

Was Plato right after all? Towards a Re-evaluation of Popular Music¹

Klaus Miehling, Freiburg i.Br.

The insight that music can have negative effects is found everywhere in music history - commencing with those passages from the „Politeia”, where Plato attributes a disordering and ef-feminating effect to certain modes and rhythms.² Medieval critics like Guilielmus Peraldus (about 1240), on the other hand, focused mainly on blasphemous contents and the sexually arousing affects of minstrels’ music.³ Sebastian Virdung criticised in 1511 the effects of the drums („baucken”), presumably as pars pro toto for all percussion instruments, that held people back from praying and studying.⁴ Jean Palairet opined in the 18th century that merry („lustige”) music and theatre dances rob the soul of its strength in withstanding temptations.⁵

Modern musicology commonly regards this criticism as a sociological phenomenon that tells us less about the music than about its critics. While the danger of violence in television and video games is continually discussed, the possible existence of dangerous music plays hardly any role in public discourse. Science, too, shies away from this question: Sabine Trepte examined 650 papers published between 1990 and 1999 on the media and stated that, among the treated media types, music appears with 2.2 % far back in eighth place.⁶ The medium to which we expose ourselves the most is among the least investigated in media psychology!

The Origins of Modern Popular Music

While Plato’s criticism of certain modes and rhythms is difficult to classify, due to our incomplete knowledge of ancient Greek musical practice, medieval and modern critics usually refer to music that can be labelled as popular: music of the minstrels, music played in inns or at rural festivities.

In the 19th century, there rose up a new kind of popular music in the USA with the then underprivileged black population, nurtured from two sources: the African tradition, and Haitian voodoo. Gerhart Harrer remarks concerning the first:

„[...] die Gesänge der Naturvölker [...] sind endlos, und der faktische Schluß eines solchen Liedes besteht meist in einem lauten Geschrei, unter dem alles Volk auseinanderstiebt, um den Folgen der durch den Gesang angestauten Gewalt, die zu explodieren scheint, im letzten Augenblick zu entrinnen.”⁷

This pent up violence perhaps could be held under control in the African tribal society; but with the transplantation such an aggressive music to another culture brought with it fateful consequences. But the violent potential in the second root of black American music, the voodoo cult, was not a lesser one. The voodoo religion is mainly known because of its magical practices intended to harm other people - which also provides a connection to modern Satanism and the

¹ Orig. in German: „Hatte Platon doch recht? Zu einer Neubewertung der populären Musik.” I am indebted to Bill Buchanan for the correction of my translation.

² Platon, *Der Staat*, Trans. by Rüdiger Rufener, ²Zürich a. München, 1973, pp. 146, 178-83 a. 216f.

³ Jungmann, Irmgard, *Tanz, Tod und Teufel. Tanzkultur in der gesellschaftlichen Auseinandersetzung des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts* = Musiksoziologie 11, Kassel etc., 2002, pp. 127ff.

⁴ Virdung, Sebastian, *Musica getuscht*, s.l. s.d. (Basel 1511). Repr. Kassel, 1970, ²1983 (not paginated).

⁵ Palairet, Jean, *Kurze Abhandlung über die Künste und Wissenschaften, übersetzt von Gotl. Lud. Münter*, Braunschweig a. Hildesheim, 1745.

⁶ Trepte, Sabine, „Forschungsstand der Medienpsychologie”, in: *Medienpsychologie* 11/1999/3, pp. 200-18.

⁷ Harrer, Gerhart, „Das ‘Musikerlebnis’ im Griff des naturwissenschaftlichen Experiments”, in: the same (ed.), *Grundlagen der Musiktherapie und Musikpsychologie*, ²Stuttgart, 1982, pp. 3-53. Ibid. p. 13. Translation: „[...] the chants of aboriginal people [...] are endless, and the end of such a song in fact consists mostly of loud shouting, while all people scatter to escape in the last moment the violence that was pent up by the chant and seems to explode.”

musical style of heavy metal. The music of voodoo, writes David Tame, is „die Quintessenz von vertontem Bösen“.⁸

It was from these sources, therefore, the black American tradition and voodoo, that in the late 19th century first the blues, then jazz, originated. In the *New York American* of June 22nd 1922 one could read:

„Nach Darstellung der *Vigilance Association* von Illinois droht Hunderten von jungen amerikanischen Mädchen durch die pathologische, die Nerven irritierende und sexuell erregende music der Jazzorchester der moralische Untergang. Allein in Chicago haben in den vergangenen zwei Jahren die Vertreter der *Association* verfolgt, wie tausend Mädchen der Jazzmusik hörig wurden.“⁹

While here the sexual stimulus is still the focus of the criticism, later on a brutalising and violence-promoting impact was pointed out. An American critic said in 1929:

„Männer und Frauen, die so tanzen, haben auch die Fähigkeit zur Gewalt“.¹⁰

The history of jazz shows that these worries were not unwarranted: this musical style had its origins about 1900 in the bars and brothels of New Orleans. Around 1917 these institutions were closed because of violent incidents and debauchery, and the musicians had to look for their income elsewhere. What was intended to halt the disorders, therefore, became the starting shot for the dispersal of jazz: first to other American cities, and then to the whole world. It was Chicago that at first became the new headquarters of jazz; soon after, this city attained its shady fame as a capital of organised crime. Chicago, so tells us the *Larousse Encyclopedia of Music*, „platzte aus allen Nähten vor zwielfichtigen Kneipen, wo man zu lauter, aggressiver music illegalen Schnaps konsumierte.“¹¹

Criminal Performers

Was it a coincidence that jazz originated in bars and brothels? Was it another coincidence that debaucheries and violent incidents originated from these institutions resounding with jazz music? Was it a third accident that after the arrival of the jazz musicians dispelled from New Orleans, Chicago became a capital of organised crime? If these are not coincidences, then the biographies of quite a few jazz musicians are likely to have their shady sides. And this is indeed the case. 1868 born cornettist Buddy Bolden is considered one of the first jazz musicians; he played in brothels and ended up mentally ill in a psychiatric hospital as a result of alcohol and syphilis.¹² Pianists Jerry Roll Morton¹³ and Hampton Hawes¹⁴ were drug dealers, the first mentioned was also a panderer; saxophone and trombone player Stan Getz¹⁵ and drug-addicted trumpeter Red Rodney¹⁶ were burglars; saxophone player Art Pepper spent almost ten years of his life in prison.¹⁷ Clarinetist Milton Mezzrow again was a drug dealer,¹⁸ the famous Louis Armstrong was convicted on probation for drug possession¹⁹. Consumers of illegal drugs also included Count Basie, Art Blakey, Ray Charles, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Dexter Gordon, Lionel Hampton, Jimmy Heath, Jackie McLean, Thelonious Monk, Gerry Mulligan, Charlie Parker and Sonny Rollins; not to forget singer Billy Holiday

⁸ David Tame, *Die geheime Macht der music. Die Transformation des Selbst und der Gesellschaft durch musikalische Energie*, Zürich, 1991, p. 166. I had no access to the English original; this is the case also for other originally English sources cited in German. I preferred not to translate them back, because this would alter the original text.

⁹ *ibid.*, pp 169f.

¹⁰ Zit. n. Frith, Simon, *Jugendkultur und Rockmusik*, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1981, p. 30. Translation: „Men and women who dance like this, also have the ability to violence.“

¹¹ Tame, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

¹² <http://www.wissenschaft.de>.

¹³ Shapiro, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 96.

¹⁵ Laufenberg, Frank, *Frank Laufenbergs Rock- und Pop-Lexikon*, 2 vol., 4München, 1998, I, p. 599.

¹⁶ Shapiro, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 99, 102 a. 104.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 42 a. 58.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 72f.

who had to make her injections next to her vagina, the rest of her body being covered with needle-wounds. Anita O'Day, a jazz singer as well, named Billy Holiday as her model - just *because of her drug use*.²⁰ Trumpeter Chet Baker was arrested several times for drug delicts and theft and convicted to prison.²¹ Jazz musicians who even died from their drug use were, in chronological order: Bix Beiderbecke, Sonny Berman, Fats Navarro, Wardell Gray, Carl Perkins (not to be confused with the eponymous rock musician), the already mentioned Billie Holiday, Tadd Dameron, Tubby Hayes and Art Pepper. Individual cases? The comparison with the classical music scene is informative: If there were no connection between the type of music and the behaviour of its performers, then similar biographies are expected to be numerous among classical musicians, too. This obviously is not the case.

