Young People's Musical Taste: Relationship With Gender and Gender-Related Traits[1]

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The present study extended previous findings of gender differences in young people's musical taste by examining whether identification with gender-related expressive or instrumental traits contributes to these differences, and by examining the underlying structure of musical taste by gender. The results confirmed greater liking of heavier contemporary music among men and of chart pop music among women. Gender was a stronger predictor of taste for gender-stereotyped styles than identification with gender-related traits. The structure of style preferences in dimensions relating to mainstream styles varied by gender. Men and participants with higher scores on expressiveness gave higher ratings to more styles. The findings are discussed in relation to gender differences in the use of music and gender-role socialization.

Music, particularly popular music, plays a central role in the lives of young people (Christenson & Roberts, 1998). A number of studies have examined the basic question of what determines their likes and dislikes.

A major approach to understanding the consumption of media more generally is the uses-and-gratifications approach (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974), which proposes that our use of media relates to social and psychological needs in areas such as personal identity, relationships with others, and the need for diversion. Two significant areas of research into musical taste can be linked to this approach. First, the choice of music as a means of controlling mood has been examined (e.g., Gibson & Zillmann, 2000; Knobloch & Zillmann, 2002). Second, investigators have examined music's role within the social dynamics of adolescence in defining and signaling social identity through its use as a badge, indicating affiliations with the values and tastes of fans of particular styles (e.g., Frith, 1981; Roe, 1985; Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves 2000). The focus of the present study is on musical taste and identity, but in relation to gender differences and personal identification with gender-related traits.

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Gender is a primary social distinction, and, not surprisingly, research into young people's preferences for musical styles has indicated that there are consistent gender differences in musical taste. For example, in an investigation of the preferences of U.S. college students, Christenson and Peterson (1988) found that women had stronger preferences for mainstream pop, contemporary rhythm and blues, soul, late '70s disco, and Black gospel music than did men; while men had stronger preferences for southern rock, psychedelic rock, and blues. In the United Kingdom, Hargreaves, Comber, and Colley (1995) found that English secondary schoolboys liked heavy metal and rock more than girls did, while girls liked chart pop, reggae, jazz, classical, folk, and opera more than boys did. Although there has been some variation in gender differences, depending on the styles used and musical fashions, greater liking of rock and heavy rock generally has been found among males, while females have expressed greater liking for lighter music, particularly mainstream pop.

These gender differences have been linked to the consonance of the styles with traditional gender-role-related attributes and the relationship of the themes expressed with the developmental issues of young men and women (Schwartz & Fouts, 2003). Lighter mainstream music tends to have lyrics that focus on emotions and relationships with others, which are concerns of young women; while heavy music is associated with aggression, dominance, and rebellion, which relate to the concerns of young men. Heavy metal and heavy rock music have particularly masculine connotations and have been linked to both antisocial behavior and physical aggression (Rubin, West, & Mitchell, 2001), and Hansen and Hansen (1991) found higher levels of Machiavellianism and machismo among students who expressed a liking for these styles of music.

Rentfrow and Gosling (2003) argued that underlying preference dimensions are an essential part of any theory of musical preference. They conducted a factor analysis of the preferences of college students for 14 musical styles and found four main factors: *reflective and complex* with high loadings from blues, jazz, classical, and folk; *intense and rebellious* with high loadings from rock and alternative; *upbeat and conventional* with high loadings from country, soundtracks, religious, and pop; and *energetic and rhythmic* with high loadings from rap/hip-hop, soul/funk, and electronica/dance.

Rentfrow and Gosling (2003) did not examine male and female preferences separately, and there are no recent data on such gender differences. However, there are data from two decades ago that found a gender difference. Christenson and Peterson (1988) factor-analyzed the preference ratings of male and female U.S. college students for 26 musical styles. Both analyses revealed eight factors and showed considerable similarities. A major difference resulted from the location of more mainstream music within the factors.

Contemporary ('80s) rock stood out as a single high-loading item on one factor for the men; with mainstream, folk, and country pop loading on another factor. Hence, rock and mainstream styles were differentiated. For the women, mainstream and '80s rock loaded on one factor.

