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Honey Pie, Colors of Dreams, and Inner Light: Stylistic Expertise and Musical Topicality in the Beatles' Mid and Late 1960s Songs

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Music

by

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June 2021

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Honey Pie, Colors of Dreams, and Inner Light: Stylistic Expertise and Musical Topicality in the Beatles' Mid and Late 1960s Songs

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by

Emily Christine Vanchella

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ABSTRACT

Honey Pie, Colors of Dreams, and Inner Light: Stylistic Expertise and Musical Topicality in the Beatles' Mid and Late 1960s Songs

by

Emily Christine Vanchella

The study of musical styles, and their conventions and changes, is often focused simply on the styles' characteristics. Previous research has focused on how specific musical features accrue meaning over time, but has given less attention to the role of individuals' stylistic expertise in establishing and/or changing stylistic patterns. This dissertation aims to show how composers' training in musical styles allows them to manifest musical references in ways unique to that composer. Building on existing work in topic theory and rock music analysis, the project asks: To what extent does the Beatles' knowledgeable application of non-rock styles create a sound entirely their own? Topic theory is defined here as the study of conventionalized musical references and musical styles performed outside of their usual contexts, and their associated meanings.

Based on a review of the literature on topic theory and rock music analysis, three non-rock styles in which the primary composing Beatles (John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison) possessed stylistic training and/or understanding were selected for analysis: North Indian (*Hindustani*) classical music, tape-based *musique concrète*, and the

Victorian music hall. The band's songs from 1965 to 1968 were analyzed for structural hallmarks of each style within the broader rock context. Analysis showed that knowledgeable references to Hindustani classical music, musique concrète, and the music hall are not only present in the Beatles' music, but are also attached to particular associations. For example, characteristics of musique concrète appear alongside lyrics describing altered or alternative states of consciousness. The nature of music hall references correlates with the type of parody being explored in each song.

The results indicate that for the Beatles, specific meanings are evoked through knowledgeable stylistic references, and expand on (and even create) the possibilities for making such musical references. Possible extensions for future research include: other musical topics and topical fields in the Beatles and 1960s British rock; analysis of the relationship between "exotic" topics and cultural power; expansions on the use of avant-garde Western art music more broadly in classic British and American rock; and investigation of topical combinations (troping) and meaning creation and/or specification in classic British rock.

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Chapter 1: "The Act You've Known for All These Years": Introduction

I had heard George Harrison's "Within You, Without You" (1967) many times before, but something was different this time, my first listen to the song after beginning sitar lessons. The sitar's bright ring and mournful *dilruba* were familiar to my ears, as was the sudden jump to a five-beat rhythm in the solo section. Now, however, I could hear and count *tintal*, the 16-beat rhythm cycle used in the Indian Ensemble's practices and performances, in the tabla underneath the other instruments. Listening through the solo with ears pricked now, I caught it: the instruments performed an improvisatory *tihai*, the thrice-repeated marker that signaled the end of an idea or section, at the end of the solo. Listening to the track again, I heard even more *tihai*-esque constructions, emphases on the same pitches, and even repeated, specific movements between notes in key song moments. All of these aspects were elements I had encountered practicing and playing the sitar, and nowhere else. They came directly from the performance practice and structural patterns of North Indian classical music.

Realizing that I could understand "Within You, Without You" with my sitar player's ears was exciting enough. To unearth a new shade of how a piece of music was put together, especially one so familiar and special to me, is an experience that drew me to music theory. But even more exciting were the questions now swirling in my head. How was this level of reference to Indian music possible? Did the Beatles reference other kinds of music in a similar way, and if so, could I demonstrate it? Most important of all: Why were these stylistic references there in the first place?

This dissertation examines how the Beatles' music from 1965 to 1968 incorporates the band members' knowledge of three musical styles: North Indian (Hindustani) classical

music, *musique concrète*, and the Victorian and Edwardian music hall.[1] I argue that while other rock musicians of the time referred to multiple musical styles as well, the Beatles could reference these three styles in more nuanced ways due to their expertise. Lead guitarist and songwriter George Harrison (1943–2001), for example, applies his knowledge of raga, tal, improvisation, and performance structure in his songs that reference Indian music. Bassist and songwriter Paul McCartney (1942–) incorporates his familiarity with the music hall into his songs' formal and harmonic structure, instrumentation, and lyrics. Finally, both McCartney and rhythm guitarist/songwriter John Lennon (1940–1980) realize references to musique concrète by drawing on its compositional methods. Composers' stylistic competencies, and their use in musical referencing, play a large role in the Beatles' distinctive sound and stylistic experimentation.

Pointing out and providing evidence for the Beatles' application of knowledge is merely the first part of the project. I am also interested in associative meanings attached to the band's stylistic references. What is being communicated through inclusion of musique concrète or Hindustani classical music? To address this second element, this dissertation examines the Beatles' music through the lens of topic theory. Topic theory is the study of conventionalized musical figures, the associations they are meant to evoke for listeners, and how this pairing of figure and association settles over time.[2] There are several more specific

[1] In the U.K., time periods after the late 1400s are sometimes classified by their rulers' names: Tudor, Jacobean, Georgian, Victorian, etc. The Victorian era spanned the rule of Queen Victoria (1837–1901), while the Edwardian era encompassed the reign of Edward VII and the years leading up to World War I (1901–1914).

[2] Leonard G. Ratner, "Topics," in *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 9; Robert Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 2–3; Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military, and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 5–6, 9–10; Danuta Mirka, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2; William Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music: A History Through Musical Topic Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), Google Play Books edition, 14–15.

definitions of "topic," from Leonard Ratner's subjects for musical discourse to Raymond Monelle's conception of topics as social and cultural worlds encompassing and surrounding particular signifiers.[3] In this dissertation, I utilize Danuta Mirka's 2014 definition of a topic: "musical styles and genres taken out of their proper context and used in another one."[4] Mirka's definition is particularly applicable to the Beatles' music, as the group is well known for noticeable references to musical styles of all kinds. It is also an especially flexible definition, allowing for a broad range of possible styles and types of references. "Styles and genres" could refer to almost any aspect of music: melodic design, harmonic patterns, rhythmic choices, text, and so on. As the Beatles' stylistic evocations are realized through all of these things and more, a definition of "topic" that recognizes this possibility is useful for analysis.

My project explores the line of when musical material is or is not a clearly delineated topic. Not all of the Beatles' musical references are completely clear as topics. For this reason, rather than describing all of the Beatles' musical references as fully topical, I prefer to use William Echard's term *topicality*. Echard describes topicality as a musical characteristic's potential to be meaningful and, to some extent, easily recognized by listeners and conventionalized. The term covers concrete topical signifiers and associations, such as the sitar and its specific associations with India, as well as more ambiguous instances that may be meaningful, but less conventionalized.[5] The Beatles interact with topicality in different ways for each type of music they reference: expanding upon topical convention

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[3] Ratner, "Topics," 9; Monelle, *The Musical Topic*, 5–6, 9–10.

[4] Mirka, "Introduction," 2.

[5] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 18–19, 29–30.

(chapter 4), contributing to a new topical field (chapter 5), and pressing the boundary between topic and overall song context (chapter 6).

Echard's broader term topicality further recognizes that while a referenced style may not be fully topical, because of historical time and place or lack of contextual clarity, the referenced style may still have very clear associations or eventually become a fully-fledged topic in later time periods or repertoires. Musique concrète and the music hall in the Beatles are two examples that fall squarely into these points. The Beatles reference musique concrète, primarily through compositional choices rather than set timbres or melodic figures. If a listener is unfamiliar with these methods and cannot recognize the Beatles' references as musique concrète, then the style cannot be described as a topic. Musique concrète references are, however, part of a set of topical characteristics developing in the 1960s that Echard terms the psychedelic topical field.[6] The Beatles' treatment of the music hall, meanwhile, sometimes frames the music hall as a topic, but sometimes frames it as the overall song style, blurring the boundary between topic and context.

To determine whether or not a musical moment is truly topical in the Beatles' songs, I equally consider four main factors. First, how long does the stylistic reference last? All three styles examined in this dissertation are referenced to some degree in the examples, but the length of time that the reference lasts varies considerably. For example, McCartney's music hall-inspired numbers apply features that sometimes flit in and out of the soundscape (particularly timbres), but also can include features woven throughout the song's structure, such as melodic characteristics. In instances where the entire song seems ruled by "topical features," I argue that the song is being composed in the actual style of the musical reference.

[6] Ibid., 16–19, 32–33.

Second, how salient or noticeable is the potentially topical moment? Topical features in Classical-period Western art music are often immediately noticeable to listeners: timbres, changes in texture or tempo, and so on. For the most part, the Beatles' topical features are also quite salient in the context of the song, or of the general album context. For example, Harrison's Indian-influenced songs from *Revolver* (1966) and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) are striking in their difference from the other, more rock-based songs on both albums. Salience of musique concrète and music hall's is slightly more complicated, as (in the case of the former) the manner of reference might not be easily recognized as musique concrète by listeners; and (in the case of the latter) some topical features involve elements that are less easily attended to, such as resolution of secondary dominants. My next two considerations assist with the issue of salience.

Third, how many topical features are there? This third question is a particularly useful one to ask in cases where the features present are less salient. For example, one of McCartney's music hall tunes does use all features required for the music hall topic to be present, two of which are less salient than timbre. However, there are other features both more salient and associated with the music hall, such as improvisational singing, in the song. The number of features counterbalances the less noticeable topical features.[7]

Fourth, what role does musical form (both of context and referenced music) play in the creation of a topic? The Indian topic in particular begs this question, as one feature that Harrison incorporates is references to sitar performance sections and improvisational markers. But the Indian-influenced songs remain in an overall Western rock form, with

[7] While I do not engage with his ideas deeply here, Stephen Rumph's topical *figurae* might be a potentially useful framework for future projects dealing with the salience problem. See Stephen Rumph, "Topical Figurae: The Double Articulation of Topics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 493–513.

verses and repeated sections. For this reason, I would classify the songs as instances of Indian music as topic: unlike the music hall-influenced songs, the forms of the original style and the rock context are different, even if Indian musical structures transform the songs in deep ways.

My work examines three musical styles that Echard also discusses: Indian classical music, the music hall, and musique concrète. However, my project differs from his in two ways. First, Echard discusses these styles in relation to their role in developing a psychedelic style of music.[8] While I organize my discussion of musique concrète similarly—I view the Beatles' references to it as part of the developing psychedelic topical field Echard describes—I focus on Indian music and the music hall as instances of topicality in their own right.[9] Second, Echard does not examine how stylistic experience and knowledge play a role in the musical references to those styles. As the Beatles' stylistic references lean heavily on their own knowledge of the referenced styles (source music), exploring the band's interactions with topicality by examining how stylistic understanding manifests itself is where I make my primary contribution.

Stylistic Knowledge and the Beatles; Case Study Selection

Even before 1965 and the Beatles' first reference to Indian music—the sitar on Lennon's "Norwegian Wood"—they were stylistically curious performers and composers. The 1957–1965 volume of Walter Everett's *The Beatles as Musicians* discusses the band's live performing career and early original songs, and shows a wide range of styles they could

[8] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 15–17, 103–104.

