# Entre o algoritmo e a curadoria: programação radiofônica, gêneros musicais e repetição[1]

# Between algorithm and curation - Radio programming, music genres and repetition

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**Resumo**: *Este artigo investiga o processo de construção da programação musical radiofônica, cada vez mais tensionada entre dois polos: a curadoria humana e a mediação algorítmica dos softwares de automação. No percurso, propõe-se uma reflexão sobre os papéis exercidos por categorias como gêneros musicais, diversidade e repetição. Parte-se da premissa de que a música permanece central para o rádio num momento de transição nas indústrias midiáticas em que se consolidam novos intermediários, notadamente serviços de streaming, em que a curadoria humana foi progressivamente dando lugar a sofisticados sistemas de automação, reorganizando a escuta de música em larga escala.*

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ARTIGO

**Palavras-chave**: *Rádio; programação musical; curadoria; automação; mediação algorítmica.*

**Abstract**: *This article investigates the process of building a radio programming, increasingly tensioned between two poles: human curation and the algorithmic mediation of automation software. We propose a discussion on the roles played by categories such as musical genres, diversity and repetition. The argument is based on the premise that music remains central to radio at a time of transition in media industries. This time of new intermediacy consolidation is marked by streaming services in which human curation has progressively given way to sophisticated automation systems, reorganizing music listening on a large scale.*

**Keywords**: *Radio; music programming; curation; automation; algorithmic mediation.*

## Introduction

To chain a sequence of songs in a way to engage an audience, building or capitalizing affectionate bonds, is an activity that was gradually raised to the status of art throughout the last six decades. With the consolidation of the music and radio industry, in the 1950's, the disc-jockey (DJ) became a pop icon, a connoisseur of "good music", articulating parties and other social events, an entertainer, master of ceremonies, in summary, a cultural mediator, able to prescribe to specific audiences what they should listen, a soundtrack not only to the dancefloor, but to everyday life.

These attributes gained importance firstly with the expansion of frequency modulation, in the 1980's, with the popularization of electronic music, in the 1990's and with new digital actors of sound media, in the 2000's. It is no coincidence that the first DJs, in late 1950's, early 1960's, had become celebrities, presenting radiophonic concerts that had their names and signing collections released by the music industry with successful songs of the moment. The same happened with DJs of the diverse subgenre of electronic music, many of which had became international stars. Maybe because of that, the pioneer streaming service, Last.fm, launched in 2003, in England, with the pretension of being the last FM – in the sense that, after them, supposedly music channels in Hertzian waves would lose their reason for existing –, presented, in their internet page, pictures and small text about their 40 programmers.

These profiles worked as type of certificate of human curatorship for a complex system anchored in the software Audioscrobbler, which informed the service each song listened by the user in their computer and traced, through algorithms, a profile, forming sequences of songs in continuous flow. In ten years, the service accumulated over 43 billion *scrobbles*, which would equate to a playlist that took 391 thousand years to be played (KISCHINHEVSKY, 2016, p. 76). The categorization of contents in music genres and subgenres, through tools of tagging, tracking and distinction, played a key role in the process of identification

between last.fm listeners (AMARAL, 2007, p. 235-239) [7], which worked as a hybrid of social media and platform for music consumption.

Automation software have gradually getting the spotlight, not only amongst the new actors of the digital market of sound media, but also in radio. The absolute majority of music channels has incorporated to their productive routines proprietary programs, such as Pulsar, Playlist and AVA or free programs such as Zara and Radio DJ, starting to chain their music programming through algorithms. The role of the programming DJ, before a radio star, is increasingly more restricted to the selection of songs that will enter a file folder through which the software will build sequences, often through opaque or simply random parameters. The programs usually only interfere in the frequency of execution of a certain track, through adjustments in its percentage of rotation, and determines – through subjective and/or commercial criteria – when his cycle of the program must end.