Christenson and Peterson (1988) explained this difference as relating to the different uses of music among young men and women. They argued that because men's musical allegiances are central and personal, they distinguished between the more macho styles that they preferred, and the "unhip" melodic, romantic mainstream styles that women like. For women, whose approach to music is instrumental and social, both mainstream and '80s rock styles were regarded as "popular." Thus, gender differences in the degree to which styles relate to identity and self-presentation can be linked to the ways in which college students structure their preferences. There is support for gender differences in the use of music both from the U.S. (Christenson & Roberts, 1998) and the UK, where North, Hargreaves, and O'Neill (2000) found that female adolescents used music more for mood regulation, while male adolescents used it more for identity formation and to create an impression with others.

In addition to collecting recent data on gender differences in musical taste from a UK sample, the current study examines underlying preferences. From recent evidence on the uses of music, it would follow that young men should tend to distance themselves from young women's tastes. It is predicted that the representation of mainstream styles will continue to vary between male and female participants and that men's liking for different styles will vary more than will women's. Using college students permits a comparison with the studies of Christenson and Peterson (1988) and Rentfrow and Gosling (2003), and gender differences may be particularly marked in late adolescence when relationships with potential partners become a primary interest (Christenson & Roberts, 1998).

Examining gender differences alone, however, overlooks the potential role of self-perceptions in relation to gendered traits, which have been examined in relation to participation in a wide range of activities (e.g., Bem & Lenney, 1976). Bem (1981) proposed gender schema theory to explain individual differences in the extent to which gender norms influence the way information is processed. According to gender schema theory, individuals who perceive themselves as possessing higher levels of gender-stereotyped traits more readily use gender to guide the way in which they behave and perceive the world. Identification with gender-related traits is measured with self-report inventories, such as the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI: Bem, 1974), which was designed to measure stereotypical femininity and masculinity. However, there has been considerable debate over what such masculinity and femininity scales actually measure.

Spence and Helmreich (1981) concluded that the BSRI (Bem, 1974) and their own Personal Attributes Questionnaire both measure the lower-order and narrower constructs of expressiveness and instrumentality, which are intimately related to masculinity and femininity but do not encompass all sex-role-related behaviors. Choi and Fuqua (2003) summarized the findings from 23 studies of the factor structure of the BSRI and supported this conclusion: The femininity scale measures personality traits relating to female-stereotyped emotional expression and communality, while the masculinity scale measures male-stereotyped dominant, forceful traits. Thus, while the BSRI does not provide a comprehensive measure of masculinity and femininity, it nevertheless measures core aspects of masculine and feminine identity, and its scales have been used in the individual-differences domain in studies of musical talent (e.g., Hassler & Birbaumer, 1984) and of musical educators and performers (e.g., Kemp, 1985). The uses-and-gratifications approach (Arnett, Larson, & Offer, 1995; Katz et al., 1974) proposes that such personal characteristics should relate to media consumption, so the extent to which individuals regard themselves as conforming to gender-related traits should influence their taste for styles that are associated with men and women.

The current study asks whether those who perceive themselves to have higher levels of forceful or expressive traits prefer styles that reflect those traits. If that turns out to be the case, masculinity and femininity scores, rather than gender per se, could underlie the gender differences in taste found among adolescents and young people. This could raise important developmental issues about the relationship between musical taste and gender-role socialization. A second question addressed here, therefore, is what are the relative contributions of masculinity and femininity (which measure personal identification with gender-related traits) and gender (which relates to social group membership) in determining taste for different styles?

A third area examined in the present study is the relationship between gender, gender-related traits, and breadth of musical taste. Bem (1974, 1981) proposed that androgynous individuals, who rate themselves as having high levels of both feminine and masculine traits, should have a broader behavioral repertoire than those who are gender-stereotyped, since the latter tend to process information in terms of gender associations. While early studies (e.g., Bem & Lenney, 1976; Orlovsky & Windle, 1976) supported this proposal, other studies have found that those with high scores on masculinity alone are more comfortable across a range of gender-stereotyped tasks (Heilbrun & Pitman, 1979; Spence, Helmreich, & Holahan, 1979). In the current study, therefore, it is predicted that those who rank high on both femininity and masculinity or on masculinity alone will have greater breadth of taste than will those with other scale score combinations.

