

THE EFFECT OF PARTICIPATION IN  
PERFORMING ENSEMBLES ON  
LISTENING PRACTICES OF ADOLESCENTS

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Music

in

The School of Music

by

Katie Kalota

B. M., State University of New York College at Potsdam, 2005

December 2009

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not be possible without help, care, and support from many people. Dr. Jane Cassidy is the first person to thank for her hours of guidance and encouragement. To Jason, my future husband, who has the amazing gift of finding humor in everything and has always made me laugh even when I thought I couldn't. To Dr. Lois Kuyper-Rushing who served as sounding board for everything under the sun. Thank you for the wonderful and happy times I have spent with you as your graduate assistant. To my family, who has always been a constant source of support, even from miles away. To my mom and sister, my closest friends, who always listen and are never afraid to give their true opinion. To Jug, Ann, and Julie my future in-laws, who introduced me to the great state of Louisiana and showed me how to greet every situation with a smile.

To my classmates and future colleagues, especially Janine Magin, Kelvin Jones, Michelle McCarver, Sara McCall, and Mandi Schlegel who have persevered along side me. Each of them understands the importance of a quality music education in the life of every child and never underestimates the power of a good laugh with friends. To Jenna Jackson who lived to see the light at the end of the tunnel and encouraged me to do the same. To my lifelong friend Kristen LoVullo who is a lover of music and one of my biggest fans.

I would also like to thank Dr. Katia Madsen and Dr. James Byo, my committee members, who have given of their time and efforts to aid in my success. To the students and staff at Glasgow Middle School, especially Karen McAlister, for their help in making it all possible. A very special thanks to Ms. Marcia Giambrone, my high school choral director and mentor, who has lovingly inspired me to be who I am today.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
ABSTRACT .....	vi
CHAPTER	
1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	1
2 MATERIALS AND METHODS .....	8
Participants .....	8
Materials .....	10
Procedures .....	13
3 RESULTS .....	16
4 DISCUSSION.....	28
Recommendations for Future Research.....	37
REFERENCES .....	39
APPENDIX	
A IRB EXEMPTION FORM .....	41
B PARENT CONSENT FORM.....	42
C STUDENT ASSENT FORM.....	43
D REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH.....	44
E SONG LYRICS .....	45
VITA.....	48

## LIST OF TABLES

1.	Frequency of Musical Preference for Music Examples.....	17
2.	Frequency of Responses of Focus of Attention for All Three Songs .....	17
3.	Frequency of Written Responses for Question 2, All Songs.....	18
4.	Question #3, Correct Answers.....	19
5.	Question #3, “Born in the U. S. A.,” Incorrect Answers.....	19
6.	Question #3, “Summertime,” Incorrect Answers .....	20
7.	Question #3, “How Can I Keep From Singing?,” Incorrect Answers.....	20
8.	Frequency of Written Responses for Question 3, All Songs.....	21
9.	Written Responses Sorted by Theme, “Born in the U. S. A.” .....	21
10.	Written Responses Sorted by Theme, “Summertime” .....	22
11.	Written Responses Sorted by Theme, “How Can I Keep From Singing?” .....	22
12.	Instruments for “Born in the U. S. A.” .....	23
13.	Instruments for “Summertime” .....	24
14.	Instruments for “How Can I Keep From Singing?” .....	24
15.	Prior Hearings of Each Song .....	25
16.	Participation in Ensembles Outside of School .....	26
17.	Frequency of Music Listening.....	26
18.	Music Preference .....	27
19.	Preference for Certain Characteristic of a Favorite Song.....	27

## LIST OF FIGURES

1.	Questionnaire.....	12
2.	Background Form .....	14

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of participation in performing ensembles on listening practices of adolescents. Specifically, this study looked at whether the focus of choral students while listening to music was more on the lyrics and their meaning and if the focus of band students was more on the instruments in comparison with each other and students enrolled in general music classes. A secondary interest of this study was to uncover the listening preferences of adolescents. Middle school students enrolled in band, choir, or general music classes ( $N = 23$ ) served as participants. Students were asked to complete a background form containing questions about their interests in music and their involvement in performing ensembles in and out of school. Three musical selections were played with time given after each selection for students to complete a questionnaire pertaining to what they heard. Musical selections were “Born in the U. S. A.,” by Bruce Springsteen; “Summertime” from the opera *Porgy and Bess* by George Gershwin; and “How Can I Keep From Singing?,” arranged by James Mulholland. Participants responded to questions about meaning of text, instruments they heard, and preference for music selections. Results indicated a tendency for all participants to enjoy the choral piece better than either the rock or opera selections, choral students to focus on the vocal part and lyrics more than instrumental students, instrumentalists to be more accurate in identifying the instruments played, little success in interpreting intended meaning from lyrics after one listening, and that all participants include music listening in their daily lives.

## CHAPTER 1

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Listening to music does not seem like a difficult task but when educators are seeking insight into what their students are actually hearing while listening, this easy task gains depth. Much importance is placed on listening in the music classroom as part of a well-rounded curriculum. The National Standards for Arts Education cite listening to, analyzing, and describing music sixth on their list of nine standards (MENC, 1994). While playing music for a student who is attentive seems to fulfill this standard, at least on surface level, it is difficult to know whether a student is listening to the music and what they are listening to.

Listening styles and musical preference have been topics of much research. Leblanc (1982) proposed a theory of attributes influencing musical preference. This model proposes numerous sources of variation that have been explored by other researchers. Alpert (1982) thought that music selection and preference of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders might be affected by outside sources. She applied approving comments from disc jockeys, peers, and music teachers to classical, country, and rock musical selections. She found that the approving comments made by disc jockeys and music teachers resulted in an increase in student preference for classical music. Another thought, from a choral conductor, is that adolescents are more likely to be influenced by their peers than by adult authority. This tends to be overlooked by teachers of adolescents and becomes a source of frustration rather than a starting point for instruction (Williamson, 2000). Brittin (1991) observed the effects of style labels on preference for pop, rock, jazz, country, and classical music. Labels were placed on the musical examples for one group, no labels

were placed on the examples for another group, and students were asked to personally write the labels on each example in the last group. Preference ratings were made on a 10-point Likert scale. Results showed that putting style labels on musical examples had no effect on the musical preference of student listeners.

Perhaps students prefer music based on the level of usefulness in their lives. Campbell, Connell, and Beegle (2007) found that music plays an important role for adolescents both in and outside of school. A national sample of 1,155 students participated in an essay writing competition on the topic of "Ban the Elimination of Music Education in Schools" Researchers looked for common themes in the essays pertaining to the role music played personally for the students and opinions given about curriculum and teachers. Students conveyed a need for music in their lives as part of their identity or even as a need for survival. Williams (2001) used interviews with young people as her source of information. She found that they preferred certain styles of music not because of the sound or meaning, but because of their usefulness in everyday life.

The age of the listener may have something to do with listening preferences. Leblanc, Sims, Siivola, and Obert (1996) asked subjects in grades one through college and adults up to age 91 to rate their level of preference for art music, jazz, and rock. Subjects were provided with their own answer booklet and were asked to rate each musical example on a five point Likert-scale. They found that preference levels reached a peak during the college years and the lowest points were in grades six, seven, and eight.

Familiarity with a song may have an effect on music preference (Siebenaler, 1999). During their regular music class, students were asked to listen to ten songs and rate them with preference options ranging from "don't like it at all" to "like it very

much.” Then to gauge their familiarity, they were asked to circle choices ranging from “never heard it before” to “know it very well.” The students then rehearsed and learned about the history of the songs for 10 weeks, after which they took the listening test again. A significant correlation between familiarity with a song and preference was found. This indicates that listeners are more inclined to enjoy a song if they are provided with learning opportunities involving the song prior to listening. In a similar study by Peery and Peery (1986), preschool students were asked to rate their preference, using five faces ranging from disgust to very happy, for six classical and two popular selections. Subsequently, the experimental group took part in 10 weeks of lessons that taught them more about the music they heard. The posttest revealed a significantly higher preference for the music expressed by the experimental group than the control group, which actually experienced a decline in preference as compared to the pretest.