If jazz stands in such a striking connection with criminality, this is even more true of the more aggressive musical styles of pop and rock. With rock'n'roll, the loudness was increased by using electrically amplified guitars, and the drums became more dominant. Thus the music attained a previously unknown level of aggression:

„Die speziellen Eigenschaften afroamerikanischer music wurden im Rock 'n' Roll überbetont. Da die stimmliche Farbgebung der farbigen Bluessänger kaum naturgetreu nachgeahmt werden konnte, quetschten die weißen Sänger künstlich ihre Stimme und funktionierten somit den Ausdruck der Erregtheit, der im Blues stimmhaft wird, in Aggressivität um. Das charakteristische, schwerpunktlose Metrum der farbigen Bluesspieler wird in einen harten, oft maschinellen beat mit betonter 2. und 4. Zählzeit verwandelt.“²²

As is generally known, popular musicians time and again lose their lives because of their drug abuse. Between 1967 and 2004, with two exceptions, I found for every year one to five deaths because of drugs. Alex Conti from the rock group *Lake* said he knew

„kaum einen Musiker, der keine Erfahrungen mit Drogen hat. Musiker kiffen und sniffen, schlucken und spritzen wie andere Leute Kaffee trinken.“²³

The connection between popular music and drugs goes so far that attempts have been made to assign certain substances to certain musical styles. Harry Shapiro writes:

„Man kann sowohl über Rock 'n' Roll als auch über die Mod- und Garagenbands der Sechziger oder die Punks der Siebziger immer nur im Zusammenhang mit Amphetaminen sprechen. Dasselbe trifft auf den Westküsten-Rock und LSD oder auf Reggae und Marihuana zu. [...] Heroin und Kokain überließ man dem Underground-Jazzler. Diese Drogen tauchten vor allem vehement in der Straßen-Drogenszene schwarzer Ghettogebiete und daher auch in den Leben vieler bekannter schwarzer Musiker, von Frankie Lymon bis Marvin Gaye auf. Diese beiden Rauschgifte, von denen es heißt, daß sie die härtesten des ganzen Drogenspektrums wären, schienen auch für die aufblühende weiße Rock-Elite obligatorisch zu werden, [...] Und dann gibt es natürlich noch Marihuana, die Droge für alle Jahreszeiten. Es war die Hauptstütze der Jazzmusiker und Beatnikkünstler der Fünfziger und verbreitete sich dann durch die gesamte Popmusikszene [...] Seit Bob Marley internationale Berühmtheit erlangt hat, assoziiert man Gras am ehesten mit Reggae.“²⁴

Drug intoxication even gave the name to a rock music style, the so-called psychedelic music of the late 60s. Here the preferred drug was LSD.

A compilation of life data and causes of death of 766 popular musicians resulted in an average life expectancy of only 45.4 years; they died 48 times more often because of illegal drugs and were killed - mostly the result of their criminal activities - 96 times more often than amongst

²⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 129f: „Ich habe sie nicht nur wegen ihres Singens bewundert. Ich bewunderte sie auch wegen ihrer Sucht. [...] sie nahm eine kleine Thunfischdose und schoß 10 Kubik von dem Zeug in ihre Füße. (Später, so habe ich gehört, konnte sie am ganzen Körper keine Vene mehr finden. Also verwendete sie die an den beiden Seiten ihrer Vagina.)“

²¹ www.zigarrenwelt.de.

²² Flender, Reinhard a. Rauhe, Hermann, *Popmusik. Aspekte ihrer Gestalt, Funktionen, Wirkung und Ästhetik*, Darmstadt, 1989, p. 88f. Translation: „The special properties of Afro-American music were overemphasised in rock'n'roll. Since the vocal colouring of the black blues chanters hardly could be imitated naturally, the white singers squeezed artificially their voices and thus converted the expression of excitement that is typical for the blues voice, to aggression. The characteristic meter without emphasis of the black blues musicians is changed in a hard, often mechanical beat with an accented 2nd and 4th time.“

²³ *Stern*, Dec. 23rd, 1980, p. 121, cit. after Bäumer, Ulrich, *Rock. Musikrevolution des 20. Jahrhunderts - eine kritische Analyse*, Bielefeld, 1988, p. 48. Translation: „hardly any musician who had no experiences with drugs. Musicians smoke grass, sniff, swallow and syringe like other people drink coffee.“

²⁴ Shapiro, Harry, *Sky High. Droge und music im 20. Jahrhundert*, St. Andrä-Wördern, 1995, 21998, p. 138f.

the average (German) population.²⁵ Of outstanding frequency as well are suicides and traffic accidents, in which drugs also play a role. Admittedly these statistics, of course, can not encompass all those that still are alive and might possibly reach a higher age. The real data therefore could be less dramatic, but still show beyond doubt a significant deviation from the average. The names and dates of „Toten der letzten Wochen“ (Deaths in recent weeks) in the magazine *musikexpress*, too, confirm the unusual high portion of popular musicians that die young;²⁶ a phenomenon unknown in the current classical musical scenes. A recent examination²⁷ proves that the mortality of North American and European „pop stars“ three to 25 years after they became famous, is more than 1.7 times higher than with the average population in the USA or Great Britain.

To list all the criminal Pop-, Rock-, Rap- and Techno Musicians would exceed available space. A list collected by myself comprises about six hundred names.²⁸ From skipping school and public urination via drug use and dealing up to arson, theft, rape and murder (at least 20 cases besides six attempts and two aidings) - there is hardly any delict not represented here. It would be difficult to find a similar accumulation of delinquency in any other professional group. Bear in mind that these names come from only a fraction of the existing literature about popular music, and, of course, only a few of the criminal acts of musicians find their way into the literature at all.

Criminal Listeners

The criminal behaviour of so many musicians does suggest that popular music exerts a criminalising effect on its listeners, too. In respect of the pervasiveness of this music, this would be a problem of alarming dimensions that is also likely to be expressed in the statistics of delinquency - and this is the case indeed: In the USA the crime rate increased between 1960 and 1970 by 176 percent, and the number of murders and manslaughters increased by 60 percent.²⁹ The number of crimes committed by under 15 year olds increased between 1950 and 1979 by 83 times with less grave crimes, 110 times with felonies.³⁰ So this development took place not only parallel with the take-over of pop and rock music, it also concerned - and this is one more clue - just the target group of this music: children and adolescents.

For Germany we have no data about the quota of children and adolescents among the criminals or suspected criminals before 1984, when pop- and rock music had already been established for a long time. Nevertheless, this quota still increased between 1984 and 1999 by 26 percent. Presumably, however, the development before 1984 was similar to that in the USA. Particularly regarding violent crimes committed by children and adolescents, the increase was very high even after 1984. Since then, the number of adolescents suspected of violent crime has tripled, and the number of children suspected of violent crime has increased by 170 percent. Especially explicit are the data from the newly-formed German states (in ex-East Germany): in 1996 there were in Thuringia three times as many suspected children as in 1991, five times more in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and in Brandenburg, and even seven times more in Saxonia.³¹ With this we have an additional clue: certainly, in the GDR pop- and rock music was tolerated and partly even promoted, but nevertheless its prevalence is not comparable to that which befell the new states after their accession to the FRG: there was hardly any more censorship of violent lyrics, no trade restrictions for the most aggressive western punk, rap and heavy metal, and new

²⁵ Miehling, Klaus, *Gewaltmusik - Musikgewalt. popular music und die Folgen*, Würzburg, 2006, pp. 457ff.

²⁶ For example, out of 14 dead that were named with their age in the issue from January 2007 (p. 10), the half died before the accomplishment of their 41st year.

²⁷ Bellis, Mark A. et al., „Elvis to Eminem: quantifying the price of fame through early mortality of European and North American rock and pop stars“, in: *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 61/2007, pp. 896-901.

²⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 137 - 169.

²⁹ Tilgner, Wolfgang, *Open Air. Monterey, Woodstock, Altamont*, Berlin, 1988, pp. 108.

³⁰ Postman, Neil, *Das Verschwinden der Kindheit*, Frankfurt/M., 1983, p. 13 a. 152.

³¹ cf. Gerster, Petra a. Nürnberger, Christian, *Der Erziehungsnotstand. Wie wir die Zukunft unserer Kinder retten*, Berlin, 2001, p. 102f.

discotheques were established to feed sensation-seeking east German youths with the dubious achievements of western popular music culture.

In addition, the increase of violence among children and adolescents in the 1990's stands in an obvious connection with the invasion of hip-hop culture and its musical representation rap in Germany and Europe. This culture originates in the criminal scene, and many famous rap musicians, whose posters hang as models in the rooms of children and adolescents, are felons. It starts with weapon offences and drug dealing, and continues with rape (Tupac)³², up to such a bestial deed as the cannibalistic murder committed by Big Lurch (Aaron Singleton).³³

The most typical delicts connected with popular music, however, are with performers as well as with listeners, drug offences. Horst Menzel stated in 1969:

„In den letzten Jahren häuften sich Nachrichten über den Rauschgiftkonsum Jugendlicher, wobei sich oft ein Zusammenhang mit dem Erleben von Reizmusik erkennen läßt. Es ist wahrscheinlich, daß auch hier die Lustvermittlung der Selbstvergessenheit die zentrale Erscheinung ist. Würde sie einmal erfahren und erkannt, so wird unter Umständen versucht, sie in immer stärkerem Maße herbeizuführen, bis der Suchende ihre letzte Steigerung im Drogenrausch gefunden zu haben glaubt.“³⁴

A connection between listening to heavy metal and drug use (and thefts and early sexual activities) was already proved by an investigation made between 1985 and 1987 in the USA by Paul King.³⁵ The physician, sociologist and psychologist Felix Tretter estimates the percentage of consumers of illegal drugs at rock concerts between 30 (hard drugs) and 70 (soft drugs).³⁶ A survey effected in 2001 by the TU Berlin concerning 406 visitors of techno events even surpassed this guess:

„Rund 83 Prozent nehmen regelmäßig illegale Drogen. Regelmäßig bedeutet mehrmals im Monat - überwiegend Ecstasy.“³⁷

Popular Music as a immediate Cause of Crime

The connections between popular music and criminality, therefore, can hardly be overseen. But what really proves that this music is not merely a typical kind of expression of criminal characters (reason enough to question critically its position in our society), but that it also is a cause for violence and criminality?

At first there are the regrettable typical riots we see again and again at events with popular music. Rock'n'roll gained significantly in currency in Europe in 1955/56 through a movie that dealt with the revolution of pupils against their teachers, and which ran in Germany under the title „Die Saat der Gewalt“ („The Seed of Violence“).³⁸ In places where it was shown, but at jazz and rock concerts, riots repeatedly broke out.³⁹ The movie „Rock Around the Clock“ with

³² cf. Farin, Klaus, *Jugendkulturen zwischen Kommerz & Politik*, 2 parts (separately paginated) in one vol., Bad Tölz, 1998, I, p. 56.

³³ www.rapz.de.

³⁴ Menzel, Horst, *Jugend und Reizmusik* = Schriftenreihe Musikpädagogik 2, Frankfurt/M., 1969, p. 44. Translation: „In the last years, news about the drug use of adolescents cumulated, when often a connection with the experience of exciting music was manifest. It is probable that here, too, the lustful transmission of self-oblivion is the central phenomenon. If it was once experienced and recognised, one possibly tries to induce it in a stronger and stronger way, until the searcher guesses to have found its ultimate increase in the drug-intoxication.“

³⁵ cit. after Glogauer, Werner, *Kriminalisierung von Kindern und Jugendlichen durch Medien*, Baden-Baden, 1991, p. 48.

³⁶ Tretter, Felix, *Ökologie der Sucht. Das Beziehungsgefüge Mensch - Umwelt - Droge*, Göttingen etc., 1998, p. 281.

³⁷ cit. after www.swr.de. Translation: „About 83 percent take regularly illegal drugs. Regularly means, several times a month - mainly Ecstasy.“ It is remarkable that, this given, those politicians who did and do campaign for the annual „Love Parade“ - in the meantime it moved from Berlin to several cities of the Ruhr area - might be actionable for promotion of hundred thousands of criminal acts, not to mention the acoustical terror against the residents, and the effects for the environment. Franz Münterfering, secretary-general of the SPD, even meant that the Love Parade would contribute vitally to the German image abroad (cf. Gorny, Dieter a. Stark, Jürgen, *popkultur 2002/2003*, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 2002, p. 218).

³⁸ The „musikalische Schwergewicht“ (musical emphasis), though, in this movie lies „auf dem Jazz von Bix Beiderbecke bis Stan Kenton“ (Heidkamp, Konrad, *It's all over now. music einer Generation - 40 Jahre Rock und Jazz*, Berlin, 1999, p. 30).

³⁹ cf. Ohder, Claudius, *Gewalt durch Gruppen Jugendlicher. Eine empirische Untersuchung am Beispiel Berlins* = Verwaltung, Recht und Gesellschaft 1, Berlin, 1992, p. 20.

Bill Haley led at this time in England to slit cinema seats and a blocking of traffic.⁴⁰ The balance of about 140 events with popular music since the 1950s shows 238 dead and about 23.600 (counted) casualties - not including the many cases in which there was a vague reference to „some” or „many” casualties.⁴¹ Likewise, the counted property damages of over 4 mill. DM and over 7 mill. US-\$ represent only a fraction of the real damages.

But also beyond such events there are numerous cases in which popular music is evident as a cause (among others) for criminal acts:

- The mass murderer Charles Manson ascribed his perverse and murderous philosophies to songs by the *Beatles*.⁴²
- A group that committed three assassinations in New York on March 13th 1970 called themselves „Revolutionary Army 9”, after the song „Revolution Number Nine” by the *Beatles*.⁴³
- A 15 year old boy shot his brother in the head and declared that the rock group *Black Sabbath* induced him to do so.⁴⁴
- Adolescents who killed several classmates and their parents and executed devilish rituals with the bodies ascribed their acts to heavy metal music.⁴⁵
- The advocate of a murderer asserted that his client’s favourite band was the rock group *Megadeth*.⁴⁶
- The murderer James Jollimore ascribed his deed to music by Ozzy Osbourne.⁴⁷
- A 14 year old adolescent saw himself forced to a triple murder by the mascot „Eddie” of the rock group *Iron Maiden*.⁴⁸
- An adolescent who believed he would get a share of the presumed power of the rock group *Slayer* in offering a human sacrifice killed his parents.⁴⁹
- An adolescent who was confined to a mental hospital aged 16 years talked about listening to heavy metal and his criminal acts in one breath.⁵⁰
- An 18 year old pupil in a boarding school confessed to have beaten someone up under the influence of punk rock.⁵¹
- A 19 year old used to inject drugs while listening to the record „Heroin” by Lou Reed.⁵²
- Fans of the group *Carcass* exhumed a corpse in a cemetery after listening to the song „Exhumed to Consume”.⁵³
- A rioter said that the insistent drumbeats of a rock group nearby provided him with adrenaline and energy to smote long iron bars with great force and vehemence.⁵⁴

⁴⁰ cf. Wicke, Peter, *Rockmusik. Zur Ästhetik und Soziologie eines Massenmediums*, Leipzig, 1987, p. 89.

⁴¹ cf. Miehling, op. cit., pp. 351 - 361.

⁴² Heuermann, Hartmut a. Kuzina, Matthias, *Gefährliche Musen. Medienmacht und Medienmissbrauch*, Stuttgart a. Weimar, 1995, pp. 230ff.

⁴³ Tilgner, op. cit., p. 229.

⁴⁴ Larson, Bob a. Steigmann, Jsolde: *Geht unsere Jugend zum Teufel?* Neuhausen-Stuttgart, 1990, p. 59, with reference to *The Toledo Blade*, Feb. 20th 1986.

