



# **Where Do They Look? :**

## **Music Information Seeking Behavior in the Digital Age**

Nara Newcomer, University of Missouri-Kansas City  
Music Library Association Annual Meeting, Orlando FL, Feb. 24, 2017

# University of Missouri-Kansas City

Public, urban university

ca. 16,000 students

Conservatory of Music and

Dance: ca. 600 students

2 campuses (main campus and

Health Sciences campus)

New arts campus proposed



Image: HGA/Helix - Artist's rendering of dance studio in proposed arts campus

# Photo List

1. A place where you feel most productive
2. A place where you practice/rehearse
3. Something weird
4. Stuff you carry with you every day
5. Your music collection
6. Your desk
7. How you stay organized
8. A place where you socialize
9. A great place to listen to music
10. A place where you study
11. A classroom you like
12. A piece of music that you like
13. A place you like to go to in the library
14. Cool technology
15. Something every Conservatory freshman should know about the library
16. A place you feel lost
17. How you recently discovered a piece of music that you like
18. Something you can't live without
19. The night before a big assignment is due
20. Your favorite part of the day

**Availability**

**Browsing**

**Convenience**

**Cost**

**Quality**

**Legal & ethical  
issues**

# Availability



# Availability

Contemporary music...[is] easier to find...on YouTube than [the] library or somewhere else. Even a music store.

Similarly: IMSLP for older scores; library for contemporary music

Is there anything about [the symphonic scores section] that you would change?

Not really. There's only been one or two instances, where I did not find a score that I was looking for.

# Availability

- “searches that result in limited or no holdings” were among top three graduate student frustrations with searching the library catalog for scores and recordings. (Dougan 2012, 565)
- 91% agreed/strongly agreed with the statement "a strong library collection (physical items and electronic resources) is important to my success as a student" (Clark 2015, 149)
- Barrier to library research: shortage of particular groups of materials. Library aids studies by providing hard-to-find items. (Mayer 2015, 414)
- Ethnomusicologist faculty used various libraries “because these institutions held special collections not available elsewhere” (Liew & Ng 2006, 62).

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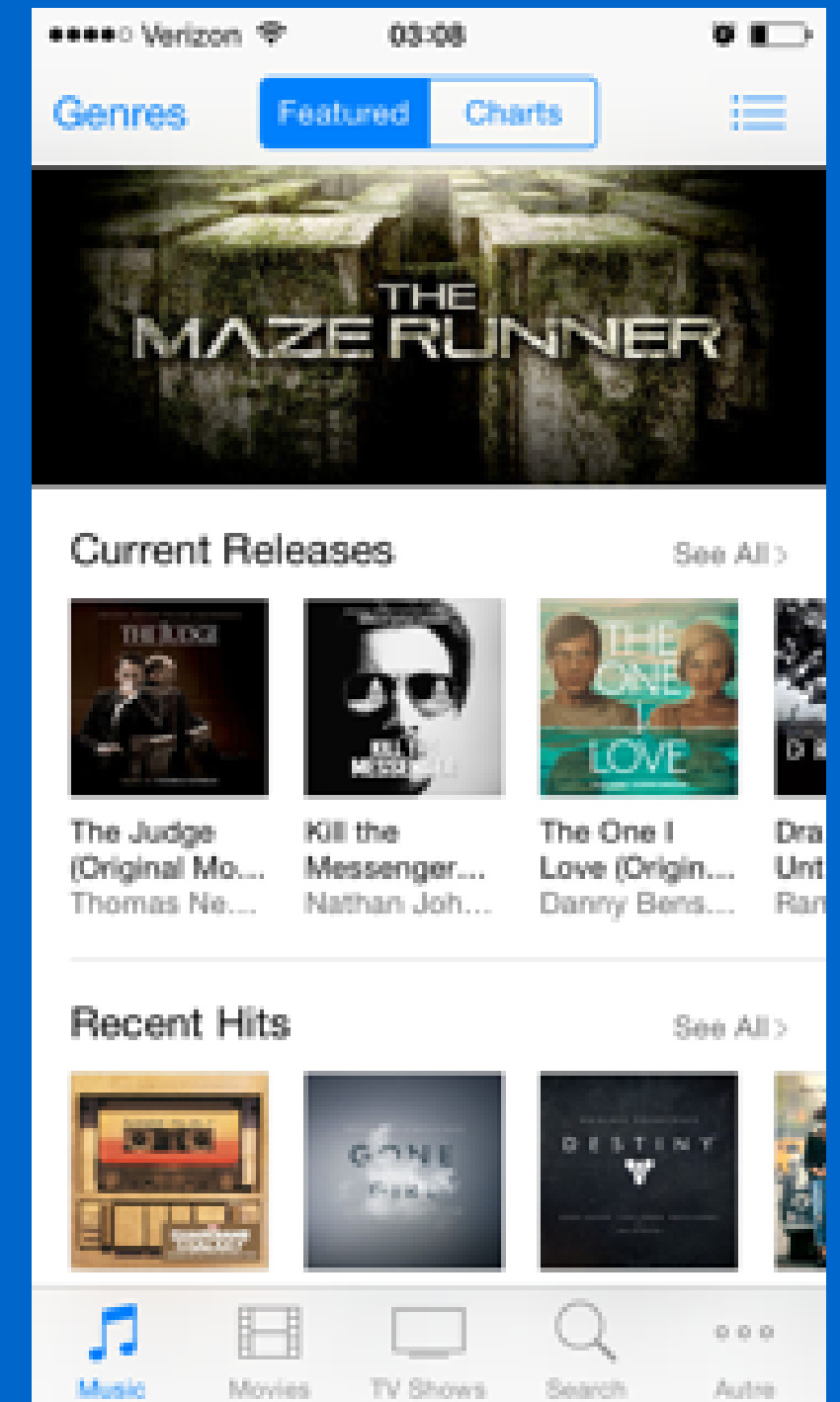
**Quality**

