

On the Overlap Between Aesthetic Disposition, Cultural Eclecticism, and Openness: An Interdisciplinary Study

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Over the past decades, psychology and sociology researchers have independently identified similar patterns of cultural dispositions. These patterns notably involve differences in terms of eclecticism, openness, and aesthetic disposition. While some scholars have theoretically fused these constructs, the extent to which they empirically overlap is unclear. In addition, the extent to which personality traits vary with social factors has received insufficient attention to date. The present study had 3 main goals. First, we assessed the respective influence of social and psychological factors on aesthetic disposition and eclecticism. Second, we sought to clarify the contours of the constructs of aesthetic disposition, eclecticism, and openness. Third, we examined the social contingency of personality traits. Based on the assessment of aesthetic disposition and of both cinematographic and musical eclecticism in high-school students ($N = 873$), the conducted analyses revealed that personality trait openness and socioeconomic status were the best psychological and social predictors of cultural dispositions. In addition, our results suggest that the constructs of aesthetic disposition and eclecticism, on the one hand, and of “cultural openness” and personality trait openness on the other hand, cover distinct phenomena. Our findings also indicated that cinematographic and musical eclecticism correlated moderately. The view of a general, or cross-area, eclecticism might thus be misleading. Finally, a strong positive association between socioeconomic status and personality trait openness was found. All in all, these findings stress the importance of adopting an interdisciplinary approach to cultural dispositions.

Keywords: aesthetic disposition, cultural eclecticism, openness, personality traits, socioeconomic status

In their examination of the determinants of cultural tastes and aesthetic appreciation, psychology and sociology investigators have generally followed separate avenues of research. The scarce number of studies investigating the joint influence of psychological and social factors on cultural dispositions illustrates this trend (for a few exceptions, see Kraaykamp & van Eijck, 2005; McManus & Furnham, 2006). Psychology researchers have extensively investigated the influence of personality traits and moods on cultural tastes and consumption; sociology researchers, the influence of social position and of a variety of sociodemographics.

Lack of interdisciplinarity has been viewed as an obstacle to the understanding of the foundations of cultural dispositions (Brisson & Bianchi, 2020; Swami & Furnham, 2014). The case of openness is emblematic in that respect. Though pivotal in both the psychology and the sociology of arts and culture, the concept of openness does not designate the same entity in these two areas of research. Moreover, the discussion of its radius of influence confronts

researchers of each discipline with issues that researchers from the other discipline may help to address. In psychology, openness has become one of the Big Five personality traits (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Digman, 1990). It can be assessed with a variety of standardized and validated inventories (e.g., NEO Five-Factor Inventory [NEO-FFI], Big Five Inventory [BFI]). The link between openness and cultural dispositions has been established for decades (for a review, see Swami & Furnham, 2014). However, the investigation of the interrelationships between personality traits, demographics, and socialization has only begun to burgeon (Swami & Furnham, 2014, p. 546). Sociologists may aid psychologists to develop this research area based on, for instance, stratification analyses that consider both class and subclass levels (Brisson & Bianchi, 2017). Reversely, psychologists may contribute to specifying the contours of what sociologists described as openness. In sociology, openness is not directly measured; it is speculatively inferred. It is loosely defined and used to characterize, or even cohere, cultural eclecticism, aesthetic cosmopolitanism, and antisnobism (Cicchelli & Octobre, 2017; Coulangeon, 2017; Eriksson, 2011; Graham, 2009; Warde et al., 2008). Within that framework, mentions of personality trait openness have been rare. One notable exception was provided by Roose et al. (2012, p. 494), who claimed that the “openness” mentioned by “sociologists of culture” does “resemble the openness-closedness dimension identified in psychology.” However, the resemblance in question has not been investigated despite the availability of valid and reliable measures of

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personality trait openness. Sociologists may benefit from the use of such measures to clarify the nature of cultural openness, a concept that has been the fulcrum of several controversies, precisely because of its ambiguous uses (e.g., see [Flemmen et al., 2019](#)). In sum, interdisciplinarity in the investigation of individual and social differences in cultural repertoires is likely to profit to both psychology and sociology researchers.

