iPOD PEOPLE: EXPERIENCING MUSIC WITH NEW MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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The decade of the 2000s has witnessed the rise of the iPod, a well-marketed mp3 player whose massive storage capacity and ever-shrinking size has extended the boundaries of personal music players to previously unthinkable proportions. And as digital music has expanded its own boundaries, it has spilled over several others, allowing us the opportunity to reconsider many of our musical assumptions.

Specifically, I examine the iPod in relation to production and marketing techniques, human-technological hybridity, music hermeneutics, genre distinctions, male music collecting stereotypes, and the urban experience in New York City. The major assumption from which this work proceeds is that the iPod's relationship to culture is dynamic; the iPod doesn't wholly shape culture, nor is it wholly shaped by culture. Rather, each influences and alters the other, as culture and product evolve alongside one another.

The primary theme that runs through this study is the listener's relationship to a listening device. How does a music medium affect the way we hear music, and how do our listening habits dictate the functions of an mp3 player? By keeping these questions in the foreground, I privilege contemporary listening habits in order to best understand not only the iPod, but also broader popular music culture in the early twenty-first century.

DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

To Kathryn,

with the hope of better dedications to come…

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Introduction

Technology is both blessing and curse in music, as it is in broader culture. It destroys and it saves, sometimes simultaneously.

Before the automobile was *de rigeur* for daily transportation, it was decried as a menace to the streets, and, in many cases, its use was heavily restricted (Southworth 2003, 65). And before nuclear energy was sold to the American public as the future of efficiency and luxury, it was a mushroom cloud sprouting from two Japanese cities. In this most horrific of paradigms, we see all that technology can excite, both positive and negative. In the years following World War II, the atom came to represent the cutting edge of technological convenience, all with the long shadow of Hiroshima and Nagasaki looming over it.

The potential danger of nuclear energy has never really subsided, as its central position in political debate illustrates. Likewise with the automobile, which is marketed with its most dangerous features—horsepower and size—foregrounded in a manner that adds ample allure and excitement to the prospect of driving fast cars. Our ambivalence toward technology stems from the alternating fascination and horror with which we behold its most dangerous potential. The same technology that can, when deployed

irresponsibly, sap the very life from us, can also, when handled carefully, invigorate us, partly because we are aware of its volatile nature, the possibility that it could, at any moment, blow up in our faces.

In music, the danger is perhaps less obvious. Phonographs and electric guitars pose no appreciable threat to humanity, yet they have each been the object of a similar ambivalence. In Adorno's 1934 meditation "The Form of the Phonograph Record," he asserts that the phonograph privileges "things over people through the emancipation of technology from human requirements and human needs," calling it the "antithesis of the humane and the artistic" (2002, 277-78). At the same time, Adorno credits this very dehumanization with a reinvigoration of music. Because musical performance without recording technology is fleeting, we are allowed by phonographs to revisit once-living musical performances, albeit in a petrified state (279). Adorno's ambivalence to phonograph technology allows him to describe it as simultaneously capable of killing and reanimating musical performance.

Thirty years later, Bob Dylan appeared onstage at the Newport Folk Festival with an electric guitar and an electric blues band backing him, and retreated after three songs in a hail of boos. At least, that is the story as it is popularly received. In reality, the booing was probably directed at the event itself, which only allowed Dylan a short timeframe for performance. But the legend still shimmers seductively for most, embodying a discomfort with technology as it penetrates the acoustic world of the folk revival. For many, the appearance of Dylan with an electric guitar has represented the invasion of technology in all walks of life, and the alleged booing of him and his guitar has become a generation's rejection of dangerous technology.

Around the same time, in a screed against popular listening habits, Adorno defends structural listening, where the large-scale form of the piece holds one's attention. Its antithesis is "atomistic" listening, which is characterized by an obsession with individual themes with no attention to their development over time. Here, Adorno evokes that thrilling yet terrifying post-War technology—the atom—to decry the habits of popular music enthusiasts (2007, 318-22). Even when addressing musical attributes that do not owe an obvious debt to technological innovation, the specter of technology and its opposition to humanity hangs over every word.

While it is clearly not as pressing as the physical danger wrought by nuclear energy or automobile crashes, the metaphorical dehumanization performed by technology through music is a persistent motif that colors music scholarship. The British rock band Radiohead is a favorite subject of this line of inquiry, as both Curtis White (2005) and Joseph Auner (2003) have dedicated essays to the exploration of the band's use of technology to problematize the existence of humanity alongside technology.

More than forty years beyond Adorno's "Little Heresy" and the events of Newport '65, electric guitars are not nearly as controversial as we imagine them to have been for Dylan's fans. They have become the standard-bearer of nearly every subgenre of rock and, in the last decade, have become prominent sounds in hip hop samples, as well. Yet, as with cars and nuclear energy, electric guitars retain the presence of something discomforting. The mild outcry following Prince's overtly phallic performance at Super Bowl XLI (4 February 2007) may have resulted simply from a performer referring to his penis in front of tens of millions of viewers. But in headlines like the one found in the Associated Press's report of the incident—"some are

questioning whether a guitar was just a guitar"—a general unease with the attachment of something as integral as one's sexuality with an electric guitar becomes evident (AP 2007). The electric guitar has long represented masculine virility, but it has also connoted a deficit in humanity for many rock bands, problematically overpowering voices and serving as the artifice opposing the acoustic guitar's authenticity.

Just as with technology in culture broadly, music technology excites listeners both positively and negatively. Tracking a consistent or smooth trajectory from anxiety over a piece of technology to its acceptance proves nearly impossible. Technology is always blessing and curse, a complex interplay of exhilaration and anxiety that lends it a double existence, a hybridity.

This idea of hybridity shapes my study of the iPod. As the latest dominant medium for music consumption, the iPod offers an opportunity to glimpse not only the state of digital music but also popular music culture as a whole. In order to best understand the iPod, I situate it within the two overarching and overlapping discourses introduced above: technology and hybridity.

The iPod behaves much like other music technology in the twentieth century. It is alternately received as blessing and curse, and it is the site of a variety of hybridities. It is produced and marketed as at once a familiar, non-threatening device and a new, exhilarating innovation; its use combines the human and the technological in a way that blurs the distinction between the two; it features a shuffle option that randomly orders songs with no regard for genre distinctions; it fits neatly into the masculine music collector stereotype while also inviting a broader consumer base that would include pre-Gen Xers, women, and gay men; and it enjoys cache as a chic accessory in New York at

the same time that non-iPodders in the city blame it for the very undoing of the moral fabric of society. In short, the iPod is a mercurial device that freely transgresses boundaries, and in this study, I will cross borders alongside it to better understand its shaping of (and by) broader popular music culture.

Music Technology and Hybridity

In order to best understand the iPod's interaction with contemporary culture, we should first dive into history. I consider here four music technology moments from the last century in order to highlight a theme the iPod continues: reappropriation. From the phonograph to magnetic tape to the phonograph again, musicians have consistently used technological devices in ways they were not originally intended to be used. And the iPod capitalizes on the mid-1990s reappropriation of the mp3 from motion picture compressor to dominant digital music encoder. A brief tour of these sites of reappropriation will help illuminate the iPod's recent music technology ancestry and allow us to determine its "family traits"—a foray that will help us contextualize the iPod and better understand its function in contemporary music culture.

The recording and reproduction of sound was intended to further the convenience of the telephone. In 1877, Thomas Edison, in an effort to devise a method of telegraphically saving telephone messages (something of a precursor to the answering machine), found that he could cause sound waves to be grooved into wax in a way that would allow them to be preserved for later playback. The early sound reproduction innovators believed their device to be a practical one and consequently targeted big business, which, they believed, would benefit from the ability to convert memos from

sound to writing at any time. The sound quality, however, proved too fallible for the straining ears of stenographers, and the phonograph[1] soon became a leisure technology, providing its owners the luxury of listening to music in the home (Millard 1995, 17-36).

With the loss of businesses as principal consumers, manufacturers began to market the phonograph in terms of class, offering middle- and upper-class Americans a replacement for the piano and player piano of the nineteenth century. Recordings evolved from technological wonderments (the earliest records are adorned with a picture of Edison and his machine, with song titles and performers relegated to inserts, if present at all) to star-powered discs of refinement, as the leading record companies (Edison, Victor, Columbia) began fashioning their labels around concepts of taste in order to attract those middle- and upper-class consumers who wished to be regarded as cultured (Millard 1995, 37-64). Indeed, Kyle Barnett notices that early phonographs were marketed as furniture—fixtures meant for an elegant sitting room featuring "a marked compromise between functionality and aesthetic values" (2006, 301).

While the changing market of phonograph users affected the kind of music recorded and sold, the limits of the technology also affected the music recorded. 78-rpm records, on which much music in the first half of the twentieth century was recorded, accommodated only three or four minutes per side, and because the sound was grooved into wax, each record had to be completed in a single take. Magnetic tape solved both of

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[1] The term "phonograph" is actually specific to Edison's patented machine, but it is colloquially used to refer to any sound reproducer that utilizes the 'grooving' method of sound recording, and this is the way I use the term here. Indeed, Edison's phonograph employed a cylinder playback, while Victor and Columbia used discs, similar to modern records. So, despite the fact that Edison's model is not even a prototype for today's format, its name has become a catholic term for all early sound reproduction machines. The term "record" should be understood here as the same kind of generic reference, since the early machines played what were termed "cylinders" or "discs." For a fuller discussion of the different companies and machines, see Andre Millard, *America on Record: A History of Recorded Sound* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 17-64.

these problems, allowing the splicing together of multiple takes and greatly expanding the length of content captured on it.

Musique concréte repurposes the practical concerns of magnetic tape, changing from a recorder of art into an artistic medium in its own right. Pierre Schaeffer, a pioneer of electro-acoustic composition, was drawn to the process because of its reversal of traditional composition and performance, assembling concrete sounds in some organized manner instead of transmitting abstract notation that would be concretized by performers at a later time (Taylor 2001, 45).

The post-war world was saturated with technological innovation, and Pierre Schaeffer's foray into the world of electronic music was in part a response to technology's growing infiltration of more aspects of life. The technologies of comfort—microwaves, automobiles, televisions—promised a happier and wealthier future for much of the Western world (Taylor 2001, 41). At the same time, however, in the shadow of nuclear bombs and heavily rationalized and scientifically-implemented methods of genocide, technologies loomed as frightful Frankenstein's monsters—created objects that threatened to take on lives of their own and overpower their creators (Palombini 1999). *Musique concréte*, in its artistic role of social critic, proved a useful medium for both confronting the terrifying power and capturing the delightful possibility of technology.

Schaeffer's reversal of traditional composition and performance acts out humanity's relationship to technology. On the one hand, a composer of *musique concréte* manipulates and controls technology in a manner not intended at its conception. On the other, technology replaces the human, substituting the live performer with prerecorded and assembled patches of magnetic tape.

In the case of *musique concréte*, the reappropriation of technology for musical purposes paves the way to a (re)consideration of the roles of music and technology in society. By changing recording technology into artistic medium, electronic composers found a new route to create meaningful music—an endeavor shared by hip hop artists in the Bronx in the late 1970s. These musicians began to employ the turntable as an instrument in its own right, manipulating and re-imagining popular songs through elaborate scratching and cutting techniques.

While Schaeffer problematized technology's place in society, DJs in the 1970s South Bronx represented their problems through turntable techniques. As a response to the economic depression and social and political marginalization of the borough, hip hop was a way for South Bronxers to reclaim "voice." With little access to traditional musical instruments, hip hop artists resorted instead to the turntables and speakers at hand. By using two turntables at once, DJs could "juggle" a segment of music, repeating it for an extended period of time. These "breaks" in the flow of the music allowed for the angular performance of breakdancers and, combined with the scratches of the music that resulted in distorted sound, functioned as a commentary on the seamless smoothness of disco, creating an aural soundscape that better matched the experience of life in the South Bronx—ruptured (Rose 1994, 21-61).

Each of these three moments in twentieth century music technology result from a reimagining of a piece of technology's intended purpose, and in each case, the intended purpose remains as a shadow cast over the new medium. Phonographs never relinquished the magic of capturing the human voice, and the pursuit of perfect fidelity by hi-fi connoisseurs attests to the central role this phenomenon still plays in phonograph

reception. *Musique concréte* composers and hip hop turntablists both rely heavily on listeners' understanding of the intended purpose of their media, as both acquire meaning through disruption of the proper use of technology.

The iPod works in much the same way. The creation of mp3 (which stands for Motion Picture Experts Group 1, Layer 3) technology was purely practical. The goal of the Motion Picture Experts Group was to compress aural and visual information in order to make it small enough to store on and send via computer. Soon, however, the mp3, which was the most compact layer of audio compression, had been isolated as a means of easily sharing music (almost wholly illegally) over the internet (Katz 2004, 160-62). By 2001, Apple had launched the iPod, a device that has harnessed the efficiency of the mp3.

Though originally intended as merely one component of a conveniently encoded multimedia work, the mp3 and its imitators have become the standard mode of music consumption. The mp3's practical roots persist, too. Apple markets the iPod by highlighting its convenience, from one-click downloads of songs to the rise of a singles market, since individual songs are much more easily selected and practical on an iPod than they were on records, tapes, or CDs.

The reappropriation of the mp3 is consistent with trends in music technology over the course of the last century, and the iPod has proved to be the device that has most successfully capitalized on this reaprropriation . As each mode of consumption is reimagined, it maintains at least vestiges of its original purpose, embodying a dual nature much like the "blessing and curse" meme introduced above. Music technology is again received as hybrid, a term that requires a bit of unpacking.

Hybridity

I use the term "hybridity" to refer to the joining of disparate parts in a single place. The most obvious examples of hybridity—the examples that often leap immediately to mind—involve technology. A hybrid car offers an engine that is powered by both gas and electricity. Or, the science fiction cyborg, the paragon of hybridity, combines the human and the technological into a single entity.

In music, hybridity is often experienced at the fuzzy boundaries separating one genre from another, as confirmed by the fashion for heavily hyphenated descriptions of bands (a paradigmatic offender is Leftover Salmon, who describe themselves on their website as "Polyethnic-Cajun-Slamgrass"). Many jazz fusion outfits were assembled partly for the purpose of highlighting these nearly imperceptible genre boundaries, as illustrated in Kevin Fellezs's case study of Tony Williams' Lifetime (2008).

The focus on fuzzy boundaries, however, is not always welcome. Fabian Holt, in *Genre in Popular Culture*, articulates a sentiment common among critics of hybridity. "Strong interest in hybridity," he argues, "has drawn attention away from categories" (2007, 5). That is, when trying to define what constitutes a genre category, hybridity studies only offer a summation of what genres are not, while contributing nothing to the work of identifying what they are. Holt diagnoses the focus on hybridity as a fetish, concluding that it does "not get us very far" (2007, 6). Hybridity, on this account, amounts to little more than the commonsensical observation that borders are permeable blown into an ill-conceived and substantively bankrupt sub-discipline. *Of course* disparate parts can be joined, Holt concedes, but what's the big deal?

One thing Holt misses (or fails to acknowledge) is that definitions often include statements about what an object is not. This is especially the case when dealing with cultural commodities, objects and systems that are defined by a group by reference to common assumptions. Just as Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities*, has argued that nations can only be thought of as unified because citizens agree to identify each other as members of a nation, genre distinctions can only be useful because the users of genre terms informally agree that a certain corpus of works belongs to a particular genre. And just as a nation often defines itself in opposition to another nation—American democracy, for instance, depending on the political climate, can function as the opposite of communism, socialism, fascism, or even Islam—one genre is often defined in opposition to another—country is decidedly not rap and vice versa, and the two genres often entertain subject matter and musical idioms that mark themselves as opposites. Obviously, this is not the only component of a definition, but Holt, by implying that it should play no role in deciding what objects are, misses an essential truth about the nature of cultural commodities.

Beyond the role hybridity can play in genre theory, Holt demonstrates a basic but common misunderstanding of hybrid projects. Holt treats hybridity as if it is only ever invoked for its own sake, a pointless revelry in postmodern nonsense that serves no greater purpose. Hybridity certainly can be the object of pointless revelry, of course, but its deployment in art and scholarship is overwhelmingly marked by an effort to redefine the subject as posthuman. The "human" in posthuman refers to a specific notion of identity, liberal humanist subjectivity (LHS), which has dominated Western ideology

since the Enlightenment. Though it has been assigned a fairly cumbersome name, LHS and posthumanism's relation to it can be fairly easily understood.

LHS is primarily concerned with marking the bounds of the authentic self in order to protect its integrity, and it follows on the tradition of Christianity by positioning the authentic self as internal. For Christianity, it is the soul that must be protected; for LHS, it is the mind. René Descartes crystallized this notion with his skepticism project. In an effort to discover how we know we exist, Descartes undermines bodily senses en route to determining that one's ability to doubt existence is, in fact, proof of one's existence (1952 [1641]; 75-81).

This distrust of the body and its senses and the privileging of the mind and its perception have long characterized Enlightenment subjectivity. LHS yields thinking agents, and because identity is tied almost exclusively to one's mind, "the liberal subject," as N. Katherine Hayles observes, "*posesse[s]* a body but [is] not usually represented as *being* a body" (1999, 4). The body becomes a prosthesis that one must learn to control and discipline. It is little more than present wrapping or an orange peel, a layer that functions to protect the integrity of what is inside but not essential to the nature of what lies within.

The criticism of LHS is easy. LHS has historically been restricted to the most powerful people in the Western world, a fact articulated by feminism, queer theory, black studies, and nearly every offshoot of postmodern scholarship. Those who were not LHS were deemed to possess too much emotion and not enough rationality; to be the product of contrivance instead of nature; to favor or work with the body at the cost of the cultivation of the mind; in short, to lack integrity to the point of being subhuman.

Disciplines that have embraced hybridity, often in the form of posthumanism, are interested in reconstructing humanity. LHS may be only a construction, but its consequences have been real, and those who have been excluded from it often prefer to construct a human subjectivity that is fundamentally opposed to LHS, that, as the subtitle of a Donna Haraway book suggests, is "the reinvention of nature," that is premised on the idea of hybridity (Haraway 1991).

W.E.B. Dubois expresses just this reinvention of self in his essay "Strivings of the Negro People," in which he famously reflects on the notion of "double-consciousness."

> It is a peculiar situation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife,—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa; he does not wish to bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he believes—foolishly, perhaps, but fervently—that Negro blood has yet a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without losing the opportunity of self-development (1897).

Here, the hybridity of one's self is portrayed as a struggle, an unwanted battle that inhibits self-realization. The kernel of reinvention, however, lies in the conclusion of this excerpt, as DuBois wishes for a blending of both Negro and American in a way that erases neither and "make[s] it possible for a man to be both."

Holding on to that which is deemed subhuman while still attaining full humanity or full citizenship undergirds posthuman hybridity and allows the self to be defined as not only the internal—the mind or soul—but also the external—the body.

By claiming the body as essential to one's humanity, posthuman hybridity upsets LHS in a number of ways. First, the self now includes what was previously problematic, and the foregrounding of the body challenges LHS's claim to internal integrity.

Second, including the body in one's definition of self allows for further hybridity. As Haraway describes it in her manifesto, the posthuman accepts itself as part animal, part technology (consider something as seemingly negligible as taking Tylenol for a headache), part non-physical (cellular communication, for instance, is "invisible," carried on waves imperceptible to its users), and part conscious, embodied human (151-55).

Third, because posthuman hybridity defines the self so broadly, it is an easy foundation on which to form coalitions. Afro-futurism and third-wave feminism are both examples of coalitions built on the notion of unity without uniformity, and each reconstructs identity by privileging the body and embracing technology. Third-wave feminism takes up Haraway's call to derive "*pleasure* in the confusion of boundaries and for *responsibility* in their construction," striving for an inclusive movement that makes room for a variety of female identities, including, importantly, women of color—another of Haraway's calls in her "Manifesto" (1991, 150; 173-81). Afro-futurism, meanwhile, extends the science fiction (sci-fi)-infused subjectivity of artists like Sun Ra through 21st century technologies, reconstructing identity using the same hybrid strategies as third-wave feminism. As Kodwo Eshun, whose prose itself blurs boundaries with mixed metaphors and compounded words like "futurhythmachine" and "sampladelia," explains, Afro-futurist music

> doesn't locate you in tradition; instead it dislocates you from origins. It uproutes you by inducing a gulf crisis, a perceptual daze rendering today's sonic discontinuum immediately audible…You are willingly mutated by intimate machines, abducted by

audio into the populations of your bodies. Sound machines throw you onto the shores of the skin you're in. The hypersensual cyborg experiences herself as a galaxy of audiotactile sensations (1999; 00[-001]).

Both Afro-futurism and third-wave feminism recognize that they are constituted of disparate individuals with differing ideologies, but they both strive for a unified resistance to inequality without offering an essential definition of who belongs to the group. Such broad coalitions are possible primarily because the posthuman is already an amalgam of varying materials, positioning the self as naturally bound up in things and with others that traditional LHS would deny as part of the self.

The iPod demonstrates hybridity in a number of ways. Perhaps most obviously, it is a device that latches onto our ears and rests warmly in our pockets, becoming a technological extension of our bodies in true cyborg fashion.

iPod users experience hybridity beyond the listening experience, as well. The iPod relies on users who are plugged into the internet, which keeps the iPod's software current, houses a large collection of purchasable music, and offers a world of software add-ons for the latest, multi-functional models—the iPhone and iPod Touch. iPod owners, in a symbiosis of human and machine, have little choice but to depend upon cybernetic connectivity to maintain their devices. Moreover, consumers are lured to the iPod (instead of other, comparably priced and functional mp3 players) by the product's ethos, producing another layer of hybridity as iPodders of many different stripes to invest themselves in the cultural capital it offers.

The iPod's ethos projects youthfulness and hipness, as well as assumes a high level of technological savvy. At the same time, it is produced and marketed in a way that invites those who are not young, hip, or techno-capable to buy it, use it, and benefit from

the cultural capital of savvy that it offers, creating a "coalition" of iPodders that crosses generational, gender, and racial boundaries.

While the iPod's hybridity is not necessarily purposefully political, as third-wave feminism and Afro-futurism are, it does participate in the reinvention of subjectivity and the transgression of boundaries. Because of its resemblance to these overtly political projects, the iPod assumes a prominent role in the reimagining of subjectivity in contemporary culture. My task here is to consider the interaction of the iPod with contemporary music culture, noting both the ways it shapes and is shaped by its culture, especially foregrounding the device's various sites of reappropriation and hybridity.

Part I includes two chapters, both of which consider the construction of identity in an iPod world. In Chapter 1, I alternate between a reflection on the iPod's market success and the way its marketing and production is mirrored in consumers and artists in an iPod world. Specifically, I am interested in George Ritzer's McDonaldization and Alan Bryman's Disneyization and the ways these two sets of market principles make the iPod such a dominant market force and affect the production and consumption of music.

McDonaldization is a set of production principles that explains the underlying ethos of streamlined businesses, and Ritzer uses McDonald's as his paradigmatic example. Ritzer breaks McDonaldization into the four components of efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control (through nonhuman technology). Together, these four standards create a business that is comfortingly familiar and that never changes from one instance of a product to another (a Big Mac should be the same in Tucson as it is in Tuscaloosa), giving the consumer a sense of ease with what may otherwise be a new product.

Apple accomplishes this familiarity in a variety of ways, but we can begin to understand its McDonaldized principles by focusing just on its predictability. The iPod itself is produced according to the simple "point-and-click" interface with which any computer user is already familiar. The iTunes Music Store (Apple's digital music outlet, which is fully integrated with iTunes, the program through which one's music library is maintained) is organized according to traditional music store standards, allowing one to browse by genre and artist headings, even though the physical restrictions that make such organization necessary have been lifted. And, of course, consumers are already familiar with the concept of portable music players because of the success of Sony's Walkman and Discman.

While a familiar interface helps make the iPod a "safe" technology for consumers, Apple is also interested in marketing the iPod as a thrillingly new device that excites iPodders' imaginations. Disneyization is a set of four principles that explains the ways a product accrues a fresh or even magical aura. Disneyization comprises theming, hybrid consumption, merchandising, and performative labor, and Bryman formed the theory as a complement to McDonaldization.

One way Apple fashions its iPod as excitingly new is by shifting expectations. When cassettes and CDs dominated the music market, full-length albums were the primary musical unit, but Apple has reintroduced the single as a viable market in order to amplify one of the iPod's defining themes.

Importantly, McDonaldization and Disneyization are blended together in the iPod, making it at once comfortingly familiar and excitingly new. The question I entertain alongside the study of these two market processes is how this blended musical medium

reflects and affects the construction of identity by consumers and musicians in an iPodized world.

Chapter 2 is a comparative study of two moments in popular music's interaction with technology. The first moment is the music video for 50 Cent's "P.I.M.P. (Remix)," directed by Chris Robinson and released in 2003. The second is Bob Dylan's electric appearance at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965. I order them non-chronologically because the place of technology in each instance does not follow a strict teleology. Rather, each moment captures our ongoing struggle with music and technology and our relationship with technology, which is alternately received as either blessing or curse.

50, a symbiotic blend of human and machine in his "P.I.M.P. (Remix)" video, and Dylan, whose Newport performance evokes fears of technology, represent the constant negotiation between the human and the technological in popular music, allowing us to consider the terms and assumptions that inform this negotiation.

In the two chapters that comprise Part II, I consider the ways the iPod redraws common musical boundaries. Chapter 3 is a reflection on the iPod's shuffle feature, which is a simple rebranding of an existing concept, random play. What the iPod offers that was previously unavailable to music listeners is the ability to expand the notion of randomness. Whereas a Discman can reorder only one CD at a time and home stereo systems no more than five or ten albums at a time, the iPod enables listeners to randomize thousands (sometimes even tens of thousands) of songs at once. The potential chaos of intensified randomness allows the opportunity to reconsider notions of unity and genre.

Early responses to shuffle technology tended to anthropomorphize the iPod, attributing some sort of logic to the device in its "choice" of song order or tendency to play the same song early in shuffle cycles. While the iPod obviously remains no more than an intelligent machine with no capacity for rational choice, the exercise of interpreting a shuffle album (a 45-60 minute cycle of songs) offers the opportunity to reflect upon listening tendencies. A shuffle album that can be argued to possess meaning allows us to consider music hermeneutics more broadly.

When the iPod shuffles with no regard for genre, what happens to the boundaries that separate one genre from another? On the one hand, genre distinctions are no longer necessary. With the move from physical collections of albums that require a way for one to know where to find any given record at any given time to cyber collections that require no physical space or the attending organizational needs, one service of genre becomes obsolete. Genre's function of ontological categorization may be subsumed in Google's model of decentralized searching and organization. On the other hand, genre distinctions come into sharper focus. With the haphazard conjunction of several disparate genre conventions within a single shuffle album, another service of genre becomes more useful. Genre's function of providing expectations for a listening experience may prove necessary for orienting oneself during a shuffle.

These questions concerning unity and genre emerge from the listening experience and illuminate the ways in which present modes of music consumption shed light on previous modes, encouraging listeners to contextualize both their present and their past.

Chapter 4 positions the iPod in a history of male-dominated music-technological pursuits. Tricia Rose, in *Black Noise*, details the ways in which early rap culture, with its

focus on electronics in music production, erected a barrier to female participation (57-58). Men inhabited the space where technological tinkering was performed, and women who entered such a space were often seen as unladylike. Mark Katz expounds upon the predominantly masculine space of DJ culture in *Capturing Sound*, emphasizing ways in which the mostly male history of rap and DJing, combined with notions of male record collectors, continue to work against female participation in music technology (131-36).

Despite the success of female producers like Missy Elliot and the prevalent egalitarian sensibility that avoids prescribing "masculine" and "feminine" attributes to professions and hobbies, the dominant image of an audiophile or a collector is that of a man. Typically the audiophile or collector is so masculine that, like vinyl junkie Rob Gordon (portrayed by John Cusack) in the movie *High Fidelity*, he has trouble communicating with and understanding women. The iPod, with its constantly growing hard drives and capacity to hold copious amounts of music, feeds the masculine image of the collector, sitting in front of his computer screen and downloading endless files of music to fill his iPod. At the same time, however, the iPod subtly subverts the masculinity of this project, as the collection is confined to the never-changing size of a computer or an iPod, undercutting the "size matters" mentality of the stereotypical collector who is eager to display his rows of vinyl or CDs.

In fact, the iPod is marketed in a way that encourages the participation of the (perceived) feminine, offering a user-friendly interface, being sold in Apples stores with dressed-down, approachable employees, and featuring billboards and commercials that foreground (perceived) femininity. Such marketing has been key to the iPod's success, as it attracts consumers who have long been unwelcome in the technological world.

The epilogue is a case study in urban geography. I am interested in the relationship between the iPod and New York, a city with "the highest saturation of iPods and iPhones" of any the editors at ilounge.com have visited (Horwitz 2008). I start with the Glass Cube, Apple's 5th Ave. store, which functions as a cipher that explains the iPod's role in the city, then examine iPod advertisements and listener uses in order to grasp Apple's purpose for the device in New York. The Glass Cube, iPod billboards, and the iPod itself all function as voids into which consumers project themselves or their experiences of the city, encouraging a subjectivity that encourages iPodders to fashion their identities to their own wills.

Not everyone has received the iPod as such a freeing device, however. A common complaint is that iPodders walk about in isolation, ignoring everything and everyone around them. This criticism participates in a nostalgia for a New York City that never existed: one in which subway riders engaged in friendly chatter and pedestrians strolled the sidewalks of New York distracted by nothing and eager to assist tourists. This is a complex nostalgia that participates in the promises of reform offered by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and the realities of that reform, which systemically ignored or criminalized minorities and the underrepresented in the city. The negative reactions to the iPod are properly understood in the context of Guiliani's New York.

Throughout this study, the iPod is considered as both blessing and curse, as I situate it within the same framework music technologies often occupy. I am interested in how it behaves as music technology as well as how it shapes and is shaped by its culture, especially focusing on the (re)construction of identity outside the bounds of LHS and the

blurring of boundaries beyond subjectivity and functioning within received musical conventions.

Like phonographs and magnetic tape before it, the iPod will eventually give way to another dominant form of musical mediation. This, of course, is no reason not to study it now. Also like previous music media, the iPod tells us a good deal about ourselves, as we explore the ways in which our musical experiences shape and are shaped by our iPods. Ilounge.com features a photo section where iPodders can upload pictures of themselves with iPods, sometimes in everyday life and sometimes at landmarks or special events. Some of the most interesting pictures are of places and people reflected from an iPod, whose shiny metallic backside functions as a mirror. This style of photography offers an obvious and useful metaphor for this project, where I peer into and strain my ear beside the iPod to see and hear what it tells and shows us. What is reflected back are the fascinating interactions among the music, music discourses, and cultural impulses that form our musical present.

