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Student Section



*Analyzing Plato's Immortal Soul Argument  
and its Compatibility with Dualism*

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I will argue that Plato's argument for the immortal soul is incompatible with his view of dualism. My argument is not against immortality in general, but only as it relates to the argument proposed in Book X of the *Republic*. I hope to demonstrate that would-be subscribers to Plato's argument must either (1) reject this particular argument for the immortal soul or (2) reject the Platonic conception of dualism.

Plato's argument for the immortal soul (or immortality) proceeds as follows:

P1. A thing is most damaged by the worst evil associated with it.

P2. Injustice is the worst evil associated with the soul.

P3. Not even injustice destroys the soul.

C1. Therefore, the soul cannot be destroyed; it is immortal.

P1 seems to be self-evident, for it is inherent to "the worst evil" to cause the greatest possible damage. P2, while not self-evident, is the product of Plato's continued arguments throughout the *Republic*. Refuting P2 would be a tall task and may quite possibly turn out to be a fruitless endeavor.

My issue with Plato's argument for immortality lies in P3. He claims, "If we discover something that has an evil that makes it bad but is not able to disintegrate

and destroy it, [we can] *infer* that it is naturally incapable of being destroyed."<sup>8</sup>

Ultimately, depending on one's epistemological inclinations, this conditional statement may or may not stand as will be shown later in this work. Because we need not observe every instance of something in order to acquire knowledge about it, the inferential step seems a legitimate one. I think the error arises when Plato substitutes the soul into the above conditional statement. In doing so, he claims with a high degree of certainty (if not complete certainty) that neither injustice nor any other kind of evil is able to destroy the soul, thus C1: "Now, if the soul isn't destroyed by a single evil, whether its own or something else's, then *clearly* is must always be. And if it always is, then it is immortal."<sup>9</sup> Herein lies the problem, as I count myself among the many who do not see the conclusion as "clearly" as Plato does.

In order for Plato to make the claim that the soul is incapable of destruction, he merely *infers* that nothing can destroy it. Logically speaking, there is nothing invalid about this move, but there are two key points to keep in mind: (1) Aristotle had not yet put forth his system of logic when Plato wrote the *Republic*; consequently, Plato did not concern himself with validity as such. (2) More importantly, Plato's epistemological theory is more or less built upon the fundamental distinction between knowledge

<sup>8</sup> Plato, 630 (609b)

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 631-632 (610e).

and opinion. Whereas knowledge is set over what is, opinion is an intermediate state, inferior to knowledge but superior to ignorance.<sup>10</sup> One of the basic concerns with Plato's inferential jump (P3) in his argument for immortality is whether it is based in knowledge or opinion.

In order to elucidate Plato's distinction between knowledge and opinion, it will be helpful to consult his so-called "Allegory of the Cave." Plato constructs an example in which a number of lifelong prisoners are bound within a cave. These individuals have never experienced anything outside of the cave; for them, reality is constituted by their captors casting shadows upon the cave's walls. One day, a single prisoner manages to escape. When he exits the cave, he is nearly blinded by the sudden flood of daylight. After several minutes, his eyes begin to adjust and he is able to see reflections of objects (i.e., their reflections in water). As time passes, he begins to observe the objects themselves. Finally, he looks up at the sun for a brief moment and discovers that it is responsible for lighting the world around him. The prisoner is ecstatic now that he knows the truth! He decides to return to the cave and tell his fellow captives the good news. Unfortunately, he is unable to persuade them of the truth, for they are creatures of the dark and cannot conceive of a world apart from the cave.

The allegorical components of Plato's "Cave" will provide great insight into both his metaphysical and epistemological convictions. The shadows cast upon the cave's wall are equivalent to images of visible things, for they are multiple steps removed from Platonic forms. The reflections of objects that the escapee experiences outside the cave represent visible objects in Plato's metaphysical worldview. As it follows, the external world objects that

the escapee observes equate to the forms for Plato, while the sun is allegorical to the ultimate form of the "Good." With his metaphysical states established, Plato is able to construct the "divided line" image. As it follows, images of visible objects, visible objects themselves, the forms, and the Good correspond to the epistemic states of imagination, belief, thought, and understanding, respectively. With this epistemological groundwork in place, we can begin to investigate where Plato's inferential claim (P3) falls on the divided line.