The relationship between humor perceived in music and musical preference was measured using pop, country, and soul listening examples (LeBlanc, Sims, Malin, & Sherrill, 1992). Researchers found a direct correlation between humor perceived and preference for the lower grade levels. Younger students tended to perceive more humor in the songs and therefore preferred them more than the older grades. Older grade levels, particularly college-age students, preferred songs labeled as nonhumorous over the others. Preference levels for the middle grade students for all songs were the lowest overall. After rating the songs, students were asked to write down some of the things they liked and disliked about the music. The comments were then categorized as pertaining to humor, beat, lyrics, rhythm, or variety. In the middle grade students, 55 percent made

favorable comments about humor and only six percent made favorable comments about the lyrics.

For some listeners, the lyrics are what they enjoy the most, or in some cases what they use to remember the song. Booth and Cutietta (1991) asked non-music majors to recall a list of 12 familiar songs. The subjects listened to the songs three times, 48 hours apart and a fourth time 72 hours after the last playing. One group listened to the songs in the same order each time and the other group listened to the songs in a different order each time. The group that heard the examples in the same order every time was able to recall titles of the pieces more accurately than the group that did not. Strategies like grouping songs of similar genre and applying verbal labels were used to simplify recall.

Uncovering more about exactly what people are listening to when music is played has also been a focus of research and speculation. Geringer and Madsen (1998) asked musicians to listen to vocal and string solo performances and rate what they heard. They were to listen specifically for musical aspects such as intonation, phrasing/expression, rhythm, dynamics, and tone quality. The recorded performers were instructed to play one very good performance and one very bad performance. Performers consistently played flat for all of their performances labeled very bad and subjects identified the bad performances primarily on the basis of intonation.

The message perceived by the listeners of music has been evaluated in opposing ways. One point of view is that lyrics can be translated to fit the life of the listener no matter what the intended meaning (Murphey, 1989). When hearing the word “you” in a popular song, listeners often think of the song on a personal level. Similar to hearing, “Hey, you!” on the street, it is human nature to find out if the person calling out is

speaking to “you.” When listeners hear a male or female vocalist singing about love, they might relate the message to their own lives no matter what the situation. The author suggests that through this relating process listeners are making music the background to their lives. Pratt (1948) wrote about music being a language of emotion that speaks to all people and does not convey a specific message. Hearing music and accepting it for pure enjoyment without searching for deeper meaning or trying to relate it to anything is the way many choose to listen. Some feel that music does not need to have any lyrics in order to be interpreted by the listener (Supičić, 1971). The author wrote about Mendelssohn’s opinion of meaning and music. He feels that music with lyrics is not expressive because it already has a set meaning. Instrumental music is free to mean anything that the listener wants it to, but the feeling of the music is always the same. The composer may have had an intended meaning in his mind while writing, but that may never get across to the listener. Wilson (1928) relates music to poetry because of their similar intentions. The poet and the composer or performer has a goal of sending a message to the audience. Wilson acknowledges the fact that songs can have a literal translation but, just like with poetry, there can also be a deeper meaning.

Identifying why young people prefer certain music can help music educators to better teach their students. Self-report is a way to collect these data about music preference. Boyle, Hosterman, and Ramsey (1981) asked students to fill out a background form and choose preference indicators. They were asked to list their three favorite pop songs and eleven reasons why people might like the songs. After each reason, the student used a Likert scale to indicate how much that specific reason had affected his or her own preference for the music. Reasons given by students were mixed

and included lyrics, the singer, mood, and instruments used. Review of the self-reports showed melody as the first reason for preference and peer influence as the last. Students in the middle grades were influenced most by what songs were played on the radio. If the student rated pop music as being very important in their lives, they also rated lyrics and dance-ability as being the most important factors for preferring that music.

Prior musical training may influence listening preferences as well (Gregory, 1994). Sixth grade, high school, and college musicians were divided into performing groups (keyboards, chorus, band, and orchestra). A Continuous Response Digital Interface (CRDI) was used to measure preference. Musical examples were classical pieces lasting no longer than 30 seconds. Each student was given a dial to rate the music they heard with two anchors -- positive and negative. Some of the students were given two dials with the other showing choices about familiarity of the piece. Results showed that participation in music performing ensembles plays a role in the preference of classical music.

In summary there are many factors that influence musical preference including familiarity, peer influence, and prior musical training. There is also some indication that students do not receive the intended meaning through song lyrics. No one is quite sure what students attend to while listening, and research has not conclusively determined what listeners hear while listening to the music. Given that vocalists focus on lyrics while learning music it would be interesting to compare lyrical comprehension to that of instrumentalists.

The current study was designed to investigate some of the uncovered territory in the reported research. The following research questions were addressed: how does

participation in band, choir, or general music affect preference for musical selections;  
what do students in band, choir, and general music attend to while listening to music;  
does style of music have an effect on preference; and can students in band, choir, and  
general music get intended meaning from the lyrics of a song.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODS AND MATERIALS

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of participation in performing ensembles on listening practices of adolescents. Specifically, this study looked at whether choral students focus more on the lyrics and band students focus more on the instruments in comparison with each other and with students enrolled in general music classes. Understanding of lyrical content and overall message was looked at. A secondary interest of this study was to uncover the listening preference of adolescents.

#### Participants

Participants in this study included sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students ( $N = 23$ ) attending a public middle school in southern Louisiana. The student racial makeup of the school includes 67.7% African American, 21.4% White Caucasian, 8.8% Asian, 1.4% Hispanic, and 0.6% American Indian or Alaska native students (School Matters, 2009).

Students were enrolled in band, choir, or general music. Enrollment in performing ensembles and general music classes were elected by the student. The band and choir teacher then arranged the students in ensembles based on performance level and where they were projected to be most successful. Block scheduling is implemented in the school, so students meet for ninety minute periods rotating between two and three times per week. General music is a nine-week class on a rotation with other electives, while performing ensembles meet all year long. Band, choir, and general music classes are made up of nearly all gifted and some talented students.

The comparison among general music, choir, and band students for this study was based on conjecture. It was speculated that choir students ( $n = 9$ ) would focus their

attention on the lyrics of each song and be able to answer questions about lyric meaning more correctly than the other groups. Choir students have had prior experiences discussing meaning in the songs they perform and therefore may focus their attention on the words being sung and deciphering meaning. It was hypothesized that the band students ( $n = 5$ ) might focus on the instrumentation of each song and more correctly remember the instruments they heard in each piece. General music students ( $n = 9$ ), would act as a control group, since they represent most children their age and have no prior experience in choir or band.

A request for exemption from oversight was approved by the Louisiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subject Studies. Permission was also obtained from the school principal and the office of accountability and assessment in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. The choir and band directors, who also teach the general music classes, both agreed to have their students participate in the study. Parents and/or guardians of students were informed of the study through a signed consent form giving permission for their son or daughter to participate. Participants also were asked to sign an assent form indicating that they understand the rules and purpose of the study. Students who did not return a signed consent or assent form still took part, but were not included in the final results. These students were not included in the total number of participants. Copies of the Institutional Review Board exemption form, a sample parent consent form, a sample student assent form, and a request to conduct research from East Baton Rouge Parish School System are included in Appendices A, B, C, and D respectively.