Method

Participants

Study participants were 208 undergraduate students (110 female, 98 male) at the University of Leicester. Female participants had a mean age of 19.6 years ($SD = 1.7$), while male participants had a mean age of 19.8 years ($SD = 2.2$). Of the sample, 93.3% were White and the remainder were British Asian. Participants' musical training was graded on the following 4-point scale: 0 = *no or very limited training*; 1 = *Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) Grades 1–3*; 2 = *ABRSM Grades 4–5*; and 3 = *ABRSM Grade 6 or above*.

Measures and Procedure

Participants completed a questionnaire asking for ratings of liking for the following musical styles: folk, chart pop, heavy metal, rock, blues, jazz, classical, reggae, opera, country, and rap. Liking was chosen as the measure of taste as it implies a general judgement or reaction, rather than enjoyment, for instance, which is context-specific.

The musical style labels were chosen to be recognizable to participants, since they had been successfully piloted and then used in a previous study of musical taste with British adolescents (Hargreaves et al., 1995). The styles were not intended to be comprehensive, as this would have produced an extremely long list, but rather to be broad and of current validity. Participants rated each category on an 8-point scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*).

The questionnaire also contains the BSRI (Bem, 1974) which includes two scales measuring 20 stereotypically masculine and 20 stereotypically feminine traits, respectively, in addition to 20 neutral items. Bem reported good internal consistency, with high alphas (>.80) for both scales. More recent studies (e.g., Holt & Ellis, 1998) have confirmed this. Participants rated how well each trait describes them on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*never or almost never true*) to 7 (*always true*).

Data Analysis

More girls than boys undertake musical training (e.g., O'Neill, 1997), which might influence liking through exposure to traditional as well as popular styles of music. The mean training grade for women ($M = 1.06$,

SD = 1.03) was significantly higher than that for men (*M* = 0.72, *SD* = 095), $t(205) = 2.46$, $p < .02$, so training was used as a covariate in a multivariate analysis of gender differences. The relative contributions of gender, training, masculinity, and femininity to liking of each style was then examined using multiple regression analyses (1 = male, 2 = female).

The number of styles with ratings above the scale midpoint (3.5) was used as a measure of breadth of taste for each participant in an ANCOVA with gender, high/low femininity, and high/low masculinity as independent variables, and training as the covariate. A similar analysis was undertaken using the variance of the ratings from each participant in order to examine whether the men differentiated more between styles they liked more and less.

The high/low categories for femininity and masculinity were based on score position in relation to the sample median for each scale (masculinity *Mdn* = 90.50; femininity *Mdn* = 93.00). Bem (1977) and others have used the median split of the scales to assign participants to groups who identify mainly with the traits of one gender or who identify to a similar degree with both masculine and feminine traits. Androgyny effects, as a result of high levels of both masculine and feminine traits, would be evident in the interaction between the feminine and masculine categories (Jönsson & Carlsson, 2000). Finally, in order to examine the structure of men's and women's preferences, exploratory factor analyses were undertaken of their ratings of styles.

Results

Liking for Musical Styles

Rock music was the style rated most highly by men, and it was also rated highly by women (Table 1). Chart pop received the highest rating from women. The lowest ratings from both men and women were for folk, country, and opera. The MANCOVA produced a significant main effect for gender, Wilks's $\Lambda(11, 176) = 3.70$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .19$. Univariate analyses show that women rated their liking of chart pop more highly than did men; while men rated their liking of rock, folk, blues, reggae, and heavy metal more highly than did women.

Relationships Between Gender, Masculinity, Femininity, and Liking

Zero-order correlations are presented in Table 2. Stepwise multiple regression analyses (Table 3) show that gender was the only or the most significant predictor of liking for rock, heavy metal, reggae, folk, and chart

Table 1

Gender Differences in Liking of Musical Styles

	Men's ratings		Women's ratings			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F*(1, 188)	Partial η^2
Rock	4.80	1.98	4.10	2.03	6.43**	.03
Blues	3.59	1.70	3.06	1.82	6.53**	.03
Rap	3.46	2.16	3.57	1.94	0.70	
Chart pop	3.17	1.96	4.62	1.81	25.90**	.12
Reggae	3.13	1.90	2.55	1.77	4.44*	.02
Jazz	3.05	1.89	3.04	1.98	0.62	
Classical	2.87	1.96	2.70	1.83	2.47	
Heavy metal	2.60	2.03	1.97	1.80	4.21*	.02
Folk	1.47	1.80	0.99	1.32	7.22**	.04
Country	1.45	1.64	1.21	1.24	2.56	
Opera	1.40	1.82	1.48	1.56	0.51	

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

pop and was among the significant predictors of liking for blues. Musical training was the only or the most significant predictor of liking for opera, classical music, and jazz and was among the significant predictors of liking for blues and folk. Masculinity was the most significant predictor of liking for the blues, but was also among the significant predictors of liking for jazz and classical music; while femininity was the only significant predictor of liking for country music, but also significantly predicted liking for chart pop, blues, and jazz.

