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ABSTRACT

This research report examines the data collected in The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) for 1992, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. The study also provides a context for interpreting the data with a comparison to a similar survey of 1982. Jazz was defined as the respondents saw fit. Findings of the survey include: (1) participation in jazz is correlated strongly with education and income; (2) participation rates are consistently higher for men than for women and for African-Americans than for white Americans; (3) in all other benchmarks arts activities, participation rates are higher for women than for men and for whites than for blacks; (4) although jazz retains a multi-racial audience, it enjoys particular support from the black community; (5) the audience for jazz and classical music overlap to a considerable extent; and (6) those who attend jazz performances are more likely than the population as a whole to participate in a wide range of leisure activities, such as movies, exercise, sports, or charity work. Tables and figures presenting the data accompany the paper. (EH)

JAZZ IN AMERICA:

WHO'S LISTENING?

by

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1. Introduction/Executive Summary

In 1992, the National Endowment for the Arts funded a broad-based statistical investigation into the audiences for various art forms in the United States. The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) for 1992[1] was the third such survey over the past decade. As in the two earlier surveys, jazz was listed as one of seven "benchmark" arts activities. Detailed information was gathered on the size and demographic characteristics of the jazz audience: those adult Americans who attend jazz events, participate in jazz through the media, perform jazz, or simply say they like the idiom. The purpose of the current monograph is to examine these data and to provide a context for interpreting them. Many items are compared with the findings in the 1982 SPPA[2]. This introductory section of the monograph summarizes some of the salient findings.

The information provided by the SPPA, it must be emphasized, does not distinguish between potentially conflicting definitions of jazz--between, for example, the more conventional definition of the "jazz tradition" favored by educators, critics, and the arts establishment, and the recent pop-oriented styles often referred to as "contemporary jazz." (Traditional jazz is nothing if not contemporary, with artists creating new music and charting new territory every year.) The SPPA figures should be understood as reliable data for the aggregate audience for jazz in all of its current manifestations. The respondents defined jazz as they saw fit.

Potential Jazz Audience

The potential audience for jazz has grown significantly. About one-third of American adults reported that they "liked jazz," and about five percent (up from three percent in 1982) of American adults reported that they liked jazz "best of all." In 1992, 25% of adult Americans expressed a desire to attend jazz performances more often than they do now, as compared with 18% in 1982.

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[1] The data collected by the U.S. Bureau of the Census in this survey were analyzed by Jack Faucett Associates, Inc. and John P. Robinson of the University of Maryland. The results of the analysis were published by the Endowment as Arts Participation in America, 1982-1992, Research Report #27. The report is referred to as SPPA92 in this monograph.

[2] Data on the jazz audience derived from the 1982 SPPA were analyzed by Harold Horowitz, Director of Research of the National Endowment for the Arts. The results of this analysis were published in 1986 as The American Jazz Audience (Washington, National Jazz Service Organization, 1986; available through the Education Research Information System [ERIC] as ED 280757), and summarized as the opening chapter of New Perspectives in Jazz, ed. David N. Baker (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), pp. 1-8.

Only half of those who preferred jazz to any other musical form attended a jazz event during the previous year. Supply may have been a limitation, but there are few data on changes in the number of opportunities to participate in jazz. Anecdotal evidence indicates a gradual shift from private commercial venues like night clubs to public-sector sites such as auditoriums and colleges. Giant record companies have expanded greatly their jazz output, focusing, surprisingly, on the "authentic" kind of jazz as well as on the easily-marketed "accessible" counterpart. Jazz programming has expanded on commercial and public radio, and there are a few all-jazz stations. A jazz cable channel may be established in 1994.

Size of the jazz audience

In 1992, approximately 10% of adult Americans (ca 19.7 million) attended a jazz performance during the previous year, while 20% listened to a jazz recording. These figures are approximately the same as those reported for 1982. But 22% watched jazz on television in some form (broadcast or videotape), up from 18% in 1982; and 28% listened to jazz radio, a dramatic increase over 18% a decade earlier. The growth in jazz radio is attributable in part to the spread of new pop-jazz formats (e.g., New Adult Contemporary) in commercial radio and to the increased popularity of more traditional forms of jazz on public broadcasting.

Cross tabulations of the 1992 SPPA data show that most of those who attend jazz performances also participate in jazz through the media at a rate three times that of the population as a whole. Of those who attend jazz performances, 76% listen to jazz on the radio, 67% listen to jazz on recordings, and 61% watch jazz in some form of television. About a third of those who listen to jazz recordings also attend concerts.

The 1992 survey provides, for the first time, data on the frequency of attendance. Those who attended a jazz performance during the previous year did so an average of 2.9 times--higher than comparable rates for any of the other benchmark performing arts. But a large majority of those attending jazz events did so less frequently than this average: 44% attended only once, while an additional 26% attended only twice. Thus, a small percentage of the jazz audience forms a disproportionally large share of the total number of attendees. Even so, the total number of attendances at jazz events was nearly as large as that for classical music.

Demographic characteristics of the jazz audience

The overall profile reveals an audience base that is affluent, well-educated, youthful, and ethnically diverse. The frequency-of-attendance data show that the audience that frequently participates in jazz is strikingly male, well-educated, well-off, and black, in comparison with the general adult population. These findings are consistent with readership surveys by jazz magazines.

Participation in jazz is strongly correlated with education and income. Nearly half of those attending jazz performances, for example, are college graduates; over three-quarters have had some college education. Those earning above $50,000 a year are more than twice as likely to attend performances than those earning less than $25,000. In this respect, the audience profile for jazz resembles that of the other benchmark arts activities, for which the highest rates of participation are to be found among the most affluent and highly educated.

The jazz audience is predominantly youthful, especially when compared to the other benchmark arts activities. Over two-thirds of those attending jazz performances are under the age of 45, with a peak in the age group 25-34. But comparison with the 1982 figures shows a distinct greying trend, with decreases in nearly all forms of participation or music preference by the 18-24 age group compensated by increases in groups over 34. The 1992 SPPA data show a striking increase in the participation in jazz through the media by respondents 75 and older. A possible explanation is that in 1992 this group had been exposed to jazz during the years when musical tastes are likely to be formed.

The demographic profile of the audience with respect to gender and race reveals other qualities unique to jazz. Participation rates are consistently higher for men than for women; although men comprise only 48% of the adult population, the audience for most forms of participation in jazz is 52-54% male. Similarly, participation rates for African-Americans are consistently higher than for white Americans; although blacks comprise 11% of the adult population, between 16-20% of the audience for various forms of participation is black. By contrast, in all other benchmark arts activities participation rates are higher for women than for men and for whites than for blacks. Jazz is unique among the benchmark activities in being derived from African-American traditions.

The statistics on frequency of attendance and on those who prefer jazz to all other music genres provide a way of focusing on the characteristics of the most loyal and intense sector of the jazz audience. Within this small but influential group, the disparities with regard to race and gender, noted above for the jazz audience as a whole, become sharper, with males and African Americans showing strikingly high rates of involvement. Nearly a quarter of those who attend as many as nine jazz performances per year, are black, and three-fifths are male. Approximately a third of those who report liking jazz "best of all" are black, and two-thirds are male. These disparities are corroborated by demographic surveys conducted by major jazz specialty magazines, who find men and African Americans to be disproportionately represented among their readership.

Other findings

- In 1992, approximately 1.7% of adult Americans reported "performing or rehearsing" jazz over the previous year. Less than half of this number (0.8%) performed jazz in public--roughly the same percentage reported in the 1982 SPPA. Performers are predominantly male, white (although blacks and Asians

are somewhat more likely to perform jazz than whites), and youthful (71% under the age of 45). Ninety-three percent of the jazz performers have had some formal musical education.

- Although jazz retains a multi-racial audience, it enjoys particular support in the black community. More than half (54%) of the adult African-American population reports liking jazz, as compared with only a third (32%) of whites. Roughly 16% of African Americans like jazz "best of all"--second only to religious music--as compared to 4% of whites.

- The audience for jazz and classical music overlap to a considerable extent: roughly a third of those who attend performances of one genre also attend performances of the other.

- Those who attend jazz performances are more likely than the population as a whole to participate in a wide range of leisure activities, such as movies, exercise, sports, or charity work.

II. The Jazz Audience: An Overview

A. Introduction: issues and problems

The figures in the SPPA report the participation of adult Americans in jazz through several different media: attendance at live events, listening to radio and recordings, watching on TV (via broadcasts or video tape), and performing. The sheer numbers of those who participated in jazz in some form or other is both impressive and encouraging. But such aggregate figures must be treated with a degree of caution, because they mask important distinctions within the jazz audience that anyone attempting to interpret these data should bear in mind.

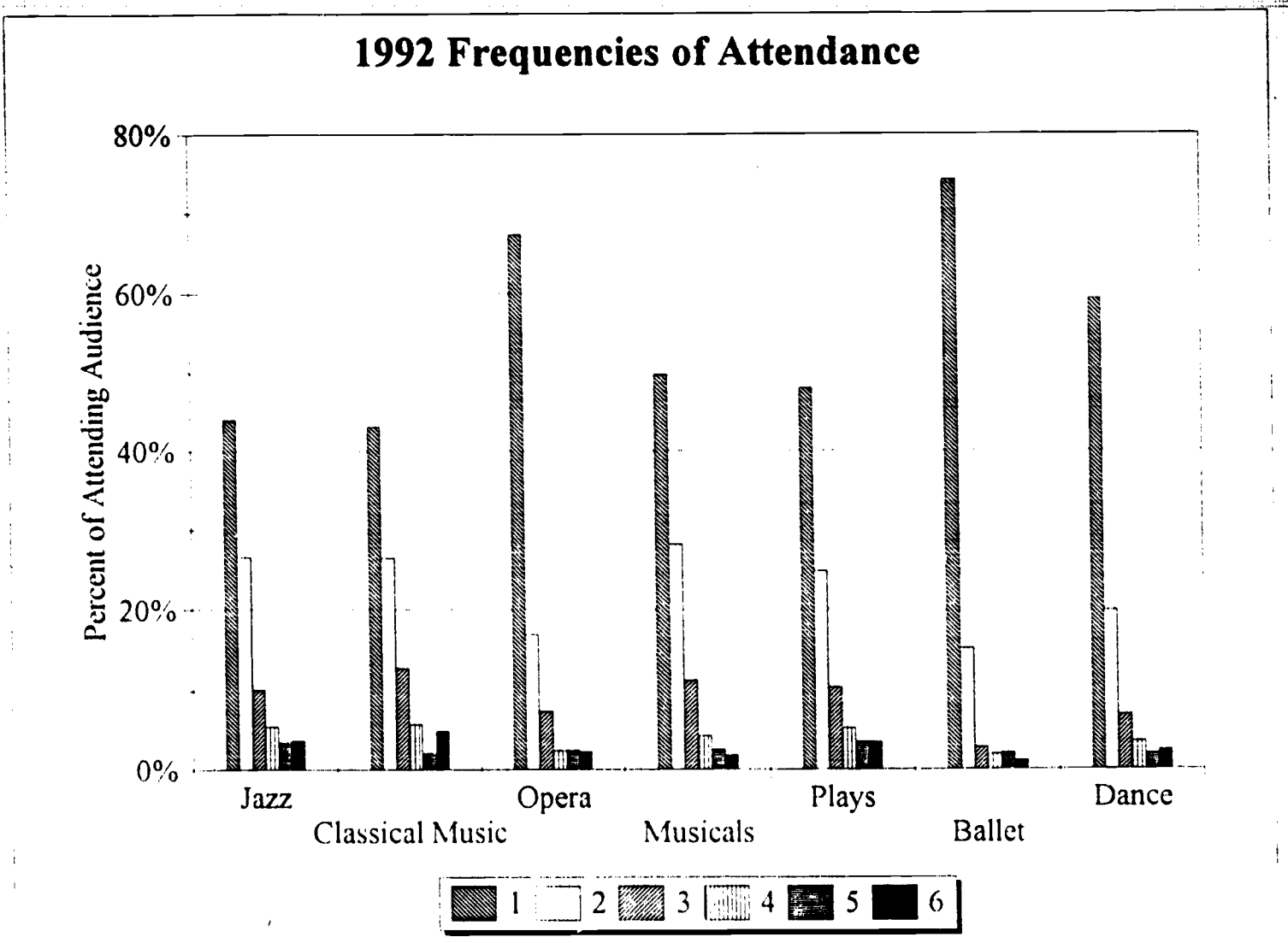
The first is a consideration shared by other arts surveyed: the distinction between the casual consumer and the dedicated supporter of the arts.

The aggregate jazz audience represents the broadest possible interpretation of "arts participation"—including casual, passive, or even unintentional listening to jazz through any medium. Out of the broadest possible audience of approximately 185 million adult Americans, about a third (34%), or roughly 63 million, say they "like jazz." Of these, no more than one in seven (5%, or 9.5 million) reports liking jazz "best of all." And of those who preferred jazz to all other music genres, less than half (44%) actually attended a jazz event over the past year. In other words, the more purposeful supporters of an art form—the regular concert-goers, record buyers, and radio listeners that one ordinarily associates with the concept of "audience"—undoubtedly constitute a fraction of the total reported jazz audience, and probably a small fraction at that.

Consider, for example, the statistics on frequency of attendance. The aggregate figure for the average number of attendances per attender for jazz is encouraging. It is, in fact, higher for jazz than for any other performing art sampled in the SPPA: 2.9 (as opposed to 2.6 for classical music, 2.4 for theater, 2.3 for musicals, 1.7 for opera and ballet). This brings the "total number of attendances" for jazz very close to the total attendances at classical music performances (57.1 million for jazz, 60.3 million for classical music). And yet, for **all** art forms surveyed, the overwhelming majority of attendances were casual—only once or twice per year. Because the numbers attending decline sharply with frequency, average attendance rates can be misleading. Figure 1 shows the number of times participants attended for all benchmark arts activities.

The distinction between the casual and dedicated participant is significant insofar as the demographic profile changes. Generalizations that one might make on the basis of aggregate figures may not accurately reflect the characteristics of those who do the most to support an art form. Data on frequency of attendance, and the portion of the SPPA in which respondents

Figure 1: 1992 Frequencies of Attendance


1992 Frequencies of Attendance
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Percent of Attending Audience
Jazz
Classical Music
Opera
Musicals
Plays
Ballet
Dance
1
2
3
4
5
6

are invited to say which genre of music they like "best of all" provide a limited means of assessing the nature and extent of the dedicated jazz audience.

A second broad consideration has to do with the divergent and potentially conflicting definitions that lurk within the broad label "jazz." This consideration unfortunately has no easy solution.

As with the previous SPPA's, the 1992 SPPA avoids entangling itself in the potentially murky question of what "jazz" might mean. Rather than guiding participants toward a particular interpretation, the SPPA relies entirely on the technique "respondent identification," allowing each individual to apply his or her own definition of jazz to the question. Respondents are simply asked whether they have attended a jazz event, listened to jazz on the radio, watched jazz on television or video, and so forth. Not until the end of the survey, in the section on music preferences, is any clue given that jazz is a genre distinct from, say, "blues/rhythm and blues," "soul," "big band," or "rock."

This all-inclusive definition is useful as a gross indicator of the relationship of American audiences with jazz. And yet as the marketplace shows, consumer taste may be much more finely differentiated. Audiences may identify less with jazz as a whole than with one or more of its subgroupings. The sheer number and variety of genres can be bewildering. "In jazz, qualifiers rule," reported ***Billboard*** on the state of jazz in 1992: "traditional, mainstream, electric, contemporary, straight-ahead, fusion, avant-garde"[3].

How to sort through this morass of conflicting definitions? Rather than examine the musical characteristics that might separate these categories, I propose to draw upon a useful distinction made recently by Richard Crawford that focuses instead on *attitudes* toward music by both musicians and their audiences. According to Crawford, these fall into two broad categories. The first, "accessibility," is "a statement of priorities. Accessibility seeks out the center of the marketplace....And it *invests ultimate authority in the present-day audience*. Performers driven by accessibility seek most of all to find and please audiences" [87]. "Authenticity," by contrast, invests its authority in *traditions* of creativity. Musicians who are guided by the "ideal of authenticity" feel that music at the time of its creation is guided by a "*certain original spirit*," and that the role of the present-day performer or creator is to remain faithful to that spirit—in short, to uphold the tradition[4].

