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My generation: examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

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**MY GENERATION:
EXAMINING THE MUSIC TASTES
AND COMMERCIAL
OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE
NEW AUDIENCE OF 40-59 YEAR
OLDS IN THE UK**

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PhD

2015

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EXAMINING THE MUSIC TASTES AND
COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE
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JULIA JONES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis provides an original contribution to the academic discourse regarding music taste. It also offers commercial recommendations relating to the use of rock/pop music in engaging the current cohort of middle class consumers aged 40-59 in the UK.

The continuing academic debate regarding music taste has largely revolved around the concepts of habitus, cultural capital, social class and legitimate culture (Bourdieu, 1984) and later contrasting theories regarding the cultural omnivore (Peterson et al 1992). Recent UK research (Bennett et al 2009, Savage & Gayo 2011, Savage 2013) identified ‘music generations’ and provided evidence of a continuing divide between two distinct genres: classical and contemporary (rock/pop). They identified ‘experts’ within the current 40-59 aged middle class cohort as those most likely to be possible omnivores and therefore worthy of further research. This thesis focused on that socio-demographic group.

Previous studies employed attitudinal surveys to investigate preferences. This thesis provides an original contribution to the discourse through a new investigation of music taste using a previously unstudied data set – a quantitative analysis of 20 years of official UK music sales data (1993-2012). This analysis was supplemented with additional qualitative data collected during participant observations over a three year period.

The analysis of this data supports a generational shift in music taste towards rock pop, particularly visible in the current cohort of 40-59 year olds who grew up post 1960s, where lifelong music taste across all classes appears to have been formed during an era dominated by popular music culture. This thesis did not find support of the omnivore theories. Instead a new ‘legitimate’ rock pop music canon may be developing within this genre, suggesting that the middle classes in particular are expanding the social definition of cultural capital and legitimate taste as their preferred genre receives increasing social acceptance as a legitimate cultural art form.

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Finally this thesis discusses the immediate commercial opportunities that this lifelong rock/pop taste of the current 40-59 middle class demographic in the UK offers businesses, and how innovation could increase the engagement of that affluent and sizeable audience. The research suggested that this taste for rock pop related to new artists in that genre as well as the original artists of the 1970s and 80s that the generation had grown up with.

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This PhD has been a personal journey for me and has resulted in a change of business direction as well as an increased depth of academic knowledge and expertise. A memorable experience in many ways.

I hope that this thesis provides useful insights for future academics and entrepreneurs.

Declaration

I declare that all the material contained in this thesis is my own work.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction - The Music Industry, Marketing and Taste

The original intention of this research thesis had been to identify ways in which the classical music industry could sell more music to reverse the decline that had been noticeable since the 1990s. According to official music industry sales reports the classical genre had decreased from almost 11% market share in 1990 to 3.2% by 2009 (BPI Handbook, 2010). During 2009 alone classical sales dropped by 17.6% equating to 825,000 fewer unit sales, resulting in a drop in total sales to 3.4 million units. This sales decline had triggered significant media interest as expert critics and fans debated the potential death of the classical sector, and this debate continues to thrive today (Dreyer, 2012; Kettle, 2007; Johnson, 2013; Sandow, 2011, Robin; 2014).

As an industry practitioner I had been involved, during 2008/9, in the management of an album project which was intended to cross genres between classical and rock/pop (a ‘crossover’ project in the music industry marketing parlance). The project entitled *The Genesis Suite* (discussed in detail in Chapter 2), performed by the London Symphony Orchestra and recorded at Abbey Road Studios, had been built on a number of assumptions – particularly the idea that the classical audience (traditionally aged 50+ according to official data published annually by the BPI) and the original fans of British rock band Genesis (now also aged 50+) would both identify with and purchase a high quality and sophisticated classical ‘crossover’ album. However, rather than finding a 50 year old audience whose rock and classical tastes had converged as they reached this age group, this release seemingly fell between two genre-specific taste audiences and, despite a strong marketing campaign, did not succeed in engaging both market segments as envisaged.

This experience provided an interesting and unexpected insight into the possible understanding of views and definitions regarding ‘elite’ or ‘legitimate’ culture and the role of ‘age’ (as opposed to ‘class’) as an influence in music tastes and consumption habits. The insights from this experience started an intellectual journey which has been the process of researching and writing this thesis. Broadly, the original guiding research question was: what could practitioners learn from the experiences of *The Genesis Suite* – what had happened to the traditional assumptions about the music tastes of the over 50s?

1.2 Introducing the main academic focus and findings

The first step in researching this thesis therefore involved examining the basis of the assumptions about music taste which had influenced the marketing strategy of *The Genesis Suite*. To try to explain the music tastes of the new generation of 50 year old middle class UK consumers (examined using the 40-59 year old cohort), the literature review drew especially on Bourdieu’s (1984), Peterson et al.’s (1992, 1996), Bennett et al.’s (2006) and Savage and Gayo’s (2011, 2013) research on taste formation (see Chapter 2).

The next step involved identifying appropriate sources of data to test the theories employed in these academic studies. Since Bourdieu, research studies of taste have employed attitudinal surveys to produce a quantitative investigation of music preferences and have been primarily focused on the social stratification of cultural taste and consumption, often across multiple cultural activities. This thesis takes an alternative approach, by looking at music *sales* data rather than responses to attitudinal survey questions about tastes and preferences. This thesis aims to provide an in depth examination of music taste and consumption using a previously unstudied data set – twenty years of the official British Phonographic Industry (BPI) UK music sales data (1993-2012). The detailed reasons for employing this data set are explained in Chapter 3. In this way the research provides additional data to test the various hypotheses implied by the existing academic literature on taste. This quantitative data is presented in Chapter 4.

However, whilst sales data enable a clear quantitative analysis of patterns of music consumption by age and social class, the categories (genres) used in the quantitative data are too broad to test some important subsidiary hypotheses concerning the role of rock and pop and classical music in the music taste of the target group. For this reason, it was proposed that additional qualitative data concerning music tastes should be collected to address these questions. Rather than a survey, this qualitative data was collected via in-depth interviews with consumers from the target audience consisting of middle class consumers aged 40-59. The findings from this qualitative research are presented in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

The original motivation for the study was to understand not simply the *formation* of music taste, but also the *implications* of patterns of music taste for practice. Given that the overall research question involved discovering how practitioners could most successfully monetize the new 50 year old audience using music that matched their tastes rather than repeating the experience of *The Genesis Suite*, it was necessary to try to understand the relationship between ideas about music taste and music marketing practices. Chapter 2 attempts to make these relationships explicit in a review of literature that considers music marketing, music taste, and marketing to the target demographic.

My professional practice, during the research process, has involved an attempt to test whether alternative marketing strategies, based on a better understanding of music taste, could yield better results than *The Genesis Suite* in terms of monetizing this new generation of 50 year olds. As a result, I have been a ‘participant observer’ in a number of initiatives attempting to market music based products to the 40-59 year old middle class audience. This has enabled me to gather qualitative data both about music taste and about music marketing.

The participant observation, interview and case study methods employed for gathering this qualitative taste and marketing data, and the reasons for using them, are described in Chapter 3. The resulting qualitative data regarding music taste and case study data regarding music marketing to the 40-59 year old audience is presented in chapters 5 to 7.

The Findings

This section presents the main findings of this thesis. They can be summarized as follows:

- The analysis of the *quantitative* data suggests a generational shift in music taste, particularly visible in the current cohort of 40-59 year olds, away from classical music and towards rock and pop. This generation does not cross the classical – rock pop divide identified by Savage and Gayo and Bennett et al.
- The quantitative data suggests a continuing role for class in that it is among ABC1 consumers (the three higher social and economic groups) that the biggest change has occurred from classical to rock and pop, where other social classes' consumption of classical in comparison has declined from a lower base.
- These two patterns of data thus provide no support for Peterson's hypothesis of general patterns of cultural omnivorousness or for Savage and Gayo's hypothesis that the 40+ year old middle class 'experts' would be the most likely to be cultural omnivores consuming both classical and rock pop genres.
- Rather than omnivorous tastes and consumption, this study suggests that there is evidence of a clear change in taste patterns from classical music to pop and rock. One might interpret this as a general move away from elite and towards popular culture – a 'dumbing down' thesis.
- However, the *qualitative* interview data suggests that rather than a general preference for rock and pop, the specific rock and pop music consumed by this demographic is part of an emerging classic 'canon' of rock and pop music.
- If the data suggests that today's 50-year old consumers are neither cultural omnivores nor consumers of elite culture, then how are we to explain how their tastes have changed? This study suggests that the data could be explained by a revision to Bourdieu's original theory of taste. The evidence that music tastes of the 40-59 year old cohort appear to be driven by a new 'canon' of classic rock and pop music from their youth, suggests that the tastes of this demographic can be explained via the emergence of a new 'core

of 'legitimate' culture. For 40-59 year old consumers in the ABC1 social bracket, the qualitative data suggest that this new core of 'legitimate' culture functions in the same way Bourdieu hypothesized for classical music.

However, rather than being confined to elite classes, the current 40-59 year old middle class generation *and* the elite group both appear to have acquired the habitus, the tastes and discriminations required to access this contemporary canon, through their engagement with popular culture during their youth. This particularly privileges a *generation* who grew up post 1960s, where lifelong music taste across all classes appears to have been formed during an era that became increasingly dominated by exposure to popular music culture.

- The qualitative data suggests that while the middle classes in particular continue to acknowledge the classical genre as highbrow, they are expanding the social definition of cultural capital and legitimate taste as the rock/pop genre receives increasing social acceptance as a legitimate cultural art form. In particular, acquisition of cultural capital may be dependent on possession of the economic capital necessary to access the increasingly expensive live events featuring classic rock and pop acts from this era, as well as to purchase the many new 'archive-based' premium priced products created by the industry for this demographic – anniversary materials, limited edition boxed sets of unreleased recordings, archive films etc.
- Rather than finding a generation that will age into the classical genre, this research has identified a new generation of middle class 40-59 year olds who offer a range of new potential marketing and sales opportunities to the contemporary music industry and wider commercial sectors who could use rock/pop music to engage these consumers.
- The **case studies** tested the 'new canon' hypothesis in the context of a range of marketing strategies addressed to the 40-59 demographic. The case studies provided strong support for the applicability of the thesis of the new canon in the marketing strategies of the music industry.
- The **case studies** also provided evidence of an interesting aspect of the new canon. They tested the extent to which the 'new canon' could admit 'new generation' contemporary artists and could confer the associated cultural

capital. The case studies provided evidence which suggested that the canon of legitimate pop and rock music can incorporate new artists as well as the core sixties, seventies and eighties back catalogue.

- This could suggest a number of interpretations. The first might be that admission of new artists is a ‘normal’ aspect of the functioning of a musical canon. In that sense, the classical canon has traditionally incorporated selected contemporary composers and performers.
- An alternative interpretation would be that the canon is defined by genres and styles of music as much as it is by those classic artists who formed the canon. This would suggest that the new canon would be open to musical styles of rock and pop compositions which are similar to the genre’s classic era of the 1960s, 70s and 80s. The case studies do suggest that many of the new releases that appeal to the 40-59 cohort are in the original rock and pop style of the new canon.

The following chapters will detail the past five years of research and discuss the findings in relation to the existing body of academic research.

1.3 Overview of the thesis chapters

Chapter 2 reviews the related academic and industry discourse regarding music marketing, marketing to the 40-59 year old demographic, and music taste. This includes a detailed account of *The Genesis Suite* marketing campaign. It also details the long running debate regarding taste and legitimate culture and the resulting discourse that has revolved around the topic of music preferences over the past four decades. This will enable the reader to obtain an appreciation of the origination of the key concepts that have been selected as a prime focus in this thesis.

Chapter 2 briefly outlines the business strategy, innovation and marketing strategies of the music industry, in particular in relation to 40-59 year old consumers. The chapter contrasts this approach with the way in which certain commercial brands established themselves as established leaders in the market for the ‘50 year old

consumer'. It provides an overview of the business development of those brands, and how they recognized and used music as part of their marketing activity. The chapter reviews the current problems these brands are facing and suggests that this raises questions about a 'generational shift' in the tastes of 50 year olds which is explored in the rest of this thesis. This chapter includes a summary of the consumer marketing research and strategies, suggested by the review of 50+ and music marketing literature, which will be tested in the case studies. These business case studies were purposely structured in order to attract the target market (the 40-59 year old cohort) using rock/pop music.

Chapter 3 outlines the research questions that will be addressed in this thesis and gives an overview of the methodological approaches that were employed to investigate them. It provides a detailed account of the development of the case studies as means of testing music marketing strategies and exploring new commercial opportunities.

The quantitative analysis of UK music sales is presented in Chapter 4. Twenty years of official music industry sales figures are analysed to test the claims made in previous research regarding the music preferences of the 50 year old consumer in the UK. This chapter identifies the 'generational shift' in music tastes away from classical towards rock and pop music, particularly among ABC1 consumers in this demographic group.

Chapters 5 & 6 discuss the qualitative data that was obtained during the participant observation sessions. This attempts to draw a deeper understanding of the music taste and consumption habits of the 40-59 year old ABC1 cohort and relate those to both the research questions and the previous body of academic literature.

Chapter 7 reviews the participant observations in relation to music taste formation, examining the early music experiences of members of this cohort in an attempt to understand how their tastes were influenced and how likely these tastes are to continue through the life course.

Chapter 8 examines the business case studies in terms of their effectiveness in targeting and segmenting the 40-59 year old cohort. This is intended to provide practitioners with information that can help inform their own business activities in targeting this demographic.

Chapter 9 discusses the conclusions that have been drawn from the findings of this research and how they relate to both the existing academic debate regarding music taste and the implications for commercial practice. Several recommendations are highlighted which relate to innovation and the use of rock/pop by the music industry and commercial businesses wishing to engage this consumer group. This chapter also acknowledges the limitations that this study may have been subject to and identifies a number of recommendations for any new research that may be carried out in future.

1.4 Contributing to the academic discourse regarding music taste.

The social stratification of musical tastes has attracted significant attention by sociologists over several decades and there is an extensive existing body of literature surrounding the concept of cultural preferences. This thesis does not intend to provide a detailed history of this discourse. Rather it is intently focused on the key concepts that have achieved longevity throughout the debate, and the findings of recent research which is considered most relevant to the topic of music taste in the UK today. In brief, the main academic discourse to date has revolved around two major theories regarding ‘elite’ distinction led by Pierre Bourdieu (1984) vs non-elitist omnivore proposals as led by Peterson and Simkus (1992) and Peterson and Kern (1996). This debate around the relationship between social class and music choices has continued to play a significant role in fuelling ongoing research interest (DeNora, 2000; Warde et al., 2007; Bennett et al., 2009; Gayo-Cal, 2006; Savage et al., 2005; Bryson, 1996; Lahire, 2008; Peterson and Kern, 1996; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005; Atkinson, 2011; Rimmer, 2011; Yaish and Katz-Gerro, 2012).

Bourdieu (1984) presented a sociological theory of taste based on his key concepts of habitus, cultural capital and legitimate culture (see Chapter 2). Peterson et al. (1992)

developed a critique of Bourdieu's theory centred on data which supported the emergence of a new concept, the cultural 'omnivore' who displayed much more liberal preferences and was capable of consuming both classical and contemporary genres (see Chapter 2). These theories have formed the centre of the debate regarding music taste throughout the past three decades. Savage and Gayo, (2011) endeavoured to test the concepts put forward by Bourdieu and Peterson via a UK based analysis, focused specifically on music taste. Their work tended to support Bourdieu's original theory, against the idea of omnivores, but suggested an emerging modification of the definition of 'legitimate culture' and a further taste category of 'experts' who were most likely to be capable of crossing the classical – contemporary boundary. At the time of 'Savage and Gayo's study, this 'expert' group they identified were originally aged 35-54. Their report was able to test the key concepts which have been debated over several decades using specific UK based quantitative survey data supported by additional qualitative interview responses.

The data supporting both of those main theories was limited to specific geographic regions and historical periods. Bourdieu's analysis in France in the 1960s, contrasted with Peterson et al. who used data collected in the USA first in 1982 and in a second, comparative study in 1992. Several studies have continued to test these theories in many different territories with the aim of refining the hypotheses relating to the correlation between socio-economic status and taste for legitimate culture. In the UK the academic research in this field benefited from the largest and most detailed study of its kind led by Bennett et al. (2006). This study titled 'Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion' (CCSE), examined social stratification and cultural preferences and specifically addressed the key concepts of Bourdieu and Peterson. In 2011 Savage and Gayo produced a detailed study of music taste and social class using the UK data collected during the CCSE study (the relevant academic discourse regarding music taste is reviewed further in Chapter 2). These studies have mostly delivered contrasting results with no clear support for Peterson's thesis of the growing appearance of the 'omnivore'.

1.5 Using the key concepts to formulate the research questions.

The review of the literature thus added a second key research question to the initial question emerging from the practical experience of *The Genesis Suite*. A study of ABC1 50 year old UK consumers (using the 40-59 year cohort) would have a practical significance in attempting to understand the tastes of a key demographic for the music industry. However it would also constitute a good test of two of the key hypotheses of the academic ‘taste’ literature:

- Bourdieusian theory would suggest that the 50-year old ABC1 demographic would be likely to be consumers of classical music for reasons connected with habitus and cultural capital.
- Savage and Gayo’s refinement of Peterson’s findings would suggest that the 50 year old ABC1 demographic would be members of the ‘expert’ group and would be the most likely to demonstrate Peterson’s pattern of omnivorous consumption.

However, in contrast to the previous academic discourse which used attitudinal responses in surveys to determine the music that people indicated they ‘liked’, this research aimed to provide quantitative analysis of the music that people actually *purchased*. This thesis therefore uses a previously unstudied data - the official annual music sales data, compiled by the official music industry trade body (the BPI), from 1993 to 2012. The data enables this thesis to produce an original and detailed longitudinal study of the music purchasing habits of distinct socio-economic groups within UK society. This is a valuable data source as it indicates the music genres that individuals ‘like’ enough to spend money on. Arguably this provides a new depth to the analysis of taste since it analyses, not what people say they like, but with the deeper decision making process that results in the consumer making an actual economic purchase of that item.

As noted, Savage and Gayo’s ‘expert’ group were aged 35-54 at the time of their participation in the original study. The UK music sales data would enable a twenty year longitudinal analysis which would demonstrate the consumption patterns of the original ‘expert’ group as they age into the 50 year old bracket and also give an indication of how the new generation entering that age group are consuming.

This longitudinal approach using purchasing data offers an interesting and alternative set of findings which can subsequently be used in addition to Savage and Gayo's propositions in order to provide a more detailed understanding of the 'expert' group they identified. It enables a broader analysis of the music taste debate and assists in the testing of whether this group, which they marked as those most likely to behave as an omnivore, continued to engage with both the classical and popular genres in the same or increasing or lesser extents.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The 50-year old consumer has been considered a lucrative target since the 1960s, as pension schemes and increased life expectancy resulted in a growing population of retirees possessing more disposable income and leisure time. It continues to grab headlines in the marketing world as brands seek to attract their spending power (Manning-Craig, 2013; Feller, 2014). They have been actively marketed to by both the music industry and other sectors. Historically in music terms the classical music sector focused on this group because they were known as a core audience for that style (BPI, 2009), whereas the contemporary sector have typically ignored them as they were not considered a core audience for that genre. The annual recorded music sales figures published by the BPI confirmed this fact (a detailed analysis of this data is presented in chapter 4). In addition the Arts Council Attendance Survey (2008/9) shown in Figure 2.1 verified that this is also evident in the live sector, where the audience attending classical music events is dominated by individuals aged over 50. Radio listening figures as published quarterly by RAJAR (Radio Joint Audience Research), (see Chapter 4) also provides evidence of the classical sector's continued reliance upon the 50 plus audience. Therefore, according to this conventional wisdom, The *Genesis Suite* project should have succeeded in winning the 50-year old audience because it used the music they grew up with but in a high quality classical style. The actual commercial performance of *The Genesis Suite* project, as detailed later in this chapter, suggested that something had changed.

Age band of respondent	Have you been to a classical music concert in the last 12 months (in own time or for voluntary work)	
	No (%)	Yes (%)
No age information	100.0	0.0
16 to 19	96.4	3.6
20 to 24	96.0	4.0
25 to 29	96.5	3.5
30 to 34	94.9	5.1
35 to 39	94.8	5.2
40 to 44	92.3	7.7
45 to 49	90.2	9.8
50 to 54	90.3	9.7
55 to 59	88.4	11.6
60 to 64	87.2	12.8
65 to 69	86.6	13.4
70 to 74	87.6	12.4
75 to 79	85.9	14.1
80 or over	91.9	8.1
Total	91.8	8.2

Figure 2.1. Taking Part Survey 2008/9 (Arts Council / DCMS)

(Sample size 14,452. All data have been weighted to be representative of the population of England)

To try to explain this change, this research project involved a review of **three key areas** of academic and industry literature. This chapter presents this review. Firstly there is a review of the **music industry and music marketing strategies** that have been used in targeting the 50-year old demographic, including a detailed account of *The Genesis Suite* release campaign. Secondly the chapter reviews the core academic theories that have led the **music taste** discourse of the past four decades. *The Genesis Suite* experience suggested that the explanations of the music tastes of the 50 year old demographic may need to be revised. These reviews suggested that the music tastes typically associated with this age group may have changed with the arrival of a new generation of 50 year olds, creating a new 50-year old audience who demonstrate different preferences than previous cohorts of 50 year old consumers. Therefore, this provided a foundation for the development of the research questions discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

As a practical, as well as theoretical, research project the thesis tries to address not just the changes that may have occurred in the tastes of 50+ consumers, nor only the revisions to theoretical explanations that these changes may entail, but also how the

music industry and wider commercial businesses might respond. Therefore, the third section of this chapter reviews in detail the literature regarding **the consumer marketing and branding activities** that have previously been successful in **marketing to the over 50s** demographic.

PART ONE

2.2 Music industry, marketing & the 50 year old consumer

A core assumption behind *The Genesis Suite* was that there would be a growing audience for classical music. As the UK is facing an ageing population this could suggest that there could be a resultant growth in the classical market, due to the fact that historically that age group has demonstrated the greatest appetite towards that genre. However, a number of questions arise when considering the marketing strategies available to the music industry. First, the industry could either focus on extracting more revenues from this growing older audience or attempt to reduce its reliance on this core demographic by marketing to younger generations.

Given the fact that *The Genesis Suite* did not attract this demographic as envisaged it was important to examine the roots of this core assumption in the literature. This section will firstly do this by reviewing the industry literature outlining the typical marketing strategies employed by music businesses when targeting the 50+ age group.

2.2.1 Music and Demographics

Music consumption in the UK has been displaying distinct trends in terms of demographics. Surveys published by official trade bodies and arts organisations have provided consistent evidence that historically the over 50s are the demographic most likely to buy classical music (see Chapter 4 for a detailed data analysis). The UK has an ageing population, and life expectancy continues to extend. In 2013 the Office for National Statistics published figures stating that life expectancy had

reached its highest level on record and that centenarians had increased by 73% between 2002-2012. So, as new generations enter the over 50 demographic, if audiences develop a growing taste for classical music as they age one would expect the classical sector's core demographic to expand also.

Figure 2.2 presents data published by the BPI and Office for National Statistics (2012). This indicates a large and affluent audience which is likely to enjoy a considerable life expectancy. Therefore, if the findings of this research suggest that this cohort displays a strong preference for rock/pop rather than classical (and that they are likely to carry that taste with them during their lifetime) it could present significant opportunities for both the contemporary music industry and businesses that can satisfy that appetite for rock/pop related products and experiences.

UK Population aged 40-59	16.7 million
% of 40-59 year olds who actively buy rock/pop	65.9%
Average annual music spend of the 40-59 year old audience	£40.18
Average life expectancy of the 40-59 year old audience	Expected to live on average for another 38.4 years

Figure 2.2. Taken from the BPI Handbooks and Office for National Statistics (2012/3)

The 40-59 year old audience clearly remains a very attractive target market for commercial exploitation with appropriate music products. With the average life expectancy for this cohort of 40-59 year olds estimated at another 38.4 years, this clearly offers a large and continuing commercial opportunity to create music based products and services aimed directly at this audience. The average spend for the target market aged 40-59 is £40.18 and this is consistent across socio-economic groups so price does not appear to be a limiting factor in consumption (BPI, 2013).

In addition, Figure 2.3 shows the 35-64 age groups made a total of 59.8% of the music CD gifting expenditure in 2011, with the 45-54 age group being the most active in music gifting (24.5% of total music gifting expenditure). Gifts account for 33% of physical album expenditure (37.2% for compilation albums). Couples aged 45+ continue to be one of the most important consumer group to the music industry (21% of total music sales), second only to ‘families’ (22% of total music sales).

35-64 age groups	59% of the total music CD gifting sales
45-54 age group	24% of music gifting sales (highest spending demographic group in music gifting)
Couples aged 45+	21% of total music sales

Figure 2.3.. Summary of UK music expenditure by older demographics (BPI, 2009)

The UK population chart (Figure 2.4 below) signifies why the 50 year old audience will continue to be of value to brands. The 40-59 cohort is a large consumer group with disposable income. Effective use of music could hold the key to unlocking increased relations with this new consumer group. The remaining chapters aim to produce a detailed picture of this new generation and how their music tastes can produce increased commercial engagement opportunities.

2001 and 2011

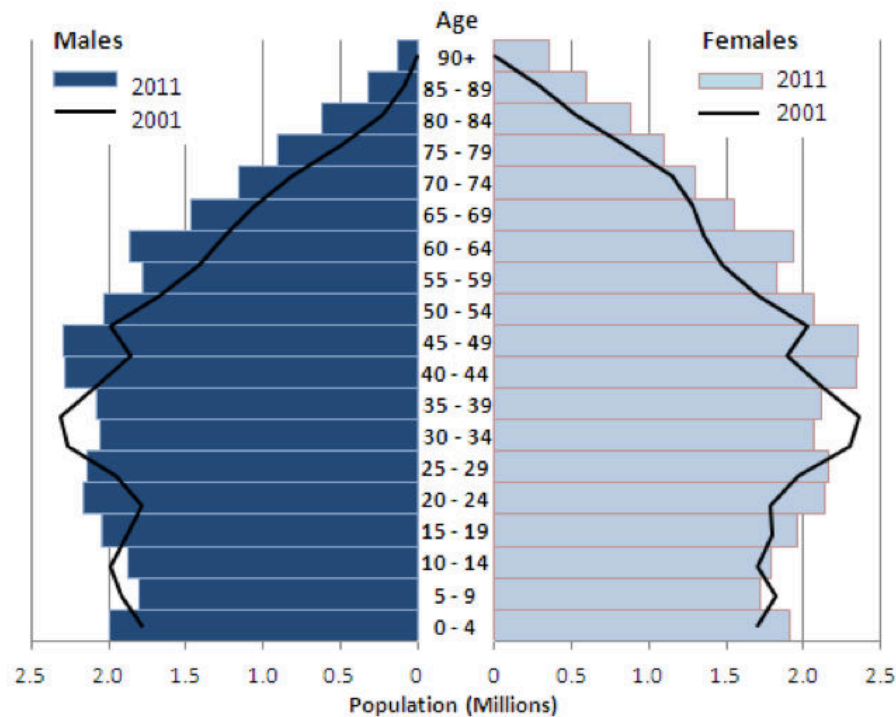


Figure 2.4.. UK Population (ONS, 2012)

In consideration of the importance and the economic affluence of the 40-59 middle class audience in terms of music consumption, it seems logical that they should be viewed as a prime market segment. In the immediate future, due to the continued current strength of the album market, the act of recording and releasing albums remains a priority strategy for UK record labels. With increasing costs and decreasing distribution outlets it becomes more essential than ever that the products that are being created match the tastes of the market that they are aimed at. Music marketing continues to adopt very traditional strategies – commercial rock/pop releases are usually aimed at youth audiences unless they are re-issues of back catalogue recordings or a new release by a heritage act, whereas classical recordings are marketed to older audiences. This strategy was verified by a series of private conversations with senior music industry executives during the research period. This marketing trend is based on the recognition that classical audiences have historically been dominated by the 50+ audience, and younger generations have been eager to consume the latest commercial artists of their era. Further evidence of these

consumption trends are verified in the music taste research which are reviewed in section two of this chapter.

Due to the size of this audience and the current lack of targeted marketing aimed at this cohort, businesses could see striking results with increased appropriate marketing and product innovations using music. Even just a small % increase in market penetration or average spend could produce significant commercial returns both for the recorded music industry and wider business sectors. The live sector is also producing increasing evidence of the longevity of the music and artists from the 1960s, 70s and 80s. A recent white paper published by Deloitte (2011) announced that 59% of the Top 20 highest earning live music performers in the USA between 2000 - 2009 were now aged 50+ and continued to tour.

Figure 2.5 below also demonstrates the significant power of the older artists, with touring revenues in 2010 – 2012 dominated by rock/pop artists aged 40+, with the exception of Andre Rieu - a classical act (Billboard/Pollstar, 2013). Each year this list has been dominated by artists who are now aged 40+ and are able to tour frequently due to the strength of their audience.

	2012	Gross \$	Shows	Attendance	2011	2010
1	Madonna	228.4m	72	1.6m	U2	Bon Jovi
2	Bruce Springsteen	199.3m	72	2.1m	Bon Jovi	U2
3	Roger Waters	186.4	72	1.7	Take That	AC/DC
4	Michael Jackson (Cirque Soleil)	147.3m	183	1.3m	Roger Waters	Lady Gaga
5	Coldplay	147.2m	67	1.8m	Taylor Swift	Black Eyed Peas
6	Lady Gaga	124.8m	65	1.1m	Kenny Chesney	James Taylor/Carole

						King
7	Kenny Chesney/Tim McGraw	96.5m	23	1m	Usher	The Eagles
8	Van Halen	54.4m	46	522k	Lady Gaga	Metallica
9	Jay Z / Kanye West	46.9m	31	371k	Andre Rieu	Dave Matthews Band
10	Andre Rieu	46.8m	99	490k	Sade	Paul McCartney
11	Dave Matthews Band	41.4m	41	757k	Michael Buble	Michael Buble
12	Barbra Streisand	40.6m	12	154k	The Eagles	Trans Siberian Orchestra

Figure 2.5. Highest grossing touring artists (Billboard/Pollstar, 2013)

Digitisation and 50+ Consumers

The market volatility facing the recorded music industry has been a very well documented story in the media over the past ten years (Sawan, 2008; Cookson, 2014; BPI and IFPI Annual Reports). Since the 1990s the industry battled with CD piracy and digital file sharing as sites such as Napster sprinted ahead of the industry in the technology race, making history as the fastest growing business ever (Nieva, 2013). The industry's immediate reaction was to focus on a lawsuit which shut down the streaming service, but at its peak Napster had already attracted 70 million users and made the word *downloading* a household term (Richtel, 2001). Interviews with Universal Music CEO Doug Morris, and former Warner and EMI executive Ted

Cohen in 2007, suggested how the industry at that time could have instead jumped to harness this new technology.

Cohen said "The record labels had an opportunity to create a digital ecosystem and infrastructure to sell music online, but they kept looking at the small picture instead of the big one. They wouldn't let go of CDs."

(Mnookin, 2007)

Despite the early resistance by the music industry downloading, and more recently streaming services, have continued to rise through the 2000s, resulting in a decade of decline in physical music sales. Despite this well publicized decline, the music industry today continues to be of a substantial size with global sales of \$15bn in 2013, although a substantial drop from the \$38bn of global music sales in 1999 (IFPI, 2014). However, it is facing continuing challenges whilst consumers slowly transition from one widespread technology format (CDs and CD players) to a newer one (internet / mobile phone / streaming).

Figure 2.6 shows that total retail-value sales of recorded music in the UK fell 0.5% year-on-year to £1.043bn in 2013 (BPI, 2014). Streaming music subscriptions are included in that figure, but not revenues from ad-supported streams or online views of music videos.

RETAIL VALUE – ALBUMS, SINGLES AND AUDIO STREAMS

Format	2012	2013	2013 +/-
Albums	£800.8m	£772.1m	-3.6%
Singles	£170.5m	£167.8m	-1.6%
Subscription Streaming	£77m	£103m	+33.7%
TOTAL	£1,048.4	£1,043.0m	-0.5%

Figure 2.6.. BPI / Official Charts Company Annual UK Sales Chart 2014

It is clear that streaming is experiencing growth. This is likely to have been driven by broadband services diffusing into homes, and technology and telecommunication upgrades enabling consumers to affordably access high speed internet on the move via mobile devices. As the industry catches up with technology through the 2010s, through collaborations with an array of high quality legal digital options for consumers to use, it seems however as if the digital era is already stalling. We witness 2014 marking an end to the rise of digital downloads, but with rises in digital streaming unlikely to be sufficient to offset the losses (Rogowski, 2014; Pakman, 2014), particularly as streaming services are forced to price their services at a par, due to the licensing stipulations imposed on them by the major music corporations. These streaming subscriptions, even though they may sound reasonably priced at £4.99 per month, still equate to requiring consumers to pay more than their average historic annual music spend according to official figures (BPI Handbooks). It is remarkable that in the past five years we have seen the rise and the possible peak of paid digital downloading. It is anticipated that as internet technology continues to upgrade rapidly over coming years, music access rather than music ownership could become the new norm as consumers increase their streaming behaviour.

So the next standard mass music marketplace of the (near) future seems to lie firmly at the door of the streaming services. Companies are already jostling for position on the consumer radar attempting to seize the important 'first to market' position and win market share and customer loyalty. At the time of writing there are certain brands who are already firmly on the leader board in this field, such as Spotify and Deezer, who now have well established subscription models, music catalogues and subscriber bases in place. However, new entrants are arriving on the scene thick and fast so there is no room for error within this sector.

During 2014 consumers witnessed the announcement of Apple buying Beats Music; Microsoft buying Nokia Mix Radio and then spinning it out as a stand alone brand; Google and YouTube announcing their forthcoming joint Music Key streaming service; Amazon attempting to join the game with the launch of their Amazon Prime service; and the upcoming launch of the first high resolution lossless streaming service called 'Tidal'. Others are sure to arrive in their shadow as official music

industry bodies recognize the future landscape and attempt to simplify licensing rules and regulations in order to ensure that they fully benefit from this new era.

However, a closer look at the current UK sales figures shows that whilst the technology transition continues consumers are still buying albums. According to the official sales data £772.1m worth of albums were sold in 2013 (BPI, 2014). Figure 2.7 shows the breakdown of album sales volumes across the CD, Vinyl and digital download format.

ALBUMS – UK MARKET VOLUMES BY FORMAT FOR THE PAST 5 YEARS: 2009 – 2013

Format	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013 share %	2013 +/-
CD	112.5m	98.5m	86.2m	69.4m	60.6m	64.4%	-12.8%
LP	0.219m	0.234m	0.337m	0.389m	0.781m	0.8%	+100.8%
Digital	16.1m	21.0m	26.6m	30.5m	32.6m	34.7%	+6.8%
Other*	0.146m	0.104m	0.052m	0.147m	0.073m	0.1%	-50.5%
TOTAL	128.9m	119.9m	113.2m	100.5m	94.0m	100.0%	-6.4%

* 'Other' includes Cassette, MiniDisc, DVD Audio, DVD Video, DMD and 7" box set albums.

Figure 2.7.. Official Charts Company Data 2014

So there remains a very strong commercial reason to continue to create and sell recorded music for the foreseeable future. This market volatility is a challenge that the music industry has overcome several times during its history. In each case it was an invention or technology that disrupted the market conditions and forced the existing music business model to adapt. In each case it also brought new opportunity resulting in new revenues once the transition had completed and the new technology been adopted by the mass market – vinyl/cassette/mini-discs/CDs/MP3 downloads/streaming. From a strategic point of view, in many respects little has changed for the record labels, although the past decade has seen the subject of music industry business models and the adaptation of business practices in the digital age attracting continued attention (Vaccaro and Cohn, 2004; Fox, 2004; Minniti and Vergari, 2010). The main strategic aim however remains the creation of a value proposition (products, artists, content, services) which consumers will pay for. With the difficulties that new technology has brought to the current marketplace it is more

important than ever before to ensure that new releases find an audience willing to purchase them with the minimum of marketing effort and expenditure.

A further key assumption behind *The Genesis Suite* was that the 50+ demographic is the most likely consumer group to continue to pay for, rather than illegally download or stream music. The percentage of paid for music increases with age and is distinctly linked with generations. This is not unusual of course as one would expect the younger generations to have adopted new digital technology before the older generations, who have been traditionally labelled as those most likely to be *laggards*. This also signifies the continuing consumption patterns of the 40+ generations who have been paying for music all their life so it is ingrained in their music purchasing behaviour, and perhaps an indication of the value that they place on music as a product. A consumption report published by the BPI in 2011 found that those aged 40s and 50s paid for 58% of their music, with the CD format dominating their purchases. They are the least likely group to obtain music via file sharing or illegal sources - their free music consumption was instead dominated by radio listening.

The experience of *The Genesis Suite* and the above published data suggests then that the tastes or the purchasing habits of this 40-59 aged demographic may have changed. So this research study is specifically interested in examining how this audience can be targeted with music which matches their taste – *to help businesses identify and create music products that middle class consumers aged 40-59 will pay for*.

2.2.2 Targeting the new 50 year old consumer with music

A review of 'The Genesis Suite' project

Prior to commencing this research I was involved as a professional practitioner managing a large scale music project. The album project titled '*The Genesis Suite*' was launched by independent music company *Lightsong Music* in 2009, and aimed to specifically target the 50 year old audience. The business strategy proposed that we are currently in an era where audience tastes have converged. Therefore that

could offer opportunities for this new classical based album project targeting the tastes and preferences of the new generation of 50 year olds (Figure 2.8). The project assumed that the music tastes this group acquired from their youth could be merged with their proposed increased liking for classical music as they entered this older demographic, based on the data reviewed in the above section.

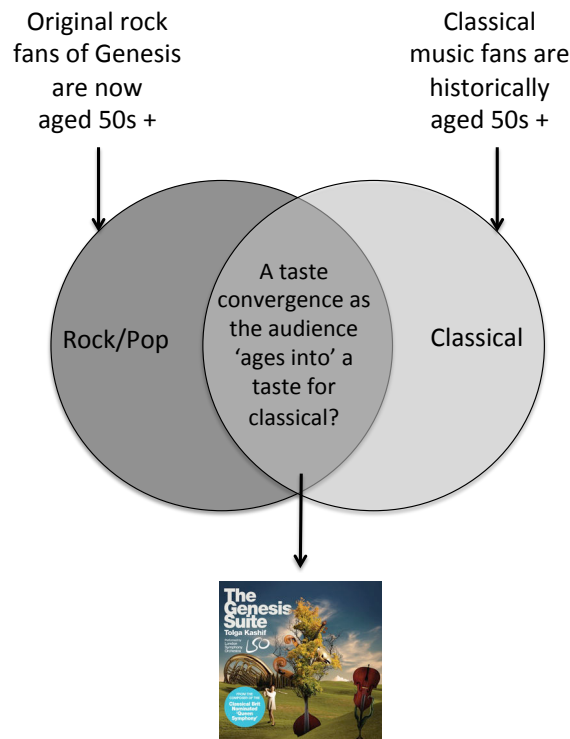


Figure 2.8. *The Genesis Suite - Product Development Assumptions*

Given that the original fans who had bought *Genesis* albums in the 1970s were now in their 50s, and that the classical audience also appeared to be aged 50+, it was assumed there would be a convergence of music tastes between the *Genesis* songs of their youth and the classical style of the new interpretations. It was also believed that the early *Genesis* catalogue (the 1970s rather than the 1980s material in particular) would appeal to this audience because it was more challenging than the later more commercial music that *Genesis* released later in their career. The company acted

upon this strategy by commissioning the album project '*The Genesis Suite*', consisting of a repertoire of classical interpretations of original songs by UK rock band '*Genesis*' from their 1970s catalogue. The composer, Tolga Kashif, is a renowned talent having achieved previous success and a Classical BRIT nomination with a similar interpretation of *Queen* classics titled '*The Queen Symphony*' with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in 2002, and had also directed the successful rock/pop BBC charity single 'Perfect Day'. *The Genesis Suite* arrangements were performed by the London Symphony Orchestra and recorded at Abbey Road Studio 1.

This crossover style album with contemporary marketing activations had seen previous success in the classical industry with artists such as The Three Tenors, Nigel Kennedy, Russell Watson and Katherine Jenkins (Carboni, 2011). However, the *Genesis Suite* album was intended to be a more sophisticated composition and targeted at the higher classes rather than the mass market commercial audience. The songs would be known extremely well by those who were fans of *Genesis* in the 1970s but not by the wider public. The marketing strategy purposefully adopted a more modern approach than traditional classical album releases. The artwork was designed to give a 'nod' to the creative flair of the original *Genesis* repertoire and with subtle references to the classical style of this new album. The campaign attempted to be much more 'rock & roll' in its promotional approach than a standard classical release. Carboni (2011) had examined how these commercial marketing approaches had been used with great success for Nigel Kennedy, for example. Figure 2.9 shows the album artwork which was used as the front cover design and formed the basis of the marketing campaign materials.



Figure 2.9. The Genesis Suite - front cover artwork

The album was released with a solid pre-release marketing and distribution campaign which included a television advertising campaign; a London Underground poster campaign; a variety of adverts and reviews in magazines and national newspapers such as The Guardian, The Independent and The Telegraph; a media partnership with Classic FM; and a world premiere launch event featuring the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Hall. Distribution was handled by Universal Music Group via Absolute Marketing, and the album received high profile shelf space in a wide range of music stores including HMV and Sainsbury's.

Upon release the album debuted at Number 4 on the UK Classical Chart thus successfully competing with new releases from major labels that week, but with sales of just 960 units. Those sales levels were insufficient to sustain the financial cost of a prolonged marketing campaign. Consequently the album gradually slipped down the chart and did not achieve the success of its predecessor, *The Queen Symphony*, which sustained weekly sales of approximately 3,000 units for several months

following its 2002 release, eventually achieving total sales of approximately 250,000 units.

The actual chart position confirmation did not become official until some weeks following the release, due to the refusal of the Official Chart Company (OCC) to acknowledge the album as being eligible for the classical music chart. Instead the OCC initially placed this album in the Indie Chart at number 22 below the release by rock artist Carl Barat of 'The Libertines'. It was necessary to lobby the OCC in order to be positioned in the Classical Chart – despite the fact that the previous album '*The Queen Symphony*' had been accepted onto the Classical Chart upon release. This was an interesting example of the confusion and debate regarding the definition of the classical genre. The album was finally accepted into the UK Classical Chart and with sales of just 960 during its debut week it was positioned at Number 4. This was an interesting insight into the sales decline being experienced by the classical industry.

The Genesis Suite project seemed to call into question a number of the core assumptions underlying marketing strategies in the classical music industry. First, although the original *Genesis* fans were indeed now in their 50s, it appeared they did not readily identify with this classical album, even when it was endorsed by the band – the album purchase link included on the official mail out to the official *Genesis* fan club (40,000+ email addresses) yielded weak sales results. Secondly, when *The Genesis Suite* was launched classical sales had declined since the release of *The Queen Symphony* album in 2002, calling into question the assumption that an ageing population would create a growing market for this genre. Thirdly, classical album sales are now insufficient to support a project of this scale due to the production costs. Instead major labels have started to actively seek to recoup their investment by driving their classical artists in the live sector, adopting *360 degree* style contracts with their artists. This is a move that has caused controversy in recent years especially amongst artist managers (McGee, 2007). However, in the classical sector the cost of a full orchestra production means that there is a minimum audience/ticket size for viable live touring. Due to the fact that promoters were concerned that '*The Genesis Suite*' album would not attract a sufficiently large live audience, the project consequently did not secure any live bookings.

So in summary during *'The Genesis Suite'* project several issues became apparent which bore relevance to this thesis:

Firstly, despite the project having a solid budget, and the previous success of the composer, the leading orchestras and venues had been very reticent about being involved in this recording. As a 'crossover' project there was a suggestion that it was not viewed as a *legitimate* classical work and was therefore not their preferred style. An air of snobbery certainly became apparent during these negotiations. This elitism has been identified by new Universal Classics CEO, Max Hole, as something which orchestras need to eradicate if they are to survive (Vincent, 2013).

Secondly, the OCC initially refused to acknowledge this album in the classical chart, which highlighted the confusion and restrictions regarding **genre definitions and legitimacy**.

Thirdly, an analysis of available data relating to the classical sector highlighted that the genre seemed to have been mainly of interest to the over 50s for many years and there was some indication that this reliance upon older consumers (and their average age) was actually rising. This suggested that new 50 year olds were not purchasing classical recordings in the same way that previous generations had, or that their **music tastes** were not for classical music.

In order to more effectively market music products to the current 50 year old audience it is of course essential to understand their music taste. Therefore, correctly measuring music taste is of prime importance to a music company that is engaged in creating new products. However, despite the available academic research resources regarding music taste (reviewed in the next section) this body of knowledge seems to remain outside of the music industry. It does not appear to be used widely to refine A&R and marketing strategies to ensure that new releases are carefully curated and marketed to distinct consumer groups, based on music taste preferences and disposable income. The transfer of knowledge in this field seems to be weak, partly because the bulk of previous academic research analysing music taste has been primarily commissioned to investigate social stratification rather than to inform the music industry – music taste findings have been the secondary findings simply used to more accurately classify social groups and behaviour. The previous research has

also been mainly contained within the academic publications, so has not been broadly disseminated into the business community. This has limited the accessibility and exploitation of this body of knowledge.

It seems appropriate at this point in the life cycle of the music industry to analyse music taste as a primary focus in order to assist in the development and application of effective business strategies.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter the original intention of this thesis was to investigate whether consumers 'aged into' a taste for classical as they entered the 50+ age groups. If this was found to be true then this could offer opportunities for increased sales in the classical genre, due to the fact that the UK is experiencing an ageing population with disposable income who are becoming increasingly 'tech savvy'. A large percentage of the UK population entering the 50+ demographic with an increasing interest in classical music could potentially offer a new growth opportunity for the genre that has historically been a niche market in terms of sales (see chapter 4). Alternatively, if they are carrying the rock/pop music taste of their youth through their life course, then this opens up a new generation of consumers in their 50s and into 60s who may instead have a considerable appetite for the rock/pop genre for many more decades, and the disposable income to indulge in it.

Either way the original research carried out as part of this thesis recognized that a new generation of 50 year olds were emerging who had significant disposable income, and who therefore should be given more attention by the music industry as a whole.

The knowledge gained from *The Genesis Suite* experience, and the recent problems experienced by both the classical sector (see chapter 4) and the traditional leading 'Over 50s' brands (reviewed in the third section of this chapter), suggested that the music taste of the typical 40-59 year old consumer group may have changed with the arrival of the new generation who grew up post 1960s. In order to gain a detailed understanding of this cohort, it was important to first gain a depth of knowledge regarding the existing theories of music taste and previous research in this field. As a professional practitioner rather than professional academic I had no previous

knowledge of the existing academic work that has surrounded this topic. Hence, it was necessary to review the body of work and the nature of the music taste discourse in order to structure this research in a manner that would bring something new to the field. Therefore, the academic literature relating to cultural taste and its relationship to social stratification is of particular relevance to this thesis. The very fact that it has continued to spark so much debate throughout the twentieth and twenty-first century demonstrates the level of interest that this subject generates. It was of interest to me to understand the factors that previous researchers have considered to be most influential, in terms of music taste formation and cultural practice. For most sociologists the main focus has been that of class, and particularly in relation to how distinct groups can be classified within society using identifiable and measurable variables. Following a review of existing work in the next section there appear to be three distinct phases in the discourse, which have specifically shaped this field in terms of a specific focus on music and cultural taste in the UK. These three key theories were outlined in chapter 1 and will now be reviewed in more detail in relation to this thesis.

PART TWO

2.3 A review of music taste concepts and theories

The issues reviewed in the previous section raise fundamental questions about the formation of music taste. A conventional explanation for the historic domination of the classical genre by 50+ consumers is that people ‘grow into’ classical music. Alternatively previous cohorts of 50 year olds grew up in an era that was pre-rock/pop and so they had naturally been exposed to a greater amount of classical music throughout their childhood and carried that taste through their life course. Additionally perhaps there was also historically a cultural capital trigger at play. For example, as people approaching and entering this 50+ age group climbed the corporate ladder, perhaps they used to make efforts to engage with the classical genre in order to exploit its cultural capital assets and social status markers? If these behaviours are no longer displayed does this create a new generation of 50 year olds who should be targeted with rock/pop music rather than classical? Does their continued consumption of, and engagement with rock/pop music, indicate that it has achieved a greater level of legitimacy driven by this new generation? These became questions that formed the original motivation behind this thesis, as I sought to understand the music tastes of this cohort of middle class 40-59 year olds in more detail. The following sections review the key theories that have led the academic music taste discourse to date.

2.3.1 The origins of the key concepts of music taste

Music as a ‘legitimate’ cultural art form.

Music holds a distinct difference to other forms of culture because it is so pervasive in society, compared with other forms of culture which are predominantly taught through school curriculums. Bourdieu (1984) provided a focus for this debate with the publication of ‘Distinction’ and his hypotheses regarding cultural taste. In this book he makes immediate reference to a “socially recognized hierarchy of the arts”

(p.1) and corresponding hierarchies of consumers. Whereby “art and cultural consumption are predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfil a social function of legitimating social differences” (p.7). Any study of music taste would not be complete if it were not to consider the underpinning Bourdieusian approaches, and also the contrasting omnivore theories that have dominated this field since the 1980s.

Music as an art form has usually been positioned within previous studies as just one variable amongst many which has been used in the measurement of social class and cultural capital. However, Bourdieu himself recognized that it holds qualities that are unique to other forms of cultural activity. In his own words “*nothing more clearly affirms one’s class, nothing more infallibly classifies, than tastes in music*” (p.18). He believes this to be true because compared with other cultural activities such as visiting galleries, theatre or museums for example, there is a rarity attached to attending concerts and learning to play ‘noble’ instruments. This rarity in the conditions makes the acquisition of the corresponding dispositions (the ‘habitus’) more difficult. Therefore, these ‘legitimate’ activities enable a distinction, a cultural boundary, to be drawn between that of the privileged society and lower social classes. A privileged distinction which can be reproduced across generations in the higher class.

Bourdieu describes music as the ‘most spiritual’ of all the art forms. Consequently the possession of ‘music culture’ seems to hold a higher value than other forms of cultural capital, “something other than a quantity of knowledge and experiences combined with the capacity to talk about them” (p.19). Of course the music that Bourdieu was referring to was the repertoire that was considered legitimate culture by society at the time of the survey in French society in the 1960s. He remarked that this acknowledgement of the definition of ‘legitimate’ culture was actually accepted across all social classes but the extent of knowledge in that genre was not constant across all classes. Early on in ‘Distinction’ he outlined the three distinct taste classifications below that ‘correspond to educational levels and social class

- i. *Legitimate Taste* – a taste of the highest major arts (classical works) which increases with educational level and in the dominant class that possess significant educational capital.
 - ii. *Middlebrow Taste* – the taste associated with the middle classes and displayed via lesser classical works and some of the more respected works of the ‘minor arts’ (‘the art of song’).
 - iii. *Popular Taste* – Light classical music which has been “devalued by popularization” and popular music “especially songs that are totally devoid of artistic ambition or pretension such as those of Petula Clark”.
- (Bourdieu 1984, p16)

We see here a very clear definition of what is considered ‘legitimate’ music, and the significant divide between how respected classical works are viewed compared with how popular works are viewed in terms of the vocabulary used to describe them. The aim of this thesis is to establish whether these opinions regarding music classifications in terms of the understanding of ‘legitimate music culture’ are valid today, or if there has been a shift which has produced a modification in how music genres are considered and how they are used to display status.

Recently Savage and Gayo (2011) noted that the use of ‘brow’ definitions is not actually particularly valid in music terms because it is historic and related to literature not music. Genre definitions have also been a consistent limitation throughout previous studies and provide increasing complexities as supply and demand continues to nurture greater variations across the core repertoire, especially in the classical genre (DeNora, 1991; Weber, 2001; Santoro, 2010).

Bourdieu applied several independent variables related to upbringing, schooling and cultural engagement to measure social class as the dependent variable. This thesis will be modifying this approach by using independent variables: age and class to measure music taste as the dependent variable.

Bourdieu went on to claim that not only is it apparent that the dominant classes are most likely to possess a taste for highbrow ‘legitimate’ cultural forms, but that this is the only musical form that is linked to cultural capital. He describes the “game of

culture” (p.12) which has different interests attached to different positions in the field. This thesis will examine whether the ‘rules’ have changed.

The key concepts of ‘Distinction’ are extremely relevant to this study relating to the new research findings put forward by this thesis.

The three specific research publications mentioned in the above sections provided the foundations upon which the discussion throughout this thesis is built. The first two presented sociological theories that have formed the centre of the debate regarding music taste throughout the past two decades (Bourdieu, 1984; Peterson et al., 1992). The third provides an extremely relevant UK based analysis focused specifically on music taste, that endeavoured to test the original concepts put forward by Bourdieu and Peterson in particular (Savage and Gayo, 2011).

i. ‘Habitus, cultural capital and legitimate culture’

Firstly, the landmark work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) and his theories of habitus, cultural capital and legitimate culture. This critically acclaimed work published in his book titled ‘Distinction’ and based upon his study of French bourgeois society, is considered one of the most important sociological publications of the twentieth century. It provided a foundation upon which modern analyses of cultural taste still use today. Although the core content of his original study may now be dated, his key concepts have largely stood the test of time. This thesis will attempt to investigate his views regarding ‘legitimate culture’, and test whether his definitions remain valid in modern society in terms of the music field. It will seek to reveal the continuing influence of habitus in cultural preferences, and the extent to which class and education still play a part. It will investigate Bourdieu’s definition of legitimate culture and its apparent rejection of the popular music genres in favour of traditional highbrow classical works, thereby providing additional evidence of the current employment of cultural capital within society in the UK today.

ii. The 'Omnivore'

Secondly, the work of Peterson in 1992 and his hotly debated 'cultural omnivore' theory. The publication of this research sparked an intense academic debate surrounding cultural taste which continues today. His analysis of survey data identified a trend of increased broadening of consumption, suggesting that the middle and privileged classes were engaging in the popular culture previously associated with lower classes, in addition to their engagement with traditional highbrow classical genre. This provided a direct opposition to Bourdieu's univorous assertion that the only legitimate music genre which could be used to assert cultural capital was classical. It triggered an elite vs non-elite debate that has dominated the discourse over the past twenty years.

iii. The 'Experts' and an emerging modification of 'legitimate culture'

Thirdly, the work of Savage and Gayo (2011) which used the extensive data collected by the highly acclaimed Cultural Capital & Social Exclusion survey (Bennett et al. 2006) to extract significant evidence relating to music tastes. This provided the key underpinning research findings for this thesis, providing a recent and relevant insight into music taste, which used both the work of Bourdieu and Peterson in its design and discussion. Hence, this report was able to test the key concepts which have been debated over several decades using specific UK based quantitative survey responses, supported by additional qualitative interview responses.

The findings of this analysis by Savage and Gayo identified that a new music canon which now included popular music could be developing, suggesting a modification of the definition of 'legitimate' cultural music genres and a weakening of the classical genre as the dominant player in the musical field in terms of cultural capital. It proposed that rather than increasing omnivore behaviour, a distinct taste boundary between classical and contemporary music genres continues to exist, but now visibly divided by age rather than class with the new identification of 'music generations'. They signified the emergence of new forms of cultural practices that can enable individuals to achieve dominance and distinction in the musical field. Rather than

displaying omnivorous engagement there was a visible contrast between those who displayed their depth of knowledge within and across defined genres (the experts), compared with those who enthusiastically engaged with distinct subdivisions within genres. This was particularly relevant in the classical music genre where distinctly separate groups engaged with the popular ‘light classical’ repertoire but would not be deemed to display highbrow characteristics. Rather than seeing a widening in omnivorous consumption across music genres there is evidence that the genres themselves are widening, especially within the classical genre. In particular they identified a well educated professional group who at the time of the Cultural Capital & Social Exclusion survey (Bennett et al., 2006) were aged 35-54 and labelled as ‘experts’ due to their ability to demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of music across the classical – contemporary divide. They proposed that this group were ‘experts’ rather than ‘omnivores’ due to their tendency to engage more with the highbrow end of the repertoire, rather than across the full classical genre – such as the popular light classical repertoire. Their final recommendation encouraged further research into this ‘expert’ group in order to provide a deeper critical evaluation of their preferences and practices. This group could be driving marked changes in the original definitions of the core principles of the cultural taste research to date. This cohort will form a key focus of this thesis.

So we see firstly, the original propositions of an elite culture whereby the privileged classes maintain a distinction over the rest of society by using a specific set of defined cultural practices that are considered ‘legitimate’ in terms of quality and value (Bourdieu, 1984). Secondly, the later concept of the more liberal ‘omnivore’ who is open to appreciating many types of cultural form without prejudice (Peterson and Simkus, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996). Thirdly, more recent attempts to put these opposing concepts into a modern contemporary framework in the UK with a more robust methodological approach and a specific focus on music taste (Bennett et al., 2006; Savage, 2005; Savage and Gayo, 2011).

The work of Bourdieu and Peterson in particular has inspired an enormous amount of academic research around these topics. This section will endeavour to produce a succinct overview of the univore-omnivore debate that has surrounded their work to date. Leading up to a review of the recent work by Savage and Gayo (2011), who

identified middle aged, middle class, educated professionals – their ‘expert’ group – as the cohort which warrants more research. This thesis aims to take forward the academic debate by providing a detailed examination of the 40-59 ABC1 cohort in the UK, identifying their music choices and practice.

