There was also a significant correlation between gender and preference for high-brow music, and negative correlations between gender and genres such as roots, electronic, and hard rock, showing females in the sample to be more prone to listen to high-brow music and to not favour the latter genres; and between music training and the preference for high-brow genres. Results also showed that music listening motives were correlated with opinion leadership, music involvement and peer group size. Further, results showed that the frequency of discussions about music was positively

correlated to variables such as music involvement and time spent listening to music; and negatively correlated with variables such as age and gender.\textsuperscript{55}

Finally, Amir Goldberg has shown, when studying the “classificatory dynamics in two social network websites”, that, when an object's quality is hard to discern, agents turn to one another to establish meaning by means of distinctions, which result in “a persistent overlap between structures of interpersonal interaction and categorical meaning,”\textsuperscript{56} meaning that when, for example, there are no clear and generally accepted distinction of quality between forms of musical expressions, music listeners turn to each other to construct meaningful distinctions. Thus music is made sense of by music consumers in collaboration with other music consumers, a finding close to that of Howard S. Becker's concept of the art world participants and how they formulate the conventions of their art world through their day to day collaboration and interaction.

Methodology

In this section I account for the methodological approach used in this thesis. At the same time this section reports on the potentially problematic aspects of the methods used that deserve full description and discussion, otherwise standard proceedings have been followed, as described in Patrik Aspers\textsuperscript{57} and John W. Creswell.\textsuperscript{58}

This research project is based upon the phenomenological approach developed by Alfred Schütz,\textsuperscript{59} Edmund Husserl\textsuperscript{60} and, to some extent, Maurice Merleau-Ponty.\textsuperscript{61} The reason for this methodological approach was grounded in the combination of the research questions' focus upon the experiences of music consumption; and phenomenology's focus on describing “the meaning for several individuals of their lived experience of a concept or a phenomenon.” and “describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon,”\textsuperscript{62} thus seeking to understand the subjective experiences, a quality which I think matches the requirements of the research ques-


tions them self. Another reason for choosing a phenomenological approach to this project lies in the nature of the theoretical foundations of this project. I would argue that, even though the methods used in the research that was used when formulating the theoretical constructions did not themselves employ a phenomenological approach, a phenomenological approach brings to the project the possibility to critically analyse the theoretical constructs of others by placing them in relation to the theoretical insights (or second order constructs) that are produced using this method.

The empirical material used in this project consisted of eleven persons' accounts of their subjective experiences. These accounts were gathered by means of in-depth interviews in which the respondents were asked to share their stories of how they came to appreciate the music that makes up the core of their music taste. The accounts were later analysed using the methodological tools provided by the phenomenological approach in which the different experiences and narratives were compared and themes describing the common experiences developed.

Following upon this short introduction is a presentation of the foundations of the phenomenological approach used in this research project, a description of the validations strategies used and a more detailed account of the practical execution of the research.

3.1 Phenomenology – eideic variation, the phenomenological reduction and the epoché

The phenomenology of Alfred Schütz is a method in which the researcher uses what has been observed to construct ideal types, described by Schütz as being models of actors who the researcher envisions as being gifted with a limited consciousness consisting of the elements necessary for the execution of observed patterns of behaviour. Ideal types are thereby constructed using the accounts of individual actors experiences and this movement is described by Schütz as being a transition from the first order constructs of the individual actors, to the second order constructs, constructed by the researcher as "constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene". In other words, the theoretical constructions made by the researcher to describe the phenomenon are constructed from the theories the actors hold of themselves, their lives and their experiences of the social worlds in which they live.

For the construction of second order constructs however, there are a number of important methodological steps. The first of these is the ἐποχή (epoché), which is the putting within brackets

63 This choice was to a large degree made following the great insights of Howard Becker (Cf. Becker, Howard S. (2008 [1998]) “Tricks of the Trade. Yrkesknep för samhällsvetare”, Liber: Stockholm) regarding the importance of understanding the question and letting the question guide the choice of method.
64 Take, for example, Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, using a phenomenological approach the researcher, I would argue, gains the possibility to, by using his or her results, compare and analyse the two theoretical constructs.
66 Ideal types can also be constructed using the observations of the researcher.
of all pre-conceptions and prejudices of the social world. This is however not to be understood as a variation on the Cartesian doubt but rather a reclaiming of the social world from the chains of it every-day-ness that come from our ideal typification of the same. In other words the ἐποχὴ is a process of not taking the world for granted rather than doubting its very existence. Edmund Husserl wrote of the ἐποχὴ as being the placing within brackets of one's pre-understanding (vorverstehen) of the world, a process in which

“We are putting in brackets, as it were, all our feeling-intentions and all the apperceptions deriving from the intentionality of the feelings by virtue of which there constantly appear to us, prior to all thinking, spatio-temporal objectivities in immediate "intuitability" charged with certain characters of value and practice characters that altogether transcend the stratum of the mere thing. Thus, in this "pure" or purified theoretical attitude we no longer experience houses, tables, streets, or works of art; instead, we experience merely material things. Of those value-charged things, we experience only their stratum of spatiotemporal materiality; and similarly, of men and human societies, only the stratum of this psychic "nature" which is bound to the spatiotemporal 'Bodies.'”68

Thus, the goal of the ἐποχὴ is to, by means of a reflective standpoint, leave the natural attitude (der natürlich Einstellung) which is the attitude kept by the subject in his or her everyday interaction with the life world (lebens-welt).

A second important methodological step is the phenomenological reduction which pertains to analysing the “correlational interdependence between specific structures of subjectivity and specific modes of appearance or givenness”69 (i.e. how the object is given to me as a subject situated in the life world).70 The third methodological step is the drawing out of the “essential and invariant characteristics of the things that we experience”71 that is the eidetic variation (or eidetic reduction). This is the search for an objects “what”, or the smallest components of an experience or phenomenon, and could be said to be the source of the building blocks that become the ideal type or the second order construct. In other words, the eidetic variation seeks analyse phenomena in their essential what-ness. Take the example of a chair, I am certain that you who could imagine a large number of chairs, all of different sizes, colours and designs, but for a chair to be a chair, even in the case of an imagined chair, the chair must have a set of qualities which will be present in all

70 For a further explanation of the phenomenological reduction and how the objects are given to the subject, please Cf. Schütz, Alfred (1960) and Schütz, Alfred (1999).
the chairs experienced or constructed imaginatively from your experience. These qualities, the *eidos*, are then the essences of the chairs.\(^72\) The fourth and final step is the *intersubjective corroboration*, meaning the sharing, discussing and reviewing of any findings.\(^73\)

### 3.2 Implementation

In the beginning of 2013 all the preparatory sketches on this project were completed. Theoretical works had been studied and an interview guide consisting of eleven questions was drawn up. Thereafter commenced a search for respondents by means of placards that were hung on noticeboards at Stockholm University, The Royal College of Music, local record stores and at one alternative café and music venue. The posting of these placards were made in a number of waves and generated a total of nine respondents. In addition respondents from a previous research project on the introduction processes to the goth sub-culture\(^74\) were contacted, returning one respondent.\(^75\) Finally one respondent were found using an informant active within a small concert arranging society in Östersund. These different strategies were chosen to generate empirical material stemming from differently situated actors, who's different experiences would thicken the empirical material, generating a thicker description of the phenomena.\(^76\) This was however not the strategy initially chosen for this project as the initial strategy involved snowball sampling by which respondents would generate new respondents by leading the researcher to new respondents. This did however prove to be difficult as respondents seemed unwilling to, so to speak, “tattle” about their friends. Why the respondents responded in this way – a way that was much unlike the positive response that I have met in previous research projects using snowball sampling strategies – can only be speculated upon. I do however believe that it might be connected to the slippery-ness of the subject matter. In a previous project using a snowballing strategy the subject matter studied was much more concrete as respondents were identified and asked to participate on grounds of their sub-cultural belonging, and not, as is the case here, on no ground other than their highly personal taste in music.

