

## **The Emotional Use of Popular Music by Adolescents**

**By Alan Wells and Ernest A. Hakanen**

This study follows up on some recent calls for study of music as a mass medium. An intensive study of high school teenagers finds that music serves as a powerful communication medium, speaking directly to emotions. Here, both men and women most often associated these emotions with music: excitement, happiness and love. Women were somewhat more likely to associate emotions with music and to use music for "mood management." Social class, race and ethnicity generally did not discriminate among emotions felt by men and women. Cluster analysis allowed these youths to be sorted into different types of listeners: "mainstreamers" "heavy rockers," "indifferents" and "music lovers."

► Popular music holds a central position in contemporary mass media. It is the main content of radio, and music videos have made it a growing component of television viewing. Music also appears to be an increasingly important part of feature film production. With records, tapes and compact discs, along with live concerts and performances, popular music is a ubiquitous medium in its own right.

However, serious study of popular music is relatively new to mass media research. During the 1980s some book length treatments emerged<sup>1</sup> and scholarly journal articles have added to existing knowledge. The frequency of programmatic statements in the literature, however, indicates the still emergent status of popular music research. Lewis<sup>2</sup> noted the dearth of "uses and gratifications" studies and Curtis<sup>3</sup> claims that technology and the audience are the least studied aspects of popular music. Chaffe<sup>4</sup> has summarized existing research in his appeal to legitimize music study. More recently, Denski<sup>5</sup> has set out a comprehensive program for music research.

This study attempts to fill some existing gaps in the knowledge about consumption and uses of popular music by adolescents. The research is in what Denski calls the "micro levels of analysis": we investigate the uses and experience of music and their relationship to age, social class, gender, academic success and race. We then focus on the emotional and mood management<sup>6</sup> uses of music.

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### Review of Literature

In a study using electronic pagers by Larson and Kubey,<sup>7</sup> respondents reported that they were listening intently to music for 1.4% of the total self-report time. However as a reported secondary media activity, music was reported 6.4% of the time. This suggests that music is more frequently used as background.<sup>8</sup> When listening to music, adolescents reported greater emotional involvement, higher motivation, greater excitement and more openness than for other media.<sup>9</sup> The study concluded that the adolescents demonstrated that music is much more successful in engaging youth than television. The authors explain why such findings are important: it speaks to adolescent concerns, from heterosexual relationships to autonomy and individualization. Rock in particular may be embraced by the young, because its very sounds and words mirror the intensity and turbulence of adolescent experience. The music reflects the extreme emotional experiences adolescents encounter from moment to moment as part of their daily realities. Thus it is no wonder that this medium has much power to engage the young.<sup>10</sup>

Christianson and Lindlof<sup>11</sup> have summarized what is known from the scarce studies of the effects of music on children. It may "...have a significant emotional and effective impact...there is evidence that two of the prime determinants of children's musical preferences are the mood and sentiment of the music...Most rock music is by its very nature an excitatory stimulus and can arouse the listener.<sup>12</sup> The same effect can be expected in young adults.

Gantz et. al<sup>13</sup> studied the gratification of popular music claimed by a sample of secondary and college students. The listeners were found to use music primarily to relieve boredom, ease tensions, manipulate their moods and fight loneliness. Music preference or use was not examined by the researchers.

Rosenbaum and Prinsky<sup>14</sup> asked a junior and senior high school sample to choose their three favorite songs and select one of seven reasons for liking them. In order of preference, the reasons the songs were chosen were: "It helps me to relax and stop thinking about things" (30%

1. Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Pantheon, 1981) and James Lull, ed., *Popular Music and Communication*, (Sage: Beverly Hills, 1987).

2. G.H. Lewis, "The Meaning's in the Music and the Music's in Me: Popular Music as Symbolic Communication," *Theory, Culture and Society*, 1(3), (1983), pp 133-141; "Towards a Uses and Gratifications Approach: An Examination of Commitment and Involvement in Popular Music," *Popular Music and Society*, 8(1), (1981), pp. 10-18.

3. J. Curtis, *Rock Eras: Interpretation of Music and Society, 1954-1984* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green University Press, 1987).

4. Steven Chaffee, "Popular Music and Communication Research: An Editorial Epilogue," *Communication Research* 12:413-424 (1985).

5. Denski, "One Step Up and Two Steps Back: A Heuristic Model for Popular Music and Communication Research," *Popular Music and Society*, 13(1), pp. 9-21, (1989).