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[3] Jeff Levenson, "Who's Listening, Who's Buying?" Billboard 104 (4 July 1992), J-2.

[4] Richard Crawford, The American Musical Landscape (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 86-88. Emphasis in original. Crawford's argument is designed to describe the sharp distinction between composition and performance prevalent in the European art music tradition and its derivatives in America. In jazz, of course, the improvising performer assumes much of the responsibility normally assigned to the composer.

One normally assumes that these conflicting principles will result in sharply divergent music, with accessibility being the reigning paradigm of popular culture, and authenticity the hallmark of art traditions. But they do not necessarily diverge. In jazz, they have coexisted, sometimes uneasily, for more than half a century. The Swing Era of the 1930s and 1940s is the high-water mark of jazz as an "accessible" species of popular music, an authentic form intimately connected with contemporary fashions in dance, popular song, and the intangible symbols of youth subculture. But one need only look to the "funky" hard bop of the 1950s, the bossa nova craze of the early 1960s, jazz/rock and jazz/funk fusion in the 1970s, and the nascent jazz/hip-hop movement of the 1990s to see how persistent is the impulse to shadow the tastes and enthusiasms of the mass public.

Meanwhile the ideal of authenticity has a long history as well. As early as the 1930s, aficionados were distinguishing the "real" forms of jazz from their impure, commercial derivations, and arguing loudly for the recognition and support due a fine art. Over time, the effort to define jazz as an "authentic" artistic tradition has gathered nearly irresistible momentum. Jazz is now a staple of university music departments and granting agencies such as the NEA. It is increasingly at home in the concert hall and on public television and radio. It is music that one approaches through experts and critics, to gain "cultural capital." It is widely, if not universally, recognized as part of the cultural establishment: in Billy Taylor's oft-quoted phrase, "America's classical music."

All of this is not merely a passive appreciation of jazz's virtues. It presumes an implicit responsibility on the part of the establishment to preserve the tradition it has inherited and to ensure its continuing survival in an indifferent or even hostile cultural environment. The listing of jazz as one of seven benchmark arts activities on the SPPA is both confirmation of its newly official status and a sign of concern by the arts community about its future. Why gather detailed information about the audience for jazz if not from a desire to increase it?

I make these obvious points to contrast the characteristic concerns of "authentic" jazz advocates with the market-driven concerns of "accessible" jazz. The paradigm of authenticity presupposes a rich tradition for which one wishes to build a wider audience. The hope is to modify the consumer, through education and exposure, to accept and support a relatively stable body of artistic practices. The countervailing paradigm of accessibility, on the other hand, presupposes an audience for which one hopes to supply a product. The aim is to satisfy shifting consumer taste by creating new genres, or by modifying existing ones, through shrewd guessing and market research. The two aims can certainly overlap. For instance, during his heyday, Duke Ellington was simultaneously a popular celebrity and a touchstone of jazz authenticity. The two aims can also be at cross-purposes.

In early 1987, ***Billboard*** changed the way it tracked the sales of jazz albums. Previously, there had been a single chart for Jazz. Now there would be two charts: one still called Jazz, devoted

to recordings "in the traditional genre"; and a new chart, Contemporary Jazz, covering "jazz fusion, new age, and other new developments in jazz music"[5].

"Traditional jazz" used to refer to revivals of New Orleans jazz style popular since the 1940s. It now encompasses everything from New Orleans jazz to post-bop and the avant garde—the entire spectrum covered by the term "the jazz tradition." Even to be aware of these genres—to say nothing of understanding the complex and manifold ways in which they interrelate, stylistically and historically—presupposes a considerable degree of education and sophistication. Its counterpoise, "contemporary jazz," carries no such intellectual baggage. It is a genre of pop music, distinguished from the rock mainstream by the absence of vocals and prominent use of traditional jazz instruments like the saxophone and continually adjusted to suit the perceived tastes of its targeted audience.

The opposition implied by these terms is to some extent illusory. "Traditional" jazz is nothing if not contemporary, with artists creating new music and charting new territory every year. And the fluid interaction with popular culture represented by "contemporary" jazz has, as I have indicated, a long history, now thoroughly absorbed into the official jazz tradition.

Semantic confusion aside, the distinction is real and not to be lightly dismissed. Traditional jazz requires a commitment from its listeners. Its potential audience must be carefully nurtured through educational outreach efforts such as college courses, CD reissues with painstakingly researched liner notes, PBS documentaries, or trade books aimed at the aficionado. Contemporary jazz welcomes the casual listener—anyone inclined to consider as "jazz" pop music that is obviously not rock. The potential audience for contemporary jazz is changeable but vast, and the boundary lines separating it from mainstream pop are fluid. Saxophonist Kenny G, considered by many the embodiment of Contemporary Jazz, but deliberately marketed as pop, has alone sold a reported seventeen million records since the late 1980s. "People who don't know anything about jazz know Kenny G," says one critic. "He's *their jazz*"[6].

None of this is directly ascertainable from the SPPA. The figures reported in this monograph are simply the aggregate of responses to the term "jazz" by the American public. Those who consider the likes of Kenny G to be unauthentic will have to make their own rough calculations or educated guesses to determine what percentage of the reported audience is listening to "authentic" jazz. Yet this larger, undifferentiated figure represents an upper bound for that segment of the audience that is willing to identify itself with the umbrella term "jazz," and therefore presumably more susceptible to educational efforts designed to bring them into the jazz tradition.

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[5] "Jazz Charts Debut," Billboard 99 (28 February), 6.

[6] Hank Bordowitz, "Letter Perfect," Jazziz 11 1 (January 1994), 37. Emphasis in original

B. Attendance

The overall rate for those reporting attendance at a jazz event over the past year has remained essentially stable over the past ten years. The surveys show a slight increase (from 9.6% in 1982 and 9.5 % in 1985 to 10.6% in 1992), but one that proves to be statistically insignificant. It is more realistic to say that the rate has remained stable at about 10 per cent. Of course, this is a rate, not an absolute number. The size of the estimated audience has grown along with the growth in population, from 15.7 million in 1982 to 19.7 million in 1992.

This rate of attendance places jazz somewhere in the middle of the benchmark arts activities. Fewer people attend jazz performances than go to art museums (26.7%), musicals (17.4%), theater (13.5%), and classical music (12.5%), but more than attend opera (3.3%), ballet (4.7%), and "other dance" (7.1%). The audiences for jazz and classical are not only similar in size, but also overlap to a considerable extent: 39% of those who attend jazz events also attend classical events, while 33% of those attending classical events also attend jazz events.

Has there been any change in the supply of concerts over the past decade—either in quantity or in the kinds of venues in which jazz performances are offered to the public? Such information, of course, lies beyond the scope of the SPPA. Anecdotal evidence, although sketchy and inconclusive, suggests a broad historical shift away from the private toward the public sector: from the traditional smoky nightclub, operated on a commercial basis, to auditoriums and performing arts centers funded by colleges and local nonprofit arts organizations.

One factor, certainly, is the emergence of new sources of funding for local jazz organizations, which for years have struggled to provide sponsorship and alternative venues for a music that cannot always reach its audience through commercial means. The most dramatic effort in this direction was the creation in 1990 of the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest National Jazz Network, a program administered by The New England Foundation for the Arts and the National Jazz Service Organization that provides financial and technical assistance to 20 local presenting organizations and 6 regional arts organizations[7]. The funding provided by the Lila Wallace-

[7] The regional arts organizations are Arts Midwest (Minneapolis), Mid-America Arts Alliance (Kansas City), Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation (Baltimore), New England Foundation for the Arts (Cambridge), Southern Arts Federation (Atlanta), and Western States Arts Federation (Santa Fe).

The presenting organizations are: Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum (Philadelphia), The Artists Collective (Hartford CT), ArtsCenter (Carrboro NC), Carver Cultural Center (San Antonio), Cityfolk (Dayton), Contemporary Arts Center (New Orleans), District Curators (Washington DC), Earshot Jazz (Seattle), Flynn Theater (Burlington VT), Helena Presents (Helena MT), Jazz Institute of Chicago, Jazzmobile (New York), Kentucky Center for the Arts (Louisville), Koncepts Cultural Gallery (Oakland), Manchester Craftsmen's Guild (Pittsburgh), Northeast Ohio Jazz Society (Cleveland), Northrop Auditorium (Minneapolis), Outpost Productions (Albuquerque), Folly Theater (Kansas City), and Sum Arts (Houston).

Reader's Digest Fund for this network (supplemented by the NEA and local sources) has accelerated growth in non-profit, public sector support of jazz. Nearly all of these organizations concentrate their energies on sponsoring performances by the wide spectrum of "traditional" acoustic jazz artists—presumably under the assumption that the more commercially oriented commercial jazz will thrive in the open market.

But existing data suggest that where people attend jazz concerts has not changed over the past decade. A direct comparison with earlier figures for this issue is not possible, since the questions on venues that were part of the 1982 SPPA were not included in 1992. But such questions were asked in the 12 Local Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts. The weighted percentages for the twelve sites combined show little change from the 1982 SPPA results. Table 1 shows the jazz venues in 1982 and 1992.

Table 1. Jazz Venues in 1982 and 1992

Venue	1982	1992 (12-cities)
concert hall/auditorium	29	30
college facility	12	7
night club/coffee house	23	26
dinner theater	10	7
park/open-air facility	20	20
other facilities	7	10

Is there a potential for growth in the audience for live jazz performance? One encouraging sign is the increase in the numbers who expressed an interest in attending more jazz performances than they currently do. In the 1982 SPPA, 18% expressed such a desire; in 1992, this rate had risen to a quarter of the adult population, or some 46.5 million people. Jazz was not alone in this regard: comparable increases were reported for virtually all of the other benchmark activities [see SPPA92, 47].

C. Recordings

The percentage of adult Americans reporting that they listened to jazz recordings over the past year has remained stable at about 20 per cent (20.2% in 1982, 20.6% in 1992). And yet, industry observers are unanimous in proclaiming that jazz now enjoys a higher profile in the marketplace than just a decade ago. The latter half of the 1980s saw nearly all the major labels establish a strong presence in the jazz market. By 1990, such corporate giants as PolyGram (on the Verve label), Capitol (Blue Note), RCA (Novus), Sony (Columbia), MCA (GRP), and Warner Brothers had "simultaneously undertaken aggressive jazz programs that encompass[ed] virtually unprecedented artist development and marketing efforts"[8].

The most striking aspect of this activity is that its focus was not the easily-marketed "accessible" kind of jazz, but its "authentic" counterpart. The bellwether was the emergence of Wynton Marsalis. Marsalis' youth, virtuosity, and outspoken criticism of commercially oriented jazz/rock fusion ("I just don't like it when people call it jazz when it's not"[9]) attracted a great deal of media attention. The success of his early albums for Columbia emboldened other record companies to promote a whole generation of youthful jazz musicians, dubbed "the young lions" by the jazz press. Some, like Marsalis, continued to act as spokespersons for a purist vision of jazz. Others—including Bobby McFerrin, Harry Connick, Jr., and Wynton's brother, Branford—were widely recognized as "jazz artists" but managed, in various ways, to reach a much broader audience. Of Connick's success as pianist, singer, and icon of big-band era nostalgia, Columbia's George Butler has said: "We didn't see him as, say, a jazz artist with a limited marketplace. We focused very broadly. We didn't go to just certain radio formats and publications with his story. We treated him like a pop artist and pulled out all the stops"[10].

By the early 1990s, the young lions were joined by veteran musicians, proving that the new commercial viability of "authentic" jazz recordings was independent of youthful fashion and sex appeal. Recent recordings for Verve by Joe Henderson, Shirley Horn, and Abbey Lincoln have provided those artists with something like mainstream commercial success for perhaps the first time in their careers. The willingness by major record companies to devote their resources and attention to jazz artists (and, of course, the persistent championing of various subgenres of jazz by independent labels) has been at the heart of a resurgence of interest in

[8] Neil Tesser, "March of the Majors," Billboard 7 July 1990, J-5

[9] A. James Laska, "Wynton and Branford Marsalis: A Common Misunderstanding," Down Beat 49 12 (December 1992), 64

[10] John McDonough, "Harry Connick, Jr. Monk? Sinatra? Try Cab Calloway," Down Beat 60 1 (Jan. 1993) 19

jazz that has the potential to stimulate demand in all areas. As one booking agent put it, "The perception of jazz as a viable and hip art form makes the record companies happy, and then the people believe it"[11].

Nor is the activity in recordings limited to new artists. The major labels have enormous stockpiles of recordings covering the entire spectrum of jazz history. The industry-wide conversion of recorded music to the CD format has meant that these recordings can be reissued, in effect, as "new" products: remastered in digital sound, either in their original packaging or with new cover art, liner notes, previously unissued alternate takes, extensive discographical information. Such recycled material keeps the idea of tradition alive in the marketplace, and helps make jazz profitable for record companies: some 40% to 50% of total jazz sales for major labels are estimated to come from reissues[12].

Meanwhile, the more frankly commercial varieties of jazz continue to thrive, exploiting the fluid boundary lines between jazz and mainstream pop entertainment[13]. Whether much of this music ought to be considered jazz, pace Wynton Marsalis, is an open question, and one of potentially great interest for musicians, critics, and scholars. But for the purposes of interpreting the SPPA data, it is important to bear in mind that recordings by the Rippingtons, Bob James, Earl Klugh, Dave Grusin, and other "contemporary jazz" artists may be the kind of music that a significant portion of the listening public most closely associates with the word "jazz."

D. Radio

Participation in jazz by listening to the radio provides the most striking contrast with previous surveys. In 1982, and again in 1985, radio had a participation rate roughly equivalent to other media (recording and TV): about 18%. In 1992, that figure jumped sharply to 28%. When the increase in population during this period is taken into account, this means that the audience for jazz via radio grew from just over 30 million Americans to 52 million—an increase of over 70% [SPPA92, 29, 32]. (Similar dramatic increases were also reported for classical music and opera.)

Personal communication, 13 January 1994

Don Jeffrey, "Reissue Fever," Billboard 104:27:64 (July 1992), 14

The top "contemporary jazz" label for 1992, according to Billboard, was GRP, followed at some distance by Warner Brothers and Columbia. The top "jazz" labels were Verve, Columbia, GRP, Blue Note, and Warner Brothers. (December 1992.)

Why this should be so, and what implications it has for the jazz audience, can only be a matter of speculation. Unlike the recording industry, where jazz has long been established as a distinct and viable specialty market carefully nurtured by divisions of major labels and independent companies, radio has provided no firm institutional base for jazz. Even in major urban areas, there are only a handful of full-time radio stations devoted to jazz.

One factor, perhaps, has been the emergence of a new mixture of jazz/pop instrumental and vocal music, strategically situated on the shifting border between more traditional jazz and out-and-out pop styles. As early as 1981, one industry observer noted that radio programmers were already scrambling to devise formats to appeal to aging baby-boomers who would, inevitably, lose their taste for youth-oriented pop. The key to tapping into this audience, he argued, was a new genre of jazz-derived pop instrumental music, which he called "jazzz" to distinguish it from the jazz of the purists. "Unhip jazz for unhip people," as he unkindly put it, would become "the 'soft rock,' 'beautiful music,' and 'adult contemporary of the eighties'"[14]. By decade's end, this prophecy had become reality. New radio formats, variously called "New Adult Contemporary" (NAC), "Adult Alternative," "Smooth Jazz," or "Lite Jazz," have brought some styles of jazz instrumental music to a wider radio audience. The targeted demographic audience consists of young adults, 25-44—not coincidentally, the peak age group for jazz activity reported in the SPPA (see below). "I want the people burned out on rock," said one producer of several syndicated NAC programs. "They're the ones who give me the ratings"[15].

