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**CONSUMING MUSIC AND TEACHING MUSIC:  
A CASE STUDY IN CREATIVITY**

BY

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# PREFACE

This thesis is grounded in my experiences of teaching music in Leicestershire secondary schools and colleges over the past twenty years. In 1974, I arrived in the county to take up my first Head of Department's post. I began teaching in a high school which, at that point in time, had a philosophy and ethos vastly different from those which currently prevail.

The school's curriculum structure which was left over from its former status as a grammar school, hung like a lead weight around its neck. The ten-form entry was rigidly streamed. The students in the bottom class 'R', (short for 'Removed'), they seemed to have no creative spirit, displayed no disaffection or resentment.

Some teachers had still not come to terms with the changes that had occurred in 1967 as a consequence of the inception of 'The Leicestershire Plan'. This created a two tier secondary phase with high schools for the 10/11-14 year olds and upper schools and colleges for those aged 14-18. My 'new' school had been, in its own terms, demoted. It housed only Key Stage 3 students (aged 11-14) and had consequently lost the kudos associated with being a grammar school with a sixth form and with it, the opportunity to acquire a reputation for academic excellence that this bestowed.

Changes were afoot, however, as many of the original grammar school staff were either on the point of retirement or were actively seeking to move. In addition, the new Headmaster who had arrived less than two years before, was endeavouring to make radical curriculum changes. He wanted to move from rigidly streamed classes to mixed ability teaching groups, a process which ultimately took several years.

As I had begun my teaching career in an 11-18 mixed comprehensive school, I was eager to help break the shackles of the old school order and its oppressive rigidity . Although young and inexperienced, I began the task of developing the music department in terms of both equipment and resources, and curriculum content. As the head of a department of one, I remember only too well the frequent sense of isolation. I was the chief resource, defender and promoter of all things musical, and as the only musician in the school, I had no access to specific curriculum advice or support.

Other Heads of Department could turn to the LEA appointed Advisors who were responsible for keeping abreast of national issues and developments and disseminating such information in schools. However, Music advisors in Leicestershire, were appointed to conduct orchestras not to provide music teachers with help in the classroom. There was a motley selection of Advisor organised courses none of which particularly addressed the issues that I faced daily. They seemed to be run by people who had not been in the classroom for quite some time, or had never taught in schools at all.

Memorable for its ineptitude, one day course commenced with singing in four part harmony, as the Advisor organising it believed this was a 'wonderful' way to start the day's proceedings. It was a million miles away from the reality in my classroom. Moreover, it was perfectly clear from the stunned looks and sighs of disbelief of the other course participants, that nothing quite like it took place in their music lessons either. The sad but predictable outcome of such events, was a growing disenchantment with all LEA organised courses during this period.

However, of all the stresses and strains that I experienced and the acute sense of isolation that I frequently felt, the greatest tensions occurred in areas that directly affected or had a bearing on the prevailing ethos in the school in which I worked. These were primarily grounded in differences of opinion concerning the appropriate relationship between students and teachers rather than in disputes associated with music in the curriculum.

Teachers of expressive subjects such as music, dance and drama have long been tacitly allowed to have a different set of working relationships with their students as compared with the more desk bound subjects like maths or humanities. At this time, however, there was a proviso that any

'differences' did not extend beyond the confines of the classroom and, therefore, did not interfere with the routines and relationships embodied in the school's ethos. Unfortunately, my relationships with the students, how we talked to each other, the kind of curriculum I wished to develop, the expressivity that I wanted them to display, could not be neatly contained within the classroom. As a result, there was a considerable gap between my philosophy and educational methods and those of various influential teachers in the school.

On two memorable occasions I was summoned to see the Head, prompted by complaints from some of my colleagues, to justify my *modus operandi*. Apparently, my relationship with students was undermining their student relationships and classroom discipline and, as a consequence, was seriously affecting their curriculum. Fueling their complaints was the value and importance that I placed on the students' own experiences and 'vernacular' knowledge (acquired outside the school). In my view, this was not only an integral part of youth culture, but a resource which had a significant role to play in the teenage learning process within school. This belief potentially set me on a collision course with the more conservative elements on the staff and with the musical mandarins at County Hall. Fortunately, the Head listened to and was convinced by the arguments that I put forward in my defence, and allowed me to practise without hindrance or alteration. He had good practical reasons to give me unequivocal support. He had ample evidence of the success of my classroom practice and of the students' enjoyment of it. Perhaps more importantly, in the public domain of extra-curricular activities, the scale of student involvement in concerts and productions, (which regularly involved over 250 pupils, a third of the school's population) gave credibility and legitimacy to my philosophy and style.

In 1983, I began an Open University degree, and concluded it in 1985 by studying a course in Popular Culture. This was meant to be a touch of light relief after the experience of the previous year when I had studied the Modernist Movement in Music (1885-1935). It proved not to be the case. The course tutor opened his first tutorial by telling the group that we would be studying an advanced level course masquerading as an easy one, and that he expected at least half of us to quit before the course was concluded. In fact, it challenged me enormously, and the profoundest and most tangible gain was that, for the first time, I could place my experiential knowledge of

the youth cultural process and the teenage learning experience within an academic context which included the rigorous research of others.

In 1986, by a mixture of fate and good fortune, I was seconded full-time to Leicester University for one year, where I took an MA in Mass Communication Research. My dissertation was an empirical study which investigated how the pop media affected teenage pop music preferences over time, and the relationship of the pop media to teenage leisure and school engagement. My research, here, made me question the relevance of existing youth culture research for all teachers in secondary education. I had been invited by Graham Murdock, my tutor at Leicester University, to embark on further research but with school work pressing, I returned to the classroom and delayed a decision. However, when I accepted an invitation to join the panel for the 10/11-14 Cohort Curriculum Review for Leicestershire Music and also took up a one day a week secondment as an Area Collaborative INSET Leader for Methods of Learning and Assessment, working in all the departments of 16 schools and colleges, my experiences in both contexts made further research inevitable.

As part of the curriculum enquiry, the music curriculum panel organised a five day, centrally funded INSET programme for all secondary school music teachers in Leicestershire. It was an extraordinary event. For the first time in over twenty years, all Leicestershire music teachers met to discuss a wide variety of issues and concerns. Many uncertainties were aired and many strengths were shared. I came away with the strong feeling that in addition to a curriculum review, there was a pressing need for a systematic appraisal of the teenage music experience in school, in order to enquire into what should be taught, what classroom methods should be employed, and the relationship of both students and teachers to popular music and culture.

At least as significant, as an Area Collaborative Inset Leader for Methods of Learning, I was made more aware of how differences in values, attitudes and experiences between teachers and students, seriously affected the teenage learning process in all subjects. The research studies which I had read did not address these differences in sufficient depth, they did not explore the relationship between the teenage learning experience and the practices of teachers and schools in the field of music fully enough and they did not include relationships in the context of these LEA and national policies.

I believed that these were significant omissions and embarked on the study reported here in the hope that my modest attempt to explore the triangular relationship between students, teachers and schools and to place them within the wider context of educational policy making, would in some small measure, raise issues which have not had the attention they deserve.

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **TEENAGE CREATIVITY**

The importance of popular music in the lives of the vast majority of teenagers is undeniable, but as much recent research into youth culture has shown, Frith (1984), Roe (1989, 1992), Willis (1990), nowadays, there is far more to rock'n'roll than records. Popular music, both actually and symbolically, is deeply embedded in the day-to-day experiences of adolescents, playing an important role in emotional and creative development as they progress from dependent child to independent adult. Although primarily located in leisure, for most teenagers, in some form or other, it pervades their lives, powerfully affecting and influencing relationships with friends and peer groups, spilling over into adult relationships at home and at school.

### **1.1 Arts in the curriculum:a justification**

The necessary place of the arts in the curriculum has been championed by various writers and philosophers who have endeavoured to stress the importance of educating feelings and emotions alongside the more utilitarian view of acquiring qualifications and fitting students to jobs. Harold Osborne sets the terms of the debate in the forward to 'Ways of Understanding and Education' by L.A. Reid. (Reid 1986, p.x).

'If we owe any duty at all to the future-and this after all is the whole meaning and implication of educating the young- then it is our duty to work for the continued progress of the race in sensibility, feeling and intelligence, rather than to look only for what is expected in the short term to be profitable in material benefit by giving preponderance to utilitarian and materialistic aims, man cramps his own mind and nature and proceeds backwards, undoing the advances he has made.'

This line of argument which Reid first advanced more than sixty years ago has sought to accord the arts equal importance, with the apparently more marketable and, therefore, more 'officially' valued subjects such as science, maths and technology. The later assertion by Ebbs et al, that the expressive arts of music, drama, dance, art, film and literature are rooted in a common aesthetic and educational process, attempts to give weight to the argument that these activities should be given more curriculum time than they have traditionally enjoyed in order to underwrite their claims to importance and equal recognition. They argue that to achieve this, the arts must have a strong curriculum rationale, which asks and answers crucial questions: 'How much making? How much presenting? How much responding? How much evaluating?' Only this, they claim will 'give us a coherent way of looking,' and provide 'the conceptual elements of a unified aesthetic.' (Ebbs et al, 1987, p.63).

This insistence on the need to work out a rigorous syllabus for the arts based around clear criteria of progression, evaluation and assessment, is as much a political claim as it is an educational one. Not only have the disparate histories of the arts often left them as isolated and, therefore, vulnerable activities in schools, but their further development in single or combined arts schemes has been seriously hampered by the introduction of the National Curriculum (NC) and the Local Management of Schools (LMS).

In the first instance, the National Curriculum has down-graded the arts by placing dance within PE, and drama within English which already plays host to literature. Film is mostly neglected at all phases other than Key Stage 4, covering the 14-18 age group, where it most often finds a place as a component in media studies packages, oriented to exploring its ideological,

rather than its aesthetic, significance. Only fine art and music have been recognised as foundation subjects for all students up to the end of Key Stage 3, covering the 11-14 age group, but their entitlement to time in the curriculum, often no more than an hour each week, will almost certainly remain unchanged. Further, fine art's survival as a discrete foundation subject is by no means secure in schools which still operate design/technology circuses, where NC art is 'covered' by all design team members. While such an organisation maintains a unified design department and its corresponding slice of curriculum time, the expressive qualities of art could be lost. A realignment with other areas of expressive arts teaching could also be severely impeded.

At the same time, the National Curriculum has given managers in schools the opportunity to resist pressure to invest resources in the arts under the constraints of LMF, and even to remove art as a separate entity from the curriculum altogether, should it be classed as a component of another foundation subject. Thus, it is quite possible, even highly likely, that the only expressive arts subject with a strong claim to exist independently within all school timetables, is music.

If music, by organisational default, becomes the sole representative of expressive arts in the curriculum, there is also a further, more important reason why it stands alone, and, thus far, no aesthetic or curriculum debate in arts education has fully grasped or understood this. If Harold Osborne set the terms for the debate, one has to ask, for whom was it set?

The unique role of music in the lives of teenagers both in and out of school was reflected in the recent National Curriculum music debate. This became a very hot-tempered discussion involving musicians as well as politicians and educators about what and whose musical values were to be taught in schools.

The meaning assigned to music and by whom, ultimately determines whether music is classed as 'high' art (so-called 'classical' music) or 'low' art (so-called 'pop' or 'mass-produced' music). It was inevitable, therefore, that the National Curriculum music debate would be acrimonious, as the right wing element of the government wished to establish a preferred set of musical values and meanings for teenagers in school, in order to mark a return to a mythical 'Golden Age' of education which embraced traditional values. This was made more urgent by the widely recognised view that youth



culture is firmly embedded in the commercially based, audio-visual pop media.

The debate on musical experience centres on the issue of whether it is inherently social and time-bound or whether it is capable of transcending its original context of production and reception and of existing independently in some symbolic form. The assumption that music could exist outside of social and historical experience dominated music in schools until the late 1960's. In this context, the three dimensions of school music, the pedagogic, analytical and expressive (the concept of these three dimensions will be elaborated on later), emphasised; the knowing, analysis, performance and importance of high art music, a knowledge of traditional notation and the development of instrumental skills. However, the explosive developments of popular music during the 1960's, especially after the spectacular success of the 'English' sound spearheaded by the Beatles, made 'low-art' music more and more difficult to ignore.

Keith Swanwick was one of the first music educationalists to address this issue. In his book 'Popular Music and the Teacher' (1968) he attempted to place 1960's pop in an historical context emphasising that there have been 'high' art and 'low' art musicians throughout history, and that commentators have attributed high emotions and formal structures to the former and lighter emotions and lesser talents to the latter. He considers that the meaning of music is essentially grounded in its formal structures and emotional appeal, and that all music which is to be considered 'art' should aim for a balance between these two components. Within this paradigm, however, he points out that there are many examples from both 'high' and 'low' art music where this balance is not achieved. Thus, he emphasises that:

'There is no reason why the two elements of feeling and form should not coexist, since they provide the polarity of the artist's work.'

(Swanwick, 1968, p.20)

Any piece of popular music therefore, could, after due analysis, take up its position along-side validated 'high' art music according to its merits. Having made the case for the relative importance of 'low' art music, Swanwick

analysed the musical derivation of the popular music of that time, and attempted to uncover the cultural significance it had for teenagers. He challenged the resistance to it proffered by many music teachers, and presented ways of introducing pop music into the curriculum in a meaningful way.

Debates about musical meaning were not, of course, new, although they had tended to be centred around issues which questioned the ability of music to convey genuine emotions. Stravinsky, for example, many years before Swanwick, declared that music was powerless to express anything at all. It was new, however, to challenge the assumptions that underpinned a curriculum dedicated to bringing a 'high' art music experience to all students in secondary schools. From Swanwick's intervention onwards, the meanings and values attributed to music in particular social contexts, mostly denied by those who created and implemented music in schools, but more and more supported by the findings of social science research into youth culture, were to challenge the established notion of meaning existing in a purely symbolic form.

At this point, it could also be said, that for the first time, the debate about music in schools actually met the everyday world. As Swanwick had noted, the view prevalent in the single person music department, where the teacher was the gatekeeper of all things musical (theoretical, practical and symbolic), was being consistently challenged by the emerging realities on the ground. In spite of this challenge, however, as he noted 20 years later, (Swanwick, 1988) students still voted music (along with religious education) as their least favourite subject. To compound the problem and further arrest reflective development, single-person music departments generally suffered from professional isolation, underfunding, and curriculum weakness due to a lack of clear progression within the learning situation, when compared with other subjects such as maths and science.

No-one has argued more forcefully than Swanwick for the need to create a theoretical frame that places feelings and emotions in the same relation to the arts, as logic and reason have traditionally enjoyed in relation to science. He proposes a psychological theory which connects musical experience and the growth of the mind.

He argues for the need to:

'reason out a positive view of the arts as part of the process of the development of mind and to expose the essential elements of musical apprehension and response, the heart of music-making and music-taking.'

(Swanwick, 1988, p.4).

Swanwick's psychological theory, based on an analysis of the compositions of children of different ages, (0-15+) sets out to show a spiral of musical development, linked to age. At the beginning of the spiral it is suggested that the early years, up to the age of four, are characterised by a fascination and experimentation with the elements of sound such as timbre and dynamics, and the acquisition of manipulative skills to organise these sounds, perhaps in the form of tremolo or glissandi. From four to nine, personal expression first appears, evident in the deliberate use of speed and volume. At the same time children enter the world of conventional music making, by using melodic phrases and standard bar units. Swanwick calls this the vernacular. From 10-15, with a secure use of the vernacular, the children enter the phase of the speculative where they explore musical structures and contrasting musical ideas, delighting in trying to find the 'right' note or using novel endings to recognisable musical conventions. Alongside this development, conventional forms and styles begin to emerge as they work in recognised idioms. Following these excursions into form and structure, the older students at 15 and beyond move into the terrain of the symbolic characterised by strong identification with particular pieces of music, an awareness of music's affective powers, the beginnings of musical reflectiveness, and a desire to convey these responses to others.

'The symbolic mode of musical experience is distinguished by the capacity to reflect on musical experience and relate it to growing self-awareness and rapidly evolving general value systems. It seems unlikely that these meta-cognitive musical processes will be found before the age of about 15 and it is possible that some people rarely, perhaps never, experience this elevated mode of musical response.'

(Swanwick, 1988, p.79.)

Developing at the same time as the symbolic mode, is the systematic level. This is characterised by an intellectual organisation and musical experience which enables reflective thinking and conceptual mapping (which could be musical, psychological, philosophical or historical). Compositions are also highly developed and are informed by research and the inclusion of more recent musical devices such as the whole tone scale or material generated by computer technology.

'In the systematic mode, the universe of musical discourse is expanded, reflected upon, discussed and celebrated with others.'

(Swanwick, 1988, p.80.)

Swanwick summarises his endeavours as an attempt to bring together his theory of music and musical development and his psychological research in order to 'integrate them into a comprehensive view of music' (ibid, p,83).

Equally important for music in school, he stresses the need to define the tasks and assessment procedures employed within the arts as he feels that one of the reasons why so many teenagers disengage from school music during their middle teens could be due to the fact that because it does not have the rigorous assessment and progression procedures applied in other curriculum areas like science and maths, students lack a sense of cumulative achievement. In addition, these shortcomings undermine efforts to argue the case for music to enjoy equality with other subjects in terms of curriculum time and resource.

Thus:

**'There must be declared criteria which, though they may evolve over time and constantly undergo revision, should be steady enough to limit arbitrary judgement. Understanding something of how we develop our capacity to make and respond to art can only illuminate teaching, infuse quality into curriculum practice and play a part in making assessment valid and reliable.'**

**(ibid, p.150)**

The basic components of the spiral of music development are located in two generic groups. On the one side, the sensory, personal, speculative and symbolic components deal with personal exploration and expression. On the other side, the manipulative, vernacular, idiomatic and systematic components stress the public domain, and influences of a social nature. Although Swanwick acknowledges the crucial link between the creative processes of music making and the influences of society, for him, the meaning of music and the arts ultimately floats free of its social and cultural anchors. He is adamant that aesthetic value is not culturally or socially defined. Through education, 'we look for the development of mind, for the aesthetic raising of consciousness' (ibid, p.101), and, thus, the ability to attenuate the links between music and cultural and social processes. Where music is culturally exclusive, he suggests:

**'The task of education is to reduce the power of cultural stereotypes through a lively exploration of musical procedures, phenomena which can be relatively independent of cultural ownership.'**

**(ibid, p.101)**

Swanwick's theory is the product of much experience of school music and the creative work of children of all ages supported by psychological research. He attempts to link the child's developments to their approach to composition and thus, place musical development within a natural progression which continues into adulthood. Moreover, this linked process is possible because of the nature of music itself. That is, it is a human need to find patterns in sound and to create form and order. We have the ability to take the 'foreground' from the 'background' in a piece of music, (perhaps a melody from its accompaniment) and distinguish between changes in musical elements, such as texture, dynamics and timbre. Thus, music as a cerebral activity, structured in an expressive way, defies cultural and social definition and, therefore, is free to be genuinely multi-cultural. Where 'meaning' may be unclear, education can help to develop a greater understanding and awareness of music as an emotional and expressive art form. We can, after a musical experience, feel 'more real, more vividly experienced, more highly integrated and structured than most of our existence.' (ibid, p.50).

Swanwick's paradigm has been enormously influential in schools, to the extent that it is now untenable for the serious music specialist to ignore the need to work out a coherent, progressive and reflective syllabus. However, his insistence that musical meaning is created primarily as a cerebral activity rather than as a result of the influence of social processes, presents a major problem for some sociologists of music and for teachers whose experiences on the ground contradict his argument.

Swanwick, not surprisingly, is critical of sociological perspectives in school music. He argues strongly against the work of Graham Vulliamy and John Shepherd, for example, and their view that musical significance is ultimately social. They argue that because the development of European music relies on notation, the analysis of music in schools has centred on forms which are notated, leaving out, for example, Afro-American music which contains 'dirty' notes or sung inflections as in the Blues. The classroom implications of this bias are two-fold. Firstly, it creates a strong hierarchy of value specifying what is acceptable or unacceptable in the curriculum and reinforcing the 'high art/low art' divide. Secondly, it excludes all but a few teenagers from creative music-making since they have to rely on notated music rather than, for example, improvisation over a 12 Bar Blues structure.

**'Extending the curriculum in a liberal fashion by allowing some kinds of popular music into the classroom represents no real advance if the music admitted is analysed and performed according to traditional criteria.'**

**(Vulliamy & Shepherd 1984, p.74).**

**Their argument is for classroom activity which is less high art orientated, and which acknowledges and investigates the social significance and cultural symbolism of music, especially that which belongs to youth.**

**The debate on musical meaning, however, is much wider and more fundamental than the question of whether or not 12 Bar Blues should find a place in the curriculum, (a structure which, in fact, Swanwick is quite prepared to see included). If the meaning of music is indeed free floating and, therefore, capable of transcending its social context, this would have immensely significant consequences for the way in which a music curriculum for secondary schools is organised. It would then be possible to devise a common curriculum for all secondary school students, with the aim that all would, to a lesser or greater degree, be successful in understanding and sharing its philosophy, content, and expressive qualities. All styles and cultures would be admissible and all students (in theory) could be taught to understand their significance. After all, according to Swanwick, it is one of the major functions of the secondary school music teacher to educate away, musical stereotypes. But this is not yet general practice. On the contrary, the music curriculum still operates to produce a withdrawal from musical activity in school during the teenage years, and in many instances, this is a process which is characterised by outright hostility. Part of this is an estrangement from and a rejection of the 'high'-art musical canon.**

**Western high-art music, in its infancy during the Renaissance, operated along two dimensions: firstly, through patronage, where it lauded the authority and power of the few, and secondly through ritual and religion, where it fostered popular conformity and order. However, ordinary people, with the passage of time and the decline in their daily lives of monarchic and religious significance, turned their ears and gaze away from established forms.**

Since the second world war, the marginalisation of high-art music has increased significantly, as developments in the mass media have enabled the majority of people to be consumers and creators of cultural activities and events which reflect more accurately their interests and tastes. In spite of this everyday reality, the legitimacy of high-art music is extraordinary. One of the most tangible indicators of its continuing authority within the daily lives of ordinary people, is the parental desire for their children to be involved in the skills of instrumental tuition and performance. Many music teachers will have seen the wistful gaze of parents at parents' evening hoping that their children would take advantage of the opportunities that they themselves, had either declined or failed to pursue.

The goal of many parents who propel their children into the world of instrumental playing, with its progressive development and accreditation through public examination, is that they may one day become proficient if not expert in instrumental performance. In reality, very few children will meet the opportunity costs of practising for many hours each week over years, a discipline which is necessary even to develop sufficient skills to play at a basic level. Among those that do, few continue to play beyond the age of 16, as other leisure or work activities crowd in on their time. Moreover, as the music does not 'speak' to them due to its 'high' art orientation, there is no great incentive to develop the necessary skills to perform 'redundant' music when there are far more pleasurable activities beckoning among the high-tech, multi-media vision and sound opportunities of the late twentieth century.

For those who remain committed to their instrumental dream, the intense professionalisation that has taken place in the high-art music world especially in the last thirty years, has opened up a huge gap between the amateur and professional musician, particularly in terms of technique. As Christopher Small quite rightly says:

'A great and widening gulf stretches between the amateur and the professional and by the time a child reaches adolescence, at the latest, it is usually clear (though not always, alas, to the child or his fond parents) on which side of the gulf he is to spend his life.

(Small, 1977, p.163).



There is a further consequence of this intense professionalisation for the amateur player, as Small notes:

'It is no wonder that the average amateur performer is unwilling to appear in public, knowing that whatever can do has been done before, with infinitely more expertise, by professionals.'

(ibid, p.163).

It is not only in performance that the rigorous requirements of expertise 'excludes. The composition of high-art music has always been the province of those who are highly musically literate. For most, therefore, access to possibilities for creative production are permanently unavailable. In broader terms, Small concludes that:

'Art remains a commodity whose production remains in the hands of experts, which we purchase when we feel the need of it, and in whose making we have no more hand than we have in the manufacture of our breakfast cereal.'

(ibid, p.166).

For some people, of course, there is the desire to actively be engaged in music. As Swanwick quite rightly points out, the arts should enable expressivity either in its performance or creation. However, the limited access to the high art tradition can only encompass the performance of the works of others, and most often in the safety of a group situation. So small in number are those who are actively involved in high art, it is an inescapable truth that either the majority of people do not express themselves at all through the established arts or they turn to some other creative activity for self realisation.

The progression implicit in Swanwick's spiral of musical development, therefore, is patently unrealistic when placed in the context of the obvious divisions between experts and amateurs and producers and consumers. Although his analysis of children's composition pointed to certain

age-related developments, it is hard to see how the evidence he gathered from his sample can support the construction of a music curriculum for all students in schools. It does not take into account, for example, key cultural changes, one of which is the active media encouragement of popular music for pre-teen children and the fact that today's child of 11, could be a pop music veteran. Given Swanwick's belief that music making and music taking is ultimately a cerebral activity, an intellectual pursuit shared in but unsullied by social contexts, his prescriptions have little connection with the everyday experience of most students, who bring to classroom music, the sum of their musical and social experiences, which cannot be ignored or educated away. After all, this sum is part of life's progression which is far more powerful than an elemental progression in music alone.

In this present study, the most powerful factor shaping musical choice was gender, a finding which has much support in current sociological studies related to youth culture. Swanwick's model does not address this issue neither does it allow for the concept of taste cultures, (people who are grouped by their musical preferences, such as Heavy Rock addicts, Country and Western buffs or Brass Band Players). Musical meaning in these instances, are clearly derived from its social, not intellectual, contexts.

Ruth Finnegan in her studies of amateur music making in Milton Keynes, identified many taste groups which she refers to as musical worlds. In the musical world of brass band playing, for example, she highlighted the importance of gender, noting how the tradition's own particular history had made it an all male activity. In recent years, however, due to social changes, notably the demise of the traditional links between bands and local industry sponsors who employed only men, and education, the growth of brass tuition for girls in schools, the bands have become less gender defined and currently include members of both sexes.

In all of the musical worlds she explored, whether it was the world of brass bands, stage musicals, classical concerts, jazz or rock, she showed how each had its own conventions and practices such as whether the audience talked, sat, drank or danced, and support networks of parents friends children and sponsors who kept their particular world in existence. Meaning for all those involved was framed by a specific social context, and whether they were performers, writers or supporters, being 'close' to the

music and the event, made it for them, a form of 'musical enactment and self-realisation'. (Finnegan, 1989, p.155).

In contrast to the professionalised and relatively exclusive world of 'high'-art music with its clearly defined consumer-producer practices, Finnegan draws attention to the world of popular music and its close association with the sounds of the electric guitar and drums. It is quite usual for the players of these instruments to be self-taught, and even when tutored, players in pop or rock groups, playing relatively undemanding material, are not required to follow the rigorous training of classical instrument players. This flexibility allows, in a very short time, access to 'musical enactment and self-realisation', by playing, performing or recording. Finnegan found it very difficult to keep a check on the number of bands active during her research, due to the ephemeral nature of the pop world as bands split up and new ones formed. As she emphasises, 'the most prominent, single characteristic of the pre-occupations of rock players' (ibid, p.129) was the desire to express their own views and personalities through their music. With such a stress on self-tuition (particularly the rock as opposed to pop groups) and composing their own material, their involvement in music making also contributed to social as well as musical identities.

'In contrast to the hierarchies and insecurities of school, work or the social services, playing in a band provided a medium where players could express their own personal aesthetic vision and through their music achieve a sense of controlling their own values, destiny and self-identity.

(ibid, p.130).

The strength of Swanwick's model also signals a danger. His work enjoyed great power and influence framing and underpinning the current National Curriculum for Music. Notwithstanding the conceptual concerns outlined already, it is questionable as to whether his model of progression is practicable as it does not sufficiently take into account the nature of learning within the context of a single weekly lesson. For most students, there is no reinforcement either in or out of school. This is the reality for almost all children in secondary schools in the UK.

The model also assumes even and equal development for all. Thus, within certain age bands, children should reflect general levels of musical development, and where issues relating to social processes interfere, it is incumbent on the teacher to find strategies to mitigate their influence. As many music teachers will testify, the socially derived attitudes and values of a child will, to a great extent, shape their development. So, if universal musical progression is, for social, psychological and institutional reasons is, unobtainable for all, perhaps the nub of the debate is more truthfully centred in finding ways to present children with a series of meaningful, musical experiences rather than a cumulative model of musical learning. In this context, the greatest challenge for teachers would be to develop a curriculum which clearly shows how a child's personal, musical expressivity can be significant and relevant in life after school.

In spite of the richness that Ruth Finnegan found in amateur music making in Milton Keynes, she had to concede that the majority of people were not and are not actively involved. For most people, therefore, expressivity must come from some other source. The directness of popular music and the easy access to the opportunities for pleasure it offers in many of the areas which contribute towards our multi-faceted popular culture, makes it a prime expressive resource.

This highlights another very important and crucial issue. As this present study shows, music, for most young people, receded in importance during their teenage years. Perhaps this is an indicator of the correct place of music in the lives of us all. It has its place, but it does not pervade all of the things that we do and, therefore, is only part of our crowded and often congested lives away from work. If this is the case, then the values and attitudes which currently underpin the National Curriculum for Music are seriously out of step with this grounded experience.

## **1.2 Grounding aesthetics**

Grounding art activity in the lived experiences of young people is a radical departure from current curriculum thinking and development. It challenges head-on Swanwick's spiral of musical development since it acknowledges that musical meaning is derived primarily from its social context. In addition, it challenges his belief in a progressive development of abstract musical thinking which ultimately leads to the true meaning of music.

Paul Willis takes up this challenge. He believes passionately that art and all that it embraces should come out of everyday youth activity, living and fresh. He considers that traditional art aesthetics have been 'hijacked' by the 'high art' lobby, and placed in a museum or concert hall where the minority public can only go to view or listen. He suggests the debate should begin:

'from where young people are rather than from where traditional arts or youth policies think they ought to be.'

(Shepherd 1990, p.9)

He then sets his agenda for discussion:

'Not exclusively, 'how can we bring 'the arts' to youth?' but 'in what ways are the young already in some sense the artist of their own lives?'

'Not exclusively, 'why is their culture not like ours?' but, 'what are their cultures like?'

'Not 'how can we inspire the young with Art?' but 'how are the young already culturally energised in ways which we can re-inforce?'

(ibid, p.9)

He endeavours to answer these questions with his notion of 'Grounded Aesthetics'. This is a sensibility rooted in the cultural activity happening daily within the mundane existence of ordinary young people, who constantly create and re-create a shared aesthetic. It belongs to them, full of living significance and symbolism.

Some teenagers actively re-create culture, like the rapper who winds a record backwards on the turntable with stylus in situ, in order to create a rhythmic dialogue with the beat of the music on another record. In this sense, a common cultural artifact used in a different way generates an active process rather than passive activity and thus, becomes part of cultural re-creation. He shares the composer's space rather than the consumer's chair. It is true, however, that most teenagers need to take the style and symbolic values associated with popular music into a youth culture which is seen to be different from the culture of their parents and teachers.

Both Willis and Finnegan identify the ease with which popular music can be molded by relatively unskilled and untutored teenagers into creative and symbolic statements of their own making. In this sense they share a common culture within which they are able to find room for self-expression, 'musical enactment and self realisation'.

This focus by Willis on where young people find themselves in a cultural and artistic sense is relevant and refreshing, and the views that he puts forward further the curriculum debate because they provide a different basis on which to interpret musical meaning.

### **1.3 The present research as a case study**

The research reported in this thesis is primarily a case study of how schools manage adolescent creativity. Because emotions and expressivity are closely identified with both pop music and culture, and with the arts in education, the school is necessarily an important meeting point between the various emotional and expressive worlds of adolescence.

The need to manage the boundary between vernacular knowledge and experience and curriculum knowledge, that is, what teenagers know from their outside school experience and what the school decides they should know, often challenges the positive potential of this meeting. It highlights a general dilemma within the school curriculum.

Although the arts in school are assigned a key role in the management of adolescent creativity, teachers of music, drama and dance, regularly feel the need to justify their co-existence with other curriculum areas due to the fact that creativity is associated with emotion and intuition, and the academic with the rational and analytic. This opposition may be false, but it is deeply embedded within the school system and prompts a continual search for philosophical justification (the rationale behind Arts in the curriculum) and of practical claims (how much time and resource it should be given).

### **1.4 Three dimensions of school music**

It is useful to think of school music as a development along three dimensions; pedagogic, analytic and expressive. The pedagogic dimension emphasises the acquisition of musical knowledge, literacy and instrument skills. The analytic dimension encompasses the various ways of deconstructing music through components like form, texture, timbre, dynamics, rhythm, melody, harmony, and different types of notational systems (such as graphic or traditional). The expressive dimension embraces the composition and performance of both classroom generated pieces and the performance of the works of others. All three dimensions can include music from the western tradition and from other countries and cultures.

This three-dimensional approach helps to place the various influential theorists and their ideas into a coherent frame, and to clarify the way in which the justification for the inclusion of music as part of the school curriculum shifts emphasis according to changes in each or all of the three dimensions. None are mutually exclusive, and schools of thought and styles of approach could appear in more than one dimension. For example, a practical lesson in a modern music curriculum would almost certainly be based in composition which uses the voice or instruments or both. On the other hand, 30 years ago, a practical lesson would probably have been exclusively, a singing lesson. Similarly, musical analysis is a common feature in most classrooms, although class-based composition today is more likely to be the centre of analysis rather than a work by Beethoven or Debussy. Another difference, here, might be that the latter could entail the skills of traditional notation, while the former almost certainly, would not.

All music teachers, at some time or other, operate in all three dimensions. The key components which lead to widely differing approaches between teachers in the classroom, are the content of a particular curriculum and the values which the teacher brings to it. Often, the teacher is not alone in deciding a particular set of values within a specific curriculum content. The ethos of the school or a societal view as promoted by the ideology of Central Government can help to frame the relationships between the three dimensions, that is, the content and approach to teaching within them, and the relative values placed on each.

Music survived in the curriculum because, paradoxically, it was perceived as an academic, not a practical subject. Music in schools was primarily geared to train the erudite few students to take the old-style 'O'-level G.C.E. at 16 years of age. The major features of the numerous examination syllabi were an emphasis on musical notation, formal analysis and knowledge of the works, history and development of western composers and their traditions, and the ability to play a classical instrument (piano, violin, clarinet, etc.) at about Grade 5 practical standard of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. The vast majority of students, who would never take the examination, were subjected to a diluted version of such courses where the only practical option in the classroom, in the absence of the necessary skills and training to play a 'proper' instrument, was singing.



Since the late 1960's and the influential work of George Self and later, Paynter and Aston and the 'York School', activity in the analytic dimension has considerably shifted in emphasis, away from the western classical tradition and the use of formal notation. Focusing on the students, they encouraged them to use their own creative and compositional works as a starting point for analysis. Notation was seen as primarily a way of recording in order to be able to recreate a composition at a later date. Thus, both drawings and electronic recordings were acceptable ways of achieving this end. Similarly, shapes and drawings could be the basis of a compositional activity, and, therefore, in skill terms, each could feed the other.

Working in this way considerably changed the approach to teaching music in the classroom. Music as a whole class endeavour gave way to music as a small group activity, and this, in turn, changed the notion of what constituted a proper physical environment for music in schools. In new buildings and in alterations to existing schools, out went the large classroom and in came the warren of small group rooms.

A further effect of the changes taking place at this time, was the inevitable increase in activity in the expressive dimension. The English innovators worked with ideas which had been pioneered by Zoltan Kodaly and Carl Orff, particularly the use of the percussion instruments introduced by the latter. Self-expression through making music was considered to be far more important than passively imbibing the perceived greatness of a long dead composer. Listening, the 'Music Appreciation' lesson, if not discarded, was rearticulated as an activity which demonstrated a specific musical component.

The inherent, untouchable value system clearly identified with the pedagogic dimension, was seriously dented by the changes in the other two. Damage was inflicted by the inclusion in both the expressive and analytic dimensions, of listening and exploring music from other countries and cultures, and working with different subject disciplines in integrated projects.

Although the changes that took place radically altered the teaching of music in schools and provided a breath of fresh air for all the students experiencing the compulsory music lesson, ways of analysing, the listening activities and the structures of the compositions were directly linked to the old western classical tradition. 'High' art remained, essentially intact. However,

popular culture and its music, particularly after the 'Beatles' and the English sounds of the 1960's, was increasingly difficult to ignore.

Within the expressive dimension, some teachers were integrating pop music compositional techniques into the classroom, not as a 'sop', by giving the students 'a bit of what they want', but as a genuine alternative to the existing value systems embedded in 'high' art music. These teachers brought into the classroom Afro-American compositional styles with all their sliding 'blues' notes and instrumentation. Similarly, in the analytic dimension, they discarded old methods of analysis, often linked to formal notation, and used instead, elaborate recording equipment as a basis for creating form and content.

Sociological research was also beginning to show the links between certain attitudes and types of behaviour, and elements of popular culture and music. As a result, some teachers began to seriously discuss in the pedagogic dimension, not just pop music, but all music in a social context. They questioned its primary existence as a cerebral art form which could transcend cultural barriers and highlighted the fact that musical values are socially defined. This fundamentally challenged, firstly, the accepted correctness of music existing as either a 'high' or 'low' art form, and secondly, the beliefs and values of the historic, pedagogic dimension.

### **1.5 Teachers and schools: their relationship to the Arts debate**

The boundaries the school places around vernacular knowledge and experience, that is, in the case of music, how much of the students pop culture is engaged with the music curriculum, will be heavily influenced by the relationship of the music teacher to the foregoing arts debate. The wider school context, of course, also has a huge bearing on how and to what extent the teenage cultural experiences are embraced within the broader curriculum. Practical considerations limit most arts policies, as 'feelings and emotions' give way to 'logic and reason' in terms of time in the curriculum, accommodation, staffing, and the pressure to opt for more 'worthwhile', 'essential' and easily traded qualifications in the market-place, post school.

This can have a considerable impact on how the school deals with some of the symbolic aspects of pop culture which relate to the expressivism

of youth, such as notions of sexuality, personal relationships and attitudes to consumerism and money matters in general. With international concern over the global spread of AIDS, and Britain having one of the highest incidents of teenage pregnancies in Europe, and currently experiencing the longest recession in 60 years, one feels a great sense of urgency in order to bring, in the words of Louis Arnaud Reid, 'an holistic approach to knowledge and understanding of many things and many kinds' (p.16).

## **1.6 Complex choices: the teachers' dilemma**

The complexity of the issues relating to Arts teaching, for most music teachers at some time or another, raises the dilemma of choices. Inevitably, the position held by the music teacher within the arts debate will generate a particular type of curriculum philosophy and content. It would be unlikely to remain static, but change would be underpinned by a strong set of personal beliefs and principles which give a natural sense of development and continuity over time. However, the terms of this general dilemma have been substantially changed by recent events in the external environment within which music teachers work.

Since the adult-teenage split in pop music preferences following the success of rock'n'roll with the youth of the mid-1950's, what was almost exclusively an adolescent teenage culture has now moved down the age scale to include children and up the age scale to include adults who grew up with previous waves of rock and pop. Thus, teenage culture is caught between child and adult musical cultures, sharing some elements of popular musical culture but not others. As an indicator of similarity, all pop audiences are encoded with the Afro-American beat, Top 10 charts, pop videos and the overlap into other media like advertising and TV programmes. Equally, age, sex and personal income are strong indicators of difference in terms of what pop music or style is preferred by what group, when and in what circumstances. The use of pop as a means of creating cultural identity and space is now, a very complex activity.

Inevitably, it also creates a complex generational effect in which teachers share some elements of popular musical culture with their students but not others. This can be a problem for teachers who may have to live out two cultural identities, one 'high art' in school and one 'pop art' out of school. Even with the belief in 'one culture only' it is often very difficult for the teacher to merge their view of popular culture with that of their students, or for that matter, with the view of the school.

## **1.7 Pop culture as a visual culture**

Another way in which the external environment has changed, particularly during the 1980's, has been the increasing convergence of musical and visual cultures as a result of rock and pop videos. It is the rare pop single released without a video, and therefore, in the eyes of the teenager, the music is always 'seen'. This greatly changes the function and meaning of the pop package and has implications not only in the music room, but in the wider context of the school. For instance, is the engagement with a style of music more to do with its symbolic value than with its sound? (that is, the greater importance of the performance, the message and the meaning, perhaps in terms of how students talk to teachers, dress in school or display sexuality).

Fundamentally, the answer to the question of how important pop music is to teenagers, its function, meaning and value, could challenge the whole notion of what the role of aesthetics education in school is all about. How tenable would Keith Swanwick's view of the arts in education be, if the cerebral nature of music to the majority of teenagers was shown to be a myth created and perpetuated by geriatric romantics?

## **1.8 Teenage leisure activities: the challenge to pop consumption**

A further challenge to the importance of popular music in the lives of today's teenagers, is apparent when one explores in detail, their leisure activities. If leisure time is defined as non-school time, then all teenagers are faced with obligations (homework, house-hold chores) and choices of leisure

activities (clubs, games playing, pop-related involvements like records, video and TV) all of which take place within the framework of a fairly inelastic time-budget, before and after school. Seen in this somewhat overcrowded context, the complexity of many teenagers' lives would suggest that the common belief that pop music is the mainstay of their actual and symbolic leisure world, is misplaced.

## **1.9 New technologies: the impact on school music**

Another major change to have taken place during the 1980's was the advent of new technologies of musical production; computers, sequencers, samplers, electronic keyboards, and drum machines. It would be the rare school, as it entered the 1990's, that did not possess some of these technologies, and many have enough for classroom activity (it is common to have fourteen keyboards, one between two students, for example). These innovations radically change the terms on which teenagers can participate as makers of music as well as listeners. At G.C.S.E.level, the use of new technology is extremely desirable as students are able to record on sequencers or tape recorders, computer-based compositions. In theory, it should have helped to open up music at examination level to more than just the 'elite' few who were familiar with musical notation and had some training in the skills of classical instrument playing.

### **1.9.1 National Curriculum: Implications for change**

Of all the changes that took place during the last decade however, perhaps the one with the potential for the greatest upset was the emergence of the National Curriculum and its implications for the philosophy of music in schools, and for classroom practice, methodology and content. In Leicestershire, from the mid-1980's, there had been a recognition of the isolation experienced by many musicians in schools. Many of them were working in single-teacher departments and believed they practised in below-average accommodation. They were underfunded both financially and in terms of time in the curriculum, and laboured under great expectations as the

impresarios of one of the important school show cases in the form of extra-curricula concerts and productions.

