

Generational Differences in Musical Preferences

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"True music must repeat the thought and inspiration of the people and the time."

George Gershwin

Musical tastes change with the times. New genres regularly appear, established styles decline in popularity, and some musical stalwarts undergo revivals. Whether an original form of music, a foreign import, or a second (or later) coming of an old style, "new" musical genres appeal disproportionately to the young (probably especially to those in their teens). Each emerging generation is open to the popular music of its day and especially drawn to music that plays to that generation and defines itself as that generation's sound. As that generation ages, it tends to maintain its preference for the music of its youth. Other genres may come along and the absolute popularity of a type of music will probably wane as new forms emerge, but at a minimum each generation remains relatively more favorable towards the music of its youth than generations raised either before or after the advent of a genre of music.

Because music exerts a strong cohort effect, we can observe the changing musical tastes of America over the last 70 years by examining the musical preferences across birth cohorts in the 1993 General Social Survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center.¹ We can track two related, but distinct, aspects of the generational transformation, changes in musical popularity or

favorability and changes in musical awareness or familiarity.

Favorability

Turning to favorability first, Table 1 shows that the proportion that "likes very much" each of 18 types of music in each of seven birth cohorts from those born before 1920 to those born from 1970 to 1975. In 14 of the 18 musical styles the proportion strongly liking varies significantly across cohorts. For 3 other genres (blues, Latin, and new age) there is significant variation in the proportion liking the music (like it very much + like it). Only for classical music is there no statistically significant variation in favorability.²

Each of the 17 significant trends shows patterns of change that closely match the historical ebb and flow of musical tastes and many show massive shifts in both absolute and relative musical popularity. Overall, there are three groupings of trends. First, there are those genres that are high at the beginning (i.e. among the earliest cohorts) and then fade in popularity among more recent cohorts (big band and gospel). For example, the big band/swing music of the 1930s and 1940s is strongly liked by 38% of the pre-1920 birth cohort, but favorability then falls monotonically across cohorts to only 4% strongly liking it among those born in 1970 and later. Second, there are those that peak in the present among the most recent cohort (contemporary rock, new age, rap, reggae, and heavy metal). For example, in mirror image of the big band trend,

contemporary rock is strongly liked by 0% of the pre-1920 birth cohort and favored by 28.5% of the 1970s cohort. Third, there are those that rise in popularity, peak among one of the middle birth cohorts, and then decline in favorability among more recent cohorts (country, musicals, bluegrass, folk, gospel, mood, opera, Latin, oldies rock, blues, and jazz). For example, oldies rock is strongly liked by only 4% of the pre-1920 birth cohort, rises to a top popularity of 37% among the 1940s birth cohort, and then falls to 24% among those born in the 1970s.

In addition, shifts in favorability across birth cohorts within rock genres can be shown even more clearly by a series of questions that Gallup asked in 1989.³ First, people were asked if they were current, former, or never fans of rock and roll. Consistent with the cohort pattern in Table 1 there are few fans (14%) of rock in the pre-1940 cohort, while substantial majorities of the 1940+ cohorts (71% and 76%) are current or former fans (Table 2A). Table 2B shows that among rock fans birth cohort strongly influences what their favorite style of rock is. Among those born before 1950 49% favored 1950s rock and only 8% preferred 1980s rock. Conversely, among those born in 1965 or later only 6% favored the rock of the 1950s and 47% preferred 1980s rock.

However, even the Gallup approach has some problems and may underestimate cohort effects regarding musical tastes. On the one hand, the references to rock music by decades may emphasize time periods too much. On the other hand, they do not differentiate clearly between different styles such as doo-wop, the California

sound, motown, acid, punk, new wave, grunge, etc. encompassed within one decade or spanning two decades. Favorability ratings of specific rock genres should capture cohort effects even more precisely and would presumably indicate that these effects were even greater than shown by the GSS or Gallup approaches. In addition, references to specific artists (and songs) that epitomized a style and period should show still stronger cohort effects.

Each of these patterns are the present day echoes of changes in musical tastes over the last 70+ years. Big band/swing music emerged in the 1930s and gained its top popularity in the 1940s. In 1940 a 15 year old Sinatra fan was from the 1920s cohort. In 1960 during the early heyday of rock and roll the 15 year old Elvis rocker was from the 1940s cohort. In 1990 the 15 year old hip hopper was from the 1970s cohort. The point is not so much that we are identifying historical patterns. Contemporaneous information on the top 40 hits and musical histories documents the rise and fall of musical tastes (Lopes, 1992; Eberly, 1982; Sanjek, 1988), although the cohort analysis can probably shed some light on these past developments. The real point is that historical patterns of favorability persist to the present even more than 50 years after a musical era was at its peak.