[9] Echard's scope is also much broader than mine, as he discusses a gradual change from style to topic across several decades.

play in and refer to. For example, here is a sampling of musical styles the Beatles covered between 1957 and 1960: blues-rooted rock-and-roll (Little Richard, Chuck Berry); straight blues and R&B (Ray Charles, Fats Domino, the Everly Brothers); and skiffle (Lonnie Donegan).[10] After 1960, the Beatles added girl-group ballads, and even the occasional Broadway tune.[11] The group's original songs from 1963 to early 1965 incorporate some of these influences, as well as patterns associated with musical theatre and Tin Pan Alley songs, in their progression choices.[12] The Beatles developed understanding of these styles primarily through listening and performance, and showed a high level of willingness to learn via experimentation and self-driven exploration.

This dissertation focuses on references to styles appearing in the Beatles' songs from 1965 to 1968. While the Beatles' stylistic understanding could apply to many different types of music, I analyze three styles that emerge for the band in the mid-1960s: *Hindustani* classical music, musique concrète, and the music hall. References to *Hindustani* classical music belong primarily to Harrison, who first encountered Indian instruments and musicians on the *Help!* film set in 1965. He developed his understanding of sitar tuning, raga and *tal*, and performance by taking lessons with master sitar player Ravi Shankar for several years.[13] Harrison's learning experience with Indian music could be described as the most traditional learning route any of the Beatles took, in that he sought out lessons with a specific teacher.

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[10] Skiffle is a type of folk music with influences from the blues and jazz, distinguished by its use of improvised or homemade instruments. It was particularly popular in Britain during the 1950s.

[11] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through* Rubber Soul (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 40–41, 81.

[12] Timothy Scheurer, "The Beatles, the Brill Building, and the Persistence of Tin Pan Alley in the Age of Rock," *Popular Music and Society* 26, no. 1 (1996), 94–95, 98–99.

[13] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through* Rubber Soul, 296.

Musical references to musique concrète were mainly driven by Lennon and McCartney. Both Beatles had strong connections to the broader avant-garde art community in England, McCartney through art critic and gallery manager John Dunbar (a friend of McCartney's partner Jane Asher's family), Lennon through avant-garde artist and future spouse Yoko Ono.[14] McCartney in particular was curious about avant-garde music, and developed his own understanding of it through seeking out concerts, discussing the compositional methods and theory of musique concrète with friends, and creating his own tape compositions at home.[15] While Lennon appears to have been less self-directed, he did discuss and listen to pieces with McCartney's encouragement, and his explorations accelerated once he and Ono met.[16] The Beatles' grasp of musique concrète compositional techniques and ideas developed much in the way their knowledge of the blues and skiffle did: through deliberate, hands-on experience and experimentation.

Finally, references to the British music hall tradition fall to McCartney. All four Beatles would have been aware of the music hall to some extent, given that its heyday (roughly 1870s–1910s) was still within living memory of many Britons.[17] McCartney, however, seems to have been particularly exposed and attached to the style. His grasp of the music hall's songs, harmonic patterns, and melodies can be traced to his father Jim, who

[14] Barry Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1997), 211; Elizabeth Ann Lindau, " 'Mother Superior': Maternity and Creativity in the Work of Yoko Ono," *Women & Music* 20 (2016), 62.

[15] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 218–219.

[16] Thom Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music, and Culture*, 5th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016), Apple Books edition, 1,372–1,373.

[17] McCartney's father, for example, worked as a lighting operator in music halls as a young man. Further, all of the Beatles were born in the early 1940s, so it stands to reason that those of their grandparents' generation might have been alive in the late 19th century.

performed this music in the home and gave his sons casual lessons in singing and harmony.[18] While the least directed of the Beatles' learning processes, McCartney's knowledge-by-osmosis experience gave him enough understanding of the music hall sound to replicate it effectively in his own songs.

In each of these case studies, individual Beatles are particularly associated with each style. However, the writing, arranging, and recording of Beatles songs was very much a team effort. Each of them regularly contributed instrument parts, lyrical ideas, or timbral effects such as tape loops to the other Beatles' songs. McCartney, for example, made most of the tape loops on the final mix of "Tomorrow Never Knows" (1966), Lennon's song.[19] Even more crucial to the final sound were the efforts of two individuals on the production side: producer George Martin (1926–2016), and recording engineer Geoff Emerick (1945–2018). While the Beatles may have had ideas about the kinds of sounds they wanted, working out the details of how to realize those sounds was often left up to Emerick and Martin. For instance, whenever a band member wanted an orchestral instrument part for his song, Martin almost always arranged the part and worked as a liaison between the session musicians and the Beatles. Many tape and instrumental/vocal effects, particularly on *Revolver* (1966) and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), are due to Emerick's technological creativity.[20] Because of the key roles the production team played in the final recorded sound,

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[18] George Martin and William Pearson, *With a Little Help From My Friends: The Making of* Sgt. Pepper (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1994), 34; Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 23.

[19] Mark Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions: The Official Story of the Abbey Road Years 1962–1970* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 1988), 72.

[20] Kari McDonald and Sarah Hudson Kaufman, " 'Tomorrow never knows': the contribution of George Martin and his production team to the Beatles' new sound," in *"Every Sound There Is" The Beatles'* Revolver *and the Transformation of Rock and Roll*, ed. Russell Reising, Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 142, 148.

this dissertation discusses them as equal contributors to topical creation and stylistic reference.

I have selected Hindustani classical music, musique concrète, and the music hall as my case studies for two reasons. First, stylistic references made in the Beatles' pre-1965 music present a serious challenge for topic-theoretic analysis. As I will explore further in chapter 2, a key issue topic theorists face is to determine the difference between a topic and the context within which it operates.[21] This issue applies to quite a few stylistic references in the Beatles, most notably the blues. Certainly, a song like Lennon's "Yer Blues" (1968) has some salient features of blues music that make the reference stand out, such as vocal timbre and repetitive guitar riffs. However, given that rock music has strong roots in the blues, references to the blues in rock songs are much less clearly outside of their proper context (as Mirka's definition puts it).[22] I explore one style that presents a similar complication of simultaneously context and not-context: the music hall. Overall, however, my case studies are more clearly separated from their original and new contexts and more amenable to topical analysis.

Second, documentation is much clearer and stronger for the Beatles' understanding of Hindustani classical music, musique concrète, and the music hall than for other styles they reference. Harrison, McCartney, and Lennon all discuss their experiences with source music to some extent, and often with great detail. Their accounts tally with secondary sources' descriptions of the band's stylistic explorations as well. I additionally posit that by the time

[21] Thomas Johnson, "Tonality as Topic: Opening A World of Analysis for Early Twentieth-Century Modernist Music," *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 4 (2017), 1.2–1.3.

[22] Mirka, "Introduction," 2.

these referenced styles emerged, the Beatles had enough of a high profile to justify greater scrutiny of their musical activities and choices.

Why the Mid and Late 1960s?

As I have shown, the three styles this dissertation explores are not the only ones that the Beatles use, nor are they present throughout the band's whole career. In fact, the styles under study do not appear until partway through the band's time together, around 1965–1966. For instance, 1965's "Norwegian Wood" (*Rubber Soul*) is the first time a sitar appears on a Beatles song, and the first time it appears on a released pop song.[23] Likewise, "Rain" (1966) and selections from *Revolver* (1966) are the first Beatles tracks to incorporate techniques borrowed from musique concrète.[24] What might explain the seemingly sudden appearance of the music hall, musique concrète, and Hindustani classical music in the band's output?

One of the most plausible answers is that in 1966, the Beatles stopped touring and performing live altogether.[25] Their frustration with live performance had been building for some time before the band made the final decision, particularly around "Beatlemania" and its attendant difficulties. By 1966, the Beatles had spent three years being chased by fans, constantly answering the same press questions, dealing with home break-ins and attacks on

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[23] Jonathan Bellman, "Indian Resonances in the British Invasion, 1965–1968," in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 293.

[24] Russell Reising, "Introduction: 'Of the beginning,'" in *""Every Sound There Is" The Beatles'* Revolver *and the Transformation of Rock and Roll*, ed. Russell Reising, Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 11.

[25] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through* Rubber Soul, 341. The Beatles gave one live performance as a band on January 30th, 1969, on the roof of Apple Studios in London. In 1969 and 1970 as the group split up, individual Beatles did return to live performance, but not in collaboration with the other band members.

significant others, and only having safe access to hotel rooms and TV/radio studios when abroad.[26] 1966 was a particularly unlucky year for the band in terms of public perception and performance. In an interview in the London *Evening Standard*, Lennon commented that the Beatles were "more popular than Jesus."[27] Many readers, especially in the American South, took this statement to mean *better* than Jesus, leading to mass burnings of the group's records and death threats.[28] Similar cultural *faux pas* followed in tours around Asia later in 1966. In the Philippines, for example, the group members accidentally snubbed the reigning dictators' invitation to a state dinner, resulting in dangerous crowds and departure difficulties.[29] As one of the most popular bands of the era, the Beatles had a high level of public attention focused on them, and their words and actions were bound to be taken perhaps a little too seriously.

In addition to these reception problems, by the mid-1960s the pleasures of live performance and touring had worn off. Stadiums full of screaming fans, and the sheer volume they created, meant that the Beatles often could not hear themselves as they performed. By 1966, they had become accustomed to not noticing mistakes or tuning issues.[30] In the relatively quiet Japan tour performances, the band and the audience alike could hear the out-of-tune instruments, wrong chords, and lyrical mistakes. On top of all this,

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[26] Olivier Julien, "'Their production will be second to none': an introduction to *Sgt. Pepper*," in *Sgt. Pepper and the Beatles: It Was Forty Years Ago Today* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 1; Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 116–117, 298. Although Beatlemania did not really set in until 1963, Harrison, Lennon, and McCartney had been performing and traveling together since 1957 (Starr joined the group in 1962).

[27] Julien, "Their production will be second to none," 1.

[28] Ibid.

[29] George Harrison, *I Me Mine: The Extended Edition*, 2nd ed. (Guildford: Genesis Publications, Ltd., 2017), 48–49.

[30] Julien, "'Their production will be second to none,'" 1–2.

the band members were frustrated that the fans did not seem to care much about hearing the music. Lennon, for example, described the concerts of 1964–1966 as follows: "[The concerts have] nothing to do with music any more. They're just bloody tribal rites."[31] For the group members, by 1966 being a Beatle had become more about the persona and the name than actually making music. Touring was no longer an opportunity for musical development or communication; it was a hindrance to them.[32] Harrison, perhaps, summed the situation up most succinctly after the Beatles' final performance: "Well, that's it, I'm not a Beatle anymore."[33]

Stopping touring, in addition to lessening these reception and performance issues, meant that the Beatles had more time and energy to explore their own interests. The process began early in 1966: though touring was not yet over, the Beatles all took roughly three months off from their frenetic schedule. During this first vacation, they frequented London clubs, discussed music with contemporaries such as the Rolling Stones and the Animals, spent time with their families and partners, and explored their own interests.[34] After ending touring in August of 1966, all four band members took another break to work on their own projects.[35] Those few months, according to rock scholar Walter Everett, were the first time the Beatles fully realized they had interests and lives of their own, outside of being Beatles.[36]

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[31] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 69.

[32] George Harrison, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and Ringo Starr, *The Beatles Anthology* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, LLC, 2000), 216, 219, 229.

[33] Martin and Pearson, *With a Little Help From My Friends*, 11.

