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Subject: The Rules

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Thu, 16 Mar 2006 00:28:32 GMT

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I'm reading Broskie's site and on one of his essays he comes up with this opinion. He says he comes across so many guys who seek him out for advice. Then he discovers that the individual in question happens to have upwards of 20k\$ invested in equipment. And about 30 albums; mostly greatest hits or collections like hits from the 70's and a few of the audiophile approved test CD's like Dianna Krall or Monheit. He says;" Finding this out is like a doctor doing an autopsy..opening the skull and finding no brain inside."It's on his site and a damned good essay too.So I propose this; anyone whose audio equipment costs more than twice what his music collection costs has henceforth lost all credibility as a audio spokesperson; and shall renege on offering any opinions involving audio in any way until he has rectified that situation. No excuses; no PHD's or Street cred matters. Thats Rule NO 1.

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Subject: Re: The Rules

Posted by [Bill Martinelli](#) on Thu, 16 Mar 2006 03:32:30 GMT

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are you feeling ok John? If you bring this into a smaller perspective things go upsidedown. Lets say you go to a friends and he has 50k in vintage music or he has 20k in a nice audiophile system. OK. 20K for stereo gear is a tonn of money but if you want to be a audiophile this is also entry level to a lot of single pieces. so lets say a guy goes out and spends what? 3,000 on a nice sound system? I'm not sure if you go to a high end audio dealer you can go home feeling 5k lighter and say you bought a "stereo" ok, anyway. 3K for entry level other than a Target or Wolly world light show bass effects stereo. 3K, this means maybe 1k for a receiver... ( ick, receiver?) 1200 for some speakers, 400 for a CD and 200 for Turntable and a hundred for some wire. plus tax is over 3K! whadayagot? save that thought....When I was younger a colection of 100 albums was something nice. surely not a "real collector" but a 100 disk would be a nice entry level place to be.Lets say we buy a hundred or a few more with a sale now and then. and we have a 100 disk's we can spin and they cost retail of 18 a piece. you got 3K in a stereo and 1800 in tunes. 3K in gear. just over half that in media. I understand yor position. think about the numbers though. It's a tough nut to get a good system that cost significantly less than your media. By the same token a person with a pair of Martin Logans costing 100K and 3 cd's, an SACD, 2 LP's and a video disk should not be taken seriously. your right of course; and I felt need to write a paragraphlongsentance. whererd day get dis bread anyway?

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Subject: Definition of Audiophile

Posted by [colinhester](#) on Thu, 16 Mar 2006 03:41:43 GMT

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Back when Audiophile Audition was still being aired on Public Radio (early 80s), the host asked a guest to define "audiophile." The response was: If you spend more on gear than the music, then you are an audiophile. To date, I have not heard a better definition.

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile  
Posted by [Bill Martinelli](#) on Thu, 16 Mar 2006 03:49:44 GMT  
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I wouldn't argue with that! Isn't an audiophile by nature more interested in the equipment and process. Honestly when I get into a mood for the music only I go to a couple live shows every week for a few months. then play with tubes and speakers for a years. then go to live shows.....

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Thu, 16 Mar 2006 13:02:49 GMT  
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I'm not sure if I read that right. I say you should have at least half of your audio budget in music. So say you have a 3k\$ system; that would mean 1500\$ in music; think about it this way, 1500\$ is 100 cd's. Why would you spend 3k\$ on a system if you had less music than that; to hear the same fifty albums on endless repeat? Broskie's point was this; how can you even want to participate in an expensive hobby like this and not even have a significant investment in the thing the hobby is designed to do? Like boating; why would you spend say 35k\$ on a custom dock for a 1200\$ dingy? If you read his essay he is really confused as to the whole concept of delving so deeply into designing and buying equipment.. to do what? Play your three disc set of Billy Joels Greatest Hits? Thats his point I believe. Because he then brings up a friend who has over a quarter of a million albums catalogued and memorised. Sheesh!

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Thu, 16 Mar 2006 13:05:26 GMT  
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Thats what killed the brick and mortar guys; the so-called audiophiles got older and realised they really didn't give a crap about music and got bored with equipment swapping.

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile

Posted by [Bill Martinelli](#) on Fri, 17 Mar 2006 18:30:37 GMT

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I understand the point and it makes sense. I'm simply saying that I think 100 albums is a nice place to start and your more than a casual listner. I dont think 3k is a lot to spend on a stereo system if you want to get into some a few notches up. Some of the boutique systems and high priced components have really hit the clouds. The number of people who are capable of spending 30k ++ on stereo gear could be even less than the top 2% wage earners? Say John, How far from Greenport are you? can make a run up the road to Stidd and pick up a few seats for me. Oh, but if you only had a handfull of CD's; but wanted them to sound really good. at what point to you stop listening to the pop up stereo from Walmart? audiophool

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Fri, 17 Mar 2006 22:58:07 GMT

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Whats Stidd; we go occasionally for Sunday brunch. To Greenport I mean. Doesn't sound too difficult. Ring me on the e-line. About the music thing; remmember this thread started as a result of an essay written on John Broskie's site. Could you say; have maybe twenty records you love and just want to hear them and are willing to put together a system at 3k\$ just for that purpose; but of course! But would that qualify you to be an audiophile who is consulted for their opinion on how equipment should sound? I geuss so. But his point was more about the nature and quality of the music these people who own 30k\$ systems and then use them to play three greatist hits albums and whether that grants those people some credibility regarding sound and what it should be. He never says they shouldn't be doing that; only that they shouldn't be offering knowledgable opinions on sound based on that sort of approach. Then of course my 2c is that ...why? Why do that? Like those guys who buy 30k\$ Harley Davidsons and then ride them three times a year. Nothing wrong with that but would you take a lot of repair advice from that guy?