Chapter 1: The iPod McDonaldized and Disneyized

On 10 November 2001, Apple released its first hard-drive-based, portable mp3 music-listening device, the iPod. The iPod was neither the first hard-drive-based mp3 player, nor the first portable music-listening device, but it was the first of its kind to experience widespread success. It seized the mp3 market and has never let go. In fact, despite the PC world's continued efforts to produce better and more popular rivals, the iPod has managed to maintain the majority share of the hard-drive-based market, as typified by 2006's first quarter, when Apple sold 14 million iPods—a rate of more than 100 per minute (Lee 2006). The first quarter of 2006 was no exception, either. Wall Street analyst Charles Wolf, in a report for Needham & Co., released a 2004 projection of the iPod that forecasted a 60% market share and a total of 23.5 million units sold by 2006, figures far below the actual numbers—a roughly 90% market share with a total of 42.2 million units sold (Evans 2004; Guglielmo 2006). Even as other mp3 players have siphoned some of Apple's share, which hovered around 70% in early 2008, the iPod achieved record sales, as 22 millions devices were bought in the first quarter of 2008 (van Buskirk 2008; Moren 2008).

The iPod, then, has become the standard in music-listening devices. Indeed, the iPod so thoroughly dominates its market that it has come to be used to refer to all mp3 players synecdochally, a fact Apple chairman Steve Jobs acknowledges when he calls the iPod the "Walkman of the 21st century" (Hansell 2004). In other words, in the same manner some refer to all facial tissues as "Kleenex," to all soft drinks as "Coke," and to all portable tape players as "Walkman," the term "iPod" is coming to denote all mp3 players. Podcasts, for instance, are syndicated music and talk programs formatted for any mp3 player, a name clearly derived from the iPod.

The iPod's profound success bucks conventional wisdom. Apple's innovations have been historically better commoditized by its competitors. From putting a computer in every home to "point-and-click" interfaces to mobile technology, Apple has consistently provided the innovative ideas on which the PC world has later capitalized.[2] But that has not happened this time, though not for lack of effort on the part of Apple's rivals. A plethora of mp3 devices exists, but none have even begun to legitimately challenge the iPod's hegemony.[3] As the iPod's popularity continues to soar, I am interested in reflecting on why the iPod has been and continues to be so successful.

My reflection is two-pronged. On the one hand, I am interested in the ways Apple produces and markets the iPod. In order to understand the hybridization of both

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[2] The source of many of the templates found on modern operating systems is rather hotly debated. Xerox's interface predates Apple's and Microsoft's and is an obvious "ancestor" to both. Jobs tends to claim most of Apple's innovations as his own, while Gates tends to claim that each of them simply stole and tweaked the same ideas from Xerox. Either way, the chronology has typically been as such: Apple introduces an advancement, Microsoft follows with a cheaper option, and Microsoft makes much more money. More can be found on this at http://www.apple-history.com/.

[3] Perhaps the most surprising PC-world 'failure' is Sony, who revolutionized our concept of portable music with the Walkman and Discman. However, with its large record division, Sony was originally reluctant to enter the potentially illegal downloading world of mp3 files, and the company, to date, has not been able to catch up with its competitors (Dvorak 2005).

the familiar and the new that characterize the iPod, I invoke the twin theories of

McDonaldization and Disneyization, which broadly define the cultural backdrop of

corporate activities and products. On the other hand, I am interested in the consumers

who have crowned the iPod. How does the construction of iPodders' identities

complement the construction of the iPod itself? I consider both the celebratory and

angst-ridden responses to the increasing entanglement of the iPod and those who

consume it.

These two avenues of inquiry will themselves become entwined as I try to

delicately balance the iPod within its milieu. By alternating between production and

consumption, my analysis imitates the complexities of the iPod's influence, as the device

is at once a hybridized product of established cultural norms and producer of new modes

of listening and subjectivity. After a brief introduction of McDonaldization and

Disneyization, I will explore the iPod and iPodders through a series of overlapping

snapshots until a larger picture begins to emerge.

McDonaldization and Disneyization

Max Weber's theory of rationalization attempts to understand the historical

transition from traditional societies to modern capitalist societies. Rationalization

involves the singular pursuit of a desired end, with emphasis placed not simply on

attaining the end, but rather attaining it by the quickest and most efficient means possible.

Weber's theory has itself been rationalized and streamlined for the general public by

George Ritzer in his book *The McDonaldization of Society*, wherein Ritzer explains that

McDonald's has achieved overwhelming influence upon society via four basic

components of production and service: efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control (through nonhuman technology). Piggybacking on Ritzer's thesis, Alan Bryman has introduced the four cornerstones of Disney's marketing success, which he calls Disneyization. These are theming, hybrid consumption, merchandising, and performative labor.

Ritzer and Bryman argue that these two theories, McDonaldization and Disneyization, wield exceptional explanatory power for the ways corporations have been able to achieve immense success by implementing basic means-end formulae in the pursuit of profit. In a world where time feels scarcer and we are bombarded with information from a litany of outlets, the homogeneous sameness, quickness, and affordability of a McDonaldized corporation can be a comforting thought. At the same time, in a world where our schedules become so tightly packed that we fall into the same routine day after day, the heterogeneous newness, assortedness, and magic promised by Disneyized marketing techniques is an enticing allurement.

Writing at the end of the millennium, Ritzer rather curiously invokes high modern theory to analyze contemporary society, while Bryman's Disneyization is thoroughly postmodern. Ritzer understands society as driven by a highly organized set of predictable goals. Bryman, on the other hand, argues that Western culture generally craves a magical experience and is therefore most interested in variability and unpredictability. Despite these differences, however, the two theories are not incompatible. Ritzer believes McDonaldized institutions can be Disneyized, as well, and Bryman concedes that Disney itself is a McDonaldized corporation. When considered together, the two theories form

an instructive lens through which we can inspect a culture that is both late modern and early postmodern.

Ritzer and Bryman each charge that McDonaldization and Disneyization "are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as of the rest of the world" (Ritzer 2000, 1; Bryman 2004, 1). It is no surprise, then, that a company such as Apple is able to simultaneously capitalize on the principles of both processes in its iPod. The iPod is at once a familiar device and a dazzling new technological gadget—a coupling made possible by the way the iPod blends McDonaldization and Disneyization.

From Efficiency to Socks

"*Efficiency* means choosing the optimum means to a given end," says Ritzer (2000, 57), and when it comes to listening to music, the iPod is as efficient as it gets. From the beginning, the iPod has featured a sleek design built around limited colors, small dimensions, and light weight. Its small size and companion 'earbud' headphones make it an easily portable device, and the iPod has consistently presented the fewest possible buttons to perform the most possible actions. Indeed, one of the most distinct features of the iPod has been its circular scrolling wheel with single button in the center—a design now mimicked by most of its competitors. This "click-wheel" design, which allows iPodders to highlight their song choice by scrolling with the click-wheel, then select it by pressing the center button, is based on the "point-and-click" interface with which any computer user is already intimately familiar.

Each year, usually in the late summer or early fall, Apple releases a new "generation" of iPods. Generational updates typically include several new features and

increased storage capacity. Significantly, as Apple expands the iPod's capabilities, the cost of the cheapest iPod remains unchanged or is even reduced, allowing consumers to purchase more storage space for a consistent price. For instance, the original iPod (2001) was available for $399 or $499 and offered 5 gigabytes (GB) and 10GB of space, respectively. By contrast, the comparable 2008 iPod—the Classic—was priced at $249, yet the storage had been expanded to 120GB.

Moreover, many more options are available for iPod customers. Apple has expanded the iPod to include a variety of devices, catering to more diverse desires of its clientele. For instance, the nano offers smaller storage space (8GB or 16GB) at a reduced rate ($149 or $199). The shuffle is a further extreme, available in 1GB ($49) and 2GB ($69) models with no screen. The Classic, as mentioned above, closely resembles the original iPod but has greatly expanded its hard drive. Color screens, video playback, and photo storage and viewing are all standard features of new iPods (both nano and Classic) that were not included on the original model. The iPhone extends the versatility of the iPod by employing a touch screen interface with cellular, Bluetooth (a localized data sharing system for mobile devices), global positioning (GPS), digital camera, and internet capabilities for $399 (8GB) or $499 (16GB).[4] Finally, the iPod Touch offers the same interface as the iPhone with fewer services (no GPS, Bluetooth, cellular, or digital camera, though it does include internet connectivity), making the price-per-GB significantly cheaper ($229 for 8GB, $299 for 16GB, and $399 for 32GB). Each winter, Apple "refreshes" the generation, usually by simply offering expanded hard drives, but

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[4] Apple is partnered with AT&T cellular service, and AT&T agreed in 2008 to subsidize the cost of iPhones for customers eligible for a phone upgrade. These AT&T customers can purchase an iPhone with a $200 price reduction. The cost of an iPhone also includes the monthly cellular plan purchased through AT&T, which recoups iPhone expenses by restricting users to high-end monthly plans.

occasionally introducing new capabilities, as with the 2004 refresh, which included the first color screens and photo storage and viewing. With each generational upgrade and refresh, the devices available to consumers offer a more efficient use of iPodders' money—and, by extension, time—than previous generations did.

Of course, Apple's generational updates are not conceived as purely goodwill gestures toward consumers. Rather, as with all McDonaldized institutions, the ultimate goal is profit. By selling a slightly new but not jarringly different model each year, Apple entices consumers to purchase new iPods to replace perfectly functioning old ones. Generating excitement over something new yet familiar is made easier by mixing McDonaldized principles with Disneyized ones. In this case, merchandising and theming allow Apple to create an annual narrative that drives consumers to stores and sustains the mp3 market. The mingling of efficiency with merchandising and theming extends beyond the iPod to its accessories, as well.

Bryman defines merchandising as "the promotion of goods in the form of or bearing copyright images and logos, including such products made under license" (2004, 79). While Bryman generally limits his merchandising examples to souvenir goods, the iPod is merchandised differently. Since the iPod is not, obviously, a destination in the sense that a Disney theme park is, then a consumer is not motivated to purchase a souvenir reminder of a visit. Rather, with the iPod, merchandising occurs in the form of non-essential products licensed by Apple for use with the iPod.

These non-essential products begin to expose us to the extent of entanglement of McDonaldization and Disneyization in the iPod, as efficiency, merchandising, and theming all meld into one. Theming, according to Bryman, is "the application of a

narrative to institutions or locations" (2004, 15). The most notable narrative that attaches itself to multiple aspects of the iPod is color. The original iPods, in a variation on the Model T, came in any color you like, so long as the color you like is white. Apple has expanded its color scheme for iPods by offering black and silver models for the Classic (iPhones and Touches are only available in black), and the nano and shuffles are available in a rainbow of pastels. While the iPod colors are relatively new (the first model with color was the 2004 mini, a precursor to today's nano), the pastels have been an integral part of the iPod's marketing campaign from the beginning. When iPods were only white, commercials and billboards featured silhouetted dancers against the vibrant background colors that now shade the nano. The efficiency and consistency of the iPod's palette has created a color narrative that easily distinguishes the iPod and its advertisements from its competitors and extends into iPod merchandise.

A prominent example of efficiently themed merchandising is the iPod sock. Of concern for iPod owners is a way to safely transport their devices. While Apple has offered cases specifically designed for the protection of iPods, many owners were choosing a "home-made" option and carrying their iPods in a sock. In response, Apple now offers the iPod socks, which are small knitted covers with enough elasticity to snugly hug an iPodder's device. A package of six pastel-colored socks with the Apple logo emblazoned on a small tag can be purchased for $29. These carriers share an ideological bond with souvenir t-shirts; an iPod owner can now purchase a "been there, done that" souvenir sock, which should perhaps display the phrase, "My owner went to the Apple store, and all I got was this lousy sock."

Efficiency in merchandising and theming allows for a great deal of predictability for the consumer. By enforcing a fairly rigid color template for production and marketing, by employing pre-existing interfaces for navigating the device, and by adhering to an annual schedule for its generational updates, the iPod offers a sense of comfort through familiarity for its consumers. Even the changes of each generation are predictable; consumers can plan to purchase a new device in August or September of each year, and macrumor.com even keeps the twenty-four hour pulse of the company so that consumers can plan their iPod acquisitions with certainty. This calculable predictability allows the iPod to maintain a dynamic existence whereby it changes each year and continues to dazzle consumers with an appearance of heterogeneity born of homogeneity. In the iPod, McDonaldization and Disneyization have been sufficiently blended so that consumers are able to buy a device with magically new possibilities that is at the same time predictably familiar.

Cyborg iPodders

The term cyborg most often conjures Hollywood images of half-man/half-machine hybrids whose human sides are besieged by the technology that threatens to overtake them—Terminator, Robocop, Darth Vader. The angst experienced by these cyborgs is no coincidence; it is the expression of a specific notion of human identity that cannot exist uncompetitively alongside technology.

This is the crux of Donna Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto," a tract wherein Haraway attempts to positively reclaim the term "cyborg" as a social and political tool in favor of feminism against the status quo. Haraway is not the first to realize the potential

of the cyborg or the hybridity it represents, but her manifesto has enjoyed such far-reaching influence in academia that it requires close attention.

As the term "manifesto" suggests, Haraway's essay is a rallying cry, as she tries to forge a coalition of previously divergent groups. The effort is paradigmatic nation-building: define a common enemy in order to forge unity among disparate groups. In this case, the disparate groups are mainstream feminism and women of color feminism, and the common enemy is the white, heterosexual man. Haraway's goal was to form a feminist coalition with greater inclusion of all women, specifically attempting to smooth the tension that had arisen because of mainstream feminism's paternalistic treatment of women of color feminists.

Haraway invokes the cyborg as a metaphor for dissolving boundaries. As N. Katherine Hayles observes, the cyborg is not simply a human-technological hybrid, but a complete reconstruction of identity (1999, 4), endowing it with nuance that extends its use far beyond the more obvious sci-fi cyborg characters. Haraway illustrates this by identifying multiple sites of hybridity—those that blur the boundaries between human and animal, human and technological, and physical and non-physical. By privileging these hybridities, Haraway at once naturalizes the coalescence of mainstream and women of color feminisms and marks a common enemy. The cyborg, with all of its fuzzy boundaries, is fundamentally opposed to the prevailing notion of self that has characterized Enlightenment and modernity: the liberal humanist subject (LHS). LHS defines the integral self as the mind or soul, leaving the body to be a prosthetic shell whose primary purpose is to guard the internal self but which should never inform one's identity. LHS has allowed for the subhuman treatment of, for example, women and

people of color, who have primarily been described by their "natural," "tribal," or "animalistic" urges. Haraway's cyborg is a call for the embrace of hybridity, of the body and all that it touches (including technology), in order to form a broader coalition and claim a subjectivity that radically confronts LHS.

The iPod provides a site of human-technological hybridity. iPodders insert headphones into their ears, then plug in to a world of music and multimedia, not unlike the many listeners of previous generations attending to Walkmen or even early phonographs. The iPod, in this instance, is not the first to offer this particular kind of cyborg identity; its large hard drive and powerful battery simply intensify the human-technological hybridity.

Blurred subjectivity extends beyond just the technological. The iPod has primarily functioned as a medium for music, which is itself a site of subjective hybridity. A central tenet of ethnomusicology is that by studying the music a culture produces, we may uncover information about the culture itself; we may even trace musical referents back to histories and memories that have been lost or forgotten (de Jong 2003). The influx of cultural studies practices in musicology, as well as hermeneutic modes of listening, are each extensions of the belief that music functions in part as a receptacle for both individual and collective identities, that people tend to inscribe themselves into their music. Considering the wireless, cellular, and Bluetooth capabilities the iPod now possesses, it becomes an extension not only of ears and bodies, but of one's identity, as well.

Cyborg theory is particularly interested in what form information is articulated. By embracing the body and extensions of it, cyborg and posthuman scholars affirm the

importance of information's materiality. A song, for example, is experienced differently depending on whether it is heard through headphones, in a recital hall, through powerful high fidelity (hi-fi) speakers, or "in one's head" while reading a score. While such differences may seem obvious, LHS often flattens these varied instances in favor of a single, unified notion of a "work," privileging more abstract qualities of music over the immediacy of the medium.

Returning to marketing procedures, the iPod, which is a device that stores and plays back music, is most often advertised as if it were music itself. Billboards feature not the details of storage space or playback capabilities, but freeze-frames of dancing silhouettes, while commercials can allow those silhouettes movement to a soundtrack, as if iPods were inherently musical. The task at hand is to focus on the medium—the material form that transmits the music—in order to best understand the iPod's roles, both positive and negative, in the musical experience. Cyborg hybridity can be a powerful tool for reconstructing identity, but it is not always used to that end, as popular culture's depiction of psychologically tortured cyborgs displays.

Irrationality and Control

Weber and Ritzer are each careful to highlight the darker side of rationality. Inherent in any rationalized system is a set of irrationalities, most abhorrent in the form of dehumanization, which Ritzer and Weber understand as the blurring of the line between thinking, feeling subjects and senseless, inanimate objects. In other words, the cyborg is for Ritzer and Weber the paragon of irrationality. Rationalization, because it is the singular pursuit of a goal, can only concern itself with humanity or the well-being of

employees or consumers when that concern will enable it to better attain its goal. Ritzer

and Weber both argue that rationalized goals are often fashioned in a way that makes

concern for humanity a luxury the system cannot afford.

The idea of irrationality can be rather broadly applied, but some obvious

examples of dehumanization may help. Fast food corporations offer the rationalized

efficiency of large quantities of food for relatively low prices, but the effects can be

devastating to their patrons, as the food often contains dangerously unhealthy quantities

of fats and sugars.[5] In wartime, a nation seeks the rationalized goal of victory, which

easily leads to the development of a technology, such as the nuclear bomb, that can kill

the maximum number of people at one time (Ritzer 2000, 76). And the most heinous and

oft-cited of rationalized institutions, the Holocaust, sought as its very goal the

annihilation of an entire ethnicity (Ritzer 2000, 26-28).

In each case, the well-being of humanity is traded for the desired end, whether it

be money, power, or both, and technology is deployed to ensure the most efficient

attainment of that goal. Though Ritzer cites a litany of irrationalities associated with

each McDonaldized principle, dehumanization is most closely associated with control

(through nonhuman technology), whereby a rationalized institution like McDonald's uses

nonhuman technology to dictate a person's actions (for instance, the design of a drive

thru window ensures a standard ordering procedure). The control principle becomes

Ritzer's favorite bludgeoning tool for questioning rationalization, and it casts a gloomy

shadow over his entire project.

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[5] Morgan Spurlock's 2004 documentary *Supersize Me* rather effectively makes this point. Ritzer repeatedly highlights the unhealthiness of McDonald's food in *McDonaldization*.

A Ritzerian reading of the iPod according to the control principle would read something like this. Apple releases periodic updates for the iPod, ostensibly to maintain its compatibility with newer versions of its software counterpart, iTunes. As it turns out, however, the iPod has been configured to shut down if it is not kept up-to-date, which allows Apple to combat hacker software. For example, the iPod is designed to receive music from iTunes or some other music management software, but it cannot transfer its songs to any other hard drive, which is meant to protect record labels from having their catalogues freely shared from iPod to iPod. iPodders, of course, quickly learned to program software add-ons that would circumvent this restriction, allowing files to be transferred from an iPod to a computer. Each Apple software update, however, would target the most popular hacking software and disable it. While hackers could learn new ways around the restrictions, the disheartening blow of having one's hard work turned obsolete within a matter of months proved powerful enough to mostly choke off this avenue of hacking.

This would be doubly irrational, if we follow Ritzer. The iPodder is not only tethered to a technological device—an internet-ready computer—but also beholden to the capitalist goals of the rationalized record industry. The restrictions placed on the iPod by Apple's software updates dictates the ways users interact with the device, and the control of the human by the technological signals the irrationality inherent to any rationalized system.

I would like to challenge this particular reading of the iPod and Ritzer's notion of irrationality in general, and my critique rests on a notion of technological control that does not always yield irrationality. When Ritzer describes control (through nonhuman

technology) as fundamentally dehumanizing, he relies on the LHS configuration of humanity, where one's identity cannot be dependent on technology without compromising the mind/soul's integrity. Ritzer's case is made easily, as the assumption that technology threatens humanity—crystallized by much science fiction, political debate, and music—enjoys primacy in popular thought. If, however, one were to proceed from a cyborg notion of identity, where one's identity is already unproblematically fragmented and hybrid, then the dependence on an internet connection to update one's iPod becomes innocuous. Apple, in fact, produces and markets the iPod primarily for consumers who are already plugged into a cybernetic world and who construct identities across MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and the blogosphere, among many other social networking sites.[6] The iPod becomes one more node in a matrix of uncompetitive technologies.

As for the citation of the Holocaust as the most irrational of irrationalities, some perspective is necessary. Ritzer's (and many other critics of rationalization who routinely mention the Holocaust) main point is worthwhile: rationalized institutions, whether governments or corporations, often disregard the basic humanity of their customers, workers, or citizens. But the Holocaust should not be too facilely invoked, whether in the discussion of the iPod or McDonald's. While corporations are guilty of a variety of dehumanizing practices, many of which Ritzer discusses, ethnic cleansing typically occurs at the hands of corrupt governments. We should be able to honestly confront the dehumanizing practices of corporations—even the ones that are directly tied to corrupt governments—without invoking the slippery slope that descends into the Holocaust. And

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[6] Social networking sites allow users to create a page where they post information about themselves. This information is then available to others (with varying levels of privacy), creating a virtual world of communication.

to the extent that either technology or rationalized processes inform our understanding of atrocities like the Holocaust, neither should be fingered as the primary culprit. In other words, other uses of similar technologies or organizational processes should not be assumed to lead inevitably to the same disastrous ends.

Invoking cyborg theory does not, of course, ultimately undo Ritzer's reading of technological irrationalities; it does, however, illuminate the assumptions informing his reading in a way that allows for the consideration of alternate, less technophobic interpretations. I am not arguing that the iPod is free from dehumanizing irrationalities. The record industry's insistence on a definition of legal ownership that cuts against the overwhelming use of "illegal" file-sharing networks robs consumers of moral agency, of the ability to debate and form an ethical consensus, and Apple certainly promulgates this irrational resistance to a reconsideration of "property." What I am arguing is that the iPod is not irrational simply because it is a piece of technology that becomes entwined with its consumers.

Sponges and Viruses, with Efficiency (Again) and Performative Labor

In 1991, Apple Corps, the record company that owns the rights to much of the Beatles' catalogue, and Apple Computer reached an agreement regarding each company's use of apple-related logos. Included in this agreement (section 1.3) was the demarcation of Apple Corps's field of use for the logo to include "any current or future creative work whose principal content is music and/or musical performances" (Mann 2006, 6-1.3). In a lawsuit heard in March and April 2006, Apple Corps accused Apple Computer of breaching this agreement, specifically in Apple Computer's use of its logo

in conjunction with the iTunes Music Store (ITMS). This use, Apple Corps claimed, allowed Apple Computer to maintain "a competitive advantage by more effectively integrating the entire end-to-end music solution, including the hardware (iPod), software (iTunes), and music content (iTunes Music Store)" (51). Justice Edward Mann ruled that Apple Computer's use of its apple logo in conjunction with ITMS was fair, comparing the logo used on the interface of ITMS to a logo at any record store where a consumer might purchase a CD, and concluding that a "reasonable and sensible user" would not confuse Apple Computer's logo with the content of the music that is being sold (89).

Whatever the legal ruling regarding the separation of iPod and music content, however, the reality is that Apple Computer certainly does intend for the line between listening device and music to be blurred. Without music or video, an iPod is lifeless, yet Apple has sold no iPod to date that comes with music or video already on it (a fact that may partially explain why Mann could be fooled); these are add-ons to be purchased by the consumer. Trademark cases are often concerned with the protection of a product's image, and the iPod offers a double-meaning of "image" that will help illuminate the ways the iPod functions as both music and medium.

The first meaning is image-as-product. That is, iPodders are intended to perceive the music *in* their iPods as part of the iPods themselves. The McDonaldization principle of efficiency returns to inform us here. One component of efficiency is what Ritzer calls "putting the customer to work," whereby a company saves itself labor wages by forcing the customer to do necessary work, such as putting fast-food trash in the cans on the way out the door (Ritzer 2000, 62-82). Putting the customer to work functions as an efficiency compromise, where a company is able to save itself time and money by forcing the

consumer to do some of the work, but the consumer still experiences efficiency (after all,

eating at home requires both cooking *and* cleaning).

Apple puts the customer to work by selling its iPod as music (we will return to

this momentarily) but placing the music component in the consumer's hands. Apple

saves the enormous time and wages it would require to sell customized iPods, and

because of the pervasiveness of McDonaldized principles, most iPodders will not find

this extra work strange. In fact, because of the success of the marketing principles we are

about to examine, many will prefer the control that is gained from doing the work

themselves. Maintenance is also largely a do-it-yourself facet of iPod ownership.

Software updates that help keep the iPod at full functionality are deployed through

iTunes, and the consumer is responsible for plugging in to iTunes to receive the update.

The second meaning is image-as-lifestyle. This latter meaning is a bit more

complicated, and the willingness of the consumer to do the work mentioned above is

often dependent upon this image-as-lifestyle.

Naomi Klein, in discussing some of the shifts (especially in the '90s) from

product-focused to brand-focused marketing, mentions 'cultural sponge' brands like

Absolut Vodka, for which advertisements show an empty bottle superimposed atop a

cultural setting appropriate for its target audience (Klein 2000, 17).[7] iPod billboards

function in much the same way. The consumer is confronted by a dancing silhouette

holding an iPod, and the intention is that the consumer's own identity and music will be

projected onto the silhouette and iPod. With very little effort, Apple is able to carry

'sponge' advertising to an extreme Absolut does not, by allowing its ads to soak up the

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[7] Klein adduces the following examples: 'intellectual in *Harper's*, futuristic in *Wired*, alternative in *Spin*, loud and proud in *Out* and "Absolut Centerfold" in *Playboy*.'

cultural background of whomever is viewing them. This principle is less available for television commercials, which often feature a band playing in the background to dancing silhouettes. Still, the use of either "underground" or classic, mainstream bands tends to diffuse any specific cultural or aesthetic identification, and, again, the use of silhouettes allows the viewer to be soaked up by the dancing ads, at the intersection with the Disneyized principle of performative labor.

Bryman defines performative labor as "the rendering of work by managements and employees alike as akin to a theatrical performance in which the workplace is construed as similar to a stage" (Bryman 2004, 103). Understanding the McDonaldized efficiency component of putting the customer to work, we can play with Bryman's definition a bit and include consumers in the theatrical performance. And Klein's "sponge" advertising has already demonstrated how the consumer joins in the performance. The iPod posits two kinds of images—music (via production) and lifestyle (via marketing)—through its advertisements, and the consumer must first perform labor before achieving the lifestyle performance the ads promise. To keep the iPod updated with music requires repeated sessions of work by the consumer, all in the service of achieving whatever performative lifestyle is perceived by the viewer in the "sponge" ads.

Klein offers one more idea that completes this particular McDonaldized-Disneyized circle. Klein describes Starbucks and the Body Shop as "virus" advertisers, who employ a variety of branding options—"cultural sponsorship, political controversy, the consumer experience and brand extensions"—in a manner that allows the brand to attach itself to multiple "carriers" and then transfer to others as it becomes increasingly pervasive (Klein 2000, 20). Again, Apple has simplified this marketing process, as the

iPod transforms its consumers into walking (or dancing) "sponge" billboards, with the intent that others will notice an iPodder's white ear buds and become "infected" with their own projection of music and lifestyle. Through a combination of McDonaldized and Disneyized principles, the cyborg iPodder becomes both advertiser and consumer.

Calculating and Googling Genre

Beyond the cyborg identity of those who consume the iPod, the music transmitted by the iPod can also be fragmented and hybridized. The shuffle feature is based in part on the McDonaldized principle of calculability, the act of "calculating, counting, and quantifying" (Ritzer 2000, 62). Apple, in an effort to maximize the iPod's quantity, has redefined the consumer's concept of musical units. While singles have long been a part of the music industry, the trend of the last thirty years has been to measure artist success by album sales and to speak of an artist's output in terms of album production. Apple, however, has helped reinvigorate the single in an effort to exponentially increase the iPod's capacity. For instance, the first generation iPod, with a capacity of 5 gigabytes (GB), was marketed as being able to hold 1,000 songs, while 2008's iPod Classic (120GB) holds 30,000 songs. Compare this to roughly 100 albums for the first generation, and 3,000 for the iPod Classic, and one finds that Apple has increased storage space simply by redefining the musical unit. This redefinition operates in tandem with one of the iPod's most popular features—the shuffle, which randomizes all of the songs contained on the iPod and functions similarly to internet search engines.

The earliest internet search engines were built around the notion of ontology—an information science term (not to be confused with the branch of philosophy that bears the

same name) that describes the "essence and relations among a group of items" (Shirky 2005). For instance, Yahoo! At first forced users to choose an ontological category, such as "Entertainment," within which one would pose a search query. Then, along came Google.

Google realized that Yahoo! Was borrowing its need for ontology from other familiar categorical locales, such as libraries. But, as Clay Shirky explains, the primary goal of a library's ontology is to manage space. Since one can only remember where roughly one hundred physical objects are at a time, a library must find a way to assemble its numerous books so that they can be easily retrieved. Not so with the internet. When searching the internet, one is searching a world of collapsed physical space, and Google's decentralized search system relieves the constraints of ontology (Shirky 2005).

In much the same way that the internet collapses the physical space of ideas, the iPod collapses the abstract space of music. When I choose the shuffle feature on my iPod menu, I hear a mix of classical, hip hop, rock, punk, and jazz, as the iPod decentralizes the ontological distinctions that define genres. Furthermore, when I do label a song in my iPod with a genre tag, I have complete control over the process. Therefore, Radiohead's "Idioteque" could be filed under a label as broad as "rock" or as contingent as "songs I used to listen to to fall asleep from May-June of 2002." Here the identity of songs and genre categories are as decentralized as internet search engines, as cyborg identity resides at both ends of the iPod.

Hybrid Consumption and Art Media

The iPod itself behaves according to cyborg identity constructions, blurring the distinction between art and artistic medium. As already noted, the iPod is produced and marketed as music, even though it really is a music storage and playback device. One might say, to make it clearer, that the iPod "is" music. That is, we realize that the iPod is not actually music, but we also allow that it functions *as if it were* music.

Arthur Danto, in his definition of art, posits that all representational works of art require an "is of artistic identification." That is, one may accurately say that the *Mona Lisa* is a woman with the trace of a smile across her face. This use of the word *is* is not strictly correct, as the *Mona Lisa* is, really, a combination of various colors of paint that combine to give a *representation* of a woman. Yet, the first use of *is*—the one that allows that the painting is a woman—is not considered odd. We use this whenever we speak of art in general. Beyond representational art, interpretations depend for their very existence upon the "is of artistic identification." In this way, a urinal *is* a fountain. The "is of artistic identification" allows one to speak of the deeper ontological status of artworks without continuously requiring qualifying remarks (Danto 1981, 126-27).

Now, Danto is also careful to point out, as I would like to be here, that we use this special meaning of *is* in other areas of life, as well. The most enlightening example may be a child at play: "Consider the way in which a child can play with a stick: it can be a horse, a spear, a gun, a doll, a wall, a boat, a plane; it is a universal toy" (Danto 1981, 127-28). So it is that not everything that utilizes this special use of *is* will be a work of art. However, according to the Dantan view, all works of art will use the "is of artistic

identification." What about the iPod? Is the use of *is* in the sentence, "The iPod is music," indicative of the iPod's blurring of the line between music and musical medium?