[34] Harrison, Lennon, McCartney, and Starr, *The Beatles Anthology*, 201, 203.

[35] Julien, "'Their production will be second to none,'" 2.

[36] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology, 31–32.

The time off gave the band members a break from each other and the space to develop as four individuals, rather than four parts of the same whole.

The 1966 breaks were crucial for the Beatles' exploration of Hindustani classical music and musique concrète in particular. George Harrison used the second vacation, immediately after finishing touring, for a six-week trip to India and sitar lessons with Ravi Shankar.[37] Paul McCartney spent much of his free time attending concerts by Karlheinz Stockhausen and Luciano Berio, experimenting with tape composition at home, and even making his own avant-garde films. Stopping touring altogether, resulting in even more time to experiment and learn, played a pivotal role in how the band's most famous album, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, turned out.[38] Speaking of *Sgt. Pepper*, producer George Martin writes: "The Beatles no longer had the millstone of madcap live performance tours around their necks. Now that they had some time and space…[t]hey were showing us what they could really do."[39] The vacations and eventual departure from touring opened up time and mental resources for the Beatles to explore other styles of music, and develop the knowledge that would deeply inform their references to those styles.

Finances are a second plausible reason for the appearance of new musical styles in the Beatles' mid- and late-1960s music. By 1965, the first year orchestral instruments appeared on Beatles recordings, the Beatles had made a great deal of money from album and single sales.[40] For perspective, according to the *Rolling Stone* Beatles album guide, the sales total in

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[37] Julien, "'Their production will be second to none,'" 2.

[38] Harrison, Lennon, McCartney, and Starr, *The Beatles Anthology*, 241.

[39] Martin and Pearson, *With a Little Help From My Friends*, 24.

[40] George Martin and Jeremy Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 184. *Help!* (1965) includes a flute solo on Lennon's "You've Got To Hide Your Love Away," and a string arrangement by Martin on McCartney's "Yesterday."

the U.S. alone during the band's time together was 183 million album copies.[41] As such, the Beatles themselves and Martin, as the point of contact between the band and the administration at their recording company EMI, could negotiate for resources that would have been denied less successful artists. They were allowed four-track recording machines from 1963 onward, a treatment never before afforded to a popular music group with EMI.[42] Recording *Sgt. Pepper* cost roughly £25,000, equivalent to almost £460,000 today.[43] As Martin states, this was an exorbitant amount of money in 1967, and the Beatles' status was the only thing that kept the company from cutting costs.[44]

The Beatle team's powerful position at EMI also aided them in getting the types of sounds they wanted, from countless feet of tape to manipulate, to session musicians and orchestras.[45] The band could bring in the best performers in the field without concern for cost, such as respected brass performers David Mason and Alan Civil.[46] The band members themselves were keenly aware of their status with EMI. Emerick recalls the following Lennon comment on cost problems with the orchestra hired for "A Day in the Life" (1967), "Sod the cost...We're making enough bloody money for EMI that they can spring for it...and

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[41] "The Beatles Albums by the Numbers," *Rolling Stone* special edition: *The Beatles: The Ultimate Album-by-Album Guide*, 2019, 112.

[42] Geoff Emerick and Howard Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere: My Life Recording the Music of the Beatles* (New York: Gotham Books, 2006), 70.

[43] Martin and Pearson, *With a Little Help From My Friends*, 168. This translates to about $642,000 in today's American dollars.

[44] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 213–214.

[45] Julien, "'Their production will be second to none,'" 4.

[46] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 201–202; W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 54. Civil improvised and performed the French horn solo on "For No One" *Revolver* (1966); Mason played the piccolo trumpet solo on "Penny Lane" (single/American release of *Magical Mystery Tour*, 1967).

for the party favors, too."[47] The Beatles had both the knowledge of non-rock styles and the financial means to create the sounds.

Earning power also gave the Beatles more intangible, but equally important, resources of studio space and time. They had booking priority in Abbey Road Studios, and Martin and Emerick, along with other studio staff assigned to work with the Beatles, had to build their schedules around when the band wanted to record. While this allowed the Beatles to consistently work with the same people, it meant long days and night shifts for the staff, often with little overtime pay or recognition.[48] The band's status also meant that artists were occasionally sidelined or forced to work around the Beatles' and other Liverpool artists' schedules. As Martin puts it, the administration at EMI "didn't want to kill the goose that was laying the golden discs," and so these issues usually did not have consequences for the groups involved.[49]

Time resources were also at play within the Beatles' recording sessions. Particularly from 1966 onward, the Beatles spent just as much studio time testing sounds and arranging as they did capturing usable takes. Recording *Sgt. Pepper* took some 700 hours of studio time, an unheard of amount of time to record a single album in 1967, but no one at EMI put any real pressure on the Beatles to finish the product. Again, as Emerick points out, these time luxuries would likely not have been allowed for anyone but the Beatles, given how much

[47] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 154. It seems that the Beatles wished the orchestral recording to be a memorable event, so they insisted on orchestra members and studio staff wearing party hats and other novelty items in addition to suits.

[48] Ibid., 197–198. These problematic working conditions for the staff only grew worse as the Beatles' relationships with each other deteriorated during the *White Album* sessions in 1968.

[49] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 141, 169–170.

money the band brought in.[50] I believe that the combination of spare time and financially based power, falling into place around the same time period, is the reason for the sudden appearance of Hindustani classical music, musique concrète, and the music hall as stylistic references in the Beatles' music.

The Drug Use Question

Before moving on to the dissertation outline, I will discuss one additional possible reason for the sudden appearance of non-rock styles at this specific point in the Beatles' career. The mid-1960s were the band's period of heaviest drug use, with all four band members experimenting to varying degrees with marijuana, LSD, and other substances. Popular mythology has occasionally argued that drug use expanded the Beatles' minds and creative potential. There may be a grain of truth to this theory, particularly when one considers the songwriters' own words on their lyrics from the mid-1960s. Paul McCartney, for example, describes his song "Got To Get You Into My Life" (1966) as an "ode to pot" that can also be read as a love song.[51] Some of Lennon's 1967 lyrics were inspired by imagery from drug trips, most famously "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds."[52] I also do not wish to appear judgmental of recreational drug use, especially given the context of the 1960s; drugs were part of the hippie counterculture, which the Beatles were seen to represent.

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[50] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 190.

[51] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 190.

[52] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 100. Many noted at the time that the song's initials spelled "LSD" and assumed that the song was about a drug trip. Lennon, however, got the inspiration for the song from a drawing done by his son Julian; as far as its writer is concerned, the song itself is not about drugs (though it could validly be interpreted that way). "I Am the Walrus" (1967) is another Lennon offering with lyrics inspired by drug-trip imagery.

Nevertheless, I do not find drug-expanded creative abilities a compelling explanation for the Beatles' stylistic experimentation for three reasons. First, while the musical styles I examine here emerged in the band's songs during the mid-1960s, they were inclined toward stylistic experimentation long before then.[53] Second, according to Emerick's account in particular, the Beatles' in-studio use was often more of a hindrance than a help to getting work done.[54] Finally, drug use also put the band members in physical danger and, particularly for Lennon, contributed to difficulties with motivation and decision-making in the studio in addition to general psychological unrest.[55] Overall, I find the band's decision to stop touring, the resulting free time to explore their own interests, and financial power far more compelling reasons than drugs for the emergence of new styles in the band's work in the mid-1960s.

Dissertation Outline

This dissertation is split into seven chapters including the introduction. Chapter 2 presents a literature review of the two theoretical worlds my work falls into: topic theory and analytical approaches to rock music. My research addresses three gaps in the topic-theoretic realm. While topical analysis acknowledges that composers or schools of composition can inform how a topic is realized, the composer's expertise in the referenced style is not usually

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[53] Some styles the Beatles experimented with referencing in their early songs include Tin Pan Alley, the blues and blues-based rock-and-roll, and country-western and rock-and-roll with country influences.

[54] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 194, 197. The only usable take made while the Beatles were under the influence that I have found was Lennon's piano introduction for McCartney's "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da." See Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 141; and Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 246–247.

[55] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 206–207; Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 172–173. For comments on motivational issues, see Hunter Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics: The Stories Behind the Music, Including the Handwritten Drafts of More Than 100 Classic Beatles Songs* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2014), 150–151; Emerick and Massey, *Here There and Everywhere*, 174; and Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 462–463.

discussed. Much topical research has also focused on eighteenth-century Western art music, with limited attempts at analyzing popular genres.[56] There have been some attempts, but overall, topical analyses of popular genres are the exception rather than the norm. Finally, my work on the Beatles' mid and late-1960s music challenges the idea that topical analyses need not concern themselves with musical accuracy. As I will show, particularly in discussions of exotic topics, the general assumption is that the topic will not resemble the original style's musical reality (performance practices, musical structure, and so on).[57] However, the Beatles' stylistic references often resemble and rely on structures (chords, scalar structure, harmony), compositional and performance techniques, and other characteristics drawn directly from the musical practices they point to. Inclusion of elements from the sources matters a great deal to the Beatles' topical explorations, and I argue that musical accuracy must be taken into account to understand the band's contributions to topicality.

Chapter 3 walks through the two-pronged methodology I apply in my analyses. To assess how closely the Beatles' musical references resemble their sources, I adapt Tara Browner's continuum of closeness to/distance from the Native American voice. Her model addresses how to distinguish between pieces that are broadly described as evoking Native American music, culture, or characters, as not all of these references directly employ Native

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[56] For examples of these limited attempts, see Rebecca Leydon, "Recombinant Style Topics: The Past and Future of Sampling," in *Sounding Out Pop: Analytical Essays in Popular Music*, eds. Mark Spicer and John Covach (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 193–213; Mark Spicer, "'Reggatta de Blanc': Analyzing Style in the Music of the Police," in *Sounding Out Pop: Analytical Essays in Popular Music*, eds. Mark Spicer and John Covach (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 124–153; Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*; and Susanna Välimäki, "War and Trauma in the Music of Bruce Springsteen: 'Born in the U.S.A.,' 'Devils & Dust.' and 'The Wall,'" in *On Popular Music and Its Unruly Entanglements*, eds. Nick Braae and Kai Arne Hansen (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 103–123.

[57] See for example Jonathan Bellman, "*Ongherese*, Fandango, and Polonaise: National Dance as Classical-Era Topic," *Journal of Musicological Research* 31, no. 2–3 (2012), 70–96; and Catherine Mayes, "Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy Styles," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 214–237.

musical material or structures.[58] As some of Browner's examples do use Native American materials, but in a parasitic fashion, I temper her continuum in chapter 4 with Yayoi Uno Everett's taxonomy of hybrid Asian and Western art music pieces.[59] Finally, I devise weighted hierarchies of topical features for the Indian topic and the Beatles' music hall references (chapter 6) based on Johanna Frymoyer's hierarchies for topics in post-tonal art music. Frymoyer's model addresses a perennial issue in topic theory: determining which features must be present for a topic to be realized and perceived. Frymoyer's example also allows for examination of how a specific composer may contribute to a preexisting topic, a particularly key question for my own work.[60] This multifaceted methodology provides a way to define topics in a stylistically varied context, and accounts for how the Beatles' application of stylistic knowledge creates a distinctive sound.