Merging all or some of these components with the arts debate in general, many music teachers had the opportunity through LEA based INSET, (In-service Education and Training) to share feelings and concerns about these issues with colleagues from all over the County. For many teachers, it was the first time this had been possible with so many other teachers of the same subject. The sharing of ideas and philosophy that took place subsequently, was almost immediately overshadowed by fears surrounding the impact of a National Curriculum for music. In common with many other subjects, most 'information' came through the media, and as the Music Curriculum was one of the last to be implemented in 1992, any benefits and progress both personally and professionally experienced by music teachers as result of the joint activities in the latter part of the 1980's, were systematically undermined.

Considering its minimal weight in the timetable, school music had the dubious privilege of national media attention, as various politicians came forward with anecdotal evidence of what should be taught to whom and when. Music teachers, many of whom had wrestled long and hard with the whole question of a 'relevant' curriculum, saw the possibility of the curriculum for music being decided not by debates related to Swanwick, Vulliamy, Willis et al, but by the desire to have, for example, choral singing as a mainstay of the curriculum because it was considered to be a 'good thing' by the then Secretary of State for Education.

Music shared the spot light of national attention for similar reasons as history and English. All three subjects can be interpreted from a variety of ideological positions. In the case of music, it was a struggle over the reimposition of a particular notion of tradition and of the classical. It was indeed ironic, that as music teachers were beginning to debate the future of school music, its philosophy and identity in a systematic and coherent fashion, that Central Government almost immediately set about fragmenting this process in its desire to impose its own brand of future, philosophy and identity in a thoroughly unsystematic and incoherent fashion.

**An indepth study of popular music, then, is indeed, an indepth study of the creative processes of the teenage years, and the implications for those related to it. The following chapters will attempt to shed light on this multi-faceted process, beginning with a detailed look at the many aspects which constitute teenage leisure.**

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **TEENAGE CULTURES**

#### **2.1 The arrival of the 'teenager'**

**'It's tough being a teenager. They tell me I never listen, I'm scruffy and my room's a mess. I'm always being told to grow up, but I'm big enough to look after my sister when they go out!'**

**(Sarah, age 14).**

Simon Frith describes the youth process as a movement from 'dependency' to 'responsibility', (Frith, 1984) but the uneven power relationships of adolescents to the institutions that represent 'responsibility' (family, school, and the world of work), ensures a far from smooth transition. Young people develop physically, mentally and emotionally at different rates, but responsibilities are often governed by social norms which do not take this into account. They cannot, for example, have a legal sexual relationship until they are sixteen, or drive a car until they are seventeen. A teenager of fourteen is dependent on the family for shelter and finance, yet will be expected to be 'fully adult' when left in charge of younger brothers or sisters.



As James Lull puts it, drawing on a long established image of youth as a period of 'storm and stress':

'But adolescence signals a time in the life of young people when dramatic changes take place. Not only does the body reach a stage of sexual maturity, but mental orientations and lifestyle activities begin to change too. Adolescence, for many young people, is a time of turmoil and resistance.'

(Lull, 1987, p.152)

The teenage years, then, often represent, at best, a period of negotiation for personal desires, activities and needs, from a position of weakness, or acceptance of delegated responsibility, the terms of which are decided by adults. The uncertainty of adolescence years can be compounded by the often paradoxical attitudes of adults. They celebrate youth as a time for idealism and freedom, yet condemn it as a period of irresponsibility and selfishness.

The concept of the 'teenager' is a relatively new phenomenon. It emerged during the 1940's and gained currency during the industrial and commercial expansion of the 1950's. It articulated the new role of adolescents, as the vanguard of the new leisure society of mass consumption and mass entertainment. Prior to the 1950's, youth culture was synonymous with the strong peer group identity of young, working-class males which was linked in turn to notions of rebellion and delinquency. It was a culture of 'hanging' around the streets in gangs and drifting into trouble. A distinction was drawn, however, between working-class youth, which was seen as playing out its hedonism in the commercialised world of leisure before settling down to a conventional life style of organised work patterns, and middle-class youth which adhered to the official norm of 'deferred gratification' and pursued the socially approved route of engagement with school, and the possibilities of a college or university career.

James Coleman , in his seminal American research of the early 1950's, 'The Adolescent Society' (1961), argued that teenagers constituted a new and distinctive culture of youth:

" 'cut-off' from the rest of society , forced inward toward his own age group, made to carry out his whole social life with others his own age. With his fellows, he comes to constitute a small society, one that has most of its important interactions within itself, and maintains only a few threads of connections with outside adult society. In our modern world of mass communication and diffusion of ideas and knowledge, it is hard to realise that separate sub-cultures can exist right under the very noses of adults - sub-cultures with languages all their own, with special symbols, and, most importantly, with value systems that may differ from adults."

(Coleman, 1961, p.3)

While acknowledging the unique place of the high school as an institution that separated youth culture from the adult world, Coleman also recognised the importance of the new rock and roll music:

'As if it were not enough that such an institution as today's high school exists segregated from the rest of society, there are other things that reinforce this separateness. For example, adolescents have become an important market, and special kinds of entertainment cater almost exclusively to them. Popular music is the most important.'

(ibid, p.4)

Musically, the advent of rock and roll proved to be a turning-point due to changes in two key areas. Firstly, pop instruments which were primarily acoustic, began to give way to, and by the end of the decade, were superseded by, amplified lead, rhythm, and bass guitars. Only the drums survived in their acoustic form. In addition to the radical change in the sound of the music, many more young people began to play these instruments as

the skills could be self-taught and were not conditional upon the ability to read formal notation. These changes heralded the beginning of a distinctive pop music sound for the young.

The second key area of change, was the breaking of the virtual monopoly of Tin Pan Alley as the chief supplier of pop music songs, as more and more of the new generation of young pop music players began to write songs with words and meaning aimed directly at young people. The emergence of rock and roll and the international success of Elvis Presley by 1956, encapsulated the changes and cemented for ever a split in popular music. Whatever the pop music 'establishment' perceived as 'pop', from here on, part of that sound would have to be directly connected to youth. In popular music terms, the generation gap was born.

Rock and roll gave teenagers the opportunity to express not only their separation from adult culture, but perhaps more importantly, their antagonism to its values. The degree of opposition, however, depended on the style and significance of particular rock and roll stars. Coleman's research, for example, showed that while 43% boys and 45% girls in the high schools he surveyed preferred Pat Boone (a very 'clean-cut, all-American' rock 'n' roller) 21% boys and 17% girls preferred Elvis Presley (whose stage performance was synonymous with blatant sexuality and anti-establishment behaviour). Coleman, however, ignored the possible class basis of rock and roll preferences, and labelled the Presley fans who were largely working class, as the 'rough crowd'. Some of the girls from one of the high schools which contributed data to his study (Coleman, 1961, p.205) were thus, categorised.

"These cliques constitute, in varying degrees, the 'rough crowd.' Their black 'rock and roll' jackets are a symbol in this school of orientation to a good time, cars, music, the skating rink, and unconcern with school.

When the choice is forced between friends and parents, or friends and school, these groups are all oriented to friends. Almost all smoke or drink, or do both. Their favourite singer is Elvis Presley, while that of most of the adolescent culture is Pat Boone, who dispenses rock and roll without the implicit deviance and rebellion in Presley's image. In short, these girls are extremely hedonistic, antischool, and rebellious."

In common with Coleman, most American researchers played down the importance of class divisions within 'youth culture', believing that by the end of the 1950's, distinctions between working and middle class American youth had become blurred by the central role of the high school as the meeting point for all youth. The media, most notably television and Hollywood, played an important role in cementing this ideological frame as they attempted to idealise the 'good' aspects of youth culture, (playing football for the school team, and dancing at the High School Hop) and marginalise the 'street' cultures of the gangs and the strong connotations of delinquency to 'hanging around'. American research, therefore, focused on 'the ways in which adolescent behaviour was a response to specific problems posed at home and school and work.' ( Frith, 1984, p.12).

The concept of the 'teenager' came relatively late to Britain, as post-war austerity lingered into the mid-1950's, and eventually gave way to a new era of relative affluence and full employment. A very visible feature of British youth cultural development has been the emergence of spectacular working-class sub-cultures like the Teds, who were clearly associated with juvenile delinquency and 'senseless' acts of violence which represented the bitter fruits of the 'affluent society', as the country attempted to find answers for the real rise in juvenile crime during the decade. Paradoxically, though, Teddy Boys had their origins in the slum neighbourhoods of the working-class districts of south and east London. They were the direct heirs of the Victorian 'Hooligans'.

"The Teds took their name from the 'Edwardian' dress-style which had originally been promoted for fashion-conscious city gents who wished to cut an affluent fifties dash. When, in a remarkable act of cultural smash-and-grab, working class youths adopted the long drapo jackets as their own uniform - to which they added embellishments such as greased duck-tail haircuts, thick-soled 'brothel creoper' shoes, slim-jim ties and narrow drain-pipe trousers - no self-respecting gentleman was going to adorn himself in what had now become a vulgar 'Ted suit'."

(Pearson, 1983, p.18)

The style of the Teds preceded the 1950's as they had also raided 1940's fashions ('Boston slash-back' hairstyles and 'zoot-suits') and dances (the 'jive' and the 'jitterbug'). When viewed as part of an earlier working-class youth tradition of street fighting and gang life, The Teds sub-culture is more clearly identifiable with Coleman's notion of the 'rough' cultures of the working class street. However, initially, it was the Teds flamboyant fashion and style which gained them popular press attention, rather than the antisocial, delinquent behaviour, which the media generously (and probably quite correctly) attributed to the few. However, societal attitudes towards the Teds changed dramatically with the arrival of rock and roll, particularly the music of Bill Haley and the Comets.

In 1955, their now legendary song, *Rock Around the Clock*' was used as the accompaniment to *Blackboard Jungle*', a film which dealt with delinquent teenagers in a New York High School, and placed the seed of a connection between rock and roll, youth, and juvenile delinquency, in the minds of ordinary people.

"In Great Britain the initial screening of Haley's own film *Rock Around the Clock* in September 1956 were accompanied by the first 'rock 'n' roll riots': the young predominantly working-class audience attempt to dance, thus bringing about the intervention of management, police and 'bouncers', who had been specially brought in anticipation of trouble, and in the general fracas which followed cinema fittings would be damaged or deliberately vandalised, and bodily injuries incurred. After a while the violence and vandalism associated with live performances of *Rock Around the Clock* - and later with live performances by the 'classic' rock 'n' roll performers - took on the form of a self-fulfilling prophecy and became almost ritual in nature."

(Davis, 1990, p.161)

The Teds, therefore, were perceived as the 'new' hooligans, prototypical of the dangers of the new rock and roll culture of teenagordom. Moreover, the moral panic which surrounded the sub-cultural activity of the Teds was symptomatic of a general feeling that the British way of life was

under attack from the negative aspects of American popular culture and societal values which were seen to be 'morally inferior to the older (British) working-class traditions' (Pearson, 1983, p.19).

Early British empirical research into youth culture, however, centred around the consumption patterns of the young. As a result of the post-war economic boom, by the late 1950's, average teenage earnings had risen in real terms by more than 50% from their pre-war levels (Abrams, 1959) and commercial interests were actively (and successfully) exploiting this new youth market. Mark Abram's two market research reports, *The Teenage Consumer* (1959) and *Teenage Consumer Spending in 1959* (1961) identified a teenage consumer group which had considerable disposable income to spend on leisure-related activities. The evidence of their buying into a leisure world which included interest in rock and roll, fashion clothes, hairstyles, films, magazines and motorbikes, revealed a new consumer culture distinctly different from that of their parents. Abrams found that teenagers spent nearly 20% of their disposable income on clothing and footwear, 17% on drinks and tobacco, 15% on sweets and soft drinks, in cafes and restaurants, and much of the remainder on pop media related activities such as records, record players, magazines, cinema and dance hall. He also estimated that as a percentage of all consumer spending, teenagers were responsible for 37.1% in bicycle and motorcycle related spending, 42.5% for records and record players, 29.3% for cosmetics and toilet preparations, 28.2% for cinema admissions and 30.5% for 'other entertainments'. (Abrams, 1961, p.4, table 1).

'By and large then, one can generalise by saying that the quite large amount of money at the disposal of Britain's average teenager is spent mainly on dress and on goods which form the nexus of teenage gregariousness outside of the home. In other words this is distinctive teenage spending for distinctive teenage ends in a distinctive teenage world.'

(Abrams, 1961, p.5)

Abrams research did however, reveal that this 'youth culture' was not homogenous and it pointed to important differences by both class and gender. His statistics showed that male teenagers, on average, had more disposable income than females, that middle-class girls were better off than working-class girls, and that while both middle-class boys and girls were about equal in terms of disposable income, working-class boys had considerably more to spend than working-class girls. Moreover, working-class males were the best-off group of all. Historically, therefore, this group has established the dominant aesthetic for the teenage consumer market, but as Davis points out, unfortunately:

'There are no easily comparable statistics for the present, or indeed for any time since the original survey, but the situation in terms of breakdown by class and sex probably remains much the same.'

(Davis, 1990, p.17)

## **2.2 Theorising resistance: the romance of sub-cultures**

Early survey research exposed how 'ordinary' and 'respectable' young people (from school-leaving age up to the age of 25 or marriage) spent their time and money. It challenged the notion that a youth culture dominated by the values of working-class males, was essentially delinquent as it was obvious that even among this group not all were Teddy Boys, who, themselves, were often erroneously associated with delinquent behaviour. There was a concern, however, that perhaps 'ordinary' youth could be drawn into delinquency via teenage culture. If, for example, the majority of teenagers share similar interests and activities, do they also share similar values and if so, what are those values and what do they mean, especially in relation to the attitudes and values of the adult world? Is it simply a generational effect?

Both Abrams and Coleman had shown that youth cultural activity is affected by the cross-cutting influences of class, income and gender, and so the view of youth culture as an homogeneous block of consumers, or the notion of massification, were seriously misplaced. Moreover, massification theory, and the belief a 'classless' teenage society could not explain the

existence of middle-class student counter-culture, and the proliferating working class sub-cultures of groups like the Mods, Rockers and Skinheads, during the late 1960's, or the meanings of their attitudes and values within the context of their pop media involvement.

By the end of the 1960's British sub-cultural theory began to respond to some of these issues as researchers concentrated on discovering the meanings and values of the working-class youth sub-cultures whose very existence they believed to be a way of negotiating some of the contradictions in the social situations facing particular groups of teenagers. Certainly, one of the key issues for researchers in education during the 1960's was the rate of working-class failure in terms of grammar school entry and in G.C.E. examinations. For British sociologists, therefore, research into youth sub-cultures became a class issue, as they believed that class was the basis of sub-cultural membership.

In 'Resistance Through Rituals', the classic study of youth sub-cultures published in the mid-1970's, the introduction states:

"We have tried to dismantle the terms in which this subject is usually discussed - 'Youth Culture' - and reconstruct, in its place, a more careful picture of the kinds of youth sub-cultures, their relation to class culture and to the way cultural hegemony is maintained, structurally and historically."

(Hall et al, 1975, p.5)

This Marxist perspective on youth made extensive use of the Gramscian concept of Hegemony, whereby a dominant group attempts to maintain its superiority by ideological means and is met by resistance from below. The notion that youth sub-cultures were engaged in class conflict by other - symbolic - means, helped to situate teenage deviant behaviour as a struggle against dominant values. By recognising the inevitable lack of success at school and limited opportunities in the job market, it became affirmation of working-class identity. As an expression of a profound 'degree of material, intellectual and, indeed, emotional dispossession' (Shepherd 1991), a punk, for example, complete with mohican hairstyle and pins through the nose, during the 1970's, would have confronted middle-class



authority and, in many cases, would have been sent home from school or turned down for jobs.

Sub-cultural research, therefore, set out to discover the relationship between working-class youth experience and its expression through styles. Semiotics, the 'science of signs', as developed especially in the work of the French semiologist Roland Barthes, was the main working-tool used by sub-cultural theorists in their 'readings' of texts and images. Dick Hebdige in his influential book, 'Subculture: The Meaning of Style' (1979) sets out to explore the meaning of the sub-cultural styles of Punks, Rastafarians, Hipsters, Beats, Teddy Boys, Mods, and followers of Glam and Glitter Rock, through an interpretation of the 'expressive forms and rituals of those subordinate groups' (p.2). He outlines the acts of a punk, for example, placing a safety pin through his nose, or a mod wearing a conventional but essentially middle-class item of clothing like Italian-style pointed shoes, can 'take on a symbolic dimension, becoming a form of stigma, tokens of a self-imposed exile'. The appropriation and reassembling of ordinary aspects of everyday life are "made to mean and mean again as 'style' in subculture" (p.3). More importantly, it is a process of separation and creation of a new sub-cultural identity which 'ends in the construction of a style, in a gesture of defiance or contempt, in a smile or a sneer. It signals a Refusal' (p.3). Thus, in the words of Murdock and McCron, the analysis of the class-based style politics of youth focused on:

"the way in which the shared social experiences of adolescents in particular class locations are collectively expressed and negotiated through the construction of distinctive leisure styles. Sub-cultural styles are made up of an amalgam of elements drawn from two main sources - the 'situated' class cultures embedded in the family and the local neighbourhood, and the 'mediated' symbol systems sponsored by youth orientated sectors of the entertainment industry. These elements are not taken over raw, however. On the contrary, subcultural styles are the product of a cumulative process of *selection and transformation* through which available objects, symbols and activities, are removed from their normal social context, stripped of some or all of their conventional connotations and reworked." (Hall et al, 1975, p.203)

This work in the emerging intellectual field of cultural studies, provided a new perspective on how working-class youth culture appropriated and subverted aspects of approved culture by teasing out, for example, the significance of the Italian-cut suit and tie of the mods as a symbol of rebellion rather than middle class respectability, or the Union Jack emblazoned across the t-shirt of the skinhead as a challenge to the dominant ideology. These insights were not confined to those versed in semiotics, however. These same signs also aroused a sense of 'moral panic' in the ordinary citizen, when faced with outrageous images and non-conformist behaviour in the shopping centre at weekends or at the football match. Sub-cultural styles, therefore, did not simply express adolescent rebellion against their parents, but publicly paraded their refusal of 'middle-class attempts to define and confine those experiences.' (Frith 1984, p.41).

Mods, for example, favoured rock bands like 'The Who', whose message, while having little empathy with middle-class, counter-cultural ideals, had a lot to say about the generation gap, espousing fast living via pep pills, motor scooters and leisure. The anarchistic auto-destructive elements in the stage act of 'The Who', were mirrored in the infamous Brighton beach battles between scooter riders and bikers which took place during public holidays. Skinheads, too, were making 'us' and 'them' statements, which were as much to do with the rejection of official culture as their student counterparts, although their battles had no connection with the counter-cultural desire to 'right international wrongs'.

Within the middle-class youth counter-culture, 'progressive rock' from both Britain and America had replaced the popular sounds of the 'Top 10' for 'serious' fans. The politicising of rock music accompanied a wave of international student idealism responding to major world events such as the Vietnam war, the beginnings of the peace movement, and the rise of the American Civil Rights movement. They used their musical preferences as a means of expressing their rejection of official values, a conscious 'opting out'. However, by 1973, the Oil Crisis in the Middle East, and the ensuing economic recession in Europe and America, had taken its toll of counter-cultural ideals as students also felt a financial squeeze. Their interest in international matters faded as they found themselves unable to make any significant changes. With no power base from which to seriously challenge the status quo, idealism withered in the face of the new reality.

A serious limitation of much sub-cultural research methodology has been its lack of empirical data on participants values, experiences and lifestyles. In its absence conclusions have depended to a great extent, on the deconstruction of texts provided by media sources (TV, magazines films, advertising, etc.). These 'readings' of styles have often been at odds with the conclusions of ethnographic research. Dick Hobbs, for example, found that the choice of dress among respondents in his study of young people growing up in the East End of London, 'stemmed from a subsequent interest in their own appearance rather than an attempt at solving contradictions within the parent culture' (1988, p.121). He suggests that sub-cultural style, certainly in the East End, was not solely the result of opposition and resistance to the conditions of the work place and the parent culture. In the case of the skinheads, for example, he uses his empirical evidence and indigenous knowledge of the area, to argue that the style was supportive of any entrepreneurially successful working-class male role model; the docker, who accepted illegal dealing, street violence and racism as normal aspects of everyday life. As economic conditions for working adults changed for the worse at the end of the 1960's, young people, while continuing to emulate traditional behaviour derived from the parent culture, could offer only symbolic, not industrial resistance. Thus, by adopting 'a style of aggressive masculinity with a more visually intimidating image than donkey-jacket, monkey boots, and sandwich box.' (Hobbs, 1988. p.132), with the help of the constant bombardment of media images of cropped-haired American marines fighting in Vietnam, dressed in jungle fatigues and high boots, the 'Doc Martined', bracer-wearing, militaristic skinhead was born.

Hobbs work, though illuminating, is not primarily concerned with questions of sub-cultural style. Rather, it stands in a long line of British delinquency research. One of the relatively few ethnographic studies centred on particular groups allied to sub-cultures, is Paul Willis's 'Profane Culture', a study of motor-bike boys and hippies during the late 1960's. As he explains,

'This book has aimed to bring out the material of two cultures and to show how oppressed or excluded social groups can creatively select, develop and transform aspects of their environment to make their own distinctive cultures.'

(Willis, 1978, p.170)

Willis shows that each sub-culture had a highly organised internal structure, and that this very orderliness helped to create a united opposition to the dominant ideology in everyday life. He applies the term 'homology' to describe 'the symbolic fit between the values and lifestyles of a group, its subjective experience and the musical forms it uses to express or reinforce its focal concerns.' (Hebdige, 1979, p.113)

Although Willis accepts the limitations of this and subsequent ethnographic studies, recognising that there are intractable problems of sampling and typicality in any attempt to make them represent the whole of society, he argues that:

'it does offer, through the particular, a general way of understanding the scope and role of human volition in relation to structuring forces. It may be necessary to choose a special case of the maximum play of a particular mechanism or social process in order to suggest its presence, more concealed, in much more general social areas.'

(Willis, 1982, p.81)

The 1970's British sub-cultural research studies, although successful in exposing the inadequacy of massification theory, were themselves, incomplete, as they have a narrow focus on working-class boys. The consumer research of the 1950's discovered the working-class male consumer. Sub-cultural work reinforced this emphasis with successful studies of Teds, mods, rockers, skinheads and punks. However, research did not adequately discuss the relationship of girls to these sub-cultures.

The studies of Angela McRobbie in the early 1980's, showed that working class girls were very much part of sub-cultural system, but that their relationship with male sub-cultural members suggested that they were those traditionally operating in the working class environment. Girls were appendages, marginalised, and secondary, 'hanging around' the main male action in much the same way as they had done so in the previous three decades. The dominant aspect of working class youth culture is peer group solidarity. Boys are allowed more freedom 'mucking about' with their mates. It is tacitly accepted that they will 'sow wild oats' and parents are less worried about their activities out of the home. McRobbie also suggests that there is no middle class female 'street culture' as the girls are much more carefully monitored, chaperoned to friends or discos, expected to return home at specific times, and told 'not to get into trouble' which for them, has a very different meaning.

The peripheral status of girls within sub-cultures is a mirror of how a male dominated cultural system operates and the dominant female media, such as girls' magazines, endeavour to nurture a smooth transition from childhood to womanhood. In her study 'Jackie: an Ideology of Adolescent Femininity', McRobbie shows how within and through the conventions and styles of a girls comic:

'a concerted effort is...made to win and shape the consent of the readers to a set of particular values'.

(Waites et al, 1982, p.264).

The nurtured values are such 'feminine' issues as, how to catch a man, look attractive, be the right shape or how to lose weight. As Murdock and Phelps argued as long ago as 1973:

"The 'teenage interest' magazines tell girls how to get their man, the women's magazines-to which they will eventually graduate-will tell them how to keep him."

(1973, p.123)

As much of girls' leisure time is spent indoors, often with other girls, they tend to spend more time than boys, listening to the radio, playing records, and pop videos. Where male peer groups extend into late adolescence and beyond, the indoor activities of girls fade in the face of the quest 'to get their man'. The fact that girls have been largely excluded from the main youth culture debate until the 1980's has also meant that traditional notions of sexuality within that frame, have been left unchallenged for a very long time.

Nor did sub-cultural research deal adequately with race. This is particularly problematic considering the major impact of black pop music styles such as reggae which was linked politically to the Rastafarians who 'promised deliverance for blacks from their prison in white Babylon' (Lull, 1987, p.170). Similarly, research was more clearly focused on the summative years of teenage life (aged 18+) excluding the distinctive patterns of behaviour and media involvement in the earlier, formative teenage years, in spite of the fact that market research clearly showed that record purchasing and chart interest was centred in young (especially female) teenagers.

Another problem with sub-cultural research has been its romance with young working-class male resistance, and the focus on life on the streets, which ignores the relationship between youth culture and school. Willis's second ethnographic study, 'Learning to Labour' is an exception, though unlike 'Profane Culture', it sheds little light on the role of music. It deals with a working-class boys' counter-culture and investigates why they fail in school, but the analysis of their failure is not linked to any exploration of the role of

music in leisure styles or of the relationship of popular music and teenage culture to the school and learning.

This leads to a final but very significant issue. Because of its structures of attention, sub-cultural research fails to address 'conventional' youth, the 'silent majority', who are found in all class groups, many of whom, with varying degrees of involvement or empathy, could be interested in punk or new romantic styles. If research is attempting to discover the meaning and value of a youth culture which operates primarily in leisure, all youth must be addressed empirically, with different questions and from a different standpoint.

### **2.3 'Ordinary' adolescence: school cultures and media cultures**

In 1973, the first substantive investigation of the triangular relationship of teenagers, pop music and schools was published by Graham Murdock and Guy Phelps. The thrust of their Schools Council Research Project was to investigate the relationship of school disengagement to class.

The study, 'Mass Media and the Secondary School' laid to rest the assumption that the pop media are received passively and uniformly by teenagers who are not members of oppositional sub-cultures. Their work marked the beginning of an understanding of what adolescents do with the media rather than what the media is supposed to do to them. Part Two of the project explored adolescent attitudes towards the pop media and how they deployed them in relation to school and street cultures. The pivotal point of this triangle of relationships, is the school. The researchers, by means of a specially constructed attitude scale, investigated the degree of commitment to or disengagement from school, and this process was shown to be dependent to a great extent on social class. They elaborated on the view of Hargreaves (1967) which is, that there are two main peer group cultures amongst secondary school students, that is, the academic or committed to school and the delinquent or anti-social. Murdock and Phelps asked a series of self-image questions which were designed to look at the students relationship with school commitment and pop involvement and how this involvement fitted in with other leisure activities. They were interested in investigating, for

example, connections between 'pop fan' and 'bad student' or 'sports team involvement' and 'good student'.

Middle-class male students either perceived themselves in the 'engaged' student role or in terms of the roles offered by the world of leisure. The working-class male student pattern was complicated by the differentiation between the roles of 'street' peer and 'pop' fan. Boys who were more involved with 'street' culture, that is, doing nothing in particular but 'mucking about' with their mates, were less interested in and thus, less informed about, the pop media. Female students self-perceptions on the other hand, were not as class orientated. A major factor here, was how much access the girls had to the predominantly male-orientated street culture. Middle-class girls, for example, were more closely monitored than working-class girls. One consequence of this was that it was not considered 'a good thing' for them to be out walking the streets or hanging around cafes. Involvement in pop, therefore, was by default if nothing else, a major leisure activity. They spent much more time listening to records or playing the radio, either alone at home, or with friends. In addition, it was clear from the results of the study, that the musical tastes of the correspondents were strongly influenced by sub-cultural peer-group pressure.

To establish pop music preferences, Murdock and Phelps carried out detailed analysis based on the pupils' ratings of twelve different pop records. They solicited answers by giving binary oppositional terms like 'interesting-boring' and 'gentle-powerful', and as a result compiled four basic taste clusters. The first dimension divided pop artists into 'mainstream' and 'underground' - mass and minority appeal. The second pairs were 'active-potency', which is essentially black music like 'soul' and 'reggae' with an emphasis on beat and rhythm, and 'understandability', dominated by white musicians and stressing the lyrics. A summary of these four basic clusters is detailed over.



	<b>MAINSTREAM</b>	<b>UNDERGROUND</b>
	<b>Cluster 1</b>	<b>Cluster 2</b>
<b>ACTIVE-POTENCY</b> (Black based music stressing beat and rhythm)	Aretha Franklin (Soul) Jackson Five (Motown) Owen Gray (Reggae) Brotherhood of Man Creedance Clearwater	Heavy Rock (Rolling Stones) Progressive Urban Blues (Johnny Winter)
<b>UNDERSTANDABILITY</b> (Music performed by whites stressing lyrics)	<b>Cluster 3</b> The Beatles Simon and Garfunkel	<b>Cluster 4</b> Individual singer-songwriter (Leonard Cohen)

(Murdock and Phelps, 1973, Fig. 7, p.108)

Preferences amongst these four were significantly influenced by school commitment, age and social class. Although more than 50% between the ages of twelve and fourteen preferred 'mainstream', there was a significant number of middle-class students who preferred 'underground'. The researchers suggest that the reason for this may be that middle-class students express 'disengagement' from school through pop rather than through street culture. It also appeared that uncommitted students preferred 'underground' rather than 'mainstream' pop.

The work of Murdock and Phelps, is still, more than twenty years later, one of the few substantive studies which rigorously explores the relationship between school-age teenagers and the pop media. More recent research into the relationship between teenage media use and the educational process, however, also owes much to the work of Pierre Bourdieu. In his work on education, he argues that the school plays a central role in both altering and reproducing social and cultural inequalities. The dominant group hierarchically orders cultural activities giving greater value to some rather than others. Those forms and practices designated as worthy, constitute a kind of symbolic or cultural capital that can be inherited, added to and invested. Similarly, the dominant group hierarchically orders educational

success in schools by awarding grades and qualifications to those rich in cultural capital. Bourdieu argues that the educational system requires a particular type of cultural development, acquired initially from a particular social class position, and then reinforced by the school. The latter, therefore;

'succeeds in imposing cultural practices that it does not teach and does not even explicitly demand but which belongs to the attributes attached by status to the position it assigns, the qualifications it awards and the social positions to which the latter give access.'

(Bourdieu 1984, p.26).

'High art' music, for example, would be understood and embraced more easily by middle or upper class groups as it would be more likely to be part of their stock of cultural capital. Unfortunately, students from a lower class would be 'locked out' of an aspect of culture that the school takes as 'natural', being more closely aligned to the values of the dominant group, and, therefore, recognising those most like itself. The school, then, cannot be perceived as neutral. Since lower class students are not from the dominant group in which such 'culture' is freely given, for them, it can only be acquired with great effort.

Bourdieu believes that the differential possession of both cultural and economic capital helps to maintain a particular social order. As our dominant economic institutions are structured to favour those who possess economic capital, so, too, school systems favour those who possess cultural capital.

The school, therefore, has a major impact on the formulation of the students' self-image ('How cultured am I?') and self-esteem ('How successful am I, academically?') which are set in turn, in the context of a complex process of channeling and sorting into both acceptable or unacceptable types of educational success and cultural experience, depending on whether they embrace or reject the dominant view. There are inevitable tensions for the students as the school constantly appraises and compares them with what it considers to be academically worthwhile and culturally valuable.

Bourdieu does not dismiss the importance of social origin. Rather, he believes that the school multiplies and amplifies by sorting and channeling the cultural and academic advantages inherited from a dominant social position. For those who choose or are rejected by the school system, confirming their low class position by their participation in less prestigious cultural activities:

'The legitimatory authority of the school system can multiply social inequalities because the most disadvantaged classes, too conscious of their destiny and too unconscious of the ways in which it is brought about, thereby help to bring it upon themselves.'

(Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979, p.72).

Bourdieu, however, finds for every area of cultural practice a stronger correlation with academic status than with social position. Moreover, these correlations operate not only between the middle and working classes, but also within the dominant group.

The work by Murdock and Phelps, and Bourdieu, highlight the role of the school and the educational process in helping to shape teenage cultural experiences. Much youth cultural research in the 1980's was centred in schools and in order to understand more fully the meaning of youth culture, it recognised the need to go beyond social position and practise differentiation, particularly in terms of age and gender.

The notion of 'taste culture' was first put forward by Herbert Gans in 1967, as a way of linking the values given to cultural products to class. Thus, classical music, (high value) for example, would be consumed primarily by the upper classes, and middle-of-the-road pop (low value) by the working classes. Other researchers found partial support for Gans's theory, but by the end of the 1970's, (Skipper, 1975, Dixon, 1979), age, religion, race and where people lived were found to be, of equal, if not more, importance.

The way in which musical culture and social structure link up, is, perhaps, best described by George Lewis:

**'Rather than assume it to be simply correlative, it is perhaps better to view it as a contingent, problematic, variable, and - to a higher degree than we might imagine - subjectively determined.'**

**(Lewis 1983, p.137)**

**Keith Roe follows this line of thinking in an attempt to:**

**'take account of the complex mediations of family, class, age, gender, education, peer involvement, etc. in the study of communication.'**

**(Roe, 1987b, p.523).**

**This 'structural-cultural' approach allows questions to be asked which challenge the notion of the media as the major actor in the communication process rather than being acted upon, or selected out, by the consumers. He found that gender and age were both significant determinants in the formation of specific taste groups, which were then identified with specific taste cultures. As Roe pointed out in his conclusion, research which fails to practise differentiation, 'runs the risk of producing highly generalized results that fail to describe the actual complexities of social reality' (ibid, p.531).**

**This 'complexity' is evident in the dynamic quality of music which can cut across social structures, and fly in the face of expected patterns of cultural consumption. In this present study, although class was not systematically researched, the students were a cross section from most social groups. However, there was an almost universal rejection of classical music, in spite of the fact that many of the students were actively involved in high art activities like classical instrumental tuition and orchestral playing**

On the other hand, there is mounting evidence to show that for some teenage sub-cultural groups, pop music reflects in a very direct symbolic way, their various social experiences. In 'Pop Music and Peer Groups: a Study of Canadian High School Students' Responses to Pop Music' (1981), Julian Tanner explored the relationship between heavy rock and school rejection among working-class adolescents in Canada. He suggests that:

"On stage, the heavy metal groups adopt a tough, aggressive, even violent stance. It can be argued that the essence of a 'proletarian rage', heavy rock's appeal rests on its ability to mirror other largely working-class adolescent core values and focal concerns - collective action and physicality, for example."

(Tanner, 1981, p.9)

There was also a clear, relationship between self-reported delinquency and heavy rock. This study was more than 'sub-culture revisited'. Tanner pointed to the large minority of mainly middle-class progressive rock fans who did not fit neatly into the 'model of polarized peer cultures, and the corresponding choices in rock music.' (ibid, p.11). He argued that rock music is multi-faceted, capable of demonstrating both rebellion and conformity. In fact, he asked that future research should include:

"a more focused examination of the social characteristics of...students who orientate themselves around rock's 'avant-garde,' and how they are distinguished in terms of, for example, academic performance and perceptions of the schooling process - from both the heavy rock fans and the large majority of students whose interest in rock is limited to the Top 40 mainstream."

(ibid, p.11).

The 'rebellious overtones' of similar socio-economic groups were highlighted by Roe in his study of adolescent VCR use in Sweden. He found that male under-achievers at school (who were the most likely to be self-reported delinquents and were generally disengaged from what school had to offer them) watched 'undesirable' videos of a violent nature. The role of the peer group was central to this usage as viewing was 'mediated by a peer groups involvement that may, itself, successfully defend and enhance self-esteem'. (Roe, 1987b, p.185).

Heavy rockers have probably taken advantage of an additional set of media opportunities afforded by the new screen-based technologies of the '80's! From the early days of its creation at the end of the 1960's and early '70's, Heavy Rock has often expressed visually, a disengagement from notions of 'good taste' and acceptable social practice. Alice Cooper in his stage show, used props such as an electric chair and gallows, and included a dance routine with a live boa-constrictor. With its inherent sexism frequently portraying women as sexual toys, it could be seen as a natural progression for some Heavy Rock fans to take advantage of the readily available violent and pornographic videos in the comfort of their own homes.

Current research is showing links between students who believe that they stand to gain little in terms of academic rewards, (having experienced poor grades or lack of exam certification), and a disengagement from school. This, in turn, is signalled by specific media activities. Roe and Lofgren found that school achievement was related to the level of ownership and time spent listening to records and tapes, knowledge of pop music, familiarity with youth culture argots, and preference for different musical genres. In their conclusion, they state their belief that their results support the view that the:

"school experience - and in particular the allocation of grades and certificates as an academic component of the production and reproduction of 'cultural capital'-contributes substantially, at both the individual and group level, to the structuring of gratifications needs and the audience for, and uses made of, the media".

(Roe & Lofgren, 1988, p.313).

Similarly, Roe's recent research 'Different Destinies-Different Melodies: School Achievement, Anticipated Status and Adolescents' Tastes in Music' (1992), has shown that the structural regularities of certain tastes and cultural practices are strongly related to the activities of the educational system. For example, a taste in classical music was associated with school achievement, and by stark contrast, those who were least contented with school together with the low achievers (mostly male students from lower working class backgrounds), shared a taste for heavy metal.

Research of this kind differs in one major respect when compared with previous studies which measured the negative engagement of students from school. It looks at the students' view of their anticipated future status as a factor determining their musical tastes and preferences.

Research into youth culture and youth media activity, which embraces both past and future has the potential to explore more effectively the implications of such variables as gender, age, socio-economic status, and class on the dynamics of cultural activity, rooted in a social context. However, there are still serious limitations. The majority of 'ordinary' students continue to fall outside the spotlights of research attention. Since they are unproblematic from the point of view of social order, or predictable in terms of their tastes, and attitudes, they are dismissed in few words. Roe, for example, comments on the majority who:

'anticipate neither palpable success nor palpable failure and who thereby feel less acutely the need conspicuously to distinguish themselves (in whatever direction) from mainstream culture, less demonstrative cultural elements such as television may offer fitting symbolic space.'

(Roe, 1992, p.353).

The minimalist way in which the majority of teenagers symbolic, academic and social space is considered, raises a very serious question. What can an educator learn from research into youth culture that has so little to say about mundane experience and how may it enhance the learning situation in school? What, for example, in this context, seeking to create the best learning environment for the majority, is meant by:

'it is time that educators begin to look at the negative effects of what they themselves are doing.'

(Roe, 1987, p.228).

Underlying the remark is the sense of a huge programme of control actively and knowingly operated by middle-class teachers. This assumption pervades much radical educational research. It appears to be tacitly accepted as 'truth'. How true this is of an English education system apparently filled with 'trendy lefty' educators, or an imposed National Curriculum, opposed by many teachers as a crude attempt to place the curriculum, its philosophy, emphasis and content under central control, is, at the very least, open to question. But more than that, how useful are current research findings for teachers, many of whom are desperately attempting to make the educational frame for their students as meaningful as possible within the constraints placed on them by the wider society? (that is, parents, governors, local education authorities and central government). They are not empowered but often, powerless to create meaningful changes. In any case, most teachers in the UK would not see it as part of their role to be involved in an overt attempt to change the social order. Such activity would be an unwelcome politicising of their function, particularly at a time when the government has already done so nationally, by placing education high on their own agenda.

Even the students are credited as willing accomplices in the conspiracy. Do successful students consciously begin to cultivate high-brow culture because they really believe it to be necessary for their perceived social trajectory? According to Roe, they do. Similarly, what is the meaning for a punk rock group in a predominantly middle class school, of the adulation



of middle-of-the-road teenagers? Might it not be that street credibility from everyone, not just fellow disenchanting peers, is a valued reward?

The youth process, from 'dependency' to 'responsibility', is characterised not by any one overarching variable or experience, but by a complex mix of competing fields of interest. Research into the teenage media experience has to be set firmly in the context of the teenage youth experience, which is not homogeneous, easily measured or categorised. Although we ought to be aware that certain pressures may result in certain effects, and that specific pop taste cultures can be identified with specific social groups, what do they say about the teenage youth process in its totality? How effectively can these results be generalised? These questions are of great significance when placed in the school context.

This viewpoint needs rigorous and systematic researching, but not solely from the perspective of youth culture. Moreover, it should be more than 'a penetrating analysis of social inequalities and the part the schools play in their perpetuation'. (Harker, 1990, p.105). What actually happens within the school and the type of relationships that take place there, between teacher and student, teacher and manager, school and community, school and local education authority, school and central government, should be essential components of any youth culture research project, and qualitative as well as quantitative data needs to be included.

It is indeed, in the interest of all educators to be fully versed about the constraints under which most teenagers operate. Only then can the system begin to address issues that impede the effectiveness of learning. Unfortunately, much present research excludes both the majority teenage view and the views of teachers. If the teachers, themselves, were to be part of the research process, rather than members of the audience at whom the research is directed, it would help in a more constructive way, to emphasise the multi-faceted relationship between teachers and students, and help stress the partnership basis of the educational process.

## **2.4 Musical worlds and leisure environments**

Simon Frith defines the ethnographic research on British youth as the 'painstaking description of how young people organise and make sense of their daily lives.' (Frith, 1984, p.52). Its major advantage over other forms of research is that it produces rich, qualitative data which allows the researcher to directly interrogate everyday meanings and expressions (such as, 'Well, I mean, like'), which is not possible in either a sub-cultural analysis of texts or a quantitative analysis of survey data. At the same time, because every social context is unique and cannot be replicated, generalisation can be difficult and problematic.

Nevertheless, ethnographic studies do give a real impression of the dynamics of culture, a dialogue of day-to-day human experience with a real sense of the constraints, resistances, gratifications and elations. In 'Learning to Labour', Paul Willis said this about his research method:

"The qualitative methods and Participant Observation used in the research, and the ethnographic format of the presentation were dictated by the nature of my interest in 'the cultural'. These techniques are suited to record this level and have a sensitivity to meanings and values as well as an ability to represent and interpret symbolic articulations, practices and forms of cultural production. In particular, the ethnographic account, without always knowing how, can allow a degree of the activity, creativity and human agency within the object of the study to come through into the analysis and the reader's experience."

(Willis, 1977, p.3)

Willis demonstrated how the boys' reaction to their educational experience was a form of resistance, but in addition, the qualitative data revealed that the nature of the boys' disengagement with school exactly fitted them for their futures as unskilled manual labourers. Also, in common with other ethnographic youth studies, attitudes to gender and race were found to be of significant importance.