Looking at the relative position of each of the 18 musical genres, we see that the peak popularity of big band music occurs in the pre-1920 cohort; for country, musicals, and bluegrass in the 1920s cohort, for folk, gospel, mood/easy listening, opera, and

classical in the 1930s cohort; for Latin and oldies rock in the 1940s cohort; for blues and jazz in the 1950s cohort; none in the 1960s cohort; and rap, reggae, contemporary rock, new age/space, and heavy metal in the 1970s cohort.

If we look at the top musical styles for each cohort, we see one notable consistency and one predominant shift. Country music has had relatively high popularity across all periods, ranking second or third in popularity for all birth cohorts. The one major shift is that prior to the 1940s cohort the top three styles are

Top Three Musical Styles Within Birth Cohorts

Rank	Pre-1920	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s
1st	Big band	Big band	Gospel	Oldies	Oldies	Oldies	ConRock
2nd	Gospel	Country	Country	Country	Country	ConRock	Oldies
3rd	Country	Gospel	Big band	Musicals	Jazz	Country	Reggae/Country

bigband, gospel, and country. With the 1940s cohort rock moves to the top position and starting with the 1960s cohort rock dominates the first two positions. The shift from big band and gospel to rock and roll is shown by the shift from the 1930s cohort to the 1940s cohort. Across these adjoining cohorts strong liking of rock styles increased by 27 percentage points, while big band and gospel fell by 25 percentage points. (Opera also dropped by 7 percentage points).⁴

The cohort and generational patterns also show up clearly when

the 18 musical styles are factor analyzed. Five factors emerge and cohort is a prime force in shaping each of the factors (Table 4). The first factor, haute and pop standards, includes musical styles that enjoyed their peak popularity prior to the 1940 cohort. The second factor, new styles, contains all genres that peaked among the 1970s cohort except for contemporary rock which also loaded moderately strongly on this factor. The third factor, minority-oriented urban music, centers around jazz and blues with the minority music styles of Latin and reggae also being related. These reached their top popularity in the 1940s-1950s cohorts. The fourth factor, country, like haute and pop standards, also consists of styles that were most favored prior to the 1940s cohort. Last, rock and roll includes rock from the past (oldies - 1940s cohort) and present (contemporary rock - 1970s cohort).

In looking at these five factors we see that two generations play an especially important role in forming these groupings. Only the rock and roll factor includes musical styles from non-adjointing cohorts⁵ and no factor includes styles that span the major generational shift before and after the 1940s birth cohort. Within musical generations sub-cultures based on region, ethnicity, and urban residence further differentiate groups. Among the pre-1940 musical styles, the haute and pop factor is upscale, cosmopolitan, and urban while the country factor is down market, homespun, and rural.⁶ For musical styles from the 1940s+ cohorts there are also two separate and long established groups - the urban, minority music of jazz, blues, and Latin and the mainstream, dominant rock

and roll. Finally, there's a new style among the genres of the 1970s cohort that for now at least combines together recent minority and majority off-shoots of rock (Lopes, 1992).

The switch in musical generations is also revealed by changes in how many styles of music people favor. Since we are using absolute ratings of music and not rankings, total favorability can be measured by looking at how many musical styles people strongly like. On average the pre-1920 cohort strongly liked 1.85 genres. This then increased to 2.37 for the 1920s and 2.38 for the 1930s before falling to 2.32 in the 1940s, 2.08 in the 1950s, and 1.90 in the 1960s. Finally, total favorability increased again to 2.18 in the 1970s. Since total favorability can be thought of as a measure of diversity in strong favorability ratings, it indicates that musical tastes became less diverse after rock and roll emerged with the 1940s birth cohort and continued to expand its influence in the next two cohorts. Greater diversity was then re-established in the 1970s.⁷ Thus, this measure of top likes also suggests that musical tastes are divided into two major generations, before and after the 1940s cohort.