The first of my three case studies, Hindustani classical music, is examined in chapter 4. This chapter presents the first route the Beatles take when interacting with topicality: creatively manifesting a clearly delineated, preexisting musical topic. I argue that lead guitarist/songwriter George Harrison's understanding of Hindustani classical music, gained through sitar lessons, distinguishes the Beatles' topical realizations from those of their contemporaries, such as the Kinks and the Rolling Stones. In addition to previously established Indian topical features, like timbre and vocal or instrumental imitation of Indian sounds, Harrison's songs present pitch, rhythmic, and formal structures from Hindustani

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[58] Tara Browner, "Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890–1990," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1995, 15–17.

[59] Yayoi Uno Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music: Historical Contexts, Perspectives, and Taxonomy," in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, eds. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 16.

[60] Johanna Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study of Schoenberg's Ironic Waltzes," *Music Theory Spectrum* 39, no. 1 (2017), 84–85, 87.

classical music. These include raga, tal (rhythm cycles), improvisational practices, and references to traditional sitar performance sections. I also investigate questions of cultural appropriation, colonial history, and intercultural respect that inevitably arise in cross-cultural analysis.

Chapter 5 discusses the Beatles' knowledge of and references to musique concrète. This chapter explores the Beatles' second interaction with topicality: contributing to a new topical field. Where Harrison took a rather traditional path in developing his knowledge of Indian music, McCartney and Lennon took a self-study route to learn about musique concrète and other forms of avant-garde art music. With assistance from their production team, producer George Martin and sound engineer Geoff Emerick, the Beatles reference musique concrète through compositional techniques such as splicing, looping, and manipulating tape speed and direction.[61] Musique concrète in the Beatles does not function as a topic on its own, as it is debatable whether or not a listener would recognize the style via its compositional techniques.[62] However, elements of musique concrète are a component of the psychedelic in music, a set of style components developing in the 1960s that would eventually become topical in later music.[63] In addition, the associations the Beatles attach to musique concrète in their songs—altered or alternative states of reality—are associations of the psychedelic in music. The Beatles contribute to the developing psychedelic topical field

[61] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 575, 591, 604.

[62] Robert Hatten points out that a topic must be identifiable as itself to be considered a topic; see Robert Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 514.

[63] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 32–33, 42.

by applying their understanding of musique concrète composition, and by connecting these techniques to depictions of altered consciousness.

The third case study, the British music hall, is discussed in chapter 6. This chapter analyzes the Beatles' third form of topicality: blurring the boundary between topic and context. While documentation is more limited around Paul McCartney's knowledge of the music hall, it can still be demonstrated that he grasped its conventions and typical characters. The primary connecting link is his father Jim McCartney, a musician and former lighting operator for music hall shows. (Paul) McCartney often listened to his father's stories about the music hall, and discussed and played the music with him at home; I argue that this exposure was how McCartney developed his own knowledge of the style.[64] George Martin's understanding of orchestral instruments and arranging also plays a key role in realization of the Beatles' music hall references. While two of the songs analyzed here ("Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear") treat the music hall as a topic, the other two ("When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie") make delineating the line between topic and context much more difficult. I argue that the kind of topicality McCartney engages in reflects the type of parody being engaged in, drawing on Esti Sheinberg and Yayoi Uno Everett's work on musical irony, parody, and satire.[65] I further suggest that the duality in McCartney's handling of the music hall—sometimes satirical, sometimes not—reflects an ambivalence toward the source music and, by extension, Britain's musical and cultural past.

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[64] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 22–23. Although the other two bands I examine in chapter 6 (the Rolling Stones and the Kinks) were familiar with music hall traditions, I have not found documentation that the band members received the kind of education in the music hall's stylistic norms that McCartney did.

[65] Esti Sheinberg, *Irony, Satire, Parody and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich: A Theory of Musical Incongruities* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000), Apple Books edition; Yayoi Uno Everett, "Parody with an Ironic Edge: Dramatic Works by Kurt Weill, Peter Maxwell Davies, and Louis Andriessen," *Music Theory Online* 10, no. 4 (2004), https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.04.10.4/mto.04.10.4.y_everett.html.

Chapter 7 presents both some concluding thoughts and looks toward future projects. I reiterate the various methods of interacting with topicality in each chapter, as well as the meanings evoked and/or reasons for doing so. I also discuss possibilities for extending topical analysis in both the Beatles' music and in British and American classic rock more broadly. As chapter 7's title suggests ("The End of the Beginning"), I see great potential for topical research in rock music.

Chapter 2: Two Theoretical Worlds Come Together: Literature Review

In this dissertation, the primary analytical apparatus I use is topic theory. Broadly defined, topic theory is the study of conventionalized musical figures and how they accrue specific meanings or associations over time. Topical analysis began in the 1980s and 1990s, with Classical-period Western art music as the main repertoire under study. Since that time, it has expanded to include many other styles and genres of music, such as post-tonal art music, film music, and popular music.[66] My own work addresses three issues in the field of topic theory. While topic theory does recognize that an individual composer or school has some influence over how a musical reference is realized, little attention is given to the composers' experience with the style they are referencing.[67] Further, while there has been some topical analysis of popular music, topical analysis of popular genres remains scant.[68] Finally, many topic theorists argue that stylistic knowledge or accuracy is not important to topical realizations, and generally does not merit discussion.[69]

[66] See for example Thomas Johnson, "Tonality as Topic: Opening A World of Analysis for Early Twentieth-Century Modernist Music," *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 4 (2017), http://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.4/mto.17.23.4.johnson.html; Janet Bourne, "Hidden Topics: Analyzing Gender, Race, and Genius in the 2016 Film *Hidden Figures*" (PowerPoint presentation, 27th Annual Meeting of Music Theory Southeast, Beaufort, SC, March 3, 2018); and William Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music: A History Through Musical Topic Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), Google Play Books edition.

[67] Johanna Frymoyer, for example, recognizes the role individuals have in topical realizations and development; see Johanna Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study of Schoenberg's Ironic Waltzes," *Music Theory Spectrum* 39, no. 1 (2017), 83–108.

[68] Echard's *Psychedelic Popular Music* is one major exception. Echard does not confine himself strictly to the 1960s or to Britain, as he is interested in how psychedelic music on both sides of the Atlantic developed from a style into a topic available for reference.

[69] See for example Jonathan Bellman, "*Ongherese*, Fandango, and Polonaise: National Dance as Classical-Era Topic," *Journal of Musicological Research* 31, no. 2–3 (2012), 70–96; and Catherine Mayes, "Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy Styles," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 214–237.

However, I demonstrate that not only is it possible for accuracy to matter to topical analysis, it is also a vital part of the Beatles' unique treatment of the styles they reference. I address these gaps by examining the role of expertise and attempts at stylistic accuracy in the Beatles' music from 1965 to 1968. These two elements together help give the Beatles a distinctive sound and manifest their stylistic references creatively.

The following literature review will focus on two main pillars: topic theory and rock music. Each of my chapters will have literature of its own, related to the specific style referenced in each chapter. However, I treat these individual sets of literature as guides to the styles of music. For the purposes of this dissertation, I do not engage in debate over finer points of those broader styles. For example, composers and scholars of musique concrète have debated over including unedited "noise" sounds as compositional material.[70] I engage with this discussion only to the point of determining unaltered sounds' importance to the Beatles' treatment of musique concrète.

Topic Theory: History and Questions

Topic theory as an analytical method begins with Leonard Ratner's 1980 book *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style*. Focusing on eighteenth-century art music, Ratner describes topics as characteristic musical figures that serve as subjects for musical discourse. While the length and nature of these figures varies, they must all have a recognizable and conventionalized element.[71] Ratner's taxonomy of topics was a key step in developing topic theory as a method for analyzing Classical-period music. However, the

[70] Thom Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music, and Culture*, 5th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016), Apple Books edition, 121.

[71] Leonard G. Ratner, "Topics," in *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 9.

work done in Ratner's book is just that: a *taxonomy*. As multiple scholars point out, Ratner does not make much progress (if any) towards interpreting what the topics he outlines mean.[72] For example, Susan McClary compares topic theory of this kind to an art critic who "explicate[s] Picasso's *Guernica* by proudly identifying the 'horsie,' without somehow noticing the creature's anguished grimace or the other figures on the canvas."[73] Surely, these scholars argue, musical meaning is about much more than simply pointing out that something meaningful is happening? Although identifying topics and describing them is a crucial first step, continuing past the identification toward interpretation is a necessary next step. What that next step is, however, depends on perspective: Is the analyst concerned with how a topic's musical structure communicates its meaning, with how the meaning arose in the first place, or a mixture of both?

Nicholas McKay's summary of topic theory up to the early 2000s describes how topic theorists divided along these three perspectives. The "first generation" of Ratner and his students Kofi Agawu and Wye Allanbrook investigated topics from a music-analytical perspective.[74] Beginning with Allanbrook's work on rhythm and dance topics in Mozart, the music-analytically oriented strain of topic theory explores how meanings become attached to specific musical ideas, rather than focusing on the meanings themselves. In *Playing with Signs*, for example, Agawu investigates how surface-level structures of topics can suggest different meanings than deeper levels of structure. This "play," as he terms it, between

[72] Nicholas McKay, "On Topics Today," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie* 4, no. 1–2 (2007), 165.

[73] Susan McClary, review of *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays*, *Notes* 58, no. 2, 326–328, quoted in Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 83–84.

[74] McKay, "On Topics Today," 161.

multiple levels creates conflicting messages about how music is organized, and play is what makes music employing topics so compelling.[75] For these scholars, the next step beyond identification and into analysis is to examine how musical topics may relate to deeper levels of musical structure. One criticism that arose, however (particularly of Agawu's work), was that they did not focus enough on *why* interactions between topics and deeper structural levels were significant.

A second generation of topic theorists responded to the lack of expressive interpretation in music-analytically oriented accounts by focusing on how topics' meanings arise in the first place. Two different emphases in the development of topical interpretation are evident in this second generation, led respectively by Robert Hatten and Raymond Monelle.[76] Monelle explores musical topics from a cultural criticism and historical perspective. He argues that historical precedents help create associations between specific musical ideas and their meanings, and analyzes musical topics by tracking those associations' development through history.[77] Hatten, meanwhile, emphasizes how seemingly opposed topics can be integrated within a broader expressive context. To him, this integration (troping) correlates to structural landmarks in musical pieces and within more surface topics, such as the heroic and the pastoral.[78] Both Hatten and Monelle take the necessary next step

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[75] Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classical Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 72, 78.

[76] McKay, "On Topics Today," 161, 168.

[77] Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military, and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 35.

[78] McKay, "On Topics Today," 172. See also Robert Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 514–515.

beyond topical identification, and both explore what makes a topical instance meaningful. However, they go about their task in slightly different ways.

Topic theory has continued to grow and develop since the early 2000s. The two primary strains I have outlined here—structural focus and cultural studies focus—can still be seen in recent topic theory literature.[79] Within both strands, scholars continue to be concerned with the boundaries between topic, context, and a gray area between short reference and full topical instance. For example, Johanna Frymoyer and Thomas Johnson's studies of topics in twentieth-century art music both struggle with questions of topical definition and clarity. If a topic is too broadly defined, it runs the risk of everything, and therefore nothing, being significant. A key feature of the minuet topic is triple meter; but a piece may be in triple meter, or have sections in triple meter, without pointing to the minuet and its connotations.[80] How is an analyst to know, in this case, whether or not the possible minuet reference is meaningful? Stylistically heterogeneous repertoires can also make topical analysis difficult. In his work on tonality as a topic in twentieth-century post-tonal music, Johnson points out that "post-tonal art music" is not a singular style. Because post-tonal music has many possibilities for what constitutes the musical context, an analyst faces a major challenge: determining what counts as a topic when the context is not clearly established.[81] Both Frymoyer and Johnson represent an ongoing concern in topic theory, that of precisely defining both context and individual topics' features.