## Materials

In order to compare focus of attention and adolescent preference across genres, a stimulus tape was created. The tape consists of three song selections that were shortened from their original length in order to equalize the length of the songs without compromising meaning or musical integrity. The meaning was not lost and each song ended in a musically logical place, and faded out in a typical way so to not attract listener attention. The first selection, “Born in the U. S. A.” written and performed by Bruce Springsteen is notorious for being misunderstood by listeners (Springsteen, 1984, track1). Springsteen (2003) reflects on this point when he states, “In order to understand the song’s intent, you needed to invest a certain amount of time and effort to absorb both the music and the words. But that’s not the way a lot of people use pop music” (p. 163). The rock music style and easily understood chorus may lead listeners to believe that the theme of the song is patriotism and love of one’s country. In fact, the lyrics tell a story of Vietnam War veterans returning home and facing hardships while re-assimilating themselves to society. Bruce Springsteen is known for his complex lyrical content and hidden meanings (Lifshey, 2009). The second example chosen was “Summertime” from the American opera, *Porgy and Bess* by George Gershwin, performed by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong (Armstrong & Fitzgerald, 1957, track2). The title and music send a message of long, lazy summer days. The song is actually a lullaby being sung by an enslaved mother to her baby, reassuring him that everything is going to turn out all right. The third song was “How Can I Keep From Singing?” a spiritual written by Robert Lowry, arranged by James Q. Mulholland, and performed by Louisiana State University’s Chamber Singers (LSU Chamber Singers, 2004, track 9). The song itself is slow and

somber, which may translate to sadness for a listener. However, the lyrical content sends a message of hope and certainty in knowing that faith will be enough to overcome all obstacles in life. All lyrics were in English and all the participants had English as their native language. Lyrics for all three musical selections were transcribed from the musical performances and can be found in Appendix E.

When selecting musical examples to be used, the common thread among songs was textual content that sent one message, with music that sent the opposite message. The differences among the songs were genre (style and performance medium) and accompanying instruments. These songs were considered to be unfamiliar to middle school students.

The questionnaire that was used is based on a previous study pertaining to aspects of popular music that influence the music preferences of young people (Boyle, Hosterman; Ramsey, 1981). Of the five total questions, four were the same in each presentation to the students. The first asked what the student thought of the song. Possible answers were presented in a five point Likert scale ranging from “hated it” to “loved it.” Participants were asked to circle the answer that best described what they thought of the song. The second question focused on what the student listened to most, asking them to circle just instruments, just voice, or both instruments and voice. The student was then asked to explain why they circled that choice. Question three asked what the song is about, but gives answers pertaining to each specific song. Therefore, the answers to this question are different on all three questionnaires. The commonality among all questionnaires however, was that there were four options for meaning with one correct, and the rest reflected what a listener may think when not correctly understanding the

- Read each question carefully.
- Circle the choice that best represents your answer.
- When asked to explain your choice, provide AT LEAST one descriptive sentence.

1. What did you think of the song? (circle one)

Hated it    Didn't like it    It was okay            Enjoyed it            Loved it

2. While listening, what most caught your attention? (circle one)

1. Instruments
2. Voice
3. Both instruments and voice

Why did you circle that choice? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the song about? (circle one)

(Possible responses for "Born in the U. S. A.")

Pride in the U. S. A.	Not liking the U. S. A.	Happy about living in the U. S. A.	Disagreement with issues in the U. S. A.
--------------------------	----------------------------	---------------------------------------	---

(Possible responses for "Summertime")

The summer arriving	Poverty of Slaves	Happiness for warm weather	A baby's lullaby
------------------------	----------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------

(Possible responses for "How Can I Keep From Singing?")

Love of Singing	Sadness in Life	Missing Home	Confidence in Safety
--------------------	--------------------	-----------------	-------------------------

Why do you think the song was about that? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. What instruments did you hear in the song?

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

5. Before today, how many times have you heard this song? (circle one)

Never            Once or twice            More than once or twice            Many times

FIGURE 1.

Questionnaire

lyrics. The data collection sheets which show these possible responses are presented in Figure 1. After this question, students again were asked to explain their choice. The fourth question asked the students to list the instruments they heard in the song. The last question asked the students to indicate the number of times they had heard the song prior to hearing it that day. Students could choose from never, once or twice, more than once or twice, or many times.

### Procedures

The project was carried out during a portion of one class meeting. All band, choir, and general music students participated as a group in their regular rehearsal space or classroom. The normal music classroom teacher was present, however I carried out the study in its entirety. Students first completed a musical background form (See Figure 2). Questions pertained to student involvement in performing groups in and out of school, listening habits, and favorite music. The format used was based on a study of popular music preference of young people (Boyle, Hosterman, and Ramsey, 1981) I distributed the packets face down and asked the students to keep them this way until told otherwise. Students were then read the following instructions:

You are about to take part in a research study. Please follow each direction I give very carefully. I am interested to know your thoughts about music. We will listen to three musical selections. While listening, do not affect the opinion of others by showing any reaction to the music or talking. When the song is over, I will instruct you to turn over your packet. You will be asked to answer questions about what you heard. You will not be graded on any of your work today. Just do your best. Here is the first song. Listen.

**Class Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender** (circle one):        F        M

**1. Are you involved in a performing group in school?** (circle one)        Y    N

If so, which one? \_\_\_\_\_  
What instrument/voice part? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Are you involved in a performing group outside of school?** (circle one)    Y    N

If so, what kind? \_\_\_\_\_

**3. How often do you listen to music?** (circle one)

1. Never        2. Once in a while        3. Much of the time        4. All of the time

**4. What is your favorite kind of music?** (circle one)

Pop    Rock    Choral    Punk    Hip-Hop    Country    Opera    Instrumental

**5. What do you like most about your favorite song?** (circle one)

1. The message        2. The instruments        3. The singer

FIGURE 2.

Background Form

The first song played was “Born in the U. S. A.” Students were then asked to fill out questionnaire number one. The second song was “Summertime” from *Porgy and Bess*. At the completion of the song, the second questionnaire was completed. The third song was “How Can I Keep From Singing?” which was followed by the completion of questionnaire number 3. The three questionnaires are displayed in Figure 1. In order to maintain focused, unbiased listening, all questionnaires were bound together in a color-coded packet. Each questionnaire was printed on different color paper to distinguish them from the others and to allow the researcher to be certain that students were not reading ahead or looking at any other pages. After each time a questionnaire was completed, students turned over their packet signaling that they were ready for the next musical example. Lyrics were not provided in written form.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of participation in performing ensembles on the listening practices of adolescents. Three songs, differing in genre, were played for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade band, choral, and general music students. After listening, students answered questions about what they heard. Prior to listening, a background form was completed which collected data about performance experience in and outside of school, as well as current listening preferences and frequency.

Question number one asked the students what they thought of the song. The students answered using a five point Likert scale ranging from “hated it” to “loved it.” A two-way chi-square analysis (3 songs by 5 ratings) of the responses yielded statistically significant differences,  $X^2 (df = 8, N = 69) = 14.168, p < .05$ . Frequency data are presented in Table 1. Many students did not like the first song “Born in the U. S. A.” Preference for “Summertime” was more evenly distributed across preference categories. More students enjoyed the third song, “How Can I Keep From Singing?”

After rating their level of enjoyment on the Likert scale for each song, the students selected what they focused their attention on while listening by circling either instruments, voice, or both. The students were categorized depending on the class taken during the school day. Responses for the three songs were added together for each student. Frequency of responses are represented in Table 2. There was nothing notable in the data. There was a trend, however, for the vocalists to listen to the voice since 23 out of 27 of the responses were either voice or both. Responses from instrumentalists and general music students were evenly distributed.

TABLE 1.

## Frequency of Preference for Musical Examples

	Hated It	Didn't Like it	OK	Enjoyed It	Loved It
"Born in the U. S. A."	2	14	5	2	0
"Summertime"	6	7	9	1	0
"How Can I Keep From Singing?"	5	4	8	6	0

TABLE 2.