Recall Plato's assertion from earlier: "If we discover something that has an evil that makes it bad but is not able to disintegrate and destroy it, [we can] infer that it is naturally incapable of being destroyed."<sup>11</sup> This seems like a simple enough statement, but would the ensuing inference qualify as "understanding" by Plato's standards? The answer seems to be "No." Plato defines understanding as:

that which reason itself grasps by the power of dialectic... [Understanding] comes down to a conclusion without making use of anything visible at all, but only of forms themselves, moving on from forms to forms, and ending in forms.<sup>12</sup>

As Plato explains throughout the *Republic*, death is not the worst thing that can happen to a person; acting unjustly is. So, in the case of the most self-gratifying tyrant conceivable, Plato infers that the injustice of his transgressions would not have the power to destroy his soul outright. Can this be known with absolute certitude? More importantly, can this be known "without making use of anything visible at all?" When one infers that the soul is "naturally incapable of being destroyed," he or she is not

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 511-513 (478a-d).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 630 (609b).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 540 (511b-c).

reasoning by the merits of the forms alone. Simple experience – which requires “making use of anything visible at all” – may lead one to the belief that the soul cannot die while the body goes on living. In any case, it is clear that one cannot have Platonic *understanding* concerning the truth of P3. As it follows, C1 (the immortality of the soul) is *thought* at best and *opinion* at worst.

At this point, the question becomes whether the non-Platonic conception of the immortality of the soul is detrimental to Plato’s argument. As I mentioned previously, Plato constructed this argument prior to the existence of Aristotelian logic. His argument for immortality very evidently hinges upon an inferential claim, but this does not render it invalid by our current understanding of logic. Valid premises can be constituted by inferential claims. For Plato, though, who holds anything short of understanding in comparatively low regard, he himself may not believe his argument adequately shows the indestructibility of the soul. (This probably helps explain why, in the *Phaedo*, he posits four additional arguments for immortality.) His argument may not measure up to his own standards, but it does measure up to ours in the present day; hence, we need to find and follow a different thread in order to debunk immortality.

Having established both Plato’s immortality argument and his epistemic views, I will turn now to his conception of dualism. Historically, his argument proceeds as follows:

**Pd1.** The soul is superior to and distinct from the body.

**Pd2.** The body imprisons the soul.

**Pd3.** The soul is immortal.

**Cd1.** The soul might have existed before embodiment.

Again, I am not attempting to debunk

dualism in this article – in which case I would attack Pd1 of the above argument. Rather, my intent is to show that Plato’s dualism is incompatible with his immortal soul argument. As such, I will grant Pd1 as true.

The argument begins to run into trouble at Pd2. In Book X of the Republic, Plato tells the tale of Er, which essentially equates to a story of rewarding the just and punishing the unjust. Within the tale, he describes the process of reincarnation. Along the way, he talks about the “Plain of Forgetfulness” and the “River of Unheeding,” both of which are designed to make disembodied souls forget about their past lives. The souls are then ensnared within bodies and sent to live their lives upon Earth. This ties back into Plato’s immortality argument via P3 (“Not even injustice destroys the soul”). If a detractor of P3 claims that no one can know for sure whether injustice destroys the soul, the supporter would counter that the body could not go on living without the soul. This personal identity claim (i.e., that we are our souls) qualifies as intuitive knowledge as far as the supporter is concerned, but I am not convinced. In fact, I postulate that P3 and Pd2 are in direct contradiction to one another: How can the soul animate the body when it is simultaneously and utterly ensnared by it?

Consider the following example. A dimwitted farmer (obviously not from North Dakota) notices that all of his lettuce plants are being chewed up. He decides to investigate and discovers that a fugitive rabbit is responsible. The farmer tries everything to get rid of the rabbit – poison, shotgun shells, dynamite; you name it – but the rabbit continues to eat his lettuce. As the farmer’s mental sanity wanes, he begins throwing random objects he finds around the farmstead into the garden. “Maybe the rabbit will be thrown off by a change of scenery,” he thinks to himself. His neighbor, a compassionate man, decides to help out the

farmer by placing a rabbit trap in his garden one night. When the farmer returns the next morning, he remarks, "I don't remember putting this metal-box-thing in here, but I'll try anything to get rid of that rabbit. Maybe this final change of scenery will make him leave." Another day passes, and when the farmer again returns to the garden, he finds the fugitive rabbit caught in the "metal-box-thing." "Oh, I get it," the farmer says, "This metal-box-thing is a trap! I would've never figured that out had the rabbit not gotten stuck in here!"