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# Browsing

YouTube...[has] links....So, if you like this piece, maybe you can just random click on the other piece, and then you find the other interesting music too.



# Browsing

The way things are organized in the music library, I think, is that it's organized by like sections and types of music. So, it's like all the woodwind quintets are in one area or something.

I'll just kind of wander around. It's like, "OK, it looks like I'm around scores for masses, so, ooh, I wonder if they have *Missa Solemnis* here."



# Browsing

[All Conservatory freshman need] to know [the code], so they can find the books....Because when I was a freshman...I didn't know how to use the library, [and it was] so difficult to find a book, you know, and I don't want to ask people all the time.



# Browsing

- "You find you can pick out a book you're looking for, and next to it are very similar things and I'm like hmm, I want to read those instead of just one."-student quote (Mayer 2015, 414)
- "I wish there was a way if you had a certain thing selected... if it said, like Amazon, you might like these, if you like this."- student quote (Mayer 2015, 415)
- "[Ethnomusicology faculty] found it easier to find relevant items in public libraries where CDs, for instance, were cataloged according to categories such as world music, traditional music, dance, and pop." (Liew and Ng 2006, 62)

# Convenience

I like Google Play or just YouTube, too....When I'm practicing, if I kind of want to hear something, I can just go on YouTube quick and listen.



# Convenience



Do you have a recording of this on your iPod?