Two research areas may particularly benefit from an integrative approach. First, the research area dedicated to musical tastes. While psychologists have found personality trait openness to predict eclecticism ([Miranda & Claes, 2008](#)) as well as taste for a large array of music styles ([Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003](#)), sociologists have highlighted the influence of social position on omnivorousness and eclecticism ([Peterson, 1992, 2005](#))—two concepts that were explicitly linked to “an openness to appreciating everything” ([Peterson & Kern, 1996](#), p. 904) and “to cultural diversity” ([Ollivier, 2008](#)). Unfortunately, because integrative studies are lacking, the extent to which openness as measured by psychologists overlaps with the openness mentioned by sociologists remains unclear. This state of affairs is problematic from a theoretical viewpoint. Indeed, although eclecticism is considered a key dimension of the structure of cultural dispositions ([De Vries & Reeves, 2021](#)) and of musical tastes ([Coulangeon, 2015](#)), its determinants are unclear and its ability to serve as new cultural boundary is highly debated ([Chan & Turner, 2017](#); [Coulangeon, 2017](#); [Robette & Roueff, 2014](#); [Veenstra, 2015](#); [Wright, 2011](#)). Such discussions, however, have generally excluded ab ovo the possibility that personality trait openness may explain musical eclecticism. The development of integrative research assessing the respective influence of social and psychological factors on musical tastes and eclecticism may help clarify these nodal theoretical issues. A second research area that may benefit from an integrative approach is the area dedicated to aesthetic disposition. Defined as the ability to aestheticize and to prioritize form over function ([Bourdieu, 1979/1984](#), p. 3), aesthetic disposition has been shown to depend on social position and, to a lesser extent, on sex ([Bourdieu, 1979/1984](#), pp. 28–41). Despite the large resonance of Bourdieu’s studies, sociology investigators have not relied on Bourdieu’s conception and operationalization of aesthetic disposition. For instance, [Daenekindt and Roose \(2013\)](#) defined aesthetic disposition as “the deep underlying expectations people gave about the arts” (p. 49) and as the “ways in which individuals appropriate works of certain aspects of the aesthetic judgment over other aspects” (p. 50). These authors considered indicative of aesthetic disposition the importance attached to the presence in a movie of “action and adventure” or of “characters [one] can relate to” (p. 53). Such indicators refer only indirectly to the ability and propensity to aestheticize. Interestingly, while sociology investigators have not used Bourdieu’s operationalization of aesthetic disposition, psychological researchers have implemented procedures that are similar to Bourdieu’s and observed similar aesthetic patterns. For instance, their findings showed, as Bourdieu’s, that men assign a higher aesthetic value to emotionally negative pictures compared to women ([Rawlings, 2003](#); [Zaleski, 1984](#)). Furthermore, personality trait openness appeared linked to the appreciation of several art styles, including abstract and unconventional forms ([Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2009](#); [Feist & Brady, 2004](#); [Furnham & Walker, 2001a, 2001b](#); [Rawlings, 2000](#)). Because of the association between openness and educational performance ([Poropat, 2009](#)) and of the link

between education and social position ([Bourdieu, 1979/1984](#)), the abovementioned studies tend to support Bourdieu’s view of the stratification of aesthetic disposition. However, the interrelations between aesthetic disposition, openness, and education or socioeconomic status remain insufficiently investigated. Again, this state of affairs is likely due to a lack of integrative studies, which compromises a comprehensive examination of the determinants of aesthetic experience ([Swami & Furnham, 2014](#)). The underdevelopment of integrative approaches is eventually detrimental to theory building. The separate assessment of social and psychological factors in research on aesthetic judgment prevents investigators from hierarchizing the respective contribution of the social and psychological determinants of aesthetic judgment. Research silos are well-identified obstacles to knowledge production ([Fogarty & Perera, 2016](#)).

While largely overlooking each other’s work, psychologists and sociologists have nonetheless observed rather similar patterns of cultural dispositions. These patterns involved, inter alia, differences in terms of eclecticism and openness. Interestingly, [Lizardo and Skiles \(2012, p. 272\)](#) suggested, based on the sociological state of the art, that omnivorousness (i.e., cultural eclecticism) should be reconceptualized as “a transposable variant of aesthetic disposition,” in the Bourdieusian sense of the term. Although he did not refer explicitly to the concept of aesthetic disposition, [Peterson \(2005, p. 260\)](#) formulated an analogous idea when he described omnivorousness as “the ability to appreciate the distinctive aesthetic of a wide range of cultural forms.” Despite its heuristic potential, the reconceptualization of eclecticism as a form of aesthetic disposition has not been submitted to examination.

In the present study, we examined the influence of both psychological and social factors on the distribution of aesthetic disposition and cultural eclecticism and, on that basis, investigated the interrelationships between aesthetic disposition, eclecticism, and openness. Such an integrative approach, focusing on both psychological and social factors, has the potential to clarify (a) the theoretical outlines of the concepts of aesthetic disposition, eclecticism, and openness, and (b) assess the extent to which the Big Five personality traits are socially contingent. To accomplish our research goals, we assessed participants’ aesthetic disposition as well as cinematographic and musical eclecticism. We also estimated the extent to which socioeconomic status and sex are associated with personality. Because several studies suggest that age, generation, and/or period influence individuals’ cultural repertoire in general and cultural eclecticism in particular ([Reeves, 2014; 2016; Scherger, 2009; Van Eijck & Knulst, 2005](#)), we decided to focus on a homogeneous age group. Relying on a homogenous age group enabled us to neutralize potential cohort effects. We gauged both musical and cinematographic eclecticism to study the transposability of the aesthetic disposition across two cultural domains.

Method

Ethics

Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Neuchâtel. Permission to conduct the study was granted by local educational authorities. Students were provided with information on the study a few weeks before the

study was launched. Both student consent and parental consent to participate in the study were requested and obtained. Complete anonymity was guaranteed.

Recruitment

Public and private high-school principals or *conseillers principaux d'éducation* from three middle-towns located in the East of France were emailed and provided with a brief description of the present study. Five of the contacted principals showed an interest in the project and allowed us to administrate the survey in their school. The main recruitment criteria were the availability of the classes and professors' approval to administrate the survey during class time.

Study Sample

873 high-school students ($M_{\text{Age}} = 16.85$, $SD_{\text{Age}} = 0.85$; 59% female) took part in the present study: 688 were recruited from four general high schools; 185, from a vocational high school providing training programs in basic administration and commerce. The study sample involves 49.4% of 11th graders (54% female), and 50.6% of 12th graders (64% female).