6. Zillman, "Mood Management: Using Entertainment to Full Advantage," In L. Donohew, H. Sypher and T. Higgins, (Eds.) *Communication, Social Cognition and Affect*, (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1988); and D. Zillman, "Mood Management Through Communication Choices," *American Behavioral Scientist*, (31), pp. 327-340.

7. Richard Larson and Robert Kubey, "Television and Music: Contrasting Media in Adolescent Life," *Youth and Society*, pp. 13-33, (Spring, 1983).

8. *Ibid* p. 19.

9. *Ibid* p. 25.

10. *Ibid* p. 26.

11. P.G. Christianson and T. R. Lindlof, "The Role of the Audio Media in the Lives of Children," *Popular Music and Society*, 9(3) (1983) pp. 25-40

12. *Ibid* p. 36.

13. Walter Gantz, H.M. Gartenburg, M.L. Pearson, L. Martin, S.O. Schiller. "Gratifications and Expectations Associated with Pop Music Among Adolescents," *Popular Music and Society*, 6:81-89, (1978).

14. J. Rosenbaum and L. Prinsky, "Sex, Violence and Rock 'n' Roll: Youth's Perceptions of Popular Music," *Popular Music and Society*, 11(2), pp. 78-91, (1978).

male, 34% female); "Helps get me in the right mood" (25% male, 29% female), "It's good to dance to" (16% male, 35% female), "Words express how I feel" (17% male, 24% female), "It creates a good atmosphere when I'm with others" (16% male, 13% female); "It helps pass the time" (13% male, 10%, female); and "I want to listen to the words" (11% male, 7% female).<sup>15</sup> Dance or emotional impact are highly represented. Except for dance, differences between the genders were small.

Melton and Galician<sup>16</sup> consciously employed a uses and gratifications model. They found that "Respondents felt that both radio and music videos provided need satisfaction in passing time, relieving tension, relaxation, mood shifting, and forgetting about problems."<sup>17</sup> Gender was dropped in their regression analysis of popular music consumption: it may have less significance in music use than would be expected from gender role hypotheses. Hochschild<sup>18</sup> analyzed some of the complexities of a single emotion, love, and the differing ways that males and females deal with it. To have their full impact, an audience would have to perform three social acts to absorb them: the music would have to be attended to, codified and managed. The artist, too, presumably must construct the emotion in the same way to be convincing. Hochschild<sup>19</sup> has also persuasively argued that the genders manage their emotions in different ways. One can therefore hypothesize gender differences in the emotional use of music.

Love, in its many varieties, is widely acknowledged to be the most common component of western popular music. Denisoff and Bridges<sup>20</sup> have cited the numerous studies on the love component of American popular music and the differing uses of music by males and females. Similarly, Frith<sup>21</sup> discusses at length the meaning of pop music to British teens. He describes the features of female youth culture<sup>22</sup> that produces the "dream lover" phenomenon while males gravitate to "macho" music. While he notes that rock has been a force in liberating sexuality,<sup>23</sup> there is neither sexual equality among performing artists nor a unisex homogenization of musical tastes. Of course, the expression of a range of emotions in popular music is complex. The music itself may imply emotions, and the artist's interpretations of lyrics can convey other than their surface meaning. The analysis herein suspends such considerations and deals only with the emotional content of music as perceived by the listener.

Using a list of emotions from the Dictionary of Emotional Meaning,<sup>24</sup> Wells<sup>25</sup> asked college students to identify the emotions that they most associated with their favorite songs. He found that "Contrary to the pernicious 'nonemotional' stereotype of males, they do in fact exhibit strong emotional use of music. Overall, there is a striking congruence

15. *Ibid.* p. 26

16. G. W. Melton and M. Galician, "A Sociological Approach to the Pop Music Phenomenon: Radio and Music Video Utilization for Expectation, Motivation, and Satisfaction," *Popular Music and Society*, 11(3), (1987) pp. 35-36

17. *Ibid.* p. 41.

18. Arlie R. Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1983)

19. *Ibid.*

20. Serge R. Denisoff and J. Bridges, "Popular Music: Who are the Recording Artists?" *Journal of Communication* 32: 132-142, (Winter 1982).

21. Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock 'n Roll*, (New York: Pantheon, 1981)

22. *Ibid.* pp. 225-234

23. *Ibid.* pp. 235-248

24. J. R. Davitz, *The Language of Emotion*, (New York: Academic Press, 1969) p. 11.

25. Alan Wells, "Gender, Emotions and Popular Music." Unpublished paper presented at the Midwest Sociological Society annual meeting. St. Louis (1985).

of the frequency of male and female selections of emotions." Gender differences did not appear to be great. Women chose songs that express hope, happiness, passion and grief slightly more than men. Men were more likely to choose excitement, delight, anger and hate. While popular music exposes the listener to a broad range of emotional feelings, the most frequently chosen were happiness, excitement, love, hope, confidence, delight and passion.<sup>26</sup>

Many studies attest to the intense effects of music. In Wells<sup>27</sup> study most respondents expressed an emotional, personal impact that is probably far more important to them than, for example, watching a television soap opera or reading a textbook. Both males and females commonly associated songs with current or past loves. Songs can also evoke other memories, sometimes sentimental or tragic ones. Music seems to be a major link of biography and nostalgia.

Wells<sup>28</sup> examined mood management and music. He found a high percentage of both males and females claim to use music to change a mood. The most common for both genders was combating depression or being upset. Music, they claimed, could lift their spirits. Others claimed that music was used to calm them down or to relax. Few respondents claimed both uses of music.

All of the studies cited imply some link between music use and emotional management. Mood management theory<sup>29</sup> eloquently addresses the psychological choices of music for the regulation and management of emotional states. Zillman expands on dissonance theory and its selective exposure theory<sup>30</sup> as his theory "deals with all conceivable moods rather than with a single, specific affective state, such as dissonance."<sup>31</sup> He<sup>32</sup> explains:

The theory is based on the hedonistic premise that (a) individuals strive to rid themselves of bad moods or, at least, seek to diminish the intensity of such moods, and (2) individuals strive to perpetuate good moods and seek to maintain the - intensity of these moods.

The theory then posits that, to the extent possible, individuals arrange internal and external stimulus conditions so as to minimize bad moods and maximize good moods.

The research herein examines mood management as respondents are asked to identify moods that they associate with their favorite music and the how they use music to enhance particular moods. "Mood management theory does not stipulate that individuals need be cognizant of the reasons for their choices. Recognition of the causal circumstances is not ruled out, however."<sup>33</sup>

## Method

A questionnaire was administered to respondents from all of the sec-

26. *Ibid* p.8

27. Alan Wells, "Popular Music and Emotions: Emotional Uses and Management. *Journal of Popular Culture*, forthcoming (1988).

28. *Ibid*

29. D. Zillman, "Mood Management: Using Entertainment to Full Advantage," In Donohew, H. Sypher and T. Higgins, (Eds.) *Communication, Social Cognition And Affect*, (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1988 D. Zillman, "Mood Management Through Communication Choices," *American Behavior Scientist*, (31). pp. 327-340.

30. Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1957).

31. D. Zillman, "Mood Management Through Communication Choices," *American Behavior Scientist*, (31). p. 328.

32. *Ibid*.

33. *Op cit*. p. 329

tions of English education (every student must take English) at a Northeastern small city high school.<sup>34</sup> In addition to demographic information, respondents were asked to rate each of the following emotions on a progressive scale (0 through 9) as to how they felt when they listen to their favorite type of music: Love, Hope, Fear, Pride, Grief, Anger, Sadness, Passion, Delight, Happiness, Excitement and Confidence. Respondents were also asked to rate each of the five completions to the following using the same progressive (0 to 9) scale: I use music to... 1) lift my spirits, 2) calm me down, 3) mellow me out, 4) get me pumped up and 5) strengthen my moods.

The respondents were also asked to choose their spare time media preference from a list provided and to rate their liking, on a progressive scale of 0 (most dislike) through 9 (most like), of each of the following: Rock, Classical, Reggae, Easy Listening, Heavy Metal, Jazz, R & B/Soul, Country, Pop and New Wave.

Because the research questions address an examination of music and emotions and preference differences across gender and grade level, appropriate tests which imply difference were applied. Since we proposed to investigate taste clusters and since respondents could prefer more than one type of music or feel more than one type of emotion, a quick cluster (SPSS) method was applied to define interest groups and emotion groups. Cluster analysis computes the similarity or distances between all pairs or objects that are computed. Based on these, similar objects are grouped using preselected criteria. Because of the great size of the data base, a quick cluster program, in which the number of clusters must be specified, was used. These music preference groups and emotion groups were then analyzed as to their gender and grade level make-up.