2.3.2 The use of cultural capital.

Adorno holds relevance to this thesis due to his essays relating to music and society. Adorno delivered a lecture in the USA in the 1960s regarding ‘The Culture Industry Revisited’. At the same time a landmark study was taking place across the Atlantic led by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. This new research for the first time enabled an intense sociological investigation into the role of culture in society and an examination of the definitions of ‘high’ art. The culture industry had changed quite significantly since the time of Adorno’s original publications in the 1930s and 40s. Commodification had particularly resulted in a highly commercialized music industry driven by huge audiences, mass media and significant profits. Looking back, 1963 proved to be a pivotal year in the history of music with a throng of new rock/pop acts bursting onto the UK charts by the end of that year, and permanently changing the music landscape. The Official Chart Company archives reveal how the first quarters of the year featured the typical crooners and big band acts that had dominated the charts throughout its history. However, by the end of that year a new wave of pop rock acts started to flood the market, such as The Beatles, Dusty Springfield, The Hollies, Gerry & The Pacemakers and The Rolling Stones. The rise of this ‘lowbrow’ pop/rock genre, and other associated popular subgenres that would soon follow, brought the formulaic ‘hit song’ standardization firmly to the forefront of the music buying public.

Bourdieu undoubtedly had a deep knowledge of the work of Adorno and the Frankfurtian school of thought. Gartman (2011) in his review of the two scholars highlighted how they approached the topic of culture.

“For Bourdieu, modern culture is a class culture, characterized by socially ranked symbolic differences among classes that make

some seem superior to others. For Adorno, modern culture is a mass culture, characterized by a socially imposed symbolic unity that obscures class differences behind a façade of leveled democracy.”

(Gartman, 2011,p41)

Adorno focuses on the role that commercial profits play in art and how only the highest varieties of the bourgeois cultural repertoire can play a critical role in society, because only that repertoire is unconcerned with sales and of the market demands. Historically much of this high level art would have had the luxury of being able to afford this position thanks to wealthy benefactors who could bankroll the composer. In practice the demands of modern life forced the majority of musicians, even of the highest standard and talent, into ‘careers’ where financial reward is essential to pay the bills. Even the acclaimed orchestras of the world continue to find themselves in that position today, often agreeing to take high paid offers to record mass market popular film scores in order to ‘balance the books’ and to support funding levels.

Adorno’s later work (1989) proposed that in the modern society (in which he had witnessed much change during his lifetime), there was a fading authentic boundary within the classical genre which was being forced upon it due to the commercial pressures that modern capitalist society creates. The divide between commercial ‘light’ classical music and ‘high’ culture drifts further apart as it becomes more and more dependent upon benefactors to remove the economic constraints of production costs. In that sense Bourdieu’s classifications in his ‘Distinction’ publication continue to hold validity into the twenty first century. A recent article by Frank (2012) highlighted the original and continuing influence of Pierre Bourdieu in the field of cultural analysis and taste. This review of just three sociology books published between 2009 and 2011 contained 41 respected authors writing 900 pages relating to Bourdieu’s work in cultural analysis. Bourdieu “became one of the first anthropologists to turn attention to his own society, where he became interested in the way that its prized cultural practices sustained forms of privilege” (Bennett et al. 2009, p9). His landmark work ‘Distinction’ (1984) continues to draw commentary today within researchers’ attempts to make comparisons between the original work and the contemporary world in which we live (Bennett et al, 2009; Silva and Warde,

2010; Susen and Turner, 2011). Bourdieu's work, in particular, was important in introducing the terms *cultural capital* and *habitus* to the discussion regarding the formation and maintenance of cultural tastes, and how they are used to distance the elite from other classes. His conceptualization was based upon valid observations.

Pierre Bourdieu's research throughout the 1960s in France formed the foundation of his 600 page book *Distinction*, first published in 1979 (English translation published 1984). His work provides a detailed and fascinating examination of the role of music taste in the pursuit of distinguishing a higher social status, and the formation of that music taste. Hence it provides valuable insights into the area of cultural preferences and social stratification in society.

Appreciation of fine arts and highbrow culture has been a visible form of high social status for many centuries. The old school elite used it to maintain a level of privilege above society. They shunned attempts by new elitists to buy their way into this high society life. For example, in 1880 the New York Academy of Music, controlled by old family elitists, rejected requests by 'new money' families such as the Vanderbilts and Rockefellers to buy boxes at the Academy, seeing it as an attempt to 'buy their way in' to the traditional elite class society life. (Khan, 2013. Instead these newly rich families eventually joined forces and established their own opera house – The Metropolitan Opera House featuring 122 private boxes. Ultimately upon the financial collapse of the Academy the old elites were forced to join the new elites and buy boxes at The Met. This is an early illustration of the perceived importance of the classical genre and also social class exclusions. Adorno appreciated that those at the top of the cultural industries were indeed themselves the elite level of society, possessing significant wealth due to their Chief Executive positions within the music industry and the profits they were creating. The more recent class study by Savage et al. (2013) also identified that there are many variations of individuals within the elite class rather than purely the 'old money' aristocracy. The cultural industries are perhaps an example of how the role of education does not play out in terms of privilege. Compared with the more traditional careers within finance and politics for example, the Ivy League schooling is far less essential here. In fact it was more common for the CEOs of cultural industries of film and music in particular to have 'worked their way up the ladder' from less privileged starts within the industry, than

to win their career positions through the old school network.

Bourdieu claimed that the cultural activities traditionally considered ‘highbrow’ were not simply private leisure opportunities, but were instead a calculated method of achieving or maintaining distinction above other social classes. Bourdieu recognized that those individuals who were given a privileged education tended to benefit from the advantages that it offered, and there was a recycling of these class advantages across generations within families. He claimed that this ‘cultural capital’ was transmitted to children by their parents and their education during their youth with the resulting ability to appreciate the legitimate cultural forms enabling them to distinguish themselves from lower classes. They had developed a sophisticated set of predispositions, habits, behaviours that enabled them to react and respond appropriately to high culture, and to display that knowledge and understanding with confidence and with appropriate vocabulary in social environments when required. Bourdieu called this quality ‘habitus’, an innate ability which people possess throughout their lifetime, even if they do not fully utilise those capabilities until later in life. With this in mind then it could be feasible that the educated privileged cohorts in society could ‘age into’ classical music later in life, because they are ‘programmed’ with the necessary tools and dispositions.

Bourdieu’s research was based on raw data he collected through survey responses whilst in Algiers during the early 1960s. It provided a detailed analysis of the way elite French social classes used a mix of cultural, social and economic factors to ensure that their children would enjoy the same advantages as their parents and grandparents. This multi-dimensional approach has influenced most research in this field over the last 40 years. The concept of cultural capital and how it is accumulated and acted upon by agents in the field, and how it relates to the concepts of social capital and economic capital still has relevance today. His model depicts one “in which power and authority flow from the top down” (Jenkins, 1992, p90), and as such there seems to be very little recognition of any resistance to that order. Rather it suggests a model in which reproduction of privileges and capital is successful and continuous, those with advantage pass on those advantages through the generations. The recent class work by Savage et al. (2013) also made note of the presence of this fact amongst the elite group that they identified. There was a barrier

to entry that made it difficult for the middle classes to achieve upward social mobility into this elite class. So in society there remains an ‘enduring hierarchical social space’, comfortably occupied by those who possess high levels of economic, social and cultural capital.

But Bourdieu’s work also drew criticism from subsequent scholars. Some of the criticism was fuelled by the view that the research was only relevant to the particular sample of French society that Bourdieu had used as his focus (Lamont, 1992). There were also questions regarding the validity of his methodology (Lahire, 2004). According to McNay (2000) the research also was very masculine and did not accurately take females into account. Age was also not of great interest to his discussion, an aspect that Bennett et al. (2009) highlighted when ensuring that the Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion (CCSE) study in 2003 included modes of measurement that addressed these factors in their work. The CCSE study is discussed later in this chapter in more detail and uses the work of Bourdieu as its foundation.

‘Distinction’ in itself is essentially a very complex read, not particularly due to the content but due to the obsessively exclusive vocabulary that Bourdieu insists on using. His long winded discourse leads to confusion amongst readers and has sparked much debate regarding his key concepts, due to misleading explanations and unclear definitions. Jenkins (1992) produced a lengthy review of Bourdieu’s work and focused on several limitations of the study. He debated the definition of ‘habitus’ suggesting that “the criterion of embodiment makes habitus a reasonable enough and individualist concept – allowing for its problems of definition” (p93). In his later work Bourdieu tried to explain his definitions of ‘habitus’ in terms of its links with individuals’ history.

“With the notion of habitus you can refer to something that is close to what is suggested by the idea of habit, while differing from it in one important respect. The habitus, as the word implies, is that which one has acquired, but which has become durably incorporated in the body in the form of permanent dispositions”

(Bourdieu, 1993,p86)

Habits can be broken but in terms of Bourdieu's definitions habitus cannot be changed. It is formed early in life and is life lasting.

Regardless of the limitations in his interpretations, definitions and methodologies his work remains one of the most important to date and presents two key concepts that are particularly relevant to this thesis. Firstly, the significance of cultural capital "whereby those schooled in forms of *legitimate* culture enjoyed advantages over the working and popular classes who stood outside of, or tangential to it" (Bennett et al., 2009,p12). It acts as a form of property which can increase in value, but unlike a physical property it is the embodied collection of the individuals' perceptions and dispositions. This generally is experienced in the elite and the educated middle classes, who develop an appreciation of legitimate culture early in life and can use it to distance themselves from the rest of the population. Secondly, Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* in 'Distinction' was related very definitively to class structure. The dominant classes 'remake' themselves by passing on the environmental benefits necessary to appropriate habitus formation.

In general 'Distinction' built some significant concepts from a study which has certain recognized limitations. It was skewed towards the bourgeois thinking of the time and region; focused predominantly on the existence of distinct class boundaries and barriers in French society in the 1960s; and relied too heavily on empirical data as a basis for its conclusions. However, the fundamental concepts of distinction, habitus and cultural capital are well respected within academia and have continued to be debated in social research. This thesis aims to examine those key concepts, together with modifications that have been developed by more recent academics, and apply them to the current status within the field of music in the UK. It is hoped that the UK music sales figures, as a previously unstudied data set, will provide a new empirical insight into the music preferences of the UK population in modern society, especially regarding the divide between the contemporary popular genres and the traditional classical ones.

2.3.3 The Cultural Omnivore

A direct opposition of Bourdieu's work concerned the argument that his analysis adopted a very unitary approach to cultural 'taste'. It was in fact much more multidimensional than he made it appear, and experiencing a change in music preferences as Western society continued to develop. It was specifically the work of Richard Peterson in America that provided a significant shift in the research on cultural preferences. When Peterson and Simkus (1992) used the term 'omnivore' to create a new perspective on cultural behaviour in the USA they created a fresh wave of subsequent research activity that would signify a transition away from the sole focus on traditional and exclusive 'elite' cultures. This strand of research suggested that status did not have to be exclusively linked to highbrow cultural practices, and that forms of culture which had previously been considered lower status were now seemingly accepted as a legitimate form of culture by all classes. Peterson proposed that the middle classes in the USA comfortably grazed across many different music genres and that this practice was considered liberal rather than being frowned upon by peers. These views completely contradicted the Bourdieusian theories supporting the proposal that high status classes shunned the culture that they did not consider to be elevated, as they displayed a unitary taste for classical.

The USA national survey that Petersen used for the original research publication with Simkus in 1992 was collected in 1982, then conducted again 10 years later for presentation in their follow up article "Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob To Omnivore" (Peterson and Kern, 1996). This enabled a comparison of two sets of research findings across a 10 year period in order to identify a continuing trend. The music genres measured included five that were considered lowbrow (country, bluegrass, gospel, rock, blues), three middlebrow styles (easy listening, musicals, big band) and the highbrow genres (classical and opera). The 'pop' genre does not appear to be included despite the fact that during the time that this survey was run (1982 & 1992) the pop genre was a significant music format and dominated the airwaves and music sales. Nonetheless the results of this second analysis (1996) supported the original findings (1992) and those of other researchers who had observed similar trends (DiMaggio, 1987; Lamont, 1992).

*“We confirm that highbrows are more omnivorous than others and
that they have become increasingly omnivorous over time”*

(Peterson and Kern, 1996,p900)

They went on to propose that this observed omnivorousness is due ‘both to cohort replacement and to changes over the 1980s among highbrows of all ages’ (p.900). This acknowledgement of the cohort effect is an important indication of how social structures had changed significantly through generations. A generational conflict was beginning to appear between those who grew up with the rebellious contemporary genres and popular culture from the 1960s, seen as inappropriate by the older generations who had grown up in a less provocative era. They noted other cohort research that had witnessed similar results resulting from younger, more omnivorous cohorts displacing older cohorts of highbrows with more snob like tastes (Abraham and Inglehart, 1993; Rogers, 1982). Cohort is measured as year of birth within these studies (Rogers, 1982). Their dependent variable is the music genres (taste) and the independent variable was year of birth. Other variables were included as control variable including education, gender, race, income. The results showed that both *period effects* (whereby the same cohorts had changed behaviour during the observed period) and cohort replacement increased their taste for middlebrow and lowbrow genres. (p.903). Having identified this ‘openness to multiple genres’ amongst highbrows and middlebrows they define that the omnivore possesses an openness to appreciating everything, and this is a direct contradiction to the idea of snobbishness which is based on rules of exclusion (Bourdieu, 1984; Murphy, 1988). They suggest that this may support the idea of the formulation of “new rules governing symbolic boundaries” (p.904), something that had also been discussed by Lamont and Fournier (1992). The only genre that was not embraced in this way was country music. Interestingly at the current time of writing country music has experienced a growth in popularity amongst the wider audiences and a widening of the genre repertoire into mainstream country rock which would probably affect the findings of this study if it was re-run in 2014.

Their observations that highbrows have become increasingly omnivorous over

time are highly relevant to this thesis. Peterson observed increases over a ten year period between 1982 and 1992. If this was an accurate and permanent shift in behaviour we would expect to see continued and increased levels of omnivorousness today. This thesis aims to test this hypothesis.

Peterson and Kern (1996) attempted to explain the omnivorous trends that their data had identified. They outlined five factors which they felt may contribute to the changes that their findings had highlighted. Firstly, there has been a structural change through the twentieth century which had resulted in higher standards of living, accessibility to the arts, increased educational opportunities, and that had resulted in bringing down the barriers of exclusion that formerly surrounded the high arts. So with less emphasis on maintaining that exclusion, higher classes have less pressure to be seen to shun lowbrow genres as the boundaries of cultural activity were less rigid and impenetrable. Secondly, significant value changes had taken place during the century and that had brought down many of the discriminations that were previously maintained between classes. It became preferable to be viewed as a modern inclusionist than an “exclusionist snob” (p. 905). Thirdly, the boom in the arts world in the late twentieth century greatly expanded the forms of art that were available and that were being lauded by the art world itself as it continued to seek “new and ever more exotic modes of expression” (p.905). Fourth, a new generation had arrived who had grown up with the pop culture in the first half of the twentieth century, and had been expected to then grow out of it and move into more serious and authentic music as they matured into adulthood. They did not. The effects of the growth of rock and roll in the 1950s; and pop and rock in the 1960s; and indeed the effects of the Woodstock era as they moved into the late 60s and early 70s, produced a generation of youngsters who had grown up with a culture which they viewed as a “viable alternative to established elite culture” (p.905). This had also been identified by other researchers (Lipsitz, 1990; Aronowitz, 1993) and had led to a decrease in patronization of the elite arts by privileged Americans, due to their continuing interest in wider musical styles (Robinson, 1993; Peterson and Sherkat, 1995; Schaefer, 1987). Finally they suggest that in an increasingly global world it has become preferable to respect other people’s cultural expressions, rather than considering them as something to be avoided.

“As highbrow snobbishness fits the needs of the earlier entrepreneurial upper-middle class, there also seems to be an elective affinity between today’s new business-administrative class and omnivorousness.”

(Peterson and Kern, 1996,p906)

Peterson’s work was a significant landmark in the examination of music taste because it focused solely on music taste rather than tastes for other forms of art.

“Among highbrows, the snob is the one who does not participate in any lowbrow or middlebrow activity (Levine, 1988) while the omnivore is at least open to appreciating them all. Perfect snobs are now rare in the United States.”

(Peterson and Kern, 1996,p901)

This definition of the omnivore suggests that in the original attitudinal study they must have indicated an ‘open-ness’ to appreciating all the other genres. Unfortunately this information does not specify the extent to which they consume it. Simply expressing a ‘liking’ for something does not necessarily result in the consumer actually completing the purchase journey for that item. This research study will analyse official music sales data to try to add new insight into those consumption levels in the UK. Like previous studies, this data is derived from surveys, the difference is that respondents are asked to state the music that they actually *bought* that year, rather than the music that they *like*.

The findings of Peterson et al. (1992) have been repeated in other international studies. This has served to both strengthen the validity of the ‘cultural omnivore’ concept, fuel more interest in it, and produce more questions surrounding it (Prieur and Savage, 2011; Lopez-Sintas et al., 2008; Perhonen et al., 2010; Atkinson, 2011; Rimmer, 2012; Glevarec and Pinet, 2012; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2006). Research since the 1990s has sought to identify the omnivore more accurately, and further

understand what this behaviour means in social terms. It could signify an increase in cultural tolerance across the middle classes, or an increased interest, a new form of cultural capital. It could signify that class boundaries are fading, and that higher classes no longer feel the need to demonstrate their distinction using their cultural activities as a marker. Music taste has been used frequently as an indicator of cultural capital, and a way of grouping individuals according to their cultural preferences (Longhurst, 1995; Thornton, 1995). Many researchers have occupied this field in recent years, identifying a level of omnivorousness within their research (Bellavance et al., 2004, 2008; Bryson, 1996; Warde et al., 1999; Van Eijck, 2004; Lahire, 2004). However, there has been a lack of consensus, which has led more recent research to adapt the previous quantitative methodologies in order to gain a deeper insight into what all this really means. Researchers such as Bennett et al, (2001), Fridman and Ollivier (2004), Warde et al. (2007), Carrabine and Longhurst (1999) preferred a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The result of this strand of research was a consensus that cultural tastes were much more omnivorous than Bourdieu's work had originally suggested. In the univore/omnivore argument the evidence certainly seemed to lean away from the strict unitary tastes that had been proposed by Bourdieu. Instead today it is generally accepted that the middle and upper classes are more likely to be cultural omnivores than cultural elitists, as they engage in both traditional highbrow and lower status forms of popular culture. It had yet to be determined whether this was due to limitations in Bourdieu's original work, or due to the fact that society had changed between the 1960s and 1990s, resulting in a blurring of boundaries and a relaxation of the rules. Music genres had also changed dramatically during that time. The jazz genre, previously included in the lower status genre groupings, started to receive increasing arts funding, thus suggesting that it was becoming considered and accepted as an increasingly highbrow cultural style. Intellectuals continue to engage with it, possibly only because now it has become a niche genre and is no longer deemed 'mass' popular culture. As with the musical continuum observed within the classical genre, jazz splintered into a wide ranging repertoire, including mainstream light works to more complex and sophisticated material. An increasing eclecticism in the higher social classes represents the changing demographics of the population. The maturing of a new generation and increased social mobility meant that new entrants into the middle classes carried with them their original cultural history from their roots, and at the

same time adopted some new behaviour from the group they moved into (Van Eijck, 1997; Coulangeon, 2005). This could suggest a dilution effect in which the elite are being joined by new and growing numbers of upper middle class people entering the higher status classes, rather than it just being regenerated with new generations of the same families. If this was true then it would suggest that the changes in cultural preferences that were being witnessed by the new wave of research could be attributed to the changing composition of those groups, rather than changes in the tastes of individuals. It is also essential to examine not just *which* cultural form is consumed but also *how* it is consumed. This was a key point of Bourdieu's distinction theory (1984). From the 1970s the classical genre which had been relatively inaccessible to lower classes, suddenly became readily available as the recording industry made it commonplace and affordable thanks to recording technology and the increased distribution chain. It was no longer the luxury of the higher classes. Subsidised funding and 'free' concerts brought the highbrow genres to the masses. This widening of availability, and ultimate popularisation of the more accessible classical repertoire, encouraged eclecticism amongst the upper classes as they attempted to 'distance themselves' from the light end of their previously exclusive highbrow cultural genre. The increasing interest in the intellectual end of the jazz repertoire was a way of acting upon that and maintaining a divide between the wider audiences who were now consuming classical (Menger, 1986; Donnat, 1994). The increased availability of the full classical repertoire is wide-reaching today, with a significant depth of catalogue offered digitally on services such as Naxos.

Re-testing Bourdieu's Concepts In French Society

With the increased attention on the omnivore driving the debate regarding the validity of Bourdieu's original theories, Coulangeon (2005) carried out research which would provide an updated insight into French society and culture. He used French survey responses obtained by a Ministry of Culture study examining cultural practice in 1997. This was intended to enable a comparison between the omnivore vs univore effect on the original cultural legitimacy theory. He explained that the focus on measuring the genres of music 'most listened to' is most likely to indicate

their preferences, rather than simply asking them to outline their tastes in more abstract ways with 'likes'. He suggested that asking respondents for likes carries risks because it is possible that individuals are likely to 'valorise' how they respond, rather than providing an accurate reflection of their tastes. So asking respondents to disclose the type of recorded music that they actually listened to can be deemed satisfactory in examining and mapping out music preferences. [This thesis takes this view a step further by examining data based on asking what they actually bought]. His results enabled him to produce five classifications of attitudes towards recorded music - five preference profiles. The first profile accounted for 20% of the sample and consisted of well educated, wealthy upper classes aged 40+ who had an *enlightened eclecticism* organized around the highbrow genres: classical, opera and jazz. The second profile (13%) was dominated by the over 60s group but with less obvious socio-occupational and education patterns. Their preferences leaned towards easy listening styles, folk and film. Thirdly 8% of the sample fell into the under-25 dominated profile which had no significant patterns in terms of socio-economic status but had very visible preferences for rap, rock, hard rock, and international pop in a generational effect that one would expect. The fourth profile was the largest (45%) and dominated by the working classes. It was strongly linked to just one genre – pop. The final profile was dominated by the over 60s lower income group and was signified by the absence of any genre at all. Coulangeon suggested that this could be another example of a generational effect caused by the arrival of the recorded music industry really taking hold after their youth so recorded music was not a part of life for them in the same way as it was for younger cohorts.

He goes on to support the theory of Bourdieu in that he found no evidence of widespread omnivorous preferences across all genres, and found a clear preference for the highbrow genres amongst the highest class group. He also noted the importance of economic capital, which he says is often side-lined in sociological research in this field. Listening to music, either as a recording or in a live concert setting, required the acquisition of goods or services and therefore the income status of that individual is relevant and influential in their consumption.

Coulangeon draws three conclusions regarding the univore-omnivore debate. First, the main segmentation influence in music preference appears to be generational in

French society. Secondly, quantitative analyses such as these do not allow deeper examinations of how people are consuming these genres, and why they are doing so. Thirdly, the omnivore model adds an extra dimension to the cultural legitimacy model rather than replaces it – the boundaries are becoming more complex to accurately measure rather than fading. This suggests a redesign rather than dilution of legitimate high culture, whereby jazz has been accepted into the circle but seemingly not other forms of popular music such as pop, MOR, rock, rap, film soundtracks etc. This is something that this thesis will investigate further. Fourthly, although his research provides support for a link between social markers and music orientations, this appears less significant than suggested by Bourdieu's habitus theory which is more of a subconscious impregnation of these dispositions. Instead Coulangeon emphasizes the role of learning in schools as a key factor in taste formation. Following Coulangeon's argument about the limitations of quantitative studies, some of the questions raised here are addressed in the qualitative work of this thesis.

Quantitative research limitations of the omnivore studies

This review suggests that previous cultural taste research has found insufficient evidence to firmly validate the existence of the omnivore. The measurement techniques have on the whole been too superficial and rather than finding increasing numbers of omnivores, the body of research has instead often provided observations which have supported some of Bourdieu's original concepts alongside some of Peterson's. Age as a key influence has constantly appeared as a significant factor, more so than class or education. This is because although the most omnivorous groups have tended to be well educated and with solid economic income, they have also tended to be in the older age groups. Consequently this reinforces a view that class only seems to be linked with musical taste in the older generations. It becomes decreasingly relevant when regarding the generations who grew up after the rock/pop boom of the 1960s, when popular culture took hold of the population through the growth of mass media.

Even Peterson admitted this in his later review of a vast array of research that had

targeted the omnivore concept, commenting that their findings were “diverse and fall into no recurrent patterns” (2005, p264). Instead of adding to the omnivore evidence the discussion was instead largely just circulating with no significant breakthroughs. This is important to note because Peterson’s work had shown evidence of increasing omnivorous behaviour between the 1982 and 1992 studies. Therefore, as mentioned above, if this was a new trend that was appearing, we would have expected to have witnessed continued visible growth of this phenomenon in the following decades. This had not been identified.

By the mid 2000s researchers were becoming increasingly intent upon addressing the limitations of previous studies in attempts to move the debate forward. The Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion study in the early 2000s was an extremely significant data source, as it was the largest survey of social class and music tastes that had ever been conducted in the UK. It produced a stream of academic articles which used the raw data, and the overall findings, to find new insights into the univore-omnivore concepts.

The quantitative methods used in previous omnivore research did not give sufficient accuracy, mainly due to the fact that there was no real method of guaranteeing that individuals would give accurate responses. This was especially the case in studies where the questions relevant to musical taste consisted of just a few questions within a survey that covered a wider range of cultural activities. It was becoming obvious within the field that although the depth of previous research had produced interesting findings, there were significant weaknesses due to their reliance upon quantitative survey response data and broad genre definitions (Bryson, 1996; Peterson and Simkus 1992; Peterson 2002; Van Eijck, 2001; Ollivier 2004). However, despite the increasingly obvious limitations in the original omnivore work it did enable a shift change in thinking regarding music tastewhereby academics no longer assumed that Bourdieu’s univore concept was the only conceptualisation of music taste. It enabled experts to consider an alternative hypothesis. Whereas the omnivore hypothesis proposed that music taste and the mechanics of taste formation were changing, an alternative proposal might be that rather than the individuals themselves changing, the music itself had significantly changed compared with Bourdieu’s original data collection in Algiers in the 1960s. Moreover the findings might also reflect

technological and broader social changes. Qualitative research will be included in this research as an essential addition to the study of the music tastes and consumption of music.

2.3.4 Contemporary Cultural Capital and The Omnivore.

Bennett *et al.* (2009) took the discourse forward considerably in publishing work which, whilst it used the iconic *Distinction* work of Bourdieu as its foundation, aimed to provide a more sophisticated understanding of cultural preferences and proposed omnivorous behaviour in modern UK society. The ‘Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion’ project 2003-2005 funded by the ESRC and led by Bennett has proven to be a landmark study in the UK, particularly when looking at cultural capital and music taste. The main body of research data was collected in 2002-3. The work was published originally by Bennett *et al.* (2005) as a working paper and then in book form (2009).

Bennett *et al.* (2005) adopts some of the approaches of *Distinction*, using a mix of surveys, focus groups and household interviews to study cultural taste in the UK. In addition to music, other cultural subfields included watching television, films, reading, visual arts, eating out and sport. Preferences (likes) and practice (level of engagement) were separately measured with a distinct set of questions. Their research allows a valuable investigation of the role of class and the influence it has today. Comparison with the findings of class and cultural taste in 1960s France, as analysed by Bourdieu in the original study, enables the CCSE to provide an analysis of Bourdieu’s theory that cultural taste and capital can be socially conditioned and depend on the ‘habitus’ of the agent. The level at which education, income and upbringing interact to form the cultural taste of an individual, was tested through a range of quantitative and qualitative sources. This enabled the research team to group the respondents into clusters based upon their cultural preferences, education, occupation and age. The results demonstrated a range of engagement levels differentiating between those who were most engaged with culture and those who were the least engaged, and in some cases leaning towards being actually disengaged

from many forms of cultural activity. There was also a visible differentiation between forms of culture. Established cultural forms and activities often viewed as legitimate or highbrow were clustered together, whilst the more contemporary forms were clearly clustered separately. Music appears to be especially divided compared to other cultural activities. TV viewing however was much more central and enjoyed by most people.

The results suggest that education and economic status are closely linked and that economic capital is closely linked to cultural capital in the UK today. Those in privileged positions and with advanced qualifications displayed a wider array of cultural practices. Overall there were clear structural divisions within the cultural field which were divided into four categories represented as quadrants. Figures 2.10 and 2.11 (Gayo-Cal et al., 2006) demonstrate that the top left quadrant tended to be highly engaged with music, young, well educated, professional and with a liking of rock, electronic and urban genres. In contrast, the top right quadrant was still dominated by the youth population but a much lower class, less educated cohort who displayed very little engagement with music and possessed a strong dislike of classical culture. The older age groups in the two lower quadrants displayed different characteristics, with the well-educated professionals on the bottom left displaying a liking of high culture and with very few dislikes (open to appreciating most things as per the original omnivore definition), and the lower class, less educated cohort on the right hand side liking musicals and country music and displaying dislikes of most other music genres especially modern genres.

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

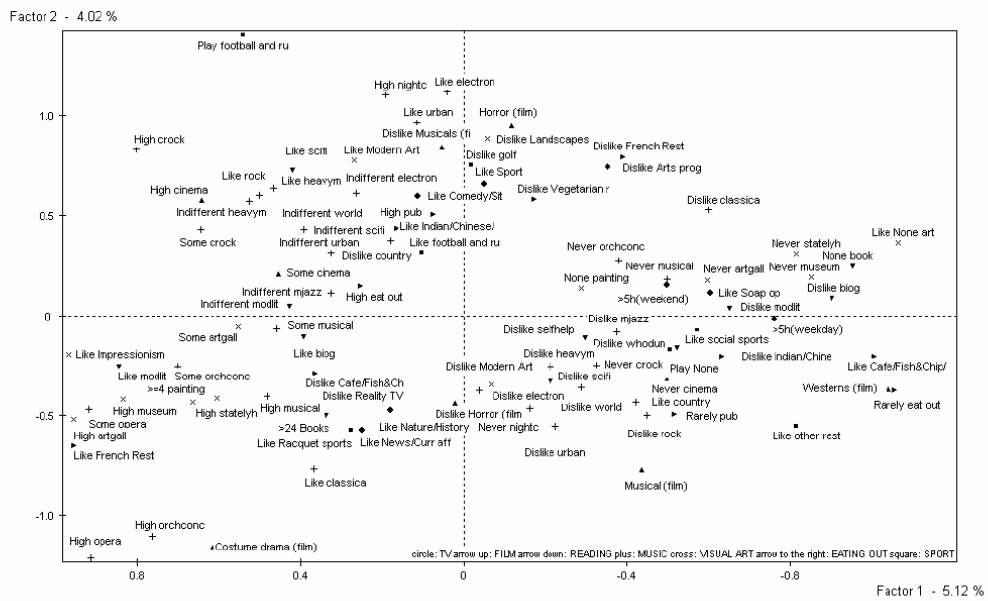


Figure 2.10. The distribution of cultural modalities (Gayo-Cal et al., 2006)

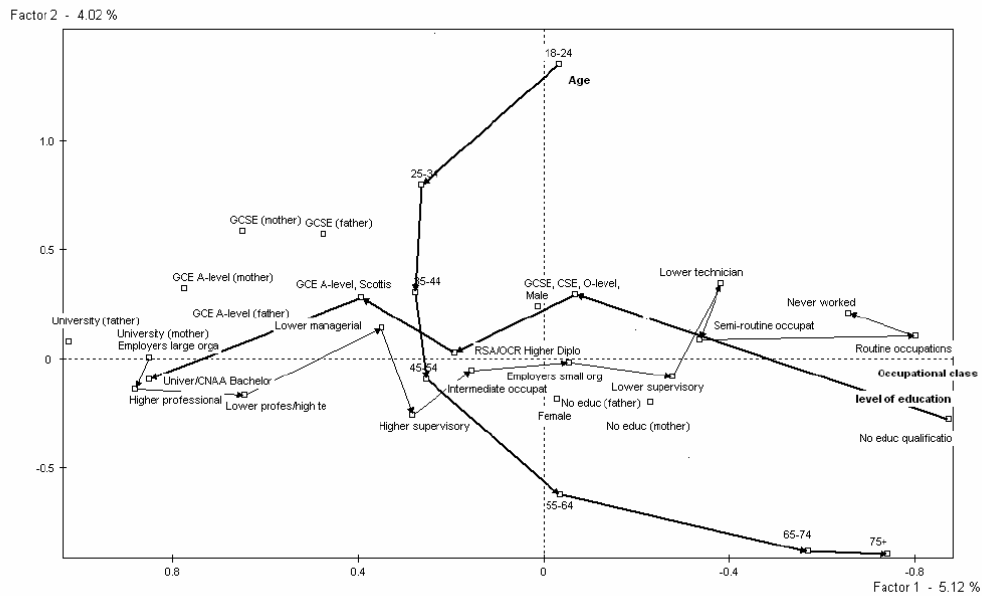


Figure 2.11. The distribution of socio-demographic variables (Gayo-Cal et al., 2006)

Age clearly seems to play a significant part in these groupings, with elderly middle classes being more likely to engage with traditional highbrow culture than younger middle classes, and middle aged, middle class individuals most likely to display modest omnivorous behaviour.

Bennett *et al.* (2009) found that the omnivore seems to be moderately apparent within their findings, although there seem to be many forms rather than one particularly defined set of characteristics. Their extended cluster analysis produced a detailed classification system, enabling an identification of eight musical taste communities. A clear divide was visible between the classical and contemporary genres, and age and education predictably play important roles (Bennett *et al.*, 2009,p80).

The Key Findings (Bennett *et al.*, 2009):

1. Dislikes are highly symbolic and can be as important as likes in terms of grouping individuals.
2. There is evidence of groups of individuals liking similar genres but there is a significant divide between popular and classical enthusiasts.
3. The most omnivorous cluster (cluster 4) who appeared to be most open to several genres including across the contemporary – classical divide, comprised 45-64 age groups, but this cluster did NOT seem to have an over-representation of the well educated middle classes. Contrary to the views of Peterson and Kern (1996), Bryson (1996) and Chan and Goldthorpe (2007).
4. Age is confirmed as an important factor in cultural divides especially where music is concerned.

“We have evidence for large amounts of ‘short-range’ omnivorousness linking musical genres which might be deemed relatively close to each other, but also a clear indication of a powerful divide between popular and classical music enthusiasts, which is only crossed in one cluster.

(Bennett et al., 2009, p81)

Age was flagged in this study as an important factor in the structuring of cluster

groups. The classical, country and jazz clusters were dramatically dominated by those over 65. There is a reference to the fact that only the older age groups (who were “first exposed to music in the 1950s and 1960s when popular music first challenged classical music’s cultural visibility”) seem likely to show omnivorous tendencies across those musical boundaries (Bennett et al, 2009, p82). **Age produced much clearer divides in this study than the other socio-demographic variables.**

“Musical boundaries are closely associated with those of age, such that we might well talk about generations with different kinds of omnivorousness.” (Bennett et al. 2009, p82)

This suggests that the factors Bourdieu did not address in detail (age, gender and ethnicity) have very influential effects on habitus, so the ‘reproduction’ effect has varied through generations due to evolutions in society. The work of Bennett and his associated academics following on from the CCSE project has created a more detailed picture of the concept of cultural capital and the omnivore in contemporary Britain. It has also provided the opportunity for a greater focus on the musical field, within the broader literature on taste, as examined using the CCSE data led by Savage (2006, 2011, 2013).

Savage published a paper in 2006 specifically detailing the music related findings of the CCSE study. He highlights the importance of measuring music taste through questioning of broad genres combined with specific works within the repertoire. This helps address any potential social expectations regarding genres. He also highlighted the significance of age.

“Age is the single most important stratifying feature for musical taste”
(Savage 2005,p170)

There was a higher association between the well educated and classical music, than occupational factors. Classical generally attracts the least ‘dislikes’ of all genres across all social groups. Savage also shows that the middle classes are now fans of

rock in particular, but this privileged social group continues to possess a disposition for classical music so are those most likely to engage with it. This has a consequence in terms of classical arts funding because of “the implication that any public support towards such music will be enjoyed predominantly by an already advantaged social group” (Savage, 2005,p173).

The complexities in approaching this area of research were recognized by the academic team.

“There continue to be powerful social processes implicated in the structuring of musical taste and participation in the UK, but these need to be carefully unpicked”

(Savage, 2005,p173)

This research thesis will follow Savage’s work in attempting to analyse taste by conducting a study that focuses on age and consumption as variables.

There remain some limitations to their analysis. It is important to note that the CCSE study gathered its data in 2003. Contemporary published papers which draw on this data set today may miss recent changes in cultural preferences and behaviours. There has been a rapid diffusion rate of technologies for music consumption over the past decade. Cultural materials are able to reach and be absorbed by a vast and varied audience very quickly today due to the adoption of digital technology within the home.

Another limitation concerns the overall conceptual framework for analysing cultural tastes and capital – a recurrent problem across all the literature of the past 30 years. Bennett et al. (2009) acknowledged that “a more elaborate and better specified analysis of capitals, or assets, is required to account for the diverse ways that cultural practices deliver profits to individuals and groups” (p259). The concept of a *musical habitus* was put forward by Rimmer in 2011 as an approach which could help to address the previous difficulties through an increased use of qualitative research methods.

“The concept of musical habitus provides a means of explaining how individuals’ relationship to music and their associated embodiment of cultural capital, of the sort approximately described by quantitative omnivore studies, enduringly connect to factors associated with their socialization and social locations”

(Rimmer 2011,p306)

This he suggests could help to examine how the destabilisation of genre boundaries may result in weakening classifications of ‘legitimacy’. For example, generations in the middle classes in particular may have an underlying predisposition for popular music genres from their youth that results in a continued subconscious attraction to those certain genres, despite having been exposed to other highbrow genres due to education or family wealth. Hence why the increased exposure to popular music in the 1960s and ‘70s, due to the rapid growth and mass media coverage during that period, can result in these effects perhaps in isolation to other forms of culture.

The Middle Classes

Bennett et al.’s examination of the middle class population is of interest to this research because this group has consistently been identified by researchers as a significant audience in terms of cultural participation and so their preferences may have important consequences in terms of music industry revenues.

“They are more convinced that the old snobbery continues to pertain than are other classes, thereby apparently recognizing that culture can be a tool of social positioning and that people might make social judgements on the basis of aesthetic preferences”.

(Bennett et al., 2009,p194)

The above quote suggests that cultural capital still operates within society but the

basis of ‘aesthetic preferences’ no longer necessary means the traditional classical canon. Furthermore, new cohorts who have entered this group – either being born into it or joining through social mobility and increased access to University education and careers – possibly have a different judgement of legitimacy than others. As the older cohort within the middle class group becomes increasingly diluted through natural causes, this could have permanent effects on cultural capital’s meaning and operation in society.

2.3.5 The ‘Experts’

A subsequent study by Savage and Gayo (2011) aimed to use the CCSE data to produce a new but compatible interpretation of musical taste by focusing on the varieties of ‘expert’ taste groups, rather than focusing on the age-specific factors which had been already identified in the original work (Bennett et al., 2009). Using the CCSE data to create a field analysis of contemporary musical taste in the United Kingdom, Savage and Gayo (2011) also demonstrated an apparent clustering of groups of individuals displaying similar characteristics.

A number of elements of Savage and Gayo (2011) are of specific significance to the current study:

- Their methodology uses qualitative interview techniques, alongside quantitative data, to gain a depth of understanding.
- Rather than measuring likes and practices to create a hierarchy of genres and social mobility between them, their analysis focused on the display of dislikes and avoidances.
- They identify detectable boundaries to *wide-ranging* omnivorousness.
- The results suggest that there is a need to recognize varying intensities *within* genre preferences, rather than just differentiating between genres. The likes and dislikes questioning helps to achieve this.

- There is a clear emergence of a sub-genre of classical music termed ‘light classical’ that has become increasingly popular in terms of listening figures at Classic FM (see Chapter 4). But significantly that has not translated into increasing classical music sales amongst the 40-59 audience (see Chapter 4).
- The results also suggest that those who both like *and* dislike classical and contemporary popular culture tend to be in the same cluster groups, suggesting that knowledge and opinions tends to be most powerful in terms of grouping people rather than preferred music tastes alone. Enthusiasts and critics of the ‘light classical’ music however tended to be very distant in terms of groupings.
- There were similar patterns to those of the original music clusters based on age, education, and income.

Savage and Gayo (2011) demonstrate that while there is evidence of some omnivorous tendencies amongst elite classes in terms of music tastes this is not strong enough to clearly identify any single group as true omnivores. They suggest that omnivorous activity could be largely within genres rather than across them and therefore would not be identified in this type of study. Their data suggests that this is especially true amongst the 40-59 age middle class groups, who are seen to be engaging with contemporary popular culture on a much higher scale than older, higher class groups.

Two clusters were particularly relevant to this thesis. *Cluster 1* were described as *classic enthusiasts* and not at all omnivorous but in fact displaying unitary taste towards classical with some country. They were aged 55-75+, lower professional/higher technician, white/other. This cluster appears to largely consist of the previous generations of 50 year olds who grew up with classical music and are displaying a lifelong taste for that genre. *Cluster 5*: were described as *experts* and the grouping most likely to resemble the ‘omnivore’, as they indicated a broad range of likes across classical, rock and jazz. However, they show little appreciation towards contemporary pop and urban genres. Therefore, they are described as experts rather than omnivores in Savage and Gayo’s study. They are aged 35-54 (in 2002-3 when the data was collected), higher professional / lower professional / high

technician / higher supervisory / university. So this cluster could represent *the new generation of 50 year olds (and those entering the 50s) who grew up with rock pop.*

Although this cluster indicated a liking of classical, rock and jazz, they scored more highly on classical than rock on the liking scale. The cultural legitimacy of participation (Lahire 2008), contrasting formal/informal settings, contemplative/participative throws up interesting questions today. For example, compare the VIP box experience to the ‘mosh pit’ at floor level front of stage, compare the listening experience at The Bedford which is formal and contemplative but not highbrow.

The CCSE research (Bennett et al., 2009) has identified age-specific tensions and a cluster who are educated and aged 45-64 as the most likely to cross the boundary of both highbrow and popular as a potential omnivore. However, it does not give a detailed breakdown of genres. Savage and Gayo (2011) expanded on the CCSE data analysis to focus on music taste in much more detail. They identified boundaries to wide ranging omnivorosity. They suggest that rather than focusing on age-related factors alone there should also be a focus on ‘expertise’ when identifying groups. They found that rather than straddling genres ‘experts’ consume omnivorously within the genre (across sub-genres). This is of interest to the current research project as the sales data clearly shows that new artists and releases within the pop/rock genre can be just as appealing to the 40+ audience as the back catalogue releases of their youth. A liking for both Shirley Bassey and Adele for example. This was likewise across sub-genres within the categories.

This thesis aims to further build on Savage and Gayo’s work by attempting to examine these age effects in detail to see whether the music tastes of the 40-49 and 50-59 cohort, over a 20 year period, display patterns of omnivorous consumption OR if they are univorous in their taste and carry the rock pop preferences of their youth through their life course.

Savage and Gayo’s conclusion is to question the consensus on the emergence of cultural omnivores. Other researchers have also proposed further analysis of the omnivore concept (Atkinson, 2011; Rimmer, 2011).

“In general (the results) reveals that no cluster can be easily characterized as omnivorous. Here our finding is more arresting than that provided by Bennett et al. (2009) – for one of their clusters (their Cluster 4) did straddle the contemporary and classical divide, whereas our Cluster 5 is strongly oriented towards classic and jazz rather than contemporary music” (Savage and Gayo, 2011, p348)

Savage and Gayo (2011) found that the role of key dislikes played an important role in musical preferences, and the respondents’ dislikes and avoidances make it difficult to class them as ‘omnivores’. This echoes Bryson’s work (1996) which identified the dislike of heavy metal music as a key partitioner of music habits.

Savage and Gayo’s aim was to move the analysis of musical taste away from the concept of the omnivore, towards an approach which better identifies and explains the ‘intensities and expertise’ associated with music tastes and cultural practices. Their approach demonstrates the value of conducting both quantitative *and* qualitative research techniques in order to fully understand the nature of engagement and avoidance, and show how groups can also be split into sub-types. Other researchers have also emphasized the importance of using qualitative research to move forward the omnivore debate (Ollivier et al., 2008; Bellavance, 2008; Warde et al., 2008).

*“It is the intensities around contemporary and popular music that are now striking to observe, and towards which the figure of the omnivore gestures. **It is these new musical ‘experts’ who demand more critical attention in future research.**”*

(Savage and Gayo 2011, p352-353)

2.3.6 Highbrow vs Emerging Culture

Savage et al. (2013) recently also published the findings of the largest survey of social class ever undertaken in the UK. The Great British Class Survey used Bourdieu's framework of cultural capital, economic capital, and social capital as its foundation, including a measurement of cultural consumption and music preferences. The aim was to produce a new model of social class that more accurately reflects the social structure of the UK today.

The results showed two social classes that are of interest to the present study: an elite group and an established middle class group with a mean age of 57 and 46 respectively. Both groups scored highly on preferences for both 'highbrow' and 'emerging culture' and the authors describe this 'Established Middle Class' as a culturally omnivorous group.

However, more detail may be required in order to fully understand the results of the cultural capital score. Savage et al. describe 'highbrow' cultural capital as the respondent's engagement with classical music and jazz, and 'emerging' cultural capital as engagement with rap and reggae. It is unclear where the rock/pop genre is addressed in this schema and their definitions of 'traditional' and 'emerging' culture may need updating.

More significantly, Savage et al.'s findings suggest an alternative conceptual framework for understanding the formation of music tastes. They find that the classical genres (educated group) and musicals (less educated group) are mostly liked by those who grew up before the 1960s. By contrast the contemporary genres are mostly liked by those who grew up post 1960s. This is visible across most groups despite class or education.

An alternative hypothesis might be that traditional high culture may be showing continuing signs of becoming irrelevant in modern society, particularly amongst the new generations (Frow, 1995; Gripsrud, 2011). This is a phenomenon that is being witnessed in other territories as well as the UK, as the generation who grew up during the birth and original explosion of popular culture now mature into the older demographic categories. This ageing effect can provide an indication of how music

preferences that are formed during youth are carried through the life course.

This idea that tastes are formed in youth and may last over the lifespan is not well supported in recent literature. Two recent psychological studies, which aimed to analyse music taste and personalities, claimed that music tastes from youth do not last a lifetime and instead they change as people age (Bonneville-Roussey et al, 2013). The two separate studies analysed in this research publication both involved attitudinal responses to an online survey. The first study concluded that music remained important to individuals at all ages. The second study concluded that preferences changed as individuals aged, with older cohorts showing a greater liking of sophisticated and mellow genres and younger cohorts showing a greater liking for contemporary genres. From these findings the authors proposed that these patterns indicated that musical taste changes as people grow older.

The study demonstrated that the population displayed a decreased liking for modern music as they age, and developed an increased liking for classical and easy listening styles. They claimed that very little is understood about age trends in musical engagement or preferences - so their study aimed to fill the void with these two large studies. They clearly omitted the vast amount of sociological research that has focused on this subject over the past decades. Their focus was a psychological one proposing that music engagement is undertaken by individuals in order to satisfy psychological needs, and that because individuals' needs changed as they aged this would be reflected in the music that they engage with.

However, there appear to be limitations in this study. Firstly they do not address the previous research findings that have been mentioned throughout this chapter. Secondly, they rely upon a limited quantitative survey which, although it represented the responses of 250,000 individuals, contained insufficient detail to validate the reasoning behind the visible patterns in music preferences that the results produced. As this was not a longitudinal study these results could instead be interpreted as providing additional evidence that those who grew up before the 1960s are far more likely to possess a liking of those styles of music, because they did not grow up with the rock/pop that the younger cohorts grew up with. They acknowledge this important fact as one of the recognised limitations of this study.

That recent large (250,000 respondents) study published by Cambridge University claimed that music tastes do not last a lifetime but actually change throughout the life course (Bonneville-Rousey et al., 2013). Age is highlighted as a significant factor and is a variable that will be targeted and investigated as part of this research thesis. The older cohorts are identified with an acknowledgement that they appear to have the ability to participate in both contemporary and classical genres. Savage and Gayo (2011) propose that this is due to a strong music enthusiasm amongst this cohort of experts who have the desire and the knowledge to explore both styles. Whereas Bonneville-Rousey et al. claim that it is due to a transition period where individuals lose enthusiasm for music engagement and actually ‘age into’ the classical genre due to a decreasing preference for contemporary and intense music styles and an increasing preference for less intense and more mellow and sophisticated styles.

These results published by Bonneville-Rousey (if they have been misinterpreted in this way) could actually strengthen, rather than contradict, the hypothesis developed above regarding ‘music generations’ with tastes firmly formed during youth and lasting a lifetime.

“We identified important age differences in the role music plays at various periods in life; we obtained compelling evidence that musical preferences develop throughout adulthood; and we spotted normative trends in the styles of music individuals prefer at different life stages and how they are related to personality”

(Bonneville-Rousey et al., 2013,p13)

2.3.7 Summary of The Music Taste Literature

Bourdieu (1984) proposed that an individual's habitus is highly influenced in early formative years by upbringing (class) and education, and this set of tendencies determines how that individual reacts to different music styles.

It was necessary for this thesis to test whether class still has an influence in that respect, and whether cultural capital was still restricted purely to the legitimate highbrow classical music forms, or if a new definition of 'legitimate culture' now existed which had recognized contemporary music. This was an elitist view setting classical music apart from other genres and positioning it firmly with the higher classes as a marker of distinction and status.

Secondly, Peterson (1992) conversely presented a non-elitist view proposing that middle classes are increasingly omnivorous and were able to cross the boundary between popular and classical genres with a much more liberal mind-set. Therefore, it was important to test the level of engagement across those two music categories, especially in terms of the behaviour of socio-economic groups.

Thirdly, Savage and Gayo (2011) proposed that the 'experts' were able to appreciate and engage with both the classical and contemporary (rock) genres and that they were re-writing the social definitions of legitimate culture. So it was essential that these 'music generations' were investigated in depth in order to ascertain the level of their omnivorous consumption of classical and contemporary.

The concept of cultural capital and use of 'legitimate' music in the quest for social status and promotion will also be examined during this thesis, and compared with the most recent literature concerning music taste in the UK. The identification of 'the expert' (Savage and Gayo, 2011) group consisting of the 40s and 50s middle class cohort highlighted the existence of 'music generations' who grew up with specific music styles and are carrying them through their life course.

2.3.8 A New Music Canon

Savage and Gayo (2011) suggest that in the UK the focus on finding the omnivore has distracted from investigating “the profoundly divided nature of musical taste” (p353) which has become evident through recent research. Younger audiences tend to be passionate about new music and new styles whereas the older audiences less so. “This division cross cuts those of class and educational equality” (p353). The cluster of “experts” as identified by Savage and Gayo are predominantly within the 40-59 cohort age group of interest to this thesis, and are professionals and graduates.

*“What we are seeing today could be a fundamental remaking of the musical canon, in which the historic investment in classical music as the dominant position in the musical field is being reworked. It is the intensities around contemporary and popular music that are now striking to observe, and towards which the figure of the omnivore gestures. **It is these new musical ‘experts’ who demand more critical attention in future research.**”*
(Savage and Gayo, 2011, p353)

The question arises regarding what is today’s definition of social distinction amongst modern, middle-aged, middle classes in the UK. The concept of subcultural capital has been examined at length in studies targeting the youth music cultures (Thornton, 1995; Hebdige, 1988). The social value of contemporary music has also been examined in previous studies (Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Toynbee, 2002). They acknowledge that the youth demographic continues to leverage subcultural capital from their allegiance with their chosen music genres and subgenres. However, it is not known whether the power to use a continued association with that music is still leveraged to achieve status or economic or social capital gains later in life. Owning an expensive car could be much more important to them than displaying a certain music taste. It is possible that music may not be used at all today to seek social distinction, it may have become purely a leisure and entertainment activity. Rock/pop can though be used to display social and economic status especially when displaying the ability to afford and/or obtain highly priced tickets to the most sought after shows today by artists who were at their peak in the 60s/70s/80s, such as The

Rolling Stones or Led Zeppelin, or limited edition box sets. The possibility that a new musical canon is being created by this generation is a valid question. It could demonstrate that this cohort is using it to achieve a level of distinction. This could also create significant opportunities for the commercial rock/pop industry over the next few decades – and equally cause many increased worries for the classical music industry. This research project will aim to provide a detailed investigation into this area and build on the existing body of work created by these previous researchers. This research explores the extent to which changes in musical taste constitute a threat or a marketing opportunity for the music industry.

2.3.9 Subcultures & The New 50 Year Old

A number of previous studies have examined subcultures in terms of contemporary music. The work has largely used Bourdieu's concepts to provide a framework within which to analyse the social actions within subdivisions of popular culture. Thornton (1995) provided an acclaimed and robust examination of subcultures using ethnographic methods to immerse herself in the club cultures at the turn of the 1990s. Hebdige (1979) also reviewed the role of music in the period of social change that he was witnessing during that period. Studies such as these provided an insight into how youth audiences use music as a marker of status and distinction. Behaviour that Thornton (1995) identifies as 'subcultural capital' built on the concepts of Bourdieu (1984), often marrying the music with associated fashion in order to visually identify with that genre and reinforce that status statement.

Other studies have investigated how the older age groups relate to these subcultures as they move through their life course. Bennett (2006) observed how older music fans continued to engage with the punk genre that they had grown up with but more in terms of the music, and less so with the visual identities attached to that music subculture. Gibson (2009) similarly observed older music fans engaging with northern soul, edm and rock music, proposing that music tastes formed in youth appear to last a lifetime.

“Although popular music tastes may alter and progress as people grow older, musical styles, genres, and involvement in particular popular music scenes are often sub-genres or derivatives of the popular music styles fans initially developed an affiliation for during their youth.”

Gibson, L. (2009,p221)

There does not appear to be an identified ‘ageing into’ classical music amongst these studies. Gibson observes that fans of rock and pop are able to enjoy newer forms of music and not just back catalogue releases but in general they tend to mirror the same musical styles as the core preferred genres from their youth. Anderson (2012) witnessed similar behaviours in her analysis of Duran Duran fans, now aged 40+ who were continuing to engage in the social activities relating to that core canon of music that they grew up with. Gibson (2009) also supported the concept of ‘habitus’ in her findings relating to the ‘handing down’ of musical tastes whereby older family members introduce the music they love from their youth to the younger generations of the family. They participate in this education process because this music still holds importance for them. This is a classless behaviour, especially with the rock genre, which was seen to have been embraced by the middle classes (Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Toynbee, 2002; Bennett et al., 2006; Savage et al., 2011&2013)

2.3.10 The implications of music taste literature for the present study

The original experiences of *The Genesis Suite* project and subsequent industry trends as reviewed in section 1, highlighted that the new generation of 50 year olds appeared to be displaying different music tastes and consumption behaviours than previous cohorts of 50 year olds. The review of the key academic research and the core concepts relating to music taste in this section has revealed a number of issues which relate to this hypothesis:

i. What dictates music taste formation?

There is empirical evidence to support Bourdieu's thesis that lifelong music taste appears to be formed in youth. However the contemporary evidence does not appear to support Bourdieu's original conception of the role of **class** in constituting the habitus which informs taste. Recent survey evidence does however, suggest a significant relationship between **age** and music taste. In particular, the 40-59 middle class cohort appears to be important because they could be the generation of 50 year olds which demonstrates the ultimate cut off point for classical music if they continue to prefer the contemporary genres of their youth. This thesis aims to investigate the music tastes of this cohort in detail.

This certainly seems to represent the experiences of *The Genesis Suite* and the music industry consumption data reviewed above. Indicating that the current 50+ year olds were potentially more likely to purchase an anniversary re-issue of a classic album by *Genesis*, than to buy the *Genesis Suite* classical crossover album based on the *Genesis* repertoire. It would be necessary to examine this in more detail during the field research period using a mix of empirical analyses of industry data and the collection of qualitative responses from the target group.

ii. What genres deliver cultural capital benefits?

Traditionally cultural capital was explicitly linked with the classical music genre. However, recent studies had posed questions regarding the potential increasing legitimacy of the rock/pop genre. So for example, the core original repertoire of *Genesis* could potentially hold higher perceived cultural capital benefits amongst this audience than the classical crossover *Genesis Suite* album which might have been considered light classical.

Much of the research studies reviewed in this section used likes and dislikes or attendance as indicators of cultural capital and engagement with certain genres. However, there would appear to be a strong case that the act of *buying cultural products* should also be classed as a form of participation. Although this distinction is not the subject of significant discussion within the literature, the act of paying for cultural products would appear to be important in a theoretical sense, because it demonstrates that agents are displaying engaging behaviour and acting on their taste

preferences. Acts of paid-for consumption are clearly also important within the discussion of music marketing strategies (above) as they are the business goal, and are thus also significant in their own right for the conclusions of this research.

For these reasons, therefore, sales data such as the BPI annual sales figures (analysed in chapter 4) have a significant amount of information to reveal regarding cultural capital and taste. In addition, the UK music sales data provides a breakdown of socio-economic groups enabling this study to examine the music genre purchasing habits of the higher social groups in an evaluation of cultural capital. Additional qualitative data will be required in order to deliver a more detailed investigation into if and how this 40-59 year old middle class cohort leverages cultural capital using rock/pop music. Also whether a legitimate classic canon has emerged and whether this can also include current rock/pop artists as well as original repertoire from previous decades.

The definition and boundaries of cultural ‘legitimacy’ suggested by Bourdieu appear to be shifting or fading. The music sales figures will examine whether rock/pop is just as popular with the middle classes today as with lower social groups. Classic FM has a vast 5 million audience across social classes. However, Classic FM purposely programmes its playlists with ‘popular’ classics in order to attract a wider audience of listeners who are enjoying ‘lighter’ forms of classical music – even if just as background music rather than a deeply passionate or engaged experience.

iii. Is this cohort increasing omnivorous music consumption?