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile

Posted by [Bill Martinelli](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 04:50:30 GMT

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Yeh, good point. From Whom you take advise has been quandry for some time. Expert, Specialist or layman. I always thought being an audiophile was a state of mind. no? There is no prerequasite that I'm aware. No test or requiremnt of qualification. Hell, not even a hearing test! Realistically, our kids and wife have far superior hearing than us old guys. Its for fun, passion and appreciation a person is called an audiphile. I'm not one. I like to build things and I like the persuit of the equipment more than the music! I just happen to like good music also. stidd.com just teasing buddy, they have some nice stuff up your way

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile

Posted by [colinhester](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 13:07:31 GMT

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For me the definition of an audiophile must be defined as a sense of awareness. That is, there is a better way to reproduce sound. Does this necessarily mean that the "audiophile" has the equipment, or is just a unique understanding of sound reproduction. I think either extreme of experience, practical or theoretical, would qualify. Equipment swapping and hours of listening and tweaking by trial and error would certainly be the practical approach. However, is this any more (or less) valuable than a structured academic (theoretical) understanding? Personally, I would rather listen and swap, but I certainly would not discount one's opinion if it came from a "scientific" perspective. Think of it as sex. It's much more enjoyable to do it than just read about it, but I still like reading and looking at the pictures

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 13:23:01 GMT

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That's a good point; you can certainly like to build and spend that interest building speakers and amps and stuff. Then use that to listen to music and enjoy it. And separating out who qualifies to have an opinion based upon their life experience and technical training is a whole other issue. Examining the past we see in the seventies the engineers took over from the designers of the 50's and sixties. So we got Sansui 9090 instead of Fisher 50a's for amps. So we know that technical training doesn't necessarily translate into capable musical design. Perfect sound forever. But I think Broskie was very specifically addressing an audience of people who are trying to get the best music they can from equipment; and he calls them audiophiles. And he wonders at the motivation of someone to sink 30k\$ into stuff that plays music when he doesn't own any or appreciate it when he does. It's a sense of puzzled confusion. If that is the case; I would say that in the participation of the hobby; music should by definition take center stage. How will you know what's good without knowing the music? That thinking leads to where you get statements like only ABX testing can tell if something sounds good or not. His thesis reminds me of the guy who plays golf but only likes to drive and can't putt worth a damn. Yet he owns a set of custom Pings because he likes the feel. Does that guy really know the game?

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Subject: Broskie link

Posted by [colinhester](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 15:34:52 GMT

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John, Could you please point me to Broskie's article you reference?

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile  
Posted by [Bill Martinelli](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 15:49:53 GMT  
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Colin is right in that there should be some kind of experience involved in a persons background. I agree with that but the closest I can see is acoustical or electrical engineer, musical degree etc. It's almost like the people you use to judge the music are as subjective as the music and the system itself? I didn't think I ever questioned Brodski's point. More and more we people who have things because they 'want' them. Not because they use the expensive motorcycle or need the expensive clubs. They just want them and enjoy having them. People have hobbies and collect things. Some people collect old things, antiques and classics. some folks collect new things. Some times you use them and other times just look or know its there. Does that mean your an expert in what ever prize you have? doubtful, right. Maybes there's a few that parade around as an expert or try to sell a service under such pretense. By and large there's a lot chatter and free advise. We know what free advice is worth!

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Subject: Re: Broskie link  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 16:09:15 GMT  
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It's in the TubeCad Journal. I found it just by looking at the first link that comes up on the site then while reading it shows up somewhere around the third or fourth paragraph. It isn't much; just a couple sentences. I can find it if you don't see it.

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 16:29:15 GMT  
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Well; we can't argue with that. If you like owning stuff for the pleasure of owning it then thats about the size of it. But just remmember these are not collectors or art aesthete's; they are guys who claim to be audiophiles buying new equipment for the expressed purpose of listening to music. I don't see this as a criticism of what people like to own or buy; just a look at what one who participates in audio should be concerned with if they like to participate in discussions and critical opinion essays.I mean we wouldn't argue whether one speaker is the nicest to own and look at; right? We would discuss how it sounds and the rest of the effects of ownership such as how nice it looks and how much we like to own it would probably take a lesser position in the discussion; ...I think.How about thhis; if you own something simply for the pleasure of knowing you own it; then it becomes art. If you own it for the purpose of using it in the capacity for which it is designed; then it becomes equipment. Does that fly?Hmmm; how about this one; would you go to a motorcycle show to look at stock bikes that your neighbors ride around; or would you go to see custom and personalised machines of interest?So to own a bike and put it in your garage just so you could

say you own it; and you don't customise, race or ride it or have it as an investment; you would think the guy was a little off; right? Give me some time and I can come up with some more wacky analogies. It's like saying why do I have that old crappy Schwinn still in the shed with the streamers hanging off the handlebars; for the pleasure of owning it of course! That's why my wife tried to burn down the shed; because of my "collection".

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile  
Posted by [Bill Martinelli](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 18:27:02 GMT  
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yep your right. you cant just buy a bunch a expensive high fi gear and become an audiophile overnight. So, but, how do you start? It's a paradox. lots of possibilities

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Subject: Re: Definition of Audiophile  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 18 Mar 2006 20:55:45 GMT  
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Of course then we bite our tails and ask "What is an Audiophile??" He who knows does not speak; he who speaks does not know. I got that in a fortune cookie. Or my back episodes of "Kung FU" with David Carradine as the FU. Which reminds me; Chinese tonight. Moo Goo Gai Pan and General tso's.

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