## Frequency of Responses to Focus of Attention for All Three Songs

	Instruments	Voice	Both
INSTRUMENTALIST	5	5	5
VOCALIST	4	9	14
GENERAL MUSIC	8	9	10

Students were then asked to explain their choice using at least one descriptive sentence. The comments were labeled using categories based on those created in a study of music terminology (Cassidy & Speer, 1990). Categories included technical terms (TT), descriptors both nontechnical (NTD) and extramusical (EMD), comments (C), referential statements (R), and value judgments (VJ). The comments category (C) was adapted to include any statement made about lyrical content or general statements, not pertaining to the music. Each statement was assigned to only one category. Responses for the three songs were added together for each student. Reliability was calculated between the

researcher and a music librarian and found to be  $r = .93$  for “Born in the U. S. A.,”  $r = .96$  for “Summertime,” and  $r = .89$  for “How Can I Keep From Singing?” Frequency of responses are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3.

Frequency of Written Responses for Question 2, All Songs

	TT	NTD	EMD	C	R	VJ
INSTRUMENTALIST	1	5	0	3	0	6
VOCALIST	4	8	1	8	1	5
GENERAL MUSIC	2	12	2	2	0	9

Both the instrumental and general music students made more comments that fell into the NTD and VJ categories. Many of the responses made in the NTD category had to do with volume of the instruments or voice. The VJ responses for “Born in the U. S. A.” mostly referred to the singer. Comments like, “The singers [*sic*] voice was really scratchy” and “it was in an annoying tone” or that the voice sounded funny were common choices. For “Summertime” the students also focused on the voices but this time, drew attention to the fact that there were two present. There were comments about one voice being higher than the other and some specifically about the female voice and its characteristics. “How Can I Keep From Singing?” was the only song to receive comments in the EMD category. The lyrics were described as depressing, relaxing, and mellow.

Question number three asked the students to determine from a list of given responses what they thought the song was about. Most did not select the correct answer. The number of correct answers chosen for each song are displayed in Table 4.

TABLE 4.

Question #3, Correct Answers

	Song #1 Disagreement with issues in the U. S. A.	Song #2 A baby's lullaby	Song #3 Confidence in safety
INSTRUMENTALIST	0	0	0
VOCALIST	0	5	1
GENERAL MUSIC	0	4	1

Instead of choosing the correct answer for “Born in the U. S. A.,” which was “Disagreement with issues in the U. S. A.,” over half of the students chose “Pride in the U. S. A.” Many students chose “A baby’s lullaby,” which was the correct answer for “Summertime,” but over half chose the incorrect answer, “The summer arriving.” For the final song, two students chose the correct answer, “Confidence in safety,” but many chose “Sadness in life” instead. The incorrect answer choices are found in subsequent Tables 5, 6, and 7.

TABLE 5.

Question #3, “Born in the U. S. A.,” Incorrect Answers

Pride in the U. S. A.	Not liking the U. S. A.	Happy about Living in the U. S. A.
13	1	9

TABLE 6.

Question #3, “Summertime,” Incorrect Answers

The summer arriving	Poverty of slaves	Happiness for warm weather
13	0	1

TABLE 7.

Question #3, “How Can I Keep From Singing?,” Incorrect Answers

Love of singing	Sadness in life	Missing home
9	10	2

Students were asked to explain their chosen answers in question three using at least one descriptive sentence. The comments were labeled using the same categories as in question two. Each statement was assigned to only one category. Responses for the three songs were added together for each student. Reliability was calculated between the researcher and a music librarian and found to be  $r = .93$  for “Born in the U. S. A.,”  $r = .93$  for “Summertime,” and  $r = .93$  for “How Can I Keep From Singing?” Frequency of responses are presented in Table 8.

Similar to written results found for question two, many answers fell into the C, NTD, and EMD categories. Responses made for “Born in the U. S. A.” were all categorized as C. Statements all pertained to the name of the song and its repetitive use. Frequently seen was, “the song kept saying born in the U. S. A.” and all they said was born in the U. S. A. Table 9 shows the answers sorted into three types: those that use the

exact phrase “Born in the U. S. A.,” responses that have a theme of patriotism or love of country, and those that talk about the U. S. A. being a good place to live.

TABLE 8.

Frequency of Written Responses for Question 3, All Songs

	TT	NTD	EMD	C	R	VJ
INSTRUMENTALIST	0	1	4	10	0	0
VOCALIST	0	3	6	18	0	0
GENERAL MUSIC	0	3	6	18	0	0

TABLE 9.

Written Responses Sorted by Theme, “Born in the U. S. A.”

	Uses the exact phrase “Born in the U. S. A.”	Patriotism, love of country	The U. S. A. being a good place to live
INSTRUMENTALIST	1	3	1
VOCALIST	2	5	2
GENERAL MUSIC	7	2	0

Responses made for “Summertime” were categorized as C, EMD, and NTD. Eighteen of the responses were labeled C. Statements mostly pertained to the name of the song and its repetitive use. Summer being fun and looking forward to the summertime were commonly used. Vocal and general music students focused in on the true meaning of the song and their responses had to do with a baby’s lullaby. One student accurately identified two lines of the song when they wrote, “your daddy’s rich and your mom’s good looking, so hush little baby, don’t you cry.” Table 10 shows the answers sorted into three types: Those that talk about telling a baby not to cry, or an exact quotation of the

lyrics, responses that talk about the summer arriving, or eagerness or happiness for the summertime, those that just claim that’s what the song was saying, and other.

TABLE 10.

Written Responses Sorted by Theme, “Summertime”

	Telling a baby not to cry, exact quote of any lyrics	The summer arriving, eagerness/happiness for summertime	That’s what the song was saying	other
INSTRUMENTALIST	0	4	1	0
VOCALIST	5	3	1	0
GENERAL MUSIC	3	3	1	2

Responses made for “How Can I Keep From Singing?” were categorized as C, EMD, and NTD. Thirteen of the responses were labeled EMD. Statements mostly pertained to the mood of the song. Sad, depressing, and down on life were responses commonly used. Table 11 shows the answers sorted into three types: Those that refer to the singer or composer, responses that say the song is sad or slow, those that talk about missing home or being down on life, and other.

TABLE 11.

Written Responses Sorted by Theme, “How Can I Keep From Singing?”

	Reference to singers/composer	Sad, slow	Missing home or down on life	other
INSTRUMENTALIST	3	2	0	0
VOCALIST	6	1	0	2
GENERAL MUSIC	2	3	2	1

\*no comment from one general music student

Question number four asked the students to fill in the blanks with the instruments that they heard in each song. Answers were not limited in any way. Instruments present in “Born in the U. S. A.” were drums, guitars, keyboards, and voice. The most success was found in this song with only four wrong answers of bells, sound mixer, timpani, and flute. Three of the incorrect answers were made by general music students and one by an instrumentalist. Table 12 shows the instruments chosen by the students. The correct choices are listed first with the incorrect written in bold.

TABLE 12.

Instruments for “Born in the U. S. A.”

	Drums	Guitar	Bass	Voice	Keyboards	<b>Bells</b>	<b>Sound mixer</b>	<b>Timpani</b>	<b>Flute</b>
INSTRUMENTALIST	5	3	0	2	2	0	1	0	0
VOCALIST	8	6	1	0	7	0	0	0	0
GENERAL MUSIC	7	5	0	1	6	1	0	1	1

“Summertime” from the American opera, *Porgy and Bess* by George Gershwin had many more instruments to listen for. The students did well with identifying the instruments of the orchestra including horns, strings, piano, and percussion. They also correctly identified and included voice. There were seven incorrect choices made by vocalists and general music students including saxophone, guitar, and clarinet. Table 13 shows the instruments chosen by the students. The correct choices are listed first with the incorrect written in bold.