Returning to Bryman and Klein will help answer this question. Bryman gives us the Disneyized principle of hybrid consumption, which is "the general trend whereby the forms of consumption associated with different institutional spheres become interlocked with each other and increasingly difficult to distinguish" (2004, 57). One aspect of hybrid consumption can be seen in the corporate entanglement in which the iPod operates. Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, is also CEO of Pixar Animations, a company which trades publicly, but in which Apple owns the largest stake. Pixar and Disney are currently partners in computer-animated movies, with Pixar creating the movies and Disney marketing them. A Disneyized conglomeration (or, in this case, partnership) uses each of its media outlets, product markets, and entertainment offerings to hawk seemingly unrelated products. Disney and Pixar each offer corporate images centered around entertainment, and a consumer who participates in one Disney or Pixar product, wittingly or not, participates in a plethora of others, spanning all of Disney's and Apple's (via Pixar) subsidiaries. One of the most recent and hybridized instances of this cross-product image is the use of the lower-case "i," which has become the recognizable iPod logo, as the logo for the super heroes in Pixar's 2004 animated movie, *The Incredibles*. The world of the iPod and the world of *The Incredibles* become ideologically hybridized to the point that a consumer of one is also, indirectly, a consumer of the other.

This is not the only example of hybridization that occurs with the iPod, however. In its endeavor to become whatever cultural icon its consumers want it to be, the iPod, through its "sponge" advertising, becomes entangled with whatever music is downloaded

onto it. The line between the iPod itself and the music it plays becomes less distinguishable via Disneyization's hybrid consumption.

Further, the iPod subverts expectations of brand behavior. Klein highlights the ways in which corporate brands began pervading everyday life in the '90s via sponsorship. This is a fairly easy concept to recognize, as most large-scale events or places—from news programs to sports arenas to summer concert tours—are sponsored. In fact, says Klein, "we become collectively convinced not that corporations are hitching a ride on our cultural and communal activities, but that creativity and congregation would be impossible without their generosity" (2000, 35). In other words, corporate sponsorship validates consumers' daily activities. With this understanding of sponsorship, one may very well expect the iPod to be the sponsor of something, whether it be a band, a concert tour, or some other such event, place, or collective. But this is not the case. Rather, the iPod is itself sponsored.

As mentioned above, some iPod commercials feature the music of classic bands or artists, among them Eminem, Paul McCartney, and U2.[8] In the commercials that feature these artists, the iPod is not endorsing or sponsoring these artists, but, rather, these artists are *endorsing and sponsoring the iPod*. What one might have come to expect from a medium for music is that it would endorse art, but the iPod subverts that expectation, setting itself up as sponsored and using artists in the place of corporate sponsorship. Here standardized marketing roles have been entirely inverted.

By producing and advertising itself as music, by becoming hybridized with the music that is loaded onto it, and by inverting expectations of corporate sponsorship, the

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[8] In 2004, iPod even released a black-and-red U2 iPod, which came with a gift certificate for downloading a U2 compilation from iTunes.

iPod's use of the "is of artistic identification" increasingly resembles the one used in the artistic sense. The line separating music and musical medium has been transgressed to the point that reference to one is reference to the other, and whether in reference to iPodders, the music the iPod transmits, or the iPod itself, iPod identity is consistently constructed according to cyborg principles.

Who *Is* Mike Jones?

As I have already mentioned, and as Ritzer demonstrates, cyborg identity is not always embraced. While the previous examples have focused primarily on broad categories of listeners and music, as well as the inanimate iPod itself, I would like to close with a case study of a recording artist in an iPod world. While each listener may embrace or reject cyborg identity construction to differing degrees, making generalizations about iPodders' subjectivity difficult to project, my analysis has privileged cyborg subjectivity. I would like to balance that bias with the example of Mike Jones.

The story of Bach encoding his name into the unfinished fugue that lies at the end of *The Art of the Fugue* is a familiar one. Why he chose to inscribe his name in a piece of music is not certainly known, but one plausible explanation is that a composer at the end of his life, who lived in an age that had not yet begun erecting altars before its great composers, felt an anxiety about mortality and desire for immortality that he attempted to seize with a fugue. It was a death act; Bach never finished the fugue, dying as he fragmented his identity into his final composition.

Meet Mike Jones. Mike Jones is a rapper from Houston who released his first major studio album in 2005. At the time when most of the songs for the album *Who Is Mike Jones* were written, the iPod still featured a greyscale screen with no pictures. In other words, Mike Jones's music would be consumed via the iPod in a manner that left only his name on the screen—no pictures, no Thank Yous in the liner notes. Mike Jones found himself in an uncannily similar predicament to Bach, realizing that, in order to ensure an adequate acknowledgement of *who* he is, he had to inscribe his identity into his music. Hence, *Who Is Mike Jones* features 16 songs in which Mike Jones tells us his name 58 times, his phone number (281-330-8004) 14 times, the album name 12 times, and his website address (whomikejones.com) twice.

Of course, a rapper obsessed with his name is nothing new. Snoop Dogg has been asking his listeners to say his name (in all of its various forms) since *Doggystyle* (1993); Dr. Dre's first two singles from his comeback album *2001* both incorporate his name in the title and the song—"Still D-R-E" and "Forgot about Dre"; and Jay-Z 's alter-ego's name, Hova, shows up repeatedly in his catalogue. The difference between these three, who are a mere sample of self-referential (or, more to the point, self-reverential) rappers, and Mike Jones is that the latter is the only one who seems worried that we might not already know his name.

Take, for instance, Snoop Dogg's "Who Am I (What's My Name?)" from *Doggystyle*. Snoop manages to introduce himself to his new fans—this is, after all, his debut solo album—in a completely self-confident manner. He crafts the chorus of his song around an exchange akin to sexual liaison kinky-speak, asking "What's my motherfuckin' name?" and being obligatorily answered by a flock of female voices,

"Snoop Doggy Dogg." He wants to make sure everyone remembers his name, and he imprints it on listeners' minds in a way that leaves no doubt that it is Snoop who dominates this encounter.

Mike Jones's self-references often invert Snoop's form. Instead of asking who he is and being answered, Mike Jones tells us his name, only to be answered with, "Who?" as in the first big hit from *Who Is Mike Jones*, "Still Tippin'," where his posturing cannot cover the insecurity laid bare when he must repeat his name: "I'm Mike Jones—Who?— Mike Jones/The one and only/You can't clone me/Gotta lotta haters/And a lotta homies/Some friends/And some phonies." Mike Jones finds himself, in this instance, in a dominated and compromising position that is completely foreign to Snoop, Jay-Z, and Dre. Whereas Jay-Z speaks of himself in third person and Snoop and Dre write songs that revolve around their names, Mike Jones is left to write his name into songs that seem to resist its presence. Time and again, Mike Jones's name is answered with "Who?" or he repeats a line that includes his name or phone number, as if perhaps no one was paying close enough attention the first time. The desperation with which he repeats his name, URL, number, and album leaves us to wonder for whose sake he does so—ours or his?

Mike Jones presents himself as a cyborg; he is a combination of his name, his cell phone, his website, and digital music files. But he presents himself as such quite uncomfortably. Instead of joining uncompetitively with these various technologies, Mike Jones struggles to maintain his integral subjectivity in *Who Is Mike Jones*, betraying a technological angst that is still able to thrive even amidst the inflection of a cyborg identity. From within his cyborg matrix, Mike Jones anxiously and obsessively reminds his listeners—and perhaps more importantly, himself—who he is.

Conclusion

McDonaldization and its progeny, Disneyization, provide unique hermeneutic windows through which we can glimpse social products. The iPod, as demonstrated by the shuffle feature and Mike Jones, alters the way we listen to and produce music. It also, however, is shaped by cultural norms that existed long before it, such as those that make McDonaldized and Disneyized institutions successful. The iPod both shapes and is shaped by the culture within which it functions.

To best understand how iPodders construct their identities, I have employed cyborg subjectivity, a reimagining of humanity that existed long before the iPod, in snapshots of identity construction in relation to the iPod. In this way, the iPod is positioned at the intersection of production and consumption principles, and it is positioned as both the ancestor and arbiter of cultural norms. Like cyborg posthumanity itself, the nature of iPod identity is not yet determined. The iPod can be the locus of a subjective angst that rehearses the values of LHS, or it can become a constructive proving ground for cyborg identity. As Hayles encourages her readers at the end of her posthuman project, the challenge is "to contest what the [iPod] means…before the trains of thought it embodies have been laid down so firmly that it would take dynamite to change them" (291). In the case of the iPod, finding ourselves at the crossroads of production and consumption models, as well as entwined with music technology, the task is to imagine the ways identity can be constructed outside the strictures of LHS.

Chapter 2: I'm an i.P.o.d: Technological Angst and Embodied Posthumanism

The opening sequence of 50 Cent's 2003 "P.I.M.P. (Remix)" features 50 in a

bedroom of all-white décor, surrounded by three women who are themselves sporting

various stages of all-white (un)dress. 50's wearing white, too. The first shot pans from

his white tennis shoes up to his face as the credits—"50 Cent," "G-Unit," "Snoop

Dogg"—appear on the screen. We hear faintly, as if it is coming from another room, the

Denaun Porter (aka Kon Artist) beat that drives the song. The muffling of the beat, as

well as the fact that we catch it somewhere in the middle of the song, immediately

destabilizes the viewing experience. Order returns as the song begins properly just after

the camera finds 50's face. 50, though, is not the star of this shot. His face remains

fuzzy because the camera focuses on what 50 holds in his hand: his iPod.

The iPod unifies the entire exposé, as we realize that it is the source of both the

muffled "P.I.M.P." beat and the uniformity of color. As the song continues director Chris

Robinson interrupts the bedroom scene with occasional shots of women dancing and

eventually stripping in front of 50.[9] In the bedroom shots, Robinson constructs a loose

narrative through a string of quick cuts. 50 chooses a song on his iPod before taking his

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[9] In the edited version, which is what appears on cable television, the bedroom sequence is
interspersed with 50 rapping in what looks like a private library or smoking lounge.

earbuds out and wrapping them around it for easy portability. Meanwhile, the women caress his arms and chest and bring him his shirt, at which point they all leave together.

The iPod in this video has moved far beyond listening device and has fused itself with 50. The song he is hearing in his earbuds becomes the song of the music video, and the iPod's color is spread to his entire environment. Robinson highlights the fusion of man and machine by juxtaposing images of the iPod with images of 50's body, sometimes close up so that all we see are women's hands on his skin, other times in wider view so that we see a mute 50 plugged into his iPod with women doting over him. In a song in which 50 brags that although he has "no Cadillacs, no perms, you can [still] see" that he is a "mothafuckin P.I.M.P.," the visual message is clear: the iPod is an integral part of 50's pimpness.

The sort of fusion we encounter with 50 and his iPod is part of a long history of aural and visual representations of man-plus-machine in music. "P.I.M.P. (Remix)" clearly embraces this blend, but music's landscape is also littered with resistance to the encroachment of the technological on the human.

The 1965 Newport Folk Festival was the site of one of the most fabled incidents of resistance to technology. On July 25 Bob Dylan, the toast of the previous two Newport Festivals, took the stage backed by the Paul Butterfield Blues Band along with Al Kooper and Barry Goldberg, ready to perform a set of "electric" versions of his songs. What followed has become legend.

The traditional (though not necessarily definitive) account of the short set details jeering, booing, and catcalling from the audience, a horrified collective of hippies who

could not stand the sight of their folk hero leading an electric band. Backstage, Pete Seeger expressed his desire for an ax with which he could disconnect the band's electricity. After only three songs, Dylan and his back-up band were chased from the stage by the crowd's continued negativity, and the singer only achieved a modicum of atonement when announcer Peter Yarrow (of Peter, Paul, and Mary) coaxed him back to the stage for two acoustic numbers.

While booing Bob Dylan seems nearly unfathomable now, we must consider the context. In the midst of a Cold War (with the attendant specter of nuclear fallout and the recent loss of Kennedy), a Hot War (with the attendant reality of gruesome technologies like Agent Orange and Napalm), and a Culture War (fought against the heavily produced sounds of both the British Invasion and Motown), the idea of trading the authenticity[10] of acoustic folk for electric rock, for allowing an anti-war movement to be infected with the same technologies that enable war, could be understandably frightening. Booing Electric Dylan in this milieu, then, seems natural.

More than forty years later, however, when our advanced technologies are understood to protect us against our perceived techno-nascent enemies, when 50 Cent marries his self with his iPod, and when *Unplugged* really means "turned down," an electric guitar toting Bob Dylan now maintains something of a grandfatherly persona as a reminder of a more innocent time. The thought of booing Electric Dylan seems absurd.

I am not arguing, however, that the difference between an angry Newport audience and a posthuman 50 Cent is the result of a direct linear progression of ideology over time, where we simply have become more comfortable with all forms of technology.

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[10] Here, Alan Lomax's influence on the folk revival is particularly important, as Lomax defines authentic folk music as that which "is sung without expectation of remuneration," with electric guitars symbolizing financially-motivated pop genres (Barker and Taylor 2007, 63).

Rather, each one represents distinct points in our shifting relationships with technology. At times, we fear the encroachment of technology; at other times, we embrace and celebrate it.

Daniel Dinello tracks posthumanism, the tension between the human and the technological, in science fiction in his book *Technophobia* by positing two extremes: "the techno-utopia promised by real-world scientists and the techno-dystopia predicted by science fiction" (2005, 2). For Dinello, science fiction is a locus of resistance to the religion of technology, and its goal is to use fantasy worlds to expose the nastier effects of technology in the lived world.

The techno-utopia envisioned by the scientists Dinello wishes to take to task involves the eventual discarding of human bodies in exchange for a self digitized and downloaded onto a computer. This techno-transcendence appropriates the language and ideology of religious afterlife, promising an immortality that is far better than any biological state. Instead of a Christian rapture, techno-utopians await what Raymond Kurzweil has termed "the Singularity"—the point at which evolution achieves "an immortal man-machine synthesis" (Dinello 2005, 4).

In popular music, this sort of dehumanization is represented by Gorillaz, an animated pop band whose music is created by former Blur frontman Damon Albarn and whose images are rendered by comic artist Jamie Hewett. On each album, Albarn works with DJs/producers to create a crossover sound that incorporates both rock and hip hop elements, and Hewett animates videos and "live" performances that feature the fictional members of the band—2D, Noodle, Russel, and Murdoc. None of the characters bear a

particular resemblance to their creators, and Albarn and Hewett are completely absent from any videos or performances. Instead, they have allowed themselves to be subsumed into the technological trappings of their creation. While this is not a particularly odd move for a cartoonist, who is always an invisible entity, Albarn sacrifices his body to the animated band in an otherwise image-centered music business.

The counterpoint to techno-utopia is science fiction's techno-dystopia, a vision of the future that incorporates present technologies and future possibilities in a critical manner. The recurring theme in science fiction portrays the consumption of humans by their technologies, from Frankenstein's Monster to Neo's Matrix. Science fiction feeds on

> fears of being transformed or taken over by machines. These fears are amplified by military and corporate funding of emerging technology, ensuring life-threatening and profit-making developments without regard to ethical or human consequences (Dinello 2005, 6).

Dinello posits these antinomies as an opportunity to champion the work performed by science fiction, saying that his main premise is that "science fiction matters, that the actual development of technology and our response (or lack of response) to it are influenced by popular culture" (5). While Dinello focuses primarily on the literary and cinematic output of popular culture, we can quite easily commandeer his thesis to fit popular music, as well.

Using Dinello's descriptions, we can set up our own duality between 50 Cent and the Newport audience. Here, 50 embodies the techno-utopian, having downloaded himself—his song—onto a computer in order to be transmitted further and wider than his biological body would allow. The Newport audience is the point of resistance to technology, vocalizing a fear of consumption.

Consumption, in this case, is a particularly fitting word, as Dinello returns us to a key component of rationalized society: "profit-making developments without regard to ethical or human consequences" (6). The audience at Newport did not boo because they were all thinking about the potential for humanity to turn into a collection of pod people, disembodied and uniform—at least, not immediately. Rather, the Newport audience feared that Dylan and all that he represented (which was an entire musical movement) had "sold out," had caved to faddish musical taste in order to achieve a higher level of sales, had traded in the strident moral message of the folk movement for wider popular consumption.

Our vantage point allows us to understand that Dylan's move to electric did not undermine his own message, as he injected his later songs with similar social and political critiques that appeared in his early material. This does not mean, however, that the Newport audience's fears were not legitimate. In fact, many would point to 50 Cent as a demonstration of the corruption of a music business interested in nothing more than profit.

50 is almost exclusively interested in drugs, sex, and violence in his lyrics, and his beats themselves have often featured gunshot sounds ("I'll Still Kill," 2007 and "Heat," 2003) or spinning bullet chambers ("My Gun," 2007). He is the epitome of the gangsta in hip hop, and the ethical consequences of his and other gangsta rappers' popularity are frequent points of debate in the media. Bill O'Reilly, for whom hip hop is, as Bakari Kitwana puts it, a "favorite whipping boy," has taken shots at Cam'ron, Snoop Dogg, and Nas for content and imagery quite similar to 50's (Kitwana 2005, 13). Rather than slow

sales, however, the gangsta nature of 50's content fuels his popularity, as he has achieved astronomical numbers in the opening week of each of his first three releases—872,000 for *Get Rich or Die Tryin* (2003), 1.14 million for *The Massacre* (2005), and 691,000 for *Curtis* (2007) (Whitmire 2005 and Mayfield 2007).

50, then, is the site of two consumptions. The first is the consumption of the human by the technological, and the second is the consumption of the artist by his public. 50's iPod, as it turns out, is the fulcrum; it consumes his humanness and spits him back out for his fans. For the Newport audience the two consumptions would seem inextricably bound: to be more popular is to become less human, and to be less human is to become more popular. Of course, such thinking did not originate with Newport concert-goers.

Noël Carroll, in his book *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, tracks a history of philosophical resistance to mass art.[11] Carroll attributes the rejection of mass art by the likes of Robin Collingwood, Theodor Adorno, and Max Horkheimer, among others, to a misapplication of Kant's theory of free beauty to a theory of art. Because of this misuse of Kantian aesthetics, philosophers notice

> that mass art is formulaic; that, in certain pertinent respects, the response to mass art is easy; that mass art is not autonomous; that mass artworks are not often striking for their uniqueness and particularity; that mass art neither necessarily elicits the Kantian free play of the faculties (in the strictest, most technical sense of that concept), nor does it border on any other realm of freedom; and so on (1998, 106).

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[11] Carroll distinguishes mass art from popular art, saying that '[m]ass art, unlike popular art *simpliciter*, is not the sort of art that might be found in any society. It emerges in a historical context, namely mass society. And it is art that is designed to serve mass society by using the means of that society—mass technologies—as a way of performing this service' (1998, 186). According to this distinction, then, what we are talking about here is actually mass music instead of popular music, but I will maintain the 'popular' designation when not discussing Carroll.

All of these observations force Kantian aestheticians to declare mass artwork deficient. What concerns us, though, is how this deficiency also has its roots in the technological aspects of popular music.

Adorno has produced what is perhaps the most infamous of anti-popular art screeds, "On Jazz," which has unfortunately become his calling card in the non-musicological world. In a different essay, "On Popular Music," Adorno describes the standardization of popular music in mechanical terms. In describing the predictability of pop tunes, Adorno suggests that a listener needs no specific context and can enjoy a song without having to start at the beginning, "supply[ing] the "framework" automatically, since it is a mere musical automatism itself" (2002, 439). The popular song, then, is a robotic form that forces its composers into a predictable routine, with each detail "a cog in the machine" (440). Moreover, even "bad serious music" is described by Adorno as "rigid and mechanical," as the specters of technology further haunt the insufficiencies of music he has deemed lacking (441).

To be sure, Adorno does not entirely object to the coupling of technology and music. Recognizing that phonograph records possess "thingness" (an ability to be collected, owned), Adorno concedes that the worth found in the preservation of music afforded by records ultimately outweighs the damage records inflict upon the liveness of musical performance.

> There is no doubt that, as music is removed by the phonograph record from the realm of live production and from the imperative of artistic activity and becomes petrified, it absorbs into itself, in this process of petrification, the very life that would otherwise vanish. The dead art rescues the ephemeral and perishing art as the only one alive. Therein may lie the phonograph record's most profound justification, which cannot be impugned by an aesthetic objection to its reification (2002, 279).

Beyond this touch of ambivalence, Adorno does not offer a glowing endorsement of technological mediation, and he would almost certainly categorize the imagery of 50 Cent's "P.I.M.P. (Remix)" or the displacement of choice allowed by the iPod's shuffle feature as "catastrophic technological progress" (280).

The Newport audience, with perhaps a few exceptions, was not thinking directly of Adorno's warning. Rather, Adorno and the Newport concert-goers shared a similar skepticism regarding technology's dissolution of humanness. But if the Newport crowd was anxious enough about the introduction of technology that they would boo their favorite son, why is 50 unconcerned? To answer this, we should consider what it has traditionally meant to be human.

The human at stake in the tension perceived between the human and the technological is best described as the Liberal Humanist Subject (LHS). N. Katherine Hayles explores posthumanity's relationship to the LHS in her book *How We Became Posthuman*.

The LHS has its roots in the Enlightenment and the urge to conjure a notion of the human that is naturally possessive. That is, the LHS lives only for oneself, owing nothing to anyone, complete with "agency, desire, [and a] will belonging to the self and clearly distinguished from the 'will of others'" (Hayles 1999, 3).

This particular version of the human is exactly what is at stake in Adorno's dialectical sociological writings. For Adorno, the primary tension of the enlightenment resides between self and society, and, by his diagnosis, the self is threatened with elimination by the rationalized machinations of society. Technology, Adorno writes

along with Horkheimer, serves kings—not-to-be trusted governments—making it part of the problem, not the solution: "it is as democratic as the economic system with which it is bound up" (2000, 38), by which the two mean, not very.

A good deal of literature already exists that critiques and rejects the supremacy of the LHS, including Donna Haraway's seminal work on cyborgism in feminist scholarship, her "Cyborg Manifesto" (1991). Bypassing the majority of these critiques and moving directly to one that helps us address the Newport/50 Cent problem, we find Alexander G. Weheliye, whose critique of the racial politics of the LHS echoes some of Haraway's sentiments.

Weheliye charges LHS—and Hayles, for using LHS as her starting point—with privileging a primarily white male experience to the exclusion of "all cultural and political formations in which the history of subjectivity is necessarily yoked to the will—and/or whips and chains—of others" (2002, 24). Because African American humanity is "refracted through the history of slavery," black popular music often projects a subjectivity that "bypass[es] the modality of the human in the process of moving from the subhuman to the posthuman" (24, 29).

In other words, while those who imagine themselves to be LHSs fear the loss of self that technology threatens, black American musicians, Weheliye argues, tend to regard "interpersonal relations and informational technologies as mutually constitutive rather than antithetical foils" (38).

Such a notion is not new, nor is it restricted to the R&B genre Weheliye dissects. Stanley Crouch, discussing the innovative nature of early black jazz musicians, describes African Americans' life experiences as naturally wed to the technological.

Though they had been rebuked and scorned since early in the seventeenth century, theirs too was the world of the recording and the radio broadcast, the printing press and the motion picture, the steel mill and the railroad, the automobile and the cafeteria. They were not only Americans as pure as any others; they were also as modern as anybody else in the twentieth century because part of being modern was responding to life in a modern manner (2004, 127).

Perhaps Weheliye finally gives us the key to understanding the divide separating the Newport audience's outrage and 50 Cent's iPod cyborgism.

50 Cent's first hit was "In Da Club," which featured a video with Six Million Dollar Man imagery wherein 50 is pictured exercising and rapping while being monitored by an array of medical gadgetry overseen by two doctors, Dr. Dre and Eminem, who also observe 50's behavior in a club setting. The video, directed by Phillip Atwell, depicts an evolutionary progression from Dr. Dre to Eminem to 50 Cent. 50's style and persona, we see, are so potent that two hip hop legends want to find out what makes him tick.

Whereas the contemporary R&B Weheliye studies foregrounds technologized voices with cell phone effects (when the singer/rapper's voice sounds as if it is coming from a cell phone) and vocoders (speech synthesizers that make one's voice sound computerized)[12], 50 Cent's unaffected voice cuts across each of his songs. So, while the "P.I.M.P. (Remix)" video suggests that 50's prowess is technologically infused, one finds little unique or obvious evidence of this fact in his music.

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[12] Vocoders have been replaced in most contemporary popular music in favor of the autotuner, a device originally meant to correct subtle pitch discrepancies in studio recordings. When set to a high level, however, the autotuner distorts the voice in a manner similar to the vocoder. Cher used an autotuner in her 1998 'Believe' (often miscredited as a vocoder), and T-Pain's extensive use of an autotuner in most of his songs has spawned a veritable Autotuner Craze in contemporary hip hop and R&B.

At this point, we have wrung as much as we can out of Dinello's duality, held the two extremes apart for as long as possible. The reality is that Dinello constructs a paper tiger by defining posthumanism according to its most extreme proponents. When all of posthumanism is a slippery slope leading to the mass downloading of brains onto computers, resistance seems necessary. Actual posthumanism, however, involves the mingling of both the human and the technological, not the consumption of the former by the latter. Revisiting and reappropriating Weheliye's comments a bit, we can say that posthumanism "imagines interpersonal relations and informational technologies as mutually constitutive rather than antithetical foils" (2002, 38).

Hayles articulates this very point, saying the most important posthuman assumption

> configures human being so that it can be seamlessly articulated with intelligent machines. In the posthuman, there are no essential differences or absolute demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulation, cybernetic mechanism and biological organism, robot teleology and human goals (1999, 3).

The posthuman, then, is two at once, both human and technological.

We should be careful here, however, not to fall prey to Hayles's implication that the successful transition to posthumanism comes from a LHS. Weheliye warns against assuming that "one has to be always already "free from the will of others" (or think that one is) in order to mutate into the fusion of heterogeneous agents comprising the posthuman state of being" (2002, 23). To balance Hayles with Weheliye, we should consider "human" to denote embodiment, so that posthumanism is the mingling of embodiment and, as Hayles puts it, "thinking machines." She elaborates on the notion of embodiment and suggests that the ideal posthuman would be one

that embraces the possibilities of information technologies without being seduced by fantasies of unlimited power and disembodied immortality, that recognizes and celebrates finitude as a condition of human being, and that understands human life is embedded in a material world of great complexity, one on which we depend for our continued survival (Hayles 1999, 5).

Embodiment as human is particularly useful to us because it performs no damage on Hayles's thesis, enfolds concepts that are integral to Weheliye's argument, and provides the key to understanding 50's iPod hybridity.

When 50 and the three women in his bedroom leave his house, they drive to the "Pimp Legion of Doom" for what appears to be some sort of pimp summit, chaired by Snoop Dogg (doing his best Huggy Bear impersonation) and attended by a handful of men in stereotypical blaxploitation pimp attire: brightly colored suits, fur coats, ostentatious jewelry, grills, and feathered hats. 50 has added only a white undershirt and white hat to what he was wearing at the beginning of the video and is obviously out of place visually. Snoop Dogg, who goes by "Big Jeffery" for the skit, introduces 50 by pointing out his dissimilarities, then yields the floor, asking him why he should be inducted into the Pimp Legion of Doom. 50 offers two pieces of evidence: the iPod from the opening scene that is already positioned in front of Snoop and his "magic stick."

"Magic stick," in this instance, refers to three different things. The first is the song of the same title that 50 released with Lil' Kim in 2003 and which would have been well known by the time the "P.I.M.P. (Remix)" video appeared on television.[13] The song is a not-so-subtle ode to sexuality, with 50 and Lil' Kim each taking a verse to chronicle the numerous sexual activities they are willing to do. The chorus varies depending on

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[13] 'Magic Stick' was originally intended for *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, which would have made it 50's song featuring Lil' Kim. Instead, the song found its way to 2003's *La Bella Mafia* as Lil' Kim's song featuring 50 Cent.

which artist sings it; 50 croons about his "magic stick" and Lil' Kim about her "magic clit." The sexual one-upmanship on display in "Magic Stick" is of the same nature as that found in 1998's "Nann" (Trick Daddy with Trina), 2000's "What's Your Fantasy?" (Ludacris with Shawnna, Trina, and Foxy Brown), and 2002's "One Minute Man" (Missy Elliot with Trina and Ludacris).

The second referent of "magic stick" is closely related to the first, and that is 50's own penis. While his apparatus does not actually appear in the video, we are privy to a visual image that, again, sidesteps subtlety. As 50 mentions his magic stick, the camera cuts to the pimp panel as viewed from just behind 50. A bright, golden light emanates from his midsection accompanied by an ethereal choral outburst, and the panel is momentarily blinded.

Finally, we see the third referent of "magic stick," as 50 lifts a serpent-headed cane and the song kicks back in. This concrete referent with its phallic handle ties all three reference points together while also connecting 50 to his pimp predecessors. 50's one vestige of the blaxploitation pimp is his cane, which represents the embodied virility that makes him worthy of induction into the Pimp Legion of Doom despite the differences that otherwise separate him from the panel.

Throughout this exchange, 50's iPod lies on the table just in front of Snoop Dogg. No one mentions the iPod, and, in fact, it lies just at the bottom edge of the close-ups of Snoop. The iPod's near-invisibility, however, does not undermine its significance in the scene. Each time Robinson cuts to a view of the pimp panel from just behind 50's head, the iPod is obscured by the top of 50's hat, visually emphasizing the fusion between thinking machine and thinking human.

Just as "In Da Club" presents a theory of evolution from Dr. Dre and Eminem to 50, so "P.I.M.P." presents a similar progression from Snoop and his pimp brethren to 50. While Snoop and company could be described as posthuman to some degree—they do, after all, identify closely with their Cadillacs (a "Snoop DeVille" in one case)—50 presents a further entanglement of a rapper with his technology.

Just as in the opening sequence, though, 50's technological side is closely linked to his embodiment. In the first scene, we see 50 plugged into his iPod while women fawn over him; in the pimp scene, we view the fusion of mind and iPod while hearing 50 brag about his sexuality—an intensely embodied experience for him. For 50, the adoption of technology does not necessitate the sacrifice of embodiment. Rather, one is dependent upon the other as each contributes to his identity as a P.I.M.P. In this way, 50 stands as an archetype of Hayles's embodied posthuman.

The title of Weheliye's essay, "Feenin," is borrowed from a Jodeci song that "deploys a vocoder to transmit only the word *feenin* in its chorus…The term *feenin* derives from *fiend*, as in a drug fiend, and Jodeci uses it to signify all-encompassing desire" (2002, 38). To express all-encompassing desire through a vocoder is to intimately wed the human and the technological, and 1993's "Feenin" foreshadows the posthuman vision of Chris Robinson's "P.I.M.P. (Remix)"

> This *feenin* dissolves the parameters of the coherent subject in such radical ways that human—all too human—desire can be represented only in the guise of the machinic, and the human is thus inextricably intertwined with various informational technologies (Weheliye 2002, 39).