One particularly useful current within British ethnographic work is a series of studies which explore leisure styles within a community setting. Peter Willmott in his classic study of adolescent boys in the East End of London (1966) shows an acute awareness of the constraints of the teenage years (having to negotiate where they are allowed to go or at what time they are expected home), as well as the freedoms from adult responsibilities (not being at work or paying for accommodation and food) and Tom Kitwood (1980) shows how societal expectations help to create different rules of teenage life for boys and girls. In his study, he found that both class and gender help frame negotiations with parents about 'going out'. Middle-class parents worry that going out may affect their sons' study, while working-class parents need convincing that their sons will not break the law. In addition, girls from both classes, need to convince their parents that they will not be sexual active during their free time.

By contrast, boys are far less regulated in their free time. There is a legitimate male street culture, one which does not exist for girls who are subjected to closer scrutiny when they do go out, having to be clearer about where they are going and at what time they are to return. In this present study, it is argued that the social framing of leisure directly affected the musical opportunities of boys (who have open access to the world of rock-band playing where rehearsal is more ad hoc, personally organised and least controlled by adults) and girls (who are allowed into the world of orchestral playing as it is highly organised, at a centre where beginning and end times are well known and is always under the direction of an adult).

Ruth Finnegan introduced the useful notion of musical worlds, (Chapter 1, p. 13-15) in her community study of local music making in Milton Keynes which she carried out between 1980-84. She wanted 'to uncover and reflect on some of these little-questioned but fundamental dimensions of local music-making, and their place in both urban life and our cultural traditions more generally'. (Finnegan, 1989, p.4). Her investigations were grounded in her personal experiences both as a consumer and participant over an eleven year period. What she discovered was several different musical worlds each with its own contrasting view of how its music could be learned or performed. She takes us away from the obvious divide between 'classical' and 'pop' music into worlds which include jazz, brass bands, musical theatre, country and western, folk, pop and rock, orchestral playing and music in schools.

She emphasised the practices and processes contained within each of the musical worlds as opposed to looking at the nature of the music itself. By looking at peoples actions, she found it 'was a route to discovering a local system that...was quite unexpected in its complexity and richness.'(ibid, p.8).

She discovered that both social practices and history played their part in gender opportunities (important in the world of brass band playing, for example), and that a particularly gifted music teacher supported by motivated parents was far more important in determining a child's musical opportunities in school, than their class position. As there is as yet, no comparable recent study, she hopes that her work 'will provoke further investigation of a subject so important for our understanding of music and of the practices of modern urban life.' (ibid, p.5).

The dearth of ethnographic data within youth cultural studies is commented on by Sara Cohen (1991) in her study 'Rock Culture in Liverpool' (Finnegan's book only became available to her as her own book was going into print). Cohen's ethnography during 1985 is a case study of two rock groups. It examines the 'social factors involved in the structure of the bands', and focuses on:

'the processes of music-making and the complexity of social relationships involved, analysing the way in which the music not only reflects but affects the social environment, and highlighting the underlying conceptions of music which determine the musical terminology and categories used and the evaluation of music, musicians, musical knowledge and skills.'

(Cohen, 1991, p.7)

She portrays Liverpool in a state of decline, with exceptionally high unemployment amongst the young, whose lives, therefore, revolve around unemployment benefit, government training schemes, or cash-in-hand, part-time exploitative cheap labour. Yet, so strong is the tradition of music in Liverpool (it was, after all famous for one or two well known bands of the past!) playing in a rock group offers for many the illusion (if not the reality) of

a means of escape, a real alternative to unemployment or a boringly unrewarding, nine-to-five job, by 'making it' with a record deal.

Unlike Finnegan whose ethnography embraces a range of musical worlds, Cohen's investigates the world of rock through a case study of two rock groups. She reveals a musical rock world almost exclusively dominated by white males, defined by the social and cultural practices of a specific locality. Rock playing is a legitimate social practice, a dedicated quest whose participants take all aspects- organisation of equipment, rehearsal schedules, creative and aesthetic processes in composition, money raising for equipment or record demo production, performance venues and management - very seriously, indeed. Where most rock literature centres on an investigation of rock lyrics, rock stardom, youth culture or the record industry, Cohen shows facets of a specific music practice which could be emulated in any other major city; the tensions between what the bands classed as 'honest', 'real' and 'creative' music as opposed to 'commercial' , 'false', pop music, the stresses of and yet, the confidence building potential of live gigs (with or without the use of alcohol or drugs), the interaction between daily working (or non-working) practices and group commitments, and the relationship of women to these activities. For most bands:

'Life was a series of successes and failures, periods of optimism followed by periods of depression. The longer a band struggled and the older its members got, the more harshly the failures were felt.'

(Cohen, 1991, p.4)

Her book documents and analyses the journey in detail.

'Common Culture' (1990) is based on an ethnographic and interview research project conducted by Paul Willis with different groups of mostly working-class young people in Wolverhampton during 1987 and 1988. A good proportion were British Asian and British Afro-Caribbean. The age range was late teens to early twenties. The study shows that a central component of youth culture clusters around the audio-visual media. Paul Willis uses the term 'grounded aesthetics' to define the 'qualities of living symbolic activities....as ordinary aspects of common culture.' (Willis, 1990, p.22). This gives a focus and value to the cultural experiences and activities of youth. He challenges directly the elitist belief in the pre-eminence of 'high' art cultural activity and the importance of the storage of its artifacts in museums and concert halls. There is the implication that youth needs to be brought to culture instead of being given the opportunity to control the process of creating their own culture. Moreover, by its absence from the hallowed halls, no particular importance, beyond the monetary value of consumption, is placed on youth cultural artifacts or the processes through which they are generated.

This debate has a great relevance to the current study because it shifts the investigation of youth culture, particularly issues relating to the handling of the teenage creative process, into the educational frame. It challenges the traditional role of the arts in education and the value (or lack of it) of the creative aspects of the youth experience out of school.

Certainly within the Arts, (although, arguably, there are implications for all curriculum areas) Willis's view turns on its head, the basic English educational assumption, which emphasises 'deferred gratification' during the school years in order to obtain certification through academic study to gain ultimate rewards in the labour market, post school. Willis opposes this view for two good reasons. Firstly, he advocates democratising the school process since, although education has become more liberal and child-centred, schools and society have continued to resist real democratic change. Secondly, he argues that creative developments within youth culture, should be seen as important as working towards certification, and, that as youth culture is firmly embedded in leisure, aspects of leisure, all time spent out of school, should become a focal point for legitimate activity within the educational paradigm.

Although both commerce and industry are well aware of the economic role of youth leisure embedded in popular culture, it is not, of course, a simple matter of the state educational system refusing to accept this reality. English education in the 1990's is set in a context of a society that has made a shift to the political right, which in turn, is set in a world that has seen the collapse of communism. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the ruling elite is asserting the values of a mythical by-gone 'Golden Age', while at the same time, facing up to the onslaught of a huge media industry which transmits vast amounts of popular culture, offering and selling enormous opportunities for young consumers to be involved directly or symbolically in its creation and further development.

As Willis, himself, says, (and in no small part due to the major technological changes in media creation and communication):

"In particular, elite or 'official' culture has lost its Dominance. It has certainly always been honeycombed with subterranean resistances and alternatives, but now the very sense, or presence, of a national 'whole culture' and of hierarchies of values, activities and places within it is breaking down."

(Willis, 1990, p.128).

Although leisure has been defined by most sociologists as the setting for youth culture, it is far more than consumer activity. Research has repeatedly shown that it is a space in which young people are relatively empowered. They create identities which are actual, fictional, or pure fantasy. They do so by reaching out into the symbolic world of popular culture, and by appropriating its nuts and bolts, build something new. Hobsbawm argues that sub-cultural styles, for example, do qualify as art, creations through 'grounded aesthetics':

"but as art in (and out of) particular contexts; not as timeless objects, judged by the immutable criteria of traditional aesthetics, but as 'appropriations', 'thefts', subversive transformations, as *movements*."

(Hobsbawm, 1979, p.129).

Thus, the dynamics of youth sub-cultures and styles set within the matrices of audio-visual pop media, can be seen as an ongoing cycle of political and generational resistance acted out in leisure, and its eventual assimilation into the dominant culture, as mod, punk and new romantic derivations enter *Marks and Spencer*, and *Next*.

The concept of resistance, however, has a greater resonance than class and generation. By their very nature, sub-cultures and counter-cultures are spectacular examples of deviant youth cultural activity. Their styles can be easily seen. Their activities make good headline news and excellent television.

They feed into a notion of moral panic as 'modern' youth contributes towards a decline in traditional standards and social values. But, how many hundreds of mods were at Brighton in the sixties? How many gangs of punks 'terrorised' the shopping precincts in the seventies? How many thousands of boys went to school wearing make-up in the eighties?

A more pressing question still remains. Who takes notice of the 'others' during any historical epoch, the millions of young people who are not seen easily, because their resistance does not draw obvious attention? All young people offer resistance within youth culture, but mostly in a less spectacular way than their sub-cultural counterparts, in order to carve out personal space and to help create a social identity. Resistance is a buffer against all the myriad reasons why young people, in their transition from 'dependence' to 'responsibility', feel totally insecure. Everyone else is more confident than they are. Everyone else is more socially astute, more chic, better with girls or boys, more 'grown up', and there is always someone to undermine them should they 'get it wrong'! Here, the pop media looses out to social imperatives.

For most teenagers, it is more important to win respect and credibility within their immediate spheres of influence. To say or do the 'wrong' thing at an inappropriate moment, runs the risk of parental or school displeasure, or cries of derision from their peer group or friends. A basic knowledge of pop music and the 'charts', is a necessary coin of exchange for most teenagers up to the age of fourteen, as, indeed, is how you look and what language argots are used in conversation. 'Fab' and 'hip' are 'out', but 'gross' or 'wicked' are 'in'.



Grand statements of dress, hair or make-up are rare for most school students, but attention to small details can be used to establish important and crucial differences. Is the collar on the shirt up or down, and how many turns or how deep are turn-ups on the denims? In fact, an awareness of and the capacity to use the symbolic value of pop is very important and useful as cultural capital for many conventional teenagers. Setting trends locally, in school, youth club or on the street, matters more than a massive immersion in the actual options offered by the pop media.

Pop and rock music is embedded in youth culture, so much so that it is part of the 'shadow curriculum' for most young people. In addition to its presentation of fashions and the 'chic' way to wear them, it introduces notions of sexuality and commerce. This has been made more significant by two phenomena of the 1980's.

Firstly, there was a change in the early media experiences of youngsters; the pre-teens. The market strategy of the pop media was targeted at very young children who were subject to osmosis consumption. It had a wide ranging application, from advertising breakfast products, (the Rice Crispies and the Weetabix 'boys'), as jingles between events in TV programmes (Saturday morning 'Going Live') and cartoon overtures or theme songs and scores ('Thundercats', 'Cities of Gold' and many more). Children's TV programmes also included new pop singles and videos as well as interviews with and competition prizes and artifacts donated by, current pop stars. The pervasive nature of pop media for pre-secondary school children as a non-mainframe activity, poses different questions. By the time these youngsters reach adolescence, pop music would be a 'way of life', background not foreground. As 'veteran' pop consumers, what effect would this have on their use of the pop media, and what meaning would it have for the conventional teenager?

A second phenomenon of the 1980's was the explosion of visual media opportunities. The pop video became an established and usually obligatory appendage to a 'Top 10' single release. The 'Top of the Pops' and 'Radio 1' link was a testimony to its importance and commonality ('an obvious thing to do'). Rock Concerts and World Tours were (and still are) either shown on TV or issued as purchasable videos and even the format of some TV series adopted a pop video-type format in the credit sequences and links between events. (The successful 'Miami Vice' American police series.)

The other significant development in visual media had been the introduction and expansion of home computing, both in terms of PC ownership and games machines. For the conventional teenager, the expansion of pop media down the age range and the availability of visual material have made a major impact on how they apportion their time between the various leisure activities on offer.

The notion of grounded aesthetics defined primarily by the sub-cultural activity of older teenagers, however, does little to explain the significant cultural practices found within the mundane activity of the majority of youth. Similarly, the meaning of youth culture can only be partially explained by its relationship with the audio-visual media. Willis's chapter on pop music in 'Common Culture', targeted a particular group who were actively involved in recreating pop culture. The majority of teenagers are not. Thus, the concept of a 'common culture' which implies a shared cultural experience, is inappropriate.

Although the media, particularly the pop media, are an important aspect of teenage actual and symbolic experience, they provide only a partial perspective on adolescent culture. For many teenagers, pop media may be the cultural glue, but not the essence. It is more the case that there are a whole series of different teenage cultures running simultaneously of which media based activities are but one component. Indeed, the findings of this present study in terms of how teenagers spend their leisure time, support this view.

If it is indeed shown to be the case, that the taken-for-granted high level of teenage pop media immersion cannot be assumed, there are real implications for schools. Firstly, it would force the teaching profession to differentiate between active, ('It's all drugs, sex and rock 'n' roll!') and symbolic components of popular music and culture (how relationships and attitudes are created, acted out, and exchanged). Secondly, the education system as a whole would have to recognise that resistance through style in a non-spectacular sub-cultural sense, is an important part of growing-up, facilitating the passage from 'dependence' to 'responsibility', and is a key component of teenage creativity. Thirdly, the very useful concept of 'grounded aesthetics', by embracing this broader definition, should take its place in educational practice.

Youth culture, which clusters around the audio-visual media, is set primarily in a social context. Leisure activity, as the key component of youth culture, is therefore, more clearly defined by social processes rather than by the audio-visual pop media. One way of thinking about this is through the notion of leisure careers.

## **2.5 The social framing of leisure careers**

The dynamics of youth culture, centred in leisure, form a complex matrix of activities shaped by social processes which offer unequal access and choices due to factors often beyond teenagers' control (parents, peer groups, the demands of the school). In this study, regression analysis of students' leisure activities prioritised three variables affecting their choices. They were age, gender and personal income. These were found to influence the emergence and development of taste cultures, affecting consistency and creating variation.

A distinction needs to be made, here, between early and late adolescence. As noted earlier, youth culture is often perceived in its summative stage, as lasting from late teens to the early twenties. However, the formative stage, which now has to include the pre-secondary school years is a substantial influencer, indicator and creator of specific youth leisure careers. What they are allowed to do, where they can go, what they can afford to buy, and who they go with as early adolescents could well shape a specific leisure career path, in late teens and early adulthood.

Social structures play a major part in framing and shaping leisure careers. What form they take for the individual teenager can determine or inhibit access to media and non-media based activities and set patterns at an early stage. The evidence gathered in this study suggests that a leisure career for most teenagers evolves as a result of negotiated or constricted choices due to a particular set of relationships at home and school, coupled with their degree of access to the variety of available media. Since the study by Murdock and Phelps, media hardware has proliferated dramatically. For the students in this study, between 77% and 90% had access to, record/cassette players, VCRs, computers and more than one TV. 34% of all students did instrumental practice each day which probably reflected an

increase in interest in pop drumming and the greater availability of keyboards and other pieces of pop technology. There was evidence to suggest that choices were being made between traditional pursuits (homework, clubs, instrumental practise) and media consumption. For example, teenagers may have chosen to exclude media opportunities like the disco in deference to instrumental practice or have had the beginnings of a particular kind of media career imposed upon them should they not have the personal funds to buy CD's or pop videos.

Media consumption is often passive and restricted to 'shopping mall' listening while other activities take place; on the school bus, while doing homework or jobs around the house. Leisure careers may be framed by negotiation and competition with other family members in the home as not all students are the sole owners of the second TV set or VCR. Certain choices are also made for them when parents vet video films before recording, hiring or purchasing. The pleasure that the various media give and what kind of returns they get from them are also an indicator of why certain media are used and when. The use of the personal stereo, for example, allows the student preferred listening when in the same room as other family members, simply to help pass the time during a car journey, or to play music loudly and escape family chores.

'I sometimes use my personal stereo as I can play it as loud as I like, and it blots out anyone trying to call me down to do the washing up'.

(Ben, age 14)

A distinction must be drawn between leisure activities pursued inside and outside of the home, as the place can determine the degree and type of involvement in media activities both before and after school. Time considerations are common to both. Media consumption in the morning, for example, is more to do with function than leisure as it is often restricted to the background listening of the radio or morning TV while they get ready for school or have breakfast. Similarly, for many students, the journey on the bus or in the car to school facilitates the major part of their pop radio consumption.

More time after school allows more flexibility in the use of leisure time and the opportunity for a greater degree of media involvement, for example, computer games playing or a purposeful choice of record listening:

'It depends what sort of mood I'm in, what sort of music I play and at what volume. So, like, if I'm upset, I put slow music on, softly.'

(Claire, age 14).

A distinction must also be drawn between media and non-media based leisure activities as their time-budget has to embrace, activities imposed upon them (homework, household chores, etc.), their desire to maintain membership of youth clubs, sports teams, or holding down part-time jobs.

In this study, the most influential of the three active variables in the development of teenage leisure careers was found to be gender. It would have taken a spectacular act of rebellion for a middle-class girl to be involved in Heavy Metal and one would expect to see other aspects of her leisure career affected. Similarly, having enough personal wealth would not automatically give a student access to 'biker' sub-culture, even with a brand new Harley Davison! No such examples were evident, here. Less spectacular, but no less significant, was the part played by gender in determining who took advantage of vision-based activities like computer games playing. It was (and still is) an activity geared towards boys (supported by the preponderance of arcade 'shoot 'em up' type games). There was also an age component, here, as the activity faded through adolescence as did the peer group culture of playing games in friends' homes. Boys 'hang around' with their friends, play football and actively exclude girls. The peer group culture of playing together was naturally extended into computer games. They had simply changed the focus of activity but not the social practice.

Girls engaged in more pop video viewing and recording than boys, suggesting again the difference between their reliance on home-based pop activities compared with the boys greater access to street culture. Personal income was, not surprisingly, a factor in terms of the purchase of pop videos,

personal stereos and CD players. These were excluding factors and supported the notion of a plurality of different leisure careers running simultaneously.

The development of a particular leisure career will also be substantially influenced by time considerations. In this study, for example, two female students, one aged 13 and 15, had made specific commitments which would have substantially affected all other leisure opportunities. The 13 year old who was partially sighted, was an excellent swimmer. She had been chosen and was busy training for, the Disabled Olympics. She trained each morning from 6.00 a.m. until 8.00 a.m., and for a further three hours, three evenings each week. In addition, she entered regional and national events which took up many of her weekends. The 15 year old was a clarinet player and was a member of an orchestra which was part of the LEA Arts programme. Every Saturday from 9.00 a.m. until 2.00 p.m., she rehearsed. She practised each day, also played in the school orchestra and was involved in concerts for both organisations. Both girls were Girl Guides whose companies met one evening each week and organised camping week-ends twice each year. In addition, there were various parades throughout the year on Sundays. The 13 year old occasionally went to the cinema with friends, and very rarely went to discos or pop oriented activities. The 15 year old went 'up town' most Friday evenings and participated in the 'Club Circuit'.

When the girls were asked how they gained pop information, they both said from the radio (which they listened to when they were doing their homework), Top of the Pops, and their friends. Both had their own audio system but neither possessed a large collection of pop tapes or records. They had their own TV and access to a video player and home computer. Although the girls went out with boys, the relationships had to fit into their other, major leisure commitments.

An in-depth interest in one specific leisure activity is not uncommon for many 'ordinary' teenagers. Indeed, two 14 year old boys in this study shared similar time pressures, as one of them was busy practising to be an international archer (he has subsequently represented England in the European Archery Championships) and the other was making his mark as a footballer at school, county and local club level. Their involvement with, ownership and access to, audio-visual media, with the exception of home

computers, was very similar to that of the girls, although both of them owned computer games machines. Neither went out with girls, but met with boys from their respective sporting clubs usually after practice or training sessions.

These four teenagers had chosen to exclude a substantive involvement in pop media and this decision had other consequences, too. It would have been difficult (if not impossible) for any of them to have taken a part-time job in order to boost their income, by the nature of their commitment to their chosen major leisure activity. Also, opportunities for other leisure activities would have been seriously limited by the lack of available leisure time.

In a less spectacular fashion, another 15 year old girl, as the eldest sibling (and, as her parents told her because she was female) was committed to helping out each evening at home. She had tasks to complete (helping with the younger child on a Monday while her mother went out with friends, and every Thursday was 'ironing night'), before she could call her leisure time her own. These domestic activities were, of course, in addition to her school commitments which she took very seriously. Another 14 year old boy had to spend almost all weekends and several evenings each week working with his self-employed father, making and installing commercial cleaning systems.

There is no doubt that teenagers need a basic knowledge of the pop media as cultural capital. However, such is the pressure on their time budgets that most 'ordinary' teenagers have to make do with acquiring the necessary pop knowledge while doing other things. For many, in-depth involvement in one specific activity is often precluded. 'Engagement has decreased; we do not listen or watch as attentively as we used to' (Boothius, 1995, p.151) as they simply pass the time by listening to radio while working, or the personal stereo during a car or bus journey.

The mini case studies presented here, are indications of how 'ordinary' teenagers spend their time out of school, and how the audio-visual media have to compete with other, often more pressing, social realities. It is at this point, that we now turn to a more detailed investigation of the teenage leisure experience.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

Planning for the study began in the autumn of 1988. I had financial support from the Local Authority who sponsored my part-time university, post-graduate research fees, though this arrangement was for one year in the first instance. Indirect support from a group of local schools was also forthcoming, mainly as a result of my involvement with them as part of the In-Service Training for Teachers (INSET) schemes during the middle to late 1980's. At the same time, the Head Teacher of my own school secured co-operation for my study from the Head Teachers of two local fee-paying schools but for the completion of questionnaires only.

The teachers' questionnaire was mailed to all music teachers in Leicestershire. I was delighted by the high response rate, which I feel, can be attributed to a great extent to my involvement in the Music INSET programme of 1987-88 when I acted as course planner and leader. Through this scheme I met, for the first time, almost all of the County's music teachers in mutually beneficial circumstances and in many instances, contact has continued up to the present day.

A variety of research methods were used in the present study, and, of course, I draw on my own experiences of more than twenty years of teaching music in secondary schools. As a part-time, single-person research unit, I had to make careful choices in terms of school and student samples. Moreover, working along side my teaching responsibilities restricted my ability to use certain research methods, particularly interviews and structured observations of students and teachers. However, I have tried to compensate for the absence of extensive qualitative information, by including and reporting when appropriate; the comments teachers and students wrote on the questionnaires in response to open-ended questions, quotations from



class discussions, unstructured interviews conducted in the course of the study and comments made to me in conversations touching on issues highlighted by the study.

### **3.1 Class as an Issue**

In the study presented here, the analysis of class is noticeable by its absence. The reasons for this were initially practical. Two of the schools selected for study were not prepared to let students supply information relating to parental incomes, occupations or types of housing, and the other four were distinctly cool. Without the basic data, it was impossible to carry out meaningful analysis on the relationships between class and the youth cultural process.

The schools were selected to represent a wide variety of educational institutions. They therefore included different phases and structures of secondary school education from both the public and private sector. I hoped that such a mix would produce a wide diversity of experiences allowing me to explore a range of factors which might affect students' musical and leisure choices.

The fact that the schools were located in the same North Leicestershire town was also a key criterion for selection and one which made it difficult to the study schools with others that may have been prepared to allow inclusion of basic class indices. Their shared locations defined a common set of pop media leisure opportunities, available to all the students who attended these schools. This was crucial since a key aim of the research presented here, was to investigate the factors which might enable or inhibit access to these media opportunities, and to explore their impact on shaping particular leisure careers and attitudes to music.

The major aim of this present study, was to shed light on the importance of pop music in the lives of teenagers, to examine how this related to music in school and the school's ethos, and to assess the implications for the management and development of the music curriculum by the specialist teacher. I therefore, set out to avoid the approach of much current youth cultural research, which relates class to leisure choices linked to sub-cultural and taste-cultural activity. I wanted to foreground the

experiences of 'ordinary' teenagers - those who do not belong to sub-cultures or immerse themselves in specific taste cultures - and to explore the variations produced by factors other than class which I believed might be at least as important and possibly more significant. As the study shows, three factors influenced choice and attitudes to music and schooling. They were: gender (by far the most potent dimension of experience throughout the teenage years), age (very significant in promoting changes in leisure activity), and personal income (the least important of the three in determining pop music activity). The interaction of these three variables within the process of growing up between the ages of 11-15, helped to shape my concept of leisure careers.

Often, discussions, including many of those within education, trade on taken-for-granted assumptions about the relationship between music and teenage experience. Music making in schools is often seen as the preserve of 'middle-class' children equally as much as 'biker' activity is inevitably linked with Heavy Metal fans and working-class boys. These tidy definitions are frequently not supported by evidence on the ground, however.

The results of this present study showed that a liking for Heavy Metal or Heavy Rock continued throughout the age-range. Since none of the participating schools allowed pupils to dress in ways which would have allowed fans of these styles to be recognised, shared musical taste acted as a key means of social expression, in the absence of the other major icon - the motor bike!

In her recent study of Milton Keynes, Ruth Finnegan concluded that there was no strong evidence that the social and economic factors associated with class position determined the musical activities of children in school. A survey which she carried out amongst teachers in 1982 (Finnegan, 1989) registered almost no mentions of class as an important factor shaping the musical choices made by children. Rather, two other factors emerged as significant. These were, parental support and the enthusiasm and commitment (more so than musical skills) of the individual music teacher in the school at any given time. Therefore, if a parent believed that it was worth the money and time to further their child's musical activity, and their child was fortunate to be at a school at the same time as a successful music teacher who facilitated instrumental and/or performance opportunities, class had little bearing. Moreover, as this present study also discovered, she found that

gender and age, to a great extent, determined the kind of musical activities engaged in by boys or girls.

On the other hand, the findings of other research into youth cultural activity show beyond doubt that some forms of popular music have been created or appropriated by sub-cultures which are embedded in working class cultures. And some of these sub-cultural activities and attitudes certainly find their way into schools. However, in formulating this present study, I opted to focus on the mainstream, the mundane, the speculative, the barely noticed the under-researched. It is an attempt to explore the ways that 'ordinary' teenagers used music, the value they placed on it and how this related to their attitudes to music and learning in school.

Perhaps more importantly though, through the present study, I hope to move the debate about curriculum music a little closer to the 'consumers' on the ground so that school music, for the majority of students between the ages of 11-15, can be a substantially more meaningful and pleasurable experience.

### **3.2 The sample**

Information on teenage musical involvement was collected from pupils in six schools based in a large North Leicestershire town during the summer term of 1989. Secondary education in Leicestershire is made up of institutions which cover different components of Key Stages Three, Four and Five. The basic plan in the Leicester City schools is a mix of 11-16 Comprehensives and Sixth Form Colleges. In the County, a system known as the 'Leicestershire Plan' operates, whereby a 'family' of High Schools cater for Key Stage Three students, (11-14 years of age). At the end of Year Nine, the students transfer to an Upper School or College for Key Stage Four (14-16 years of age) and Key Stage Five (16-18 years of age) Some High Schools also include Primary Year Six (10 year olds). In addition, there are Grant Aided and Private schools. In this particular Leicestershire town, it was possible to draw on a variety of educational institutions, and access was granted by an Upper School and its two major feeder High Schools, a Voluntary Aided 11-18 comprehensive school of a religious denomination, and two private schools, one for boys and one for girls.

Bearing in mind the near impossibility of gaining access to fifth formers as a result of G.C.S.E. examination pressures which, in some institutions, meant that students were absent on study leave, the age range chosen was 11-15, secondary school years 7-10. By randomly choosing one class in each year from the appropriate institutions, a sample of 460 students was generated, 226 boys and 234 girls. At the same time, all music teachers in Leicestershire's secondary schools were contacted by post.

### **3.3 The students' questionnaires**

The major empirical data for the study was provided by the students who completed two questionnaires. These were delivered by hand to each of the six participating schools. The teacher responsible for music oversaw the completion of both questionnaires in four of the schools. A Head of House and Head Teacher carried out the equivalent role in the remaining two schools. Upon completion, I went to each of the schools to collect them. There were only a handful of returns which were unusable.

### **3.4 The teachers' questionnaires**

All the music teachers' working in Leicestershire were asked to complete a questionnaire and return them to me in stamped-addressed envelopes. 49 of them replied with completed questionnaires; a response rate of 67%.

### **3.5 Student Interviews**

There were major difficulties from both a personal and professional point of view in organising interviews with students. As a full-time teacher, the only way I could go into the participating schools to carry out class interviews was by using my own non-contact time. This in itself, put pressure on

colleagues from my own school as it meant that I was unable to be part of the cover rota for absent teachers.

I had to liaise quite carefully with the participating schools in order to visit at a mutually convenient time and here, I was helped enormously by friends and colleagues in these schools who tried to give me access to specific year groups, often at the expense of their own curriculum time and organisation. In the end, from those groups who had completed the questionnaires, I was able to conduct group interviews with two classes (a year 7 and 8) from one school, and a year 9 from another. These class interviews, which lasted for about an hour, were taped and later transcribed. Timetabling complications made it impossible for me to interview the only participating year 10 group from the state-sector upper school.

In addition to these formal interviews, I had many informal conversations with students in my own school, some, in fact, had helped me with the questionnaire pilots. Where the content of these less structured meetings had a bearing on an issue or gave weight to an argument, I have freely used their comments and the 'voices' of others which I recalled during the active time of this study.

### **3.6 Teacher interviews**

I arranged in advance, a series of interviews with individual teachers in order to obtain views from different phases of the Leicestershire school system. These meetings were very loosely structured as I wanted people to talk about their own experiences as teachers and musicians in a relaxed manner. I scribbled a lot and made sense of my notes later. As I had met almost all of the music teachers in Leicestershire, and they had all received questionnaires, many of them approached me out of interest in the study and volunteered additional information and views when we met at conferences and centrally based INSET activities. In addition, many comments were written on the returned questionnaires, in a variety of styles, some serious and some not! Where appropriate, I have quoted freely from comments, gathered from all of these sources.

### **3.7 LEA advisor's interview**

My involvement in the Curriculum Cohort for 10/11-14 Music and as a course organiser for music INSET immediately prior to the beginning of this study, gave me a very useful and close insight into the workings of the Music Advisory Team at that time. I am deeply indebted to one of them who gave me an extended formal taped interview which enabled me to more fully understand the historical role of the Music Advisor and the relationship of this role with the LEA. In addition, I was informed of the views of other advisors from outside Leicestershire, and of key players who were involved in the embryonic National Curriculum Music discussions which were taking place at that time. This gave me an insight into how they viewed the implications of a National Curriculum for music in schools. After the formal interview, I had many conversations, sometimes face-to-face and at other times by telephone, when further information or clarification was needed and, as always, this was freely given.

### **3.8 Personal experience**

Although it hardly equals participant observation in the formal sense, there is no doubt that my own experience has had a strong influence on the way in which the study was carried out and the outcomes which I have presented. In the final stages of writing up this thesis, I became very aware of the passage of time covered by the research, in which we have witnessed, for example, the inception of a National Curriculum for Music and its first journey through Key Stage Three, the inclusion and then exclusion of music at Key Stage 4, and the demise of the Advisory Service and privatisation of instrumental tuition in most counties, including Leicestershire.

None of these very substantive and significant organisational changes, however, take proper account of the meaning of music for teenagers and schools. My experiences lead me to this study in the first instance because I believe that there is the need to build a framework of musical understanding which recognises the grounded artistic reality of the

common man. Youth culture, and its relationship with schools, has been the dominant unresolved issue throughout my teaching career of more than 20 years. Until the school music curriculum breaks free from its past, it is not capable of addressing the present creatively and will never be able to address the future. At the very least, as we approach the second millennium with an already out-of-date National Curriculum for Music, it is a debate which must not be allowed to fade.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **TEENAGE MUSICAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **4.1 Leisure inside of the home**

The cost of leisure to the students is assessed in terms of both time and personal income. The interplay between these two factors helps to shape the formation of particular leisure careers. The following groupings have been formulated in an attempt at clarity, ranging from the cheapest (time) to the most expensive (income).

Radio, homework, instrumental practice.

Magazines.

Records, tapes, CDs.

There were five time values for both morning and evening radio listening, that is, 'Never', '15 mins.', '30 mins.', '45 mins.', '1 hour or more'. The channel choices for those who listened indicated an overwhelming diet of 'Radio 1' and/or local 'copies' like 'Radio Leicester' and 'Radio Trent'. Their listening, therefore, was firmly pop orientated. The students were also asked how many mornings and evenings they listened to radio each week.



## **4.2 Boys' morning radio listening**

80% of 11 year olds listened to morning radio, a figure which fell to 61% by the age of 12. During the next three years however, listening gradually increased again, peaking at 72% at 14 and falling back slightly to 70% at 15. The degree of listening was interesting, however, suggesting that whilst most boys eventually tuned in to radio listening, they showed less commitment as they grew older.

30% of boys listened to morning radio during the five day school week, a figure which remained fairly constant throughout the age range. By contrast, the proportion of students who listened in six days declined from 20% at 11 to 7% at 15. Seven day listeners stood at 13% at 11, enjoyed growth until 14, (17%) but fell back to 14% at 15.

## **4.3 Boys' evening radio listening**

In marked contrast, evening radio consumption grew throughout the five year cycle, rising from a 43% involvement at 11 to 60% at 15. The minutes spent evening listening also increased with age, with 45 mins. being the most popular. At the 'hour or more' category, the figures were remarkably consistent from the age of 13 to 15, at 24%.

The number of boys who said they listened to evening radio during the week varied very little with age, (54% of 11 year olds rising gradually to 60% at 15). The frequency of listening, however, was age related. At 13, 20% of the boys listened for seven days each week (the highest by far in either gender or age). At 14, although more boys in total listened to evening radio, there was a move away from the seven evenings to six at 14, to 21% at 15 for five evenings.

At the opposite end, steady growth at one evening each week was maintained from 13-15, probably at the expense of a decline through four, three, and two evenings each week. This polarising around the single evening was also matched by an increase in non-listeners. (48% of non-listeners at 12, down to 36% at 14, rising to 40% at 15).

#### **4.4 Girls' morning radio listening**

With girls there was a definite correlation between consumption and age. The sample of 11 year olds was small (only nine cases) and this probably accounts for the fact that no correspondents listened for wither an hour or more or 45 minutes slots. From the age of 12, however, a clear pattern emerged, whereby as the proportion of non- listeners decreased, ('never' fell yearly, 46%, 30% 24% and 10% at 15), the majority settled into a listening pattern of 15 and 30 minutes. Only at 13 did a significant percentage (16%) listen for an hour or more and 45 minutes (14%). By the age of 15, only 7% listened in each of these two categories. 41%, however, listened for 15 minutes.

Morning listening, as with the boys, centred around the five day school week, and increased substantially through the five years. From 22% at 11, it rose to 51% at 15. Again, at 13, girls listened for more days (12% at six days and 18% at seven days). Both these categories declined by the age of 15, although 15% still listened daily. It is quite likely that the six and seven day listeners had, by the age of 15, reduced their consumption to the five day school week and thus, accounted for part of the percentage increase in consumption for this category. The 15 year olds were also significant in the sense that at this age, more girls were engaged in radio listening for two, three and four mornings, more than any other year.

#### **4.5 Girls' evening radio listening**

Evening radio listening gradually increased by 20% from 12 to 15 (53% to 73%) with the hour or more listeners showing the most dramatic change. From 9% at 12, it rose to 39% at 15. A lot of girls also listened for 15 and 30 minutes each evening (combined, 30% between the ages of 12-15).

The most significant trend for evening radio listening, was an increase in the consumption of one evening per week. It rose from 9% at 12 to 22% at 15. Equally significant, was the decline in listening for five evenings. It remained constant between the ages of 12-13, (7%), rose to 14% at 14, then fell to 10% at 15. This decline was also mirrored in the frequency of listening for three and four evenings as the numbers fell back to a two

evenings per week, raising the average of 8% for 12-14 year olds, to 33% at 15.

A picture emerged which suggested that the girls were more active and earlier pop radio consumers than the boys although the age dimension showed almost a levelling at 14, where only 3% less boys than and girls were non-radio listeners. However, at 15, the total radio consumption of the boys had begun to decline as compared with the girls which continued to grow. For both groups, there was a contraction in time from the heaviest consumers and a reduction in the number of days spent listening each week.

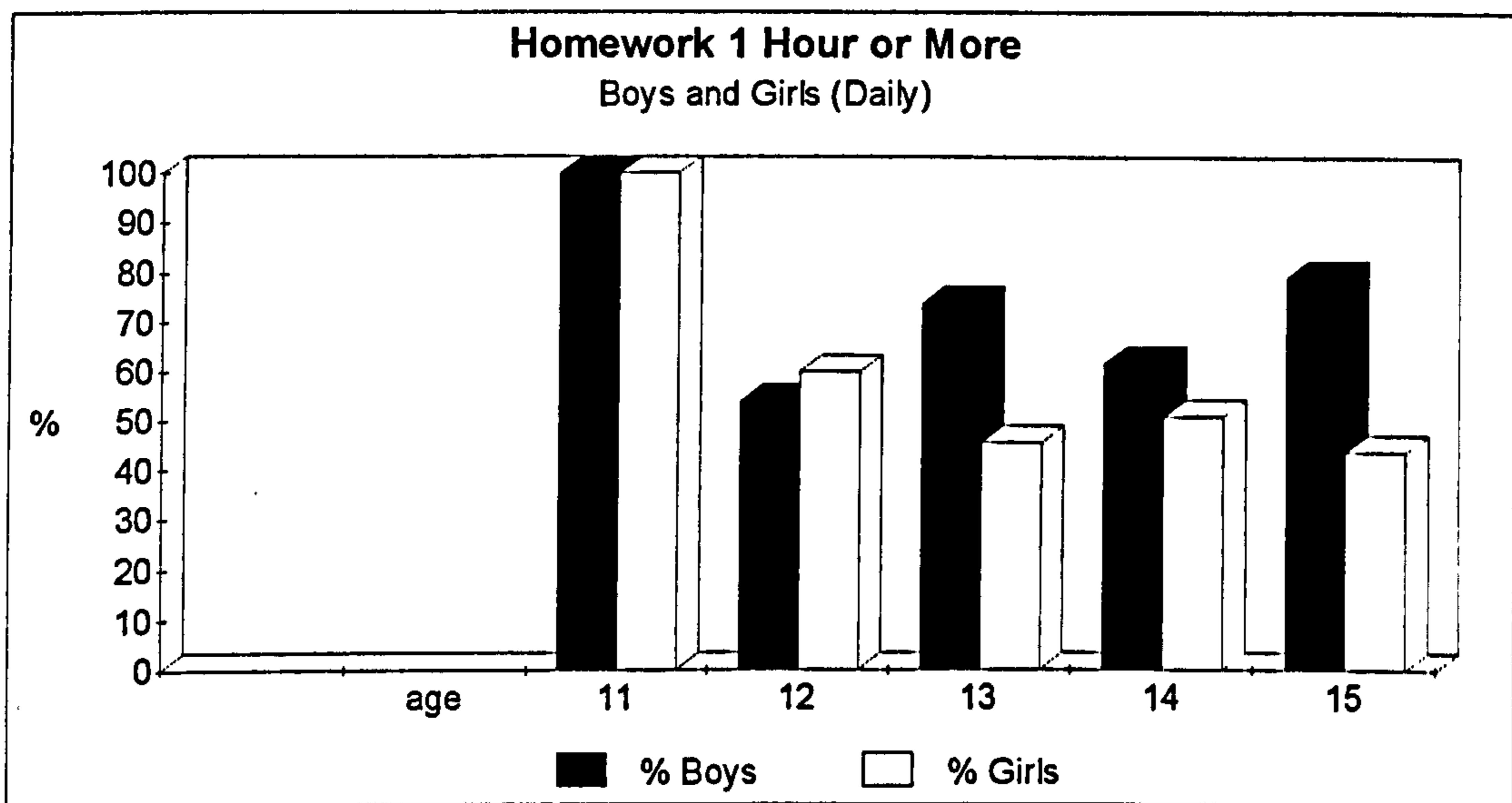
This was the case for both morning and evening listening. In the morning, the expansion of listening centred around the small time units and progressing through the age groups, listening became more confined to the five day school week. For most of this group then, the expansion in listening to morning pop radio indicated that it had more of a role as 'aural wallpaper', filling in a convenient time space between home and school, function rather than interaction. 'I just listen to it while I'm eating breakfast' or 'Mum puts it on when I go down stairs.'

Underlying these basic trends however, were some interesting variations in the evening listening patterns which may be pointers to what they listened for as a combined entity and what they used radio for on a gender basis. Although the girls listened more than the boys, their listening frequency showed the beginnings of the one night's listening as early as 13 years of age which eventually settled around the two evening mark for the majority of the girl listeners. The single evening listening (evident in both sexes) was probably almost entirely due to tuning into the 'Chart Show' on Radio 1 on a Sunday and the second evening could have been partly filled with the simultaneous listening and viewing of 'Top of the Pops'. These two events are a short-hand way of keeping up to date with the current hit singles and once focused, perhaps allows for a more general listening during the rest of the week. Knowing what is around saves detailed listening when other pressures take priority. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that within this general pattern of listening, students would become aware of new releases and be subjected to D.J. banter which helps frame teenage choices and affect preferences.

The yearly increase in boys listening for five evening each week could reflect a different usage. By the age of 15, G.C.S.E.'s are only one year away, and as music is often part of the homework environment, it could be that as the boys did more homework than the girls at 15 (95% combined '45 minutes' and 'an hour or more' compared with the girls combined 68%), it acted as background to their studies. In addition, the decline of radio consumption with age for the boys (40% non-consumers at 15) points to the development of other leisure activities which must have been displacing and replacing this medium. Weekends, for example, are often spent in outside leisure pursuits and undoubtedly, some of the seven day listeners at 13, by the age of 15, would have been active participants. This applies equally to the girls. In spite of the fact that their engagement with radio increased with age, 25% remained non-consumers at 15.

## 4.6 Homework

The students were asked to supply information of daily homework involvement by choosing one of five bands. These were: One hour or more, 45 mins., 30 mins., 15 mins., none. At eleven, all of the students did homework daily, split 67% 'one hour or more' and 33% at '30 mins.' for the boys and 78% 'one hour or more' and 11% for both '30 mins.' and '15 mins.' for the girls. Although every student (with the exception of two!) remained committed to homework throughout the age ranges, regression analysis did, in fact, show a correlation between homework commitment and gender. From 12 onwards, the degree of the boys' homework involvement was greater than that of the girls. Diagram 1 shows this process at the '1 hour or more' category quite clearly.