The interviews, which were recorded\(^77\) with the permission of the respondents, were carried out as new respondents reported an interest in participation (i.e. during February and March of 2013) and varied in length from about 30 minutes to about 50 minutes. For the interviews a walkabout-inspired strategy was chosen. By this, the date, time and location for the interviews were all chosen by the respondents. This strategy aimed at constructing a situation in which the respondents felt at home and in which the interview could evolve into a relaxed discussion in which the respondents

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\(^{73}\) Gallagher, Shaun & Zahavi, Dan (2012).


\(^{75}\) Another two respondents from the previous study showed interest in participating in this study but chose to decline due to limitations in their schedules.


\(^{77}\) For the recording I used an iPad which was chosen due to its inconspicuous appearance.
were leading and I followed, however ever ready to guide the conversation using short responses and follow-up questions.

During the interview stage, a systematic search for previous research was carried out using the ProQuest and EBSO databases. Searches were also performed using Google Scholar. The results of these searches is reported above where it has been grouped together with results of previous searches in electronic databases, Google and reference lists.

When the interview stage was finalised the recorded interviews were transcribed using word by word transcription. The transcribed empirical material was then coded using a thematic coding strategy in which themes were identified and marked. These themes were then used as entry points into the empirical material during the analysis in which the phenomenological approach accounted for above was used to identify the essences of the combined accounts of the respondents experiences. Once the analysis was in its final stages, a draft of the results was written and sent to all participants who volunteered to participate in the validation of the findings. The feedback provided by the respondents were then added to the analysis and incorporated into the final results.

As the respondents were asked to participate in the validation of the results of this inquiry, this research project has been validated using three separate validation-strategies. The first of these being a peer-review strategy by means of a constructive dialogue with my supervisor, and the critique delivered by the opposition when this thesis was defended at the end point of this project. The second strategy employed here focuses on the accounting for past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations that have likely shaped the interpretation and approach to the study.”; and the last, and perhaps the most important strategy, is a respondent validation strategy by which the initial results of the analysis has been commented on by the respondents, letting them judge the credibility and accuracy of the analysis. The critique was incorporated into the final results.

Finally, at the end of this project the finished thesis (i.e. the document you are currently reading) was sent to the respondents participating in this research project. Together with the text I also sent my warmest thanks, as they, by means of their participation made this project possible in the first place.

3.3 Coding

The material was coded using a mixed approach in which some codes were created using a deductive approach, searching for themes related to the theoretical concepts presented earlier in this thesis. Codes were also created using an inductive approach taking its departure in the respondents shared

80 Ibid.
81 In order for the reader to identify the comments that stem from the respondent validation, such comments are followed by an obelisk (†).
experiences. Using this approach enables, would I argue, the researcher to tend to the material in such a manner that the analysis is grounded in previously established knowledge at the same time as it allows the researcher to focus his or her analysis, not on what is already known, but on the respondents' experiences. This approach resulted in a total of fifteen codes:

1. The first introduction to a gateway artist, group or genre,
2. To learn about music from family and friends,
3. To learn about music from services such as television, radio or the Internet,
4. To learn about music from professionals such as critics or record store personnel,
5. To read up and to learn conventions,
6. Descriptions of what makes good music good,
7. Descriptions of bad music,
8. To search for new music,
9. Music and its relation to one's personality and inner life,
10. To hear the music instead of just listening to it,
11. Music as an act of resistance,
12. To try out music,
13. Attending concerts,
14. Descriptions of perceived differences between different media,
15. The saturation of taste.

Ethics

4.1 Ethical orientation and considerations

The ethical standards of science are founded upon the goals of the “scientific profession” writes David B. Resnik. These goals are identified by Resnik as including (i) practical goals (i.e. finding solutions to practical problems) and (ii) epistemic goals, that is, goals seeking to advance human knowledge by “giving accurate descriptions of nature, developing explanatory theories and hypothesis, making reliable predictions, eliminating errors, and biases, teaching science to the next gen-

eration of scientists and informing the public about scientific ideas and facts.”

It is therefore important to consider whether or not the goals of science are put at risk in the decisions on ethical matters that are a part of research. I have therefore, in designing and carrying out this study, paid close attention to the ethical guidelines proposed by Resnik and by the Swedish Research Council. In addition I have chosen to base ethical considerations upon the kantian theory on ethics. Thereby the ethical considerations of this project has been based on a duty-based ethical perspective, ultimately based on Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative: “Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law.”

In the publication “Forskningsetiska principer inom humanistisk- samhällsvetenskaplig forskning” (Research ethical principles within the human sciences and social scientific research) the Swedish Research Council describe the “individual protection requirement” which is divided into four sub-requirements: 1) the information requirement; 2) the requirement of consent; 3) the confidentiality requirement; and 4) the utilisation requirement; and it is these four principal requirements in combination with the writings of Resnik that I have turned to when seeking to resolve any ethical considerations that are accounted for below.

The first ethical concern to arise during this project was that of who would be considered eligible for participation in this study. Here I decided that, in order to avoid any ethically questionable situations, only to include adults (i.e. persons who are 18 years old or older). The second concern arose when designing the interviews. Here I chose to include a section in which I informed the respondent of the purpose of my research, how the data were to be handled, that any participation in this study was voluntary and that the respondents have the right to terminate his or her participation at any time and for any reason until I hand in of this paper to the Department of Sociology as a part of the examination process. A third concern considered the management of the data collected in this study. Here I chose to have the transcriptions carefully anonymised by the removal of all personal names. By this the transcriptions only contain information about the date and location for the interview and the respondents age, gender and educational attainment.

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86 At the finalisation of this thesis the transcribed interviews were archived and are available (in Swedish) upon request to the author of this thesis.
5.1 Reducing music consumption

Before heading further into this section, I would first like to provide a short discussion on the constructed-ness of the empirical material that is presented here. The empirical material is constructed in the sense that it was forged in interviews were I, as a researcher, contributed with the over all topic of the conversations, and as a researcher I, by means of follow up questions, short answers and nods, guided the conversations towards the subjects of this research. By this I participated in the construction of the interview situation that became the empirical material. I would however argue that my influence upon the material was limited as I worked hard to maintain a reflective and open attitude in which I sought to minimise my influence by employing strategies such as the walk-about-inspired approach accounted for above.

Now, one of the key features of the phenomenological approach is the placing within brackets of one's own experience so that one can approach the phenomenon without having one's vision disturbed by one's pre-understanding. I did therefore spend a large amount of time and energy on the bracketing of my pre-understanding and prejudices stemming from my (lived and taught) experiences as a sociology student and a music enthusiast. Practicing the ἐποχή meant that I sought to keep an open attitude towards the respondents and their experiences. In this open attitude I sought to leave my own musical preferences and theoretical prejudices and pre-understanding behind, interviewing each respondent with the same amount of interest no matter his or her taste in music or how well his or her experiences confirmed this or that theoretical model. I sought, to put it short, to focus my attention upon the phenomena as being noesis and not the phenomena being noema.87

5.2 Five themes

In the empirical material, the respondents' shared experience gives the image of music consumption, or taste in music,88 as being a process starting with an initial initiation or introduction that paves the

88 These two concepts will here be used interchangeably as the respondents preferred the concept of taste in music whilst this research is based around the concept of music consumption.
way for the formulation of a consumption in which new artists, groups, genres and knowledge is added to the consumption by means of discovering new music and reading up on artists and groups. Whilst doing this, the music listener also establishes relationships with the artists or groups that make up his or her music consumption, or taste, by interacting with the music on a personal level, and by attending concerts and other events in which the artists or groups are present. This process finally comes to a halt the day the music listener stops adding new knowledge and music to his or her consumption, after which the consumption stagnates and stops developing.

Using the coded empirical material as the point of departure five themes have been constructed. These themes all describe different phases and elements of the process described above. The themes were constructed by grouping together different codes, paying close attention to sections in which codes overlap, and are relatively wide to allow for the variation in the respondents' experiences. The five themes – who will be presented in close detail below – are:

1. The gateway,
2. To develop a music consumption,
3. Discriminating taste,
4. The relationships between listeners, music and artists,
5. Saturation and stagnation.