In counterpoint to Weheliye's essay, Joseph Auner offers a study of Radiohead and Moby that focuses on the draining of the subjective—the human—in posthuman

music, referring to "the penetration of the human by machines" and creating a duality

"between authentic human presence and the technological" (2003, 99-100). Auner's

analysis of Radiohead and Moby allows no room for the kind of symbiotic relationship

between human and technology that Weheliye finds in R&B. Rather, Auner implies that

humanity is a zero-sum game, whereby the introduction of any technology necessarily

depletes the human. Drawing on the imagery of HAL from Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A*

Space Odyssey, Auner describes the technological voicings in Radiohead's "Fitter,

Happier" (1997) and Moby's "Porcelain" (1999) as ventriloquism, with technological

puppet masters speaking through human dummies.

> In many areas of recent music, the unaltered human voice has become an endangered species. Manipulations and simulations of the voice appear in several different forms in popular music, paralleling the introduction of new technologies or new ways of using old technologies. There are groups that sing almost exclusively through vocoder-like devices that make possible a kind of ventriloquism through which a musician can sing or speak into a microphone and modulate a synthesized sound (Boards of Canda, Daft Punk, Air); a broad range of hip-hop and electronic dance music relies on vocal samples and voices lifted off vinyl (DJ Shadow, X-ecutioners, Public Enemy, Fatboy Slim); while the digital modulation of vocal pitches with the Autotuner (as in very successful recordings by Madonna and Cher) has become so prevalent as to be called "one of the safest, maybe laziest, means of guaranteeing chart success" (2003, 100).

Curtis White describes the relationship between the technological and the human

in reverse terms. For White, the heavily technologized soundscapes of Radiohead's *Kid*

A (2000) are the result of the band's resistance to technology from within. Radiohead's

primary goal, according to White, is to answer the questions,

> What does it mean to be a human being in a context in which every relationship is mediated by technology and technical rationality?...And, Radiohead asks, what does it mean to be artists opposed to technical rationality when we are obliged not only to create our art through computers, in highly technical and utterly engineered recording studios, but also in cooperation with international mega-corporations? (2005, 13)

The supposition, as in Auner, is that a relationship mediated by technology is rendered less human—less real—as the technological consumes the human. And Radiohead, White argues, willfully allows itself to be consumed by technology in order to regain control from the inside, "reorient[ing] its energies" by "inhabit[ing] it" (13).

From both Auner's and White's perspectives, the technological is something to be resisted, held at bay, or conquered, just as the Newport audience attempted to do. The symbiosis suggested by Weheliye and Hayles and embodied in "P.I.M.P. (Remix)" is completely absent from this anxiety-ridden account of posthumanism. Instead of expressing desire "only in the guise of the machinic," desire—and any other human feeling—is disconnected by the machine.

The black/white divide suggested in the dichotomy between 50 Cent and the Newport audience faces—as does any generalization—significant counterexamples. Not all black popular music presents a cozily embodied posthumanism, and not all white popular music resists the influx of technology.

 One counterexample is found in the increasing tendency for rappers to refuse to dance. Tricia Rose, in her New York-centric essay on the beginnings of hip hop, ties rap into a four-part aesthetic experience within hip hop culture: rap, Djing, breakdancing, and graffiti (1994, 34-35). Encompassing poetry, music, dance, and visual art, each of these four forms engages a different portion of the body, and each originally served a necessary function within hip hop culture. Graffiti, as the most obviously invasive and therefore the most easily combated of the hip hop arts, has experienced a decline into subcultures while rap and Djing have fused together and currently occupy the mainstream

of American popular music. Caught in limbo is breakdancing, which has migrated to and thrives in the videos and concerts of R&B artists such as Chris Brown and Usher but which has been held in near disdain over the course of the past decade by several male rappers.[14]

"I will never dance for you trick-ass niggas" ("Down for Whatever" by Ice Cube, 1993)

"Gangstas don't dance/But we boogie on some hard shit/Fuck the V.I.P./We by the bar" ("We Boogie" by Geto Boys, 1996)

"Gangstas boogie/Gangstas don't dance/Gangstas pull the strap/out cha pants/and blast" ("C Walk" by Kurupt, 1998)[15]

"People don't dance no mo/All they do is diss" ("They Don't Dance No Mo" by Goodie Mob, 1998)

'We don't dance no mo/like Goodie M-O-B/All we do is squad/and a 9 milli's" ("Break 'Em Up" by Twista, 1999)

"Nah, I don't wanna dance (I'm good)" ("Jigga that Nigga" by Jay-Z, 2001)

"Might bounce a lil bit/But see a gangsta don't dance" ("Head in Advance" by Juvenile, 2003)

"Buck been shot/but no more than 50/I don't dance/What I look like signin with Diddy?" ("Lay You Down" by G-Unit, 2003—line by Young Buck)

"Said my niggas don't dance/we just pull up our pants/and/do the roc-away" ("Lean Back" by Terror Squad with Fat Joe and Remy Martin, 2004)

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[14] Because he is focusing on the aural aspects of R&B, Weheliye does not mention the large role dance plays in R&B concerts and videos, but such an observation would certainly strengthen the idea that embodied posthumanism plays a fundamental role in R&B.

[15] The line "Gangstas don't dance/We boogie" appears in Westside Connection's 1996 "Gangstas Don't Dance," as well as Mack 10's 1997 "Backyard Boogie." Kurupt later borrowed the sentiment in his 1998 single "C Walk," changing it to "Gangstas boogie/Gangstas don't dance/Gangstas pull the strap/out cha pants/and blast." Lil Jon and the Eastside Boyz also work "Gangstas don't dance/we boogie" into their 2004 "Grand Finale" (with Nas, T.I., Bun B, and Ice Cube).

"I'm just gonna stand/and watch you dance/from over here" ("The New Workout Plan (Remix)" by Kanye West with Lil Jon and Farnsworth Bentley, 2004—line by Bentley)

"But baby I don't dance/Not that I can't/There's a pistol in my pants" ("Lean Back (Remix)" by Fat Joe with Lil Jon, Ma$e, and Eminem, 2005—line by Eminem)

"I'm a playa/I don't dance/What I gotta dance for/I just pick hoes from the bar/and take em off the dance floor" ("Peepin Me" by Chamillionaire, 2005)

"I'm in the club posted up/Got my arms folded/Blunt in my mouth/and these haters I'm scopin/I'm just/twistin my body from side 2 side" ("Side 2 Side" by Three 6 Mafia, 2005)

"I can shoulder lean/I 'on't know how to dance, though" ("Shoulder Lean" by Young Dro (with T.I.), 2006)

"Mami I don't dance/I rock/I bop" ("Playboy 2" by Lloyd Banks, 2006)

"I'm so hood/I wear my pants/below my waist/and I never dance/when I'm in this place/cause you and your man/is planning to hate" ("I'm So Hood" by DJ Khaled with T-Pain, Trick Daddy, Rick Ross, Plies, and Young Jeezy, 2007)[16]

This reluctance to dance could be understood as a loss of embodiment because of the encroachment of technology and could stand as a warning that posthumanism may be a zero-sum game after all. Because, one might suppose, hip hop incorporates technologies so abundantly, a bit of the human is lost as the embodied sensation of dance becomes de-emphasized in some segments of hip hop culture.

Indeed, one reason "gangstas," specifically, do not dance is hinted at by Twista, when he mentions his "9 milli" (a 9-millimeter gun), and made more explicit by Eminem when he says he has a gun in his pants. Rappers talk about dances that involve primarily upper body movements ("leaning back" or "shoulder leaning") or small waist movements ("twisting from side to side") because they are allowed to negotiate the dance floor while carrying a gun. Here, the technology that encroaches upon the human is not recording

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[16] Lil Wayne quotes this line exactly in his 2008 "Lights, Cameras, Action."

technology but a weapon, and the care one must use to protect that weapon stifles

embodiment.

Further complicating the black/white divide over embodied posthumanism is U2.

Instead of expressing anxiety over the influence of technology or even corporate

bureaucracies like many other white rock bands, U2 embraced the iPod in 2004 by

forming a partnership with Apple that produced a digital "box set," a U2 special edition

iPod, and a commercial that combines the dancing silhouette theme of other iPod ads

with the aesthetic of a rock video. In an interview with Chuck Klosterman, U2 frontman

Bono explains the band's enthusiasm for the iPod.

> The company that best exemplifies the marriage of technology and pop culture is
> Apple…The iPod is probably the greatest pop object since the electric guitar. We—as
> a band—feel strongly about the iPod. We—as a band—talked about the idea for an
> iPod years ago. We—as a band—are fans of Apple…We want to work with them.
> The Edge wants to work with their scientists. We want to play with their design team.
> We want to be in their commercial (2006, 25-26).[17]

We can see the leap from Newport 1965 to U2. While the Newport audience would be

just as likely as Bono to understand the iPod as a cultural progeny of the electric guitar,

Bono clearly values such objects in a different way.

To complicate matters just a bit more, even Radiohead and 50 Cent resist simple

classification. Thom Yorke, the lead singer of Radiohead, attributes some of his creative

choices during songwriting to nothing more than the pleasure of technological playback.

Klosterman decides the reason Yorke would do something such as repeat "the phrase 'the

rain drops' forty-six times during the song 'Sit Down, Stand Up'" is that "[h]e simply

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[17] Interestingly, in early 2009, U2 announced a partnership with Research in Motion, the producers of the Blackberry, and Bono himself has been involved with the production of the Palm Pre, an iPhone rival (Spence 2009).

liked the way it sounded on tape" (2006, 139). Yorke himself justifies this techno-

friendly interpretation when discussing his solo album, *Eraser* (2006):

> [Producer Nigel Godrich and I were] very much trying to keep with the aesthetic of it being homemade, but discernibly out of the computer or out of the laptop, and making that something to be celebrated rather than pretend it's not (Pareles 2006).

For a band that Auner and White regard as anxious about the influence of technology on

humanity, allowing technology to participate in the creative process is rather

progressively posthuman.

50 Cent, like other rappers mentioned above, does not dance: "Look homie, I

don't dance/All I do is this/It's the same two step/with a little twist" (Disco Inferno,

2005).[18] Standing still around dance floors is, in fact, an ethos 50 shares with fellow G-

Unit members Young Buck and Lloyd Banks, who are each cited above. If the

explanation for our mercurial relationship with technology in music cannot be explained

by either a consistent progression of ideology over time or along neat racial lines, how

are we to theorize it?

Though the image of 50 Cent in Robison's "P.I.M.P. (Remix)" and the sound of

the booing audience at Newport 1965 seem to represent two extremes of the posthuman

spectrum, most musical examples fall somewhere in between. Two basic explanations

can account for this muddied middle, where a particular response to posthumanism

cannot be predicted based on time, race, or an artist's previous material.

The first explanation is that responses to posthumanism do not occur in a single-

issue vacuum. Rather, several ideologies appear side by side, making it difficult to

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[18] Jody Rosen notes this reluctance to dance as a foil to the Bay Area hyphy movement, which moves dancing back to the foreground (2007).

identify which parts of a song, video, or oeuvre address posthumanism and which represent other ideologies. Returning to our example of rappers who resist dance, our conclusion that this resistance is the result of the sacrifice of humanity to technology is complicated by issues of both gender and race.

As suggested by Farnsworth Bentley in "The New Workout Plan (Remix)," male rappers often encourage women to dance but tend to stand and watch or else dance as minimally as possible, as witnessed by the Terror Squad's "Lean Back" and nearly every song by the Ying Yang Twins. A familiar rap video sight is the male rapper standing or gently rocking from "side 2 side" while surrounded by women who are doing all the work on the dance floor. This image perhaps finds its extreme in David Banner's "Play," in which Banner urges a woman to pleasure herself on the dance floor while he watches.[19]

Rappers who do not dance, then, are often projecting a male aloofness that proceeds from a "cult of cool" (Rosen 2007). In a popular music milieu still dominated by men and rife with the ideology of virile masculinity, rappers who encourage women to dance while avoiding the dance floor themselves participate in a demeaning ritual akin to watching strippers perform pole dances or lap dances—activities lauded in many hip hop songs. Women in these scenarios are objectified by the male gaze.

More sinister than Rosen's "cult of cool" is the deep-seated misogyny that characterized the early 1990s Black Nationalist strain of hip hop and that lives out a fragmented existence in contemporary hip hop genres. Rap activists ("raptivists") like

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[19] Banner's imagery is often presented in the manner of the trickster. In his 2005 "Ridin," he refers to himself as "the new Nat Turner." He often assumes the persona of the most extreme racial stereotypes, as in the song "Play," in order to undermine the power of those stereotypes.

Ice Cube and Chuck D gave voice to a multitude of black Americans who perceived a racial double standard that was otherwise underdiscussed in mainstream America. In doing so, however, most raptivists embraced a mode of resistance that capitalized on a violent, hyper-masculine imagery that relegated black women to third-class citizenry. Not just black women, the introduction to "Nappy Happy," a conversation between Ice Cube and Angela Davis, notes: "[Ice Cube's second album, 1991's *Death Certificate*] delivers a strong message of uplift and affirmation…unless you happen to be female, Asian, Jewish, gay, white, black, whatever" (1992, 175).

The notion of black emasculation fueled raptivist misogyny, as outlined by Charise Cheney:

> During the post-Civil Rights, post-black Power era, in communities where the majority of male children were raised in female-headed households, masses were imprisoned, more were under- or unemployed, and too many died a premature and violent death, the reclamation of black manhood reemerged as the primary issue on the political agenda[…]A perceived crisis of masculinity once again seized the spotlight in the black public arena as Eldridge Cleaver's black Eunuch became an "endangered species" (2005, 101).

This perceived crisis was felt so strongly as to prompt Ice Cube to tell Angela Davis that black men "can't speak for the sisters until we can speak for ourselves" (1992, 182), explicitly acknowledging the sexist hierarchy implicit in much raptivism.

While much contemporary hip hop is less concerned with racial politics than early 1990s Black Nationalist hip hop was, the hierarchy persists in many of the examples listed above. Women are objectified by the male gaze as the result of the sort of egocentricity exhibited by Ice Cube; the urge to act on one's own desires obscures the desires of others.

The objectification that results from a phallocentric society is the sort of impetus for Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto," as her urge to women to embrace posthumanism is intended to undermine the male dominance that is inherent in the LHS. A properly posthumanized LHS, if we extend Haraway's prescription, would be one who willingly blended his own self with not only technology but also women and those of different sexualities, races, and ethnicities. While Black Nationalist hip hop's sexism is not an explicit resistance of technological posthumanism, it is a resistance to the kind of hybridity posthumanism typifies, where one willfully acknowledges the blending of one's self with disparate others. While Weheliye rightly points out that black popular music can embrace posthumanism in order to "counteract the marginalization of race," we must realize that posthuman tension still exists on other planes (2002, 25). In this way, we can understand that an artist like Missy Elliott embraces a posthuman persona in response to both racial and gender marginalization. As a female producer (a rarity in the popular music world) and rapper, Elliott has often appeared in otherworldly costumes and turned out beats that are heavily machinic, challenging both the maleness and whiteness of the liberal human subject.

Another complication of the non-dancing rapper returns us to a more positive raptivist discourse. As Hayles points out, liberal humanism, fueled by an anxiety that finds comfort in cognition, abandoned the necessity of embodiment long ago, understanding the body as something to be controlled but not an integral part of one's being (1999, 4-5). As white LHSs increasingly considered themselves to be minds who happened to have bodies, blacks became a repository for the opposite: bodies which happened to have (deficient) minds. Minstrelsy reflects this notion, as shows presented

black-face performers (some white, some black) enjoying a simple, backwardly funny life and, above all, dancing and singing.

Rappers who refuse to dance participate in a stand-off with a history of black essentialism that remains influential today. Ice Cube renounces this essentialism in "Down for Whatever" (1993), when he declares "I will never dance for you trick-ass niggas." Common captures a similar sentiment when he observes that "monkeys dance around for MTV spots" ("New Wave" with Laetitia Sadier, 2002). This racial aspect of dance complicates posthumanism, as embodied posthuman images such as 50 and his iPod are challenged by the less embodied reality of not dancing. While Spike Lee refers to gangsta rap as "a 21st century form of the minstrel show," indicting rappers like 50 Cent for propagating a negative and stereotypical black experience, we must include alongside his assessment the resistance to minstrelsy exhibited in many rappers' (including 50's) refusal to dance (Said).

Not only do race and gender complicate our understanding of posthumanism in hip hop, but posthumanism also complicates our understanding of race and gender.

The second explanation for the shifting reaction to posthumanism is that the signifiers of posthumanity are in constant flux. For instance, while the Newport audience found the use of electric guitar by Dylan insufferable, many modern folk artists use both acoustic and electric guitars with no outcry from their fans. We cannot conclude, however, that posthuman anxieties do not still rule some popular aesthetics. Rather, while the dispute continues, the borders of conflict shift. As the electric guitar has proven tamable by musicians during the last forty years, its ability to symbolize invasive technology has declined. Technological anxiety still exists, though, as we witness with a

band like (who else?) Radiohead, whose music remains unavailable from the iTunes Music Store. Radiohead cites as a reason "Apple's practice of selling individual tracks rather than entire albums" (Van Buskirk 2007). Such reasoning betrays a fear of the loss of control when one('s music) is digitized and signals that the frontline of the musical battle over posthumanism has migrated from guitars to iPods.

A different story has arisen in the past decade concerning Newport 1965. Prompted to review stage microphone masters of the event after a revitalization of the tales surrounded Dylan's 2002 return to Newport, Bruce Jackson, a program director at the 1965 concert, found verification that the audience's boos were not spurred on by the electric quality of the set. Rather, the audience quite enjoyed what they heard and were upset by the shortness of Dylan's time onstage. Jackson's transcription of the concert includes several annotations that direct the booing anywhere but at Dylan.

> [Peter] YARROW: We will be very limited in time and so will each person who comes up. The person who's coming up now—
>
> [a single note from each string of an electric guitar struck by someone apparently checking the tuning]
>
> Please don't play right now, gentlemen, for this second. Thank you.
>
> [three more guitar notes]
>
> The person who's coming up now is a person who has, in a sense—
>
> [two brief bursts of feedback hum]
>
> changed the face of folk music to the large American public because he has brought to it the point of view of a poet. Ladies and gentlemen, the person who's going to come up now—
>
> [Yarrow pauses a long time, drawing it out; a few hoots at the pause from the audience]

has a limited amount of time—

[very loud booing and yelling, shouts of "No, no, no"]

his name is Bob [pause] Dylan.

[enthusiastic and sustained cheering and applause from the audience that had watched the electric band set up and which was now watching Dylan plug in his own electric guitar] [a minute or so of things being moved around, levels checked, voices talking about where to set things. No hoots, jeers, calls, or yells from the audience.] (Jackson 2007, 143-45)

Jackson offers similar descriptions of cheering (always for Dylan and on cue) and booing (always at Yarrow's explanations of limited time) for the rest of the concert.

Greil Marcus, who sketches the traditional scene in his 1997 *The Old, Weird America*, a book dedicated to an exploration of Dylan bootleg material, returns to the Newport narrative in his eponymously titled 2005 "biography" of "Like a Rolling Stone." Marcus acknowledges—and quickly discredits—the alternative memories similar to Jackson's.

It has since become weirdly fashionable to claim that there was no booing—or, if one admits that there was less-than-pleasant noise coming from the audience during and between the songs, at least no condemnation of Dylan's new music in that form. The sound was too loud, some say, and people, especially the elite of the folk movement, seated up front, who, the argument goes, were inexplicably familiar with the technical side of amplified music, were simply calling for a better mix. Or the sound was not loud enough. Or the people in the back, misunderstanding the constructive criticism offered by the people in the front, and not wanting to appear uninformed, imitated what they mistakenly took to be boos and thus drowned out the helpful suggestions. Or people were booing because Dylan only played three songs, which is imaginable, though that doesn't account for people booing before the band finished and left (Marcus 2005, 155-6).

Of course, Jackson does offer an explanation for why the booing began before the set: Yarrow incited it by mentioning the short time frame for Dylan's performance.

Ultimately, whether the Newport audience booed or not is less important than the facts that 1). The negative response to Electric Dylan seemed plausible enough that "[t]here was no controversy at the time as to whether or not the crowd booed Dylan" (Marcus 2005, 156), and 2). Revisionist accounts like Jackson's are now plausible enough that a writer like Marcus, who relayed the traditional account as fact in 1997, felt the need to address and redress challenges to the status quo in 2005.

The plausibility of these dueling stories results from our shifting and complicated relationship with technology through music. Ultimately, Weheliye's assertion that one who is not "always already 'free from the will of others' (or [who doesn't think] that one is" will be more likely to embrace an embodied posthumanism than the traditionally understood LHS (Weheliye 2002, 23) is a helpful one. Indeed, Lee Marshall, in a short essay on Newport 1965, details the ways Dylan's individualistic tendencies made him feel at odds with his folk following and likely contributed to his aberrant behavior at the festival (2006, 18-27). The ushering-in of the new in music technology is to be expected, then, from those who find themselves on the margins, whether of a society or a musical movement.

Our questions about the iPod are not entirely new, as each side of the posthuman debate continues to offer compelling arguments. The concern over the forfeiture of humanity to technology is a legitimate one as we step deeper into a world that is technologically mediated at every turn. Not pausing to ask what we may lose would be foolish, indeed. At the same time, what sort of humanity is being forfeited? If it is one

that marginalizes all who are not white and male, then the loss of humanity—of the hegemony of that kind of humanity—is quite desirable, after all.

We can conclude with a final look at 50 Cent and posthumanism as an alliance between marginalized parties. Apple's history is one on the margins, as Microsoft constantly outsold and outstripped its competitor until the success of the iPod brought Apple a new cache replete with plenty of cash. 50, a black man, shares in the history of a people marginalized at the hands of a white supremacist mainstream. While the historical oppression of blacks by whites in America is certainly more extreme than anything experienced by Apple (a company which, at any rate, has long been characterized by white yuppiness), a hip hop artist like 50 can find metaphorical value in aligning himself with a corporation that has only recently dominated the mainstream, since hip hop itself is a "music from the margins that has grown up to consume th[at] mainstream" (Boyd 2003, 15).

The embodied posthumanism we see in the opening shot of 'P.I.M.P (Remix)," as both the iPod and 50's face come into view, is a partnership formed from the margins that engages the human-technology debate in a fullness that enfolds both the positives and the negatives of a posthuman present and future. Though the extremes of this debate often seem most frightening, we have noticed that, even in the case of 50 and Newport, such extremes rarely exist in reality. Instead, the discourse about posthuman hybridity is inflected in a milieu that is itself hybrid. Just as the opening shot of 50's face is blurred by his iPod, we are often only able to find ourselves by peering through and past the technologies that inflect our existence.

Chapter 3: Ordering Randomness:

Considering Musical Meaning and Genre within the iPod's Shuffle

The idea behind the iPod's original shuffle feature was fairly simple: randomly to play back all of the songs contained on a listener's iPod. The concept was not new, as most home stereos and portable disc players had long featured a "random" option. The difference, of course, was one of scope. While a portable disc player could only shuffle ten to twenty songs and most home stereos no more than a few hundred, the iPod offered the potential to shuffle a thousand songs in its first generation and now is capable of shuffling tens of thousands of songs—all without the time lag one came to expect from a CD player, whose moving parts had to physically change discs and tracks.

By 2007, the shuffle feature on all iPods had become more refined, as iPodders could choose to shuffle songs across album, artist, or genre boundaries. With the release of iTunes 8.1, the iPhone 3G, and the second generation iPod Touch in the summer of 2008, Apple added the 'Genius' feature, which offers to shuffle twenty-five songs that are similar to the one the iPodder is listening to when the Genius option is chosen. The evolution of the shuffle feature reflects its popularity among iPodders. Consumers have enjoyed shuffling since the first generation iPod was released, and Apple has responded by constantly tweaking the feature and expanding its options.

The shuffle feature also offers the opportunity to consider the ways in which the iPod engages musical meaning and genre. Because a shuffle is generated randomly by a machine, intention, the idea that the resultant songs were purposefully collated, must be subtracted from any interpretive equation. How is musical meaning achieved in a shuffle without an intentional DJ? By rearranging and mixing disparate tracks, the shuffle feature encourages us to reconsider how genre designations prescribe listener expectations. How useful is genre when the iPod shuffle is programmed to ignore it? I will examine several different shuffle albums (about one hour of randomly generated music) to inform our consideration of musical meaning and genre. The iPod destabilizes meaning and genre in a number of important ways, challenging our assumptions about the listening experience. At the same time, the iPod re-affirms many of the notions we have about meaning and genre, as it encourages us to engage our musical assumptions in new ways.

Musical Meaning

In a dance hall, a DJ attempts to create an energetic atmosphere by assembling a set of songs that encourages patrons to continue dancing. One of the most important factors for a DJ to consider, for instance, is "beats per minute" (BPM), as each song's tempo falls within a handful of BPMs of the previous song. If the difference is much greater, then the effect can be jarring, so DJs use mixers to gradually speed or slow songs to appropriately match each other.

A DJ must also consider the content of songs when creating a set. Depending on the club setting, a DJ may play mostly trance or deep house music (both dance genres), hip

hop, or dub (a dance-centered reggae genre), and in some cases, all of these genres may be appropriately blended, or an instance of a wildcard genre—an 80s power ballad, perhaps—could be pleasantly nestled into an otherwise specific set—like hip hop.

Whatever the parameters or expectations, a DJ can be judged as successful or not, and a set is opened to interpretation. The inclusion of that 80s power ballad in the middle of a hip hop set, for instance, could be interpreted as meaningful in some way—a commentary on the recent preference in hip hop for heavily guitar-inflected beats, maybe.

Leaving aside the qualitative aspect of a DJ set, where listeners decide whether it is good or bad, I am interested here in the interpretive opportunities afforded by the assemblage songs. A listener may ultimately choose an interpretation that differs from what a DJ intended, and this interplay between musician and audience will be discussed below. The first and most important observation, though, is that any interpretation of a DJ set assumes that the songs were intentionally ordered, that a DJ purposefully chose which song to play next.

A series of songs generated by the iPod's shuffle feature may closely resemble a DJ's set in content. An important and obvious difference, however, is that the iPod has no capacity to intentionally "choose" which song to play next. Rather, the iPod is programmed to follow an algorithm that randomly sorts and plays back the songs stored on it.

Given the role of intentional design in crafting a DJ set, then, it seems odd that we should consider the potential meaning of an iPod shuffle. But, from the beginning, listeners and writers have reveled in the anthropomorphic nature of the iPod. Writing for

Newsweek, technology guru and iPod maven Steven Levy ruminates on the

mischievousness of his device.

> From the day I loaded up my first iPod, it was as if the little devil liked to play favorites. It had a particular fondness for Steely Dan, whose songs always seemed to pop up two or three times in the first hour of play. Other songs seemed to be exiled to a forgotten corner of the disk drive. Months after I bought "Wild Thing" from the iTunes store, I'm still waiting for my iPod to cue it up (2005).

From bloggers to journalists, nearly every iPodder is consternated at some point by the

iPod's tendency to play shuffled tracklists that appear to favor artists and songs or to

meet or thwart one's mood.

Blogger Scott Klebe spent several weeks in 2004 and 2005 posting random playlists

as generated by iTunes. In a 17 December 2004 post, Klebe wonders, "What's up with

iTunes shuffle?"

> I have 1520 songs in my iTunes library, of which 15 are from The Eels' so-so album *Daisies of the Galaxy*. And only one of which is Ozomatli's "Street Signs." Yet two songs here in the Shuffle from *Daisies* [sic], and "Street Signs" appears two weeks in a row. I hit refresh, and now I have three songs by Cake, including two from *Fashion Nugget*. I hit refresh again, and now I have three songs by the Magnetic Fields, including two from *69 Love Songs*. Again, and I again have three songs by the Magnetic Fields, including two from *69 Love Songs*.

Rachel Dodges, in a 2004 article titled "When iPod is the DJ, Watch Out," featured

listeners who were either amazed or disgusted by their iPods' ability to read moods.

Revere Geister, a cyclist, noticed that his iPod nearly always played 50 Cent's "In Da

Club" when he needed a boost during a workout. On the other hand, New Yorker Lucy

Shaw found that her iPod "was totally not reading [her] moods," as she often heard bonus

tracks whose first several minutes are silence.

The predominance of this sentiment has yielded several tech-world articles trying to explain randomness and the ways in which iTunes and the iPod may or may not be truly random. From *NPR* (Stamberg 2008) to *How Stuff Works* (Fuller) to *Cnet* (Braue 2007) to *The Wall Street Journal* (Bialik 2006), popular media have explored the shuffle starting with the premise that all iPodders have noticed their iPods' proclivities for playing favorites. One academic journal article even poses the question, "Does your iPod have a soul?" (Keeling 2007, 169).

One explanation for the widespread play with the notion that iPods think or make rational choices arises from contemporary musical hermeneutics. Here, the listener's role in determining the interpretation of a musical work is heightened to the point that a musician's intention is obscured, if not entirely expunged.

Kofi Agawu, in *Playing with Signs*, favors reception in a manner that at least places the listener in equal-footed conversation with the composer. His theory of musical signs assumes that musical conventions are created within a vibrant music-discursive milieu. Musical topics, Agawu argues, are extramusical ideas that are suggested by rhythmic, harmonic, or melodic material and are expected to be easily recognized by an audience familiar with classical music conventions. These topics are not embedded in the musical material but rather require the interpretation of listeners. In Agawu's semantic model, music becomes a cultural commodity, existing in a marketplace where a community of composers, performers, listeners, and patrons together determine the different meanings music may have.

Lawrence Kramer relies on the same cultural commodity premise that Agawu invokes, but he crafts a hermeneutic theory that tips the balance of interpretive power in

the listener's favor. While defining the terms of his hermeneutic project in *Musical Meaning*, Kramer moves immediately to the subjective experience. Though he says he is interested in negotiating the tension between autonomy and subjectivity, he frames such a negotiation as "the ways in which we authorize ourselves to listen to music and to talk about it" (2002, 1). It is this negotiation, Kramer argues, that is the answer to the question of how music accrues meaning. Neither autonomy nor subjectivity wins; it is the asking that brings meaning to music. At the outset, then, Kramer privileges the self, as we are able to write our own licenses for musical interpretation, and as our own grappling with hermeneutic questions imbues music with meaning.

More specifically, Kramer notes that the experience of music is the experience of one's own body. While we may address the tension between autonomy and contingent subjectivity in a variety of arenas, it is with music, Kramer argues, that "we feel it in ourselves." This is because music presents an "immediacy" that "tends to feel like bodily self-presence, the intimacy of oneself with one's own embodiment" (3).

Finally, after observing music's ability to heighten other forms of media with which it mixes while maintaining its own integrity, Kramer suggests that music is a metaphor for the self:

> Because it forms the remainder of every experience it engages, music may act as a cultural trope for the self, the subject as self-moved agency that remains when all of its attributes and experiences have been subtracted (4).

Kramer claims that, because both music and the self are "meaningless in [themselves] alone and necessarily seek to enunciate [themselves] in relation to others" (4), the negotiation between autonomy and subjective contingency, which are "structurally equal," tips always toward the "production of contingency" (8).

Kramer's reliance on what Adam Krims calls a "self-present and unitary subject" (1998, 315) yields a rather isolated hermeneutic, as Kramer finds meaning "inextricably bound up with the formal processes and stylistic articulations of musical works" (Kramer 1990, 1). In this analytic framework, Kramer's insistence on cultural considerations is always subjugated to the subjective experience. Agawu's vibrant milieu turns in on the individual, creating a hyper-subjective hermeneutic.