However, one can recognize that there is a factor of distinction that revert into audience for the channels that do not give up the selection of music through human curatorship. University and educational radios are examples of the persistence of flesh-and-bone programmers, who even recur to automation software, but remain in the coordination of the process, activating artistic criteria for the selection and management of repertoire – a type of music activism, that appeals to values such as authenticity, quality and exclusivity, in counterpoint to the mainstream of homogenizing hit parades.

In this article, we discuss this tension between algorithmic mediation and human curatorship in radio, media that, despite the advancement of digital platforms, remain as a central space in musical prescription. No less than 83% of the population listen to radio stations daily in the 13 biggest metropolitan regions of the country, according to data of Kantar

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7    Purchased by CBS Interactive Music Group on May 30, 2007, Last.fm gradually lost its audience, especially when it started charging monthly fees. Even so, in 2011 it reported having about 40 million active users - the number was no longer updated after that date.

Ibope[8]. The audience is even bigger (86%) between the younger audience, and the music schedule plays a key role, being consumed by 93% of the listeners.

Throughout the making of this study, we reviewed the scarce literature available on radio music scheduling, mostly international and/or dedicated to case studies of commercial stations (according to ROTHENBUHLER, 1985; ROTHENBUHLER; MCCOURT, 1987; AHLKVIST; FISHER, 2000; AHLKVIST, 2001; AHLKVIST; FAULKNER, 2002; KISCHINHEVSKY; HENRIQUES, 2015; GAMBARO; VICENTE; RAMOS, 2018). We also contextualize the role of music in radio in a moment of transition in media industries that consolidate new intermediaries, especially streaming services (about that, see KISCHINHEVSKY; VICENTE; DE MARCHI, 2015; DE MARCHI, 2016; VICENTE; DE MARCHI; GAMBARO, 2016; KISCHINHEVSKY; DE MARCHI, 2016; VICENTE; KISCHINHEVSKY; DE MARCHI, 2018), the importance of human curatorship (GAMBARO, 2016) and the growth of playlists, format that has been taking centerstage in sound media industries (FERREIRA, 2017).

The current reflection is an unfolding of the cartography of university radio broadcasting developed throughout the last three years (for preliminary results of this research, see KISCHINHEVSKY; MUSTAFÁ; PIERANTI; HANG, 2018; e KISCHINHEVSKY; MUSTAFÁ; MATOS; HANG, 2018), as well as the construction of music programming at UFRJ's radio station, from which four authors directly took part in 2019.

The cartography, with 106 stations identified up until now (68 FMs, 33 *web* radios e 5 AM), involved the application of an online questionnaire with 57 valid answers and the systematic listening of 24 hours of scheduling of 15 of them, selected through their historic importance, their relevance in their action markets and the regional and vinculation representation (public, private and confessional, federal, state and city,

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8    Inside Radio 2019. Available at: https://www.kantaribopemedia.com/download-inside-radio/. Last login: 4 nov. 2019.

community higher education institutions). The data collected show the role of music in university radio: only one station, among all the ones investigated, works exclusively with journalistic content; all the others have music scheduling to build their identities and establish bonds with their target audiences.

We begin the discussion, however, with a theoretic approach about the relationship between music genres and radio, thinking about the dynamics of repetition and innovation around which the industry has structured in the last decades, with flagrant challenges to the diversity of offer of symbolic goods.

## Song format and music genres as (problematic) units of analysis

When extracting the content of a compact disc (CD) to feed the music library of a radio station, it is important to check if the music have corresponding metadata, such as the title of the tracks, authors, singers, label, year of release, editor. One of these information, however, is usually discarded by music programmers, because it doesn't reflect on what will be listened: in the vast majority of CDs recorded by Brazilian artists in the main multinational music labels, the song receives the seal "Latin".

It is not in question here the Latin American identity of Brazilian musicians, but rather the homogenizing character of action of big mainstream labels, that level the whole local production to a label that evokes an imaginary latinity, maybe existing only in the marketing offices of these companies.