5.3 The respondents

The eleven persons who's experiences are reported and quoted here were between nineteen years of age and fifty-two years of age, five identified themselves as being women and six identified themselves as being men. Out of the eleven nine had some postsecondary schooling of which seven had attained some university education.

In the interviews thirty-four artists and groups were identified by the respondents as being their favourites. These artists or groups were: AC/DC, Albert Ayler, Avril Lavinge, Bayside, Big Bang, Bob Marley and The Wailers, Bon Jovi, Christine Sehnaoui, Doppelgangaz, Eric Dolphy, Eric Satie, Evelyn Evelyn, Green Day, Hammerfall, Hobsin, Hurrganes, Joakim Thåström, Kendrick Lamar, The Kinks, Lake of Tears, Ludovico Einaudi, Mats Gustafsson, Michael Jackson, Neil Young, Sex Pistols, Simple Plan, Slayer, Sopor Aeternus, The Soundtrack of Our Lives, Supertramp, Tom Waits, Tupac Shakur, The Verve, Warne Marsh and Ulf Lundell.

89 The respondents also had the possibility to identify themselves as being of a neutral gender.
5.4 The gateway

A music consumption, or taste in music, has its beginning in the initial introduction in which the subject discovers an artist, group or genre that later will become the foundation upon which the subject's consumption is developed. All eleven respondents reported having experienced being introduced to music that turned out to be the starting point of their later music consumption. One example of this is respondent 6 who got introduced to the punk genre whilst staying at his friends house, hearing the friends brother play records by he UK Subs, 999, Sex Pistols and Dead Kennedys. Another example is respondent 4 and her first encounter with the heavy metal genre and the Swedish heavy metal group Hammerfall, when watching MTV: “And they played Hammerfall's Blood Bound, and that became my gateway to heavy metal.” Other respondents reported having been introduced to the music that became the gateway artist, group or genre to their music consumption, by family members or friends (1, 2, 3, 5 and 11), radio (9) or the Internet (7 and 10).

One interesting observation here is that the two respondents, who were introduced to their respective gateways by means of the Internet, both emphasise their own agency in the encounters with their respective gateway whilst the other respondents place their own agency far later in the process. Respondent 7 told the story of how she came in contact with the goth genre, as part of a reaction to the exclusion she experienced in school:

“I rather felt like I wanted to place myself outside the rest of the school as they did not let me join in, like, in the community. So I just 'Well then I might just go full on!’ so just 'Goth-git, that's what they yell to the strange persons, I'll search for goth.’”

Respondent 10, on the other hand, told of how she in her youth was “quite uncertain of what [she] really liked” in music, and that she because of this uncertainty first and foremost listened to the music her friends liked. This did however change when she read about a Korean group on a webpage dedicated to Japanese pop-culture, which had broadened its spectra, picking up on Korean pop-culture as well. This encounter was described by the respondents as a very important part of what would later become her taste in music:

“Well, I do somewhat think that music is, like, a factor that defines a human being, or defines one's personality. And the music I like, well its first and foremost the korean music that has defined me, or how I should put it, because it was really like the first music that I found by myself and, by myself, realised that I really like listening to this.”

5.5 To develop a music consumption

“Much inspiration really comes from one's mates” (10)
This theme concerns the different sources from which the music listener finds out about and discovers new artist, groups or genres; and where and for what purpose information about these artists, groups and genres is obtained by the listener.

In the respondents' experiences, one of the most common sources for information about, to them, new music, was persons close to the respondents, such as family members and friends. One example of this is respondent 2 who's girlfriend sent him two songs by Bon Jovi, a group that later become his favourite group. Another example is respondent 1 who traces large parts of her taste in music to her parents and their passion for Indian music, jazz, classical music and psychedelic rock. Yet a further example of this is respondent 4 who told of how she learnt about new artists and groups from friends she had met through her passion for Hammerfall. Another perspective on this was provided by respondent 3 who believed that new social environments bring with them new influences:

“There are these times in one's life when you have finished [pauses] When you break with, well, whatever it is you do at the time. You leave home, you move from your home municipality, you goes to college [pauses] For me it was when I began to study at a folkhögskola\(^90\) and, of course, you know, you get new perspectives, you find new friends, you get introduced to, well, other forms of music of which you might not have been interested earlier.”

Something experienced also by, amongst others, respondent 9:

“It was, I was in upper secondary school and then there it was a person who took, well, the same programme as I did, but two years above me and at our programme we were very, even if they were to years above us we hung out and so, so so, so we talked often and then there was this person who, like, constantly talked about [Bayside] and I was like 'What, what kind of band is that?' because it sounded close to the genre I liked, and he told me about them and, well, I thought that 'Right then, I'll check them out when I get home' and the first song I heard was Devotion and Desire and it was so damn good. And it was really like he was singing with emotions in his voice; and the lyrics was good and I just 'Oh shit!' and then I listened to more and was just like 'Everything they've done is really good!'”

Besides providing the respondents with tips and information about new artists, the social environment also provided the respondents with music in the form of recorded cassettes, mp3s, playlists etcetera.

Other sources by which the respondents (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10 and 11) learned about new music were online services such as Spotify, Youtube and LastFM, where the respondents could listen to, and try out, music they had heard of, or learn about new music by looking up related artists or recommendations provided by the services. One example of this was respondent 9 who talked about how she picked up hints on Youtube:

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90 Scandinavian form of adult education, translates to “Folk high school.”
“Those videos that are recommended to you and alike, I gladly check them out. I discovered a new tune I really liked like the day before yesterday or something like that, when I clicked one of those videos.”

Respondent 10 who used Spotify's related artist-service to discover new music told that: “Well I usually sit on like Spotify and check out related artists and so.”; and respondent 7 told of how she discovered new music via LastFM: “It's mostly via that website LastFM as they register everything I listen to and by doing so they can pick out other groups they think you'd like and tell you about them.” Respondent 8 also told of how he had discovered music that was new to him by using Spotify. The respondent did however seek to dissociate himself from Spotify as using the service, according to him, was “to steal music” and that:

“it is important to buy records. In part because (...) the musicians I listen to, it's really that and concerts that make up, like, their only income. And that concerns people who are, like, still alive and do many gigs. But in the case of old jazz it is, the record stores will sink if you don't buy anything”.

Respondent 11 also pointed out social media such as Facebook, Soundcloud and Twitter as sources, used by him, to get to know about and discover new music.

A third source to new music was, according to just a few of the respondents, other agents such as music critics, record store personnel and music journalists. Respondent 4 told of how she, after having discovered Hammerfall, started subscribing to Sweden Rock Magazine, from which she learned about the heavy metal genre's big artists and groups. Other periodicals that were mentioned during the interviews were VeckoRevyn, Kerrang!, punk fanzines and Kingsize Magazine's online edition. Furthermore did respondent 8 talk about how the owner of a certain record store had helped him, and still helps him, discover new music. The respondent told of how he had gone to the record store to buy records for a greater sum of money which he had received on his birthday or alike. At the record store the owner had asked the respondent what music the respondent liked, and on the basis of the respondents answers the owner had picked together a bundle of thirteen records he thought the respondent would like. Only two respondents did mention music critics in connection to their experiences of searching for, and discovering new music. Respondent 5 said that he read reviews of music and that “then it is so that I read about an group or artist and then I might see that they have released a record that I haven't heard, then I'll want to do so as I become curious.” The respondent further told that he thinks that critics are good at writing about music, but that he “does not care for their opinions” and that:

“[Y]ou cannot really trust any critics (...) I mean, Aftonbladet did a poll, their music editorial

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91 Veckorevyn here refers to the periodical before its relaunch in the late 1970's.
staff did one of those best of-list of the fifty biggest, best and most important rock artists of all
times nineteen-ninety-nine, and included like twenty soul artists and there were like loads of
obvious artists they should have included, they had like [pauses] well who have created rock
music, they were not included on that list. It's a bit typical I think, they are way off, music
critics, I think. One can only shake one's head.”