Finally, by examining the specific patterns of change for the 18 musical genres, we can observe how the cohort transitions come about. The basic pattern is for there to be a sharp surge between two birth cohorts that indicates when the musical genre emerged and achieved its initial popularity. The music usually reaches a peak popularity among the cohort following the surge. Then popularity either is maintained for a few cohorts (a plateau effect) and then

declines (e.g. country, gospel, folk) or peaks and immediately begins to lose ground (e.g. bluegrass, oldies, jazz). Of the 17 musical genres showing significant variation in favorability, three (big band, gospel, and folk) developed too early to catch their initial growth phase. For the 14 for which we can follow their initial period of growth, we see that in 12 instances their maximum gain in popularity occurs immediately before the music's high point of popularity (either peak or plateau). Only for jazz and contemporary rock is the initial surge followed by significant further growth to a high point two or more cohorts after the initial surge.⁸ A surge across adjoining cohorts is what we would expect for an event that occurred at a specific point in time and heavily influenced the youth of that period.⁹

The decline after the surge is typically less rapid than the rise. As noted above, several genres show plateau effects and those that decrease from a peak usually have less steep declines than increases. This is probably because musical styles remain accessible (via music stores, concerts, and "period" radio stations) and thus continue to potentially reach subsequent generations. Before their surges the new musical styles either did not exist or were restricted to some limited niche and thus were not accessible to the general population. However, since only 9 genres show both rises and declines and this pattern appears in only 6 of these cases, it is uncertain how general this pattern is. We suspect that this would be the general pattern except when a major new genre emerges in which case the newcomer's surge might

lead to a sharp decline in the eclipsed genre.

Familiarity

Changes in musical awareness or familiarity shows a distinctive pattern from popularity. Awareness is measured by looking at the proportion that says a type of music is one that they "don't know much about" (Table 4). First, there is less variation across birth cohorts in familiarity than for favorability. There is significant variation in awareness across birth cohorts for only 12 of 18 musical styles, compared to 17 of 18 for favorability. Also, the range of variation is less. In 13 of 18 cases the range for strongly liking is greater than the range in being aware of the music. The exceptions are all minor musical genres that never obtained notable mass popularity in any birth cohort.

Knowledge or awareness of a musical style penetrates more widely and evenly throughout the population, while gains in popularity are heavily concentrated among the youth at the time a genre appears on the music scene. In particular, awareness usually differs little between the birth cohort with the top popularity and immediately preceding and following cohorts. As a result, neither the surges in favorability nor the more moderate declines following the peaks in popularity come from appreciable changes in awareness levels. The increase in strongly liking during the surge period is always greater than the drop in those unaware and average an 8.1

percentage point gain for favorability and an average drop of -0.3 percentage points for those unaware. Similarly, declines in favorability average 6.5 percentage points, while those unaware increase by an average of only +0.3 percentage points.

Awareness is thus not notably higher among the top popularity cohorts and does not change much around the peak of popularity or during initial surges and declines in popularity. However, awareness is often appreciably lower among birth cohorts most removed from the peak generation. In 16 of 18 cases awareness is lowest among either the pre-1920 cohort (9 cases) or at the other end among the 1970s generation (7 cases). On average people are unfamiliar with 1.2 styles of music, but the pre-1920 cohort is unfamiliar with 1.9 styles, the 1940s cohort with 0.85, and the 1970s cohort with 1.6. Thus, unfamiliarity and favorability do not co-vary much among adjoining cohorts, but do at the extremes. For example, big band has its highest popularity (37.7%) and lowest unfamiliarity (2.4%) in the pre-1920 cohort and its lowest favorability (3.7%) and highest unawareness (25.8%) among the 1970s birth cohort. Likewise, reggae is highest in popularity (20.1%) and lowest in unawareness (5.8%) in the 1970s cohort and extremely low in favorability (0.2-1.4%) in all cohorts before the 1940s and highest in unfamiliarity (42.0%) in the pre-1920 cohort. Favorability and familiarity do not closely track one another, because favorability is heavily determined by cohort and awareness diffuses more widely and evenly.

Political Events and Music

Musical tastes are not a special case; an unique or rare phenomenon especially linked to cohort. Many other aspects of life are also shaped by events that leave an enduring impact as one ages. Table 5 shows that political and musical generations closely track one another. First, big band is the top music and World War II the historically most important event of the pre-1930s cohorts and the popularity of swing and the importance of World War II declines considerably among more recent cohorts. Second, oldies rock is the most popular music of the 1940s and 1950s cohorts and these cohorts are most likely to mention President Kennedy's assassination (1963) and the Vietnam War (peak years 1965-1970) as top historical events. In cohorts both before and after those of the 1940s and 1950s oldies rock, Kennedy, and Vietnam are less often mentioned. Third, heavy metal music is rarely mentioned before the 1960s cohort and mentions of the Gulf War (1991) follow a similar pattern (except for peaking among the 1960s cohort rather than among the 1970s).