Very evidently, the farmer is a confused man. He believes that the rabbit's presence in the 'metal-box-thing' is what turns it into a rabbit trap. This is simply not true. To cite Aristotelian causes, the rabbit's presence does not have anything to do with the trap's formal cause ("What kind of thing is it?"). The rabbit does, however, seem to play a role in the trap's final cause ("What is the thing's purpose?"), for a rabbit trap is intended to trap rabbits. So, what is the takeaway from all of this? The dualist states that the soul is trapped in the body. The dualist also states that the soul cannot be destroyed while the body goes on living. However, it seems counterintuitive that the soul is entrapped by the very thing it supposedly animates, as this characteristic is found seemingly nowhere else in reality. (Consider this: If entity X has the power to animate entity Y, it is self-evident that X has more causal power than Y. How, then, could Y entrap X?) I have constructed my argument below:

**Px1.** The soul is superior to and distinct from the body (Pd1 from above).

**Px2.** The soul cannot be destroyed while the body goes on existing. (Dualism)

**Cx1.** Therefore, the soul must be responsible for animating the body.

**Px3.** The body imprisons the soul (Pd2). (Dualism)

**Px4.** If the body imprisons the soul, then the body must have more causal power than the soul.

**Px5.** If the body has more causal power than the soul, then Cx1 is false.

**Px6.** If Cx1 is false, then P3 ('Not even injustice destroys the soul.') cannot be known definitively.

**Px7.** If P3 cannot be known definitively, then Px2 may or may not be true.

**Cx2.** Therefore, C1 ('The soul cannot be destroyed; it is immortal.') is not definitively true. The soul may or may not be immortal.

With this argument in place, deciding whether or not the soul can be destroyed while the body goes on existing becomes a matter of subjective inclination. Moreover, it shifts the discussion into the realm of personal identity, which is beyond the scope of this article.

This argument also produces an unexpected fallacy for Plato's argument for immortality. In his argument for dualism, Pd3 ("The soul is immortal") is the obvious derivative of C1 ("The soul cannot be destroyed; it is immortal"). As I have demonstrated, however, Plato's immortality argument is built upon the dualistic premise Pd1 ("The soul is superior to and distinct from the body"). Thus, Plato's immortality argument circles back to his dualism argument which circles back to his immortality argument! It is a subtle move, but as I have previously mentioned, it is getting less and less surprising that Plato posits additional arguments for the immortality of the soul in his post-*Republic* writings.

In conclusion, Plato's argument for the immortality of the soul in the context of his dualistic worldview does not entail that the soul is definitively immortal. In addition, Plato's arguments for immortality and for dualism are subtly circular in relation to one another. To be sure, Plato's self-imposed

epistemic standards make an argument for immortality a tall task in the first place. As I have argued, however, Plato's argument contradicts itself in multiple places even if those standards are lowered. Nevertheless, the immortality of the soul remains a live option, and Plato's further arguments in the *Phaedo* deserve analyses of equivalent or even greater depth to the one given in this article. After all, it is a matter of life and death.

### References

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*Should Classical Music Concerts Reform to Attract New Audiences?*

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**Introduction**

Declining audience for classical music concerts have been brought to attention at various times by experts in the music field. One reason for this decrease in attendance is due to the aging of the present audience (Kolb, 2000; Asia, 2010). Another reason is, classical music, from its early Stages, focused on the elite and educated. Hence, it was shaped to cater to the requirements and tastes of that particular group. As a result, classical music is struggling to attract new audience for concerts due to its focus on a very specific audience. Therefore, trying to attract new young audiences has been seen as a solution for the continuity of classical music concerts (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). However, research conducted on attracting new audiences for classical music concerts highlights certain perceived educational and social barriers to future participation by young first-time attendees (Dobson & Pitts, 2011) such as lack of musical knowledge, unfamiliarity with concert etiquette, and reluctance to replace other leisure activities with classical music concerts (Kolb, 2000; Dobson, 2010). In order to attract new audience, the present elements of classical music might require a reformation, restructuring, and reevaluation. Therefore, the paper focuses on understanding classically trained young audiences' perspectives on classical music concerts, and the possibilities for changing the current concert etiquettes and introducing mainstream cultural elements to classical concerts in hopes of providing an alternative for increasing future classical

music concert attendance.

**Methodology**

This paper is written based on ten face to face interviews. Students from the Music Industry program in a Midwestern University were selected under purposive method and snowballing method. The interviews were conducted in the lower level lounge area of the Arts building of the university. The participants were asked twelve open ended questions and follow up questions as necessary. The interviews lasted for about 15 to 30 minutes. All the interviews were recorded using a recording device with the consent of the participants.

**Literature Review**

According to Asia, recently published articles have highlighted the current unhealthy status of classical music concerts (2010). The articles report that the audience for classical music concerts is declining rapidly. One critical reason highlighted for this circumstance is an aging audience which represents a majority of the present audience (Asia, 2010). Between the years 1982 and 1997, the representation of younger age groups has dramatically declined. During this same time period, the representation of age group of 50-59 has increased from 1 percent to 4.9 percent. By 2001, this age group (50-59) accounted for 19.5 percent of the total attendees at classical music concerts, although they were only 14.6 percent of the population (Kolb, 2001). Therefore, sustaining and attracting young audience to fill the void has become crucial for the future

continuation of classical music concerts (Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