This is only the tip of a big iceberg. Music genres were built and tensioned throughout the 20th century as a marketing strategy. In Brazil and in other countries, due to legislation, vinyl records, popularized after the Second World Ware, mandatorily had indications on how the song should be framed in a musicology perspective – *marcha, marcha-rancho, maxixe, tango, bolero, etc.* In the last decades, however, hybridizations made difficult the task of marking genres often established for over a

century. The mix of diverse elements are behind, for instance, in the arrival of rock'n'roll, hip hop, electronic and so many other artistic manifestations that expand the frontiers of genre and re-signify established labels.

Music genres develop among the poles of consolidation and opening, at times shaping, at times imploding specific grammars, in which the repetition of melodic structures play a central role (according to, for instance, FRITH 1996; JANOTTI JR., 2006; and CARDOSO FILHO, 2008). Genres sold by the music industry, however, do not necessarily coincide with segments explored by the radio industry, opening a wealthy field of disputes of meaning in which the discourses imbued of value judgements and operation of social distinction are strongly concerned, helping in the identification or rejection of songs, artists and specific genres by part of the audience.

The music radio works, mostly, with the song format, popularized by the music industry in the beginning of the 20th century. Supported in the perspective of a Greimasian semiotics of the researcher and composer Luiz Tatit, former participant of the São Paulo group Rumo, Jorge Cardoso Filho (2008, p. 5) highlights that the song is structured in a specific manner, in a scheme that can be summarized with the following elements happening in this order: stanza -> bridge -> chorus -> stanza -> chorus -> solo -> chorus.

According to the researcher, the song "has a stabilized axis LYRICS vs. MELODY and a fundamental appeal to the voice of the singer" (CARDOSO FILHO, 2008, p. 7). The grammar of the song is completed with the average duration of around 3 or 4 minutes, as a result of the technical conditions resulting from the physical support – the acetate with 78 rotations per minute, of the beginning of the last century, only supported recordings with this extension, which demanded the simplification of the song structure produced at the time, in which predominated the opera, concert music and (more or less) popular manifestations of variable formats, such as *samba de roda*, polka, waltz, *maxixe*.

The song format, therefore, transits through production and recognition grammars that involve two movements:

> A) the articulation between LYRICS x MELODY will be promoted through the employment of strategies recognized by the expressive dynamics of the song. That implies that a fundamental attention must be given to the voice that sings that song, because the hierarchization in uses of each one of the dictions falls over the final sense of expressive manifestation, b) the structures of melodic repetition, although expressively different, generally promote a deceleration of the song, which implies that their functions are extremely similar (that is why we call "structures of repetition"). (CARDOSO FILHO, 2008, p. 8)

A target for critic studies, the repetition becomes key for the recognition (another doomed category associated to the supposed regression of listening) and the appropriation of the song by the general public. This process is deepened as the music and radio industries, constituted from the 1920's, are developed in a profoundly interwoven manner. Both gain strength in the post-war era, in the turn of 1940 to 1950's, when vinyl begin to be consolidated – in 33 and 1/3 rotations per minute, the so-called long-play (LP), and in 45 rpm, most used for singles – and the systems of recording in a magnetic tape. The result of this technical advancements is the abundant offer of pre-recorded music, in discs of increasingly wide circulation. In the radio, the occupation of Modulated Frequency would change the way music was listened: the prevalence of live presentation in the phase of spectacle radio would give place to music played in vinyl.

The radio, locus of broadcasting of songs registered by the music industry, had already helped since the early decades of the 20th century, to consolidate the song format, operating a dynamic in which they established habits of musical consumption, characterized in great extent by the repetition of melodic structures. But not everything is repetition: radio would be also notable as a space of prescription of music release, generally new bands that the music industry tries to frame (associating them to pre-established genres) and commercialize.

Jeder Janotti Junior highlights that, facing the "informational excess" of the last few decades, that presupposes a strong segmentation, the fields of production, circulation and consumption "count with extremely coded labels". Because of that, genres would be a key-element "for understanding the production of meanings in mainstream songs".