(Boys:n=227)

(Girls:n=233)

Diagram 1. Percentages of students who did an hour or more of homework each day by gender.

At 12, there was a reduction in the amount of time spent on homework by the boys, and was spread across four bands (6% at '15 mins.' to 54% at 'one hour or more'), but at 13, the trend indicated a greater homework input with an increase to 74% spending 'one hour or more'. '15 mins.' remained quite constant at 6%. At 14, the trend reversed, decreasing to 62% at 'one hour or more'. However, at 15 the top band figure increased dramatically where 79% of boys did 'one hour or more' and by combining the top three bands, ('one hour or more', '45 mins.' and '30 mins.'), all of the boys were involved in daily homework.

60% of 12 year old girls worked for 'an hour or more' (the only age group to work more than the boys in this top category) fell to 46% at 13 rose again to 51% at 14 but fell again to 44% at 15. Homework commitment centred around the '45 mins.' and '30 mins.' bands, but for the first time, the '15 mins.' band featured at 14 (6%) and doubled at 15 (12%).

Several important points are worth noting. Firstly, there was a substantial engagement with homework from both boys and girls throughout the age ranges as the majority were prepared to spend at least 30 minutes, daily. Secondly, while the boys commitment grew through the 12 to 13 age ranges, the girls, although committed 100% in practice, were even at this early stage, beginning to reduce the time they were prepared to allocate to it.

Notwithstanding the general reduction in homework time allocation from all of the students at 14 there was a significant gender difference by 15. Whereas the boys, became 100% committed between '30 mins.' and 'one hour or more', the girls, in these three bands, totalled 85%, which indicated a continuation of the decline evident from the age of 13.

Among 14-15 year old girls, time given over to homework generally decreased, with a significant number spending 15 minutes or less. In contrast, by the time they reached 15, boys were generally spending more time on school related tasks suggesting a more determined engagement with the curriculum, or at the very least, a pragmatic acceptance of the need for certificated qualifications.

In the run up to G.C.S.E. examinations, it is highly significant that only 44% of girls of this age did homework for 'one hour or more' as compared with the 79% of their male peers. The decline in the girls' commitment to school work by the age of 15 was also evident much earlier

on. They were already, perhaps, actively seeking a leisure career centred around the quest of 'boyfriend seeking' with all the media support available.

Finally, regression analysis suggested that students with more disposable income did less homework. Crosstabulation analysis was confirmatory, but in the higher income levels, cell counts were often too small to show convincing patterns, and in the absence of qualitative information it is impossible to know precisely why this should be the case. However, The students with most disposable income also had part-time work, which would certainly have eaten into homework time. In addition, more money would give greater access to sophisticated home-based entertainment (video and computers), and outside activities and culture,(clubs, cinema, discos and fashion). Therefore, any increased activity in pop music would have to be placed in a crowded leisure frame afforded by these new opportunities, and, as a consequence, might well take second place except in the symbolism of 'getting your man' or 'cruising chicks'.

## 4.7 Instrumental Playing and Practice

The students were asked questions in order to find out (1) if they played one or more instruments, (2) to discover how much of their leisure time was spent on daily practise, and (3) to ascertain whether or not they were members of orchestras or pop groups. Instrumental ownership and tuition is not freely available to teenagers as is, for example, radio and TV. Consequently, the number of students who opt into this process may vary from year to year, a fluctuation which was evident in this student sample, as shown in Table 4.1

Boys					
Age	11	12	13	14	15
	27%	37%	30%	31%	47%
(n=226)	(15)	(54)	(50)	(64)	43)
Girls					
Age	11	12	13	14	15
	22%	47%	43%	33%	54%
(n=233)	(9)	(57)	(56)	(70)	(41)

Table 4.1 Instrumental tuition by age and gender.

A wide variety of instruments were nominated by the students. These were amalgamated to form the following eight basic groups: piano, keyboards, guitar, drums, organ, woodwind, brass, and strings. A multiple response analysis revealed that the most nominated instrument was the piano (73), followed by woodwind (40), keyboards (33), strings (25), guitar (20), drums (16), brass (9), and organ (5). As can be seen in Table 3.1, more girls played instruments than boys but within those figures were some interesting gender variations. Three times as many girls played string instruments and more than twice as many played woodwind. On the other hand, twice as many boys played brass and over four times as many played drums.



The students were asked to nominate one of five categories to indicate how much time they spent on daily instrumental practise, which were: 'an hour or more', '45 mins.', '30 mins.', '15 mins.', 'none'. Regression analysis suggested that more practise was done by older students. There was a general decline through the ages of 12 and 13, greater for boys than girls. This trend changed at 14 as the girls' practise continued to decline as compared with the boys which showed a slight increase. At 15, the commitment of both sexes increased dramatically. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 show the boys and girls daily instrumental practice by age and time spent. Table 4.4 shows the daily instrumental practice by gender and time, which indicates an overall similar level of commitment by both boys and girls.

	Hour or more	45mins.	30mins.	15mins.	None
Age 11 (n=15)	0%	0%	7%	13%	80%
Age 12 (n=54)	4%	3%	5%	15%	63%
Age 13 (n=50)	2%	0%	12%	14%	72%
Age 14 (n=64)	7%	3%	14%	6%	70%
Age 15 (n=43)	16%	2%	12%	12%	58%

Table 4.2 Boys' daily instrumental practice by age and time.

	Hour or more	45mins.	30mins.	15mins.	None
Age 11 (n=9)	11%	11%	78%		
Age 12 (n=57)	2%	5%	21%	16%	56%
Age 13 (n=56)	7%	3%	16%	12%	62%
Age 14 (n=70)	2%	3%	9%	7%	79%
Age 15 (n=41)	12%	10%	24%	0%	54%

Table 4.3 Girls' daily instrumental practice by age and time.

	Hour or more	45mins.	30mins.	15mins.	None
Boys: (n=226)	6%	3%	13%	12%	66%
Girls: (n=233)	5%	4%	16%	10%	65%

Table 4.4 Daily instrumental practice by gender and time.

Gender was a striking determinant of orchestral and pop group membership as two very clear trends were evident. Of those that played, more than twice as many girls were orchestral members but the direct opposite was true of pop groups.

Pervading the whole process was the correlation between personal income and musical opportunity. Wealthier students were more likely to play instruments and be orchestral and/or pop group members.

The amount of active music making was higher than, perhaps, one would have imagined. 38% of the students were players, 34% practised daily and 15% were members of orchestras and pop groups. This represented a considerable time allocation for a sizeable proportion of the sample

Age, gender and personal income played an active role in shaping the musical leisure careers of the students. Older students allocated more time for practice and personal income (which probably reflects the relative affluence of the household) underpinned musical choices.

Perhaps more important however, was the influence of gender, as it affected the type of practical music experience. The data supports the common sense view that girls are more likely to be orchestral players and members, as compared with boys, who are more likely to be drummers and in pop groups. Moreover, the perpetuation of this experience is, to a great extent, 'built in' to a system which primarily operates in schools via the specialist peripatetic music service. Girls more than boys opt to play an instrument in school when the opportunity becomes available, and the system, at present is primarily classically and orchestrally orientated. As this first operates in junior schools, opportunities are further constrained by the instruments which are available to loan and the particular expertise of the serving peripatetic teacher.

As the nature of instrumental playing is progressive and concerned with the acquisition of specific skills, from an early age, many girls are placed into a particular musical frame which could continue throughout their formal education.

The opportunity to become involved in pop oriented playing is very restricted, and available to few students. Most of those who take up pop instruments do so privately, and often follow a programme without the rigors of a 'classical' training which is primarily centred in an examination system. The notion of 'pop stardom with ease' is singularly attractive to boys who

otherwise would not become involved in instrument playing. Attempts are being made to address this massive short coming, but finance in terms of appropriate instruments and teachers will inhibit any major change in this area.

Social factors also compound constraints. Instrument playing transcends the home as it is a bridge between leisure inside and outside. The 'legitimate' nature of orchestral membership allows girls access to an outside leisure activity, which may not extend to the pop world with all its connotations, especially as it is reasonable to assume that many of the female players in this study would have been from middle class backgrounds.

#### **4.8 Magazine purchasing and borrowing**

The students were asked to provide information on the frequency of their magazine purchasing and borrowing and were given the opportunity to state up to three of their title choices. It was no surprise to find that it was overwhelming a girls' activity. They considerably outread the boys in all years. The boys 'regularly' and 'sometimes' purchasing patterns were consistent throughout the years, averaging about 13%. By combining 'regularly' and 'sometimes', the girls patterns were also consistent, averaging just under 70%. Age did make a difference, however. Regular purchases rose between the ages of 11-13, and then declined between the ages of 14-15 as the older girls became 'sometimes' purchasers. This decline was quite considerable, down to 27% of regular purchasing at 15 from a peak of 46% at 13. There was no correlation for either sex between personal income and purchasing.

Of the 32 magazine titles named, 'Smash Hits' was universally the clear favourite. The boys had no other allegiance, as compared with quite a few girls who also read 'Just 17' and 'No 1'. The infamous 'Jackie' only attracted seven female nominations, and none of these was after the age of 13. (No boys read it, at all!)

The success of 'Smash Hits' is significant because of its unisex appeal (which, of course, means a greater circulation) and its move away from the traditional format of the girl's magazine. The content is predominantly concerned with 'Top 10' pop performers and bands and the

associated fashions and styles. This highlights the marketing importance of the interlocking relationship of magazines, TV and radio, whereby the pop artists are heard, seen and read about. The decline in chart interest by the age of 15 could partly account for the decline in readership as many teenagers of this age begin to develop particular taste cultures.

Borrowing patterns were similar to purchasing patterns, and interest was inevitably centred around the same titles. Although, very few students regularly borrowed magazines, 53% of the girls and 25% of the boys sometimes did, across all ages. 'Smash Hits' could have a similar function to the magazine in the doctor's waiting room; something to browse through when available, which would give information on pop performers and style, but received in a fairly passive way. Another indicator of the pervasive nature of pop.

#### **4.9 Pop audio recordings: purchases and collection sizes**

The 1980's marked a tremendous explosion in low-cost audio equipment, taking hi-fi out of the connoisseur bracket and into the chain stores. Most teenagers, therefore, had the opportunity to own their own stereo systems in addition to other equipment available in the household. Indeed, in some homes there was an audio system for each child, as was the case for Beth, (age 14) who said in response to the question asking where her system was situated:

'I have my own in my bedroom, and my two brothers also have one in theirs. We close the doors, but still play music loudly to drown out the sound of my mum's and dad's down stairs!'

Such saturation was evident in the results on access to equipment, 93% had access to record players and 99% had access to tape recorders. Two new pieces of stereo hardware emerged during the 1980's, the personal stereo and the compact disc player. There was a correlation between personal income and access in both cases, less so for personal stereos (over 90% of all students) but substantially so for compact discs, 32% of boys

compared with 24% of girls. Age also appeared to be significant, as boys figures declined through the age range whereas the girls increased. By the age of 15, 26% of the boys had access to CD's as compared with 41% of the girls.

The students were asked, in addition to their access to specific stereo equipment, how often they bought records and tapes, and the number they had in their collection. All three variables, age gender and personal income, played an active role in framing choices. There is still the distinction between single and album purchasing, although the emergence of 'hit' single compilations like the 'Now' and 'Monster Hits' series does blurr this division. Although of album length, teenagers seem to view them as a convenient way of listening to all the 'hits' of a given time period and, therefore, they can probably not been seen as an indicator of movement away from a chart orientated involvement.

Girls, traditionally, purchase more singles and albums than boys, and the data confirms a continuation of this process. From the age of 12 to 14 (the cell count is too small at 11 to be significant in this particular context), boys singles purchases increased from 63% to 86%, but fell away at 15 to 73%. Girls purchasing was more even through the first three years (an average of 81%, but increased to 88% at 15. Although there were marked differences in the size of individual single record collections (six 14 year old boys said they had collections of 110, 200, 225, 250, 300 and 600, respectively), the majority of both boys and girls were well inside 50 singles. In fact, only 3% of girls and 5% of boys had more than 50 singles in their collection. It was interesting, however, that the big singles collectors (150+) were boys as they had no rival from what is normally seen as an intensely female preserve.

The largest proportion for both sexes throughout the five years (20%) had a collection of five singles. The ages of 13 and 14 were the prime years of interest with collections reaching up to 50, although within the divisions of five, from five to fifty, girls owned more than boys. Even so, collections up to 15 were most common for all the teenagers, larger collections averaged only 6%.

The preponderance of small singles collections were inevitably reflected in purchasing patterns as few of the students regularly bought them. (An average of 5% between the ages of 12-14). 'Sometimes' purchasing

remained constant (30%), while there was a discernible move from 'rarely' to 'never'. Also, girls, in general, increased purchasing with age as compared with the boys.

The students owned marginally fewer albums than singles. 8% more girls owned more albums (and singles) than boys. An age and size of collection correlation was evident for both boys and girls. Although the majority of collections were in the five to ten bracket, bigger collections emerged, more so in the case of the girls with an increase in age. For the first time in either singles or albums, a double figure percentage (15%) of female students who had 20+ in a collection was apparent.

Collections by the age of 15 for all students, reached into the 50's. Once again, the really ardent collectors were boys, with two 14 year olds owning 100 and 150, respectively, and two boys at 14, claiming to own 400 and 800, respectively! Perhaps more in the realms of reality, 8 boys owned more than 50 albums as compared with only two of the girls.

From the age of 13 to 15, a distinctive purchasing pattern, centred in the 'sometimes' category, emerged for both boys and girls. For boys aged 13 and 14, although 'sometimes' remained constant at 30% there was general upwards movement from 'rarely' through to 'regularly'. At 15, however, clustering took place around 'sometimes' which increased to 37% due to movement from 'regularly' and 'rarely'.

Girl 'sometimes' purchasers remained at 52% at 13 and 14. The 'rare' female purchaser declined each year. 'Regularly' female purchasers followed the male trend, peaking at 14 and declining at 15, which increased the

'sometimes' category to 73%. Thus, the pattern primarily centred in the 'regular' category, indicated a greater inclination to purchase rather than an intense desire to do so.

Many more girls, then, were sometimes involved in album purchasing than the boys. However, the really ardent purchasers were boys, as twice as many of them bought albums (14%) as compared with the girls (7%).

The driving force behind single purchasing and ownership was gender although disposable income was also a factor. This is hardly surprising as a single costing at least £1.75 and an album about £6, regular collecting would eat into the disposable income of many (especially young) teenagers. In the case of album purchasing, the age component came ahead

of gender, but, once again, this was probably linked to the added disposable income of the older teenager.

A dimension that was not investigated, but one which almost certainly would have had a direct influence on record purchasing and collecting, was the possibility of cheap home recording. It is relatively inexpensive to buy a twin deck cassette machine or cassette radio and open up the arena of illegal copying. Acquisition of current hit singles can easily be obtained from the recording of Radio 1's Sunday evening Chart Show and simultaneous radio and television broadcasting of Top of the Pops. It can, of course, be updated weekly, and with adept editing, it is not difficult to erase DJ chat and banter. Also, the questionnaires did not draw the distinction between cassettes and record albums, although many students wrote that they had included both. Even so, the case is left open as it is impossible to know whether they had included 'pirated' copies in their collection totals.

The students in this study represented the younger teenagers and were indeed, cash conscious and it is quite likely, therefore, that a sizeable proportion of their single listening was centred around this illegal activity. This could account for the fact that so many of the students only claimed a singles collection of 15. In interview, numerous students mentioned the constraining nature of limited finances in relation to record purchasing, and notwithstanding illegal copying, were always on the lookout for value for money. In this frame sits the 12" single.

'Singles are a rip-off. At Castle's discount, 12 singles cost £2.99 and for that you get the single plus an extension, and the instrumental version on the 'B' side.'

(Agatha, age 14)

The cost of batteries for personal stereos and portable cassette players was a serious limitation in terms of usage for 10% of the interviewees. Similarly, the majority always sought mains powered equipment in order to save batteries even if, given a free choice, they would have preferred to have removed the encumbrance of a plug and lead. Cost



caution also included secondary listening, especially for those who only had access to battery driven equipment.

'I have one in my room, but when my brother has his on, I leave my door open and listen to his.'

(Ben, age 14)

Although Ben did not think that his brother was close in age at 16, he did feel that their musical tastes were similar. This shared activity, along with record and tape exchange, must be common for many related teenagers.

As well as constraints created by age, gender and personal income, the nature of listening was also constrained and shaped by social context and the need for specific gratifications. The personal stereo gave the students much freedom for listening in hitherto unlistenable situations, when working paper rounds, travelling on buses, walking the dog, or as a 'necessary' alternative to someone else's choice.

'I listen to it when my sister's got something naff on in the car.'

(John, age 14)

It also created personal space in private listening when they were prohibited from playing music out loud or simply to block out the presence of the rest of the family. Some students liked the convenience of being able to switch from visual to aural media in an instance, when they became bored or dissatisfied with a particular TV programme. It also allowed rule-breaking after 'lights out'. For a lot of them, however, battery cost prevented a greater use.

Alternatively, some students preferred not to overuse their personal stereo because of actual hearing problems which were associated with the closeness of the speakers, and many expressed concern because of media warnings. For some, head phones and trailing leads were all too much trouble.

'I tend to use my stereo more than my Walkman because, it's, like er, less faff with the headphones and everything. It's more, just, it's more around you in a way. It sort of echoes round the room. In the Walkman it just goes straight into your ears.'

(Sarah, aged 14)

Further problems associated with the closeness of headphones to ears .

'I don't listen to it that much because I like to sing along and I always get done for singing too much.'

(Stephanie, age 14)

Personal stereos, were for these students a mixed blessing. They certainly gave much freedom and musical pleasure, but potentially placed the listener in a musical context which effectively neutralised overt, physical reactions. This last point probably explained why none of the students interviewed were prepared to swap the personal stereo for their mains system. Main stereo listening had a variety of gratifications primarily centred in or around their own rooms. Many students used it as a background to homework and jobs, almost as a quasi radio, but a major difference was the ability to choose a particular ambient sound. Listening as a sole activity was for the derived musical pleasure obtainable from a specific artist or group.

"When I put music on, not necessarily radio, but cassette, because I really want to listen to it, so I sit down and do nothing else, but just listen to it.'

(Beth, age 14)

Purposeful listening also operated as an alternative to radio for disillusioned listeners who failed to find stations which offered music to match their specific tastes. Being in control of listening choices was important to the vast majority of those interviewed and therefore, emphasised the importance of records and tapes within this frame.

When used as a means of escape from other members of the family, it not only created personal, private space, but took on therapeutic qualities, by reducing pressures and ameliorating family tiffs and squabbles.

'I listen to it when I want to wind down if my brother has been teasing me or something, then I go to my room, shut the door and listen to something I like.'

(Ben, age 14)

In a similar vein, the head set in the main stereo, fulfilled a different set of needs not mentioned by anyone in relation to the personal stereo.

'I listen to it with my head set when my mum's nagging at me.'

(Tina, age 14)

Other students used it as an alternative to TV when there was nothing on which appealed, and some students were interested in comedy tapes when fancying a touch of light relief and amusement.

Listening to pop music recordings was a major activity, pervading a large slice of the students' leisure time budget. On its own, the students were not necessarily singularly engaged, but as an enabler or necessary accompaniment for other chosen or imposed activities, it was very important, indeed.

#### 4.9.1 Students' taste cultures

Sub-cultural and Counter-cultural studies have shown a link with particular musical styles. As age, gender and personal income were highlighted as important variables in framing musical choices, a multiple response analysis was used to uncover possible consistency or variation in particular types of leisure career paths due to links between income and gender, and income and age. The students were asked:

'If you had to spend some time on a desert island alone, what five records would you take with you? They can be singles, L.P.'s, tapes or compact discs.'

All nominations were classified into 32 categories, but giving prominent chart artists a separate listing. These were:

1. Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan,
2. Michael Jackson,
3. Madonna,
4. Current Hit Groups,
5. Solo male,
6. Solo Female,
7. Singer-Song Writer,
8. Heavy metal,
9. Rock '80's,
10. Folk Rock,
11. Rap, Hip-Hop and Acid,
12. Compilations of Recent Hits,
13. Motown,
14. Reggae,
15. Classic '40's,
16. Classic '50's,
17. Classic '60's,
18. Classic '70's,
19. Jazz,
20. Country and Western,
21. Films-Shows,
22. Baroque Instrumental,
23. Baroque Choral,
24. Classical Instrumental,
25. Classical Opera,
26. Classical Choral,
27. Romantic Instrumental,
28. Romantic Opera,
29. Romantic Choral,
30. Modern Instrumental,
31. Modern Opera,
32. Modern Choral.

The age group covered in this study was heavily chart orientated, and it was, therefore, no surprise to find most responses were centred around Kylie and Jason, Current Hit Groups, and Recent Hit Compilations. However, most nominations for all styles, was centred within the lower income bands up to £4.75. Many of these students received very little pocket money, 90% between £2-£3 per week, and even allowing for 'topping up' via part-time jobs and financially rewarded family chores, 24% of this group increased their

income by a mere £1.50 and 11% by an average of only £3. The students interviewed were asked how they would have spent an increase of £5 per week. In response, along with clothes, record purchasing would have been the other area of increased financial investment. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that a lack of disposable income heavily constrained record purchasing. The development of specific taste cultures then, may not be solely linked to gender, age or sub-cultures in the early to middle teens. Its development could also be linked to choices due to ownership over time of purposefully chosen material. It would, indeed, be interesting to see the results of choices made freed from the constraints of income, and how this could affect the development of musical tastes during the teenage years.

Some musical tastes were enjoyed by all income groups, mostly centred around chart-orientated material, and also included Solo Female Singers, Current Hit Groups, and Compilations of Recent Hits.

Away from the charts, Heavy Metal and '80's Rock were also nominated by all income groups. However, boys generally were more ardent rock fans than the girls as was spectacularly demonstrated by Heavy Rock where male nominations were nearly four times that of the girls.

Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan had a huge appeal amongst the low income girls and some interest in all other female income groups. This was not mirrored in the boys nominations. There was also a difference in Film and Show music nominations, whereby interest was shown in all female income groups but hardly at all for any of the equivalent males.

Although the pop music tastes of young teenagers are firmly rooted in the charts, the teenagers in this study demonstrated that it is not static process. An indication of the dynamic nature of chart orientation through the years could be seen in the movement between record choices of Kylie and Jason, Current Hit Groups, Compilations of Recent Hits, Solo Male and Solo Female. Table 4.5 summarises the nominations by each year group.

	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15
Kylie & Jason	64	39	21	5
Current Hit Groups	37	42	71	33
Hit Single Compilations	17	31	42	23
Solo Male	11	7	20	7
Solo Female	13	14	26	11

Table 4.5 Record nominations by age.

The table shows a broadening of interest between 12 and 14 years of age, as the students moved away from the 'teeny-bopper' culture epitomised by the sounds of Stock, Aitken and Waterman, eventually doubling, for example, their interest in other Current Hit Groups and Compilations of Recent Hits, often the case in the rise and fall of other leisure activities, 14 marked a watershed in chart interest. Only Current Hit Groups remained as an active involvement, and even here, was greatly reduced.

An interest in nostalgia was also evident at this age. All income groups showed some interest in Classic '60's and '70's records (there were even three nominations for Classic '50's). This, too, with the exception of a few nominations for '70's Rock, disappeared by the age of 15. '80's Rock (especially boys) doubled between the ages of 12 and 14, remaining constant at 15. It was also actively supported by all income groups in these latter, two age categories.

Heavy Metal was an interesting phenomenon. There was a small, but ardent following in all years, and included virtually all income groups. Moreover, at 15, it showed an increase in support. No other style was as evenly supported throughout the age range and showed a broad appeal which cut across any income barrier.

Another mini indicator of movement away from the charts through the teenage years, was a small but significant growth of interest in the music of well established Singer-Song Writers, like Paul Simon, centred in the lower income groups.

The 15 year old high income earners (£7.50 and £18+) made few nominations in any category. They are undoubtedly faced with a greater amount of choice in terms of activities (perhaps in line with more personal freedom), which could lead to increased demands on discretionary spending. This would inevitably require a prioritising of activities in relation to income. (Even a larger disposable income is finite.) At this age, the symbolic pop activities associated with fashion (a particularly expensive involvement) may have take priority over record purchases, and as a result, minimised real immersion in specific musical taste cultures. For many teenagers at this stage, then, the sound of pop music may be relegated to the status of aural wallpaper, necessary, but as background, not foreground.

A final point, here, is the need to see the years between 12 and 15 as a musical arena of personal investigation and experiment. Of the 32 possible style categories, Table 4.6 shows the number of categories nominated by each year.

Age 12	16
Age 13	19
Age 14	23
Age 15	16

Table 4.6 Record category nominations by age

Pop music was a dominant component in the centre of their leisure activities, but as their horizons grew, and faced with the many choices they had to make, whether they were constrained or freely embraced, the relative importance of active pop music involvement, decreased. The peak of this involvement at 14, was followed by a substantial scaling down of their commitment to it at 15. For the majority of these teenagers, then, the basic patterning of their pop leisure activities could well have been already substantially fixed for adult life before they even left school.

One cannot leave the analysis of taste cultures without referring to High Art music. It may be established common-sense knowledge that teenagers generally have little interest in 'classical' music, but the scale of its rejection was staggering. Of the 10 possible High Art categories, none were nominated at the age of 12, three at 13, six at 14, and none at 15. In total, there were only 19 records nominated by any of the students.

The implications for music teachers are substantial, in terms of how they negotiate their own values and those of the students in their classrooms. There are also major implications for the type of course material chosen and how it is delivered. Similarly, so is the choice of material for extra-curricular activities, that is, the style of music included in concerts or for stage productions. On a larger scale, the type of opportunities available for students in the county system of orchestras and bands is called into question. As many of these students were already members of orchestras, there was a serious miss-match between their orchestral practice and their personal preferences and perhaps sheds light on why many students 'drop out' of orchestral activities and instrumental tuition before they leave school.

It also begs another, fundamentally important, question. How well does the school musically prepare all students for adult life? This issue will be returned to, later, in the analysis of the students' attitude to school music and the music teachers' attitude to pop.



## **4.9.2 Vision Culture**

The 1980's saw an explosion of visual opportunities in home-based leisure activities due to the availability of relatively cheap technology in the form of video cassette recorders, personal computers and games machines, satellite and cable television.

Moreover, television, almost universally embedded as the focal point in the living room, as a result of these developments, provided extended viewing opportunities via additional sets in the bedroom and the childrens' rooms.

The questions asked of the students, attempted to shed light on two issues. Firstly, the way in which this visual revolution had affected their leisure activities and the possibility of the development of a teenage vision culture, and secondly, its relationship with and impact on their involvement in pop music.

## **4.9.3 Television access and viewing**

The embedded nature of television was confirmed by the fact that all of the students had access to at least one TV. Perhaps more interesting, was the fact that 90% of the sample had access to another television set in the home, evenly spread across both sexes. Between the ages of 11 to 13, this secondary access was remarkably constant at about 87%, but rose to 90% at 14 and higher still, 95%, at 15. Personal ownership was more likely at these ages, a finding substantiated by a large proportion of the 14 year olds interviewed.

Viewing information was restricted to pop programme preferences and their weekly consumption measured in hours. Four programmes were nominated by the students, and are listed in rank order in Table 4.7.

Top of the Pops	85%
Saturday Morning Chart show	54%
Def 2	8%
American Top 10	3%

Table 4.7 Pop television programmes nominated.

It was not surprising that the two chart orientated pop shows received most nominations, with Top of the Pops the inevitable clear favourite for the vast majority of students. 15% more girls than boys watched this programme weekly, whereas viewing of the Chart Show was almost evenly split. Twice as many boys than girls watched American Top 10, a situation which was reversed in the case of Def 2.

With the exception of American Top 10 which peaked at 13, interest in the other three programmes grew, or at least remained constant, up to the age of 14. At 15, however, there was a significant decline in interest, with no nominations for American Top 10 by this age group.

The nature of viewing was constrained both financially and socially even when ownership of the hardware was clearly defined. Of the students interviewed, 75% had access to a second television (in some cases there were three or more in the household), and three quarters of this group personally owned the second set. Sharing by other brothers and sisters, both willingly and unwillingly, was common and some parents restricted use in order to save on energy costs. A common root to second television access was the passing on of the redundant black and white set after the household had upgraded to colour. Having established the precedent of increased sets per household, this older group, by the age of fourteen, almost naturally changed to colour (often portable for sharing purposes) via Christmas or birthday presents.

The location of the second television was always 'up stairs', in one of the children's bedrooms. Where the set remained most often, seemed to be determined by the age of the owner. Older children, whatever the rules of the household, were prepared and capable of ousting younger brothers and sisters, as Philip, (age 14) commented:

'It's in my room, it's partly mine and my bother's but I still kick him out when I want to watch my programmes.'

It was apparent, therefore, that although parents could issue rules and regulations in relation to secondary television viewing, age helped to enhance access, which helped viewing 'after hours' if the television was located in the appropriate place.

A huge favourite with a majority of the interviewees, was soap opera, with Neighbours top of the list. Interest in comedy programmes like Black Adder and New Statesman followed closely, and the 'mini' series over three of four episodes (a common feature in 1989), was mentioned by several others. By the way in which it was said, ('oh, and of course...') it was a taken for granted assumption, that Top of the Pops was inevitable weekly viewing for most of the teenagers.

The only interest in film viewing was mentioned by Ben:

'I like watching the old thriller films because they make me crack up as the special effects are such rubbish.'

He was also heavily committed to comedy programmes and hated all soap operas, dismissing them as another 'load of rubbish'.

#### 4.9.4 Video viewing and recording

The scale of video access was high at about 85%, shared almost equally by both boys and girls and across all ages, and probably accounts for the apparent lack of interest in the weekly television films' programming. Movie viewing seemed to take on a different meaning, detaching it from general television viewing, as video opened up a dimension for younger teenagers which was not previously available to them. Set bedtimes no longer restricted the viewing of the 'late' films if they were recorded, and film hire (for many students, at least a weekly affair), and for special occasions such as 'video parties' in place of the disco for birthdays, further helped to cement this sense of a 'separate consumption'.

A degree of parental 'policing' was evident in terms of the appropriate nature of films matched with age. Although censoring was attempted, it did not come across as a strong concern for those students who mentioned it. In fact, they suggested, without exactly saying how, that such sanctions could be overcome.

Video flexibility was not only apparent in movie viewing. If 'live' consumption formerly impeded other activities like homework, the students, now, found it possible to record and watch later. This was especially true of 'soap operas', like Neighbours and Home and Away, which were avidly followed by many of the girls and accounted for the half an hour per day recording, a common time allocation for many of them. It allowed them to keep up to date with ongoing serials whilst fulfilling the compulsory elements of their time budgets.

Another aspect of video was the freedom to rewatch programmes of particular interest. Beth, one of the 14 year olds interviewed, gave as an example, her sister, who had watched the film Grease, 37 times. Comedy programmes like Black Adder, were recorded and watched frequently by a number of the students, and, perhaps, may help to move it and other programmes like it, from the category of an ordinary comedy programme into the 'Classic Comedy' genre.

The nature of video viewing was a negotiated family affair. No-one mentioned access to more than one VCR, and, therefore, choice of viewing, recording and film hire became a question of 'turns' particularly between brothers and sisters.

"We take it in turns in our house between me, me brother and me sister to choose which video we get. My sister usually gets something like 'Grease', my brother normally gets some horror movie which he thinks is really horrible, but is absolutely 'naff', and I normally get some comedy."

(John, age 14)

The arrival of video, then, had certainly had an impact on the students use of leisure, but there was an omission in all conversations bar one. Karen was the only student who mentioned the recording or purchasing of pop videos (she had to suffer the derision of her class mates as she watched 'New Kids on the Block' AND liked Jason Donovan!).

Questionnaire results showed that 22% of the students purchased pop videos, and 48% of them recorded pop material from the television. 3% viewed three times per week or more, and 12% once or twice each week. 'Sometimes' was 25%.

Girls, almost inevitably, were more active in all areas. They purchased, recorded and watched more than the boys by 10%, 15% and 7%, respectively. It is worth mentioning, however, that the viewing category of 'three times each week or more' the really ardent fans, was the same for both sexes, at 3.5%. There were, however, no large pop video collections as very few had more than three.

Purchasing and television recording patterns, showed that girls were more active than the boys by about 9% but recorded less by about 13%, an indication that girls were more prepared to invest financially in the pop market as compared with the boys, who while still interested, sought a non-expensive way of achieving pop video 'currency' and entertainment.

Frequency and age, however, may have been the key to the apparent lack of comment in interviews. Although there was an ardent group who viewed video pop material at least once each week, the numbers were only in the 'teens. 'Sometimes' averaged about 25% which still left about 60% who rarely or never watched pop video material. Once again, for those who

were involved, 14 years of age marked a watershed in interest. The steady growth in purchasing, recording and viewing declined by the age of 15.

Ever since 'The Magical Mystery Tour' by the Beatles in the 1960's and 'Glitter Rock' in the 1970's, the association of vision with sound naturally moved into and continues to flourish in the emerging technology of video.

Today, the most successful pop singles are usually released with some form of video support. However, these early to middle teenagers, did not embrace this development whole-heartedly. Some even suggested that the visual element impeded real enjoyment of the music.

'I don't like looking at pop singers when they sing because it puts me off. I just turn away'.

(Rosalind, age 14)

When they were asked what they would do if they had an extra £4 each week, only 25% said they would put some of that extra money into pop video purchasing.

This lack of visual interest in pop music was pursued further when the students were asked what programmes they would like to see on television if they had access to the programme controllers. Comedy featured often, with a long list which included more programmes like Monty Python, Red Dwarf, and Black Adder and anything which included Rowan Atkinson or was written by Ben Elton. Moreover, everyone (except Karen), thought that pop music was well served by radio and it was not, therefore, necessary to include more on television.

As Karen was the only student who did not support this view, she was asked for her opinion, which could be revealing in the sense that it exposed a possible deficiency in pop music programming.

"I didn't say anything because, well they don't put the, right, well, my type of music on. So, they wouldn't do it, and I, you know, I'd like to see some of my music on there, but they don't seem to actually put any of the music that I like on the telly. The only chance I can ever get is watching the 'Indy' charts in the 'Charts Show'."

The Saturday morning 'Chart Show' on Channel 3 splits the most popular records of the week into different charts, and by not solely dealing with the traditional Top 10, attracted a young but discerning, viewer. Pop music is not consumed uniformly, but even with greater access through satellite and cable, there is no guarantee that these individual tastes will be met. Perhaps more research needs to be done on the burgeoning taste cultures of this age group.

No analysis of the visual media of the 1980's would be complete without at least a mention of satellite broadcasting. None of the students interviewed had access to this medium, but 75% would like to have had the opportunity. However, the opportunity to watch more pop music videos was not a major attraction. Apart from a very small minority who would have liked more sport (both boys and girls), most saw satellite as the 'Mecca' for movie opportunity, vast choice with a quick turnover, superior to the 'wait for release' date at the video shop. This was also reflected in the small following of American Top 10 despite the flexibility of video.

#### 4.9.5 Home computer access

In the questions asked, no distinction was drawn between access to micro computers or games machines. The students were simply asked, 'Do you have the following in your house?', (which included other media hardware such as personal stereo, cassette tape player, etc.), 'a home computer'.

77% of all the students had access to some form of computer, but on a gender break, as regression analysis had suggested, boys would be ahead of the girls. This pattern was, however, influenced by age as Table 4.8 illustrates.

Age	11	12	13	14	15
Boys access	86%	83%	86%	90%	81%
(n=)	(15)	(54)	(50)	(64)	(43)
Girls access	100%	63%	68%	8%	66%
(n=)	(9)	(57)	(56)	(70)	(41)

Table 4.8 Access to home computing by age and gender

As has been said previously, there were few students aged 11 (15 boys and 9 girls), so the real indicators appeared in the other years. Female access was quite stable from the ages of 12 to 14, as compared with the boys which showed a little growth between these years, but dropped by 9% at 15. Notwithstanding the greater male interest in computer based leisure, the gap between the sexes, which averaged about 19%, did not disguise the fact that a minimum of two thirds of the girls had access to some form of computer.

Access does not necessarily mean usage, and the answers to the question, 'How often do you play computer games each week? Daily, Three times a week, Once or twice a week, Never', exposed a tremendous gap between the sexes.



Six times as many boys than girls played computer games daily and three times each week. Even at once or twice each week, between the ages of 12 to 14, about 11% more boys than girls played computer games and at 15, it rose to twice as many boys. The 'Never' category was also revealing. For the girls, it rose gradually from 53% at 12, to 83% at 15, compared with the boys who were stable at 28%, between 12 to 14, before it climbed to 44% at 15. Thus, it was clear that computer playing was a very important boys leisure activity.

These figures also showed that interest declined with age for all of the students, but more so for the girls. At 15, the only category nominated by them was 17% for once or twice each week.

On the other hand, although the daily playing of the boys fell to 5% at 15 as compared with about 19% between the ages of 13 and 14, three times each week and once or twice each week remained fairly stable at an average of 13% and 38% respectively.

It is worth mentioning, yet again, that at the age of 14, the students, (in this case the boys) had begun to reduce their time allocation in another leisure activity. Set in this context, it was even more significant that the girls, who have been shown to follow this general trend, from the early age of 11, did not really embrace this visual media or the interactive opportunities afforded by it.

In an attempt to discover more about the nature of computer playing the students were asked how often they played at friends' homes. Very few boys or girls played at their friends' homes daily or three times each week, about 2% between the ages of 12 to 14. The most significant factor was the playing at the 'once or twice each week' category, the results of which are shown in Table 4.9.

	Age	12	13	14	15
Once or twice each week	Boys	54%	32%	28%	6%
	(n=)	(54)	50)	(64)	43)
Once or twice each week	Girls	25%	23%	11%	15%
	(n=)	(57)	(56)	(70)	(41)

Table 4.9 Computer games playing at friends' homes once or twice each week by age and gender

As a peer group activity, computer playing was, therefore, very important for the younger boys, and remained so for over a quarter of them until the age of 14. The girls interest, while half that of the boys at 12, faded substantially at 14 but rose slightly at 15. Here, the residual 'hard core' interest was now more or less even at 15. The apparent increase in the girls playing at this age is, perhaps, best seen in the overall playing pattern, particularly the 'never' category. Interest declined yearly with 72% non-peer group players at 12 increasing to 85% non-peer group players at 15. By comparison, the boys showed a decrease in interest between the ages of 12 and 13 (42% non-peer group players at 12 and 62% non-peer group players at 13). This figure remained stable at 14, but increased to 79% at 15. Thus, by the age of 15, peer group computer games playing was an unimportant activity for the majority of older teenagers in this group.

#### **4.9.6 Computer games playing**

Several hundred games' titles were nominated by the students. Some of them gave no titles and, of course, others named many. The first four nominations of each student were classified into eight categories, which were, arcade games, (commonly known as 'shoot 'em' up type games), simulation, (landing aircrafts or motor racing involving a higher level of skill), football related, other sports, martial arts, (the 'Kung Fu' variants), board games (chess, scrabble, etc.), adventure, (often word based and possibly in the form of clues like the Channel 3's 'Crystal Maze') and educational, (maths and science programmes).

Far and away the most popular category was arcade games. Here, boys nominations were only marginally more than the girls at 12, although the gap widened each year until the age of 14. The general pattern showed a peak for both sexes at 12, which dipped at 13, increased again at 14 before fading quite substantially at 15.

Only three other categories, simulation, sports and adventure games, were nominated in double figures by the boys. All three were most popular with 14 year olds, and the first two, similarly with 12 year olds. No category other than arcade games, was nominated in double figures by any of the girls. In fact, the average nomination for all ages and categories by the girls was less than two. Female nominations for sports which averaged six, was, therefore, quite significant as the only other area of games interest.

The lack of nominations for educational games may not have been solely to do with a lack of interest. Unlike the video battle whereby the VHS system eventually established market supremacy, there is no comparable stability in the home computer market. Thus, there is a problem of software compatibility between the competing systems. BBC computers, for example, which were widely used by schools, have a wide variety of educational software. However, it is unlikely that this system would be purchased for home use, (it is expensive compared with other micro computers) and this excludes its educational use outside of school.

Similarly, Atari games machine have no educational software and IBM compatible micro computers, like the Amstrad, are designed primarily as work stations. In fact, it has only been very recently that software writers for this latter system have realised the profit potential of IBM compatible games.

Given that, at present, most interest in computers is male dominated, primarily centred in games playing, and declines by the age of 15, it is unlikely that there will be an increase in the availability of educational software for home use, in the near future.

Computing as a symbolic world (the relationship between the games played and other media, like film), was ascertained by coding all choices into four categories. These were, comics, films, television programmes or personalities, and books or novels.

The vast majority of games were non-media related, mainly 'shoot 'em ups' derived from the arcades. Films were well ahead of all other media categories. Many more boys played, probably due to the preponderance of titles such as 'Robocop', 'Rambo', 'Aliens' and 'Kung Fu'. All nominations for television related games were in single figures, and peaked for the boys at the age of 12 and girls at 13. (The only occasion at any age when the girls nominated more than the boys.) No games were derived from books or novels. Interestingly, the least media derived games were played by 14 year old boys.

It is well documented that computing is more boy-orientated. The interactive skills developed by arcade-type games playing would be a springboard for the more complex simulation and adventure games. Without the development of these skills, girls exclude themselves from an interesting and absorbing screen-based leisure activity, and, perhaps, more importantly, inhibit their opportunities in the work place which is rapidly becoming dominated by the hardware of Information Technology.

#### **4.9.7 Leisure outside of the home: clubs, cinema, theatre**

The distinction between home based leisure activities, and those which take place outside, is crucial. Firstly, parental control is exercised more consistently as the need to organise teenage girls into safe and acceptable leisure activities, becomes important. Youth cultural studies have shown that parents are very reluctant to allow girls to be part of peer groups which spend their time 'hanging around', with no particular place to go. Boys, on the other hand, have much more freedom. After all, 'getting into trouble', will never mean pregnancy, and this legacy of generations is still an important factor in deciding the degree and type of constraints placed on girls in unchaperoned leisure activities.