[79] For an example of each focus, see Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works"; and Mayes, "Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy Styles."

[80] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 84–85.

[81] Johnson, "Tonality as Topic," 1.3.

Another area of growth in topic theory is expansion into repertoires of music beyond art music of the Classical and Romantic periods. Twentieth-century repertoires and popular music are two examples that come to mind. I have already touched on Frymoyer and Johnson's work on topics in twentieth-century art music. The study of topics in popular music is still relatively unexplored territory, but as I will show in the "Interlude" of this chapter, several attempts have been made since the 2010s.

The relationship between topics, "exotic" music, and stereotypes is also a growing area of topic theory. Catherine Mayes and Jonathan Bellman examine several exotic Classical topics from this perspective. For Bellman, exotic dances used in Classical-period music communicate certain connotations that Western listeners at the time had about the referenced cultures. For example, in some operatic works (for example Giovanni Paisiello's 1782 *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), the Spain-associated fandango was often paired with haughty, arrogant Spanish characters who looked more threatening than they actually were. The character reflected late eighteenth-century opinion on the country of Spain. It was a vanquished power, but one that had not let go of memories of its former superiority.[82] Rather than reflecting the cultural and musical reality of Spain in any accurate fashion, the topic communicates the audience's *perception* of Spanish music and people. Mayes' discussion of the Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy topics makes similar points.

The points raised in Bellman and Mayes' work dialogue nicely with previous sources on exoticism in music, most notably with Edward Saïd's *Orientalism*. Much like the later topic theorists, Saïd emphasizes that culturally defined ideas about "the Other," wherever that Other came from, are more important than representing the referenced culture's musical

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[82] Bellman, "*Ongherese*, Fandango, and Polonaise: National Dance as Classical-Era Topic," 77.

reality.[83] In my chapter on the Indian topic in the Beatles, I argue that musical references drawn from the original style (Hindustani classical music) are what help distinguish the Beatles' Indian topic from earlier topical realizations. As I will discuss shortly, Mayes' and Bellman's scholarship also provokes the question: Can or should a topic theorist concern themselves with musical accuracy?

Definitions and Gaps

Topic theory is the study of conventionalized musical references, and how those may be used rhetorically to evoke particular meanings. Previous work in topic theory has provided several definitions of what musical topics are. Raymond Monelle's view of a topic, for example, expands to include not just Ratner's characteristic figures themselves, but also the historical and cultural precedents they grow out of.[84] In this project, I most closely follow Danuta Mirka's definition.[85] Mirka's definition of topic is particularly flexible, which makes it both a useful definition and one that raises some issues around topical clarity.

The flexibility of Mirka's definition of topics works particularly well in the context of rock music. Rock music from the 1950s to the early 1970s has reasonably clear stylistic conventions. As Everett points out, rock music from 1955 to roughly 1969 follows (mostly) predictable patterns in its melodies, rhythmic and metric elements, and harmonic patterns.[86]

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[83] Edward Saïd, *Orientalism* (Vintage Books, 1979), 71–72.

[84] Monelle, *The Musical Topic*, 19.

[85] Danuta Mirka, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2.

[86] Walter Everett, *The Foundations of Rock: From "Blue Suede Shoes" to "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), vi. Everett further argues here that these fundamentals of rock music, developed during 1955–1969, have not changed dramatically in modern-day rock. However, as a discussion of all rock is well beyond the scope of this dissertation, I do not discuss rock beyond 1970 in depth.

Rock becomes much more stylistically heterogeneous, and presents more difficulties in defining context, from the early 1970s, just past the time period I study here.[87] The Beatles, whose primary musical influences and career sit squarely in Everett's outlined time period, used and helped develop the conventions with which later rock subgenres would interact. Within that context, the Beatles are well known for stylistic variety, often deploying other styles besides rock conventions.

I find Mirka's definition useful for topical analysis of rock because it is flexible enough to account for this wide range of stylistic reference. Further, her definition allows space to consider elements directly from the referenced music (the source music) as part of a topic. She does not restrict her definition to specific gestures or characteristics, instead referring simply to the "style" or "genre."[88] If a source element—an accompaniment pattern, timbre, a type of form, a specific scale, and so on—can be shown to come from that source style, under Mirka's definition the source element can be considered part of a topical reference.

Mirka's definition of topics does have a potential weak point. While the broadness of her definition makes it flexible enough to account for direct references to source music, that flexibility can also mean that defining context becomes much harder. Johnson makes this very point about Mirka's definition: "Moving to the myriad compositional practices of the twentieth century makes identifying genres and proper settings – and thus topics, per Mirka's

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[87] David Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 5, 7. There is slight overlap between the late 1960s and early 1970s in terms of subgenre development and stylistic change. However, for the most part, these changes do not drastically impact rock music's conventions until the 1970s. For example, the Grateful Dead formed in 1965, but their emphasis on improvisation and ambiguous musical forms did not become a strong element of classic rock until later.

[88] Mirka, "Introduction," 2.

definition – much trickier...If we are unable to consistently identify genres in this still-meaningful and still-rich music, then we will be unable to consistently analyze topics per Mirka's definition."[89] In other words, when the repertoire providing the context for topics is stylistically varied, topics within that context become even more difficult to clearly define.

I face challenges similar to Johnson's in my own research. Much like post-tonal art music, popular music and specific genres within it also present a wide variety in the range of stylistic influences. For example, while the term "rock" describes a genre within popular music, that term encompasses sixty years of music, and many subgenres: hard rock, country rock, progressive rock, and so on. Focusing on a single decade of rock and its stylistic elements, or accurately determining context, has been a necessary analytical decision. Choosing the Beatles as my repertoire for study has also presented a challenge. Determining a specific artist or band's individual style is a difficult proposition, particularly when one of the artist's hallmarks is stylistic eclecticism.[90] I address the issue of a clear context by both specifying a particular branch of rock, and by discussing what constitutes stylistic conventions within it, with attention given to how the Beatles contributed to those conventions.

To deal with potentially ill-defined topics, I adapt Frymoyer's hierarchies of topical features, weighting how important particular features seem for the Beatles' references.[91] Topic theory's emphasis on conventionality and listeners' instant recognition might imply

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[89] Johnson, "Tonality as Topic," 1.2–1.3.

[90] Allan F. Moore, *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Popular Song* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 120.

[91] Please see chapter 3 for more details.

that there is little to no room for innovation in the craft of musical referencing. However, as Frymoyer's hierarchy points out, topics can actually strike a balance between convention and variation. How the waltz topic manifests itself in Schoenberg's music, for example, can be found at the idiomatic level of Frymoyer's hierarchy as shown in figure 2.1 below. Waltz topics in Schoenberg often include a reversal of the typical beat range (high-low-low rather than low-high-high), in addition to previously established features such as triple meter and melody-plus-accompaniment texture.[92] Even in a reference with established features, individual composers can introduce something new without weakening or changing the associations. I extend this idea by arguing that in the Beatles' case, stylistic knowledge allows them to expand upon topics creatively without losing sight of their meanings.

[92] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 92.

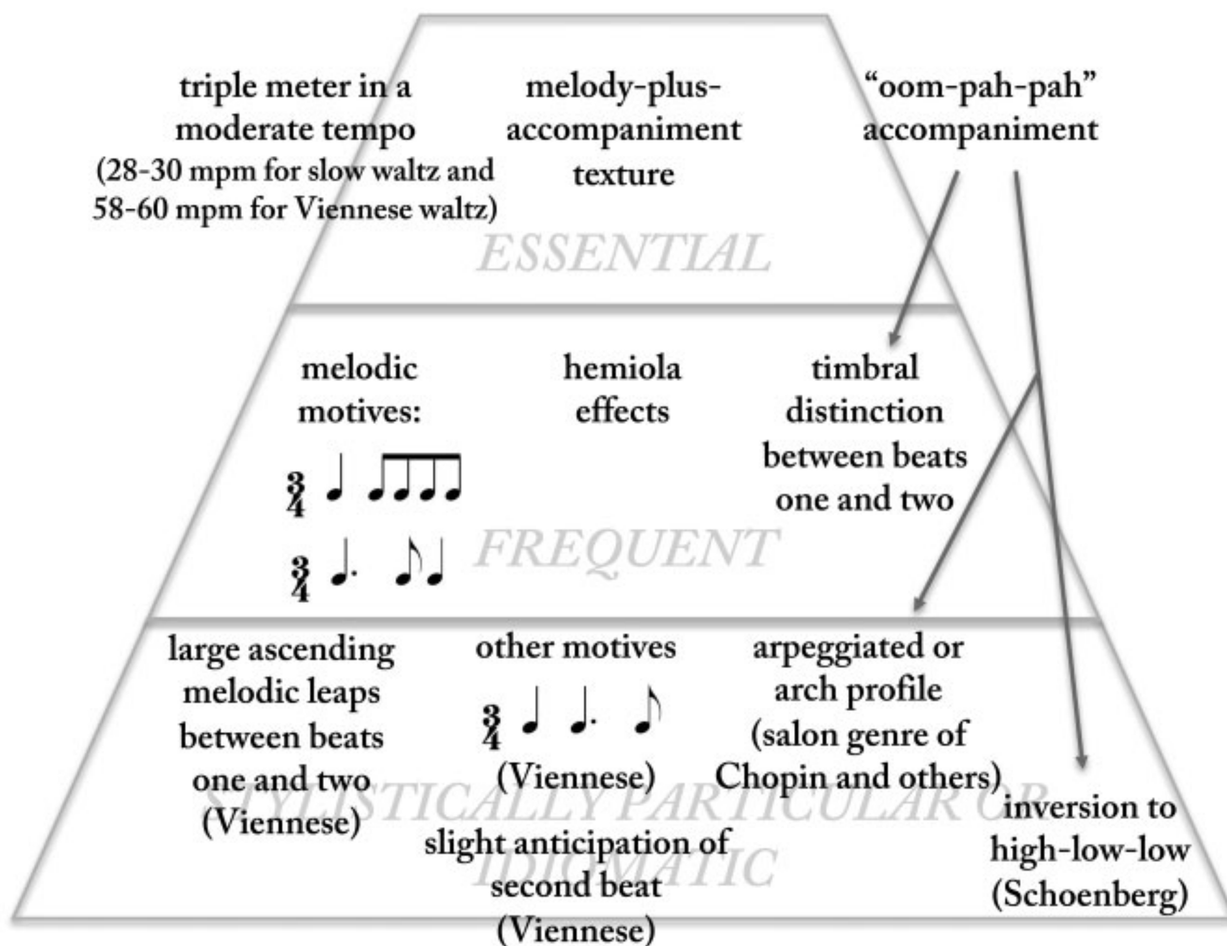

Fig. 2.1: Frymoyer's weighted topical hierarchy for the waltz topic. "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study of Schoenberg's Ironic Waltzes," *Music Theory Spectrum* 39, no. 1 (2017), 92.