A $2 \times 2 \times 2$ (Gender × Femininity: high vs. low × Masculinity: high vs. low) ANCOVA on breadth of taste (number of styles above the scale midpoint) reveals significant main effects of gender and femininity, but no significant interactions. Male participants ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 2.18$) assigned higher ratings to more musical styles than did female participants ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.97$), $F(1, 186) = 4.56$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$ Those with high femininity scores ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 2.22$) assigned higher ratings to more musical styles than did those with low femininity scores ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.89$), $F(1, 186) = 4.58$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. A similar ANCOVA undertaken on the variance of ratings from each participant reveal no significant effects, and the means of variances from the men and women were very similar indeed (men, $M = 1.98$, $SD = 0.44$; women, $M = 1.97$, $SD = 0.38$).

Table 2

Zero-Order Correlations of Style Ratings With Gender, Musical Training, Masculinity, and Femininity

	Gender	Training	Masculinity	Femininity
Rock	−.159*	−.065	.074	.111
Blues	−.155*	.151*	.179*	.161*
Rap	.048	−.075	.089	−.053
Chart pop	.378**	−.027	−.113	.285**
Reggae	−.148*	−.028	.026	−.005
Jazz	−.026	.247**	.159*	.194**
Classical	−.045	.240**	.130	.140*
Heavy metal	−.153*	−.002	.149*	−.028
Folk	−.160*	.117	.027	.059
Country	−.114	.111	.041	.142*
Opera	.015	.258**	.066	.090

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Structure of Taste for Musical Styles

Principal components analyses with orthogonal rotation (varimax) were performed on the ratings from men and women separately. Oblique rotation produced a virtually identical solution. Tables 4 and 5 show the rotated factor loadings that were obtained.

The men's ratings produced five factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, which accounted for 81.0% of the variance. The first factor had high loadings from blues, jazz, classical, and opera and was labeled *Sophisticated*. The second factor had high loadings from folk and country and was labeled *Traditional*. The third factor had high loadings from heavy metal and rock and was labeled *Heavy*. The fourth factor had high loadings from reggae and rap and was labeled *Rebellious*. Finally, the fifth factor had only one high loading, *Chart Pop*.

The women's ratings produced four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, which accounted for 67.7% of the variance. The first factor was similar to the men's and, therefore, was labeled *Sophisticated*. The second factor was similar to the men's third factor, had high positive loadings from heavy metal and rock, and a smaller negative loading from chart pop, and was labeled *Heavy*. The third factor had its highest loadings from country and folk, with

Table 3

Significant Predictors of Musical Style Ratings

	Predictor	β	R^2
Rock			
Step 1	Gender	–.176*	.031
Blues			
Step 1	Masculinity	.148*	.029
Step 2	Training	.162*	.051
Step 3	Gender	–.197**	.076
Step 4	Femininity	.160*	.099
Rap	—	—	—
Chart pop			
Step 1	Gender	.310**	.128
Step 2	Femininity	.204**	.167
Reggae			
Step 1	Gender	–.161*	.026
Jazz			
Step 1	Training	.235**	.058
Step 2	Masculinity	.160*	.085
Step 3	Femininity	.145*	.105
Classical			
Step 1	Training	.237**	.051
Step 2	Masculinity	.140*	.070
Heavy metal			
Step 1	Gender	–.171	.029
Folk			
Step 1	Gender	–.167*	.021
Step 2	Training	.142*	.040
Country			
Step 1	Femininity	.140*	.020
Opera			
Step 1	Training	.263**	.069

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Table 4

Structure of Men's Style Ratings: Factor Loadings

	Sophisticated	Traditional	Heavy	Rebellious	Chart pop
Folk		**.890**			
Chart pop					**.900**
Heavy metal			**.889**		
Rock			**.887**		
Blues	**.735**				–.335
Jazz	**.856**				
Classical	**.796**				
Reggae				**.805**	
Opera	**.727**	.321			
Country		**.908**			
Rap				**.888**	
Proportion of variance	24.06	17.05	15.02	13.58	11.28

Note. Loadings > .30 shown, with highest loadings in bold.

slightly lower loadings from chart pop and blues, and was labeled *Mainstream*. The fourth factor was similar to the men's fourth factor, had high loadings from reggae and rap and was labeled *Rebellious*.