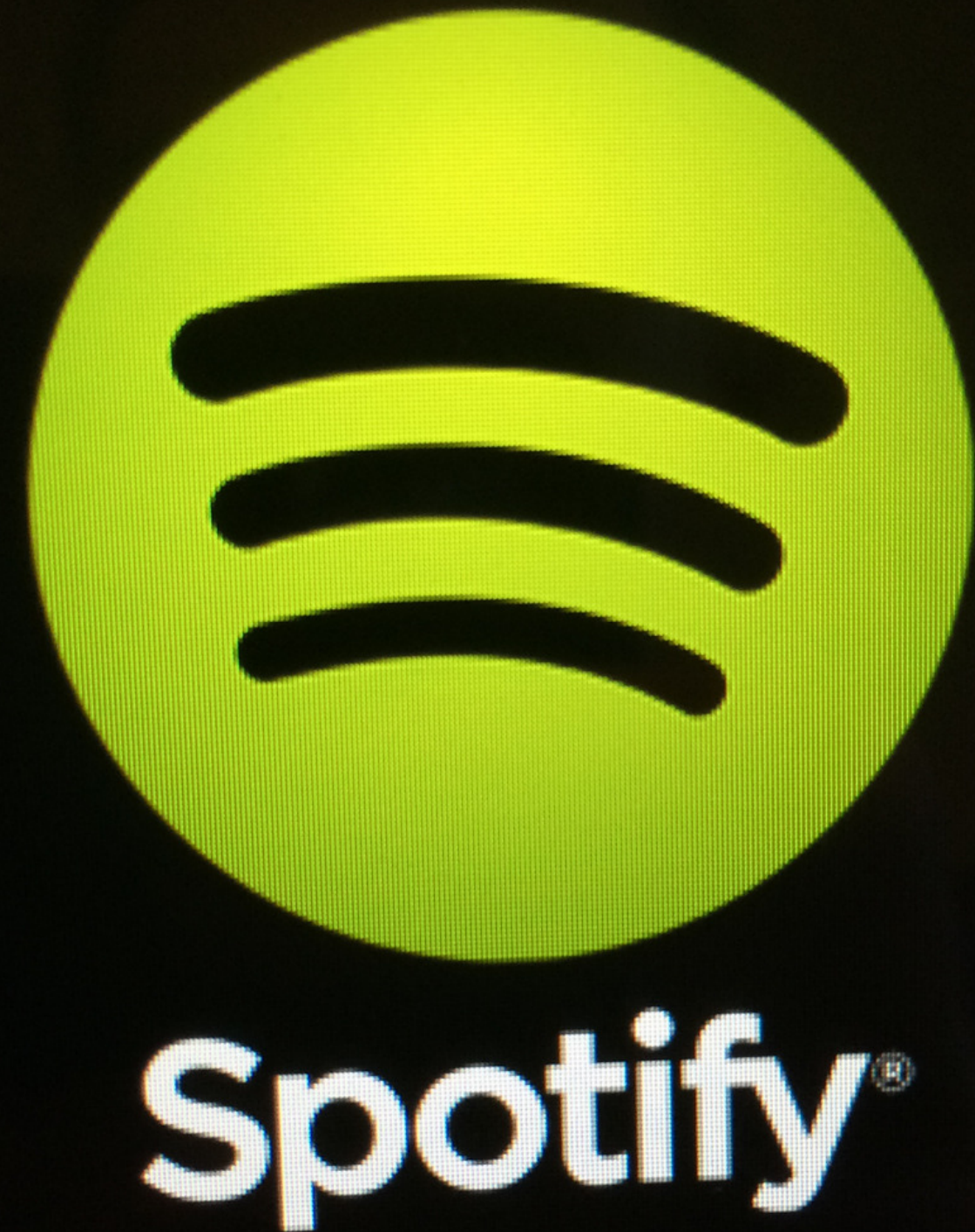
Yes....But now I can just YouTube them, yeah.  
Easier.

# Convenience

- "Ease of access" and "convenience" ranked #1 and #3 (out of 5) factors related to "information and research needs" (Clark 2013, 305)
- ""students were likely to use non-Library resources if/when it was easier or more convenient to do so." (Dougan 2012, 567)
- Comments related to "Convenience/speed/ease of access" and "Portability/storage/organization" were two of the top three most frequent reasons given for preferring a particular format (Knop 2015, 91)

## Cost

I would be a very poor person if I bought all my music. So, I utilize internet radio and Spotify is my favorite. Because you can basically just type in whatever you want to hear.





# Cost

- "In some cases students want a library copy because it is expensive to buy or print a digital copy" (Dougan 2015, 66)

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# Quality

I have sometimes gotten stuff off from Schubert Line...[but] it's always nicer to go to the library and make sure you're getting the right key and the right everything.

My friend told me that YouTube decreases the sound quality of their videos so that they can have the high quality video.