## Results

Males (n=732) rated TV as their most used medium (42.6%) followed by recorded music (32.8%) and radio (14.8%). Females (n=800) rated radio listening highest (38.5%) followed by TV (25.5%) and records (25.1%). Listening to music, either on the radio or records, is clearly the predominant media use by females and is also strong for males. Both genders rated movies, books, magazines and newspapers very low as a premier media activity. Television use decreased with grade in school (40.4% in 9th to 26.9% in 12th), while recorded music as a first choice rose steadily from 22.6% in 9th grade to 33.1% among 12th grade.

Most respondents were able to identify strong links between music and emotions. As Table 1 shows, excitement, happiness and love are the emotions most frequently associated with music.

Emotion ratings varied significantly by gender. As shown in Table 2, women tend to associate emotions with music more than do men. The only emotions rated higher by men than by women were confidence, anger and pride. Gender differences were significant ( $P < .005$ ) for all emotions except grief and excitement, the two emotions with the most

34. The availability sample consisted of 1,547 respondents (52% female and 48% male) from ages 11 to 19. Many (77.5%) intend to continue their education beyond high school. Using father's occupation as an indicator and A. Edwards "Comparative Occupations in the U.S., 1870 to 1940" (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1943) as a classification scheme, about one-third (34.5%) are from upper middle to upper class backgrounds. About half (47.2%) fall into middle class classifications. Almost one-tenth (9.5%) were from working and lower class backgrounds. The remaining respondents (8.8%) did not answer or have households in which the providers were not in the work force, unemployed, or deceased.

extreme ratings.

**Table 1**  
**Association of Emotions with Favorite Music**

Rating Emotion Variable	"Does Not Reflect" (0-3)	"Intermediate" (3-6)	"Reflects a Great Deal" (7-9)
LOVE	10.8	20.0	69.2
HOPE	16.4	30.6	53.0
FEAR	40.2	34.4	25.4
PRIDE	17.7	32.7	49.6
GRIEF	41.2	36.3	22.5
ANGER	35.3	30.0	34.6
SADNESS	29.3	33.0	37.7
PASSION	21.1	29.8	48.9
DELIGHT	16.7	32.5	50.8
HAPPINESS	7.4	21.5	71.3
EXCITEMENT	6.2	17.6	76.1
CONFIDENCE	15.2	27.4	57.4

**Table 2**  
**Emotion Ratings by Gender**

Emotion	Females		Males		T Value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Love	7.67	2.14	6.05	3.03	12.12*
Hope	6.23	2.76	5.60	3.02	4.27*
Fear	4.17	3.22	3.46	3.00	4.45*
Pride	5.56	2.99	6.00	2.97	-2.87*
Grief	3.82	3.09	3.51	2.96	1.95
Anger	4.26	3.35	4.75	3.31	-2.88*
Sadness	5.59	3.10	3.84	3.09	11.00*
Passion	6.06	2.96	5.10	3.24	6.00*
Delight	6.15	2.74	5.41	3.03	4.99*
Happiness	7.37	2.26	6.72	2.60	5.20*
Excitement	7.48	2.25	7.26	2.40	1.87
Confidence	5.94	2.89	6.37	2.92	-2.91*

\*p<.005 d.f. range from 1515- 1525

Analysis of Variance was employed to test the difference between emotion ratings and selected social variables. The Tukey procedure was also used to examine where the significant differences occurred. Because many of the respondents did not know their class or father's occupation, father's education was used as an indicator of social class. None of the emotions were significantly related ( $P<.05$ ) to social class or to race and ethnicity.

Grade in school was related to four emotions. ANOVA for love ( $F=261$ ,  $P=.05$ ) was attributable (Tukey  $P<.05$ ) to 12th graders rating it higher than 9th graders. Despite the image of music appealing to young teens, apparently love strikes later. The same also holds for grief ( $F=3.06$ ,  $P=.03$ ). Sadness ( $F=7.09$ ,  $P=.0001$ ) is experienced by 11th graders and 12th graders significantly more than 9th graders. Passion follows a slightly different pattern ( $F=4.81$ ,  $P=.002$ ) with 10th and 12th rating it significantly higher than 9th graders. For love, grief, sadness and passion, there appears to be a maturation effect, with 9th graders associating these emotions with music less than upper classpersons.

Success in school (self evaluation grade) of the respondents was not significantly related to emotions ratings.

A cluster analysis (SPSS quick cluster routine) was used to identify homogeneous groups of cases based on selected attributes. The attributes in this case were the twelve emotion variables. After examining different numbers of clusters, a set of five clusters (see Table 3) was used based upon its comparative nonambiguity and clarity.

