

Opinions

10 music albums that have meant a lot to me

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Tessnear

I've always believed that music is one of the most important and influential of all the material things on this planet. There are so many great types of music, and there is a type of music for every mood.

Everyone has a different set of musical preferences and certain genres fit with each person's personality. A person might like jazz, rock and country, but can't stand rhythm and blues. Another person might prefer rock, rhythm and blues, and classical, but can't stand the twang of traditional country.

Others like everything but gangster rap and twangy, Loretta Lynn-style country. Eliminating those two would be my personal preference. I'm not the biggest fan of Americana or European techno, but I can handle anything but the two styles above.

I've had several conversations recently about favorite albums, favorite songs and favorite artists. I think it's hard to find a favorite album, if you are a big music fan of any genre. The same could be said for songs and artists. I have my favorite artists, but there are 10 albums that have influenced my life, shaped my actions and that describe my personality. So, in essence, they are my 10 favorite musical albums of all time. I think this list portrays my wide range of musical favorites. Listed in reverse order:

10. "Dark Side of the Moon" by Pink Floyd contains such a wide variety of sounds. Some of them are weird. A few songs on the album have the moan-

ing voice of someone who appears frustrated with life. "Speak to Me Breathe" and "Great Gig in the Sky" are two of my favorite druggie tunes.

No, I've never done drugs, or even smoked a cigarette, but this album is full of songs that are great for "chilling."

9. "Nimrod" by Green Day is one of the few albums from the 1990s that really struck a chord with me. It has a great group of songs, from top to bottom. "Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)" is one of the great "moving on" anthems in modern music. Some dislike it for its synonymous relationship with graduation ceremonies.

I like the punk sound of "Nimrod," but it doesn't hold true to the punk norms of '90s music. Green Day did a great job of mixing in additional sounds with their punk for "Nimrod."

8. "Joshua Tree" by U2. Released in the late 1980s, this set is the closest I'll come to enjoying Christian music. "Joshua Tree" really had strong religious themes, and the songs ultimately made mention of God. This album was characterized by great guitar sounds and inspirational lyrics. I've found myself listening to this album when I need a pick-me-up.

7. "The Essential Billy Joel" by Billy Joel was not an original album release, so it could be pronounced unfair for the purposes of this list. However, it's my list and I'm making the rules, so back off.

Joel's varied lyrical styles, but constant piano mastery and strong voice make him one of the best musical artists of all time. From "Anybody's Song (Movin' Out)" to "Piano Man" to "New York State of Mind," this CD provides care and sympathy for moments when I'm just not 100 percent. Runners up for Billy Joel would be "Glass Houses" and "52nd Street."

6. "American Idiot" by Green Day makes the band the only group or artist with two on my list. I actually didn't listen to Green Day growing up in their "Nimrod" and "Dookie" days. This album hooked me on Green Day-style punk.

This album is solid from top to bottom and is a good CD for riding down the road with the windows down and the meter on my speedometer above 55.

5. "Feels Like Today" by Rascal Flatts single-handedly converted me into a country music fan. Well, the album and a former girlfriend who loves country music. Honestly, though, this album made me fall in love with country music.

"Bless the Broken Road" and "Then I Did" wooed me with their soft sounds, while "Fast Cars and Freedom" won me over with rock-style guitar play. Thanks to this set, I am now a contemporary country music fan.

4. "Catch Without Arms" is a hard album to place. Mike Mitteer, my roommate, introduced me to the album after his brother sent it to him. The artist, Dredg, is not a mainstream group, but they have a great mix of sounds. Unlike the title, Dredg's versatile mixture of styles definitely caught me.

3. "Continuum" by John

Mayer is a flashback to the early days of roots American music. It has blues, jazz and country sounds, and really fuses together all of the great styles that were popular during the first half of the 20th century.

Mayer's voice is soft and pleasing, while the album harks back to Hank Williams and Elvis Presley's styles. This album is a C-L-A-S-S-I-C.

2. "Make Yourself" by Incubus is my "screw you, I'm pissed off" album. Incubus caught many with "Drive" in 1999. However, that song is probably actually my fifth or sixth favorite song on the disc.