Discussion

In common with previous studies, the present study found greater liking of chart pop among women and greater liking of heavy metal, folk, rock, and blues among men. Of those styles, both heavy metal and folk had overall means below the scale midpoint, indicating relatively low levels of liking among both men and women. Only four styles had overall means greater than the scale midpoint for males or females: rock, blues, rap, and chart pop. Of those, only rap did not show a gender difference, confirming its status as a crossover style that appeals to male and female listeners, possibly because the aggressive and subversive lyrics appeal to males while the dance rhythms appeal to females (Christenson & Roberts, 1998). It is worth noting also that

Table 5

Structure of Women's Style Ratings: Factor Loadings

	Sophisticated	Heavy	Mainstream	Rebellious
Folk			**.631**	
Chart pop	–.306	–.496	**.555**	
Heavy metal		**.860**		
Rock		**.815**		
Blues	**.609**		**.500**	
Jazz	**.728**		.399	
Classical	**.819**			
Reggae				**.825**
Opera	**.803**			
Country			**.707**	
Rap				**.779**
Proportion of variance	22.27	16.75	15.60	13.09

Note. Loadings > .30 shown, with highest loadings in bold.

rock was rated highest by men and, despite the gender difference found, was rated second highest by women.

The underlying structure of the style preferences in the present sample shows similarities to the structure obtained by Rentfrow and Gosling (2003). The largest factor in all of the analyses encompassed classical music, jazz, and blues. It also included folk in Rentfrow and Gosling's study and was labeled *Reflective and Complex*, while in the current study for both men and women it included opera (which was not used by Rentfrow & Gosling) and was labeled *Sophisticated*. There were also close similarities between the Heavy factor found in both the men's and the women's structures and Rentfrow and Gosling's Intense and Rebellious factor, and between the Rhythmic/Rebellious factors from the current analyses and Rentfrow and Gosling's Energetic and Rhythmic factor.

The main area of difference lies in the factors associated with mainstream music. In Rentfrow and Gosling's (2003) study, the mainstream styles loaded on the Upbeat and Conventional factor, which had high loadings from pop, country, religious, and soundtracks. This resembles the structure found for the women, rather than the men in the current study. The women's Mainstream factor was similarly broad and had high loadings from country, folk, chart pop, and blues. The men's data produced a single factor with a high

loading from chart pop only. Blues loaded on the Sophisticated factor, while folk and country loaded on a separate Traditional factor.

The present findings are interesting in two respects. The first is the relative consistency of the structure of preferences across samples and cultures. The second is the similarity with the study of Christenson and Peterson (1988) in the gender differences in representation of mainstream styles, which supports their explanation in terms of the different uses of music by men and women. Men make clearer distinctions between contemporary styles because music is central to their identification with particular musical subcultures and self-presentation (North et al., 2000). An apparent problem with this interpretation arises from the lack of any gender difference in the variance of the ratings, which appears to suggest that men are not making clearer distinctions between different styles in their ratings. However, contemporary styles are the most relevant to the uses of music by men, since they are likely to be listened to most by the age group studied. Of these, only chart pop was liked more by women, and it represents music that young men regard as "uncool" (Christenson & Roberts, 1998). Taken together, the findings of the men's significantly lower liking of chart pop (below the scale midpoint) and the distinction between different mainstream styles in their preference structure support the view that self-presentational concerns play a significant role in men's musical taste. In particular, it might be predicted that young men do not wish to engage with styles strongly associated with the opposite gender since the literature on gender-role socialization shows that boys are more likely to be discouraged from engaging in cross-gender behavior than are girls (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Martin, 1993).