And yet, "traditional" jazz has continued to maintain a presence in commercial radio. It crops up in special program blocks in the day (a "Sunday Brunch," for example), and as "'spice' elements in regular playlists" in established formats such as Adult Contemporary[16]. Although it is unlikely that new stations entirely devoted to jazz will spring up, programmers are learning that the music has a market with demographic characteristics that can be very attractive to advertisers. KJAZ, the California radio station that is one of the few 24-hour jazz outlets, has recently started syndicating programs to be sold to other stations nationwide.

Meanwhile, jazz is well established on non-commercial radio, especially National Public Radio (NPR). Whether locally generated or broadcast in syndicated programs like Marian

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[14] Mike Harrison, Billboard 93 (15 August 1981), 31. Harrison later explained, "The reason I choose to spell jazz with the extra z...is to emphasize the point that among the new breed of commercial jazz musicians and broadcasters there is an emerging broad-minded attitude about the music, its expanded boundaries, and new potential for being competitively marketable. Not surprisingly, the purist jazz community is resentful and resistive of this growing movement to 'bastardize' and 'sell-out' jazz. Hence, the 3rd z clearly separates the philosophies and avoids the long-standing and obvious pitfalls of becoming caught up in the 'what is the definition of true jazz' syndrome." Billboard 93 (22 August 1981), 23.

[15] Personal communication, 13 January 1994.

[16] Kim Freeman, "Jazz Carves a Niche on the Airwaves," Billboard 99 (20 June 1987), 13.

McPartland's "Piano Jazz," jazz has found a place alongside classical music in NPR programming. An estimated 80% of NPR stations in 1992 regularly included jazz programming. "Jazz has become a force on these stations," notes one industry observer. "It's got listener viability, and the classical music audience is continuing to age"[17].

E. Television/Video

The fraction of adult Americans who have watched jazz on television has increased slightly over the past decade: from 18% in 1982 to 21% in the latest SPPA. Added to this is a new category of participation via television—watching videotaped performances on a VCR. Although 4% of adult Americans report watching jazz video, most of them also watch jazz on both television and VCR, and the total audience is 22%. [SPPA92, 26].

The growth of the audience for jazz on television is probably attributable at least in part to the cable revolution. The proliferation of cable channels over the past decade has inevitably led to a greater diversity in programming. New channels such as Bravo and A&E have provided broadcast time for jazz performances that otherwise would not have existed.

Although jazz's foothold on television continues to be tenuous, there are a few striking exceptions: Branford Marsalis' upholding the tradition of live jazz performance on "Tonight Show," the indefatigable Billy Taylor on morning television, documentaries on the PBS series "American Masters." But the revolution in music video that has transformed popular music—in particular, the interrelation between cable music-video channels and record promotion—has yet to affect jazz. The market for jazz recordings has been too small, and the expense of producing music videos too great. Such jazz videos as have been produced tend to be of a more documentary nature and marketed at a relatively small group of dedicated jazz enthusiasts. This accounts for the tiny percentage (4%) of people that has watched any jazz video over the past year. Corresponding percentages for popular music genres are not available in the SPPA, but given the popularity of MTV, VH-1, and country music video channels, it is a safe assumption that they are substantially higher.

And yet the continued expansion of cable will very likely pull more specialized musics like jazz into its wake. In 1994, Black Entertainment Television announced plans to establish a 24-hour jazz cable channel by autumn of that year. Whether this ambitious project will become a reality is, as of this writing, impossible to say. But, should it come to fruition, the demand for material to fill programming slots would create an explosive demand for jazz video that would, more likely than not, have to come largely from videotapes of live performances. One non-profit jazz presenting organization, the Manchester Craftmen's Guild of Pittsburgh, is

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[17] Jeff Levenson, "Who's Listening, Who's Buying?" Billboard 104 (4 July 1992) 1-8

preparing for the future by adding a multi-camera video recording capability to its performing facility. It has already syndicated audio recordings of its concert series through NPR, and is looking to similar possibilities on cable television[18].

Obviously, the potential to build new audiences for jazz via television is incalculable. Veteran vocalist Betty Carter, who has seen her "name recognition" soar more as a result of a few appearances on the Bill Cosby Show than in her previous four decades in the music business, has recently said: "The big wave of change will be jazz on television. This is something I've been working on for years. You see, I can hire young musicians and encourage young players for the rest of my life and it won't develop an audience. This will"[19].

F. Cross-tabulations

Some sense of the interrelation among the various types of participation in jazz—especially between attendance at live performances and media participation—can be gained through cross-tabulation of the data in the SPPA. Although the tables of statistics are difficult to interpret, the following picture emerges:

Most of those who attend jazz performances are also exposed to jazz through the media. Over three-quarters (76%) listen to jazz on the radio. Two-thirds (67%) listen to jazz on recordings. 58% watch jazz on broadcast television; 16% watch jazz on VCR; taking into account the 13% who say they do both activities, the aggregate audience for watching jazz on television in some form accounts for 61% of the jazz attenders. All of these figures, not surprisingly, exceed the national norm for participation in jazz via the media by approximately a factor of three.

Of the three main media, listening to jazz on recordings is the strongest predictor of jazz attendance: more than a third (35%) of those who listen to jazz recordings report attending a jazz performance. This is more than three times the national average. Somewhat smaller percentages of those who consume jazz through the free broadcast media (radio: 28%; TV: 26%) attend jazz performances. The new medium of videotape also shows a strong correlation with jazz attendance, with 30% of those watching via VCR only attending and 45% of those who watch both broadcast television and VCR attending.

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[18] Personal communication, 25 January 1994.

[19] Quoted in Larry Blumenfeld, "Forecast: The Future of Jazz from the Inside," Jazziz 11:1 (January 1994), p. 63.

III. Demographic Characteristics of Jazz Audience

A. Overview of demonstrate profile

1. Education

Socio-economic background remains the strongest predictor of participation in the arts generally, and jazz is no exception. Participation in jazz through live attendance and the media rises steeply and steadily with socio-economic attainment as measured through increases in education level and income.

The rates for participation through attendance at live performance exemplify this principle clearly enough. Jazz events attract insignificant levels of those without a high school diploma (less than 1%) and high school graduates (3%). Jazz events attract nearly a quarter of those with graduate education. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the 1982 and 1992 jazz attendance by educational level. Since educational attainment is unevenly distributed in the population, another way of expressing this disparity is to consider what percentage of the total projected jazz audience is attributable to the various educational levels. Figure 3 shows the education distribution of the 1992 jazz audience for all kinds of participation. Although those with some college education amount to about 45% of the total population (i.e., combining the categories of "some college," "college graduate," and "graduate school"), they comprise over three-fourths (78%) of those attending jazz events. Only 23% of adult Americans are college graduates (combining the categories of "college graduate" and "graduate school"), but 47% of jazz attenders are. Figure 4 shows the percentage of the total audience who are college graduates for all benchmark arts activities.

Of course, similar disparities are reported for all of the other benchmark arts activities. If anything, the upward curves for classical music, opera, and theater are steeper, showing slightly more pronounced increases in the participation rates of college graduates and those with graduate education. While 47% of jazz attenders are college graduates, the corresponding rate is higher for attenders of theater (50%), classical music (53%), and opera (58%).

A comparison with the earlier SPPA shows jazz may be gradually attracting more adherents from this most highly educated group. In 1982, the attendance rates for college graduates and those with graduate education were essentially equivalent. By 1992, the attendance rates for the latter group had jumped 5 percentage points. (This increase was offset by slight decreases in all educational groups below college level.) This shift toward a more educated audience is heightened by the general tendency over the 1982-1992 period for the population as a whole to become more highly educated.

Figure 2: Jazz Attendance by Education in 1982 and 1992

JAZZ ATTENDANCE BY EDUCATION

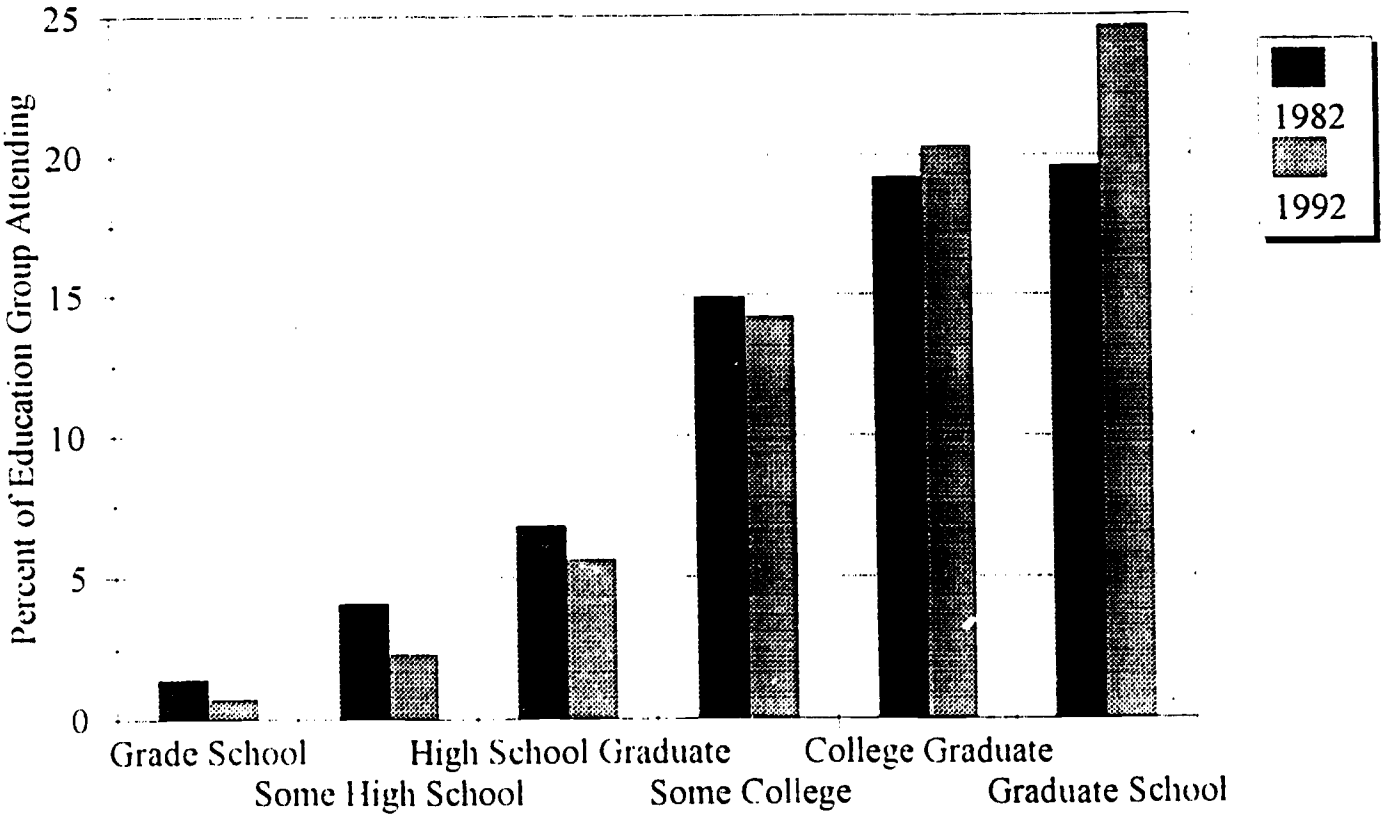


Figure 3: 1992 Education Distributions of Jazz Audiences

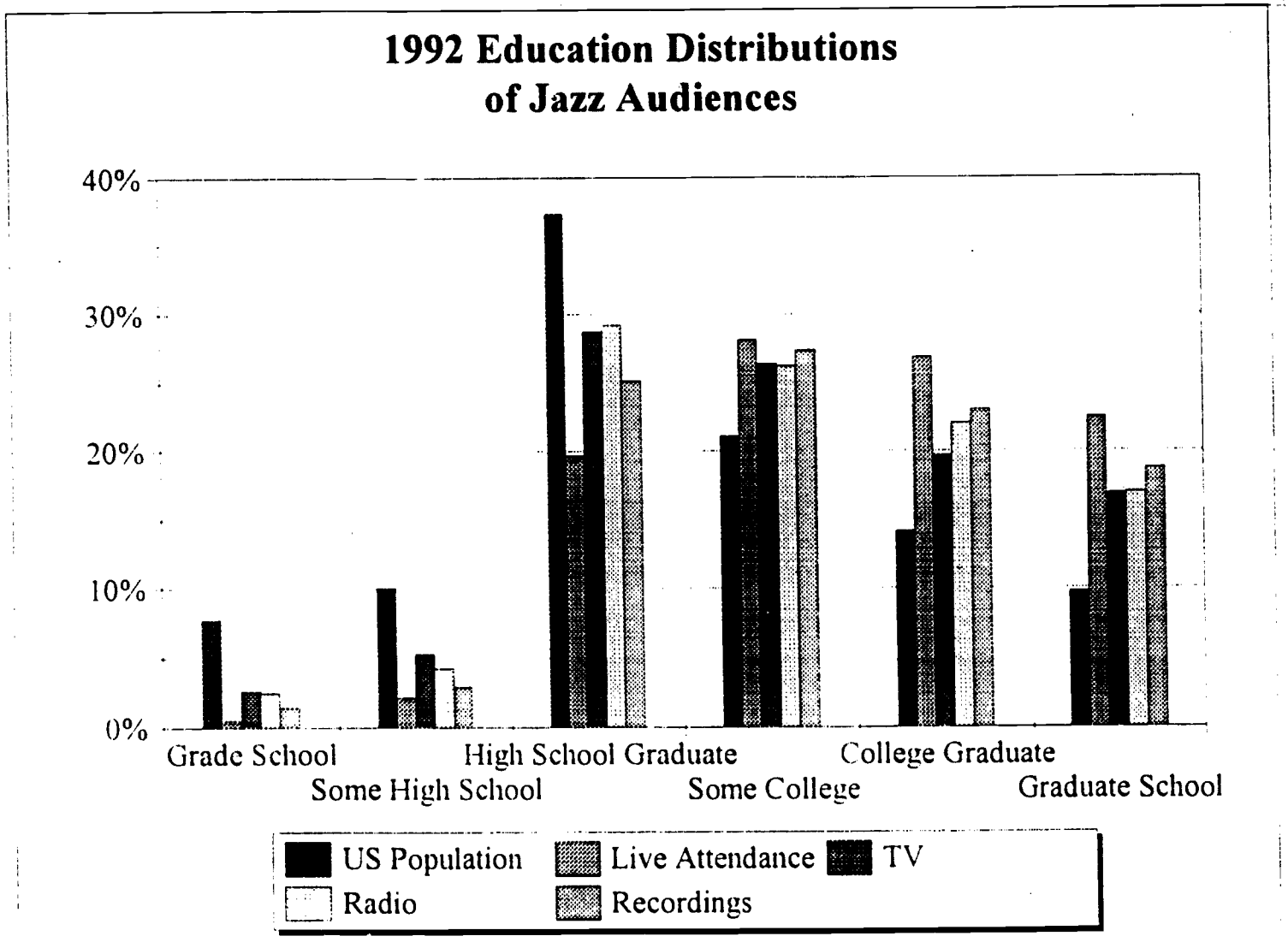
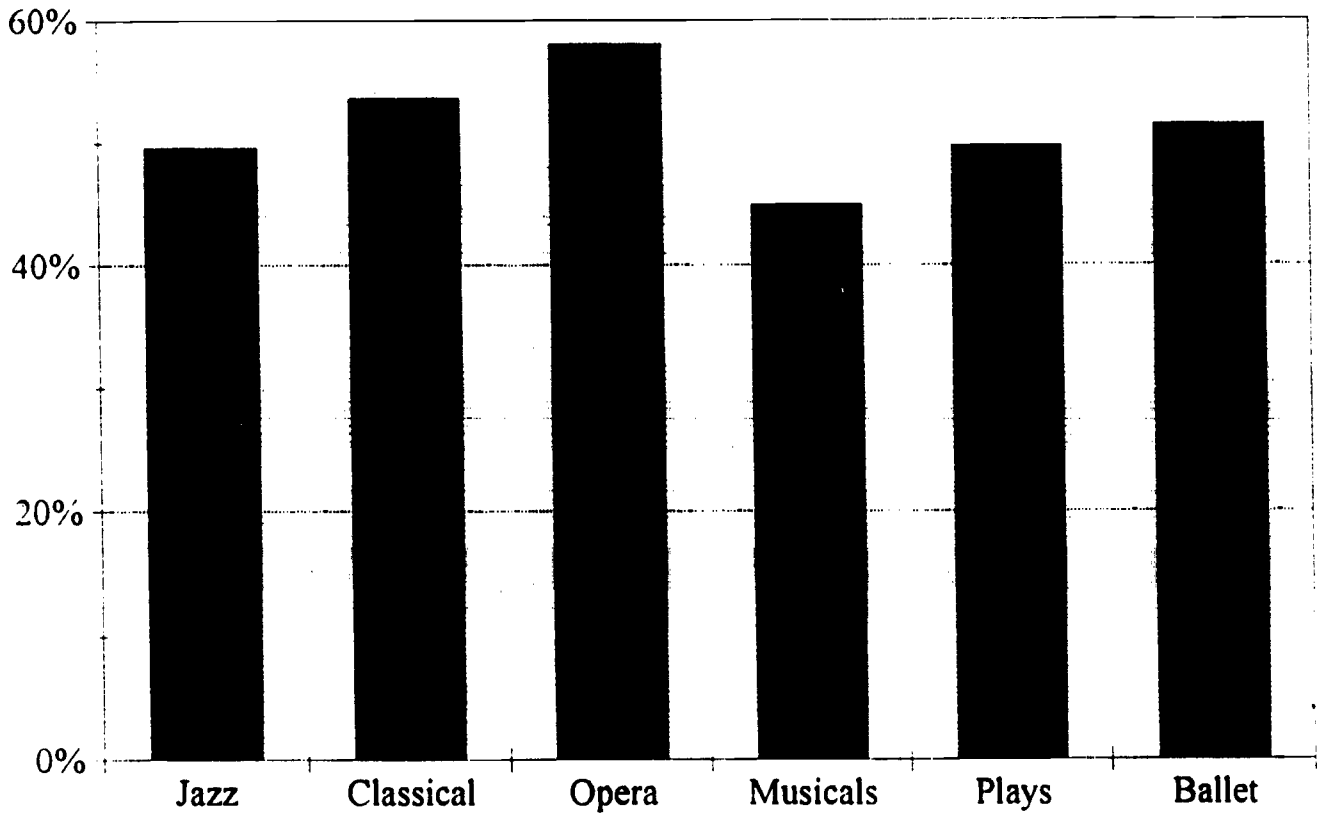