Socioeconomic Status

Based on students' reports of their (step-)parents' education and (former) occupation as well as on the type of the attended high school (i.e., general vs. vocational), we distinguished between seven socioeconomic statuses (hereinafter SES). Our classification was also guided by the work of Bourdieu (1979/1984) and Hansen et al. (2009). These authors discriminated between a vertical and a horizontal level of analysis, namely the social-class and the class-fraction levels (see also Brisson & Bianchi, 2015, 2017). Within that framework, social class is defined by the volume of capital that an individual owns. Volume is assessed with measures of economic capital (e.g., income) and cultural capital (e.g., education). Class fraction is defined by the respective weight of these two types of capital within the volume of capital owned. Bourdieu (1979/1984) and Hansen et al. (2009) identified within both the middle and the upper class a cultural fraction (cultural capital > economic capital), a balanced fraction (cultural capital $\approx$ economic capital), and an economic fraction (cultural capital < economic capital). Thus, the vertical level of analysis allows researchers to differentiate, for instance, between a university professor (upper class) and a secondary teacher (middle class); the horizontal level of analysis, between a university professor (cultural fraction of the upper class) and a chief executive officer (economic fraction of the upper class), or between a secondary-school teacher (cultural fraction of the middle class) and a medical secretary (balanced fraction of the middle class). It is of note that Bourdieu (1979/1984) as well as Hansen et al. (2009) did not demarcate fractions within the lower class. Bourdieu (1979/1984, p. 115) was unable to do so due to the characteristics of his study sample. Hansen et al. (2009, p. 10) opted for the creation of an additional class called "welfare transfers," a class that gathers individuals whose income mostly consists in payments from the social security system (e.g., child benefit allowances, guaranteed minimum income).

In the present study, we differentiated between seven SES corresponding to seven class fractions, two of which relate to the lower class. The first SES ($n = 185$; 59% female) gathered the students from the vocational high school because (a) their parents exhibited lower economic and cultural capital and (b) the type of high school (i.e., general vs. vocational) is in itself a status marker (Caille, 2014). Indeed, the high school in question exhibited one of the highest "indexes of social difficulties" and one of the lowest "indexes of social position" of the region. These indexes combine, inter alia, measures of dropout, learning difficulties, and parents' income. As an illustration, about 93% of the parents of these students possessed no diploma or a low diploma (i.e., $\leq$ bac, the French high-school degree). Moreover, 38% of these students reported to live in a single-parent family. Such a rate is dramatically high, compared to the national average (i.e., 21%; see Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques [INSEE], 2020) and to the rest of our study sample (i.e., 14.7%). The second SES ($n = 206$; 59% female) comprised students whose both parents held no or a low diploma and occupied unskilled and low-remunerated jobs (e.g., cashier, waiter). These two SES correspond to the lower class (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; Hansen et al., 2009).

The third SES ($n = 110$; 57% female) grouped students whose parents had a low but qualifying diploma and occupied semi-skilled jobs (i.e., craftsman, master mason). The fourth SES ($n = 103$; 62% female) congregated students whose parents (a) held a postbac diploma involving a 2–3 year of training, (b) had jobs unrelated to arts, education or teaching, and (c) occupied an intermediate rank in the occupational hierarchy (e.g., nurse, secretary). The fifth SES ($n = 89$; 55% female) gathered students whose parents' job (a) was directly related to arts, culture, education, and teaching, (b) required a postbac diploma involving a 3–5 year of training, and (c) was associated with medium remuneration (e.g., educator, librarian, primary teacher). These three groups correspond, respectively, to the economic, balanced, and cultural fractions of the middle class (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; Hansen et al., 2009).

The sixth SES ($n = 91$; 66% female) comprised students whose parents' jobs (a) required a postbac diploma involving at least a five-year of training, (b) were associated with the greatest incomes, (c) occupied the highest ranks in the occupational hierarchy, and (d) pertained to the economic/finance sector (e.g., business executive, insurance top manager). The seventh SES ($n = 89$; 54% female) grouped students whose parents exhibited a postbac diploma involving at least a five-year of training and occupied high-status positions unrelated to the finance sector (e.g., engineers, pediatrician, university teacher). Because of sample size issue, it was not possible to distinguish within the upper class between a balanced and a cultural fraction. Thus, the sixth SES corresponds to the economic fraction of the upper class; the seventh SES, to a mix of its balanced and cultural fractions (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; Hansen et al., 2009). By convenience, we will refer to this "hybrid" fraction as the cultural fraction of the upper class.

We note that our study sample was highly affected by social endogamy. As an illustration, most parents exhibited a similar educational level. Based on six education categories (i.e., "no diploma," "< bac," "bac," "2–3 year postbac training," "4–5 year postbac training," "doctorate, degree from a *haute école*"), we found a relatively high correlation between fathers' and mothers'

level of education ($p = .693$). This trend limited the number of discrepancies between parents' educational level and occupational status. Such discrepancies were treated based on the consideration of the parent endowed with the highest SES.

Personality Traits

The Big Five personality traits (i.e., agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism, and openness) were assessed with the NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 2004; Rolland et al., 1998). The NEO-FFI measures each trait with a 12-item subscale (sample neuroticism item: "I often feel tense and jittery."). Participants responded using a 5-point scale (from 0 for "strongly disagree" to 4 for "strongly agree"). Cronbach's alpha was .712 for agreeableness, .733 for extraversion, .811 for conscientiousness, .841 for neuroticism, and .804 for openness.