When analysis becomes hyper-subjective, the tendency is toward the lonely listener whose interpretation is restricted by her own existence. Carolyn Abbate's "drastic" hermeneutic, when enacted, is the interpretive work of a single audience member or a solitary backstage observer (2004, 533-36). Kramer's hermeneutic brings subjectivity to the fore in a manner that renders the listener the most powerful interpretive force in a hermeneutic system.

When music on an iPod is randomly shuffled, a meaningful interpretation of the songs can only be created by the listener. Like Kramer's hermeneutic, a shuffle interpreted by the listener will, at times, invoke extramusical material. The reading of each song, for instance, may rely on the musicians' intentions, the social, cultural, or political backdrop of the song, or even the reception and interpretation of the song by others. But, also like Kramer's hermeneutic, a shuffle automatically defaults to the listener's interpretation, as no other conscious agent even exists in the interpretive chain.

Of course, because of the extent of the subjectivity involved in unifying a set of shuffled songs, I can offer an example of my own experience but not one that necessarily represents the process of other iPodders. The exercise, however, is illustrative because it

represents a certain kind of listening that has become more prevalent with the rise of mp3 players—specifically the iPod.

My analysis of the following shuffle borrows heavily from performance studies. Shuffles are rarely saved or reflected upon at later times; rather, they are engaged in the moment they happen, so any interpretation must deal with the music primarily as it passes by, with the possibility of recalling ideas from previous songs in the shuffle (just as one may recall previous themes when listening to a rondo or sonata-allegro form movement). We return to Kramer's notion of "the intimacy of oneself with one's own embodiment," as performance studies relies on one's attention to immediate details and resists, as much as possible, the instantiation or codification of the emergent interpretation beyond the boundaries of the performance.

In order to generate the shuffle album I analyze, I chose the iPod's most basic shuffle function—"all songs." As previously mentioned, Apple has refined the iPod in later generations to be able to shuffle according to increasingly specific parameters. One can shuffle all of the songs of a genre, an artist, or an album. I have chosen the broadest option because it allows the broadest analysis. A shuffle governed by genre, artist, or album features built-in parameters dictated by the iPodder. Finally, I am choosing the rather arbitrary limit of twelve songs, which is roughly the length of a traditional popular music album.

Figure 1—Unity Shuffle

Song (Year)	Artist	Album	Length
1. Watermelon Man (1973)	Herbie Hancock	*Head Hunters*	6:31
2. Last Call (2004)	Kanye West	*The College Dropout*	12:40
3. Adagio ma non troppo e molto espressivo, Movement 1, String Quartet no. 14 in C# minor, op. 131 (1826/1936)	Busch Quartet	*Beethoven: The Late String Quartets*	7:59
4. Do You Want More?!!!??! (1995)	The Roots	*Do You Want More?!!!??!*	3:21
5. Valley Morning (2007)	Loudon Wainwright III	*Strange Weirdos: Music from and Inspired by the Film* Knocked Up	3:44
6. Mic Check (1999)	Rage Against the Machine	*The Battle of Los Angeles*	3:33
7. Stupidity Tries (2000)	Elliott Smith	*Figure 8*	4:23
8. Invisible (2007)	Modest Mouse	*We Were Dead Before the Ship Even Sank*	4:01
9. Lights Out (2008)	Santogold	*Santogold*	3:12
10. My Girl is Calling Me (A Liar) (2007)	Chromeo	*Fancy Footwork*	2:20
11. Times Like These (2004)	Foo Fighters	*One by One*	4:16
12. If Rap Gets Jealous (2006)	K'naan	*The Dusty Foot Philosopher*	4:20

This particular shuffle is governed by irony. While all shuffles are likely to demonstrate this characteristic to some degree (unless one's music collection is particularly narrow), I find a fairly sophisticated irony embedded in this one that extends beyond the experience of thinking, "Oh! I didn't expect to hear *that* next." This shuffle has a clear narrative arc, with a beginning, middle, and end, but it shifts songs to

unexpected places and subtly subverts my expectations while still maintaining a cohesive progression.

The beginning is comprised of the first three songs. "Watermelon Man" is a retread for Hancock, who first recorded it in 1962 with a bop group, shortly before joining Miles Davis's quartet. The fusion reimagining of "Watermelon Man" strikes me as the assertion of a bandleader who has left all vestiges of his sideman status behind him. Kanye West's "Last Call" is a similar assertion. Here, West recalls his rise from amateur beatmaker to producer for Rocafella Records to solo artist. "Last Call" also presents the first touch of irony. Beginning a shuffle with two artists reflecting on their early recording days is innocuous in itself, but West's comes from the last track of *The College Dropout*. While the similar material helps to unify the two pieces as part of the beginning, "Last Call" is otherwise clearly out of place, as its length and spoken word section are the common stuff of album finales.

The last of the beginning tracks cements the idea that things will be out of place in this shuffle, for the end of our beginning is a movement that, in its original context, begins Beethoven's String Quartet no. 14, op. 131. Beyond being slightly askew in this shuffle, the first movement of op. 131 defies expectations even as part of its string quartet. It is an introduction that never produces a sonata-form movement. Rather, it stretches through a fugal passage and becomes its own movement, setting the tone for op. 131, which features misplaced movements and misshaped forms.

The transition to the middle appropriately asks whether we "want more," and features a good deal of boasting, setting expectations that we will hear more of the irony that colored the beginning. But the middle itself is rather less interesting than the

sections that frame it. One can notice a pattern, as the four songs alternate equally between singer-songwriters and rock groups, but in a shuffle whose tone is set by irony, it is ultimately unsurprising that the middle, where one expects the most intriguing material, is actually a rather uninspired progression of songs.

The transition to the end is, like the transition before, appropriately titled—this time, "Lights Out." Santogold herself is a blend of the styles heard in the middle; she is part singer-songwriter and part pop rocker. For a shuffle that began with a fusion track, it is appropriate that we transition to the end with another artist who fuses styles.

Finally, we reach the end, which is again inflected with irony. Just as Beethoven's op. 131 was the perfect opening for an ironic shuffle, Chromeo's "My Girl is Calling Me (A Liar)" is the perfect ending. Both, of course, are buffered from their perfect positions by two other songs. Chromeo is a study in musical comedy, featuring a duo that specializes in '80s synth-pop with lighthearted and occasionally nonsensical lyrics. Even their appearance is humorous, as they often stand behind keyboards that are draped in front with the image of women's legs. Chromeo is an ironic band that belongs at the end of this particular shuffle.

But instead of ending with Chromeo, we are left with a coda, consisting of two songs that appear in an order that inverts the structure of the middle. Instead of a singer-songwriter followed by a rock group, we first hear from Foo Fighters, the rock group, then K'naan, a Somalian-Canadian singer-rapper-songwriter. And K'naan concludes the shuffle the way Hancock and West began it, by reflecting on his past and how he has come to play the style of music he does.

While I consult and invoke lyrical content to argue for my interpretation of the shuffle, I rely primarily on the ordering of songs to try to extract meaning. This is the essence of Kramer's hermeneutic: though the iPod could not intentionally order the songs, I, the listener, nonetheless use the order to read meaning into the shuffle.

A second, simpler explanation for the widespread play with the notion that iPods think or make rational choices arises from our tendency to order our environments, even—or perhaps especially—when confronted with randomness. Peter Kivy, reflecting on the nature of musical perception, concludes that the listener's tendency is to "interpret [abstract, purely instrumental music] as meaningful in the full linguistic sense" (1990, 9). Though Kivy only conjectures about purely instrumental music, we can incorporate his idea into broader musical discourses.

Just as we tend to structure our experiences of instrumental works along narrative or rhetorical lines, we also impose order on popular music in order to better organize our experiences of it. Genre distinctions both describe and prescribe musical attributes in a way that helps us make assumptions about songs and albums without ever hearing them. We know the probability of our enjoying a certain song, and we listen with expectations that are dictated by the conventions of genre.

The urge to create order out of randomness is also evident in the ways Apple has refined the shuffle feature in later iPod generations. iPodders are now able to decide how random their shuffle is. Shuffling by album is less random than shuffling by artist, which is less random than shuffling by genre, which is less random than shuffling all songs on the iPod. The smallest category—the album—includes a good deal of built-in cohesion, making interpretation easier. After all, these songs have already been assembled

intentionally, so the iPod is simply rearranging them. The largest category—one's entire

iPod—obviously offers the greatest challenge to finding musical meaning, though I have

already demonstrated that some chance for interpretation still remains.

Beyond the choices of what to shuffle, iTunes, until 2008, offered the listener the

choice of how to shuffle. iPodders could set iTunes to "more" or "less" random, though

the experience of these two choices was often the opposite of what listeners expected.

The more random a series of songs, the more likely one is to hear two songs by the same

artist sequentially, while a less random series of songs approximates our expectations of

randomness by making it less likely that one would hear the same artist twice in a row

(Bialik 2006).

We can also observe the tendency to order randomness in a shuffle game that has

been passed around the blogosphere.

If Your Life Was a Movie, What Would the Soundtrack Be?
1. Open your library (iTunes, Winamp, Media Player, iPod, etc).
2. Put it on shuffle.
3. Press play.
4. For every question, type the song that's playing.
5. When you go to a new question, press the next button.
6. Don't lie and try to pretend you're cool – first songs only.[20]

Using these parameters, I have generated the following soundtrack for my life:

Figure 2—Soundtrack Shuffle
Opening Credits—"Spirits Rejoice" by Albert Ayler, *Live in Greenwich Village* (1965)
Waking Up—"No One Else" by Weezer, *Weezer (Blue)* (1994)
First Day at School—"Slave to the Traffic Light" by Phish, *A Live One* (1995)
Falling in Love—"The Show" by Talib Kweli, *Liberation* (2007)
Fight Song—"Up Against (Blackout)" by Taking Back Sunday, *Louder Now* (2006)

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[20] The problem with citing any particular source for the soundtrack game is that it appears in exactly this form on countless blogs and social networking profiles. The top "hit" for a google search of "soundtrack shuffle game," as of March 2009, is a blog called "Sheila Variations," found at http://www.sheilaomalley.com/archives/007191.html.

Breaking Up—"C.R.U.F.F." by Roots Manuva, *Slime and Reason* (2008)
Prom—"Giant Steps" by John Coltrane, *Giant Steps* (1960)
Life is Good—"Live" by The Kleptones, *A Night at the Hip-Hopera* (2004)
Mental Breakdown—"Another Brick in the Wall (Part 3)" by Pink Floyd, *The Wall* (1979)
Driving—"Mood Indigo" by Charles Mingus, *Mingus Mingus Mingus Mingus Mingus* (1965)
Flashback—"Collectif" by Pierre Schaeffer, *Symphonie pour un homme seul* (1951)
Getting Back Together—"God in a Cage" by An Pierlé, *Mud Stories* (1999)
Wedding—"1979" by Smashing Pumpkins, *Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness* (1995)
Paying the Dues—"This is Not a Test" by She & Him, *Volume One* (2008)
The Night Before the War—"Drips" by Eminem, *The Eminem Show* (2002)
Final Battle—"Old Yellow Bricks" by Arctic Monkeys, *Favourite Worst Nightmare* (2007)
Moment of Triumph—"Bombs over Baghdad" by OutKast, *Stankonia* (2000)
Death Scene—"Liar (It Takes One to Know One)" by Taking Back Sunday, *Louder Now* (2006)
Funeral Song—"Beautiful, Loved & Blessed" by Prince, *3121* (2007)
End Credits—"Quoniam tu solus sanctus" by Beethoven, *Missa Solemnis: Otto Klemperer and the New Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra* (1823/65)

The fun in this game is to notice the serendipity of particularly appropriate songs (in this case, "Up Against" for the Fight Song or "Another Brick in the Wall" for the Mental Breakdown) or the horror of very ill-fitting ones (in this case, "1979," a song that should never be anywhere near a wedding, or "Drips," in which Eminem and D12 opine about venereal disease and make The Night Before the War seem like a regret-filled event). The soundtrack is an easy object of interpretation, as it becomes a metaphor for one's imagined life. No matter the absurdity of the songs that appear in the shuffled soundtrack, it will be held together by an autobiographical logic that imposes meaningful order on randomness.

Importantly, we also have arrived at an emergent quality of Kramer's hermeneutics, where a fusion occurs "between thinking about meaning and subjectivity to gain insight into music, and[…]thinking about music to gain insight into meaning and subjectivity"

(2002, 8). That is, by thinking about the ordered randomness of this shuffle game, we are able to project something about the way we order our own subjectivity.

The landmark moments highlighted by the soundtrack are those of a middle class member of society, replete with relationships, altercations, and free time. Though the particulars of the shuffled soundtrack certainly do not match many of the lives of those who post this game online, the soundtrack constructs a middle class, techno-literate subjectivity that mirrors the kind of user who is likely to own an iPod, blog, be part of a social networking site, and revel in the hokey conventions of mainstream cinema. Embedded in this subjectivity are the traditional values of middle class America, from weddings to the pursuit of education to the ownership of property. In this way, a cybergame becomes the vehicle by which the values of previous generations are recycled and repackaged for a new cybergeneration.

Two considerations remain in the discussion of interpreting shuffles. The first is that there is an obvious but hidden cohesive element to shuffles: the music that is randomized has been loaded onto the player by the listener. Because the iPod is a personal listening device, the songs one hears have been selected by and are likely favorites of the listener (although, especially with increasingly large storage capacities, many iPodders probably have songs on their iPod that they have not listened to or, perhaps, do not really even like).

Finding meaning in a shuffle is made easier when one is familiar with the vast majority of the songs shuffled together. While the order may be random, the content is not, allowing the iPodder to locate a narrative, topical, or rhetorical logic that holds the group of songs together with much more facility than would be the case with songs one

has never heard before. In this way, the randomness of the shuffle is at least partially meaningful before the shuffle option is even chosen.

Another way in which the randomness of the shuffle may be pre-ordered lies in the possibility that Apple has programmed the shuffle feature to favor certain songs. David Braue, writing for *Cnet*, suggests that iTunes favors songs downloaded from the Music Store over those loaded from CDs and even toys with the idea that Apple's software plays certain record labels more often than others. Braue's last hypothesis is left unproven, and the relatively small sample size of the playlists he generates makes his first finding, while interesting, under-supported.

Besides, a truly random shuffle would yield flukes where some songs are played at a greater frequency than others. It is our own notion of randomness that everything will even out within whatever parameters we impose. Still, because Apple guards its shuffle permutation closely, speculation about settings that tip the balance in favor of certain songs will persist and must be acknowledged when considering the randomness of shuffling.

While the iPod holds no capacity to make intentional choices, the two explanations we explore here work together to illuminate listener responses to the shuffle. iPodders hear their songs shuffled in a musical milieu that privileges the listener's interpretation and encourages hyper-subjective hermeneutics. Both explanations turn meaning on its head. While the iPod cannot contribute any intentional order to the songs it shuffles, the listener is still able to hear a set of shuffled songs as meaningful or to impose limits on the shuffle, like the Soundtrack Game, that order the iPod's randomness. The shuffle in this way challenges the notion of interpretation altogether, as that which we have often

assumed is dependent on the conscious choice of a musician is found to reside entirely in the listener's perception when the iPod is the DJ.

Genre

Genre is another concept listeners use to govern the musical experience. When dealing with hundreds or thousands of songs or artists at a time, one finds it helpful to label and group music in order to minimize the potential randomness of distinct musical events. Genre categories allow 10,000 unique songs to become a handful of *groups* of songs. Listening to these songs becomes much more orderly when they are slotted into distinct categories instead of left to function independently. Listeners' expectations are conditioned by the conventions of genres, and the musical experience is made more predictable.

Genre is typically studied at its core or at its boundaries, and the goal of each strategy is different. When studying genre at its core, one attempts to uncover characteristics that typify a genre category. In other words, one defines genres by laying out the qualities that are found in the vast majority of songs within that genre.

The definition of genres is a never-ending endeavor. Because they function within popular discourse, genre distinctions are vulnerable to the shifting winds of popular perception: what is punk one day is pop the next. The discursive nature of genre means that genres are notoriously difficult to define, so the attempt to do so is often piecemeal and makes few claims to completeness. Still, the project is a necessary one, as genres can also be surprisingly resilient, effectively marking musical styles for millions of listeners who can achieve relative consensus on the categorization of songs.

When studying genre at its boundaries, one is interested not in what songs within a genre have in common but, instead, how songs in distinct categories differ. Here, genres are still defined, but they are defined by contrast rather than by similarities. To study genre at its boundaries often entails considering songs that lie at the borders separating genres in order to better define those borders or else to demonstrate that they are actually less clearly defined than previously thought.

As is perhaps already evident, our notion of genre is influenced by the same factors that shape our concept of interpretation. As a cultural commodity, genre is fleshed out in vibrant discourse among audiences, musicians, producers, and record labels, similar to Agawu's description of musical interpretation. Fabian Holt, in his book *Genre in Popular Music*, makes this point explicitly, noting that "genre is not only 'in the music,' but also in the minds and bodies of particular groups of people who share certain conventions" (2007, 2).

In some instances, genre acts as a descriptor, pointing to a group of songs or artists and naming the characteristics they share. For example, techno, broadly conceived, features an aggressive, relentless pulse, a predictable variation scheme, and the heavy use of computers and electronic gadgets. In other instances, however, genre acts as a prescriber, generating music based on a formula that is concocted using existing conventions. Record labels are generally understood as notorious prescribers, forcing their artists to create music that is predictable enough to sell well and discouraging them from flouting long-standing tradition.

This vibrant milieu tends to collapse on itself and become hyper-subjective, reproducing itself by using ideas that already exist within the interpretive chain. For

instance, Adam Krims describes the ways in which resistant, anti-label music is dependent on big labels to sustain it and how, conversely, big labels make use of resistant musicians by incorporating their music within their catalogs (2007, 57). In this way, cycles of resistance and acceptance are repeated, and discourse sways from favoring independent artists to mainstream artists without ever actually changing sides (because all are dependent on one another). This is the essence of Kramer's hermeneutic: a discourse about genre that is self-sustaining and mostly static in its content.

Genre is also dependent on the need to impose order where there otherwise is none. Part of the reason music genres are so difficult to define is that, in the rush to categorize and order, listeners devise strange bedfellows using rather tenuous similarities between a song and a genre. Weezer, a mainstream band whose lyrical content is rife with irony, for example, becomes emo, a genre that originally grew out of hardcore punk in the Eighties and featured bands so aggressively self-important in lyrical and musical content that the scene essentially suffocated itself.

How does Weezer become emo? We return to the urge to create order among randomness. Weezer seemed different enough from mainstream rock and grunge in the 'nineties to deserve its own category, and the self-reflection and amateurish musical sound that characterized their second studio album, *Pinkerton*, resembled emo enough to justify the connection for many. A perfect fit was less necessary than the need to classify the band in some way, in much the same manner that iPodders feel the urge to structure shuffled songs into meaningful wholes.

Keeping in mind these two factors, we can turn to the question of how genre functions in an iPod shuffle. When the iPod shuffles according to genre, the listener is

primarily dealing with genre cores. The iPod presents a series of songs that share certain characteristics. When the iPod shuffles the entire library, the listener is primarily dealing with genre boundaries. The iPod moves from one song to the next with no concern for categories, allowing a song to bleed into the next regardless of the similarities or differences between them. Given genre's use as an organizational tool, we might expect haphazard shuffling to upset its usefulness. Indeed, iTunes and the iPod unsettle the (already tenuous) stability of genre in two basic ways.

The first way is through subjective labeling. Music purchased from the iTunes Music Store comes with a genre label assigned by Apple, as does music purchased from other online music stores like Amazon, Rhapsody (Real Player's retail component), Napster, and eMusic, as well as CDs converted into one's iTunes library. These labels are not fixed, however, as listeners need only double click the "Genre" field in iTunes and type in whatever category they wish—a task that becomes even simpler when one realizes the ability to change multiple songs' genres at one time.

Moreover, many iPodders do not purchase all of their music from online music stores or rely only on CDs they have converted into their libraries. Rather, peer-to-peer (P2P) networks provide a great deal of the music found on iPods. A P2P network, instead of offering the inventory of a single store, connects computers to each other in a way that gives each computer direct access to certain files stored on other computers in the network. One can search the network for desired files (usually music, but also videos, pictures, and software programs) and download them from other computers that have those files stored on them. Mark Katz describes the difference between iTunes and P2P networking this way:

> If a public library is analogous to a client-server model [iTunes], P2P sharing is more like the arrangement my wife, her mother, and her aunt have to circulate their collections of mystery novels among one another. But on the Internet, P2P networks can exist on a much grander scale, linking millions of users who can share data almost instantaneously (2004, 161).

Bittorrent clients are the cousins of P2P networks, linking computers in a similar fashion but utilizing a code that allows entire albums or seasons of television shows to be swapped in a single exchange. In other words, bittorrent clients operate on a much grander scale than even P2P networks regarding the amount of material that is available to download.

The importance of recognizing the role of P2P networks and bittorrent clients in iPodders' acquisition of music is that, as deregulated sources of music, they offer completely unpredictable genre categorizations. A P2P user, for example, may download a song by R&B artist Aaliyah only to find that, when the music file is opened in iTunes, it is labeled "folk." The implications of this are subtle but potent.

As mentioned above, changing genre labels in iTunes is exceedingly simple, and, in fact, many of the bizarre labels one encounters on P2P networks and bittorrent clients is the result of a listener changing the song's genre before sharing it on the network. If one does not pay close attention to the genre categories of songs pulled from a P2P network, a song by Aaliyah may be assigned to the folk genre, meaning that a shuffle organized by genre—specifically R&B—will never include that song. Multiply this phenomenon by hundreds of songs on one's iPod, and the ability to consider genres' cores becomes significantly limited as representative examples of certain genres are left out.

The ability to change genre labels enacts the fluid nature of genres in a way that highlights the subjective nature of these categories. While we understand that genres are

crafted by the cultural milieu in which they exist, we are rarely given the license to unilaterally change a song's label. In this way, iTunes and the iPod undermine genre's stability by exaggerating an already-existing weak point. We again find ourselves interpreting music in a way that privileges the listener over every other member of an interpretive network.

The primacy of the single listener is evident in the genre shuffle. Apple's update of the shuffle feature to include the option to shuffle by genre seems, at first, to encourage interdependent discourse about genre. After all, iPodders are presented with the opportunity to attend to long stretches of a single genre, allowing the opportunity to contemplate what constitutes the core of qualities of a category. But, if one assigns all of the genre labels within a single shuffle, then we arrive again at Kramer's individualistic listening experience, as an iPodder can only reflect on the hyper-subjective decisions that fashioned the genre being heard.

For example, I have structured my own iPod so that all sixty-four hundred of my songs fit into eighteen genre categories. Of those eighteen, six—classical, folk, hip hop, jazz, R&B/soul, and rock—account for 95% of my song collection. Two categories—hip hop and rock—account for 72% of my song collection. Of course, someone browsing my iPod could easily question some of my classifications. Do Erykah Badu and Gorillaz really belong under "hip hop?" Are Justice and Aimee Mann rightly categorized as "rock?"

Of course, part of the reason these questions can be asked is explained by the nature of genre. As mentioned several times already, genre distinctions are meant to be determined in discourse. But another reason these questions can be asked is because I

have structured my iPod so that when I choose to shuffle by genre, I will hear a wide variety of songs. My genre categories are purposefully broad because I have designed them with the iPod's shuffle function in mind. And the primarily private nature of the iPod ensures that a challenge from others about my genre designations can be easily avoided.

From the user who pays little attention to how songs are labeled when they are downloaded from P2P networks to the user who (perhaps obsessively) ensures that all of the songs on his iPod are functionally labeled, the iPod destabilizes genres at their cores. On the one hand, the iPodder is listening to incomplete genres. On the other, the iPodder is listening to over-filled genres. In both instances, the ways in which genre functions as a cultural commodity are obscured by the iPod's shuffling.

The second way iTunes and the iPod destabilize genre is through decentralization. Before mp3 players, the size of one's musical collection was visible. The more music one owned, the more storage space was needed to keep and organize that music. With the iPod, the growing of one's musical collection is invisible. Because the size of a computer hard drive or iPod does not expand or contract with the addition or subtraction of music files, a music collection can grow without the need for more space to store and organize the music.

This fundamental characteristic of the iPod has a potentially profound effect on the way we organize our music. When dealing with physical objects, it is imperative that we organize them in some way so that we can find them when we need them. Imagine a library whose books were randomly placed on shelves with no system of call numbers to

help patrons find their selections, and the need for systematic organization of physical objects becomes apparent.

Music collections tend to work the same way. While no individual music collection is likely to rival the book holdings of a library, many listeners still possess enough music to require some sort of organizational system. CDs or LPs may be stored alphabetically by artist on a shelf, or they may be sorted chronologically. Perhaps the system would be as informal as knowing which case holds the CDs one wishes to listen to in the car.

One particularly handy tool for organizing music is, of course, genre. All music stores employ genre as the primary sorting method, after which artists are typically listed alphabetically. Indeed, our familiarity with record stores probably influences the way most consumers have stored their music at home. Whatever the organizational system, the physicality of all previous forms of music recordings required some kind of order. Their spatial dimensions necessitate a central anchoring system that will allow us to find what we want to hear when we want to hear it.

With the iPod and its ability to store invisible music files (we can see representations of the files onscreen, and we can see the hard drive where they are stored, but not the files themselves), the need for organization is less pressing. Music files are freed from their moorings and possess the potential to float freely on our hard drives and iPods. They are decentralized.

Of course, we have already noticed that the iPod does include organizational features. One can control genre categories easily, and iTunes and the iPod default to alphabetical listings of songs, artists, or albums. With the press of a button, however, one's entire music library can be reordered in seconds. iPodders can switch from

browsing their music by song title to browsing it by artist name in a way that is unimaginable when dealing with physical objects. To find a CD, one must remember the disc's exact location. On an iPod, a listener can approach a song or album from a variety of different organizational settings. While a song's location is as fixed on a hard drive as it is fixed to a CD on a shelf, the ability to access it in different ways gives one the sense that it is in many places at once.

The shuffle feature takes full advantage of this illusion. In much the same way that listeners can approach their music using a variety of tools, the shuffle feature presents music to listeners in a variety of contexts. The shuffle, in this sense, is aptly named; it treats songs like cards in a deck, nimbly moving them around and reordering them with a speed and efficiency that one cannot match when trying to manipulate physical objects similarly. In so doing, the shuffle deemphasizes the role of genre as an organizational tool, undermining, in fact, all forms of organization.

We can see this tendency when reviewing the shuffle from Figure 1. Songs from disparate genres are thrown together without regard for the ways in which the different conventions governing each song may clash with those of the previous or subsequent one. And in fact, this clash may be less significantly experienced than one would expect. After all, we are still able to piece together meaningful readings of groups of shuffled songs, despite the turmoil one might initially anticipate from the shuffle's actions.

Perhaps the most frequently recurrent critique of genre is the perception that it is too divisive. As Holt puts it, "Some cultures of categorization are excessive and narrow-minded, and many people feel that genre boundaries create artificial divisions between the things they love" (2007, 3-4). It is unsurprising to realize that alongside the shuffle, a

tool that disregards the "artificial divisions between the things we love," has risen a genre of music that is inherently anti-genre: the mashup.

Whereas the shuffle puts songs side-by-side in unexpected ways, mashups move one step further and superimpose one song on top of another. The most praised mashups are those that marry the least likely songs. For example, Danger Mouse, who has produced some of the most popular albums of the past several years, including those for Gorillaz and Gnarls Barkley, rose to prominence when he released *The Grey Album*, which mashed the lyrics from Jay-Z's *Black Album* (hip hop) with samples of music from the Beatles' *White Album* (classic rock). Some of the attention he gained was doubtless the result of the ensuing lawsuit and cease-and-desist letters he received from the Beatles' lawyers. Much, though, came from the unlikely partnering of two artists whose styles are so apparently different.

The Best of Bootie, a yearly compilation of mashups compiled by DJ duo A plus D and distributed from bootieusa.com, consistently privileges creations that feature the combination of songs that represent seemingly antithetical genres. In fact, the idea of opposition is embedded in the labeling of songs, as mashup artists typically credit the artists they sample parenthetically with a versus symbol, ie "(Jay-Z vs. Beatles)." A representative sampling from the last three years includes the following tracks:

"Paid for by My Doorbell" by Party Ben (Eric B. and Rakim [hip hop] vs. White Stripes [rock])—2005
"Big Shot Pimpin" by Brat (Jay-Z [hip hop] vs. Billy Joel [easy listening])—2005
"Hung Up on Soul" by Party Ben (Death Cab for Cutie [indie rock] vs. Madonna [pop/dance])—2006
"Illiterate City" by Divide & Kreate (Jackson 5 [soul] vs. Guns N' Roses ['eighties rock])—2007

Both the shuffle and the mashup subvert the notion of genre by eroding its ability to separate categories of music. Listeners are encouraged to disregard the boundaries that distinguish genres and to allow free interplay among the different categories. The shuffle brings us to genre's boundaries and asks us to rub them out.

Still, even as the iPod hints at the kind of decentralization that can upset the function of genre, it holds onto structural systems that reinforce genre's traditional role in the listening experience. The iTunes Music Store, for instance, is still primarily organized as a traditional music store would be, allowing shoppers to browse according to genre and highlighting the best-selling songs and albums of each genre, as well as the best-sellers overall. One is immediately reminded of the displays in music megastores that push the Billboard Top 40 or the most popular albums from each genre. A "power search" option exists that allows the consumer to type in parameters (artist, song, album) that are meant to generate a desired song. The search functions in much the same way Google does, and it represents the same kind of decentralization that the shuffle function exploits. But the dominant experience of the iTunes Music Store closely resembles that of traditional music stores.

N. Katherine Hayles's description of information systems helps to explain what is happening with the Music Store. As one paradigm gives way to another, the former paradigm wanes in its influence and the latter gains strength. The shift is not clean; rather, the two paradigms will exist side by side for a period. If we were to trace the influence of a paradigm, it would be

shaped like a tiger's iris—narrow at the top when an attribute first begins to be introduced, with a bulge in the middle during the heyday of the attribute, and tapered off at the bottom as the shift to a new model is completed (1999, 15).

If decentralized music listening and shopping proves to be a new paradigm, it is in its early days, still at the top of the tiger's iris, while the genre system of organization is at the end of its heyday, still in the middle of the iris. The structure of the iTunes Music Store, by presenting both paradigms at once, performs an important function. It introduces a new model of music consumption while maintaining vestiges of the familiar model.

Whether we are experiencing a true paradigm shift, however, remains to be seen. While iTunes and the iPod display several features that suggest a move toward decentralization, Apple also invests its devices with fairly conservative features. In 2006, Apple released an updated version of the fifth-generation video iPod. The original fifth-generation iPod was released in the summer of 2006 and offered 30 gigabyte (G) and 60G models. The update, sometimes referred to as 5.5, was released just before the holiday season, and its main selling points were a drop in price and a rise in the capacity of the largest model (from 60G to 80G). Significantly, the 5.5 video iPod also included a software update that allowed the listener to search for songs, potentially replacing the need to browse through one's entire library in search of a desired tune (iTunes has long included this feature and continues to offer it).

