

internet radio

In the early throes of adolescence, round about the time of junior high, I would constantly listen to the radio — 99 KSKG in Salina, Kan., to be exact — in hopes of catching the rock waves that were supposedly cool. Whether requesting songs by now-forgotten wonders of hard rock and then waiting endlessly for the silver-throated DJ to play them, or catching Kasey Casem's American Top 40 to hear the latest, my stereo's dial never moved.

If only I had known. About jazz. Classical. Reggae. College rock. Zydeco. Rockabilly. Bluegrass. R&B. Punk. My refusal to change the dial locked me into an auditory cul-de-sac, and it wasn't until years later that I figured out that the phrase, "Either you rock or you suck!" said infinitely more about the speaker than its intended victim.

Luckily, a stint as a DJ in college radio began to open my drums to a different beat. Over the years my tastes haven't necessarily become more refined, they've tended toward the eccentric (a nice word that, here, means odd, quirky and thoroughly unexplainable to anyone). But as the fiscal one-two of kids and mortgage KO'ed my music budget like a young Cassius Clay, I had to get my sonic fix elsewhere. And what better place than the Internet.

Today high school kids possess crazy music libraries on their iPods — only

THE BEAT GOES ON — ONLY THESE DAYS IT'S TCHAIKOVSKY

STREAMING FROM TOBACCO ROAD BY MARK LUCE



much of the time, said tunes weren't necessarily paid for. That's neither the route for me, nor particularly legal, so I have opted for a return to my old friend the radio. And listening online gives me darn near any station on the planet, along with just about any type of music I could possibly want. Into 1950s Apalachia music? Check out *ramradio.net*. Perhaps it's French lounge and club music that carries you away, try *datempo.com*. Most sites require either iTunes, RealPlayer or Windows Media Player, but once you figure out how to navigate those, the goods are but limited by how obscure your tastes can get. A few worth directing your browser to:

Radio Dismuke (*dismuke.org*) — My latest obsession, a station devoted to

vintage and popular music from 1925-35, arguably one of the liveliest times for American music. Listen to enough songs such as "Good Morning Glory," and you'll want spats, a dame with a bob, and a nip or three of bathtub gin.

WWOZ (*wwoz.org*) — They got hammered by Katrina, but this New Orleans gem still streams the Cajun soul of the Big Easy. With a wonderful group of dedicated DJs, WWOZ's shows always surprise as much as they entertain.

Rockabilly Radio (*rockabillyradio.com*) — It bops. And if you don't know who Wanda Jackson is, tune it here.

WCPE (*theclassicalstation.org*) — Phenomenal classical music broadcast commercial-free in the heart of North Carolina. They list all the music they play in an easy-to-use format and often have special programs.

And to show you that I can still throw down with the best big-hair bands, direct yourself to the **Metal Shop** (*metalsshoprocks.com*), where you can thrash to your heart's content.

Happy listening.

Mark Luce lives in Kansas City, Mo., where he's now starting to dig Hawaiian music.

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