The students provided information on four main outside activities. These were, membership of clubs, (Scouts, Guides, Youth Clubs, St. John's, etc.), and frequency of attending the cinema, theatre, and sports events, (football matches, athletics meetings, etc.).

The social constraints placed on girls, and the relative freedoms granted to the boys, undoubtedly helped group the activities into two main sectors. The boys interest in clubs and sports events was significantly ahead of the girls as compared with cinema and theatre, where the reverse was the case.

In the case of club membership, on average, 15% more boys were members up to the age of 14, when the gap increased to 22% at 15. Sports visits of once a week or more, were dominated by the boys, but dedicated interest declined throughout the 11 to 15 age spread.

On the other hand, the girls' general interest gradually increased up to the age of 14, and although more boys went to an event weekly, the combining of 'once per week' and 'sometimes', showed both sexes even at this age. Moreover, this growth in interest manifested itself at the age of 15, as more girls regularly went to sports events than boys.

Although the girls showed a greater general interest in cinema the boys consistency both in their 'sometimes' frequency and weekly visits, were remarkably stable throughout the total age range. On average, about 65% of boys, 'sometimes' went to the cinema, and about 5% went once each week or more. 13 and 15 were the twin peaks for the girls' 'sometimes' visits, the latter age range, they were 20% ahead of the boys. Also, this was the only female

age group bar one, which featured as weekly 'cinema-goers', and moreover, from barely 2% at 13, to an impressive 17% at 15.

Girls, with the exception of the 14 year olds, were twice as likely to 'sometimes' go to the theatre. Neither group went to the theatre, weekly. In general, girls' interest increased with age, as compared with the boys, whose interest declined. The comparison by gender highlighted the social construction of leisure engagements. All of these activities usually have a pre-determined time allocation which can be monitored by parents. However, the way that students spend that time, with whom, and the relative sense of personal 'safety', is very different between the two groups of activities.

In a cinema and theatre, social interaction is curtailed by the nature of the activity, which requires the attention of both eyes and ears, and often in relative silence. Most younger teenage girls go with girl friends, if the outing is not organised by parents or by the school. Even if boys are present, the opportunity to interact is limited. Thus, the milieu to a great extent, organise interaction, not only shaping but also limiting it.

On the other hand, youth clubs, and sports activities, allow a greater freedom in deciding the nature of social interaction. In a youth club, although the playing of table tennis or pin ball is usual, 'hanging around' and chatting is an equally important part of the evening's entertainment. Similarly, as a spectator at a football match, one is actively encouraged to engage with the activity, in both a vocal and quasi-dramatic sense. It is very difficult to cheer (or boo) the winning runner or the goal scorer without some massive, physical gesture!

Girls, then, from an early age, are not usually encouraged to participate in activities where social control is not guaranteed. The increased visits to sports events and cinema by 15 year old girls, can be taken as an indicator of changes in parental attitudes. Firstly, it signals the beginning of granting more freedom in general. Secondly, and also connected with the relaxing of the early 'teens regime, sports events and cinema take on a new dimension of meaning and significance when chaperoned by a member of the opposite sex.

#### **4.9.7 Personal, disposable income**

The students provided information on their level of disposable income. They were asked how much weekly pocket money they received, together with income generated by doing chores for the family, relations, friends, and part-time employment. The weekly income of each student from all three sources was amalgamated in order to investigate possible links between spending power and leisure activities. Personal income derived from working situations, takes time to accumulate, however, and therefore, inevitably eats into leisure-time budgets. Hence, although it could open up a wider choice of leisure activities, it could also operate as a constraint. For example; part-time employment and family chores could exclude pop radio listening and television viewing, erode instrumental practice and restrict computer playing.

The level of income from pocket money fell into three broad bands. 44% of all students received up to £1.50 weekly, and 27% between £2-£3. The figures were virtually identical for both boys and girls. The third, 'high income' bracket, was made up of 28% who received up to £10 weekly. There was a 'super-wealthy' 1% who received £15 or more. Nearly three quarters of the students, then, were given a maximum of £3 each week. 40% of this group earned extra money by doing family chores, two thirds of whom 'topped up' by about £1.50, and the remainder by about £3. 8% more boys than girls supplemented their income in this way.

Within 2%, as many boys as girls had part-time jobs, and the most frequent wage was between £2-£3. Part-time employment increased with age, from about 12% at 12 to 32% at 15. There could also be a link between pocket money and earned income. The number of students receiving pocket money rose from 75% at 12 to 88% at 14. However, at 15, it fell back to 74%. Perhaps some parents expected their 15 year old teenagers to earn spending money through part-time work both in and outside of the home.

The majority of students then, would have in total, a weekly disposable income of about £5, which is not a princely sum when the cost of a single record is about £1.80, and admission to the cinema about £1.20. Throughout the analysis of leisure involvement, personal income was often found to be an important a determinant of choice, shaping leisure careers.

The survey also indicated the limitations of real buying power for students in their early to middle teens.

#### **4.9.9 Conclusion**

The research into teenage leisure reported here, set out to challenge the assumption that there is a dominant youth culture primarily centred around the audio-visual media, which offers a core set of activities and thereby, provides a basis for a common teenage experience.

Leisure time was defined as non-school time, embracing activities which were imposed as well as chosen. At the interfaces between personal volition and the requirements of home and school, it was relatively easy to recognise the difficulties of satisfying all demands within a fairly inelastic time budget and to see the ways in which social structures were very important in framing and, often determining, choices.

The audio-visual media was found to be of varying degrees of importance, their salience shifting according to the differential influence of gender and personal income within the age range from 11 to 15, and within specific age cohorts. It was true that the audio-visual media were firmly embedded in the lives of most of the students, but they were not the dominant feature of their leisure world. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to define these experiences as the basis of a common youth culture. Rather, it suggests the presence of a series of different youth cultures which co-exist.

A finding in relation to a range of activities which featured frequently, was the peaking of involvement at the age of 14, followed by its decline at 15. School structures help to explain why this might occur. In secondary schools, 14 marks the end of Year 9, and heralds the beginning of examination courses with perhaps, new teachers, new subjects, and within the Leicestershire Plan, a new school. It is a key point of transition and change, a space for personal appraisal, and a time to consider the future.

For many students, the experimentation of early adolescence, had to give way to more purposeful leisure choices, such as a greater commitment to homework, or instrumental practice, as a result of pressure on their time budget, due to the changed nature of their schooling. Media involvements,



declined or as with radio listening, was reintegrated into leisure careers as a passive accompaniment or background sound to work.

Within the context of a greater commitment to more purposeful leisure choices, this change in degrees of interest and involvement could also be seen in media activity as evidenced by the move away from the pop charts into specific taste cultures. As leisure time was squeezed, so were general activities. Breadth of interest gave way to depth.

This analysis also suggests that the level of 15 year olds' interest in out-of-home leisure activities like cinema and organised sports would remain at least stable as a result of an increase in personal freedom, mid-teen dating and disposable income. As weekends are the main 'going out' days for school students, this would inevitably involve a decline in interest in more home-based leisure activities, like radio, records, and television during this period.

Although the students with the higher disposable income were more likely to have access to the relatively expensive technology of compact disc players and pop videos, this did not necessarily increase their pop music involvement. Many of the more affluent students did not develop specific pop music preferences through their teenage years, probably because it was more important for them to be active in the associated symbolic worlds of fashion and style, keeping their pop information up to date with short-hand knowledge derived from chart-oriented shows. This would also explain why they actively chose NOT to do homework as a greater disposable income would increase access to outside leisure activities.

In some cases, limits to personal income created a perceived rather than actual, problem. The students who were interviewed were constantly mindful of cash constraints. For example, battery costs for personal stereos, inhibited use, but all had access to a mains stereo system. Similarly, many would liked to have bought more records, but almost all could have recorded any preferred pop material from the radio since they had ready access to the necessary technology. Perhaps the majority of the teenagers, while taking for granted the opportunity to be involved in the pop media, were unwilling to spend the necessary time and effort to sustain a more than conventional engagement. Their pop activities were curtailed more by inconvenience than deprivation.

As access to all of the low-tech pop equipment was virtually universal, perhaps the most pressing teenage aspiration was total technical autonomy. There was a definite sense of frustration within a home situation which often required a substantial amount of negotiation in order to meet the needs of other family members involved in similar media activities.

Although the students were only asked about their own disposable income, the relative affluence of the household clearly affected the range of media opportunities open to them. State of the art technology was evident in the majority of homes, but in some, students had access to three computers, and any one of four television sets.

Similarly, it was not surprising that there was a strong link between pop group and orchestral membership and personal income. Instruments are costly (a beginners clarinet is about £250 and a drum kit over £600). In addition, there is the financial commitment of lessons, should they be unavailable in the school system. This would almost certainly have been the case, here, for youngsters who had aspirations in pop music playing.

There was no doubt that school had a great impact and influence on the leisure choices of a sizeable proportion of the students. Their impressive commitment to homework, alone, (especially the boys) would have directly framed leisure choices at 15. Moreover, as was outlined in detail earlier, some opportunities offered in schools, such as those related to instrumental training, were likely to include some students (girls as orchestral, classical players) and exclude others, (boys as pop players).

The role of the school and of social dynamics in organising 'free' leisure was particularly evident in relation to gender. Of the three dimensions singled out for specific attention, it was undoubtedly the most powerful influence on choices.

Simply being a boy or a girl, had a powerful determining influence on the kind of activities and involvements that were pursued. For example, differences in access to leisure options outside the home meant that girls were more likely to take on board all the new technological trappings of the pop media. They did more domestic viewing, recording, listening, taping and magazine reading. They were first into the market at the youngest age. But the evidence also suggests that they began to reduce some of their media commitment quite early on in their teenage career.

Most boys played around with the pop media in the home, but displayed no-where near as much commitment as the girls. At the same time, the really dedicated collectors of records and the most committed listeners to evening radio were almost all older boys. Girls' interest grew and faded without the same legacy of a 'special commitment' shown by those boys who remained involved.

In specific areas, however, the continuing commitment of some girls was also evident, the most significant instance being instrumental playing, practise and orchestral membership. Here, the whole social system supports and maintains this interest for **both** boys and girls. Once in this system, it takes a supreme act of rebellion to opt out. As it is more likely that girls will be players, the concerted pressure on them to continue, can shape leisure careers for several years.

The research reported here, has shown that because boys have greater freedom of access to out-of-home activities they cannot accommodate in their time budgets the equivalent degree of home-based pop media as the girls. In early teens, they acquire the necessary short-hand knowledge of the current pop charts via programmes like Top of the Pops.

The pre-teen revolution in pop culture has exacerbated gender positioning in the sense that very young girls, seeing images of young womanhood in childrens' pop programmes and videos, symbolically embrace dominant gender roles from a very young age. Girls, then, unwittingly collude with their parents (who, by the time their children have reached secondary school age, begin to actively defend their daughters' sexual integrity), by removing them from self organised activity centred on 'hanging around'. They do 'girls things' at home, develop the 'bedroom' culture, and, more importantly, begin to see themselves in terms of the media notion of the 'desirable and fashionable woman'.

The relationship of the girls to the pop media, therefore, raises two significant issues. Firstly, is there a relationship between their attitude to school work and the symbolic world of the pop media? Secondly, do they consume more pop media than boys because they derive more from it?

Training to 'get and keep their man' is still widely seen as a necessary preparation for a career as a wife and mother or at the very least, as a more salient imagined future than the conventional ambitions and aspirations put forward by school. Success is measured in social terms (the stable relationship) not by academic criteria (exams leading to full time employment).

Although it would be ludicrous to say that boys are exempt from pop ideology (the term 'cock rock' neatly summarised the macho nature of 1970's rock, and is still applicable today), it could be argued that the function, and, therefore, one of the major gratifications of the pop message for boys, is confirmation of what 'they already know'. That is, a male dominated society where females are 'placed' for male (ultimately sexual) gratification.

In contrast, girls have to learn how to accommodate this gendered reality. Their overriding interest in the pop media ensures a long apprenticeship in the skills of meeting male demands and one which is often, self-fulfilling. The girls' exclusion from 'unorganised' activities outside the home, confines them to indoor leisure which is centred in the pop media. Once they enter this domestic world, they remain trapped, and with age, parental concerns for their sexual well-being, cement the process 'for their own good'.

This actual and symbolic entrapment should be a real concern for educators as it is evident in areas other than the pop media. Computing is a good example. As this is perceived as a boys activity, it is very difficult for girls to become involved. There is nothing inherent in computers which produces this exclusion. It is simply that they have been largely appropriated by boys, both in and out of school and the nature of predominant leisure software, which is primarily centred in all action 'shoot 'em' up' arcade-type games, does not attract girls to play. There is no reason why manufacturers cannot make games less gendered, but this does not happen to any significant extent since the main market is predominantly for young teenage boys.

The sense of a lack of firm commitment and wider ambition at a time when it is crucial, has profound implications for the girls' educational careers. As the schools attempt to redress outmoded social value systems through equal opportunities, they will also have to take into account the importance of

leisure activities based on pop media, with their macho ideology and inherent sexism.

This study has confirmed the findings of many other researchers in showing that popular music and the audio visual media are the basic building blocks of teenage leisure. 'Rock 'n' Roll' in the 1950's, with its technology of amplification, heralded a new aural division between the popular music of the older generation and the emerging sounds of adolescent pop, serving both to cement and to celebrate the cultural differences between old and young. The 'generation gap' found a ubiquitous symbolic expression. To be part of the younger generation, 'hip' (1965) or 'wicked' (1985), familiarity with current movements in pop music was essential.

This symbolic imperative made an interest almost universal in the Top 10 charts for 11 to 14 year olds. Although some distinctive taste cultures had emerged by 15, more important, was the absence of any significant differentials in taste development for the majority of students following the waning of chart interest. At this point, when changes were taking place in pop preferences, competition for time and resources came into play. Pop music, as an integral and ubiquitous dimension of every day activity, lost out. It was still necessary to demonstrate difference and difference from adult taste. The symbolic value of pop was as salient as ever, but its essential, intrinsic, sound quality, was not. For most students, it had great value, primarily as 'aural wallpaper'. It filled in the cultural and social spaces, by gluing together, the multi-faceted leisure activities in which they were involved.

The symbolic value of pop music for teenagers is not lost on the music industry. The most popular magazine in this sample was Smash Hits with its unisex appeal, addressing the symbolic values of pop through artists' comments, life styles, and fashions. The pop video often fulfills a similar role, selling desirable images, and a purchasable way of life, or at least, of leisure, obscuring sexual inequalities and promoting the belief that the interest in pop is greater than it actually is.

Yet, within this symbolic sea of apparent blandness, the teenagers were not simply cast adrift, prey to media hype and commercial exploitation. It was interesting to track taste cultures through the age range covered in this study and to discover discernable moves away from the charts into other more distinctive styles like Heavy Metal or the work of Singer-Song Writers. Students did make purposeful choices of material and artists as the middle

teens approached in order to fulfil specific needs. For many teenagers, this activity in conjunction with choices to do with their careers and the world of work, was, perhaps, the first time they had actively taken stock of their desires and aspirations.

For the majority of these teenagers, who had been able to use the new technologies of the 1980's as a matter of course, there was no doubt that easy audio and video recording had given them a tremendous increase in flexibility and choice, and enabled them to fill in 'gaps' in media broadcasting which did not fulfil particular tastes. More importantly, the revival of interest in movie viewing, which followed the use of the video cassette recorder, further eroded main stream interest in pop oriented material.

This investigation began with an acknowledgement that the teenage years are often problematic, an uneasy and difficult transition from childhood to adulthood. The process is embedded in leisure; time out of school. Pop music was central to this movement but not necessarily the foreground activity. Most teenagers embraced pop music as aural wallpaper and were fully aware of the gratifications that he or she wanted from it. The amount of interest and degree of pop involvement had to be negotiated within a fairly inelastic time budget, and faced with either more pressing or interesting alternatives, pop music was rarely perceived as the primary activity.

Finally, what is evident from this investigation, is the need to research in more detail, several key areas. Firstly, the relationship between pop music and pre-secondary school age children, especially in terms of its effect on gender positioning. Secondly, we need to know more about the 14 to 15 year old age group and the changes that take place in leisure careers as a result of social and educational processes at this key junction point. Thirdly, we need an extended research programme which is not subject to undue limitations of manpower, time and finance which would explore in a more rigorous and systematic way, leisure careers within the 11-15 age range. This would be most usefully approached by way of a longitudinal study, which tracked teenagers over time, and sought to tease out the links between the particular dynamics of individual biography and the general shifts of social and cultural development. A snapshot of a single segment of time, such as is offered here, cannot do justice to the complexities of these dynamics. It can raise questions and queries and point to issues deserving of further investigation, but by its nature it cannot provide the answers. The

main intention in the present work, however, was not so much to pursue the notion of leisure careers. Indeed, it would have been extremely difficult to do this since the concept arose in a grounded way, out of the material that had been collected, and after the main research strategy had already been decided upon. Rather, the main aim was **comparative** - to explore communalities and disjunctions in the musical perceptions of pupils and teachers and to try to trace their consequences for the teaching of music in schools. It is, therefore, to the question of teachers' musical experience that we now turn.

## CHAPTER 5

### TEACHERS' MUSICAL EXPERIENCE

All music teachers in Leicestershire's secondary schools were sent a questionnaire at the same time as the students in the six schools involved in this study were asked to complete their two questionnaires. 49 music teachers returned completed questionnaires, representing 67% of those contacted.

Teachers were asked to supply information which could shed light on their relationship with a range of pop related activities. The areas covered included; their knowledge of and formal education in, popular music; their listening, viewing, and purchasing of pop media, and their participation in live music events; and their use and acceptance of popular music and its related symbolic values in school. In addition, they were asked to give their views as to the likely implications of a National Curriculum in music.

Many of the questions asked of both students and teachers were identical. One of the major purposes of the teachers' study was to assess the possible mismatch between music teachers' leisure involvement in and knowledge of popular music and its related culture, and the values which they might bring into school. Research into the 'High Art/Low Art' debate is by no means new. Nearly 20 years ago, Murdock and Phelps commented on the gap between the activities of teachers in and out of school and how they may 'live a kind of double life between their professional role and their private experience, teaching Shakespeare and Keats to their pupils while returning home to watch Top of the Pops. (Murdock and Phelps, 1973, p. 148).



Many educational changes have taken place during the 16 years since that study was done in terms of both structures and attitudes. At the time the present study was conducted Grammar schools largely belonged to the past, (although this may now be changing as Private schools and Grammar schools enjoy a revival) and Comprehensive education was the norm. Attitudes in education have also shifted and teachers are now more likely to place the student at the centre of the learning process, with a corresponding reduction of emphasis on didactic teaching.

Music teachers have been key players in these changes together with teachers in other arts' areas, since it has often been pointed out, they tend to have a 'special' relationship with their students. They have the opportunity to be more informal as their work centres around expressive as well as academic concepts, and is less desk bound. Certainly, many of the music teachers in

this study felt that their relationships with students, both in the classroom and around the school campus, was 'different' when compared with their colleagues. Translating this generalised notion of difference into the classroom situation and embedding it in the curriculum as part of the learning process, is another matter, however. If music teachers perceive their relationships to students as in some way 'special', one would expect them to work to create frameworks in which their relative uniqueness would be fostered. However, as the data analysis unfolded it became clear that this notion of difference did not necessarily include embracing teenage experience and interests as an essential part of the learning process and as a strategy for 'closing cultural spaces'.

This is not perhaps, surprising since the desire to forge a special type of student-teacher relationship has to be viewed within the context of the school as a workplace and its central functions as part of the wider society. Whatever a teacher may endeavour to do, ultimately his or her actions and beliefs are subjected to the school's formal role as a system of social and cultural authority. Therefore, relationships between teachers and students, what is acceptable or unacceptable, are more do with the type of institution, its ethos and structures, than with the volition of individual teachers, no matter how well intentioned.

The fact that music teachers are allowed to have relationships with students which are different in any way from those of other colleagues, is an indicator of the extent to which the power relations within the school are negotiable and admit variation and exception. The students are not similarly empowered, however. They are obliged to work within a settlement negotiated elsewhere. Hence, their perception of the degree of 'difference' in relationships may not be the same as their teachers. For example, 'trendy' teachers who make strenuous efforts to cultivate cultural proximity, may well be seen by the students as trying too hard to keep on the 'right side', negotiating a 'quiet life' in the classroom. Nor is this a cynical perception on the pupils' part. In the final analysis, all teachers have to abide by the school's 'party line' and decisions which may well directly affect student behaviour or attitudes are necessarily subject to its imperatives. Pupils know this very well.

Teachers' actions, of course, are not solely defined by the dynamics of the institution in which they operate. Although they bring to the school a particular set of experiences, expectations and skills, they also bring to the workplace the more subtle influences of gender and generation which have shaped them over a lifetime. When dividing a relatively small sample by age, gender and type of school, however, one had to be cautious about the inferences that can be drawn, due to the inevitable fact that some of the sub groups are very small. However, certain pictures did emerge, and some trends were evident. Overall, the research did show that type of school, together with the gender and age of the teacher, did have a powerful bearing on teachers' attitudes and strategies, and hence on students' musical experience in school.

## 5.1 Generation, gender, school type and departmental organisation

The gender balance of the survey respondents was nearly equal, 53% were male and 47% female. Their age spread ranged from 24 to 61, with the largest proportion between 35 to 39, closely followed by the 45 to 49 year olds. What was interesting was that the entire 45-49 age cohort was female, and represented the oldest and largest female category (39%). This, at times, made it difficult to make inferences solely on the basis of age or gender.

Responses were received from all the different types of schools. Almost half came from High Schools, followed by Upper Schools. Table 5.1 shows the distribution of responses in rank order by type of school.

10/11-14	45%
(n=22)	
14-18	25%
(n=12)	
11-16	20%
(n=10)	
11-18	8%
(n=4)	
16-18	2%
(n=1)	

Table 5.1 Teachers' responses by school type

The majority of teachers (61%) worked in discrete Music Departments, with a further 33% of music tuition taking place in Expressive or Performing Arts Departments or Faculties. The remaining small percentage was made up of separate departments operating modular course options with Expressive or Performing Arts.

## **5.2 The origins of teachers' pop knowledge**

In spite of the impact of popular music on teenage culture since the advent of 'rock and roll' in the 1950's, the survey provided no evidence that it had secured a firm niche within the music curricula of the colleges and universities the teachers had attended. 85% of the teachers had no formal tuition at all in popular music. 10% had 'a little' and only 5% 'a lot'. There were signs that some changes were occurring, however, as most formal pop tuition had been received by the youngest teachers between the ages of 24 and 29. Of this small group, 50% had received 'some'.

Although most of the teachers had not received any formal pop education as students, this did not necessarily mean that their knowledge of popular music and related activities such as recording and pop compositional techniques, was limited. To shed light on this area the teachers were asked the following question:

"A knowledge about pop music compositional techniques, the pop industry, and recording studios, etc. is, perhaps, more important than a knowledge of the current 'Top 10'. On this basis, how much would you say you know about pop? A great amount, a lot, a reasonable amount, a little, not much at all."

Not surprisingly, the greatest knowledge ('a great amount' or 'a lot') was claimed by the youngest teachers. Nominations in these two categories ceased to feature after the age of 39, however. Nevertheless, with the exception of the 45-49 year olds, over 50% in all age groups believed they had at least a 'reasonable' knowledge of pop. The responses from this exceptional age group posed a question, as it was the group consisting solely of women teachers. Were the responses due to age or gender? It was also

the only group to have such a massive nomination for 'not much at all', some 44%. In contrast, no teachers below this age selected this category. In the age groups above 40, small cell counts and the nature of their distribution made it impossible to ascertain an identifiable trend.

There was, however, a definite gender difference in one area. Although just over 50% of both males and females believed they had a 'reasonable' knowledge of pop, nearly twice as many males than females believed they knew 'a lot' or a 'great amount'. In fact, male responses throughout the five categories claimed a stronger pop knowledge orientation than the females.

Some students, therefore, depending on which school they attended, would have had the benefit of being taught by teachers with more pop expertise than the norm. The High School students in particular would have had a good chance of working with a teacher who had received some formal tuition in pop at college or university, as three quarters of those claiming such training worked in this sector. Not surprisingly, more Key Stage Three music teachers said they knew 'a great deal', 'a lot' 'a reasonable amount' about pop than teachers working with other age groups.

However, informal acquisition of pop knowledge in the Upper Schools was quite close. This can probably be explained by the nature of the Upper School and its unique relationship with the High Schools. Music in the Upper School has had to become more oriented to the non-specialist who wishes to have access to G.C.S.E. in a way which would have been very difficult, if not impossible under the old G.C.E. system. The introduction of G.C.S.E. has undoubtedly influenced teaching in several ways particularly in the compositional aspects of the course. Not only can students submit works on tape, but teachers need to have a reasonable amount of pop knowledge as many of their students want to compose using pop idioms. Similarly, teachers have had to acquire the skills of recording and multi-tracking (both of which are strongly associated with pop) in order to facilitate the production of their students' compositions.

It would also follow, that if most of the teachers with a good knowledge of pop are to be found in the High Schools, there would be every possibility that it would feature in their course work. As will be shown later, this proved to be the case. Progression, then, would be maintained for those

students who had opted to do music at exam level as it would allow the Upper School teacher to capitalise on the students' High School music experience.

Finally, students who had male and/or younger teachers may have had a greater access to pop information and processes as compared with those whose teachers were female, and/or older. It was suggested in the Students' Study that the nature of single teacher music departments could heavily influence curriculum content and mode of delivery. Evidence here supports this view. Moreover, it would follow that students living in a particular catchment area would receive a particular type of music education.

The debate, of course, need not stop with music. It is not always the case, for example, that Religious Education is part of Humanities or that Dance and Drama are part of Expressive or Creative Arts. In the wider curriculum, then, there are important educational implications that flow from the special nature of the single person department.

### **5.3 Teachers' leisure inside of the home: radio listening**

The teachers were asked a series of questions in order to establish their patterns of morning and evening pop radio listening, pop television viewing, visits to rock or pop shows and concerts, recorded pop music purchases, their 'chart' interest and their knowledge of the current 'No 1' single.

Only 35% of all of the teachers listened to pop morning radio, with an equal involvement by both sexes. Almost two thirds (62%) of the youngest age group of teachers listened 'often', a figure that fell by the age of 39 to 17%. Older teachers 'sometimes' listened. Of the four categories, 'often', 'sometimes', 'rarely', 'never', the groupings showed that younger teachers either listened often or not at all, and that the older teachers listened sometimes, or not at all. This could well have been an indicator of the lack of a 'middle ground' in pop music empathy. That is, you either like it or you don't! Were the 'sometimes' older listeners 'yesterday's rockers?'

Teachers who taught in High Schools and the 11-16 Comprehensives were by far the most involved. However, caution is needed here as it is with all inferences which link teachers' age and type of school. There are far more High Schools than any other type of secondary school in

Leicestershire so that the opportunity for employment is far greater in this sector. 53% of all the teachers between the ages of 24 and 32 taught in High Schools. With limited promotion prospects in the late 1970's and falling rolls throughout most of the 1980's, many music teachers found it difficult to move within the area. As a result, it was quite likely that a number had been in the same school for many years. Statistically, more movement would have occurred in Key Stage Three, and it was not surprising, therefore, to see the majority of younger teachers concentrated in this sector. As the second biggest group of schools, a similar context would have prevailed in the 11-16 comprehensives.

Exactly the same type of pattern emerged for teachers' evening pop radio listening, but on a much reduced scale. Very few listened 'often', with only 13% women and no men in this category. As for their preferred pop radio channel, the overwhelming majority of listeners, both morning and evening, tuned into Radio 1.

#### **5.4 Pop television viewing**

Viewing patterns of pop television suggested certain trends. The most involved were the second age band (average age 30), closely followed by teachers in their mid-20's. All teachers did some pop viewing, however, but it was more likely to be teachers in High Schools and in 11-16 Comprehensives who were keen pop viewers.

The only programme to feature significantly was Top of the Pops. Nearly 50% of all the teachers who responded claimed to watch. More viewing by far was done by teachers in the 11-16 schools and 10% more women than men tuned in, (56% as against 46%).

From the patterns of radio and television involvements, it was reasonable to assume that most knowledge of the charts, would have been acquired from a weekly viewing of this programme, probably fulfilling the same function for teachers as it had done for their students, that is, a quick way of keeping up to date with current trends and 'hits' in the pop market. Women were more knowledgeable about the Top 10 charts than men. In fact, across the four options in response to the question, "Do you follow the Top 10 charts, 'usually', 'sometimes', 'rarely', 'never'," female teachers were far

more positively oriented than their male counterparts. Similarly, substantially more female teachers could 'usually' name the current 'No 1'.

The most significant factor to arise from these responses, was that more women teachers had an interest in, and a greater knowledge of, chart orientated pop music. Nearly 50% usually knew the 'No 1' record, and nearly twice as many followed the Top 10 charts as compared with the men.

### **5.5 Pop audio recordings: purchasing and borrowing**

It was no great surprise to discover that purchasing single records did not feature very highly as a music teacher's activity! Single collections did occur up to the age of 39, but after that it seemed that they were either dispatched to the PTA car boot sale or its existence was no longer admitted! In fact, one female teacher confessed that she thought her singles collection would best be seen as part of the Antiques Road Show! 12% of the teachers had a collection of 50-100 singles and one female teacher had 250+. However, in general, more males than females had singles collections and they were more likely to contain 50 records or more, (with the notable exception of the one very substantial female collection already mentioned). Similarly 13% of the male teachers 'often' bought singles as compared with no females in this category.

As singles purchasing is primarily an early teenage activity, it would be quite probable that teachers who bought them, were doing so in order to use them in the classroom. With this use in mind, the teachers were also asked if they borrow singles from their students. Although it was not an activity which occurred 'often', 30% of female teachers did 'sometimes' as compared with only 12% of males. In fact there was generally a more positive orientation towards borrowing singles by the female teachers.

The purchasing of pop L.P.'s was very definitely age linked. 62% of those with an average age of 25 'often' bought them. The remainder fell into the second category, 'sometimes'. By the age of 30, the percentage in the 'often' category had fallen to 43%, and to 25% at the age of 39. Beyond the age of 49, no teachers were involved in purchasing pop or rock albums.



The size of collections was interesting. 35% of all female teachers had a small collection of up to 20 albums. In contrast, 30% of the collections of male teachers ranged between 23 and 50 compared with only 17% of the collections owned by female teachers. Larger collections of 100-200 albums were claimed by 23% males as compared with only 9% females. Substantial collections between 300- 500 albums, were rare but it was fairly evenly spread by gender at about 8% of both men and women. As we saw from the pupils survey, boys are the first to move away from the charts into album purchasing. This could account for the fact that male teachers generally had larger collections as compared with females as they were more likely to have entered the market, later. The findings also point to the progressive nature of male album collecting. As for the largest collections, the 8% committed 'rocked on' through the ages!

Purchasing patterns were fairly polarised, as about 22% bought albums 'often' and about 30% 'never' did. These figures were even across both sexes. More women than men 'sometimes' made purchases by about 10%.

The Upper School teachers, who worked with the 14-18 age range, featured after the High Schools as the most likely purchasers and had some of the biggest collections. This, of course, could have been linked to the curriculum content of G.C.S.E. as well as personal interest.

Albums bought on Compact Disc did not really feature. Only about 12% 'sometimes' purchased, the rest 'never'. It was significant that buying increased with age, peaking at the age group which included the 35-39 year olds. They were probably the first age group with a reasonable disposable income, bearing in mind the high cost of the average C.D. and of C.D. players at the time the survey was conducted. Compact Disc collections ranged from 5-50, and were accumulated fairly equally by both males and females. All were owned by High School teachers.

## **5.6 Leisure outside of the home: pop shows and concerts**

Excursions to pop events was not a dynamic leisure activity for the teachers, although there was a greater possibility that they would go to musicals rather than concerts, and this possibility increased through the age bands up to the age of 42, and then slumped from 66% to 22% in the 45-49 age band beyond which it ceased to feature.

The curve of interest showed that teachers in their mid-twenties were most likely to go to pop concerts and musicals. Then there was a drop in interest in the next age band (about 30), with interest picking up again until the early 40's, after which it fell away sharply. The rock show curve showed a similar pattern. This activity also ceased to be of importance beyond the age of 42.

The High School students, then, would have been taught by teachers more likely to be interested in pop shows and concerts since this is where many of the younger teachers worked. Worth noting is the fact that of those teachers who were inclined to go to such events, it was marginally more likely that women teachers would have gone than their male counterparts.

## **5.7 Teachers' taste cultures**

The students' 'Desert Island Disc' question ('If you were marooned on that famous desert island which five recordings would you take with you?') was also included on the teachers' questionnaire. A series of multiple resins analyses were carried out in order to establish whether their leisure engagement linked with what they actually taught, how the gender and age of the teachers might help to shape music preferences, and what implications these results might have for the students in different phases of the secondary school process.

Teachers submissions fell into two clear groups. Either five nominations were made or the question was ignored. In general, the question posed more problems than anticipated. As some of the correspondents pointed out it was, at least, 'really difficult' or at worst, 'Impossible!'. Perhaps

the following quotation summarises the feelings of those who were unwilling to make choices.

'I hate this question! Making decisions like this is so difficult-maybe I'm a coward!'

but the correspondent went on, with good humour,

'Be assured, that whatever I would take (and I'd want my entire collection!) it would include SOME pop and SOME classical!'

One, goodnaturedly (?) blamed the questioner.

'Come off it Bob, this is unfair! Mutter, mutter!'

For others, time may have been the enemy.

This is going to take longer than I thought. I'll see you later....RIGHT THEN, 1. Bach's Brandenburgs, 2....'

The majority of those teachers who did tackle the question, included a mixture of styles, which were split 55% set in pop music and 45% set in classical, serious high art music. Only a few cases included all pop or all classical. Nominations were placed in 25 of the possible 32 categories, mostly thinly spread in single figures. Six categories did make the dizzy heights of double figures, two of which were pop and four classical. These are shown in rank order in Table 5.2

'70's Rock	26
Modern Instrumental	21
'60's Pop and Rock	18
Classical Instrumental	16
Romantic Instrumental	16
Baroque Instrumental	12

Table 5.2 Teachers' record category nominations

Within this top six, nominations were almost evenly on a gender break, with the notable exceptions of '70's Rock and Modern Instrumental. In the former, 69% were women, and the latter, 71% were men. The responses also showed that more female teachers were interested in records by Singer-Song Writers and from Film Shows, whereas more male teachers were interested in listening to Baroque and Classical Choral music. All the teachers who expressed an interest in singer-song writers worked in 10/11-14 and 11- 16 schools, whilst the majority of those interested in Baroque and Classical Choral music taught in the 14-18 schools and colleges.

The small amount of interest in chart oriented material that was shown, was concentrated among teachers working in the 10/11-14 and 11-16 schools. Rock interest featured in all phases with one notable exception. Apart from a '60's Pop and Rock, and a Jazz nomination, no other pop/rock performers or records were nominated by teachers working in 11-18 schools.

Some styles were significant by their absence. Particularly notable was the fact that no interest was expressed in the major 'black' styles of the '60's such as Motown, in '70's Reggae, or in '80's Rap, Hip-Hop or Acid. Similarly, neither Country and Western nor Heavy Metal had any following amongst these teachers.

Beyond the age of 40, there was little interest in pop with the exception of '60's Pop and Rock and '70's Rock records. These two categories spanned all ages, but fell away after the age of 39, although there was an even distribution through the other, older age groups. The most ardent followers of '70's Rock were to be found amongst the youngest teachers between the ages of 24-29. As for '60's Pop and Rock, the keenest followers were the 35-39 year olds, carrying their teenage years with them!

Classical, Romantic and Modern Instrumental music featured in all age groups, the latter being a particular favourite of the 35-39 year olds. Interest was also spread across all types of secondary institutions. Classical and Modern instrumental music, however, were nominated more by teachers in 14-18 schools and colleges.

Romantic Choral music attracted a reasonable degree of interest amongst younger teachers, peaking at the age of 42, but not featuring beyond the age of 49. Teachers in the 10/11-14 and 11-16 schools were responsible for all nominations in this category. In contrast, opera was almost completely ignored by this particular group of music teachers. Only three nominations were recorded.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

Gender and age emerged from this study as important determinants of both the degree and the type of pop music involvement engaged in by music teachers in their leisure time. Female teachers, for example, knew more about the Top 10, and watched more pop TV than male teachers. In fact, they were generally more attuned to the pop culture inhabited by their pupils. However, the men believed that they had more pop knowledge than the women in all areas. Does this suggest a degree of sexism in the sense that the male teachers simply assumed that they knew more about pop than their female counterparts? This attitude is not uncommon within the educational system.

However, the degree of variation in pop music interest, leisure involvement and knowledge between the sexes was generally less significant than the impact of age. Interest in pop music, record buying, pop TV viewing, in fact, pop related interest in general, faded with advancing years.

The implications for the student in school have been referred to already. When combining the differences between age and gender, it could have mattered quite significantly which teacher was responsible for music in a particular institution. All would have brought with them a variety of tastes, likes and dislikes mediated through age and gender, which would have been embedded in the foundations of their curriculum, remembering, of course, that there may have been only one person developing it. The evidence for teachers' pop music leisure involvement, showed clearly that many of them could have brought some personal pop interest and expertise to their work. In order to interrogate the notion of the music teacher living 'a kind of double life between their professional role and their private lives', that is, Top of the Pops at home, but 'traditional' music in the classroom, an investigation of how pop music and its symbolism was used and accepted in schools, will be developed.

But first, a brief resume of the history and development of Leicestershire schools' music policy over the last forty years will help to clarify the wider context in which both teachers and students operated.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **TEACHING POP MUSIC IN SCHOOL**

#### **6.1 The Leicestershire Music Policy**

In 1989, when the material for this research project was collected, the relationship between the Leicestershire Education Authority and its schools, was more or less as it had been since the Second World War. It was responsible for buildings, maintenance, school budgets, salaries, and the oversight of curriculum matters via centrally appointed Advisors for specific curriculum areas.

At first glance, one could view the role of the Advisor for Music in much the same way as any other Advisor, that is; as a supporter of the curriculum and all related matters in schools; as an organiser of central courses for teachers; and as a disseminator of national and local policies and initiatives. However, a second glance would quickly reveal that historically, this has not been the case. In addition, the nature of the relationship of the Music Advisor with the Director of Education, (and later, the Chief Education Officer) and with school music teachers during the past 40 years, has resulted in the development of a distinctive LEA music policy which has had significant repercussions in the classroom.

Leicestershire has been renowned for its school music for many years. This reputation is largely the product of the partnership between Eric Pinkett, (the first Music Advisor), and Stewart Mason, (the Director of Education) in the 1950's. Pinkett concentrated on identifying student musical

excellence and withdrawing it from the schools in order to create orchestras, bands and choirs run centrally. This gave for many adolescent players and singers the opportunity to be part of high quality musical activities that most schools could not hope to match. The centre piece of this system was the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra, which drew on the most able and experienced players, and over the years attracted much deserved praise both nationally and internationally. In its wake, the reputation of music in Leicestershire attracted music teachers to the County but many quickly found that support for music in school was not all that they had hoped it would be.

Such an intense emphasis on centrally created music-making, offered great opportunities for the few but at the expense of the many. Because curriculum music was not a priority, support for the class-based music teacher in terms of buildings, equipment and perhaps more importantly, classroom ideas, techniques and methods, was not forthcoming.

However, the 'flowering' of music and drama at the centre and the provision of shared resources such as the Rowans and Knighton Fields buildings (the respective bases for Music and Drama) continued. The commitment of the Director of Education was crucial, as he could exercise a decisive influence over the way resources were made available, and developed. It also helped to define the role that any Music Advisor who was appointed had to fulfill.

Eric Pinkett remained in post until the mid-1970's, and his successor was heard to say when challenged about the lack of central support for music in schools, that it was the job of the music teacher to teach music, while it was his job to run an orchestra. This ethos, that school music was primarily a continuation of support for musical excellence at the centre (which, helped maintain the national profile of music in Leicestershire), continued in spite of efforts by many teachers to affect change. Mason's successor, as Director of Education, was also a passionate supporter of the Arts, and it was apparent that no major shift in emphasis would occur while he was in place operating in much the same way as his predecessor. Changes at the highest level of educational management within the LEA were, therefore, necessary before voices from the classroom could be heard and listened to.

The nature of support for school music eventually shifted in the mid-1980's when the new occupant of the key administrative post (who preferred to be known as Chief Education Officer, rather than the Director of



Education), began to develop a different way of operating in which the Educational Committee would collectively help to shape curriculum policy rather than leaving it to a single individual. This particular modus operandi was unlikely to favour the championing of specific educational empires. Music, now, had to stand more on its own two feet. The shift was helped by the widespread feeling among many with interests in other subjects, that the pursuit of excellence in musical performance had had an inordinate share of resources for far too long.

Another key change and a further signal of a shift of emphasis towards schools, was the appointment of a Chief Advisor, which brought all advisors into a line management structure. This policy decision, for the first time, initiated a serious attempt to lead and co-ordinate all Advisory activities in a coherent way. It challenged the old notion of Advisors as mavericks, who were free to operate and build up their own empires, answerable only to the Director, usually when something 'unsatisfactory' reached his ear.

The Music Advisory Team was not at all equipped to deal with school-based issues and curricular concerns, as none of them, either past or present, had had any significant school experience. Indeed, most had had no school experience at all. When one of the three Music Advisors retired in 1987, a practising teacher was appointed in his place, and as a result of the policy changes at County Hall and internal divisions within the Music Advisory Team, the Curriculum Advisory Team split away from the School of Music and its centralised activities. The members of the newly formed Curriculum Music Advisory then set about raising funds in order to address the many school-based issues which had been neglected and often ignored for so long.

The new policy and the resulting structures made funds available to Curriculum Music which had formerly gone directly to the centre, especially to the School of Music, based at the Rowans. Hence, although music had received financial support over the years along with every other curriculum area, the lion's share of the available funds never reached the schools.

An inventory of needs was drawn up which showed the appalling conditions in which some of the County's music teachers were operating. The notion of the 'hut in the field' was, in fact, the truth for some. Many music departments were operating in a single room, with at best, one practice room.

The modern music curriculum with its emphasis on composition and activities in small groups, could not be sustained in this impoverished environment.