Aesthetic Disposition

Our operationalization of aesthetic disposition was inspired by Bourdieu's (1984, p. 517). Students were asked to indicate whether, with a list of 20 items, a photographer was likely to take a more or less beautiful photograph. Participants reported their aesthetic judgment on five-point rating scales (from 1 for "very ugly" to 5 for "very beautiful"). The list involved twenty items, seven of which were used in Bourdieu's inventory (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; p. 604). Because pretests involving 30 adolescents highlighted that the other items from Bourdieu's inventory were obscure to several adolescents (e.g., "still life," "a weaver at his loom"), we replaced them. Given that aesthetic disposition deals with the ability to aestheticize common and emotionally negative objects, our selection process was guided by the objective of including items that were positively and negatively connoted as well as items having more neutral contents. Participants to pretests were asked to class a list of potential photographic themes into a category (i.e., clichéd/positive, neutral, or negative) based on the emotional connotation of each single theme. We selected the items involving a consensus rate greater than or equal to 90%. We therefore relied on the following 20 items (Bourdieu's items are italicized): deserted street at night, *famous monument*, luxury car, starry sky, *sunset*, and wedding couple as "clichéd" items; *bark of a tree*, beetle, *breast-feeding woman*, *metal frame*, pile of banknotes, religious people praying, and vegetable stall as neutral items; abandoned cat, *car crash*, naked old man, prison cell, *quarreling tramps*, sad child, and surgical operation as "negatively connoted" items. The reliability of the measure, as indexed by Cronbach's alpha, was .866.

We computed four indices of aesthetic disposition. The first index corresponds to the mean score of appreciation of the clichéd items; the second, to the mean score of appreciation of the neutral items; the third, to the mean score of appreciation of the negatively connoted items; the fourth, to the general score of aesthetic disposition, all types of items considered.

Cultural Tastes and Eclecticism

Musical and cinematographic tastes were assessed with 5-point rating scales (from 1 for "I dislike very much" to 5 for "I

like very much") measuring the appreciation of 40 music styles and 21 movie (sub)genres (see the Appendix Table A1). Participants had the possibility to signal that they did know a particular item. Our item selection was based on pretests involving 30 students who were asked to indicate which music styles they regularly listened and never listened to and which movie (sub) genres they regularly watched or never watched. 47 music categories were cited at least thrice (i.e., by at least 10% of the pilot sample). We grouped the answers "black metal," "death metal," and "trash metal" into the category "extreme metal." We excluded the answer "electro" because of its generality and its overlap with "dance," "electropop," "house," and "techno." We also ignored the categories "chill" and "minimal" (three occurrences for each) to not overrepresent electronic music, as well as the categories "commercial" and "indie" because they cover several music styles. 24 movie (sub)genres were cited at least thrice. We excluded the categories "Asian movies," "independent movies" and "blockbusters" because they encompass numerous movie genres. Unlike most sociologists, who usually examine smaller sets, we relied on a relatively large spectrum of categories to better capture potential differences in terms of eclecticism.

Musical and cinematographic eclecticism were assessed with (a) the mean score of appreciation of the categories under study and (b) the rate of categories liked. Both scores omitted unknown labels. The two scores of musical eclecticism were highly correlated with each other ($r = .914$). The same applied to the two scores of cinematographic eclecticism ($r = .932$). We note that our indicators of cultural eclecticism neglect the question of cultural hierarchy or legitimacy and therefore relate to the so-called "omnivorousness by volume" (Warde et al., 2007). We ignored the hierarchy issue because, as noted by Brisson (2019; p. 11), the methods used by sociologists in that respect have been either tautological or highly speculative, to date.

Data Analyses

Depending on the nature of our variables and of the properties of the corresponding distributions, we performed general linear modeling analyses together with Tukey's posthoc tests or correlational analyses. We note that the variance inflation factor (VIF) of each single predictor was systematically satisfactory (all VIFs < 1.8). We used Eta-squared and correlational coefficients as effect size estimates.

We assessed the distribution of aesthetic disposition, cinematographic eclecticism, and musical eclecticism with two models. The first model included the Big Five personality traits, SES, and sex as predictors. The second model involved additional predictors, namely, aesthetic disposition, cinematographic eclecticism, and musical eclecticism. We used mean score of appreciation of the categories examined as a measure of eclecticism. For instance, the supplementary predictors of our second model examining the determinants of musical eclecticism were aesthetic disposition and cinematographic eclecticism. This allowed us to further address the issue of the interrelationships between aesthetic disposition, cultural eclecticism, and openness without exclusively relying on correlational analyses.

Results

Determinants of Aesthetic Disposition

In our first model (see Table 1), our general indicator of aesthetic disposition was found to vary, in descending order of importance, as a function of openness, SES, and conscientiousness. Agreeableness, extraversion, neuroticism, and sex did not affect aesthetic disposition. While a focus on the neutral items highlighted similar patterns, the examination of the sole negatively connoted items showed an additional, albeit weak, influence of agreeableness and neuroticism. Results pertaining to the clichéd items revealed no impact of the retained factors, with the exception of a marginal effect of extraversion. Our second model affected those patterns of results only moderately. The only substantial difference was the mitigation of the effect of openness, due to the interference of cinematographic eclecticism. This interference equated the respective strength of the effects related to openness and SES. It is of note that musical eclecticism was uninfluential here.