⁴⁵ Heuermann/Kuzina, op. cit., pp. 56f.

⁴⁶ Wehrli, Reto, *Verteufelter Heavy Metal. Forderungen nach Musikzensur zwischen christlichem Fundamentalismus und staatlichem Jugendschutz*, Münster/Wf., 2001, p. 80.

⁴⁷ Peters, Dan a. Peters, Steve a. Merrill, Cher, *Manipulation im Rückwärtsgang. Was ist 'backward masking'?*, Asslar, 1988, pp. 72f mit Bezug auf „Rock Sparks Stabbing”, *Canadian Press Association*: Halifax, Kanada, 26. 9. 1984.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 99, with reference to *Toronto Sun*, Nov. 1st 1985.

⁴⁹ Heuermann/Kuzina, op. cit., p. 55, with reference to *Arkansas Democrat*, May 30th 1987, p. 1.

⁵⁰ Glogauer, 1991, op. cit., p. 48.

⁵¹ Luger, Kurt, „Die Macht der Gewohnheit. Wie Jugendliche mit dem Fernsehen umgehen”, in: Baacke, Dieter. a. Kübler, Hans-Dieter (Hgg.), *Qualitative Medienforschung. Konzepte und Erprobungen*, Tübingen, 1989 = Medien in Forschung + Unterricht A/29, pp. 223-51. *Ibid.* p. 244.

⁵² Bäumer op. cit., p. 55, with reference to *Stern*, Dec. 23rd 1980, p. 124.

⁵³ Glogauer, Werner, *Die neuen Medien verändern die Kindheit*, Weinheim, 1993, p. 35, with reference to *Bonus* 36/1991, p. 144.

⁵⁴ Vaughan, Denis, *Schlag auf Schlag. Die Sucht nach dem harten Rhythmus oder Rock-Musik und Spiritualität*, Hamburg, 1992, p. 80.

- Faust (Bård Eithun), the drummer of *Emperor*, killed a homosexual man at Lillehammer on August 21st 1992. He said later that he listened to *Hellhammer* before the act, which „might have influenced and facilitated it a little”.⁵⁵
- In January 1993 two 15 year old boys from Vernon (New Jersey) cruelly „sacrificed” a bitch belonging to neighbours. They had just been listening to music by the group *Deicide*.⁵⁶
- 17 year old Sebastian Schauseil, being asked about external influences that might have driven him, together with to others, to murder 15 year old Sandro Beyer in 1993, named heavy metal. He and one of the two accomplices played in the rock group *Absurd*. Threatening letters intended to influence witnesses during the trial consisted of rock lyrics.⁵⁷
- Two 15 year old girls burned the church of Salabacke (Sweden) to the ground on July 3rd 1993 as a „salute to Varg Vikernes”, the murderer and rock musician known as Count Grishnack. One of them, Alexandra Jansson, had to stand trial again in 1996 because of desecration of graves, dead threats and violence against public employees.⁵⁸
- On April 10th 1994, four adolescents raided a general store in Eugene (Oregon); one killed an employee with a metal bar and injured another. One of the delinquents said the act was carried out in the spirit of Glen Benton (*Deicide*) and Chris Barnes (*Cannibal Corpse*), and had been induced through previously listening to *Deicide* songs.⁵⁹
- In spring 1996, a group of adolescent *Slayer* fans killed another adolescent in Arroyo Grande (Cal.) whom they wanted to sacrifice to the devil.⁶⁰
- Right-wing extremists stimulated themselves with music of the rock group *Landser* before committing physical injuries and homicides.⁶¹
- In the USA two policemen lost their eyesight after being shot in the face with a „twelve gauge” gun, as described in Ice-T’s „Cop Killer”.⁶²
- In 2005 in Switzerland a gang rape and instigation of minors to prostitution was inspired by the music of the German Rapper Bushido.⁶³

How Popular Music affects people

The negative influence of popular music on thinking, feeling and acting of its listeners can also be documented on the basis of their own statements. For example, a member of the audience at a *Sex Pistols* concert tells us of „eine seltsame Böswilligkeit, einen Wunsch, Menschen zu Boden zu schlagen; meine Augen wanderten nach unten, wo ich kleine Kinder sah [...], und ich stellte mir vor, sie zusammenzuschlagen.”⁶⁴ A rocker named Fred said: „Wenn ich ‘ne starke Platte hör, ach Scheiße, dann packt mich echt die Wut, das bringt mich einfach in Rage, ganz einfach so, und ich muß um mich hauen. Bei all den scharfen schnellen Sachen is das so. Ich muß wo drantreten oder sonstwas, ich kann einfach nich anders. Kennste das, wenn du tanzt und die Platte macht dich so geladen, und du hast das verdammte Gefühl, daß de am liebsten allem und jedem da eine reindonnern könntest?”⁶⁵ Kurt Luger quotes a boarding school pupil who

⁵⁵ Moynihan, Michael a. Söderlind, Didrik, *Lords of Chaos. The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Venice, 1998, p. 110f.

⁵⁶ Wehrli, op. cit., p. 108.

⁵⁷ Billerbeck, Liane von a. Nordhausen, Frank, *Satanskinder. Der Mordfall Sandro B.*, Berlin, 1994, p. 233.

⁵⁸ Wehrli, op. cit., p. 330.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p. 108.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 101.

⁶¹ *Badische Zeitung*, July 29th, 2003.

⁶² Cornyn, Stan a. Scanlon, Paul, *Explosiv! Helden, Hits & Hypes. Die abenteuerliche Geschichte der Warner Music Group*, Höfen, 2003, p. 404.

⁶³ *magazine.web.de*, March 26th 2008.

⁶⁴ Büttner, Jean-Martin, *Sänger, Songs und triebhafte Rede: Rock als Erzählweise*, Diss. Zürich, 1995, Basel a. Frankfurt/M., 1997, p. 393. Translation: „a strange malevolence, a desire to knock people flat; my eyes wandered downwards where I saw little children [...], and I imagined to beat them up.”

⁶⁵ Farin, Klaus, *generation-kick.de. Jugendsubkulturen heute*, München, 2001, p. 70. Translation: „When I listen to a strong record, o shit, then I get really angry, it just incenses me, just as it is, and I have to sock around. With all the keen stuff it is like that. I have to kick against something or so, I’m just forced to do it. Do you know that, when you dance and the record makes you so pent up, and you have the damned feeling that you’d like best to hit everything and everyone?”

got „irr aggressiv“ („crazily aggressive“) from punk rock: „I werd dann ziemlich brutal und da hab i dann amol an im Zimmer zsmmgschlag.“⁶⁶ Gudrun Henneberg reports an experiment in which rock music was played in the background during group work in a music lesson: „Die Schüler reagierten wie Versuchstiere oder wie das Publikum bei einer Veranstaltung der Rolling Stones, steigerten mit wachsender Lautstärke den Grad körperlicher Mitbewegungen und seelischer Reaktionen von ausgelassener Freude bis zu aggressivem Sich-gehen-Lassen.“⁶⁷ Klaus Farin writes: „Und so headbante ich mir, während ich synchron zu den Langhaarigen auf der Bühne meine Air guitar quälte, die letzten Reste bravbürgerlicher Sehnsüchte aus dem Schädel. Musik & Rebellion waren eine Einheit geworden, eine extrem sinnlich erlebbare, lautstarke Symbiose eingegangen.“⁶⁸ The former VIVA-presenter and actress Jessica Schwarz relates: „[...] während des Drehs haben wir viel 80er-Krachmusik gehört, bei der man richtig Lust bekam, was kaputtzumachen.“⁶⁹

The long-term effects of consuming popular music become clear in the statement of a rock music listener, who observed „wie mein Leben von der Musik, die ich hörte, beeinflußt wurde. [...] Ich begann zu bemerken, daß ich tolerantere Einstellungen zu Sex und Drogen bekam. Meine Musik verübte an mir nach und nach eine Gehirnwäsche [...]“⁷⁰ Robin Denselow recounts:

„One girl said that rock music had led her to be promiscuous, and a young man assured me that his downfall began when he started listening to Barry Manilow records, at the age of twelve. This led, inevitably, to rougher music, drugs, alcohol and violence.“⁷¹