By far the largest group of respondents fell into the "highly emotional" cluster. Love, excitement, happiness and passion are strongly associated with their favorite music, but so are other emotions. In contrast, the "unemotional" group rate every emotion lower than any other group. They clearly do not associate emotions with music. The second most populous group, the "self-assured," associate music with the positive emotions of happiness, confidence and so on. They reject the negative emotions of fear, anger and sadness. The "romantic's" primary emotions are love, passion, hope and excitement. The "angry" cluster also associates excitement with music, but its distinguishing emotions are anger, love and sadness.

**Table 3**  
**Emotion Clusters and Cluster Centers**

Cluster Name	1 Unemotional	2 Highly Emotional	3 Romantic	4 Angry	5 Self-Assured
Emotion Variable					
LOVE	2.36	7.98	7.40	5.91	6.48
HOPE	1.16	7.06	5.48	4.29	5.89
FEAR	1.61	5.62	3.82	3.13	1.80
PRIDE	2.13	6.67	3.33	3.20	6.41
GRIEF	1.52	5.58	2.48	3.38	1.60
ANGER	2.20	6.20	2.07	6.79	2.32
SADNESS	1.89	6.67	3.92	5.83	2.47
PASSION	1.43	7.23	6.52	3.29	4.61
DELIGHT	1.88	6.84	3.57	2.20	6.52
HAPPINESS	3.36	7.68	6.11	4.52	7.90
EXCITEMENT	4.21	7.85	5.05	6.62	8.09
CONFIDENCE	1.62	6.61	4.58	4.96	7.15
NUMBER OF CASES	116	716	84	117	464

A cluster analysis was used to identify homogeneous groups of cases based on the 10 music choices. After examining different numbers of clusters, a set of four clusters was used based upon its comparative non-ambiguity and clarity.

The four clusters represent four distinct musical taste cultures (see Table 4). Cluster I was labeled "mainstreamers." They like the main types of commercial music aimed at youth through radio, record promotion, MTV and concerts. "Mainstreamers" give relatively high positive ratings to rock, pop and new wave and are relatively tolerant to easy listening. Another large group, cluster IV, seems to specialize in rock and heavy metal. These "heavy rockers" are the most hostile group in their ratings of R&B/Soul, new wave, reggae, classical, country and jazz. Cluster II, by contrast, gives low ratings to all types of music. While they like reggae more than the other groups, no music genre

gets a positive rating, and the only music that they dislike more than the other groups is heavy metal. They are, therefore, labeled "Indifferent." The last group represented by cluster III are named "music lovers." They rate rock higher than any other group, enjoy heavy metal pop and easy listening, and even give a positive rating to classical, country and jazz, strongly disliked by the mainstreamers and heavy rockers.

**Table 4**  
**Music Preference Cluster Centers**  
(Means of cluster method 0-9 scale)

	I	II	III	IV
<i>Music Labels</i>	<i>Mainstream</i>	<i>Indifferent</i>	<i>Music Lovers</i>	<i>Heavy Rockers</i>
Rock	7.61	3.72	8.02	7.82
Pop	7.19	3.23	6.40	4.00
R&B/Soul	4.40	2.38	3.43	1.88
New Wave	5.25	4.45	3.73	2.37
Heavy Metal	2.81	1.01	6.31	7.55
Easy List.	4.97	1.78	6.59	2.09
Reggae	3.47	4.47	3.65	1.84
Classical	1.58	3.84	5.86	1.01
Country	1.14	0.97	5.19	0.62
Jazz	1.93	3.01	5.28	1.38
N	662	112	101	630

**Table 5**  
**Musical Taste by emotional cluster**

Music Cluster

Count Col Pct. Tot Pct. Emotion	Main- streamers	Indifferents	Music Lovers	Heavy Rockers	Row Total
Unemotionals	35 5.5 2.4	20 18.3 1.4	2 2.1 .1	58 9.4 4.0	115 7.9
Highly Emotional	345 53.8 23.6	35 32.1 2.4	53 54.6 3.6	266 43.2 18.2	699 47.8
Romantics	36 5.6 2.5	3 2.8 .2	7 7.2 .5	37 6.0 2.5	83 5.7
Angry	35 5.5 2.4	15 13.8 1.0	4 4.1 .3	63 10.2 4.3	117 8.0
Self- Assured	190 29.6 13.0	36 33.0 2.5	31 32.0 2.1	192 31.2 13.1	449 30.7
Col. Totals	641 43.8	109 7.5	97 6.6	616 42.1	

Chi Square = 58.21 d.f. = 12 P< .000

Table 5 shows the relationship of music taste and emotional identification. The "unemotionals," as would be expected, fall disproportionately into the indifferent music cluster. "Highly emotionals" and "romantics" are both slightly over represented in their choice as "music lovers," and under represented as "indifferents." The emotionally



"angry" are "indifferent" or favor heavy rock music. They are under represented as "mainstreamers." "Self-assured" are evenly distributed among the music taste choices.