The primary complaint about the search function was its impracticality. Because one had to input letters using the click wheel—scrolling to a letter and clicking it, then scrolling to the next, then the next—the search was often more time-consuming than simply finding the song in one's library. The introduction of the iPod Touch in 2007 should have remedied this problem. The Touch featured a much larger screen than previous iPods, and instead of a click wheel, the screen was touch sensitive and included

a virtual keyboard that would allow the listener to quickly type in search terms. But the iPod Touch came without the search function. After less than a year, Apple had abandoned the idea. iPodders could only browse their collections, not search them, reinforcing the primacy of organizational systems like genre.

Another rather conservative feature that has been introduced to iTunes and the iPod is the Genius shuffle. The Genius feature creates a playlist of similar music, starting with whatever song is playing when Genius is activated. The idea is to create a more delicate shuffle than would be produced by haphazard forays through genres or an entire library produce. The idea is similar to that which spawned internet radio stations Last.fm and Pandora, each of which begin by having listeners type in a preferred artist or song before generating a set of tunes similar to the starting one.

Last.fm and Pandora each employ different methods to define similarity. Last.fm relies on traditional genre distinctions, so if one begins with Bob Dylan, the web site plays mostly folk and Sixties rock tunes. If Scarface is the starting point, then the listener hears mostly Southern Rap. Pandora, on the other hand, is specifically interested in flouting genre distinctions. The site determines similarity by employing a stable of expert listeners who describe songs in a variety of ways—noisy, sad, funky, syncopated, lyrically suicidal—then generates playlists of songs that share many of the same descriptors. One is likely to hear a parade of genres, as with iPod's shuffle but generated with a higher degree of intentionality.

iPod's Genius shuffle works like Last.fm, as it is reluctant to include songs in a playlist that are outside the original song's genre category. Three Genius playlists consisting of ten songs each are displayed in Figure 3.1-3.3.

Figure 3.1—Genius Shuffle generated from "Highway 61 Revisited"
  1. "Highway 61 Revisited" by Bob Dylan, *Highway 61 Revisited* (1965)
  2. "Ball and Chain" by Janis Joplin, *Love Janis* (1967/2001)
  3. "Truckin'" by Grateful Dead, *American Beauty* (1970)
  4. "Tonight's the Night" by Neil Young, *Tonight's the Night* (1975)
  5. "Crosstown Traffic" by Jimi Hendrix, *Electric Ladyland* (1968)
  6. "Atlantic City" by Bruce Springsteen, *Nebraska* (1982)
  7. "Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again" by Bob Dylan, *Highway 61 Revisited* (1965)
  8. "You Wreck Me" by Tom Petty, *Wildflowers* (1994)
  9. "What Light" by Wilco, *Sky Blue Sky* (2007)
  10. "Eclipse" by Pink Floyd, *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973)

Figure 3.2—Genius Shuffle generated from "Git Out My Face"
  1. "Git Out My Face" by Scarface, *Made* (2007)
  2. "B.A.N. (The Love Song)" by David Banner, *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (2008)
  3. "Keep it 100" by Bun B, *II Trill* (2008)
  4. "The Life" by Prodigy, *H.N.I.C. Part 2* (2008)
  5. "Life Changes" by Wu Tang Clan, *8 Diagrams* (2008)
  6. "God's Plan" by Hi-Tek with Young Buck and Outlaws, *Hi-Teknology 3* (2007)
  7. "This is the Life" by Rick Ross with Trey Songz, *Trilla* (2008)
  8. "I Ain't Hard to Find" by Paul Wall, *Get Money, Stay True* (2007)
  9. "Weed, Blow, Pills" by Three 6 Mafia, *Last 2 Walk* (2007)
  10. "Bitch I'm from Dade County" by DJ Khaled with Trick Daddy, Rick Ross, Trina, Dre, and Flo Rida, *We the Best* (2007)

Figure 3.3—Genius Shuffle generated from "Smells Like Teen Spirit"
  1. "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana, *Nevermind* (1991)
  2. "Give it Away" by Red Hot Chili Peppers, *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* (1991)
  3. "Buddy Holly" by Weezer, *Blue Album* (1994)
  4. "Bulls on Parade" by Rage Against the Machine, *Evil Empire* (1996)
  5. "All Along the Watchtower" by Jimi Hendrix, *Electric Ladyland* (1968)
  6. "Money" by Pink Floyd, *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973)
  7. "Clint Eastwood" by Gorillaz, *Gorillaz* (2001)
  8. "Like a Rolling Stone" by Bob Dylan, *Highway 61 Revisited* (1965)
  9. "Look What You've Done" by Jet, *Get Born* (2003)
  10. "Fat Bottomed Girls" by Queen, *Jazz* (1978)

    As is evident from these three shuffles, the Genius function rarely moves beyond genre boundaries. In fact, of the twenty-seven songs generated, only one, "Clint Eastwood" (which is labeled "hip hop" on my iPod), belongs to a different genre than the

original song. And, again, we notice that the shuffle feature is limited by my own definition of genre.

If we look only at the second shuffle, which begins with Scarface, we might conclude that Genius is quite sophisticated. All of the songs were recorded within an eighteen-month span, and the majority of the songs feature Southern rappers who share stylistic qualities. The other two shuffles, however, begin with very different artists— Bob Dylan and Nirvana—but feature songs from many of the same albums. *Highway 61 Revisited*, *Electric Ladyland*, and *Dark Side of the Moon* are represented on both shuffles in Figures 3.1 and 3.3.

We can account for the difference in precision by realizing that the Genius function uses genre to determine the playlists it generates, and it relies on my categorization to determine the genres of songs. The Scarface shuffle benefits from the fact that many of the artists represented in the shuffle appear as guest artists on each others' albums. I assume Genius searches by genre and narrows by common components—in this case, shared guest artists. Because my broadly defined rock genre features fewer guest appearances, Genius is unable to narrow the field with the accuracy we find in Figure 3.2.

While Last.fm and Pandora present the listener with new music in order to either expand one's notion of a genre (Last.fm) or move beyond traditional genre conceptions (Pandora), Genius simply recycles what I have already determined when loading my music onto my iPod.

While Apple still includes components in iTunes and on the iPod that reinforce traditional genre functions, the very act of shuffling, especially when understood in a music-cultural context that includes services like Last.fm and Pandora, weakens the

traditional role of genre and points toward a new paradigm of decentralized musical consumption whose boundaries are increasingly defined individually with less need for recourse to broader conceptions.

Conclusion

The iPod's shuffle feature represents a redefinition of musical meaning and repurposing of genre to cater to contemporary music consumption trends. Realizing that we order randomness when confronted with a shuffle may call into question how and if music means, the answers to which have often been tethered to intention and conscious choice. But, importantly, noticing that what we are able to interpret a shuffle despite the absence of an intentional agent, we are more likely to move forward with a fuller sense of what produces musical meaning and the hermeneutic ideas that most heavily influence contemporary music interpretation rather than deciding that randomly assembled music simply cannot hold meaning.

Genre works in much the same way. While the iPod's shuffle feature undermines many of the traditional functions of genre, it also relies on those very notions. Shuffles and mashups play with the boundaries of genres at the same time that they rely on our understanding of where those boundaries lie—otherwise the pleasure of a string of unrelated songs or the irony of two opposing songs superimposed on one another is lost on the listener. As Holt mentions in his discussion of genre, "the fetishization of hybridity do[es] not get us very far" (2007, 5-6). The iPod's shuffle does not blend together multifarious genres simply to point out genre's weak points. Rather, it

participates in a trend alongside other cultural forces like Pandora and mashups to encourage an active reexamination of genres and their usefulness.

The shuffle, as we have seen, is limited. Significantly, though, its limits are defined by those who use it. As iPodders are able to grasp increasingly individualized interpretive and organizational power, concepts like musical meaning and genre evolve. As cultural commodities, they are not meant to remain fixed for long, and the shuffle presents a platform that allows us to redistribute our own notions of music interpretation and organization.

Chapter 4: Wax Collectors v the iPod People:

Reimagining Masculinity with Digital Music

> A while back, when Dick and Barry and I agreed that what really matters is what you like, not what you *are* like, Barry proposed the idea of a questionnaire for prospective partners, a two- or three-page multiple-choice document that covered all the music/film/TV/book bases. It was intended a) to dispense with awkward conversation, and b) to prevent a chap from leaping into bed with someone who might, later, turn out to have every Julio Iglesias record ever made…There was an important and essential truth contained in the idea, and the truth was that these things matter, and it's no good pretending that any relationship has a future if your record collections disagree violently (Hornby 1995, 117).

So opines Rob Fleming in Nick Hornby's *High Fidelity*, a novel whose world is relayed

to the reader by a record-collecting narrator who is trying to salvage an eroding

relationship and who understands his surroundings primarily in terms of his record

collection. Along with its cinematic version (where Rob's surname is changed to

Gordon, and he is played by John Cusack), *High Fidelity* presents an all-too-familiar

image of the Record Collector that embodies many of the stereotypes that dominate

popular perceptions of collectors. Rob is such a paradigmatic example of the record

collector, in fact, that Roy Shuker, Will Straw, and Mark Katz all invoke him in their

discussions of music collecting.

The stereotypical record collector is a man who is doing what men do: hunting.

While he may begin collecting because he enjoys music, he continues because he

becomes consumed by the hunt. His identity is shaped by his ability to find obscure

recordings, to amass copious discs, to organize and display them, and, through his exposure to a wide variety of music, to become the arbiter of taste among his family and friends (if he has any left). Rob emphasizes this last point by insinuating that the most horrifying secret one might learn about a sexual partner is that she is a Julio Iglesias fan.

Discussions of record collectors invariably note and, often, recycle the notion that all of the record collector's pursuits are bound up in his masculinity. His behavior is tied to his genetic makeup so that, just as his manly ancestors wandered the plains searching for food, he bravely wades through racks of old records and digs through crates of unwanted discs to provide musical sustenance for himself and those around him. The record collector so completely embodies masculine stereotypes—and is so infrequently imagined as a woman in mass media—that one is left to wonder which came first: the male stereotypes, or the behaviors of male collectors?

Record collecting is sometimes intertwined with another stereotypically male indulgence: high fidelity (hi-fi) audio. What better way to enjoy one's collection than with a stereo built of disparate parts selected and purchased (or hunted and gathered) by the audiophile himself? Before big screen televisions and home theaters, a "man cave" was fashioned around stereo equipment, and its assemblage, as well as its very existence in the home, marked masculine territory, a place of refuge from women and children.

The iPod, though, upsets many of the hallmarks of stereotypically masculine music consumption. While scouring the internet for music is still sometimes just as time-consuming as digging through crates in a record store, the fruits of one's labors are not as apparent as before. Because a hard drive occupies the same physical space whether it is full or empty, the accumulation of music files is much less obviously impressive for a

collector's friends to see (if they see the music at all). Further, iPodders primarily listen to their devices using earbuds (Apple's name for the iPod's signature headphones), and the music they hear is often in a digital format that maximizes space by capitalizing on low fidelity. When iPodders do use stereos, they are often single-box units that require no assembly.

These shifts in music collection and fidelity tap into non-masculine modes of consumption and combine with a marketing campaign that allows Apple to appeal to listeners beyond the masculine stereotypes that still permeate popular perception. This is not, however, an entirely brave new world, as Apple also equivocates in its marketing strategies and is still sure to target the stereotypical record collectors and audiophiles of old. By alternately upholding and undermining these stereotypes, Apple uses the iPod to repackage the consumption habits of obsessive music fans for a broader listening public.

Sketching the Collector and the Audiophile

In order to best understand the ways the iPod interacts with collectors and audiophiles, we should broadly describe their dominant characteristics. I offer a purposefully generic sketch because it is the image of the generic collector and audiophile that dominates the iPod's marketplace. The character of Rob in *High Fidelity* works well with audiences because he is iconic of a stereotype that has embodied the collector for the better part of a century, and it is this stereotype that the iPod both undergirds and undermines. I include here both popular accounts as well as scholarship that describe and critique the nature and formation of the collector and the audiophile. I also include a discussion of the ways in which Apple incorporates collector and

audiophile stereotypes into the marketing and intended uses of the iPod. The following

sketch, then, will at times draw more heavily on the stereotype of the hi-fi connoisseur

and at others on that of the collector in order to fashion an image that encompasses both.

The collector/audiophile is male.

Roy Shuker, in his ethnographic survey of record collectors, reminds us that

"collecting is not a male-dominated practice," and he cites Susan Pearce to suggest that

women may even comprise the majority of collectors (2004, 314).   Indeed, of the fifteen

hundred respondents to the survey featured in Pearce's *Collecting in Contemporary*

Practice, 58% were women. "Certainly in contemporary Britain," Pearce concludes,

"there seem to be rather more women collectors than men" (1998, 24-26). Even as

Shuker invokes Pearce, however, he mentions that his own survey of sixty-seven self-

identified collectors features only eleven women. Further, the majority of his

respondents confirm what his sample implies: namely, record collecting is a masculine

endeavor.

> Most (64/67) of my respondents, especially the males, drawing on personal
> observation, agreed that record collecting is largely a male activity. Conversely, the
> majority of the women collectors (7/11) are conscious of being in a visible minority
> (314).

Shuker even admits that none of the women he did find to respond to his survey had

collections "on the scale of a number of the men" (314). How are we to resolve the

dissonance between Pearce's findings and the popular perception of the record collector

that Shuker, despite efforts to the contrary, reaffirms?

Pearce is concerned with the collection of any material, whereas Shuker limits his

scope to record collecting. The difference is the valuation of what is collected.

> Evidence is now beginning to build up from work done at the Victoria and Albert Museum and elsewhere which suggests that a significant number of women were collecting material like china, postcards, and the decorative arts through the twentieth and nineteenth centuries, and back into the later part of the eighteenth century. The bulk of this collecting activity, however, has to be discovered through study of diaries, memoirs, and the like because the collections themselves seldom survive, unlike the material amassed by men (26).

The material amassed by men survives because it is often preserved in museums and special collections, whereas women's traditional collection pursuits are considered domestic items whose preservation society does not deem vital. When we isolate music collecting pursuits in Pearce's study, we can see that more than 70% of record collectors and almost 100% of musical instrument collectors are male (134).

Tricia Rose observes the sort of gender segregation that propels separate interests in her study of hip hop's early days. One of Rose's concerns in her book *Black Noise* is to consider why women have been so severely underrepresented in rap despite being integral to the formation of hip hop culture in New York. Her conclusion is that rap's dependence on technological innovation creates social spaces that are not welcoming (and occasionally are even hostile) to women. Rose notes that hip hop music production relied on "shared local knowledge"—knowledge one would gather at friends' houses while spending hours around stereo equipment. "For social, sexual, and cultural reasons young women would be much less likely to be permitted or feel comfortable spending such extended time in a male neighbor's home," Rose explains (1994, 57-58).

Timothy Taylor examines the split between male and female technological space in *Strange Sounds*. He traces the socialization of technology in the years immediately following World War II, when the atom and nuclear energy carried the greatest extremes of the nation's hopes and fears regarding technology. The public perception of atomic

energy was fashioned by a rather aggressive public relations campaign through which the

United States government assured its citizens that the technology was safe and would

create a world of ease for consumers.

> Because of the complex science involved, most people didn't (or were told they couldn't) understand atomic power, which was often described in terms of magic, mystery, and wonder…There was also a good deal of hyperbole about the conveniences nuclear energy would bring, hyperbole made possible in part because of the technological complexity of atomic power. Politicians, scientists, and journalists alike exaggerated the benefits of nuclear power, foreseeing a time when there would be power "too cheap to meter" (2001, 73).

Importantly, the kind of technological innovation promised by the atomic age

targeted women just as vociferously as men. The difference is that women were defined

by the domestic and were therefore seduced by "push-button" technologies that offered

complicated functions at the push of a button. These included kitchen gadgets and

cleaning equipment that were meant to greatly simplify the housewife's life. How these

technologies worked was less important than the fact that they worked—and that they

were marvelous.

Men, on the other hand, were meant to feel unsatisfied by push-button devices

and were encouraged instead to delve more deeply into technology. The rise of the hi-fi

stereo demonstrates this tendency, as enthusiasts bought individual components and

assembled them into a working unit at home. While high fidelity stereo systems were

marketed also to women, they were usually already-assembled units that functioned like

push-button devices and drew the ire of audiophile men. The part of the house that

centered around the hi-fi, then, marked a man's space.

> Coming home from a hard day at the office, the man, oppressed by his dull job, could relax with his own piece of space-age, futuristic technology and escape from not only work, but also the wife and kids (Taylor 2001, 80).

Here we find in the middle-class white home the same sort of technological division that colors Rose's hip hop history. In each case, it is men who tinker with technological gadgetry and women who are closed off from the space where that work happens.

We should pause to note that the domesticity that punctuates the United States' nuclear campaign illuminates another aspect of the masculinity of collectors and audiophiles: they are not just men, but heterosexual men. Overwhelmingly, images of collectors and audiophiles exclude not only women but gay men, as well. The latter group is ignored perhaps a bit more perniciously, though. The absence of women in a technological milieu is often obvious; it is marked in a way that causes one to note a woman's absence. The exclusive presence of heteronormative men, however, tends to obscure the absence of gay men and women, as the "other" of the men presented is the straight woman, leaving gay men and women unrepresented and often unconsidered. When describing collectors and audiophiles as "masculine," then, we must acknowledge that the term assumes heterosexuality.

While record collecting and high fidelity stereos are the stuff of the twentieth century, Rose notes that we are witnessing "the continuation of the pervasive marginalization of women from music throughout European and American history" (58). Indeed, the recent notion of domesticity that largely separates women from the world of audiophiles simply extends the rationale that defined social spaces in the Enlightenment.

Tia DeNora, in her study of the interpenetrating worlds of opera and botany, explains how the perception of woman as being closely tied to nature helped ensconce the

home as woman's proper place. Specifically, woman's ability to lactate "placed her closer than man to other mammalian creatures," and so she was expected to live according to what nature prescribes, "within [her] naturally 'rightful' place within the private sphere of the family" (2006, 157). It is within this milieu that the collection of, as Pearce notes, "china, postcards, and the decorative arts" was devalued, while man's pursuits, which in the twentieth century increasingly include technology, were privileged.

Harnessing nuclear energy was understood to be dicey. It was an attempt to exert control over nature, so women, who were too closely governed by their natural urges, were not to be trusted with power over the atom. The choice of hi-fi stereos over push-button devices enacts this ideology on a smaller scale, as it is men who are meant to exert control over the disparate parts of their stereos and women who are perceived as unable to ascend beyond their natural urges to achieve the rationality necessary to build technology and who must therefore rely on the simpler push-button technologies.

When Shuker says that "women's investment in the collecting process, and the nature of the artifacts collected, differs from men's, with a greater emphasis on domestic-related collectables," he is both correct and overly simplistic. Centuries of ideology defining gender roles, combined with the nuclear promotional campaign of the United States in the mid-twentieth century, guaranteed that men and women would be directed into different technological and collecting pursuits.

Apple deploys several of the male stereotypes we have seen here. The first iPod commercial, launched in 2001 alongside the first iPod itself, features a man, alone in his apartment, loading tunes onto his iPod and dancing around his living room. The viewer can see that the man has several LP sleeves and CD cases in his apartment, and he is

stationed in front of his Mac computer at the beginning of the ad. He is playing with his iPod—the latest electronic gizmo—and the two feed off of each other. His masculinity is buttressed by the iPod's technology, and the iPod's technological draw is in part powered by the man's masculinity.

While iPod commercials have increasingly included women and a general obscuring of overt masculinity, Apple launched an ad campaign in 2006 that would brand the company itself with a heteromasculine image. The series of commercials known as the "Get a Mac" campaign features two men standing in front of an entirely white backdrop. One man (played by Justin Long), who is a twenty-something dressed in blue jeans, a t-shirt, and an unzipped hooded sweatshirt, declares, "I'm a Mac." The other (played by John Hodgman), who is middle-aged and dressed in a cheap suit and glasses, declares, "I'm a P.C." Over the course of the more than fifty television and internet commercials shown in the United States, the viewer watches the P.C. bumble through his existence, unable to explain some of his simplest functions while exhibiting incredible self-awareness about his shortcomings. The Mac, on the other hand, always has an easy barb to rile the P.C. or a ready solution for whatever problems the P.C. has.

The effect of the "Get a Mac" commercials is to brand Apple as a young, heteromasculine company that is able to harness technology much more easily than its rivals. The P.C. is represented by a man, but he is decidedly effeminate when it comes to technology; he is unable to understand how technology works, while the Mac demonstrates obvious mastery. Though the commercials are technically selling Mac computers, the iPod-white background gently reminds the viewer of Apple's other major product offering, which itself now audibly enacts the P.C.'s femininity against the Mac's

masculinity. The third generation iPod shuffle, released in March 2009, features "voice-over," whereby the click of a button generates a computerized voice that tells the listener the name of the song that is playing. If one's iPod is synchronized with a Mac, the computerized voice is decidedly masculine. If it is synchorinzed with a P.C., the voice is feminine.

I have lingered over this characteristic of collectors and audiophiles because it is entwined with all of the following characteristics. The masculinity of the collector and the hi-fi connoisseur is understood to drive his hobbies, as what becomes stereotypical of males becomes stereotypical of collectors and audiophiles, as well.

The collector/audiophile hunts for unique items.

Mark Katz discusses the importance of record rarity to DJs, whose need to produce hours of music that will hold listeners' attention makes them de facto collectors. Noting that "originality and novelty are prized in the selection of records," Katz describes the hunt for "large and eclectic collections, gathered by 'digging in the crates' of used record shops, Salvation Army stores, or garage sales" (2004, 118-19). The goal of sifting through others' unwanted records is to find the record, song, or beat that no one else has.

This urge extends beyond the world of DJs. In his profile of record collectors in *Opera News*, Patrick Giles describes these music hunters as "slinking from flea markets to tag sales to second-hand dealers more stealthily than any Sparafucile [the sneaky assassin from Verdi's *Rigoletto*]" (1998, 30). Giles reminds us that collectors are not only after a rare record; rather, they seek to find or create something unique, whether it is a single disc or an entire collection.

Giles mentions the possibility of owning a recording of Maria "Callas' disastrous (and hence only) live appearances as the *Barbiere* Rosina," or of "Montserrat Caballé immortaliz[ing] a Met broadcast *Don Carlo* by holding her final high B-natural for a staggering[ly]" long time (32). But he also includes collectors who seek to create a one-of-a-kind collection. Lewis M. Hall, who collects French recordings, is described as focusing on a "corner of opera history," and Giles mentions another (unnamed) collector who owns "more than 250 recordings of 'Che gelida manina'" (32). In each case, the collector has acquired a recording or amassed a collection that is unlike what anyone else has.

Shuker observes the same tendency in his survey group, where most of the collectors he spoke to cared little for the monetary worth of many of their albums, instead focusing mostly on their unique holdings, including "signed editions of recordings, rare releases, and scarce recordings" (323).

In *High Fidelity*, Rob and his friends/employees Dick and Barry, as collectors themselves, understand the value of a rare recording. Rob relays the story of an album by the Sid James Experience that Barry loves: "he says it's very rare, and that someday we'll make somebody very happy" (152). The sale of the album, which he has had since the store opened, marks, Rob assumes, the promise of good things to come. But his next meeting with his ex-girlfriend goes poorly, and the Sid James Experience album is returned the following day. Here, Hornby emphasizes the importance of rarity to a collector by allowing the devaluation of a rare album to mirror the further devaluation of Rob's love life.

Hi-fi stereos are each meant to be unique. Since audiophiles assemble them using disparate parts, each system should necessarily be different from any other, and the complexity of each system is what defines it against simpler "in-the-box" stereos.

Katz's *Capturing Sounds* was published in 2004 (and the manuscript was finished in 2003), and his chapter on file sharing represents theorizing at a critical juncture in music dissemination. Though the iPod and iTunes Music Store were launched in 2001, it was not until 2003 that they became compatible with P.C.s and subsequently effected an appreciable impact on music consumption and sales. 2004 marks the first year the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) began keeping statistics on digital music purchases, and the sale of digital units did not surpass that of physical albums until 2007 (2007 year-end report).[21] In other words, while iTunes and the iPod already existed at the time of Katz's writing, their success was far from guaranteed, and they certainly did not yet represent the standard in digital music distribution in the United States.

In Katz's 2004 survey of internet file-sharers, he finds that they would be willing to pay for digital music if the retailer met a number of conditions, including reliability, speed, and ease of browsing. One kind of offer that could lure file-sharers to a digital music store would be uniqueness in the form of "exclusive or advance access to new material" (183). iTunes does, in fact, feature exclusive material, including B-sides and

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[21] In 2004, digital units (a unit is defined as that which is purchased, so when discussing units sold, a single, an album, and a box set hold equal weight) accounted for 143.9 million of 958 million total units shipped, or 15% of the total number of units. In 2007, digital units totaled 868.4 million of a total 1.77 billion units shipped, or 49% of the total units shipped, while physical recordings represented 31% and mobile/cellular sales represented 20%. Significantly, digital units still only accounted for 12% of the market (measured purely monetarily) in 2007 (with physical recordings at 77% and mobile at 11%), up from 9% in 2004, as the bulk of digital units purchased are singles (whose norm price is $0.99), while the bulk of physical units purchased are albums (whose price may range from $10-18). All statistics are pulled from the RIAA's 2007 year-end report, available online at http://www.riaa.com/keystatistics.php?content_selector=keystats_yearend_report.

live tracks unreleased anywhere else and advance sales of singles and music videos. To be sure, this material is not directly analogous to the rare finds available in record and antique stores, since anyone with access to iTunes may purchase it. But the offer of content unavailable in any other purchasable format still represents Apple's acknowledgement of and catering to collector and audiophile stereotypes.

The iPod even has unintended effects on the collection of rare items. Since physical units are still more lucrative for the record industry than digital ones, CDs are often marketed with exclusive features that one cannot access from a digital store. These features range from bonus tracks (which inevitably become available online) to posters or, in the case of Mariah Carey's 2007 album $E=MC^2$, a sticker that fits onto the back of one's iPod.

For the collector/audiophile, size matters.

The phrase "size matters" is practically clichéd when discussing collectors and hi-fi connoisseurs. In Giles's profile of opera collectors, he consistently mentions large figures in conjunction with a collector whose holdings seem particularly massive, and even notes when other collectors are impressed.

> As with *Godzilla*, size matters. 50,000-plus was the highest figure claimed by a devotee, but collections scaling the 10,000-item mark do not seem uncommon (30).
>
> Longtime collector Lewis M. Hall has amassed almost 10,000 78s, LPs and CDs (32).
>
> One New Yorker is said to have more than 250 recordings of "Che gelida manina." (Other collectors, apprised of this statistic, sighed in admiration.) (32)
>
> "As you may expect, I am single," Robert Browne chuckles, after proudly enumerating the 8,615 LPs, 2,570 CDs in his…archive (33).

The walls [in Bob Rideout's Brooklyn Heights apartment] are crowded with 120 autographed opera-star photos. Three hundred opera and theater reference books sit alongside CDs on several bookcases (34).

"I have a friend with over 13,000 records," [Rideout explains] (35).

Does one need to have every different LP and CD edition of every Maria Callas recording? (At least one person actually does.) (35)

To this last feat, "a collector with a paltry 1,400 items shakes his head" (35). Collectors are portrayed as admiring the girth of each others' assets, and those with "paltry" archives are appropriately embarrassed. Even Robert Browne's apparently self-deprecating remark, in the context of Giles's size-obsessed piece, can be understood instead to indicate that Browne's collection is simply too large to share with only one partner.

Pearce's study reinforces the idea that men are likely to have larger collections than women. Because she is working with a variety of collectibles, Pearce's largest collections are described as holding one hundred pieces or more, and the men who responded to her survey account for roughly 65% of the collections that attain this highest level (34). Comparing collections sizes by pure numbers can be crude. A collection of one hundred cars, for instance, is a much different collection than one hundred LPs. Still, the collection types Pearce attributes mostly to women—china, postcards—are comparable enough to music collections in terms of size and price that one can attribute significance to the fact that men account for the majority of collections of more than one hundred items.

Even hi-fi stereos traffic in size. Before flat screen televisions and microscopic surround sound systems were chic, the hi-fi was partly judged by its sheer mass; the larger the system, the bigger the sound. And sound itself is the very essence of a hi-fi

system. The brunt of a man's stereo was meant to be felt all over the house, as Taylor

notes that "one of the main points of friction in hi-fi-equipped homes concerned volume"

(80).

Shuker finds a different attitude among his collectors, though. Half of his

respondents had collections of fewer than one thousand items, and many could only

approximate how many albums they owned. Shuker attributes his unexpected findings to

the fact that those who study collections are perhaps more obsessed with size than those

who collect, pointing out studies which focus on outrageously large holdings and

ignoring moderate collections. Certainly Giles seems guilty of Shuker's charge, as he

repeatedly highlights and champions size over all else.

The iPod, since its inception, has been marketed with a focus on the size of

listeners' music collections. Though iPods are primarily designated by hard drive size—

5, 20, 30, 80, 120, or 160 gigabytes, for instance—Apple has always translated hard drive

space into the number of musical units that can be stored on any particular model.

Commercials for the first generation iPod, which featured 5GB of storage, ended with the

tagline "1,000 songs in your pocket."

Apple arrives at its figure by assigning the average song a size of 4 megabytes

(MB), with 1,000 MB comprising one GB. Technically, the first generation iPod could

carry 1,250 songs—a figure that apparently fits more tidily into a pocket than into a

slogan. Apple could have easily assigned an average of ten songs to an album and

marketed the iPod as "100 albums in your pocket," but the figure isn't nearly as

impressive. By defining the musical unit as a single, Apple insured that, as its product

grew, so would the impact of its capacity. The 120GB iPod Classic, released in 2008,

boasted of a capacity to hold 30,000 songs, allowing listeners the room to grow their collections to proportions that would dwarf some of those of Giles's subjects. Apple's narrow definition of the musical unit and consistent focus on capacity illustrate another way in which the iPod is subservient to collector and audiophile stereotypes.

The collector is obsessed.

Obsession is displayed by the collector in a variety of ways. One is the need for items. Sometimes the need for items is what Shuker calls "accumulation," where one (sometimes indiscriminately) begins to purchase music simply for the sake of owning more. Any threshold of enjoyment, practicality, or sense of completion is obliterated by the urge to add something to one's collection (319).

Sometimes, the need for items is much more specific. If a collector is amassing, to use one of Giles's examples, all of the recordings Maria Callas ever made, then his need for a particular item is specific and well-defined. The search for such a recording falls under Shuker's "completism" rubric, where a collector desires to own all of a particular category (320). Completism leads to potentially antisocial behavior, as illustrated by Giles when he describes a woman who was hospitalized while shopping in a New England antique store; she was blindsided and knocked to the ground when she randomly picked up an album that a nearby collector apparently needed to add to his collection.