> Genres would be, thus, forms of mediation between productive strategies and the system of reception, between the models and uses that the receptors make of these through the strategies of reading media products. Before being an immanent element to the strict aspects of music, the genre would be present in the text through its conditions of production and consumption. [...] The music genre is defined, then, by the textual, sociological and ideological elements, it is a spiral that goes from aspects linked to the field of production to reading strategies inscribed in media products. (JANOTTI JR., 2006, p. 137-138)

The genre must, therefore, be understood as a form of addressing music, that becomes inserted into a specific "grammar". The British researcher Simon Frith (1996) sustains that music genres structure the market, establishing parameters for production, execution (live performance) and listening. An artist signs a contract with a label in the hopes that their work will be produced and addressed to a certain target audience imagined within specific rules, which condition from the language of a video and promotional photos to the studio dynamics.

The rule of music genres are always related to society and the historic period in which they are formulated. They always operate between two poles: innovation – necessary to the industry, but, eventually, disorientating – and the consolidation – which enables some stability and predictability –, associated to the repetition. Genres arrive in a moment of organization of the music market, but they depend of tacit agreement among the most different actors – at the time Frith was writing, record labels, radio stations, music magazines, concert producers, retailers.

The music genres that the music industry tries to sell are, constantly, an object of dispute. In this sense, Frith calls attention to the importance of radios as well, that begin to segment in the most diverse formats from

the 1960 and are going to test the limits of the labels record labels seek to create to sell more. Only that this segmentation serves a very distinct logic from the one record labels had – in the USA, reference for the Brazilian Market, radio formats like country, classical music, jazz and pop contemporary hit radio lived with others much more different to define, such as adult contemporary, urban contemporary, AOR (Album Oriented Rock), among others.

The radio industry would strongly segment itself in the 1960's and 1970's, to capitalize the social and cultural diversification, most of the times in frontal disagreement with commercial strategies of major labels. Music stations of the contemporary pop segment tend to open spaces in their schedule for different successful genres in the moment, surpassing communities of taste. Stations of other segments, such as adult contemporary, rock, jazz, classic, etc., in turn, operate with more strict rules of genre, working to offer more homogeneous schedules, fitting the parameters of identification and distinction.

To Frith, the music genre as strategy of addressing symbolic goods presupposes an idealized customer.

> [...] When using genre labels to make the marketing process more efficient, record companies presume that there is an administrable relationship between the music label and consumer's taste. That resides, however, in a series of suppositions about who are these consumers in terms of age, sex, ethnicity, income, leisure habits, and so on. In terms of wider market research, suppositions like that are fairly efficient […] However, what is happening here is an idealization, the creation of a fantasy consumer […] And, in that, the industry follows taste more than form. [...] When deciding to label a song or a musician in a particular manner, record labels are saying something about what people like and why; the music label acts as a sociologic and ideological argument combined. (FRITH, 1996, p. 85-86, our translation)

Music genres are created and tested all the time, consolidating and tensioning their own limits. In this sense, adds, Frith, we put the issue of the relations established between the pleasures of novelty and repetition: popular genres establish expectations, and the let-down happens

when they are not met when in these case that this occurs in a very predictable manner.

This logic of music consumption, currently, does not circumscribe to radio stations – understood as mediating institutions and a benchmark of popular taste – but it is extended to the new media intermediates of sound media. At streaming, the situation becomes more complex, with music genres dividing attention with moods as a parameter of categorization of songs – a strategy that already is reverberated in the schedule of a few music stations. A research about music consumption performed by Box 1824, a consulting agency for trends in consumption, behavior and innovation, focused in new forms of music mapping, considering the similarities in messages and speculating about the ideal moment for hearing each style. The study identified that subjective factors such as mood are elements considered at the moment of listening.

The moods categorized by the research are: a) dystopia (reinvented pop music – examples: Björk, Adele, Lorde); b) *Heavy* ball (street music, for ghetto and partying, such as *hip hop*, electronic and variations like *trap* and *funk* – example.: M.I.A, Kanye West, Calvin Harris); c) Melodic malice (songs that talk about love, sex, passion, suffering and disillusion – example: Thiaguinho, Luan Santana, MC Gui, Beyoncé etc.); d) *Mass indie* (indie artists that have insertion in the market, such as Kings of Leon, Beirut and, in Brazil, Silva e Lucas Santtana)[9].