Barlow and Shibli (2007) suggest two options to address the issue of declining audience under market penetration strategy. The first option is coming up with new strategies to attract non-concert attendees, and the second option is making the current attendees more frequent and re-attracting audiences that have not attended concerts for some time (Barlow and Shibli, 2007). Since the early days, classical music concerts attracted and catered to an intellectual audience that belonged to the upper and middle class (Levine, 1988). A higher level of education was a common trait among the regular classical music audience (Kolb, 2000; ter Bogt et al., 2011). Even the first-time attendees of both Kolb (2000) and Dobson (2010) studies noticed that classical music concert audience possessed a better understanding of the performed music. As Kolb's (2001) study shows, a person who graduated from high school has a 4.3 percent lower possibility of attending classical music concerts, compared to a person who graduated from college. Another study by Roe (1992) reports, that high school students prefer classical music if they are academically successful and intend to achieve higher educational goals in life. On the contrary, the same study reveals that students with lower educational ambitions develop a taste towards music such as heavy metal (Roe, 1992). A later study by Tanner, Asbridge, & Wortley (2008) concluded that, many students who were academically successful and aimed for accomplishing higher goals adopt cultural traits that they believe are necessary for their intended status destination. The process reverses for the low ambitious group (Tanner, Asbridge, & Wortley, 2008). Since education is an important aspect of becoming acclimated with classical music, Kolb (2000) suggests attracting university students and college

graduates as potential future audience.

Contrary to Kolb's suggestion, non-music majors identified that their lack of knowledge in music as a hindrance to becoming a part of the audience, even though they belonged to the educated (Kolb, 2000). Lack of understanding and unfamiliarity with classical music was a common trait among many non-attendees. They fear that their inability to understand may accentuate them as philistine or outsiders and doubt that they will enjoy the concert (Barlow & Shibli, 2007). Some students, who attended classical music concerts for the first time, expressed their lack of knowledge on concert etiquette, such as when to applaud, to express audience appreciation for a performance. Baker (2000) says the unstated laws of the concert hall can be perceived as unwelcoming by the first time attendees. Not only when to clap but what to wear is also a risk a first-time attendee has to take compared to a regular concert attendee who is accustomed to the etiquettes of the concert hall (Baker, 2000). The participants of the Dobson study encountered discomfort because of the level of enthusiasm audiences displayed and not knowing that they were allowed not to appreciate a piece of music if they felt undeserving (Dobson, 2010). Since attracting young, first-time attendees seemed more challenging than Kolb suggested, attracting audiences who have developed a taste for classical music may at least reduce the degree of unfamiliarity experienced in the concert hall. According to a study by Brown et al. (2002), shows that 10 to 15 percent Americans have expressed a close or moderately close relationship to classical music but only 5 to 7.5 percent expressed a preference to attend classical music concerts. If prior knowledge is essential to fully comprehend classical music as highlighted by first-time attendees, this particular non-attending group who has a preference for classical music can be a



potential future audience.

Another study conducted involving non-music undergraduate students shows that the participants preferred more modern styles and genres compared to classical music (Woody & Burns, 2001; Tanner, Asbridge, & Wortley, 2008). Prior to many technological advancements, classical music was considered “timeless.” Yet with time, the expectations and requirements of the younger generation have changed as many other genres and styles have become popular integrating other art forms and modern stage techniques, compared to classical music concerts (Kolb, 2000). The younger generation’s experiences related to popular music concerts is vastly different compared to classical music concert experience. Every aspect of popular music concerts from stage effects to performer appearances are aimed at the emotions of the young people. The audience is expected to express their emotions freely and interact with the music and the other audience members actively as a crucial aspect of the setting of a popular music concert. On the other hand, classical music is not produced to fulfill any entertainment aspect but rather for laid back listening purposes where the stage is visually and technically unattractive (Kolb, 2001). Therefore, despite the availability of such music through digital media, popular music concerts continue to attract younger audience because of its informal and social interaction aspects (Frith, 1996). Many first time attendees of the Kolb study (2000) claimed that they were willing to attend classical music concerts in the future. Yet, the participants were not willing to attend concerts sacrificing their other extracurricular activities (Kolb, 2000).

Thus, attracting young generation suggests changing the traditional concerts to suit the various requirements of a younger generation (Kolb, 2000). A study by Kotler and Scheff (1997) suggest that reforms in

classical music concerts are essential for the future existence of the genre. The researchers further suggest that these changes can occur in the internal structure, the way of conducting business, and even in the general operational strategies (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Both Baker (2000) and Kolb (2000) in their studies take a similar stance supporting easing the boundaries of classical music experience. However, as Preece (2001) believes, attempts to reform may result in changing the traditional aspect of classical music concert into a highly commercialized medium in the hope of attracting the younger generation and such attempts may adversely affect the present concert goers, driving them away from the halls. This paper attempts to understand the perspective of classically trained young audience of reforming the classical music concerts.

