

Effect of different styles of music on people morality essay

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



Everybody loves music. Seldom do we find somebody who doesn't. Why not? Music soothes the soul longing for rest.

Music sparks romantic moments of two people highly strung with love. Music accompanies you when you are feeling down and blue. Music dances with you when you are bubbling with joy and energy. Music announces to the whole world what you can't plainly say in words.

In short, music brings out the real you, the good, and may be even the bad. 2 Music is the medium through which you express yourself, in the same manner that you find yourself being expressed in the music that you play and hear. If this is true, can it be argued that one's preference for music has an effect on one's emotions, thoughts, and conducts – one's morality? 2 Way back in early philosophers' times, music is believed to have a catalytic effect that stirs up man's passions and emotions. 2 Plato in his Fourth Book of the Republic wrote that, there is no other more potent instrument than musical training, because the inward places of one's soul can be penetrated by rhythm and harmony.

For Aristotle, " Music directly represents the passions or states of the soul- gentleness, anger, courage, temperance" (Aristotle, Republic, Politics, 8, 1340, quoted in Donald J. Grout, A History of Western Music, 1980, p. 8). This means that, the more a person listens to a kind of music that stirs his dishonorable passions, the more that his character will become dishonorable.

It is as if saying that, listening to the wrong kind of music begets the wrong kind of person; while listening to the right music begets the right kind of

person. In the present, modern times, music has not ceased in moving man. According to Kilpatrick (1993), music has such an influence that go far beyond leisure and amusement. By creating sensual appeals to righteousness, it can play a positive role in moral development, and a destructive one, if it sets an unpredictable path that point to the opposite direction of virtue. Throughout the civilization of man, music has been believed to influence man's character and the formation of his moral. ² Whether we admit or not, there are certain points in our lives when we involuntarily stomp our feet to the beat of the music no matter how explicitly violent the lyrics are. So, it's the music itself really that induces us to respond, and not necessarily the words put into it, although they accentuate the effect. ¹And still, there are times, too that to a certain point when we know, we do some crazy and naughty stuffs, yet we feel it's alright, especially when we mask the truth by singing with Matchbox20's, " I'm not crazy, I'm just a little bit unwell" song.

² Experience tells us also that different people prefers different styles of music. And every style of music carries different rhythm, different pitch, different harmony, and different melody. Every style conveys different mood, a reflection of the period or the moment the music is composed. ² Here exactly reveals that, unlike other forms of art works that only portrays the emotion experienced by others, music directly mimics and kindles the emotions themselves. ² In so doing, the classification of music relies on the imitation and arousing of man's passions. Hence, there is music for love,

there is music for war. 3 There is music for dancing, there is music for meditating. There is music for worship, there is music for pleasure.

3 Whatever is appealing to man's moods, so does his choice of music at any given time. 2 Irregardless of the presence or absence of lyrics, the emotions conveyed " is felt, not intellectualized (Nortz, 2002) Music indeed is like a cradle of diverse feelings, a language of man's emotions. 2 As Nortz (2002) observed, " music can imitate a reasonable, ordered, honorable, virtuous emotion, in which case music helps dispose man to the virtuous and honorable ordering of his life. Likewise, he observed music can also imitate exactly the opposite, " disposing man to his unreasonable, disordered, dishonorable, vicious emotion.

" Nortzah oki (2002) further added that, " Music is one of the powerful means" in teaching " our passions to rejoice in accord with right season," and what Plato meant when he wrote in the Republic, " Musical training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul. " Consequently, man may choose one style of music over the other, and another style or styles the next. And such peculiarity is a moral choice in itself.

1 One can distinguish one generation from another through the style or kind of music that one listens to or is delighted to hear. Different age group prefers different kinds of music. You will notice that a young professional belongs to the 80s, when he is thrilled to hear the music from the 80s, which that generation called the New Wave music. 2 You know that your parents

belong to the Rock “ n” Roll era every time your house shook up on weekends with the sound of Elvis Presley. You can foretell that your new neighbor has a teenage kid when you hear the lambasting sounds of the electric guitars from the Hard Rock and Heavy Metal music being played on. And your grandma, you never fail to hear the Gospel music being played in her radio every time you come to visit her in the home for the aged. 1 Those types of music mentioned are just few of the many music genres we have. Interestingly, the DataDragon Information Services Website has this Genre Sampler where one can tour on some of the popular music genres that includes: Classical – “ Classical music is composed by some of the most brilliant minds in the world,” like Beethoven, Mozart and George Gershwin; “ Everyone knows that classical music is some of the most difficult music to perform, requiring great speed and accuracy” (Lux, 1997).