The second respondent who brought up music critics did also distance herself from the opinions
presented in reviews:

“I am not the one who usually sit and read music reviews and alike. I, ehm, I don't know, I do
not want to be influenced by other people's opinions. Of course they're professional opinions but
I want to, like, make up my own thoughts of what I like or what I don't like. If you read music
reviews you often get, well, maybe not unconsciously but, an idea of how something should
sound before you've even heard it. So it ruins the experience a bit.”

Five respondents (3, 4, 8, 10 and 11) also told of how they discovered new music whilst reading up
on an artist or a group (see bellow). Respondent 8, for example, told of how he, when reading up on
the jazz fusion duo Mats & Morgan, learnt that they their music was inspired by Frank Zappa, and
when the respondent then started reading up on him, he discovered connections between Frank
Zappa and Captain Beefheart. Another example was provided by respondent 10 who told of how
she, after having discovered the Korean pop-group Big Bang, came in contact with other artists,
groups and genres when reading up on, amongst other things, the music agency to which Big Bang
were signed:

“With Big Bang a door to a whole new word opened. They are still the group I like the best, but
they have also, via them I have been introduced to other Korean music that I also like. And it
was really then I started listening to Korean hip-hop as well, and then, via the Korean hip-hop, I
found my way to the Western hip hop. So the journey I had with Doppelgangaz did I also in
principle get via the Korean music. I had never listened to hip-hop before and then I heard a
song, just by accident, and thought 'What the hell, it's pretty good in Korean, then it might be
good in english too.'”

This was also true about respondent 11 who had read up on Hobsin and Kendrick Lamar and their
own record labels, checking out the artists tied to the different labels.

A minority of the respondents also brought up concerts as a fifth source to new music.
Amongst this minority respondent 8 was the only one to bring up attending concerts as possibly be-
ing primary about discovering new music, whilst respondents 5 and 11 were in favour of, when at-
tending concerts or music festivals, attend concerts by other artists and groups than the artist or
group for whom they were attending in the first place:

“I mean like, if I go to a music festival there will surely be a lot of, at least at larger music
festivals, bands I have yet to hear of, and if I then [pauses] Then I might check out what genre
and like what they roughly sound like on beforehand if there are four or five different concerts
on different stages at the same time. Then it is real fun if you discover something really good.” (5)

“But it's always funny being, if the main act starts at eight and the concert opens as early as four or five, then you can always be there as early as that to see what else is going on.” (11)

The last respondent who mentioned concerts as a possible source for new music was respondent 2 who told that he attends concerts as often as he can afford them and that he would “almost go and see anything without listening to it on beforehand just because live concerts give, like, such a bloody good feel” but that “my goal when I attend concerts is not to discover new music, but I am willing to listen to them again if they're any good.”

Finally, respondents 6 and 9 told of how they discover new music by other means than the ones described above. In the case of respondent 9 she told that “[i]f I hear a song in the store, I can go up to the cashier and ask what record they are playing, or something like that. Or listen to the lyrics and google the words to see what pops up.” Respondent 6 in turn, told of how he had discovered the artist Rodriguez from watching the film Searching for Sugar Man.

Besides the search for new artists and groups knowledge in the artists, groups and genres that make up the taste in music appear to play an important role in each and every respondents taste in music. The respondents often showed proof of having accumulated extensive knowledge about the artists, groups and genres present in their tastes. All respondents reported having “read up” on the music they listen to, respondent 4, for example, told of how she, after having been introduced to Hammerfall, to paraphrase the respondent, ran to the record store, bought the record and read up on the group. Many respondents spoke of their knowledge as an important part in their own great interest for music, but the knowledge was also spoken of as being an essential part of a credible music interest. Respondent 5 told an example of the first, and the thoughts of respondent 2 can be used as an example of the latter:

“Well I buy lots of music DVD:s and biographies and such. It even becomes such that I cannot find the time to enjoy it all, but it is hard to resist, it's some sort of collectors-instinct or something like that. And then, if there's something on TV concerning rock music you listen in, you go on Wikipedia and you listen on Spotify and so [laughs], you know. Yeah, it's a great interest, like not only listening to music but wanting to know of, and like know and be in on stuff.” (5)

“Well, I believe I think that it is important to know [pauses] I think that it is quite important to, like, know the songs and records and alike. I mean, I know of many who's just like 'Rolling Stones's my favourite band' without being able to name a single song of 'em. I just think that's strange really, and then they're like 'What the hell, you do not have to know every single song?'"
But you should be able to name a few of them at least.” (2)

Amongst the respondent, the respondent who most heavily emphasised the importance upon reading up on the artists and groups he or she listened to was respondent 11 who's dwells on his thoughts and experiences in an excerpt from the interview below (my words in bold):

“Respondent 11: I try to find out, like, when and where they're born [Mm], where they get their inspiration and why they've chosen to focus upon making the music they do. It makes you find out a little more than, because it's one thing to get to know the artist, and another to get to know the person. 'cause it's, not always but often, some use like names and aliases and such, so it's not really them, or how you should put it. So I guess it's some kind of, like, mask to cover yourself too. So I really try to find out like, yeah, birthplace, year, important events in their lives. And it's mostly Wikipedia that've that [Mm], and there, you know you can change all possible information so I guess it's not the most reliable really, but mostly there. And, as I said, the official homepage, they often have a tab that says bio or biography, so if you tap that you'll see, like, from the beginning to the end, or, from the beginning up to the present you know [Mm]. So yeah, I try to find out as much as possible 'bout the the artist to get to know that part, the artistic part, and the personal level.

T.O: So it is important to have, like, an overview of the entire artist?

Respondent 11: Yeah I think so because it makes it more fun like, because then you really know why this person's making the music. It's one thing to hear, like, the drums and guitar and piano and all that, vocals and such. But if you don't know why the person's singing or have this kind of lyrics in his music you don't, like, click a hundred percent I think. But if you know that, yeah like, he has gone through this or she has done this and that and that's why [the respondents emphasis] the song was made from the start, like. Then you get a bit more 'Yeah, alright, then I know!' like, you'll get more questions answered.”

As we have seen here, an important part in the development of a taste in music seem to be the reading up on, or gathering of information and knowledge about, artists and groups. In doing this, the respondents – from what I have been able to identify in the empirical material – often turn to Wikipedia; and, however in lesser extent, to the online encyclopedia Metalarchives, artists' webpages, published biographies, user generated material on Youtube, documentaries, news papers, magazines and other media.

5.6 Discriminating taste

During the interviews the respondents were asked to give examples of what music they listen to, what artists and groups they would consider to be their favourites, and what they believe to be the
reasons for these favourites being, what the respondents called, good music. Taking this as the point of departure, this theme is constructed from the respondents statements on what makes music good or bad.

Good music is, according to the respondents' statements, characterised by, amongst other characteristics, being music that evokes emotions, is original, has a history, is touching and has a good message or a good sound, or both. Respondent 7 for example talked of how feeling, for her, is an important quality in good music:

“It's just that they are so very wayward. I don't think that, at least the singer and she who plays the piano, I don't think she has any formal music education [Mm], instead she does everything on feeling, and that is so [respondents emphasis] cool and you really notice it in the music as well.”

Respondent 9 also spoke of feelings, here as in how the artist communicate emotional content in the music, as an important part of good music:

“[I]n his voice you can really hear what it is that he is trying to communicate and that's so, well, it's just so perfect. Everything you could ever want. And I like the lyrics, of course. It's just like, it really is poetry [laughs].”