1992 Education Distributions
of Jazz Audiences
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Grade School
Some High School
High School Graduate
Some College
College Graduate
Graduate School
US Population
Live Attendance
TV
Radio
Recordings

Figure 4: 1992 College Graduate Attendance Rates (Percent of Total Audience)

1992 College Graduate Attendance Rates
(Percent of Total Audience)



For media participation, rates also rise steadily with educational attainment. Only 9% of those with a grade school education listen to jazz radio, but nearly half (49%) of those with graduate education do. But the curve is far less steep than that for attendance. Television and radio—those media most accessible to those with modest incomes—show the greatest participation by low education groups, with recordings closest to the distribution found in attendance. Those with a high school diploma or less (i.e., combining the categories of "high school graduate," "some high school," and "grade school") account for only 22% of the jazz attenders, but they comprise 30% of those listening to recordings, 36% of those listening to jazz radio, and 37% of those watching jazz on television. Similarly, 47% of jazz attenders are college graduates, compared with 42% for recordings, 38% for radio, and 37% for television.

2. Income

As with educational level, participation in jazz through attendance at performances rises with income—with one exception: the participation rate for the lowest income group (below $5000) was slightly higher than that reported for the next two income levels. This discrepancy is probably attributable to the fact that the lowest income level is something of an anomaly, combining as it does the poorest members of society with relatively privileged college students who have yet to enter the monetary economy.

Not surprisingly, those earning $50,000 or more are disproportionately represented. For instance, 18% of them attend jazz events—the only income group to substantially exceed the national average, while 32% of those attending jazz events earn more than $50,000, even though those in this category comprise only 19% of the total population. Those earning between $25,000 and $50,000—by far the largest group in the population as a whole (37%)—attend jazz events at only a slightly higher rate than the population as a whole.

A similar pattern can be found for the benchmark arts activities as a whole: under-representation by lower income groups, over-representation by the $50,000 and above group, and the large $25,000 to $50,000 group attending at a rate nearly identical with the national average. Similar patterns were also found in the 1982 SPPA, although inflation over the intervening decade makes a direct comparison impractical (those earning $25,000 in 1982 were considerably more prosperous than their counterparts in 1992).

As with education, participation rates through the media also rise steadily with income, but less steeply

3. Age

The audience for jazz in live performance is predominantly youthful, especially when compared with most of the other benchmark arts activities. Participation rates for jazz peak with the 25-34 age group, with only slightly lower rates for the 35-44 group, before tailing off rapidly with age. By contrast, theater, musicals, opera, and classical music all peak with the 45-54 age group, with the next highest participation rate in the 55-64 age group.

Because the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups also happen to be the largest in the population as a whole (23% and 21% respectively, or a combined 44% of the adult population), they are particularly well represented in jazz. Fifty-four percent of jazz attenders fall between 25 and 44, compared to 44% for musicals, 43% for theater, 40% for classical music, and 43% for opera. Extending this comparison to include 18-24-year-olds, over two-thirds (68%) of the jazz attenders are younger than 45, by contrast with 56% of the audience for musicals, 55% for theater, 50% for classical music, and 53% for opera.

For media participation, the rates for radio and recordings peak with the 25-34 age group, while the rates for television peak with the 35-44. This corresponds with the general perception by industry observers that the audience for recordings in particular is to be found primarily among younger Americans[29]. In general, the audiences for the free broadcast media (television and radio) are older than those attending performances: 23% of those who watch jazz on television and 19% of those who listen to jazz radio are over age 55, as compared with 16% of jazz attenders. The age distribution of the audience for jazz recording corresponds almost exactly with that of the audience for live performance.

Analysis of trends over time for the demographic information on age is more complicated than for other factors, because there are two different broad approaches. One can consider the behavior of any one age group—25-34-year-olds, say—at different times. Or one can take into account the fact that the 25-34-year-olds of 1982 will inexorably become the 35-44-year-olds of 1992, and compare the behavior of that age "cohort"—i.e., those born within a given ten-year-span—over time. "Cohort analysis" adds an invaluable dimension to the interpretation of age data, because it begins to show how arts participation may evolve with age, and how different generations or "cohorts" may differ from one another.

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[29] Tom Evered of Blue Note Records said in 1992, "My feeling is that there are mostly young people buying records." According to Wilbert Jenkins, executive director of the National Jazz Service Organization, "The demo has shifted to a younger audience, much of that owing to the young lions proliferating on various labels." Jeff Levenson, "Who's Listening, Who's Buying?" Billboard 104 (4 July 1992), J-2. Nevertheless, "youth" is a relative concept. In a pop music market dominated by teenage consumers, the maturity of jazz record buyers may be more striking than their youth. "The mainstay of the record industry was always 13-18 year olds," according to GRP executive Larry Rosen. "But the average age of American consumers is now 32. And as they're getting older, they're looking for a more mature music." Neil Tesser, "March of the Majors," Billboard 102 (7 July 1990), J-5.

A direct comparison with statistics from the 1982 SPPA shows a significant "greying" trend. In 1982, the highest participation rate (18%) came with the youngest age group—18-24. The rate declined slightly (15%) for the 25-34 group, and dropped off more sharply thereafter. A direct comparison of participation rates across age groups shows a sharp decline for the 18-24 group, compensated by increases for the age groups above 34.

Because the population as a whole was younger in 1982—18-24-year-olds then comprised 17.4% of the population, as opposed to 13.0% in 1992—the youthfulness of the jazz audience in 1982 is even more striking. Two-thirds of jazz attenders in 1982 (67%) were under age 35, fourth-fifths (81%) were under age 45.

One striking finding concerns the behavior of the oldest age group. In 1982, participation rates by those over 75 were insignificant. This is not surprising for jazz attendance, since advanced age inhibits the ability to attend live performances across the board. But the figures for media participation were also very low—only 4% watched jazz on television, only 2% listened to jazz radio, only 1% listened to jazz recordings. The corresponding figures for the over 75 group for 1992 were much higher: 12% for television and radio, 7% for recordings.

One logical explanation for this phenomenon is that the over 75 group in 1982 consisted of those Americans born before 1907, who became young adults in the years before 1925. The bulk of this group came of age before the emergence of jazz in the 1920s, or overlapped with the earliest jazz styles that have largely passed from favor with mainstream audiences today. If musical tastes are formed in youth, it is not surprising to find this age cohort indifferent to jazz.

For many within the over-75 group in 1992, however, jazz was part of their youthful experience. They came of age in the years 1915-1935—thus overlapping not only with early jazz, but with the swing dance band styles that were part of the musical landscape in the early 1930s and that found widespread acceptance by the end of the decade (the Swing Era).

This suggests that the "greying" trend in the future for jazz may not be limited to the shift of the core audience from the youngest adults to the 25-44 group, but may involve increasing participation in jazz by older Americans.

Cohort analysis shows that members of the baby boom generation (which roughly corresponds to the 25-44 age groups in the SPPA and includes those born between 1948 and 1967) are declining in their rate of attendance at live jazz performances, while the participation rates for older cohorts have increased.

The NEA monograph on AGE gives more detailed information on cohort analysis.

4. Race

One of the most intriguing, and controversial, areas for demographic analysis is race. Any discussion of the racial makeup of the jazz audience inevitably raises the contentious social issue of ethnic cultural identity.

Ethnicity is a potentially divisive issue in the arts, and often not directly addressed. In the spirit of pluralism and democracy, one may prefer to gloss over the ways in which art articulates ethnic difference, celebrating instead its capacity to transcend racial, national, and religious divisions. Mozart is not thought of as a Viennese composer, but as an artist with "universal" appeal. To the extent that race surfaces at all in classical music, it is with reference to an imperfectly realized ideal of inclusion. Once African-Americans were barred from the concert hall, both as performers and audience. Today, arts administrators worry over perennially low rates of participation by minorities, and plan strategies to include and involve them.

Why, then, should the question of ethnicity be so contentious for jazz? The answer is that alone among the art forms surveyed by the SPPA, jazz has historic roots in African-American culture. Given the tangled and tragic history of race relations in this country, it is hardly surprising to find conflicting interpretations of its place in American culture and its ultimate political significance. Is jazz best understood as the music of blac Americans—an art form shaped by, and uniquely expressive of, the struggle of an embattled minority for cultural autonomy? Or is it a music that demonstrates through its widespread appeal the irrelevance of race in a pluralistic society?

These are not questions that an appeal to the historical record can easily resolve. On the one hand, the distinctive musical language of jazz clearly derives from African-American (and ultimately African) folk traditions. Many of the most important creators and innovators within the jazz tradition—Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis, John Coltrane—have been black. On the other hand, jazz has from its inception depended upon white audiences for support, and has been shaped by the contributions of white musicians. Nearly all serious treatments of jazz have emphasized its ethnic character; and yet many (if not all) underscore the complex interactions between black and white that have given the lie to the myth of unbridgeable racial division.

The broader philosophical and political implications of these arguments are obviously beyond the boundaries of this monograph. I have broached them here not only because they must be borne in mind when interpreting the data, but because statistics from the 1982 SPPA have already been drawn into the debate. In his 1993 book ***Jazz: The American Theme Song***, James Lincoln Collier argues forcefully against the interpretation that would situate jazz unambiguously within black culture. "There are thousands of white jazz fans who have devoted lifetimes to the music, and bitterly resent being told that jazz is not theirs.

Nonetheless, the official position, which obtains in college and university programs, granting organizations, and scholarly institutions like Lincoln Center, is that jazz is black music"[21].

To reinforce his argument, Collier draws on the summary by Harold Horowitz of the data on the jazz audience drawn from the 1982 SPPA, emphasizing both the modest size of the total audience for jazz and the overall predominance of whites. While noting that "fifteen percent of blacks, as against nine percent of whites, attended a jazz performance in the surveyed year," Collier argues:

> The black audience for jazz is *relatively* larger than the white audience; but it is also clear, given that a lot of the respondents had only listened to jazz a few times in the course of a year, that jazz is of serious interest only to a small percentage of blacks—probably not more than ten percent. It can hardly be said, therefore, that jazz today somehow reflects anything that can be called a 'black ethos.' And it is also clear that the bulk of the audience for jazz is white[22].

Statistics alone cannot resolve this complex and emotionally charged debate. But the figures from the 1992 SPPA provide at least an updated empirical foundation upon which to attempt a reconsideration of the issue.

As with other aspects of jazz participation, there are different ways of assessing the quantitative differences between black and white participation. One is to point out that the audience remains predominantly white. White Americans make up 81% of the jazz attenders, 78% of those watching jazz on television or listening to jazz recordings, and 79% of those listening to jazz on the radio. This simply reflects the numerical predominance of whites in the population. African-Americans, who account for 11% of the population as a whole, make up 17% of jazz attenders, 18% of the radio audience, 19% of the television audience, and nearly 20% of those who listen to jazz recordings. The remainder (2-3%) is accounted for by the category "other" (Asians, Native Americans).

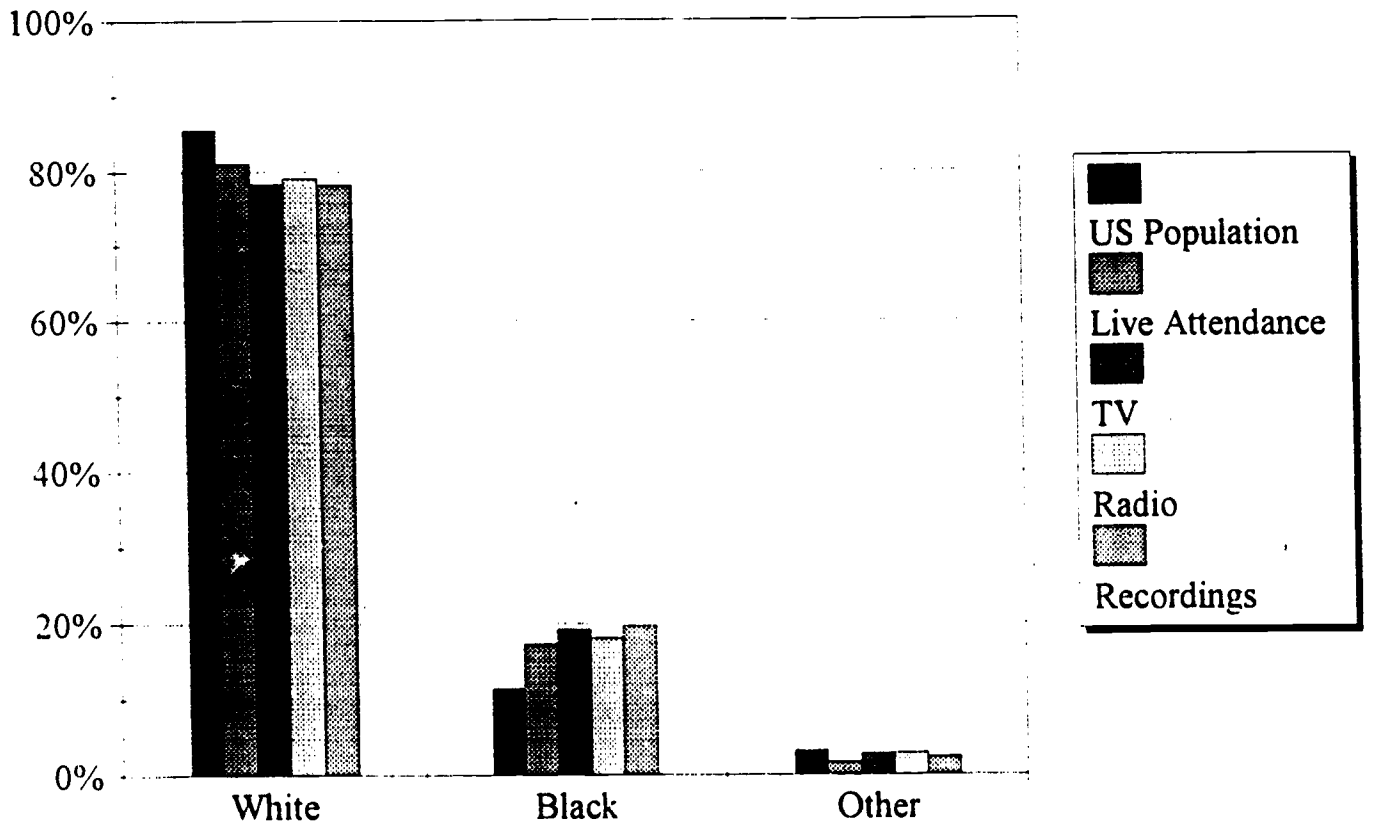
Another is to underscore the difference in participation rates. African-Americans consistently participate in jazz at a higher rate than white Americans: they are one-and-a-half times as likely to attend jazz performances, and even more likely to participate in jazz through the media. Figure 5 shows the 1992 racial distribution of jazz audiences for all forms of participation. These figures, contrasting as they do the relatively expensive activity of live attendance with the free media of radio and TV and the easily shared medium of recordings, suggest that economic factors have limited the ability of black Americans to attend jazz performances. It is also possible that black Americans feel less comfortable in attending public events in which

[21] James Lincoln Collier, Jazz: The American Theme Song (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 185.