My investigation of how stylistic knowledge affects topical realizations challenges an assumption often made in topic theory: that a match between the original style and the topical version of it need not matter. As Mayes' and Bellman's work shows particularly clearly, musical accuracy is not an obligation of stylistic reference. Exotic topics are often associated with stereotypes of the culture the music attempts to evoke, and are thus not likely to depict the home culture's music by drawing on it, even if the creator was familiar with the original style. Bellman, for example, identifies a plausible meaning behind the use of the *ongherese* in Haydn: "In any case, the joke now at least makes some sense: *This is how those Gypsies would play a minuet, get it?*...Haydn and his colleagues would certainly have had contact

with Gypsies and their music. It is no great leap to surmise that this is a joke that would have been appreciated in Esterházy circles."[93] Mayes, meanwhile, examines Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy topics in the late eighteenth century, and finds that the two did have different associations, though their topical features overlapped. However, as she points out, both the overlapping features and the associations arose from Western perceptions of Turkish and Hungarian cultures, not from either culture's musical practice.[94] The assumption here seems to be that a study of possible connections to the original music and context in topics, particularly exotic ones, will not reveal much other than cultural prejudice.

But what happens when a creator *chooses* to involve stylistic elements drawn directly from the music they reference, as the Beatles do? In such a case, it is not only possible to take stylistic accuracy into account, but also (I would argue) necessary. The Beatles' informed use of source musical elements matters for two reasons. First, the fact that the Beatles had knowledge of the styles they referenced means that they can use that knowledge to expand upon previous topical conventions, particularly in the case of the Indian topic.[95] Second, the band members' knowledge of various styles, and application of it, is a part of the Beatles' idiolect: it helps them sound unique. Discussions around exotic topics only apply to one chapter here, on the Indian topic (chapter 4), but I plan to continue topical research along these lines in future projects.

Interlude: Topics and Popular Music

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[93] Bellman, "*Ongherese*, Fandango, and Polonaise: National Dance as Classical-Era Topic," 87–88.

[94] Mayes, "Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy Styles," 217–218.

[95] Gerry Farrell, *Indian Music and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 96–98, 173. The question of accuracy is especially pertinent with the Indian topic, as lack of accuracy to Indian music was the norm, both in the 1960s and before.

The idea of a composer's experience with referenced styles is something that topical analyses of both art music and popular music have not discussed. Part of the reason could be simply that topical analyses of popular music are scant. As of this chapter's writing, four scholars that I am aware of have attempted topical analyses of various popular groups and genres.[96] Most relevant for my own project is William Echard's *Psychedelic Popular Music: A History Through Musical Topic Theory*. Echard is interested primarily in two questions: How can preexisting topics combine to form a style, and how does that style then itself transform into a topic? Echard is a continuation of the historically and culturally oriented strain of topic theory, as he draws on Monelle in determining how psychedelic music transforms over time from style to topic.[97] In his discussion of topical transformation, Echard also highlights how difficult it can sometimes be to tell where a topic ends and begins, especially when (as is the case, he argues, with the psychedelic as a topic) multiple preexisting topics contribute to a new one. I find topicality a particularly useful term, as it implies that while some musical references may behave like clearly delineated topics, defining the boundary between topic and style is not always fully possible.[98]

Rebecca Leydon and Mark Spicer have also discussed topical analyses of popular music. Spicer's work on the Police argues, similarly to Echard, that a collection or family of topics is what constitutes a musical style. Spicer's definition allows him to argue that one

[96] While I do not discuss his work in detail here, Kevin Holm-Hudson is another scholar whose work is similar to topic theory, examining stylistic references in rock from a timbral perspective. See Kevin Holm-Hudson, "The Future Is Now...And Then: Sonic Historiography in Post-1960s Rock," *Genre* 34, nos. 3–4 (2001), 243–264.

[97] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 14.

[98] This seems to be the case with the Beatles' references to the music hall; see chapter 6.

small component of this family, or one topic, is enough to evoke the referenced style.[99] Leydon, though her work touches on topic theory, is primarily concerned with sampling. She asks what the difference is between a quotation or sample, lifted directly from another's recording, and a stylistic reference that artists make themselves. Topics and sampling accomplish the same referencing and association-making tasks, but topics as Leydon sees them place more emphasis on composers' *compositional* abilities, rather than on their editorial or mediatorial abilities.

Leydon does not explicitly state a definition of topic, but she seems to define them the same way Mirka, and I, define them: as elements of a musical style played in a different context than its usual one. Leydon also raises the issue of stylistic expertise in a mild fashion, in her discussion of topics on Beck's *Midnite Vultures* (1999): band members included country musicians, who used their (presumed) knowledge of country music to create stylistic references. However, she does not discuss whether or not Beck himself knew the styles treated topically, and the references all seem to simply take the form of timbres.[100] My own work, while elements of it are related to Leydon's concerns, involves bringing the composers' (and performers') understanding of musical styles much more to the forefront.

A final example of topical analysis on popular music is Susanna Välimäki's study of war and trauma in Bruce Springsteen's music. In her three case studies, she argues that conventionalized musical elements help communicate experiences of trauma, and the

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[99] Mark Spicer, "'Reggatta de Blanc': Analyzing Style in the Music of the Police," in *Sounding Out Pop: Analytical Essays in Popular Music*, eds. Mark Spicer and John Covach (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 127, 140.

[100] Rebecca Leydon, "Recombinant Style Topics: The Past and Future of Sampling," in *Sounding Out Pop: Analytical Essays in Popular Music*, eds. Mark Spicer and John Covach (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 196–197, 199.

apparent role that music can have in healing them. Two of her analyses deal with "Americanism" as a topic, defined as "open intervals of fifths and fourths, slowly shifting harmonies, and the solemn timbres and gestures of brass instruments, especially trumpets, and military drums."[101] In Springsteen's songs, Americanism as a topic is juxtaposed with musical representations of the mental consequences of war, such as aggressive vocalizations and repetitive, harsh timbres and section structures. The juxtaposition of Americanism with the more brutal musical elements suggesting trauma conveys the horrors beneath the shine of patriotism. Similarly to the Beatles, Springsteen takes a pre-established musical topic (Americanism) and treats it creatively. Välimäki does not suggest that Springsteen incorporates expertise or training in Western art music into his creative topical treatment.[102] Springsteen's topical realization is characteristic of his music, but in a different way than the Beatles' realizations are characteristic of theirs.

Context: Form in Classic Rock Music

A particularly important aspect of topical analysis is to determine the context within which topics operate. For my own project, that context is 1960s British rock, a style that the Beatles are both part of and contribute to. Smaller-scale elements of the classic rock style are a part of determining how that style works: melodic and harmonic constructions, instrumentation, commonly used meters, and so on. However, I analyze several songs where the distinction between topic and stylistic blend is somewhat fuzzy. For example, as I will discuss in chapter 4, George Harrison's Indian-influenced songs often include formal

[101] Susanna Välimäki. "War and Trauma in the Music of Bruce Springsteen: 'Born in the U.S.A.,' 'Devils & Dust,' and 'The Wall,'" in *On Popular Music and Its Unruly Entanglements*, eds. Nick Braae and Kai Arne Hansen (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 106, 110, 118.

[102] Ibid., 108–111.

elements from Hindustani classical music, and few (if any) Western instruments. These songs' musical forms nevertheless mimic common song forms in Western rock, and the Indian formal elements in them are facsimiles of the style they reference. The fragmented nature of those features, and the retained Western form, suggest that these songs present topics rather than true stylistic blends. Similarly, the Beatles' musique concrète references also fall within the norms of Western rock song forms. As unusual as "Tomorrow Never Knows" is, it remains a rock form, with clearly delineated verses and an introduction, solo section, and outro.[103] Rock's formal patterns and norms, in this project, are the most key stylistic element in determining where context ends and topic begins.

Before I discuss the perspectives on form I rely on, a word about rock's relationship to common-practice tonality is necessary. One long-standing debate in rock analysis has been whether or not to use analytical systems inherited from common-practice tonality. As Everett points out in *The Foundations of Rock*, rock music does indeed share some characteristics with common-practice tonality, especially in the harmonic realm. For example, many rock songs present the idea of a strong tonal center, from which one departs and to which one returns, and major-minor opposition.[104] Nevertheless, there are conventions in rock music not covered by common-practice tonality and its analytical methods: the frequency of the pre-dominant as a dominant resolution, instances of II-IV, and a higher degree of modally-based melodies and harmonic constructions.[105]

[103] Lennon's "Revolution 9" (1968), as I discuss in chapter 5, is an exception; its formal sections are delineated in ways much more similar to a true musique concrète piece.

[104] W. Everett, *The Foundations of Rock*, 163, 215, 222.

[105] Trevor de Clercq and David Temperley, "A Corpus Analysis of Rock Harmony," *Popular Music* 30, no. 1 (2011), 61–62; Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock*, 47–48. See also Allan F. Moore, *Rock, the Primary Text: Developing a Musicology of Rock*, 2nd ed. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002); and Nicole Biamonte, "Triadic Modal and Pentatonic Patterns in Rock Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 32, no. 2 (2010), 95–110.

One method for dealing with this seeming paradox (simultaneously tonal and less tonal) is to take a flexible or blended approach: one that is more often used on common-practice music, but adapted to better account for rock music's unique possibilities. For example, Everett's work draws strongly on Schenkerian analysis, but he acknowledges that rock may have several possible tonal systems, including modal and fully chromatic systems.[106] Similarly, Nobile's *Form as Harmony in Rock Music* is built on the premise that the functionalities of tonic–pre-dominant–dominant (inherited from common-practice norms) do still apply in rock music. The difference lies in what chords can serve these functions, a question which is much more variable in its answers than tonal Western art music.[107] An approach that accepts both rock's structural similarities to Western art music and the difference between the two provides, perhaps, the most well-rounded way to view rock music.

While the debate over analytical methods is not one I engage with in depth, as I use a different method than either described here (topic theory), my own stance on the matter is similar to Everett and Nobile's. To implement analytical techniques and concepts from Western art music need not necessarily be a problem. A large body of rock songs does make sense when analyzed from that angle. To use a Beatles example, McCartney's "I've Just Seen a Face" fits almost squarely into a major key as defined by common-practice tonality. The verse chords behave largely as they would in a classical piece. In the chorus, IV seems to

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Moore argues that rock harmony is often non-functional because of its modal material, where Biamonte sees functionality as defined by common-practice analysis as a possibility even with modal material.

[106] W. Everett, "Making Sense of Rock's Tonal Systems," *Music Theory Online* 10, no. 4 (2004), http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.04.10.4/mto.04.10.4.w_everett.html: 3–5.

[107] Drew Nobile, *Form as Harmony in Rock Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), Kindle edition, 7.

work as an extension of dominant function, a more rock-driven usage. Nevertheless, in the case of "I've Just Seen a Face," an analytical method that is rooted in Western art music accounts for a good deal of what happens. A song like Lennon's "Tomorrow Never Knows," on the other hand, demands a method less strictly connected to tonal norms, as the song does not have chords in a traditional sense.[108] It seems to me that the most convincing way to analyze a body of music that presents such different examples is a middle ground: a method that can account for both similarities to Western art music and differences from it.