The respondents also spoke of feelings in a third meaning, stating that good music evokes feelings in the listener. Respondents 1, and 3 gave examples of this:

“Well, when I look for music today I look for music that has quality, or mostly [pauses] or music has quality. It could be an instrument I like, or it is something that it builds an emotion, that is what I am looking for in new music as well. That there's some theme in all music that I want. Something a bit deeper, that it can take that I listen to the song a couple of times before I start to appreciate it, and then I appreciate every single detail in it.” (1)

“Well, I like it when music affect you in some way, it should, like, evoke something.” (3)

Other respondents stated that the message of the lyrics or the sound of the music, not seldom in combination, were important components in good music:

“Yeah, in part because it appeals to me both, like, melody-wise so that there're like nice melodies and it's easy to keep up with the song and so, and then that there're good, well the text like I said before, like a nice message. It's not like that out to party all night and having fun. Life has it's downs as well and I think that, that's what I relate to to a larger extent than just having fun and living life like that. So it appeals to me both, like, sound-wise and intellectually, if you say so [Mm]. So that's why I have these favourites.” (11)

“Yes, well, I like, if I take rock and punk, what I like is that it is powerful. And not only the music, but the lyrics. Like, they often have a message or are just like 'I don't give a shit!' And I
really like it when the lyrics really have a message or mean something, yeah, or just are really good.” (9)

“The combination of text and music, when those parts amplify each other and blend together to full extent. That's when strong emotions arise in the expression, that's when the artist really connects with the listener. The early albums by Ulf Lundell were masterpieces in that way. Olle Ljungström is fantastic in how the way in which he sings, the expression in his vocals can transform the most trite lyrics into luminous poetry.” (5)†

In addition there were respondents that stated that the music in itself, as a sound or as the performers technical skill, were the most important qualities of good music. Respondent 5 for example stated, as an example of the former, that, in music with lyrics in, to him, foreign languages, he likes “like, when there's bite in the guitars and there's some roughness in the guitar playing and so, a bit of, like, heavy rocking.”; and of the latter there are one single example available in the empirical material, and that is respondent 8 who talked of how his favourite artists' technical qualities such as their “unbelievable expression”, “energy”, “musical drive” or “long phrasings” as being hallmark qualities of good music.

Further characteristics of good music could, according to the respondents, lie within the intentions driving an artist or group makes and performs music. Respondent 4 told of how she appreciates artists and groups who are “[w]illing to give back, to enrich, to not only make hard rock but that they have an idea with their music, a will to reach people. There's a soul in what they do” and Respondent 10 said that what she liked about Korean pop is the great levels of appreciation that is directed, from the artists or groups, towards the fans, and that the artists our groups really “are nothing without their fans because it's the fans that keep them going.” and that “within the mainstream industry [of Korean pop; my note] there are very much the case that, if a group does not hit when they make their debut, and get a fan base, they will essentially get disbanded. So it feels like you who listens is appreciated, or how I should put it, yeah.”. The same respondent also talked of how music that is written as a result of an artists love for music, in her opinion, is good music:

“[Thåström; my note] is not one of those artists who raises himself to the skies, instead he does what he do because he likes it and he always has some message with his songs or a lot of heart and pain, but it feels honest. And he's not the one who does it in order to earn a lot of money 'cause he's obviously not dirty rich, instead he does it because he really, like, well, loves music.”

A final characteristic of good music was, according to some of the respondents (2, 5, 6, 7, 10) characterised by an act of resistance. This resistance could be expressed as a resistance against mainstream society as was punk rock for respondents 6 and 7, or against mainstream music as in the case of respondent 10.
When the respondents were asked to give examples of what characterises bad music, music they did not like that is, they used terms such as: function music, Western mainstream music, radio music, dunka-dunka, RnB-music and commercial music. Characteristic for the music flagged by the respondents as being bad music, was music which failed to evoke any form of emotion in the listener, or as respondents 5 and 6 put it:

“Well, the rapping in hip-hop music, I think that's so static. Well, tis some kind of anti-musical thing with it, its like some kind of thrusting sound. It isn't even real singing I find it offensive. I get irritated (...) And soul, I think of that being so anti-rock. Well, it's sleazy, cheesy, with some kind of over the top sentimentality without any [pauses] it doesn't evoke any feelings within me, to me it only feels wrong. Well, I think that one in one way or another wants to identify with the music, you want to be a part of it. But in the case of soul I feel the opposite, I do not want to be a part of it in like any way ever. And RnB I mostly find boring and tiresome, I does not give me anything.” (5)

“[I]t doesn't evoke anything within me, no emotions, I don't find it worth listening to, I just find it bloody boring and uninteresting.” (6)

Bad music were also characterised by having been made with the wrong, not seldom commercial, but also functional, intentions:

“Well, it feels kind of lame to say this, but like regular Western mainstream music, or what one would call it. Like music that's all about making money. That doesn't feel like, it's like if the artist rally haven't got much to say.” (10)

“I think it is music which, which is made for more commercial purposes rather than musical. I find it difficult to listen to pop, well that kind that is played on the radio, or like, it doesn't reach me.” (8)

“I can listen to electronic music like so, I can do that. But like this club house does not interest me a bit, like techno [pauses] I do not want that, no. Dance orchestras are also like [pauses] no, to me that kind of music is like functional music. If I did enjoy dancing, well sure, in that case it's that kind of music that is played like, but it's not the kind of music I would listen to.” (3)

Bad music could also be music which did not respond to the demands the respondents placed on good music. One example of this is respondent 9 who emphasised the role of the vocal expressions and the lyrics in good music. This meant that the respondent did not enjoy music in where vocals and lyrics are parentheses, or where the music itself was given to much focus.

The differences in quality between medias was picked up by some respondents (1, 2, 5, 8 and 11) who told of how they experienced how music gained different qualities on different media.

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92 Dunka-dunka is a Swedish derogatory term for techno and surrounding genres. A rough translation would be "ooncha ooncha music."

93 RnB is here used to describe modern RnB and not the historical rhythm and blues †.
This was first and foremost – just as in the research on young music fanatics and their relation to vinyl records presented above – true for music on vinyl, which were seen as being of a higher quality (1) in comparison to other media, and was associated with active music listening (5 and 8). Respondent 2 also told of how he experienced vinyl records as being more luxurious and that old music sounds better on vinyl as they play the music as it sounded back then. Respondent 11 did however not consider vinyl records to be better sounding than digital formats, but that vinyl records have “a different push in the frequencies” and that vinyl records are more genuine in comparison with the digital formats as the later “are very shapeable as you can remove a lot of frequencies and alter the very file, but on vinyls you get vinyl and that is made out of plastics so if you'd want to change it you'd have to carve new the changes into new tracks on the plastic yourself.”

The respondents were also asked whether or not they had any history of musical studies, and if so, whether or not this in any way affected the way in which they listen to, and evaluates, music. Out of the total of eleven respondents, seven claimed to have a history of musical studies. Out of the seven, some had a history of elementary instrument studies (4 and 7), music studies at people's high school (i.e. folkhögskola) (8), aesthetically oriented upper secondary schooling and aesthetically oriented studies at university (1), and non-professional music performances (i.e. being in a band, singing, songwriting or alike on a non-professional level) (2, 6, 11). Amongst these respondents, four told of experiencing that their musical history in any way has affected the way in which they listen to music, and one respondent (4) claimed that her musical history had not affected her music listening but had, however, helped her in her role as a music journalist. The degree to which the respondents music history had, in any way, affected their music listening appears to vary somewhat between respondents. Respondent 1 told of how her history of aesthetically oriented upper secondary education and aesthetically oriented classes at the university had affected her:

“[T]o become more, not scrutinising, but I really can see when the music sounds good, when the music is done in a good way and how it's structured and something like [pauses] the theoretical (...) It almost becomes a bit [pauses] not dangerous but nearly a bit irritating from time to time as I can [pauses] I can hear when it's not right or like now I think that this music isn't, it's quite quantitative, it's not like quality music, it's just one among many. I really believe that it has contributed to me becoming a bit more critical.”

Further, respondent 11 told of how his own musicianship has affected the way in which he listens to music:

“You really start to look for chord progressions and what different types of instruments are used. Like, I had not thought about that before. What kinds of instruments are there, are they real or are they, like, computer made instruments that they have used in the production of the songs and so forth. And what effects are used, you know like, that you can put on a lots of different echoes and what not which makes the sound skip between the headphones right and left side channels.
So yeah sure, I've started to look for those things as well.”