Recent studies reviewed above have suggested that the 40+ ABC1 audience segment are most likely to display omnivorous tendencies. If this cohort were indeed capable of crossing the rock/pop – classical divide we would have expected to have seen this in action during *The Genesis Suite* project. This study will investigate that cohort in depth to ascertain whether the omnivore theory is relevant in today’s society. It has been argued above that previous quantitative approaches cannot delve deep enough to understand the detail of taste preferences amongst the audiences. Therefore, a mix of quantitative (the analysis of UK music sales data) and qualitative (participant

observation/surveys/interviews) will be used to try to address this problem.

Previous research in this area often ignores (or is unable to deliver) a detailed analysis of *genres*. As the broad genre definitions have continued to become more complex over recent years this can only really be examined with qualitative questioning to accurately determine whether they are consuming omnivorously across the classical – contemporary divide. Highbrow is defined as classical and opera, but a large number of other genres are bundled together under ‘popular’, ‘lowbrow’ or ‘emerging’. There is a strong argument that the rock/pop genre warrants its own detailed investigation today, especially when considering the commercial significance this genre holds in terms of revenues. This is a genre that accounts for the majority of music sales across all demographics. While the quantitative analysis conducted for this study has very limited sensitivity to genre, the qualitative sections are designed to attempt to explore these issues in more detail.

Economic capital has been highlighted as a constraining factor in participation, resulting in consumers confining their purchases to their core tastes. However, the widely available streaming services mean that economic capital today does not have to constrain an agent’s participation in terms of listening and building a considerable music collection in the form of playlists across multiple genres if they wish. We might expect that technology would facilitate omnivorous behaviours in a way that was not available to previous generations. Increased availability of web-based music libraries, downloading and streaming services would appear to facilitate omnivorous behaviours due to vastly increased ease of access and decreased price. If this is the case we might expect the analysis of sales figures to display flatter distributions of music sales across genres.

Much of the previous research has relied upon ‘self-reporting’ of the likes and dislikes and levels of participation. Therefore, the UK music sales data can provide a more specific visualization of audiences using their actual precise purchasing habits. Observation at actual events during the field research period will also reveal more information regarding audiences and genre preferences.

Several questions arise from the discourse:

- Is age a stronger determinant of music taste than class and, if so, why?
- Does the omnivore exist at all?
- Has the rock/pop genre as a whole attained legitimacy as an art form or are we all 'dumbing down' into a taste for lowbrow popular culture?
- Are the definitions of cultural capital and legitimate culture being reworked by this new generation of 50 year olds as they carry their rock/pop tastes into later life with pride?
- Is this resulting in the creation of a new 'music canon' which features rock/pop albums from previous decades which are considered and valued as 'classic' or 'iconic' and respected artistic works of popular culture?
- Can this continued appetite for the rock/pop music genre be leveraged by product innovation in order to produce new or increased revenues from this cohort by UK businesses?
- Is this continued passion for rock/pop amongst this cohort tied to the back catalogue repertoire and artists of the 1960s, 70s and 80s or does it also extend to new artists in that style?
- Has the new generation of 50 year olds separated itself from the traditional music preferences of previous 50 year olds due to the rock/pop explosion of the 1960s? If so does that mean that the term 'Over 50s' is redundant as a useful marketing term because they are too different in their tastes and behaviours compared with the rest of that 50+ group?

The final section of this chapter will review the businesses that have succeeded in marketing to the over 50s over the past 50 years. This will provide a broader examination of this consumer group and establish whether the possible *generational shift*, that has been identified amongst this cohort in the music sector, is also being experienced in other commercial business sectors.

PART THREE

2.4 Consumer marketing & the 50 year old demographic

A second opportunity could have arisen for *The Genesis Suite* album if a brand partner could have been secured to assist with the cost of touring it as a live show. Several experienced brand sponsorship agents came forward expressing interest in pitching this opportunity to a target list of high profile brands. They believed a brand would snap up the opportunity to associate with a high quality album project such as '*The Genesis Suite*'. They agreed that the target audience was an average age of 50, probably male, and most likely to be the more affluent socio-economic group. At first glance it would seem that this consumer would be of significant interest to brands, as they have solid disposable income and tend to be empty nesters with time on their hands once the children have left home.

It became apparent during the pitching phase that although several brands in the finance and motor sectors agreed that this target market was of interest to them, they did not prioritise this demographic in their marketing activity. In fact many brands were hesitant to be seen associating their products with the 50+ audience, even though it remains one of their key consumer groups, especially for premium priced products.

This is a stark comparison to music projects aimed at younger demographics. Brands ranging from American Express to Burberry enthusiastically spend marketing budgets to ensure connections with music based campaigns aimed at the younger audience despite the fact that this audience has far less disposable income than their parents' generation (Diaz & Pathak, 2013).

This tendency to steer away from the 50 year old in brand marketing is partially driven by historical trends regarding the 50+ market. A number of new companies and organisations have emerged in recent years, pitching *Over 50s* and *50 Plus* expertise to brands in order to increase commercial activity around this growing consumer group. The Mature Marketing Association (MMA) was also launched in the UK in 2013 to position itself as the official umbrella body as more and more

business interest (and media interest) continues to grow around this 50+ demographic. However, there continues to be a focus on the term 50+ or *Over 50s* which, based on the academic and industry literature reviewed above, seems to be an increasingly dated and ineffective consumer grouping in terms of marketability. It consists of a group aged between 50s and 100s and spans several generations.

2.4.1 Consumer marketing research and music

Much of the music related consumer marketing research to date has been focused on the consumer psychology field. Several studies published since 1989 have confirmed the findings reviewed in the above sections, proposing that consumer response to music is likely to be age dependent with popular genres appealing to younger cohorts and jazz and classical forms appealing to older adults (Behne, 1997; Gembris, 2002; North, 2010; Gembris and Hemming, 2005; Sivola et al., 1996; Hemming, 2013). Holbrook and Schindler's (1989) study into music taste suggested that the age dependency was in fact a generational effect rather than an ageing effect. They proposed that consumers hold onto certain music preferred in late adolescence throughout the life course, a finding that was also proposed in the sociological research reviewed in the earlier sections above. Their research calculated a peak song-specific age of 23.47 years (the age at which music has most impact). Hemming (2013) repeated this study and found that the age reduced to 17.36 years. She considered that this could have been caused by cultural changes such as increased access to music players and media at an earlier age. However, upon analysing the raw data in more detail it was proposed that actually the original song-specific age was a result of combining two separate linear data types into one chart. Although this did not provide further evidence for the original theory of generational effects, it did produce a new finding signifying that the age of 37.51 years appeared to be a turning point in music preferences whereby consumers younger than 37 displayed preferences for new music and those older than 37 displayed an increasing preference for older titles. This signified the presence of a *nostalgia effect* in the older adults, an effect that Schindler and Holbrook continued to examine in later work relating to marketing strategies (1996, 2003). They recognized that these peak preference ages and the associated nostalgia effects could be used by marketers to segment consumer groups and that the entertainment arts were particularly effective

in this regard. These nostalgia effects can produce powerful positive effects (Stafford, 2014) and are now increasingly harnessed as a marketing technique as brands revert to ‘classic’ brand packaging and advertising themes from previous decades. This thesis will examine this marketing technique in relation to music using the case studies reviewed in later chapters.

Hemming concluded her discussion by questioning the validity of the calculation of the peak preference ages. She also proposed that only a longitudinal study can accurately determine whether consumers’ music tastes change or continue through a lifetime. However, she commented that “*setting up longitudinal designs is a laborious task with limited data precision and general practicability*” (p303).

2.4.2 A review of successful Over 50s marketing strategies

The above sections have reviewed previous industry and academic work relevant to this thesis to identify a potential new market of 50 year olds in the UK. The following section reviews how companies have successfully employed marketing strategies in the past to create highly successful *over 50s brands*. It also reviews how those brands have used music to target this audience, and the problems they have experienced in recent years, as the effectiveness of their traditional marketing activities and the attractiveness of their brand appears to have been declining, in terms of winning the new generation of 50 year olds.

i. Saga

Company history and marketing strategies

The undisputed over 50s market leader in the UK has been the *Saga* brand for many years, currently achieving 96% brand awareness among the target market (Permira, 2014). It is the story of a family business which successfully targeted the over 50s demographic and experienced significant growth to become a household name. The business was launched as a holiday and travel company by founder Sidney De Haan

in 1951 with a single guest house in Folkestone called *The Rhodesia*, bought with a loan from his wife Marjory's father who was a bank manager in London (Ewbank, 2011). It grew to become one of the pioneer brands of direct mail marketing.

According to their annual reports (2013) the turnover now exceeds £1bn with 50% of revenues being derived from their financial products, 30% from holidays, 10% from healthcare and the remaining 10% from other activities such as magazine publishing. *Saga* captured this lucrative consumer group due to De Haan's early innovation as a pioneering marketing entrepreneur who recognized the potential of the retired population.

According to the *Saga* history records and published obituaries (Telegraph obituary, 2002; Guardian obituary, 2002; Saga.com, 2014) Sidney De Haan revolutionized the travel industry. When facing difficulties filling his 10 bedroom hotel in the off-peak months he realized that the 'retired population' could travel out of season. His target marketing and direct mail approaches resulted in regular coachloads of customers travelling to his hotel. De Haan realized the potential and quickly expanded his hotel portfolio in order to scale up the business which originally he named the '*Old People's Holiday Bureau*' (Ewbank, 2011).

His ongoing innovation continued to create new opportunities in targeting that retired audience. The business continued to expand with his regular newsletter becoming what is now known as *Saga Magazine*. This direct mail editorial approach built a significant customer base of individuals aged 65+ who remained extremely loyal to the brand. When the age of retirement in the UK dropped to 60 the *Saga* entry age was lowered to 60, then 55 and 50 as it was recognized that a growing number of individuals were able to take early retirement due to lucrative pension plans, and those who were still working had significant disposable incomes and were empty nesters with more leisure time on their hands.

By the time Sidney De Haan had retired in 1984 the company had been renamed *Saga* which allegedly was short for the *Sexually Active Geriatrics Association* (Ewbank, 2011). In the 1990s *Saga* launched their first cruise ship and began building ambitions for *Saga's* financial services products.

In 2002 upon his death aged 83, *The Telegraph* described Sidney De Haan OBE as “one of the most innovative British entrepreneurs of his time” (Telegraph, 2002). He had built a substantial and lucrative database of subscribers aged 50+ which was in a prime position for further exploitation. An expansion into insurance and financial services proved to be a significant turning point for the company which culminated in the family exiting the business in 2004 in a £1.35bn management buyout.

The arrival of the new generation of 50 year olds and market disruption

In recent years *Saga* has experienced increasing difficulty in successfully attracting the new generation of 50 year olds to its magazine and holidays, whilst also maintaining their vast core audience now aged over 75. In recent years the company has made several moves into expanding its services for the older loyal customer base. Acquisitions have included companies such as Allied Healthcare and Primecare in the healthcare sector, and the acquisition of Titan Travel to bolster its holiday provision with a portfolio of escorted holidays for older travellers. *Saga Home Care* launched in 2010 to offer a care service rolled out nationwide for elderly individuals wishing to continue living independently in their homes rather than relocating to a care home as their health deteriorates. In addition the *Saga Services* division has also opened up a legal service offering will writing and estate planning. All well positioned acquisitions and developments which enable *Saga* to maximize revenue opportunities amongst their 2 million+ existing loyal customers many of whom are who are now entering their 70s and 80s or above.

At present there appears to be very little overt activity aimed at attracting the new generation of 50 year olds. The magazine and company logo has undergone a rebrand and regularly features ‘rockers’ turning 50 on the front cover. But with a readership that extends into the 80 year old age group it is a significant challenge for that publication to successfully use the *Saga* brand to continue to service the existing ageing audience, whilst also attracting today’s 50 year old. *Saga* faces the challenge of appealing to today’s 50 year olds who grew up with rock, pop and vinyl and have much more in common with their children than with their parents.

The *Saga* magazine data highlights that the 45-54 year old age group has continued to fall from 7% to 5% of total magazine readership between 2012 and 2013, and the under 45s from 4% to 3% (Figures 2.12 and 2.13). However, it is not just the magazine that could face these challenges. Consumers today are increasingly tech savvy and well versed in the use of comparison websites for buying insurance and holidays. They search online and switch brands to get the best deals, demonstrating less brand loyalty than previous generations especially in terms of insurance, banking and holidays.

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK



Saga Magazine's Circulation & Readership figures

Saga Magazine			000s**	%		000s**	%
Circulation	632,217*	A	152	11	Under 45s	55	4
Readership	1,431,000**	B	502	35	45-54	98	7
Women	898,000 (63%)**	C1	418	29	55-64	278	19
Men	533,000 (37%)**	C2	212	15	65+	999	70
ABC1	1,073,000 (75%)**	D	105	7			
		E	41	3			

Figure 2.12. Source: *ABC Jan-Jun 2012 **NRS Jan-Jun 2012



Saga Magazine's Circulation & Readership figures

Saga Magazine			000s**	%		000s**	%
Circulation	498,074*	A	112	9	Under 45s	35	3
Readership	1,235,000**	B	399	32	45-54	61	5
Women	742,000 (60%)**	C1	434	35	55-64	231	19
Men	493,000 (40%)**	C2	178	15	65+	909	73
ABC1	945,000 (76%)**	D	73	6			
		E	38	3			

Figure 2.13. Source: *ABC Jul-Dec 2013 **NRS Jan-Dec 2013

The *Saga* brand has very successfully built a reputation for quality and it will continue to maintain its powerful loyal following of existing older readers. It remains to be seen whether they can also win the new generation of 50 year olds to maintain the ‘over 50s leader’ title. Or if they are content to switch focus solely onto their existing and ageing loyal consumer base, which still offers significant growth opportunities in sectors such as retirement villages and wealth management (Dunkley, 2014).

Saga & Music Marketing

Saga made moves into the music sector in December 2001 with the launch of their first FM radio station in the Midlands. The programming was curated to appeal to their target market and was deemed successful enough to expand the *Saga Radio* brand with a second station in 2003 and a third in 2004. This was a creative move that enabled this aspect of the business to also act as a significant marketing tool.

By 2006 they had launched a third successful station and secured a fourth. However, the company made a strategic decision in December 2006 to sell the *Saga Radio* brand to the Guardian Media Group for an undisclosed sum (but described in the official press release as ‘an excellent ROI for shareholders’). At that time the three active *Saga Radio* stations in the West Midlands, East Midlands and Glasgow had a combined weekly audience of 849,000 listeners according to the RAJAR Q3 2006 figures (Bold, 2006), and was heralded as a great success story by *Saga*. They publicized that their depth of knowledge of the over 50s market had enabled them to use that insight to act as pioneers and successfully create a radio proposition that appealed to the target market, a group of listeners that were largely being ignored by radio stations (Saga, 2006).

The sale decision was ‘based upon the consolidation occurring in the radio industry at that time and the lack of any further availability of FM licenses to expand the brand’ (Saga, 2007). GMG immediately rebranded the *Saga* stations as Smooth Radio and the programming changed to attract a younger audience, playing middle-of-the-road, adult contemporary music aimed at listeners aged 45 and over. It had very few similarities to its predecessor *Saga Radio*. The Smooth Radio portfolio was

later sold as part of GMG Radio to Global Radio Group in 2010 for an estimated deal worth £70m and continues to broadcast today (Guardian, 2012). Other organisations continue to enter the radio format, making use of the online broadcast technology. Age UK launched The Wireless in 2012 which is fronted by former well known presenters such as David Hamilton and aimed at the older adults (The Drum, 2012).

Saga has not made any high profile moves into music based marketing or business activity since the sale of the radio stations.

The AARP & Music

In comparison the equivalent of *Saga* in the USA market, the American Association of Retired People (*AARP*), has been successfully making strategic use of music for several years.

The *AARP* recorded 37 million subscribers in the USA in 2014 (*AARP*, 2014). The organisation specifically used a rebrand to move away from the word 'retired' and associating themselves with 'real possibilities'. They started to secure advertising during the Oscars and Grammy's to position themselves with iconic names in the entertainment field who are also now in their 50s (Elliot, 2013; Wong, 2010).

In recent years the *AARP* has actively used music to communicate with its membership base. They have been running large scale concerts as part of their annual *@50 Convention* since 2008. This lifestyle expo features a range of exhibitors and celebrity speakers in travel, finance, health, education, and technology. In addition they have included a growing programme of film and music features at this event, which in 2011 was attracting 25,000 attendees over a weekend. The weekend includes arena concerts headlined by featured artists such as Gladys Night and Lionel Richie. In 2013 the success of the annual *@50* convention resulted in the event becoming a biannual affair, duplicating itself in two separate USA cities: one in Spring and one in Fall. This strategy was continued in 2014.

Their music strategy is largely based upon servicing their existing membership base which has a current average age of 69 (AARP, 2014). For example, the artists booked for their Spring @50 convention in 2014 included The Spinners and The Moody Blues. These artists were 1960s stars so not within the sights of the new 50 year old who grew up with the stars of the 1970s such as David Bowie, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Fleetwood Mac etc.

In addition to the headline arena event the AARP have realized the value of having a smaller stage which operates within the exhibition itself during the daytimes. This has been run in the past by Concord Music who are keen to promote their heritage rock/pop catalogue to the vast AARP audience. The response has been positive.

“The quantity of visitors to the Concord booth and Music Stage was off the charts. But more importantly, the quality of their engagement with our music and artists far exceeded our expectations and is already generating long-term impact.”

Marc Morgenstern, Chief Marketing Officer

Concord Music Group

(AARP, 2014)

In October 2013 the AARP asked its members to nominate their 10 favourite artists of all time. The results highlighted the continuing music passions of the AARP audience and an indication of their possible average age: The Beatles, Elvis, The Rolling Stones, Bill Hailey & The Comets, The Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly & The Crickets, The Beach Boys, Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry, Little Richard.

The AARP is continuing to use music to connect with its audience and at the time of writing is currently running a talent search inviting its members to upload videos of themselves singing. The campaign is run in association with the *American Idol* franchise and called ‘*Boomer Superstar Contest*’.

The Genesis Suite and Saga

A media partnership with *Saga Magazine* was actually activated during *The Genesis Suite* album marketing campaign, as it was the leading Over 50s magazine and already had an established relationship with Classic FM. The album was advertised and reviewed in the magazine, and tickets for the world premiere concert at the Barbican Hall were offered to Saga readers at a discounted price. However, this yielded very little return on investment and upon review of the subscriber profiles, and in conversation with the Saga Magazine CEO, it became apparent that the readership was probably too old to identify with the *Genesis* repertoire of the 1970s.

However, the fact that Saga has been experiencing the same generational effects in its relationship with the new cohort of 50 year old consumers, provides further evidence that a change in consumer taste and behaviour may have occurred. Music could be an effective marketing tool for Saga to increase engagement and revenues from their existing loyal 65+ audience who identify with the brands. If the generational shift which is the focus of this thesis does exist, then it will not be possible to attract the 50 year olds with the same music as the older Saga subscribers. They associate with a different era of music pre-1960s. However, music as a segmentation tool can be highly effective in that regard, using specific catalogues to target precise consumer groups. It can only be prescribed once the music tastes of the target cohort/s are established.

ii. Reader's Digest

Company history and marketing strategies

Founded in New York in 1922 this magazine quickly became one of the favourite reads in the USA. By 1929 Reader's Digest Magazine had 290,000 subscribers generating a turnover of \$900,000. The UK version of the magazine launched in 1938 and quickly became as successful as its USA originator. Additional international versions were rolled out quickly and the continued success made the Reader's Digest brand at its peak the most read magazine in the world with a

circulation of 17 million and a readership of 70 million worldwide. The marketing campaigns were focused on the middle aged market, and the magazine editorial aimed to provide interesting material for that post war generation. In 2009 the company was reported to have offices in 45 countries, a customer base of 100m households in 79 countries, global annual sales of 68m books, music & video products, and 65 branded websites generating 18m unique visitors per month. (BPI, 2009)

Readers Digest & Music Marketing

The UK division of the business launched a very successful entertainment division in 1960, which became one of the leading home delivery brands for music, leveraging music purchases from its extensive middle aged readership. Their music products were self-branded multi-disc set compilations or re-issues licensed directly from major record labels, but which did not contribute to Official UK Chart sales. These box sets often comprised of four or five vinyl records/CDs. In a February 2009 report published by the BPI the average selling price of a Reader's Digest 5-CD Set was quoted as €69, with sales of 5 million music box sets sold globally each year.

The core customer in 2008 was stated as 55+ and the BPI research report clearly showed how the Readers Digest brand successfully sold music to a consumer group that were more likely to buy directly from RD than the high street music stores. This is largely because the RD music division recognized the music tastes of that older generation and curated its releases accordingly. Their focus was on the easy listening, 60s, classical and country genres, in that order. In research commissioned by RD and featured in the BPI report over 45% of RD readers selected those genres, followed by shows/musicals and 50s hits. Rock appeared towards the end of the list with just 22% of respondents selecting it.

The arrival of the new generation of 50 year olds and market disruption

The 2008 sales figures demonstrated that the over 50s age group contributed to 24% of overall UK album spend that year but contributed to 86% of Readers Digest sales. Whereas the 40-49 age group contributed 20% to overall UK album spend but only

9% of Reader's Digest sales. This demonstrates that the genres and releases that Readers Digest was focusing on were not appealing to the new generation approaching the age of 50. Therefore, the brand was in danger of being too reliant on an ageing market, which seemingly had very different music preferences to the younger market. They were however a very loyal readership, with 47% naming Readers Digest as their most often used source for purchasing music, followed by supermarkets at 14%.

The marketing strategy focused very much on internal cross selling of products to its existing readership with very little external marketing. Therefore, as a brand that a new generation of readers did not migrate into, they were becoming increasingly reliant upon the existing ageing subscriber base.

At the time of the report in 2009 Reader's Digest confirmed that most of their marketing and sales occurred in physical formats but they recognized the importance of digital and were making concerted efforts to establish this aspect of its business strategy. However, in recent years the brand has struggled to appeal to new generations of adults. It became known for its presence in doctors' and dentists' waiting rooms and on grandparent's and parents' bookshelves.

The UK business hit significant problems in 2009 when it was bought out of administration for £14m by a private equity fund. Despite attempts to modernise, including launching an online edition, its readership had fallen from about two million in the 1990s to under 600,000 by 2010.

By January 2013 the circulation had fallen to 400,000 and 30% of those issues were being given away for free. The once successful CD and DVD division had experienced faster than expected declines so was also wound up when the new executive board made 75% of the UK staff of Reader's Digest redundant in an attempt to save the business.

Despite a further investment of £9m, the efforts to appeal to a new generation of reader failed to reverse the decline. In February 2014 with a circulation of 187,000 the UK business was sold for £1. The new owner is Mike Luckwell, an entrepreneur

with a personal estimated wealth of £135m, who made his fortune in media. Luckwell claims that his new strategy for the Reader's Digest brand is to aim to replicate the model of Saga by launching a financial services division to sell products to the existing readership (Titcomb, 2014)

It does not appear that the strategy aims to win the new generation of 50s. Instead he aims to merge the business with his existing direct mail business in order to sell an expanded range of products that are aimed at the 60+ year old audience (Goodley, 2014).

The Genesis Suite and Readers Digest

The Readers Digest did not form part of the marketing campaign for the Genesis Suite, as the magazine and music department were already experiencing problems at that time. However, the facts reviewed in the above section provide further evidence of the music tastes of the previous cohorts of 50+ consumers, and the divide that appears to exist between those previous cohorts and the new generation of 50 year old consumers.

2.4.3 Identifying further evidence of a potential generational shift

These leading over 50s brands achieved phenomenal success during the past 60 years. They identified an audience of retired consumers, who at that time were not being fully serviced by existing brands and organisations. They created services to fulfil those needs and consequently experienced high growth with accelerating subscription figures. They lowered their sights from the over 65s to the over 60s and down to the over 50s. In some ways they are now victims of their own success, because they have so firmly established themselves as the *old age* brands there is a danger that the new generation of 50 year olds today may tend to associate them with their parents' generation rather than identifying with the brands themselves.

AARP has recently started increasing its campaigns aimed at the new 50 year old, featuring fashion shoots with glamorous 50 year old celebs and creating street graffiti marking anniversaries of rock stars.

Readers Digest has released an interview with the new owner suggesting that they are going to service the new audience of 'frisky' 50s and 60s year olds.

It remains to be seen whether any of these tactics will result in the 50s forming a relationship with the historically 'grey' brands.

These organisations may find increased success in creating completely new sub-brands/sister brands aimed at the new 50 year old audience rather than trying to use their existing brand to juggle the task of maintaining a large loyal core subscription of older 65+ members whilst also appealing to the new generation of 50 year olds.

2.4.4 Business Innovation, Music, & The New 50 Year Old Consumer

Many brands now use music to target consumers through a variety of ways. Energy drink company Red Bull has successfully launched its own record label led by former senior executives of the major record labels. It has strategically set out to deliver a double benefit, using this music company to market the drink brand to its youth target audience whilst also striving to achieve profits through its music activity. Apple leads as a significant example of a company who struggled in the computer hardware sector against its larger competitor Microsoft, so expanded out into digital lifestyle products such as the iPod and then into the mobile phone sector and created the most successful legal digital music download service of all time. Steve Jobs demonstrated how creativity when combined with execution can produce extensive commercial returns. Timing is paramount of course. It's about hitting the growth market at the right time (Accenture, 2011), gathering market information and creating business ideas that can ride the curve during its growth. Apple recognized the dawn of a new music era and reaped the rewards.

The above examples demonstrate how new product innovations and business strategies using music have successfully targeted the younger demographics. This thesis intends to test whether the 40+ demographic can be engaged in a number of ways using music in order to generate revenues and business growth thereby providing insights which companies across many sectors (not just the music industry) can use to inform and shape new products, campaigns and business strategies. To date within the music industry this activity has traditionally just revolved around re-issuing albums on anniversaries and putting the artist on tour. This thesis aims to investigate if innovation could extend this activity beyond the usual practices. This is not just about using music in the marketing of products, it's about developing new products or experiences that deliver something of value to the consumer. Brands have often used music in their marketing strategies but these techniques often purely become replications of the same idea. Music has to be used appropriately to achieve maximum results. Simply adding a music theme to an existing product might succeed in achieving short term sales and PR, but can also run the danger of alienating music audiences who are passionate about that music or artist. For example, the special edition Kurt Cobain trainers by Converse attracted a backlash from core fans who saw this as a blatant corporate exercise in 'marketing bollocks' and in direct contrast to what they believed the artist stood for (NME, 2008). Converse in fact went on to build a credible music strategy launching the brand's own recording studio in New York in 2011 named 'Rubber Tracks' which offers musicians and artists free studio time to record their music (Billboard, 2011). They also continue to release their special edition trainer range with the latest issue celebrating Black Sabbath's 40 years in rock. Converse has actually succeeded in becoming a brand of footwear products that has crossed multiple generations using rock/pop. This thesis will specifically investigate the extent to which rock/pop music can be used to commercially engage the middle class 40-59 year old consumer using innovation.

A recent report published by Trendwatching.com (2014) announced that "demographics are dead" as we enter an age where consumers are better defined by attitude than age. They identify the opportunities that exist for marketers and brands to cross generations rather than continue to use traditional demographic ideas regarding their target markets. According to the report there is a 40% overlap

between the 1000 preferred artists of 60 year olds and 13 year olds (Ergatoudis, 2014). Brand examples in the report demonstrate how these demographic boundaries are fading. For example, there are now more gamers aged 44+ in the UK than under 18, and more women gamers than men for the first time. Rolls Royce is one premium brand that has made new moves into gaming, making its first appearance in an Xbox driving game. The report also highlights how status, which traditionally has been linked with consumerism and economic wealth, is now increasingly being linked with experiences rather than material goods. Consumerism though is still strong and retailers are recognizing that they can use technology to reach their older customers as well as young. Twitter's fastest growing demographic in 2013 was the 55-64 age bracket with growth of 79%. Sotheby's as a brand has leveraged social media and e-commerce to extend its reach by now using eBay, Twitter and Facebook in its auctions. The report states that it is time for brands to rethink their traditional demographic segmentation strategies because generations are more similar than ever before and are connected by similar attitudes and tastes. Technology innovations in particular are now adopted just as quickly by the 45-54 age group as by the traditional *digital natives* aged 16-20.

*Successful products, services and
brands will transcend their initial
demographics almost instantaneously.
As a result, executives who continue to
attempt to navigate using demographic
maps, with borders defined by age,
gender, location, income will be ill prepared
for the speed, scale and
direction of change.*

(Trendwatching.com, 2014 p41)

This is a trend that is certain to continue if cultural tastes and attitudes continue through a lifetime, as this thesis proposes. Marketing Week magazine published some of the early data analysis from this PhD research in April 2014 (Jones, 2014) in a featured article recognizing how rock/pop music might be used to engage multiple

generations due to similar tastes and attitudes. Recognising the rise of the new generation of 50 year olds.

2.5 Chapter Summary

The core body of knowledge that was identified as relevant to this thesis included: music marketing, music taste, and marketing to the 50 year old consumer. This chapter reviewed the scale and profile of the 50 year old demographic in the UK, and demonstrated its commercial value through a review of the related works and examples from both the academic and industry fields.

The body of literature suggests that a new generation of 50 year olds may have arrived who could provide new opportunities for businesses to engage them using pop rock music rather than classical. This body of knowledge has been used to develop the research questions for this thesis which are detailed in chapter 3. These research questions will aim to examine and identify the music preferences of the new generation of 50 year olds, and the effectiveness of marketing strategies that use the preferred music style to engage them.

The experiences of *The Genesis Suite*, *Saga* and the *Readers Digest* suggest the potential emergence of a new growth curve in which the current generation of 40-59 year olds are arriving at a point in their life where they have the disposable income and time to indulge in their lifestyle passions.

Those companies who can deliver interesting, relevant and high quality experiences or products that match those appetites could see extremely rapid growth. The traditional businesses are already witnessing it in the growth of heritage acts touring the arena circuit, festivals witnessing growth in the 40+ audience and VIP packages. However, if this demand is as large as it appears to be, then there is the opportunity to create a much wider range of new experiences and products that push the boundaries a little further.

Part one of this chapter identified the potential arrival of a new generation of 50 year old consumers who grew up with rock/pop music and appear to display a continuing appetite for it. It has shaped their attitudes and consumer habits. Part two reviewed the academic literature relating to music taste and appears to have provided further evidence that this new generation of 50 year olds with rock/pop music tastes could offer significant commercial opportunities. Part three above appears to provide further evidence of the existence of this cohort through the market disruption experienced in recent years by commercial brands who had a long and established history of success in marketing to the over 50s consumer group.

The remaining chapters in this thesis will provide an account of how the original experience of *The Genesis Suite* project and the associated academic and industry literature reviewed in this chapter were used to design the research methodology and investigate the hypotheses. This research study will examine the music taste of the current 40-59 year old middle aged consumer group using a quantitative data analysis presented in chapter 4. It will use qualitative measures presented in chapters 5 to 7 to establish whether the apparent continued appetite for rock/pop music is tied exclusively to the back catalogue repertoire or extends into new artist releases. It will test the extent to which new business ventures and innovation can use music to commercially engage this new cohort of middle class 50 year olds using the case studies presented in chapters 3 and 8.

Based on the annual music industry statistics reviewed early in this chapter this consumer group is sizeable and lucrative and warrants more attention. It is hoped that this thesis will highlight the opportunities that this generation holds, identify their core music preferences, and encourage entrepreneurs to increase the amount of music themed business activity that is aimed at this audience.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Limitations of The Previous Taste Research

The original inspiration for this research project was the commercial experiences of *The Genesis Suite*, which had suggested the appearance of a new generation of 50 year olds. Chapter 2 reviewed the key academic theories regarding music taste. In contrast to the original rigid taste boundaries found in Bourdieu's 1960s study, Peterson's work had shown evidence of increasing omnivorous behaviour between the 1982 and 1992 studies. Therefore, we might expect to find continued visible growth of this omnivorous behaviour amongst the middle class demographics in the following decades. Instead, the review of the subsequent research, from the 1990s through the 2000s, suggested that researchers have found insufficient evidence to support the theory of the omnivore. Peterson admitted in his later review of a vast array of omnivore research that the findings were "diverse and fall into no recurrent patterns" (2005, p264). Instead of adding to the omnivore evidence the discussion was instead largely just circulating with no significant breakthroughs.

Secondly, Bourdieusian theories of taste suggest that taste is defined in terms of high culture and against popular culture, and that our tastes and dispositions reflect both the social class we were born into (our habitus) and the desire to join elite social groups (via acquisition of cultural capital through an engagement with high culture). There is an implied 'ageing' of taste in this theory. An implicit assumption that elite tastes (specifically high cultural forms like classical music and fine art), are increasingly acquired as we age, particularly if we are already predisposed to appreciate them, due to early formative experiences (habitus).

More recently as detailed in chapter 2, Bennett et al. and Savage and Gayo suggested that the middle class, *middle aged* cohorts were *most likely* to display omnivorous behaviour, but they did not find actual conclusive evidence that this behaviour was

increasing amongst this cohort. Rimmer (2011) also suggests that the destabilisation of genre boundaries (see also below) may result in weakening classifications of 'legitimacy'.

Chapter 2 thus found tentative support for an hypothesis of an emerging cohort (40-59 aged ABC1s) which, in particular, may have developed an underlying predisposition (*habitus*) for 'legitimate' commercial music genres in their youth, despite having been exposed to other highbrow genres during their youth due to education or wealth.

This thesis, therefore, provides a detailed academic examination of the tastes of a generation of 50 year olds (and the 40-49 year old cohort who would reach that 50 year old marker within this decade) who had grown up during the pop rock cultural explosion. It tests whether this group's tastes have indeed changed significantly, and whether this shift represents the emergence of a new canon of legitimate pop/rock music.

The literature review also identified certain methodological limitations of previous work in this area, and this analysis has been the basis for the methodology chosen for this study, as far as possible within the budgetary confines of the research.

3.1.1 'Likes' vs Purchases

Music has simply been one variable in a multi-faceted examination of culture (and class) in many previous studies. The definition of the omnivore claimed that, in the attitudinal studies reviewed in chapter 2, respondents had indicated an open-ness to appreciating both classical and contemporary genres. Unfortunately this does not specify the extent to which they actually consume it. Simply expressing a 'liking' for something doesn't necessarily result in the consumer actually completing the purchase journey for that item.

Therefore, in an attempt to produce a new and valid examination of music taste this research study produces a unique longitudinal academic analysis of actual music sales data. This will add new insight into those consumption levels in the UK. Like

previous studies, this data is derived from self-reporting, the difference is that respondents are asked to report the music that they actually *bought* during the year rather than indicating the music that they *like*. This sales data is published annually by the official music industry body the BPI. Their data collection methodology is described later in this chapter.

3.1.2 *Genre Definitions*

Music genres are difficult to accurately define. They contain numerous sub-genres, and variations within sub-genres, that provide limitations in the depth of understanding of taste when used in isolation in quantitative studies. A detailed analysis of the broad genre definitions, which have continued to become more complex over recent years, can be most effectively examined through the medium of qualitative questioning. For example, highbrow is defined as classical and opera, but a large number of other genres are bunched together under the terms popular, lowbrow or emerging. Classical also comes in many forms, some of which are considered highbrow and some lowbrow. There is also a strong argument that the rock/pop genre warrants its own more detailed investigation today, especially when considering the commercial significance this genre holds in terms of revenues. This is a genre that dominates music sales across all demographics (BPI, 2009). When attitudinal studies ask individuals to indicate whether they ‘like’ a genre, it results in responses that are highly reliant on their personal definitions of those genres. The alternative, the use of official industry genre definitions, has also been subjected to critique. The BBC music journalist Mark Savage (2014) commented, for example, that Mumford and Sons were classed as ‘rock’ although he viewed them as a ‘folk-pop band’ and he considered Rod Stewart as a MOR act rather than the ‘rock’ category in which his 2013 release had been categorised. As chapter 1 detailed, *The Genesis Suite* itself suffered from original inclusion in the rock/pop rather than classical chart.

3.1.3 *Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Taste Research*

Previous researchers have also emphasized the importance of using qualitative research alongside quantitative data analysis, in order to move forward the omnivore

debate (Coulangeon, 2005; Ollivier et al., 2008; Bellavance, 2008; Warde et al., 2008). They demonstrate the value of conducting both quantitative *and* qualitative research techniques in order to fully understand the nature of engagement and avoidance, and show how groups can also be split into sub-types.

3.2 Defining and Testing The Music Taste Research Questions

The literature review suggested that the subjects of this study, the 40-59 year old middle class cohort, had been identified as belonging to the *experts* group, and as potential omnivores who consumed across the contemporary rock and classical divide (Savage and Gayo, 2011). However, the evidence relating to this hypothesis, to date has been inconclusive.

The research questions designed for this study aim to provide four outcomes. Firstly, a new evaluation of the music taste of the 40-59 year old ABC1 demographic, to examine whether they consume music omnivorously across the classical – contemporary divide into pop rock. Secondly, an examination of whether the pop rock music tastes of their youth continue exclusively throughout the life course and are linked to the original artists, or whether they also consume new artists and repertoire in this pop rock genre. Thirdly, whether there is a legitimate classic canon of rock pop repertoire emerging which is being driven by this audience. Finally, as a practitioner focused study, the research aims to provide an evaluation of the commercial business opportunities that this new generation of 50 year olds might present to commercial businesses, through the development of appropriate music or music related products or experiences that suit their tastes better than *The Genesis Suite*.

3.2.1 Research Question 1

What is the music taste of the current 40-59 year old ABC1 cohort in the UK?

Hypothesis 1: The recent research by Savage and Gayo (2011) proposed that age is more indicative of taste boundaries than class, and that the new generation of middle class 'experts' now aged in their 40s and 50s are re-writing the social definition of

'legitimate culture'. This thesis will investigate the music tastes of the 40-59 year old ABC1 cohort in detail to provide additional insight into this group and the concepts of music taste. It will examine whether this group is actually engaging in an omnivorous manner across the classical – contemporary boundary as Savage and Gayo suggest.

Test: The research enabled a test of hypothesis 1, as well as theories of the key propositions concerning taste formation presented previously by Bourdieu and Peterson. These hypotheses were tested against new data, the official UK music sales data, over a 20-year period, as produced by the official music industry trade body. This previously unstudied data set is rich in information relating to the consumption habits of UK consumers. The full socio-economic and demographic empirical analysis of this data source is detailed in Chapter 4 of this thesis and provides interesting comparisons with the previous academic literature. The raw data obtained from the BPI Handbooks was analysed and represented using line graphs and linear trendlines.

3.2.2 Research Question 2

Does this group prefer original pop/rock music from their youth or new music or both?

Hypothesis 1: The 'legitimate', 'heritage' rock/pop purchases have replaced classical music purchases as a form of cultural capital in this cohort. Their expenditure is dominated by consumption of re-issues of past works which they consider iconic and respected as legitimate works rather than spending on new artists releases which are viewed as 'youth music'.

This hypothesis suggest that new 50 year old is consuming much more music in the rock/pop genre than previous generations, but they are predominantly interested in the original music of their youth: so back catalogue re-issues, original artist new releases, artist tours, covers of those back catalogue songs, tribute acts. This suggests that their preferences formed during their youth were more likely linked to the

original artists and their catalogue themselves rather than the style of music genre as a whole.

Hypothesis 2: This audience is also interested in 'new music' within the rock/pop genre: so they have an interest in music discovery and enjoy engaging with young music talent, as well as any new material released by the original artists from their youth.

This would indicate a wide ranging consumption of the rock/pop genre and suggest that tastes are formed around genres and styles rather than solely around the original artists who they grew up with. Due to the fact that the music genre has been continuing to recycle itself (in style) through new artists since the 'classic era' of the birth of the rock/pop style in the 60s/70s, then many new artists in this genre today will appeal to this audience.

Test: The BPI data uses broad definitions of genres and consequently is insufficiently discriminating to reveal the detailed nature of rock and pop purchases as regards precise styles and sub-genres within that repertoire, or the date of that repertoire. Previous studies have struggled to resolve the problems associated with 'genre' as a variable. Individuals' definitions of genre differ greatly, as does the repertoire that spans each genre, not to mention the increasing numbers of sub-genres that exist today. The BPI data is also limited purely to recorded music expenditure. However, given the increasing importance of *live* music consumption, there is a need to investigate further how this audience consumes in the live sector too.

In order to obtain additional data to examine this target group in more detail, qualitative data collection was conducted over a three year period in live event and retail settings. The methodological design for this aspect of the research was inspired by previous studies which had used ethnographic approaches to observe participants in a music setting. This enabled an examination of the target group in the field environment (DeNora, 2000; Thornton, 1995; Frith, 1981). This qualitative data capture provided further information which helped build a profile of the music preferences of the target cohort. This data is presented in chapters 5-7.

3.2.3 Research Question 3

Can innovative and targeted use of rock/pop music produce new revenues/engagement amongst the 40-59 year old ABC1 consumer group in the UK?

The final research question is firmly directed at commercial marketing activities and innovation. Aiming to test whether the music taste of this 40-59 year old ABC1 target market can be leveraged, in order to create new or increased commercial opportunities. This thesis intends to offer a detailed investigation into music taste and music marketing, and to support a greater level of knowledge transfer by translating the academic discourse into practitioner focused recommendations and actions. The focus on the 40-59 year old middle class cohort can demonstrate the significance of this group, which has historically been largely ignored by pop rock marketing campaigns that instead continue to prioritize spends on the youth audience (see chapter 2). It is hoped that these findings will clarify the music taste of this large demographic, and highlight the commercial opportunities they offer to the music industry and wider business sectors.

Hypothesis: Rock/pop music successfully attracts and engages the target market when curated appropriately based on the results of research questions 1 & 2.

Two ongoing business case studies (described below) were activated during a three year period in order to test this hypothesis and measure the effectiveness of using music and innovative product and marketing strategies, to exploit new or additional revenues from this consumer group. These case studies were designed to examine their feasibility as ongoing commercial vehicles as well as to provide data collection opportunities.

3.3 Research Methodology

This research aims to produce findings that would result in new contributions to the academic discourse on music taste, and also provide core recommendations for practitioners wanting to target this audience, commercially, using music.

3.3.1 UK Sales Data – The BPI Statistical Handbooks 1993-2012

The quantitative analysis conducted for this thesis, an examination of official UK music sales figures, published by the BPI provides the opportunity to address Research Question 1 (see section 3.2.1). The BPI data set studied here provides 20 years of music purchasing data, enabling a clear measure of the purchasing habits of the group that was of interest to this research, the 40-59 year old ABC1 demographic in the UK. The classical and contemporary genres will be compared. Because this group included the generation of new 50 year olds (and those in their 40s approaching and entering the 50 year-old bracket within this decade) this analysis enables a test of the omnivore theory. Bennett et al. and Savage and Gayo (see chapter 2) had identified this group as the most likely to display omnivorous behaviour crossing the classical-contemporary pop rock genre divide. For this omnivore hypothesis to be sustained we would expect the analysis of BPI data to show the purchasing habits of this group, increasingly, to include both classical and contemporary choices.

Data Collection

The BPI's annual analysis of UK music sales figures is collected annually by Kantar Worldwide. The annual handbooks are made available to the companies who subscribe to the BPI membership – primarily the UK record labels and related music industry organisations. This information provides a useful overview of the industry performance year-on-year, but it does not appear that this data has been used in any longitudinal research of this nature to date, certainly not in the academic examination of music taste amongst this cohort.

Kantar Worldpanel's UK panel members consist of 15,000 individuals aged 13-79.

In percentage terms they are representative of the age and socio-economic make up of the UK population and therefore the data can also test whether the definition and boundaries of cultural legitimacy as suggested by Bourdieu appear to be shifting or fading. The music sales figures will examine whether rock/pop is just as popular with the middle classes today as with lower social groups. It will also measure the level of middle class consumption of classical music.

These panel members record details of their music purchasing online when they make purchases throughout the year. When consumers make a purchase, they access the Kantar Worldwide online data entry platform and provide information relating to the purchase. The respondents provide the name of the artist and the title. Kantar Worldpanel then automatically record the full details in terms of the artist, title, genre, release date, using the official data from the Official Charts Company database.

The Validity of BPI Data Compared to Survey Data

The BPI data collection method may be significantly more reliable as an indicator of real music tastes, compared with the survey methods on which academic studies have tended to rely since Bourdieu's original research. This is, firstly, because the BPI data is collected at the time of purchase and thus data collection is not based on recall, on relying on a single survey date where respondents have to remember the music that they bought during the year. Secondly, whereas previous surveys have recorded responses ('likes') to a question about a genre, the BPI data represents total album *purchases* by genre - both physical and digital. This sales data provides a measure of both taste and participation because it is based upon a physical engagement – an actual purchase. Thirdly the BPI data represents an alternative approach to collecting and categorising data about *genres* of music purchased. Whereas a survey approach largely leaves the identification of a genre to the respondent, the BPI data simply records the albums that individuals have purchased. The individual respondent does not identify the genre of their purchase. Instead the genre is identified according to the industry definitions used by the Official Charts Company. So this is a significant departure from previous studies, which have relied upon individuals confirming a like when asked about a particular genre.

Limitations of the BPI Data

During discussions with the BPI and Kantar Worldpanel it became apparent that although more detailed information is collected from respondents each year, it was not subscribed to by the BPI. For example the Kantar Worldpanel holds the details of all purchases made by the panel. This includes the information regarding the artist and release. Online retailers and music services such as Amazon, Spotify and iTunes also have significant data regarding their customers and their purchases. This type of data is a valuable asset and companies either do not wish to disclose it, or charge significant fees for disclosing it. Therefore, although attempts were made to access this additional data for this research study, it was unfortunately outside of the available budget. It does however hold significant potential for future studies into this field if funds were available.

Although the BPI sales data does provide valuable, longitudinal, ‘real sales’ data instead of ‘likes’, it is subject to the same limitations as survey research in terms of repertoire detail. The BPI data is categorized by broad (Official Chart) genre definitions and, as noted above, those genre categories can still be quite weak and subjective. For example, the BPI data available to this study cannot tell us whether the ‘classical’ purchases were at the ‘light’ end of the classical repertoire or the critically acclaimed works of the composers who were traditionally considered as the legitimate canon. It also does not identify whether the rock/pop purchases were back catalogue titles or new releases by upcoming young artists in that genre.

Therefore, to answer Research Question 2 (see section 3.2.2), further qualitative field research was needed to provide a more detailed insight into the tastes of the target cohort. To gather this qualitative data, observations and interviews were conducted at live events during a three-year field research period.

3.3.2 Qualitative Data – Live Events, Participant Observation and Interviews

The live events were selected to further test the research questions and to examine the audiences that were drawn to such events. They consisted of a mix of heritage

events featuring the original artists, and a series of bespoke events created for this research for participant observation. Some of these bespoke events also acted as business case studies in order to test Research Question 3.

In addition to the key case studies, I also attended a variety of other live music concerts and festivals in order to observe the socio-demographic breakdown of the audience that was attracted there. Some additional interviews were also carried out in non-live event settings to obtain less ‘adrenalin fuelled’ responses, because it was recognised that there would inevitably be a level of excitement at a live event itself, especially when alcohol was present. A primary goal was to observe the individuals who were attracted to these rock/pop events, and to gain a deeper understanding of their backgrounds, motivations and experiences. It is believed that the qualitative methods used in this study succeeded in achieving that.

The data collected from these participant observations and informal interviews is discussed in Chapters 5 to 7. The identifying names of individuals who participated in these ethnographic investigations were changed, in order to honour anonymity and recognise ethical guidelines.

Sampling and External Validity

The BPI data used a sample sourced by professional market research leader Kantar Worldpanel to be representative of the UK population and showed that across the target cohort, music taste had shifted from classical to rock/pop. However, as described above this analysis could not reveal important distinctions within and between the rock and pop genres. Crucially, this data did not reveal whether the taste shift in the target cohort represented a shift towards contemporary, ‘legitimate’ (60s and 70s) or all types of rock and pop music. To answer this question (Research Question 2) it was necessary to engage in qualitative research with the target cohort.

Heritage Rock and Pop

The research strategy chosen for this section of the research was to target consumer groups most likely to reveal a preference for a legitimate (60s and 70s) canon of rock

and pop. We might situate this group as a ‘critical case’, since, if the qualitative research revealed that amongst this group, music tastes actually extended across all genres including classical, or across all genres and decades of rock and pop material, then we might conclude that there is no support for an hypothesis of the emergence of a new ‘legitimate’ canon of music.

The case studies were designed around the rock/pop genre theme to examine how they attracted fans of that genre. However, as this passionate and knowledgeable 40-59 ABC1 audience was also identified as the cohort most likely to display omnivorous tendencies, it gave an opportunity to observe them and question them about their wider music preferences.

To target this sample, a number of events were designed around what we might hypothesise constitutes core elements of the legitimate canon of rock/pop. The events are described below. The rationale for selecting these particular event themes was led by a combination of significant music anniversaries arising within the research period, and the availability and affordability of artists and guest speakers/performers. A significant anniversary being one that is highly regarded by the industry and media and that has achieved a very high level of sales success since its original release. The individuals who participated in the qualitative data collection were not selected by the researcher. They had made a personal choice to attend the particular event having heard about it or seen it advertised. They were the individuals who were attracted by the event itself due to the content. In order to improve external validity this field research was carried out multiple times over a three-year period, at different events, featuring varying content, and in different locations.

i. 40th Anniversary of The Old Grey Whistle Test (OGWT)

This anniversary theme was selected because OGWT was the television programme popular during the 1970s with the rock connoisseurs in their 20s who did not engage with the chart pop alternative at the time. They were the audience for Led Zeppelin, Genesis, The Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Bob Dylan. Rather than focusing on particular artists or material this television show represented a range of artists who might be considered ‘legitimate’ today. The OGWT was informative and educational and

didn't have to try too hard. With an apparent budget of £500 per week (Harris, 2011) the show became thoroughly focused on the music. Throughout the 1970s it shaped the landscape of rock and is still highly revered today.

This 40th anniversary event featured the original host of the OGWT 'Whispering' Bob Harris. Harris participated in an on stage interview and Q&A with the audience at this event held at the Brighton Centre in 2011. This gave the audience the opportunity to ask questions regarding his memories of the performances of their favourite artists for example. Harris then interviewed Tilbrook and Gifford from Squeeze about their memories of performing on the OGWT in the 1970s early in their career.

We might expect to find people who would be 'expert' listeners attracted to this Old Grey Whistle Test 40th Anniversary event. Observation and interviews with them during the event enabled testing of whether they were (as Savage and Gayo said was likely) omnivores or whether they consumed contemporary pop/rock in addition to the original 60s and 70s repertoire.

ii. 40th Anniversary of Dark Side Of The Moon

This was a test of an album which one might consider a key work within the 'legitimate' rock/pop genre. In contrast to the OGWT anniversary event this format did not feature any celebrity talent related to this album or the artist. Instead it was celebrated with a performance by a semi-professional Pink Floyd tribute band. The event was staged under the moonlight on Matala Beach in Crete in June 2012. Matala Beach has an historic connection with music of the 60s and 70s, including a song called 'Carey' which Joni Mitchell wrote about this coastal village after staying there in the early 1970s.

This enabled me to test the commercial potential (Research Question 3) by selling holiday packages around this event. It also enabled observation and interaction with the participants over a 5 day residential stay to gather data for Research Questions 1 and 2 regarding music tastes of this group.

iii. 40th Anniversary of Ziggy Stardust's Farewell

This was a test of an 'iconic' live performance (and an accompanying film) which one might consider a key moment within the 'legitimate' rock/pop genre, but also a good test of the broader rock/pop genre since Bowie became a more mainstream artist in the 1980s. Bowie as an artist had touched a wide demographic due to his career spanning both the 1970s and the 80s, having considerable success in both those decades.

This test event was held on July 3rd 2013 to mark the exact date that Bowie had famously 'retired' his Ziggy persona 40 years earlier at Hammersmith in 1973. We received approval from David Bowie's management to host an official private screening of the film footage of that final performance. 50 guests attended the private screening room in London to view the film in surround sound for the first time. This was widely advertised through various social media promotions, through Time Out and as part of the Kilimanjaro weekly newsletter that goes out to 300,000 individuals aged 20s to 60s. Again this event did not feature any celebrity guests.

iv. 30th Anniversary of 'Prince Charming'

This event intended to test the extent to which the legitimate canon incorporates the broader rock/pop genre as (unlike the other events discussed above) Adam Ant was primarily known as mainstream pop artist.

Adam Ant represents a different test of the concept of 'legitimate' pop and rock. Most audiences encountered *Adam & The Ants* when they broke through in the pop scene in the early 80s. Adam was considered a new romantic era artist, having had high profile success with ten Top 10 chart hit singles between 1980-83. However, his earlier activity was part of the UK punk movement. This would also enable an observation of whether early fans view him as a rock artist rather than a pop act for example.

The event featured an interview with Ant, a Q&A with the audience, and an acoustic performance of some of his hits.

v. *30th Anniversary of Duran Duran's 'Sing Blue Silver Tour'*

The reference to the 80s revival raised important opinions regarding the credibility of the 80s pop scene, which has often been mocked for its superficial nature and the costumes and make up that represented the new romantic era.

This event featured all band members at a private event marking the release of a coffee table book containing photos of their USA tour in 1984. Guests were able to mingle and have their photos taken with the band members and other guests such as Gary Kemp from Spandau Ballet and Boy George.

iv. *Weekly Vinyl Nights*

Additional data was collected to examine Research Questions 1&2 during a weekly vinyl music night that was set up as part of this research. Each week a collection of 250 vinyl albums dating from 1960s to 2010s was made accessible to the audience. This was an informal event where participants were able to browse through the record collection and select songs that they wanted to play. They also had the opportunity to physically put their chosen record onto the record player.

This vinyl event series enabled weekly observations over a 3 month period in 2013 regarding the types of participants who were attracted to this event, and the music selections they made.

Contemporary Rock and Pop

The qualitative research also attempted to gather detailed evidence about the extent to which the rock/pop tastes of this group are open to contemporary rock and pop as well as the core heritage repertoire that they grew up with (Research Question 2).

Again the events were designed to test a critical case around a clear definition of the genre. Rather than asking the target cohort if they also ‘like’ contemporary rock and pop genres, the events were designed to include live performances by emerging contemporary rock/pop artists so that participants could be asked for their responses to specific examples of contemporary rock/pop music which they were unlikely to have heard before.

The contemporary artists were invited to perform at the above events as follows:

‘Little Fish’ Performance

The *Old Grey Whistle Test* anniversary event featured an upcoming duo called *Little Fish*. They performed on stage prior to the interview with Bob Harris. They had been receiving increasing attention over the past 12 months through their live shows and debut singles. Signed to Island Records UK they had recorded songs produced by Linda Perry, and supported Courtney Love and her band ‘Hole’ in New York in 2010. Their classic rock sound and female lead singer was drawing attention. Debbie Harry attended and enjoyed their New York show with *Hole* and invited them to join as support act on the 14 date Blondie tour in the UK later that year (Harry, 2010). A *New York Times* review of that show highlighted their rock strengths, suggesting that *Hole* looked ‘lacklustre’ in comparison with the energy of *Little Fish* (New York Times, 2010.) They compared the lead singer’s voice to Patti Smith, Siouxsie Sioux and P.J. Harvey – artists who the 40s and 50s aged audience would identify with (www.littlefishmusic.com/wonderful).

“Her thick, quivering voice rode three-chord rock songs that accelerated as she wailed about desire and power. Little Fish had the raw rock spark that doesn’t depend on fame”

(New York Times, 2010)

More recently though they had split from Linda Perry and the Island Records deal and were going independent to try and maintain their identity. They remained with

their management company, Trinifold, best known for its long-term management of The Who, Judas Priest and Robert Plant.

The audience at the OGWT event would have been unlikely to have heard them before.

'Bethia Beadman' Performance

Prior to the film screening of Ziggy's last performance an upcoming singer-songwriter performed an acoustic version of Bowie's song '*Ziggy Stardust*' at the front of the room. Beadman has been garnering a growing fan base of tastemakers, critics and industry professionals but has not yet made a mainstream breakthrough so it was unlikely that the audience would have been aware of her music prior to this performance.

Harry Keyworth Performance

Emerging singer-songwriter, Harry Keyworth, was invited to perform at the Matala Beach Festival. Several months prior to the event Harry had recorded a live acoustic version of '*Breathe*' from the *Dark Side of the Moon* album. This was his interpretation of the song in his own acoustic style. He performed on a small stage which enabled the audience to stand close to the performer. Harry is a particularly visual performer and his technical guitar skills are impressive. His multi-layered vocal harmonies and loop pedal techniques create a fantastic rich sound that perfectly complements the visual spectacle of his guitar techniques. He had been garnering recent increasing interest on the acoustic circuit and on radio. It was unlikely that the audience would have previously been aware of him or his music.

Vinyl Night Performances

Emerging talent was booked each week to appear early during the evening at the Vinyl Nights. The performances were acoustic and took place prior to the vinyl sessions commencing. As with the vinyl sessions (described above) these performances were free and were open to both local residents and hotel guests. This ensured a regular mix of attendees.

Performers who appeared throughout the season included artists such as Ilona, Berenice Scott, Rudy Warman, Sam Batt, Ellie Lawson. All performers were rock/pop based artists.

Participant Observation and Subjectivity

These events were advertised widely in London newspapers and magazines, social media, Universities, poster campaigns, mailing lists and professional networks to ensure visibility across multiple demographics and not purely directed at the target demographic.

For the fieldwork I adopted an ethnographic approach, entering live event settings and immersing myself in the audience. This enabled me to observe the participants who had attended these events and to converse with them to gather further information using a semi-structured interview format. During each event I recorded field notes regarding observations I had witnessed during the session and in conversation with the attendees. Atkinson (1990) remarks that it is inevitable that this process of writing field notes becomes selective, because it is not possible to fully scribe the amount of activity and conversational discourse that I was exposed to. Therefore, I as the researcher must judge which information is significant and which is not. The design of a semi-structured interview format was intended to help focus the conversations on key topics that were related to the research questions.