The most foundational rock literature studied here deals with form, and questions of what exactly constitutes "form" in such a varied repertoire. I draw most heavily on Drew Nobile's *Form as Harmony in Rock Music* (2020) and David Temperley's *The Musical Language of Rock* (2018). Nobile's book, as its title suggests, deals specifically with form in rock, arguing that harmonic structures and their interactions with other elements (lyrics, texture, melody, etc.) are the primary determinants for rock forms. Further, specific and conventional harmonic patterns and formal sections mutually create each other; as he puts it, "[F]orm and harmony do not act independently but synchronize into a small number of conventional patterns used consistently across genres and decades."[109] Temperley's book is wider in scope, dealing more specifically with what he calls local features: scales, key, instrumentation, rhythm, and so on. Using corpus analysis as his primary method, he applies a statistically based approach to rock's general features. Temperley's account of form, unlike Nobile's, is based on lyrical changes and those changes' relationship to repetition and/or

[108] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37.

[109] Nobile, *Form as Harmony in Rock Music*, xiv.

variation. I mainly use their sources to help describe and discuss rock formal sections, as formal differences between rock and the styles referenced are a strong determinant of a topical reading in my work.

I find Nobile's ideas on rock forms more effective than Temperley's, for several reasons. First, Temperley's approach is based on a moment-to-moment, statistical approach, especially in the way he discusses harmonic progressions, where he concludes that there are not "strong, specific constraints analogous to those found in common-practice harmony."[110] However, as Nobile points out, this conclusion may be partly because certain chords are more common than others. More to the point, Temperley's account of form does not always account for high levels of consistency across formal areas.[111] Further, while Temperley is correct in saying that many rock songs feature some kind of alternating form between verses and choruses/refrains, there is a fair amount of rock music that does not follow such forms, including examples from the Beatles ("Tomorrow Never Knows," which has only verses and solos, comes to mind).[112] Like Nobile, I question whether or not detail-oriented or moment-to-moment analysis tells us much about rock's large-scale components, such as form or harmonic organization.

Second, Temperley's text suggests in places that rock music is more drastically different from common-practice music than it is. For example, rock may be fairly unconstrained in the types of acceptable harmonic progressions, as its freer treatment of IV

[110] Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock*, 4, 48, 153–154, 161.

[111] Nobile, *Form as Harmony in Rock Music*, 1.

[112] Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock*, 153, 181. He does allow for the repeated unit to be a verse-refrain unit, and acknowledges a variety of rock songs that do not use a repeating form. But I question whether such songs—"Suite: Judy Blue Eyes," "Stairway to Heaven," and "Bohemian Rhapsody" among them—are abandoning formal conventions to the extent Temperley suggests.

attests. However, he also describes several progressions (such as the descending fifths progression) that are equally common in Western art music as they are in classic rock.[113] Temperley's approach gives attention to rock norms that are not drawn from Western art music, which is an admirable task. But at times, it swerves a little too far away from moments that are important to rock's stylistic norms and that the music shares with common-practice tonality.

Nobile's account of form in rock more successfully balances the seeming paradox of rock analysis: how to analyze a music that is equally similar to and different from common-practice music. His book shows that rock music can be analyzed with ideas rooted in tonal Western art music analysis, without assuming that the music *must* behave in accordance with those ideas. The ideas of rock harmony/form as goal-oriented, and chords being allowed to hold multiple functions, in particular seem especially strong ways of handling rock's hybrid nature. For example, depending on the other chords around it, IV can serve as a pre-dominant-functioning harmony, or a dominant harmony. Where the syntactical function changes depends on which chords are in prominent places, such as the start of a chorus or verse.[114]

Although my own views of form align more with Nobile's than Temperley's, I will still use the descriptions of form outlined in *The Musical Language of Rock*. Useful here in particular are Temperley's account of verses in relation to lyrics simply states that the lyrics change, while chorus lyrics generally do not, and verses tend to come first.[115] Temperley's

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[113] Ibid., 48–49, 55–56.

[114] Nobile, *Form as Harmony in Rock Music*, 21, 29.

[115] Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock*, 159.

ideas on rock's "local features," as well as the stronger emphasis he places on lyrics. His book serves here primarily as a second opinion on rock's stylistic norms, to present a well-rounded idea of what those norms look and sound like.

Temperley and Nobile's books present fairly broad views of what "rock" means, both in terms of subgenres and of time periods. Nobile's text, for example, encompasses rock, pop, and related music from the 1960s through the 1980s. However, as my own project focuses on the 1960s, a source dealing with that specific time period is needed. That source is Walter Everett's *The Foundations of Rock: From "Blue Suede Shoes" to "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes"* (2009). Like Temperley's text, Everett's book describes rock's "local features" in detail, devoting individual chapters to instrumentation, rhythm and meter, and melodic construction. Everett's conceptions of rock, however, are along the same lines as Nobile's.

Everett's text also manages to acknowledge both rock's shared common-practice elements, and those different from it. For example, Everett presents many songs that utilize tonic, pre-dominant, and dominant functions inherited from common-practice analysis. At the same time, he discusses a large number of songs built on modal constructions and pentatonic collections, recognizing that these examples would make little sense from a strictly common-practice perspective. Further, Everett's text covers rock music only from 1955 to 1969. The narrower scope, and argument that this time period established fundamentals of rock music that did not change in later decades, allows me to define context for the Beatles' musical topics more precisely.[116] Finally, Everett also devotes a chapter to the production side of rock music: microphone placement, tape manipulation, effects (reverb, echo, etc.), and sound mixing. As elements from this part of the recording process are key to

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[116] Everett, *The Foundations of Rock*, v–vi, 170–173, 222–223.

the Beatles' informed musique concrète references, the attention given to it here makes Everett's source especially useful.

I have based my own conception of rock's stylistic norms and formal structures on these specific texts because they seem the most balanced accounts of rock's construction.[117] Rock music shares as many elements with tonal Western art music as it has elements that differ. As important components of rock's stylistic characteristics, those shared elements demand attention, and I see no reason to hide the relationship to common-practice tonality that they suggest. At the same time, I do not wish to imply that rock music always behaves according to the norms of common-practice tonality, or that it is somehow wrong or deviant when it does not reflect those norms. Many rock songs are indeed based on modes, or even fully chromatic collections, and a strict tonal perspective does not usually yield a convincing analysis in such cases. I seek a conception of the rock style that can respectfully account for both, without leaning too much to one side or the other. Nobile's, Everett's, and (to some extent) Temperley's accounts manage to convincingly strike that balance.

As a brief final note for this section, I also borrow two concepts from Allan Moore's *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song* (2012). The first of these is "idiolect," which is Moore's word for an individual artist's distinctive musical sound and style.[118] As my project involves multiple uses of the word "style" and argues that the Beatles'

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[117] Some additional sources on form in rock music include Brett Clement, "Scale Systems and Large-Scale Form in the Music of Yes," *Music Theory Online* 21, no. 1 (2015), https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.15.21.1/mto.15.21.1.clement.html; Trevor de Clercq, "Embracing Ambiguity in the Analysis of Form in Pop/Rock Music, 1982–1991," *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 3 (2017), https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.3/mto.17.23.3.de_clercq.html; de Clercq, "Interactions Between Harmony and Form in a Corpus of Rock Music," *Journal of Music Theory* 61, no. 2 (2017), 143–170; and Jay Summach, "The Structure, Function, and Genesis of the Prechorus," *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 3 (2011), https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.11.17.3/mto.11.17.3.summach.html.

[118] Moore, *Song Means*, 120.

informed topical realizations are part of their unique sound, Moore's term is a helpful one for clarity's sake.[119] Following Moore, in lyrical descriptions and analysis, I also use a neutral term ("narrator") for the character or persona presenting the song lyrics. The wording choice is for clarity as well, as a songwriter's lived experience is not always what a song communicates. Paul McCartney is the primary composer and lead singer for "Lovely Rita" (1967), but is not necessarily the man in the lyrics describing his romantic hijinks with a meter maid. McCartney as singer, McCartney as person, and the song character are not interchangeable, and I wish to recognize this by distinguishing between them.[120] When the composer indicates that the lyrics are related to his lived experience (Lennon's "Strawberry Fields Forever," for example), I will make note of it, but will still refer to the song character as the narrator.

Sources on the Beatles

Most of the rock literature I draw on deals with rock music more generally, with the Beatles as oft-cited examples of concepts. The Beatles are important contributors to classic rock as a style, with elements of their idiolect becoming broader stylistic markers over time.[121] As such, examining sources only on their music is a key part of developing a sense of context in this project. I use a mix of analytical and musicological texts, as well as some primary texts by producer George Martin and sound engineer (1966–1968) Geoff Emerick.

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[119] I discuss the term "idiolect" in greater detail in my methodology chapter (chapter 3).

[120] Moore, *Song Means*, 179. Moore's specific term is *persona*, as he describes: "[R]ather than imagine that we are listening to...an individual able to express himself or herself directly, and through whose expression we understand his or her subjectivity, it is usually more helpful to recognize that we are listening to a persona, projected by a singer, in other words to an artificial construction that may, or may not, be identical with the person(ality) of the singer."

[121] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through* Rubber Soul (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 128.

Sources focused only on the Beatles are useful for describing their idiolect within rock, and provide valuable information about recording and composition processes underlying their songs.

Since the 1960s, the Beatles have been a perennial topic of musical discussion and opinion. During their time together, writing surrounding their professional and personal lives ranged from fan magazines and journalistic reports, to semi-analytical writings on their music and lyrics. In the years since the band's separation, there has been a veritable avalanche of biographies and memoirs of the various group members and their associates.[122] Academic, musicological and theoretical writing on the Beatles developed somewhat slower. Music theory first began to treat rock music as an acceptable genre for academic study in the 1990s, and the Beatles were part of that initial wave of research.[123] The Beatles continue to intrigue music-academics up to the modern day, both as an individual band and as part of rock music as a whole.[124]

For this project, the main analytical source on the Beatles' music is Walter Everett's two-volume *The Beatles as Musicians*.[125] In these two books, Everett analyzes and describes

[122] Some examples include Martin's, Emerick's, and George Harrison's autobiographies, which I use here; *The Beatles: The Anthology* project by the band members themselves which I also occasionally draw on; and texts by ex-wives, family members, and friends.

[123] See for example Walter Everett, "The Beatles as Composers: The Genesis of *Abbey Road*, Side Two," in *Concert Music, Rock, and Jazz Since 1945: Essays and Analytical Studies*, eds. Elizabeth West Marvin and Richard Hermann (Rochester: Rochester University Press, 1995), 172–227; Allan F. Moore, *The Beatles: Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Russell Reising, ed., *"Every Sound There Is": The Beatles'* Revolver *and the Transformation of Rock and Roll*, Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002).

[124] See for example Drew Nobile, "Form and Voice Leading in Early Beatles Songs," *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 3 (2011), http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.11.17.3/mto.11.17.3.nobile.html; Biamonte 2010; Echard 2017; Temperley 2018; and Nobile 2020.