Obsession moves beyond the need to acquire items, however. When one owns a large number of items, order, ranging from an individual album to an entire collection, is a necessity. The sort of DJing Katz discusses is aided by the placement of stickers on the

records that indicate to the DJ where a desired sound begins. A busy DJ must juggle hundreds or even thousands of records, some of which are only used for a single soundbite. Stickers help DJs manage their vast collections so that they can create sets and mixes without constantly searching for a particular musical quote.

Beyond individual discs, one must house and organize a collection if it is to be accessible. Since Giles pays such close attention to size, he also addresses the ways his subjects house their holdings. "Some collectors resort to warehouses or storage facilities; some build or move to bigger houses." Robert Browne, the single collector with more than 10,000 items, has an archive that is described as "carefully catalogued, beautifully arranged, utterly intimidating" (33).

Shuker discusses completism as a desire that is in tension with itself. On the one hand, a collector wants to amass all of one kind of item, but, on the other, the collector fears the completion of this task, as the collecting process would then end.

> [Completism] admits the possibility of closure, but this can be indefinitely postponed by a constant extension of the boundaries of the collection. This can occur, for example, by collecting the ongoing output of a living artist, in all its formats and national pressings…or closure can be avoided by simply choosing a goal that is essentially unattainable, given the scope of the subject and the fierce competition for rarer items, such as all Jamaican reggae (33).

Here we see one's sense of self bound up with the collecting process, as a certain despair attends the potential completion of a collection goal. Russell W. Belk, in his essay "Collectors and Collecting," asks, "If one is a collector and there is nothing left to collect, who is one then?" (324).

High Fidelity's Rob displays a similar conflation of his hetero-masculine self and his collection in the urge to organize his records. Soon after his relationship with Laura

ends, he spends an evening amidst his records, imposing an order on them that is lacking

in his love life.

> Tuesday night I reorganize my record collection; I often do this at periods of
> emotional stress. There are some people who would find this a pretty dull way to
> spend an evening, but I'm not one of them. This is my life, and it's nice to be able to
> wade in it, immerse your arms in it, touch it…Tonight, I fancy something different, so
> I try to remember the order I bought them in: that way I hope to write my own
> autobiography, without ever having to do anything like pick up a pen…What I really
> like is the feeling of security I get from my new filing system; I have made myself
> more complicated than I really am. I have a couple of thousand records, and you have
> to be me—or, at the very least, a doctor of Flemingology—to know how to find any of
> them (54-55).

The boundaries of Rob's collection are as broadly defined as possible—music he would

like to own. And the infinite pursuit of this goal, with its ever-receding horizon that

assures that he meanders toward it his whole life, mirrors his emotional life, as he

wanders from girlfriend to girlfriend, feeling a tinge of despair each time he almost

commits himself fully to one woman.

The iPod taps into the obsessive side of collectors by encouraging them to amass

huge music holdings. Because the iPod's size itself, whether it has no files on it or is

completely full, never changes, and because hard drives that hold hundreds of gigabytes

are reasonably priced and also never change size, the accrual of music suddenly barely

invades one's physical space.[22] The warehouses and extra rooms previously needed to

house 30,000 units are now unnecessary, as such a collection can fit onto a single iPod

and most standard hard drives.

The iPod is not a solution for every collector's space problem. For instance, the

collector Giles mentions who holds more than 50,000 albums will not be able to fit the

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[22] I determine that large hard drives are "reasonably priced" only in relation to a person
who owns an iPod. My assumption is that if one can afford a $250 iPod and the music to fill it
(realizing that many songs can be illegally downloaded for nothing), then another $200 on a hard
drive is also relatively affordable.

entire collection on an iPod and will probably be hard-pressed to find a hard drive that

can contain that much digital media. What is significant about the iPod, however, is that

it sells the audiophile's acquisitive nature to casual music listeners. Consumers who own

only a few CDs, when confronted with all of the storage space on an iPod, may be lured

into a broadly defined collector's hunt: fill the iPod. Apple designs the iPod to interact

with technology that makes finding, downloading, and storing music much simpler than

before, and, in so doing, translates the stereotypical obsession of collectors into a

mainstream pursuit.

The collector defines taste.

The cultivation of taste and its importance in one's life is a thread that runs all the

way through *High Fidelity*. One particularly telling moment occurs when Rob, Dick, and

Barry each list their five favorite "side one track ones of all time."

> [Rob]: "Janie Jones," the Clash, from *The Clash*; "Thunder Road," Bruce Springsteen,
> from *Born to Run*; "Smells Like Teen Spirit," Nirvana, from *Nevermind*; "Let's Get it
> On," Marvin Gaye, from *Let's Get it On*; "Return of the Grievous Angel," Gram
> Parsons, from *Grievous Angel*. Barry: "Couldn't you make it any more obvious than
> that? What about the *Beatles*? What about the *Rolling Stones*? What about the
> fucking…fucking…*Beethoven*? Track one side one of the Fifth Symphony? You
> shouldn't be allowed to run a record shop" (147).

Whether compiling lists with his friends, fearing what music may be on the shelf of a

sexual partner, or wondering if he even can be friends with Laura's friends, who own

albums by "Tina Turner, Billy Joel, Kate Bush, Pink Floyd, Simply Red, the Beatles, of

course, Mike Oldfield (*Tubular Bells I* and *II*), Meat Loaf" (279), Rob constantly works

to portray himself as an arbiter of musical taste, and he understands his extensive record

collection as that which licenses him to define good music for his social circle.

Philip Auslander invokes the notion of cultural prestige to describe the status of those who attend live events, and he imagines a future in which owning a recording may be more prestigious than being at a live concert. Indeed, our present may already be that time.

> It is actually not at all difficult to imagine cases in which owning the mediatized version of a performance is worth the same, if not more, symbolic capital as having attended the live event. I would derive substantial symbolic capital from having seen the Beatles at the Cavern Club in Liverpool in 1960, for instance. But it is open to question whether I would garner more cultural capital than someone who owns a bootleg recording of the same performance. The bootleg would surely be worth at least as much symbolic capital as attendance at the live event; as a tangible artifact of the performance that would make it accessible to others, it might even be worth more (1999, 59).

Auslander's scenario is not obviously true. One can easily envision the bootleg owner responding in amazement to a person who actually attended the event that is recorded. But Auslander includes a significant qualifier at the end of his thought experiment. If the bootlegged recording of a show earns one greater cultural prestige than actually attending the event, it is because of the accessibility of the recording. The bootleg owner trumps the concert attendee because the recording can be circulated, allowing others to enjoy the show as well. Here, defining and spreading musical taste to one's friends is the apex of cultural prestige.

Of course, if a collection can define taste, the reverse is true as well. One may be ridiculed for the contents of a musical archive, as we see in the interaction between Barry and Rob. In the example Giles offers of the man who injured a woman in an antique store, many of the subjects he interviewed responded with disdain—not for his actions, but for the cause of his actions. "She got hurt over a *Maria Chiara* record?" (34). These

reactions confirm the trend-setting status of audiophiles. They may be mavens with a good collection, but that means they are also open to ridicule when they fall short.

Giles also includes the ruminations of Richard Slade, who shudders to think of dying and leaving behind his collection. When pressed, though, he decides that he may will his collection to his *alma mater,* then "adds, hope springing eternal, 'maybe my kids will want to keep it'" (33). Slade's true dream is to define musical taste for his children, though he is willing to settle for a university donation. Shuker explains that the urge to leave a collection in the hands of a museum, university, or some other archive is similar to the one felt by book collectors who will their shelves to libraries. It is an urge that helps "keep the collection intact and provide a publicly available educational resource" (322).

Whether working in the academy or as a DJ, or just as a music enthusiast, the collector educates others about musical taste and is often prepared to be judged by the same criteria. Rob, for instance, argues with Barry about what is considered good music, but he never disputes the terms of the argument—that his taste is on the line.

iPodders, similarly, are often judged by the music they carry with them. A favorite topic for popular culture journalists is the "What is [insert famous person's name] listening to on his/her iPod?" article. These articles tell readers that Pope Benedict XVI listens to Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, and Tchaikovsky (Glatz 2006); Tony Blair has Christina Aguilera on his iPod ("Would you allow [this man] to run your country?" the article asks) (Haines 2006); and Hillary Clinton's collection includes Aretha Franklin, the Beatles, the Eagles, and U2 (Weisberg 2006), while Barack Obama prefers Stevie Wonder, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, and Jay-Z (Wenner 2008). The iTunes Music

Store also features a section called "Celebrity Playlists," which offers the songs that more than four hundred celebrities have selected as their favorites (at least of the moment). "iMix" is a similar idea. It allows non-celebrity listeners to create their own playlists and publish them to the Music Store so that others can enjoy their selections.

iTunes also allows listeners to make their libraries accessible over wireless networks. While fellow iTunes consumers cannot download music from one iTunes library to another, each can listen to the other's music over a wireless connection, allowing iPodders the ability to display their knowledge of music to whomever is connected to the same network.

Whether the listener is a politician, the Pope, an actor or actress, or just an average iPodder, the ability to make and publish one's own playlist is a participation in the collector's world of connoisseurship. Each magazine feature or playlist is an iPodder's opportunity to share musical taste with others and try to accrue cultural prestige.

The iPod and the Reimagining of Collectors and Audiophiles

While Apple capitalizes on collector and audiophile stereotypes in its production and marketing of the iPod, we can also observe several ways the iPod works against these stereotypes. To the extent that notions of masculinity are interwoven with many traits of collectors and audiophiles, the iPod redraws the boundaries of who collectors and audiophiles are.

Size matters…if it's visible and audible.

We have already noticed that the iPod and the information-searching and –storing technology with which it interacts make amassing huge collections of music easier than if one is compiling physical objects that require storage space and meticulous organization. In one obvious way, this encourages consumers to compile large music collections, just as stereotypical collectors do. By collapsing the space occupied by music collections, the iPod streamlines the collection process and simplifies storage and organization.

The near invisibility of one's music collection, however, undercuts an important function of that collection. Size matters in part *because* of how much space it consumes. In Giles's profile of opera collectors, he imbues the storage solutions of his collectors with a great deal of cultural capital. He rarely mentions the size of a subject's collection without also noting the physical space it consumes.

It's hard to say what has driven [Robert E.] Browne to amass so large a stash of LPs and CDs that he had to build an extension to his house to accommodate them (30).

The peculiar tribulations of this voracious passion invite questions. Where do you find the room? (Conquering inner space is part of a collector's triumph.) (31)

Some collectors resort to warehouses or storage facilities; some build or move to bigger houses (33).

Fresh stock is offered to [Academy Records' Joseph GaNun]'s store constantly. "Most people have the attitude—and it's a sane one—that they only have so much room for their records; so they sell the ones they've already heard to us, then buy some more to listen to." Serious collectors have very different notions (33).

The very air in Bob Rideout's Brooklyn Heights apartment seems filled with opera. A CD reproduction of the young Giuseppe Di Stefano singing "Vola, Vola, Vola!" sweetens the atmosphere from a stereo in the study. The walls are crowded with 120 autographed opera-star photos, spanning a century of great singing (from Po Plançon to Cecilia Bartoli). Three hundred opera and theater reference books sit alongside CDs on several bookcases. It's a refuge for someone who has dedicated himself to understanding and revering the greatest music the human voice can compass (34-35).

This last profile of Rideout conflates several of the collector and audiophile stereotypes considered above. His collection is large, he organizes it meticulously, and he has used it to acquire a high level of taste, which "sweetens the atmosphere" thanks to the pervasive sound of his stereo.

The valorization of such a large collection is less likely to extend to a digital music collection, whose parameters are less obvious to observers. Indeed, a person could hold as many digital files as any of Giles's subjects hold physical items without anyone being aware of them. While a traditional music collection is displayed, as Rideout's is, a digital music collection remains mostly hidden.

Will Straw suggests a framework for collecting that accommodates the potential superiority of a physical collection over a digital one. Straw constructs a web of homosocial affects that includes the dandy, the nerd, the brute, and the hipster, all of whom negotiate a balance of knowledge and social mastery. The dandy displays complete social mastery with no underlying depth of knowledge; he is pure façade. The nerd, conversely, is full of knowledge but is incapable of deploying his mastery of facts in a way that allows him to successfully navigate social settings. The brute possesses neither knowledge nor social mastery and instead relies on instinct, receiving, as Straw notes, the least "appealing imageries of the male" in popular culture (1997, 7-8).

Hipness effectively combines knowledge and social mastery. A hip person possesses a great deal of knowledge, but he also knows how to master his social milieu. Controlling knowledge is key. "What counts," Straw observes, "is not simply the degree of knowledge but the amount of restraint with which it is deployed and guarded" (9).

Straw cites the club DJ who is reluctant to discuss his musical preferences and choices while enjoying a venue for displaying them prominently.

Giles's opera enthusiasts enjoy a similar scenario. Because their collections have grown so large, they must be displayed in such a way that any visitor is able to peruse the audiophile's holdings while the collector himself remains relatively aloof. Overindulging in conversation about one's knowledge makes one too nerdish, so the natural display of (the evidence of) taste aids in cultivating the appropriate balance between the dandy and the nerd.

The near invisibility of a collection of digital music means the iPod owner does not enjoy the casual distance offered by a visible collection. Rather, in order to display the connoisseurship evident in a collection, the iPod owner must find another way to make it visible to others. While this may be accomplished in a variety of ways, a barrier to hipness still exists in the erasure of physically dominating collections. Even the "sweeten[ing of] the atmosphere" is less likely, as the iPod is designed primarily as a personal device. The sound of a man's music emanating from his hi-fi to permeate multiple rooms of a house gives way to a personal soundtrack pumped through headphones into the individual's ears.

As noted, the definition and display of taste plays an important role in the male collector stereotype, but the iPod disconnects connoisseurship from the size and organization of one's collection. The iPod itself assumes the role of taste-maker, as demonstrated by the slew of iPod ads that say little to nothing about music but display the device as a fashion accessory. Here the iPod is aligned more closely to decorative items,

which have historically been allied with female collective pursuits, than music and hi-fi

equipment (Pearce 1998, 26).

Mp3 as lo-fi

In a *New York Times* article exploring the shift from high fidelity stereos to iPods,

Anthony Tommasini describes the pursuit of hi-fi enthusiasts in religious terms: "the

holy grail of musical life was to have the best home sound system [audiophiles] could

afford, a system that would bring the concert hall into their living rooms" (2007). The

iPod does nothing of the sort. In fact, one of its main selling points—its ability to store

tens of thousands of songs—hinges on the listener's adaptation of inferior sound-

producing technology.

The iPod capitalizes on mp3 audio formatting. As Katz explains in detail in

Capturing Sound, mp3 technology, which stands for "Motion Picture Experts Group 1,

Layer 3," was born from the effort to digitally encode video and audio in sizes small

enough to be stored on computers. The encoding takes advantage of natural acoustic

phenomena to erase bits of digital information that listeners do not perceive anyway.

One instrument in a group, for instance, may momentarily sound loudly enough to cover

the sound of other instruments; MPEG-1 reduced digital files to only perceptible sounds.

While the first two audio layers targeted high quality stereo systems, the third layer was

meant to be "suitable for more modest systems, such as personal computers" (160-61).

A variety of other encoding options exists for digital music files, including

Advanced Audio Coding (AAC), Apple's default encoding option that is meant to

improve upon mp3 technology. The majority of these options, however, extend the logic

of the mp3, seeking to provide acceptable audio while encompassing far less space than a CD track. Apple and other audio technology distributors offer high-end headphone options that cancel outside noise and include sophisticated speakers, but as long as iPodders choose to encode their music in formats like mp3 and AAC—and most do—the fidelity will fall far short of the hi-fi standard.

The iPod trades quality for convenience in a manner that undercuts another audiophile stereotype. As Tommasini concludes, with the iPod and other mp3 technologies, "the target audience is not the audiophile" (2007).

Push-button iPods

As noted above, even if one were to connect an iPod to a hi-fi stereo system, the sound quality would be inferior, as the encoding process erases portions of music files in order to allow for greater storage capacity. Apple and third-party distributors manufacture stereos that are made especially for iPods, including "docks" that allow easy connection with the iPod and even charge the device while it plays. Beyond the lo-fi sound quality encoded into the music, these stereos employ the kind of push-button technology to which hi-fi ideology is opposed, as we have already seen in Taylor's writing. He expounds on the gendered nature of home stereos:

> Hi-fis, however, were not only for men; some hi-fis were marketed specifically to women. These made use of the familiar push-button technology that women were accustomed to finding on their kitchen appliances. In other words, what was marketed toward, and consumed by, men, was not just hi-fi technology, but *complex* hi-fi technology. Not surprisingly, male hi-fi enthusiasts ridiculed the simpler equipment in its pretty box, and valued instead the complex hi-fi of separate components (2001, 80).

Though, as we have seen, they are not hi-fi products, iPod stereos, which often feature minimal buttons and large speakers, are exactly the kinds of stereos that come in "pretty boxes" and would invite the ridicule of audiophiles. The idea that guides these stereos—convenience—is antithetical to the hi-fi pursuit, which favors quality of sound and complexity of assemblage above all else.

Convenience permeates all aspects of the iPod. The iPod itself features a minimal control interface, with either a circular click wheel that allows one to scroll and highlight selections or a touch screen that allows iPodders to use their thumbs to select media. Artists, albums, and songs are automatically organized alphabetically, and the iPod can be set to synchronize with the user's iTunes library whenever it is connected to a computer. iTunes offers convenience in its one-click checkout, as consumers simply choose a song, album, or video, then iTunes downloads it and integrates it into the iPodder's music library (and the iPod, if it is set to synchronize with the iTunes library). Each of these design features reduces the work performed by the iPodder, much like push-button technology was intended to do for housewives and in opposition to the ethos of hi-fi assemblage.

A final symbolization of push-button technology marks the iPod. In his description of the United States' "massive public relations campaign" to normalize the atom after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Taylor lists several ways the atom intruded on everyday life. "There were Boy Scout merit badges in atomic energy; dozens of songs; and images of the atom's orbit appeared on consumer goods, from electric shavers to clocks" (2001, 73). The image of the atom's orbit, shown in Figure 1, which came to mark the magical wonders of nuclear technology, also serves as the watermark

for the pages of front matter in Hornby's *High Fidelity* and is now also the official logo of the iPod's "Genius" function.

The Genius function, as discussed in Chapter 3 creates a progression of songs similar to the one being played when the listener activates the function, and its output is the equivalent of a mixtape—that ultra-personal collection of songs traded between friends or lovers that Rob Fleming has mastered. Rob, in fact, returns several times in *High Fidelity* to instructing his readers on how to build the perfect mixtape, which must display one's connoisseurship. The iPod, with its Genius function, now offers to rearrange listeners' tasteful selections into ready-made mixtapes at the push of a button.

The Genius function mixes push-button technology with connoisseurship, conflating the traditionally masculine realm of the collector and audiophile with the stereotypically feminine realm of goods designed for ease and convenience. The iPod and iTunes, in fact, are marketed primarily as goods that offer ease and convenience, again falling short of a fully masculine stereotype.

Figure 1—Image of Atom's Orbit
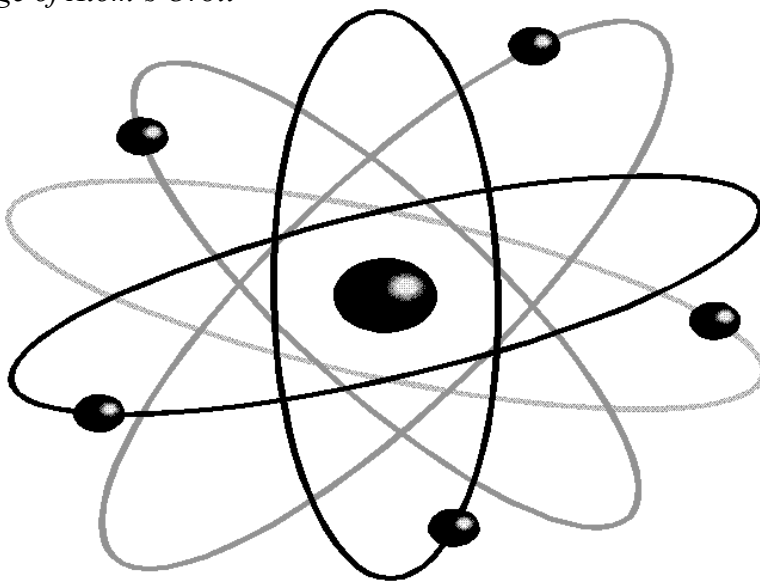
Every(wo)man Geniuses

Mac retail store employees are called Geniuses. Much like their Geek Squad counterparts at Best Buy, Geniuses are meant to be perceived as bottomless wells of knowledge—experts who can easily solve any problem a consumer may encounter. Also like their Geek Squad brothers and sisters, Geniuses dress casually and perform the role of approachable, eager helpers. Geniuses work alongside Trainers, who tutor consumers on various Apple products, and Concierges, who field questions about the store and schedule appointments with Geniuses and Trainers. Apple retail stores are designed as welcoming environments for even the least knowledgeable customer.

The Apple website makes this aim explicit. On the front page for the Retail Stores' site (apple.com/retail), Geniuses, Trainers, and Concierges are featured prominently alongside a blurb that touts their helpfulness and expertise. In late 2008, for instance, under the headline "We're here to help," Apple described its employees this way:

> You can find some of the world's most knowledgeable Apple people in your neighborhood Apple Retail Store. Our Specialists help you get to know our products and answer your questions. Geniuses provide hands-on technical support and repairs at the Genius Bar. Trainers offer face-to-face personal training to help you get the most out of your Mac. And the Concierge in the orange shirt is your guide to the Apple Retail Store, ready to answer your questions and point you in the right direction (apple.com/retail, accessed 28 October 2008).

Every step of one's visit to a retail store is assisted by an employee, and the store is described in terms befitting a local Mom-and-Pop shop—"your neighborhood Apple Retail Store." While the stereotypical collector or audiophile is young and heteromasculine, like the subject of the first iPod commercial and the character played by Justin Long in the "Get a Mac" ads, the Apple retail store, by selling itself as a

"neighborhood" shop and employing male and female workers who appear average and approachable, broadens the scope of its customer base and targets women and middle-age consumers alongside the stereotypical collectors and audiophiles.

The warm, inviting atmosphere that Apple tries to create in the retail stores is meant to encourage consumers to relinquish control of their products to experts. The "do-it-yourself" ideology that typifies hi-fi connoisseurship is replaced by a dependence on others that is meant to engender trust in technology without the burden of having to attain an understanding of how it works. Even the iPod itself is designed like a miniature fortress, with a single seam that runs along the edges, making the device nearly impenetrable without the help of a professional (or, less safely, a pizza cutter).

The iPod and Apple's retail store function like domestic goods marketed to women in the post-war era (Taylor 2001, 78-81). The technology is convenient but magical, with the secrets of its functioning mostly locked to consumers. The ethos of the atom's orbit, which branded 1950s technology as pragmatically efficient but ultimately incomprehensible, extends through the Genius shuffle function to the Geniuses at Apple's retail stores, and, again, the iPod reaches beyond the stereotypical collector and audiophile to market to a broader consumer base.

Conclusion

Bryce Traister, in his overview of masculinity studies, notes that studies of masculinity in the humanities overwhelmingly tend to present the male subject as being in a perpetual mode of crisis.

> Like the countless men whose erections, we are now finding out, have been for some time anything but firm and energetic, American masculinity emerges in the pages of

heteromasculinity scholarship as troubled, distracted, counterfeit, constructed, masked, performative, flaccid, domestic, tender, and feelingful (2000, 284).

The effect is to present masculine stereotypes as constructed and to deny that they can claim any basis in reality, turning (white, heteronormative) men into victims of racial and feminist theorizing. Masculinity in crisis equates all males as anxiety-ridden, whether the man in question is "the Neanderthal, the [timid] milquetoast, [or] the Abba fan, potentially blur[ring the] politically vital distinction" between those who are equally anxious [about their identities] and those who are historical equals (297). That is, while men may experience an identity crisis as intense as other groups (women, LGBT, people of color), Traister cautions against equating this crisis with an equal historical plight. Anxiety about one's identity does not require political or social disenfranchisement, and Traister argues that the incessant focus on masculinity in crisis implies victimhood where none exists.

Heeding Traister's warning, I want to argue that the iPod does not exclude the stereotypical audiophile described above. Rather, Apple has produced and marketed the iPod in a way that endorses many of the characteristics of audiophiles while expanding the notion of who may possess these characteristics. The iPod blends together audiophile characteristics such as obsession, connoisseurship, and an investment in size and deploys them in an effort to attract a broad consumer base, including but not limited to the traditionally-conceived audiophile. An iPodder may not have shelves of LPs and CDs but is likely to own several gigabytes worth of digital files. And while someone like Rob Fleming himself may not be seduced by the iPod, finding comfort instead in his stacks of tangible artifacts, many iPodders can identify with Rob's acquisitive nature as they hunt for tracks to fill their hard drives.

In this way, the iPod unravels the rivalry between heteromasculine collectors and audiophiles and everyone else, instead of unraveling heteromasculine collectors and audiophiles themselves. If we consider only a few aspects of the iPod—say, the Justin Long "I'm a Mac" character, the eradication of music items that inhabit physical space, and the every(wo)man employees who populate the retail stores—we may see only contradictory marketing practices that alternately target heteromasculine stereotypes on the one hand and broader demographics on the other. When conceived as a whole, however, Apple's marketing of the iPod uses many of the stereotypes that characterize collectors and audiophiles as a starting point to redefine who can be a collector or an audiophile, ultimately seeking to reach the broadest possible base by reappropriating old ideas in new ways.

Epilogue: The iPod's Urban Ethos

Without question, New York City has the highest saturation of iPods and iPhones of any place (yes, any place) we've seen. Even San Francisco and Tokyo, which are both impressive but short of saturation, don't hold a candle to Manhattan.

-Jeremy Horwitz, ilounge.com

It rises thirty-two feet above the concrete expanse in front of the General Motors building at the intersection of 59th St. and 5th Ave. in midtown Manhattan. Its exterior is entirely glass, and in the center hangs a large white apple that is illuminated at night to reflect off the front and back of the glass in an infinite regression. It is the Glass Cube, Apple's flagship store, and its unveiling in May 2006 triggered a flurry of online reviews and praise, exciting Mac techies to the point of effusive swooning. One writer was affected enough to describe the structure as "a new world architectural landmark as striking as the once-controversial I.M. Pei Pyramid at the Louvre in Paris," making Apple "a technology-fashion leader" by offering "a modern, clean design experience" (Kazan 2007).

Of course, calling the Glass Cube Apple's flagship store is not entirely accurate. The actual store sprawls below ground level, and the Glass Cube functions as entrance

and façade, an eye-catching show case at New York City's consumer center that brings to life Apple's urban ethos.

New York is also home to a bevy of iPod billboards that feature silhouettes dancing in front of vibrant monochromes with white earbuds extending from their ears. The clean design, evident in the use of minimal solid colors, is not the only thing the billboards share in common with the Glass Cube. The billboards and the Glass Cube feature a nothingness that invites viewers to fill the void with their own selves. The Glass Cube, as a transparent edifice, functions as a lens through which consumers view the surrounding city. This lens metaphor allows the viewer to perceive the urban landscape subjectively, covering the blank glass panes with their own experiences of the city. At the same time, Apple brands this subjective reception of the city with its floating Apple logo. In much the same way, iPod billboards encourage viewers to insert themselves into the emptiness of the dancing silhouettes, and this experience is also branded—this time by Apple's iPod. In each case, Apple facilitates a particularization of the sprawling city by viewers of the Cube and billboards.

The iPod itself participates in a similar branding and particularization of the city. Though it is a mass-produced gadget owned by millions, the iPod allows owners to load their favorite songs, videos, photos, and games onto it until it becomes a unique device for each iPodder. In a city as inundated with iPods as New York is, these unique iPods become an integral part of commuters' daily experience of the city.

The task here is to examine the iPod's role in New York City life. Specifically, I am interested in the gentle flux between the general (the city) and the particular (the individual). The iPod allows users to navigate these two extremes by folding them into

one other; one's daily traversal of the city is overlaid by the unique contents of a person's iPod. After introducing a useful theoretical concept, urban ethos, I will trace the evolution of the iPod's urban ethos—its combination of the general and particular—and, finally, examine a prominent strand of negative reception of the device in New York.

Urban Ethos

Adam Krims introduces the urban ethos as the foundation of his 2007 study, *Music and Urban Geography*. He defines it in three parts:

> a set of representations detailing [1] which subjects move through the urban landscape, [2] which parts of that landscape they traverse, and [3] the extent to which that landscape imposes its constraints on those subjects (12).

In its simplest form, urban ethos describes the relationship between the individual and the city, representing "who can do what in the city and with what degree of autonomy" (9). Krims suggests a complex urban ethos that is formed by the diverse experiences of many different people. Instead of privileging one particular experience of the city over any other, Krims argues that a full understanding of the urban landscape can only be reached by acknowledging the divergent experiences of a city's inhabitants.

Because the urban ethos is so multifaceted, it proves a useful tool for comparative analysis. Before taking advantage of the comparative opportunities offered by the urban ethos for our analysis of the iPod in New York, it will be helpful to see how Krims employs it.

Krims begins by juxtaposing Chaka Khan's 1984 video for "I Feel for You," where Chaka Khan moves freely about a ghetto setting, with the Geto Boys' 1996 video for "Geto Fantasy," which portrays a ghetto that restricts the movements of its

inhabitants. These two videos display the perceived shift in urban life from the 1980s to the 1990s, regardless of whether the objective reality of ghettos changed from one decade to the next. Krims then contrasts "Geto Fantasy" with Kylie Minogue's 2002 "Can't Get You Out of My Head," where Minogue not only moves freely against a generic cityscape, but actually controls her urban landscape, as we see the city "in the final scene flashing the lights of its office towers [in time] to her Euro-dance rhythms and choreography" (15).

These three videos emphasize the varied nature of the urban ethos, and underscore its usefulness for comparative analysis. One can contrast genres, artists, eras, and cultural milieus in order to build a more complete representation of a city and those who live there. Because of the predominantly subjective nature of the representations of the city, the urban ethos tends to be descriptive, making us privy to what musicians perceive without requiring us to see the city the same way. Since the urban ethos, then, is comprised of several descriptive parts, potentially oppositional perceptions of the urban landscape exist alongside rather than in competition with one another.

The uncompetitive nature of the urban ethos is unsurprising when we consider one of the broader aims of Krims' book. Krims urges cultural studies to move beyond resistance motifs, whereby some minority group is always interpreted as revolting against the established norm. Rather, he suggests that we are better served by understanding the mutual dependence between the minority group and the established norm.

For instance, Mos Def's "The Rape Over," from his album *The New Danger* (2004), affords the sort of classic resistance reading against which Krims cautions. In the song, which includes the lyrics, "All white men/is runnin this rap shit/Corporate force/is

runnin this rap shit," Mos Def takes a clear shot at rap's corporate rulers while also parodying rap mogul Jay-Z's 2001 "The Takeover" (*The Blueprint*). The resistance reading seems obvious: Mos Def resists both the White ruling class of hip hop as well as Black rappers like Jay-Z who "hit the street and perform for" them. But such an interpretation stops short of a full account of the song.