It is acknowledged that as a practitioner, and an individual who falls into the cohort being examined, I may carry pre-existing enthusiasms. The immersion factor is recognized as I was heavily involved in the live events that were created throughout the research. However, other successful studies have operated similar techniques with great success (Thornton, 1995; Anderson, 2012). I was in fact in attendance at these events as an observer not a participant, so was able to extract significant information from these ethnographic investigations.

Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality

During all participant observations I was present as an attendee (or organiser in the case studies described later). Therefore other attendees were not aware that the event was being observed, or that the bespoke case study events were part of this PhD research. However, where these participant observations led into a personal conversation with individuals, I revealed the nature of my research and asked for their responses whilst leading the conversations through the semi-structured interview.

I confirmed to all participants that the information they gave would be confidential, and their identities would not be published. The overt nature of my reasons for attendance could have influenced the participants' responses during conversations (Li, 2008). However, due to the non-controversial nature of the topic, it was deemed unlikely that respondents would be hesitant to speak their minds regarding their opinions and tastes in music.

This approach was based on the successful use of interviews and focus groups by Bennett et al. (2008), and their ability to address key concepts such as age, gender and ethnicity – the variables that had been omitted by Bourdieu (1984) when examining cultural capital.

The Business Case Study Methodology

The events described above were set up as working business units to provide an opportunity to test whether innovations in live events and products could attract and monetise the target audience, and whether the use of relevant music themes could engage this audience even when the original heritage artists were not involved.

Therefore, throughout the three-year field research period the strategies and activation of these business ventures was noted, with the intention of being able to provide an academic analysis of the implications of the research for marketing music to the 40-59 year old middle class consumer group.

The case studies were all designed to use music as their core marketing strategy, with the intention of targeting the new 40-59 year old demographic. They are examples of businesses that have made a conscious effort to leverage the passion of music amongst the 40-59 aged ABC1 demographic, in an attempt to create increased or new revenue streams using this knowledge.

The live event activations were all promoted under a new lifestyle brand created for this research study called '*Generation Music Club*'.

A second business case was utilized in this research period in order to provide a retail based test of the target group. This involved the launch of a new range of physical and digital greetings cards which featured a unique streaming playlist generated by the person's birth date. The card range was launched by an existing company called I Like Music and promoted at two pop up retail stores in Brick Lane and the O2 Arena in 2013.

This second business case study focused mainly on examining Research Question 3, regarding how the music taste can be commercially leveraged with new product innovations. However, it also provided the opportunity to gather additional participant data relating to music taste and comparisons of tastes for heritage versus rock pop music repertoire (Research Question 2). The taste observations gathered from this case study are presented in chapters 5-7

The business performance observations relating to these business units (Generation Music Club (live event / lifestyle) and I Like Music (retail) are reviewed in chapter 8.

3.4 Summary

This research study has used a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods to examine the three core research questions and the related hypotheses.

1. *What is the music taste of the current 40-59 year old ABC1 cohort in the UK?*
2. *Do they prefer original pop/rock music from their youth or new music or both?*
3. *Can innovative and targeted use of rock/pop music produce new revenues/engagement amongst the 40-59 year old ABC1 consumer group in the UK?*

Official UK music sales data was selected in order to produce a new empirical analysis of music taste based on purchase choices. This provides an examination of Research Question 1 regarding core music tastes. Additional qualitative testing was carried out in the field over a three year period to examine Research Question 2.

It was expected that the findings could produce one of four possible outcomes in terms of music taste. Firstly, that this 40-59 aged ABC1 group displays classical preferences as in Bourdieu's work. Secondly, that this group displays both classical and contemporary rock pop preferences as per Peterson's omnivore theory. Thirdly, that they display a taste for purely a select collection of original rock pop works that might be considered a new 'legitimate canon', hence replicating Bourdieu's classical theory but activating it in the rock pop genre not the classical genre. Fourthly, that they display a taste for a very broad range of rock pop material across sub genres and decades, hence weakening the likelihood of a new 'legitimate canon' of rock pop works.

The field activities which were designed to collect data for Research Questions 1 and 2 (taste) at live events were also used as business case studies to examine Research Question 3 (regarding commercial innovation opportunities).

The empirical data analysis is presented in chapter 4. The participant observations are presented in chapters 5-7. The business performance review of the case studies is presented in chapter 8.

Chapter 4

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF UK MUSIC SALES

4.1 Introduction

The review of literature in chapter 2 highlighted the relevance of the 40-59 year old middle class cohort both in terms of music preferences and cultural capital in the music taste research to date, and also from a commercial business standpoint.

This chapter will analyse data taken from the annual BPI Statistical Handbooks. This is the leading UK music industry publication compiled and issued by the BPI (British Phonographic Industry) each year. These publications contain considerable detail regarding the status of the industry, and the performance of a variety of related business units within the recorded music industry. The key focus points usually include analyses of sales by genre, pricing, market share, music retail, world market, and consumer data. As such these annual handbooks contain a wealth of information regarding music taste, providing longitudinal data revealing trends in buying behaviour across demographics and social class. The information acts as the official music industry performance figures and is considered a credible source of data for this thesis. The market research is conducted for the BPI by professional organisations including Kantar Worldpanel, The Official Chart Company, BPI, Gallup Poll, TNS Global, Entertainment Retailers Association (ERA), IFPI and occasional other contributors. The final production of the annual handbook is managed and published by the research department at the BPI.

For the purposes of this thesis the quantitative analysis was initially carried out in 2010 as part of the early research for this study. It was later updated with newly released figures to include years 2010-2012. It focused primarily on age, social class and the genre definitions of classical and rock/pop. Of particular interest is the fact

that the typical 50 year old in the UK appears to have potentially experienced an *historic shift in music taste* compared to their parents' generation.

This seems to provide further evidence of the generational shift described by Savage and Gayo (2011). This could explain why *The Genesis Suite* did not appeal to the target 50 year old middle class audience. It could also signify the potential repercussions that might be experienced by the classical genre in particular, due to its visible reliance on the 50+ audience.

There are also significant implications/opportunities for the rock/pop industry as music buyers in their 50s clearly continue to actively buy recorded music and concert tickets in this genre, in greater numbers than previous generations of 50 year olds. In addition to the trends identified using the annual data held in the BPI Handbooks, the BPI's "*Music Consumption in the UK*" report published in November 2011 confirmed that the older age groups are more likely to pay for music rather than use free legal sources (figure 4.1 below). 58% of music listened to by 55-60 year olds was paid for compared to 45% for 25-34 year olds, and 38% for 18-24 year olds. Amongst 45+ year olds CDs still represent almost half of the music they listen to.

Age group	% of music listened to that was paid for
55-60 year olds	58%
25-34 year olds	45%
18-24 year olds	38%

Figure 4.1. Music Consumption in the UK (BPI, 2011)

The following tables and charts present the BPI data, as collected from the annual BPI Statistical Handbooks over a 20-year period dating from 1993 to 2012. The BPI Handbooks have been published since 1976, but the early versions did not include detailed statistical data and they were not published annually. Those first editions do however give an indication of the growing divide between the classical and pop rock

genres. In the first edition (BPI 1976) a featured article highlighted the growth of the popular music in comparison to classical and suggested that the industry was beginning to be considered niche in comparison to the booming popular commercial genre. The article emphasized that total classical sales still “*hovered around 20% of the complete record market*” (p55) and therefore remained a significant operation within the industry.

By 1982 the classical genre was not mentioned at all in the BPI Handbook. Instead, piracy was starting to become the focus of attention and given significant consideration (p. 40-44). The BPI recognised the growth that the illegal taping had experienced over the past 10 years. It was estimated that in 1980 approximately 19% of total world sales (equal to 314 million units) were illegal commercial copies. Approximately 6% of UK sales were illegal commercial copies. This, combined with the boom in blank tape sales for home taping suggested a growing and serious problem for the recording industry (BPI 1982, p43). The classical genre had dropped to 5.8% of total recorded album sales by 1982 but saw a rise in popularity over the next decade. By 1991 it had risen back up to 11.4% of total sales but this was largely driven by the explosion of the new ‘classical pop stars’ such as Nigel Kennedy and the Three Tenors, who had experienced accelerated growth by crossing into the mainstream audience (BPI, 1992).

It was not until 1993 that the BPI Handbooks settled into a format which would provide an annual examination of consumer profiles and genres. Hence, why this study has analysed the 1993-2012 period for this research. Please note that the BPI Annual Handbooks made slight revisions to their format during this 20-year timeframe. Therefore, appropriate weightings and recalculations were applied, in order to produce a continuous longitudinal analysis of the data set.

The following sections in this chapter will analyse the BPI’s recording industry sales data from three perspectives: music choice by demographic, music choice by socio-economic group, average spend and market penetration.

4.2 Music Choice By Demographic

The initial analysis of music expenditure immediately produced striking results. Plotting the linear trend lines onto Figure 4.2 provides a clear indication that there is a generational shift taking place. This data represents the genres that these consumer groups chose to spend money on during the year. Throughout the past two decades there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of rock/pop spending amongst the 40–59 year old consumer groups, coupled with a consequent decline in classical purchasing. The increase is far greater in the 50-59 age group, suggesting the arrival of a cohort now entering this age group, with the strong rock/pop music preferences from their youth being carried through their life course.

Figure 4.3 adds a trendline representing the sales of the 60+ demographic. It also adds the additional genres of MOR/dance/urban to create a combined ‘contemporary’ sales figure for this analysis. This enables a broad comparison between the classical and contemporary pop/rock genres, the genre divide that true omnivores would cross in their consumption habits. Again the generational differences are striking, but the same trends of increasing contemporary purchases and decreasing classical sales also appear consistent across other age groups. The older age groups remain the greatest purchasers of the classical genre. When the younger demographics aged 20-29 and 30-39 are also added (Figure 4.4) this generational pattern is again repeated. At no point do the age groups cross. However, the increase in contemporary spend and decrease in classical spend seem to have converged, resulting in the 20s, 30s and 40s age groups exhibiting very similar levels of music spend by 2012. The vast difference between the levels of spending on rock/pop compared with other genres is clearly evident in Figure 4.5. There are no other genres that are comparable in terms of sales across any age group, but certainly not in our target cohort aged 40-59. The genre boundary between contemporary and classical genres, as identified by Bennett et al. (2006) and Savage et al. (2005, 2011, 2013) does not appear to be crossed. Or if it is being crossed, then it is by a very small minority group of individuals. This certainly does not suggest the emergence of a growing omnivore group, or of generations who are becoming increasingly accepting of a wider range of genre preferences.

Figure 4.6 presents the longitudinal analysis of the classical music spend of demographic groups in the UK. There was some variation in the age categories during the period dating 1995 – 2009 and in 2009 the full set of data was split into male and female categories rather than just the total figures as in previous years. However, it is evident that the most important demographic for the classical music industry is the 60+ and that it has experienced a decline over the years even in those groups. In 2013 the age groupings changed again due to revisions to the data collection methodology but showed a similar pattern. The younger age groups remain at similar levels (0.8% and 1.1%); the 65+ group dominates the classical genre sales (13.7%); the 55-64 year old cohort is the second most important consumer group (10%); with the 45-54 group (4.4%) and the 35-44 group (2.7%) displaying a lesser likelihood of ageing into this genre.

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

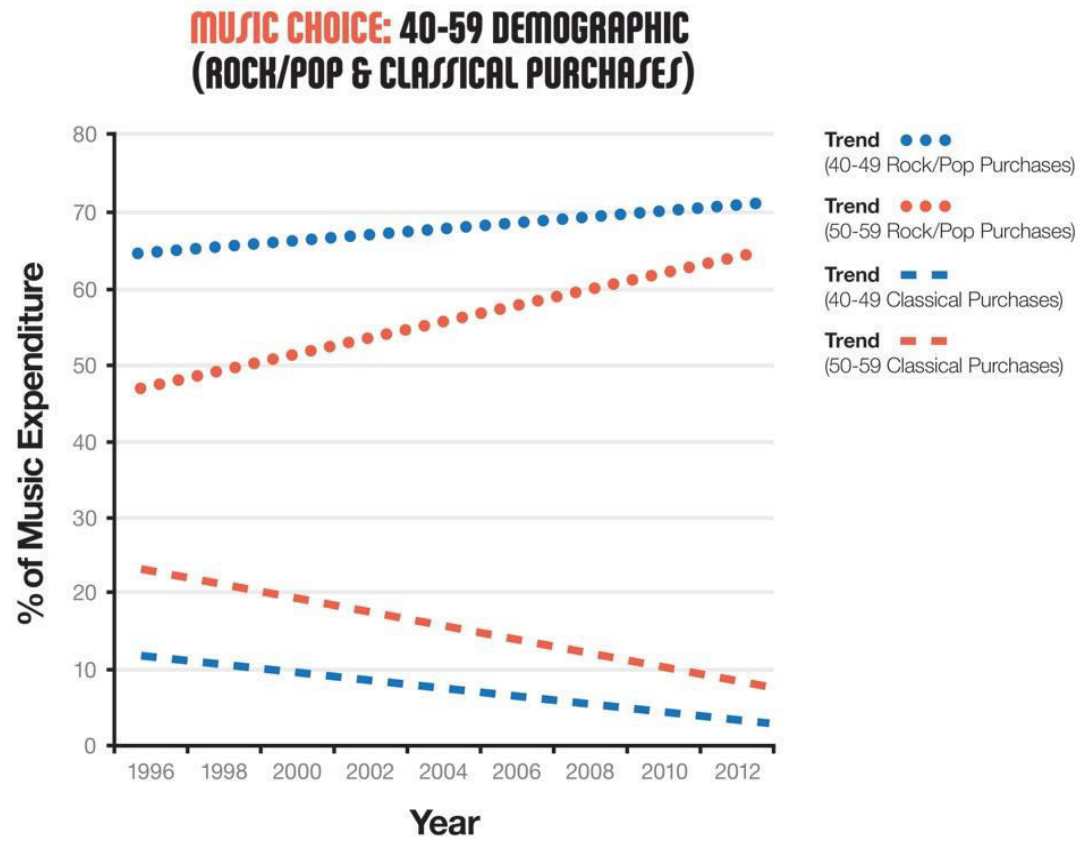


Figure 4.2. Analysis of BPI sales data 1993 – 2012. - Music Choice in the 40-59 year old demographic (Classical vs Rock/Pop)

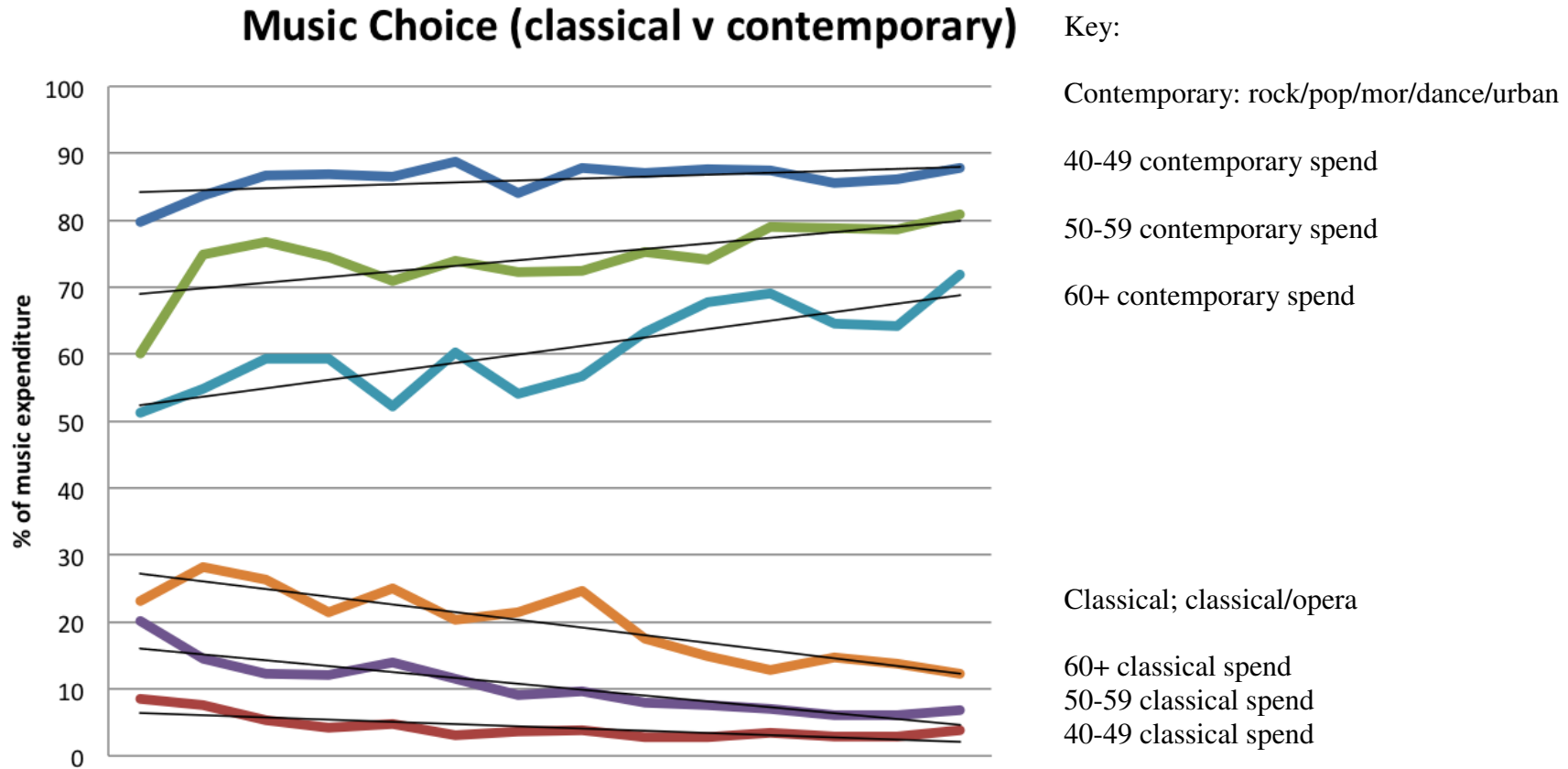


Figure 4.3. Analysis of % of music expenditure 40+ demographics including linear trend line.(1999 – 2012)

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MUSIC CHOICE ACROSS GENERATIONS IN THE UK (% of music expenditure)

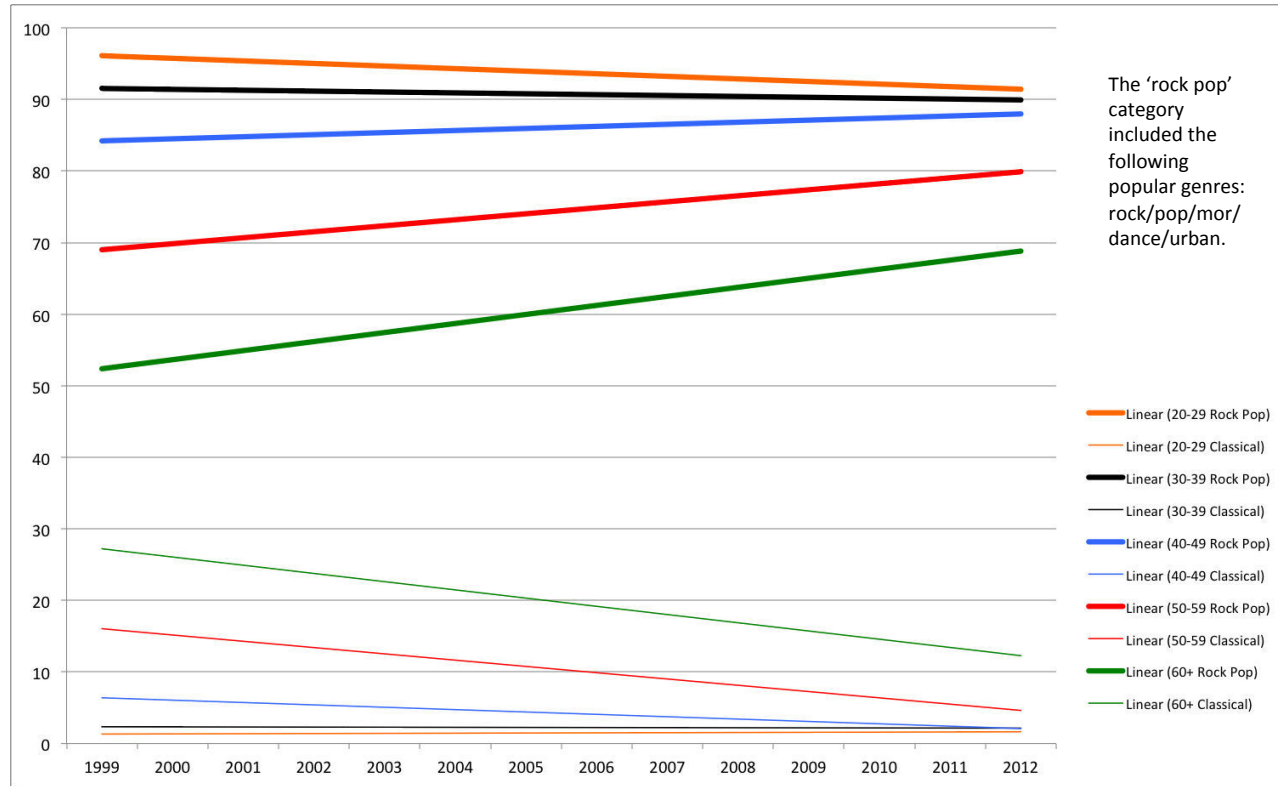


Figure 4.4. Analysis of sales figures across all demographic groups aged 20+ (classical vs contemporary)

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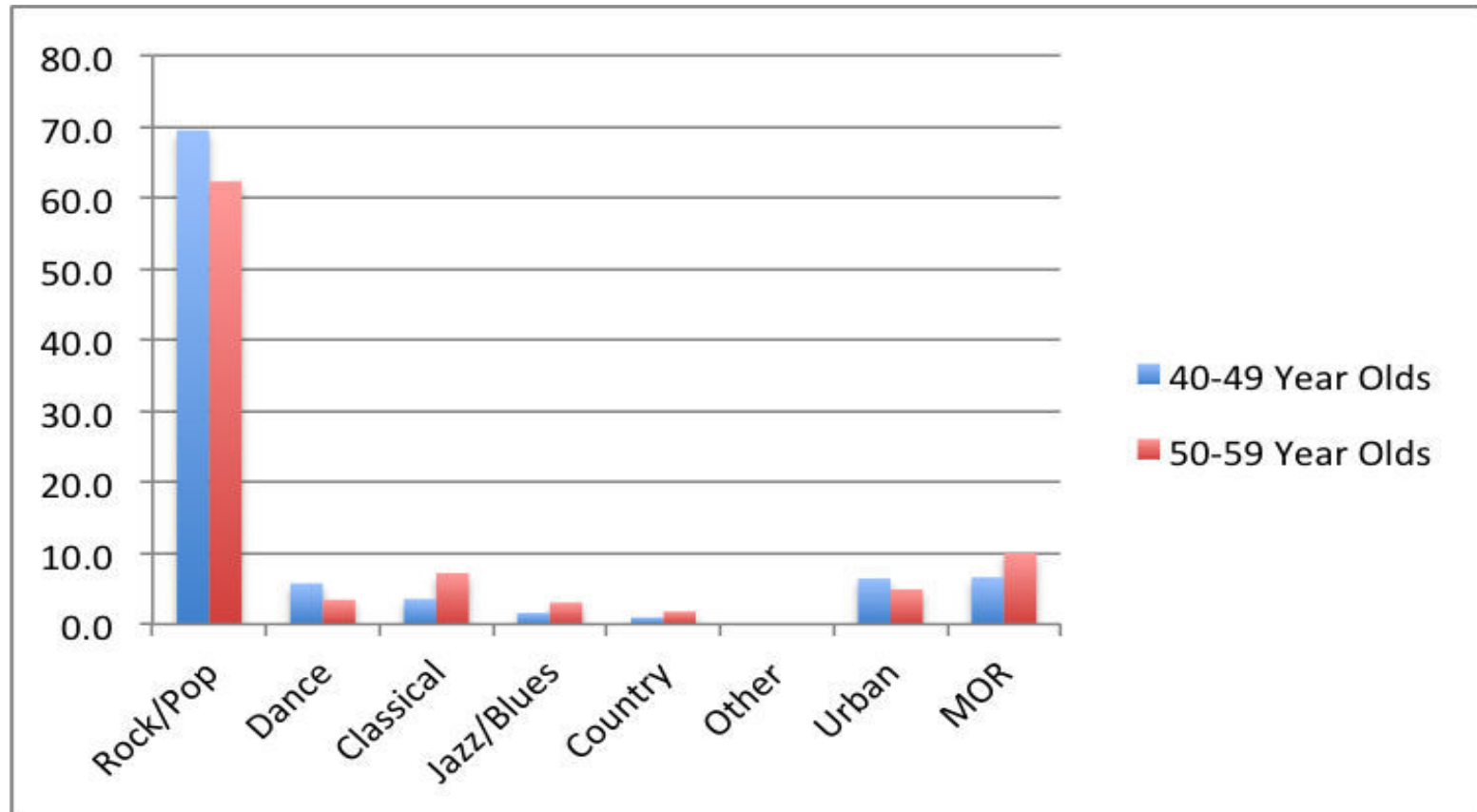


Figure 4.5. Music choice across genres (% of music expenditure in 2012)

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities
within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

Music Choice (Classical) - % of album expenditure								
	M	F		16-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65+
1995	8	8		1	4	4	13	32
	M	F	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
1996	10	7	-	4	6	10	14	34
1997	9	7	1	2	6	12	19	23
	M	F	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
1998	7	7	1	1	3	6	13	25
	M	F	12-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
1999	7.5	4.2	0.5	1.5	2.6	8.5	20.1	23.2
2000	6.1	4.6	0.2	1.1	2.6	7.6	14.6	28.2
2001	5.2	4.6	0.3	0.9	2.3	5.4	12.3	26.4
2002	6.0	4.0	0.6	0.8	2.0	4.3	12.1	21.4
2003	6.9	5.6	1.3	1.7	1.9	4.7	13.9	25.1
2004	5.5	4.3	0.5	2.3	2.0	3.0	11.6	20.3
2005	6.0	4.6	1.6	1.2	2.5	3.6	9.1	21.4
2006	6.4	5.5	0.5	1.0	1.8	3.8	9.6	24.7
2007	5.0	4.5	1.5	1.5	1.9	2.8	7.9	17.6
2008	4.3	4.6	0.6	1.5	1.8	2.8	7.6	14.9
			m/f	m/f	m/f	m/f	m/f	m/f
2009			0.6/0.5	1.3/2.7	3.4/2.1	4.8/1.7	8.8/4.3	11/14.4

Figure 4.6. Music choice by demographic group (Classical) – 1995 - 2009

From this initial longitudinal quantitative analysis it is possible to see a clear trend appear in the data sets over time. Classical music has witnessed a steady decline during this period amongst virtually all age groups. Due to the reliance on the 50+ demographic this decline potentially has the power to cause the most disruption to the classical industry business model. The 60+ consumer group fell from approximately 30% to less than 14% between 1996 and 2009, as confirmed by the sales data regarding percentage of album expenditure. This steady decline is also visible in the 50-59 and 40-49 brackets whereas the demographic groupings below 40 have not changed markedly, and have only ever counted for a very small percentage of overall classical music sales. The representation of male and female data from 2009 shows an interesting difference between purchase habits in the 40-49 and 50-59 age groupings, where males appear to be the dominant buyer of classical music. This gender difference is significant. In 2012, 68% of total classical music sales were attributed to men.

The charts displaying choice of music by demographic show how the album expenditure of each demographic group breaks down. Therefore, it is possible to see which genres are most favoured by that demographic. It is clear in Figure 4.7 that rock/pop is by far the most popular purchase, with a clear majority in the 40-49 age group. When other genres are expanded in Figure 4.8 it is possible to identify an ongoing decline in classical, and a rise in popularity of urban music amongst that demographic which includes R&B. MOR is also a popular choice, whereas dance appears to have suffered a sharp decline since 2000.

A similar pattern emerges in the 50-59 group in Figure 4.9 where rock/pop is clearly the most popular music purchase. In this cohort urban music does not appear to be as popular as MOR and classical (Figure 4.10). Classical has suffered a much more drastic decline here than in the 40-49 demographic though, plummeting from 20% to 7.6%.

Compared to the previous two demographic groupings it is immediately noticeable in Figure 4.11, that the 60+ age group classical and MOR come a much closer second

and third to the rock/pop genre in popularity. The decline in classical is still very prominent though, and MOR overtook this genre as the second most likely purchase in 2006 (Figure 4.12).

The dominance of rock and pop as the major music genre preference in all of the 40 to 60+ age groups is made very clear in the analysis. When rock/pop is removed from the data it becomes easier to identify the second and third most favoured genres. Classical has been suffering a long-term decline due to tastes seemingly leaning more towards increasing consumption of rock/pop, MOR and urban genres.

These charts do not support the theory of a growing omnivorous group as proposed by Peterson et al. (1992, 1996).

Music Choice 40-49

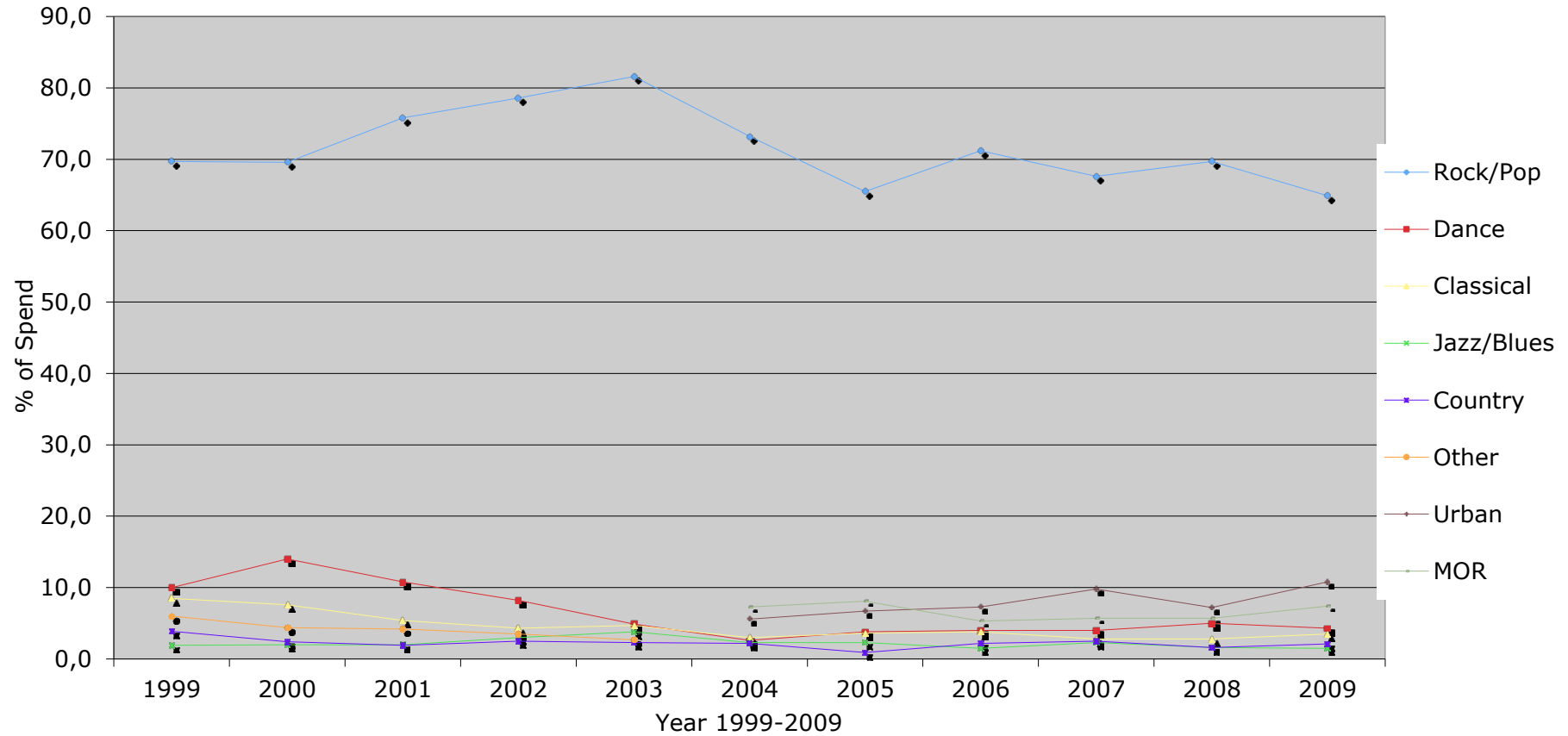


Figure 4.7. Music Choice (% of spend by 40-49 demographic)

Music Choice excluding Rock/Pop 40-49

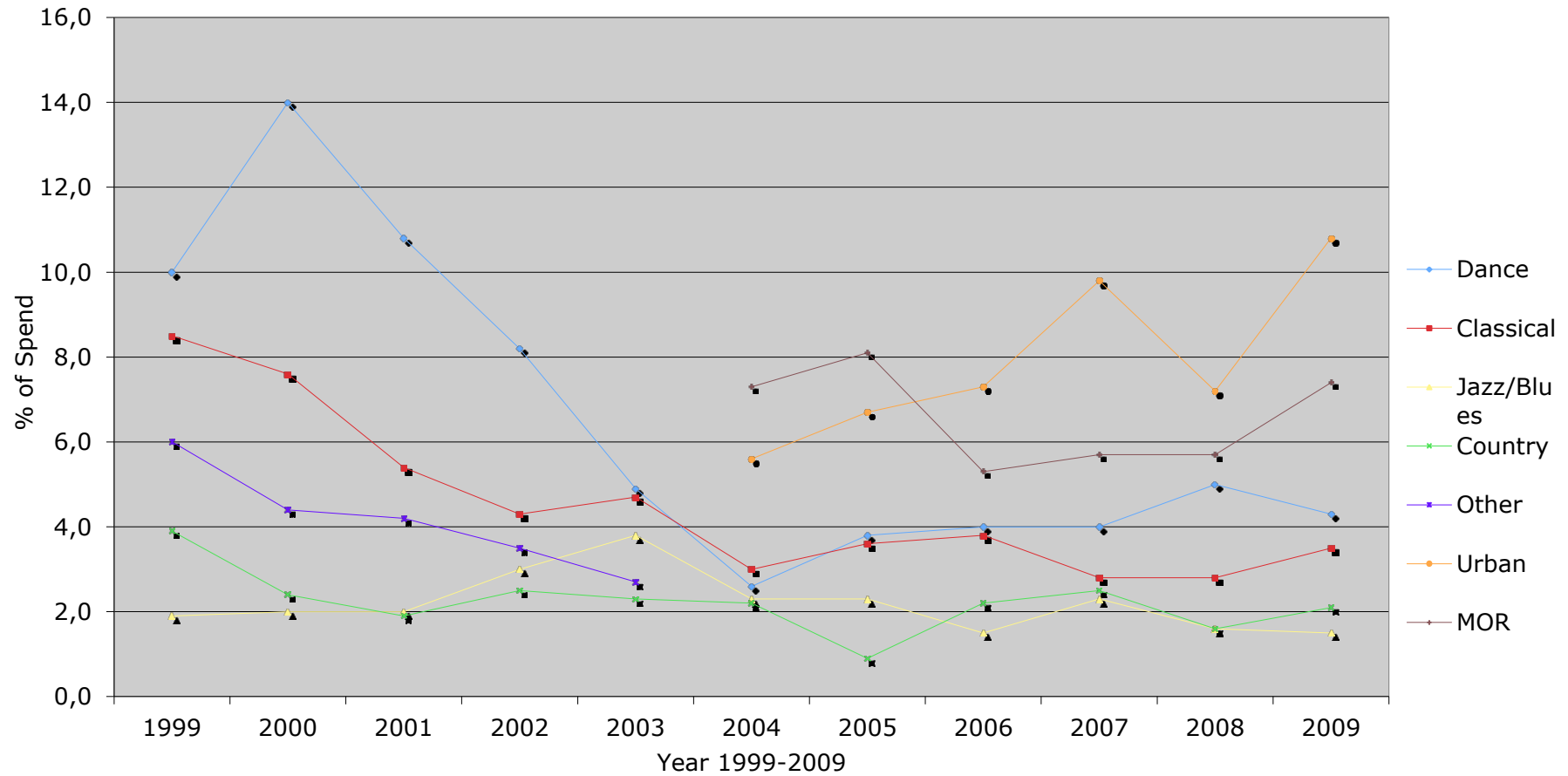


Figure 4.8. Music Choice excluding rock/pop genre

Music Choice 50-59

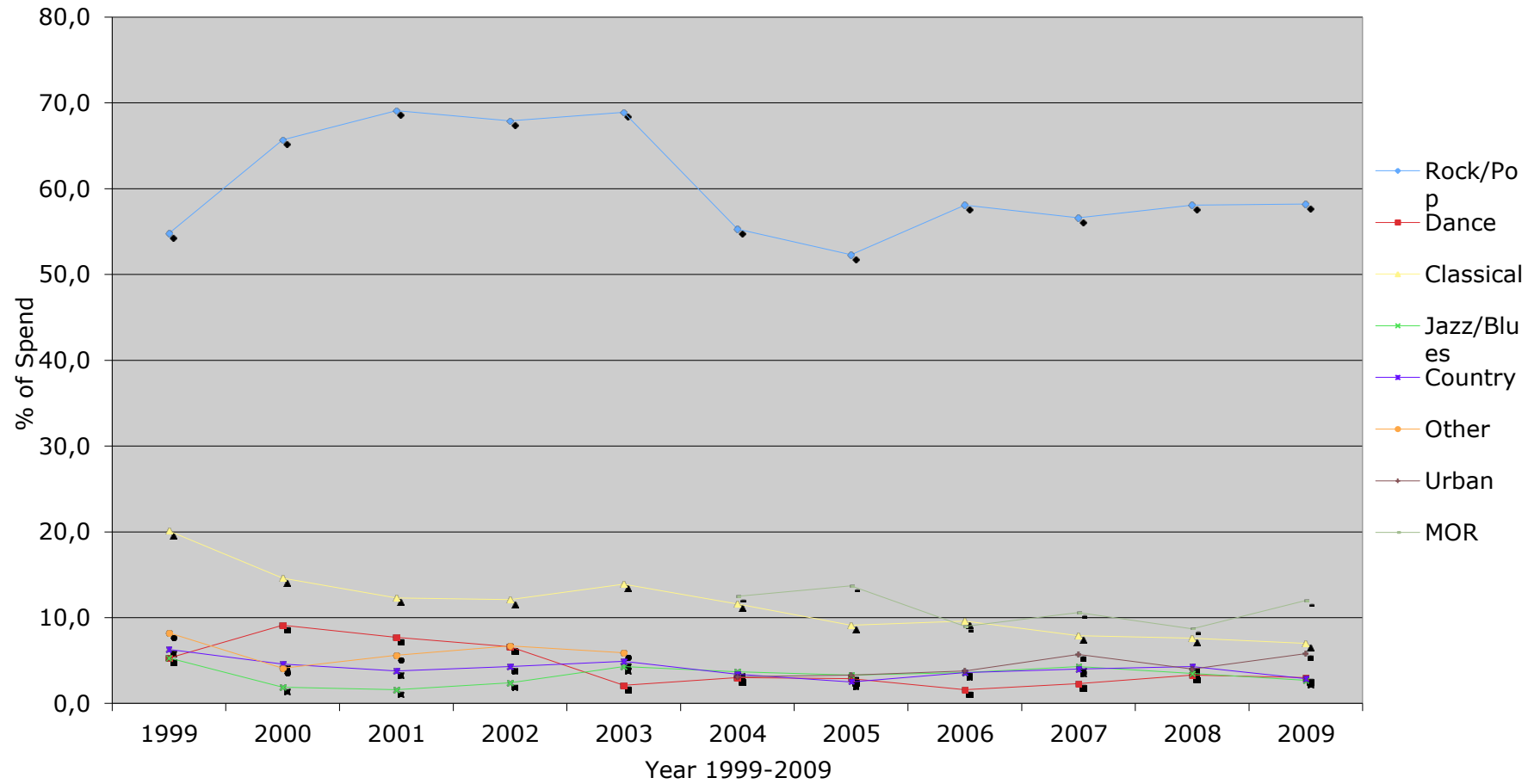


Figure 4.9. Music choice of the 50-59 demographic

Music Choice excluding Rock Pop 50-59

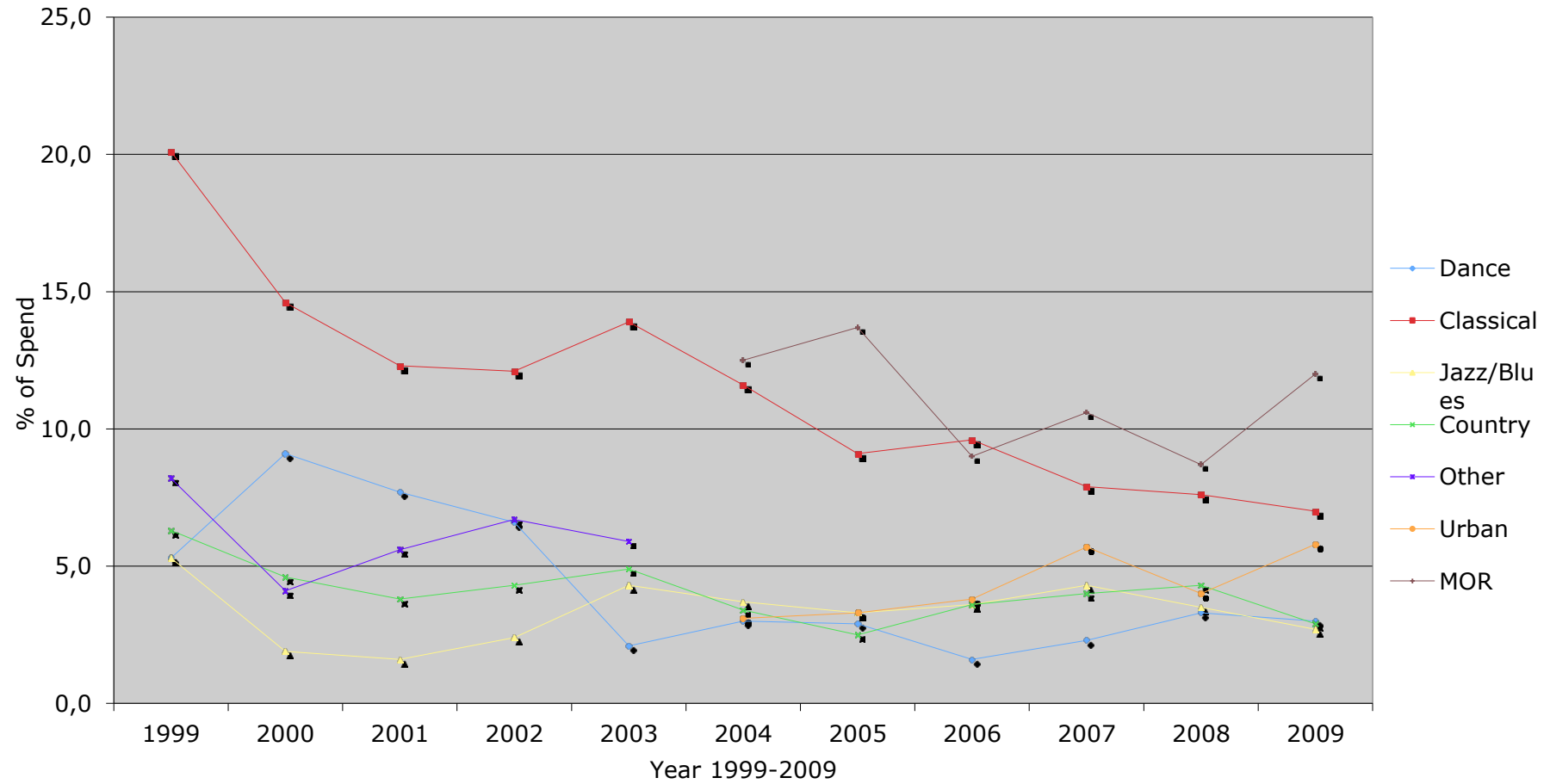


Figure 4.10. Music choice excluding rock/pop genre in the 50-59 demographic

Music Choice 60+

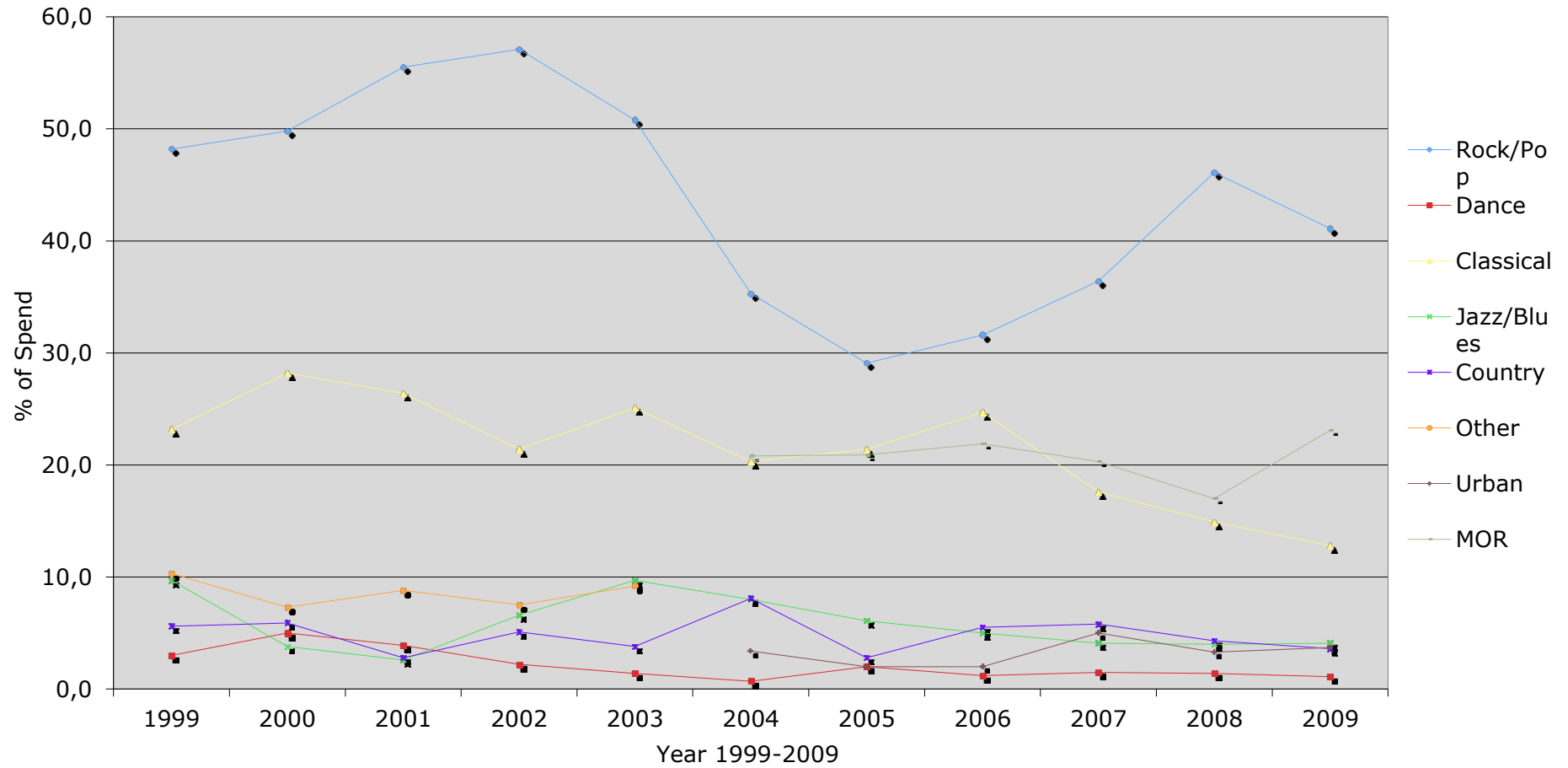


Figure 4.11. Music Choice of the 60+ demographic

Music Choice excluding Rock Pop 60+

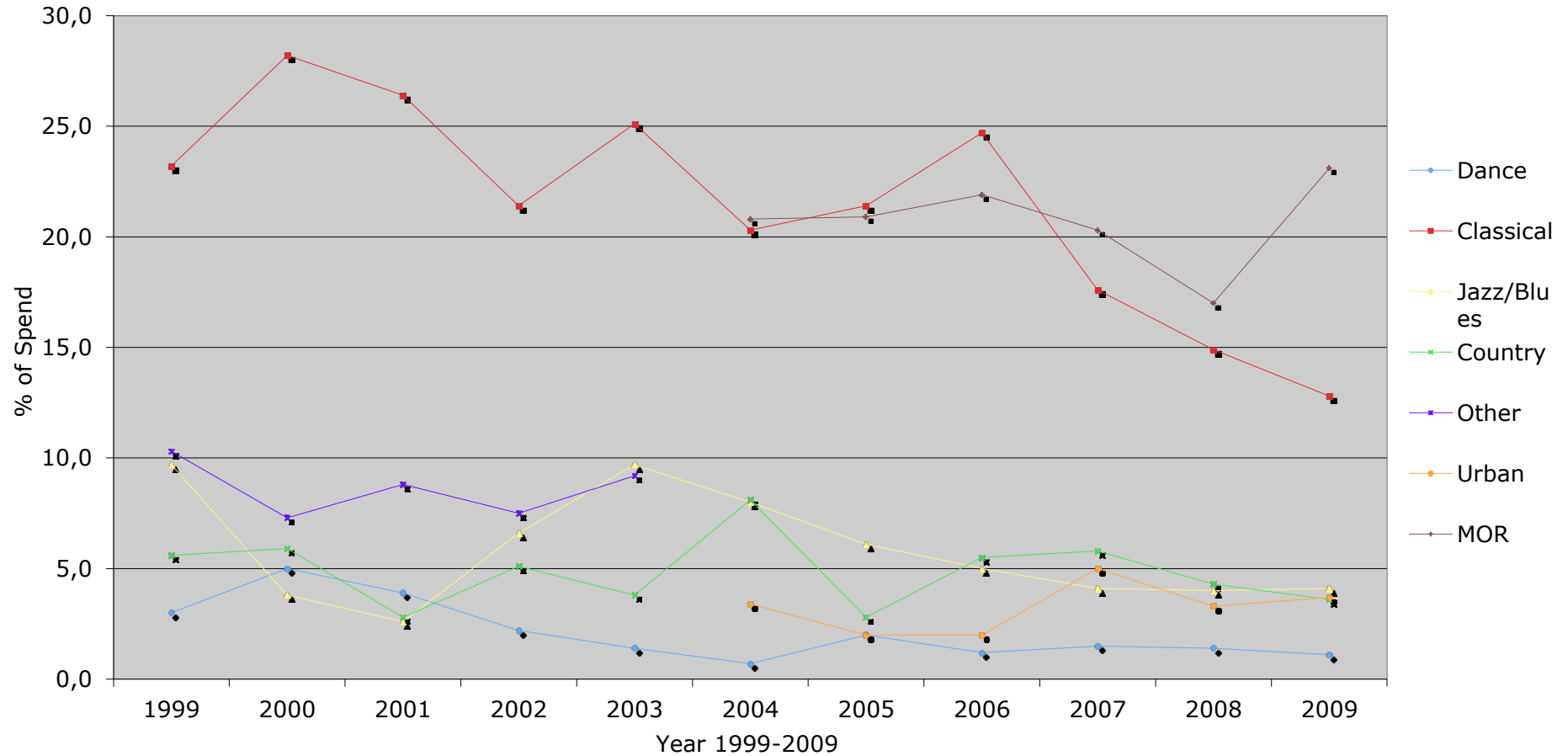


Figure 4.12. Music choice of the 60+ demographic excluding rock/pop

4.3 Music Choice By Socio-Economic Group

As well as examining the music taste of the target demographics it is of interest and relevance to assess other characteristics such as their socio-economic status. The analysis of the official BPI data (Figure 4.13) clearly shows that in the 1990s the AB group were by far the most likely to spend money on classical music purchases. However, over the years that dominance has diluted. It is also interesting to observe that there has been an increase amongst the DE group. This results in them being more significant as a purchaser of classical music than the C2 group, although these numbers are still very small and demonstrate a niche consumer group. This analysis is important as it could demonstrate that the AB group is disengaging with the traditional classical genre that has historically been associated with cultural capital. This decline in purchasing amongst the privileged group is very significant as it suggests the possibility that classical music has a diminishing importance in terms of demonstrating status and achieving distinction. Of course these figures only represent recorded music sales so the potential to use live music in the leveraging of cultural capital could still be taking place amongst this socio-economic group.

This increasing purchasing amongst the lower socio-economic groups also signifies how 'scarcity and rarity' and pricing barriers, as suggested by Bourdieu (1984) have been eroded over recent years, making the classical genre accessible to all. These figures do not enable us to differentiate between the sophisticated classical repertoire and the 'lighter' end of the genre.

Conversely the rock/pop engagement by these socio-economic groups (Figure 4.14) has dramatically increased. The two charts appear to suggest a shift in the AB group from classical to rock/pop over the period. This could account for the significant rise in sales of VIP packages at popular concerts and festivals. It could also suggest that this elite group are now potentially using rock/pop to leverage cultural capital, in the same way that previous cohorts used classical.

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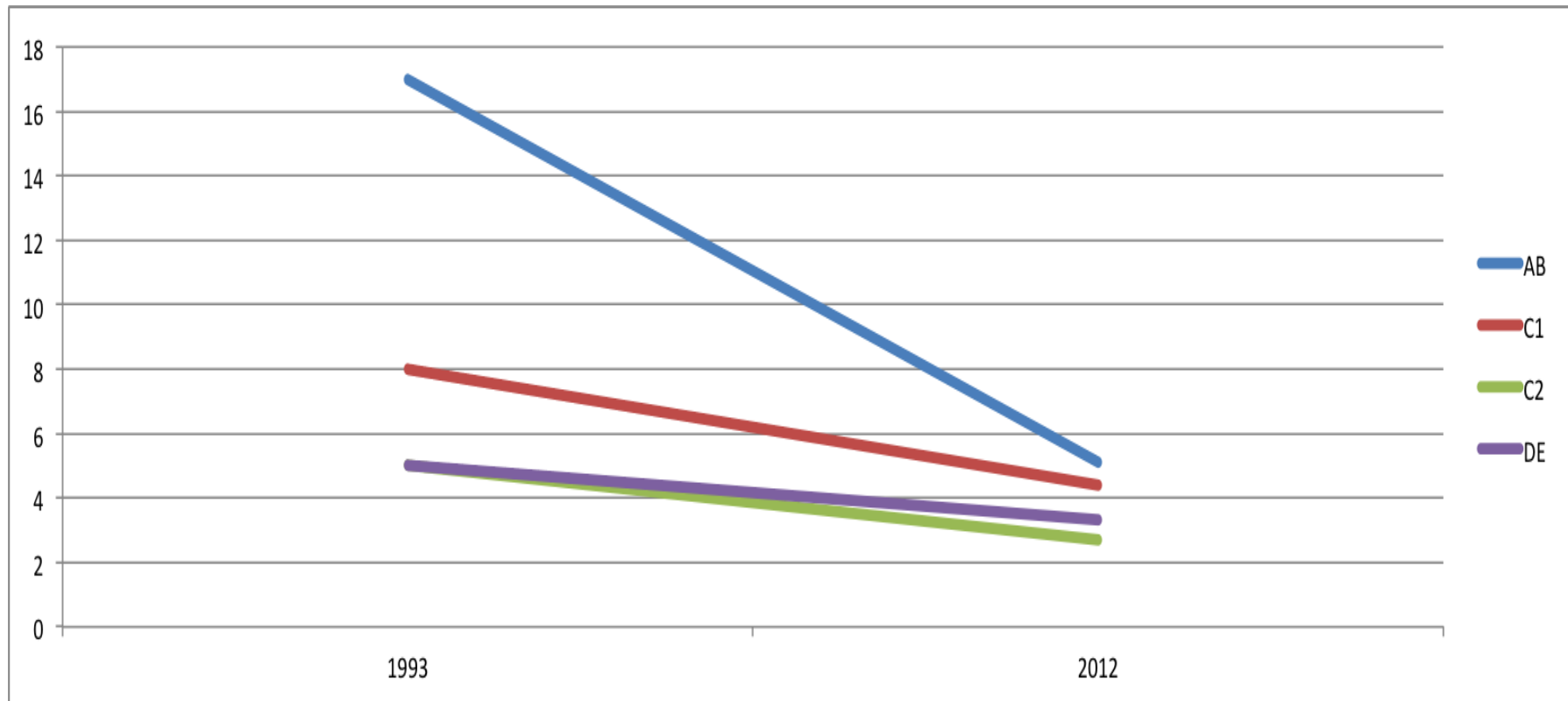


Figure 4.13. Music choice by socio economic group (% of expenditure on classical music)

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities
within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

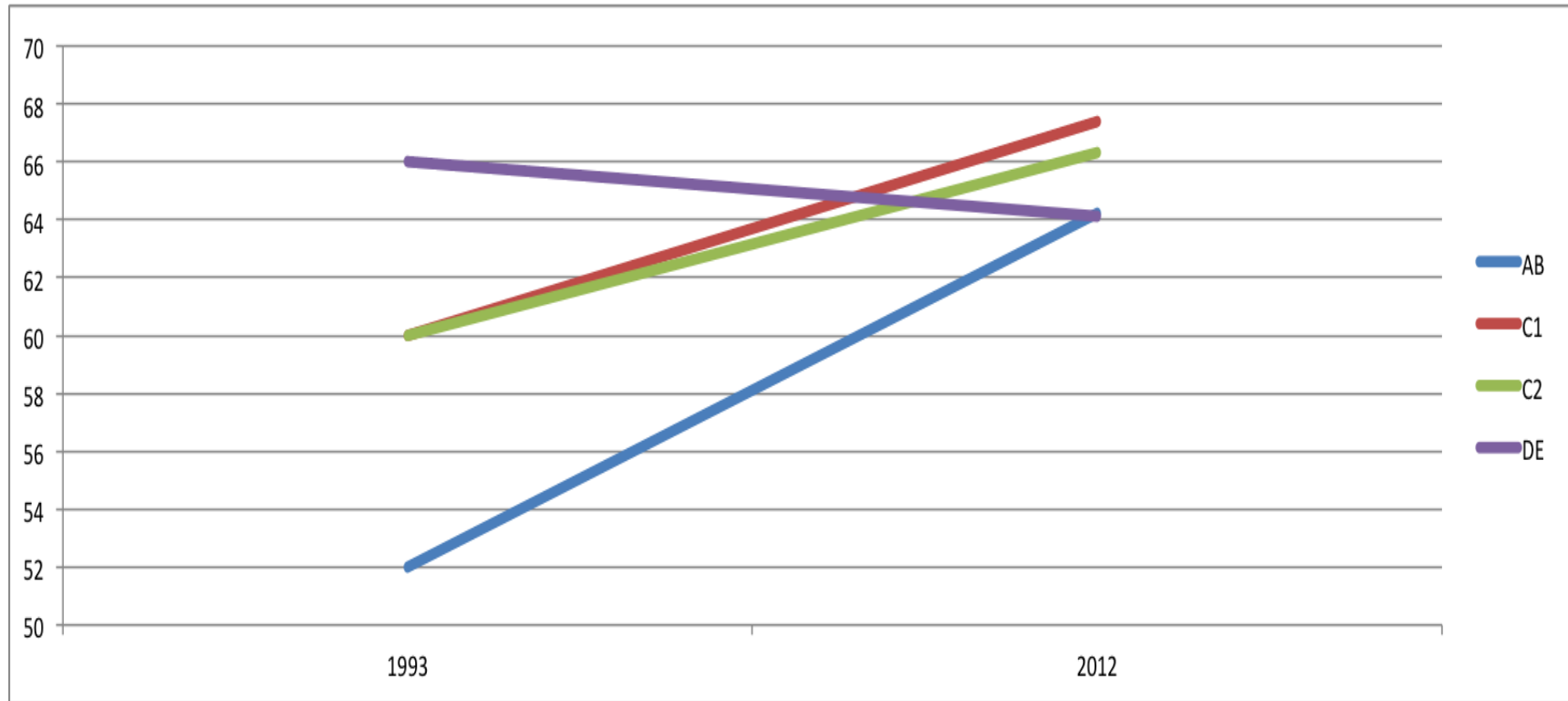


Figure 4.14. Music Choice Amongst SEGs (% expenditure on rock/pop music)

Revenues

If we turn our attention to the actual expenditure data we can see in more detail how, over the past 15 years, the bulk of classical music purchasing has been attributed to the activity of individuals aged 60+. Importantly during the past 10 years there has been a decline in the classical purchasing activity of those in the 40-49 and 50-59 age groups, making the 60+ demographic increasingly responsible for sustaining this genre. Figure 4.15 shows how the gap has widened since the early 2000s. If this trend continues then the classical music industry would be at risk of being heavily exposed to a reliance upon the purchasing power of a demographic which inevitably will gradually expire. These particular data sets were only available up to 2010 due to a change in methodology introduced by the BPI in their annual publication. Figure 4.16 demonstrates how that reliance on the older 60+ consumer group increased dramatically over a ten year period from 28.9% in 1999 to 44.9% by 2010. All other demographics declined, except the 12-19 year old group which increased from 1.3% to 7.4% demonstrating a marked growth.