But if we observe the restructuration of streaming services in the last two years, we will perceive that the specialization became much more deep, with the classification of songs into categories or playlists titled like Relax, To Sing Along, Workout, Happy, Party, Romance, Zen, Focus, LGBTQi Pride, etc.

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9   Cf. "Pesquisa propõe nova forma de categorizar os estilos musicais por humores". UAI, 2015. Available at: https://www.uai.com.br/app/noticia/musica/2015/08/27/noticias-musica,171060/pesquisa-propoe-nova-forma-de-categorizar-os-estilos-musicais-por-humores.shtml. Last visit: Jun 28 2019.

## Playlist on the radio and on streaming: similarities and differences

The addressment performed by music genres (or by moods) occurs in the music scheduling, through the establishment of the segmented format. The decisive tool for a segmented music scheduling on the radio, later also adopted by streaming platforms, is the development of rules and procedures for the definition of a specific format of communication. This format is the playlist, which identifies the vehicle as a segment of action, when establishing compromises of offering music to the desired audience.

The playlist is the final product of a process of selection based on cultural and technical discussions and economic disputes that presuppose an imaginary listener, with which that specific list keeps more or less adherence. Their construction depends mostly on that professionalizing characteristic: the communicative intentionality of regiment certain audience for a certain sequence of songs. Constitutes the basic unit of a radio music scheduling.

On radio and on streaming, this discursive construction through playlist is fundamental, but their processes are different in the sense it emphasize different elements and sources of information. On radio, according to Ahlkvist (2001, p. 345-347), there is a dispute between four fundamental "philosophical" axis that orient a curatorship made by the programmer: focus on the industry or in the audience and aesthetic or "rational" judgements. On streaming, in which the automation prevails, this clash is not central, because the digitalization and the use of algorithms presuppose rationalization. However, contrary to communities of taste, the identification of the station and the connection to who prescribes the music with the listener, one prioritizes the need of personalizing the taste, moments and activities of the listener, a special playlist to each one and to each moment. In both medias, however, the propeller of the election of criteria and conceptions of the listener is the need of identifying an audience and becoming a subscriber of each prescription, on account of the vehiculation of ads or payment of signature.

The playlist appears on the radio, still according to Ahlkvist, as a grammar of temporality, a metanarrative resulting from the music scheduling. The main concern in radio studies, however, is the standardizing tendency that involves the application of the same playlists through radio. The playlist scheduling is produced as a temporary mark of communities of taste, building repertoires and reinforcing specific practices of selection. To Berland (1990, p. 182), a construction that tends to standardization oriented by technical and administrative processes of the great economic centers, mainly when we consider the tendency of concentration of control over the radio from the deregulation occurred in the USA during the 1990s. An example, we can add, is the format *pop contemporary hit radio*, one of the most popular formats in USA and in Brazil, which operates in the logic of the top 40 – in other words, a closed list of 40 songs that are hammered throughout the schedule of the station every 2 or 3 hours, from commercial relations with the music labels and presuppositions of what must or must not be a hit, a success in the audience.

However, a criticism of this "apocalyptic" perspective of standardization seeks to offer a deeper analysis of the interactions between commercial impositions and views of the own role of the programmer. It is what present Rothenbuhler (1985) and Ahlkvist, Faulkner and Fisher (2002; 2000), when observing that these strategies can be understood as linked to the identities of the programmer. (1) as a representation of a brand and responsible for their identity; (2) as "curator of content fit to listeners; and (3) as promoter of songs with potential to be a commercial hit.

Rothenbuhler and McCourt (1987, p. 108) describe how the selection processes in commercial radio are primarily perceived as professional routines, with predefined categories of format, acceptance and potential. They initiate with the "sensitization", in which they evaluate the universe of available songs and which are priorities for the station, and, next, they think about the space available in the schedule and the selected songs in relation to the ones already established in the repertoire. This

routine process, in the 1980's, would take less into account the listeners requests, record sales and other radios than information of promoters of the music industry, specialist recommendations, artists' reputation, space in the schedule and subjective perceptions of music directors on the potential of getting a hit. There is a great concern in establishing a reputation or credibility to the work developed and in the results obtained by this selection.