Determinants of Cultural Eclecticism

The investigation of the determinants of cultural eclecticism pointed out important differences depending on (a) the area examined (music vs. movie), (b) the type of indicator retained (mean score of appreciation vs. rate of items liked), and (c) the statistical model considered. We note that the effects, mentioned below, linked to personality traits are all positive, with the exception of conscientiousness. The direction of the effects linked to SES and sex are specified in the Appendix Tables A2 and A3.

As shown in Table 2, the examination of our first indicator of musical eclecticism, based on mean scores of music-style appreciation, revealed in model 1 a large effect of openness and a small effect of SES. All the other predictors were uninfluential. Model 2 confirmed these trends and identified, in addition, a strong effect of cinematographic eclecticism and a marginal effect of neuroticism.

The analysis of our second indicator of musical eclecticism, based on rates of music styles liked, highlighted in model 1 a large effect of openness as well as marginal-to-small effects of

conscientiousness, SES, and sex. In model 2, the effects of conscientiousness and SES lost their significance and, again, a strong effect of cinematographic eclecticism and a marginal effect of neuroticism were observed.

Regarding cinematographic eclecticism (see Table 3), the examination of the mean scores of movie-(sub)genre appreciation revealed in model 1 a large effect of openness and a small effect of conscientiousness. Importantly, this large effect of openness vanished in model 2, in which additional effects of musical eclecticism, aesthetic disposition, SES, and sex appeared. The analysis of the rates of movie (sub)genres liked accounted for similar patterns, although an effect of sex was found in both models and the effect of conscientiousness lost its significance in model 2.

It should be noted, finally, that eclecticism varied as a function of the cultural domain examined (i.e., films or music). While students reported, on average, to like a majority of movie (sub)genres, irrespective of their sex and SES, most of them indicated to like, on average, a minority of music styles (see the Appendix for descriptive statistics).

Intercorrelations Between Aesthetic Disposition, Cultural Eclecticism, and Openness

The examination of the interrelationships between aesthetic disposition, cultural eclecticism, and openness highlighted only partial overlaps between those measures (see Table 4). With the exceptions of the link between openness and musical eclecticism and of the coefficients related to our two indicators of musical and cinematographic eclecticism, moderate levels of correlation (i.e., $< .5$) were observed. Controlling for SES and sex affected only slightly the correlational coefficients.

The Social Contingency of the Big Five Personality Traits

General linear models showed that SES largely affected openness ($p = .000$; $\eta^2 = .196$) and influenced to a far lesser extent agreeableness ($p = .000$; $\eta^2 = .055$), extraversion ($p = .002$; $\eta^2 = .024$), as well as neuroticism ($p = .000$; $\eta^2 = .031$). Conscientiousness

Table 1
General Linear Modeling Analyses of the Determinants of Aesthetic Disposition

Predictors	Aesthetic disposition															
	Clichéd items				Neutral items				Negatively connoted items				All items			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2	
	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2
SES	.214	.010	.128	.012	.000	.038	.000	.033	.000	.097	.000	.089	.000	.068	.000	.063
Sex	.098	.003	.034	.005	.512	.000	.276	.001	.214	.002	.123	.003	.151	.002	.052	.004
Agreeableness	.340	.001	.241	.002	.675	.000	.501	.001	.000	.018	.000	.017	.068	.004	.098	.003
Conscientiousness	.466	.001	.953	.000	.005	.009	.044	.005	.002	.011	.013	.007	.002	.011	.022	.006
Extraversion	.006	.009	.023	.006	.895	.000	.449	.001	.254	.002	.132	.003	.957	.000	.565	.000
Neuroticism	.624	.000	.413	.001	.685	.000	.578	.000	.001	.013	.001	.012	.117	.003	.150	.002
Openness	.620	.000	.152	.002	.000	.118	.000	.055	.000	.128	.000	.077	.000	.125	.000	.063
Movie eclecticism	—	—	.000	.060	—	—	.000	.049	—	—	.000	.018	—	—	.000	.057
Musical eclecticism	—	—	.539	.000	—	—	.018	.006	—	—	.175	.002	—	—	.103	.003
Adjusted R^2	.013		.075		.230		.291		.290		.311		.258		.317	

Note. SES = socioeconomic status. *p* values $< .05$ and $\eta^2 > .06$ are bolded.

Table 2*General Linear Modeling Analyses of the Determinants of Musical Eclecticism*

Predictors	Mean score of music style ratings				Rate of music styles liked			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2	
	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2
SES	.000	.050	.000	.042	.008	.020	.069	.014
Sex	.311	.001	.065	.004	.000	.017	.000	.026
Agreeableness	.361	.001	.140	.003	.652	.000	.374	.001
Conscientiousness	.093	.003	.804	.000	.026	.006	.287	.001
Extraversion	.407	.001	.987	.000	.227	.002	.608	.000
Neuroticism	.196	.002	.047	.005	.118	.003	.033	.005
Openness	.000	.173	.000	.092	.000	.154	.000	.084
Aesthetic disposition	—	—	.103	.003	—	—	.330	.001
Movie eclecticism	—	—	.000	.151	—	—	.000	.117
Adjusted R^2	.323		.439		.276		.370	

Note. SES = socioeconomic status. *p* values < .05 and η^2 > .06 are bolded.

did not depend on SES ($p = .079$; $\eta^2 = .013$). Notably, openness varied as a function of SES at both the between- and within-class levels (see Table 5). Contrariwise, the observed variations in agreeableness, extraversion, and neuroticism did not reflect clear patterns of stratification (see Table 5).