# Quality

- Students who preferred library DVDs to YouTube tended to select these reasons for their preference: "The sound/video quality is usually good"; "The performance is usually good and authentic" (Lai 2013, 204)
- "Other criteria mentioned by students include quality of the recording, image (in IMSLP), or edition, and reliability." (Dougan 2014, 66)
- Music faculty concerned over quality and about student choices (Dougan 2016, 500); (Matsumori 1981, 92-94)

## Legal & ethical issues

Now [it] is past fifty years already...so, you can find some of [Schoenberg's] stuff on IMSLP. Maybe this piece also. But, like five years ago, you couldn't.

If it's like, I just want one track, I'll maybe find the CD at the library. And I'll get the one track. I know it's- I think that's technically illegal, but buying an entire CD for one track seems a little bit nonsensical sometimes.

## Legal & ethical issues

- “Noticeably absent were comments regarding concepts related to scholarly communication: open access and information publishing cycles. Only one focus group briefly acknowledged copyright as a barrier to accessing online sources.” (Mayer 2015, 427)
- Copyright was smallest faculty concern about YouTube (Dougan 2014, 585)
- Legal and ethical considerations for recording indigenous music (Liew and Ng 2006, 66)

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# Practical Application at UMKC

Availability rules --

"Blow their minds" freshman library tours



Image: UMKC Libraries Staff



# Practical Application at UMKC

Serendipity prized --

Signage to enhance browsing and  
quietly teach classification



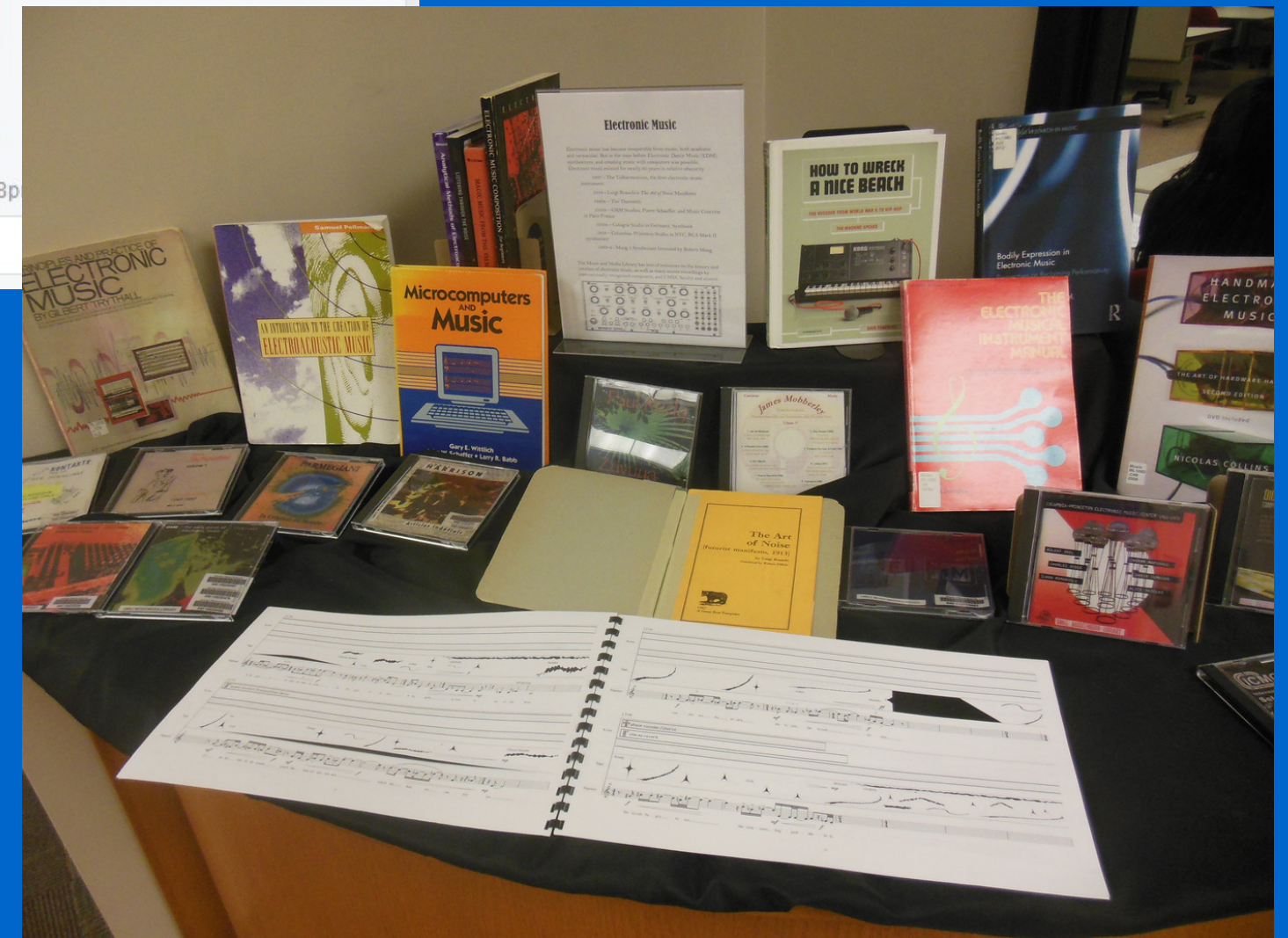
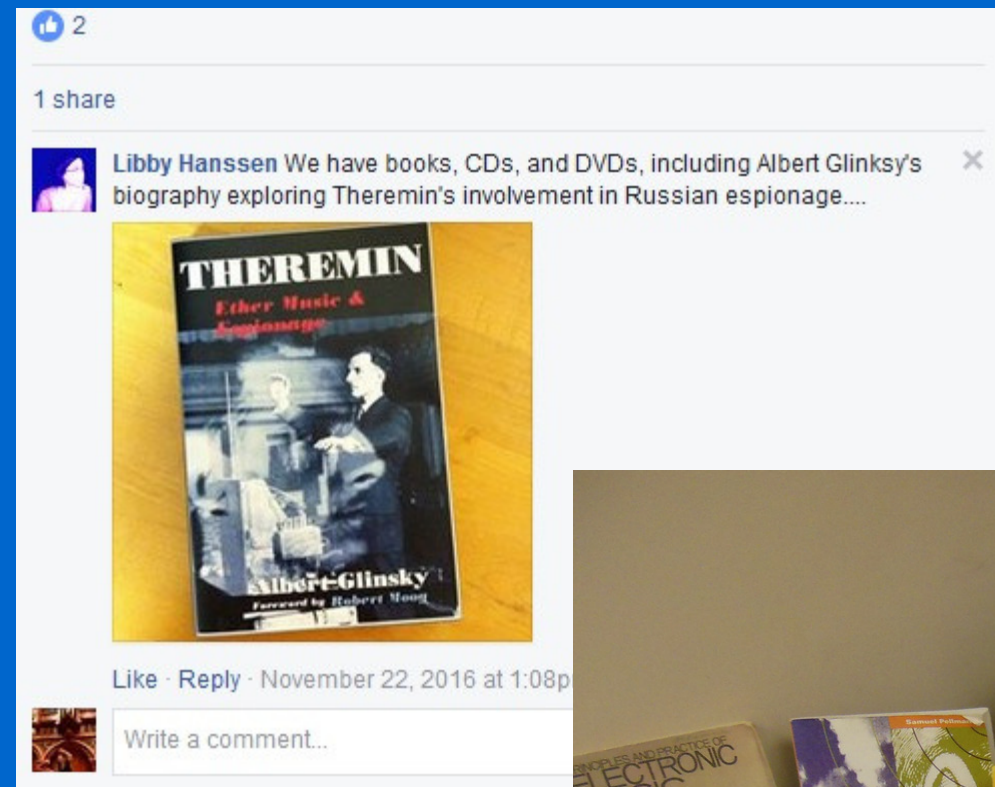
Image: UMKC Libraries Staff

# Practical Application at UMKC

Availability + serendipity --

Physical displays

Social media promotions



Images: UMKC Libraries Staff

# Practical Application at UMKC

Quality, legal & ethical issues undervalued --

Expanded, multi-faceted copyright education

"Authority is created and contextual"

"Information has value"



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