[22] Ibid., 215. Emphasis in original.

Figure 5: 1992 Racial Distributions of Jazz Audiences

Racial Distributions of Jazz Audiences
1992



they are likely to be a decided minority, as opposed to relative flexibility and privacy of media participation[23].

The contrast with other benchmark arts activities is striking. Jazz is the only art form in which African-Americans are more likely to participate than white Americans. Moreover, this disparity has been consistent over time. Figures from 1982 show the same pattern: blacks participating in jazz at significantly higher rates than whites, while participating in other art forms at significantly lower rates. If one is looking for evidence of a cultural divide—a polarization in patterns of arts consumption along ethnic lines—one need look no further than jazz.

The data on those who express a desire to attend more concerts suggest that the black audience for jazz performance could easily be considerably larger. Overall, 25.2% of the population expressed a desire to attend more jazz concerts. Breaking this figure down by race shows that while less than a quarter (22%) of whites expressed such a desire, nearly half (49%) of African-Americans did. Granted, expressing the desire to attend is not the same thing as attending; but this figure exceeds the percentage of *any* ethnic group expressing an interest to further attend *any* art form. The projected potential audience for jazz of 46.5 million would still be predominantly white, but black involvement would be 22%—double the percentage of African-Americans in the population as a whole.

The NEA monograph on RACE gives more information on race—including the use of Multiple Classification Analysis to separate education as a factor.

The polarity of black Americans and white Americans in jazz makes it easy to overlook the additional miscellaneous ethnic grouping of "other" in the survey. For the most part, those identifying themselves as "other" participated in jazz at roughly the same rates as white Americans. The only noticeable difference came with attendance, where the rates for "other" were significantly lower (5.5%, as opposed to 10.1% of whites and 16.2% of blacks). This does not correspond with the 1982 figures, where the reported attendance behavior for the category "other" was indistinguishable from that of white Americans.

Additional information on racial polarization in musical taste will be discussed in the sections on frequency of attendance and music preferences.

Because the audience for jazz is predominantly white, relatively few jazz venues are situated in neighborhoods where blacks are the majority. One such venue is Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, a non-profit arts center located in the historically black Manchester area of Pittsburgh. Its jazz programs attract a higher percentage of African Americans than most commercially-run nightclubs in the city. Personal communication, 25 January 1994

5. Gender

The racial politics of jazz has understandably overshadowed consideration of its sexual politics. And yet the audience for jazz shows an unmistakable tilt toward males that is anomalous among the benchmark arts activities surveyed by the SPPA.

The participation rates for attending jazz performances were 11.9% for men and 9.4% for women. Were men and women evenly distributed in the population, the audience would consist of 56% men, 44% women. But since women outnumber men by a ratio of approximately 13:12, the actual disparity in the audience is somewhat less: 54% men, 46% women.

These figures are striking, however, in the context of the other benchmark arts activities. For art museums and opera, women are as likely as men to participate; for the remaining genres (classical music, musicals, theater, and ballet) women are significantly *more* likely to participate. Jazz thus stands out as an arts discipline in which men predominate—perhaps because women are less inclined to become involved. Compare, for example, the figures for jazz with the participation rates for attendance at classical music concerts. For men, the rates are essentially equivalent to those for jazz: 11.5% for classical, 11.9% for jazz. The rates for women, on the other hand, diverge sharply: 13.4% for classical, 9.4% for jazz. The result is that for classical music, the gender disparity runs in the opposite direction: 44% men, 56% women.

Among those who express a desire to attend more jazz performances, the gender disparity widens slightly. 29% of men, as opposed to 22% of women, express such a desire, resulting in a potential audience for jazz that is 55% male, 45% female.

A slightly less pronounced gender disparity is found in participation in jazz through the media. For TV and recordings, 23% of men and 19% of women report participation, resulting in a projected audience that is 53% male, 47% female. The figures for radio (participation rates of 31% for men, 26% for women) result in an audience that is 52% male, 48% female. (The sense of many in the music industry that the audience for jazz radio and recordings is even more heavily male, especially above age 35[24]. But it must be emphasized that the figures make no distinction between casual and dedicated consumers.) As with attendance, the gender disparity runs counter to the data for other benchmark arts activities, in which women are at least as likely, and often more likely, to participate through the media.

[24] See, for example, a 1986 Billboard article that described the audience for various contemporary jazz artists as male-dominated above age 35 (although the under-18 audience is "mostly girls"). Mike Shalett, "On Target," Billboard 98 (1 March 1986), 23. The 24-hour "straight-ahead" jazz station KJAZ reported targeting men between 35-44. Freeman, "Jazz Carves a Niche," 18.

A cross-tabulation of sex and race for jazz attendance shows a slightly greater gender disparity among African-Americans. 56% of the black audience is male, compared with 53% of the white audience.

Additional information on gender disparity can be found in the sections on frequency of attendance and music preference.

6. Geography

Geographic measures derived from the SPPA are relatively coarse. The data distinguish among population areas of relative density: those living in a central city of a metropolitan area (or SMSA), those living within an SMSA but not in the central city (i.e., in suburbs), and those living in rural areas. The data are also broken down into four broad regions: West, Midwest, South, and Northeast. Figure 6 shows the geographic distribution of the 1992 participants in jazz through the media.

Of the four geographic regions, the West shows significantly higher levels of participation in all forms of media. This disparity is most pronounced in jazz radio: 35% of those in the West report listening to jazz radio, compared with the national average of 28%. But figures for recordings (24% in the West, 21% nationwide) and TV (25% in the West, 21% nationwide) confirm a broad-based trend.

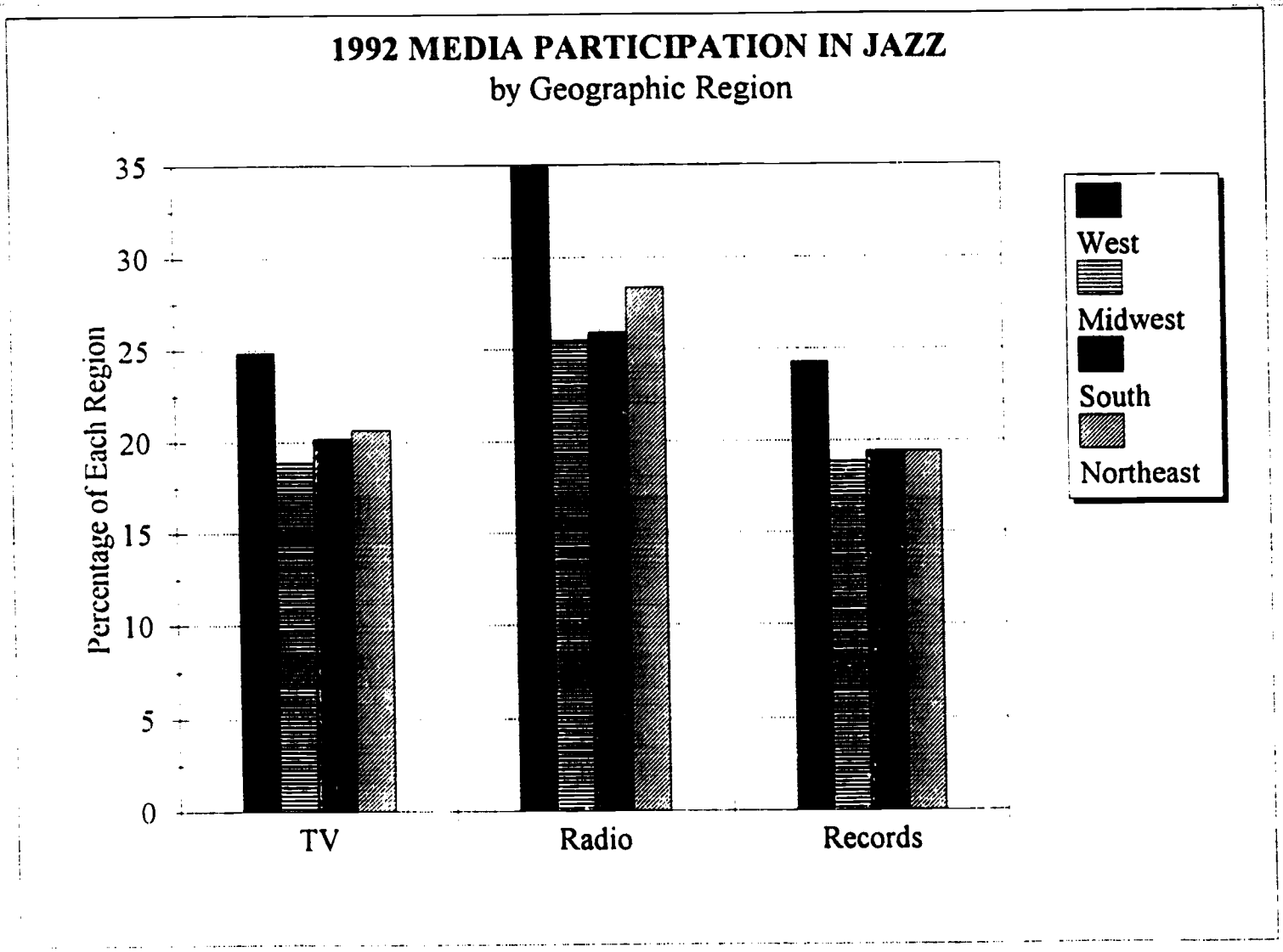
Other regions are somewhat less easy to characterize. The Northeast is close to the national average in all three categories, the South slightly below (especially in radio). The Midwest is more noticeably below the national average in all three categories.

B. Other demographic profiles

1. Demographic profile by frequency

The new questions in the 1992 SPPA concerning the frequency of attendance at live performances over a twelve-month period make it possible to explore new aspects of audience participation.

For one thing, the data clearly show that the majority of those reporting jazz attendance are what one might call "casual" consumers. Of the roughly 10% of the adult population who have attended a jazz performance, nearly half (44%) did so only once. Another quarter (26%) attended only twice. This means that adults who attended jazz as little as once every four


1992 MEDIA PARTICIPATION IN JAZZ
by Geographic Region
Percentage of Each Region
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
TV
Radio
Records
West
Midwest
South
Northeast

months comprise about 3% of the total adult population.

And yet that 3% attended often enough to pull the *average* number of attendances up to 2.9 per year. (This figure is based on the average number of attendances for those who reported attendance, not the population as a whole.) This figure is higher than those reported for classical music (2.6), plays (2.4), musicals (2.3), opera (1.7), and ballet (1.7). The dedicated jazz audience may be relatively small (relative to popular music genres, not other art forms), but it is loyal and intense.

What are the demographic characteristics of this more dedicated group? There are two trends that clearly emerge from the data, and reinforce earlier findings in this monograph: as the audience becomes more dedicated, it becomes more male and more African-American.

a. Frequency of attendance and race and gender

The relatively casual consumers that attended only one jazz event, as it turns out, show few of the distinctive characteristics of the jazz audience. First of all, 54.4% are female—much closer to the population as a whole (52.1%) than to the figure for all attenders (46.2%). The racial mix also more nearly corresponds to the population as a whole. 85.8% of those who attend only once are white (compare 85.3% of the population as a whole, 81.2% for jazz attenders), while 12.3% are black (11.4% for population as a whole, 17.3% of attenders).

As the frequency of attendance increases, the gender and race disparities characteristic of the jazz attending audience as a whole steadily emerge. Those attending at least three times a year (the average for the group as a whole) correspond roughly to the characteristics for the group as a whole: the percentage of males rises to 54.7, of African-Americans to 17.9. By the time one reaches the relatively tiny numbers that attend nine or more times a year (0.6% of the total population), nearly 60% are male and nearly 25% are black. While it is risky to place much weight on precise numbers for samples as small as these (74 people out of the 12,739 interviewed for the SPPA), the overall trend is unmistakable.

And of course, these figures do not take into account the disproportions in the population at large. In other words, there are more females than males, and significantly more white Americans than African-Americans. As frequency of attendance increases, the participation rates for males and African-Americans become much higher than corresponding rates for females and white Americans. Male participation rates run roughly 60% higher; black participation rates more than double. Table 2 shows the distribution of frequency of attendance at jazz performances by race and gender. The term "unweighted" means that the percentages have not been adjusted for the fraction of the adult American population each group composes.

Table 2. Frequency of attendance by race and gender, [unweighted]				
Frequency	% male	% female	% white	%black
once only	45.6	54.4	85.8	12.3
at least 2X	51.2	48.8	81.7	16.7
" 3X	54.7	45.3	80.1	17.9
" 4X	56.1	43.9	78.8	19.6
" 5X	54.9	45.1	78.3	20.1
" 6X	57.7	42.3	78.8	20.4
" 7X	58.2	41.8	76.9	22.0
" 8X	59.6	40.4	76.4	22.5
" 9X	59.5	40.5	74.3	24.3

b. Frequency of attendance and age

Figures 7 and 8 show, in two different ways to illustrate the important features, the distributions of frequency of attendance and age at jazz events. Those who attended only one event in the last year correspond closely to the age distribution of jazz attenders as a whole—with one significant exception: the age groups from 55 years and older are disproportionately represented. This is hardly surprising, since the older age groups (especially the 75 and older group) can hardly be expected to share the stamina for late-night music shown by the younger groups. As frequency increases, the participation by older age groups (including in this instance the 45-55 group) begin to decrease noticeably. But so, interestingly, does the 18-24 group, which peaks at "at least two" attendances (13.4%) and drops off thereafter. The group that absorbs the slack is the 25-34 group, which accounts for nearly 40% of all of those who attended at least six times (i.e., an average of every two months).