Some significant associations between liking for individual styles and participants' self-ratings on gender-stereotyped traits emerged in the data. Femininity was significantly positively associated with liking of chart pop, jazz, blues, classical, and country music; while masculinity was significantly associated with liking of blues, jazz, and heavy metal. These correlations show an association between femininity and styles that produce lighter music, and between masculinity and styles that mainly produce heavy sounds.

However, the correlations do not take into account gender and training. The regression analyses, which included gender and training as variables, show a stronger effect of gender than masculinity or femininity for five of the six styles with a significant gender difference. For rock, reggae, and heavy metal, gender was the only significant predictor. There is abundant evidence in the existing literature of a strong link between social identity and musical taste. Within the framework of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), musical taste has been shown to influence perceptions of others. For example Tekman and Hortaçsu (2002) found that college students had more positive perceptions of individuals who listened to music that the college students

liked. Similarly, Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves (2001) found that male adolescents used similarity of musical taste to define in-group members. Gender is a primary social category and the current findings suggest that identification with being male or being female has a stronger influence on liking for musical styles than does possessing gender-related traits.

Musical training was a significant determinant of liking for the more musically sophisticated styles. North and Hargreaves (1995) found that musically trained participants had stronger preferences for pop music of higher subjective complexity than did untrained participants. Training provides exposure to classical music and opera, and voluntary rather than incidental exposure is related to liking (North & Hargreaves, 1997). This aspect of the data offers empirical support for the benefits of musical training in enhancing young people's enjoyment of more complex styles.

Although gender and training feature most frequently as the most significant predictors of the majority of styles, there were some significant effects of masculinity and femininity within the data. Femininity was the only significant predictor of liking for country music—perhaps because of the emotional content of the lyrics—and was a significant predictor of liking for chart pop, which similarly deals with emotional and romantic themes.

Two styles, jazz and blues, had both masculinity and femininity among the significant predictors, possibly because both are associated with strong rhythm and forceful sound, while also providing emotional expression. The prediction of greater breadth of taste among those high on masculinity—or on both femininity and masculinity—was not supported by the data. Men gave higher ratings to more styles than did women. Since music is more central to men's social and personal identity, they may seek out and listen to a broader range of styles than may young women. Christenson and Roberts (1998) concluded that male, rather than female adolescents are more likely to listen to styles that are not mainstream and, again, the relationship between voluntary exposure and liking (North & Hargreaves, 1997) would explain their greater breadth of taste. The association of breadth with high femininity scores, rather than androgyny or high masculinity is most likely a result of a difference between music and the types of tasks investigated in the androgyny literature. Music, whether male-preferred or female-preferred, is an expressive medium; therefore, the uses-and-gratifications approach would predict that those with a higher level of expressive traits would gain gratification from it and seek it out.

The data presented here have replicated and extended previous findings on gender differences in young people's musical preferences. The overall gender differences in taste broadly confirm those found in earlier research. Similarly, the gender difference in the representation of mainstream styles is similar to that found nearly 20 years ago by Christenson and Peterson

(1988), and can be related to contemporary music's role in the social and personal identity of young men versus its social and affective use by young women.

Greater breadth of taste was found among men and among those with higher levels of feminine expressive traits. The former would be expected if music plays a central role in the identity of young men, but the link with expressiveness opens up new perspectives on musical liking, which can be explored in the future. For example, this indicates a link with aspects of gender-role socialization. Since girls are more likely to learn to identify with the expressive traits associated with the female gender role, this may help to explain why girls have greater liking for school music (Crowther & Durkin, 1982) and a greater likelihood of taking up instrumental tuition (Hanley, 1998; Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall, & Tarrant, 2003).

In conclusion, the current findings update and extend previous work on gender differences in musical preferences and their structure, adding detail to the map. While there were some associations found between possessing higher levels of gender-linked traits and the specifics of musical taste, overall, being male or female is a stronger predictor of liking for gender-stereotyped styles. In line with the more central role of music in their identity, young men gave higher ratings to more styles than did young women. However, expressive traits associated with stereotypical femininity were found to be associated with higher ratings of liking for more styles. This latter finding not only adds to the list of individual-difference measures that relate to musical preferences (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003), but also indicates that further exploration of a link between the reinforcement of expressive traits in gender-role socialization and the development of musical behavior would be fruitful.

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