The Curriculum Music Advisors fought hard to raise awareness and funds and managed to negotiate successfully with those responsible for Property in County Hall. The result was a rolling programme of renovation for at least two Music Departments each year. Equally important, when architects went into schools to plan and renovate facilities for other curriculum areas, a way of thinking was eventually imbued in them, whereby they would suggest to school managements additional alterations at very low cost for, perhaps, two extra practice rooms for the Music Department, to be created from some hitherto redundant space.

The first detailed look at the music curriculum was centred in the primary schools and from an initial survey, a working party was formed out of which support for the non-specialist emerged in the form of a comprehensive book which contained programmes of study. In addition, new appointments of Teacher Advisors were made (initially for a one year duration) in order to continue direct support in the primary schools.

A second working party for the 10/11-14 High Schools was formed to investigate the music curriculum of Key Stage 3. Work was also carried out for Key Stage 4 involvement in the new G.C.S.E. This culminated in the bringing together for the first time, through a systematic programme of centrally funded INSET, all secondary school teachers responsible for Music, breaking for many, years of isolated working in single person departments.

Coincidentally, Collaborative INSET (with money devolved to groups of schools defined, for example, by geographical area or by the 'family' relationships between Upper Schools and Colleges and feeder High Schools) brought smaller groups of music teachers together for mutual support, liaison, joint developments and new initiatives.

Up to this point, the development of Leicestershire's Policy for Music can be read as a classic example of how to exclude almost all students in schools from a worthwhile educational experience. Music teachers were left with the job of rectifying this massive deficit. In 1989, when the bulk of the material here was collected, remedies for the years of central neglect had barely begun. The resulting constraints placed on teachers feature in various ways throughout what follows as they give reasons for certain courses of action and ways of thinking.

## **6.2 Teaching pop music in the classroom**

The students' study showed that, in general, schools did not provide much pop related material in the classroom or within the school more generally, nor did they handle the symbolic aspects, such as of dress, make-up, money matters and sex, either very positively or very thoroughly. A series of questions were asked of music teachers, in an attempt to shed some light on their particular contribution to promoting pop music in the classroom and the school, and on their attitude to teacher-student relationships more generally.

The way in which pop music can be used in the classroom is subject to structural constraints as well as to teachers' personal preferences. The High School teachers, for example, generally have rather more freedom when choosing curriculum content as compared to exam based teachers working in 14-18 Upper Schools, who have to address a variety of student skills and specialisms. It is not uncommon to have in the same G.C.S.E. group, highly trained instrumental players rooted in the classical tradition (a grade 7 violinist, for example) and a drummer with no musical language skills or formal training. Added to this wide diversity, which is problematic enough, is the uncomfortable fact that the higher grades at G.C.S.E. are still mainly achieved by the more advanced and musically literate, classically trained students. As a result, many G.C.S.E. music teachers have difficult decisions to make in terms of both course content and style of delivery as they negotiate the constraints of time-tabling on the learning situation. At the same time, teachers in non-exam based schools also have restrictions placed upon them (some of which are common to all schools), such as the amount of time allocated to curriculum music each week, the types of accommodation, class sizes, and the availability of equipment (especially access to the technology of electronic keyboards and computers). From this perspective, then, effective differentiated learning to meet the requirements of all music students would stretch the skills and expertise of even the most dedicated music teacher, even if they operated in a neutral terrain, untouched by the impact of generation and gender.

Because the use of pop music in the classroom and the reasons for its introduction are not solely teacher defined, it is inevitable that it will be deployed in a variety of ways.

As a prelude to analysis, three contrasted situations were posited. Firstly, some teachers may have no particular preference in their personal choice and interests in music. Consequently, although they would have likes and dislikes, they may not have operated a strong hierarchy of value. As a consequence, any style of music was acceptable in the classroom as a basis for composition, analysis, or performance. Some teachers used this apparent 'neutrality' as an indicator of their 'approachability' by students who would talk about their own musical tastes and preferences knowing that they had equal standing in the eyes of the teacher.

Secondly, some teachers would have chosen to treat pop music as a separate entity, dealing with it as a discrete course component. Several teachers commented that pop should have some, but only some, classroom time. This explicit, but limited acknowledgement raised the issue of 'tokenism' rather than the teacher expressing a belief in its real value.

Thirdly, some teachers would have used pop in the classroom both explicitly (as a discrete course component), and implicitly, (pop music examples or songs as a natural part of general classroom activities). In the absence of adequate, qualitative information based on extensive depth interviews, it was impossible to ascertain the true balance between these three options. However, the quantitative data (and particularly the extensive person comments on questionnaire items), did make it possible to get some sense of how this particular group of music teachers handled classroom based pop music in relation to the three ideal typical situations.

To begin this analysis of the use of pop music in the classroom and the wider context of the school, the teachers were asked:

'Taking pop music in its widest sense, for example, singing a pop song, using pop for listening and/or analysis, using 12 Bar Blues as a basis for composition, teaching drum riffs on a kit, etc., do you think that pop music ideas are embedded and implicit in a lot of your course work?'

Nearly 40% of the teachers replied that they believed that they embedded pop music 'a great amount' or 'a lot' in their curriculum and a further 36% thought it to be 'equal to other course components'. Thus, at least 75% of the teachers in this study, claimed to give pop a significant degree of 'no nonsense' recognition (and, therefore, status) without the need to positively discriminate in its favour. Marginally more male than female teachers believed that they gave pop this type of recognition. At the same time, it declined sharply with advancing years. By the age of 42, 60% thought it 'equal to other course components'. By the age of 49, 22% thought it 'not much at all'. In terms of the type of school, 50% of teachers in High School claimed 'a great amount' or 'a lot', followed, by the 11-16 schools at 40%, and 14-18 schools and colleges at 34%. Responses in the 11-18 schools were split 50-50 between 'equal to other course components' and 'a little'.

In conversation, a number of teachers claimed that they gave pop music exactly the same value as any other musical style, especially when choosing musical or spoken examples for students.

'Well, I choose a pop example if I can think of one, say, if I want to compare differences in the use of dynamics or perhaps, texture. Heavy Metal groups like Guns 'n' Roses or AC/DC when compared with Kylie Minogue, would do as a general indicator of thick versus thin sounds and loud dynamics versus soft.'

(Male Teacher, Aged 27)

Some teachers believed that they automatically chose appropriate examples from a variety of styles and sources:

'Although I try to be mindful of pop and to use it generally in my lessons, I'm equally as likely to choose a classical example to talk about or play in order to demonstrate a musical point.'

(Female Teacher, Aged 34)

For others, the implicit/explicit distinction was quite irrelevant:

'I use all sorts of musical examples, generally in class as well as the specific course work in Year 9. I don't like 'boxing up' any musical style. Whatever comes to mind, if it's appropriate, in it goes!'

(Male Teacher, Aged 38)

About a third of both male and female teachers had a discrete pop music block in their curriculum. However, when age was considered, it became clear that the majority of all such courses were organised by teachers between the ages of 35 and 49 as shown in Table 6.1.

Age	%	(n)
24-29	12	(8)
30-32	14	(7)
35-39	33	(12)
40-42	80	(5)
45-49	33	(9)
50-61	25	(4)

Table 6.1 teaching a discrete pop music block by teachers' age.

Younger age groups were represented by a single teacher, whereas older age groups showed no interest in such courses, at all. Three quarters of the teachers in 11-18 schools had discrete pop music courses, as compared with about a third in all other institutions in the sample. As all schools in the 11-18 age range were in some way 'outside' of the direct LEA system, notions of music as 'High Art' may have prevailed and, therefore, the study of pop music could have been a token gesture. Questions were also, asked in order to establish how much pop composition, listening and history featured in the course.

Pop music as a vehicle for composition offers some fixed, yet simple structures in which students can work. (For example, 12 Bar Blues, A A B A patterns over 32 bars, or chord sequences of I, VI, IV, V). Used with keyboard technology, a number of playing skills are made easier, thereby freeing the student to concentrate on the task of composition. The value of this process is recognised by many music teachers, and it was interesting to see that the majority in this study deployed it to a greater or lesser extent.

Marginally more men than women used pop composition 'a great amount' or 'a lot', but 10% more men claimed to use it 'not very much' or 'not at all'. The middle ground, 'equal to other compositional components' was held by the women, with some 20% more giving this answer than the men (43% as against 23%). These figures suggest that male teachers' interest sat either side of the centre, actively using or actively refusing to use pop as a compositional tool. Conversely, female teachers were more accommodating moving towards active or inactive engagement in a far less extreme way.

Most pop composition took place in the High Schools. In fact 82% of all responses fell into the top three categories. On the other hand, almost half of the teachers in all other types of school said that they used it either 'not very much' or 'not at all'. The youngest teacher group (24-29), were the most active, 63% saying that they employed pop composition 'a great amount' or 'a lot'. There was surprising stability of interest from the age of 30-42, with an average of 40% falling into the same categories. However, interest waned substantially among older teachers and 'not very much' was done beyond the age of 52.

As noted earlier, in recent years a great deal of emphasis has been placed on the compositional component of classroom music. There is only a small amount of time in the single period (which is the staple musical diet for most students in school) to accommodate all of the many facets contained in a balanced musical curriculum. Consequently, in deference to the 'hands on' approach, one would expect teachers to spend less time on the listening, history, and the cultural aspects of musical styles. Trends in relation to non-compositional aspects of pop music, therefore, be seen within this context.

The modal responses for the listening analysis clustered around 'equal to other pop music components' and 'not very much', with male teachers being marginally more likely to play pop music in class than their female counterparts. In fact, they were split evenly between probably playing pop in class and probably not. Female teachers on the other hand were less likely to use pop listening as part of their classroom practice, (56% claimed that they spent 'not very much time' or 'no time at all').

Taking teachers as a whole, the 'equal to/not very' dividing line was drawn in more or less the same place in most institutions, except for the 14-18 schools, where the inclusion of the lowest category, 'no time at all', meant that the three lowest categories accounted for only 33% of responses. The inclusion of pop listening for G.C.S.E. could, of course, account for its greater use in the classroom for this age range.

The most active users of pop listening in the classroom were the 24-29 year old teachers (who all said they used it either 'equal to other course components' or 'a lot') followed by the 40-42 year olds, (with 80% responding in the same categories). Other age groups, however, were less likely to introduce pop music listening in the classroom.

Only a third of all teachers taught the history of pop in their curriculum, and they were marginally more likely to be females by about 8%. Age was also significant. The inclusion of pop history in the classroom increased with the age of the teacher up to the age of 39, after which it declined dramatically. By type of institution, the different schools were fairly evenly split about 50-50, with those that gave pop history either an equal or greater emphasis than other course components and those that taught little or none at all. The one exception was the 11-18 schools, where 75% included a significant amount of pop history.



The questions for listening, composing, and history were very straight forward, simply asking the teacher how much time was spent on each, giving them a series of options ranging from 'a great amount' to 'no time at all'. The cultural question was somewhat more detailed outlining the type of activities which could be considered under this heading. specifically, it asked:

'In class, how much time do you spend on the cultural aspects of pop, e.g. the relationships between the writer/performer, technological developments and world events, etc. A great amount, A lot, Equal to other pop music components, Not very much , No time at all?'

This extended formulation could account for the fact that more teachers claimed to be involved in this aspect of pop in the classroom. Perhaps the fact that they understood more fully what was being asked of them produced more interest, or, it could be that the greater range of activities subsumed by the question offered something for almost everyone. This elasticity may also have made it more difficult for teachers to be precise in their replies. As one teacher commented:

'Not very much, but occasionally more if time allows, if relevant. (And if I feel like it!)

(Male Teacher, Aged 39).

Overall, almost 50% of all teachers claimed to give popular culture equal or more time in their courses than other elements with more male teachers being likely to teach it than women. The 24-29 year olds were much more positive than any other age range, with 87% claiming they taught it 'a lot' or at least 'equal to other pop music components'. The second most enthusiastic group were the 35-39 year olds, after which, interest declined substantially. Most schools were bunched across the axis 'equal to/not very much'. In the 11-18 schools, however, 50% taught 'a lot' and 25% at least as much as other pop music components. As for the 14-18 schools and colleges, they were split evenly between 33% saying they taught 'a lot', 33% 'not very much' and 33% claiming they gave it 'no time at all'.

### **6.3 Multicultural Education: a shadow 'pop' component**

Although notions of sexuality and concerns with spending money are not the sole province of popular music and popular culture, both are central ingredients and, therefore, form part of the 'shadow curriculum' of school-age teenagers. Similarly, multicultural education is a 'shadow' component for music teachers introducing pop into the classroom, as its study cannot be divorced from the historical fact that until the 1960's and the 'Liverpool Sound', American pop music dominated the Western world in the twentieth century having been created and lead by, Afro-Americans, from the pre-jazz age onwards. Any study of pop music in the classroom cannot, therefore, ignore this issue. In order to establish what part multicultural education played in the classrooms of music teachers, they were asked three question. These were:

1. 'Do you approach multicultural education as a separate entity?'
2. 'Do you highlight multicultural components when relevant during your course work?'
3. 'Is the notion of multicultural education embedded and implicit in a lot of your course work?'

The most interesting point to emerge from the responses were the differences in terms of gender. 22% of female teachers as compared with only 4% of their male colleagues approached multicultural education as a separate entity. These figures were scattered thinly across the entire age range, but were more likely to reflect a positive strategy among the 24-29 year olds.

91% of females said that they highlighted multicultural components when relevant, as compared with 69% of the males. Up to the age of 39, this represented about 93% of the teacher group, after which interest in this area declined to about 70%. In contrast, 46% of the males believed that the notion of multicultural education was embedded and implicit in their course work (as

compared to 35% of the females). No clear age-related pattern emerged, as figures moved erratically through the age ranges from as high as 62% down to 25%.

If one considers the first two questions as addressing explicit course components, and responses to the third relating to an implicit course component, the responses suggest that women were far more likely to take a positive and conscious stand on multicultural issues as compared with men. Even so, nearly half of the male teachers believed that they included multicultural issues in their lessons as a matter of course; the assumption that it was more or less automatically present as an implicit presence. This does, however, beg the question, 'was it?' When comparing these responses to the male teachers belief that they 'knew a lot' about pop music, one has to remember that their active involvement with pop was generally less than their female counterparts, and yet the females, who were probably better equipped, were far less certain of their own knowledge. Of course, in the absence of further information, it is difficult to develop this argument. One is left, though, with the possibility of a serious 'reality gap' between what is believed to take place and what actually happens. Similarly, the replies suggest that this may be another instance of male certainty as compared with female insecurity in relation to their own knowledge and experience, a gender and role difference hinted at previously.

It must be said, however, that a majority of the teachers believed that multicultural issues were addressed in some way in their classrooms. Almost 100% of teachers in most institutions believed that multicultural issues were highlighted when relevant. There were two exceptions. In the 11-16 and the 14-18 schools, the figures stood at an average of 63%. Along with their colleagues in most other schools, about 45% of the teachers in 11-16 schools believed that multicultural issues were embedded in their course work. In contrast, only 33% of music teachers in 14-18 schools believed this. It would appear, therefore, that multicultural issues in music were dealt with least extensively in the 14-18 schools and colleges.

## **6.4 Pop music as an extra-curricular activity**

Music and Physical Education specialists have a 'twilight' existence unparalleled by teachers in any other subject areas. They spend a great deal of time and effort running choirs, orchestras, putting on concerts, coaching, running teams and organising competitive sports events. Almost all of these 'extra-curricular' activities take place in lunch breaks, at the end of the school day, and at weekends.

For many students who participate in these activities, closer relationships with teachers and more positive memories of school are often developed, well beyond what is possible solely through the classroom experience. Similarly, most Music and P.E. teachers understand the importance and value of working with students 'above and beyond the call of duty'.

It has to be said, however, that this additional involvement with students brings with it pressures outside of the obvious. For example, if teachers are committed to extra-curricular activities within the school frame, what happens to events which take place outside of the usual in-school experience of competitions and joint productions with local schools? Should it be automatic that the music teacher should organise or be involved with discos in or out of school? Similarly, is it the responsibility of the P.E teacher to organise competition beyond his or her locality or trips to distant football or athletic events?

There are no simple answers to these issues, as so much depends on the local situation. It is not uncommon, for example, for teachers to work in extra-curricular situations across disciplines, as when a P.E. specialist plays in a school production. What has to be taken into account is the context in which teachers make decisions about how they use their time beyond contracted classroom requirements. Similarly, how about the Music or P.E. teacher as careerist, the potential Deputy Head or Pastoral Head of Year? What are the personal career consequences for musicians in school, (especially if they are a single-person department) of being totally active in music, in all its guises, that is, spending all their available time in school as a musician? He or she cannot develop the classic management-training profile in such circumstances. Responses to questions about the nature of the music teachers' commitments to extra-curricular activities, then, would certainly be

affected by issues beyond the simplistic evaluation of their involvement in music-related events in school.

Information was sought in order to establish the degree to which music teachers were involved in two pop related extra-curricular arenas. Firstly, they were asked about the amount of pop material included in concerts, the staging of pop or rock shows and the encouragement of students pop or rock groups in school. They were also asked about their involvement in the organisation of discos in school. Secondly, they were asked about their organisation of trips to discos, pop or rock concerts and shows, out-of-school. The easiest way to introduce pop music directly into extra-curricular activities is to use a pop song in a concert. About a third of the teachers claimed that they 'often' did this, and around 45% said they did it 'sometimes'. They were more likely to be female teachers as only 13% 'rarely' did as compared with 23% of male teachers.

Age was also important. 62% of the 24-29 year olds 'often' included pop related material in their concerts. There was less interest among the early 30's, a group which yielded the biggest 'rarely' category of 43%. Up to the age of 42, about 40% also 'often' included pop, but at the age of 45, this figure fell to 22% and generally, willingness to include pop faded with the older teacher. The most significant finding in terms of type of school was the size of the 'rarely' category in the 14-18 schools and colleges. This was by far the largest at 33%. Thus, one third of teachers in these institutions had little interest in including pop related material in concerts for their students.

The staging of any production in school is a major undertaking, a large step up from a school concert. It would be expected, therefore, to find 'sometimes' as the most frequent vote by those teachers engaged in large scale productions and choosing to select from the pop repertoire. Male teachers were far more involved in this area, some 15% claiming that they 'often' mounted such productions as compared with only 4% of females. At the other end of the scale, about 40% of female teachers said that they 'never' staged rock or pop shows as compared with 15% of their male colleagues.

Teachers in their early 40's were the most likely pop show directors and all of them did 'often' or 'sometimes'. It takes both experience and skill to oversee a full scale production, when one considers the multi-faceted nature of such an undertaking (singing, acting, band, tickets, costume, seating).

Beyond this age, interest faded. Perhaps the skills acquired during twenty years of teaching came together with enough residual energy in the early 'forties to tackle such an event.

Teachers in the 14-18 schools and colleges were the most positive about the pop and rock musical, closely followed by those in the 11-14 High Schools. Generally, over 50% of teachers in all phases were prepared on some occasions, to stage a rock or pop musical.

The encouragement of pop or rock groups in school can take a variety of forms, ranging from empathy and advice, a teacher's relatively 'low-cost' approach, to direct involvement in rehearsals and the arranging or writing of material up to an involvement in LEA courses for young rock players and performers. Even passing on information to interested students of LEA courses pre-supposes that the teacher knows that there are interested students in his or her school.

This was very definitely a male dominated area. Some 65% of male teachers 'often' encouraged groups in school as compared with 26% of their female colleagues. At the other end of the scale, though there was still a marked gender bias, 16% of all teachers overall, 'never' gave any encouragement. By combining 'rarely' and 'never', 34% of female teachers were in this category as compared with 20% of the males. The composition of most professional pop and rock groups is predominantly male. As we noted earlier, this skew was also characteristic of the pupils in this study in relation to playing pop and rock instruments. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that a combination of teenage instrument choices and the reality of the pop world outside of school, both of which are heavily gender defined, would actively discourage female teachers from taking a more positive attitude to pop and rock players in school.

75% of the youngest teachers gave a lot of encouragement ('often') to pop players in school. This fell to 43% at the age of 30, but rose steadily though the age ranges to a peak of 80% by the age of 42. This fell dramatically at the age of 45, to 22% and became insignificant for teachers beyond 50. At this stage, it is, perhaps, worth re-stating that all the teachers in the age category 45-49, were female.

By far the most encouragement for rock groups was in the 14-18 schools and colleges, (75% 'often') followed by the high schools (50% 'often'). Potentially, the worst place to be for the budding rock stars was in the 11-18 schools, where 50% of the teachers 'never' offered encouragement, and the other 50% only 'sometimes'.

There was a clear lack of interest in the organisation of activities not directly related to the classroom and which may have been perceived more as leisure than learning. Less than a quarter of the teachers 'sometimes' organised in-school discos, and all (except one male 'sometimes'), 'never' organised a disco out of school.

About 60% of teachers overall 'never' organised trips to pop or rock musicals and at best, about 15% organised such trips 'sometimes'. There was more interest in rock concerts, but none organised them 'often'. Clearly, though, male teachers were more likely to organise the visits that did take place, 19% claimed to do so 'sometimes' compared with 4% of females. But generally, there was little interest or commitment. 69% of the male teachers and 83% of the female teachers 'never' organised trips. High School students were most likely to have discos organised for them by their music teachers. On the other hand, there was far less likelihood of the music teacher organising any of these events, if he or she was above the age of 45.

## **6.5 Pop as a means of communication**

As we noted earlier in the discussion of the students' study, a knowledge of pop, in both its actual and symbolic dimensions, was necessary in the day-to-day flow of relationships between teenage peers. Boys, for example, watched Top of the Pops in order to obtain, a quick, shorthand knowledge of the charts. It was an essential currency in conversation. The teenage use of pop argots like 'Yo', the shirt tucked in or out depending on the occasion, the hair flicked in a particular way, were all ways of showing an awareness and basic understanding of the cultural value of the symbolic world of popular music. 'Follow that Star' meant do (at least, a little) what he or she does. Show deference to the 'look', the walk, manner of speech or dress.

Although these markers may be transitory and change from one year to the next, the teacher should recognise that they have REAL value within the learning process. Thus, genuine understanding could be used as a basis for common ground where values are shared or negotiated rather than imposed, and could serve to show, that although one is no more important than the other in absolute terms, one could, perhaps, be more appropriate in a given circumstance or context.

Earlier it was suggested that teachers involved in the Performing and Creative Arts, (Music, Art, Drama and Dance), may perceive and experience a different quality of student-teacher relationship as compared with those of their colleagues. That is to say, there could be a difference in teachers' attitudes to students as a result of the different styles of teaching necessary to explore, in part, meaning through feelings, not logic and reason. The more egalitarian the learning situation, the more likely that each student could achieve real artistic growth within the educational frame.

The use of pop, then, in its widest context, could be an effective means of communication between student and teacher. It could facilitate just that difference in attitude that removes art enquiry from the routines of the timetable. The teachers were asked if they talked to their students about pop and whether they perceived a difference in their relationships with pupils as compared with those of their colleagues.

More male teachers than female teachers talked to their students about pop, 31% claiming to do so 'often', compared with 22%. The most frequently chosen category, however, fell into 'sometimes' selected by 58% males as compared with 48% females. The results were also strongly age related, with the figures gradually declining from 'often' to 'sometimes' with advancing years. In fact, 'often' disappeared beyond the age of 49. This category featured least in the 14-18 schools and colleges (17%) followed by the 11-18 schools (25%). Other schools were virtually identical at about 41%. Encouragingly though overall, less than a quarter of all music teachers said that they 'rarely' or 'never' talked to their students about pop music, in general. The results of the question asking about music teachers' relationships with students in their classes, showed a marked gender. They are printed in Table 6.2.



	Males	Females
Very Different	35%	17%
Different	23%	22%
A little different	15%	9%
About the same	27%	56%
	(n=26)	(n=23)

Table 6.2 Music teachers' perceptions of their relationships to students in their classes (as compared to other teachers)

The gender variation in perception was quite marked. Over half of the female teachers thought there was no difference in the relationship between themselves and their students when compared with colleagues from other subject disciplines. This was double the number of male teachers in this category. In fact, the results showed that nearly three quarters of male music teachers believed that there was some difference in their relationships to students due to the nature of the subject.

On the other hand, the results were not particularly age related, although there were some interesting differences. Teachers in their early thirties were fairly evenly split between 'different' and 'about the same'.

Either side of this age, and up to the early 40's, the lowest category ('about the same') stayed at about 20%. The major shift came at the age of 45+, when 89% thought attitudes towards students were 'about the same'. This was an increase of 69%.

By far the greatest perceived difference was in the 14- 18 schools and colleges, where 50% of the music teachers thought their attitudes to students to be 'very different'. In fact, 75% of teachers in this phase registered some degree of difference. The least affected teachers were found in the 11-16 schools where some 60% believed relationships to be 'about the same', followed by the 11-18 school, with a 50% endorsement of the same category. About 65% of High School teachers registered some degree of difference.

The general attitudes of teachers towards students around the campus can help to shed light on the nature of class based relationships. They may, of course, have to be class based. For example, the ethos of a school may frown on a student shouting 'Hello Mr C' across the grounds. The teacher, in turn, may warm to the greeting in spite of the school ethos or they may discourage it. Alternatively, Mr C's familiarity with pupils outside the privacy of the classroom may not be appreciated by some teachers irrespective of the school ethos. Although it would be necessary to explore in much greater detail the nature and content of such interactions, the question asked of the teachers was hinting at the kind of exchange that may take place with students when their paths crossed before or in between lessons or during lunch hours. A similar gender pattern emerged here as for music teachers' relationships to students in the classroom, but no-where near as marked. 58% of male music teachers thought that there was some degree of difference as compared with 44% of their female counterparts.

In terms of age, the figures almost mirrored those for attitudes in the classroom. Here, too, 89% of those age 45+ or more saw their relationships with students as 'about the same' as their colleagues. As for attitudes within the different school phases, the only marked difference between classroom attitudes and relationships as compared with relations around the campus, was in the 14-18 schools and colleges. Here, the degree of difference perceived compared with colleagues from other disciplines fell from 75% in the classroom to 50% around the campus. This suggests that any difference in relations between Upper School music teachers and students was likely to be restricted to those participating in specialist courses such as G.C.S.E. and 'A'-level. The need to address the 'general school student' in the 'class lesson' does not arise here, in the same way as it would in all other phases of secondary education with an age range which includes Years 7-9. This was

born out by the minimal inclusion of pop related material in music courses. Thus, the symbolic value of popular music could be seen as less important by the music specialist in the Upper School as the students involved in the available courses, opt in and are often, by nature of their expertise, self-selecting.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

The study showed, that in addition to the age and gender of the music teacher, the phase of education and the size of the department were also important variables when considering the type of musical opportunities available to students. Thus, both cultural practice and social structures helped to shape their musical experience in school.

As was evident from the findings of the students' study, gender played a highly significant stratifying role with regard to pop music activity in school. Men gave more encouragement to pop and rock groups, and generally believed that they were more aware of pop music issues and had different relationships with their students, than women, in spite of the fact that female teachers were more active in the pop media than their male counterparts.

Music teachers also seemed to have made positive choices which limited their involvement in the more leisure-based components of pop as there was no real interest expressed in discos or visits to pop musicals and concerts. For those who know the workload of the practising school musician, already immersed in concerts and productions, this would come as no great surprise, particularly when one considers the amount of time and effort such activities take to organise. This would include the co-opting of other colleagues to help in creating appropriate teacher-student staffing ratios, and, hopefully, 'policing of the non-crisis', not an easy task at the best of times, and probably made more difficult by the nature of the activity.

There was no clear evidence to support the view that teachers led a 'double' artistic life (pop in school and Mozart at home). Rather, the data showed that what happened in school was as much to do with the structural constraints such as the specific demands of an exam curriculum in a particular school phase, or with sets of cultural practices associated with the

age and/or gender of the individual teacher. Further support for their apparent neutrality could be seen in the music teachers' taste preferences which were fairly evenly split between pop and classical music.

Formal pop education at college or university, more likely in current courses and thus, inevitably the province of the younger teachers in this study, would have affected, significantly, the type of pop music experience for students in some schools.

Several of these factors were not, necessarily, music-specific, and, therefore, could equally help to shape the principles, attitudes and working practices of teachers in other subject disciplines.

Although the amount and degree of pop activity within the school varied quite considerably, the absence of an obvious and general bias against popular music and the notion of popular culture in general, was encouraging. Many teachers were actively giving their students the opportunity to listen, to compose and perform material drawn from the pop repertoire whether it was in the classroom or in the school concert. In addition, some teachers pursued the history and cultural resonances of pop. Here again, constraints, like the institutions ethos, school phase, available weekly time per student, and type of department, would probably have played as big a part in curriculum content and organisation as the teachers personal preferences. However, if there was a difference of perception between male and female teachers over certain issues, there was a much more significant one between teachers and students.

Pupils generally, did not feel that pop was a particularly important part of their music curriculum, in spite of the inclusion (in some cases quite significant inclusion) of pop related material by their music teachers. What do teachers regard as popular music, and are they working with the same definitions as their students? Can the average student relate a 12 Bar Blues composition to the current Top 10? Moreover, can popular music as an academic study be readily accepted by the majority of students who spend most of their time experiencing it as an integral aspect of their leisure time? Do they see the need to detach pop from leisure as most of them would not study music at exam level and, therefore, could not, or would not need to see the relevance of using pop as a working tool, equal to any other musical element or style? Could there be for some students, a sense that a major component of their actual and symbolic space had been invaded and

appropriated? As many teachers have found to their cost, it is insufficient to raise pop as a token gesture. Through the teacher's attitude and delivery, it has to have greater meaning than that, and failure is certain if students feel patronised.

In spite of these uncertainties, many students also thought that their relationship with their music teachers were somehow 'different'. They recognised that the subject and the person were 'not the same' when both were compared with their experiences in other curricular areas.

Ultimately, perhaps the means of bridging perceptual space, in this instance, is in recognising that a classroom relationship based on a desire for genuine cultural equality, overrides content, by removing contention, thereby opening learning opportunities within a context of mutual respect and trust. If this is implicit in the widely expressed notion that music in school is 'different' when compared with other subject disciplines, perhaps, in an embryonic form, it is a pointer to a better and more fruitful set of relationships within the context of the school in general.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **LEARNING MUSIC IN SCHOOLS**

Curriculum music has undergone great changes during the last twenty years. As we saw in the previous chapter, the impact of popular music on teenage culture has persuaded many music teachers to consider its use in the classroom and has challenged them to reconsider their own values bearing in mind that most come from a classically trained background.

As we noted earlier, the teenagers in this study who played orchestral instruments in the school system, felt that there was an experiential gap between their classical involvement and their own taste preferences. The same could be said of today's younger music teachers as the '60's pop music revolution became embedded in their own adolescent culture during the '70's and '80's. Therefore, the practice of school music will not necessarily address teenage culture as a debate between the relative values of 'high' and 'low' musical art, will also be strongly influenced by the context of individual schools and colleges.

This is particularly likely to be the case where a school's Music division operates as a single teacher department. In this situation, the musical emphasis and personality of the teacher can play a major role in determining the kind of musical experience offered to students both within the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. Paradoxically, national pressures, like the introduction of the National Curriculum, the need to maintain a particular school's ethos, and the pressure of limited lesson time (most 11-14 year olds only receive up to an hour each week), can frame

music courses in such a way that they do not necessarily reflect the personal interests and strengths of the teacher as musician, but emphasise the teacher's institutional role as an educationalist.

However, it is a point worth noting, that the experiences of all the teenagers in this study were mediated through a small number of music teachers whose impact should not be underestimated.

In spite of structural pressures and contradictions, the developments in keyboard technology during the 1980's and the introduction of the G.C.S.E., have helped teachers to tackle the issues of musical relevance and access in a new way. In order to break with the traditional emphasis on specialist music skills and the resulting closure of opportunities for most students who could not fully participate in curriculum music (G.C.E., for example, was only a realistic option for trained music students who had the benefit of considerable tuition out of school), keyboard technology is being used by many music teachers as an aid to creativity due to its capacity to store and recreate musical information without the need for the student to be a trained and practising musician.

This freedom, however, is a two-edged sword. It was evident in the study of students' leisure activities and choices, that computer technology was embraced more readily by boys, and this inevitably opens up the possibility of this group adapting more easily to the new technology within the music curriculum, particularly post- 14, at G.C.S.E. level. Moreover, there is now the scope for two types of student within this examination frame, boys who are more pop oriented and technologically minded, and girls who are more traditionally trained and orchestrally schooled.

Focusing on the post-14 students does not necessarily mean that keyboard technology is not used in many schools for the entire secondary age range. However, because the scope for deploying computer technology and multi-track recording, is generally limited by the time and resources available for large class groups, the impact of gender biases on in-depth use is less apparent.

Nevertheless, in the same way that gender played an important part in framing leisure choices and activities, it emerged as an important component of attitudes towards both music and the music teacher within the school environment.

## 7.1 Music in the timetable

The National Curriculum has enshrined music as a core subject for all students in the first three years of state secondary schools. It was somewhat surprising, therefore, that in response to the question, 'Do you have a music lesson or lessons each week?', there was significant variations by year and gender. Table 7.1 shows the results of for those who answered 'yes'.

	Boys	(n)	Girls	(n)
Age 11	88%	(15)	100%	(11)
Age 12	94%	(54)	95%	(57)
Age 13	76%	(50)	98%	(56)
Age 14	84%	(64)	87%	(70)
Age 15	33%	(43)	29%	(41)

Table 7.1 Students' having weekly music lessons by age and gender.

Firstly, the results show, that with the exception of the 11 year old girls, curriculum music is not a weekly event for all 11-14 year old students. Response error may account for a small percentage of the shortfall, particularly in relation to the small sample of 11 year old boys and the 5% of 'no's' among students at 12. It is, however, difficult to explain the results for 13 year old boys in this way, where nearly a quarter of the students said they did not have regular music lessons, or the nearly 15% of both boys and girls who answered 'no' at the age of 14.



In some of these cases, music may have been part of an Expressive or Creative Arts package, whereby music linked with other subjects such as Dance and Drama, and featured, say, two out of every three weeks. If this were so, one would expect that the impact would be uniform across both sexes, as was the case with the 14 year old respondents. As this was not the case for the 13 year olds, one has to conclude, that for whatever reasons, over 20% of the boys at this age were given the opportunity to opt out of weekly curriculum music.

It would be expected that the real change in weekly involvement in curriculum music would be highlighted by the responses of the 15 year olds after option choices had been made for G.C.S.E. Interestingly, however, 4% more boys than girls were engaged in weekly music lessons at this age. Although this is a small percentage difference, it would be interesting to know if the boys rather than the girls were more interested in opting for the G.C.S.E.- type course due to the added opportunity to study with the new music technology which often includes the use of computers and digital recording. Not only are boys more au fait and comfortable with this type of technology, it also frees them from the need to be as musically literate as was the case in the old style G.C.E.

G.C.S.E. also encourages a broader platform of musical specialism and instrument skills, such as drumming and guitar playing. It is more likely that boys would be the budding 'rock stars' who would wish to bring their interest and experience into the academic school frame. This point goes hand in hand with the use of computers and modern, relatively cheap, recording techniques. Pop and rock music, in compositional terms, is much more an aural rather than written process, enabled greatly by modern music technology and could be more advantageous to the less academically trained male musician.

## 7.2 Students' attitudes to curriculum music

A series of questions were asked in order to shed light on students attitude to curriculum-based music. They were asked to compare music with other subjects, to say how much they enjoyed the music lesson, and to say whether pop music was included in the courses, and to give their view on their teacher's knowledge of pop music and whether they talked to the teacher, in general, about pop music. Bearing in mind the often unique position of the music teacher in many schools (a single person department solely responsible for the music curriculum which was probably more practically based and, therefore less 'desk bound') they were also asked if their teacher was easy to talk to. Responses here, can shed light on the question of whether or not music teachers are right to feel that their involvement, however peripheral, in teenage pop culture, may lead to a reduction of the space between themselves and their students in the classroom, in ways that are not possible in other curriculum areas.

The majority of students did feel that there was some difference between curriculum music and other subjects. The degree of difference felt varies with both age and gender. Very few students felt their music lesson was 'very much like other lessons'. However, a lot more boys than girls thought it was 'like other lessons', a feeling which grew with age, peaking at 13 (39% of boys compared with 20% of girls). As the greatest number of responses claimed that music was either 'a bit like other lessons' or 'not like other lessons at all', it is possible that music was not easily comparable to other curriculum areas. Girls felt the difference more than boys and there was a significant movement towards 'not like other lessons', with age. Figures grew markedly between the ages of 12 and 15, (35%, 42%, 72% and 87%, respectively). The boys on the other hand attitudes were paradoxical. The figures showed a decline in those claiming to perceive a difference when comparing music with other curriculum areas. From a low of 13% at 13, this jumped to 53% at 14, rising to 64% at 15.

Whatever the reasons for the students to think of class-based music differently from other subjects, for a substantial proportion, it was not a positive experience. By the age of 14, over 40% of both boys and girls did not enjoy their music lessons 'at all', figures that grew progressively from the age of 12. The majority of the rest thought it was 'alright'. Once again, the trough

for boys was at 13, when only 8% liked music 'a lot', but at 14, this rose to 17%. By contrast, only 3% of girls liked music 'a lot' at 14. At 15, when most students would have taken a positive decision to continue their music studies, both sexes were almost identically distributed between the two upper categories, (with an average of 42% for 'a lot' and 54% for 'it's alright'). Only one male student did not like his music lessons 'at all'.

Pop music was not seen by students as an important part of the music curriculum. Nearly 80% of students 'rarely' or 'never' experienced it in the classroom up to the age of 13. It 'sometimes' featured for about 25% of students at 14. At 15, this declined to 17% for the boys and only 7% for the girls. The difference, here, could again be connected with the nature of choice at G.C.S.E., if boys were more involved with technologically based pop music than girls.

In themselves, these responses do not have great significance, as there is no necessary connection between pop music empathy and course content. Courses are created for a variety of reasons, and there need be no reason why one style should be more important than another. However, outside of course content, conversation about pop music between music teacher and students, the knowledge of the music teacher about pop and how easy she or he is to talk to, are perhaps more important in the sense that they could indicate an understanding and appreciation of teenage culture and a willingness on the teacher's part to share in it, either on a conversational level or, perhaps, through the use of pop music examples in the classroom situation. At the same time, these points could indicate not only a teacher's knowledge of pop music but also the importance of 'the need to know', due to its significance and value to teenagers.

### 7.3 Students' attitude to the music teacher

Talking to the music teacher about pop music showed some interesting variations between the boys and girls. Only one girl (a 15 year old) spoke to her teacher 'often' about pop. There was, however, an observable trend from the 'never/rarely' categories, to 'sometimes' between the ages of 12 to 15. (with 42% saying that they 'sometimes' talked at 15). Only 17% 'never' talked about pop to their teacher by the same age, having fallen from 78% at 11.

An analysis of the boys' responses showed two distinct groups. Firstly, from 13 to 15 years of age, there was a 'hard core' of about 35% who 'never' spoke to their teachers about pop music. Secondly, there was a definite movement in the same age range, among the remaining male population from 'rarely', through 'sometimes', to 'often'. Table 7.2 shows this progression.

	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Age 13 (n=50)	53%	8%	5%
Age14 (n=64)	33%	24%	6%
Age15 (n=43)	21%	29%	14%

Table 7.2 Pop music conversations between teachers and boys, aged 13-15

As the results of the pupils' study confirm, boys enter the world of pop music consumption late and leave the singles market early (as compared with girls), preferring albums and rock. The present analysis, perhaps, supports the idea of the boys' greater commitment to and more purposeful choice of pop consumption as they move through their teenage years, in the sense that they actively sought out discussions about their interest with their music teacher.

Further support for the notion that boys solicited their teacher's response to pop issues can be seen in the responses to the question, 'Do you think your music teacher knows: A lot about pop, A little about pop, Not much at all, Don't know'. Between the ages of 12 to 15, more girls than boys thought that their teacher knew a little or not much at all, about pop, but more boys than girls thought their teacher knew a lot. Although between the ages of 12 and 13, more boys than girls didn't know what their teacher's knew about pop, at 14 and 15 years of age, nearly twice as many girls than boys answered in this category. The crux of the matter is, did the girls ask their teacher about pop music issues and how important as a major conversation topic was it to them?

It would be reasonable to assume that those students who communicated frequently with their music teachers about pop, would find them easy to talk to. The analysis of the question, 'Is your music teacher easy to talk to: very easy, easy, all right, not really, not at all', supports this view.

By combining the response categories 'very easy' and 'easy', the boys data revealed that between the age of 12 and 13, they felt that their music teacher was progressively easier to talk to, (30% and 50% respectively). On average, only 5% found their music teacher 'not at all easy' to talk to. This changed dramatically at 14, when only 28% claimed to find their music teacher easy to talk to with 35% answering 'not at all'. At 15, after option choices had been finalised, 61% had no problems in talking with their music teacher, and no male students found it difficult. This response is not particularly surprising since by that point students would have made a conscious decision to continue their musical education.

Where the boys ease of talking to their music teacher progressively peaked and then troughed through the ages of 12 to 14, the girls responses revealed a steady decline. Also, where most boys had no real difficulty in talking to their music teacher (with the exception of the 35% answering 'not at all' at 14) on average, 28% of the girls did not find it at all easy to communicate. The general trend of the data showed a 'bunching' towards the middle category ('all right') up to 14 years of age, perhaps creating, as the extremes moved towards the centre, an impression of an acceptance of another inevitable curriculum experience, with no real differentiation between subjects. However, of the 15 year old girls who had made the commitment to continue their musical education, all except one ('all right') found their music teacher easy to talk to.

#### **7.4 Pop music as an extra-curricular activity**

In order to assess their access to pop culture within the school environment, away from the confines of the curriculum, the students were asked about the frequency of rock or pop songs in school concerts, organised discos both in and out of school, trips to pop concerts and shows, and the legitimacy of using personal stereos and radios.

The organisation of extra-curricular activities are fraught with difficulties. They are very time consuming, and are affected by the need to maintain effective and safe staffing ratios, as well as competing with curriculum demands for more accepted and valued out-of-class 'educational activities'. Therefore, those initiatives which could be perceived as solely leisure based, would probably be given less priority by teachers who are asked to give up yet more of their voluntary time.

On the other hand, whether or not personal stereos and radios can be used in school, and the use of pop material in school concerts, if at all, touches on the values and ethos of the school, which are shaped primarily by the attitudes of the management, staff, governors and parents. A particular school ethos could also, of course, preclude or reduce the amount of organised extra-curricular pop music activities.