Scientific Results

The experiments by Dorothy Retallack, documented in her book *The Sound of Music and Plants*⁷² of 1973, have already shown that rock music in particular may have a harmful effect on life processes with experiments that, among other things, show a deadly effect of rock music on plants: these have, to my knowledge, never been falsified but, on the contrary, confirmed.⁷³ The harmfulness of this music, therefore, seems not to be restricted to the human psyche - it interferes immediately in life-relevant processes. In fact, Earl W. Flosdorf and Leslie A. Chambers could prove in a series of tests that „shrill sounds“ lead to an agglutination of proteins.⁷⁴ Under laboratory conditions, music also can change the chemical structure and stiffness of crystals.⁷⁵ The commonly known effects, however, are found on a psychological level, and this is valid even for animals. Heiner Gembris says that music may influence the social behaviour of mice:

„Klassische Musik übte im Vergleich zu vier anderen Musikarten (Country, Jazz/Blues, Easy Listening, Rock'n'Roll) den größten Einfluß aus, indem die Mäuse z.B. mehr soziale Verhaltensweisen zeigten und eine gesteigerte sexuelle Aktivität an den Tag legten.“⁷⁶

⁶⁶ Luger, Kurt: Die Macht der Gewohnheit. Wie Jugendliche mit dem Fernsehen umgehen; in → Baacke/Kübler 1989, pp. 223-51, *ibid.* p. 244. Translation (Bavarian dialect): „Then I become quite brutal, and once I knocked someone down in the room.“

⁶⁷ Henneberg, Gudrun, „Popmusik und Schule“, in: *Musik & Bildung*, 1974/6, pp. 618-23, *ibid.* p. 612. Translation: „The pupils reacted like laboratory animals, or like the audience at a event with the *Rolling Stones*; they increased the grade of physical movements and psychical reactions with the loudness of the music, from boisterous joy to aggressive letting-themselves-go.“

⁶⁸ 1998, *op. cit.*, II, p. 9. Translation: „And so, while torturing my air guitar synchronously with the long-haired ones on the stage, I headbanged the last remains of good bourgeois desires out of my brain. Music & rebellion had become an unity, entered into an extreme sensual experiencing, loud symbiotic relationship.“

⁶⁹ *TV Today* 2003/14, p. 184. Translation: „[...] during the shooting [of a movie] we listened a lot to noisy music from the 80's which gave a good mind to destroy something.“

⁷⁰ Larson, Bob, *Larson's Book of Rock*, Wheaton/Ill. 21988, p. 105.

⁷¹ Denselow, Robin, *When the music's Over. The Story of Political Pop*, London a. Boston, 1989, p. 264.

⁷² The book for me was not available, but the experiments are mentioned repeatedly in literature. The most detailed description I found with Robertson, Don: *About Positive Music*, s.d., www.dovesong.com, together with a description of an experiment he undertook himself.

⁷³ cf. Robertson, Don, *About Positive Music*, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁴ Watkins, Terry: *Is Music Neutral?*, s.d., www.av1611.org.

⁷⁵ cf. Tame, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

⁷⁶ Gembris, Heiner, „Wirkungen von Musik - Musikpsychologische Forschungsergebnisse“, in: Hofmann, Gabriele a. Trübsbach, Claudia (ed.), *Mensch & Musik. Diskussionsbeiträge im Schnittpunkt von Musik, Medizin, Physiologie und Psychologie* = Forum Musikpädagogik 51, Augsburg, 2002, pp. 9-27. *Ibid.* p. 24. Translation: „Classical music exerted the greatest influence, compared to four other musical styles (country, jazz/blues, easy listening, rock'n'roll), the mice e.g. showing more social be-

And humans? The effects of acoustic violence are less well researched than those of visual violence - therefore first a few words about this.

That visual violence in media promotes violence has been proved repeatedly in our day. According to information of the British *National Viewers' and Listeners' Association*, there existed already in the 1980's „nicht weniger als *sechshundert* Untersuchungen, die den Zusammenhang zwischen Gewalt im Fernsehen und im Alltag bewiesen haben.“⁷⁷ Moreover, so-called killing sprees can „als Folge der Überflutung mit Gewaltszenen auf die Hirnfunktion aufgefasst werden“ („be interpreted as a result of the flooding of the brain functions with violent scenes“), say Max Hermanutz and Joachim Kersten, who teach at the Fachhochschule Villingen-Schwenningen; and they add:

„Aus der Sicht der Hirnforschung gibt es an solchen Einflussfaktoren keinen Zweifel, obwohl derartige Medienwirkungen auf das Verhalten von Individuen in der Fachdebatte ansonsten immer noch sehr kontrovers diskutiert werden.“⁷⁸

What *part* media violence really plays in the violence in our society, however, is hard to measure. Yet psychiatrist and behaviourist Brandon Centerwall attempted this with reference to the USA, and came

„zu wahrlich alarmierenden Zahlen: 22 bis 34 % junger, männlicher Schwerkrimineller haben nach eigenen Angaben verbrecherische Handlungen aus Fernsehfilmen bewußt imitiert und damit ihr Ziel auch meist erreicht. Centerwall kam in seiner epidemiologischen Studie zu dem Fazit, daß die Einführung des Fernsehens bei den weißen Untersuchungspopulationen in den USA, in Kanada und Südafrika langfristig zu einer Verdoppelung der Mordrate geführt hat, wörtlich: 'daß es - wäre die Fernsehtechnik nie erfunden worden - heute jährlich in den USA 10.000 Morde, 70.000 Vergewaltigungen und 700.000 Körperverletzungen weniger gäbe.' Auch Fälle von Kindesmißbrauch hätten sich durch den verderblichen Einfluß des Fernsehens verdoppelt.“⁷⁹

It is to be noted that the mentioned 22 to 34 percent of felons *themselves* pointed to the imitation of television violence! With how many of the other 66 to 78 percent may television- or just musical violence have its share as well, but the criminals kept it secret or just were not conscious of it? In a recent study with pupils of the classes 5 to 10 of a Hauptschule (basic technical school), Werner H. Hopf detected that the consumption of violent media (though he, too, did not include acoustical media violence) had an impact on aggressive behaviour, and even more than every other examined variable (e.g. parental violence or values): „26 % der Varianz der Gesamt-Gewalttätigkeit in der Problemgruppe“ („26 percent of the variance of the total violence in the problem group“) could be traced back to it.⁸⁰

It is highly probable that the consequences of acoustic violence do not differ much from those of visual violence. The greater circulation of popular music - why not name it „violent music“? - compared to violent movies implies even a greater, maybe much greater influence.

Cyril Scott ascribed whole social systems of the past to the then dominating music.⁸¹ If that may seem exaggerated, nowadays music is available all day thanks to radio and discs, and most people listen to music for several hours a day, consciously or unconsciously (as is generally known,

haviour and increased sexual activity.”

⁷⁷ Tame, op. cit., p. 129. About concrete examples cf. Heuermann/Kuzina, op. cit., pp. 149 a. 200.

⁷⁸ Hermanutz, Max a. Kersten, Joachim, „Amoktaten aus kriminalpsychologischer Sicht“, in: Archiv der Jugendkulturen (ed.): *Der Amoklauf von Erfurt*, Berlin, 2003, pp. 93-108. Ibid. p. 102. Translation: „From the view of brain research, there is no doubt about such influencing factors, though medial effects like these otherwise are discussed very controversially in the professional debate.“

⁷⁹ Heuermann/Kuzina, loc. cit., p. 178. Translation: „to really alarming numbers: 22 to 44 percent of young, male felons imitated consciously criminal acts in television movies and mostly succeeded with, as they reported themselves. Centerwall came in his epidemiological study to the result that the rollout of television led in the long term, with the examined white population in the USA, Canada and South Africa, to a doubling of murders, literally: 'that - had television technique never been invented - we had nowadays in the USA every year 10.000 murders, 70.000 rapes and 700.000 physical injuries less.' Cases of abuse of children had doubled also, due to the ruinous influence of television.“

⁸⁰ Hopf, Werner H., „Mediengewalt, Lebenswelt und Persönlichkeit - eine Problemgruppenanalyse bei Jugendlichen“, in: *Zeitschrift für Medienpsychologie* 16/2004/3, pp. 99-115, ibid. p. 111.