This was probably the first album that I would have in my CD player and then to, over and over. Like Dredg, Incubus has a large mixture of sounds and they use some of the synthesizer effects that made '80s music so much better than today's offerings.

1. "Thriller" by Michael Jackson came out a few years before I was born. Jackson released the record in 1982, to be exact. It is the quintessential album that should be in every collection. Jackson may be a weirdo now, but footage of his moonwalks across the stage are evidence of the great entertainer that he used to be.

"Thriller" has so many different moods, also. "Baby Be Mine" and "Human Nature" are soft ballads, while "Beat It." Add in the first ever moonwalk on the stage at Motown 25 to "Billie Jean," and the best music video of all time, the short

film known as "Thriller," and you have the best album of all time.

I own this CD, the special edition, and my parents still own the vinyl version. This album came out in a time where vinyl albums were still the popular, and

pretty much only purchasable, music vehicle.

It has a solid mix of songs you can dance to and that will make you want to crawl into bed and hide from the world. It encompasses every mood and is my favorite album of all time.

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WISDOM ON WHEELS:

Be careful when you play these 10 songs

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Conley

As you have probably figured out by now, my mind works in some strange ways. The latest example of this occurred the other day as I was watching a special on The Learning Channel about conjoined twins.

The special profiled 16-year-old sisters and the challenges of being Siamese twins. My first thought was not one of admiration for overcoming challenges. Instead it went something like, "If they want to get married, they will have to move to Utah." I know that some people might claim that this is inappropriate, and it might have been. If you think about it, most things in life can be considered inappropriate if applied in the wrong situation.

Music is a perfect example. Most people would agree that Afroman has some questionable and offensive lyrics in his music but, if played at the wrong time, a completely innocent song can be offensive. Therefore, I decided to make like Casey Kasem and present

Jacob Conley's Top 10 Most Offensive Songs If Played At the Wrong Time.

10. You would most likely be offended or terrified if, when you were going in for triple bypass surgery, your surgeon began humming "Achy Breaky Heart" by Billy Ray Cyrus.

9. If you were working at the North Carolina School for the Blind, your favorite song should not be Corey Hart's "Sunglasses At Night," or "I Can See Clearly Now" by Johnny Nash.

8. If you have dinner with Michael J. Fox, don't serenade him with The Georgia Satellites' remake of "Hippy Hippy Shake." It would not be prudent.

7. If you are performing for a group of deaf students, don't choose to do a rendition of Simon and Garfunkel's "Sounds of Silence."

6. If you work at a nursing home, Tim McGraw's "Live Like You Were Dy-

ing" is defiantly taboo.

5. If McGraw ever performs a concert at Harrah's Cherokee Casino, he should leave "Indian Outlaw" off his play list.

4. "Red Red Wine" by UB40 is not a good choice for the opening hymn at the Baptist State Convention.

3. Playing Toto's "I Miss The Rain Down In Africa," as Jesse Jackson is delivering a speech will probably land you a spot on the evening news or, at least, the Daily Show.

2A. If you are a lifeguard at a nudist beach and a swimmer is suffering from hypothermia, don't play "Blue Moon" from your stand.

2B. If you're doing relief work for the people of New Orleans, the Scorpions' "Rock You Like a Hurricane" should not be your theme song for the week.

1. If you're working with people in wheelchairs, don't listen to Disturbed's "I Stand Alone" or The Proclaimers' "I'm Gonna Be" ("I would walk 500 miles). It would make people rise up in protest and make me laugh until it hurt.

Marching band invites you to play along

Campus community has first opportunity to hear new band

The new marching band will make its first joyful noise Saturday as part of the festivities surrounding the spring exhibition football game.

Any Gardner-Webb University student or community member who plays an instrument is invited to participate in the event.

Bring your instrument to the stadium, and join the fun! The sheet music will be provided, but you will need to bring your own in-

strument.

To reserve your spot, or for more information, contact Sid Haton, marching band director, at marchingband@gardner-webb.edu, or at 704-406-BAND (2263).

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