Pop music did not feature 'often' in school concerts. Up to the age of 13, the girls thought it was included more than the boys. Similar figures for both boys and girls at 14 and 15, suggested that the vast majority thought that it was at best 'rarely' included, and at worst, 'never'.

The frequency of discos organised in school, however, showed a remarkable difference in opinion between boys and girls. On average, only 10% of girls in all years, thought that discos were organised 'often', which was in sharp contrast to about 32% of the boys. Given their greater involvement in pop at their age, 'not often' may well have meant not often enough. Where the girls' figures declined between the ages of 12 to 14, the boys' increased dramatically (12%, 28%, 45%, respectively). At 15 years of age, the boys figures stood at 37% as compared with only 10% of the girls.

The girls' responses centred on the 'sometimes' category, although there was a trend with age towards 'rarely' and 'never'. The boys, on the other hand, moved in the opposite direction. 'Rarely' and 'never' declined as 'sometimes' and 'often' increased. It would appear, then that teachers' organising discos out-of-school was not a frequent event. Trips to pop or rock concerts were an even greater rarity with over 95% of all students answering 'never' to this question. On the other hand, visits to pop or rock musicals, like Cats, Phantom of the Opera, and Joseph and his Amazing Techicolour Dreamcoat, although not a regular occurrence, did feature as part of a number of pupils' extra-curricular activities. The girls, in general, were more aware, especially at 15, where 41% nominated 'sometimes' as compared with 21% of the boys.

The use by pupils of radios and personal stereos was actively discouraged, as 80% of the boys and 93% of the girls said they were not allowed in school. The percentage difference, here, was the result of twice as many boys than girls answering that they believed that both pieces of hardware were allowed in school 'in certain places'.

Although this percentage difference did vary from year to year, at no time did girls poll more than the boys. Moreover, only one 12 year old girl said 'anywhere', as compared with the boys, where 'anywhere' featured in four of the five years (an average of 4%).

## **7.5 Pop and the school:the symbolic relationship**

The students in this study supported the view that pop music generally, for most teenagers, functions more as aural wallpaper and less as a main frame leisure activity. Nevertheless, its influence is all pervasive. Most teenagers either consciously or unconsciously, adapt to the image of pop music, so much so that it is part of their living day to day culture. Pop music offers not only aural gratification but also examples of explicit visual and attitudinal identities which teenagers can embrace, modify and re-issue. It is, therefore, a consumer product rich in symbolic significance.

There are consequences for the school in terms of how aspects of the symbolic world of pop are acceptable or oppositional to its ethos as it includes potentially contentious issues relating to style of dress, hair style, use of make-up or jewelry, and the use of pop music or pop cultural language argots like 'yo', 'mega' or 'wicked'.

A teacher, of course, does have to work within the context of the school's values and ethos, which, of course, will in some way, directly affect student teacher- relationships. But, it is the individual teacher's values within the classroom that are first scrutinised by the students. The symbolic world of pop culture, therefore, is not a neutral terrain which schools or teachers can ignore. How they handle its implications can also have a direct bearing on the effectiveness of the learning situation in addition to the way in which student-teacher relationships are framed. The students were given the choice of four categories, when answering the question, 'Can you choose what clothes you wear in school?'. These were, 'always', 'mostly', 'a little', 'not at all'. Schools exercised considerable control, as 66% of boys and 56% of girls claimed that they were not allowed to choose their mode of dress. The boys claimed that their choices increased a little up to the age of 14, but by the age of 15, 90% claimed that they had no choice at all. On the other hand, the girls choices were related to age, as by the age of 14, a significant number claimed that they had the freedom to choose 'a little' or 'mostly'. Moreover, by the age of 15, although 66% had no choice, 20% had 'a little' and 15% 'always' chose their style of dress.



The students believed there was a more liberal attitude towards their choice of hair styles. They were asked 'Can you wear your hair as you would like in school?' The patterns that emerged were, once again, age and gender related, with greater freedom each year up to the age of 14. At 15, 'always' fell back from 31% (at 14) to 22% for the girls, and 27% (at 14) to 12% for the boys. By the age of 15, 76% of the girls nominated 'always' or 'mostly' as compared with only 49% of the boys. In general, the girls thought the system allowed 'always/mostly' as compared with the boys who thought the system allowed 'mostly/a little'.

The use of make-up is primarily a female domain. In fact, one student in an all boys school did comment on his questionnaire, 'What, in a all boys' school? It isn't allowed!'. In response to the question, 'Can you wear make-up in school?', the majority of the students claimed that they were not allowed to wear it at all with about 26% on average, claiming that a little could be worn. At 15, there was a significant gender difference, as 84% of the boys claimed none could be worn as compared with 51% of the girls. The remaining 14% of the boys claimed that 'a little' or 'any' could be worn as compared with 47% of the girls. Thus, at 15, girls claimed to have significantly more freedom of choice.

The wearing of jewelry in school centred around three categories, 'any', 'a little', and 'not at all'. Since Glitter Rock in the 1970's and the likes of Elton John and his famous ear ring, it has been an area of style open to both sexes. Most responses up to the age of 15 were for 'a little', an average of 56%. A gender difference was, once again, evident at 15, as boys claiming 'a little', fell to 37%, and 'not at all' rose from 34% to 51%. Where boys responses were fairly evenly split between 'a little' or 'not at all', the girls figures, although sharing the same two categories, were less negative in the sense that 'a little' was nominated a lot more than 'not at all'. In addition, about 4% of the girls each year up to the age of 14 claimed any jewelry could be worn, a figure which rose to 10% at 15.

A feature of secondary schools, is movement between lessons, from one specialist area to another. The following question was asked: 'When you change lessons, are you expected to move in silence, quietly, or with consideration for others'. On average, about 40% of all students claimed that they had to move around school quietly and 50% by showing consideration for others. More girls than boys, however, claimed that they should move

about the school in silence (7% at 12, 16% at 13 for the girls as compared with 4% and 2% for the boys). Between the ages of 14 and 15, there was a shift from 'quietly' to 'with consideration for others' in both sexes. Table 7.3 shows this progression.

	Boys		Girls	
	Age 14 (n=64)	15 (n=3)	Age 14 (n=70)	15 (n=41)
Quietly	36%	21%	54%	41%
Consideration for others	58%	76%	40%	54%

Table 7.3 Students' movement around school, age 14-15.

Although the proportional move was similar for both sexes, the rule of 'quiet movement' around the school was evidently far more important for older girls, and, perhaps, hints at another example of gender difference linked to age. Most girls in school are likely to observe and take seriously, school rules. Few boys at 15 would openly say that they are important. Thus, 'with consideration for others' could be their interpretation of an order to 'move quietly'.

Effective learning, more often than not, has a quality relationship between student and teacher, where a real effort has been made to bridge cultural spaces and value systems. One small indicator of this process is how a relationship is based on the ease and trust of shared communication patterns. The students were asked the following, two questions. Firstly, "If you use words like, 'dipstick', 'burke', 'cruciality', 'mega', 'fab', 'hip', etc., do your teachers complain?"

Secondly, "Can you talk with your teachers in lessons or around the school, as you would talk with your friends? Not WHAT you say but how you say it, for example, 'Eh up, sir'." The four response categories - 'nearly all', 'a lot', 'a few', 'just one or two', - were available for both questions.

Neither sex at any age felt particularly inhibited when using current pop argots with their teachers. The majority of responses were for 'a few' or 'just one or two'. In fact, 54% of the students claimed only one or two would complain.

Although the responses were similar for the second question, the significance, of course, is quite different. If teachers did not mind the pop argots, very few were prepared to be too familiar with their students. Over 40% of students would talk to a few or just one or two teachers as they would talk to their friends (that is, running the risk of being 'over familiar'). In general, more boys than girls claimed that they communicated easily with their teachers. Certainly, the boys responses were more weighted towards a 'few' then, 'a lot' and 'nearly all' as compared with the girls whose greatest nominated category was 'just one or two', followed by 'a few', and ending with a couple of nominations for 'a lot'.

## **7.6 Pop and the school: the shadow curriculum**

Since Rock'n'Roll in the 1950's, teenage pop music has been more clearly associated with sex and consumerism. The overt stage sexuality of Elvis Presley and a decade later, Jimi Hendrix, never endeared such pop idols to an adult audience, many of whom considered them to be either infantile or immoral. Similarly, the messages contained within the lyrics, about fast cars, staying out late, and 'free love', had little connection with adults who were often more concerned with upward mobility, mortgage repayments or rent, maintaining a stable, legal relationship, and generally balancing the family budget. The relative affluence, though, of households in the 1950's and '60's, did enable many teenagers access to the new 'electric' pop scene, and an exposure to messages and meanings which were directed squarely at them.

Certainly, the wide-spread availability of the birth control pill in the 1960's, took the lid off sex, and superficially, promised sex without strings, or more to the point, sex without pregnancy. Minimally, sex was more openly placed on the teenage agenda (even if the full blown notion of easily available sex and drugs in the 'swinging '60's' often seemed remote to those

young people who lived 'north of Watford'). Schools, therefore, could more openly perceive sex education as part of their practice.

Consumerism, on the other hand, had far fewer social taboos. After all, a girl could not get pregnant or catch a sexually transmitted disease, by buying a Top 10 single or album. However, pop music and popular culture offered more than hedonism and a temporary relief from the inevitable and often painful realities of the teenage transition into adulthood. It offered style. It cost money, of course, to be involved in the symbolic, consumerist world of popular culture, and the selling of the clothes label has always intended to override a balanced judgement of quality related to value-for-money.

Teenage popular culture which embraces music, cinema, television, advertising, and more recently video and computing, continues to be a consumer and sexual training ground for teenagers. It helps to place young people in relation to the world in which they live, as part of the 'shadow curriculum', education out of school.

Therefore, schools should have an important role to play, by investigating and informing in a more objective and less partial form, both sex and consumerism. Teenagers should, for example, be helped to avoid the trauma of debt, which could be the result of badly prioritising financial needs. Similarly, the school should offer a better understanding of the nature and means of sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS, and a greater awareness of sex as an emotional experience, as well as a physical activity.

Some students in all years, claimed to be taught sex education. 12 year olds received most tuition, 68% for boys and 78% for girls. The amount taught to both boys and girls declined by the age of 14, to an average of 42%. However, at 15, where the boys tuition remained stable, only 20% of girls claimed to receive some sex education in school.

It is difficult to know from these figures, how much sex education was taught in the various schools or if all students received it. It could have been the case, for example, that students were specifically tutored in sexual matters in specific years, so all students would have, therefore, received some sex education by the age of 15. It is clear, however, that the schools' offered less sex education as the students moved up through the years.

Two questions were asked in order to illuminate where and how sex education was taught. The majority of study was done in Science, with the remainder taking place in Tutor Periods or as part of Personal and Social

Education programmes. Three response categories were given for the question, 'In your Sex Education work, do you mostly, listen to your teacher, spend time writing, or discuss in groups'. Up to the age of 14, most girls 'listened to the teacher' (about 70%), although 30% 'discussed in groups' at the age of 13. At 15, however, only 23% 'listened to the teacher', compared with 53% who 'discussed in groups', (a rise of 50% between the ages of 14 and 15). The ages of 13 and 15, then, appeared to be the least teacher-led. The majority of boys 'listened to the teacher', and although the opportunity to discuss increased yearly, it moved from 0% at the age of 11, to only 18% at 15.

The implications of these findings are very significant, as student responses in this present study suggest that sex education in schools is delivered neither uniformly nor progressively. The discussion of sexual matters, especially for boys, is rarely easy, which is why 'information-gathering' by teenagers from peers and older sisters or brothers, plays such an important role. As an educational process, however, it is often inaccurate and at best, usually partial. All too often it is assumed, that young people know a lot about sexual activity, sexual health, reproduction and contraception. The recent report by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, (1991) did not substantiate this view and also concluded that, as young people find it difficult to talk to each other, education about sex should also include education in shared verbal communication.

Sex education, therefore, should not be about sex alone, and yet the students in this research project either did not have, or claimed that they did not have, the opportunity to discuss sexual matters. For many of the students, their sex education was delivered by the teacher, and as it usually occurred in science lessons, it would probably have been about sexual practice devoid of an emotional component or placed in the context of a caring, close relationship.

If one of the major role models for both boys and girls is through the 'cock-rock' notions of the pop media, the somewhat sterile approach of schools does nothing for the long-term understanding of sex in the context of a caring, close relationship. Moreover, the perpetuation of the notion that boys are simply 'takers' and girls 'givers' of sex, the human cost of venereal disease and AIDS will not be addressed and a real understanding of one of the most important components of equal opportunity will remain illusive.

Education of money-management, hardly featured at all, in the schools. The students were asked, 'Do you have any lessons on, how to manage your money, how best to save, how you can avoid getting into debt?' 95% of the boys and 90% of the girls had no advice on how to manage their money. 14 year olds were served the best, with 21% of the girls and 13% of the boys receiving some guidance. At 15 years of age, this fell to 12% of the girls, and no information was given to the boys.

Only 5% of the students received guidance on how best to save. A few 14 year olds, once again, had some help (14% and 9% of girls and boys). Almost identical claims and patterns were made in the responses to debt avoidance.

The students were also asked where this information, if any, would be found in the curriculum. Results were scattered so thinly, that no clear picture emerged. However, girls who did Business Studies, seemed to be best served.

A Drama teacher once said that the problem with adolescents, was that their major concerns were, 'Money, Sex and Rock'n'Roll'. (She subsequently reduced her teaching commitment by job-sharing!). The first two are undoubtedly important issues for many teenagers, and more

so as they progress through the school system. The developing of life-skills is a significant aspect of the schooling process. Personal and Social Education and/or Tutor Periods are common in many of today's schools. They are the forum in which life-skills, as distinct from traditional subject-based skills, can be explored. In this sample, in spite of the availability of curriculum space in terms of P.S.E and Tutor time, the two issues under discussion were hardly addressed. It should be, therefore, of great concern that schools do not fully understand the relevance or the need to spend more time and resources in a comprehensive commitment to sex education and money management, both of which can have appalling personal and social consequences, if mis-managed.

## 7.7 Conclusion

The absence of student interviews did not allow for a more qualitative appraisal of the students attitudes towards pop music and popular culture in school or their relationship with teachers. Thus, the information gathered can only give a glimpse of the real situation pervading in secondary schools. However, this 'broad brush strokes' approach does give some indication of the kind of terrain in which the actual and symbolic use of pop music is implanted and a suggestion of its value within the school context.

Pop music did not feature in the music curriculum for the majority of the students. Even if it had done so, it would not necessary have altered the fact that, although there were definite trends indicating differing degrees of engagement due to age and gender, most students placed a low value on curriculum music in their schools.

Why did the students feel that music was not like other lessons? It would be too simplistic to correlate lack of interest and enthusiasm with an inappropriate curriculum content, perhaps deprived of a greater pop music input. The dominant nature of the single department musician, for example, could in itself be a problem as all students experiencing curriculum music in this context would have no other choice of music teacher and, as a result, would be subjected to a particular style and type of tuition. More fundamentally, in such circumstances, if a student did not relate to the music teacher for whatever reason, he or she would have had no other curriculum music tutor from the age of 11 to 16.

On the other hand, a less contentious reading of the situation could simply be the difference between and perhaps, the preference for, the more practically based and less 'desk bound' way of working of class-based music, both of which are less common in other subjects areas. If this were the case, the same answers could have been given to a subject like P.E. Whatever the reasons, however, many of the students, in this present study were not engaged, and it was a situation which deteriorated with age.

Notwithstanding a general malaise felt by many of the students in relation to music in school, there could be a perceptual problem with regard to the presence (or absence) of pop orientated content or thinking in their music curriculum. Most secondary schools operate in discrete departments or faculties, and cross-curricular mapping is a relatively new

phenomenon. Students, then, tend to be exposed to subjects in isolation, and it becomes a way of thinking, perceiving the acquisition of knowledge in isolated boxes. Music teachers may have a fund of pop music knowledge which surfaces in conversation, but may not feature as a mainstream activity within the classroom. It may be the case, therefore, that students do not realise that pop thinking is embedded in a music curriculum because it does not feature as a special activity, such as a purposeful listening to a pop record or the study of texture applying to all music, whatever the style.

Certainly, year by year, there was evidence of an increase in the conversations that took place between the students and their teachers about pop music. Talking to the teacher about pop after class or over lunch, would not necessarily mean that students realised pop related processes were included in their music curriculum.

One also has to take into account the impact of gender and age when assessing the value placed on pop music by the students. Boys were more comfortable with teachers in discussing pop music issues, and as the girls moved through the secondary school years, they claimed that their music teachers knew less about pop music as compared with the boys whose views were paradoxical. As we saw in the chapter about student leisure activities, a purposeful engagement with pop through the secondary school years was more prevalent with boys than girls.

Perhaps the students' view of music is best considered within the context of the whole school process. Attitudes to music followed the age-related trends that were evident in the study of leisure activities which often showed a decline in school engagement up to the age of 14, and a re-emergence of endeavour following option choices at 15. Certainly, students who had opted to do music were far less negative about the subject or their teachers. Perhaps class-based music, therefore, is seen to be no different to a maths or history lesson, except for the greater spatial freedom and practical bias of its content.

The students claimed that pop music did not feature significantly in school concerts or productions. One has to question the general accuracy of the students' responses, as most would not have been involved either directly as participants or indirectly as members of the audience. Therefore, how would they know? This situation is often exacerbated as they get older. On the other hand, as more girls than boys would have been participants, it was



not surprising, therefore, that they nominated its inclusion more than the boys. They are far more willing to be involved in performing dance, drama and singing, and generally demonstrating an artistic commitment in their own time, during their lunch breaks or after school.

Boys also claimed that school discos were more frequently organised than the girls, particularly in the early years. This runs counter to the common sense view that it would be more likely that younger girls, not boys, would attend. If this was the case, the girls' information would have been first hand and more accurate than the boys', who could have been making 'inspired guesses'.

Progressively, though, through the teenage years, more boys than girls in this present study claimed that discos took place in school. Perhaps older girls gradually outgrew school orientated events in deference to going out with older boys no longer at school. However, could this account for them all?

A further indicator of the value placed by teachers and schools on teenage popular culture could be evident in the amount of organisation of out-of-school discos, trips to rock concerts, pop musicals, and attitudes to the use of radios and personal stereos in school. For the majority of teenagers in this present study, there were very few pop-orientated events out of school and the use of pop hardware was seriously limited or banned. Thus, the findings, here, indicate that there should be a substantial space between the value placed on popular culture by the schools and that which was placed on it by the teenagers.

Changes in educational practice in recent years, embracing self-assisted study, individualised learning, and target setting to match student ability, are far removed from the didactic curriculum delivery of yesteryear. The notion of 'giving back' the learning process to the student is commendable, but how honest is it? To surrender teacher autonomy is to devolve elements of student control, and it is questionable as to how willing the school as institution and society in general, are prepared to meet the real demands of 'pupil power'.

The commitment of young people to popular culture, especially in terms of style, as exemplified by dress, for the majority of students in this present study, was unnegotiable. On the other hand, the generally shorter hair styles of the 1980's, posed no particular threat to the school's

preconceived notions of 'respectability'. However, the majority of boys believed there was more control over their hairstyles than girls. Boys' choices of hairstyles can represent disengagement with the school process should they embrace unconventional styles identified with specific sub-cultures such as heavy metal or punk, whereas the greater variation of girls' choices, perhaps, represent an acknowledged and legitimate preparation for womanhood.

This training process for womanhood had its limits, however. Much grander statements can be made with make-up and jewelry. What is considered 'appropriate' in school severely minimised student choice. Very few students had no restrictions, but once again, nearly half of the oldest girls were allowed to continue their 'womanhood training' by wearing 'any' or 'a little' make-up and jewelry.

This poses yet another question of perception. Were the boys actively discouraged from choosing their hairstyles, wearing jewelry or even, make-up? Certainly, it would have been true to say that if there were strong controls over the style of dress, it would have been difficult to make 'statements' with hair at a time of popular, short styles, and earrings apart, jewelry would not feature greatly for most of the boys. They may, therefore, simply have not known what limitations the school would have placed on them because it was not necessary or relevant for them to find out.

The free use of pop argots by the students did imply that most teachers were not culturally offended or threatened. The reduction of language constraints can go even further. It is not uncommon, for example, for students to call their teachers by acceptable 'nicknames'. On a practical level, the shortening of 'Mr Cruickshank-Smythe' to 'Mr C', could reduce the time needed to call the register quite considerably!

Beneath this relatively superficial familiarity between teachers and students, lies a more fundamental barrier. The tutor system operating in most schools encourages students to seek pastoral counselling should the need arise. The form tutor is usually the first in line to deal with problems or concerns, before involving the next level within the pastoral system, which is most likely to be the Year Head. Although weighty matters such as child abuse may be brought to the attention of teachers, how likely is it that students with less pressing needs would make use of the pastoral system if many of them feel that they are unable to communicate with their teachers 'as

friends'? It is not surprising that many teachers feel threatened or their authority challenged by the idea of genuine student equality, because to be 'equal' can invite criticism. Students, at times, can be ill-informed, disorganised and operate ineffectively and can be told so by their teachers. How many teachers, however, would be prepared to be told by their students that they, themselves, sometimes exhibit similar tendencies?

Control, then, is exerted for a variety of reasons, which primarily maintains a particular type of status quo, acceptable to schools and the teachers who work within them, and the perceived role and function of schools by society. Within this context, it perhaps makes sense of the absence of more comprehensive education in financial and sexual matters. Many teachers do feel uncomfortable in discussing these issues openly as it could touch on areas of private, personal experience as well as a perceived or actual lack of training and skill. Without a degree of familiarity borne from a real sense of equality, a trusting frame in which to enable genuine debate, sharing and learning, would be difficult to create. It is easier, therefore, to leave them out of the curriculum, or, as is the case with sexual matters, deal solely with the biological functions, in Science.

It is easy to point out weaknesses but far more difficult to positively address issues which are part of a much broader context. Although the stimulus for change often occurs from within institutions, teachers as well as students operate in a real world much bigger than school, and the pressures of the 'outside' can inhibit developments on the 'inside'. Several classes were asked recently if they had perceived any real difference in their classroom experience since the introduction of the National Curriculum, many subjects which have been up and running for quite some time. The fact that they had noticed no particular change is a view hardly likely to be shared by most teachers. For some teachers, it marks a return to the classroom-based, 'boxed' notion of their subject, an opportunity to teach their specialism without the peripheral interference of the social well-being of the student. For others, it is an inhibitor of broader aims which move beyond specialist subject boundaries, perceiving the student in an holistic context which includes the education of social and emotional components. It is not only the PE department who can make claim to the phrase, 'fit for life'. The aim of this excursion into the classroom and school-life of these students is far from condemning the current practice of teachers and the schools in which they

work. It shows, in a limited way, that in spite of the pressures facing teachers and schools from a variety of sources, the process of erosion of cultural spaces between student and teacher is evident in this study (the 'limited familiarity'), but only just. The more value placed on the culture that is brought into school by the students who are the *raison d'être* for its existence, the richer and more effective will be the learning process and workplace, even if, in the final analysis, there is no major change in the school's function and mode of operation.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **NATIONAL CURRICULUM MUSIC**

The Education Reform Act of 1988 provided for the establishment of a National Curriculum (NC) of core and foundation subjects for students of compulsory school age in England and Wales. Music was one of the last subjects to be put into place, in August 1992. The Music Working Group, under the Chairmanship of Sir John Manduell, (the Principal of the Royal Northern College of Music) was set up in July 1990, a year after the main material for this study was collected from the teachers in Leicestershire

Hindsight has shown, that in some ways, it was an advantage to be last. Although, as will be outlined, presently, music attracted its fair share of weighty national debate and generated much uncertainty, teachers were able to learn from their colleagues in other curricular areas, and to avoid some of the inevitable pitfalls inherent in one of the greatest changes in English education since the Second World War.

However, the prospects of the imposition of a National Curriculum hard on the heels of Leicestershire's own Curriculum Reviews in Key Stage Two and Three, plus the introduction of G.C.S.E and the ensuing changes at Key Stage Four, cast a shadow over many music teachers, uncertain of the implications for yet more change. It was within this context that the teachers in this study were asked to submit answers to four questions relating to the possible impact of the NC, a rather tall order in the absence of any hard information from Central Government.

## 8.1 1989: teachers' reactions to a National Curriculum

The teachers were asked if they thought that the NC would affect their approach to the subject, their classroom practice (more emphasis on skills, for example, as opposed to experiential learning) and to assess the likely impact on curriculum content. Each of these questions employed a five point scale: 'a great amount', 'a lot', 'a reasonable amount', 'a little', and 'not at all'. A number of respondents wrote on their questionnaires, 'don't know', a point that needs to be taken into account in the analysis. The fourth question asked teachers, if they wished, to outline any other way that they thought the NC might affect them, or to expand on their scale nominations in the previous three questions. 48% of them did so.

Two trends were evident in the answers addressing the possible need to change their approach to music teaching as a result of the NC. A group of about 27% (male and female) thought there would be a little or no need to change, and an average of about 20% didn't know. However, the remainder thought that the NC would affect their approach substantially. Significantly, they were more likely to be men than women (60% as compared with 49%).

No teachers thought that the learning of skills would replace other forms of learning 'a great amount', but 42% of the male teachers as compared with 18% of their female colleagues thought the change would be 'a lot' or 'a reasonable amount'. In fact, the trend in answers to this question showed a marked gender difference. Male responses moved from high to low across the six point scale, from 29% 'a lot' to 8% 'don't know'. Female responses were an almost exact mirror image, 9% 'a lot' to 26% 'don't know'.

Although not as striking, a marked difference emerged from the answers assessing the possible effect of the NC on curriculum content. Nearly half the male teachers thought that the need to change would be great, a quarter said 'at least a little', only 16% replied 'not at all', 12% 'didn't know'. On the other hand, 39% of female teachers thought there would be a lot of change needed, 35% at least a little, and 26% 'didn't know'.

In summary, male teachers believed the NC would affect them and their subject more significantly than the female teachers, and judging by the amount of 'don't know' responses, women teachers seemed to be waiting for more substantial information before admitting to the need to make further changes in their curriculum.

The teachers submitted a variety of responses to the question dealing with the general implications of the introduction of a NC in music. In addition to the need for additional finance to fund large scale changes in general, teachers were concerned more specifically, with the need for extra teaching space (for group work, especially composition), time (should there be a greater and more prescribed curriculum content), and staffing (if music was to be a core subject and not an option at Key Stage 4).

Several teachers commented on the changes that had already taken place as a result of the introduction of G.C.S.E. and the move to a wider, more relevant curriculum. Some teachers were optimistic that should the NC retain the attainment targets of G.C.S.E. (Listening, Performing and Composing), then the content of music at Key Stages 2 and 3 would not be unduly altered. On the other hand, other teachers saw the possibility of a return to the old-style G.C.E., a prospect not necessarily to be relished:

"We haven't, of course, received many details, yet, but if it follows the maths pattern, for instance, music education will once again be placed in the same straight-jacket in which it was placed by the old 'O'-level. I am glad I am near retirement if that is the case!"

(Male, age 61).

Nor were the worries confined to older teachers. On a similar theme, that is, the impact of exam-style teaching on the type (and relevance) of course content, a young female teacher commented:

'It worries me a great deal that the National Curriculum constraints upon Fourth and Fifth years will affect teaching also in the Lower School. I feel that I have spent a lot of time in my career making efforts to make my teaching geared to the individual student, and the content interesting and relevant, and that the content of the National Curriculum may well defeat all these attempts. I hope these fears turn out to be unfounded.'

(Female, age 29).

On a more optimistic note, however:

"So hard to say, Bob. All I can say, is, 'Give me a curriculum and I'll make it work for me!'"

(Male, age 30)

These issues and concerns were taken up by the Music Working Group for music in the National Curriculum, and attempts to address them were included in its interim report to the Secretary of State for Education.



## **8.2 The Education Reform Act**

The Educational Reform Act (ERA) of 1988 introduced a new vocabulary into the common language of teachers, parents and pupils. Emphasis was placed on the notion of a progressive school career spanning the years from the age of five (Year 1) to age eighteen (Year 13), and passing through four key stages (Key Stage 1, age 5-6 through to Key Stage 4, age 15-18).

Ten curriculum areas in the ERA were identified as foundation subjects, three of which were described as core. The Secretary of State for Education was obliged to introduce the core subjects (english, maths and science) first, and these were duly scheduled for the following year, 1989.

The National Curriculum Council (NCC) was the body responsible for the initial consultation process on the Key Stages before giving advice and making recommendations to the Secretary of State. Beyond the core subjects, there was much discussion as to whether all of the other foundation subjects should be studied to the age of 16. In November 1990, the NCC wrote to Kenneth Clarke, the new Secretary of State for Education, outlining their recommendations which expressed the view that there was wide support for the full NC for all students up to the age of 16. At this point, the music debate began.

## **8.3 Art and Music in Key Stage 4**

A section of the NCC's letter dealing specifically with art and music, pointed to the first difficulty that the Secretary of State would face when making his final decisions. The Committee believed that coherent courses could be devised to include other elements in the aesthetic and creative areas of the curriculum, like dance and drama. However, as both art and music were statutory subjects, the question was raised as to whether they would always have to be present in all syllabuses.

The combining of music, art, dance and drama into Expressive, Performing or Creative Arts, was not new. In Leicestershire, at this time, a third of all music teachers operated in such faculties, and in some parts of the County, there were continuing discussions concerning the relative merits of

art subjects developing as combined or separate entities. However, in addition to the statutory position of music in the NC, the fact that the previous Secretary of State had placed such emphasis on singing both in school up to Key Stage 4 and in society in general (supporting his predilection with a sizeable financial gift to a national choral competition), was helping to create a perception of music as a separate and special entity, the artistic 'soul' of the nation. The second difficulty facing the Secretary of State was the financial ramifications of the NCC's recommendations that music should be part of the NC up to the end of Key Stage 4.

#### **8.4 The Interim Report**

The Music Working Group, which had been formed in July 1990, presented its Interim Report in December of that year, working on the assumption that music would be compulsory in Key Stage 4. They had been bombarded by information from such sources as Music Advisors, teachers and professional musicians, many of whom were pointing out the cost implications of providing the necessary resources and INSET for training non-specialist teachers in primary schools. Similarly, there would be a need for staffing increases in the secondary schools as a result of teaching music to all students up to the age of 16, together with substantial extra resources including, in some cases, new buildings, and the additional new technology which has become a feature of the current way of working within the context of G.C.S.E. LEA's did not receive the Interim Report until March 1991 and there was a suggestion that it had been 'held up' while decisions were made about the cost implications of music up to the end Key Stage 4. In January 1991, in a speech made to the North of England Conference, Kenneth Clarke announced that music and art would be optional subjects in Key Stage 4. He responded to the Music Working Group in February confirming this decision, but suggested that there was scope for combining arts courses at Key Stage 4 and asked the Committee to explore such a possibility with the PE Working Group. Once he had responded to the Music Working Group, the LEA's received their copies of the Interim Report, and were now, via Advisory, able to disseminate its content to their music teachers.

There was a lot of support for the document and its general philosophy. It recognised and built on good practice in schools, provided a sensible framework in which to work, and had all the necessary arguments to support music within a broad and balanced curriculum. The structure it suggested was for four attainment targets grouped into two profile components:

Profile Component 1: Making Music

AT1 Performing

AT2 Composing

Profile Component 2: Understanding Music

AT3 Listening

AT4 Knowing

There were several underlying agendas in operation, most importantly, an emphasis on multicultural world awareness in music, singing up to the age of 16, and the way in which instrumental teaching services in the Country should be maintained to allow for the specific needs of especially gifted children. There were also very useful sections on music technology, special needs, support services, teaching strategies and inservice training. Guidance for assessment and reporting and proposed programmes of study beyond Key Stage 2 were, however, conspicuous by their absence.

There was considerable unease amongst many educational music practitioners about the prospect of Standard Attainment Tests (SAT's) in music. Although they would give status and credibility to music within the NC there was no real support for the need to test at the ages of 7, 11 and 14 in addition to 16. The criteria on which to judge students' work had been a major issue in the debates around the G.C.S.E. and the whole discussion seemed set for a re-run. For example, would SAT's test skills, techniques and knowledge only, or would they include projects and extended pieces of work? Would teacher assessment be part of the process? Moreover, within a curriculum time allocation for music of usually one hour each week, how and at what cost to other course activities would SAT's be operated?

In Kenneth Clarke's response to the Working Party, in addition to his decision to make music optional at Key Stage 4, and the possibility of combining music with other arts at the same stage, he also asked the Group to consider reducing the number of Attainment Targets from four to two by combining AT1 and 2, and AT3 and 4. This would have removed the need for Profile Components and would also have brought the Music NC into line with the Art and PE Working Groups recommendations on both counts. Finally, he asked the Group to consider ways of enabling some pupils to be less involved with practical work and more with repertoire, history and traditions.

### **8.5 'Music for ages 5 to 14'**

To many music educationalists, the last point made by Kenneth Clarke to the Group, suggested a move back towards 'knowing' at the expense of 'doing'. Classroom composition, which in many ways was still relatively new to curriculum practice, seemed to be under threat. The emphasis placed on composition in the classroom had provided the rationale for the construction of new music suites which differed greatly from the 1950's practice of a large, single room plus store. A National Curriculum document which enshrined composition would give added legitimacy to requests for the necessary funding requirements. These issues were taken on board by the Music Working Group.

The Group's final report was submitted in June 1991. Taking note of Kenneth Clarke's desire to reduce attainment targets, and his request for a greater emphasis on 'knowing', but at the same time aware of the threat to composition, they recommended three AT's, Performing, Composing and Appraising, and no Profile Components.

It had been decided, prior to the completion of the Group's report, that statutory testing would not apply to music in the NC. Thus, taking this into account, they recommended that each AT would have 10 non-statutory levels of attainment which were to be used along side the statutory Programmes of Study for Key Stages 1-3, and the non-statutory Programmes of Study at Key Stage 4.

The statutory obligation was in the reporting at the end of each key stage (commonly known as 'end of key stage statements'). Table 8.1 shows the range of levels in each stage as they were originally planned.

Key Stage	Ages	Range of Levels
1	5-7	1-3
2	7-11	2-5
3	11-14	3-7
4	14-16	4-10

Table 8.1 Original National Curriculum range of levels for music by age and key stage.

## 8.6 The Consultation process

Under the auspices of the NCC, LEA's were asked to respond to the proposals for music in the NC document 'Music for Ages 5 to 14' by November 1st, 1991. In Leicestershire, the 13 page consultation booklet was sent to all schools for the attention of those responsible for delivering music in the curriculum. The response booklet was divided into four sections. The first three referred to statutory requirements, the fourth to non- statutory aspects of the Working Group's report, and on the final page there were three questions with preset answer categories which sought general reactions to the proposals of the Secretary of State.

Leicestershire's consultation process was extensive and well organised. In addition to much informal discussion, there were three structured meetings held in the September at which 122 schools and colleges were represented from all over the county, city, town and rural primary and secondary schools. The schools and colleges were also asked to indicate their answers to the three summary questions asked by the NCC.

There was an overwhelming consensus from the three major meetings about three key issues. Firstly, there was a general welcome for the structure and philosophy embedded in the report. Contributors believed the proposals built on the good practice then current and provided an excellent framework for giving continuity, progression, direction and rigor to children's work. In particular, the meetings were unanimous in their support for the retention of the three separate attainment targets as they believed that this structure ensured the distinctness of composing, the creative and practical activity that had been the single most influential feature of the music curriculum over the last few years and which had contributed to greater involvement and access for all pupils.

Secondly, the meetings gave total support to the proposals which had identified inservice training, particularly for Key Stages 1 and 2, as the urgent first priority for implementation. Many of those present had been primary teachers who had been involved in Leicestershire's primary development programme. They attested to the fact that the proposals could be realistically introduced in their schools with the appropriate support.

Thirdly, those present at the meetings were clear about students' entitlement to an arts experience (including music) up to the age of 16 and wanted to see a requirement on schools to provide appropriate courses for all within the NC.

Responses to the summary questions on the Secretary of State's proposals for music were based on a six point scale, ranging from 'strongly agree'-1 to 'strongly disagree'-6. Respondents were asked to ring one number. The three questions were:

1. 'To what extent do you agree with the basic structure of statutory attainment targets with statutory end of key stage statements and non-statutory levels of attainment?'
2. 'To what extent do you agree to the proposal to include three attainment targets in the Order to establish the National Curriculum.'
3. 'To what extent do you agree with a reduction of two attainment targets'.

The results from the 90 schools who responded to the survey, showed that 92% and 97% respectively ringed the first two points of questions 1 and 2 ('strongly agree'). For question 3, 98% ringed the last two points ('strongly disagree'). In addition, Leicestershire's Music Advisory registered a general feeling from the teachers in the county of their appreciation for the thoroughness of the Working Groups proposals and hoped that they would be accepted by the NCC.

The responses from Leicestershire were mirrored nationally, especially with regard to the three summary questions. In the light of such a clear national consensus among teachers, therefore, the NCC report which was sent to the Secretary of State in January 1992, was a bombshell to say the least.

## **8.7 The National Curriculum Council Consultation Report**

No analysis of the national curriculum music process would be complete without some reference to the accompanying media attention. It would be hard to imagine that debates in the appropriate committee rooms and working groups were any more intense than the arguments in the newspapers and on radio and television. There was an extraordinary amount of cultural pressure from the right wing of the Conservative Party as music began its long and winding road to the statute book. The ideological battle was over whose musical values and traditions were to be represented and fostered in schools. Were they to promote a western high-art and more

knowledge-based approach, or to continue to develop a multi-culturalist, less prescribed and more practical stance? A moderate view of a difficult scenario had prevailed in the Group, due in no small measure to the outside influence of people like Keith Swanwick and the advocacy Group members like John Stephens (Vice Chairman of the Music Working Group) who had managed to influence decisions which diluted programmes of study that were too prescribed, and kept the balance in favour of making, rather than knowing about, music.

In this context, and given the arguments which had already been raised to support composition in schools, much emphasis was placed on the outcome of the NCC's reaction to the results of the three summary questions. Ignoring the national consensus, the NCC recommended to the Secretary of State; that there should be two, not three Attainment Targets, Performing and Composing (AT1), Listening and Appraising (AT2), that the 10 non-statutory levels be removed and that there should be no obligation on schools to support an art experience in Key Stage 4. In addition, they recommended more emphasis on knowing about music at the expense of creative music making. This, taken in conjunction with the reduction of attainment targets, suggested an equal weighting between the two, an opinion almost universally opposed by those directly involved in music education in schools.

The furore that followed stirred up more public debate. Influential musicians like Simon Rattle, the conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, responding to the apparent success of the traditionalist stance, like many others, did not want music in schools to move away from the current practice with its emphasis on composition. Very quickly, the Secretary of State publicly announced that the weighting of the attainment targets should be two to one in favour of AT1 (performing and composing). However, what for many in education had been a golden opportunity to develop through consensus, a coherent, meaningful curriculum for music in schools, was in the end, an opportunity missed, and the practical repercussions of the final document laid before Parliament in March 1992, had still to be fully understood.



## 8.8 1992: Teachers' reactions to the National Curriculum

In order to obtain a current, post-music NC view, a variety of educationalists in Leicestershire, including music teachers and teachers of the Arts, Music Advisors, Deputy Heads and Vice-Principals who were responsible for managing curriculum matters, were asked for their assessment of the issues for music and the Arts in schools as a result of the new legislation.

The notion of a National Curriculum in music, in itself, was not necessarily regarded negatively. It was seen as providing an opportunity across all Key Stages to re-assess and rethink the curriculum in terms of concepts, content and resources, and to challenge some of the 1960's notions of change which rejected the academic approach of the 'old order' but replaced it with what was often unrigorous practical work, lacking a firm conceptual frame and assessment processes. Certainly, in Leicestershire, in spite of the fact that in the first instance many primary teachers thought the NC was foisted upon them, following the support given from the Advisory service, many acknowledge that the NC did tighten up much of the junior school music practice. On a less comfortable note, for them, it has also provided a plethora of paperwork and check lists which can be overburdening.

In many cases, secondary school teachers who came into the profession in the wake of John Paynter et al, and made the leap from music as an academic subject into a more practically based approach, found themselves busily involved in finding ways of topping up their established curriculum to meet the requirements of the NC rather than having to institute wholesale change.

'In terms of the National Curriculum, I had to make decisions as to whether my work fitted the AT's and in the absence of any real guidelines, my view was that it's reasonably OK, with the exception of the 'listening' component which I suspected needed reviewing as long ago as the Leicestershire Curriculum Review. Oh, for the time!'

(Male music teacher)

One of the reasons music survived for so long in traditional schools was the fact that it enjoyed high cultural status by virtue of the fact that it was accessible only to the erudite few. The more modernist view has perhaps thrown away 'the baby with the bath water' in the sense that an activity like listening, for example, is practised less and less in deference to practical music-making. However, there is also an argument which suggests that listening, an icon of the 'knowledge' exponents, has simply changed and become assimilated as a part of practical music making, as one female teacher commented:

'Listening for me, is for very important reasons which are associated with something else, more integrated with other activities rather than a lesson in itself. Therefore, I am unlikely to choose a record for 'listening' but very likely to choose part of a record for a specific purpose, like a melodic line or an example of dynamic change. Very rarely do I play a whole piece of anything if it's more than 20 minutes long. If it is, I want it to be very important, indeed, and, therefore, only ever do it as an exercise, perhaps once each year.'

However, if the National Curriculum helped many music teachers to sort out certain aspects of their curriculum, it left key areas in crisis for the vast majority.

## 8.9 Assessment

A major concern was the whole question of assessment, what form it should take and how it was to be carried out. The removal of the ten levels of attainment left teachers in a quagmire of uncertainty. They could see only too clearly, that when producing differentiated scores in assessment, music teachers were open to the charge that they were working with personal rather than objective criteria. Teachers turned to Advisors for guidance, who in turn asked the NCC. One Advisor commented:

"I go to Music Advisors meetings both Midland's and National ones, HMI meetings where you've got a whole group of Music Advisors sitting around a table getting at the NCC's music officer, saying, 'Tell us, what is actually going to be expected? What is SEAC's guidance going to say? Teachers are asking us, they're expecting us to know. We're asking you, we certainly expect you to know.' And he sits back and he says, 'What do teachers want, how do you think they're going to want to organise it? What is going to be manageable for them?' Basically, what he's saying, every single time you get in that position, he's saying, in effect, teachers are going to have to work it out for themselves. Basically, what he's REALLY saying is that nobody knows!"