This respondent also makes a distinction between to “listen to music” and to “hear music”: “Be-cause earlier I only listened, at that time I did not hear the music, if you know what I mean. Like then I could listen to any song as long as it sounded good.”. The respondent did however claim that this transition from listening to hearing, besides being in part connected to his own musicianship, mainly came as a result of him “going through some stuff that made [him] begin to, like, question everything.”. Respondent 11 was, however, not alone in drawing inspiration from the music he listened to as respondent 8 told of doing the same, letting the music he listens to guide what he is playing. Respondent 8 did also talk about how his music listening is highly technical and that he probably “learned to listen in that way because [he] himself is a performer.” In comparison to the other three, however, respondent 2 said that his musical history as a self taught singer singing in a band had rather made him more open in his relation with music.

5.7 The relationship between listeners, music and artists

“I really think that you want to like identify yourself, you want to enter into the music, you want to be a part of it.” (5)

We have earlier seen how a minority of the respondents attend concerts intending to discover new music. Other respondents (3, 7, 9 and 10, but also 5 who to some extent also told of discovering new music through concerts) also told of attending concerts, but here the purpose rather focused on developing the respondents relationship with the music. Respondent 5, for example, told of the ideal concert as being a concert at which he sees a group he knows of, has listened to earlier and thinks is really good, which he have yet to experience in concert. Further, respondents 3 and 10 shared their stories of how they have experienced concerts with their respective favourite artists or groups, and of how this deepened their relationship with the music:

“I waited for nearly ten years because when I started listening to him in the middle of the late ninety's, like somewhere around ninety-seven, he came to Sweden ninety-nine and played at Cirkus, gave two or three concerts, and I lived in Stockholm. But for some reason I never went to see him play and I regret that bitterly and I have heard the records, the bootlegs and alike from that concert. And since then I have been waiting, like: 'When am I to get the opportunity?' [laughs]. And he haven't played in Sweden at all since then, he has given concerts in Europe and I've tried to get hold of tickets for some year to attend a concert in Europe, but I didn't succeed until two-thousand-and-eight or two-thousand-and-nine when I succeeded in getting tickets to Dublin. So I went there and saw him there. It was really cool.” (3)
Another aspect of the respondents relationship with the music they listen to lies in how the music is related to the respondents inner life and their personalities (what Adorno and Hoyer and Stockburger-Sauer perhaps would call emotive music listening) (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11). One example of this is how respondent 1 told that she mirrors many of the emotive states with music: “[s]o sometimes when I feel that I am in a certain phase in my life I might perhaps listen to nothing but death metal and then maybe a half a year later I would never even imagine listening to it. It is like a part of my identity as I grow, I'd say.” whilst respondent 2 told of how “[y]ou learn things when you listen to the lyrics; that like damn this is how it is, really!”, and respondent 9 told of how she takes in the lyrics and of how these give her new insights and makes her think and “perhaps alter” herself, something that was also present in respondent 5's experiences of, with the help of music, develop and inspire to changes in his personality †; and respondent 4 who said that “[i]t becomes like a life style, hard rock becomes our personalities.”. According to respondent 10 is “music a factor which define a human being” and respondent 11 said that you see how music has shaped some people who have taken in the messages, and respondent 6 said, of how punk was still an important part of him:

“It's not like when I was, well, when I was young. At that time I was a punk rocker and now I am, I love that music and I embrace the history I have with punk and so, but it's nothing that I live out in that way, and I have no need to do so either, like so. But that it is like affecting, it has affected me and it is affecting me now, it do to some extent. That I have to say. But now its not that I am, today, entirely shaped by my music style or music taste. But that it's with me and that it's a part of me never the less, that I must say, yeah.”

Respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 11 also talked of music as a way to manipulate or influence one's feelings. The respondents talked, amongst other things, about how music helps them when they feel down (4), how they use music to “amplify a feeling” or “frame” a feeling (1), how certain music is related to certain feelings (3), how music can be used to “manage” thoughts and feelings (9), reduce stress before a workday (5), or to cheer oneself up, of which respondent 2 gives an example:

“Well, I think music [pauses] brings out like emotions. But the above all best [pauses] the best feeling with music is, well as I said I listen to at lot of rock 'n' roll, like happy rock 'n' roll, and I get so fucking happy when I listen to it.”

Respondent 11 also talked of how music can help in affecting feelings, but with the difference that
respondent 11 used his own musicianship as “a form of therapy” by writing songs about issues that lie close at heart but are too private to share with one's family or friends. In his musicianship the respondent saw that opportunity to use his music as a diary in which he could write down what he was feeling and thinking, disguising it by use of metaphors and parables, or just putting it out there straight up. One interesting observation here is how all respondents but respondent 8 talked of music and its relation to the respondents' inner lives. Respondent 8 however, never brought up this subject, and talked instead about technical qualities in music.

Finally before heading further a number of respondents talked of the relationship between themselves and the artist or group they listen to. Here it is no longer the relation between the respondent and the music, but the relation between the respondent and the musician. This relation could consist of simple things as to “like” an artist or groups Facebook-page as an act of loyalty to the artist or group (6), to sending emails with queries regarding any upcoming concerts and alike (5), or to write a few lines on social networking sites such as Twitter or Instagram (10), to write to an artist or group about a future record release (1), or to interact with the artist or group after concerts, at signings and other events (2, 7 and 8, but also 3 and 4 who also interact or have been interacting with artists and groups through their respective works), to interacting with agents such as artists, groups, producers and alike in order to spread their own music (11).

5.8 Saturation and stagnation

This final theme concerns the ceasing to search for new music to add to one's taste. This theme is based upon the experiences put forward by four of the respondents (2, 3, 4 and 6). The respondents told of how they, amongst other things, ceased to actively search for new music, that the few times they find new music is “when it like falls down on you. If I get like tips or if I hear something on the radio (…) Then I can listen further but no, I do not search actively, no.” (3) or that:

“I listen to the radio at work, it's to make me endure, so I always have the radio on there. So I do not search but through the radio, new song and new bands come to me. But actively searching is nothing I do, but I have heard so much music that if it does not come to me I cannot be bothered to go out and search for it, I've got enough music on my repertoire.” (4)

Respondent 2 told of how the only times he discovers new music is when somebody gives him a tip or if he stumbles upon something new at the record store, and that he thought that he has “heard everything that there is to hear [laughs], like at least once or twice.”
Respondent 6 thought that this phenomena could come with age,\textsuperscript{94} that one's taste in music is shaped in one's teens and that it later halts in its development:

“Well, I've been thinking about that before. I am certainly searching less actively but, I don't know, I think it is age related, that it's so that, that much is formed in one's life when one go from being a child into puberty and so. This is then both in terms of interests but, I note after all, many of my friends and people I've met, the best music you've got, that is the one you bring with you, that music puts one's course under a few years when you're like fourteen, fifteen, sixteen.”

This saturation of taste is however not a phenomena that all respondents had experienced. Respondent 5, for example, told that he “try harder and harder to discover new music, or old music which I did not know. And there's so much to discover, it is exiting and inspiring.”

\textbf{5.9 Summary}

The respondents' experiences accounted for above paint a picture of the ideal typical music consumption as being a process. This process is situated in the social milieu surrounding the music consumer and it is this milieu (i.e. significant others, the media or other sources of information available to the music consumer) that provides the music consumer with a gateway artist or group, which make up the foundation for the thereafter following development of the consumption. The ideal typical music consumption could therefore be described as being conditioned upon the gateway artist, and thereby upon the sources of information that provide the music listener with it. After the initial first steps, the ideal typical music consumption becomes a process of discovering new music to add to the taste, and of searching for information and knowledge regarding the artists, groups and genres that make up the taste in music. Here the ideal typical music listener uses a wide array of sources to find out about new music. From the respondents' experiences we know that one source for new music is persons close to the music consumer such as friends and family. We also know that services such as Youtube, Spotify and LastFM, who all give recommendations to the listener based upon what the listener is listening to, are common sources for new music. Other sources for new music are social networking services, record stores, radio, television, music journalists, and to some extent, music critics, other media such as films and encounters with music in the everyday life, for example, as in the case of respondent 9, at a store. Another source for new music can be found in the reading up on artists, groups and genres. The ideal typical music listener, according to the respond-

\textsuperscript{94} For a discussion on age and the experience of the development music consumption patterns, please see the latter part of the discussion.
ents’ experiences, sees the reading up on his or her favourites as an important part of a music interest. The ideal typical music listener is, in other words, a person who not only wants to listen to music, but he or she also wants to know what it is he or she is listening to, where the music is coming from as respondent 11 put it. Thereby the music consumer develops his or her music consumption patterns in collaboration with other contemporary and past music consumers, aestheticians, music critics, artists and others who contribute information and knowledge to the field of music consumption.