The industry as a whole experienced a turbulent decade in terms of sales through the 2000s as digital technology continued to impact the traditional business model. Figure 4.17 gives an indication of the spending power across all demographics. The 50-59 demographic has declined much less dramatically than other groups through that decade. In fact in 2010 this age group spent more on average than all other age groups except the 12-19 demographic. Similarly in Figure 4.18 we can see that, compared to a decade ago, 50-59 year-olds are more likely today to make an album purchase, and very closely resemble the levels of purchasing of the younger age groups. That makes this cohort of significant interest to the music industry and wider businesses.

Expenditure by Genre (Classical)

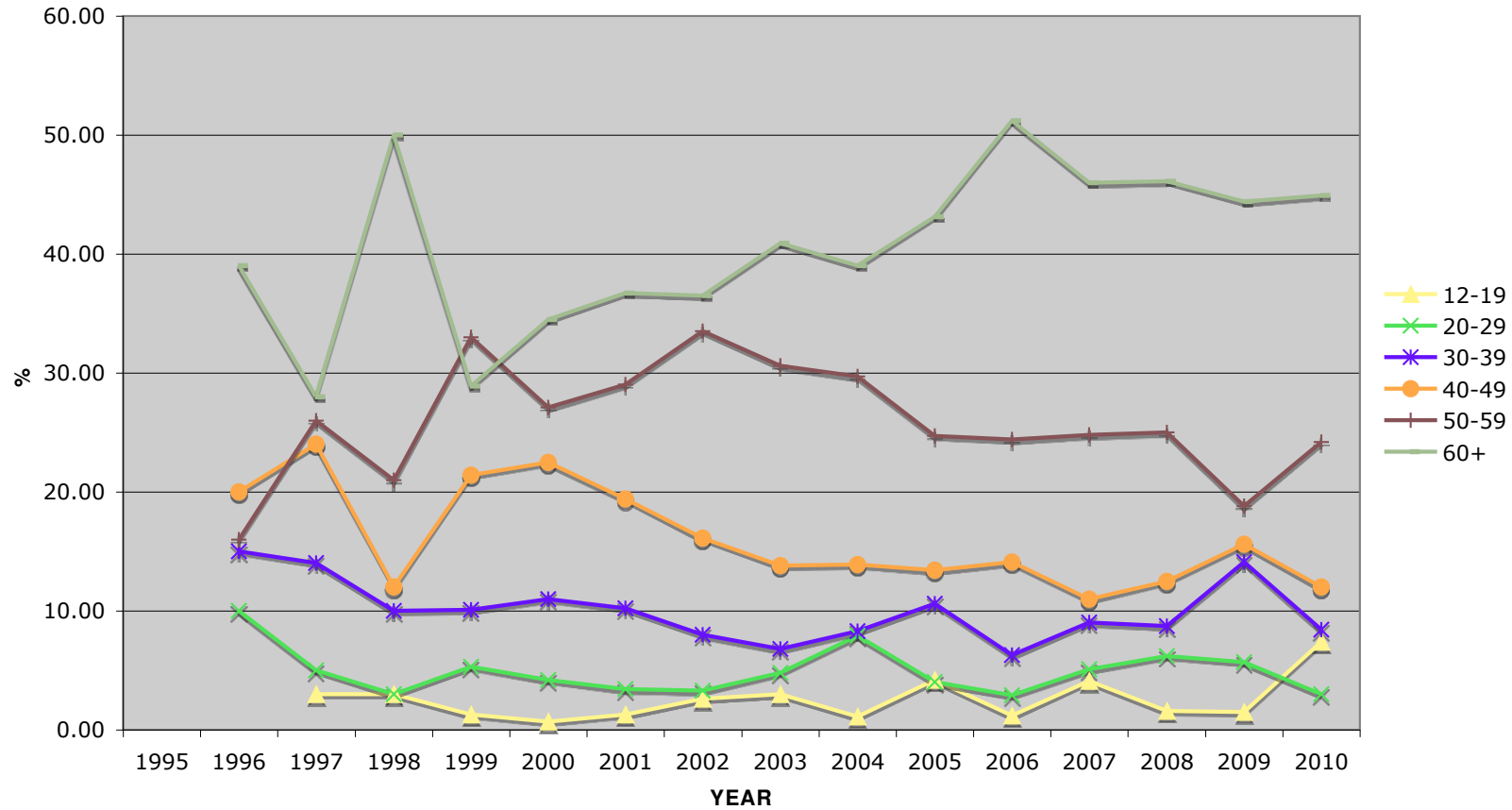


Figure 4.15. Expenditure by Genre across all demographics (Classical)

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities
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UK Music Expenditure by Genre (Classical Music) - %								
	M	F	12-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
1999	74.7	25.3	1.3	5.3	10.1	21.4	33.0	28.9
2000	68.3	31.7	0.7	4.2	11.0	22.5	27.1	34.5
2001	66.0	34.0	1.3	3.4	10.2	19.4	29.0	36.7
2002	68.0	32.0	2.6	3.3	8.0	16.1	33.5	36.5
2003	64.0	36.0	3.0	4.8	6.8	13.8	30.6	40.9
2004	63.9	36.1	1.1	7.9	8.3	13.9	29.7	39.0
2005	64.4	35.6	4.2	4.0	10.6	13.4	24.7	43.1
2006	62.5	37.5	1.2	2.9	6.3	14.1	24.4	51.2
2007	62.5	37.5	4.1	5.1	9.0	11.0	24.8	46.0
2008	57.8	42.2	1.6	6.2	8.7	12.5	25.0	46.1
2009	58.2	41.8	1.5	5.7	14.1	15.6	18.8	44.4
2010	66.8	38.7	7.4	3.0	8.4	12.0	24.2	44.9

Figure 4.16. Expenditure by Genre (Classical)

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

Ave Annual Spend Per Buyer

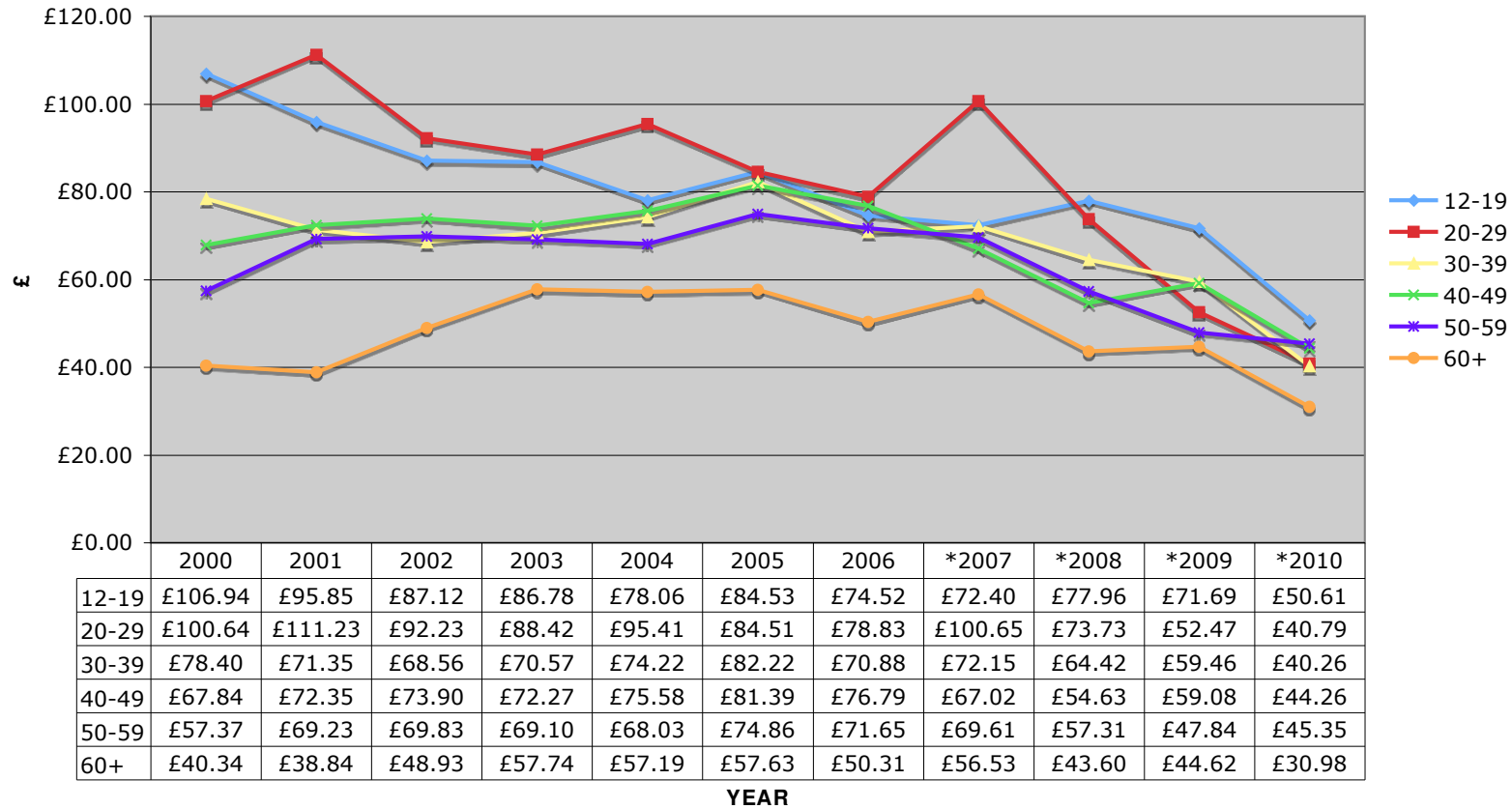


Figure 4.17. Average annual spend per buyer across all demographics

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

Market Penetration

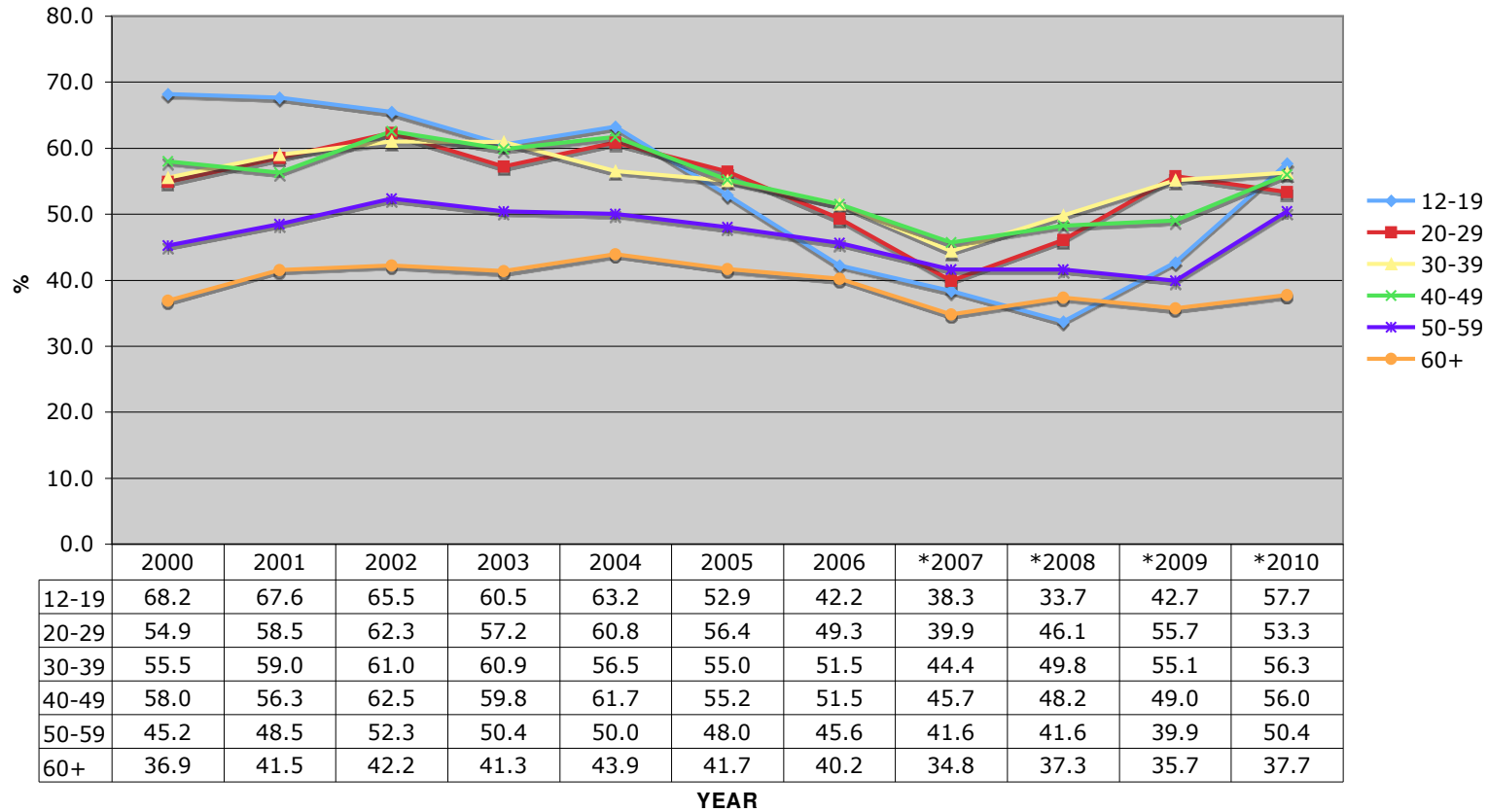


Figure 4.18. Market penetration across all demographics

4.4 Additional industry data

The above music sales data provides an interesting insight into the music tastes and consumption of the target cohort aged 40-59 ABC1, and comparisons with other demographic groups. However, this information purely relates to recorded music purchases.

The same level of detail was unavailable for the live sector hence this research study turned to qualitative data capture and ethnographic observations, to examine the audience profiles at live events.

Radio

Additional data was kindly provided by the BBC research department in order to examine the audience profiles of the primary UK radio stations. Figure 4.19 shows the summary of the current listener data as compiled by RAJAR (2014).

Recent reports have suggested that both Classic FM and Radio 3 have been experiencing a decline in their audiences in recent years whereas the rock/pop stations that have experienced significant growth during the same period have been BBC Radio 2 and Absolute 80s. Both of these stations are driven by audiences aged 40s-50s (Plunkett, 2014). BBC Radio 3 has been facing ongoing criticism by the media and listeners that it has been ‘dumbing down’ its content in an attempt to win more listeners. This is something that has been strongly denied by the BBC (Guardian, 2014).

The rock pop station BBC 6 Music also appears to be attracting an older middle class listener (mean age 40). This may suggest their passion for the genre, and for discovering new music before it hits the primetime playlists of Radio 1 or Radio 2. The BBC’s youth radio station, Radio 1, also displays a surprisingly older audience with a mean age of 34. This may suggest that new music in this genre continues to appeal to those in their 30s and 40s. The classical stations (Radio 3 and Classic FM)

are clearly dominated by the 65+ audience which make up over 40% of total listeners. So these radio listening figures appear to mirror the trends that were highlighted by the music sales data in the above sections.

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities
within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

		Total	BBC Radio 1 (Rock/Pop)	BBC Radio 2 (Rock/Pop)	BBC Radio 3 (Classical)	BBC 6Music (Rock/Pop)	Classic FM (Classical)
Total	Audience (000)	53,502	10,550	15,014	1,912	1,994	5,199
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100
Men	%	48.8	47.6	51.3	54.8	61.3	48.3
Women	%	51.2	52.4	48.7	45.2	38.7	51.7
15-24	%	15.4	30.8	7.2	6.4	9.8	7.2
25-34	%	16.6	27.6	10.7	5.8	25.4	10.7
35-44	%	15.8	18.9	16.8	8.6	31.6	12.1
45-54	%	17.1	12.9	22.6	16.3	20.6	13.3
55-64	%	13.7	5.9	19.4	21.4	9.7	16.4
65+	%	21.4	3.9	23.2	41.5	3.0	40.4
Mean Age	%	47	34	51	58	40	55
Class AB	%	22.5	25.2	28.5	39.8	35.9	33.9
Class C1	%	31.8	32.9	33.7	35.5	35.8	35.0
Class C2	%	24	24.1	24.6	15.2	20.1	16.8
Class DE	%	21.7	17.7	13.2	9.5	8.2	14.3

Figure 4.19. UK radio audience profile data RAJAR 2014 (BBC Research)

Live

The Arts Council also kindly provided some live music participation figures for 2009 – 2013, which provided further evidence of the divide between classical and rock pop.

The Taking Part survey is a key evidence source for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. It is a continuous face to face household survey of adults aged 16 and over in England. Therefore, it provides useful additional data for this study. It collects data on many aspects of arts and culture, but of most relevance here is the attendance of live music events – as attended in the respondents' own time. Figure 4.21 below shows the proportion of each age group who reported attending these events at least once in the past 12 months. It also provides the population figure that this equates to. For example, 25.6% of 45 to 64 year olds attended a rock pop live music event in the 12 months period (2012/3), equating to 3,446,599 people. It is clear that the attendance level of rock/pop events appears to be very similar across all demographics from aged 16-64 years old whereas the classical genre leans more towards the older age groups. Total classical music concert attendance remains very similar between 2009 – 2013, dropping slightly from 8.2% to 7.9%.

Again these live concert attendance figures appear to confirm the trends highlighted by the analysis of the music sales data.

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities
within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

Age band of respondent	Have you been to a classical music concert in the last 12 months (in own time or for voluntary work)
	Yes (%)
No age information	0.0
16 to 19	3.6
20 to 24	4.0
25 to 29	3.5
30 to 34	5.1
35 to 39	5.2
40 to 44	7.7
45 to 49	9.8
50 to 54	9.7
55 to 59	11.6
60 to 64	12.8
65 to 69	13.4
70 to 74	12.4
75 to 79	14.1
80 or over	8.1
Total	8.2

Figure 4.20. Taking Part Survey Arts Council (2008-9)

Sample size 14,452. All data have been weighted to be representative of the population of England

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities
within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK

Have attended a live music event in the past 12 months	16-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75+	All age groups
Opera or operetta	75,958 1.2%	397,830 2.7%	701,719 5.2%	355,344 7.8%	178,199 4.3%	1,709,050 4.0%
Classical	164,475 2.6%	709,081 4.9%	1,416,043 10.5%	615,084 13.5%	489,472 11.9%	3,394,155 7.9%
Jazz performance	159,123 2.5%	588,282 4.0%	916,585 6.8%	286,029 6.3%	172,281 4.2%	2,122,300 4.9%
Rock or pop	1,869,117 29.7%	3,886,420 26.6%	3,446,599 25.6%	482,806 10.6%	126,087 3.1%	9,811,029 22.8%
Soul, R&B or hip hop	883,551 14.1%	946,149 6.5%	891,738 6.6%	99,873 2.2%	23,339 0.6%	2,844,650 6.6%
Folk or country and western	342,041 5.4%	721,069 4.9%	972,062 7.2%	244,794 5.4%	83,002 2.0%	2,362,968 5.5%

Figure 4.21. Taking Part Survey Arts Council (2012-2013)

4.5 Chapter Summary

For the purposes of this study it is most notable that, when analysing the buying choices of the 40-59 consumer group, there has been a marked change between 1993 and 2012. This could represent a new generation of individuals entering that age group who grew up with rock, pop and punk.

The trend appears to suggest that tastes in this demographic are increasingly leaning towards rock/pop purchases, and not classical. Hence, the classical industry is becoming increasingly dependent upon the 60+ demographic, unless they can start to attract new consumers.

In addition, the identification of a shift in the middle class consumers away from classical, with increased engagement with rock/pop purchasing, could present opportunities for the contemporary music industry especially when taking into increasing consideration the spending power and the music appetite of the 40-59 demographic. This middle aged, middle class cohort are clearly an important consumer group and will continue to be the focus of this thesis.

Additional evidence of this generational shift was provided through the examination of the official radio audience data and the Arts Council live music attendance data.

The following chapters will detail the qualitative research that was carried out over a 3 year period of participant observations. This field research was designed to provide additional evidence to test, and further explain the trends identified through this empirical analysis of the official recorded music industry sales data.

Chapter 5

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF MUSIC TASTE: ROCK/POP vs CLASSICAL

(Review of the participant observations)

5.1 Introduction

The analysis in the previous chapter provides the academic discourse with a new data set regarding music taste. The quantitative analysis of the official music industry sales data set for this thesis provided useful data in answering our first research question examining the core music tastes of the 40-59 year old middle class cohort. The data clearly suggested that this cohort (measured by their purchasing of recorded music) were increasingly consuming rock/pop, compared with previous generations at that age, accompanied by an apparent decrease in their classical consumption. These trends seem to support the concept of *music generations* and supports the findings of Bennett et al. (2006) and Savage and Gayo (2011) in identifying a clear and increasing divide between the contemporary and classical genres amongst the middle aged group. This study has demonstrated just how great the gap is in popularity of those two contrasting styles, and that it is also being demonstrated in the higher social classes.

However, this finding does not provide sufficient detail to address the second research question surrounding the definition of the rock/pop genre. As noted in Chapter 2, Bennett et al. (2009) observed that their middle aged, privileged cluster had a knowledge and interest in the classical canon but found that several of their elite interviewees also liked rock music. However, the artists that they referred to in that genre were predominantly from the 1960s and 70s rather than recent acts. Artists they named included Bob Dylan, The Beatles, Eric Clapton, Fleetwood Mac and Queen (Bennett et al, 2009; p84). Rather than a move from a classical canon towards contemporary pop, therefore, we might hypothesise that the BPI data is evidencing a shift from a canon of 'legitimate' music based on the classical genre to

a new pop/rock canon. The next two chapters attempt to answer this question: how far does this change in taste of the 40-59 year old demographic reflect a taste for current contemporary rock/pop music, and how far is it a reflection of the emergence of a new canon of legitimate music based on 'classic' rock and pop?

To answer this second research question, it was necessary to go beyond the UK music sales data and collect qualitative data about what kinds of pop and rock this group consumes. Rather than a survey approach, this thesis attempts to examine this question in a number of field-based situations, developed specifically for this research project, where detailed ethnographic observation and qualitative semi-structured interviewing occur with a range of individuals in the target cohort.

5.2 Examining the music taste of the 40-59 ABC1 cohort in the UK.

The participant observations described in this chapter were collected during field research dating from 2011 through 2013, giving direct access to the 40-59 aged ABC1 target audience. A range of events were designed to test whether rock/pop based innovations in events and products could attract this target 40-59 year old middle class consumer group.

5.2.1 Anniversary Event Series

(Investigating music taste and cultural legitimacy)

The selection of the anniversary events for this research study was reviewed in Chapter 3. The sections below document the participant observations and field notes from these sessions. The key insights gained from those observations and informal interviews provide an informative personal insight into the groups that were attracted to the events.

i. 40th Anniversary of The Old Grey Whistle Test

During the afternoon and evening as the researcher I observed and engaged in conversation with participants in order to gain a deeper examination of their tastes and opinions.

George (59): When I saw this event (The Old Grey Whistle Test anniversary) advertised in the local paper, first I couldn't believe it was forty years since I was watching it in my 20s. I used to religiously watch it. There was nothing else like it at the time. I bought a guitar and used to practice the riffs that I saw the bands play on the show. It used to drive my parents mad.

Researcher: Did you watch other music shows?

George: There wasn't really anything to compare with it. The other music shows were much more disco and pop and that wasn't my thing. Although I did used to dance to it at the disco!

Helen (48) I used to watch Top of the Pops too! I loved dancing. The OGWT was great but I mainly watched it because my brother used to make us watch it. You couldn't really dance to that music. I did love the boys in the bands though in those days. They were super skinny and cool. We all had long hair in those days! Girls and lads!

Researcher: Did you used to buy the music that you watched on TV?

George: Oh yeah definitely! I used to spend a fortune in our local record shop and my turntable was my pride and joy. No-one was allowed to touch it except me! I bought all the great rock albums that came out during the early 70s. I loved Pink Floyd, Genesis, David Bowie a lot of Brit acts.

As well as the importance of rock and pop music in the taste preferences of this group, the event also revealed the level of knowledge of participants about the rock and pop of the OGWT era. Bob Harris was interviewed about his OGWT career on-stage before the audience were invited to participate in a Q&A session with Harris. The audience engaged very enthusiastically and the level of questioning was impressive. They were clearly well educated and passionate music experts who still had a strong affinity with the programme and music that they had loved during their youth.

Brian (57): I can remember seeing Jimi Hendrix for the first time on OGWT. He wasn't playing live it was some concert footage that they were featuring but it was amazing. I saw so many amazing acts coming through at that time. Those songs still sound great today. I heard The Who 'Can't Explain' on Radio 2 last week and that song still sounds great. British rock was incredible in the 1960s & 70s.

However, the taste preferences of this group appear to exhibit certain gender differences, with the men tending to lean towards what they considered the 'legitimate' music of OGWT and women more interested in the broader range of pop/rock music featured on the alternative TV programme of the era. The men tended to be much more likely to watch OGWT than TOTP (although they were very keen on the dancers). Overall the OGWT audience at the anniversary event was predominantly male aged 50s with wives who they had brought along, but who were not as big fans of OGWT as their husbands. There seemed to be an apparent gender difference emerging from these conversations. As the conversations deepened it became increasingly evident regarding how those two shows (OGWT and TOTP) were viewed differently by the males and females.

Researcher: What do you think the main differences were between the OGWT and TOTP in the 1970s and 80s?

Julia (53): I don't remember much about the OGWT as I used to watch TOTP. I'm just here to keep John company! Although I do like Bob Harris. I sometimes listen to his Radio 2 show featuring all the Americana singer-songwriters.

Researcher: So would you say you are a country fan?

Julia: I wouldn't say I'm a fan of country music no but I do like his show. A lot of it is more singer-songwritery than what I would call country music. I also like some of the country acts that now sound quite pop rocky. Radio 2 play them but I don't know what they are called. I quite like Taylor Swift too and someone told me the other day that she is a country act but I wouldn't class her music as that. I like listening to most things really.

Researcher: Do you like classical or jazz?

- Julia: Not really. I like stuff that I can sing along with.
- John (57): You like Amy Winehouse. She's jazz isn't she?
- Julia: I thought she was pop?
- John: Oh I suppose so yes. I don't know. Does it matter? You should just listen to what you like. It doesn't need a label.
- Researcher: So what do you like John? Were you an OGWT fan or TOTP fan?
- John: Definitely OGWT. I loved watching that show. You got proper artists and musicians on that show. TOTP had acts and OGWT had artists.

This recognition of the growing following of the rock genre in the early 1970s and the association with its educated and cool fan base is indicative of the distinction that, according to the participants, was already being drawn by this audience during that era. Pop music was 'for the masses', viewed by the core rock fans as entertaining but slightly cheesy.

- Joe (55): I used to think I was so cool heading down to the papershop to collect my NME and to the record store to buy the new release of the band I'd seen on OGWT. Both of those shaped my music collection.
- Researcher: Did all your friends do the same?
- Joe: Yeah pretty much. We all had long hair of course (laughs)!
- Geoff (56): Back in the day when we had hair yeah! And we all used to wear skinny jeans and think we were Robert Plant.
- Joe: I remember how I used to read the NME on the school bus to impress the girls. Music was a huge thing for us at school.
- Researcher: So did you enjoy your music lessons at school?
- Joe: Not really. They were pretty boring. Very historical and we weren't interested in historical music. We were interested in the music of the day. It wasn't cool to like the classical stuff. Some of the boys in the school band used to get a hard time on the bus, being teased and that. Silly really. I was at a grammar school but some of my other friends were at the secondary

school and it was even tougher there. Your music tastes helped you identify with the cool gangs.

Geoff: Everyone had their own idea of what 'cool' was at school but there was a real division between those who liked prog rock and those who liked glam rock which was also big at that time. Totally different images as well as music. I wasn't really into glam rock but I do remember having a pair of pretty impressive platforms!

Joe: And flares! And I remember buying a white suit when *Saturday Night Fever* came out. When that arrived we all drifted into disco music because that film and the album were so huge. Also we were a bit older by then so were going to the clubs and dancing. You couldn't really dance to the prog rock stuff. That was more for listening in your bedroom on your own or with your mates.

Geoff: I never had a white suit but I used to try and dance like John Travolta. We did used to strut. Thinking we were so cool.

Researcher: So what genres are your main preferences today?

Geoff: I still really love the original rock classics. Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Yes, Genesis, Stones, Bowie, The Who. British rock was incredible at that time. You just can't beat it. I also like Roxy Music, Fleetwood Mac stuff like that. Those albums had so many great songs on there.

Joe: Yeah same with me. I love the classic rock stuff. I was listening to *Dark Side of the Moon* a few weeks ago and it still sounds great. I was also watching some of the OGWT videos on YouTube before coming to this event last week and there are so many great bands and artists that were around at that time you forget how exciting it was.

Following this conversation the researcher mentioned *Saturday Night Fever* in future conversations with other participants at this event. Similar opinions were expressed whereby they viewed it as rising above pop or disco because it was so good. The success of the film could also have contributed to this of course. It was interesting that throughout the conversations participants mostly described the OGWT and TOTP repertoire and audiences with clear differences, and with a moderate boundary differentiating between the two. Especially between the prog rock (regarded as rock) and glam rock and disco (regarded as pop). However, where *Saturday Night Fever*

gained widespread adoration, even the prog rock audience appeared to cross that boundary and engaged in varying levels with that new pop genre. It seemed that although they do distinguish themselves by reference to ‘legitimate’ rock genres and a discourse of ‘credibility’, they could still engage with the more popular forms of the music that they had previously dismissed as non-legitimate. These respondents seemed completely comfortable with the idea of engaging across a multiple of very different contemporary styles of the time – which also had very different fashion statements attached to them.

The qualitative interviews also posed questions regarding the role of classical music in the tastes of this group.

Researcher: Did you used to buy any classical music?

Helen: Oh god no. But we did have a lot of that in our house because our grandparents had quite a large collection which my mum then inherited.

George: I played the trumpet at school but really I wanted to play guitar and be in a band. Music lessons were very dull and the teacher didn’t have much control over the class.

Researcher: Do you play an instrument now?

George: No I don’t but I am going to visit the Gibson guitar masterclass later. I wish I’d learnt to play.

Helen: Yeah I wish I had learnt an instrument too. I don’t have the patience now! Or the time.

Regarding classical music there was no strongly discernible gender difference observed during the participant conversations. Responses were very similar across all participants.

Researcher: Do you like classical or jazz at all?

Joe: Not really. I sometimes listen to Classic FM in the background but I couldn’t identify the names of any of the music. It’s quite nice to have it on sometimes though.

- Geoff: Not really. My wife goes to church and sings in the choir there so sometimes she puts it on at home.
- Researcher: Why do you think you don't listen to classical or jazz?
- Joe: Just not my thing really. I don't dislike it but I don't choose it.
- Geoff: Yeah same.
- Researcher: Do you see any live bands these days?
- Geoff: Yeah loads! So many artists tour nowadays and loads of them come to Brighton. Or we go to London. I'm going to see Deep Purple at the O2 Arena next month. That is going to be a great gig. They are playing with an orchestra, does that count as classical? (laughs)
- Joe: Yeah I was too slow to get tickets for that. That will be amazing.

However, as this and many other participant conversations throughout the event demonstrate, the willingness to entertain music outside the *OGWT* canon did not extend as far as becoming 'omnivores' in its true sense since there was virtually no interest or engagement with classical music other than in formal lessons. Instead there were strong signs that they were still enthusiastically engaging with the classic rock music and artists that they grew up with. Their reference to the Deep Purple concert was particularly interesting in comparison to *The Genesis Suite* example because they appeared interested to see the band perform with the orchestra because they agreed that it would sound incredible. However, when asked if they would be interested in seeing an orchestra perform classical interpretations of Deep Purple without the presence of the original band themselves they expressed limited interest. They wanted to hear the band in full rock mode but with the addition of an incredible orchestral sound. Hence, if *The Genesis Suite* had been performed by Genesis band members with the LSO it would no doubt have been a far more popular release and live event.

This response was common across the majority of participants. They spoke enthusiastically about their favourite bands within rock or pop but when asked about classical music they were disinterested., describing any classical music that they did listen to as chill out or easy listening.

Sharon (42): I almost exclusively listen to Radio 2 as it has a bit of everything on there.

Researcher: All genres including classical and jazz.

Sharon: Yes they do have that music on some shows but not the ones I listen to. I listen to the daytime ones and that has a nice mixture of old songs that I remember and new songs that I like too.

Maggie (55): I quite like Classic FM when I am working as it helps me concentrate.

Robert (42): It's not my first choice. Not really my cup of tea.

Researcher: Would you go to a classical concert?

Sharon: Not really. Unless it was with my mum. She likes that.

Robert: I doubt it. I have seen a few open air events in the summer but they were free. We took a picnic and it was nice.

Researcher: What music did they perform?

Robert: No idea! Classical music! Don't know what it was.

Researcher: What about opera?

Robert: No never been to the opera. Tickets are so pricey these days that I try to just go to see the acts that I really like.

Researcher: Quite a lot of classical and opera tickets are actually subsidised these days.

Robert: I probably still wouldn't go. No idea who the singers are. It's just not my world.

That last comment summed up the separation that this audience generally felt when asked about the classical genre, and opera in particular.

Given the focus of Bourdieusian theories, there was surprisingly little reference to the social class or cultural capital aspects of classical music, of the genre being

‘posh’ in their descriptions. Most respondents described classical music as ‘nice’ or ‘not my taste’ or ‘it’s ok’, but the ‘not my world’ remark suggested a more significant opinion and a reference to class distinctions.

Researcher: What do you mean by ‘not my world’?

Robert: Well I’ve just never really been into it. None of my friends listened to it and I don’t play an instrument so I was never in the school orchestra or anything so it just isn’t something I think about.

Maggie: It is mostly liked by the older generation I think. Not us.

Sharon: Yes when I go with my mum I feel quite young there!

Researcher: So you listen to it as background but do you have any favourite composers?

Sharon: I know that the famous ones do stuff that I like but I wouldn’t be able to name the music no.

Robert: I know the big names Mozart, Bach and so on but don’t know their music although I would know it if I heard it because they are very famous.

There was very little evidence of it being viewed as ‘high’ culture even when the researcher directed the questioning in that manner.

Researcher: Do you think classical music is more respected than rock?

Sharon: I think it probably used to be because the older generation didn’t like the new youth music.

Robert: I suppose it’s a bit pompous.

Sharon: It’s just totally different to rock. When you sit in the audience you aren’t even allowed to clap after a song finishes. I find that very odd. There is a weird silence between songs. It’s uptight and uncomfortable. It’s a bit like church.

There were also no references to ‘cultural capital’ in relation to rock. We may conclude that the respondents’ taste simply reflected their memories of their favourite bands and albums from their youth, without any evident need for ulterior motives regarding social or economic capital. However, the retail exhibitors at the OGWT event (such as a Gibson Guitars dealer and luxury goods retailer) all experienced a high level of sales during the event, despite the fact that the audience were mostly interested in the main OGWT show so did not browse for very long. The group that had been attracted to this event were high spenders, and considering the exhibitors were mainly selling high priced goods this was indicative of an audience which has a solid base of economic capital.

ii. 30th Anniversary of ‘Prince Charming’

The second anniversary event gave a fascinating contrast to the Old Grey Whistle Test event. Adam Ant was the special guest interviewed live on stage, before performing acoustic versions of some of his hits. The audience was also invited to provide questions for Adam from the floor.

It was immediately apparent how different this audience was compared with the OGWT audience. There was a much larger representation of females, they were mostly aged 40s and many of them also brought their children. The OGWT audience had been predominantly male aged 50s, and were very conservatively dressed. In contrast many of the attendees at the *Prince Charming* anniversary show chose to wear Adam Ant t-shirts or 80s styles. This indicated a different relationship with this music compared with the previous audience. They displayed their passion for this artist and music in a much more visible way. The OGWT had appealed to its fan base which included fans of many classic rock artists, whereas this event singled out one particular artist so had drawn the core fan base who were visibly more engaged.

Researcher: What brought you here today?

Sarah (45): Adam Ant of course! I’m so pleased that he is back again. He’s a fascinating guy and a real 80s icon.

Rachel (40): He’s a total 80s icon. Everyone knows that white stripe. That was clever. And he’s quite controversial

and has had quite a lot of press about his years of mental illness so that has made him quite fascinating to lots of people I think.

- Researcher: Have you seen all the people wearing his t-shirts and badges?
- Sarah: Yes! I was quite surprised when I saw all that. Although I guess he has a pretty large fan base. When I heard he was coming here and doing an interview and performance I thought it'd be interesting.
- Researcher: Did you hear we celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the *Old Grey Whistle Test* anniversary here yesterday?
- Sarah: I saw it on the poster but hadn't really heard of it before. Was it before my time?? Ha!
- Researcher: Why do you think Adam Ant still has such a strong fan base? He hasn't recorded or performed for years.
- Sarah: That probably makes him more popular. I used to have his poster on my bedroom wall. He was always in the charts when I was growing up. He was huge and the stripe made him much more recognizable than other bands.
- Researcher: Did you like him in his earlier 'punk' stage?
- Sarah: I didn't know he had an earlier punk stage?? Did he really?
- Researcher: Yes he did. Did you used to watch him on TOTP?
- Sarah: Of course. TOTP was essential viewing. Shame it stopped. Not that I watched it anymore. I do watch the TOTP show that Steve Wright does sometimes though.

This answer regarding his 'punk rock stage' and subsequent transition into pop produced quite consistent answers with participants. Most of the attendees at this event had discovered Adam & The Ants when he broke through in the pop scene in the early 80s. They were unfamiliar with his earlier activity as part of the UK punk movement. He was considered a new romantic era artist, having had high profile success with ten Top 10 chart hit singles between 1980-83. Others were early fans

and viewed him as a rock artist rather than a pop act. Adam Ant had a strong educational foundation, having studied art at undergraduate level before leaving college in the 1970s to focus on his growing music career. His interview demonstrated his depth of knowledge of popular culture and art.

Martin (47): I loved his early stuff. It had much more edge than his 80s hits but the 80s hits were catchy and his whole image at that time fuelled the new wave of bands coming through.

Debbie (46): I liked his '*Dirk*' album best. It was darker than the pop stuff.

Researcher: Why do you think his style changed?

Debbie: I guess the record labels probably wanted him to reach a bigger audience. We were his early fans and it was like an underground thing. So it wasn't so huge. But the *Dirk* album was a success and then his audience grew and he needed to put out songs that were a bit lighter I guess. Still love him though. He is a true artist and really into art too. I've read some interviews he has done and he really knows his stuff. That's what I like about him. He seems passionate about music and art.

Martin: Yeah I was in art college and he was huge in our circles at that time. He was cool. Did you know that the Sex Pistols' first gig was as a support act for Adam's earlier band? Not many people know about the pre-pop stuff he did.

Debbie: The difference between the pop albums and the earlier albums is that he is probably still earning money from the pop albums because I often hear his songs on the radio.

Martin: His lyrics were much more edgy in the early stuff too. They probably told him to tone it down a bit.

There was an interesting range of opinions about his material and it was a difference that could almost be predicted purely by their appearance. The men tended to be fans from his earlier darker era (or had been brought along by their girlfriends) and the women were longstanding fans of his pop era. The fans of the earlier era spoke about his lyrics, his artistic ability, the underground nature of his audience, the punk/post-punk references and styles. Many were older and those who were dressed up were wearing the earlier imagery, whereas his pop fans were younger (early 40s)

and talked about how catchy the songs were, didn't mention the lyrics, and spoke about his new romantic look more. Those who were dressed up were sporting 80s styles. There was a noticeable division between the two groups, with the fans of the earlier era placing much more emphasis on elements that would be considered more niche and educated, compared with the mass market nature of pop. Interestingly these early fans, although obviously viewing his earlier work as more credible and artistic, mostly respected his career in its entirety rather than accusing him of selling out to the commercial market.

It was also interesting how the participants viewed the record labels as a controlling force in his career. Their opinions when asked why they thought his style progressed into punk often suggested that they considered it was a commercial decision made by the business rather than by the artist himself. The commodification of music, driven by the industry packaging it up for mass consumption. Adam Ant was an artist who had the ability to cross audiences, appearing both on OGWT and TOTP during the 1970s and 80s. His physical appearance combined with his musical talent gave him an increased dimension.

- Researcher: What is your favourite music style? Do you still listen to pop?
- Sharon (43): Yes I love pop and 80s pop in particular. 80s radio is always on at home. This is my daughter and she loves it too.
- Researcher: Pop or 80s pop?
- Sharon: 80s pop for me but my daughter does listen to it too. She loves it. Not that she has much choice because I play it in the house and the car!
- Researcher: What were your favourite 80s bands?
- Sharon: Adam Ant was probably the most memorable because I really liked his music but also because his videos were really interesting. I can't really remember the videos of any other bands. Except for A-Ha's *Take On Me*.
- Researcher: Was music video quite important to you?

Sharon: It wasn't important to me really no. It was the music I liked but it provided another thing to watch to see more music. TOTP used to play them a lot. And on some TV shows. It meant we could see what the bands looked like and wore rather than just hearing them on the radio or occasionally see them perform on a TV show. I remember buying some music video compilations and watching them over and over. Then going out and buying the same sorts of clothes. Madonna was especially big at that time and so we were all wearing those styles too.

The participants who described a preference for pop generally showed more interest in fashion than the older rock fans had. They described the fashions as 'ground-breaking' and 'artistic'. Arguably this is just a personal preference as others would have described the fashions of the time in less complimentary terms. However, it was interesting to note how closely music and fashion were linked for those who were fans of 80s pop, and how they described how people 'wore their music' during that era. It created a visual bond, an added dimension that communicated 'who you were' and what you liked. This helped form groups of friends who identified similarly with that group and importantly it helped demonstrate your close affiliation with that culture, suggesting a depth of involvement and knowledge of that music. A form of subcultural capital as described by Thornton in 1997, subcultures formed around sub genres of the growing and evolving rock and pop genres and operating in similar ways to distinguish themselves from one another. This suggests a paradigm shift whereby the cultural capital strategies that had been described by Bourdieu in earlier years were now used in similar ways amongst the mass rock/pop audience. Previous academics have directed their research focus to these sub-groups, but much of this attention has been directed towards the youth demographics and not the older cohorts who actually grew up in this area. Hesmondhalgh focuses on this point in his 2005 publication titled '*Subcultures, scenes or tribes? None of the above*', highlighting the youth focus of many researchers.

"Pop is still discursively centred around the young, in other words, but we should no longer see the consumption of music as being primarily a youth phenomenon, as commentators did in the 1960s and 1970s." p.96

He recognized that by the 1990s, teenagers were no longer the main buyers of music. In 1992, according to the British Phonographic Industry Handbook, 47 per cent of album buyers older than 16 were in fact over 45 years old; only 16 per cent were aged 16-24 years. Experiences happen early but have can seemingly have long lasting impact. Journalist, Alexis Petridis, recently described his early experiences in an article he wrote regarding subcultural capital.

“When I arrived at secondary school in the mid-80s, the fifth and sixth forms, where uniform requirements were relaxed, looked like a mass of different tribes, all of them defined by the music they liked, all of them more or less wearing their tastes on their sleeves. There were goths. There were metallers. There were punks. There were soulboys, at least one of whom had made the fateful decision to try and complete his look by growing a moustache, the bum fluff result pathetic in the extreme.”

(Alexis Petridis 2014)

Many of the individuals at the live event case studies used particular terms repeatedly during conversations with the researcher, emphasising the ‘back then’ or ‘in those days’ with clear suggestion that they considered the music of that era to be more credible than the music of today. There was significant mention of the ‘manufactured’ nature of pop today and the ‘commercial’ nature of the charts. This opinion was clearly directed towards quality and how they compared the music of their youth with today’s output. There was a general agreement that nothing ‘new’ was really happening in music these days. Many of them had children in their teens who shared their music but they noted that their offspring didn’t really demonstrate the level of passion for music that had consumed them when they were in school. There was divided opinion on the reasons for that. Many blamed the internet for killing the original distribution model and thereby diluting the value of music by flooding the market with it, along with other alternative activities and entertainment.

John (45): I used to spend so much time browsing the record store and then playing the vinyl on my record player at home. Reading

all the sleeve notes and the lyrics and really absorbing the music. My kids today just pull it up on YouTube and have it playing in the background whilst multi-tasking on Facebook, messaging their friends, browsing the internet or playing games and stuff. Although there are certain bands that they have clearly bought into such as One Direction who my daughter loves, on the whole music doesn't play as big a part for them as it did for me and my age group when we were their age.

This thesis does not intend to address the youth market of today but it is relevant to see how the 40+ generation observe their children, and recognize that it is different to the experience that they remember from their youth.

Others saw the revolving nature of the genre to be the central cause of the dilution of their perceived quality in pop especially.

Helen (43) All the songs seem to sound the same these days. That's not to say that I don't like them because I do, but there doesn't seem to be the same level of excitement as when we were in school. Or maybe I just don't know about it! But I think that this is why music today and back then is actually quite similar because it's still basically the same style.

This recognition of a classic style that has endured is interesting. Many at the event believed that this is why rock/pop music appeals to more than one generation because the similarity means that their children can appreciate and share the music they grew up with in the 1970s and 80s and vice versa. This type of cross generational sharing did not appear to be experienced by the participants aged 40s and 50s when they were younger as they did not share the taste of their parents.

Brian (46): My kids are always sifting through my music. They love the old prog rock stuff. And they both play guitar so are really into that sound. We all went to Glastonbury last year on a family holiday. It was fantastic.

Researcher: Did you used to borrow your parent's music?

Brian: God no. That was all easy listening stuff. A bit middle of the road for me back then.

Researcher: Do you like easy listening now?

Brian: Yeah I do actually but not the stuff my parents were listening to back then. They were listening to Andy Williams, Val Doonigan, Des O'Connor and stuff like that. Crooners. My easy listening is more sort of singer-songwriter style. I like Rumer. She reminds me of The Carpenters actually. Great voice. Ironically my parents would probably like her too because it is an unintrusive easy listening sort of vibe.

The *music generations* highlighted by Savage and Gayo (2011) and Bennett et al. (2009) were consistently highlighted during the participant conversations. There appeared to be a much stronger boundary between the tastes of the 40-59 cohort and their parents, than between them and their kids. Age was certainly a very strong factor that frequently appeared in participant conversations.

iii. 40th Anniversary of Dark Side Of The Moon

The observations gained at this event supported the findings of the previous events. Firstly, there was quite a clear age and gender divide. The older men were most enthusiastic about the Pink Floyd anniversary tribute, whereas the younger women (who were the partners of the men) were less so. The women aged 30s and 40s enjoyed the event experience as a whole (especially as it was on a beautiful beach in Crete!) but were not as knowledgeable about the music, which was very focused on the early 1970s and therefore a little before their time. This gave a really interesting insight into how precisely these 'music generation' segment audiences, because during one's youth a few years makes a large difference. In the space of just 4 years someone can age from 7 years old to 11 years old and they experience music very differently during those years. So even though a gap between the men and the women may only be 6-10 years it became noticeable how that gap made a considerable difference in terms of their music exposure and favourite original artists.

- Tom (53): I can't wait for the Floyd tribute act. It's going to be amazing. Especially in this setting (on the beach) under the moon.
- Mike (55): I hope they're good though! I bet the Floyd stuff is pretty complicated to play and there are some iconic tracks on that album.
- Tom: Yeah it could be embarrassing if you don't get it spot on, especially if there are fans here because they will know every note. Pressure! Rather them than me.
- Researcher: Apparently they are very good. Do you still listen to the album (*Dark Side of the Moon*)?
- Mike: I hadn't heard it for a while actually but I downloaded it on iTunes before we came out here and it still sounds incredible. It was such an amazing album at the time and it still blows you away now.
- Tom: I used to have it on vinyl but I gave them all away years ago. Not heard it for many years. They don't really play much stuff like that on the radio that I've heard.
- Mike: They do on the classic rock radio stations.
- Tom: I haven't listened to those stations.
- Sue (42): Oh god don't suggest that or we'll have it on all day every day.
- Tom: You just don't know good music when you hear it, 80s chick.
- Sue: At least I can dance to my music and have a bit of fun with it. I'm not ashamed of my 80s roots!

These competitive comments became common during the course of the case studies' observation sessions, with wide differences between the music that individuals did or didn't like between the genres. The men in the above exchange were outlining their belief that the music of Pink Floyd was technical and clever. The tease about the 80s music and the reference to 'good music' demonstrated this, believing their music as the more credible in terms of talent and artistic integrity. Her response about not being 'ashamed' about her preference for the 80s music she grew up with suggested that she also believed that the music they liked was better than hers but she liked it anyway. She clearly didn't feel any social pressure to pretend to like the music that

they liked, and she also adds a retort clarifying the advantages of her favoured music compared with theirs. This suggests a feeling of ownership and a relationship with that music that makes her feel that she has to protect it – and justify her love of it. There appears to be an underlying sense of cultural capital here whereby the men are leveraging their knowledge of that particular album which they describe as ‘iconic’ and attempting to position themselves and that music as a ‘higher’, more legitimate form.

Throughout that event the word iconic was used surprisingly frequently by individuals who were not part of our group, but one of the 20,000 people from all over Europe who gathered on the beach to hear it. The album was clearly considered a great work even amongst the non-Floyd fans because some of the songs were very well known and recognisable. The level of technological adoption was also noticeable whilst asking numerous attendees whether they had recently heard the album. No-one still had the album on vinyl (except possibly in their attics) but most of the individuals who described themselves as original fans (now men aged 50s) had it on CD because they had bought the 30th Anniversary edition ten years ago. This marketing technique has been employed repeatedly by record labels over the past few decades. Anniversaries create opportunities for new product re-releases, with new packaging and a new PR angle for media coverage to promote it. This is precisely the reason why the *Generation Music Club* event brand had been built upon the same anniversary model using the live events in this research period (see Chapter 8 for the *Generation Music Club* business review). However, it was also revealing to discover how many of the participants were completely *au fait* with the new digital technology. Most of them had some form of MP3 player and an account with iTunes. They also used Amazon extensively to buy CDs and downloaded a lot of music from the Apple store.

Sarah (40): I absolutely love my iPhone. I feel lost if I go out without it these days.

Adam (40): Yeah me too. It is an essential item now. Especially for emails and work.

- Sarah: I mostly use mine for photos and texts and Facebook although I do have some music on there but the battery doesn't last very long if I listen to music much.
- Nicola (48): James puts my music on there for me. I use an iPod not my phone though. I got that before my phone so I just keep using that for my music.
- Researcher: Where do you listen to most music?
- Sarah: In the car definitely.
- Nicola: We have it on at work so listen to Radio 2 pretty much all day every day.
- Researcher: How do you listen to music at home?
- Sarah: I have a Bose Sound-dock which sounds amazing.
- Nicola: I'd like one of those but they are a bit expensive aren't they?
- Sarah: Yeah it was a bit expensive but worth it. I love it. It's Bluetooth so you don't even have to plug it in to stream music.
- Sue: We've just got a new Bang & Olufsen system which cost a fortune but it's amazing. You can access all the digital music through the TV. It's really clever.
- Sarah: Yes that's what I would have wanted if I won the lottery!

There was a clear ability amongst all the participants to demonstrate a strong understanding of digital technology, and also an interesting attachment to the importance of sound quality in many of the conversations. However, all their comments regarding quality was regarding the hi-fi system. They seemed unaware that even with the high priced, high quality system they were still tied to a compressed MP3 file quality if they were streaming or playing music from their digital libraries which means a lower audio quality than vinyl recordings.

It was also interesting to watch how the participants casually spoke about their high priced items, consequently demonstrating their economic capital but not in an overt manner. It didn't appear that they were intentionally doing this but rather as just a

statement regarding how they listened to music. Some individuals within the group, who clearly had less economic capital, did vocalize the price tags that came with the items that were being discussed so it was clear to everyone in the conversation who could afford what. There did not seem to be any hesitation in people's willingness to position themselves at either end of the economic scale. Everyone there had a reasonable income and were financially comfortable enough to afford the trip from the UK to Crete.

iv. 40th Anniversary of Ziggy Stardust's Farewell

Part One

The level of education and economic capital was clearly much higher at this event than the previous case study events, but there was a much more even spread between male and female attendees and also a broader range of ages. During conversations with attendees it very quickly became apparent that Bowie as an artist had touched a wide demographic due to his career spanning both the 1970s and the 80s, and having had considerable success in both those decades. However, there was an interesting divide between how the two groups viewed Bowie as an artist. The older cohort were mainly men and admired the creative nature of his 'Ziggy Stardust' persona and the rock based material that he created at that time. The younger cohort, aged 40s and mainly female, had experienced his 'pop' career through the 1980s where he had taken a new direction with his fashion and his sound, and was considered a mainstream act rather than a creative artist.

Nick (56): I loved his Ziggy Stardust album. I played it over and over in my bedroom and on headphones in the early 70s. It was phenomenal. We'd never experienced anything like it before. He was somewhat of a freak but so creative with his style and sound. The Spiders From Mars were huge. All my friends had that album. It was devastating when he killed him (Ziggy) off.

Mark: Yeah it was. We wanted him to carry on with them. Apparently the band didn't even know that they were being killed off until he announced it. Some of the band still play

today I think. The fans were not happy about it at the time but as an artist he obviously wanted to move in a different direction so looking back I can see why he did it.

Nick: I actually liked all of his stuff throughout most of the 70s. It was different but still some great songs on those albums.

Mark: Tony Visconti must have had a great time working on all these albums.

Nick: Yeah an amazing producer. I faded away as he started to enter the pop genre towards the 80s as that wasn't really my thing.

The clear depth of knowledge demonstrated by many participants at that event was striking. Not only did they know about the details of Bowie's personas and the albums but also the musicians and the producer. This enables them to demonstrate how broad their knowledge is around this subject. Again these conversations seemed to be genuinely driven by their passion rather than any attempt to gain a position of authority of cultural distinction. They had grown up with this artist and more specifically this album, and it had clearly had a great influence on them.

The audience generally displayed a knowledge and a passion for this artist. There was a distinct impression given by the older men that Bowie's early era was viewed as generally more creative and artistic than his later work in the 80s. The younger females viewed him as an 80s pop star and pin up, having not experienced the earlier era due to their age. Interestingly the men closely identified with the *Ziggy Stardust* persona despite his androgynous image at that time. They viewed him as a credible artist and a highly talented musician, and even a creative *genius* being talented in many artistic fields, not just music (also visual arts and mime for example).

Researcher: Do you still listen to Bowie's albums?

Kate (45): I haven't for ages actually no. I usually just listen to the radio mostly these days rather than choosing music. Partly because I moved house and so some CDs are in boxes and the rest of my music is on my computer so it's a bit all over the place.