Thus far, adolescent associations of music with emotions have been examined. Now, we turn to an examination of music and its use in emotional management. Respondents were asked to rate five (progressive scale, 0-9) of the uses for music derived from open ended questions in Wells<sup>35</sup> studies. The distribution of ratings is shown in Table 6. Most respondents claim high levels of emotional management through music use. Getting "pumped up" is the most frequent use. This energizing is followed in popularity by "mood strengthening" and also "lifting spirits." All three may be seen as mood enhancing using music as a stimulant. Less frequent, but clearly established, is the use of music as a tranquilizer. Thus about a third of the respondents use music a great deal to "calm down" and "mellow out."

**Table 6**  
Percentage of Distribution of Emotional Uses

	<i>Lift Spirits</i>	<i>Calm Down</i>	<i>Mellow Out</i>	<i>Pumped Up</i>	<i>Strengthen Mood</i>
Rating					
Don't Use					
Music					
0	8.9	18.1	19.6	7.2	6.8
1	1.5	2.2	2.4	1.3	1.2
2	2.8	4.1	4.5	.9	1.5
3	1.8	3.5	5.4	2.6	1.5
4	2.2	3.9	4.4	1.8	2.7
5	6.3	9.9	9.7	5.5	6.2
6	5.1	5.4	6.4	4.3	5.6
7	8.4	9.1	8.4	6.7	9.6
8	13.4	8.8	7.6	11.2	12.6
9	49.6	35.0	31.6	58.5	52.3
Use A					
Great Deal					
N	1531	1531	1529	1532	1530

**Table 7**  
Emotional Management by Gender

Emotion	Females		Males		T Value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Lift my Spirits	7.53	2.48	6.34	3.23	8.13*
Calm me down	6.24	3.28	5.05	3.49	6.86*
Mellow me out	5.72	3.43	4.97	3.45	4.24*
Get me pumped up	7.34	2.73	7.35	2.71	-0.07
Strengthen my mood	7.43	2.54	7.01	2.78	3.05*

\*P<.005

d.f. range from 1525-1530

Women use music for mood management significantly more than men. T-tests reveal differences (P<.002) for all uses except "get me

35. Wells, A. (1985). "Gender, emotions and popular music." Unpublished paper presented at the Midwest Sociological Society annual meeting, St. Louis.

pumped up.” This is the most popular choice for males and it is the only use that they rate higher than do female respondents.

The only significant relationship between social class and music use was an association with “strengthen my mood” ( $F=2.03$ ,  $d.f.=7$ ,  $P=.048$ ) due to differences (Tukey  $P < .05$ ) between high school and master’s degree paternal education.

Race/ethnicity was related to some emotional uses. “Lifts my spirits” ( $F=4.84$ ,  $P<.0005$ ) was claimed more by black respondents than whites (Tukey  $P<.05$ ). “Getting pumped up” ( $F=4.84$ ,  $P=.0005$ ) was significantly lower for Asians than for whites, blacks and others.

Grade is related to the use of music to “lift my spirits” ( $F=6.88$ ,  $P=.0001$ ), with 9th graders significantly less likely to do so than 11th and 12th graders. The same pattern is true of “mellow me out” ( $F=6.01$ ,  $P=.0005$ ). The other uses of music are not significantly related to music.

### Conclusion

Listening to popular music is a major media use by adolescents, and it increases with age. The respondents clearly associated particular emotions with music they liked. The choice of music was closely related to emotional uses. Emotional use was related to some social variables (gender, grade in school) but not to others (social class, academic success).

A cluster analysis was used to identify five emotional types: “unemotional,” “highly emotional,” “romantics,” “angry” and “self assured.” Four taste clusters were identified: “mainstreamers,” “heavy rockers,” “indifferents” and “music lovers.” The relationship between emotional clusters and musical taste was investigated.

Most respondents claimed to use music for emotional management, either mood enhancing (energizing, strengthening or lifting) or tranquilizing. Women engage in this management significantly more than men. There were also some differences in specific emotional uses by social class, race/ethnicity and grade in school. Overall, it is clear that for many adolescents who like popular music, it is a powerful tool for expressing and managing emotions.