The same general linear models indicated that sex significantly affected each personality trait. Females scored far much higher in neuroticism ($p = .000$; $\eta^2 = .184$) and slightly higher in agreeableness ($p = .000$; $\eta^2 = .054$), openness ($p = .000$; $\eta^2 = .016$), and conscientiousness ($p = .004$; $\eta^2 = .009$). Males exhibited a higher degree of extraversion ($p = .001$; $\eta^2 = .012$). Neuroticism was the unique trait involving a relatively clear sexual pattern, with females exhibiting a mean score > 2 and males, a mean score < 2 on a 0–4 scale (see Table 5).

Discussion

This study aimed (a) to assess the influence of both psychological and social factors on the distribution of aesthetic disposition and cultural eclecticism and, on that basis, (b) to clarify the outlines of the concepts of eclecticism and openness. Such clarification indeed required consistency between our findings and the findings from sociological research and psychological research.

Table 3*General Linear Modeling Analyses of the Determinants of Cinematographic Eclecticism*

Predictors	Mean score of movie (sub)genre ratings				Rate of movie (sub)genres liked			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2	
	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2	<i>p</i>	η^2
SES	.383	.007	.011	.019	.230	.009	.001	.025
Sex	.053	.004	.003	.011	.010	.008	.000	.014
Agreeableness	.515	.000	.449	.001	.199	.002	.175	.002
Conscientiousness	.001	.013	.026	.006	.004	.010	.069	.004
Extraversion	.056	.004	.071	.004	.163	.002	.212	.002
Neuroticism	.281	.001	.162	.002	.815	.000	.733	.000
Openness	.000	.085	.147	.002	.000	.072	.104	.003
Aesthetic disposition	—	—	.000	.057	—	—	.000	.049
Musical eclecticism	—	—	.000	.151	—	—	.000	.100
Adjusted R^2	.125		.316		.103		.247	

Note. SES = socioeconomic status. *p* values < .05 and η^2 > .06 are bolded.

The Sociodemographic and Personality Determinants of Cultural Dispositions

Overall, our findings are in line with past research. As Bourdieu (1979/1984), we found that the inclination to aestheticize common and negatively connoted items positively varied with SES. Unlike Bourdieu (1979/1984), however, we did not observe a negative relationship between SES and the appeal of clichéd items. Our results also showed that the impact of the Big Five personality traits on aesthetic judgment was mainly circumscribed to openness (Swami & Furnham, 2014). The weight of the other traits was either nil or weak. Importantly, we did not find females to reject as ugly the emotionally negative items to a stronger extent than males. This result contrasts with previous findings, which underlined that men were likely to assign a higher aesthetic value to negatively connoted items than women. Differences in sampling and data treatment may partly explain such dissimilarities: indeed, Rawlings (2000; 2003) surveyed small samples of psychology students that comprised, on average, about 80% of females; Bourdieu (1979/1984) focused on item-per-item comparisons and reported descriptive statistics only. Future studies may further specify the role of sex or gender in the aesthetic appreciation of negatively connoted items. Be that as it may, our findings corroborated the view that SES and openness inflect the ability to aestheticize nonconventional items

Table 4*Correlation Matrix: Aesthetic Disposition, Cultural Eclecticism, and Openness*

Variables	AD	CE-M	CE-R	ME-M	ME-R	OtE
[AD] Aesthetic Disposition	—	.387	.345	.396	.339	.450
[CE-M] Cinematographic Eclecticism (Mean)	.358	—	.923	.497	.443	.321
[CE-R] Cinematographic Eclecticism (Rate)	.325	.921	—	.421	.406	.284
[ME-M] Musical Eclecticism (Mean)	.306	.485	.414	—	.914	.536
[ME-R] Musical Eclecticism (Rate)	.266	.442	.413	.910	—	.494
[OtE] Openness-to-Experience	.364	.291	.264	.444	.419	—

Note. Partial correlation coefficients controlling for SES and sex are italicized. All correlations were significant at $p < .01$.

(Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2010) and shape the distance “vis-à-vis ‘first-degree’ perception” (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; p. 34).

Similarly, our results pertaining to musical eclecticism echoed past research (Dollinger, 1993; Miranda & Claes, 2008; Purhonen et al., 2010). We indeed found musical eclecticism to depend on openness and SES. On a different note, our findings also mirrored past research in that they underscored that the method of measurement of musical eclecticism significantly affected the outcomes. Indeed, relying on mean scores of appreciation of music styles or on rates of categories liked produced different results. Notably, we found sex and conscientiousness to influence musical eclecticism only when considering rates of categories liked. This finding illustrates the problems mentioned by several scholars regarding the proliferation of the operationalizations of cultural eclecticism (Brisson, 2019; Robette & Roueff, 2014).

