

Classical Music Everywhere

Let's play classical music in our homes, schools, and prisons.

I have been sharing with you the impact certain kinds of music have on the brain and social behavior. In my last article, I presented the positive impact of classical music on crime. I suggested that classical music can reduce crime because of how it works on the mind and instills discipline. We also know that intellectually disciplined people are at lower risk for criminal activities.

On April 23, 2013, David P. Goldman, wrote these words in his online article, Why Does Classical Music Make You Smarter? : “Thirty-six million Chinese kids now study classical piano, not counting string and woodwind players. Chinese parents pay for music lessons not because they expect their offspring to earn a living at the keyboard, but because they believe it will make them smarter at their studies.” He continues: “In an essay for First Things titled, “The Divine Music of Mathematics,” just released, I show that the first intimation of higher-order numbers in mathematics in Western thought comes from St. Augustine’s 5th-century treatise on music. Our ability to perceive complex and altered rhythms in poetry and music, the Church father argued, requires “numbers of the intellect” which stand above the ordinary numbers of perception. A red thread connects Augustine’s concept with the discovery of irrational numbers in the 15th century and the invention of calculus in the 17th century. The common thread is the mind’s engagement with the paradox of the infinite.”

Here is what David Goldman suggests: “The painstaking acquisition of knowledge and technique, and the enhancement of attention span and intuition, are the long-term benefits of classical music study. Humility, patience, and discipline are the virtues that children acquire through long-term commitment. I doubt that blasting your baby with Mozart will do much good. It takes a lot of learning to hear what Mozart is doing, especially because we have lost so much of the musical culture that Mozart took for granted in his audience.” To put in my own words, the discipline, commitment, and energy it takes to truly understand classical music is what positively impacts brain development, intelligence and social behavior. Although I love other forms of music I personally know the value of a great classical peace.

THE CLASSICAL MUSIC EXPERIMENT

Let us conduct a national experiment. Let us have a classical music week throughout the entire Bahamas. During this week every radio station will play only classical music or similar kinds of music (like easy listening, soft country music, light jazz) for seven days. It will be a week when background music in all stores, malls, busses, taxis, hotel lobbies will only be classical music or easy listening music. During this week we will also ask teenagers who walk around with their ears stuffed with sound boxes to pump classical music in

them. Every police station, every sports game is to be saturated with classical or easy listening music. Cheryl, one of my Facebook friends, suggested that we also play classical music in the prisons to help reduce the tension and angry spirits. Perhaps classical music could be played over giant speakers in large outdoor areas and deprived neighborhoods.

Based on my previous article on crime and how classical music reduces crime, I am confident that crime will be reduced during that one week period.

Then what next? Will one week of classical music be sufficient to reduce crime in our country? No. But it will be a start. What should happen next is a restructuring of the educational system requiring all students (in public and private schools) to become proficient in playing at least one instrument and reading classical music. In addition the instruments cannot be limited to percussion (drums, cymbals, etc.). It must include a wind or stringed instrument of any kind for which classical music has been written.

What can adults do, especially those who are not musically inclined? I suggest that parents, grandparents, and other adults start by adding classical music to their listening enjoyment. Start by listening to one hour a week and gradually increase it to 24 hours or more a week. They can tune in to our own Classical Station 98.1 or purchase classical music from online or local stores. For starters, persons who are not keen on classical music but are willing to try can listen to the music of Roger Williams, Victor Borge, Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein. Or they can listen to some of our own professionals like Joan and Lee Calender, Francis Fawkes, and Audrey Wright, The Nassau Renaissance Singers, just to name a few.

In my previous article, "Music, the Brain and Your Health," I quoted Napoleon Bonaparte who understood the enormous power of music. He summed it up by saying, "Give me control over he who shapes the music of a nation, and I care not who makes the laws."

If we start from a young age to train our children with the discipline of classical music, I am confident that our nation will be different soon. No, classical music is not enough; but it can be one of the many tools needed to change the direction of our nation.

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