⁸¹ Scott, Cyril, *music - ihr geheimer Einfluß durch die Jahrhunderte*, München, 1985 (Transl. of the 5th engl. Ed., 1982).

a big part of television programmes carries it, too). Given this, a far-reaching influence of music on people and thus on the society they form, seems to be a really obvious conclusion. The findings of psychology, sociology and brain research also point more and more in this direction. The following table summarises in which studies connections (~) between musical taste/consumption and personality, character or behaviour, or, conversely, effects of the former on the latter (>) have been found:⁸²

| Study | Source | Results |
|---|---------------|--|
| a) Connections between musical taste/consumption and personality / character / behaviour | | |
| Cattell a. Saunders 1954 | | classical music ~ sentimental, introvert but optimistic personality / popular music, jazz ~ optimistic but nervous personality |
| Fox a. Williams 1974 | | musical taste ~ political orientation |
| King 1985-87 | Glogauer 1991 | heavy metal ~ violence, thefts, adolescent sexual activity |
| Trostle 1986 | | heavy metal ~ occultism |
| DRS 1986 | Dollase | musical taste ~ personality assessment, political orientation |
| Roe 1987 | | classical music ~ good school performance / popular music ~ bad school performance |
| Langenbach 1988/94 | | musical consumption loud and a lot ~ aggressive behaviour |
| Yee/Britton/Thompson 1988 | Hansen 1995 | heavy metal consumption ~ antisocial attitudes, opinions and behaviour |
| Wass/Miller/Stevenson 1989 | Hansen 1995 | heavy metal consumption ~ antisocial attitudes, opinions and behaviour |

⁸² Literature concerning the table: Anderson, Craig A. a. Carnagey, Nicholas L. a. Eubanks, Janie, „Exposure to Violent Media”: The Effects of Songs With Violent Lyrics on Aggressive Thoughts and Feelings, in: *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84/2003/5, pp. 960-71. / Arnett, Jeffrey, „Heavy Metal Music and Reckless Behavior Among Adolescents”, in: *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 20/1991/6, pp. 573-92 / - idem: „Adolescents and Heavy Metal Music. From the Mouths of Metalheads”, in: *Youth & Society* 23/1991/1, pp. 76 -98. / Ballard, Mary E. a. Coates, Steven, „The immediate Effects of homicidal, suicidal and nonviolent Heavy Metal and Rap Songs on the Moods of College Students”, in: *Youth & Society* 27/1995/2, pp. 148-68. / Brown, J.D. et al, „Sexy media matter: exposure to sexual content in music, movies, television, and magazines predicts black and white adolescents’ sexual behavior”, in: *Pediatrics* 117/2006/4, pp. 1018-27 / Cattell, Raymond B. a. Saunders, David R., „Musical Preferences and Personality Diagnosis: I. A Factorization of One Hundred and Twenty Themes”, in: *The Journal of Social Psychology* 39/1954, pp. 3-24. / Döbler, Thomas a. Stark, Birgit a. Schenk, Michael, *Mediale und reale violence. Eine Untersuchung sozialer Netzwerke von Jugendlichen*, München, 1999 / Dollase, Rainer, „Rock gegen Rechts - Rock von rechts. Oder: Wie music eine politische Bedeutung und Funktion erhält oder auch nicht”, in: Frevel, Bernhard (Hg.), *music und Politik. Dimensionen einer undefinierten Beziehung* = ConBrio-Fachbuch 6, Regensburg, 1997, pp. 109-26 / - idem: „Musikpräferenzen und Musikgeschmack Jugendlicher”, in: Baacke, Dieter (ed.): *Handbuch Jugend und music*, Opladen, 1998, pp. 341-68 / Epstein, Jonathon S. a. Pratto, David J. a. Skipper Jr., James K., „Teenagers, Behavioral Problems, and Preferences for Heavy Metal and Rap Music: A Case Study of a Southern Middle School”, in: *Deviant Behavior* 11/1990, pp. 381-94. / Gembris, Heiner, „Musikalische Präferenzen”, in: Oerter, Rolf a. Stoffer, Thomas H. (ed.): *Spezielle Musikpsychologie*, Göttingen etc., 2005 = *Enzyklopädie der Psychologie* D/VII/2 / Glogauer, 1991 op. cit. / Hamer, Mark: Fast music linked to car crashes, www.newsscientist.com, 13. 3. 2002. / Johnson, James D. a. Jackson, Lee Anderson a. Gatto, Leslie, „Violent Attitudes and Deferred Academic Aspirations: Deleterious Effects of Exposure to Rap Music”, in: *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 16/1995, pp. 27-41. / Jost, Ekkehard, „Der Jazz und die Politik. Szenen einer problematischen Beziehung”, in: Rösing, Helmut a. Phleps, Thomas (ed.), *popular music, Politik und mehr ... Ein Forschungsmedley* = Beiträge zur Populärmusikforschung 21/22, Karben, 1998 / Kemp, Anthony: *The Musical Temperament. Psychology & Personality of Musicians*, Oxford, New York a. Tokio, 1996 / - idem: „Persönlichkeit von Musikern”, in: Oerter/Stoffer, 2005 op. cit., pp. 245-77 / Kreuz, Gunter, *Musikalische Vorlieben und Aggressionen bei Kindern*. Zusammenfassung unter musicweb.hmt-hannover.de / Langenbach, Christoph, *Musikverhalten und Wirklichkeit 16- bis 18jähriger Schüler* = Studien zur Musik 7, Frankfurt/M. etc., 1994 / Liska, Allison, *Music preference and its relationship to grade point average & A longitudinal study of students’ attitudes of the war in Iraq and its relationship to grade point average, Follow up report*, www.washburn.edu, Aug. 2004 / Martino, S.: et al., „Exposure to degrading versus nondegrading music lyrics and sexual behavior among youth”, in: *Pediatrics* 118/2006/2, pp. 430-41 / Medeke, André, *Die Welt zertrümmern?! Musikkonsum und aggressives Verhalten*, www.ejh.de, 2001. / Miranda, Dave a. Claes, Michael. „Rap Music Genres and Deviant Behaviors in French-Canadian Adolescents”, in: *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 33/2004/2, pp. 113-22. / Motte-Haber, Helga de la a. Rötter, Günther, *Musikhören beim Autofahren* = Schriften zur Musikpsychologie und Musikästhetik 4, Frankfurt/M. etc., 1990 / Münch, Thomas a. Eibach, Martin, „Musik und Medien”, in: Oerter/Stoffer, 2005 op. cit., pp. 461-523 / North, A.C. a. Hargreaves, D. J., „Problem music and self-harming”, in: *Suicide & life-threatening behavior* 36/2006/5, pp. 582-90 / Peterson, Dena L. a. Pfof, Karen p., „Influence of Rock Videos on Attitudes of violence Against Women”, in: *Psychological Reports* 64/1989, pp. 319-322 / Roe, Keith, „The School and Music in Adolescent Socialization”, in: Lull, James (ed.), *Popular Music and Communication*, Newbury Park/Calif. etc., 1987, pp. 212-230. / St. Lawrence, Janet S. a. Joyner, Doris J., „The Effects of Sexually Violent Rock Music on Males’ Acceptance of violence against Women”, in: *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 15/1991, pp. 49-63. / Vandebosch, Heidi, „Criminal Involvement and Media Use”, in: *Deviant Behavior* 22/2001, pp. 541-70. / Ward, Monique, „Does Television Exposure Affect Emerging Adults’ Attitudes and Assumptions About Sexual Relationships? Correlational and Experimental Confirmation”, in: *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 31/2002/1, pp. 1-15. / Wester, Stephen R. et al., „The influence of sexually violent rap music on attitudes of men with little prior exposure”, in: *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 21/1997/4, pp. 497-508. / Zillman, Dolf et al., „Racial Rap: Does It Further Ethnic Division?”, in: *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 1995/16, pp. 1-25.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Schmücker 1990/93 | Jost | jazz ~ preference of left-oriented parties (which have above-average violent supporters - cf. Schwindt et al., p. 38) |
| Epstein/Pratto/Skipper 1990 | | behaviour problems with 40 % each of rap- and pop-, and with 33 % of heavy metal listeners |
| Arnett 1991 (<i>JYA</i>) | | heavy metal ~ traffic delinquency, promiscuity, drugs (male) / ~ sex without contraception, marihuana, shoplifting, vandalism (female) |
| Bleich et al. 1991 | Ballard/Coates 1995 | rebellion ~ liking of song lyrics |
| Hansen/Hansen 1991 | Kemp 1996, Gembris 2005 | heavy metal ~ low acceptance of cognitive effort, machism, machiavellism, male hypersexuality, drugs, occultism, satanism, antisocial attitudes and behaviour / punk ~ hostility against authorities, possession of firearms, shoplifting, criminality |
| Wass/Miller/Redditt 1991 | Gembris 2005 | 91 % of adolescent criminals were rock fans, 54 % thereof satanists, the most thereof „Schulabbrecher, die auffallend viel Musik hörten“ („broke off school early and listened to conspicuous amounts of rock music“) |
| Stack/Gundlach 1992 | Gembris 2005 | spread of country music ~ suicide rate ⁸³ |
| Martin/Clarke/Pearce 1993 | Gembris 2005 | rock/metal ~ thoughts of suicide, self-harming, depression, delinquency, drugs, family problems |
| Singer/Levine/Jou 1993 | Gembris 2005 | classical music ~ low delinquency |
| Took/Weiss 1994 | Anderson/Carnagey/Eubanks 2003 a. Gembris 2005 | rap / heavy metal ~ below-average academic performance, problematic behaviour in school, drug use, delinquency, sexual activity |
| Dyce/O'Conner 1994 | Kemp 2005 | popular musicians ~ arrogance, neuroticism, extroversion |
| Rawlings et al. 1995 | Kemp 1996 | hard rock ~ psychotizism, extroversion, impulsiveness, audacity / dance music, easy listening and classical music ~ psychotizism / atonal chords ~ psychotizism, neuroticism / dissonant chords ~ psychotizism / consonant chords ~ empathy ~ psychotizism |
| Lester/Whippel 1996 | Gembris 2005 | heavy metal ~ thoughts of suicide |
| Rawlings et al. 1998 | Gembris 2005 | „hard“ music ~ sensation seeking |
| Döbler/Stark/Schenk 1999 | | „at risk youths“ ~ hiphop-culture |
| Gardstrom 1999 | Gembris 2005 | classical music ~ low delinquency |
| Stöver 1999 | Medeke 2001 | aggressive personality ~ aggressive music |
| Gillespie/Myers 2000 | Kemp 2005 | popular musicians ~ neuroticism |
| Kreuz 2001 | | fast pop ~ aggressive behaviour complex music ~ low aggression |
| Vandebosch 2001 | | criminality ~ „hard“ musical styles like heavy metal, punk and hard rock |
| Rubin/West/Mitchell 2001 | Anderson/Carnagey/Eubanks | rap / heavy metal ~ more hostile attitudes |
| Ward 2002 | | consumption of music videos ~ compliance with sexual stereotypes („men are sex driven and cannot be true“, „dating as sport“, „women are sexual objects which value is determined by their appearance“), estimation of the sexual activity of peers as high |
| Roberts/Christenson/Gentile 2003 | Anderson et al. 2003 | consumption of MTV ~ aggressive behaviour; negative correlation with helping behaviour |
| Liska 2004 | | rap ~ bad school performance with male a. female adolescents / hiphop ~ good school performance with female adolescents (the difference between „rap“ and „hiphop“ is not clear) |
| Miranda/Claes 2004 | | American rap ~ violence, gangs, drug use / French rap a. gangsta/hardcore rap ~ violence, theft, gangs, drug use / hiphop/soul ~ gangs, drug use |
| North/Desborough/Skarstein 2005 | | hard rock, rap and punk ~ psychotizism, rebellion, marihuana use, carrying of weapons |
| Rentfrow/Gosling 2006 | | vocal music ~ extroversion, country ~ emotional stability, ⁸⁴ jazz ~ intellectuality |
| North/Hargreaves 2006 | www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/ | hard rock, rap, punk ~ self-harming |
| North 2006 | cache.ibnlive.com | hiphop a. dance music ~ sexual promiscuity, drug use; club music ~ drug use; blues ~ traffic delinquency; musicals ≠ criminality, alcohol, drugs. Fans of adult-pop a. classical music pay bills more in time. |
| b) Effects of musical consumption on feelings, attitudes and deeds of listeners | | |
| Greenson/Williams 1986 | Hansen 1995 | violent music videos > higher acceptance of violence |
| Hansen/Hansen 1988 a. Hansen 1989 | Anderson/Carnagey/Eubanks | adoption of stereotype sexual role behaviour in music videos |
| Peterson/Pfost 1989 | | violent rock music videos > hostile sexual beliefs and negative feelings |
| Motte-Haber/Rötter 1990 | | pop > 1,7 times more traffic accidents |
| Hansen/Hansen 1990 | | rock music videos with antisocial content > greater acceptance of antisocial behaviour |
| St. Lawrence/Joynor 1991 | | heavy metal (also Christian!) > negative attitude against women (male) / „easy listening“ > higher sexual arousal than after heavy metal |
| Waite/Hillbrand/Foster 1992 | Anderson/Carnagey/Eubanks | decrease of aggressive behaviour with patients of a forensic clinical institution after prohibition of MTV |
| Hansen/Krygowski 1994 | Hansen 1995 | sexual music video > sexual interpretation of ambivalent behaviour |
| Ballard/Coates 1995 | | rap leads to more aggression than heavy metal |
| Johnson/Jackson/Gatto 1995 | | violent rap music videos > acceptance of violence for the solution of private problems / non-violent rap music videos > materialistic life attitudes |