The case of cinematographic eclecticism is difficult to appreciate based on the state of the art, since both sociologists and psychologists have paid little attention to this visual art (Duval, 2011; Rentfrow et al., 2011). Moreover, most investigators have either studied peculiar types of film (e.g., horror movies; see Martin, 2019) or relied on different sets of personality traits (e.g., the Dark Triad; see Bowes et al., 2018). Nonetheless, our findings pointed out an effect of openness on cinematographic eclecticism, a result that is consistent with Swami et al. (2010) study highlighting the role of this trait in the appreciation of unconventional, surrealist motion pictures. The absence of an effect of SES on cinematographic eclecticism that we observed is theoretically challenging, since eclecticism is supposed to be socially stratified irrespective of the examined cultural area. Two main factor may explain this apparently confounding result. First, the “identity badge” hypothesis (Frith, 1981; North & Hargreaves, 1999). According to this

hypothesis, musical styles refer to subcultures, set of values, behaviors or attitudes, that are highly distinctive during adolescence. Unlike musical tastes, movie preferences may be less prone to constitute such a banner. The minor importance attached to movie compared to music supports this view (Lonsdale & North, 2011). Second, the signature of the labels of movie (sub)genres. The frontiers between movie genres may be more porous than the boundaries between music genres. For instance, Soderbergh’s adaptation of *Solaris* may be simultaneously ascribed into several categories (e.g., Sci-Fi, drama, romance). This state of affairs may partly explain why a majority of movie (sub)genres was positively valued by students, irrespective of their SES. Be that as it may, our findings suggest that the determinants of cultural eclecticism are likely to vary as a function of the examined cultural area.

Aesthetic Disposition, Eclecticism, and Personality Trait Openness

Our findings suggest that aesthetic disposition, eclecticism, and personality trait openness refer to distinct entities and that they should not be conflated with each other. They also invite to be cautious in the conceptualization of a broad, cross-area cultural eclecticism.

Our results suggest that Lizardo and Skiles (2012) reconceptualization of eclecticism as a variant of aesthetic disposition might be problematic. First, the correlations between eclecticism and aesthetic disposition appeared to be too small to assume that one merely reflects the other. Second, musical eclecticism was not associated with aesthetic disposition in our model. Third, while cinematographic eclecticism was linked to aesthetic disposition, it accounted for less variance than SES and openness. Fourth, while

Table 5*SES, Sex, and Personality Traits (Five-Point Rating Scales [0–4])*

Demographics	Agreeableness		Conscientious		Extraversion		Neuroticism		Openness	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Vocational	2.24 _a	0.60	2.54 _a	0.59	2.34 _{ab}	0.50	2.07 _a	0.71	2.00 _a	0.60
Lower class	2.29 _{ab}	0.59	2.36 _a	0.59	2.33 _a	0.58	2.37 _b	0.73	2.24 _{ab}	0.66
Middle class-EF	2.59 _d	0.55	2.48 _a	0.70	2.51 _{ab}	0.59	2.12 _{ab}	0.80	2.42 _{bc}	0.67
Middle class-BF	2.53 _{cd}	0.57	2.53 _a	0.61	2.48 _{ab}	0.52	2.33 _{ab}	0.77	2.52 _c	0.60
Middle class-CF	2.53 _{cd}	0.55	2.40 _a	0.66	2.38 _{ab}	0.62	2.35 _b	0.78	2.77 _{de}	0.57
Upper class-EF	2.36 _{abc}	0.65	2.54 _a	0.71	2.55 _b	0.59	2.38 _b	0.97	2.53 _{cd}	0.60
Upper class-CF	2.47 _{bcd}	0.50	2.42 _a	0.62	2.46 _{ab}	0.52	2.31 _{ab}	0.72	2.96 _e	0.55
Females	2.50 _a	0.59	2.51 _a	0.65	2.36 _a	0.56	2.54 _a	0.71	2.46 _a	0.69
Males	2.24 _b	0.56	2.39 _b	0.60	2.48 _b	0.56	1.87 _b	0.70	2.32 _b	0.67

Note. EF = economic fraction; BF = balanced fraction; CF = cultural fraction. When different from a vertical cell to the other, minuscules refers to a statistically significant difference.

aesthetic disposition affected cinematographic eclecticism, it accounted for less variance than musical eclecticism. One could argue here that the inclusion of musical eclecticism as a predictor of cinematographic eclecticism was problematic. However, it should be noted that the correlations between cinematographic and musical eclecticism were only slightly higher than the correlations between aesthetic disposition and either cinematographic or musical eclecticism. In brief, our findings are indicative of modest associations between these variables. This therefore suggests that aesthetic disposition and eclecticism constitute distinct entities. This view is further supported by the observation that the best predictor of one type of eclecticism (i.e., cinematographic or musical) was the other type of eclecticism, not aesthetic disposition. In addition, our findings indicate, again, that the determinants of cultural eclecticism are likely to vary as a function of the domain under study. The inclusion of both types of eclecticism and aesthetic disposition in our predictive models indicated that aesthetic disposition was significantly linked to cinematographic eclecticism but not to musical eclecticism.

Our results also suggest that the sociological construct of “cultural openness” used to characterize eclecticism should not be confused with the psychological construct of openness. Correlations between our indicators of eclecticism and openness signaled small-to-medium associations. It is of note that openness was more strongly linked to musical eclecticism than to cinematographic eclecticism. As mentioned above, students with lower SES who exhibited relatively low scores of openness reported to like a majority of movie (sub)genres. This result questions the transposability of the eclectic disposition from one cultural area to the other. It also underlines both the importance of studying different cultural areas and the hazard of generalizing findings related to a unique domain. Sociology investigators have indeed disproportionally examined dispositions toward music (Hazir & Warde, 2016), hence neglecting other cultural domains. The “rise of eclecticism” paradigm might have not emerged if sociologists had systematically assessed movie preferences in addition to music preferences. In any case, our findings indicate that the resemblance, noted by Roose et al. (2012; p. 494), between cultural openness, as reflected in eclecticism, and personality trait openness, involves weak-to-moderate overlaps. Although additional studies are required to confirm this trend, cultural openness and personality trait openness are likely to cover distinct phenomena.