## Results and Findings

### Classical versus Popular

Many participants acknowledged that apart from attending classical music concerts, they also attend popular music concerts. The majority even admitted that they prefer popular music more in comparison to classical music. One of the main points of the participants was that classical music has become obsolete in comparison to many other genres available in society. They viewed that as a discouraging factor for current and new young audiences who have grown up listening and attending contemporary popular music.

**Participant 7:** I definitely think people like what’s appealing to their ear, what sounds good, and what everybody else likes. So it is more like, people won’t talk about classical music much anymore unless you are studying or and if you learn about it in you music classes or when you are like in middle

school or elementary school you might learn about it, but you'll probably forget about it about it after a while.

Another factor highlighted by the participants was the absence of lyrics in classical music compared to popular music. They thought the absence of lyrics makes classical music difficult to understand by the non-attendees. According to Dobson and Pitts' (2011) research, popular music is predominantly narrative or conveys a message. This feature allows the listener to understand the music in relation to lyrics further facilitating how the listener responds to the music emotionally and physically (Dobson & Pitts, 2011). Participant 5's comment supported this idea: "I mean I think obviously lyrics can help sometimes because you hear directly."

Participant 1 suggested that the absence of lyrics can be substituted with conductor descriptions prior to the music being performed: "Often the director might give a brief background before they perform it. That puts a picture in the audiences head. So I think that helps." Although lyrics are considered important to understanding the music, Participant 5 thought that lyrics were not essential to appreciate music, "I sometimes just like to listen to an orchestra or just strings. I think music can be just as powerful without lyrics." Participant 2 thought that some lyrics fail to convey a meaningful message.

**Participant 2:** If you listen to like the lyrics as way back, then lyrics it was way better. They had meaning, they had purpose for the lyrics. Now they are just words. Just like 'what are you trying to say.' You know you are just throwing words out there and have nothing in it.

Apart from lyrics, participants also

mentioned about the length of classical music pieces. In general, classical music pieces are longer compared to popular music pieces which follow a simple verse-chorus structure. The participants of the Kolb (2000) study who attended the Pops Classical Music Concert said that they can only focus for about ten minutes listening to a single piece. These participants also expressed satisfaction, because pieces selected for the relevant concert were short. The current study participants also said they get easily distracted and lose focus when the pieces are lengthy.

**Participant 1:** If I had to choose what I dislike most in classical music concerts, it would be the music itself. It's so relaxing like it often puts me to sleep in a good way. So, it gets kind of long at some points.

Then they were asked whether the pieces with four movements should be reduced to one or two movements. The participants were not in favor of that idea because they found that having more movements is interesting based especially on different rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic changes. Instead of limiting to one or two movements, the participants wished to have short intermissions between the piece which would allow the audience to relax and stretch. They assumed that this strategy would help them to get back their focus and enjoy the rest of the piece.

**Participant 5:** I mean it's never fun to not like hear the conclusion of a piece. It's just like having like a good intermission where people can try to get up and walk around or like. But I do not know if it would work, but I suppose may be you could try like instead of having like a big 15 minute intermission also may be like try like

just a little like short ones where people can like get up, get their blood pumped, and then like just stand up and move a little bit and then like “all right let’s go again.”

Other than length, participants made comments about the pieces selected for concerts and the program order. Many participants complained that they have attended concerts where almost all the pieces are slow in tempo. Participant 6 said, “I have gone to some places where they only play very slow pieces like start to finish. I think variety adds lot to it. It makes better for me personally.” Participant 10 supported participant 6’s idea as follows.

I think just a good mix of like lots of different things. Sometimes it bothers me when it’s always like romantic stuff and they always keep playing the same style. Just mixing more 20<sup>th</sup> century, mixing more baroque, mixing a little bit of everything.

They sought variety rather than conforming to a similar slow type of music. Many of them preferred fast music with key changes. The participants also said they would like to listen to classical music pieces that are not popular and unfamiliar. They said most of the time they hear the same pieces from the same composers, but it is time to unravel the other music from the known composers as well as the unknown.

**Participant 7:** I definitely feel like sometimes they over play certain pieces. You know what I mean like there’s like lot of Bach played or lot of Beethoven or lot of like you know strict Mozart pieces that are super popular that everybody knows. They do not show or shed light on the other pieces that people do not know.

Some participants suggested variety could be introduced by organizing concerts with collaboration of other classical music ensembles. They thought combining orchestra, wind ensemble, choir, and even jazz band would add variety to a concert and appeal to audiences with different tastes and preferences. One of the participants shared a high school choir experience that resonated the above idea.