Teachers can also see that the absence of a firm, agreed criterion to judge student's work will eventually cause problems in preparing end of key stage statements. No-one wants to return to the pre-Record of Achievement days where assessments turned on passing or failing. In Leicestershire, in an effort to be positive, Advisors and teachers are notionally talking about three levels of summative statementing with words like 'working towards', 'has reached with reasonable competence', and 'reached very competently'. Many music teachers have learned from criterion referencing course work and the experience of colleagues already operating the NC, that the whole notion of 'knowing' is difficult to substantiate. Thus, 'having experience of' is preferred as an underlying trend in any summative statement policy.

Equally important is the limitation of assessing only musical skills and ignoring other competencies, such as those required for working successfully in a group. As a consequence, music is removed from its everyday educational context.

'As any teacher will tell you, the best outcome is almost always achieved by the group that unites quickly, addressing the task as a single unit. If they argue and don't negotiate or try to force individual points of view, whatever the subject area, the task will suffer.'

(Male music teacher)

None of this is particularly rigorous and many music teachers and Advisors believe that a further consequence of the removal of the 10 non-statutory guidelines and SAT's, is to marginalise not just music but all of the arts in the NC. Once more, the arts could be perceived as educationally less valuable when compared with subjects like maths and science, which have an accepted tradition of objective assessment procedures.

### **8.9.1 The place of the Arts in Key Stage 4**

Although the Secretary of State hopes that many students will continue with the study of an aesthetic subject to the age of 16, the schools have no legal requirement to offer them this opportunity. The reality is that most schools will probably continue to provide those foundation subjects in Key Stage 3. On that basis, music and art will be available at G.C.S.E. level. However, other arts like dance and drama, and perhaps more importantly for the non-specialist, combined arts courses, may all be casualties.

When schools went through the process of a curriculum audit in order to define the amount of time in percentage terms that each subject should receive as a result of recommendations in preparation for the National Curriculum, it quickly became clear that the 'crowded curriculum', if fully implemented, was well in excess of 100%. Some school managers as early

as 1989 were making crucial decisions as to which curriculum areas would be eliminated in order to reduce the overcrowding. In this context, all of those involved in the arts were looking for statutory support in the NC for an arts entitlement for all students up to the age of 16. Some schools did not wait for legislation but took on the spirit of the recommendations. A Vice-Principal in a Community College who was anxious to give the arts his fullest support, commented:

"We believe the Arts to be so important that all students who come at 14 have to choose either Music, Expressive Arts, Media Studies or Art and Design as one of their options.'

The lack of statutory support, however, leaves the Arts in other schools very vulnerable.

'I can foresee a situation when a dance or drama teacher leaves the school, the pressure of LMF will make a replacement very unlikely. That will mark the end of the subject at G.C.S.E. and maybe, the end of Expressive Arts too.'

(A female drama teacher)

### **8.9.2 Local Management of Schools (LMS)**

Under LMS, control of finance has passed from the LEA to the schools, which are now responsible for meeting the costs of almost all requirements. During the early 1990's, educational support services like Advisory, INSET and Peripatetic Music Support, have either closed or dramatically scaled down their operations. Those left, in most cases, sell their services to schools and the money saved by the LEA is ostensibly devolved to all schools. The theory is, that any school can 'buy' into any services with the 'additional' money added to their budget.

The reality is often quite different. Schools do not know the amount of their budgets each year until the LEA announces its spending level for education. In turn, the LEA has to stay inside the public spending limits set by Central Government, or risk central funds being withheld. This year, 1993, due to strict Government controls on public sector spending, many LEA's nationally have had to make spending cuts in virtually all of their services and projects. In Leicestershire, £15 million has been taken out of the education budget. This means, that, despite the 'additional' money added to budgets from the devolved services, the schools have actually received less than the previous year. As reductions in departmental Capitation as part of a strategy to reduce budget short-falls are inevitable in many schools, the music teacher working in the context of LMS and the NC is forced to focus more than ever before on personal management skills.

It has always been the case that a music teacher at Head of Department meetings or curriculum discussions with Management has had to argue a case for funds. Not all musicians in school, however, see this as an important part of their function.

"I can see his face now. We were trying to find strategies to deal with the long term effects of LMS, and this guy said, 'I don't want to be a manager. I'm a teacher, I'm paid to be a teacher, so basically you can go hang'. O.K. that's fine if that's the choice he makes, and he doesn't go to management meetings. He doesn't make the case for music within the curriculum. He doesn't argue the case for funds, because he's a teacher and, therefore, they should be given to him. He wont get them. You've got to be out there and arguing"

(A Music Advisor)

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that the practice of music teaching has changed substantially in recent years. The impact of technology and the resultant resource implications are a world away from song sheets duplicated on a stencil. To operate effectively within the framework of the NC, music teachers must be prepared to fight for resources within their institutions. Relevant NC requirements need resourcing and the statutory documentation can be used in support.

Another area potentially rich in additional funding is extra-curricular activity. Schools vary as to who reaps the rewards from ticket sales for school concerts and productions. In some schools, money 'disappears' into general school funds. In others, a politically astute teacher can establish favourable ground rules from the beginning.

'The Head agreed at the outset that all funds raised as the result of a major musical initiative could stay with that department. Three Heads later, that policy is firmly institutionalised, and, as a result, I have one of the best equipped departments in the County.'

(Male music teacher)

In spite of reductions in Capitation then, there is room for the music teacher who is an effective manager, to approach the resource implications of the NC with a little less fear and trepidation. There is also the added bonus of being able to exploit the degree of flexibility and choice in the market place which has been created as a result of LMS. They are, for example, free to make equipment purchases from any source offering the best value for money. A music teacher looking for IT or keyboard technology can make a small budget go much further freed from the insistence of using County approved suppliers. Similarly, better deals can be struck since schools pay direct to suppliers, now the constraint of the county ordering system has disappeared together with the 90 days payment system, which was not a good bargaining counter to offer a small, specialist company, very concerned about cash flow and survival in a recession.

The development of a symbiotic relationship between the NC and LMS does not lie solely with equipment procurement, however. Students, now have a price on their head, and every new pupil entering a school brings over £1000. If music teachers can use LMS to help manage changes brought about by the introduction of the NC, it could raise awareness among managements and make them view music in school in a different and more favourable light. Schools with successful music departments, both in curricular and extra-curricular terms can attract students. This could be a very important issue in city schools where parents are faced with a range of choices. In addition, schools can now take students from outside their traditional catchment area.

Invariably, however, there is a less attractive side to the possibilities opened up in a more market-orientated school. It is currently not uncommon to see advertisements for music posts which include the notion of extra-curricular activity as contractual. The teacher applying for such posts needs to approach with caution, and with the demise of Music Advisory, (it was usual for an advisor to be present on interview), there is no external source of support for the individual teacher in terms of monitoring job specifications or simply influencing management attitudes prior to appointments.

In Leicestershire, since the Music Advisory made positive attempts to bring 'in from the cold' the isolated musician, the centrally-based INSET initiatives became stepping stones for the creation of locally-based collaborative initiatives between schools in the same family, or families of schools in close geographic proximity. The importance of these groups could well grow in future as schools may decide not to buy into any INSET activities organised by the small central team or their commercial equivalents. Prior to LMS, with the exception of the need to provide Supply cover for the absent teacher, such courses would have been free. A noticeable reduction in requests for places on centrally organised courses is evident since the introduction of charges.

Local collaboration may be the only way forward for the music teacher who, without it, could experience the same sense of isolation as was common prior to the 1987 INSET initiatives.



### 8.9.3 Music Support Services

The NC documentation, while clearly supporting peripatetic instrumental and vocal tuition in schools, does not resolve its position within the curriculum. In the NCC documentation, 'Music for the ages of 5 to 14', they state that they believe that children:

'In the early years, at Key Stage 1, will use simple instruments requiring limited technical skills..... By Key Stage 2, pupils should be exercising their skills and developing their ideas on a wider range of instruments requiring more sophisticated technical skills.' (p.57)

but six pages later:

"The notion of 'entitlement' has never applied to the teaching of instruments in school." (p.63)

It may take a court case to resolve the issue of whether or not all children by the age of eight should have the opportunity to play a more 'sophisticated' instrument as part of the NC.

The tensions between LMS and the NC are no more keenly felt than in the relationship between music support services and schools. The Working Group wanted to maintain the Music Support Services and the orchestras, bands and choirs which existed because of their work:

'The remarkable high standards achieved by the best of these groups-to be seen at events such as the annual National Festival of Music for Youth and the Schools Proms-are internationally recognised and acclaimed.'

(ibid, p.6)

The Group was probably influenced by the introduction of LMS and the threat that it posed to support services. Central support and control of the Service freed schools from concerns about teaching quality, reliability and, perhaps more importantly, cost. The total collapse of the system would leave the school or more accurately, the music teacher, solely responsible for the hiring of expertise from the private sector. It is unreasonable to expect class music teachers to effectively run a system whereby he or she is responsible for quality control, references, hiring and firing, even if they believed that they ought to offer such a musical enrichment. Unfortunately, although the Working Group highlighted the issues, because it had no control over funding, it made recommendations which are unclear and in some cases, challengeable.

Where a Music Support Service still exists, the management of the new devolved system in schools has had a significant impact on the music teacher as Head of Department. Many schools have traditionally been served by peripatetic teachers, and it would not be uncommon for an average school to have five or six visits each week. Most schools now ask for a parental contribution towards instrumental lessons. The level varies from school to school, depending on, for example, the school's size and commitment to music, and the political skills of the individual music teacher. Now that schools 'buy in' services, the role of the music teacher has to embrace its organisation, which could include collecting contributions, monitoring visiting teachers more closely, checking on absences of both teachers and students, negotiating and making formal requests for teaching time and resources from the support Service managers. In many cases, the development of a 'Policy for Music Support Services' in individual schools since the introduction of charges, has been left with the Head of Music prior to ratification by the school managers. The mushrooming of this aspect of a music teacher's daily practice has taken place invariably, in unchanged circumstances. That is, there is no extra time to meet the peripatetic teachers bearing in mind that they often, peripatetics pass 'as ships in the night', possibly working in a remote room a long way from the music area, and usually at a time when the school music teacher is teaching. As one male teacher commented:

"What the charge to the parent comes to is not really important. If I only charge one penny I have a different accountability to that parent, and that makes for a potentially hazardous experience!"

The challenge, then, may not be as spectacular as a court case. It could come from parents who, endeavouring to obtain for their children, the best musical opportunities and experiences, could use the NC documentation to pursue the issue with schools.

The music teacher's relationships with school managers, parents, students and outside agencies are changing due to the impact of the National Curriculum and the introduction of Local Management of Schools. David Pascall, Chairman of the NCC, claims that it could take 25 years to implement the NC. Perhaps it could be that long before the new role of the music teacher is fully understood or defined.

# **CHAPTER 9**

## **CONCLUSION- 'THE FINAL CURTAIN'**

This study has explored music and teenage creativity in education within a context which has included pupils, teachers, schools, the Local Education Authority and National Government. The research has focused on three major areas. These are:

- 1. The relationship between popular music cultures grounded in a proliferating system of audio-visual media with a); the development of teenage creativity between the ages of 11-15 and b); the experiences and activities of teachers responsible for music in schools.**
  
- 2. The relationship of schools and of teachers to the Local Education Authority and the policies of National Government, with particular reference to the introduction of the National Curriculum**
  
- 3. The implications of these relationships for the place and status of music within the secondary school.**

The research of such a complex set of relationships was an enormous undertaking for an underfunded, part-time researcher, although the fact that the focus was on an investigation of general trends rather than on specific sub-groups made the task more manageable.

The approach adopted did not directly address social class although much research on education and teenage leisure has placed enormous importance on this dimension of the pupils' backgrounds. The relevant research on sub-cultures and taste cultures has been referred to in earlier chapters. The primary concern here, however, was to shift attention to regular mundane features of adolescent experiences by looking for general patterns and trends in pop music listening, in record purchasing or in appreciation of curriculum music. Some elements of general experience, such as the

almost total lack of interest in classical music, were almost universal among the teenagers studied. Similarly, given the necessary funds, all had access to a common pop music experience out of school due to a shared geographic location. At the same time there was evidence to suggest that differences in preferences and activities were attributable to factors other than social class background and family wealth.

One of the primary aims of this present study is that it should be accessible to music teachers in schools. I hope that the information it contains will illuminate some of the factors directly affecting music education policy and their classroom practice, and will stimulate interest and discussion within all areas relating to music and teenage creativity in schools.

## **9.1 The Major Findings**

**1.** They do not support the assumption that there is a single, dominant 'youth culture' primarily centred around the audio-visual media which offers a core set of activities and thereby, provides the basis for a common teenage experience. There is sufficient evidence to suggest the presence of a series of youth cultures which co-exist and are structured in complex ways by the cross-cutting influences of gender, age and personal income.

**2.** Most students placed a low value on their musical experience in schools.

**3.** 'High' art music was irrelevant to almost all of the students in this study.

**4.** Schools exert considerable control over symbolic aspects of popular culture particularly in terms of dress, make-up and jewelry, subject to the differential influence of gender and age.

**5.** There is no evidence of systematic or progressive tuition in relation to either sex education or money management, two of the fundamental life-skills teenagers need to come to terms with.

**6.** Gender and age are important determinants in framing the attitude of music teachers to a); popular music and culture and b); student-teacher relationships.

**7.** There is no clear evidence to suggest that music teachers lead a double artistic life or have an obvious bias against popular music and popular culture, in general.

**8.** The single teacher department, which is a characteristic of curriculum music organisation in many schools, can uniquely affect the development of a particular musical ethos and value system for both pupils and schools.

## 9.2 The National Curriculum: a missed opportunity

In discussions of the National Curriculum, one of the key changes in music education during the last 20 years has been repeatedly highlighted, namely, the move away from academic, knowledge-based learning towards more practical work based in composition. This shift in turn, has helped to ensure a change in teaching style and student-teacher relationships, as a less didactic more fluid approach is required by non-desk bound activities and group work. Yet, although the teaching situation, lesson content and pedagogic relationships have changed, music in the curriculum was not regarded particularly positively by the majority of students in this study. It therefore appears that the 'consumers ' do not value the service they are being offered.

The idea of students as educational consumers implies a different set of school relationships. When purchasing a house or car, the buyer asks for advice, expects the outcome to fulfil a variety of needs, and will reject one option in favour of another until the final choice fulfils pre-determined criteria.

Curriculum reviews and three to five year development plans, which are now a feature of modern educational practice, endeavour to produce outcomes with the student's assumed needs in mind. In school it is called creating a relevant curriculum. Efforts to make schoolwork meaningful and relevant are not new. Composition would never have been the key feature of the last 20 years without it. Yet, change is slow, conservative and teacher-led. What opportunity does the student as the consumer of music in schools have, to affect change or negotiate outcomes, until the final package fulfils their pre-determined criteria? At G.C.S.E. level, there is indeed negotiation particularly in relation to composition. But at Key Stage 3, where 95%+ of all the secondary musical experience starts and ends, there is little. Given the choice, 'high' art and all it represents would be removed from the classroom by most consumers. Its demise would be mourned by few as it is a meaningless concept for the vast majority of secondary school students. This brute fact is recognised by most music teachers, many of whom simply pay lip-service to it in their day-to-day curriculum practice. So, why is the system still failing the student? A substantial part of the answer is the need to perpetuate a myth, the enshrinement of musical dishonesty and the resulting inability to make real changes.

In order to address this problem, one has to understand the relationship of relevance to artistic value. The following event summarises the music teachers' dilemma:

"I rated the lady quite highly. She had worked in my school for some time and was impressed by the students' reactions to music lessons and extra-curricular activities. She asked me why I didn't teach notation. I went through my list of reasons, like it would be impossible to teach any language in 50 minutes each week, and would be impossible to master unless they were instrumental players. It would be irrelevant to the vast majority who were not. It would take every single minute of every lesson to get no-where and for no purpose, and so on. After every point she said she understood and agreed. When I'd finished my little lecture she said, 'But why don't you teach notation?' I really didn't know what to say."

(Male music teacher)

Within the classroom, music teachers are at the epicentre of conflicting artistic relationships, generated by the incommensurate perspectives of the teacher, the school, the parents, and most importantly, the wider society. The subtext of all artistic discussion in the mainstream of ordinary living, outside of erudite debate, is in which pigeon-holes do we place our creative heroes?

In our consumer-led system where everything is for sale, our artistic heroes sell themselves. It is sometimes called breaking down barriers. Therefore, it is perfectly reasonable to have an internationally famous tenor singing a well known aria from an opera to introduce the television coverage of the World Cup, or a well regarded soprano performing with a pop idol for the Olympics. The Arts are actively encouraged to seek sponsors, often for their very survival, and should it be found, the art is supposedly never sullied by such support. Within this contradiction, there is an enduring constant; when value is apportioned, the league tables rarely change. An artist can be revered within the sphere of 'low' art, but can only hope for qualified recognition in the world of 'high' art. Without 'classical' roots, the 'Presidency'



of popular art forms is always possible but the 'Monarchy' of 'high' art remains reserved for the 'natural' heirs of the selective tradition. Popular culture can be enjoyed by the vast majority, but it is held to have no value beyond ephemeral consumption. As a consequence, it is credited with little enduring quality. The product may be

ephemeral, but the process is not. Great debates take place about music as a referential art. Ultimately, the notion of music only existing in a social context has to be explained away either as a part of some sub-cultural research, or as a blemish which needs to be educated away, like treating some cultural disease in a clinic called school.

In the meantime, the vast majority of 11-14 year olds have a grounded musical experience which sometimes relates to them. Eventually, they leave the educational system with at best, no long lasting scars which could serve as a reminder of how to avoid any future musical experience. Almost always, the student is rarely equipped by the school to make musical culture personally meaningful.

The 'league table' aspect of the arts debate has been addressed by others who are better qualified, and in this study, they have been referred to and quoted in the relevant sections. It is not relevant, here. To rehearse these arguments in the abstract would skew the discussion away from the classroom and while this reification may suit the academics, it does not address the reality of the classroom as experienced by the students and the teacher. Moreover, it perpetuates the 'reality gap', which many music teachers in particular attest to, between what they see and do in the classroom versus what they feel they should put in their syllabuses.

Efforts to address the 'reality gap' have taken place within curriculum development but they are, of necessity, tentative, cautious and slow to reach the classroom. Teachers have to be persuaded to challenge the relevance of their own value systems, a personal change which can be uncomfortable, difficult and timeconsuming. Parents rarely challenge classroom practice in a concerted way due to their own lack of knowledge and understanding of the subject and the feeling that their children could be involved in something that is practical and even interesting. This is in sharp contrast to their own musical experience in school which was more often than not, over-academic, personally unfulfilling and unmemorable.

However, in spite of all its flaws and built-in dishonesty, the music curriculum in 1989, was dynamic, challengeable and developmental. The last thing that school music needed was a national, public debate primarily centred around a discussion of the relative merits of the 'traditional' versus the 'modern', and on the need to 'know' versus the belief in 'doing'. Yet these were precisely the arenas on which debates around the National Curriculum focused. Unfortunately, the terms of debate for the future of music in schools were not set by those who had the knowledge and skills to address the important issues, but by politicians whose sole experience of musical philosophy was probably developed in a G.C.E. 'O'-level course, taken 30 years previously.

By the time the NC was introduced in the autumn of 1992, those empowered to oversee educational music had, by and large, achieved a primary aim. The Music Working Group had deflected the right-wing attack on current practice in schools which endeavoured to return music to the values of a mythical 'Golden Age'. There was no doubt that current musical educational thinking was vulnerable and that as a consequence, Music Advisors were obliged to act as 'Whips', mobilising united support for the Working Party's recommendations. Teachers were told it was the only 'realistic' option. It became a rearguard action to maintain the status quo. The kind of debates that had taken place 20 years before and which had heralded the moves towards practically based music, were never allowed to take place. As a consequence, the 'reality gap' has been enshrined in the NC and is now set to stay for may be, a very long time. In essence, the National Curriculum for Music is for both teachers and students, the greatest missed opportunity for decades.

Once the starting point for discussion became cultural values rather than classroom relevance, the Group inevitably had to work with a remit which was destined to fail its consumers. The debate should have been based on where educational music had developed to by 1989, not to justify its existence, because in spite of the fact that classroom practice had moved on a long way since John Paynter, many of the constraints which have been alluded to throughout this study, helped maintain and preserve the 'reality gap'. The agenda should have included questions like:

'What do we want to be practical about?'

'How does it work in the classroom?'

'What are the constraints that hinder practical music making?'

'What is left out by the emphasis on practical music-making?'

'How is a balanced curriculum achieved?'

'What do we want to be balanced about?'

Two major factors, more than any other, frame the practice and effect the success of music courses. They are class size and curriculum time. The Working Group went some way to addressing the first issue, recommending an upper limit of no more than 20 students in any group for Key Stage 3. Of course, this is non-statutory guidance, so no school is obliged to fund such group sizes. In any case, many could not afford to, even if they believed they should. In relation to the second issue, curriculum time, the Group considers that all the programmes of study are achievable in lessons that operate in a weekly one hour session, during the Key Stage 3 years.

Taken together, these recommendations present music teachers with a particularly uncomfortable scenario which centres on devising a curriculum strategy which attempts to strike a balance between breadth and depth within a course structure. Should a teacher, for example, pursue a relatively small area of investigation for many weeks in order to address depth of experience, knowledge and understanding? Alternatively, should the teacher, in an attempt to cover more components spend fewer weeks on each, sacrificing depth for breadth? In addition, what is singularly ignored in the NC is the fact that 95% of all students will receive no interim re-inforcement of their class work from one week to the next. Is there a native of any country who has learned to communicate in their own tongue in just one isolated hour per week, without any further practice or communication of any sort connected with the development of such a skill? Would one expect the French department to prepare students with the equivalent programmes of study for G.C.S.E. in the same manner? Would anyone, anywhere ever learn to speak

or write anything fluently, let alone in a personal style, given the same constraints? Few specialist music teachers now working in schools learned their skills as pupils in one period per week. In fact, are there any?

If the class group does not have a music lesson on a Monday (traditionally one of the commonest single day holidays in England) and the student is never ill on the day of a music lesson, it would be possible to have a musical experience lasting the equivalent of about three school weeks during the three years of Key Stage 3. Given this reality, one has to raise serious doubts about the viability of National Curriculum Music. Within its own terms, neither the notion of progression nor knowledge acquisition are attainable.

If the NC debate had started with these stark facts of classroom life, more attention could have been paid to the musical experience that educationalists believe to be appropriate for children from 5 to 14 years of age. They could have talked about the practical acquaintance of musical elements, how they could be received by the mind as sensations, perceptions or knowledge, how these ingredients might relate to their experiences, and how they could combine to enhance the growth of the whole individual, both in and out of school. Within this context, structures and examples from any musical culture or tradition are useable. Expressiveness is a fundamental human need, and the development of composition as the most important component of the music curriculum gave every student, for the first time, the chance to be genuinely creative. The level of expression and the demonstration of skills are of secondary importance, it is the 'doing' that matters and the performance of the job that is done.

Until the 1980's, classroom composition was mainly restricted to the acoustic sounds of the voice or percussion instruments. As a consequence, in the three-week, whistle-stop tour of curriculum-based school music teaching, more sophisticated composition was restricted to those few students who had the necessary instrumental skills. Electronic technology has broken this barrier and liberated composition in the classroom, with its capacity to produce the base on which to compose. It may be the sounds of an orchestra, a pop or rock backing track, the ability to do multi-track recording or synthesise sounds.

The active music lesson should give access to all levels of ability and challenge passivity which, for many, has been the only available option up until recently. Heroes are drawn from the ranks of those who have the skills to do what the average individual cannot. A return to an emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge merely feeds passivity. What evidence is there for the enrichment of the expressive qualities of the average 13 year olds through a non-participatory consumption of musical knowledge? Crammed into a minute time spot, it has no connection with them as expressive individuals nor is it part of their culture. It would be more meaningful to run an hour's aerobics class set to music. At least, then, they would have the benefit of a kind of expressivism connected to physical fitness.

In everyday life, people are continuously expressing themselves through music; singing in the bath, humming the latest Number One hit, dancing, drumming their fingers on a table top. Unfortunately, the cultural mandarins have imposed an unnecessarily narrow interpretation of 'musical expressivism', one which ruthlessly differentiates and habitually grants greater value to those with the most skill, either instrumental or vocal. Some two year old children move rhythmically, instinctively, others have to learn, some, as years go by, will always find it very difficult. Yet, most people take for granted the possession of simple musical skills and many will find a forum in which to display them, perhaps on the disco dance floor or at a karaoke evening. Yet, so often, these hard won competencies and the resulting artistic expression of the vast majority are trivialised or dismissed.

The prescriptive view of music in the NC does not enable, and by its omission, does not give value to, the acquisition of attainable musical skills and the relevant knowledge needed to be expressive in composition and performance. Instead, it locks pupils into the culture of a by-gone educational age, which few wish to explore. It ought not be a legal requirement that schools insist that the vast majority of young people should imbibe someone else's musical values, and then for society to make them feel guilty, disadvantaged or uneducated if they choose not to participate in experiences it validates. Willis and others have shown this route to be fruitless. Similarly, Swanwick's version of expressivism is part of a tradition which suits 5% of the population only. Like Byronic heroes, appealing for their message to be heard still, it falls on deaf ears for most in a 1990's classroom. Once again, ask the consumers.

The perpetuation of such a mythology owes much to the argument that standards would be unduly depressed by appealing to the lowest possible classroom denominator. But a lowering of standards for the few may be a relevant art experience for the many. Do they really mean that the needs and preferences of 95% of the school population should be ignored? Do they really expect teachers to place their faith in a late conversion to the 'right' musical values when most of the evidence denies such a possibility?. There is an assumption which seems to be contained in most official presentations of the National Curriculum, that eventually, most teachers will cease to question its rationale.

There is also the assumption that the artistic views and values of the individual are fixed for life by the time he or she leaves full time education. This perception generates a fear that unless 'high' art culture is pre- eminent in school, and imbibed by the age of 14, it will be forever too late to gain access to the only 'legitimate' culture. How do such exponents explain away the dynamism of taste cultures, and who are 5% of the nation to say that their culture is always and everywhere superior to the cultures of the rest?

An honest music curriculum in school would be underpinned by the desire to give every student the skills to choose how they express themselves with the minimum of inherent value judgements. Music, as a creative, expressive artform is fundamentally an exploration of sound itself, and as the individual tires of one particular sound structure, he or she is free to move on to another and in this process, interest and pleasure will be rekindled and satisfied. The student should be free to make musical choices and decisions without prejudice. The same holds for any future investigation of the nature of the teenage musical experience. Like the practical exploration of classroom practice, such research should be undertaken in a spirit of honesty and with the consumer firmly in mind.

### 9.3 Future Research

The concept of teenage leisure careers which has been floated here, is worth pursuing because of its enormous, although not necessarily obvious, impact on the reality of school life and schooling. The complexity of teenage experience rarely finds space in school policy discussions. It is unlikely, for example, that a homework policy would take into account compulsory out of school teenage commitments, whether it be for area orchestral concerts and rehearsals, or for looking after younger brothers or sisters for several hours after school has closed.

On a day to day basis, many teachers operate as though their homework request is the only commitment for those students required to complete it. Future work should aim to tease out the links between out of school teenage commitments and their impact on music and learning in school. The research structure should include a comparable frame for music teachers' leisure and every effort made to obtain matching data from both groups. A similar research strategy should also be pursued in relation both to music in schools and to emotional and creative development more generally. Unfortunately, this was not practically possible in the present study.

A case in point was the degree of school commitment to sex education. According to student perceptions, sex education in schools was limited. A teacher who has been a member of several working parties responsible for the development of sex educational material for a group of Leicestershire schools, having read the findings, strongly disagrees with the students' perceptions. If teachers had been asked to provide information, their responses could have substantiated the students' claims or provided an alternative view. In addition, it could have placed the role of the pop media and this aspect of its 'shadow curriculum' into a broader context.

Future research should also draw more comprehensively on qualitative materials drawn from taped personal interviews, group discussions or structured observations of classroom activity. This material would help to clarify and explain the patterns indicated by quantitative data.

Although some interviews and group discussions were included as part of this present study, a more concerted and structured approach would have thrown more light on the puzzles and inconsistencies thrown up by the survey results.

A more comprehensive, longitudinal research project would build on the present study and do more justice to the complexities and stresses of the triangular relationship between pupils, teachers and schools. It would be particularly interesting to track a sample group of 11 year olds and their teachers over a four year period covering the crucial entry into adolescence. In the current national and local climate, where the dust from recent educational initiatives has far from settled, findings from such a study would indeed, make fascinating reading.

The contribution of the present study is necessarily more modest. I hope, though, that the reader will be prompted to take up the issues it raises, to take issue with the way I have explored them, and to learn from the gaps I have left. The work presented here is an attempt to explore a complex set of intersecting relations, paying particular attention to aspects that have received less attention than they deserve in the existing literature, and drawing on my experiences of listening, playing and teaching music. I hope that my effort to relate biography and history for myself will stimulate others to pursue the connections between lived experience and social, cultural and institutional contexts, for themselves and for all the pupils who will encounter music in schools in the future.



# APPENDIX

## Questionnaire 1

I am looking at two things. Firstly, I want to find out what your interest is in pop music and secondly, how it is handled in school. For most questions, put a ring around or underline the answer which best describes you. A few questions need you to write a few words, e.g. the names of magazines or TV programmes. Please answer ALL questions.

1. Reference Number.

2. Male      Female

3. Age (in years)    11      12      13      14      15

4. Are you:    \*\*Asian      Afro-Caribbean

                  UK/Irish      Other European

                  Oriental      \*Other

(\*\*Indian Sub Continent/East African Asian).

\*For students of mixed descent who may not want to ring one of the other choices)

5. Do you listen to pop radio in the MORNING?

1 hour or more      45 mins      30 mins      15 mins      Never

6. How many mornings each week?

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7

7. What pop programmes do you listen to?

Name the pop programmes or write 'None' in this space:

8. Do you listen to pop radio in the EVENING?

1 hour or more    45 mins    30 mins    15 mins    Never

9. How many evenings each week?

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7

10. What pop programmes do you listen to?

Name the pop programmes or write 'None' in this space:

11. What pop TV programmes do you watch each week?

Name the pop programmes or write 'None' in this space:

12. How long do you watch pop TV each week?

2 hours or more    1 hour    30 mins    Never

13. Do you go to discos?

Once a week or more

Once a month

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

14. Do you go to pop or rock concerts?

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

15. Do you have the following in your house:

A record player

A personal stereo

A cassette tape player

A compact disc

A video recorder

A home computer

16. How often do you play computer games each week?

Daily

Three times a week or more

Once or twice a week

Never

17. Do you play games on someone else's computer during the week?

Daily

Three times a week or more

Once or twice a week

Never

18. Which computer games do you like?

Write the names or 'None', here:

19. Do you have a TV in your house?

Yes No

20. Do you have more than one TV in your house? Yes No

21. Do you buy a pop magazine?

Regularly      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

22. Which pop magazine(s) do you buy?

Write the names or 'None' in this space:

23. Do you read someone else's pop magazine?

Regularly      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

24. Which pop magazine(s) do you borrow?

Write the names or 'None' in this space:

25. Do you buy pop 45 r.p.m. (singles) records?

Regularly      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

26. About how many singles do you have in YOUR collection?

Write the number or 'None' here:

27. Do you buy pop L.P. records or tapes?

Regularly      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

28. About how many L.P.'s do you have in your collection?

Write the number or 'None' here:

29. If you had to spend some time on a desert island alone, what five records would you take with you. They can be singles, L.P.'s, tapes or compact discs.

Write the song title, singer/group name (both if you can) under the headings, below:

Song/Album Title	Singer/Group
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30. Do you buy pop/rock videos?     Yes     No

31. How many do you have in your collection?

Write the number or 'None', here:

32. Do you record pop videos off the TV?     Yes     No

33. How often do you watch recorded pop videos at home or at someone else's house?

Three times a week or more     Once or twice a week

Sometimes     Rarely     Never

34. Of the recorded pop videos you watch, are most of them:

Bought from a shop     Recorded from the TV

An equal mixl     don't buy or record any

35. Do you play a musical instrument?     Yes     No

36. What do you play?

Write the instrument(s) or 'None' here:

37. How much time do you practice each day?

1 hour or more      45 mins      30 mins      15mins      None

38. Are you a member of an orchestra?      Yes      No

39. Are you a member of a pop or rock group? Yes      No

40. Are you in any clubs, e.g., Youth Club, Scouts, Guides, Sports, St. John's, etc? Yes      No

41. How much pocket money are you given each week?

Write the amount or 'None' here:

42. Do you earn more money each week by doing jobs for your parents, relations, friends, etc? Yes      No

43. How much extra do you earn each week?

Write the amount or 'None' here:

44. Do you have a part-time job, e.g. paper round, work during the evening or weekend?      Yes      No

45. How much do you earn each week?

Write the amount or 'None' here:

46. Do you go to the cinema (pictures)?

Once a week or more      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

47. Do you go to the theatre?

Once a week or more      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

48. Do you go to sports events, e.g., football matches, athletics, etc?

Once a week or more

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

49. How much homework do you do each day?

1 hour or more

45 mins

30 mins

15 mins

None

## Questionnaire 2

If you remember, I asked you some questions about your involvement in pop music. Now I want to find out how pop music is treated in your school and what you feel about it. As before, please ring or underline the answer which best describes you.

1. Reference Number.

2. Do your teachers organise school discos?

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

3. Do your teachers organise trips to discos out-of-school?

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

4. Do your teachers organise trips to pop or rock concerts?

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

5. Do your teachers organise trips to rock or pop musicals like 'Cats', 'Phantom of the Opera', 'Chess', 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat', etc?

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

6. Do your teachers include rock or pop songs for you to perform in school concerts or shows.

Often              Sometimes              Rarely              Never

7. Are you allowed to use radios or portable stereos      around the school?

Anywhere      In certain places      Not allowed in school

8. Can you use personal stereos around the school?

Anywhere      In certain places      Not allowed in school

9. Do you have a music lesson or lessons each week?

Yes      No

If you answered 'Yes' to Q.9, ANSWER Q.10 to Q.15.

If you answered 'No' to Q.9, MISS OUT Q.10 to Q.15.

10. Is your music lesson:

Very much like other lessons      Like other lessons

A bit like other lessons      Not like other lessons at all

11. Do you enjoy your music lesson:

A lot              It's alright              Not at all

12. Is pop music included in your music lessons?

Often              Sometimes              Rarely              Never



13. Do you talk to your music teacher about pop music?

Often              Sometimes              Rarely              Never

14. Do you think your music teacher knows:

A lot about pop music              A little about pop music

Not much at all              Don't know

15. Is your music teacher easy to talk to?

Very easy      Easy              All right              Not Really      Not at all

16. Can you choose what clothes you wear in school?

Always              Mostly              A little              Not at all

17. Can you wear your hair as you would like in school?

Always              Mostly              A little              Not at all

18. Can you wear make-up in school?

Any              A little              Not at all

19. Can you wear jewellery in school?

Any      A little              Not at all

20. When you change lessons, are you expected to move:

In silence      Quietly              With consideration for others

21. If you use words like 'dipstick', 'burke', 'cruciality', 'mega', 'fab', 'hip', etc., do your teachers complain?

Nearly all    A lot    A few    Just one or two

22. Can you talk with your teachers in lessons or around the school, as you would talk with your friends? Not WHAT you say but HOW you say it. e.g. 'Eh up, sir'.

Nearly all    A lot    A few    Just one or two

23. Which subject areas do you feel are the happiest places to work in? e.g. English, French, etc.

Write your answer here:

24. Is Sex Education taught in your year?    Yes    No

If you answered 'Yes' for Q.23, ANSWER Q.24 & Q.25

If you answered 'No' for Q.23, MISS OUT Q.24 & Q.25

25. Are your Sex Education lessons taught in:

Science    Personal and Social Education

Tutor Period    Anywhere else?

26. In your Sex Education work, do you mostly:

Listen to your teacher

Spend time writing

Discuss in groups

27. Do you have any lessons on:

How to manage your money

How best you can save

How you can avoid getting into debt

If you underlined or ringed any of Q.27, ANSWER Q.28

If you did NOT underline or ring any of Q.27, MISS OUT Q.28

28. Are you taught about it in:

Personal and Social Education

Tutor Period

Anywhere else

## Music Teachers' Questionnaire

Would you please put a ring around or underline the answer which best describes your attitude, circumstances or situation. Please feel free to add additional comments where you feel it to be appropriate.

1. Reference Number

2. Male          Female

3. Age (in years)

4. Is the student age range of your school/college:

10/11-14    11-14    11-16    11-18    14-18

5. In terms of the whole school curriculum, is your department?

A separate department

Part of Expressive or Performing Arts Department/Faculty Modular

A Modular Option

6. In your courses, do you emphasise skills?

A great amount A lot

Equal to other classroom methods

A little Not at all

7. In your courses, do you emphasise experiential learning?

A great amount A lot

Equal to other classroom methods

A little Not at all

10. Do you approach multicultural education as a separate entity?

Yes No

9. Do you highlight multicultural components when relevant during course work? Yes No

10. Is the notion of multicultural education embedded and implicit in a lot of your course work? Yes No

11. Is musical appreciation an important aspect of your curriculum?

Very important      Quite important      Important

Sometimes      Not really important

12. Taking pop music in its widest sense e.g., singing a pop song, using pop for listening and/or analysis, using 12 Bar Blues as a basis for composition, teaching drum rifts on a kit, etc., do you think that pop music ideas are embedded and implicit in a lot of your course work?

A great amount      A lot

Equal to other course components

A little      Not very much

13. Do you have a block of course work dealing specifically with popmusic:

Yes      No

If 'Yes' to Q.13, answer Q.14

14. For what age range(s) does it appear?

10-11      11      12      13      14      15

15. In class, how much time do you spend on the historical aspects of pop?

A great amount      A lot

Equal to other pop music components

Not very much      No time at all

16. In class, how much time do you spend on compositional aspects of pop?

A great amount      A lot

Equal to other pop music components

Not very much      No time at all

17. In class, how much time do you spend listening to pop music?

A great amount      A lot

Equal to other pop music components

Not very much      No time at all

18. In class, how much time do you spend on the cultural aspects of pop, e.g., the relationships between the writer/performer, technological developments and world events, etc?

A great amount      A lot

Equal to other pop music components

Not very much      No time at all

19. A knowledge about pop music compositional techniques, the pop music industry, and recording studios, etc. is, perhaps, more important than a knowledge of the current 'Top 10'. On this basis, how much would you say you know about pop?

A great amount      A lot      A reasonable amount

A little      Not much at all

20. Did you have formal tuition in pop music at college or university?

A great amount      A lot      A reasonable amount

A little None at all

21. Do you talk to your students about pop music, generally?

Often      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

22. It is sometimes said that our subject allows us to behave differently with the students in class. (Perhaps more friendly and/or familiar). Do you think your attitude to students is different from your colleagues in other subjects?

Very different      Different

A little different      About the same

23. Similarly, do you feel that your attitude to students is different from your colleagues when communicating with or simply crossing paths with students around the campus?

Very different      Different

A little different      About the same

24. Do you include rock/pop songs in your concerts?

Often      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

25. Do you stage rock/pop musicals in school?

Often      Sometimes      Rarely      Never

26. Do you run or encourage pop/rock groups in school.

Often          Sometimes          Rarely          Never

27. Do you organise or help to organise discos in your school.

Often          Sometimes          Rarely          Never

28. Do you organise or help to organise trips to discos out-of-school?

Often          Sometimes          Rarely          Never

29. Do you organise or help to organise school trips to pop/rock musicals?

Often          Sometimes          Rarely          Never

30. Do you organise or help to organise school trips to rock/pop concerts?

Often          Sometimes          Rarely          Never

31. Do you listen to pop radio in the morning?

Regularly      Sometimes          Rarely          Never

32. What pop programmes do you listen to in the morning? (If you don't, write 'None')

33. Do you listen to pop radio in the evening?

Regularly      Sometimes          Rarely          Never

34. What pop programmes do you listen to in the evening? (If you don't, write 'None')

35. Do you watch pop TV: Often Sometimes Rarely Never



36. What pop TV do you watch each week. Name the programmes or write 'None' in this space.

37. Do you go to rock/pop musicals?

Often            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

38. Do you go to pop or rock concerts?

Often            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

39. Do you buy pop 45 rpm records?

Often            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

40. About how many pop singles do you have in your collection?

Write the number or 'None' here:

41. Do you borrow pop 45 rpm records?

Often            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

42. Do you buy pop L.P. records or tapes?

Often            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

43. About how many pop L.P.'s do you have in your collection?

Write the number or 'None' here:

44. Do you buy pop C.D.'s:

Often            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

45. About how many pop C.D.'s do you have in your collection?

Write the number or 'None' here:

46. Do you borrow pop L.P. records, tapes or C.D.'s?

Often            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

47. Do you follow the top 10 charts?

Usually            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

48. Could you name the current 'Number 1' if asked?

Usually            Sometimes            Rarely            Never

49. If you were marooned on that famous 'Desert Island', what five recordings would you take with you?

Title	Composer/Performer(s)
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50. Has the introduction of Records of Achievement affected your approach to your subject?

A great amount            A lot            A reasonable amount

A little            Not at all.

51. Has Records of Achievement altered your classroom methodology, i.e. are you more attuned to the needs of the individual student?

A great amount            A lot            A reasonable amount

A little            Not at all

52. Do you consider the greater emphasis placed on student negotiation in terms of attainment grades and reporting has enhanced student learning in your subject?

A great amount      A lot      A reasonable amount  
A little      No difference

53. Has the Curriculum Review had an impact on your curriculum organisation, i.e. are your courses more coherent?

A great amount      A lot      A reasonable amount  
A little      Not at all

54. Do you think the introduction of the National Curriculum will affect your approach to your subject?

A great amount      A lot      A reasonable amount  
A little      Not at all

55. Do you think the National Curriculum will affect your classroom emphasis, e.g. will you emphasise skills at the expense of experiential learning?

A great amount      A lot      A reasonable amount  
A little      Not at all

56. Do you think the National Curriculum will affect your curriculum content?

A great amount      A lot      A reasonable amount  
A little      Not at all

57. If you can think of any other ways that the National Curriculum might affect you as a music teacher, or would like to expand on the ideas in Q.53-55, write here. Please write 'None' if you have no further comments to make. Many thanks for your time.

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