The Social Contingency of the Big Five Personality Traits

We found all personality traits to vary with sex. However, except for neuroticism, effect sizes were relatively weak. Overall, our results corroborate previous findings (Costa et al., 2001; De Bolle et al., 2015). Interestingly, we also observed that SES affected most personality traits. While most effect sizes were weak, SES turned out to largely influence openness. This finding partly erodes the view that “openness cannot be understood as the culture that is acquired through education or good breeding, nor as intellect or any cognitive ability” (McCrae & Costa, 1997; p. 826). Our results indeed suggest that high SES and, in particular, high inherited educational capital may constitute a fertile ground for the development of openness. Future research may further address the

issue of the stratification of openness and, more generally, of personality. The extent to which personality traits are socially contingent has received insufficient attention to date (Chapman et al., 2010; Shanahan et al., 2014).

Conclusion

The present study involves four main findings. First, while personality trait openness appeared, among the psychological and sociodemographic factors under study, as the best predictor of the examined cultural dispositions, SES accounted for a non-negligible part of the variance in aesthetic disposition and musical eclecticism. Second, openness is likely to be socially stratified. Third, the view of a general, cross-area cultural eclecticism (whether or not considered as a transposable avatar of aesthetic disposition) may be unwarranted. Fourth, personality trait openness and the “cultural openness” invoked by sociologists to characterize eclecticism are likely to cover distinct phenomena. In order to further address these issues, future research may develop integrative approaches based on the concomitant consideration of both psychological and social factors as well as of multiple cultural domains.

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Appendix

Complementary Information and Descriptive Statistics

Table A1
List of Music Styles and Movie (Sub)Genres

Music styles		Movie (Sub)genres
Blues	Metal	Action
African music	New Age/Atmospheric music	Adventure
Alternative, indie rock	New wave/PP	Animation
American rap	Opera	Auteur film
“Chanson à texte”	Pop	Biopic
Classical	Punk	Comedy
Conscious rap	R&B	Detective, crime
Country/Western	Raï	Disaster movies
Dance/Disco	Rap-metal	Documentary
Electropop	Reggae/Ska/Dub	Drama
Experimental, art rock	Reggaeton	Fantasy
Extreme metal	Religious music	Gangster, mafia
Folk (American)	Rock	Horror
French rap	Rock 60s, 70s	Musicals
French “variété”	Soul	Peplum
Gypsy jazz	Symphonic metal	Romantic comedy
Hard rock	Techno	Sci-Fi
House/Trance	Trip hop	Superhero
International “variété”	Zouk	Thriller
Jazz		War
Latin music		Western

(Appendix continues)

Table A2*Aesthetic Disposition, SES, and Sex (Descriptive Statistics)*

Demographics	Clichéd items		Neutral items		Negative items		All items	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Vocational	25.72	3.42	20.37	4.71	13.01	4.91	59.10	9.67
Lower class	26.12	2.69	23.23	5.20	16.80	6.64	66.15	12.24
Middle class-EF	26.26	3.09	23.90	5.74	19.20	7.94	69.36	14.38
Middle class-BF	26.17	2.84	24.49	4.73	19.73	7.44	70.38	12.10
Middle class-CF	26.12	2.45	25.38	4.58	20.84	6.39	72.35	10.54
Upper class-EF	26.04	2.79	24.00	4.96	19.23	6.25	69.27	10.41
Upper class-CF	25.26	2.89	25.83	4.13	22.51	6.79	73.60	10.41
Females	26.14	2.82	23.69	5.08	17.85	7.12	67.68	11.98
Males	25.71	3.10	23.04	5.41	17.95	7.32	66.70	13.06

Note. SES = socioeconomic status; EF = economic fraction; BF = balanced fraction; CF = cultural fraction.

Table A3*Cultural Eclecticism, SES, and Sex (Descriptive Statistics)*

Demographics	Cinematographic eclecticism				Musical eclecticism			
	Mean scores		% of items liked		Mean scores		% of items liked	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Vocational	3.34	0.71	54.41	21.11	2.47	0.67	30.76	17.44
Lower class	3.37	0.57	53.86	19.45	2.69	0.63	34.12	17.44
Middle class-EF	3.39	0.46	53.17	17.27	2.79	0.63	35.85	17.08
Middle class-BF	3.53	0.54	58.47	18.02	3.01	0.60	41.01	18.48
Middle class-CF	3.64	0.50	60.73	17.03	3.21	0.59	46.60	18.78
Upper class-EF	3.49	0.56	58.79	18.22	3.01	0.53	40.87	15.94
Upper class-CF	3.63	0.46	61.40	15.80	3.24	0.49	46.52	17.22
Females	3.41	0.61	55.00	19.15	2.89	0.66	40.50	17.81
Males	3.50	0.53	58.47	18.29	2.76	0.67	33.62	18.32

Note. SES = socioeconomic status; EF = economic fraction; BF = balanced fraction; CF = cultural fraction.

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