Jazz – Jazz music “ usually is a strong bass line backed-up by a great drummer. ” Well-known musicians include Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Glenn Miller (Lux, 1997). Rock – “ Rock is the most popular form of music” from musicians like Van Halen, Bruce Springsteen and Sting; “ A real heavy drum beat and awesome guitar lines usually make up the best rock music” (Lux, 1997). Reggae – “ Reggae is one of the most unique forms out there. It uses a lot of steel drum but usually has a ‘ happy sound’. ” Well-known musicians include UB40, Bob Marley and The Wailers (Lux, 1997). These are just some of the popular music genres.

The list goes on like Pop, Urban, Celtic, Country, Latin, Christian, Folk, Rhythm and Blues, and combinations of all sorts of the different styles of

music. But what's the relevance of stating and knowing these types of music? 1 This just show, that music has varying styles that make use of instruments to create different beats, melodies and rhythms to create an effect to its listeners. Different combinations of music styles can also be listened to as a result of mixture of different beats and instruments. The lyrics and vocal techniques also accentuate the effects of music. In a nutshell, different music styles affect different types of people to varying degrees. Usually, the preference for music styles has something to do with the age of the population.

The adult generation, who is expected to know what they want in life, is expected to listen to a more relaxing kind of music like jazz, and thought inspiring kind of music like classical music. Or it could be also that their kind of music is the one that they loved most during their teenage years, as evidenced by their music collections. Whereas, the young generation, who oftentimes are still seeking for their own identities, goes for pop, rap, urban, alternative or whatever is the "in" thing among their peers. They are also the ones, especially the teenagers, who habitually rooted for rock music, which is branded as a "rebellious" kind of music.

Such is expected because at their age, they are still subjected with so many "do's" and "don'ts", and rock music, with its fast rhythm and explicit lyrics on sex and violence, is a sort of expression of their rebellion and want for freedom from rules. 2 These realities about music will give us the idea that music indeed is a language of our emotions, a channel for our sentiments, and a tool for our message. This supported Marshall McLuhan's argument as

quoted by Nortz (2002), that “ the medium is the message. By moving the emotions, the music all by itself, with its beat, tune and harmony influences man’s disposition towards virtue or vice. Therefore, the standard for giving a verdict whether this kind and that kind of music is good or bad, should be on the manner that a piece of music move one’s passions (Nortz, 2002). On the contrary, in an online article entitled, The Heresy of Claiming That Music is Neutral, there are still claims even among the Contemporary Christian Musicians that “ music itself is a neutral force and that only a song’s words determines its morality. The same article declares that: “ Common sense tells us that music is not neutral, that all music is not the same [...] The notes and components of music are neutral, but when these are arranged into a pattern, that piece of music no longer is neutral but becomes a voice, a language [...] musical components are neutral as long as they remain themselves, but as soon as they are arranged into a piece of music, that piece of music communicates a message which can be sensual or spiritual, godly or satanic.

” Whether or not music is itself moral or amoral, neutral or not neutral, this essay did not attempt to come into such a conclusion. Rather it sticks to the idea that music, as a tool, medium or language of emotions has an effect on man’s morality to varying degrees that man subjects himself into. 2

Moreover, it was written within the premise that agrees along the line of thoughts found in Truth Matters blogspot (2006) that says: “ Music does not exist unless mankind brings it into existence. ” Music is a tool “ created by mankind as an expression of either the righteous or evil intentions in his

heart...” And as a tool, music is “ used by the individual for carrying out the designs of the heart. The real issue therefore is not whether good music fosters right attitudes and bad music fosters the wrong ones.

For “ morality rests only in the heart of the man” and “ man will be judged by God not the tool. ” Therefore, let’s not put the blame on music on whatever grievous effect it has on our morality. Instead, let’s ask our own selves where could we have gone wrong, and how can we make things right. The extent by which music affects us depends on how we immerse ourselves into our penchant for music.

So, it’s our duty to be careful in choosing our music, or music will “ choose” us otherwise. _____ 1. Chapter 14, Begin your sentences with and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet 2. Chapter 16, Fragment your sentences 3.

Chapter 17, Splice with commasREFERENCESAristotle. Republic, Politics, 8, 1340, quoted in Donald J. Grout, A History of Western Music, 1980, p. 8.

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