⁸³ Maguire/Snipes 1994, however, could not replicate this finding.

⁸⁴ But note the contradiction with STACK/GUNDLACH 1992!

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Johnson et al. 1995 | | non-violent (!) rap music videos > higher acceptance of violence against women (female, not significant with men) |
| Zillmann et al. 1995 | | political rap > more support of an Afro-American liberal politician / less support of a white conservative politician (white persons) ⁸⁵ |
| Wester et al. 1997 | | misogynous rap lyrics > sexual misogynous attitudes (male) |
| Kalof 1999 | Münch/Eibach 2005 | music videos with sexual stereotype images > higher acceptance of those role stereotypes |
| North/Hargreaves/McKendrick 1999 | www.le.ac.uk/psychology/acn5/acn.html | music in a wine store influences the type of bought wine (German music > German wine, French music > French wine) |
| Rustad 1999 | Münch/Eibach 2005 | music video with suicidal content > rise of suicide thoughts |
| Brodsky 2002? | Hamer 2002 | fast music > more than twice as many traffic accidents, more offences against traffic regulations, more risky driving behaviour |
| Anderson/Carnagey/Eubanks 2003 | | aggressive music lyrics > higher aggression |
| North/Shilcock/Hargreaves 2003 | www.le.ac.uk/psychology/acn5/acn.html | Classical music in a restaurant > higher spending per person than with pop or no music |
| Barongan/Hall 2005 | www.eric.ed.gov | misogynous rap > sexual aggressive behaviour (male) |
| Fischer/Greitemeyer 2006 | www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov | misogynous lyrics > more negative rating of women (male) |
| Cobb/Boettcher 2007 | www.blackwell-synergy.com | not-(!)misogynous rap > misogyny |
| Guéguen 2008 | www.wissenschaft.de | louder music in bars > faster alcohol consumption |

These scientific results confirm what we had stated empirically: whoever prefers popular music is mental less motivated or able, is more likely to take drugs and to become a criminal, is more aggressive, more hostile and sexually more active. Adolescents who feel associated with hiphop culture are also more likely to belong to the group of „at risk youths”. After the consumption of music videos, sexual role behaviour shown there is adopted, hostile sexual opinions and negative emotions are aroused, anti-social behaviour and violence are more accepted as solutions for problems. Conversely, the aggressive behaviour of patients on a forensic clinical institution decreased after prohibition of MTV. Finally, it was detected that listening to popular music while driving leads to more traffic offences and accidents.