The main characteristic of this professional gaze on the construction of the schedule consists in the commercial base that regulates it. In other words, this procedure is predominantly regulated by the logic of business management, and not, necessarily, by the communicative or educational logic. Largely, thus, the audience is evaluated in terms of audience segments, or as consumers, typified according to market logics and not as interlocutor in a process of symbolic exchange. The reputation is built in terms of different segments prioritizing not the listener, but other professionals (ROTHENBUHLER, 1985, p. 212).

In turn, Ahlkvist and Faulkner (2002, p. 196) propose a detailing of the variation of practices of responsible that move to a study in the production of culture, in other words, locate in the subjectivity of programmers and in its negotiation with the professional rationalization a more comprehensive and qualitative analysis. This ia how they present the idea of philosophies of programming, that describe the approaches of programmers to legitimate the construction of a playlist. The philosophies present the hierarchized values that determine the music selection, shared discursively in the professional world of radio. Therefore, programmers deal with binary oppositions: aesthetic or research, selection of songs, and to meet the expectations of listeners or the company/industry, about their role. The determination of the position in some of these axis will guide, according to Ahlkvist (2001, p. 345), the practices of selection.

In this context, aesthetics will take a central place in the factors of music quality and subjectivity of the programmer's "ear". The taste and knowledge of the programmer are key in this philosophy. Another

position is focused on the rationalization of the selection. We seek the objectivity and use of data, ignoring the listening of the song itself. In this case, there is a professional and procedural valorization of the selection, based in data from the audience and research with listeners.

In the axis of the role played by the programmer, in an extreme a philosophy locates the programmer as a replacement consumer, in other words, as someone who selects the songs imagining himself as listener of the radio and of these songs, guiding it, but with the focus in the experience of the listener. In this case, however, the music knowledge or subjectivity are seen as possible obstacle to the programmer, because it is necessary to understand the listener's perspective, not the professional. The reach of the market goals of the station and the music industry is the main focus. In this last one, the interpretation of research and artistic content is the label's role, which subsidizes the programmer, intermediate between the industry strategies and the audience.

Such studies show how the logic of the commercial radio organizes the music schedule. However, in stations without financial goals, these philosophies are substantially different. Tim Wall (2007, p. 36) observes that the construction of the schedule of north American university radios is, in a more pronounced degree, associated to a political action and the promotion of alternative or independent music.

Wall shows that an "alternativity" discourse in these radios is based in a variety of different repertoires that operate in consonance with the cultural stories that involve such repertoires and are not limited to a specific music genre. The construction of an "alternativity" guides song choices and their presentation in accordance with a predominance of progressive, educational and counter-culture discourses predominant in media without lucrative goals in the US. Thus, the definition of alternative becomes variable according to their cultural and political relations.

This perspective is similar to the "non-rational" philosophies of Ahlkvist (2001, p 345), in which the concern is oriented towards education, to empathy with the listener and with the aesthetic values of the music selected but adds a political dimension to the analysis. In

addition, the idea of authenticity, associated to the discursive production of the music genre discussed by Frith reappears here associated to "alternative discourses".

All this logic applied to human curatorship of music scheduling can work as a theoretical board for streaming services, mainly due to the perception that the human touch is essential for the identification of these services as music channels, not only data libraries (GLANTZ, 2016, p. 45-46). However, facing this dimension of the data available for the organization of the schedule and the emphasis of the digital market in the personalization of the access of content, the use of algorithms for filtering, selection and offering to users was always a key-piece. This need is also justified by the attempt of fitting such companies not as music media companies, but as tech companies – even if their discourses were heavily sustained in the remediation of the radio as continuous flow, the identification with the service and the specialty of music offers (ERIKSSON *et al.*, 2019, p. 12).