Figure 7: 1992 Frequency of Attendance for Jazz by Age

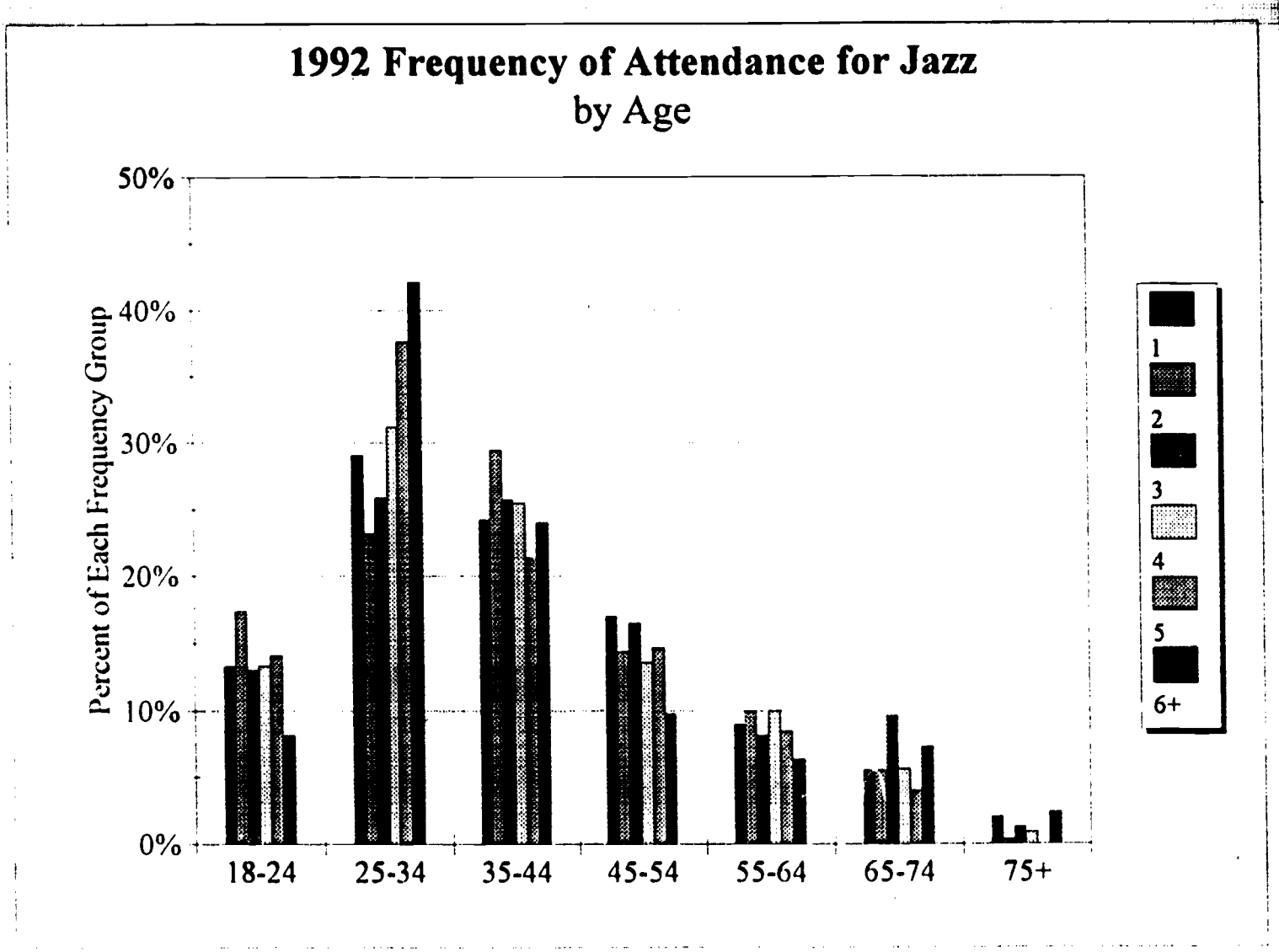
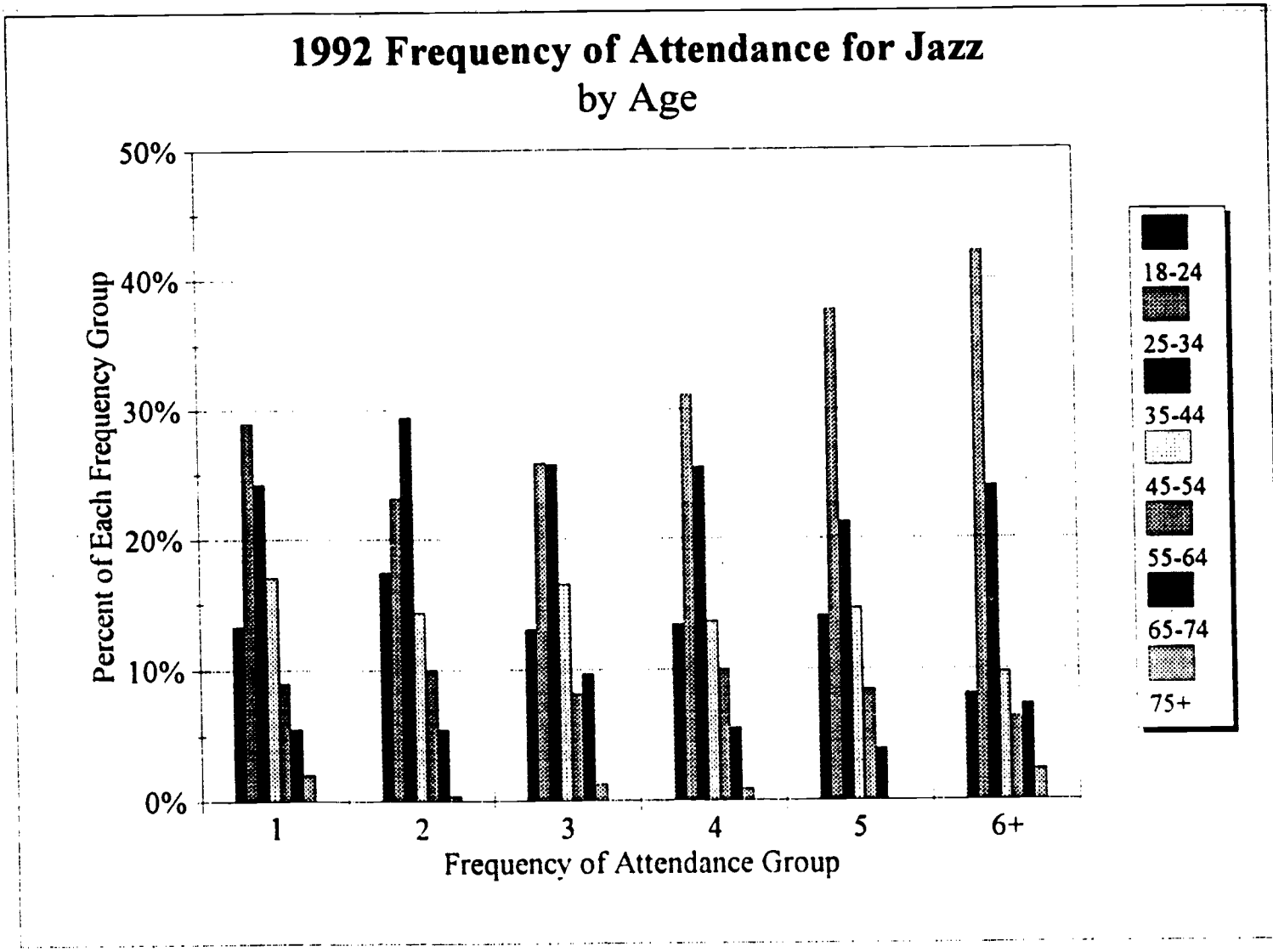

1992 Frequency of Attendance for Jazz
by Age
Percent of Each Frequency Group
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
18-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74
75+
1
2
3
4
5
6+

Figure 8: 1992 Frequency of Attendance for Jazz by Age (alternative presentation)


1992 Frequency of Attendance for Jazz
by Age
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Percent of Each Frequency Group
1
2
3
4
5
6+
Frequency of Attendance Group
18-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74
75+

c. Frequency of attendance and education

There is no clear trend, except to confirm the general finding that lower educational levels (grade school, some high school) are significantly under-represented in the jazz audience, while higher levels are over-represented.

d. Frequency of attendance and income

As with education, an increase in frequency of attendance brings no dramatic results. The demographic profile for income of those who attended only one jazz concert in the previous year corresponds closely to the profile for jazz attenders as a whole. The absence of change is striking, for one might expect the more frequent attenders to be more affluent. But in fact, the percentage of frequent attenders who earn more than $50,000 actually *declines* with frequency: from just over 30% of one-time-only attenders to about 20% of those attending at least seven times. The percentage of those earning between $25,000 and $50,000 rises slightly from 33% of one-time-only attenders to just under 40%. Again, because the samples are so small at these levels, one should not place any weight on these findings. But they do suggest that one need not enjoy a high income to find a place in the inner circle of jazz aficionados.

2. Demographic Profile of Subscribers to Jazz Magazines

Another way of obtaining a more detailed profile of the most dedicated jazz audience is to examine the readership profiles of national jazz magazines. Two monthly magazines, Jazz Times and Jazziz, have cooperated by releasing the results of their current demographic research[25]. The audiences of these magazines are small—Jazziz, for example, has a paid circulation of 93,600, and an estimated readership of approximately 250,000 (or slightly more than .1% of the adult population). But this self-selected group is intensely involved in jazz. Approximately 50% of the readership of Jazziz attends a jazz performance at least twelve times a year (i.e., once a month). About a third of the readers of Jazz Times report that they attend jazz performances *more* than once a month.

Because the groupings for age, income, and education used by Jazziz and Jazz Times do not correspond to the categories used in the SPPA (or with each other), direct comparisons are not easy to make. The majority of readers for both magazines fall between the ages of 25-44: approximately 44% of Jazziz readers and 32% of Jazz Times readers fall into the 25-34 age

[25] Jazziz Magazine, "Readers Demographics, 1993"; Jazz Times, "Reader Profile 1992/1993."

group, while 34% of both Jazziz and Jazz Times readers fall into the 35-44 group. The figures for Jazziz are actually for 26-35 and 36-45. This is a somewhat greater concentration of the audience into these age groupings than that reported for the jazz audience as a whole, corresponding roughly to the findings from increased frequency of attendance. Of those reporting attendance of at least six jazz events, for example, about 64% fell between 25-44, as compared with 53% of those who attended only once.

They are on the whole more educated: 82% of Jazz Times readers and 92% of Jazziz readers report at least attending college, as compared with 78% of the jazz audience as a whole (and 45% of the adult population). And they are considerably more affluent—not surprisingly, since subscription to a specialty magazine is a good indicator of economic stability. Of Jazziz readers 62.2% had a household income of at least $50,000, with a median household income of $71,000. Ninety percent of Jazz Times readers had a household income of at least $40,000, with an average household income of $67,000. The affluence of the readership of these specialty magazines can be measured through consumption as well. Seventy percent of Jazz Times readers purchase jazz videos (an average of 9 per year), and 77% purchase jazz books (an average of 4 per year). They purchase an average of 9 compact discs per *month*. Sixty-six percent attended jazz festivals in the United States, with an additional 11% attending festivals overseas. For Jazziz, 28% own more than 300 compact discs; 78% attend jazz festivals, and 64% purchase jazz videos.

The most distinguishing demographic characteristics, however, are gender and race. Both Jazziz and Jazz Times report a surprisingly high (and surprisingly identical) figure for the percentage of their readers that is male: 89.4%. While this corresponds to the general trend toward an increasingly male audience noted in the frequency statistics, the extreme disparity suggests additional consideration. Perhaps some magazines are read by a married couple but the subscription is held in the husband's name. But it is certainly possible that the desire to augment one's passion for jazz with such ancillary patterns of consumption as magazine subscriptions and the purchasing of jazz videos is a distinctively male trait (or to put it in the vernacular, a "guy thing").

Both magazines also show a disproportionately high percentage of African-American readers. For Jazz Times, the reported black readership is 24%; for Jazziz, 29.9%. (Bear in mind that African-Americans comprise 11.4% of the total adult population.) Given that these magazines draw upon a readership that is disproportionately affluent and well-educated, sectors of the population in which African-Americans are under-represented, the exceptionally high participation of African-Americans suggests a strong link between ethnicity and intense dedication to jazz.

IV. Music Preference

One of the most revealing sections of the SPPA is the portion that assesses music preference. For here, jazz is not simply one of several officially sanctioned arts but must be situated against the complex and shifting background of popular musical taste. Respondents were asked to identify which of twenty musical genres they "liked," and subsequently which of these genres they liked "best of all." Thus, respondents were invited to distinguish between jazz and other related genres, such as blues, soul, big band, or new age, as well as to contrast their relationship with jazz to such diverse genres as country, bluegrass, reggae, and parade music. The list also included hymns/gospel, choral/glee club, mood/easy listening, contemporary folk, ethnic (national tradition), rock, Latin/Spanish/Salsa, rap, operetta/musical comedy, opera, and classical/chamber music.

A. Those Who "Like Jazz"

The overall demographic profile for those who express a liking for jazz corresponds closely to the demographic profiles for the various forms of participation in jazz. The rates climb steadily with income and education (although, as before, the percentage of the income group "under $5000" is anomalously high). The highest rates are found in the 25-34 age group, declining steadily thereafter. Blacks and males show higher rates of preference than whites and females.

The numbers, however, are considerably higher. More than a third (34%) of adult Americans, or approximately 63 million people, express a liking for jazz. Moreover, these numbers show a sharp increase from 1982, when the comparable figures were 26%, or 43 million.

Table 3 shows the age distribution of those who "liked jazz" in 1982 and 1992. The comparison shows a significant change in age distribution over the decade.

Table 3. Those Who "Like Jazz" in 1982 and 1992

Age	1982		1992	
	rate	% of total	rate	% of total
18-24	32	(21.5)	30	(11.8)
25-34	33	(29.7)	40	(27.4)
35-44	23	(14.7)	38	(24.5)
45-54	27	(14.0)	32	(14.4)

55-64	23	(11.9)	29	(9.9)
65-74	17	(6.3)	26	(7.7)
75+	8	(1.9)	21	(4.3)

There are several ways of examining these data. The first is to look at the percentages within each age group who report liking jazz (the first number in the table). By this measure, only the 18-24 age group has remained stable. All the remaining groups show a sharp increase, with the largest increases coming in the 35-44 and 75+ age groups. This reflects the overall increase in the numbers of those who like jazz. The overall distribution in both surveys is the same—a peak in both rate and sheer numbers at 25-34—but the rise to this peak is more steep in 1992 than 1982, and the falloff much more gradual.

Another way is to consider what percentage of the total is attributable to each age group (the number in parentheses)—to see, in other words, how the uneven patterns of growth have redistributed the relative sizes of the various age groups that report liking jazz. This measure shows a sharp decline by the 18-24 group, and sharp increases by the 35-44 and 75+ groups.

Finally, one may examine the tastes of age cohorts. This suggests that the relatively high enthusiasm for jazz by 18-24 and 25-34 year olds in 1982 has translated into correspondingly high enthusiasm for jazz by 25-34 and 35-44 year olds in 1992 (even if the enthusiasm has not necessarily been translated into greater participation through attendance or the media). Similarly, one can connect the preference for jazz of the 65-74 group in 1982 with the higher rates for those 75 and older in 1992.

The third of all adult Americans who "like jazz," not surprisingly, participate in jazz at much higher rates than the population as a whole: 49% watch jazz on television in some form, 50% listen to jazz recordings, and 67% listen to jazz radio. Even higher percentages of those who participate say that they like jazz: 77% of those who watch jazz on television, 81% of those who listen to jazz radio, and 86% of those who listen to recordings. This still means, however, that sizeable percentages of those who participated in some way in jazz do not report that they like the music. These percentages are higher for the free broadcast media (19% for radio, 23% for television) than for recordings.

B. Those Who Like Jazz "Best of All"

The percentage of the adult population who say they like jazz "best of all" is considerably smaller than those who simply say they "like jazz"—5% as opposed to 34%—but this still translates into approximately 9.5 million Americans for whom jazz is preferred above all music genres, and a substantial increase over the comparable figures (3%, 5 million) reported for 1982.

The demographic profile of this more dedicated audience reveals the same tendency toward disproportionate representation by males and African-Americans already noted with those who attend jazz performances more frequently. Slightly more men (54%) than women "like jazz"; among those who like jazz "best of all," the ratio of men to women widens to nearly 7:3 (68% to 32%). African-Americans constitute 18% of those who "like jazz," but 33% of those who like jazz "best of all." The percentage of African-Americans who belong to this latter category (16%) is four times as great as that for white Americans (4%).

Shifts in age and education between these two groups are more subtle. Those who like jazz "best of all" are slightly less likely than those who "like jazz" to be either very young or very old: the highest rates are found in the 35-44 age group (6.4%). They are also slightly more likely to be more highly educated. Income figures, on the other hand, are essentially identical for the two categories.

Quite logically, those who "like jazz best" are much more inclined to participate in jazz. 44% attend jazz performances; 74% watch jazz in some form on television; 79% listen to jazz recordings; and 89% listen to jazz radio—indicating that radio is a medium for dissemination of the music to nearly all serious jazz fans.