Mos Def recorded *The New Danger* for Geffen Records, which is a subsidiary of Universal Music Group, a sprawling conglomerate of record labels headed by CEO Doug Morris, one of the "white men [who] is runnin this rap shit." While not ignoring the resistance of Mos Def's lyrics, we should recognize that his song thrives on the funding of the same heavily centralized corporate group that he criticizes. And this corporate force, in turn, thrives by marketing resistant artists like Mos Def. By accommodating market forces, we arrive at an urban ethos that includes the seemingly paradoxical corporate funding of a critique of corporate power.

Here is the crux of Krims' urban ethos: seemingly opposing perspectives of the city exist uncompetitively alongside one another. As we consider the iPod in New York, we will include in our analysis multiple perspectives of the device in order to build a fuller, more accurate account of the relationship between city and mp3 player. We can start with Apple and the iPod.

The Evolution of Apple's Urban Ethos

The first iPod commercial defines its product quite narrowly. The ad opens with the shot of a Mac PowerBook and the sound of clicking keys. Just over the top of the computer, we see the hair and forehead of a White twenty-something man who is wearing

Buddy Holly glasses. The keyboard strokes yield "Take California" (1998) by the Propellerheads, and the man's head begins nodding in time to the infectious tune. After about two bars of music, with the scene established, we experience our first cut, followed by twenty-one more cuts over the course of the next fifty seconds. The rapid pace of the shots, moving at the rate of most music videos, is meant to establish the ease and speed of the iPod. It also, though, allows us a fuller view of our iPodder and his habitat.

The man's apartment is dotted with LP sleeves and CD cases, trendy furniture, and painted canvases hung directly on the wall, unframed. The man himself is dressed casually in khaki pants, tennis shoes, and an unbuttoned collared shirt draped over a long-sleeve T-shirt. As the source of the music shifts from the PowerBook to the iPod, the volume increases, and the man is freed from his chair to dance about his living room and finally leave his apartment. His dancing is carefree, comedic.

This first iPod commercial establishes a theme—freedom—we will encounter in future advertisements, but the targeted audience differs drastically. Here, the freed subject is limited, as Apple holds a mirror in front of its usual consumers. Apple has long targeted a niche demographic defined against the ignorant masses of Microsoft users, a strategy still obvious in the most recent ad campaign—"Get a Mac"—that features a sharp-witted Gen Xer as the Mac and a befuddled Baby Boomer as the P.C. Apple consumers buy more than just hardware and software; they purchase an experience, an alternative to the status quo, and the dancing man from the original iPod ad reflects this demographic in three key ways.

First, he is a music collector. In addition to the stacks of anonymous CD and LP holders, his iTunes library includes a number of underground musicians, from Gus Gus to

Sherby. As discussed in Chapter 2, the music collector falls into an easy stereotype,

which Apple is able to easily invoke with its original iPodder. Roy Shuker elaborates on

these stereotypes, many of which are visible in the "Take California" commercial, and he

also speculates about why collectors collect, positing at least one idea that will illuminate

our understanding of Apple's first iPod commercial.

> [Collectors exhibit a] fairly standard set of motifs and an associated vocabulary.
> Collectors and the collecting process are variously associated with longing, desire, and
> pleasure; ritualistic, near-sacred, and repetitive acquisition; passionate and selective
> consumption; stewardship and cultural preservation; and obsession and linked
> pathologies such as completism, accumulation, and a preoccupation with collection
> size. Collectables are usually regarded [in such a way as to place] a premium on their
> intrinsic value. The collection exhibits a series of attributes: it is a source of pleasure,
> an economic investment; an exhibition of logic, unity, and control; an indicator of
> cultural and social capital (2004, 312).

The idea of "intrinsic value" measured in cultural and social capital is highlighted by

Apple's use of the relatively obscure "Take California," signaling that the dancing man is

willing, as Apple's brilliantly ungrammatical slogan of the time urged, to "think

different." The intrinsic value of collectibles is often directly related to collectors' pride

in their ability to think differently, as such individualism represents discernment for fine

music.

Second, he is working at a Mac computer, which allows Apple to combine two of

its products in a single commercial in a way that passes credibility from one to the other.

Mac computers are themselves marketed as the choice of those with discerning taste, as is

obvious in the recent "Get a Mac" commercials. The association of Mac with

knowledgeable consumers establishes a social capital that is passed from Mac to the iPod.

More concretely, the iPod required Mac hardware for its first two generations, and its

software component, iTunes, was not available for the PC until early December 2003.[23]

Here, the constraints of the technology may have dictated the reach of the ad campaign.

Finally, he is dressed in the style of Generation X's Alternative Idol, Kurt Cobain. While Cobain was neither the first nor last to layer collared shirts over long-sleeve T's, he was certainly the most iconic to do so in the early 1990s, and the dancing man's age implies that he probably embraced this particular style as a rebellious teen who found that the noise and look of Nirvana were the perfect tools for unnerving his parents. Beyond the dancing man's dress, he is shot in a shaky, handheld style inspired by the "Do It Yourself" (DIY) mentality of punk, which spawned not only the sound of the grunge and alternative movements, but that other icon of Generation X, Bart Simpson (Turner 2004, 119-49).

In each case, experience trumps mere content. Listening to punk or grunge, watching *The Simpsons*, valuing Macs over PCs, and collecting underground music are all marketed as countercultural activities that require an investment of time and, in some cases, a good deal of money in order to acquire "cultural and social capital." Apple has long depended on consumers who desire such capital, and it is this consumer that the company chose to feature in the first iPod commercial.

By 2003, the iPod was entering its third generation. It was smaller, held more music, cost less, and featured a touch-sensitive interface. And, with the introduction of a new ad campaign which targeted a far wider audience, its cultural capital was about to become mainstream.

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[23] For the first few months of the third generation iPod's life, PC users organized their music libraries using MusicMatch Jukebox.

The third generation iPod advertisements sported a sleek new design that invited viewers to project themselves into the commercials. The norm[24] became dancing silhouettes whose uniform blackness better highlights the whiteness of the iPod. These silhouettes dance in vacuums, as each new silhouette appears in front of a different, solidly-colored background. Where they are is of little import; all that matters is that, wherever it is, it certainly is vibrant.

By emptying the dancers of most of their physical attributes and placing them in Technicolor voids, Apple moved beyond the narrow demographic of the first iPod commercial and began encouraging consumers to fill the silhouettes with their own personae. Just as the iPod has always been an empty hard drive onto which consumers are expected to project their own music collection, the dancing silhouettes function as repositories onto which viewers download themselves.

We can better understand Apple's new tack by looking in more detail at a representative commercial, "Rock Star." The dancers featured in "Rock Star" are both men and women wearing clothes that could be identified with either rock or hip hop styles. The song itself is the product of collaboration across racial, ethnic, and genre boundaries. N.E.R.D, the group responsible for "Rock Star," is the side project of Pharrell Williams and Chad Hugo, whose primary musical identity is the production duo The Neptunes.

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[24] Several exceptions exist, but they are extensions of the norm. For instance, during the 2003 holiday season, Apple distributed an iPod commercial that featured the song "Ride" by the Vines (2004). This spot follows an iPodder as he strolls past a wall of dancing silhouette posters, all of which begin dancing as he walks by. Celebrity cameos have also been common, as U2, Eminem, Wynton Marsalis, Bob Dylan, and Mary J. Blige have all appeared in silhouette ads, with each musician shadowed but not fully silhouetted.

Pharrell and Hugo have formed an integral part of hip hop and pop since the late-1990s, producing hits ranging from Britney Spears' "Boys" and "I'm a Slave 4 U" (2003) to Ludacris' "Southern Hospitality" (2000) to Ol Dirty Bastard's "Got Your Money" (1999). When Apple released the "Rock Star" commercial in late 2003, Pharrell and Hugo were beginning to experience a greater level of exposure, thanks to the debut of their first N.E.R.D. album, *In Search Of...* (2002), the release of an album bearing their production name, *The Neptunes Present…Clones* (2003), Pharrell's frequent cameos, including with Snoop Dogg, Busta Rhymes, and Jay-Z, and even a Pharrell solo release, "Frontin" (2003).

Because of the growing appreciation of the Neptunes' pop music stature, Apple could be sure that many viewers would recognize Pharrell's voice and that the slippery nature of the duo's genre status could become emblematic of the company's new direction with iPod advertising. And just as the ambiguity of the dancing silhouettes' identities allows Apple to appeal to audiences across various racial and ethnic boundaries, Pharrell, an African American, and Hugo, a Filipino American, embody the new multiracial audience Apple seeks. Added to the cross-genre and multiracial cache of the Neptunes is the third part of the original N.E.R.D. song, a white, four-piece rock band from Minneapolis called Spymob. Finally, the version of "Rock Star" heard in the commercial is the product of Jason Nevins, a white producer who specializes in house mixes. In this forty-five second spot, then, Apple manages to mix together a handful of racial and ethnic identities, as well as three distinct genres via a group of musicians who perform at the crossroads of many more.

When taken as a whole, the silhouette ads and their cameo spin-offs encompass a much broader demographic than the original iPod commercial. In addition to the broad swaths cut by commercials like "Rock Star," Apple uses the silhouette ads to target those who were left out of the original "Take California" spot. All of the group silhouette commercials feature female dancers, and many feature female musicians, as well. "Hey Mama" (3G), "Saturday Night" (4G), and "Channel Surfing" (4G) feature exclusively black dancers, while "Someday Baby" and "Dance Tonight" (both 5G) employ Bob Dylan and Paul McCartney, two icons of Baby Boomers' adolescences.

The most recent link in the evolution of Apple's urban ethos is the Glass Cube. It is the architectural analogue to the commercials' symbolic colored voids. The silhouette ads divorce any particular context from the proceedings so that viewers can project any urban (or rural) backdrop they please. This is not Kylie Minogue standing in for the white Euro-pop crowd[25] in a futuristic city, nor is it the Geto Boys representing a black inner-city demographic in the ghetto. It is both, while also neither. The solid colors of the silhouettes' backdrops are meant to encompass and energize any urban environment a consumer could imagine, and the vibrancy of the colored backdrops is meant to ensure that viewers idealize the environment as much as possible.

The Glass Cube brings this symbolism to a material context. Shoppers are meant to peer through the translucent walls of the flagship store and see their ideal New York City. By emptying dancers until they become silhouettes, cities until they become bright, monochrome colors, and storefronts until they become an outline and a logo, Apple has branded itself with a nothingness that allows it to be anything.

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[25] Minogue is Australian, but her greatest success has been experienced in Europe.

In Krims' terms, the early "Take California" ad projects an urban ethos that is particular and unique, while the silhouette ads and the Glass Cube project an urban ethos that is general and open to any possibility. Just as Krims argues in *Music and Urban Geography*, this generalizing force does not act independently of the particularizing one. Rather, the two form a symbiosis whereby the vast void of the iPod ads and Apple store become as specific as consumers choose to make them. Apple and the iPod have evolved into a vacuum into which everyone is invited to create a new world, encouraging an urban ethos that would provide absolute freedom for all of a city's inhabitants.

A Reversal of Resistance

Apple's urban ethos, with its emphasis on individual freedom, aligns with Krims' preference for uncompetitive accounts of the city that exist alongside one another. Apple's urban ethos, as projected through the iPod, allows consumers to construct their own particularized cities that are not affected by any other consumer's construction.

As mentioned above, Krims' emphasis on such a broad urban ethos is partly attributable to his dissatisfaction with the use of resistance in cultural studies. Much of Krims' problem with resistance is the trope's tendency to privilege the particular over general (which he refers to as "place" and "space," respectively).

> In [the dichotomy between space and place], roughly speaking, '"space" represents coercive forces of social constraint, for instance, the social inequalities of so-called globalization, or the homogenizing structures of the shopping mall and service-industry employment. In the context of scholarship that is critical of capitalism and cultural domination, therefore, space acquires a generally negative force. Against the negative value of space, 'place' then assumes a liberatory force in this dichotomy, representing the ways in which people and their expressive cultures revalidate localities, create symbolic attachments, and reaffirm the importance of their specific and unique corners of the world. Place, in other words, becomes, in this most common rubric of analyses, the model of liberatory resistance to space (2007, 32).

The general (space) homogenizes, while the particular (place) heterogenizes through resistance. In the case of the iPod, however, Apple dictates an urban ethos whose end product is keenly heterogeneous: iPodders mobilized with a soundtrack of their choosing in a city they are encouraged to mold to their wills. Here, the resistance to Apple's urban ethos argues for the "liberatory force" of the general *from* the particular in what is a surprising reversal of what Krims posits as the cultural studies norm.

Resistance to Apple's Urban Ethos

> They stalk the city's sidewalks and subways, their faraway eyes punctuating blank, expressionless faces, lumbering along to a soundtrack of their own devising, oblivious to all around them. Woe to those who approach them, daring to break their spell by asking directions. Friends and relatives admit to being ignored—avoided even—when spotted by the white-tailed undead. Their numbers swell by the day. And they're taking over. (Angio 2004, 33)

This flourish from Joe Angio, which appeared in a November 2004 issue of *Time Out New York* under the apt title, "iPod Zombies," captures the essence of the resistance to iPod culture in New York. The iPod, the argument goes, isolates its users and destroys the potential for interaction among both strangers and friends. Earlier in 2004, on the first real wave of iPod hysteria, the *New York Times* ran a piece on the front page of its Sunday Style section titled "The World at Ears' Length," in which Warren St. John argues that the iPod effects social distance to a greater degree than its portable music ancestors.

> The immense storage capacity of iPod [sic] and its imitators offers at least the opportunity for total, uninterrupted isolation from one's surroundings for long— extremely long—periods of time. It is now possible to commute, to stroll, to shop, even to go to a Knicks game, without having to listen to another human being, or even the same song. There is no rewinding or CD-changing to permit the outside world to leak inside the cocoon. With a jukebox in your pocket, a suitable tune is always at the ready, no matter your mood. And if you have little white ear buds rammed in your

ears, there is always an excuse not to acknowledge fellow humans. "I'm busy right now," iPod users seem to say. "I'll get back to you in 10,000 songs" (St. John 2004).

Alongside and inextricable from the lament over isolation is a fear of technology rooted in the notion that technology and humanity cannot coexist. Rather, the two are locked in zero sum warfare wherein the strengthening of one is only achieved through the weakening of the other. Angio's iPod zombies are products of this sort of techno-angst, and St. John and the *Times* editors have aired similar fears in the city's most prominent paper:

> Idea for a sci-fi horror flick: New York is invaded by zombielike robots. They ghost along the sidewalks, oblivious of pedestrians, and have frequent near misses with taxis and cyclists, causing chaos. They carry a secret weapon—no bigger than a deck of cards—that can render humans invisible. The only sign they are not quite human themselves: two white wires that run from their ears into their clothes, just below the neckline, as distinctive as the bolts in the Frankenstein monster's neck (St. John 2004).

> What began with the VCR has expanded to include the DVD player, the digital video recorder, on-demand television, Internet broadcasts and downloads for iPods. Viewers with eclectic tastes can track down obscure favorites on the Web…We all have the option now to live in the lonely isolation of our own exact tastes, on our own uncompromising schedules. Everybody's happy, right? Wrong (Editorial 2006).

The theme running through each of these iPod complaints is that of being shut off from someone else's world, of being left out, and the culprit is technology. Gary Silverman, a former New Yorker writing of a recent visit to Manhattan in the *London Times*, notes that

> iPod listeners are a new kind of lonely crowd. You could be sitting next to someone who is listening to the same music as you—who loves the same music as you—and never know it. Music no longer brings people together; it separates them (Silverman 2005).

Christine Rosen, writing in *The New Atlantis*, cites a similar, slightly more visceral sentiment from a New York blogger, who complains, "white headphone wearers on the streets of Manhattan nod at each other in solidarity, like members of a tribe or a secret

society" (Rosen 2005, 65). Implicit in all of these critiques is the notion that, paradoxically, as we become more autonomous and our everyday experiences are increasingly personalized, we become distinctly less human, sinking to the level of tribal or even undead.

Rosen calls this radical personalization "egocasting," and the moment of dehumanization seems to occur at the point of fetishization of the individualized.

> We talk about our technologies in a way (and grant them the power over our imagination) that used to be reserved for art and religion. TiVo is God's machine, the iPod plays our own personal symphonies, and each device brings with it its own series of individualized rituals. What we don't seem to realize is that ritual thoroughly personalized is no longer religion or art. It is fetish. And unlike religion and art, which encourage us to transcend our own experience, fetish urges us to return obsessively to the sounds and images of an arrested stage of development (Rosen 2005, 70-71).

Rosen strikes squarely at the iPod's urban ethos, which, by converting the general into the particular, encourages a "thoroughly personalized" perception of the city. Added to tribalism and undeadness, then, is the self-centered fetishization characteristic of adolescence. Rosen is primarily concerned with the effect of the iPod and other personalized media on our ability to properly respond to art or to responsibly form opinions about our culture and politics. When egocasting, Rosen argues, we expose ourselves only to those things we already know we like or believe.

In yet another *New York Times* article covering the world of the iPod listener, Rutgers communications professor James Katz is called upon for comment, and his evaluation of iPod-listening commuters resembles Rosen's assessment, as he notes

> a trend in American culture toward "withdrawing from the public sphere or the public culture into one's private space, where you can have complete control over your entertainment…Where does it leave people without the iPod?" he asked. "It psychologically depopulates that social space for you. It increases the isolation and anomie" (Kadden 2004).

The idea of anomie that Katz introduces seems to underlie the entire resistance to iPod individualism in New York. The iPod highlights the decline of communal space in New York over the last two decades in favor of the increasingly personal, and social norms seem less clearly defined as a result. At stake with the isolation produced by the iPod, then, is not just the idle chatter of commuters or a potential feeling of exclusion for those who do not own iPods, but the very standards and values upon which society is built.

Such a notion—that the iPod erodes the very fabric of New York—seems completely overblown, especially considering New Yorkers have long found ways to avoid communication with strangers. I would like to suggest, however, that this perception is grounded in the New York experience of a particular event that unfolded over the course of nearly a decade. In order to better understand how the iPod could be understood as a societal ill of the magnitude described above that should be firmly resisted, we should look more closely at the declining crime rate in 1990s New York, the policies Mayor Rudolph Giuliani enacted to achieve the crime crash, and the effect of these policies on the city's inhabitants.

Giuliani and the Crime Crash

The 1990s brought an astoundingly precipitous drop in New York City's crime rate, and Rudolph Giuliani presided as mayor over the bulk of the decline in violence. Depending on the source of critique, the crime rate either fell because of or in spite of Giuliani's aggressive scouring of public spaces. No matter the cause, however, the impression that New York was becoming a "safe" city brought with it expectations of just how this safe city would look and feel, and experience has not met expectation.

In 1990, New York City suffered a record 2,245 murders, 340 more than 1989

(1,905), which itself had marked the bloodiest year to date. The murder rate declined

each of the next three years, but it remained in 1993 (1,946) perched just above 1989's

numbers. The state of violent crime in the city was getting better, but only in comparison

to the appallingly brutal and very recent past. Then, in 1994, the year Rudolph Giuliani

was sworn in as mayor, New York recorded 1,561 murders—a nearly 20% drop.

Throughout Giuliani's two terms as mayor, the murder rate steadily declined,

plummeting to 649 murders in 2001, a number unthinkably low only a decade previous.[26]

Most criminologists and sociologists agree that a crime crash like the one New

York experienced in the mid-to-late 1990s is the result of a confluence of factors ranging

from the availability and efficacy of social services to the unemployment rate to the

passing and enforcement of laws meant to address violent crime. Throughout the 1990s,

however, only the latter received the bulk of media attention, as Giuliani lengthened the

leash on law enforcement, and high-ranking New York police officers practically taunted

those who would credit any other factor for New York's improved murder rate. Andrew

Karmen, in his study of the New York crime crash, notes this antagonism in a 1995 quote

from Deputy Commissioner Jack Maple:

> I'd be very happy to get all the criminologists to come in here together. They can put
> all their grant money in a big pile in the middle of the floor, and then we'll settle this.
> Winner takes all. What's changed in this city in the last eighteen months other than
> what the police are doing? (Karmen 2000, 131)

While media outlets like the *New York Times* typically reported the fuller analysis

offered by criminologists (even if this was buried under several paragraphs focusing on

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[26] All numbers are pulled from Andrew Karmen, *New York Murder Mystery: The True Story behind the Crime Crash of the 1990s* (New York: New York University Press, 2000) as well as Chris Mitchell, 'The Killing of Murder,' *New York* (7 January 2008).

policing tactics), Giuliani and his Police Commissioners were largely successful in their attempts to take full credit for the violent crime decline and even managed to have their methods spotlighted by Malcolm Gladwell in his bestseller *The Tipping Point*.[27] Here, Gladwell cites the "Broken Windows" theory first introduced by Wilson and Kelling in *Atlantic Monthly*, which argues that increased police foot patrol helps maintain "order" in neighborhoods, which, in turn, allows residents to feel safer (whether they actually are or not) (Wilson and Kelling 1982, 29).[28] The inverse is also meant to hold; decreased foot patrol invites crimes like vandalism (a broken window), leading to a neighborhood in disrepair that encourages further, increasingly violent crime. The broken window, to borrow Gladwell's language, is the tipping point that ushers in total chaos.

To illustrate the broken window metaphor, Wilson and Kelling lead readers through a one-paragraph decline of a hypothetical neighborhood.

> We suggest that "untended" behavior also leads to the breakdown of community controls. A stable neighborhood of families who care for their homes, mind each other's children, and confidently frown on unwanted intruders can change, in a few years or even a few months, to an inhospitable and frightening jungle. A piece of property is abandoned, weeds grow up, a window is smashed. Adults stop scolding rowdy children; the children, emboldened, become more rowdy. Families move out, unattached adults move in. Teenagers gather in front of the corner store. The merchant asks them to move; they refuse. Fights occur. Litter accumulates. People start drinking in front of the grocery; in time, an inebriate slumps to the sidewalk and is allowed to sleep it off. Pedestrians are approached by panhandlers (Wilson and Kelling 1982, 31).

Significantly, the paragraph does not climax with murder, a mugging, rape, or any other violent crime. Rather, Wilson and Kelling build up to this moment: "Pedestrians are

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[27] Former Police Commissioner William J. Bratton co-authored an article with George Kelling that openly touted his involvement in the crime crash. 'Declining Crime Rates: Insiders' Views of the New York City Story,' *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 88:4 (1998): 1217-31.

[28] Wilson and Kelling's article was later reprinted in a collection of essays edited by Eugene McLaughlin, John Muncie, and Gordon Hughes, *Criminological Perspectives: Essential Readings, 2nd Edition* (London: SAGE Publications, 2003), 400-12.

approached by panhandlers." Social dissolution is reduced to the unpleasantness of being

asked for money, of sharing space with non-traditional families or the homeless.

Neil Smith, an early and vociferous critic of Giuliani's public policy, notes a

similar ideology in *Police Strategy No. 5*, a mayoral missive issued a few months after

Giuliani's inauguration in 1994. Giuliani sums up public perception of crime thusly:

> New Yorkers have for years felt that the quality of life in their city has been in decline,
> that their city is moving away from, rather than toward the reality of a decent society.
> The overall growth in violent crime during the past several decades has enlarged this
> perception. But so has an increase in the signs of disorder in the public spaces of the
> city (Smith 1998, 3).

Behind that sentiment, Giuliani and Police Commissioner William Bratton led a

crackdown on "homeless people, panhandlers, prostitutes, squeegee cleaners, squatters,

graffiti artists, 'reckless bicyclists,' and unruly youth" in an effort to decrease the signs of

disorder in public spaces of the city (Smith 1998, 3). In short, Giuliani and the NYPD

implemented a Broken Windows theory of policing, targeting anyone who threatened the

orderly appearance of the city.

While Wilson and Kelling freely admit that "it is not inevitable that serious crime

will flourish or violent attacks on strangers will occur" in an area such as the one

described above and that a foot patrol initiative much like the one they and Giuliani

endorse was implemented in Newark, NJ, with no accompanying decrease in the crime

rate, the public perception, importantly, is that increased police action against "signs of

disorder" does, in fact, make a neighborhood or city safer.

It is this perception that carried Giuliani, running as a Republican in a Democratic

bastion, to a 59%-41% victory in his bid for reelection in 1997. Violent crime had

plummeted, and Giuliani was credited with the success. If Giuliani's initiatives were, in

fact, primarily responsible for the drop in crime during his tenure—and no clear evidence indicates that this is the case—at what price did New York enjoy such success?

Early in his study of the crime crash, Karmen offers a broad contrast between New York of the early 1990s and the expectations of the less violent New York presided over by Giuliani.

> A soaring body count indicates a rise in discontent, alienation, animosities, mutual antagonisms, displaced frustration, fratricidal violence, low-intensity warfare, and the readiness of many people to kill plus their willingness to die. A plunging murder rate signals a de-escalation of hostilities, greater tolerance of diversity and differences, and a growing acceptance of existing social arrangements and interpersonal relationships (2000, 13).

While such a friendly city may not realistically proceed from a decreased crime rate, Karmen speculates that New Yorkers likely expected that a safer city would be a cheerier, more collegial city, with lower and fewer barriers separating classes, genders, races, and ethnicities. It is likely New Yorkers generally held these expectations, realistic or not, as they simply describe the opposite end of the crime spectrum that was experienced in New York in the early 1990s. But the policing tactics endorsed by Giuliani, the same tactics widely credited with driving down murder rates in the city, actually widened the distance between historically divided groups and confounded New Yorkers' dreams of a friendlier city.

Perhaps Giuliani's greatest targets as "signs of disorder" were the homeless, whose makeshift homes or villages were routinely disrupted and torn down. Instead of attempting to eradicate homelessness, Giuliani settled for eradicating the visibility of homelessness for the rest of New York's inhabitants, as the NYPD drove homeless people from the centers of the cities to the outskirts of the boroughs (Smith 1998, 4-6). Welfare recipients were characterized as lazy and in need of proper motivation, as

Giuliani implemented "workfare," whereby recipients were required to perform mostly city maintenance tasks for sub-minimum wage compensation (Smith 1998, 7-8). And the NYPD under Giuliani was known to routinely antagonize Blacks with unnecessary searches or pat downs, as well as outright physical abuse (Smith 1998, 2; Herbert 2002, 19). Wilson and Kelling had already hinted in their Broken Windows study that Blacks were to blame for ruining perfectly good neighborhoods with integration, as they coopted the "jungle" metaphor that has long characterized integrated, poorer neighborhoods in supposed need of civilizing by white gentrifiers.

In fact, the jungle metaphor, by characterizing portions of the city as wild frontiers waiting to be tamed, energized Giuliani's police initiatives and subsequently helped real estate values skyrocket during the '90s. By ramping up police foot patrols in Broken Window neighborhoods, Giuliani paved the way for extensive gentrification efforts, elevating previously undesirable sections of the city to trendy middle class bastions. Neil Smith offers a compelling case study of the gentrifying frontier mentality by examining the ways in which Tompkins Square Park became, in the late 1980s, the last holdout in a battle for the urban plains (1996, 3-29). The broad implication of his study is obvious: wherever buildings slouch dilapidated, parks house the homeless, and landlords terrorize tenants with dangerously unsafe living conditions, the middle class charge in, buy up, and remodel, while dispersing the "natives" to some other corner of the urban jungle that will eventually need civilizing itself. When grouped with Broken Windows policing and the prevalent frontier real estate mentality, genrification becomes revanchism, as middle class New Yorkers rush to reclaim the city that they assume is rightfully theirs.

The flaw at the heart of the Broken Windows theory is the belief that those things that scare us are actually harmful. In implementing a city-wide version of Broken Windows policing, Giuliani marked as dangerous, among others, the poor, the homeless, and people of color and allowed New Yorkers to experience not a "greater tolerance of diversity and differences, and a growing acceptance of existing social arrangements," as Karmen projects, but a resegregation of the city.

On this side of Giuliani's catastrophic 2008 presidential campaign, it is sometimes difficult to remember that he was at times a wildly popular mayor, receiving praise and defense even from the city's long-entrenched voices of left-wing dissent, the *New York Times* and *Saturday Night Live*.[29] But he has always had critics, and the further the city progresses from his tenure, the less appreciated he has become, largely for the callousness of his reaction to the long-term plight of Ground Zero workers and the divisive effects of the police initiatives cited above.

The reaction to this divisiveness has included nostalgia for a New York that never existed, a friendly, fully integrated metropolis that closely resembles Karmen's description of a city with a low murder rate. Such nostalgia is evident in the writings that mourn the passing of interaction on public transportation and among strangers. And the iPod, with its urban ethos of absolute individual freedom, has come to represent that which drives people apart. Alienation is a common theme among those who complain of iPod isolation, as is the discontent of those who feel ignored or left out by iPodders.

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[29] Jim Dwyer, 'The Giuliani Years: News Analysis; A Reborn City, Stamped "Giuliani,"' *The New York Times* (31 December 2001), A1. Dan Barry, 'The Giuliani Years: The Overview; A Man Who Became More Than a Mayor,' *The New York Times* (31 December 2001), A1. Jennifer Steinhauer, 'His Term Ending, Giuliani Celebrates His Record,' *The New York Times* (20 December 2001), D2. The *Saturday Night Live* season premiere on 29 September 2001 (Episode No. 506) featured the mayor in the opening segment, as well as a 'Weekend Update' tribute to him from Tina Fey, who otherwise leans far to the left, politically.

Even the language of low-intensity warfare, mentioned by Karmen in his description of a disfunctionally violent city, creeps into St. John's "idea for a sci-fi horror flick," as the iPod is described as a "secret weapon" and its users are compared to a rampaging Frankenstein's monster.

Giuliani's goal of "encourag[ing]the poorest of the city's population, those most dependent on public services, to move out of the city" was really an attempt at "sanitizing the landscape," whitewashing the city until it would become sterile (Smith 1996, 230; Smith 1998, 3). It is into this sterile void that Apple's urban ethos is injected as part of "a market more powerful and extensive than ever before [that] is increasingly endowed with the power to establish social norms" (Smith 1998, 11). And the idea of absolute freedom embedded in the iPod's urban ethos, even while Apple's integrated ads visually include people of color and non-traditional techies in their ad campaigns, evokes a secluded individualism that at once confounds the expectations of a safer city, benefits from Giuliani's disregard for those most dependent on his government, and, thereby, weds itself to the particularly narrow definitions of freedom and for whom that were the lived reality of Giuliani's police initiatives.

Conclusion

The iPod has become tightly entwined with New York, marking the landscape with billboards, architecture, and an army of walking advertisements, all of which project an urban ethos of individual freedom. To more fully understand the relationship between the iPod and New York, however, we must file its urban ethos next to the backlash against Rudolph Giuliani and revanchism, where communality is privileged above

individual freedom. By describing the ways New Yorkers both embrace and reject the

device, the urban ethos emphasizes the vibrancy of the iPod that makes it an integral part

of modern musical culture.

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EMPLOYMENT
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PUBLICATIONS
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- 'I'm an i.P.o.d: Technological Angst and Embodied Posthumanism,' *Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies*. Ed. Sumanth Gopinath and Jason Stanyek. New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming.
- 'Erykah Badu,' *Musicians and Composers of the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Chris Moose. Pasadena: Salem Press, forthcoming in May 2009.
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- Program Notes, *Rutgers in New York* Carnegie Hall Performance, 2 March 2005.
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