The associations between favorability of music and historical events are almost entirely explained by birth cohort. For example, people mention World War II and big band music because a) these were roughly contemporary events and b) people who were among their impressionable years at that time carry their exposure of these events down to the present. Net of birth cohort there is little direct relationship between musical tastes and historical

judgments. However, there are a few exceptions. Controlling for birth cohort, people who mention World War II are significantly less likely to like either rap music or contemporary rock.

Musical Tastes as Cultural Markers

Since musical familiarity and preference reflect cohort effects, we thought that they might also help to identify individuals who assimilated the political and social changes associated with a particular generation. Using the rock 'n roll and the 1960s as our test case, we identified four changes that were associated with that the youth of that period: liberal/permissive positions on drugs, sex, civil rights, and women's rights. To measure one's attitudes on these issues we had items on 1) the legalization of marijuana (GRASS), 2) approval premarital sex (PREMARSX) and homosexuality (HOMOSEX), 3) legalization of miscegenation (RACMAR) and willingness to vote for a Black for president (RACPRES), and 4) disagreeing that men are better suited for politics than women (FEPOL) and that women should stay home and men should run the country (FEHOME). We tested whether those who liked rock 'n roll (the factor consisting of liking oldies and contemporary rock) were more in more in favor of these seven variables with controls for cohort and other appropriate variables.¹⁰

Table 6 shows that in every case except for the legalization of marijuana liking rock 'n roll was a significant predictor net of

the other variables (negative signs indicate that liking rock is associated with the liberal position). Moreover, on the two political feminism items, liking rock 'n roll was the strongest predictor of women's rights. It appears that liking rock 'n roll is a indicator of identification with the progressive, youth culture of the 1960s and down to the present it helps to identify individuals who shared the political agenda of that generation.

Summary

Much of our perspective on life is shaped by events occurring during our transition to adulthood from the teens to the early twenties. As Mannheim theorized political generations are formed by the prevailing events that individuals experience during the early stages of adulthood. Schuman and colleagues (Schuman and Rieger, 1992 and Schuman and Scott, 1989) have shown that evaluations of what events and developments in recent American history have been most important and choices of historical analogies to characterize the Persian Gulf war are heavily influenced by ones birth cohort. And in particular they showed that there have been two especially important and distinctive generations - the World War II and the Sixties (JFK and Vietnam) generations. Musical tastes show both the same general patterns of cohort changes and the specific pattern of two dominant generations (big band and rock and roll) that is indicated by the assessment of historic events. This further shows the power of cohort effects to influence subsequent social change

and identifies generations that were especially distinctive in how they view the world, in what music they enjoy, and presumably in many other areas as well.

Table 1

Musical Preferences by Birth Cohorts

(% Like Very Much)

Birth Cohorts

	Pre- 1920	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	Prob.
Big Band/Swing	37.7	35.8	25.9	13.9	9.7	6.7	3.7	.0000
Bluegrass	9.7	16.0	13.9	11.4	5.6	6.1	5.4	.0009
Country/Western	17.9	30.7	30.1	29.5	21.1	20.0	20.0	.0025
Blues or Rhythm and Blues	9.2	11.9	10.5	12.5	17.1	13.2	14.2	.254*
Broadway Musicals/ Show Tunes	17.8	25.3	20.2	22.1	8.7	5.9	9.8	.0000
Classical Music- Symphony & Chamber	17.4	18.4	21.1	18.3	17.3	12.9	14.0	.2580
Folk Music	10.6	10.6	10.8	10.5	8.1	3.3	3.4	.0016
Gospel Music	30.4	29.0	33.4	20.8	19.0	16.2	13.0	.0000
Jazz	9.7	9.6	15.4	15.5	21.0	16.4	11.6	.0078
Latin/Mariachi/ Salsa	1.4	4.8	6.0	6.6	5.5	4.0	2.4	.219*
Mood/Easy Listening	13.0	19.6	20.5	17.2	14.0	11.0	8.9	.0081
New Age/Space Music	0.0	2.1	0.9	2.8	4.1	3.2	5.5	.073*
Opera	6.8	6.2	10.8	3.7	1.8	1.7	4.4	.0000
Rap Music	0.0	1.4	0.0	1.7	1.7	2.9	17.6	.0000
Reggae	1.0	1.4	0.3	2.4	4.6	9.4	20.1	.0000
Contemporary Pop/ Rock	0.0	3.4	5.1	8.5	14.8	23.2	28.5	.0000
Oldies Rock	4.3	11.9	13.9	36.9	33.0	27.1	24.4	.0000
Heavy Metal	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.6	1.7	7.1	13.0	.0000
	(109)	(155)	(175)	(285)	(378)	(331)	(156)	

Source: 1993 GSS

Wording: I'm going to read you a list of some types of music. Can you tell me which of the statements on this card comes closest to your feeling about each type of music? Let's start with big band music. Do you like it very much, like it, have mixed feelings, dislike it, dislike it very much, or is this a type of music that you don't know much about?