Nevertheless, the broad audience for jazz radio shows the lowest proportion of dedicated jazz fans—albeit by a narrow margin: 16% of those who listen to jazz radio report liking jazz best, as compared with 18% who watch jazz on television in some form, 20% of those who attend jazz performances, and 21% of those who listen to jazz recordings.

C. Music Preference for Jazz in Relation to Other Genres

The existence of detailed demographic information on those expressing preference for the other nineteen music genres surveyed in the SPPA provides an intriguing and highly useful way of situating the taste for jazz in a broader social context.

Where does jazz fall in this broad spectrum of musical taste? Of the 20 genres, jazz ranks seventh, between big bands and classical/chamber music. Country and western is the most popular, as it was in 1982 and 1985. It is the only musical genre that more than half of adult Americans say they like, while jazz and classical music are liked by about one third of them. Table 4 shows the percentage of respondents who said they "liked" the ten genres that were most popular.

Table 4. Percentages Who "Liked" the 10 Most Popular Genres	
1. country/western	52
2. mood/easy	49
3. rock	44
4. blues/R&B	40
5. hymns/gospel	38
6. big band	35
7. jazz	34
8. classical/chamber	33
9. bluegrass	29
10. show tunes/operettas	28

The position of jazz is slightly higher when the question is which genre is preferred above all others. Several genres—mood/easy, blues, bluegrass, and showtunes—prove to have wide but shallow appeal, and drop in rank. Others, like jazz, classical, and hymns/gospel have a more dedicated following and rise in the standings. Country and rock, the dominant genres of popular music, lead the list (followed by the 13% that declined to name a favorite genre). Religious and mood music follow, with the two dominant "art music" genres, jazz and classical, not far behind. (Opera reports a much smaller audience.) Table 5 shows the percentages of respondents who liked 10 musical genres "best of all".

Table 5. Percentages Who Liked 10 Genres "Best of All"	
1. country	21
2. rock	14
["no one type"]	13

3. hymns/gospel	9
4. mood/easy	9
5. classical	6
6. jazz	5
7. big band	4
8. ethnic	3
9. Latin	3
10. blues	3

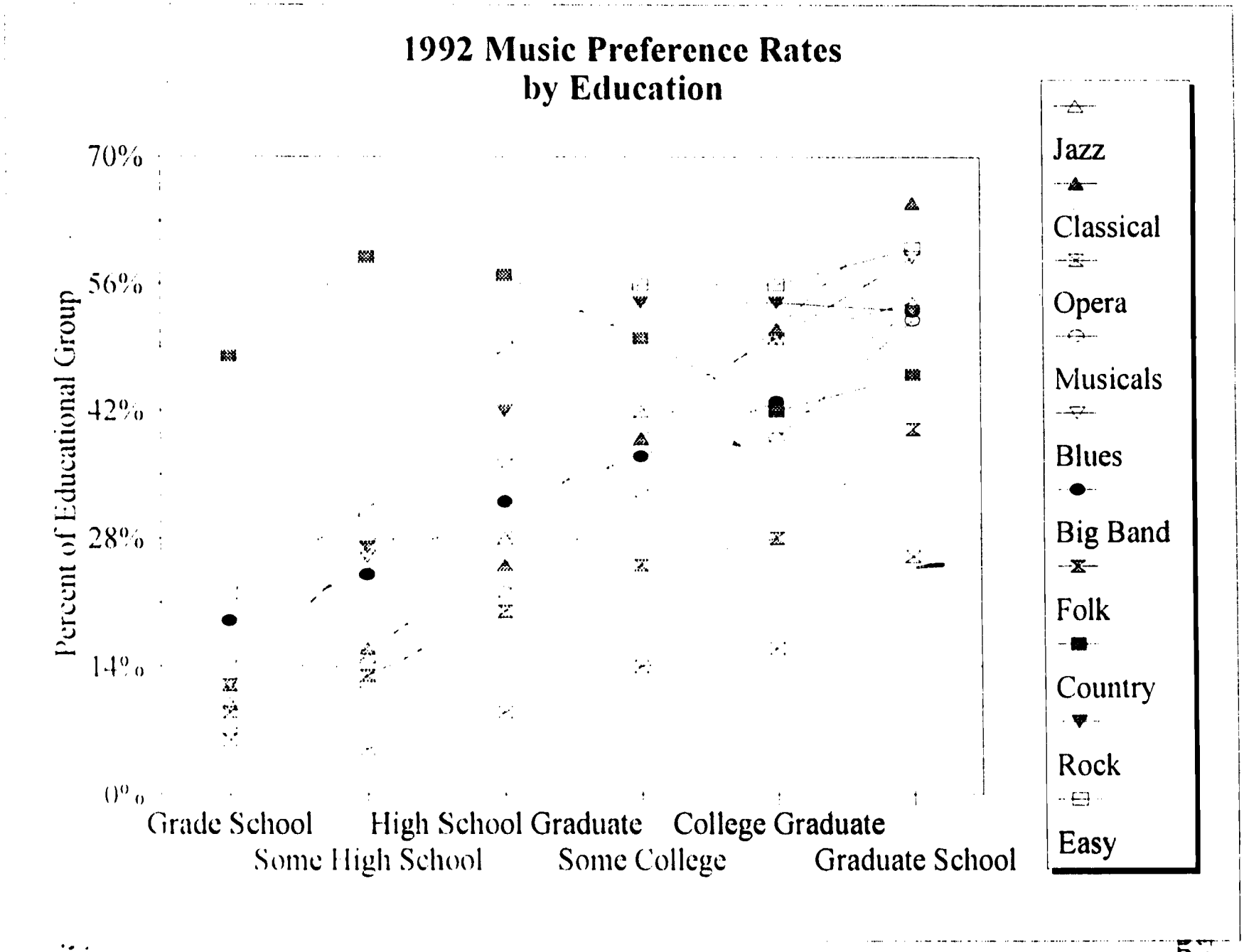
Where does the distinctive demographic profile of the jazz audience fall in relation to those of other genres? To answer the question, each demographic factor must be considered separately.

1. Education

The rates for liking a given musical genre tend to rise steadily with educational level (the exceptions are country and rock). Jazz rises more steeply than most, from 10% of those with a grade school education to nearly half of college graduates, but it does not show the substantial increase for graduate school that classical, opera, and musicals show. Among those with some college education, easy (56%), rock (54%), country (50%), and blues(50%) are preferred more than jazz (42%). Among college graduates, easy (56%), rock (54%), and classical music (51%) are preferred by more respondents than jazz (50%) and blues (50%). Among those with graduate degrees, the number preferring jazz (54%) trails classical music (65%), easy (60%), and blues (59%). Figure 9 shows the percentages of each educational group that preferred some selected genres in 1992.

The percentages of people in each education category who "like jazz best" increases steadily with increasing education. Rock and country attract sizeable percentages for all groups (although country steadily declines), while classical music shows the strongest gains. Those with graduate education are the most likely to report liking no one genre best (17%), followed by advocates for classical (15%), rock (12%), country (9%), and jazz (8%).

Figure 9: 1992 Music Preference Rates by Education


1992 Music Preference Rates
by Education
70%
56%
42%
28%
14%
0%
Percent of Educational Group
Grade School
Some High School
High School Graduate
Some College
College Graduate
Graduate School
Jazz
Classical
Opera
Musicals
Blues
Big Band
Folk
Country
Rock
Easy

2. Income

The patterns for income are similar to those for education: steady rises with income for most genres, including jazz. (The exceptions are rap, soul, Latin, country, mood, and choral.) For jazz, this ascent is preceded by a relatively high rate for the income group under $5,000 noted earlier—a pattern shared by reggae and blues. This lowest income group prefers country (43%), rock (36%), blues (35%), and mood/easy (32%) to jazz (27%). The highest income group ($50,000 and above) prefers mood/easy (62%), rock (55%), blues (52%), and country (48%) to jazz and classical (47% each).

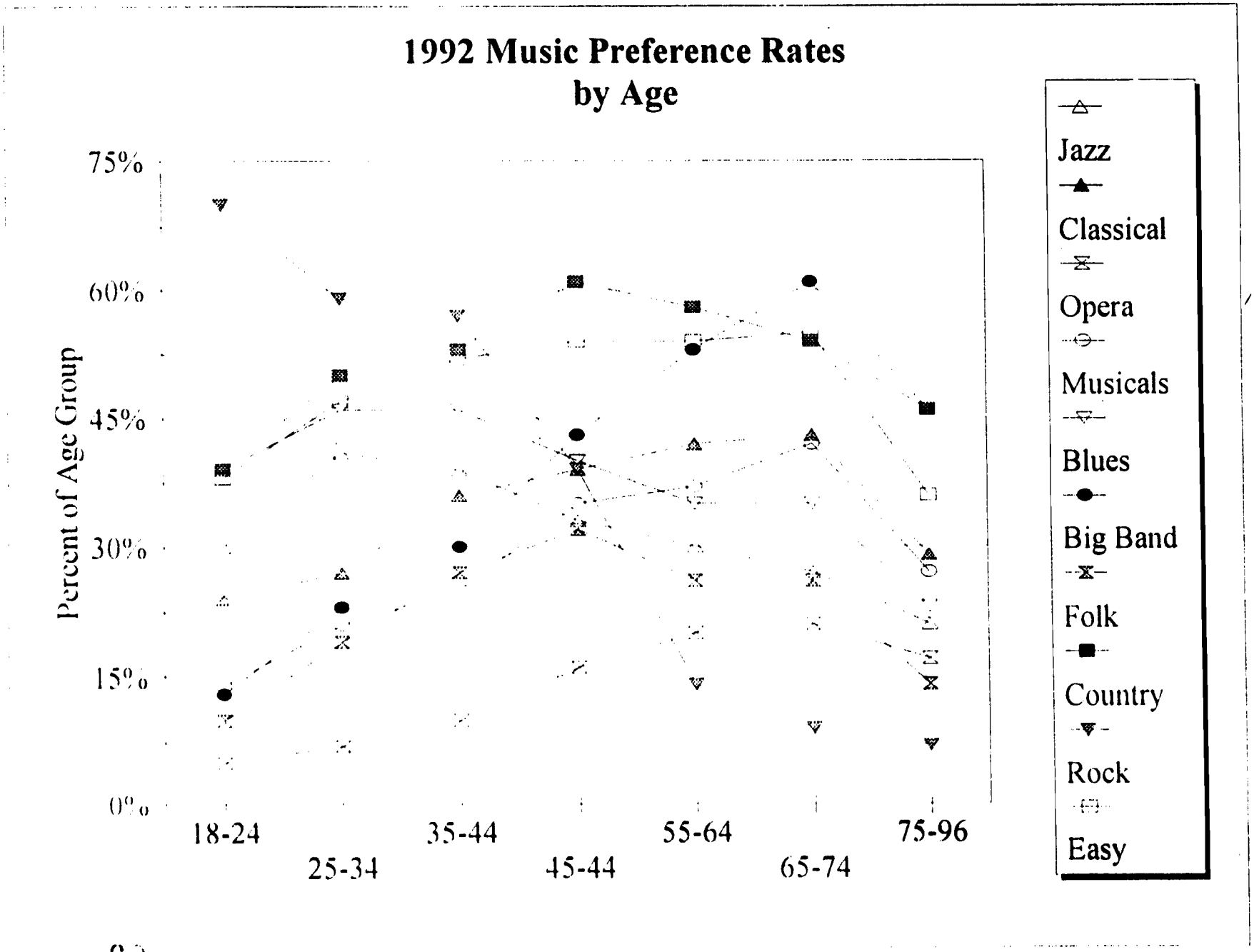
The rates of those who "like jazz best" similarly rise with income, although far less steeply. Those in the $25,000-$50,000 and $50,000 and above groups are only slightly more likely to prefer jazz to all other genres (6% and 7% respectively) than the national average. In the highest income group, jazz advocates (7%) are outnumbered by devotees for rock (17%), "no one type" (14%), mood (13%), country (11%), and classical (10%).

3. Age

There are several distinct patterns for music preference with respect to age. One large category shows markedly increased interest with age. The most notable increase is that of big band. Others in this group are classical, opera, and musicals. Another category consists of genres for which interest decreases steadily with age (reggae, rap, soul, rock). Jazz fits into a third category: those genres that rise to a peak somewhere in the middle before declining with age. Folk, blues, country, bluegrass, and new age show the same behavior. The peak for jazz is in the 25-34 age group, where it appeals to 41%, placing it behind rock (59%), country (50%), easy (47%), and blues (46%) in popularity.
Figure 10 shows the percentages of each age group that preferred some selected musical genres in 1992.

The rates of those who "like jazz best" show a far less clearly defined pattern. Slightly above average percentages are found in the broad range from 25 to 64, with significantly lower figures in the youngest and oldest groups.

Figure 10: 1992 Music Preference Rates by Age


1992 Music Preference Rates
by Age
75%
60%
45%
30%
15%
0%
Percent of Age Group
18-24
25-34
35-44
45-44
55-64
65-74
75-96
Jazz
Classical
Opera
Musicals
Blues
Big Band
Folk
Country
Rock
Easy

4. Race

The data on music preference clearly show that musical taste in this country is stratified by race. Only a few genres are relatively "race-neutral." There is a broad liking of choral and religious music (although the percentages are significantly higher in both instances for blacks) and of the deliberately inoffensive genres of mood and new age music. The remaining genres tend to be strongly identified with one race or the other. White Americans show strong preferences for country (57%), rock (46%), classical (35%), and bluegrass (33%). (The corresponding figures for black Americans are much lower: country 19%, rock 23%, classical 18%, bluegrass 12%.) Black Americans show strong preferences for soul (68%), reggae (43%), and rap (34%).

There are two genres that, although most strongly liked by black audiences, also have a significant white audience. Blues is liked by 59% of black Americans and by 38% of white Americans; jazz is liked by 54% of blacks and 32% of whites. Because white Americans greatly outnumber black Americans, the racial distribution of the jazz-liking audience is still roughly the same as for participation: 80% white, 18% black, 2% "other." (The distribution for blues is essentially the same: 81% white, 17% black, 2% "other.") But the figures clearly show that more than half of all black Americans report a preference for jazz—a percentage that is comparable to the number of white Americans who like country music. Table 6 shows the 10 musical genres which black respondents most frequently said they "liked" and the percentages who liked them. Table 7 shows the counterpart genres and percentages for whites.

Table 6. Music Preference--"Top Ten" for Blacks

1. choral/glee	78.2
2. soul	67.7
3. hymns/gospel	67.6
4. blues	59
5. new age	57.2
6. jazz	54
7. reggae	43
8. mood/easy	39
9. rap	34.3
10. ethnic	30.1

Table 7. Music Preference—"Top Ten" for Whites	
1. choral/glee	64.4
2. hymns/gospel	57.7
3. country	57
4. mood/easy	50
5. new age	49.2
6. rock	46
7. blues	38
8. classical	35
9. bluegrass	33.1
10. jazz	32

The figures for the genres liked "best of all" show an even more prominent racial polarization. There is very little overlap in the list of the top seven genres by race, and even with these, racial disparity is evident. Religious music (gospel) is by far the most preferred genre by blacks (30%), while its white equivalent commands the allegiance of only 7% of whites. Nine percent of whites prefer mood music above all, compared with 4% of blacks. Country and rock, preferred above all others by large percentages by white Americans (24% and 16% respectively), show relatively little support among black Americans. Similarly, soul, blues, rap, and reggae have significantly higher percentages of black adherents than white.

Jazz is found in the top seven for both races—testimony once again to its cross-ethnic appeal. But jazz ranks second only to religious music among blacks, with a remarkably high 15% preferring it above all other types of music. Only 4% of white Americans express a similar commitment to jazz—well behind the numbers for country, rock, mood, religious, classical, and big band.

The racial distribution of this dedicated audience for jazz is still predominantly white (63%), but a third (34%) are black—three times the percentage of black Americans in the population as a whole. Jazz joins soul, reggae, rap, blues, and religious music as genres for which the dedicated audience is at least one-third black.

Table 8 shows the percentage of blacks who liked particular genres "best of all." Table 9 shows the equivalent percentages for the "top seven" genres for whites.