Julie (46): Yeah same. Mostly radio.

Researcher: What stations?

- Kate: Usually either Radio 2 or Absolute 80s. Sometimes 6 Music.
- Julie: Yeah I've just started listening to Absolute 80s but I can only get it on my kitchen radio because its digital.
- Researcher: Do you ever listen to classical?
- Kate: Not really.
- Julie: Never. Maybe Christmas.

This transition description regarding technology was common across all the case studies. It became clear that they are adopting the new technology, but it has meant a period where they don't access their music because it's too complicated. Instead it is easier to revert to radio. This is important because it is potentially throwing up barriers to their music consumption. However, the conversations clearly demonstrated their enthusiasm for the genre and music that they grew up with so at a later stage, once the technology has diffused further enabling ease of consumption, this cohort is likely to engage again with gusto.

Part Two

A second event celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Ziggy Stardust's farewell was run later in the year to capture an opportunity which arose unexpectedly. This was an invite only event of an elite group of participants (mainly CEOs and equivalent) featuring astronaut Colonel Chris Hadfield, the most recent Commander of the International Space Station. During his interview on stage Colonel Hadfield also conveyed the impact that the songs of *Ziggy Stardust* (and also the *Dark Side of the Moon* album) had on him during his youth in the 1970s. He confirmed that even now his music listening preferences whilst working on the space station include those albums and many more albums from his youth.

Colonel Hadfield was interviewed on stage by Dr. Maddie Aderin-Pocock, the new presenter of BBC's '*Sky At Night*' programme. He discussed not only the scientific aspects of his job, but also how he had wanted to fulfil a personal dream by filming

himself performing *Space Oddity* in space. This song held special meaning for him as an early inspiration so to receive approval from his music hero to go ahead with this project had clearly meant a great deal to him. That resulting video of his space station performance – the first music video ever to be shot in space – received several million views on YouTube. The audience were invited to participate in a Q&A with Commander Hadfield. The questions from the floor raised several interesting points regarding space travel and science. The attendees appeared to be a well educated group as well as being in high status positions. Professor Stephen Hawking was one of the special guests, and after the main event was over the audience was keen to meet with him and have a photograph taken with him. He was treated as more of a rock star celebrity than purely a scientist. His IQ was clearly highly respected by the audience and most were aware of his work. Commander Hadfield performed *Space Oddity* live on stage after the Q&A session. He then autographed the acoustic guitar for silent auction, which was bought for £2001 by a participant at the event in aid of Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy Charity.

During the after show drinks (and for several months after this event) it became clear from the responses of attendees that this event had made a particular impression. It had offered more than just a music concert, it had provided an opportunity to ask a leading astronaut questions about space, a leading scientist questions about science, and also to hear about and enjoy the music of an artist from their youth that they were still attached to. This suggested how this event had tapped into not only their music preferences and enthusiasms, but also their intellectual curiosity that had clearly been developed through the experience of a good education. This elite group identified with this event. During the course of the evening the conversation also turned to the Virgin Galactic project and how the rock superstars and high net worth individuals were already signing up to visit space in those early journeys. That level of wealth however was not in the room for this event.

v. 30th Anniversary of Duran Duran's 'Sing Blue Silver Tour'

This event, although higher profile and more exclusive than the previous case study events, supported many of the observations of previous events. Firstly, it was clear

that music can be used to segment a target market with great effectiveness and predictability. This event had a high percentage of females aged 30s and 40s. There was a general excitement about being in a room with the actual band members. There was no formal staged event, so no interviews, no Q&A opportunities in the room, no live performances. Despite that the attendees were clearly satisfied enough with just being in the same room with the band, and socialising at this drinks reception.

- Tina (46): I can't believe they are all here! I have been so excited for days about coming to this. I loved them so much when I was growing up.
- Amanda (44): I had all their albums and their posters were all over my wall. I saw them in concert a few years ago and they were still great. Not sure about Simon's beard though.
- Researcher: What was so great about their music? Do you still listen to it?
- Tina: I don't know really. They were just great pop songs and great pop stars actually. Good looking and stylish. I don't have my records anymore but I do listen to Absolute 80s sometimes and they are often on there.
- Amanda: They just seemed to write really catchy songs. I assume they wrote them anyway? I remember the Wild Boys video even now!
- Tina: Yeah and the Rio video on the boat!
- Researcher: Gary Kemp is here too. Did you like Spandau Ballet at that time too?
- Tina: Yeah there was a bit of rivalry between those camps. I liked SB but I was more in the Duran camp.
- Amanda: I liked both but I also liked a lot of other bands. Still do. My music is quite eclectic.
- Researcher: Can you give me some examples?
- Amanda: The Smiths, New Order, Depeche Mode, The Cure. I like all of those as well as the more pop acts like Culture Club and Duran Duran.
- Researcher: Are you both still fans of pop/rock or have your tastes broadened?

Amanda: Yes it's still what I listen to.

Tina: Me too. There seems to be quite an 80s revival going on these days with music festivals and radio and so on. It's obviously not as naff as people thought!

Often it was revealed that although participants considered their music tastes to be very varied and described as *eclectic*, it usually was quite confined. When giving examples of acts, they would list several artists who were actually within the pop/rock genre, although admittedly often across different locations on the genre spectrum. However, it was still very mainstream, and they had not drifted towards consumption of any other genres such as jazz, classical or even blues. They were very much chart focused.

The reference to the 80s revival raised important opinions regarding the credibility of the 80s pop scene, which has often been mocked for its superficial nature and costumes and make up that represented the new romantic era. The participants referred to the lack of credibility as if they agreed that it lacked legitimacy as a 'serious' artistic repertoire but at the same time were happy to discuss their close association with it. These participants were in high status careers and seemed well educated. They are clearly confident enough in themselves to not worry about the potential perceptions of being attached to genres and eras that may be considered by some to not have serious cultural depth.

Researcher: Would you go to a Duran Duran concert now?

Amanda: If they were playing somewhere and I could go then I would yes. So many of the 80s bands are playing now. I saw A-Ha at the Royal Albert Hall a few years ago and they were great! That is a fabulous venue.

Researcher: What was the typical age of the audience at that concert?

Amanda: My age! Not sure if the younger generation knows who A-Ha are.

Tina: I went to see Alison Moyet and there were a lot of women there my age but also with their kids. I'm going to see Erasure

next year. Can't wait for that. I probably still know all the words! We are reliving our youth!

Amanda: I still know all the words. I'm not surprised that there is such excitement about older acts touring again because back then they were hugely famous. There were much fewer radio stations and TV channels so if they were on TOTP everyone soon knew them.

Many of the participants mentioned how incredible it is that when they hear music from their youth on the radio or at a concert they can sing along, even when they have not heard the music for many years. It was imprinted on their memory following endless repeat listens, and as mentioned above, the narrow range of media at that time meant that bands received very high exposure to this youth generation.

5.2.2 Weekly Vinyl Nights

(The power of music for segmentation & the appearance of a new canon)

The series of weekly vinyl nights was conducted to examine the extent to which a new canon of 'classics' might be appearing that is revered by today's 40-59 ABC1 generation. The event ran as a weekly session through a 12 week season at a 4-star hotel in 2013. As it gave the participants access to a collection of 250 well known albums dating from 1960s to 2000s it enabled an observation of selections to collect data for both Research Questions 1 and 2 in terms of taste.

Particular outcomes became apparent on the first night and were witnessed regularly throughout the season. Firstly, the act of physically browsing through albums which many of the participants had owned at some point during their life was clearly exciting for the majority of the guests. Upon entering the room and first seeing the vinyl it always produced interest, with most people choosing to stay for more than one drink and to engage with the browsing opportunity. Secondly, the act of physically putting a vinyl record on a record player was something that the guests also clearly found very nostalgic and meaningful. Thirdly, the event mainly attracted

the 40+ audience who had grown up with vinyl, but was also of interest to their children – many of whom had actually never seen or used a record player before. However, hotel residents aged 70+ tended to find the room too loud and did not engage as enthusiastically with the music or the event, choosing to retire to the quieter bar upstairs.

The ‘experts’ became very noticeable as a distinct group who were very passionate, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. There was at least one ‘expert’ (often more) each week who spent the whole evening lining up their favourite songs. They took great pleasure in telling the researcher and standers by about the album, the artist, their personal memories of the album or era. They were mostly male aged 45-59, although throughout the season there were also ‘expert’ females but they tended to lean towards the pop genre, in contrast to the male experts’ rock preferences. The females were less vocal and much less confident about using the record player but very enthusiastically selected records and brought them over to be played so they could dance to them.

A repertoire of frequent comments became noticeable as guests shouted excitedly to friends and partners in the room:

- “Look darling I used to have this album!”
- “Oh look do you remember this one honey!”
- “Oh my god I remember this one!”
- “I wish I’d kept my records”
- “I can remember where I bought this record!”
- “I wish I’d kept my record player”
- “I’ve still got my records in the attic”
- “I’ve still got my record player in the attic”
- “My wife made me get rid of my records”
- “I used to be in a band”
- “I absolutely love this record”
- “This is a classic”

As the weeks went by it became increasingly easy to predict which albums/eras participants would select from the boxes, based on their estimated age. The vast majority of selections were songs/albums that were hits during the guests' early teenage years. Those in their 40s firstly gravitated towards the 1980s collection, those in their 50s gravitated towards the 1970s collection and those aged 60s gravitated towards the 1960s selection. There was clear attraction to the back catalogue that referred to their school days so although the music collection that was available in the vinyl room dated from 1960s to late 2000s it soon became distinctly apparent that attendees were firstly and most greatly attracted to the music that they used to own and listen to. It became quite predictable as the weeks went on to see those aged 40-59 head to the 1970s and 1980s sections and exchanging stories about the memories that these albums evoked whilst browsing the boxes. Similarly attendees aged 60s tended to search for the hits that they remembered from their youth in the 1960s. Interestingly though this trend did not seem so apparent for the younger attendees aged 20s and 30s. They had the opportunity to select multiple hit albums and 12" singles from the 1990s and 2000s that they had grown up with but instead often chose various 1980s or 1970s hits to play on the turntable, as these were the songs that they had heard their parents play at home whilst growing up. There seemed to be a cross generational sharing of many of the most popular records from these 1970s and 80s decades amongst these participants.

Throughout the course of the weekly event series it became apparent that there were several specific artists and albums which repeatedly were selected by the groups.

These included (in no particular order):

- David Bowie (Ziggy Stardust)
- Elton John (Yellow Brick Road)
- Fleetwood Mac (Rumours)
- Michael Jackson (Thriller and Bad)
- Pink Floyd (Dark Side of the Moon and The Wall)
- Led Zeppelin (any)
- The Doobie Brothers
- Stevie Wonder (Superstition)

- Motown Greats
- ELO (Hits)
- Madonna (Like A Virgin)
- Blondie (Parallel Lines)
- Bryan Adams (Reckless)
- Tina Turner (Private Dancer)
- Diana Ross – Motown Hits
- Kate Bush (Hounds of Love)
- Duran Duran (Rio)
- Spandau Ballet (Through The Barricades)
- Heaven 17 (Temptation)
- Wings (Band On The Run)
- Adam Ant (Prince Charming)
- The Beatles (any)
- Bob Marley & The Wailers (Legend)
- Rod Stewart – Greatest Hits (Maggie May and Young Turks)
- Queen (Hits)

There was frequent mention of the term ‘classic’ in relation to songs or albums that participants demonstrated closest attachment to. This certainly supported the possibility of the appearance of a new contemporary ‘music canon’ as recently identified by Savage and Gayo (2011).

Neil (52): This is timeless this song. Just superb.

Geoff (59): These guys really paved the way with their musicianship. The production is incredible. It’s really stood the test of time.

Researcher: What do you think defines a classic?

Neil: These artists were innovators. They were so creative and talented. They were making the creative decisions rather than simply being put in a studio and told what to do.

Geoff: Yeah they had the know-how. The drugs probably helped too! The 1960s and 70s turned music on its head.

Researcher: Do you think this music will still be seen as the classic catalogue in 100 years?

Neil: God knows what we'll be listening to in 100 years but I definitely think it is growing in strength. You see so many anniversary albums and tours and media coverage and blue plaques going up on walls now. It is taking on a whole new persona in terms of importance. Even when most of the artists are still alive. So I imagine when they are no longer with us it will continue to be increasingly highly regarded yes. Certainly while all the current generations are alive anyway. Who knows what is coming next.

Geoff: There doesn't seem to be much new coming next at the moment. Maybe that is what also happened with classical. The oldies were the goodies and those are the artists that become remembered as the 'masters'. So the original rock/pop artists will be the ones who are remembered as the 'masters'.

The level of respect that this demographic has for the popular music culture that they grew up with is evident, and the points regarding the 'masters' are salient ones. The innovators are often the ones that are remembered in the long term.

5.3 Chapter Conclusion

This section summarises the findings of the live anniversary event case studies and the weekly vinyl event series in relation to the examination of core music taste (Research Questions 1 and 2). The responses in this chapter present us with a nuanced understanding of the taste of this group which may not have been revealed by previous research and the empirical analysis of music sales (see Chapter 4). We can summarise the responses in relation to the broader taste literature reviewed in Chapter 2 as follows:

Firstly, when asked most respondents described a liking for (and few of the participants stated a dislike of) the classical genre. But when probed in more detail, they predominantly described having a superficial relationship or at best a passive

engagement with it as background music or easy listening, The respondents mostly seemed to describe it as quite a neutral genre; although they wouldn't say that they dislike it, they also do not prefer it. And crucially, they do not consume it in a commercial sense as they do not spend money on it.

This returns us to an important distinction between the approach used in this study and the approach commonly adopted in survey research. Many of the responses detailed above would be classified as a 'like' for classical music in an attitudinal survey which in turn might be interpreted as evidence of omnivorous taste. However, in practice it was clear from the conversations during the field studies that they were certainly knowledgeable and passionate about rock pop, but held virtually no expertise regarding the classical genre. This was a pattern that was also witnessed by Bennett et al. (2009) in the CCSE focus groups.

“Discussing Gerry’s taste in rock opens up named bands, associated with family experiences. Classical music is evoked in a much more general and vacuous way, only ultimately focused in highly generic terms as ‘just easy listening classical music. Claiming affiliation with classical music demonstrates respectability, but rock demonstrates involvement, excitement and commitment”

(Bennett et al. 2009p87)

Secondly, we can contrast this low level of classical knowledge with the level of knowledge displayed about classic rock and pop. As shown above, a recurring theme in the Q&As with featured guests at events, and during the participant conversations, was that there was very clearly an ongoing respect and knowledge for the era of rock music that seemed to reach beyond just pure nostalgia. It was a recognition of something that they truly believed was exceptional, and still do. The men vocalized this much more than the women, especially at the OGWT event.

Thirdly, the participants rarely spoke about the relative importance of classical music in terms of elevating status or 'being seen' at the right events. This evidence supports

the findings of previous studies (reviewed in Chapter 2) that ‘high’ cultural goods like classical music are not (or are no longer) the preferred form of cultural capital of this demographic. However, it does not support the hypothesis that this group has the ‘expert’ omnivorous taste, if we apply the criteria of music purchase, as opposed to the more neutral expression of a ‘like’.

Fourthly, rather than identifying classical music with cultural capital, the participants instead made a clear generational distinction between their cohort and those they identified as consumers of classical music. Many respondents described classical music in relation to ‘older people’.

Fifthly, the data provides support for a distinction between the ‘legitimate’ music of OGWT and the other forms of pop/rock featured on TOTP. The vocabulary, that men in particular, used to describe the two shows was very different - the contrast between ‘artists’ and ‘acts’ being a significant indication of how that rock audience was attempting to position the genre as a legitimate cultural style compared with ‘pop’ which it deemed less worthy. This suggests a taste for ‘legitimate’ rock among a sophisticated, passionate, male audience and a taste for a lighter, more mainstream ‘pop’ oriented repertoire among females.

These conversations, regarding the OGWT vs TOTP topic in particular, support recent theories of ‘emerging cultural capital’ (Savage et al. 2013; Savage & Prieur 2013). The middle class group, who were aged 20s during the 1970s, appeared to be striving to demonstrate how ‘cool’ they were by displaying a knowledge of the new music and artists that they considered ground breaking, and of ‘legitimate’ music media such as OGWT. The television viewing figures support the indication from these interviews of a distinction between the group exploring the legitimate canon and the rest of the youth population during the 1970s predominantly consuming the mainstream pop acts, with TOTP enjoying vast audiences compared with the niche viewing base of OGWT.

As noted in the methodology section, these participant conversations were drawn from a sample attending a ‘legitimate’ rock event, so we would expect them to be very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about that genre. However, if omnivorous

consumption were typical of this demographic we would also expect to detect some ‘crossover’ into classical during these participant conversations. The qualitative data from these events, however, found, apart from a moderate passive engagement, very little evidence that this audience’s tastes crossed the boundary into classical, particularly if we consider music purchases as the measure of taste.

However, the purpose of these live event case studies was to provide detailed qualitative data concerning the rock/pop music tastes of the target demographic. Asking this question demonstrated how taste concerning different sub-genres of contemporary music in the 70s and 80s is affected not by overt considerations of cultural capital, but by varying assumptions regarding ‘legitimacy’ or ‘credibility’. This is reflected in distinctions drawn between the serious nature of rock artists on the OGWT in the 1970s compared with the lighter more commercial mass market pop acts on TOTP, and the new romantic pop acts compared with the darker more serious artists in the 80s. There was a consistent demonstration of how they viewed certain genres in terms of their ideas regarding ‘good music’. Those who expressed a liking for pop often made subtle comments which suggested that they knew that it was held in lower respect than other genres. Those who expressed a love of rock were also happy to discuss how they also enjoyed some pop and attended discos, but were keen to add that they knew it was a ‘guilty pleasure’ so that it was clear that they did not consider it to be at the same level of quality as rock.

They did not appear to need to display an identification with any particular genre, they were happy to discuss how they had actively engaged with lots of different types of rock pop music during their youth, but with varying levels of attachment.

The first finding concerns the Bourdieusian thesis of cultural capital. The qualitative data suggested a consistent lack of relationship between either classical or rock/pop music and considerations of ‘cultural capital’ from participants across all case study events and across all levels of economic capital and occupation.

Secondly, certain artists and albums were clearly considered very *iconic* and had made lasting impressions on this demographic across all classes.

This ethnographic study of groups of target participants enabled a micro-level examination of their taste and relationships with music. This approach was largely inspired by the work of Tia DeNora (2000) and the Cultural Capital & Social Exclusion study (Bennett et al., 2009) in terms of the usefulness of participant observations. The availability of music in everyday life today is widespread. There are few places where you might not find music playing. DeNora contributed valuable insights into how music engagement can extend invisible forces on listeners despite being a material experience.

It was striking that across all case studies there was a passionate attachment with the music the participants identified with. The music that they had grown up listening to, not as a passive participant, but as a fan absorbing the music and using it during the difficult teenage years to help develop social bonds and personal identities. Through the case study period it became clear that those were no longer the reasons that the participants responded to the music with such passion. Today in their 40s and 50s they have a subconscious nostalgic bond with the music that they identified with during their youth. It evokes memories which obviously deliver pleasurable responses, even if the period was one of teenage angst that they struggled through. Certain songs were also attached to very different memories, especially in relation to romantic experiences such as falling in love or having one's heart broken for the first time. These instances provoked very strong memories of where the person was and who they were with when hearing those particular songs. It was clearly a positive experience which supports the finding of Anderson (2012) in her analysis of original Duran Duran fans now aged 40s.

As these case studies had been particularly designed around the rock/pop genre theme it was not surprising that they attracted fans of that style. However, as this passionate and knowledgeable 40-59 ABC1 audience was identified as the cohort who could potentially also display omnivorous tendencies, it gave an opportunity to observe them and question them about their wider music preferences. There was no evidence that this cohort also consumed classical music, other than a small percentage of participants occasionally grazing in a passive background manner. It is open to debate whether this constitutes being 'open' to classical and contemporary

as originally described by Peterson (1992) but in terms of this study there certainly was no evidence that they have an enthusiasm for the classical genre, or a depth of knowledge. However, when questioned about the classical genre all participants clearly still firmly associate that genre as being ‘different’ and ‘clever’ in comparison with the contemporary rock/pop genre that they absolutely identify with. In that sense the legitimacy of the traditional cultural canon has not diminished at all amongst this demographic, but simultaneously this group has driven the increased level of respect that the contemporary music genre now commands.

Throughout the observations there was no obvious indication of this demographic currently using this rock/pop engagement to leverage any cultural capital value. Rather it is an aspect of their leisure time and a route to entertainment. Although there were clear and frequent references to how they had viewed the different genres and sub genres during their youth in terms of legitimacy now they view all the rock/pop genres with a shared sense of legitimacy because they represent a time which was their ‘era’. A representation of popular culture, with the word *culture* being taken very seriously by this demographic. They are proud of the music that they grew up with, and still hold the artists who created that back catalogue in high regard. This observation was apparent across all social classes. There was no indication at all amongst any of these participants that they considered rock/pop to be inferior in comparison to the true legitimacy of the classical genre. In fact when classical music did enter the topic of conversation it was largely described as a popular format – the lighter end of the traditional repertoire. How this lends itself to the traditional Bourdieusian thinking regarding the inter-related roles of cultural, social and economic capital will be discussed in more detail in later chapters.

The ‘experts’ amongst this demographic were equally able to recognise and celebrate the artists they considered the ‘masters’ across a wide array of sub-genres within the rock/pop repertoire. They were also able to identify other important players who were influential in the development of music during this era. The Beatles and George Martin were frequently cited as music innovators who would be remembered in future, also Quincy Jones and Michael Jackson, and David Bowie and Tony Visconti. The ability of experts to recognize the combined value of these artist-producer relationships demonstrates the depth of their expert knowledge within the

field. However, they also were highly competent in the recent technological advances, recognizing how that could actually shape the future music landscape and how that could influence the rise or fall of the contemporary innovators. In other words it could either mean that new generations have instant access to be able to explore the 'masters' who shaped the contemporary genre that they consume today, or they will simply become lost amongst the 25 million+ (and growing) songs that are available at the touch of a play button. The school curriculum could be a contributing factor in the level of awareness of new generations, regarding the origins and the 'classic canon' of the contemporary music genre. This deserves further investigation but is outside of the focus of this particular thesis.

Chapter 6

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF MUSIC TASTE: CLASSIC ROCK/POP vs CURRENT ROCK/POP

(Review of the participant observations)

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter detailed how the live event case studies were designed to examine the core music taste of the target 40-59 ABC1 cohort. Aiming in particular to attract the middle aged middle class ‘experts’ that had been identified in the previous academic discourse, and to attempt to observe and collect additional data on whether or not the relationships and opinions regarding contemporary and classical genres differ across that group.

This chapter is directed towards the focus of the second research question regarding how that cohort engages with rock/pop music across its genre timeline. In other words examining their level of engagement and association with the back catalogue classics that they grew up with (as examined in Chapter 5), compared with the new artists and current material within that rock/pop genre.

6.2 The Anniversary Event Series Case Study Review

The anniversary event series used iconic music dates and events as a marketing hook to test its effectiveness as a tool for market segmentation, and to examine music taste. The commercial success of this theme as a marketing strategy will be discussed in Chapter 8. The previous chapter outlined how these anniversaries appeared to effectively attract the target group that had grown up with the particular event that was being celebrated. So for example, the Duran Duran 30th anniversary event

primarily drew a female audience aged 40s whereas the *Dark Side of the Moon* and the *Old Grey Whistle Test* anniversaries had attracted primarily men in their 50s.

The main feature at those events were the elements that related directly to the artist or that anniversary. So for example, Bob Harris as the special guest for the *Old Grey Whistle Test* anniversary, Adam Ant for the 30th anniversary of *Prince Charming*, Commander Chris Hadfield at the *Ziggy Stardust / Dark Side of the Moon* event, and Duran Duran at the anniversary book launch. However, alongside these elements **every event also featured performances by emerging rock pop artists**. These guest artists were young performers in their 20s who firmly sat within the rock/pop genre, but who would not have previously been known by the audience as they were at an early stage in their careers.

The intention was to examine to what extent the 40-59 ABC1 audience engaged with these new artists and material, compared with the back catalogue anniversary that had attracted them to the event.

i. The Old Grey Whistle Test – 40th anniversary event: Little Fish

Despite the performance at the *Old Grey Whistle Test* event being acoustic rather than a full rock band experience, the vocals and attitude of their rock foundations came through loud and clear. They made an impression with the audience who were primarily there to hear Harris talk about the *Old Grey Whistle Test*. Following the performance, members from the audience queued at the front of the stage to meet *Little Fish*, have photographs taken with the band, and to buy autographed copies of their new single which had been produced by Gaz Coombes, lead singer of 90s indie band *Supergrass*.

Jules Sophie, lead singer and guitarist of *Little Fish*, commented afterwards that she was amazed at the reaction of the audience.

Jules: I didn't really know what to expect from this audience as this was an OGWT event but I can't believe what a great response we had.

Researcher: Why is it different from other shows?

Jules: It's great to have that many people queuing to buy autographed albums. These guys were so enthusiastic and supportive. It was great.

Members of the audience who had queued for signed copies of the new single explained what they had most liked about *Little Fish*.

Guest (Female,40s) She just had so much confidence up there and such a great voice. The songs were great. I just loved them. I really hope they do well. I'm going to try and go to one of their full band shows. I'm sure they are amazing.

Guest (Male/50s) I am sure they are going to be very successful. They already have apparently toured with *Blondie* and others and are signed to a big producer. They clearly are very talented. They could be big so I wanted to get their special edition single now before they hit the big time!

There was a strong sense of support amongst the audience after the *Little Fish* performance. Most of the attendees who spoke with the researcher stated how much they really hope that they 'make it' because they are so good. This audience appeared very engaged with music and talent. These performers were not a manufactured pop band, they were a raw rock act who wrote their own songs. They appeared to appeal to the audience, and achieved sales of their new single which appropriately was on vinyl. What was even more striking though was that when asked if they still played vinyl, it was apparent that many of those people who had bought the special edition, autographed, vinyl single actually no longer had a record player to play it on. It was purely being bought as a memento, something to mark the event, the first time they had seen this band. It was likened to the experiences that they recounted regarding when they had seen other 'now famous' bands back in the days before they were famous, back when they could get up close and personal at local venues. Those were the experiences that they spoke about, that they remembered in great detail even though it was thirty or forty years previously. They didn't speak about when they had seen the same acts decades later in the distance on

screens in arenas and stadiums with 50,000 other people. It was the intimacy and the excitement of seeing new bands develop through their early careers that they valued. There was no branding around this band, no publicity machine, no manufactured look or feel. It was a very organic performance which seemed to connect with the audience, suggesting that in relation to Research Question 2, this audience was attracted to new acts in this genre as well as classic repertoire.

ii. The Ziggy Stardust 40th anniversary event: Bethia Beadman

Prior to the film screening of Ziggy's last performance upcoming singer-songwriter Bethia Beadman performed an acoustic version of Bowie's song '*Ziggy Stardust*' at the front of the theatre. The room was a film screening room and therefore the acoustics were exceptionally dry. She had no microphones or reverb or sound system. She simply played an acoustic guitar and sang the song.

After the film screening the attendees were invited to a drinks event at a bar on Heddon Street, where the Ziggy Stardust album cover was photographed. Guests were asked for their thoughts regarding Bethia's performance of *Ziggy Stardust*. Overall the general feedback confirmed that they clearly loved her 'rawness', her 'voice', and that she seemed so 'authentic'.

There were comparisons during these conversations with the feedback that had been received after the *Little Fish* event. There was consistently a clear judgment regarding how 'real' and authentic and original these artists were. Their style obviously struck with the tastes of the audiences at these events. It was unclear whether the opinions regarding their authenticity was due to their close proximity to the performer, thus enabling them to immerse themselves in a much more intimate experience. The continued judgement of these performers as 'real' talented artists was a recurrent theme in conversations. There was no distinct criteria for these opinions, it seemed to be more of an innate response and an embodied feeling gained during the experience. Several people ordered Bethia's debut album that night, which again interestingly was on vinyl.

iii. Dark Side of the Moon 40th anniversary event: Harry Keyworth

Emerging singer-songwriter, Harry Keyworth, performed on a small stage at the Matala Beach anniversary event. This enabled the audience to stand close to the performer and appreciate the high level of skill demonstrated in his guitar playing. Participants were asked for their feedback following his performances.

Sue: Wow, that was absolutely incredible. How does he do all those parts on the guitar? It's amazing isn't it.

Tom: Yeah he is really talented isn't he. A proper talent. The way he worked that pedal to create all the loops was brilliant. It was totally the right atmosphere at sunset with that sort of cool acoustic vibe.

Mark: How long has he been playing?

Researcher: Formally, around 2 years.

Sue: Is that all?? That's amazing. He seemed so confident as if he's been doing it for decades.

Sarah: His voice sounds amazing. It's like chill out acoustic music.

The majority of the group bought Harry's CD and had their photos taken with him. They were asked what made them particularly enthusiastic about seeing new talent.

Sue: I like to see new artists and to watch them develop. It makes me feel really proud when they progress. As if I was there first.

Researcher: Did you see many emerging bands when you were growing up?

Sue: Not really no because all the bands that we were listening to in the 80s were already pretty big because we were either hearing about them on the radio, or television or in the papers and magazines. I don't remember ever really seeing bands that were just breaking through.

Sarah: Yeah and no-one came to remote Wales!

- Tom: I can remember seeing some great bands at small venues in the 1970s. Some of those mid-sized venues used to be part of the main circuit then so many of today's big names played there like Jimi Hendrix, Genesis, Fleetwood Mac, The Who, The Rolling Stones. They all used to come there before they got too large for those venues. Now we just get the tribute bands. Some of those are really good though.
- Mark: Yeah that Pink Floyd tribute band was fantastic. For an amateur band it is amazingly authentic.

The memories of their youth seemed to suggest that those who grew up in the 60s and 70s experienced more of the early development era of the greatest artists of the day than those who grew up in the 80s. This could be because the music business itself was still very early in its development in the 60s and into the 70s. By the 80s however the marketing activities had become much more sophisticated and the distribution networks and record label strategies had become much more efficient at creating high profile artists much faster. The development of mass media had also contributed to this increased efficiency.

The observations and feedback from the live event case studies seemed to demonstrate that this cohort can display enthusiasm for young emerging acts in the pop/rock genre as well as the classic repertoire. However, in discussion it became apparent that they usually do not become aware of these new acts until they reach a higher level of success and begin to receive media coverage. Very few of the participants attended smaller, independent venues where this new talent might be performing early in their careers so there is a knowledge gap in relation to new artists. Participants believed that smaller, independent venues were focused on attracting a younger audience so they did not actively promote to these participants aged 30s, 40s and 50s. Some participants noted that they often usually hear of new acts through recommendations from their children's generation, or on the radio.

iv. Weekly Vinyl Nights

Emerging talent was booked each week to appear at the Vinyl Nights.

Performers who appeared throughout the series included artists such as Ilona, Berenice Scott, Rudy Warman, Sam Batt, Ellie Lawson. All performers were very much rock/pop based singer-songwriters.

Ilona performed a set of very up tempo, original rock/pop songs which the audience clearly enjoyed. The whole performance was received very enthusiastically by the audience who regularly participated when invited to clap along or sing choruses.

Jane (40s): They were REALLY good! So glad I happened to pop in as I had no idea this was happening. She has an amazing voice.

Mark (50s): She does have an amazing voice. They are a great outfit actually. Those songs were really catchy.

Researcher: Did you know her guitarist and co-writer was in The Cutting Crew?

Mark: To be honest when someone said that I didn't really know who the Cutting Crew were but when he sang the hit (*I Just Died In Your Arms Tonight*) at the end I knew the song of course. It was a huge hit in the 80s.

Jane: I bought that record in the 80s. It's probably still in the attic.

Researcher: Do you think their original songs were quite 80s style?

Jane: Not really no. They were just very easy to catch on to. I like up tempo stuff. I don't think those songs were 80s or current. They were just good classic rock/pop songs.

Several people in the audience bought Ilona's CD and went up to speak with her after their performance. As it was in a small room and with quite a large audience it was interesting to note how people responded throughout the performance. Due to the high intensity of the set and the confidence of Ilona, the majority of the participants in the room remained engaged throughout, although some people were clearly more comfortable being seen to be singing along and clapping than others. The audience included a variety of age groups due to families (hotel residents) being present. However, the audience members who afterwards followed on to the vinyl session downstairs were the ones who were most enthusiastic about the show, bought

the CD, and were aged 30+. This could be due to the fact that they are the group that are most engaged with music, the 'experts' who were eagerly consuming all the music that was on offer that night.

There was a clear indication that they respected Ilona as a talented performer and songwriter and had enjoyed her set of original songs.

Ellie Lawson attracted a younger crowd than other acoustic singer-songwriters who were advertised through the season. The hotel received phone calls from individuals who had seen her appearance advertised locally and wanted to obtain more details regarding cost and timings. It became apparent that it was her alternative music that was attracting their interest as she had also recorded several songs with successful trance DJs and producers over the past few years in addition to her singer-songwriter material.

Berenice Scott is from a musical heritage with her parents having had success with the hit single 'Pop Muzik' in the late 70s and early 80s. She is also currently the keyboard player for 80s group 'Heaven 17' so there were numerous points of interest for the 40s aged audience at this event. It was evident on the night that they enjoyed Berenice's original work but it was her finale, an interpretation of a Stevie Wonder hit, that proved to have the most impact.

Neil (51): That was a brilliant version of that song. I love Stevie Wonder. I'm going to look for that later in your vinyl boxes!

Sue (44): I liked 'Walls Cave In' too. I saw her video for that song on the link on the email we were sent. I'd love to hear her with a full band. She is a great keyboard player.

Neil: Yeah I liked her original stuff but it was the last song that really got my foot tapping. And I already know it of course.

Other artists that performed throughout the course of the summer drew recurring responses from the 40-59 aged members of the audience. Rudy Warman was very popular and was considered a 'cool' and 'credible' artist who they likened to Bob Dylan due to his style and manner. They also recognized the strength of his

songwriting as he performed an entire set of original songs. Sam Batt delivered a very different experience to most of the other artists. Most of the artists were in their 20s into early 30s and engaged at a very sparse level in terms of conversing with the audience. In contrast Sam had a much more mature and confident relationship with the audience. She engaged them with her detailed storytelling and humorous anecdotes of broken relationships or lost friends that had inspired the songs that she would then perform. The audience were drawn into this depth of storytelling and comedy and listened with great intent. Consequently they gained a strong understanding of the songs and the performer's life, which created a stronger attachment to the experience than had been witnessed at other events during the series.

- Diane (57): She is hilarious. I loved the story about the boyfriend troubles. A really great performer.
- Marion (59): Yes I was hooked. She was very intense but I loved hearing all the detail about the songs.
- Sharon (59): I wanted to go to the bar at one point but didn't want to disturb her as everyone was listening so intently. She is fascinating.

This level of respect for performers and the interest regarding their songwriting, lives and careers was regularly demonstrated during these events. The 40-59 aged attendees were genuinely interested in the performers themselves. It was not just background music. They had attended the event because they were interested in it and were therefore engaged and enthusiastic. In contrast, there were often hotel residents present who had simply come in for a drink, having had no previous knowledge that the performance was happening. There was an interesting dynamic when this occurred because there was often a visible tension between the audience who were there for the performance and those who were not. Overall though across all age groups there was a positive response to the performances and everyone respected the acoustic nature of the performance that was happening in the bar and the appropriate behaviour required in that setting. Those who were not interested in it left the room rather than talking over the performance. It was interesting to witness this unwritten rule of performance etiquette in action across all ages and all

classes. This was not deemed background music, it was more personal and required an attentive and respectful audience.

Roger (50s): I just stumbled on this event as we are staying in the hotel. I'm really glad those lads left the bar after buying their drinks. At first I thought they were going to sit at the table in the corner and continue chatting loudly.

Anne (40s): I could see you glaring at them. I think they realized that everyone would be very pissed off with them if they had stayed and broken the silence. It clearly wasn't their scene.

Roger: I think they came down to this bar because it is usually where Sky Sports is on and they want to watch the football. I heard the barman tell them there was another screen downstairs.

Researcher: What do you think is different about this event and other performances in bars?

Roger: Well as soon as I entered the bar I could see that people were listening and watching the singer so I didn't want to draw attention to myself by talking as it is quite a small room. Then I got drawn in by her songs. She was really good. Often in bars the music is just there for general entertainment so it is more of an entertainment thing which you enjoy but don't necessarily need to listen to properly.

Anne: Or it's louder bands so you don't have the need to stay so quiet and attentive.

Researcher: What about quieter string quartets or pianists?

Anne: Well I only really hear that sort of performance in restaurants or at weddings so it is not a setting where I would necessarily pay proper attention to it.

This was a view that was shared by most participants who attended these events throughout the season. The nature of the performance, acoustic style singer-songwriters, required a respectful level of attention in order to engage with it. It needed more focus. This was partly due to the nature of the event which was more of a showcase style than simply background music in a bar. Also the lyrical nature of this type of performance, especially in a small room, enables the audience to tune into the story within the song and that seemed to intensify the level of engagement with it and result in an increasing level of enjoyment. The 40-59 aged audience who

had come specifically for the performance appeared much more interested in the lyrics than other casual attendees. They were able to name the songs they most liked and talk about them both to the performer and amongst themselves afterwards.

In summary, this emerging talent showcase series at the Vinyl Nights consistently demonstrated that there was an audience aged 40-59 years old who often were most interested in the vinyl sessions which followed later in the evening, but who also thoroughly enjoyed the acoustic sessions by the new artists.

Chapter 7

MUSIC TASTE FORMATION DURING YOUTH 'THE NEW MUSIC CANON'

(Review of the participant observations)

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapters contained details of how this research study used live event case studies to examine the music preferences of the 40-59 year old ABC1 cohort. They provided an insight into the music tastes of this cohort, which appear firmly focused on the rock/pop style that they were exposed to during their youth.

This chapter will discuss additional information, gathered through conversations with participants during the field work period, regarding the music memories of their childhood and family. It will seek to understand the background of the participants in more detail and evaluate the factors that may have influenced their music tastes today. An evaluation of this nature assists in the understanding of how the concept of 'habitus' may or may not still be relevant today, and how exposure during youth appears to have a significant and lifelong effect on music taste.

The additional retail case study (the *I Like Music* greetings cards) will also be discussed in an attempt to use the observations captured during the retail pop-up events to strengthen the understanding of music taste formation during youth.

7.2 Growing up in the 1960s/70s

Firstly, this chapter will summarise the information gained from male participants who are in their 50s. From the observations it became apparent that

the live event case studies appeared to attract individuals aged 40-59 who held an enthusiastic relationship with the contemporary rock pop genre. Not only were they able to engage with enthusiasm but they were also able to communicate information and memories about the material, artist, the genre and sub-genres and the period. They appeared knowledgeable in popular culture. As mentioned in previous chapters this provides possible evidence to support the identification of the group that Savage and Gayo described as ‘experts’. However, as with the observations reviewed in previous chapters, these conversations did not identify any confirmation that this enthusiasm also crosses over into the classical genre. The only exceptions to this observation were the participants who had grown up in a highly classical music based upbringing. So, it was hoped that the more detailed investigation into their youth, presented in this chapter, would give a deeper understanding of when, how and why these music tastes were formed. This chapter also includes data collection, using the same semi-structured interview format, from an additional participant base outside of the live event settings.

Demographic Profile

One of the most interesting findings in conversing with the men in their 50s at the case study events was that many had built successful careers and were financially stable. In some cases these participants had built significant economic wealth through their business activities. None of them though would be categorized as having come from exceptionally privileged backgrounds. During informal conversations it seemed that their parents’ occupations largely related to the trades or civil service roles or self-employed small business activities. Some of them gained University degrees and some left school without many qualifications at all. There is a clear indication of social mobility here in witnessing how they have built professional careers and incomes that are far higher in terms of class and economic return than that of their parents. When asked questions regarding their childhood and early music memories they all remember with vivid detail.

(Habitus and) Music Taste

Tom is a 53 year old engineer in a senior role, having worked his way up the ranks after graduating with a first class honours degree. He was born in South East England and still lives there.

My parents bought me my first records with a first record player when I was about 12 years old and I can still remember a lot of the running order and songs because I played them to death. Slade – *Take Me Back Ome*, Derek and the Dominoes – *Layla*, *Standing in the Road* – Blackfoot Sue, *Tiger Feet* – Mud, *Come What May* – Vicky Leandros (she was a Eurovision winner!), *Those Were The Days* – Mary Hopkin, *48 Crash* - Suzi Quatro. It was a K-Tel compilation album. Slade were great. I can remember seeing them with my mates in Folkestone when I was 15. That was my first concert. We went on our own on the bus.

That level of detail regarding early music memories is consistent across all participants. Everyone appeared to remember their first records and the stories around them. When asked about his memories of his parents' tastes and school days the generational shift begins to become apparent.

My parents mostly liked the crooners such as Frank Sinatra, Frankie Vaughan who was mum's favourite, Tom Jones was dad's favourite but he went off him when 'he went all American'. Whereas the music I got into whilst living at home in the early 1970s was totally different. Most of my friends and I were listening to Slade, Bowie, Bob Dylan, Led Zeppelin, Queen. Our music made my parents' stuff seem so out dated. We used to spend loads of time leafing through the records in the shop in town. I read the NME and avidly watched TOTP but when it moved from a Thursday to a Friday I began to lose track of the up to date music scene because I was always out on a Friday night when I got a bit older.

He currently still enjoys the guitar based rock music from his youth and shares music tastes with his children who are late teens / early twenties.

The kids like rap music which I'm not into but they also share my taste for rock. We haven't been to any live music events together yet but I think we could. I would never have attended any music events with my parents, as our tastes didn't cross over at all really. I've bought some great albums recently. John Newman, Royal Blood. I go to Lounge On

The Farm festival each year and that often has some great young breaking talent headlining the main stage before they gain wider recognition.

Tom is clearly a keen music fan and can knowledgably talk about a range of rock pop music both from his youth and current artists. He is also heavily into audio visual technology with a new Bang & Olufsen audio system enabling him to connect to his vast ('my iPod is full again') iTunes collection all over the house. Social media and mobile technology are not a prime interest though. 'My other half is on Facebook so passes messages on to me'. When asked what artists or albums he thought could be considered 'iconic' or classics he firmly returns to the back catalogue that he grew up with. He believed that his tastes were formed around the age of 12 when he got his first record player and will stay with him for life. This would have been 1972.

I think that any of the Bob Dylan albums from the mid 60s and early 70s could all be considered iconic. Also the Led Zeppelin albums up to *Presence* and all Bowie's albums in the 70s.

This pattern appears consistently across the male participants in their 50s. Paul is in his late 50s, grew up in Manchester and left school with O'levels. He progressed through the ranks in various businesses to senior director level, and now runs his own consulting and event business in London. He too has a keen recollection of his early music memories.

I remember buying Beatles, Led Zeppelin and Elton John records in the sixties and seventies in Manchester. I saw Bowie, Led Zeppelin live in Manchester with various different school mates from the council estate where I grew up. My tastes were very different to my parents'. Music was much more important to me than it was for them. Dad's music hero was Elvis. I spent absolutely hours and hours in the record shop in Manchester. Loved a lot of pop rock like The Beatles, Stones, Hollies, Al Stewart plus loads of Tamla Motown/Stax. Most of my friends shared my love of music. I still have all my old LPs but no longer have a record player to play them on.

Paul is clearly a passionate music fan and again there is a noticeable generational shift between him and his parents, but much more similarity with his children. As a family they are going to see Rod Stewart and he recognizes that some of the artists from his youth have successfully crossed decades. As well as his children sharing some of his original tastes he also shares their love of more recent music.

I use iTunes a lot and have over 10,000 songs on playlists which I listen to through my Sonos and Bowers & Wilkins wireless speakers in the house. The playlists are broken down into pop, blues, soul and so on. Most recently I have downloaded Neil Young, Rita Ora, Sam Smith, Lily Allen and Radio 1s Live Lounge compilation.

His lifelong relationship with music and his continuing excitement for it shines through as he speaks about it. He knows what's Number 1 and he likes it - 'Ed Sheeran'. However, when asked about albums or artists he considers classic or iconic, he reverts to the core seventies catalogue of 'Bowie, Zeppelin, and much of the old Motown'. He is also clearly a fan of technology and has the disposable income to spend on it.

I think iTunes works brilliantly and allows me to buy hundreds of songs a year at my leisure and depending on my mood, at a price that makes it easy to do without thinking. I download music every week.

Pete is also in his 50s and grew up in Surrey with his self-employed parents running small businesses. He gained a HND in business in the 1970s and currently runs his own consulting business in Kent. His responses support the tastes and experiences described above.

My earliest music memories were based on my parents' music such as Sinatra, Andy Williams, Big Band music, the Rat Pack and so on. That was what they listened to at home. The first records that I bought were *Something* by The Beatles, *Led Zeppelin I* and *Deep Purple in Rock*, all around 1969 from Harvey's the shop in Guildford High Street. A few years later I remember attending my first concert with a girlfriend and had to walk 6 miles in total to see Status Quo! I got my first record player in 1969 and spent most of my Saturday's browsing

the record stores and buying regularly. Stupidly I sold around 400 of my albums at a car boot fair in the late 80s but I still have around 50 of them.

Again there is evidence here of a generational shift between the 1950s style music of Pete's parents and that of him and his friends. Interestingly though, he comments on how his mother's tastes grew over the years to include music in the rock/pop genre that he also likes.

My mother has been known to listen to David Gilmour, Dire Straits and various jazz artists. I used to take her to gigs. At school I loved Led Zep, Genesis, Uriah Heap, Hawkwind, Yes and loads of other prog rock bands that my mates and I used to play air guitar to. The last gig my mother came to see with me was the Jools Holland Big Band four years ago. She is 85.

He more closely shares music tastes with his children and describes his tastes as eclectic, but they mainly span the sub-genres of rock pop.

I listen to and enjoy some of what my children like. I took them to a London Grammar gig recently. I've also seen Beth Hart, Jason Mraz, Red Hot Chilli Peppers, and Hot Chip in the last 2 years. I want to see Jeff Beck and Joe Bonamassa this year.

Pete has no idea who number 1 is but has an awareness of current music. He has a monthly paid subscription to Spotify and also listens regularly to internet station Radio Paradise. He is currently listening to Lana Del Ray, Slash and The Staves. However, when asked about iconic and classic albums he reverts to the back catalogue.

Dark Side of the Moon, Goodbye Yellow Brick Road, Tapestry,
Back In Black and far too many more to mention.

He is an engaged enthusiast in the rock pop genre who is spending significant expenditure on music each year and has 'happily embraced the change in the music industry'.

David is also an engaged expert in his late 50s. He grew up with his mother in Liverpool after his parents were divorced. She was an administrator in the local council and after leaving school with O-levels in the late 1960s David progressed through his business career and currently runs his own consultancy in London.

My first single was Dusty Springfield '*I Only Want To Be With You*' bought at a local shop in Liverpool and my first albums were Beatles albums bought for me in the sixties. My mum used to listen to Sinatra records on a Dansette record player. The first live band I saw was The Dave Clark 5 whilst on holiday with my family when I was around 11 or 12 years old.

David's recollections of his Grammar school days described a polarised range of choices with friends either liking the Beatles or Stones, Dylan or Donovan, mod or rocker.

For a time Merseybeat was the dominant UK sound and Liverpool the epicentre of popular culture... what a place to be then in my early childhood! My own pop knowledge and tastes widened thanks to pirate radio stations like Radio Caroline. By the late 60s into the 70s the field (of acts) became so much wider, although The Beatles were still acknowledged as the masters (their *White Album* side 1/disc 1 leaving me awestruck).

David has an extensive knowledge of music and also the ability to articulate what music meant at that time. He avidly kept up with music news through NME, TOTP and religiously was 'in from the beginning of The Old Grey Whistle Test'. Music was clearly very important to him and his contemporaries. His vocabulary is passionate and intense and knowledgeable. He could talk for hours on this subject.

That first wave of 60s music gave way to segmentation, subtlety and nuance. With hindsight I wonder if tastes were perhaps becoming more aligned to social class? When I entered sixth form the brighter boys, mainly from middle class backgrounds were already listening to Cream, Pink Floyd and Simon & Garfunkel. This wasn't yet my comfort zone but Woodstock happened and popular music would never be the same. I

wanted to know more about acts like Janis Joplin, Richie Havens,
CSN&Y.

This is an interesting personal insight into how pop and rock started to take different paths that that time. Especially interesting as it was experienced by someone who grew up in Liverpool at that time where the intensity of the excitement around the new music must have been deep. His recognition of the difference in music tastes between his own pop preferences and the rock preferences of the ‘middle class’ boys is also interesting. He would tour the record stores in Liverpool on most Saturdays looking at all the covers of albums that he couldn’t afford. He did manage to build a record collection once he started working in later years but “it became the casualty of a divorce”. His identified music tastes are pop “mainly of the 70s and 80s vintage” but he is an extensive consumer. As a Spotify Premium member he reels off an endless string of the music he has been streaming recently such as Damon Albarn, Paolo Nutini, Kelis, Elbow, Coldplay, Thelonius Monk, Dory Previn, Randy Newman, Bob Dylan, Ry Cooder, Led Zeppelin, Crosby Stills, Steely Dan, Fairport Convention, Colin Blunstone, Glen Campbell, Neil Finn, and The Magic Flute. He thinks his contemporary music tastes were fully formed by the time he was 16 and doesn’t see them changing that much in future as he ages through his 60s.

Those core tastes have broadened somewhat and I’m now comfortable with some classical music, some choral, some jazz and occasionally plainsong BUT.....there are times when only the Allman Brothers Band, Michael Jackson’s *Off The Wall* or the Ting Tings will do! I think the ‘morphing into your parents’ notion is a bit of a red herring. In my case there was a parental influence from an early age as discussed, but it was a casual and positive influence which has informed my tastes. Biologically, emotionally and spiritually I would be unable to succumb to my Mum’s 2014 easy listening diet!

David spoke candidly about his surprise that he was not often targeted by music companies. He is aware that he is part of a large cohort who grew up in the 60s and 70s during the popular music explosion. He highlighted how he doesn’t feel that that the music industry is seeking him out as a potential customer at all

despite the assumptions that could be made about his increased leisure time and spending power. The financial services sector by contrast is falling over itself to sell him an array of products - as are the holiday cruise, charity, and private health sectors.

I have to assume that music industry marketers view me and my contemporaries as being lost to all but easy listening compilations, military bands and 'songs from the 60s' topping up our collections every Christmas with the odd album. We're categorised as infrequent/occasional purchasers and – on that misconception - a minor advertising target.

When it comes to asking about artists and albums that he feels are iconic it is no surprise that he struggles to reduce the list to less than twenty examples. For him most of that era was “entirely iconic in its own right as it laid the foundations for 50 years of continued developments in the pop and rock genres”. The selections on his list were all examples of highly successful albums and artists from the 60s to the 80s such as Bowie, Beatles, Cream, Led Zeppelin, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix and many many more, plus one example from the 90s - 'Blur'. David has a sophisticated understanding of the music industry and the technology that enables him to satisfy his hunger for music quickly, simply and at a reasonable price. He, like many of the other participants in his cohort, are looking forward to what developments are coming next.

The above examples were representative of many of the male participants aged 50s. Most had grown up with working class parents, and had developed their own business career and economic stability over the past 40 years. This is an interesting insight into social mobility. Further research into how their rock pop music tastes may have inspired and motivated them in life would be interesting.

The two examples below are of male participants in their 50s who have also achieved social mobility. They have in fact entered the elite ranks in terms of wealth due to their entrepreneurial successes. They are both in their mid 50s and grew up in households with working class parents, albeit one in the north of

England and one in the South. They both cited *Dark Side of the Moon* as the first album they bought. Their parents both listened to easy listening hits of the era.

Dave listened to Roxy Music, Genesis and Pink Floyd, and Nick remembered listening to Slade, Sweet, Thin Lizzy, Led Zeppelin in school years. They both spent a lot of time in the local record shops. Nick learnt a bit of guitar and keyboard but neither of them particularly enjoyed music lessons in school. Both Dave and Nick expressed that they probably had more in common musically with their children than with their parents today. They are both voracious consumers of live music and recorded music today, enjoying rock music and using services such as Spotify and iTunes to deliver the songs that they seek. The artists/albums that they consider iconic include *Dark Side of the Moon*, Bowie, Genesis (Peter Gabriel era), The Stones, The Who and Led Zeppelin. The Arctic Monkeys also got a mention. Again these participants continue to maintain their rock tastes from youth. All these participants appeared to display behaviour that is very univorous even though many of them described their tastes and listening habits as very omnivorous. In fact they are clearly most passionately engaged with the music styles from their youth, but also enthusiastically engaging with newer artists in this genre.

Classical Music

There was no significant mention of classical music in terms of enthusiastic engagement and knowledge and certainly not compared with the level of engagement and enthusiasm as expressed for the rock/pop genre. One exception was Chris, a Kent born male in his early 50s, who grew up with his parents, both of whom had professional careers. He gained a music degree in the mid 80s and went on to build a career as a freelance musician. His early music memories included listening to an orchestra rehearse next door to his grandfather's house and hearing his parents' music choices of Grieg piano concertos, Rachmaninov, *The Planets* and the King's Singers. His first record purchases though were T-Rex's '*21st Century Boy*' and a compilation of pop cover songs by The Wombles.

I loved the rawness of T-Rex and the tunefulness of the Wombles songs – also my first big step in telling mum and dad what I liked! I bought it at DeeJay Records when I was about 7 years old and it was very exciting.

Chris had a good education, a love of music lessons, and a family immersed in the classical genre. From the information given by the other participants this set him apart as he had a very different upbringing which was more dominated by classical music at home. This could demonstrate the role of habitus in taste, and certainly indicates how music exposure in the home could have equal influence on music taste as that at school. He learnt multiple instruments at school and became a chorister at St Paul's cathedral. His above comments suggested that his parents may have been disappointed with his choice of pop over classical music. However, in his daily life he was exposed to both genres.

Dad took me to a BBC Proms when I was about 10 years old so that was probably my first live concert experience. At school I was listening to Queen, Abba, and choral stuff. We were allowed to watch TOTP on Thursday nights and our Latin teacher Mr Parker was a big fan and let us borrow his records. We often bought the little lyrics papers that came out weekly and I used to go to the library and take out albums – about 8 or 10 each week – I had a voracious appetite for punk fusion and Shostakovich Symphonies. I got heavily into Jazz Rock.

Based on this information Chris was beginning to resemble a true omnivore, heavily engaged with music as an 'expert' across rock/pop/classical/jazz and knowledgeable due to both his education and upbringing and his pure passion for both the music he was playing in school and seeing/hearing on TV and radio. This seems to have continued through his life course. Today he continues to engage on both sides of the classical contemporary boundary.

In the past 2 years I have seen quite a few live concerts such as Mike & The Mechanics, Newton Faulkner, Mozart Spectacular, various open mic events at local venues, Laura Mvula, a couple of BBC Proms and opera concerts.

Chris thinks his tastes were formed at the age of 6 or 7 and believes they will continue to evolve as he finds new things that he likes. At present he describes his favourite music as 20th Century Russian Orchestral. He says he identifies mostly with choral or acapella styles. He listens mostly to Radio 3 and Five Live but when asked to list the albums or artists he describes as iconic he reverts to the familiar names that had been presented by the majority of participants.

Beatles (*Rubber Soul, Revolver, White Album, Sergeant Pepper*), Bob Marley (*Legend*), Sex Pistols (*Never Mind The Buzzcocks*), Fleetwood Mac (*Rumours*), Carole King (*Tapestry*), Paul Simon (*Graceland*), Sinatra (*Songs For Swinging Lovers*), Beach Boys (*Pet Sounds*), Blondie (*Parallel Lines*), Elvis (*Sun Sessions*), U2 (*Joshua Tree*), Marvin Gaye (*What's Going On*), Queen (*Night At The Opera*).

He buys CDs either at concerts or online but does not subscribe to any music streaming service. He would like to buy a Macbook Air and would use it for music listening.

Gender Differences

There was not a great gender difference. The female participants in their 50s presented similar observations to the males, although there was possibly more of a leaning towards the pop heroes during their youth, as they were the 'pin ups' of the day. Many of these female participants had attended the case study events because their husbands or partners wanted to go so they were not necessarily there because they had been drawn by the music (e.g. the *Dark Side of the Moon* event was clearly most of interest to men in their 50s and their wives had just accompanied them).

Dee is in her early 50s and grew up in London with her bookmaker father and housewife mum. She has a BA degree, is self-employed and now lives in South East England.

The records that I bought was when I was about 15. Credence Clearwater Revival and Led Zeppelin. It was from a shop in Woolwich and I was excited. I can remember a sense of achievement and pride. My father was into jazz and my mum likes lots of things. Their records included Bo Diddley to Ed Hawkins, Ray Charles, Andrea Bocelli, La Aida.

She listened mainly to chart music and rock during school years and her friends were a mixed bunch with varying tastes. Her first live concert was Knebworth festival when she was 17 where she went with a group of American friends. Radio Caroline, Top 40 Chart on Radio 1 on Sundays, Old Grey Whistle Test and TOTP were a staple diet.

Dee considers her tastes to be much more similar to her children's generation than her parents'. Her parents listened to classical and she had on occasion attended stage musicals with them whereas the last concert she attended with her children was Rage Against The Machine. She is clearly engaged with technology, using iTunes to buy music, YouTube to search for music and the purchase she would like to make would be a Bose sound system. However, she is also a firm fan of vinyl.

I think they should bring back the product, vinyl. Vinyl albums in general held the iconic status. Cassettes lost interest in the artwork. Like *School's Out* for example.

Alice Cooper's 'School's Out' album was an interesting example of a vinyl product which was released in 1972 and became legendary due to the artwork and the product packaging. The original album cover sleeve opened like an old graffiti'd school desk, with the vinyl record inside being wrapped in a pair of girl's underwear. The actual desk is on display at the Hard Rock Cafe in Las Vegas as a piece of rock memorabilia.