*=Each of these shows statistically significant variation by birth cohorts when % saying like very much + like is compared to other response categories (Blues=.0003; Latin=.0046; New Age=.0000).

Table 2

Preference for Rock Music by Birth Cohorts

A. Rock Fans

	Birth Cohorts		
	pre-1940	1940-1959	1960+
Current Rock Fan	6%	40%	58%
Former Rock Fan	8	31	18
Never Rock Fan	86	29	24
Don't Know	0	*	*
	(414)	(506)	(320)

B. Favorite Period of Rock (Among Current and Former Rock Fans)

Rock of...	Pre-1950	1950-54	1955-59	1960-1964	1965+
50s	49%	18%	12%	10%	6%
60s	47	51	27	35	28
70s	14	22	49	43	33
80s	8	16	15	24	47
Don't Know	2	7	4	0	1
	(189)	(109)	(119)	(111)	(132)

Source: Gallup, 1989 (Kohut and Hugick, 1989)

Wording: Which of the following categories best applies to you? I consider myself a rock music fan today. I used to be a rock music fan. I never was a rock music fan.

If Current or Former Fan:

Rock Music has been around in one form or another for four decades. Which period of rock music do you, yourself, enjoy most? The music of the 50s/60s/70s/80s.

*=Less than 1%

Table 3

Factor Analysis of Musical Tastes^a

(varimax rotation)

	Haute & Pop Standards	New Styles	Minority Urban	Country	Rock & Roll
Classical	.828				
Opera	.755				
Musicals	.743				
Folk	.634			.418	
Big band	.559				
Rap		.764			
Heavy Metal		.714			
New Age		.684			
Reggae		.604	.434		
Jazz			.755		
Blues			.754		
Latin			.458		
Country				.773	
Bluegrass				.751	
Mood				.563	
Gospel				.474	-.450
Oldies					.814
Con. Rock		.403			.727
Eigenvalue	4.2	2.6	1.6	1.2	1.1

Source: 1993 GSS

^aFactor loadings of +/- .4 or greater are listed.

Table 4

Familiarity with Music by Birth Cohorts

(% Does Know Much About)

	Birth Cohorts							Prob.
	Pre-1920	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	
Big Band/Swing	2.4	5.1	6.9	6.5	9.9	17.2	25.8	.0000
Bluegrass	9.7	8.2	6.3	6.6	8.1	15.6	20.7	.0009
Country/Western	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.6	2.2	0.5	6.1	.0001
Blues or Rhythm and Blues	6.8	2.7	6.3	1.7	3.8	2.7	3.4	.0760
Broadway Musicals/ Show Tunes	5.0	7.2	4.2	2.0	5.9	4.8	7.5	.1370
Classical Music- Symphony & Chamber	5.3	7.5	3.3	2.4	5.3	2.1	6.1	.0340
Folk Music	5.8	5.1	1.5	2.6	4.8	3.5	17.7	.0000
Gospel Music	1.9	1.7	1.5	0.9	3.4	1.3	4.8	.0760
Jazz	2.4	4.5	1.2	1.8	2.4	1.4	3.4	.3750
Latin/Mariachi/ Salsa	16.9	16.5	13.9	7.6	14.0	14.3	14.9	.0740
Mood/Easy Listening	10.6	6.5	2.1	2.6	2.4	5.2	8.5	.0003
New Age/Space Music	31.4	20.3	22.0	20.1	14.3	16.2	14.2	.0012
Opera	5.3	4.5	3.3	5.5	6.7	5.4	10.6	.1470
Rap Music	14.1	6.1	3.3	3.9	2.2	0.6	1.7	.0000
Reggae	42.0	38.9	28.6	16.1	12.3	5.9	5.8	.0000
Contemporary Pop/ Rock	9.7	6.8	3.3	2.2	1.4	0.3	3.4	.0000
Oldies Rock	11.1	6.5	3.6	0.6	1.0	0.5	2.0	.0000
Heavy Metal	13.5	9.9	3.3	2.6	2.7	1.4	3.4	.0000
	(109)	(155)	(175)	(285)	(378)	(331)	(156)	