Table 8. "Music Liked Best" by Blacks	
1. hymns/gospel	30
2. jazz	15
["no one type"]	15
3. soul	9
4. blues	8
5. rap	4
6. mood/easy	4
7. reggae	3

Table 9. "Music Liked Best" by Whites	
1. country	24
2. rock	16
["no one type"]	13
3. mood/easy	9
4. hymns/gospel	7
5. classical	6
6. big band	4
7. jazz	4

Table 10 shows, for six of the most popular musical genres, the percentage of the audiences that liked this genre best that is black. These percentages should be compared with the 11 percent of the U.S. population that is black.

Table 10. Percentage of "Liked Best" Audience That Is Black	
1. soul	61
2. reggae	42
3. rap	37

4. blues	37
5. hymns/gospel	36
6. jazz	34

5. Gender

The 20 genres surveyed in the SPPA can be grouped into three categories: 1) those preferred more strongly by women; 2) those preferred more or less equally by both sexes; and 3) those preferred more strongly by men. The female-preferred category includes classical, opera, and musicals, among the benchmark music genres, as well as mood, soul, religious, and choral music. The "gender-neutral" category includes country, big band, folk, and blues. Jazz falls into the third, male-dominated category along with rap, rock, parade, and bluegrass.

In the figures for genres liked "best of all," the gender disparity is much more pronounced. Indeed, the dedicated jazz audience is tilted more toward the male side than the audience of any of the other 19 genres surveyed, even more than the ostensibly macho genres of parade, rock, and rap. Tables 11 and 12 show the percentages of males/females for selected "male-dominated" and "female-dominated" genres.

Table 11. "Male Dominated" Musical Genres, with Male%/Female %	
jazz	68 | 32
parade	65 | 35
bluegrass	63 | 37
rock	61 | 39
rap	60 | 40

Table 12. "Female Dominated" Musical Genres, with Male%/Female%	
classical	42 | 58
soul	39 | 61
mood	37 | 63
choral	37 | 63

musicals	35 | 65
hymns/gospel	32 | 68
opera	30 | 70

6. Cross-Tabulations

What other kinds of music do those who "like jazz" like? Perhaps the best way to address the question of the musical taste of the jazz audience is to see how its preferences for other genres deviate from the national average. On the whole, jazz listeners have catholic tastes, and state a liking for nearly all genres at a higher rate than the population as a whole. But some genres are clearly preferred more than most. Topping the list with the largest increases over the national average are blues and soul, two of the most popular genres among black Americans, followed closely by big band music, a genre with close ties to jazz of the Swing Era. Classical music, musicals, and reggae also show large increases. Only country, religious, and choral music show neutral or negative correlations. Table 13 shows the percentage of those who "like jazz" who also like other genres and compares these percentages with overall percentages. Bold face is used to indicate genres where those who like jazz also like the other genre better than the average respondent.

Table 13. Percentage of Those Who "Like Jazz" Who Also Like Other Genres (with Overall Percentage Liking)

blues	**75 (40) +35**
big band	**57 (35) +22**
choral	56 (67) -11
mood	**56 (49) +7**
new age	**54 (49) +5**
classical	**53 (33) +20**
rock	**52 (43) +9**
c/w	52 (52) --
soul	**48 (25) +23**
gospel	46 (57) -11
musicals	46 (27) +19

bluegrass	43 (29) +14
reggae	39 (20) +19
Latin	34 (21) +13
ethnic	34 (23) +11
folk	30 (23) +7
parade	26 (20) +6
opera	19 (12) +7
rap	18 (12) +6

What musical genres were "liked best" by those attending jazz performances? Jazz, not surprisingly, leads the list, followed by "no one type"—suggesting that a consistent percentage of those who decline to name a favorite genre are in fact jazz fans. Of the largest groups, rock fans participate in large numbers but are somewhat under-represented, as are fans of religious and mood music. Fans of country music are significantly under-represented. Blues, classical, big band, new age, soul, and reggae music typically show above average representation. Tables 14, 15, and 16 show the percentages of those participating in jazz through attendance, radio, and recordings, respectively, who "like best" the various genres, compared with the national average for "liking best" those genres.

Table 14. Percentage of Those Who Attend Jazz Performances and the Genre They "Like Best," with National Average

jazz	**20 (5) +15**
no one type	**17 (13) +4**
rock	12 (14) -2
classical	**7 (6) +1**
hymns/gospel	6 (9) -3
mood	6 (9) -3
country	6 (21) -14
blues	**5 (2) +3**
big band	**5 (4) +1**
new age	**3 (2) +1**

reggae	**2 (1) +1**

Table 15. Percentage of Those Who Listen to Jazz Radio and the Genre They "Like Best," with National Average

no one type	**17 (13) +4**
jazz	**16 (5) +11**
rock	13 (14) -1
mood	8 (9) -1
country	8 (21) -13
hymns/gospel	7 (9) -2
classical	**7 (6) +1**
big band	**5 (4) +1**
blues	**4 (2) +2**
soul	**3 (2) +1**
new age	**3 (2) +1**
latin	2 (3) -1

Table 16. Percentage of Those Who Listen to Jazz Recordings and the Genre They "Like Best," with National Average

jazz	**21 (5) +16**
no one type	**17 (13) +4**
rock	13 (14) -1
classical	**7 (6) +1**
mood	6 (9) -3
hymns gospel	6 (9) -3
c/w	6 (21) -15
blues	**4 (2) +2**

big band	4 (4) --
new age	**3 (2) +1**
soul	**3 (2) +1**
reggae	**2 (1) +1**

Another way of examining the same data is to see what fraction of those who "like best" each musical genre participate in jazz through attendance at jazz events or via the media. The youthful dedicated fans of reggae, blues, and new age show a strong inclination to participate in jazz in all forms. The somewhat older groups whose favorite music is opera, big band, soul, classical, or musicals participate in jazz somewhat more than the average (although fans of soul listen to a lot of jazz radio). Again, of the four largest groups, rock fans participate at a slightly below average rate, religious and mood fans somewhat below average, while country fans participate hardly at all. Tables 17, 18, and 19 show the percentage of those who "like best" a given genre, who participate in jazz through attendance, radio, and recordings, respectively, compared with the national average for those activities.

Table 17. Percentage of Those Who "Like Best" a Genre and Attended a Jazz Performance

jazz	44
reggae	28
blues	25
new age	21
choral	16
no one type	15
opera	15
big band	14
soul	13
musicals	13
classical	13
----------	(avg: 11)
folk	10

rock	10
rap	9
mood	8
hymns/gospel	8
ethnic	6
bluegrass	6
parade	5
Latin	4
country	3

Table 18. Percentage of Those Who "Like Best" a Genre and Listened to Jazz Radio

jazz	89
new age	51
soul	48
blues	48
reggae	46
opera	39
folk	38
no one type	35
big band	34
classical	33
choral	32
----------	(avg: 28)
rock	26
musicals	24
mood	24
rap	23

hymns/gospel	21
bluegrass	19
Latin	19
ethnic	12
parade	12
country	10

Table 19. Percentage Who "Liked Best" a Genre and Listened to Jazz Recordings	
jazz	79
reggae	46
blues	35
new age	35
soul	30
folk	28
opera	27
no one type	26
choral	24
classical	24
rap	22
big band	22
----------	(avg: 20)
rock	18
musicals	15
mood	14
hymns/gospel	14
parade	11

Latin	9
bluegrass	8
ethnic	7
country	6

V. Performers

The numbers of adult Americans who actually perform jazz rather than simply listening to it are, not surprisingly, quite modest. Approximately 1.7% (or 3.2 million) reported "performing or rehearsing" jazz. Less than half of these performers (0.7%, or 1.3 million) performed or rehearsed for a public performance. The 1982 SPPA reported approximately the same percentage (0.8%) for public performance of jazz. Substantially larger numbers (4.2%, or 7.8 million) report performing classical music, although the percentage for public performance of classical music (0.9%) is not much higher than that for jazz.

What are the demographic characteristics of jazz performers as a whole? They are predominantly male; the male/female ratio is roughly 60/40. They are predominantly white, although blacks and Asians are somewhat more likely to perform jazz in private or in public than white Americans. (The rates for performance are 2.2% for blacks, 2.9% for Asians, and 1.7% for white non-Hispanics; blacks comprise 15% of the jazz performers, Asians 5%.) They are predominantly youthful, with 45% under age 35 and 71% under age 45. The highest rate (2.5%) is reported for the 18-24 group (suggesting that many performers may be students), followed by 35-44 (2.1%) and 25-34 (1.9%).

Inclination to perform rises steadily with education: over 3% of those with graduate education perform jazz, and all those with at least some college education are more likely to perform jazz than the population as a whole. The correlation with income is much less clear. The highest percentage comes with the $5000 or below group (2.7%) (again suggesting a significant number of student performers). The next highest rates are for $15,000-25,000 (2%) and over $50,000 (1.9%).

Demographic analysis of the tiny number of public performers is risky, because the sample is so small. But the data suggest that the gender disparity widens further (a male/female ratio in excess of 7:3), and that blacks are disproportionately represented (they comprise about 25% of the total number of public performers). They are somewhat less youthful(only about 30% are under age 34) with the greatest concentration in the 35-44 range.

Not surprisingly, there is a strong correlation between performing jazz and attending jazz performances. About 60% of jazz performers attend jazz performances; they make up 9% of the attending audience. About 70% of those who perform in public attend, a high percentage; but one that means that nearly a third of those who perform in public evidently do not count their own performances, and did not attend performances of others.

VI. Arts Education

Is there a correlation between music education and jazz participation? It should be remembered, first of all, that music education does not necessarily mean jazz education. Jazz has only recently attained even a modest profile as an officially sanctioned art and has made only modest inroads into educational networks that remain overwhelmingly committed to the European art tradition.

Nevertheless, the basic technical training for music performance designed for European music has served well as a foundation for most varieties of American music, including jazz. The image of the autodidact may loom large in jazz mythology, but the large majority of jazz performers since at least the 1930s have been literate in Western musical notation, and most have received some conventional training on their instrument. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that 93% of the jazz performers have at some time taken music lessons (as compared with 40% of the population of the whole). Four percent of those who have taken music lessons perform jazz (as compared with less than 2% of the population). Moreover, those who have taken music lessons attend jazz performances at a higher rate (17%) than the national average (11%), and comprise 61% of the audience.

Music appreciation courses, on the other hand, probably have a far more indirect relationship to jazz *per se*. While many colleges and universities now offer courses in jazz history or appreciation, the large majority focus on European music and include genres such as jazz only as ancillary topics.

There is, in fact, a strong correlation between taking courses in music appreciation and jazz participation. Although only 18% of the population as a whole has taken such courses, 40% of jazz attenders and 62% of jazz performers have done so. This relationship, however, probably reflects two factors: 1) the audience for jazz is considerably more educated than the population as a whole, and therefore far more likely to take courses that are usually only offered in institutions of higher education; and 2) the audience for jazz is more interested in European art music than the population as a whole (about half of those who "like jazz" also like classical music, and vice versa), and therefore is more inclined to take advantage of opportunities to learn more about the subject.

VII. Leisure Activities

On the whole, those adult Americans who attend jazz performances are more inclined to participate in a variety of leisure activities. This is not surprising, since participation in both leisure activities and jazz is strongly correlated with education and income. The activities favored by jazz attenders broadly mirror the population as a whole, with going to the movies (84%), exercising (82%), and going to amusement parks (66%) leading the list. Substantial increases over the national average were shown for all activities surveyed by the SPPA. The two activities that showed the least increases—gardening and home improvements—were also the only two activities strongly associated with older Americans. The highest rates of participation came with the age grouping 35-64 for home improvements, 45-74 for gardening—well past the peak of jazz interest in the 25-44 group. Two of the activities that showed the highest increase by jazz attenders, "participate in sports" and "attend sports events," were also the most male-dominated in the population as a whole. Table 20 shows the percentage of those attending jazz performances who also participated in nine surveyed leisure activities, compared with the national average for those activities.

Table 20. Percentage of Those Attending Jazz Performances Who Participated in Other Leisure Activities

Activity	% jazz attenders	% population	increase
movies	84	59	+25
exercise	82	60	+22
amusement parks	66	50	+16
participate in sports	62	39	+23
gardening	61	55	+ 6
attend sports events	59	37	+22
home improvements	57	48	+ 9
charity work	51	33	+18
outdoor activities	50	34	+16

VIII. Conclusions

The decade from 1982-1992 has seen a crucial generational shift in jazz. Many of the giants from the formative years of swing and modern jazz passed from the scene during this period—among them Thelonious Monk (1982), Count Basie (1984), Benny Goodman (1986), Miles Davis (1991), and Dizzy Gillespie (1993). Their deaths symbolize the end of an era, and have caused some long-time observers of the jazz scene to wonder whether the links between contemporary forms of music-making and the jazz tradition have become attenuated. "Jazz has always lived not by the hipness of the public," writes Eric Hobsbawm, "but by what Cornel West calls 'the network of apprenticeship,' the 'transmission of skills and sensibilities to new practitioners.' The cords of this network are fraying. Some of them have snapped"[26].

And yet the contemporary image of jazz—as exemplified by the new generation of performers led by Wynton Marsalis, if not by Kenny G—is not only young, black, and hip, but fiercely committed to ideals of tradition, artistic discipline, and education. Jazz is undergoing a historic transition from a music embedded in popular culture (if carving out an ironic stance to it) to an official, if belatedly recognized, part of the art establishment. "Straight-ahead jazz almost died in the 1970s," wrote a correspondent for Time in 1990, "as record companies embraced the electronically enhanced jazz-pop amalgam known as fusion. Now a whole generation of prodigiously talented young musicians is going back to the roots, using acoustic instruments, playing recognizable tunes and studying the styles of earlier jazzmen"[27].

These two assessments—one pessimistic and elegiac, the other optimistic and celebratory—sum up the ambiguous position of jazz as it approaches the end of the century. Compared to other "official" arts, jazz still retains traces of its origins in popular culture: the relative youthfulness of its audience and the associations with old (blues) and new (rap, reggae) forms of African-American music. But contemporary audiences are increasingly likely to encounter jazz in settings carefully sealed off from the marketplace: college classrooms, PBS specials, concert halls. As the new century nears, jazz will continue to compete with the European "classical" tradition as the music of choice for the training of young musicians[28]. And knowledge of jazz, its history, and its major performers—will increasingly be seen as a desirable outcome of education, a crucial component of American "cultural capital."

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[26] Eric Hobsbawm, The Jazz Tradition (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), xxii

[27] Thomas Sancton, "Horns of Plenty," Time 22 October 1990, 66

[28] According to sources quoted by James Lincoln Collier, it is now rare for a college or university not to have a jazz component to its music program; and more than half of America's secondary schools have jazz programs. Jazz: The American Theme Song, 145

This presents advocates of jazz—those who wish to see it thrive as an American art form—with a peculiar challenge: to marshal the prestige and financial resources of the arts and educational establishment on its behalf without endangering its appeal to a youthful, pop-oriented audience. Whether the current audience profile for jazz will persist into the future is a key question. Will jazz become even more the special province of the affluent, the educated and the middle-aged? Or will it continue to be, as it is now, the favored music of the 25-44 age group, delicately balanced between the adolescent enthusiasm for pop music and the considerably older audience for most other official arts? Will the African-American audience continue to embrace jazz—perhaps as its *own* officially sanctioned art? Or will jazz be displaced by newer forms of vernacular African-American music that speak more directly to current concerns and tastes? As jazz becomes more integrated into existing arts networks and less associated with the insular, intense world of enthusiasts, will the imbalance in participation between men and women gradually disappear?

These questions cannot be answered by the current survey: the information it contains can only provide fuel for speculation. And yet for those who cherish jazz as a uniquely American form of artistic expression, and who have some sense of the extraordinary path it has taken over the past century, these figures cannot but help encourage a feeling of optimism. The audience for jazz is modest, but diverse and expanding; in the language of market research, it "reaches all demographics"[39]. For the foreseeable future, the music will continue to be heard.

[39] Mike Shallett, "On Target," Billboard 98 (1 March 1986), 23.