Margaret on the other hand is at the other end of the 50s range (59 and a half) and grew up in West Wales in a very different environment to Dee. It was remote and quiet in that area during her childhood. Her parents were a civil engineer working for the local council office and a housewife. She left school with a secretarial certificate and went straight into a receptionist job at the local council office.

My earliest memory of music is listening to my parents playing classical music and hymns on the piano. My mother was the church organist so she practiced a lot at home. There was no record player in the house so I used to listen to Radio Luxemburg and dance to the music. I didn't attend a concert until I saw Cliff Richard at Wembley Arena when I was in my early 40s. We went on a coach trip with some friends.

At school Margaret used to hear about all the bands on the radio or through watching TOTP or Ready Steady Go which was a must. At school they mostly liked The Hollies, Manfred Mann, Cliff Richard, Elvis Presley and most of the sixties groups who were big at the time. She was not an engaged consumer growing up because she did not have access to a record player or much disposable income until her mid teens. Then she would borrow from friends and very rarely went into the local music shop or made purchases due to lack of funds. She was a lover of music though, enjoying music lessons and learning to play the piano, singing in the choir and enjoying the choral style of music that her parents had exposed her to through their tastes and activity. She didn't have a record collection and today makes only occasional purchases of CDs but has Radio 2 on 'all day long'.

My parents only liked classical and choral which I also like, but I also buy easy listening CDs and ballads. Such as Rod Stewart, Michael Buble. I also like Adele and quite a lot of new stuff in that style. I have Radio 2 on at home all day long. I still play the piano and sing at church on Sundays. When I think of 'iconic' I think of Sinatra, Beatles, Pavarotti. They will be remembered I think.

The difference between Dee and Margaret is significant even though they are only 9 years apart in age. They experienced music very differently during their childhood, in different regions of the UK and with exposure to different music tastes of their parents. That difference seemingly continues to display itself even now. Margaret aligns herself more closely with her parents' music preferences than her children's (aged 30s and 40s). Her pop tastes were based on 1960s experiences rather than 1970s as she is on the upper end of the age bracket.

The above comments very much summed up the observations of this participant cohort through all the event case studies during the field work phase. There was no doubt that they were drawn to the rock/pop of the 1970s because that is what had drawn them to those events in the first place. However, the more detailed information that was gained during these conversations helped to place that taste for 70s rock into perspective in terms of how it had developed. There was a consistency across all participants in this cohort that whatever their background, the new music of the era had reached them, and that was largely due to the success of the new music television shows and the radio stations. The penetration of popular culture into this cohort is apparent and appears to have created a taste for rock pop that continues as they age into their 50s.

7.3 Growing up in the 1970s/80s

The 40s cohort grew up during the 1970s and 80s when rock and pop had already gone through 15 years or more of rapid growth in the UK. The 50s cohort had grown up with parents who listened to a mixture of rock and roll, jazz, crooners, big band, classical and choral, whereas the 40s cohort appeared to have much more consistent upbringings in terms of exposure to rock pop music.

Pete grew up in Manchester with his parents who both had professional careers. He gained a diploma in business and finance and now works as a software developer.

I bought my first record when I was about 14 at the MVC store in Manchester and I was excited to get home and play it. It was the hits of the 80s compilation and I loved it. My first concert was Robbie Williams at the Royal Albert Hall. I love a lot of indie music from the 90s such as Happy Mondays, James, Nirvana.

Upon first meeting this participant it was thought that he was 40 years old but his date of birth later revealed that he is in fact 38. This was interesting because it highlighted that, even though just a few years younger than the rest of the participants, he had hit the 90s era which changed dramatically from the 80s into more of an indie scene. His parents, now aged early 60s, listened to Johnny Mathis, The Beatles and Elvis however, so an even greater gap in listening tastes was noted here between that and the 90s acts, even though they would both be included in the rock/pop genre.

I think my tastes formed when I went to college in my teens. My music taste is very varied and I like hearing lots of new stuff so I don't think I'll ever be stuck in the past like my parents. They listen to the 70s & 80s Gold radio station. I'm listening to Pharrell Williams, Calvin Harris, Arctic Monkeys, Bruno Mars, Avicii, The Killers and lots of other chart and indie stuff that I download on iTunes or Spotify.

Pete is very engaged in new music, he listens to Radio 1, knows what the chart number 1 is. He has a CD collection but no vinyl as he "missed out on that era". He'd like a Bose system and enjoys creating playlists on Spotify. However, he is much more engaged in listening to recorded music than any particular attachment to an artist or live experiences. He wants 'more streaming at lower rates'.

Jon is 40 and grew up with parents who had more recent music preferences from the 1970s rather than the 60s. His mum was the music fan in the house, always listening to records whilst cleaning, such as Abba, Bee Gees, Johnny Mathis, Barry Manilow. His dad liked the early Tina Turner and Kate Bush stuff. Jon bought his first record when he was around 10 years old, it was a NOW album bought at the local newsagent, because he wanted to be like his brother and

collect the series. He was taken to see Blur by his parents in his teens and he believes that his music tastes changed dramatically through his school years, moving from light pop such as Wet Wet Wet, Beautiful South, Five Star and Madonna into more indie sounds as he entered the 90s, listening to Blur, Oasis, and Radiohead. His reading activity matured from Smash Hits into NME and Q as those tastes progressed. Today though he has returned to his 80s pop roots and in the past 2 years has seen a number of artists in concert: Pink, Belinda Carlisle, Blondie and Alison Moyet. He uses Spotify and is currently listening to Chrissie Hynde, Kylie Minogue, Paloma Faith, Avicii and Vance Joy.

Jon “already has all the gadgets” and uses iTunes and Spotify to find and buy music. His iconic artists and albums are *Abbey Road*, Freddie Mercury and Oasis. He has listened to Radio 1 all his life but is now “disappointed with BBC Radio 1 because they have changed in recent years, purposely aiming for an audience aged 16 to mid 20s”.

Mark is in his mid 40s and grew up in Shropshire with his parents who worked in sales. He left school with A-Levels and now works in management. His parents listened mostly to rock and roll and pop artists such as The Beatles and Elvis Presley. His tastes were formed in his teens and influenced largely by his older siblings. The sibling effect had not come up in previous conversations with participants, but it is an interesting and significant point as it can dramatically increase the person’s exposure to contemporary music.

The first record I remember buying was Black Sabbath’s *Paranoid*, influenced by my step brother as he was heavily into heavy metal. I grew out of heavy metal after a year or two and started developing my own tastes. My school friends and I started attending outdoor raves in our late teens and I really liked the electro, house and dance stuff at that time. I used to listen to late night Radio 1 shows a lot, and John Peel.

This was the first time that a participant had expressed a love of this type of music in this cohort. Upon further questioning it became apparent that he still had his vinyl collection from this era and had recently bought a record player so

he could play it. However, he no longer considers 'clubbing' as a night out as he says he would feel 'old'.

My parents still listen to the same music they grew up with, so The Beatles, Elvis and they are now in their mid 60s. I still like dance music and I still have all my records which I play now and again. I mainly listen on Spotify or iTunes and I've bought a few dance compilations this year, plus Joy Division and Arctic Monkeys. I share some tastes with my kids. We both went to see The Smiths this year as we really like them.

The single iconic album that he suggested was The Smiths album *The Queen Is Dead*. He still listens to Radio 1, but only late night Pete Tong shows because "the presenters are awful in the daytime as they try to focus on the young generation and poorly promote its services for other listeners". This disappointment with the radio station is an interesting example of the problems that some radio stations face today. If listeners are continuing to love the styles of music that they grew up with, they do not want to move on when they reach an age that is older than the radio station would like to be associated with. They want to carry on listening to that station. During the course of the field work a lot of participants aged early 40s confirmed that they sometimes still listen to Radio 1. Mark is also a regular live music attendee having attended several concerts and festivals in the rock/pop genre with friends and family during the year. He would love a Bose system at home.

Ian is 48 and grew up in Scotland with his parents who were an architect and a librarian. He grew up in a musical household with lots of exposure to Scottish dance bands, bag pipes, classical, jazz, rock and roll and chart music. Due to his location he remembers many long car journeys to visit family, listening to cassettes all the way. His love of music and culture continued and after completing a Masters degree he now works in a senior management role in the creative industries.

My parents listened mainly to traditional music, plus some classical, jazz and Elvis. But the first single I bought was Dave Edmunds, *I Hear You Knocking*. Can't remember much about that one really but the first single I bought that I remember being really excited about was Ian Dury – *Hit*

Me With Your Rhythm Stick bought In Woolworths. Just because I loved the song. The first album that I can remember buying was either The Clash – *The Clash* or Richard Hell and the Voidoids - *Blank Generation*. I had started getting NME and so had read articles about these bands, along with the fact that I heard tracks on the radio. Also a friend's older brother had a really large record collection which we listened to. Can't remember exactly my age, but I was certainly at primary school.

Growing up in Scotland he had a solid exposure to piping concerts, which he attended with his father from an early age. In primary school though he listened to a “strange taste” of folk music and punk. His favourite bands were The Clash, The Cramps, Killing Joke, The Damned and Richard Hell. At primary school only one friend shared his taste for punk, and no-one listened to traditional music but by the time he reached secondary school both genres were considered ‘pretty cool’. His discovery came through reading NME and listening to radio DJs such as Annie Nightingale and John Peel. The first ‘bigger band’ he saw was Siouxsie and The Banshees at the Ice Rink in Inverness.

Ian is highly engaged with music, still buys and plays vinyl records and still has his original collection although he regrets a gap in his cherished vinyl collection (which he started at around 10 years old when his grandparents gave him a record player) when he ‘foolishly’ went through a stage of buying cassettes and then CDs. Ian today has a very varied taste ranging from the traditional music that he grew up with, through some classical, folk, rock and Americana.

Most of my musical taste was formed as I was growing up. It has broadened a little however. I think these early tastes will stay with me for life, even if I have more recently come to appreciate more music than I did when I was a teenager when being seen as cool also impacted on what you would listen to.

His children, aged 10 and 7, also have broad musical tastes ranging from traditional folk to rock and pop. “My daughter likes everything from One Direction to bands such as AC/DC. She recently announced that *Smoke On The Water* was her favourite song (and wants to hear Frank Zappa because of the mention in it!)” In terms of iconic artists or albums “that would depend on the

style, and usually they would have changed something significantly”. Examples included Miles Davis, The Clash, Sex Pistols, Van Halen and Johnny Cash. He is still very engaged with music.

Not sure that the industry targets my age group terribly well. Certainly radio is constantly being dumbed down and the decision of BBC to cut Scottish show on Radio 1 (Ally Macrae) is not helpful. There are an increasing number of re-releases on vinyl of older albums which is great as I can find older music that I have not heard before, and my taste tends to lead me to older releases. Interesting to see smaller independent labels selling special packages now, rather than just the album, buy the £60 box set with T-shirt and extras. As a music buyer, I am pretty pleased with the access to music, but still miss the recommendation that came with being known in a proper music shop, as opposed to online recommendations which rarely actually recommend music that is connected. I’d love to see more of the back story of the acts and the songs.

Ian makes good use of his iPod (he wants a new one) and so do his parents who fill theirs with songs of the 50s, 60s, folk, traditional and classical for long train journeys. Their playlists also contain some more current pop music – “basically they like things that have a nice melody”. He is a subscriber to Spotify and iTunes. Last month he bought 5 vinyl records and 4 CDs.

Nicola is 46 and grew up in Berkshire in the 1970s. Her first records were *Freak Out* by Chic and *England My Lion Heart* by Kate Bush, which she bought from Revolution Records in Windsor. She frequented that store every Saturday to listen to and buy records. Kate Bush made “a massive impact” and forged a liking for many other female singer-songwriters, inspiring Nicola to actively write and perform songs of her own later in life. Her parents liked The Beatles, Elkie Brooks, The Who, Roberta Flack. Many friends shared similar music tastes although Nicola remembers that those tastes were quite ‘eclectic’. They listened to Prince, Kate Bush, Talk Talk, The The, Yazoo, Duran Duran, Barbra Streisand. They read *Melody Maker* and watched *TOTP* and the *Old Grey Whistle Test*, and *The Tube*.

I started buying records when I was about 12 but I am ashamed to say they are now in the loft at my mother’s house. I buy most of

my stuff from iTunes and am listening at the moment to Kings of
Leon, The Civil Wars, and Diana Krall.

Nicola frequently attends live music events and would like to attend Bestival and
the Isle of Wight Festival next year. She finds the struggle for tickets frustrating.

I get fed up of tickets being sold quickly and then appearing on
re-selling sites. It makes it hard for fans to buy or afford tickets.

She still loves all the old music she grew up with, but thinks her tastes are “still
forming” as she is introduced to new stuff all the time. She indicates that she
likes all kinds of music “with few exceptions” but with no mention of classical or
opera in any comments. She likes some of the stuff that her parents like and she
recently took her mother to see James Morrison. Her parents mainly listen to
jazz and easy listening, but she likes other genres and especially singer-
songwriters. Nicola considers the following to be iconic: Pink Floyd ‘*Dark Side
of the Moon*’, Prince ‘*Purple Rain*’, Radiohead ‘*The Bends*’, Kate Bush ‘*Hounds
of Love*’ and ‘*Lionheart*’, Led Zeppelin, Bowie, Hendrix, Beatles, “and I could
go on!!!”

Sue is also 46 and grew up in Yorkshire, with her parents who worked for BT,
but moved to Kent before her teens. She still lives in Kent and owns a retail
store. Her parents listened to Simon & Garfunkel, Don Mclean and Neil
Diamond, but her first music purchases were Abba and Bay City Rollers from
WHSmiths. As she progressed through school her love of 80s chart pop and rock
further developed with acts such as Adam Ant, Duran Duran, UB40 and Soft
Cell. Her first live music experience was The Prodigy at Glastonbury Festival in
1995. Today she still likes 80s music and also ‘chill-out’ and reggae “but no
heavy rock!” Her iconic artists are Queen, U2, Bowie, “and loads more!”

She loves live music and festivals and listens to Radio 1, 2 and 6 Music but,
although subscribing to iTunes, she finds the new technology frustrating.
Despite not calling herself a record buyer in the past or owning records now she

still feels that “it was far easier to pop into WHSmiths and buy a record back then!”

Juliette is also 46 and grew up in Wales with her parents before graduating and relocating to South East England where she still lives. Her memories of her parents’ listening tastes were based around easy listening crooners such as Andy Williams and Val Doonigan, with classical music being the norm at her grandparents’ house. She developed an early love of pop in the late 70s whilst still at primary school, buying Mull of Kintyre by Wings and Showaddywaddy’s greatest hits. By the early 80s she had built a collection of singles and was now seeking out back catalogue Blondie and The Pretenders as well as soaking up the booming pop scene with bands like Duran Duran, Spandau Ballet, Adam & The Ants. As she progressed into her mid to late teens her tastes started to move more towards the harder end of the commercial genre with bands like The Cult, Depeche Mode, The Cure, The Smiths and more gothic material from bands such as The Mission. She gained a Masters degree and is now a freelance management consultant in London.

I definitely think my music tastes were formed between primary school and Grammar school. I still love all that 80s stuff and it brings back great memories.

The nostalgia factor is something that had also been mentioned by other participants at the live events. There was a sense that the music of youth brought back special feelings and made people feel good. Many participants voiced the opinion that everyone has their own ‘special time’ for music and that it can never be taken away, even if you sell your record collection. Of course now it is possible to replace the entire collection with a streaming music subscription anyway. Juliette does not cross the classical contemporary boundary.

I have to say that I have no interest in classical or jazz, or even opera. It just doesn’t appeal to me at all. I have been to some events but I wouldn’t rush back. I don’t dislike it but I’m just not passionate about that music in the way that I am with the rock/pop music that I grew up with. I wouldn’t spend any money on it.

She also intimates how that passion continues into the current scene today, describing how she enjoys listening to BBC 6 Music and Radio 2 because they offer a mix of old classics and emerging talent that is “really good”. She regularly attends live music events and festivals but doesn’t really buy any music anymore.

I have a Spotify subscription but actually I very rarely use that. Mostly because my systems are just not hooked up properly. I have records and a record player but that is in one room. Everything is in different rooms and what I’d really like is a way of just easily playing anything in any room. I think the Sonos wireless systems can do that. I’d like those. I have been streaming music from my iPhone to a Bluetooth jambox that I bought but it needs to be charged regularly so I forget about it.

Again, as with most of the participants, she has a strong grasp of technology, and seeks to upgrade to the latest devices when possible in order to make music listening easier. At the moment she is listening to “anything on the radio” and Dolly Parton in the car (because she saw Dolly at The O2 Arena). She classes herself as a ‘live music fan’.

My first concert was U2 at Cardiff Arms Park in the 1980s and it was amazing. I also saw Simple Minds and Michael Jackson at that stadium. My first real gig though was seeing Blondie in London at the Kentish Town and Country Club when I was in my teens. I also saw them again the following year at the Brixton Academy. My dad drove me to London from Wales and it took forever. He hung around London until I came out of the gig. It was incredibly exciting and my first experience of a really crowded live music venue.

Some participants expressed a feeling of great excitement and adventure when seeing their first live performances. An adrenaline rush seeing their idols up close and live on stage after watching them on television for years and also because of the nature of those concerts: hot, loud and pumping with energy.

Almost all of the early live experiences were based on this type of event rather than a seated quiet theatre performance. These live gigs are an explosion of the senses when you are in your teens.

Juliette's list of iconic artists and albums was based largely around the music that she had grown up with, plus artists who she knew were now considered 'the legends' of the music world, the royalty of heritage acts. Her choices were Michael Jackson *Thriller* and *Bad*, Tina Turner, Madonna, Fleetwood Mac, Stevie Wonder, Genesis, Pink Floyd, "Bowie of course, Elton, Beatles, Led Zep, The Who, and just far too many others to list!. I went to Rewind Festival this summer and loads of 80s stars were performing. It was fantastic! Loads of people were dressed in 80s fancy dress. I'm definitely going again next year."

However, despite stating that her favourite era is the 80s music of her childhood she has also enjoyed a variety of contemporary music through the decades.

At college I loved all the 90s indie bands, then I got into house music in the late 90s and early 2000s. Then I was pretty much enjoying anything in the charts and I still do across a variety of genres such as rock, pop, rnb, and even a bit of hip hop.

Lou is 44, grew up in Middlesex, and now lives in the South East running her own business. She gained a diploma level 5 in 2012. Her iconic artist list also features pop names such as Michael Jackson, George Michael, Elton John, Madonna, Lady Gaga, Bob Marley but her favourite music is rnb from the 90s and "anything from Nirvana to Streisand depending on my mood". She has far more in common with her children than with her parents.

My children and I will discuss new music. The latest music of our choice is on MTV which we have on all weekend in the background so we will see new tunes and then will download the album on Spotify and then we can all listen on our phones/ipads etc. I would say I am a music lover as I have to have music in my day as much as possible. I love to sing (although I can't) and it makes me happy. I like to hear new music.

Lou is an example of a passionate music fan who likes to know what's happening. She has her finger on the pulse of popular culture, and shares information and news with her children who are in their early 20s. She listens to Radio 1 although she realizes that "they do try and appeal to the younger generation and not my age". She has seen several concerts in the past year including Katy Perry, Wireless, Neo, Usher, Bruno Mars, Trey Songs, Beyonce, Lady Gaga. She thinks her music tastes were formed early on and influenced by her parents' love of Bob Marley, Barbra Streisand, UB40, John Denver, Dolly Parton.

I loved the music we listened to growing up as kids as it was full of soul and was always played loud. It made my mum and dad dance and we (me and 2 older brothers) giggled but then joined in....

She also thinks that her sons' love of rnb is due to them hearing her playing it when they were growing up. They have all been to dozens of gigs together and the boys "like the fact that I know songs that are featured in modern popular culture, as well as facts about the artists - sometimes I know more than them!"

Julie is 43 and grew up in Croydon. She believes that her mum's music tastes influenced her own when she was growing up. She listened to a lot of 60s singers, Buddy Holly, Neil Diamond when Julie was in primary school, and later progressed "through an embarrassing stage of liking Shakin' Stevens, Robson and Jerome, Westlife, Jimmy Nail". Julie developed a liking for her mum's 60s music but as she progressed through school she become obsessed with the big pop acts of the time, such as Kids From Fame, Culture Club, Debarge, Go West. Again she was an avid watcher of TOTP and her first concert was Wet Wet Wet, where her and her friend "pushed their way to the front and Marti Pellow waved at me".

I thought I was going to burst with happiness when my mum bought me my first proper stereo when I was about 14. I used to go to the local music shop with my mates every Saturday and buy a new record each week.

Today she listens to a “range of music” such as Eminem, Pink, Paloma Faith, Paolo Nutini, and she can see that her daughter who is now in her mid teens shares some of her tastes. They both like Eminem and some chart music plus a lot of 80s music. “I recently took her to see N Dubz and Example in concert”. The iconic artists that she recommends are Bowie, Elvis and “more recently I think that Eminem is hugely talented”. She has a strong engagement with current music but says she “often reverts to the favourites from my youth”.

Rachel is 40 and grew up in Devon with her parents, who were both in the medical profession. After a private education she gained a Masters degree and is now a marketing and event manager in London. She remembers her parents listening to a lot of music whilst she was growing up, mainly 50s and 60s artists although her mother also liked some current chart hits too. Her first purchases of Wham and Band Aid singles were from Woolworths when aged 7 or 8 and it was a memorable and exciting occasion as experienced by all of our participants. Throughout her school years her and her friends listened to the chart hits of the 80s era they were growing up in. Throughout her teens and into her twenties her tastes kept up with the developments occurring in music at that time. The 80s artists whose posters adorned her walls during primary school days were swapped for the ‘cooler’ artists of later years such as Primal Scream, Suede, Hole, Elastica, Happy Mondays.

Our friendship groups tended to have similar music tastes and fawn over pin up posters, swap cassettes etc. Later we all went to gigs together and bonded over the collective experience. Initially magazines like Smash Hits, Just Seventeen and tv shows like Top of the Pops, which everybody watched, Neighbours exposed us to new music. Saturday morning TV showcased lots of music, as did The Word. Now I like Later with Jools Holland.

She got her first record player aged 12 and bought lots of music, “often getting told off for sending off money in envelopes for special editions which came with

signed photos or badges”. Her record collection is currently housed in her parents’ attic.

Today Rachel listens mostly to radio (Radio 2 and Absolute 80s), a range of 80s tunes which she most identifies with, and random shuffle on her iPod. She loves to stay in touch with current music “out of interest and as a cultural reference and barometer”, but she buys very little music other than occasional iTunes purchases. She spends more money on attending live music events than on recorded music purchases and she enthusiastically supports emerging artists who she has been introduced to or discovers through films, magazines and through recommendations. She thinks that her “core popular culture music tastes were formed very early in life” and will stay with her forever even though she expects to like a ‘range of music’ over the years.

My Dad still prefers music from his youth and likes seeking out rare editions of obscure 50s music, but my mum likes a wide range of music from Pavarotti, The Three Tenors, Russell Watson, Michael Ball to modern contemporary acts such as Coldplay and Blue. I like a lot of music but mostly identify with the 80s songs that I grew up with.

Rachel’s iconic artists are Michael Jackson (*Bad*), Prince (*Purple Rain*), Madonna, Elvis, The Beatles. She had passionate views about the music industry, believing that it has “rested on its laurels” and not moved with the times like other industries have. “Their focus is the younger audience and they don’t give enough consideration to the older lucrative audience”. She would like to see more ingenuity in the music industry instead of negativity about how it’s dying, with records stores disappearing and the “quick fix manufactured Pop Idol artist ruling the waves”. She feels strongly that BBC Radio 6 is important in terms of giving experimental music a voice. She would like to hear more female DJs on the radio in peak times, “not tucked away in the twilight hours”. She hopes the resurgence of vinyl will continue “let’s get record shops back up and running again and revive the feeling of going out and buying music in a tangible form rather than all online”. Rachel felt that less music should be given away for free, as she was concerned that this practice has undermined its value.

Sarah is also 40 but grew up in West Wales before moving to Shropshire after graduating with a tourism degree. She grew up with parents who worked in local government as a town planner and a secretary. They enjoyed easy listening artists and choral music whilst she was growing up but her tastes were firmly focused on the 80s pop acts of the time. She attributes that largely to the fact that she grew up listening to the music that her older sister was playing at that time such as A-Ha, New Kids On The Block, Bros. Her and her friends enjoyed learning the words and the dance moves to the songs in school. She doesn't think her tastes will change much as she grows older although she has in the past few years "really got into Dizzee Rascal and Jay-Z". Today she listens to Radio 2 or Absolute 80s and likes a mix of chart music and older 80s songs. Her activity resembles most of the females aged 40s that participated in the research. She actively attends live music events (Maroon 5, The Feeling, Texas, Mel C) and mostly buys her music online through iTunes. Her iconic artists are Michael Jackson and The Beatles. The technology purchase that she would like to make when she can afford it is a Bang & Olufsen Bluetooth soundbar so she can stream her music at home in high quality. At the moment she has a small Bose Bluetooth speaker.

7.4 The Relevance of Music Lessons During Childhood

Bourdieu (1984) viewed education as a significant influencing variable in the formation of music tastes. It also influences arts funding decisions relating to public money, with the classical genre being the predominant benefactor. However, what became very obvious during the conversations with these participants during the three years of field work was that they were mostly disengaged from formal music education in school during their childhood, despite the fact that they were all obviously very engaged with popular music during their leisure time. This highlights the potential failure of music education during the 1970s and 80s amongst this cohort. The music curriculum did not inspire or interest them. In fact in many cases it resulted in a rejection of the

classical music curriculum that was being forced upon them because they found it such an un-enjoyable experience. The curriculum was heavily dominated by core classical works and notation.

The responses below were collected from a number of individuals during the participant interviews, and highlight the long-term effect that this had on today's generation of 40-59 year olds. These examples are very representative of the views that were expressed by virtually all respondents.

- It was dry and didn't reflect my love of music in any way. I hated it. I also hated the instrument lessons after school. I would love to learn guitar or piano today.
- I didn't enjoy them at all, not very interesting. I would love to learn to play piano.
- I didn't enjoy music lessons. They were far too serious. I learnt a bit of violin and clarinet but don't play today.
- They were ok. Don't remember them much. I would LOVE to learn piano now.
- They were not at all inspirational and the teacher was crap!

Nicola was the one exception in the female 40s participants. She has always had a love of music and still writes and records her own compositions in her spare time.

I loved music lessons, I loved sound and rhythm. I play guitar and drums and would love to play piano.

The men aged 40s demonstrated similar feelings regarding the memories of their music education.

- I didn't enjoy music at school at all, they only taught classical. We were not encouraged to play guitars etc. I'd love to learn guitar or piano.

- I found them very boring. I had to learn violin.
- Music lessons at school were ok but not great. I wanted to learn more than we were taught and then I lost interest. I wish I had learnt the piano and guitar when I was young. I'd also like to learn the cello. I am trying to teach myself some basic piano now.

Jon was the only participant aged 40s who expressed a love of school music lessons and he learnt to play piano when he was young. The men aged 50s expressed similar experiences.

- No I didn't enjoy music lessons, they weren't trendy.
- I never had the chance to learn an instrument at school but now I'd love to learn the sax.
- I don't remember them at all in primary school and what I do remember from Grammar school was very choir based. I'd love to play piano or guitar really well.
- Music at school was very boring and I never learnt any instruments until I left. I taught myself a bit of guitar and still play at home.

The exception was Chris who enjoyed his music lessons as it was his "best subject". He clearly had a talent for instruments and learnt piano, violin, viola and organ during his teens. Today he also plays piano and guitar and earns his living as a professional musician across both classical/choral and contemporary work.

Dee and Margaret had positive music experiences at school. In Dee's case it was largely due to having a great music teacher which helped her enjoy the lessons. Margaret was in the school choir and really enjoyed singing with her mum in the church choir so that was a key factor in her frequency of participation.

7.5 *I Like Music*: Music Streaming Birthday Cards – Lifetime of Music

This retail case study used the marketing activity and a new product trial relating to the *I Like Music* brand (described in Chapter 3) to leverage the rock/pop songs of the UK official Top 40 chart archive dating from 1952 to present day.

A printed birthday card range was developed featuring streaming music compilations generated by the person's date of birth.

The birthday card range called *Birthday Number 1s* was officially launched at pop-up shops in Brick Lane & The O2 Arena in London during 2013 and 2014. This enabled the researcher to observe a large cross section of visitors who came into the shop throughout the launch weekend.

As the product and the associated technology were a new innovation it was necessary to demonstrate the birthday cards to the customers in the shop. The product featured the UK Number 1 hit on the person's birthday throughout their lifetime. So someone born in 1970 would receive a compilation album of 43 birthday number 1s in 2013, whereas someone born in 1980 would receive 33 and so on. There were two options regarding how to activate the cards to access the personalized album. Inside the front cover there was a QR code and also a Text Code. Therefore, the recipient could either choose to scan the code using a QR scanner app or if they did not have the app and did not want to download the app they could use the text code instead. Texting the word BIRTHDAY to the number 63333 triggered a reply text containing a url link to the product webpage. That webpage featured a date wheel which users could then spin to enter their date of birth. This immediately generated a personalised streaming compilation album featuring all the songs that had been number 1 on their birthday date throughout their life. This webpage could then be saved to their phone or computer and streamed anytime they have internet availability on any of their devices.

The marketing was not targeted at any particular demographic, and because both pop-up shops were situated in locations that had a high footfall of a wide range there was a diverse range of ages that entered the shops. The 40-59 year old shoppers were observed during the pop-up shop sessions as the target range for this research. The birthday cards required the person's age in order to activate the date wheel. It became clear that there was a lot of fascination surrounding what was number 1 on the day they were born. Most people didn't already know and so were fascinated to find out what it had been. In the majority of cases people did not particularly like the song that was number 1 on their birthday and in some cases people did not even recognise it when they heard it unless it was a song that was very well known.

In the majority of cases people started strongly identifying with the Number 1s around their 9th or 10th birthday and had strong memories associated with the number 1s throughout their teens and into their twenties. This was when most of the record purchasing seemed to have been done as people could remember buying the songs when they were Number 1. Although these individuals in the target cohort had access to up to 59 songs depending on their age, most of them were predominantly interested in finding out what was number 1 on each year throughout their teens. They were less interested in finding out more recent number 1s, and in most cases they didn't know the current chart number 1.

Many female and male shoppers aged 40-59 years old when asked about the charts expressed less interest in current number 1s. They were not questioned in detail about their engagement with charts during the youth. However, many held the view that they were not as passionate about supporting current bands as they were in their youth and so it didn't matter so much how well those bands performed in the charts. In contrast during their youth they were committed fans who wanted their favourite artists to do well on the charts. Many participants also verbalized their opinion that Top Of The Pops was the driver of their chart interest during youth.

Overall it was consistently observed that this cohort had very little idea what was going on in the Top 40 charts, even though they usually expressed how much they like new music as well as the back catalogue from their youth. They cited many reasons for that. Firstly, that they spent a lot more time listening to music during their teens as they spent most of their time in their bedrooms avoiding their parents. Secondly, they voiced their sadness regarding the demise of Top of the Pops as a show that the whole family watched and which kept everyone up to date with current music and the charts. Thirdly, many described the charts today as full of ‘youth’ music which they didn’t think they liked, even though many of the artists in the charts are actually artists from their youth or current artists who they displayed a liking for.

They regularly described their music tastes or collections as *diverse* but then cited songs which were actually in the commercial Top 40 charts so these examples of their *diverse tastes* were really only subsets of the contemporary genre and therefore not that diverse at all. This was also observed during the live event field testing.

This *Birthday Number 1s* product demonstrated how excited people can get about music that is personal to them. It produced a lot of conversations around music and around memories that they associated with different songs from their lives. It also demonstrated how passionately people can like and dislike songs. It was common for users to voice their strong opinions as they scrolled through the list with comments such as “I love that song”, “That’s a great one”, “Ugh I hate that song”! Interestingly another greetings card product in the shop featured the Christmas number 1s but most of the songs prompted strong dislikes from the users as many were either “cheesy and annoying” (such as Mr Blobby style) or were from X Factor. None of the shoppers who were observed in the shops described the Christmas number 1s as *great music*. Those songs were mostly classified as novelty rather than music talent or classics. This is largely because the music industry has historically used the Christmas period to push out this type of product.

Overall the *Birthday Number Is* cards proved to be extremely popular with this target group. It also confirmed that this cohort have both the mobile technology to access the streaming products and the technical knowhow to do so. There were repeated observations that those in the target age range of 40-59 were most familiar and passionate with the music from their school years.

7.6 Chapter Conclusion

The examples of participants' responses given in this chapter aimed to deliver a range of individuals from different backgrounds and geographic regions. There were clear trends which became apparent during this research phase. Today's 40-59 year olds shared very similar experiences with the rock/pop genre across social classes, education, region or upbringing. That genre successfully permeated every household and created incredibly strong impressions on the children growing up during this era through the 1970s and 80s.

There is very little suggestion of omnivorous tastes amongst this cohort. When they do describe their tastes as 'wide ranging' or 'eclectic' they go on to list a range of music which is actually only on varying ends of the contemporary rock pop genre, and rarely crosses over to the classical repertoire. The only exception was Chris who had grown up with a privileged education and a family that was immersed in the classical genre. In this sense he fits Bourdieu's description as his upbringing influenced his habitus and has enabled him to continue his appreciation of the classical genre. However, in his responses he demonstrated considerable knowledge and love of music in both the classical AND contemporary rock pop genres. Today he is an accomplished professional musician and his habitus arms him with the skills and discriminations to appreciate the complexity of the more intricate classical works as well as lighter popular forms of music. In other cases where participants indicated a liking for classical they actually were really only referring to the lighter end of classical. They did not have the depth of knowledge or participation in classical that they displayed for contemporary music.

Education or background did not seem to significantly affect access to or preferences for rock pop music. However, it did become apparent that middle class children who received high quality education were more likely to be able to demonstrate a liking for both contemporary and classical music. However, their dominant preference when asked appeared to be rock/pop. Those participants with lower class backgrounds and education rarely mentioned classical music at all, other than in references to their dislike of music lessons during school years.

The interviews provided an insight into the impact of the media during the 1970s and 80s, which appeared to have had a very profound effect on this generation of children. Television shows such as Top Of The Pops and Old Grey Whistle Test were clearly very influential and became 'essential viewing' amongst school children at this time.

The observations from the retail field testing confirmed that this cohort displayed the strongest and most passionate connection with music that dominated the rock pop charts during their school years. This was observed across both genders and across the full spectrum of the target age range.

Chapter 8

LEVERAGING ROCK/POP TASTE FOR COMMERCIAL RETURNS

(Business review of the research case studies)

8.1 Introduction

The live anniversary event case studies revealed that an anniversary of a well known music artist, event or song/s could be very effective in segmenting audiences into age determined music generations. To some extent this activity as a tool could also predict the gender of attendees, although most people were now married or in relationships so were as likely to come with their partners as with a group of friends.

There was an indication that these live events were delivering new experiences to this audience compared with other events they had attended. Most of this audience had confirmed that they already actively attend concerts and festivals in the UK when they can. Therefore, they are very familiar with the concert format of attending a venue and enjoying a large performance by the high profile artists that excite them. Due to the popularity of these artists the venues tend to be very large theatres or even arenas or large scale festivals. The anniversary events had provided an experience that was a little different and that had delivered new elements that had enabled them to gain some intellectual stimulation. They had been able to get up close with the artists they grew up with, they had been able to ask questions and discuss the music and the era that they identify with, they had been in environments which were much more intimate or much more unusual like the Matala Beach setting.

The previous chapters used existing research findings (Chapter 3), empirical analyses (Chapter 4), supported by qualitative field research (Chapters 5-7), to describe and analyse changes in the music tastes of the current 40-59 year old middle class cohort. The results and analysis indicate the emergence of a generational cohort whose taste for rock/pops was formed in their youth, continues to elicit strong responses and is likely to continue through their life course. They also share this taste with younger age groups sub 40 years old.

As a professional practitioner it was my aim from the outset that in addition to describing and explaining changes in music taste, this thesis could also provide some recommendations for the music business, and other business sectors, concerning the commercial implications of the data analysis (Research Question 3).

This chapter will address this question through an analysis of the two business case studies: *Generation Music Club* (lifestyle) and *I Like Music* (retail). These case studies had a dual role in this research project: to facilitate the participant observations and collection of music taste data from the target group, and to test the business potential of these formats. This analysis describes how these business units attempted to use rock/pop music to attract and engage the 40-59 aged middle class demographic. It evaluates the success of these case studies in engaging the target market, and identifies any limitations in the approaches used thus providing industry practitioners with an insight into the potential business growth opportunities that have been identified.

8.2 CASE STUDY 1 – “*Generation Music Club*”

All of the anniversary live events used in this research project were advertised under a new brand name created for this PhD study. The *Generation Music Club* brand was positioned as a social/lifestyle brand targeting ‘those who grew up with vinyl’. A series of bespoke special events under this brand name were activated between 2011 and 2014. These events were used as an opportunity to collect participant observations and field notes to test Research Questions 1 and 2 regarding music taste (see Chapters 5-7). The following sections will discuss the process and review

whether this brand has successfully harnessed an opportunity, and has continued potential as a commercial business after the research has ended.

Core Business Strategy

The original business focus for *Generation Music Club* was to use rock/pop music as the curated marketing theme to successfully attract the target cohort and then to build a mailing list of this target audience and leverage that database using brand partnerships to increase revenues across a range of products such as travel packages, event ticket packages, merchandise, limited editions/special editions product ranges etc. This strategy mirrored the original strategy of the *Saga* brand whereby Sydney DeHaan had succeeded in using travel and holidays to attract the target group, and through building a mailing list succeeded in exploiting that database with the appropriate cross selling of other products. Rather than using travel as the ‘hook’ *Generation* aimed to use music themes to build and sell a portfolio of events, products and holidays. In the immediate term the event series would also act as a vehicle for ethnographic data capture for this research.

These events were intended to be more innovative than the typical concert format. For example, intimate live events combined with featured artist interviews, Q&A interactions with the audience, dinners, screenings, cocktails, unusual locations, unusual special guests, special edition products.

Core Products/Services

Having analysed the success of the *AARP*’s annual @50 lifestyle event it was decided that the inaugural event to launch the *Generation* brand would follow a similar format. An inaugural event branded as *Generation Expo* would feature a range of lifestyle exhibitors during the daytime, and a live music event during the evening.

The aim was to use this large scale expo style event to launch the *Generation* brand as a club oriented lifestyle brand offering other events, holidays and products throughout the year. It was designed to test whether music themes from the 1970s and 80s would attract the target cohort aged 40-59, and if it did successfully attract them it would provide an environment for ethnographic data capture for this study.

Launch

It was decided that the most favourable location to launch the inaugural *Generation Expo* event was Brighton. Firstly, Brighton as a city has a population which includes the target market, and a concise media offering that would make it easier to promote the event to larger numbers of people than in London. There was naturally a lot less activity in Brighton than London so it was deemed more realistic that the event could draw media interest here than in London, where it can be more difficult and expensive to break through. Secondly, the Brighton Centre was due to undergo a multi-million pound refurbishment. A booking was agreed for October 2011 so that the *Generation Expo* event would receive the marketing boost around the re-opening of the venue. This benefit underpinned the decision to host this event at this venue, because as a start up the internal *Generation* marketing budget was small. The Brighton Centre confirmed that a significant marketing campaign would be activated to relaunch the refurbished venue, and that as one of the first events in the new calendar *Generation Expo* would be positioned as a featured event across that marketing campaign. For start-up brands this type of marketing partnership is a very desirable position to leverage as it can deliver very significant results without high expenditure.

The 40th Anniversary of *The Old Grey Whistle Test* (OGWT) was selected as the key theme for the first event. It was considered to be appropriate as the original fans of the show would now predominantly be in their 50s.

The original OGWT TV presenter Bob Harris was booked to appear as the celebrity host of the evening event. Glenn Tilbrook and Chris Difford from *Squeeze* were

booked as special guests, due to their former appearances on the OGWT show in the 1970s.

In order to examine for generational effects within the 40-59 cohort a second event was held at this venue on the Sunday during the same weekend. It used the 30th Anniversary of the *Prince Charming* album as the theme. Adam Ant was booked as the special guest to be interviewed on stage, and to perform some of the songs from the album. This album was a 1980s release, whereas the *Old Grey Whistle Test* hosted by Bob Harris was a successful 1970s show. Therefore, these two events were designed to deliver an insight into how effectively rock/pop music could segment audiences in terms of age, and also potentially gender.

This anniversary theme was continued through a number of *Generation* branded events during the field research period.

40th Anniversary of *The Old Grey Whistle Test*

30th Anniversary of '*Prince Charming*'

40th Anniversary of *Dark Side of the Moon*

40th Anniversary of *Ziggy Stardust's* Final Performance:

30th Anniversary of '*Seven & The Ragged Tiger*' (Duran Duran):

Several other concerts and festivals were selected and were attended by myself in addition to the bespoke *Generation* branded events. This enabled me to get a further insight into the types of audience that these original heritage artists were attracting.

These additional events featured the original artists and included:

40th Anniversary of Rick Wakeman (Royal Albert Hall)

50th Anniversary of the Mods & Rockers Riots (Margate)

30th Anniversary of A-HA (Royal Albert Hall)

40th Anniversary of Blondie (Hyde Park)

Rewind: 80s Festival (Henley On Thames)

30th Anniversary of Roxette (Wembley Arena)

50th Anniversary of Dolly Parton (O2 Arena)

Generation Music Club - 'Vinyl Night' Series

A second live event series was created under the *Generation* brand in order to collect further data in the field. This took place every week in the basement bar of a 4 Star hotel in Kent which was selected due to the proximity to my home, which simplified the weekly running of the event. It featured my Technics 1210 turntable, and record collection of approximately 200 well known vinyl albums dating from the 1960s to the 2000s. The event was marketed at both local members of the hotel database and the residents of the hotel. The revolving resident list enabled access to new people each week who lived in different areas of the UK, across a wide age range, and typically either travelling through en route to or from France, or at the hotel for a weekend wedding or celebration.

The event was un-ticketed and participants were free to enter the bar, browse through the boxes of vinyl records on display, and select songs to play on the turntable. This gave the audience free access to the music choice of the evening, and the opportunity to re-live the experience of putting a vinyl record onto a record player. The intention was to observe the choices of the participants and their responses to the experience of browsing and playing these records. It was in effect a D.I.Y style vinyl jukebox.

In the first two weeks of this weekly event an additional lounge adjacent to the main reception bar featured a vintage gramophone and a collection of 78rpm jazz, swing and classical records. After the first few weeks of the event it became clear that the target age group of 40-59 year olds were attracted to the vinyl room, leaving just older residents aged 60-65 and above in the upstairs lounge. Therefore, in order to simplify the event management and the observation process the gramophone room did not run after the first few weeks of the event.

The vinyl event started at approximately 9pm every Friday night and ran until the last participants departed. On certain nights I ended the event at 2am even though the audience was still enthusiastically selecting records. The event ran every Friday night through a full summer season from early May to early September 2013.

The first week was marketed as a launch event, attended by approximately 100 guests including both hotel visitors and local residents. The vinyl format received an enthusiastic response as guests browsed through the boxes. Once they had found an album/albums that they liked they brought their selection/s over to the Technics 1210 turntable. This was set up in the centre of the room under a spotlight - as the *star of the show*. The turntable was supervised by myself and event assistants. Visitors were invited to either put the record on the turntable themselves, or for the researcher to play it for them if they were nervous of scratching the vinyl records or damaging the needle/stylus.

8.3 CASE STUDY 2 – “I Like Music”

The *Generation Music Club* brand was set up as a live event based social lifestyle brand. In contrast *I Like Music* was set up as a retail brand aiming to develop a range of new products using a commercial music archive. *I Like Music* is the trading name of Broadchart International Limited, a successful B2B music streaming business. The company owns the most comprehensive physical collection of UK Top 40 Chart Hits in the UK and is the sole digital music provider to the BBC and other high profile clients. It is thought to be the only complete physical collection and was started by BBC Radio 2 Producer and *I Like Music* President, Phil ‘The Collector’ Swern, when he was aged just 4. Phil continued collecting the new Top 40 releases each week through his life thereby creating a vast physical library containing every UK chart hit released since the UK Charts began in 1952.

The company realized that they had created a very stable B2B digital music platform, and that this may also have the potential to be used as the basis for a B2C brand extension. They also realized that due to the nature of the collection they were able to offer a full range of chart hits dating back over several decades. Therefore, there is the potential to use this archive to curate products which can engage the older demographic as well as the youth market.

The activity of the company over the past five years had resulted in the development of a number of USPs. This included the 17.5 tonne physical collection which had been fully digitised; the IT platform which delivers the streaming music; all the necessary music licenses to use the music collection commercially; and an exclusive retail agreement with the Official Chart Company. The Board of Directors recognized that there was potentially an opportunity to use this existing B2B infrastructure and USPs as a foundation for new B2C activities and products using the *I Like Music* brand and thereby potentially also opening up a new merchandise revenue stream for rights holders.

Core products/services

A period of research and development began in August 2013, with a test campaign launched in December 2013. This featured two pop-up shop locations leading into the prime Christmas period. A range of *I Like Music* branded gift products were created which all carried links to streaming music compilations: birthday cards, Christmas cards, t-shirts, hoodies, bags, mugs, caps, headphones, record players. All items featured the main *I Like Music* brand logo design. This logo had previously won design awards, and was considered a strong image that could have the potential to successfully migrate onto actual commercial products. It featured a range of cartoon faces with musical notes as the eyes and mouth which offered flexibility in terms of how the brand could be used across a range of faces representing different age groups or musical tastes.

A QR code was printed onto the items which, when scanned with a mobile phone, would take the recipient to a webpage where the music compilations could be streamed.

The two pop-up shops were located in Brick Lane in London (over one weekend) and The O2 Arena (over a 3 week period).

8.4 Business Case Study Review 1: *Generation Music Club*

The *Generation Music Club* case study spans 2011 to 2014, and demonstrates how the brand has used a rock/pop music theme to build a profile that successfully attracts a target market aged 40-59 ABC1. This *Generation* case study represents a good test of the extent to which branded events (the anniversaries) represent a successful marketing strategy for attracting and engaging the target cohort aged 40-59.

The inaugural *Old Grey Whistle Test* event at the Brighton Centre was attended by the Mayor and various dignitaries, and gained positive feedback from local media and exhibitors. Not all exhibitors witnessed sales uplifts. Those who had premium products available to buy immediately at the event experienced highest sales. Gibson Guitars noted that they had witnessed more retail sales at this event than at a recent guitar exhibition. The gourmet food company confirmed that they had sold more luxury hampers than at any other event they attended. The Powerboat Association received an offer for the speedboat they had on display. The exhibitors believed that these positive sales results, despite the relatively small scale attendance figures (approximately 500 visitors), were likely to be due to the high proportion of middle class 40+ year olds who had been attracted to the event.

A survey was conducted during the event inviting visitors to share their thoughts regarding their experience, and to select the elements that they would most like to see more of at future *Generation* events. 88% of the 100 respondents stated that they had been purely attracted to the event due to the music based elements of the weekend (the *Old Grey Whistle Test* or *Prince Charming* anniversary celebrations). The majority expressed a delight with the intimate nature of the music event, and the fact that they were able to ask Bob Harris and Adam Ant questions during the Q&A interviews. This is not something that happens at concerts so was seen as a unique event feature and a much more personal and engaging experience.

However, a number of contingent factors, unconnected with the core strategy, affected the success of the event. The venue had been selected due to a multi-million pound building refurbishment being carried out prior to the event date. The event would therefore benefit from the intensive relaunch marketing campaign that the

venue had planned. However, it became apparent in the weeks leading up to the event that the venue contractors were not going to be able to complete the building work on schedule. That led to a number of significant complications. Firstly, the planned high profile marketing campaign around the venue relaunch was not activated by the venue owner. Secondly, the entire building continued to be covered in scaffolding. Consequently the local population naturally assumed that the venue was still shut, as it had been closed for refurbishment for several months. Thirdly, the crucial 'sea views' and new VIP rooftop restaurant that had been promised to potential exhibitors and sponsors were all unavailable for the event. The above factors led to several exhibitors and sponsors pulling out in the weeks running up to the event. Significantly reduced packages had to be renegotiated in order to maintain enough features within the venue for the event to be substantial enough and of interest to attendees.

Despite the limitations the event went ahead as planned but was restricted to the main hall rather than the sea facing side of the building. The event drew approximately 500 visitors per day during the weekend rather than the 2500 per day that had been projected. All exhibitors had to locate within the same space in the main hall resulting in a rather confusing and eclectic layout, which many visitors and exhibitors commented on negatively. As a result of these contingent factors, this first event lost money despite its positive response from the attendees.

Refining the business model

Originally *Generation* aimed to use the passion for rock/pop music amongst the 40-59 audience (as identified by the industry data analysis in Chapter 4) to attract and build a database which could be financially exploited with a suite of products, events, and services. Because the first large scale event resulted in a financial loss there was little choice other than to downsize for future activity. However, it was fortunate that the survey at the initial event clearly highlighted that it was the **intimate** music based events that were the key draw for this audience rather than large scale lifestyle events. Large scale concerts featuring the heritage acts from the 1970s and 80s have become increasingly popular (and expensive) so there was a

continuous stream of those styles of events competing for this audience. However, the intimate Q&A style of the *Generation* anniversary event offered something different from such live concert events. It provided an opportunity to learn more about the artist they were interested in, rather than just seeing them performing. There was a higher sophistication and intellectual component to this event format which satisfied their depth of interest in this genre.

Subsequent anniversary themed events focused on smaller scale formats or co-promotions with existing events. This proved successful in being able to grow the activity and profile of the new *Generation* brand without financial commitment.

Developing the brand

Repositioning the *Generation* brand as a ‘social club’ style business, offering unique music anniversary celebrations became the key focus after the inaugural event. A number of small scale events were curated between 2011 and 2014 (see Chapter 3). As well as being used to collect field data for this PhD research, they have also assisted in the development of a strong identity for the *Generation* brand at low cost. They have all proven that the anniversary theme draws in the targeted audience with considerable accuracy without ever having to mention an age. In fact it was recognised very early on that any reference of ‘Over 50s’ or ‘Over 40s’ tends to actually alienate those in the 40s and 50s. This was recognised during early research observations at existing events such as ‘The Over 50s Show’, ‘The Retirement Show’ and the ‘50+ Show’ in 2010 and 2011. The observations recorded at these events confirmed that although they advertise themselves as ‘Over 50s’ events, they mostly succeed in attracting an audience dominated by the over 60s attendees. This apparent aversion to ageing also appeared repeatedly during conversations with 50 year old participants during the research period. When asked if they had joined *Saga* or would go on a *Saga* cruise the response was similar across all participants. They did not view themselves as old and considered *Saga* as an old age brand associated with their parents and not themselves. This is further evidenced in the *Saga Magazine* readership data presented in Chapter 2.

As most start-ups do not have significant marketing or operational budgets at their disposal it becomes imperative to forge as many strategic alliances as possible in order to achieve business growth. In the case of *Generation* the partner had an existing event or asset that *Generation* could tag onto in order to provide an interesting and relevant offer for its target group, and/or an existing and relevant audience or database that *Generation* could access in order to raise its profile and promote its event calendar and mailing list. This partnership approach enabled the brand to continue to operate and grow whilst carrying the financial loss of the original event.

Large marketing budgets can provide obvious benefits to the growth of a brand and increasing awareness within the target market. However, often start-ups have to bootstrap their way through the early phases of business development, finding more innovative ways to keep the brand active, alive and growing with minimal spend. The addition of a number of partner networks between 2012 and 2014 enabled *Generation* to promote new events via its third party databases containing over 100,000 target customers. The *Generation* brand has not yet been widely marketed to the target audience outside of partner networks, due to the unavailability of marketing funds. However, it has been able to continue to expand its reach through the development of its partnership network. The event calendar since 2012 has featured numerous events using this approach in order to continue to provide ethnographic opportunities for the music taste research, and also to build a stronger brand identity which the target audience can identify with. The events have provided a deep insight into the music preferences and consumption behaviour of the target audience.

Future Growth Strategy

The *Generation* brand has to date focused on positioning itself as a lifestyle company which delivers a unique music themed ‘social club’ service, offering a range of events, holidays, VIP opportunities, and special products to primarily the 40-59 aged middle class audience. In 2014 the brand name was changed in order to reflect this focus and also to assist in the search engine optimisation success of the *Generation*

name. The original word *Generation* alone was very difficult to promote due to the extensive number of existing websites using that word. In contrast, the *Generation Music Club* website now ranks at number 1 on Google when those words are searched. This has been achieved without any marketing spend on SEO campaigns.

Having succeeded in building a strong brand identity using the event series during 2011-2014, the next phase in the business development is to achieve scale. At the time of writing two approaches are currently being investigated to achieve this.

Firstly, the company is actively seeking new untapped routes to market that deliver innovative music based experiences to the target market, and create new revenue opportunities. One example of this is the recent identification of the County Show network in the UK. According to the Association of Show and Agricultural Organisations approximately six million people visit county shows in the UK every year (ASAO, 2014). The visitor base tends to be dominated by the 40+ ABC1 target market so this is of prime interest to *Generation* in terms of access to the target audience to drive membership sign ups, and also drive sales of special products. A partnership has been agreed with one of the leading County Shows to test the market by launching a *Generation* branded music event on site in summer 2015.

At present there is no established music themed entertainment experience which tours the leading county shows. Most sites have in the region of 40,000 visiting per day but close their gates and encourage visitors to leave at 5.30pm. In comparison the Jockey Club in the UK in recent years has recognised that when tens of thousands of people are on site for their horse racing meetings, they can encourage longer dwell time and increased revenues by hosting an evening music event. This strategy has been very successful. The Jockey Club is now the sixth largest promoter in the UK having sold almost 300,000 tickets to their horse racing concerts in 2014 (Williamson, 2014). Most of those concerts have featured artists from the 1980s or from the broad pop/rock genre.

The ambition of launching a *Generation Music Club* event at this county show in June 2015 is to test this music experience concept in a county show context, with the

aim of then touring the event around the leading county show network annually from 2016.

Secondly, the business has recognised during the research period that *Generation Music Club* as a brand has the potential to deliver social impact in an ageing UK society. The government recognises the impending pressure that an ageing population can place on the UK's social services, and the NHS in particular. Life expectancy has increased but *healthy life expectancy* has not, however, increased as fast, resulting in proportionally greater demands on public services such as the NHS. In 2012 a House of Lords committee was established in order to examine this issue and assess the Government's action to prepare for this in coming years. The White Paper that was published in 2013 suggested that much more intensive action was required in order to sufficiently guard against the pressures that the ageing population could present. This has become an increasing concern amongst leading health professionals (Campbell, 2015).

NESTA research (Khan, 2013) identified that although cohorts who are in their 50s and 60s today will live longer than previous generations, the quality of life is not increasing at the same rate. This suggests that the most significant change that can be addressed in the immediate future is to ensure that the current cohort of 50+ year olds are supported as they age into retirement and through their 70s, 80s and 90s. NESTA confirmed that the most significant factors in maintaining both mental and physical health are ensuring continued social engagement, connections and a sense of purpose. Those individuals who continue to be socially active throughout their 60s, 70s and 80s are least likely to require NHS services until later life. In comparison, individuals whose social life decreases after retirement, or revolves largely around retired aged peers, are more likely to encounter mental and physical health problems earlier.

Generation Music Club has demonstrated the ability to successfully attract and engage the 40-65 aged demographic with music themed events and content. Importantly, it has demonstrated how this music taste is also shared by younger groups, meaning that it can facilitate cross-generational social engagement.

The *Generation Music Club* website and event calendar can be scaled up for this purpose by using music themes to engage the target group. It could use digital technologies such as a website ad app to deliver social opportunities (e.g. events and holidays) and access to other benefits such as regional volunteering, educational and exercise opportunities.

According to government figures in 2007/8 the average cost of NHS services for retired households was £5,200 compared with £2,800 for non-retired. The Department of Health estimates that the average cost of providing services for a person aged 85+ is around three times greater than for a retiree aged 65-74 years (Cracknell, 2007).

Clearly, there is a significant financial benefit in ensuring that the ageing UK population maintains a healthy life after retirement. Music has a unique power to deliver social benefits, especially amongst the current retiring population aged 60s, and the next generation of retirees aged 40-59. This business strategy is currently being examined and discussed at the House of Lords.

It is anticipated that a second round of fundraising will be launched in 2015 to secure working capital to accelerate growth and activate the growth plan of *Generation Music Club*. The company has been registered as an EIS approved vehicle in order to offer investors tax relief incentives. This fresh capital will assist in the growth of the brand and the company.

8.5 Business Case Study Review 2: *I Like Music*

The market testing of the birthday cards in the retail environment yielded a number of findings relating to the commercial potential of this unique product innovation.

Firstly, the birthday cards appeared to make immediate impact with consumers across all ages because the cards were personalised according to the recipient's age. This meant that the UK number 1s playlist that came with the card included music that they connected with.

Secondly, these cards were very versatile as they could be produced in a range of visual designs due to the low print manufacture costs.

Thirdly, it became clear that QR codes are still not widely used by the consumer. Very few people who were observed during the pop-up shop observation sessions had QR code readers already installed on their phones. Therefore it added another step requiring them to search for and download a QR code reader before being able to scan the item to access the music. This was a significant drawback in the user experience. Following these retail field tests the product was altered so that text codes could be used by the consumer to access the playlists. This enabled a universal experience which was easier and more familiar in terms of execution.

Fourthly, consumers generally responded well to the *I Like Music* birthday cards in store but sales were low at both test sites. This could have been a pricing issue. Due to the additional music royalties attached to the playlists this card retailed initially at £5.99, which consumers may have had difficulty justifying due to the fact that the music playlist was not a physical product attached to the card. Consumers are not used to paying that level of price for a birthday card.