When listening to the third song, “How Can I Keep From Singing?” the students experienced the most difficulty in identifying the instruments present. There were only two instruments present in this choral piece and they were piano and voice. However,

thirteen incorrect choices were made including strings, harp, and organ. Table 14 shows the instruments chosen by the students. The correct choices are listed first with the incorrect written in bold.

TABLE 13.

Instruments for “Summertime”

	Horns ----- (trumpet, trombone, horn, tuba)	Strings ----- (violin, viola, cello, bass)	Voice	Piano	Percussion ----- (inc. bells and xylophone)	<b>Saxophone</b>	<b>Guitar</b>	<b>Clarinet</b>
INSTRUMENTALIST	3	3	2	3	0	0	0	0
VOCALIST	1	7	1	5	1	2	2	0
GENERAL MUSIC	6	3	0	4	2	1	1	1

TABLE 14.

Instruments for “How Can I Keep From Singing?”

	Piano	Voice	<b>Strings</b>	<b>Harp</b>	<b>Organ</b>
INSTRUMENTALIST	4	1	2	2	0
VOCALIST	8	2	1	1	0
GENERAL MUSIC	7	0	2	4	1

In an effort to rule out prior knowledge of the songs as cause for understanding, question five asked the students how many times they had heard each song before listening to it during their class. They chose between never, once or twice, more than once or twice, and many times. Almost all of the students answered never with no more than four students choosing once or twice for any of the songs. For “How Can I Keep

From Singing?” there was an instance of a student claiming to have heard the song many times. Table 15 shows the information collected involving prior hearings.

TABLE 15.

Prior Hearings of Each Song

	Never	Once or twice	More than once or twice	Many times
Born in the U. S. A.	19	4	0	0
Summertime	17	4	2	0
How Can I Keep From Singing?	21	1	0	1

Background information was collected before the students listened to the songs in order to gain insight into their listening preferences and prior experience level. The first question asked the students to indicate whether they participated in a performing ensemble during the school day and what instrument or voice part they were within the ensemble. This information was used to categorize the student as part of the instrumentalist, vocalist, or general music group. The next question asked the student about performing ensembles that they took part in outside of the school day. More than half of the students did not take part in performing ensembles outside of school. The most number of students involved outside of school were found in the instrumentalist group where students were involved in piano lessons. There were two general music students who were involved in orchestra outside of school and one vocalist that participated in ballet. Table 16 shows participation in ensembles outside of school.

TABLE 16.

Participation in Ensembles Outside of School

	No	Yes Piano	Yes Ballet	Yes Orchestra
INSTRUMENTALIST	2	3	0	0
VOCALIST	8	0	1	0
GENERAL MUSIC	7	0	0	2

In another question, students were asked how often they listened to music in order to gauge enjoyment and familiarity with listening. Choices for this question were never, once in a while, much of the time, and all of time. Table 17 shows the frequency of music listening.

TABLE 17.

Frequency of Music Listening

	Never	Once in a while	Much of the time	All of the time
INSTRUMENTALIST	0	1	3	1
VOCALIST	0	0	2	7
GENERAL MUSIC	0	1	4	4

Most of the students chose all of the time to describe their music listening habits and a few less chose much of the time. No students chose never and a very small number chose once in a while. Interestingly, almost all of the vocalists chose all of the time.

In other background questions, students were asked what their favorite kind of music was and what they liked most about their favorite song. The genres that the students could choose from were pop, rock, choral, punk, hip-hop, country, opera, and

instrumental. The genre of songs used for this study were present in the rock, opera, and choral options. In Table 18 music preference of the students is shown. A large number of the general music students chose hip-hop as their favorite type of music; the vocalists and instrumentalists were evenly spread among the choices.

TABLE 18.

Music Preference

	Pop	Rock	Choral	Punk	Hip-hop	Country	Opera	Instrumental
INSTRUMENTALIST	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	1
VOCALIST	3	1	1	0	2	1	0	1
GENERAL MUSIC	1	3	0	0	6	0	0	0

Continuing to gain information about music preference, the next question asked the students what they liked most about their favorite song. They were asked to choose one of the following: the message, the instruments, or the singer. In Table 19 preference for a certain characteristic of a favorite song is shown.

TABLE 19.

Preference for Certain Characteristic of a Favorite Song

	Message	Instruments	Singer
INSTRUMENTALIST	0	4	1
VOCALIST	5	1	3
GENERAL MUSIC	2	4	3

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

This study sought to uncover those characteristics by investigating the effect of participation in performing ensembles on the listening practices of adolescents. Three songs, differing in genre, were played for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade band, choral, and general music students. After listening, students answered questions about what they heard. Prior to listening, a background form was completed which collected data about performance experience in and outside of school, as well as current listening preferences and frequency. It was hypothesized that instrumentalists would pay attention to the instruments and vocalists would pay attention to the voices while listening. Also of interest was student comprehension of lyrics and their meaning even when they were contrary to the overall sound of the song. The hypothesis was that the students would base their answers about meaning on repetitive refrains, or only listen to the music and base their thoughts about meaning on sound alone. The secondary concern was to find out why students preferred the songs in the study and the music they listen to outside of the classroom. The hypothesis was that students preferred songs that had a good beat.

A two-way chi-square analysis was calculated on the results from the preference for musical example question. There were five ratings with the three song choices ranging from “hated it” to “loved it.” The results yielded statistically significant differences. The “Born in the U. S. A.” was particularly not liked by the listeners, perhaps because it reflects an older style of music, the voice had a harsh quality, or the range was limited. “Summertime” may have been better received because it contained a variety of instruments. “How Can I keep From Singing?” was liked most of all possibly because it

was a familiar genre for many students. None of the musical examples were songs that students would be listening to on a regular basis or were particularly familiar with. This could be the reason that no students said that they “loved” any of the pieces. If students were given the opportunity to learn about the musical examples prior to listening, the preference ratings may have been higher (Siebenaler, 1999). Another possibility is that middle school students seem to have a low preference for music listening in general (Leblanc, Sims, Siivola, & Obert, 1996). Lack of familiarity with the song choices presented in this study is also a plausible explanation (Leblanc, 1982; Peery & Peery, 1986).

The next question asked the students for their focus of attention between instruments, voices, or both instruments and voice. The category that scored the highest for every song was “both instruments and voice” which then leaves the focus of attention unknown. This question could be changed to force the student to choose what they listened to more, instruments or voice because that is one of the objectives of the study. The hypothesis made about instrumentalists listening more to the instruments and the vocalists listening more to the voices was not evident by the results collected.

Written comments for the second question allowed the students to elaborate on their circled choice. All comments were categorized based on a study of music terminology (Cassidy & Speer, 1990). Categories included technical terms (TT), descriptors both nontechnical (NTD) and extra-musical (EMD), comments (C), referential statements (R), and value judgments (VJ). The NTD category was used most frequently to describe the statements made. General music students made the most statements categorized as NTD. Examples of statements made by the students were, “the

instruments were very silent” and “the instruments stood out a lot,” which is describing dynamics or balance in a nonmusical way. The use of NTD’s by general music students could be linked to lack of repetitive use. They may not have ever known the musical terms or engaged in musical conversations the way that the instrumental and choral students had. Students in band and chorus use musical terms on a regular basis and feel comfortable using them to describe what they were hearing in the music. The VJ category also received a high number of comments and again, most were from the general music students. Comments made included calling the voice annoying, the piano beautiful, and the overall sound being depressing. In the age of television shows involving music performance critiques, the value judgment comments could easily be attributed to a familiarity with statements that place judgment on the performer or the overall sound of a piece of music. The models for this type of criticism are judges that do not make musical critiques, but rather value judgments about the performer.