Source: 1993 GSS

Table 5

A Comparison of Select Musical Favorability
and Mentions of Most Important Events

Birth Cohorts

	Pre- 1920	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s
Big band	37.7	35.8	25.9	13.9	9.7	6.7	3.7
World War II	33.8	40.9	26.7	15.7	13.1	15.7	6.1
Oldies	4.3	11.9	13.9	36.9	33.0	27.1	24.4
Vietnam	4.8	5.3	8.0	14.0	17.7	8.2	7.1
Kennedy Killed	6.7	3.9	8.2	12.5	9.2	5.0	2.0
Rap	0.0	1.4	0.0	1.7	1.7	2.9	17.6
Heavy Metal	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.6	1.7	7.1	13.9
Gulf War	3.9	1.8	3.4	4.2	9.7	13.6	11.9

Source: 1993 GSS

Wording: The next questions concern about how people think about the past. There have been a lot of national and world events and changes over the past 60 years--say, from about 1930 right up until today. Would you mention one or two such events or changes that seem to you to have been especially important? There aren't any right or wrong answers to the question--just whatever national or world events or changes over the past 60 years that come to mind as important to you. IF ONLY ONE MENTION ASK: Is there any other national or world event or change over the past 60 years that you feel was especially important.

Table 6

Liking Rock 'n Roll as a Predictor
of Issues of the Sixties

Variables	Beta	Prob.	Rank Among Predictors ^a	N
Marijuana	-.029	.450	6/7	947
Premarital sex	-.139	.000	4/7	952
Homosexual sex	-.069	.048	5/7	896
Inter-racial marriage	-.146	.000	2/6	980
Vote for Black president	-.089	.015	3/8	953
Women suited for politics	-.154	.000	1/7	947
Women not stay home	-.215	.000	1/7	948

^aVarious controls were used in a series of models. Education, cohort, and sex were used in all models. Race was controlled for with the two civil rights items. Church attendance, theological orientation of denomination (liberal/moderate/fundamentalist), political ideology (liberal/moderate/conservative), and region of origin (South/Non-South) were utilized in most other models. Various models were tried for most issues.

Endnotes

1. The GSS is an in-person, full-probability sample of the household population of the United States. It had a response rate of 82.4% and its demographics closely match those of the Census and Current Population Surveys. For complete technical details see Davis and Smith, 1993.

2. If the five liking categories are treated as interval measures, favorability significantly varies by birth cohort except for classical music.

3. The categories oldies rock and contemporary pop/rock are less than optimum and have some potential problems. Oldies rock is suppose to refer to the rock and roll of the fifties and sixties and the pattern observed here suggests that is the way it is generally understood. However, it is undoubtedly understood by some to refer to fairly recent rock music (perhaps in the extreme case to last year's hits) and as time moves on more and more songs from an ever longer period will probably be considered as "oldies" rock. There is even a more striking problem with contemporary pop/rock. This term will continually evolve to refer to currently popular rock and thus over time as rock styles change it would refer to different types of music.

Some of the other musical genres also have similar problems. For example, jazz covers a wide range of distinctive styles associated with different periods from ragtime early in the century to be-bop in 1950s and fusion and new age jazz in the 1970s and 1980s. More specific questions about jazz styles would presumably

show cohort effects even more clearly.

4. On this shift see Eberly, 1980; Sanjek, 1988; and especially Peterson, 1990.

5. The rock cohorts of the 1940s and 1970s hold together in part because both oldies and contemporary rock are quite popular among the intervening 1960s generation.

6. These depictions are re-enforced by analyses by race, education, church attendance, community type, and region. Analysis not presented.

7. But that may be an artifact of greater coverage of recent sub-genres of rock and roll (e.g. heavy metal and reggae) while other periods may not be so well covered. This certainly seems to be the case for the earliest period where styles such as barber shop quartets, rag time, and Dixieland may have been fairly popular.

8. Jazz and contemporary rock may show this pattern because they do not distinguish between musical sub-genres (see above). The initial surge and subsequent rise may be capturing and combining distinctive styles from different periods.

9. The surge may be similar to the steep intermediate slope on a logistic curve such as found in diffusion of innovation models. However, in this case the "innovation" (i.e. favorability towards a new musical style) never diffuses to near the entire population.

10. We would have used two drug variables, but an appropriate second item was not available.

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