Fifthly, it was necessary to verbally explain that the cards came with music – the UK number 1 hit on their birthday every year of their life since birth - and to explain and demonstrate how the products worked. This highlighted a significant marketing communication issue which needed to be resolved. This is a new product innovation and consequently there is an educational journey that needs to take place in the marketplace. An incredibly simple message needs to be able to convey the key points to the consumer quickly at the point of sale.

The retail test activity proved that a commercial potential for these greetings card products certainly exists, but more work was required to solve the marketing communication and design issues. The pop-up shops had demonstrated that there was an interest amongst the older age groups as well as the youth groups.

Future Growth Strategy

It became clear from the market testing that there was a significant opportunity to bring the birthday card (and extended greetings card range) to the greetings card sector. The greetings card industry is worth £1.4bn a year in UK sales alone.

The GCA (Greetings Card Association) Market Report, which covers value and volume figures for the sales of single cards across the main sending occasions in 2012, shows that the size of the total market is fairly static at a value of £1,372m with 'everyday' cards at a value of £1,060m (2013).

The average retail price (ARP) of a card is £1.42. The value of the Christmas singles market is £164.4m. Spring Seasons have a value of £147.1million. Mother's Day remains the largest Spring Seasons card sending event, with a value of £55.3million and an ARP at £1.87. Also the UK public continues to show its romantic side with Valentine's Day value of £42.5million with an ARP of £2.01, the highest of all the card categories. The GCA estimates that the Christmas Boxed market has a volume of 800m cards and a value of around £200m.

The positive picture that this market report paints shows that despite rocky times on the high street, the increase in online print on demand and the rise of social media, the UK greeting card industry is healthy, vibrant and still a world leader. Greeting cards remain an ever important part of the UK social culture – people clearly still want to celebrate everyday and special occasions with their loved ones, and to mark many of life's key 'connecting' moments with the sending of a card.

This appears to hold particular significance for the 40+ generations who have grown up with the tradition of sending cards for special occasions.

The unique selling points of the *I Like Music* birthday card range are:

- It is a self-personalising product so holds all of the attraction of personalisation but at a low cost per unit because the personalisation is carried out online when the recipient enters their date of birth.

- It touches upon nostalgia because it gives the recipient the songs that were number 1 on their birthday for their entire life.
- It is a talking point so consumers will assist in the marketing of the product because it is unique enough for people to show and tell their friends and family.
- *I Like Music* has an exclusive agreement with the Official Chart Company so they are the only commercial company who are able to use the charts to produce commercial products in this way.
- This technology can be added to ANY birthday card by any designer or publisher. The webpage link simply has to be printed inside the cards.

The market testing highlighted that this product particularly appealed to the adult audience because they are a prime card buyer and sender. Also it is a product which rewards you for getting older as it features one song per year of your life. So a 50 year old would receive 50 tracks whereas a 20 year old would receive 20 tracks etc.

Given the size of the industry and the marketing challenges that became apparent during the pop-up shop tests, the company decided that it was not feasible to try and introduce this into the marketplace independently. Instead it was agreed that it would be pitched as a licensing opportunity to the corporations who are the market leaders in this sector. They possess the marketing resources, the manufacture and distribution infrastructure, and the industry knowledge to assist in the creation of a successful marketing campaign that would introduce and educate the market regarding this new product innovation. There has been very little product innovation in the physical greetings card sector in recent years. Therefore, the *I Like Music* streaming platform, combined with the unique music products and licenses, offers a new product development that could easily be implemented by leading corporations in this industry.

At the time of writing the company is in discussion with leading corporations in the greetings card sector to license this product for widespread retail activation. Trial locations are under discussion in order for the partner to test the product in a controlled live retail setting in their main retail outlet.

Ultimately if a licence agreement is secured this product could become an additional revenue stream within *I Like Music*'s existing B2B business, rather than the anticipated B2C route that was originally intended. At present it is unclear whether the product range will remain branded as *I Like Music* because it is a corporation that licenses the technology. However, whether it remains branded as *I Like Music* or not, the company successfully recognised how its existing resources could create a new product innovation which used music to engage and monetise the target audience.

8.6 Chapter Conclusion

The live event potential proved particularly interesting when examining the above findings. It is not a new breakthrough to find that this audience aged 40-59 enthusiastically consumes rock pop music. Promoters, artists and record labels have been exploiting this audience with heritage artist concerts and anniversary re-releases for many years.

However, this research demonstrated that even when the original artists are removed from the event it is still possible to use the rock pop music theme to attract and commercially engage this audience. Furthermore, this audience appeared to receive a wider range of experiences (outside of the usual artist concert and album re-releases) with positive enthusiasm, such as the film screening, the music themed trip to Crete, the Q&A sessions. Similarly, with the new birthday card product, this new technology based innovation was also well received by this cohort.

This suggests that there is scope for businesses to leverage the lifelong rock pop music taste of this audience in a wider range of products and experiences. There is clearly an appetite amongst this target group, and they have the disposable income to consume new innovations in this field. This is particularly relevant as concert tickets for heritage artists now sell out so quickly and leave a large audience unable to access the core activity. Peripheral opportunities that are created and directed at this sizeable audience could be well received. Chapter 9 will discuss the implications of this in further detail.

Chapter 9

CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Achieving the Practical Aims of the Project: Providing recommendations to practitioners through an academic research project

Rather than existing only as an academic project, this thesis has attempted to also make commercial recommendations relating to the use of rock/pop music in engaging ABC1 consumers aged 40-59 in the UK. This was achieved by conducting research that also provides an original contribution to the academic discourse regarding music taste.

9.2 Delivering an original academic contribution to the existing discourse

This research project has examined two key concepts – cultural taste and social stratification – drawing on an academic discourse dating back to Bourdieu’s original work (now 50 years old).

The original foundation of this research was built upon the continuing academic debate regarding music taste. This has largely revolved around the concepts of habitus, cultural capital, social class and legitimate culture (Bourdieu, 1984) and later contrasting theories regarding the cultural omnivore (Peterson et al 1992). Recent UK research (Bennett et al 2009, Savage & Gayo 2011) identified ‘music generations’ and provided evidence of a continuing divide between two distinct genres: classical and contemporary (rock/pop). They identified ‘experts’ within the current 40-59 aged ABC1 cohort, as possible omnivores who could cross this boundary, and who were therefore worthy of further research.

Cultural taste and social class is still being discussed and debated today. Some contemporary authors argue that Bourdieu’s original view of cultural capital and high culture appears to have weakened in modern society (Warde et al, 1999;

Coulangeon, 2005). Others continue to support Peterson's hypothesis that modern elite classes now display omnivorous consumption across the classical and contemporary divide (Warde, 2011).

A recent workshop (Savage, 2013) proposed a number of important tasks for the academic study of emerging cultural capital and new forms of distinction. This research project has attempted to address a number of these :

- “divisions in the consumption of popular culture”, - use of a new data set, of UK music sales, to analyse the music taste of the 40+ ABC1 demographic, and identify a decline in the taste for classical music and an increase in the taste for pop and rock. This study was supported by new ethnographic analyses, which suggested that this shift in taste was particularly towards forms of pop and rock music considered “legitimate” by this age group.
- “empirical engagement with the cultural omnivore thesis” – this research has provided a new empirical data analysis to test whether the tastes of this key demographic are omnivorous.
- “critical engagements with Bourdieu's formulation of cultural capital”, - based on the findings about the tastes of the 40+ group, this thesis has proposed a reformulation of Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, focusing on the generally under-researched “ageing” hypothesis, to try to explain why the tastes of the study group should be shifting from “elite” culture towards pop and rock music. The analysis has proposed that, rather than a simple “dumbing down” effect, the data suggest what we might call a neo-Bourdieuian process of taste formation. Rather than abandoning cultural capital, elite social groups are redefining it to apply to a new “legitimate” canon of pop and rock, replacing the canon of elite classical music.

9.3 Methodological Contribution of the Research

Since Bourdieu, most studies in this field (see Chapter 2) have employed attitudinal surveys to investigate taste preferences by asking respondents to state their liking of genres. Chapter 3 noted that some of the disadvantages of this method are that they

are limited by their reliance upon respondents' definition of genres, and also perhaps offer a weaker indicator of taste than purchasing activity.

This thesis provides a new investigation of music taste using a previously unstudied data set – a quantitative analysis of 20 years of official UK music sales data (1993-2012) enabling this study to examine the actual music purchases of the target group.

Chapter 3 also noted that the limitations of the album sales data relate to broader problems in the categorization of music into genres like rock and pop. The BPI data is collected using official industry classifications. To test whether the data follows a pattern of a general taste for rock and pop, or for the emergence of a canon of legitimate pop/rock, this analysis was supplemented with additional qualitative data collected during participant observations over a three year period.

9.4 Empirical Contribution: Quantitative Analysis of Music

Based on the literature review (see Chapter 2), four alternatives were proposed as possible outcomes of the research. That is, the data would reveal that the 40-59 ABC1 group would display:

- i. classical music tastes (supporting Bourdieu's original theory)
- ii. omnivorous tastes consuming both classical and contemporary rock pop music in significant amounts (supporting Peterson's original theory)
- iii. a wide range of consumption across the rock pop genre alone, across both heritage AND new artists in this style (what popular media might describe as a 'dumbing down' thesis)
- iv. a significant preference for the original core heritage repertoire of the 1970s (a neo-Bourdiesian theory of an emergent 'legitimate' canon of rock and pop (see also Savage et al, 2011))

The empirical data analysis suggested that the 40-59 year old middle class cohort were consuming increasing amounts of rock/pop and decreasing classical music.

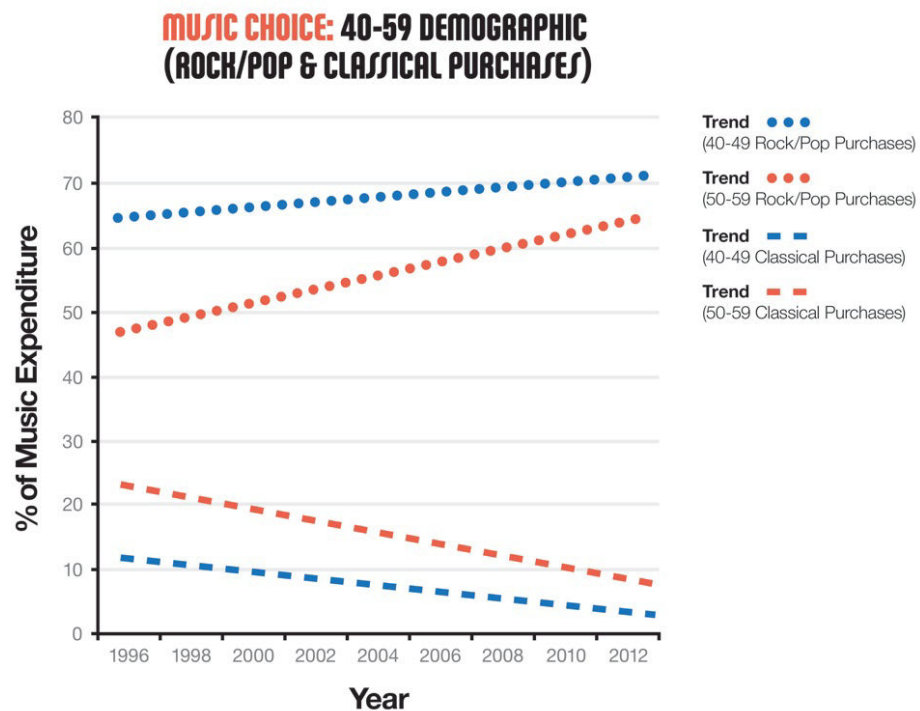


Figure 9.1. BPI data analysis 1993-2012: Music choice trends in the 40-59 age group

The findings of this research project suggest that in fact even the elite classes aged 40-59 are now consuming predominantly rock pop music, and have very little taste for or engagement with classical. This change between classical and contemporary consumption amongst the AB socio-economic group is very significant and clearly evident in the UK music sales analysis in Chapter 4.

The BPI data analysis does seem to support that music tastes are formed early in life. Therefore, we see a natural age effect whereby the older cohorts who grew up pre-1960s dominate the classical music expenditure figures and are least likely to have a taste for the popular genres. Therefore the BPI appears to show an historic 'generational shift' in music tastes in that process, with today's cohort of 40-59 year old consumers buying more rock/pop than previous generations of 40-59 year olds.

This phase of the research seemed to highlight that in fact the new generation of the 50 year old age group (40-59 cohort) appeared to be very different to their parents.

There was an apparent *generational shift* in the music choices of this cohort. They had grown up in a society during the 1960s, 70s and 80s which was becoming increasingly dominated with rock, pop, punk and vinyl and they appear to be actively demonstrating a continuing taste for those genres throughout their life course. It points to the arrival of a new generation who grew up with this explosion of popular music culture during the 1960s and 70s, and who are carrying their music tastes with them through their life course.

The initial analysis of these figures dating from 1993 - 2012 (see Chapter 4) very clearly identified that historically the classical consumer audience had been dominated by the over 50s throughout that period, and in fact was becoming increasingly reliant on the older audiences aged over 65.

The analysis of this data supports a generational shift in music taste, particularly visible in the current cohort of 40-59 year olds who grew up post 1960s

9.4.1 Empirical Contribution: Qualitative Analysis of Music (RQs 1 and 2)

Chapters 5 and 6 presented the findings of the *qualitative* analysis of music taste in order to test for the emergence of a new legitimate canon of legitimate rock and pop music, and to further test for the existence of omnivorous consumption among this target group.

The data were collected based on interviews with the target demographic. A number of live event case studies were designed around key works in the rock/pop canon (e.g. 40th Anniversary of Dark Side of the Moon – Pink Floyd, 40th Anniversary of Ziggy Stardust – David Bowie, 40th Anniversary of the Old Grey Whistle Test, 30th Anniversary of Prince Charming – Adam Ant, 30th Anniversary of Duran Duran). These case studies successfully attracted the target audiences aged 40-59 ABC1.

The main results of the qualitative studies were

- No evidence of omnivorous consumption – the interviews confirmed the findings of the BPI data that this target group do not purchase classical music.
- Further confirmation of the important distinction between “liking” and purchasing music. The interviews appeared to show how consumers could express a liking for classical music (as has been recorded in other previous surveys) without this being expressed as actual purchases in the BPI data.
- The qualitative data suggests that the rock and pop consumed by this demographic is part of an emerging classic ‘canon’ of rock and pop music.
- The case studies also demonstrated that this rock and pop taste and the associated cultural capital can be deployed across the current stable of new artists as well as the familiar back catalogue of their youth.

9.4.2 Empirical Contributions: Marketing and Music – The Findings of the Case Studies (RQ 3)

As well as providing an examination of music tastes amongst this socio-demographic group, the findings of the initial analysis of UK sales data proved to be instrumental in refining this research project. Research Question 3 was designed to look more closely at the commercial opportunities surrounding this target market.

For the purposes of the research a number of live event case studies were created to test the potential for marketing to the target demographic using music events built around the idea of a new canon.

In addition to the main findings relating to taste highlighted above the case studies also demonstrated several findings that are of value to industry:

- Even when advertised to a broad consumer audience the anniversary events attracted primarily the target group aged 40-59 ABC1. The interviews showed how powerful the connection with the artist or album still was.

- The connection was strong enough to warrant a high spend from this audience. They would consider buying VIP experiences or premium packaged products relating to the heritage music that they connected most strongly to.
- The anniversaries could be used to segment the target group into sub-groups. For example, the 40 year old women preferred the 30th Anniversaries of Prince Charming and Duran Duran. Whereas the 50 year old men preferred the 40th Anniversaries of Ziggy Stardust and Duran Duran.
- This was further evidenced in the vinyl night events where attendees could select from 250 albums across a 40 year period. Participants mostly selected the music that they had grown up with during school and early college years.

These case studies allowed an examination and testing of how the music industry and other sectors in the UK can more effectively communicate with, and commercialise that growing target market of 40+ year olds, using their cultural taste over the coming decades.

This pattern of consumption thus suggests a range of potential marketing options open to the music industry and other business sectors. Especially if innovative new products and experiences can be targeted at this audience.

As an industry practitioner this aspect of the research was of particular interest. The original experience of *The Genesis Suite* had led me to question how this growing market of 50 year old consumers could be commercially targeted using music. The research findings that I have gathered over the past six years have led to the restructuring of my own business in order to fully focus on the new generation of 40-59 year olds. The research findings suggest that this audience holds significant commercial potential for businesses in the UK over the next three decades. This thesis has gathered evidence of how their lifelong rock pop taste can be used to harness and engage them.

9.5 Theoretical Contributions: Taste and Taste Formation

The main theoretical conclusions of the research can be summarized as follows:

Omnivorous Consumption

The patterns of data presented in this study thus provide no support for Peterson's hypothesis of general patterns of cultural omnivorousness, or for Savage and Gayo's hypothesis that the 40+ demographic would be the most likely to be cultural omnivores. Instead there is a clear change in taste patterns from classical music to pop and rock, which appears to be driven by a new 'canon' of classic rock and pop music from their youth.

The recent body of research reviewed in Chapter 2 highlights that the appearance of a visible and growing group of omnivores as originally described by Peterson in the early 1990s, has simply not materialized. This thesis attempted to provide further conclusive evidence to test this theory. The use of actual sales information rather than simply 'likes and dislikes' delivered a new approach in establishing the level of engagement across genres. Respondents are able to accurately recount the music purchases they make during a year. Therefore, it produces a much more realistic view of their consumption than when they are asked for their music preferences. A respondent who might express a liking for a genre may not ever actually consume that genre in a commercial transaction. In general consumers spend money on the genres that give them most enjoyment, a more passionate interest than simply a 'like'.

The findings of this thesis do suggest that omnivorous behavior may operate within genres rather than across genres. However, this does not substantiate the original theory and definition of the omnivore. If a consumer is not engaging across the classical – contemporary divide can they really be described as omnivorous just because they are engaging in multiple sub-genres within the contemporary genre? It is the view of this research that this type of inter-genre behavior does not realistically count as omnivorous. Despite the fact that musical styles within the pop/rock category are now numerous and span many different formats. Contemporary and

classical styles are still two distinct entities and without engagement in both forms the original omnivore terminology appears weak.

Ageing and Taste

Rather than cultural omnivores, the study appears to support a revised version of Bourdieu's original theory of taste. This new 'canon' of rock and pop music appears to constitute a core of 'legitimate' culture, functioning in the same way Bourdieu hypothesized for classical music. However rather than being confined to elite classes, the current 40+ middle class generation *and* the elite group both appear to have acquired the habitus, the tastes and discriminations required to access this contemporary canon, through their engagement with popular culture. This particularly privileges a *generation* who grew up post 1960s, where lifelong music taste across all classes appears to have been formed during an era that became increasingly dominated by popular music culture. Whilst some consumption of both genres clearly does exist amongst the 40-59 cohort, suggesting a level of omnivorous consumption (as proposed by Bennett et al, 2009 and Savage et al 2011), it is evident that the overall trend points towards increasing consumption of popular music and decreasing levels of classical. This signifies new generations entering the 40-59 demographic who have increasing contemporary preferences due to the rock/pop genre they grew up with. There is effectively a 'dilution of classical' as this effect continues to take hold through subsequent generations.

Social class and cultural capital

This does not mean that class is not important in taste. A new 'legitimate' music canon may be developing which suggests that the middle classes in particular continue to acknowledge the classical genre as highbrow, but are expanding the social definition of cultural capital and legitimate taste as the rock/pop genre receives increasing social acceptance as a legitimate cultural art form. In particular, acquisition of cultural capital may be dependent on possession of the economic capital necessary to access the increasingly expensive live events by classic rock and pop acts from this era, as well as to purchase the many new 'archive-based' products created by the industry – anniversary materials, premium boxed sets of unreleased recordings, archive films etc. The implications for social classification appear to

suggest that economic status is likely to be a key determinant in how consumers, who are currently aged 40-59 demonstrate distinction using music taste from this point on. This poses questions regarding whether classical high culture will continue to decline as the older elite audiences expire, if the new generation do not need to engage with it to signify their distinction. It appears that cultural capital may indeed have moved on and is now achieved using the popular genres, which were previously considered 'lowbrow' forms of culture. Depth of knowledge and expertise of the popular genre heritage and access to 'money can't buy' experiences featuring the original artists appear to be how this new generation can achieve a conversion into cultural capital today.

Cultural Capital and Pop/Rock Music

It is thus clearly still possible for this group to display cultural hierarchies within the rock pop genre and to attempt to leverage knowledge in pursuit of distinction amongst this group. According to the findings of this study this is achieved through demonstrating a depth of knowledge of the core rock pop classic repertoire and through demonstrating economic capital power. Accessing the best seats at sold out events featuring high profile artists from the 1960s, 70s and often now 80s also. The added arrival of the 80s as a credible and legitimate cultural repertoire in recent years (since this research project started six years ago) indicates that age plays a very significant role in determining legitimacy. It appears that as cohorts reach middle age (which also brings senior status positions in their professional careers and the associated wealth) they bring the passion for the music they grew up with. A sizeable audience with the taste for the music from their youth, and significant disposable income to spend on it, appears to assist in driving these contemporary sub-genres and eras to the forefront today as credible and legitimate cultures. Nostalgia also has a probable role in this behavior.

There is existing support of this view which proposes that rather than consuming omnivorously across the classical-contemporary divide this group is instead passionately consuming within the contemporary genre and across its sub-genres and subcultures (Atkinson, 2011; Friedman, 2011).

This ability to demonstrate distinction through the manner in which this contemporary culture is consumed has been identified in previous research, and recognized as a new form of ‘emerging’ cultural capital (Hennion, 2001; Holt, 1997; Savage and Prieur, 2012; Lizardo, 2012, Savage et al, 2013). However, this research finds no evidence for any level of association with the traditional cultural capital genres. So at present the two forms of cultural capital – traditional classical and ‘emerging’ contemporary – only both exist because they are most likely driven by two separate generations. The former primarily by the over 70s age group who grew up pre-1960s, and the latter driven by the new generation who grew up post 1960s.

Rather than rejecting Bourdieu’s theory of taste, the most compelling analysis of this data is through a reformulation of Bourdieu’s theory. This historic change appears to be a redefinition of the roles of high and popular culture and a redefinition of ‘taste’ in social groups. Increasingly, ‘legitimate’ forms of popular culture (particularly classic 60’s and 70’s era rock music) appears to be replacing classical music as a form of ‘cultural capital’ within elite social groups as they demonstrate their knowledge and respect of those works. Also demonstrating their levels of economic capital through engagement with the increasingly expensive live events in this genre.

This implies a redefinition of the process of taste formation. The habitus is still important, but the influence of popular culture has become pervasive so suggesting that although music tastes are formed early on and are continuing through their life course, consumers increasingly look to a ‘classless’ popular ‘youth’ culture rather than the tastes and discriminations of their social class in the early formation of taste. So, even when the privileged classes have been exposed to high culture during those formative years they demonstrate an engagement with the rock/pop genre because it receives such mass media exposure it can saturate across all classes regardless of education.

Cultural capital remains important but ‘high’ culture is no longer the singular associated dominant genre. Popular contemporary genres are now seemingly entering this definition of ‘legitimate’ culture as ‘experts’ display their knowledge and appreciation especially of certain heritage works. Although the ‘snob’ effect is still evident as this cohort demonstrates their distinction by buying higher priced

seats at concerts, VIP packages at festivals, and premium special edition deluxe versions of music products. This is expressed via a *trend* towards increasing consumption of pop and rock music and decreasing consumption of classical music compared to previous cohorts of 50 year olds.

A more detailed analysis of the BPI data in Chapter 4 enables a comparison between class and age in respect of popular vs high culture preferences and how the social definitions of 'legitimate music' are being seen to dilute as privileged classes show an increasing engagement with rock/pop and decreasing in classical.

The analysis of the official music sales data suggests a significant historical shift in the music taste preferences of the 50+ demographic across all classes, compared with earlier studies.

We may indeed be witnessing the arrival of a new contemporary archive of musical works becoming the contemporary 'music canon' of the new generation of 50 year olds. This new canon may be 'legitimized' by the generation of 40-59 year olds who grew up with works such as *Ziggy Stardust*, *Dark Side of the Moon* and *Quadrophenia*.

This suggests that a new conceptualization of the formation of music taste is required. Since Bourdieu, the formation of music taste has been largely explained in terms of a 'socialization' process, with cultural preferences being transmitted during youth via the 'habitus', influenced by the privileged status of the parents and the agents' own education. However, the analysis of sales data appears to reveal a large audience of 40-59 year olds, across all classes, who are clearly displaying a lifelong taste for rock/pop. This suggests that their parents' habitus and music tastes had very little effect on the development of their own individual cultural preferences. For this generation, at home, it was likely that their parents were listening to classical, opera, jazz, big band, film soundtracks, or easy listening crooners. But rather than absorbing these tastes and reflecting them in maturity, this group appears to have been much more powerfully affected through the exposure to the media and popular cultural explosion of the 1960s and 1970s. It would appear to be this broader pop cultural milieu which provides the basis for 'legitimacy' of this music in later life,

rather than any form of referencing back to the specific habitus of their youth.

9.6 An updated definition of ‘cultural capital’.

Given that the research found little support for the idea of a tendency towards omnivorous consumption, this thesis has returned to a Bourdieusian conception of a relationship between taste and cultural capital. It is clear that Bourdieu’s original theory is still capable of explaining some patterns of cultural taste. The recognition of traditional forms of *legitimate culture* can still operate in the UK, as social capital and economic capital can be leveraged from mixing amongst the high society circles and engaging with classical and opera attendance. The findings of this thesis and previous research provide evidence that the cultural and class status of the traditional highbrow music genres has not really weakened. Most classes today when asked, still associate the classical and opera genres as music they associate with the privileged classes. It is well known and accepted that the classical genres are considered ‘higher’ in terms of culture.

However, the review of recent literature in Chapter 2, and the findings of this thesis in Chapters 5 to 7, has suggested that to be relevant to the music sales data collected in the UK between 1992- 2013, Bourdieu’s original theory of cultural capital and distinction (1984) needs to be revised.

The idea of a return to and revision of Bourdieu’s theory was proposed by Bennett et al (2009). Their research identified visible patterns of cultural taste and practice, and showed that across all fields, music displayed most marked differences between established and emerging forms. Their research demonstrated that applying Bourdieu’s ‘total volume of capital’, consisting of cultural and economic assets, enabled the most distinguishable division of cultural differences. This suggested that, in most fields, class still exerts more influence over engagement and practice than education or occupation. In music, however, they found that *age* was significantly important in music taste. Based on their results, Bennett et al (2009) concluded that ‘while Bourdieu effectively reduced patterns of cultural taste in France to differences of class habitus, treating gender and age as secondary, such a strategy would not properly apply in Britain in 2003’ (p. 251).

Contrary to the rigid framework of Bourdieu, then it would be very difficult to compile a distinct list of identified cultural practices that would reliably deliver profit in terms of capital. Age has cut across the definitions that were originally outlined by Bourdieu. Class habitus in terms of its traditional definition has not crossed generations in the way that Bourdieu described. Younger generations may have inherited the ability to comfortably engage with and understand established traditional legitimate cultural forms of classical and opera, but it appears that they do not see a necessity in doing so. Their music tastes and practices appear to be more driven by their true passion in the genres they prefer rather than those that they feel they should be 'seen' to enjoy. The explosion of pop/rock genres during their childhood and the associated rise in mass media exposure permeated across all classes from the 1960s. Bennett et al (2009) provided a stark reality check for the classical music sector with their view that the 'older generation will probably go to its grave with the highbrow/middlebrow alignment based around an accommodation to legitimate culture' (p.254). Whereas they recognize that the majority of the middle class population is not particularly attached or engaged with traditional legitimate culture.

In terms of class, the findings of this thesis support Bennett et al.'s evidence that, in the UK today, the middle class is able to share music tastes with the working class – popular contemporary repertoire. This, of course, is in direct opposition to the findings of Bourdieu, who argued that the French middle class found working class popular culture vulgar and instead actively pursued more legitimate cultural forms and practices in order to achieve refinement and distinction.

9.6.1 Rock Pop Music, Legitimate Culture and Distinction

The interviews and observations carried out during this thesis suggested an alternative role for legitimate culture in the relationship between taste and distinction in contemporary Britain. Middle class participants had a very clear opinion regarding what they did and did not consider legitimate within contemporary music genre. However, this did not stop them in engaging with lowbrow forms of contemporary music culture, but they recognized that it probably would not deliver any capital

benefits. It was for pure enjoyment and excused as their 'guilty pleasure'. Thereby, demonstrating that they had the cultural ability to understand that it was not legitimate culture, and were confident enough to not worry about being seen to be engaging with it. Ironically this recognition that some forms of rock/pop are not considered legitimate enables them to display status and distinction even when they do engage with it. Because they can show that they possess the *knowledge* to recognize that it is not legitimate.

9.6.2 Taste Formation, Age and Cultural Capital

This in turn appears to support the theory that music tastes are formed in youth and last a lifetime. This in itself would not be ground breaking news. It is reasonable to think that the pervasiveness of the classic rock/pop genre in the 1960s/70s/80s would have left a permanent stamp on that generation which is now aged 40-59. However, this thesis could also have revealed new evidence that this generation of 40-59 year old ABC1 year olds, who traditionally in previous decades would have been the primary classical and jazz audience, now solely engage with rock/pop and not the highbrow genres.

The increased engagement with rock/pop would suggest that firstly their habitus is still formed by early exposure to excellent schooling and upbringing, but today merely serves to enable them with a knowledge of highbrow genres but it does not lead to an engagement with that genre. In practice they prefer to engage with the powerful contemporary genres from their youth. Secondly, not only do they not *desire* an engagement with the classical genre but they also do not *need* appear to engage with it in terms of cultural capital. They can possibly profit equally from the contemporary genre.

This emerging cultural capital is driven by the rise of the popular music genres that took the UK by storm during the 1960s and 70s in particular. It was the boom era for popular music and today it is enjoying a renaissance as the original youth generation revisits their past by consuming the huge number of nostalgia re-releases, concert tours and festivals that have sprung up in recent years due to the increasing demand

of this audience who are now in their 40s and 50s. The average age of festival goers is now 36, with the age of headline acts averaging 39 years and eight months (Gigwise MSN, 2013). This is largely due to the fact that you need significant economic capital today to attend most of the leading concerts and festivals in the UK. The average expected spend for an outdoor concert experience is now £423.01 and that is becoming increasingly out of reach for the 18-24 year old demographic. This ageing of headline artists has been witnessed since the turn of the 21st century as the heritage acts steadily achieved significant growth in their touring revenues. A Deloitte white paper in 2011 found that ‘40% of US touring revenue from the top 20 live acts in the past decade, or about \$2.5 billion, was generated by artists who are or will be in their 60s this year’ (Marketing Charts, 2011). That increases to 59% of US touring revenue if you also include the artists who are in their 50s, and a staggering 94% if you include those in their 40s. These trends suggest that the industry and the artists themselves are recognizing how passionate and loyal their original fans are. They have seen the economic potential of monetizing this lifelong music taste and they have been reaping the rewards for over a decade. However, this phenomenon of course is not sustainable in the live sector. Many of these artists are now reaching their 70s and this level of live performance is unrealistic from a physical perspective. These artists will inevitably retire or die in the coming decade. In most cases they die before their original fans who were in their early teens when the artists were successful pop and rock stars aged 25 plus. Based on the evidence regarding music taste formation, this upcoming cessation of original artist touring activity will not mean that the generation who grew up with the music will lose their passion for it. In many cases the music becomes even more revered and critically acclaimed at the point when the artists are no longer active or alive.

This rise of the *new contemporary music canon* is becoming more evident year on year. Artists who originally found fame in the 1960s, 70s and 80s are now glorified and respected both by their original fan bases and by the journalists who themselves now fall into the category of the middle class 40+ demographic. The rock music that originally grew as a rebellious art form that teenagers used to annoy their parents, has now reached the point where it has reached middle age. Mods, punks, rock and pop artists and their teenage fans of the time are now 40 years older than they were at the height of this music explosion. The new music canon is being built by the fans

who grew up with it and who are carrying it through their lifecourse. There is no definition of what precisely makes a 'classic' but radio stations are homing in on the desire to hear the songs of this era. The demand is significant. Listener requests play a large part in shaping the contents of the new music canon. Classic Rock, Classic Pop, Classic Punk are all well established formats now both on radio and with regular CD compilations ensuring that the back catalogue material of the record labels and publishers continues to act as the cash cow assets. Even the hip hop genre which turned 40 recently is experiencing this canon effect. A new 'Classic Hip Hop' radio station launched in 2014 in Houston. 'The Boom' plays hip hop songs from the 80s, 90s and early 2000s and has declared itself the nation's first 'classic' hip-hop station. (Boston Globe, 2014). These 'classic' radio stations have recognized how many people grew up listening to rock, pop, punk, Motown, ska, hip-hop, reggae and most importantly they have recognized that these generations have an embodied connection with these genres that they grew up with. It is a much deeper relationship that plays an important role in their entire lives, shaping how they think about both themselves and the world. The evidence to date suggests that these generations are very unlikely to 'age into' a taste for classical and opera styles as they grow older. Contrary to the propositions put forward by the work of Bonneville-Roussey et al (2013). This poses questions regarding the future of classical music despite the fact that it remains the genre that produces the least 'dislikes' of any musical style.

This decline in the traditional definitions of legitimate culture does not signify a weakening or elimination of distinction though. The middle classes have actually demonstrated the ability to still flex their status and capital prowess in contemporary music practices by distancing themselves from the lower classes using the nature of engagement as described above. Thus distinguishing their status via exclusive and expensive VIP areas, private boxes at arena shows, backstage passes and meet and greet drinks events with the artists for example.

The findings of the above authors and this thesis do not however suggest that Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital has lost its relevance. On the contrary, the findings appear to point to a continued display of these behaviours. Distinction continues to be displayed and attained through applying status markers as before.

However, for those generations of middle classes and elites who grew up during and after the 1960s these principles can be applied equally well in contemporary music settings. Whereas previously they only reliably worked when used in highbrow music settings. One of the most important findings of this thesis is the indication that rock/pop music has finally ‘come of age’. Today’s generation of 40-59 year old middle classes and elites grew up in a society where exposure to the new pop/rock phenomena was unavoidable whatever class habitus you grew up within. This music and the growth of popular culture at that time got under your skin if you were at school during the era of the 1960s, 70s or 80s. Consequently, today they have the self-assurance to confidently assert the same cultural capital practices in the contemporary music setting. The same principles that their parents’ and grandparents’ applied in the classical and opera music setting. A professional-executive today has the embodied confidence to demonstrate his status by inviting friends and colleagues to the highly sought after tickets to the Led Zeppelin reunion concert, without fear that this damages his status due to the music genre. Bourdieu’s principles of cultural capital and distinction appear to be more relevant than ever before in the new generation of middle classes but are being employed in the contemporary music genres rather than the highbrow classical genres previously exclusively associated with class status.

So in that sense the principles of cultural capital continue to be employed but it is the definition of the term ‘legitimate’ that may need updating rather than the term ‘cultural capital’. This is because the evidence implies that what used to be considered outside of the traditional definition of legitimate (rock/pop) now can be exploited in the same way as the historically traditional legitimate genres (classical/opera). Although carrying with it a caveat that the rock/pop engagement that most reliably delivers cultural capital benefits is that which is exclusive/expensive and considered part of the new ‘canon’ of critically acclaimed works. So to bring that into perspective the Kate Bush concerts had the potential to deliver considerable capital returns whereas the upcoming reunion tour of pop supergroup ‘Steps’ is unlikely to provide the same status. In this sense we can start to see a new ‘list’ of contemporary artists and albums from the 1960s through to the 1980s who are beginning to be recognized as ‘artistic’ talent rather than ‘acts’. So the traditional hierarchies are now most likely to continue to exist within cultural

genres rather than across them. Such as the potential snobbish comparison between Kate Bush and Steps, even though they both sit within the rock/pop genre and have both sold several million records. Modern researchers have claimed that most of the earlier work examining omnivorousness has been structured in a way that in fact resulted in this inter-genre hierarchies of legitimate culture being hidden (Atkinson, 2011; Friedman, 2011).

The debate over what constitutes the new music canon is a complex one. The classic radio stations delve into the archives to select the obvious songs that formed the origins of the genre, but also allow the audience to place requests to help curate playlists. What may be deemed mainstream and manufactured by some may be considered legitimate classics by others. Nonetheless according to this research it seems certain that a large population of middle aged middle class Brits agree that contemporary classics are just as legitimate as classical ones. If an association with high art is no longer necessary for those who want to prove their status, where does that leave the concept of the omnivore? Does this new generation of middle class 40-59 year olds need to indulge in classical genres at all? If there is not the necessity to do so for cultural capital purposes then engagement with it remains hinged purely on a true passion for the genre. Something that they seemingly do not possess.

A “Generational Canon”

The classic musical styles of rock and pop compositions have been recycling since this genre’s classic era of the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Consequently many new releases appeal to the 40-59 cohort today as they are in the same vein as the rock and pop style that they grew up with. They appear to be able to champion new young talent in this genre, and can use this association with new talent to demonstrate a credibility and expertise – a John Peel effect. So, although there was a repertoire of albums from the 1960s and 70s that were name checked as ‘classics’ during the interviews, this audience is not purely restricted to these heritage works.

9.7 Theoretical and Practical Contribution: Marketing Theory and Commercial Practice

Retail

The case studies demonstrated the commercial opportunity that lies within the current and future generations of middle class 40-59 year olds. Their connection with the pop/rock genre and their enthusiasm to engage with it shows no sign of slowing down.

There are multiple opportunities for companies both within the music industry and across wider sectors to harness this enthusiasm and convert it into commercial revenues. These sales can be achieved via actual music based content and products or simply harnessing music in marketing strategies for non-related products. This is a generation that historically has been ignored by brands. Innovation will be rewarded by this audience. They are tech-enabled, fashionable and seeking out retail opportunities. A rich target for any company that recognizes their value.

Education

The biggest gift is the ability to play a musical instrument but the interviews seem to suggest that a whole generation were let down badly by the music education that was forced upon them in the 1970s and 80s. They were in love with the powerful rock/pop explosion of the time but instead of harnessing that passion and directing it into a mastery of instruments their passion was extinguished by an insistence upon classical works in the classroom. There is potential to target this audience with music lessons.

Health: Social Impact in an Ageing Population

Perhaps the most significant finding to emerge from this thesis is the fact that the research indicates that this lifelong rock pop passion amongst the 40-65 aged

population has the power to deliver health benefits. This is because it can be very effectively used to keep them socially active as they age. Research has identified that maintaining an active social life is the most effective way to prolong a healthy life throughout the later decades of life. (NESTA, 2014).

If the music passion of this audience can be harnessed it can assist this target group by providing a range of social opportunities, products and services. Ensuring that this generation ages well. Giving them affordable opportunities to engage socially after retirement.

9.8 Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

It is acknowledged that this research was limited in its sophistication of empirical analysis. The methodology was designed to contribute a level of new data and discussion using the official UK music sales information. It was also designed to ensure that the thesis was supported by additional qualitative data and not constrained by the lack of statistical capabilities of the researcher. The annual music industry official market research contains a wealth of information. It is recommended that with adequate funding future research could be targeted at producing an increased depth of analysis of music taste and social stratification using the vast amount of raw data that is available to purchase.

It is also recommended that future research could use the new emerging data regarding music streaming services in order to produce a much more detailed picture of the listening habits of the population in future years. This thesis did approach the major streaming services but access to the data is somewhat restricted at this point whilst companies compete for market share. Increased use of this detailed music streaming data would be extremely valuable. However, again it demonstrates a weaker indication of taste than actual purchases of recorded music or tickets.

According to the findings of this research there has been a significant shift in taste amongst the new 40-59 year old middle class. The findings suggest that both social capital and economic capital status can now be demonstrated through engagement

with the popular forms of music that were historically the low-brow working class genres. Since the middle classes can now comfortably share the music tastes of the working class, they can exercise their cultural power through the *nature of engagement* with that form rather than the form itself. In other words it has become possible to demonstrate distinction through popular music genres through practice. The middle classes can afford the best seats in the house whereas the working classes cannot. The rise of ticket prices and new VIP packages featuring meet and greets backstage with the artist has been driven sharply in the past five years by the middle classes. This has enabled this group to display their distinction in terms of not only their economic capital (being able to afford the experiences) but also their social capital (when tickets sell out within minutes of going on sale, only those with the best contacts can access tickets). Social capital also plays a role at the event itself because the very nature of this premium ticket environment provides valuable networking opportunities to strengthen social capital and potentially develop subsequent business opportunities that then increase economic capital. Future research could strengthen the methodological limitations of this study and provide further measurements regarding whether this observed behavior is the new activation of cultural capital theory in legitimate popular culture.

Chapter 10

APPENDICES

10.1 The Genesis Suite album: key marketing events and materials.



Figure 10.1 The Queen Symphony released by EMI Classics in 2002

My Generation: Examining the music tastes and commercial opportunities within the new audience of 40-59 year olds in the UK



Figure 10.2 The London Symphony Orchestra recording The Genesis Suite in Abbey Road Studio 1.

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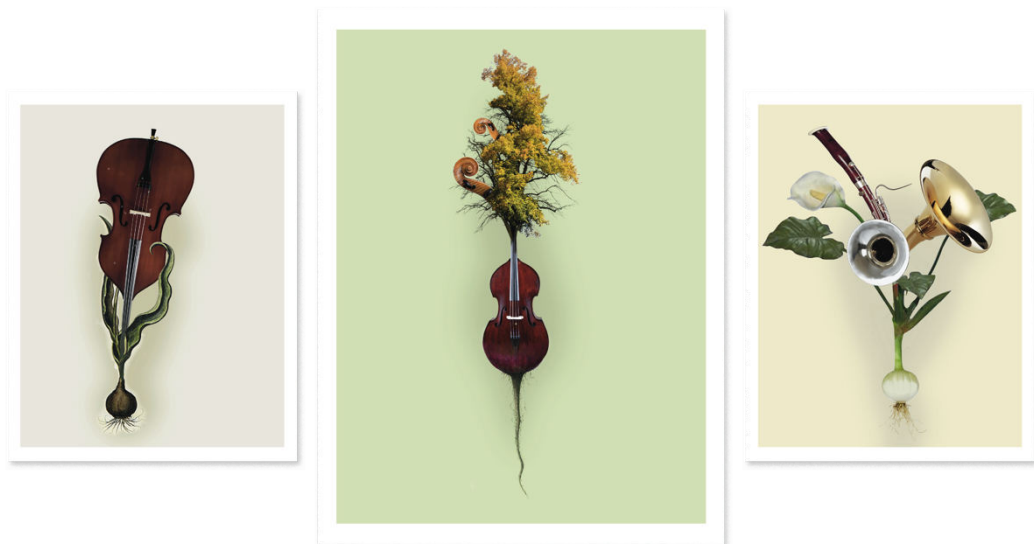


Figure 10.3 The Genesis Suite - album cover artwork and additional design concept examples.



The Genesis Suite
Tolga Kashif

Out Now
£9.99

hmv
hmv.com



The Genesis Suite
Tolga Kashif

£8.99
Out Now

Sainsbury's
Try something new today

Figure 10.4 The Genesis Suite – retail marketing examples

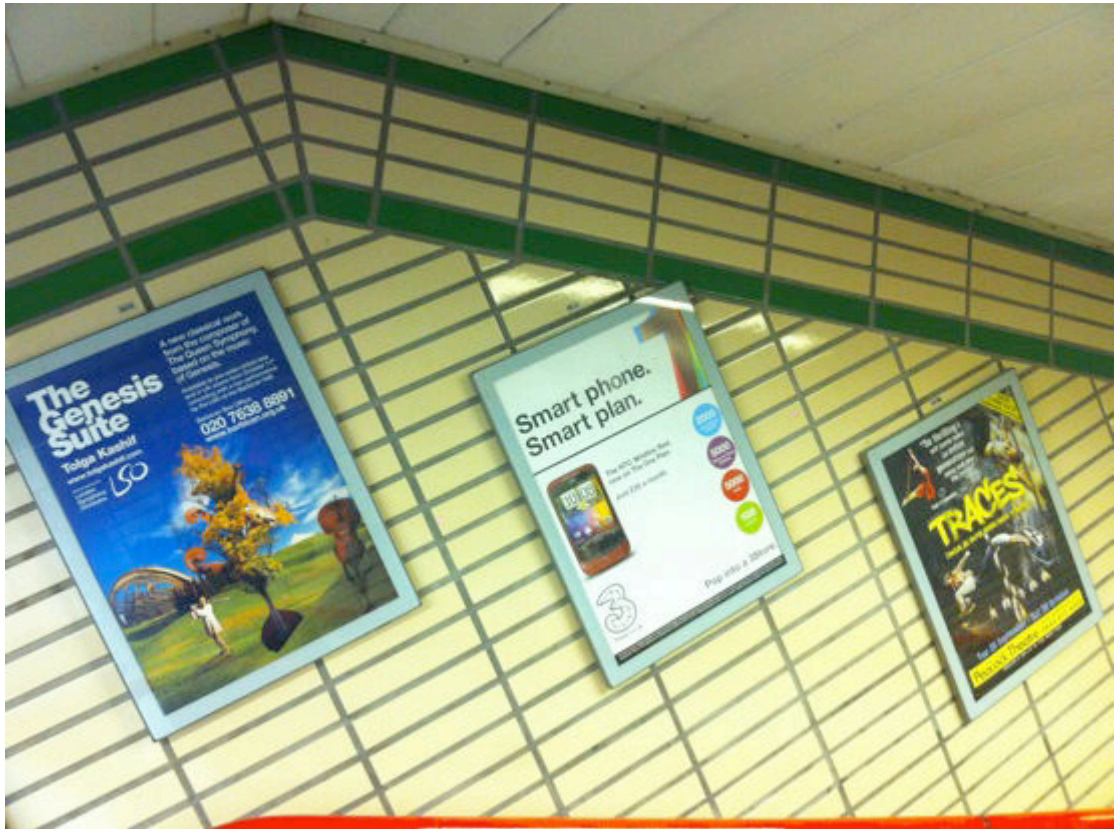


Figure 10.5 The Genesis Suite – London Underground marketing campaign

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Figure 10.6 Shelf positioning in HMV and Sainsbury's

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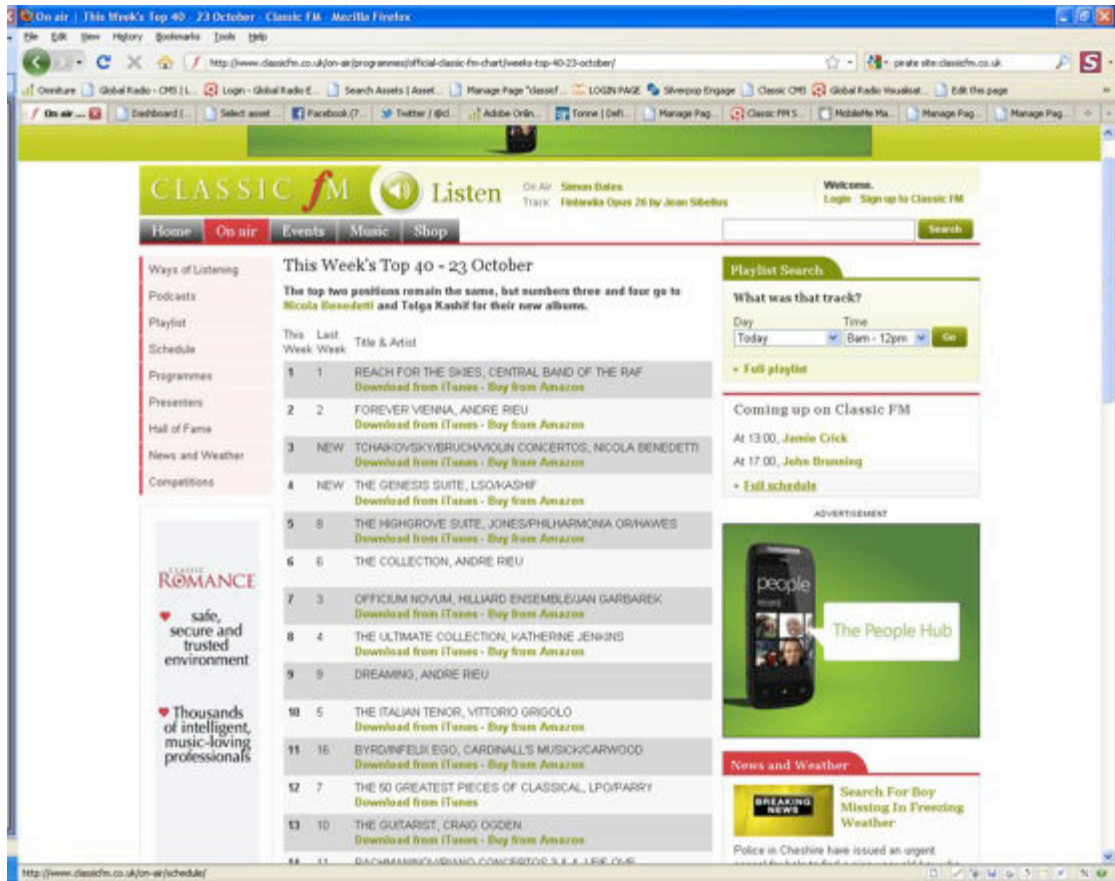


Figure 10.7 Chart debut at No.4 in the UK Classical Chart (shown on ClassicFM.com)

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Figure 10.8 The premiere of The Genesis Suite performed by the LSO at the Barbican in 2010.

The Genesis Suite
Tolga Kashif

The Genesis Suite
Tolga Kashif

The Genesis Suite
Tolga Kashif
London Symphony Orchestra

INTRODUCING A NEW CLASSICAL WORK FROM THE COMPOSER OF THE QUEEN SYMPHONY, BASED ON THE MUSIC OF GENESIS.

1. LAND OF CONFUSION / TONIGHT, TONIGHT, TONIGHT BANKS / COLLINS / RUTHERFORD (Arr. KASHIF) London Male Voice	7:36
2. RIPPLES BANKS / RUTHERFORD (Arr. KASHIF) Freddy Kempf (piano)	9:47
3. MAD MAN MOON / FANTASIA CONCERTANTE FOR VIOLIN AND ORCHESTRA BANKS (Arr. KASHIF) Tara Miller (violin)	16:42
4. FOLLOW YOU FOLLOW ME BANKS / COLLINS / RUTHERFORD (Arr. KASHIF) Cassidy Davis (soprano)	6:49
5. FADING LIGHTS BANKS / COLLINS / RUTHERFORD (Arr. KASHIF)	12:13
6. ENTANGLED BANKS / HACKETT (Arr. KASHIF) Freddy Kempf (piano)	7:26
7. UNDERTOW BURNS ON THE RODTOPS BANKS / COLLINS / HACKETT (Arr. KASHIF) London Male Voice	12:45
TOTAL RUNNING TIME	73:18

Writers Credits
COLLINS: The Collins List / Imagogen Music.
RUTHERFORD: Michael Rutherford Music Ltd / Imagogen Music.
BANKS: Anthony Banks / Imagogen Music.
HACKETT: EMI & Real Music Publishing Limited.
All Titles Arranged and Orchestrated by Tolga Kashif
Co-Orchestrator: Julian Karolshaw

Photography:
Courtesy of Sam Cole Photography and Gualter Deblonds

Programme design
www.lso.org.uk/2010

A Lightsong Media Group Production
© 2010 LMG 1 Ltd. www.lightsongmusic.com

Figure 10.9 The programme for the premiere of The Genesis Suite performed by the LSO at the Barbican Hall.

10.2 Generation Music Club: marketing design examples



Figure 10.10 Generation hosted anniversary event series examples



**JOIN THE
VINYL CLUB.**



GENERATION PRESENTS

MUSIC HOTEL

FRIDAY NIGHT IS MUSIC NIGHT
ROCK-POP, OPERA
JAZZ, FOLK, CLASSICAL
SINGER-SONGWRITER
AND MORE.

 Stay up-to-date with all the latest Generation and Music Hotel news including whats on, event photos or simply join the conversation. Visit our facebook page: itsmygeneration.com/facebook

KAZZBAR VINYL JUKEBOX
Browse and play the classic album collection on our record player.
1960s - 1990s

MARTELLO BAR COCKTAILS & LIVE MUSIC SHOWCASES
At the grand piano.
Featuring special guests.

WINDSOR LOUNGE GRAMOPHONE JUKEBOX
Browse and play the classic 78rpm record collection on our HMV gramophone.
1920s - 1960s

EVERY FRIDAY FROM 7.30PM
STARTING MAY 31ST THE HYTHE IMPERIAL HOTEL
www.mercurhythetheimperial.co.uk/music-hotel

In association with our partners:
Harrisons Hair Team | **LOAF SANDGATE**

GENERATION
A LIFETIME OF MUSIC

Figure 10.11 Music Hotel / Vinyl Night marketing materials



Figure 10.12 Event photograph examples

10.3 I Like Music: example marketing and materials.



Figure 10.13 I Like Music online e-card advertisement

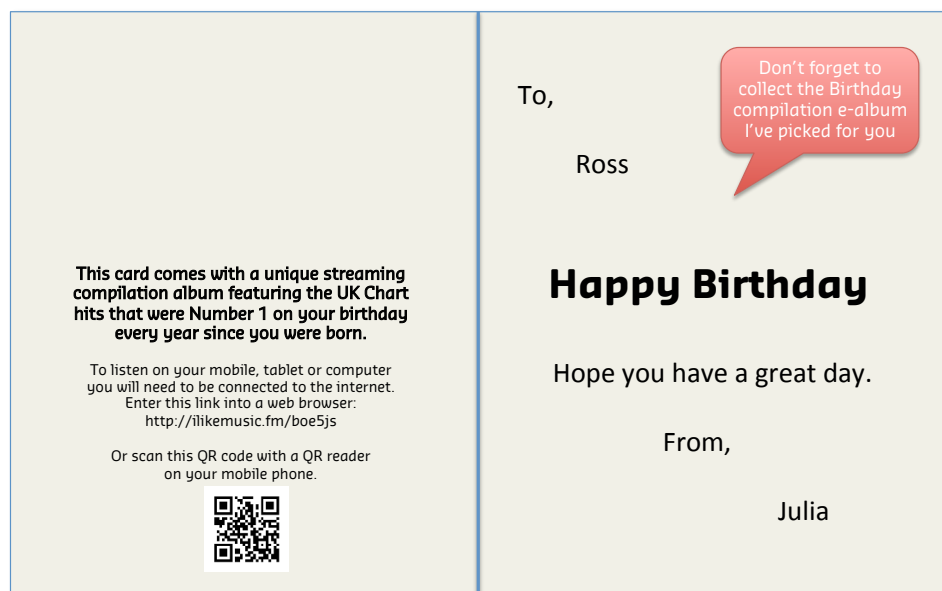


Figure 10.14 Inside of the printed version of the Birthday Number 1s card



Figure 10.15 I Like Music pop up shop front in Brick Lane



Figure 10.16 Customers of all ages could find out their birthday number 1s in-store



Figure 10.17 The retail display unit for the Birthday Number 1s cards

10.4 Semi-structured interview example format

1. What is your earliest memory of music? What was the first single and album you bought? Can you remember where you bought it? What do you remember about buying these records? Where were you? How old were you? Why did you buy these particular records?
2. What do you remember your parents' buying and listening to when you were young? What music do you remember them having in their record collection?
3. What was the first live music concert you remember attending? How old were you? Where was it? Who went with you? How did you get there?
4. What music / artists did you listen to in school? Did your friends share your music tastes? How did you hear about this music and new releases? What did you read/watch?
5. When did you get your first record player? Did you collect records and buy frequently? Did you spend a lot of time in a local record shop?
6. Do you still have your records? Do you still have a record player? Why did you get rid of them (if you did)?
7. Did you enjoy music lessons in school? Why did you or didn't you enjoy them? Did you learn an instrument? Can you play an instrument today? Would you like to learn an instrument – which one?
8. What music do your parents listen to today (or most recently if not still with us)? How do they listen to music today? How old are they?
9. Do you think you share the music tastes of your parents or do you like different styles? Do you attend live music concerts together? If so what style of music are those events?
10. Do you think you share the music tastes of your children (or nephews/nieces/friend's children/god children etc) generation? Do you attend live music events with that generation?
11. What live music events have you attended in the past 2 years? What do you have planned for the next 12 months?
12. Do you think of attending a music festival as a mini holiday break? Do you camp at festivals or stay at local guest houses/hotels? Or do you prefer to just attend for one day? How do you travel there?
13. Have you ever attended an overseas live music event? Would you be interested in an overseas holiday that included a live music event/festival?
14. Have you heard of Generation Music Club?

15. When do you think your music tastes were formed? Do you think it will stay with you for life or do you think you will like your parents music styles as you grow older?
16. Where do you buy your live music tickets? Do you find it easy or difficult to buy tickets for popular live music events before they are sold out? How do you buy tickets? Do you phone or use online ticketing?
17. Have you ever bought a live music ticket on a secondary ticketing website for a higher price because it was all that was available and you really wanted to attend the event?
18. Would you like easier access to live music tickets at face value?
19. How would you describe your favourite music? What style of music do you mostly listen to and identify with? What music have you bought this year? How do you buy it? Do you subscribe to a music streaming service and if so which one?
20. Do you know what is number 1 in the UK Top 40 charts this week? Do you want to know? What radio stations do you listen to? Do you have a favourite radio presenter?
21. Where do you listen to the most music? Car? Commuting? At home etc?
22. What albums and artists would you describe as iconic if any?
23. Are there any technology purchases that you would like to make if you had some spare cash? Would they be used to listen to music?
24. Do you seek out new music and recommend it to people? If so where do you look for it? Who recommends music to you? Which of these best describes you and why? Music Listener – Music Buyer - Music Lover – Music Fanatic – Music Expert. What are you most listening to on your phone/mp3 player at the moment?
25. How effectively do you think the music industry services you with products? Do you think they focus their efforts mainly on the younger audiences and not on the 35+ audiences? What would you like to see in the next 5-10 years in terms of your music activity and the products and services available to you?

Chapter 11

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