I like most types of music. I am pretty much a across the board person. I like types of classical stuff and then I also love lots of pop or folk type of music. It [orchestra, band, and choir] could be an interesting way to try to grab new people to like understand a more classical approach to popular music. In my high school we have a pops concert every spring and it’s like all the choirs pick numbers and they do popular music and like arrangements and then small groups can try out. And it’s a nice way for, an outlet I think for people who that’s not their type of music, it’s a way to get them into seeing it in a more classical style.

All participants thought incorporating popular music into classical music concerts would also add variety. They suggested that performing music from movies or arranging popular music to classical ensembles would draw a young audience and increase attendance. Participants think playing music known to the younger audience would reduce the unfamiliarity of the music being performed and keep them interested throughout the concert. Many participants said that the whole concert does not have to be based on movies or popular music, but adding one or two pieces would add variety and modernity the young audience desires.

**Participant 3:** I am already going but may be pieces that I can relate to may be stuff like that. I mean that's the thing. You do not need the entire program to be those songs it can be one song and you can have the rest in classical. It's just those little things that get someone excited to show up and hear and that kind of thing.

Kolb's study (2000) identified absences of stage techniques as a negative factor in classical music concerts, and that absence created a languid feeling. Similarly, many participants of the current study believed that incorporating visuals concurrently to the music would fill the void created by not having lyrics. If lyrics are an essential aspect to the inexperienced concert goer, it can be addressed by having graphics to enhance the musical ideas conveyed by the music. The participants also thought having visuals to follow, in addition to the music, would sustain the audience's attention.

**Participant 2:** May be that could at least give them something to be looking. Music majors understand the music not just by hearing it they understand exactly what's going on. But those non-music majors they are not really ear trained to that much. It might attract some people.

Two participants of the current study said that they have attended a concert which provided such visuals to follow. Both of them viewed that addition as positive and preferred similar repetition in the future.

**Participant 8:** I remember back in, I think it was like 2012 or 2013 there was a concert Dr. [ ] was the director of that had a projector for all the music they were playing. And it was really cool. I do not know how long it took to put that

together if it was pre-made before the performance or anything like that. I thought it was really cool. So if they are to implement something like that, that would be pretty cool.

One participant said, he preferred restricting visuals for one or two pieces as it might be a distraction for the audience who are there only to listen.

**Participant 10:** Sometimes it gets a little distracting for me when I see that. Like I am more there not to look I am more there to listen. So I do not mind if I am in a seat where I can't see that. That works. Because I am kind of there to hear but I think sometimes it's effective too. So may be just little dozes of that but not like all the time.

### **Concert Hall Etiquette Training**

As Barlow and Shibli (2007) state, non-attenders fear that they will not enjoy themselves, because they lack understanding and familiarity with the subject, which might result in feeling alienated, inferior, and disinterested. As a solution to the latter, the participants of the current study suggested that schooling and introducing students from a young age is appropriate. They thought this strategy would help develop a taste for classical music as well as reduce the anxiety experienced by first-time attendees in the concert hall. Participant 8 suggested the following idea.

I think having like a class where they are introduced to a lot of that stuff and how to look at it and how to listen to it. I think that would be really good for other people to have to may be gain a better appreciation for things.

The participants of the current study restated the idea about unfamiliarity of

concert etiquettes and how it can influence the consciousness of a first time attendee as mentioned in the literature review. Many of the participants of this study possessed a significant understanding of the behavioral patterns and rules of conduct followed in a concert hall. As discussed in the previous section, many of the participants were schooled in classical music from their childhood through parents, school, and present college education. They all acknowledged the fact that this training has made them comfortable in the concert hall and that it can be unfamiliar territory for many newcomers who have not mastered the accepted norms and rules.

Affirming to this idea, some participants shared their experiences from childhood where they were introduced to the classical concert hall by their parents or school and thus introduced into the norms and rules of conduct. They believe that similar training, especially through the school system, can educate young students about concert etiquette, regardless of whether they choose to attend classical music concerts in the future or not.

**Participant 5:** I guess I am not sure as much for college students. I know like it's obviously always easier if you can get people knowing about it when they are younger. Because I know like when I was in elementary school one time we literary one of our field trips was the orchestra hall. They put on like a concert at like 11 o'clock. It was four schools. So it's like we were able to kind of go during a school day. It was a field trip. We dressed up and went to orchestra hall for the day. So it was kind of a fun little thing for like a lot of kids who like didn't necessarily may be do choir, band, orchestra, we all went together. So it's kind of like an even playing field. I mean may be exposing

students from a younger age. It would grab people more. Because like they get to grow up learning about it instead of just trying to like jump into a different style and setting.

Apart from educating students from an earlier stage, educating new audiences before the concert about etiquette was suggested by the participants. In Kolb's study (2000) participants revealed that they were not certain when to applaud. Participant 4 also had a similar opinion about audience members. "Maybe some people like, why cannot I clap right now... because I am a Music major I understand and that make sense to me." To address the issue, the current study participants said that educating the audiences, especially about applauding before a concert, is appropriate to minimize any embarrassment or confusion caused by unfamiliarity.