Using the perspective of philosophies of scheduling for analysis, in the automation will predominate the rationality, mainly due to the necessity of quantifying and transposing to numeric keys subjective behaviors as the definition of genre and their discourses, used by curators, about sensations, feelings and activities linked to listening to certain songs, as moods and physical activities.

It is yet to show, however, whether the construction of such algorithms imbued of a communicative intentionality fills the same roles that the radiophonic playlist scheduling.

## Final considerations

The music radio faces an unheard challenge when having a competition that does not measure their audience in thousands of listeners a minute, but rather in hundreds of thousands of subscribers, as it is the case of Spotify, Deezer, Apple Music and other streaming services – which we can also call social radio –all with libraries above 50 million songs. The automation of processes, such as the catalog management

and the rotation of tracks in the schedule, is unavoidable, facing the weakening of the radiophonic market, with a decrease in revenue and unheard loss of work positions. Many music programmers today respond for the curatorship of two, three or even more stations, simultaneously, balancing themselves between commercial interests and artistic criteria.

We understand that, when they give up human curatorship in their schedules, many stations sign their own death certificate, with their offer of symbolic goods becoming indistinctive from the one brought by new actors of the digital surrounding. The segmentation, in this sense, can be a trap, making so that the listener remains in a known terrain and do not get surprised by any track inserted on the playlist. We understand that music genre, treated in a strict form, stifle the construction of a music schedule and can create false dilemma. "*Rock*" can be understood as a label geared towards a young audience, even though the genre exists for over 60 years. "Samba", in turn, present a thousand subgenres – "pagode", "samba de raíz", "partido alto", for instance – which operate much more in the discursive field than the music one, making it much harder to algorithmically mediate.

The homogenizing character of segmentation of commercial radio in Brazil and the subordination of the dynamics of musical circulation to sale strategies of music companies raise the responsibility of radiophonic programmers in the sense that they do not reiterate these processes; that harm the diversity in the offer of symbolic goods and the vehiculation of overlooked artistic manifestations by the reference media. Unfortunately, this concern is manifested in few stations, generally university and/or public stations of educational nature, which, in general, do not pursue mainstream audiences.

It becomes obvious, however, the need for the radio stations to (re) establish channels of re-feeding music scheduling, that must be constantly renewed, in an effective listening of the audience's demands, without also disregarding the structure of sharing of record labels[10].

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10   In a visit by the first author to one of the stations monitored during the cartography of university broadcasting, it was surprisingly found that there is a budget for the monthly acquisition

We listen a music schedule because we recognize a great part of these songs (they constitute a familiar grammar to us, who integrate certain *communities of taste)* but not only that. We also want to be surprised, having access to new releases or remembering blasts from the past, which bring back memories, reminiscences of other times that we hold on dearly. Innovation and repetition walk hand in hand, configuring listening habits more or less volatile, conditioned by many other factors, including aesthetics and politics.

We advocate here that, despite the unfeasibility of manually elaborating a music scheduling that work 24/07, the human radiophonic programmer makes a difference for the future of the media. And, in this sense, this professional needs to retrieve his status as an artist, as a music connoisseur and the complex webs of meaning that surround them, building bonds, links between station and audience. The work of the programmer, especially in stations without lucrative endings, must be based by "non-rational" scheduling philosophies, as Ahlkvist would say, but that balance technical parameters (diversity of genre, plurality of artists, representation of the selected tracks, balance between new releases and blasts from the past, which enable an effect of recognition) and affectionate parameters (activation of mechanisms of subjectivation, identity, taste).

The music radio has survived the individualized playlists in MP3 listened in mobile devices, facing the exponential growth of offering of songs brought by streaming services, forcefully has to stand out from the rationality imposed by automation software. And the only way to that is qualified human curatorship, carried out with equal doses of intelligence and emotional involvement.

We hope these reflections can contribute for the debate on the construction of musical radiophonic scheduling, expanding the theoretic discussion about a theme that are still very overlooked in radio and sound media studies.

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of CDs, which could be obtained free of charge from the record companies, as part of their dissemination strategy.

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