When students were asked to decide the meaning of each song there were four possible answers. Results showed that they were not very successful in choosing the correct answer. As expected, the students tended to choose the answer that best described the repetitive refrain or the feel of the music, not the lyrics. For “Born in the U. S. A.” the correct answer was disagreement with issues in the U. S. A. However, because the refrain is very repetitive, the listener tends to think that the meaning has something to do with pride in the U. S. A. or happiness about living in the U. S. A., which were the other choices that were picked most often. Underlying themes and inferred meanings are commonly found and might only be apparent to the listener if they study a complete album (Lifshey, 2009). “Born in the U. S. A.” refers to opposition to the war in Vietnam,

but is frequently played on patriotic holidays. Listening to the song multiple times or reading the text while listening may help the true meaning to be revealed to the listener.

“Summertime” had the highest number of correct answers for meaning, most of which came from vocalists. The slow tempo made the words easy to hear, and this song was more familiar than the other two songs. The music for this song portrays an overall lazy and easy going feel which is how summer is often described. Many of the students chose the summer arriving as the meaning of the song when the song really is a baby’s lullaby sung by an enslaved mother. She is singing to her baby about promise after an unfortunate life here on earth. The word summertime is used to tell the baby that everything is easy and plentiful where they are going. Vocalists may have understood the meaning of this song better than other students because they are more accustomed to listening to lyrics, it was performed at a slow tempo, and the singer used clear diction. This piece is part of an American opera and being heard out of context with the rest of the story line. If students had listened to the song within the whole work, they may have understood the meaning. Composers can be more subtle with their textual settings in operas because the actor is another component that helps the audience to receive the message.

The correct response for “How Can I Keep From Singing?” was confidence in safety and was chosen by only two students. The polyphonic nature of the arrangement used in this study might have made it difficult to comprehend the text. The song reflected a feeling of sadness because of the slow tempo and somber piano part; therefore most students chose sadness in life as their answer for meaning. The real meaning of this song is one of joy for life and confidence in protection from the Lord. The answers chosen by

students were “sadness in life” and “missing home.” These answers reflect sadness and were probably chosen because students were thinking about overall sound instead of lyrical content. Another answer that was chosen many times was “love of singing.” The word singing is used many times during the piece and stands out from the other text. Even if students had missed the meaning, they could easily remember this word from the song.

Written comments were made for each song and reliability was calculated. All three songs had a reliability of  $r = .93$ . The statements made were most often categorized as comments (C) because they were about the lyrics or not about the music at all. This is a likely choice for students because they were asked to discuss meaning, which can be heard in the lyrics. Statements made for “Born in the U. S. A.” were actually about the U. S. A. and not about the music. Responses were also categorized by themes with most using the exact phrase “Born in the U. S. A.,” and talking about patriotism or love of country, with a few saying that the U. S. A. was a good place to live. Some of the written comments for “Summertime” recalled exact lyrical phrases including, “your daddy’s rich and your mom [*sic*] is good looking, so hush little baby, don’t you cry” and “they kept saying, baby don’t you cry.” Comments made that were explaining incorrect responses claimed that “the singer just kept saying summertime” or that it was about summer arriving “because that’s all the song said.” When sorted by theme, listeners wrote most about the summer arriving and eagerness or happiness for the summertime. The high number with this theme could be because of the word summertime being the first word sung in the song and the first word heard from either of the two singers. Rhythmic emphasis was created by the word summertime having a longer duration in comparison to

other words. Many of the responses for “How Can I Keep From Singing” were categorized as EMD because they described the music using moods or feelings. Common statements were “the mood of the song was sad and slow” or “they sounded sad when they were singing.” When sorted by theme, a large number were categorized as referring to the singers or the composer. Examples of comments made about the composer included “The composer felt safe and happy so I guess he decided to compose a song” and “Maybe the person who wrote this was sad at the time.” When writing about the singers, students wrote, “...the people that sang must have loved to sing” and “because the voice sounded sad.” Remaining responses were found to have themes of being sad and slow, missing home or down on life, or other. The choice to put a song with a slower tempo at the end of the study may have had some impact on the answers lacking details and the majority focusing on the overall mood. Students may have been tired at this point and been lax in their willingness to offer their thoughts.

All three questionnaires were asking the students to recall the same information after listening and this presented a validity issue. The students may have anticipated the questions on the third questionnaire and focused their attention while listening as a result. After listening to the first two songs the students seemed to be bored with the task and completed the last questionnaire in the shortest amount of time. This may have been why answers were not as detailed for “How Can I Keep From Singing?”

Specific instruments heard while listening to each song was the topic for the fourth question. There were five instruments present in “Born in the U. S. A.” including drums, guitar, bass, voice, and keyboards. Almost every student answered within these instruments, but there were four students who incorrectly identified bells, timpani, flute,

and a sound mixer. The incorrect answers were given by mostly general music students with one instrumentalist giving the answer of sound mixer. It was interesting that no vocalists wrote down voice as an answer and did not add any instruments that were not present. I was pleasantly surprised to see that some students thought to write down voice as an instrument, this could be a result of their lessons in music. On the questionnaire, instruments and voice were separated in prior questions, so this may have acted as a cue and could explain why some students did not make this delineation.

Instruments present for the next song, “Summertime,” were horns, which included any mention of trumpet, trombone, horn, or tuba; strings, which included any mention of violin, viola, cello, or bass; voice, piano; and percussion including bells and xylophone. All student categories covered the instruments present except the general music students who did not write down voice, and the instrumentalists who missed the percussion. Other instruments heard that were not present were saxophone, guitar, and clarinet. Only vocalists and general music students gave incorrect answers. This could be because instrumentalists are familiar with instruments of the orchestra and know what they sound like.

In the last song, “How Can I Keep From Singing?,” the students experienced the most trouble with instrument identification. The only instruments present in this choral piece were piano and voice, and instrumentalists and vocalists picked up on both, but general music students left voice out. Many students incorrectly heard strings, harp, and organ in the piece. This could be because the soprano voices singing together in their upper register, like they do in the beginning of the song, could sound like strings and harp

to an untrained ear. With such an evident struggle, I would guess that these students have not had much experience listening to recordings of choral pieces.

Listener familiarity with any of the pieces may affect preference so the next question was on the questionnaire so that this possibility could be ruled out. For “Born in the U. S. A.” all students said they had never heard it or heard it only once or twice. I had expected this outcome because this song been out for 25 years and is bound to lose its popularity among younger generations. There were two students who said they had heard “Summertime” more than once or twice. This result could have occurred because it is a vocal standard sung by two famous jazz musicians. When choosing this song, popularity was not taken into consideration because I felt strongly that no matter how popular a song may be, if the music has an opposing sound to the lyrics, the true message is not always understood. The last piece “How Can I Keep From Singing?” had all but two outside of the “never” category. One listener said they had heard it once or twice and the only listener that ever wrote that they had heard any of the songs “many times” was for this song. Post hoc information revealed that one student had performed another arrangement of this piece before.

Background information was collected from the students before listening to any examples. In an effort to understand their enjoyment level for music listening, they were asked how often they listened to music. Out of the four possible answers of never, once in a while, much of the time, or all of the time, all but two students were in the much of the time or all of the time categories. This told me that they were familiar with listening to music outside of their school day, but did not tell me what they were listening to. In order to find this out, students were asked what style of music they preferred out of pop, rock,

choral, punk, hip-hop, country, opera, and instrumental. Every category had at least one person that chose it except for punk and opera. Choral, rock, and opera were included because those were the styles chosen as musical examples. Rock was the second most chosen category amongst students, but yet many students said that they hated the rock example used in the study. This could be because they were unfamiliar with this particular rock song and because it could be classified as classic rock instead of the style of rock that students may be listening to currently. The style of music that was most chosen by students was hip-hop. This outcome was expected because many middle school students identify most with music that has a loud bass beat and has a high level of dance-ability like hip-hop (Boyle, Hosterman, & Ramsey, 1981). When students were asked about what specifically they enjoyed about their favorite song between the message, the instruments, or the singer, most chose the instruments. This could have occurred because students equated “instruments” with overall sound instead of specifically enjoying the instrumentation. Interestingly, most vocalists chose the message as their favorite part. This reflects the idea that understanding lyrics is a focus of attention for vocalists. Participation in performing ensembles outside of school was another question in the background portion. Many students were not involved in any ensembles outside of school but there were students who were involved in piano lessons, ballet classes, and community orchestras. Any student who was involved in an ensemble outside of school that opposed the ensemble they took part in during the school day was not counted in the study. This forced four subjects to be left out. In order for data from student questionnaires to be used parent permission slips needed to be turned in to the

classroom teacher. More than half of the students did not return the form causing the number of subjects to be low.