The criminal Society

The domination of popular music might be in fact the main reason why our society has become thoroughly criminal. The criminal acts registered by the police tripled in Germany between 1955 and 1992 (old states)⁸⁶ actually represent only a small part of actual crime. Surveys show that more than half of the adult population already accepts crimes like insurance fraud, illicit work and tax fraud.⁸⁷ Damages of three-digit billions are to be lamented every year. Even more dramatic is the situation with adolescents: according to surveys, between seven and nine out of ten committed a criminal act in the last twelve months before the poll.⁸⁸

Mark Schneider, therefore, speaks about a „schleichenden Erosion des Rechtsbewusstseins” (“gradual erosion of the sense of justice”):

„Sozial schädigendes Verhalten wird zunehmend von der breiten Masse der Bevölkerung akzeptiert. Aus Umfragen lässt sich ablesen, dass sich der Duldungspegel bei vielen - z.T. kriminellen - Sachverhalten im Laufe des letzten Jahrzehnts [d.h. der 90er Jahre] in Richtung ‘zulässig’ verschoben hat.”⁸⁹

⁸⁵ But not so with Afro-Americans. The authors explain this with the fact that those traceable listen more to rap music and therefore are already so much primed by this music that *ibid.* is with the one-time listening during the experiment no further significant change of their attitudes possible. This explanation, *mutatis mutandis*, may be usually applicable when test persons show no reaction to music consumption during an experiment.

⁸⁶ The number raised from 1,58 millions to 5,21 millions. Since the traffic delicts were taken out of the statistics in 1963, what apparently cancelled the increase of a whole decade, it may in fact be spoken about a triplication.

⁸⁷ cf. *Hörzu* 2004/21, pp. 17ff.

⁸⁸ Brettfeld, Katrin a. Wetzels, Peter, „Jugendliche als Opfer und Täter: Befunde aus kriminologischen Dunkelfeldstudien”, in: Lehmkühl, Ulrike (ed.), *Aggressives Verhalten bei Kindern und Jugendlichen. Ursachen, Prävention, Behandlung*, Göttingen, 2003, pp 79-114. *Ibid.* p. 100. / Schwind, Hans-Dieter, *Kriminologie. Eine praxisorientierte Einführung mit Beispielen = Grundlagen* 28, Heidelberg, 1986, ¹³2003. *Ibid.* p. 67.

⁸⁹ Schneider, Mark, *Vandalismus. Erscheinungsformen, Ursachen und Prävention zerstörerischen Verhaltens sowie Auswirkungen des Vandalismus auf die Entstehung krimineller Milieus*, Diss. Würzburg, 2001, Aachen, 2002, p. 168. Translation: „Socially injuring behaviour is more and more accepted by the crowd. From surveys we can learn that the level of tolerance moved in the direction ‘allowed’ with many - partly criminal - facts during the last decade [i.e. the 1990’s].”

In Germany in the 1960s, in fact parallel to the career of the *Beatles*, a change in values started that seized at first the young generation, that is, the main target group of the popular music industry. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann made it clear that the frequent argumentation that the ancient Greeks also used to lament the state of their youth does not recognise the scale of the change:

„Während sonst die Generationen, jung und alt, zwar nicht im Musik- oder Kleider- oder Möbelgeschmack, aber in den gesellschaftlichen Grundwerten weitgehend übereinstimmen, traten die Auffassungen der jungen und älteren Generation im Zeitraum 1967 bis 1972 weit auseinander. Wo vorher die Ansichten über Erziehungsideale 3 bis 4 Prozent[punkte] auseinandergelegen haben, weiteten sich jetzt die Distanzen auf nicht selten 15 Prozent[punkte]. Auch dies kann man wohl regelhaft als ein revolutionäres Symptom betrachten [...]“⁹⁰

For example, the acceptance of theft at work rose among young men between 1959 and 1971 from 43 percent to 76 percent.⁹¹ Here something happened in peoples' brains, a „brainwashing“. This word also was used by one of the rock music listeners cited above for that what his music did to him. Are those listeners who are negatively influenced by popular music just rare individual cases, or are they perhaps typical examples for what this music causes a million times? Are the plentiful distribution of modern popular music, the change of values and the criminal society only contemporaries by chance, or is it a matter of cause and effect?

Outlook

Studies of popular music take up more and more space in modern musicology. In the sciences it is permissible to consider negative consequences of new techniques and products, too, but the question of the consequences of music is seldom asked, and least of all by musicians and musicologists. It is considered „politically incorrect“ to associate music with morals. But if music influences human psyche - and that is unchallenged -, why, then, should its effects be exclusively positive or at least harmless?

It has become quite clear that popular music, from jazz to rock, does indeed have negative effects: first, there are the conspicuous chronological parallels between the development of popular music on one hand and the change of values and the increase of criminality on the other. That this is no coincidence is shown by the high-grade criminality among popular musicians, the reports of listeners about the influence of the music, the criminal acts that are demonstrably motivated by the consumption of popular music, and the riots associated with concerts. Finally, the results of psychological, sociological and brain-related research show the connections between musical preferences, personality and character as well as the immediate effects of music listening on feeling, thinking and acting. What we still lack are long-term studies that prove undoubtedly a permanent change of personality and character through consumption of popular music. But even now all circumstantial evidence indicates that popular music may cause such a permanent change of personality and character. Brain researcher Eckart Altenmüller gets to the heart of it: „Musik [ist] der stärkste Reiz für neuronale Umstrukturierung, den wir kennen.“⁹² That means: *Music changes people*.

Scholarship is called on to investigate further the effects of different musical styles and the connections between musical preferences, personality and character. With tomography, for example, the activity patterns of the brain while listening to music could be made visible and compared with the patterns that emerge with certain acts and emotions. This is important not only to prove objectively the aggression-enhancing effect of certain music; it could also objectively visualise the emotions of those who suffer from the more and more rampant forced

⁹⁰ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth, *Werden wir alle Proletarier?: Wertewandel in unserer Gesellschaft*, Zürich, 1978, p. 12. Translation: While otherwise the generations, young and old, conformed in the basic social values, albeit not in musical, dressing or furniture taste, the opinions of the younger and the elder generation disintegrated widely in the period from 1967 to 1972. Wherever before the meanings about education ideals differed from about 3 to 4 percent, now the distances widened frequently up to 15 percent. This, too, can regularly be considered as a symptom of revolution.”

⁹¹ dies., „Die stille Revolution. Wandlungen im Bewußtsein der deutschen Bevölkerung“, in: dies. (ed.): *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie VII, 1976 - 1977*, Wien etc., 1977, p. VII - XXXIX. Dort p. XIII.

⁹² *GEO* 2003/11, p. 68. Translation: „Music [is] the strongest stimulus for neural restructuring we know.“

distribution of aggressive music - be it in the supermarket, in the restaurant, by reckless neighbours or at open air events. (Though the reactions under experimental conditions might deviate from those in everyday life.) It would also be of interest to examine the influences of different musical styles on dopamine production. The willingness to take high risks seems to be connected with a high dopamine level in the brain,⁹³ and contributes to turning an already existing criminal energy into deeds.

But yet the findings of research so far, as well as the empirical facts, should be enough to cause us to think over the nature of our musical environment. This may still seem utopian at the moment; but one should consider, for example, what has happened with tobacco consumption during recent decades. Sanctions employed here would be applicable *mutatis mutandis* also with respect to popular music: information campaigns, warnings, advertising restrictions, a tax on records and concert tickets, legal protection for children and young persons. Additionally, we will have to ask the question whether our pluralistic society has to tolerate a music that causes, directly or indirectly, hundred thousands of criminal acts every year, or whether the damage caused is reason enough to consider seriously a prohibition of music of this kind. By no means, however, we should continue to deny the view that any approbation or even support of popular music contributes to the moral break-up of our society.

⁹³ cf. Strauch, Barbara, *Warum sie so seltsam sind. Gehirnentwicklung bei Teenagern*, Berlin, 2003, p. 152.