**Participant 10:** I know a lot of people do not know that going in though. They do not know when to clap and when you are not supposed to clap. I think that might be appropriate in some situations education people before a concert about clapping. Kind of suggest you do not clap during these parts because it's a whole set and stuff like that. Because I know a lot of people just do not know that.

If the audience is not educated prior to the beginning of the concert, the only solution available for them is to blindly follow the other audience members. A similar idea is mentioned in Dobson and Pitts' (2011) study. They mention that frequent attendance at classical music concerts and fellow audience members can help new attendees to assimilate into concert hall etiquettes.

Participant 5 compared classical music applauding practices to jazz music.

The participant commented how the audience is allowed to clap after a solo performance in jazz performances. Similarly, there are times that audiences want to applaud in classical music concerts if they feel that a certain section of the performance deserves appraising but would suppress such behavior in order to comply with the etiquettes.

**Participant 5:** But I know it can be very intimidating for people who aren't used to it. Because it's like even I sometimes find up that I like, I want to clap here but I know I shouldn't. And then it's like it's effective like when I see other types of music. Like when I see jazz sometimes I am like oh yea I can clap basically whenever I want.

A similar comment was made by a participant of the Dobson (2010) study comparing other popular music styles where the audience is allowed to applaud when musicians enter after an instrumental introduction or when a singer sings the first verse of a song.

Another suggestion was to continue to have program notes or conductor introductions for each piece to give an overall idea about the selected pieces. The participants thought these suggestions would eliminate the idea of a completely unfamiliar experience by new attendees in the concert hall.

Despite the aforementioned suggestions, as the Crawford et al. (2014) study reveals, regular audience members expect other audience members to follow the norm and rules of conduct regardless of their familiarity and education level. Even many participants of the study expressed lower preference to changing the "traditional" etiquette practices followed in the concert hall. As Small (1987) writes, classical music is a way of affirming middle class life which included self-discipline and diligence.

**Participant 9:** I think for me it's more of a respect where you should clap when you need to you should only cheer when you need and not like randomly in the middle or like you obviously hear some random coughs you couldn't hold back go ahead and cough. Because I ran through like someone cracking their knuckles right in the middle of the performance and I was like "why would you do that?" It makes your focus go away from the performance to that person.

Similar comments supported the above quote question of whether the participants really embraced the traditional etiquettes sincerely as appropriate or it is deeply ingrained in them that they feared to deviate from the tradition as they have only experienced classical music performances in a well-structured manner. Some participant comments suggested signs of a quandary between continuing the tradition and introducing changes to comply with the socio-demographic changes. Participant 7 stated, "I think I am kind of like to have that structure and stuff but at the same time I think that it's good to have new ideas and innovation you know." Yet, none of them viewed eating, drinking, and talking as welcomed additions, because they all thought that it would be distracting, disturbing, and disrespectful.

### **Eating and Drinking and Talking**

Eating, drinking, and talking were allowed during the times of Haydn and Mozart symphonies. During the time of Wagner the audience was expected to be quiet, and reverently listen to the music (Burkholder & Grout, 2010). These trends continued ever since in the classical concert hall while the popular music venues continued to allow the audiences to socialize

as they desired. Since then as Blake (1997) says, classical music has had difficulty attracting audiences due to lack of entertainment. As most of the participants revealed, their peers prefer popular music concerts primarily due to less formality as well as the possibility of social interaction allowed in such venues. Kolb (2001), and Preece (2001), also support this idea, indicating that the gulf between the performer and the audience has alienated the younger generations who have witnessed concerts with social interaction. As Maitland (2000) explains, audience development strategies are essential to bridge the growing gap between the audience and the music. Therefore, easing the formality and norms of the classical concert halls can be predicted as solutions to increase the attendance of new attendees as well as a way of catering to the current young concert attendees who admit to being engaged in both highbrow music and popular music. Kotler and Scheff (1997) propose audience development and reform strategies to reduce formality and ease classical etiquette by organizing concerts allowing audience members to eat, drink, and socialize while the performances are in progress. The researchers have declared that these changes have proven to increase audience attendance in relation to the revival of the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra in their marketing management textbook (Sigurjonsson, 2010). The audience development strategies to save the orchestra from bankruptcy involved conducting concerts under different themes. “Jeans and Beer” and “Mocha and Mozart” allowed the audience members to snack during the performance and drink coffee, respectively, as they pleased. When the participants of the current study were questioned about allowing food and talking in the classical concert hall, many thought it would distract audience attention as well as disrupt the focus of the players.