None of the students enjoyed the musical selections very much. Studies have shown that student musical preference is higher when given the opportunity to learn about the songs over a period of time (Peery & Peery, 1986; Siebenaler, 1999). I believe that student enjoyment of the music would have been more positive had focused learning taken place prior to listening.

All findings related to this study will have an affect on my teaching strategies. Lessons involving music listening will be enhanced through presenting students with information about what they are hearing. This is not to say that information about the music should be used to persuade preference towards enjoyment. However, giving students the opportunity to make an informed decision will produce meaningful critiques about the music, not value judgments alone.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

Further research might include background information with the musical examples for one of the groups to see if knowledge of the piece may have an effect on preference. Also shorter musical examples may have increased student attention especially during the third song. Each example used in the study was no more than 3 minutes and many students chose to close their eyes while listening, but some students needed something to do while listening to focus their attention. In my prior teaching experience with middle school students, listening was more focused when they had questions to answer about what they were hearing. However, for the present study I did not want any prompts to affect what students were listening to.

In summary this study produced value judgments more than any other type of comment or observation about the music. Students were provided with one short listening for each musical example and were only given a short time to write about their reactions. The questionnaire was formatted with choices first and comments second, which may have presented it as a rating sheet rather than a collection of thoughts about the music. Further investigation may uncover more information about this topic.

## REFERENCES

- Alpert, J. (1982). The effect of disc jockey, peer, and music teacher approval of music on music selection and preference. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 30 (3), 173-186.
- Armstrong, L., & Fitzgerald, E. (1954). Summertime. On *Porgy and Bess*. [CD]. Verve Records.
- Booth, G. D., & Cutietta, R. A. (1991). The applicability of verbal processing strategies to recall of familiar songs. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 39 (2), 121-131.
- Boyle, D. J., Hosterman, G. L., & Ramsey, D. S. (1981). Factors influencing pop music preference of young people. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 29 (1), 47-55.
- Britten, R. V. (1991). The effect of overtly categorizing music on preference for popular music styles. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 39 (2), 143-151.
- Campbell, P. S., Connell, C., & Beegle, A. (2007). Adolescents' expressed meanings of music in and out of school. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 55 (3), 220-236.
- Cassidy, J. W. & Speer, D. R. (1990). Music terminology: A transfer from knowledge to practical use. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 106, 11-22.
- Geringer, J. M., & Madsen, C. K. (1998). Musicians' ratings of good versus bad vocal and string performances. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 46 (4), 522-534.
- Gregory, D. (1994). Analysis of listening preferences of high school and college musicians. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 42 (4), 331-342.
- Leblanc, A. (1982). An interactive theory of music preference. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 19 (1), 28-45.
- Leblanc, A., Sims, W. L., Malin, S. A., & Sherrill, C. (1992). Relationship between humor perceived in music and preferences of different-age listeners. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 40 (4), 269-282.
- Leblanc, A., Sims, W. L., Siivola, C., & Obert, M. (1996). Music style preferences of different age listeners. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 44 (1), 49-59.
- Lifshey, A. (2009). The borderlands poetics of Bruce Springsteen. *Journal of the Society for American Music*, 3 (2), 221-241.

- LSU Chamber Singers. (2004). How can I keep from singing? On *LSU Chamber Singers*. [CD]. Baton Rouge.
- Murphey, T. (1989). The when, where, and who of pop lyrics: The listener's prerogative. *Popular Music*, 8 (2), 185-193.
- Music Educators National Conference (MENC). (1994). *What every young American should know and be able to do in the arts: National standards for arts education*. Reston, VA: Author.
- Peery, J. C., & Peery, I. W. (1986). Effects of exposure to classical music on the musical preferences of preschool children. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 34 (1), 24-33.
- Pratt, C. C. (1948). Music as a language of emotion. *Bulletin of the American Musicological Society*, (11/12/13), 67-68.
- School Matters*. (2009). (McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.) Retrieved April 11, 2009, from Glasgow Middle School:  
<http://www.schoolmatters.com/schools.aspx/q/page=sp/sid=28009>
- Siebenaler, D. J. (1999). Student song preference in the elementary music class. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 47 (3), 213-223.
- Springsteen, B. (1984). Born in the U. S. A. On *Born in the U. S. A.* [CD]. New York: Columbia Records.
- Springsteen, B. (2003). *Songs*. New York, NY: Harper Entertainment.
- Supičić, I. (1971). Expression and meaning in music. *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, 1 (2), 193-212.
- Williams, C. (2001). Does it really matter? Young people and popular music. *Popular Music*, 20 (2), 223-242.
- Williamson, S. (2000). Positively adolescent. *Music Educators Journal*, 86 (4), 29-32.
- Wilson, K. M. (1928). Meaning in poetry and music. *Music & Letters*, 9 (3), 211-225.

APPENDIX A

IRB EXEMPTION FORM

Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight

Unless qualified as meeting the specific criteria for exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, ALL LSU research projects using living humans as subjects, or samples or data obtained from humans (directly or indirectly), with or without their consent, must be approved or exempted in advance by the LSU IRB. This Form helps the IRB determine if a project may be exempted, and it is used to request an exemption.



Institutional Review Board
Dr. Robert Mathews, Chair
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8992
F: 225.578.8792
irb@lsu.edu | lsu.edu/irb

- Applicant, Please fill out the application in its entirety and include the completed application as well as parts A-E, listed below, when submitting to the IRB. Once the application is completed, please submit two copies of the completed application to the IRB Office or to a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee.
A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:
(A) Two copies of this completed form and two copies of parts B thru E.
(B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1 & 2)
(C) Copies of all instruments to be used.
-D If this proposal is part of a grant proposal, include a copy of the proposal and all recruitment material.
(D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)
(E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. Training link: (http://php.nihtraining.com/users/login.php.)

1) Principal Investigator: [Name] Rank: [Rank] Student? Y/N

Dept: [Dept] Phone: [Phone] E-mail: [Email]

2) Co Investigator(s): please include department, rank, phone and e-mail for each. \*If student, please identify and name supervising professor in this space.

3) Project Title: [Project Title]

4) LSU Proposal? (yes or no) [Yes/No] If Yes, LSU Proposal Number: [Number]
Also, if YES, either [ ] This application completely matches the scope of work in the grant OR [ ] More IRB Applications will be filed later

5) Subject pool (e.g. Psychology Students): [Subject Pool]
\*Circle any "vulnerable populations" to be used: (children <18; the mentally impaired; pregnant women, the aged, other). Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

6) PI Signature: [Signature] \*\* Date: [Date] (no per signatures)
\*\*I certify my responses are accurate and complete. If the project scope or design is later changed I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted. I also understand that it is my responsibility to maintain copies of all consent forms at LSU for three years after completion of the study. If I leave LSU before that time the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office.