Looking at the distinction between good and bad music, a frequent demand placed upon the music by the respondents is that the music should have, at least one of three emotive components. Many of the respondents either wanted the music to be written and played on “feeling” (i.e. non-theoretical or technical), communicate emotional content through lyrics, music and vocals, or evoke emotions in the listener. Other criteria for what makes music good was, amongst other things, the message communicated through the lyrics, the “sound” of the music or that the music wasn’t created with the wrong (i.e. commercial) intentions. One respondent however emphasised the technical aspects of music (i.e. the technical skill of the performer) as a criteria for what makes good music good. Turning to what makes bad music bad, one could almost say that bad music is the opposite of good music as bad music was described by the respondents as being music that does not evoke any emotions in the listener, that is made from commercial intentions, doesn't speak to the listener and lacks the qualities the respondents look for in good music. Another aspect of the act of discriminating between different musical objects is how some of the respondents ascribed different qualities to different formats, not seldom holding records on vinyl as being of superior quality. One final aspect of the discriminative taste can be found in the distinction made by respondent 11 who told of the differences between listening to music and hearing the music. A number of respondents told that they experienced how their history of musical education affected their listening, making it more theoretical or critical in their interaction with music.

From the respondents’ experiences we also learn that the ideal typical music listener has a number of relationships with the music and artists or groups he or she listens to. The first of these relationships is a listener-music relationship in which the listener has a relationship with the music itself, a relationship built upon the experiences the listener has had with the music, and a relationship that is developed by, for example, attending concerts. The second relationship is a music-listener relationship in which the listener takes in the musical content and uses music to manipulate or affect his or her emotions, or to, as we learned from respondents 5 and 9, develop his or her personality. The final relationship is the listener-artist relationship which consists of the listener interacting with the artist or group by, for example, showing of his or her loyalty by liking an artist or groups
Facebook-page, communicating via email, speaking to the artist or group after a concert or attending different events such as signings.

Finally we have seen examples of how the process that is music consumption might come to a halt and stagnate as the music listener ceases to add new music to his or her consumption. The respondents who had experience of this told of how they didn't need more music in their tastes, or that they thought that they had probably already heard most of what there is to hear. This finalisation does not occur in every taste however, as respondent 5 pointed out.

I have here sought to summarise the respondents' experiences accounted for above. It seems to be that a music consumption, as I have written before, is a process. But at the same time it is much more. We have above seen how the respondents interact with other music consumers, aestheticians, distributers and other contributors as well as the music itself and the artists who produce it, making music consumption both a process and a complex set of relationships. I would also argue for a third element to be added to this description of music consumption. This third element is a description of the consumption as being a practice. In arguing for this interpretation I would refer to, amongst other things, the practice of reading up on artists, groups and genres that make up the core of one's taste. One important example here is respondent 2's telling of how one, according to him, should know one's favourites, which, from my perspective, hints at the presence of normative practices describing how one should be a fan. Thus music consumption is, according to the empirical material used here, a phenomena which can be described of as being a process in which the music listener, using a wide array of sources, discovers and adds new music to the taste, reads up on his or her favourites, practices the role of being a fan and has relationships with the music he or she listens to.

Turning now to the questions posed in the beginning of this thesis, we see that the respondents came into contact with the music they like as they were introduced to a gateway artist, group or genre. This introduction was carried out by friends and family, television and radio, and the Internet, which answers the first research question of how the respondents came into contact with the music they like. Turning to the second question of how the respondents music consumption developed over time, we see that the further development is a process of discovering new music, reading up on artist, groups and genres, and of establishing relationships between the listener and the music, the music and the listener, and between the listener and the artist. We also see that this process might come to an end in stagnation as the music listener stops searching for new music and knowledge. The third research question concerned what makes music good and how music makes sense to the respondents. Here we see that music can be viewed as being “good music” based on a variety of criteria spanning from the technical qualities of the musicianship to three different emotive criteria.
(see above). Good music is, according to the respondents, in short, music they can relate to, and that music can be related to in different ways depending on from what perspective the music quality is assessed. Lastly, we also see that good music is made sense of as being produced for non-commercial interests. Good music should, again according to the respondents, come straight from the heart or from a love for music. The last and final research question concerned the strategies employed by the respondents in searching for new music, and here we see that new music can come from a wide spectra of sources. New music is given to the respondents via, amongst other sources, friends, family; the media and Internet; different services providing the listener with information about related artists, such as Youtube and Spotify; from reading up on artists, groups and genres; or by encounters with new music in the respondents everyday life.

Discussion

In this study I have sought to answer the question of the social origins of music consumption patterns, or if you will, taste in music. Where does the consumption patterns come from, how do individuals seek out music to add to their consumption? I have conducted in depth interviews with eleven respondents, ten of them from the Stockholm area, and from their experiences arose the results presented above. But how do these results relate to already established knowledge about the formation of music consumption?

First of all, looking at the results of this inquiry in relation to the results of the research reported on above I would argue that the most important findings here are: 1. The breadth of the experiences used by the respondents in assessing the quality of music; 2. The identification of a wide array of sources of information through which the respondents found out about new music, and; 3. The identification of the prevalence and importance of a gateway artist, group or genre, upon which the future music consumption is formulated. I would further argue that the results are in line with some of the results of previous research. Two examples are the results from the research of Mary Elizabeth Ray and David Hayes. Ray's results told us that social ties together with the mass media, besides less important sources of information such as the artists themselves, terrestrial radio, Internet radio stations and websites, played important roles in music consumers learning about new artists and releases. Hayes on the other hand found that some young music consumers held vinyl
and music produced during the pre-CD era as being more authentic and less denigrated by market-pressure. Both these phenomena are represented in the experiences of the respondents in this study.

What then, can the results of this study say about the theories employed in this research? First of all I would like to make distinctions between (i) theories treating music consumption as a phenomena guided by the amount of cognition and affect that goes into assessing the quality of music; (ii) theories concerned with music consumption and class and; (iii) theories concerned with music consumption as being a phenomena guided by the access to knowledge or experience. In the first category we find the theories of Adorno and Hoyer and Stockburger-Sauer, in the second category I would position the theories of Bourdieu, and in the third and last category I place the theories of Becker and Schütz. Regarding the first category I would argue that the theories are, at least to some extent, correct in relating music consumption patterns to how the music listening subject interacts with the musical object. I would further argue that Adorno makes an important contribution when he writes that music can be many things depending on who it is that interacts with it. I would however say that the theories of Adorno and Hoyer and Stockburger-Sauer, in light of the results of this study, use too limited concepts to fully grasp the breadth of the phenomena of music consumption patterns. This is because they, when deriving differences in music consumption from the amounts of affection and cognitions that are employed by the music listening subject in assessing the quality of music, fail to grasp the wide array of experiences that we have seen employed by the respondents in their interaction with music.

Turning to the second category and the theories of Bourdieu, I would like to express my concern that the concepts of habitus and cultural capital, just like the affect versus cognition conceptualisation of the first category, are too narrow to fully cover the wide base of experiences utilised by the respondents in assessing the quality of music. The concepts of Bourdieu are to blunt to fully account for the frequent use of a discourse of emotive experience (see above) which seem to guide the music listener into preferring music that conveys a message or emotional content favourable to the listener. Listeners seem to prefer music which evokes emotional responses, something experienced by many of the respondents. Can cultural capital and habitus really cover this vast base of experiences that seem to be important in the development of a music consumption, and more importantly, to what forms of experiences do these two concepts refer? From my reading of Bourdieu I would argue that the habitus corresponds to most of the extra-musical experiences used by the respondents in assessing the quality of music, whilst the cultural capital is the experiences gained from labour (i.e. studies in music). But then, would not intra-group variations in music consumption patterns have to be described by reference to habitus, leaving cultural capital to account for vari-
ation between groups? And what happens then to the intricate relation between class and taste?