**Participant 3:** Having someone eating nachos next to you, you know the crunching noise kind of takes away from the entire experience of the compositions. I feel like there is a time and a place for those types of things. But I do not feel like orchestral music and different classical pieces or wind ensembles are really the place for that.

The participants also commented on how such behavior will disrespect the music as well as the performers who have invested time, talent, and their emotions to practice the music and present the music to the audience.

**Participant 2:** These performers’ they are really working hard putting their heart and soul into everything. And if people like bring food or anything that’s definitely just disrespectful. Drinking water is just fine but if you are actually bringing like a whole lunch with you. I think it’s more of showing the performers more respect. You know they are putting their time and putting a performance out of their schedule.

All of the participants disagreed on allowing food or talking inside the concert hall. Some participants agreed to allow water bottles in the concert hall. As Ashworth et al. (1999) and another article called *Culture on demand* (FreshMind, 2007) highlight, participant interaction is important to engage a broader audience. Although some participants commented that classical music venues lack social interaction, they were reluctant to introduce that missing aspect to the traditional concert venue.

**Participant 10:** I think it should stay kind of this classical experience. It’s different from other forms of music

performances people would see I think. There's some value in keeping with the tradition a little bit.

Preece (2001) raises similar concerns about lowering the standards of classical music concerts in the hope of attracting a new audience, which might remove the sense of authenticity expected by the current concert attendance. Current participants also expressed skepticism that reforming classical music concert procedure as a novelty can be rejected by the older audience, consequently reducing this group's attendance.

**Participant 3:** It [change] would definitely appeal to people that are not so much into classical type of music. But as far as it goes for like the older generation that actually like it [classical concerts] to be like that [changes] be frowned upon by them. So you would be kind of losing a group of interest, but then you would be gaining one as well.

As mentioned before, although Kotler and Scheff's audience development strategies increased audience attendance and generated higher income and reveal that the reforms to traditional concert procedure is "smooth, simple, and problem free," the rising question is to what degree the quality and aesthetics of traditional nature is preserved (Sigurjonsson, 2010: 267). The latter concern might be governing the hesitation expressed by the participants in relation to introducing food and drinks inside the concert hall.

### **Dress Code**

Dress is another part of classical etiquette which enhances the formality of the event. According to Griffiths (2011), concert attire "is a valuable visual cue to an individual's attitudes" (30). Considering that highbrow culture catered to the middle class,

dressing appropriately to showcase their class is an expected practice built into our culture. Kolb's study (2000) reveals that the students preferred dressing formally for the concerts. Even after 15 years from Kolb's study, the current study participants expressed similar opinions about the concert attire. Many participants held the notion that dressing formally is appropriate especially if it is an off campus event. As many participants have noticed, audiences wear causal clothing for on campus concerts. None of the participants supported the idea of allowing audiences to attend in any type of clothing of their choice such as ripped clothes and night wear. Two of the participants specifically mentioned that night clothing is not at all accepted even for an on campus concert. The lowest they were willing to accept was smart casual clothing for concerts outside of campus.

**Participant 4:** I have only attended classical music concerts here on campus but if you see an orchestra somewhere else you will need to be dressed like formal. I guess that could be a reason too. And then for the formal thing, I guess maybe not dressing so formal. It's not like you are going to come in your PJ's, I mean come on. Like a regular dress code will be appropriate.

Although amusement is attached participant comments in relation to dress, it also exemplifies that maintaining standards are important and expected from the classical music audiences.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The current study results reaffirmed that having a basic knowledge about classical music and familiarity of classical music etiquette is necessary to fully comprehend and enjoy the music. It can be suggested that introducing children to classical music from



a younger age would develop a taste for the particular genre. Similarly exposing to classical music concert hall at a younger age would reduce the discomfort encountered by inexperienced audiences. Parents and schools can work together in introducing children to classical music and classical music concert hall at a younger age. This application would take a longer time to generate a significant amount of audience members for classical music concerts. Yet, this strategy would create a dedicated audience members to ensure the existence of classical music concerts.

Changing current classical music concert etiquette was not preferred by the participants of the current study. Instead, they wanted to conform to the traditional etiquettes practiced that originated during the Wagnerian era. Without reforming the present procedural practices of classical music concerts, the participants suggested probable additions that can be implemented without further due. The suggestions included, playing fast, unheard music from different periods, giving short breaks between long pieces, playing movie and popular music, collaborating work including all classical ensembles, incorporating modern stage techniques, educating about rules of the concert hall, continue to have program notes and conductor introductions about music, allowing water bottles in the concert hall, and allowing smart casual clothing for concerts outside the campus. These proposals can be applied to attract new younger audiences who are more accustomed to popular music. However, the sample size is not sufficient to come to definite conclusions. More studies on large scales should be conducted to make definitive assertions.

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