Study Exempted By:
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
03 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225 578-8992 | www.lsu.edu/irb
Exemption Expires: 4/24/09

## APPENDIX B

### PARENT CONSENT FORM

**Project Title:** The Effect of Participation in Performing Ensembles on Listening Practices of Adolescents

**Performance Site:** Glasgow Middle School

**Investigators:** The following investigators are available for questions:

Katie Kalota  
Masters Student, LSU  
(318) 617-5412

Dr. Jane Cassidy  
Music Education Professor, LSU  
(225) 578-3258

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this research project is to determine what effect participation in choir and band has on the listening practices of adolescents. A secondary interest is in listening preference of adolescents.

**Inclusion Criteria:** Students in choir, band, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade general music.

**Exclusion Criteria:** Students not enrolled in choir, band, and other sections of general music.

**Description of the Study:** During 30 minutes of one class period, the investigator will administer a background questionnaire with questions about students' listening preferences and involvement in music outside of school, followed by the playing of three musical examples and the completion of three sets of questions assessing student focus of attention during music listening and preference for musical style. All students will participate in this activity as a part of their regular music class. Only data from students with a signed consent and assent forms will be used in the study.

**Benefits:** None

**Risks:** There are no known risks.

**Right to Refuse:** Participation is voluntary, and a child will become part of the study only if both child and parent agree to the child's participation. At any time, either the subject may withdraw from the study or the subject's parent may withdraw the subject from the study without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.

**Privacy:** Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included for publication. Subject identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

**Financial Information:** There is no cost for participation in the study, nor is there any compensation to the subjects for participation.

**Signatures:**

The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, [irb@lsu.edu](mailto:irb@lsu.edu), [www.lsu.edu/irb](http://www.lsu.edu/irb). I will allow my child to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The parent/ guardian has indicated to me that he/she is unable to read. I certify that I have read this consent form to the parent/guardian and explained that by completing the signature line above he/she has given permission for the child to participate in the study

Signature of Reader: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C**

**STUDENT ASSENT FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to be in a study to determine the effect of participation in performing ensembles on listening practices and preference of adolescents. I will have to complete a background form about my musical experience, listen to three musical selections, and answer three questionnaires. I understand that participation in the activity is considered part of my normal music class responsibilities, however I can decide at any time to withdraw my answers from the study without permission.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness (Choir Director)\* \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*(N. B. Witness must be present for the assent process, not just the signature by the minor.)

## APPENDIX D

### REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



East Baton Rouge Parish School System  
*Department of Accountability and Assessment*

12000 Goodwood Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70815  
(225) 226-7625 FAX (225) 226-7605

### Request to Conduct Research

All research conducted within the school district that is not specifically carried out by employees as part of their duties and that is not part of a district initiative requires advance approval from the EBRPSS Accountability and Assessment Department. This includes research by district employees or students outside the district seeking an advanced degree and research by outside professionals or agencies. The district reserves the right to limit the number of studies conducted annually. Data collection activities must take into account schools' primary instructional mission and conflicting demands upon schools that may arise at certain times of the year (e.g. state mandated testing).

It is the researcher's responsibility to identify schools that will participate. Principals and employees have the right to refuse participation unless the research is part of a federal, state, or local mandate. We suggest contacting the administrators at your preferred research sites to ensure their availability.

Researchers are subject to the following requirements:

- Submit an approved IRB from the sponsoring university or research agency
- Submit copies of all instruments used in the study
- Submit copies of parent and student permission forms
- Prepare a summary of research that includes the timeline and locations for collecting data
- Agree to confidentiality of all participants and data
- Agree to exclude scores for any groups with less than ten members
- Agree to provide a summary of findings to the district upon completion of the research

Forward your research request to:

Liz Frischhertz, Chief Officer for Accountability, Assessment, and Evaluation  
East Baton Rouge Parish School System  
Christa McAuliffe Center  
12000 Goodwood Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70815  
[lfrischhert@ebrschools.org](mailto:lfrischhert@ebrschools.org)

Once received, your request will be reviewed and submitted to the appropriate Area Superintendent and the Superintendent for their approval. An approval or denial letter will be sent to you within three weeks.

If you have questions, please contact Liz Frischhertz or Carolyn Clark at 225-226-7625.

## APPENDIX E

### SONG LYRICS

“Born in the U. S. A.”

Written and Performed by Bruce Springsteen

Born down in a dead man’s town,  
The first kick I took was when I hit the ground,  
You end up like a dog that’s been beat too much,  
Till you spend half your life just covering up.

Born in the USA,  
I was born in the USA,  
I was born in the USA,  
Born in the USA.

Got in a little hometown jam,  
So they put a rifle in my hand,  
Sent me off to a foreign land,  
To go and kill the yellow man.

Born in the USA,  
I was born in the USA,  
I was born in the USA,  
Born in the USA.

Come back home to the refinery,  
Hiring man says, “Son, if it was up to me”,  
Went down to see my VA man,  
He said, “Son, don’t you understand now”.

Had a brother at Khe Sahn fighting off the Viet Cong,  
They’re still there, he’s all gone,  
He had a woman he loved in Saigon,  
I got a picture of him in her arms now.

Down in the shadow of the penitentiary,  
Out by the gas fires of the refinery,  
I’m ten years burning down the road,  
Nowhere to run, ain’t got nowhere to go.

Born in the USA,

Born in the USA,  
I’m a long gone daddy in the USA,  
Born in the USA,  
Born in the USA,  
Born in the USA,  
I’m a cool rocking daddy in the USA

“Summertime”  
From the opera *Porgy and Bess*  
Written by George Gershwin  
Performed by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong

Summertime,  
And the livin' is easy  
Fish are jumpin'  
And the cotton is high

Your daddy's rich  
And your mamma's good lookin'  
So hush little baby  
Don't you cry

One of these mornings  
You're going to rise up singing  
Then you'll spread your wings  
And you'll take to the sky

But till that morning  
There's a'nothing can harm you  
With daddy and mamma standing by

Summertime,  
And the livin' is easy  
Fish are jumpin'  
And the cotton is high

Your daddy's rich  
And your mamma's good lookin'  
So hush little baby  
Don't you cry

“How Can I Keep From Singing?”

Text: Anonymous, 3<sup>rd</sup> Stanza by James and Ina Heup

Arranged by James Mulholland

Performed by LSU Chamber Singers

My life goes on in endless song,  
above the earth's lamentation,  
I hear the real, though far off hymn,  
that hails a new creation.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm  
while to that rock I'm clinging,  
It starts an echo in my soul,  
How can I keep from singing?

What though the tempest 'round me roars,  
I know the truth, it liveth  
What through the darkness round me close,  
Songs in the night it giveth.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm,  
while to that rock I'm clinging,  
Since love is Lord of Heav'n and earth,  
How can I keep from singing?

Though hunger, war, and sickness rage  
And race or creeds divide us,  
My faith is firm: I still believe  
A child's sweet song can guide us.  
A mother's kiss, a father's touch,  
can send all evil winging.  
No weapon wields the pow'r of love  
How can I keep from singing?

## VITA

Katie Kalota is a candidate for the degree of Master of Music in music education at Louisiana State University. She obtained a Bachelor of Music Education degree and New York Teaching Certificate in 2005 from The State University of New York College at Potsdam and the Crane School of Music. After graduating, Katie was accepted to take part in the Teach Music in New York City Project, a scholarship program through VH1 Save the Music, that places certified music teachers in urban schools with no music program. She started a choral program at I. S. 278 Marine Park Middle School in Brooklyn, New York, and taught chorus and general music to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from 2005-2007. While teaching, Katie was invited to guest conduct a New York State All-County Chorus in Albany, New York. Also, during this time, members of her sixth grade chorus were invited to take part in the American Choral Directors Association's summer conference choir in Buffalo, New York. While starting her master's in music education at Louisiana State University full time in 2007, Katie was a full time graduate assistant in Carter Music Resources. She is the children's choir director at University Presbyterian Church and has been since 2008. In the fall of 2009, she will be teaching Pre-K through fourth grade music at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.