Turning to the third category I would argue that the critique hitherto delivered at the previous two categories is dealt with as both Becker and Schütz acknowledge and develop the importance of experience or knowledge in music listening and music consumption. However, I fear that, the theoretical concepts developed by Becker and Schütz are somewhat to wide. This is first and foremost true of Schütz concept of experience as experience is all lived experiences and taught experiences. Thereby, when the concepts of categories one and two are to blunt to fully grasp the width of the experiences used in the development of a music consumption, the concepts used by this third category could be criticised for being to wide and unpractical. This is however, I feel, a drawback which anybody studying music consumption might have to get used to if one is to fully understand the development of a music consumption. It does after all seem like extra-musical experiences play a vital role in forming a music listening subjects consumption pattern, or if you like, taste. Take respondent 11 as an example, the respondent told of how he had begun to hear the music rather than to merely listen to it. This transition the respondent traced, not to any musical education that enabled him to interact with the music in a cognitive fashion, but to extra-musical experiences. However, I do feel a need to emphasise the drawbacks of such a perspective on music consumption as any inquiries into music consumption using a wide concept such as experience would cover everything from what any well-socialised member of society learn in school, to individual experiences, via the experiences of individuals close to the subject, to highly specialised experiences such as a university education, many years of music education or the experiences of the individual subject's own musicianship. These experiences are hard to grasp in just a few variables and thereby call for a micro-level, or verstehen, oriented sociological approach. I do however feel that these drawbacks do not hamper the possibilities of such an approach in describing, understanding and informing any inquiries into the phenomena on the structural level.

Now, if we allow ourself to step outside these three categories for a brief moment, I would like to highlight two facts, the first that only a few of the theoretical perspectives used in this project actually considers the music listener him- or herself. Amongst these theoretical perspectives I would consider naming the perspectives of Hoyer and Stockburger-Sauer, Adorno and Schütz to be listener-oriented, whilst the perspectives of Bourdieu and Becker are surprisingly ignorant when it comes to discussing the music consumer. This critique might be dated but I find it hard to understand how a scholar who sets out to describe the social life within art worlds can spend so little ink on the art consumer and his or her position and role as Becker does. The second fact I would like to highlight here is that it seems to be that the theoretical perspectives used in this thesis seem to have a quite one-dimensional understanding of emotions which makes them come up quite blunt when faced
with the respondents' experiences of music and its relation to emotions and the relation between good music and emotive content. Take, as an example Adorno's elitist conceptualisation of the emotive listener presented earlier. The same critique an be aimed at Bourdieu and other scholars presented above. If I would be allowed to speculate freely my guess would be that music, from the perspective of the majority of the respondents in this research, is much more intertwined with the music consumer's personality than it is in the theoretical models. Respondent 10, for example, told of how music defines a person, and respondent 5 said that you want to be a part of the music you like. To these respondents music is much more than a mere object which is to be bought and experienced. Music, to these respondents, seem to be affecting them on a much more fundamental level than the a mere aesthetic or emotional stimuli.

Finally I would like to spend some time on the fact that non of the theories employed in this study mention the importance of a gateway artist, group or genre. The importance of such a gateway is highlighted in this research as all respondents shared the experience of having been introduced to the music that later became the core of their respective music consumptions. The fact that this phenomena, at least from what I can see, is highly overlooked makes it a highly interesting result, a result I would urge other inquiries to shed further light upon. However, as the phenomena of the gateway artist, group or genre is overlooked by, what I would describe as being the mainstream of the sociology of music, further inquiries needs to look at other theoretical perspectives which deal with similar phenomena. One such perspective could be that of Howard Becker in his study of how one becomes a marijuana smoker as this perspective deals with the process of learning to like something. Could it be that the introduction to a gateway artist, and the thereafter following development of a music consumption, is a similar process? Another perspective I would encourage is to look at from where the introduction to the gateway artist is coming. Are there any possibility that the gateway is provided by an actor holding an significant position within the subjects life world? Could it even be that the gateway is a result of information flowing through a network, passing certain positions such as gatekeepers or brokers? These are all highly interesting questions to which I, unfortunately, do not yet have any answers. The phenomena of the gateway artist, group or genre is in other words a very interesting finding of this inquiry, a finding which I have merely been able to highlight and point towards as being an interesting field for future research.

Epilogue

7.1 Concluding thoughts

Looking back at this research project, I find that one needs to acknowledge that music consumption, just as any other social practice, is never practiced in a social vacuum. Instead music consumption patterns are forged in collaboration with a large number of alter-egos who provide the music listening subject with new music and information. This is why I, in the section above, have argued for a broad approach to music consumption, and in the long run a shift from the class oriented perspective of Bourdieu and the affection contra cognition in interacting with aesthetical products perspective of Hoyer and Stockburger-Sauer, to a perspective oriented towards understanding music consumption as being driven by the, to the music listening subject, available experience and knowledge. Taking such a perspective, the stratification of music consumption patterns becomes a result of the stratified and stratifying distribution of experiences or knowledge. Music consumption patterns should, in other words, be understood as being a complex phenomena which is developed through the music listening subject's everyday interaction with the social world. Music consumption patterns are, according to the results presented above, the result of process spanning a great number of years. The music listening subject is introduced to the music that will later become the core of his or her music consumption, or taste, by other actors, and it is other social actors who contribute to the further development of the music consumption as they provide music, information and experiences. By this any theoretical perspectives on music consumption which fail to consider the breadth of the experiences that influence the development of a music consumption pattern, will only gain a limited insight into the phenomena.

In this project I have sought to answer a number of questions regarding the development and practice of music consumption. This I have done using a phenomenological approach, gathering the experiences of eleven music consumers, and by this I have, I would argue, been able to shed some light on the development of music consumption at the same time as I have been able to critically examine some, from my point of view, quite canonical theoretical perspectives on music consumption. In retrospective I must admit that this project is not one that is free of flaws, nor does it lack in positive qualities. First and foremost I was truly surprised when I, in the empirical material, discovered the importance of the gateway artist, group or genre. All respondents told of having experienced be-
ing introduced to music via a gateway, and I would therefore stress the importance of further inquiries into this matter, perhaps utilising the theoretical perspectives highlighted earlier. One possible drawback of this thesis is that of the possibility for the empirical material to be suffering from selection-bias, as one could argue that everybody would not feel inclined to respond to a placard asking for respondents to a student research project, and that the locations at which the placards were posted could have disqualified participants as they do not have access to said locations. I have however tried to minimise the risk of generating a too homogenous empirical material by posting my placards on a number of music related locations. Another drawback of this study is that parts of the empirical material is retrospective. As I wrote earlier in this thesis I chose not to include any respondents younger than eighteen years of age. This meant that any accounts of how the respondents came into contact with the gateway artist, group or genre are accounts of experiences that took place years ago, forcing me to depend upon the respondents' memories. For some respondents even the further developments of music consumption patterns was told in retrospect as some of the respondents, but far from all of them, had gone through the stagnation phase, ceasing to develop their music consumption. I do however feel that any drawbacks from this should be considered negligible as the empirical material generated in the interviews was relatively thick. Turning once again to the positive aspects of this project I would like to conclude by saying that I am glad that this project enabled me to immerse myself in the phenomenological method, a subject that has interested me for quite some time. I would also say that I am very satisfied with how the walkabout inspired approach to the interviews turned out. This approach, I would argue, enabled me and the respondents to construct open minded and trusting interview situations.

I would now like to conclude this thesis by thanking you dear reader for accompanying me on this journey. I hope that you, like I, have found some insights and perhaps gained a new perspective on the phenomena that is music consumption and music consumption patterns.
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