[125] Some additional music-theoretic sources on the Beatles include: Naphtali Wagner's articles on the Beatles, such as "Fixing a Hole in the Scale: Suppressed Notes in the Beatles' Songs," *Popular Music* 23, no. 3 (2004), 257–269; John Covach, "From 'Craft' to 'Art': Formal Structure in the Music of the Beatles," in

the band's compositional choices throughout its career, and beyond, including information on the members' solo projects and the then-newly released *Anthology* (1999). The books are one of the first in-depth, analytical studies of the group's music and how their idiolect shifts and, in some respects, stays the same over time. Both books also discuss less abstract elements: instrumentation (including specific guitar makes and models), vocal techniques, and recording and studio equipment and procedures such as mixing and effects.[126] Those elements, along with structural considerations, play important roles in how the Beatles treat musical styles topically.[127] Everett's account of the band's music, in addition to providing theoretical insight, recognizes that in rock music, the instruments and studio work that go into the recordings are equally important to the composition.

I consult two additional academic texts on the Beatles, *"Every Sound There Is": The Beatles'* Revolver *and the Transformation of Rock and Roll* (2002) and *Sgt. Pepper and the Beatles: It Was Forty Years Ago Today* (2008). The two edited volumes present a mix of musicological and theoretical research on *Revolver* (1966) and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967). In addition, they discuss the contributions of the Beatles' recording team, musical influences on the band, and the two albums' position in rock history and Western popular culture. As *Revolver* and *Sgt. Pepper* feature the most topical experimentation in the Beatles' mid and late-1960s albums, songs from them form the core of my analyses. As such, sources devoted to exploring them in depth are useful here.

Reading the Beatles: Cultural Studies, Literary Criticism, and the Fab Four, eds. Kenneth Womack and Todd F. Davis (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 37–53; and Nobile 2011.

[126] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), viii.

[127] Studio effects and production techniques, as I describe in chapter 5, are particularly crucial to the Beatles' evocations of musique concrète.

While I generally avoid sources aimed at a popular audience (tell-all memoirs, album reviews, fans' stories, etc.), there are a few hybrid and non-academic texts that are useful. Chief among those is Mark Lewisohn's *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, a day-by-day account of the band's recording activity from 1962 until their breakup in 1970. The book provides a deeply detailed account of which songs and parts were recorded, at what point in time, and which takes ended up in the final product. Lewisohn does not target his book at an academic audience, but it is a source cited consistently in more strictly academic texts.[128] Like Everett's discussion of recording processes, Lewisohn's book provides valuable (and necessary) information on exactly how the Beatles' team created the sounds eventually released on albums. I consult Beatles biographer Hunter Davies' *The Beatles Lyrics*, a second text aimed at a non-academic audience, as a reference for song lyrics.[129]

Finally, a word on primary sources. While the structural elements and sociocultural importance of the Beatles' songs are well-traveled ground in academic sources, examination of the band members' development of stylistic understanding is less consistently explored or discussed. For example, the influence of musique concrète and other post-tonal art music styles on Paul McCartney is often mentioned, but how exactly he came by his knowledge of them is much less discussed.[130] Accordingly, I consult four autobiographies: George Martin's (one general, and one specifically about *Sgt. Pepper*), Geoff Emerick's, and George Harrison's. The recording team's accounts of how the songs were recorded tally with third-

[128] Everett's Beatles writings, for example.

[129] Davies' book does present some analysis of those lyrics, as well as scans of the composers' handwritten copies. I do not incorporate his lyric-based analysis, however, as they mainly take the form of personal stories and/or popular myths about the lyrics' meanings.

[130] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 32.

party accounts like Everett and Lewisohn. In addition, these sources (along with Barry Miles' biography *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*) provide information that is difficult to find in academic sources: the Beatles' experiences developing stylistic understanding. While not my main source of information, primary sources help give a clearer picture of how the Beatles' stylistic knowledge came about.

Conclusion

While a few scholars recognize that individuals have influence over how a musical reference manifests, topic theory does not give much attention to expertise. Further, topical analyses do not tend to explore the implications of accuracy with regards to the styles being referenced. Neither composerly knowledge nor accuracy are obligations for someone wishing to create meaningful musical references. However, musical topics in the Beatles include manifestations that are based on stylistic knowledge, and as such bear a greater resemblance to the source styles than was the norm at the time. In fact, the inclusion of the seemingly optional stylistic understanding is an element that, I argue, distinguishes the Beatles' music from that of their contemporaries. In the next chapter, I present my adaptation of Browner's continuum of closeness and Frymoyer's hierarchies of topical features as methods for demonstrating *how* musical training and stylistic understanding help the Beatles create topical realizations unique to them.

Chapter 3: "I Consciously Tried to Use the Sitar": Source Musics and Weighted Topical Feature Hierarchies

Of the multiple musical styles the Beatles referenced, one example that they were strongly associated with, mainly through George Harrison's influence, was Indian classical music.[131] Some of the influences from India the band incorporates are explicit borrowings from Hindustani classical music's instrumentation, melodic materials, rhythms, and performance/formal constructions. However, other references are less explicit borrowings from Indian music (thus weakening their connection to that specific place), or have much less effect on the songs' deeper structure. A vocal imitation on Harrison's "I Want To Tell You" (1966) is a good example: it has been described as Indian-influenced, but there is actually little to suggest that it points specifically to India.[132] How does one interpret such a wide range of possible features, some drawn directly from Indian music and some not, and decide what counts as a topical realization rather than a casual reference?

In this chapter, I investigate questions of accuracy to source musics, topical definition, and expansion within conventions by building on the work of two scholars, music theorist Johanna Frymoyer and ethnomusicologist Tara Browner. My primary concern in this dissertation is how the Beatles' expertise in non-rock musical styles manifests itself in their songs, and how closely their informed references resemble the actual styles being referenced. As such, ethnomusicologist Tara Browner's continuum of closeness to the Native American voice is an important part of my topic-theoretic method. Her work on appropriation of Native American music presents a way to distinguish between musical references that directly

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[131] Russell Reising, "Introduction: 'Of the beginning,'" in *"Every Sound There Is": The Beatles'* Revolver *and the Transformation of Rock and Roll*, ed. Russell Reising (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 5.

[132] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 57.

employ Native American musical material and structures and those that have little to do with the source music: in the context of my dissertation, the original music being referenced. I adapt Browner's continuum as an assessment measure for the ways the Beatles use their knowledge, both in instances that are less clearly topical and across various levels of the weighted topical hierarchies (see below) I devise here.[133] Yayoi Uno Everett's taxonomy of hybrid "Eastern" and "Western" art music will also be a useful tool for assessing accuracy in George Harrison's Indian-influenced songs.[134] Applying and adapting frameworks that more clearly delineate what features count toward a topic, and how close those features are to the original styles being referenced, allows me to scrutinize the main way the Beatles create musical references: through their stylistic knowledge.

The Beatles interact with topicality in different ways across the three styles I examine. One of those styles, Indian classical music, falls squarely within "topic" since musical references to it can be separated from the overall song form (context) as discussed in chapters 2 and 4. Another style, the music hall, works as a topic if a) the reference and the context can be clearly separated, and b) features can be clearly classified.[135] In both cases, relying only on Danuta Mirka's definition of topics as musical styles out of their usual context may not be sufficient.[136] She does not explicitly illustrate how out-of-context styles

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[133] Tara Browner, "Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890–1990," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1995, 17.

[134] Yayoi Uno Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music: Historical Contexts, Perspectives, and Taxonomy," in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, eds. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 16.

[135] Please see chapter 6 for more details.

[136] Danuta Mirka, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2.

are defined. While salience of possible genres referenced is important—even if the genre is not completely identifiable, it is still possible to detect something "out of place" in a musical reference—salience alone may not be enough to clearly identify and analyze topics according to her definition.[137] To address these issues with Indian music and the music hall as topics, I use theorist Johanna Frymoyer's work on essential features and stylistic particulars in twentieth-century topics as a model for my analyses. Frymoyer's weighted hierarchy of topical features provides a useful model for answering a key question: Which features must be present for a topic to be realized and perceived, and which are not necessarily definitive of a topic? I use her model to address these questions, and to analyze how the Beatles' stylistically informed topical realizations make their music distinctive.

Prelude: Context, Style, and Idiolect

Before explaining my methods for analyzing stylistic references in the Beatles, I will begin with determining the context within which these topics function. For this project, I define "context" as the norms and practices of British rock music from the early 1960s to the early 1970s. As discussed in detail in chapter 2's literature review, my main sources are the work of Walter Everett, David Temperley, and Drew Nobile on rock's structural conventions (common harmonic progressions, pitch collections, form, etc.). As a seminal band in the foundation of classic rock's conventions, I also give attention to the Beatles' idiolect within rock, with assistance from Everett's two-volume *The Beatles as Musicians*. Allan Moore describes idiolect as a composer or group's distinctive sound within a particular style:

> *Style* for the purposes of this book…refers to a decision a band may make to play a song in, for instance, a "rock" style rather than a "country" style. *Idiolect* as a concept is frequently conceived to be subsidiary to a style…[T]he

[137] Thomas Johnson, "Tonality as Topic: Opening a World of Analysis for Early Twentieth-Century Modernist Music," *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 4 (2017), 1.2–1.3. Many thanks to Janet Bourne for raising the point about salience.

> idiolects of both Fats Domino and Chuck Berry carve out spaces within the *style* known as rock'n'roll. They carve out different spaces...but both singers' output is subsidiary to the style known as rock'n'roll.[138]

My work involves several different uses of the term *style.* Among those uses is describing the way a specific band (the Beatles) sounds, as compared to other 1960s rock groups. Thus, Moore's term *idiolect* is a useful one, particularly when I discuss elements of the Beatles' musical technique that, while initially unique to them, are now considered conventional features of 1960s rock. Both idiolect and style help to form the context within which musical topics operate, and thus a distinction must be made between the two terms. Several of the Beatles' favored harmonic progressions, forms, and pitch collections (though not necessarily their topical references) make the leap from idiolect to stylistic convention in classic rock by the 1970s, which is why I treat their choices as an important part of context.

Native Voice, Source Music, and a Continuum of Closeness

My first main method is an adaptation of the theoretical framework in ethnomusicologist Tara Browner's dissertation, "Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890–1990." In this study, Browner examines the role and meaning of authenticity in musical works influenced by traditional Native American music. She argues that when this music is utilized, not all musical borrowings are identical, or created equal. Browner states, "Composers used not only Indian [Native American] musics, but drew also from historical and literary sources, presenting music from the latter as being authentic and national, just as did those who employed transcribed Indian [Native American] melodies."[139] At issue here is that in "Indianist" or stereotypical musical representations, the

[138] Allan F. Moore, *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 120.

[139] Browner, "Transposing Cultures," 15–16.

composer can suggest or invent alternative realities in which the problems of colonization are oversimplified or erased. For example, in the late nineteenth century, composers such as Edward MacDowell and John Fillmore used transcriptions of Native American melodies, but often “improved” them by Westernizing them, a process reflective of efforts to assimilate Native American peoples at the time. The risk of such an approach is inaccurate portrayal of historical relations between peoples, inviting distortion and misinterpretation of both the music and its function and significance in Native American societies.

To address inequality of references, Browner uses a theoretical framework composed of two main elements: Native voice, and a continuum of closeness to that Native voice. She defines Native voice as Native American singers, performing music of their communities in accordance with traditional practice.[140] By using the Native voice as a metric, Browner is able to sort out each work’s relationship to Native American music, cultural practices, and history in a way that centers the Native American experience.

Browner’s theoretical model, the continuum of distance from the Native voice (fig. 3.1), is based on Peircean semiotics and adapts several of its key terms. At the iconic end of the continuum are works that utilize musical materials from Native American music. In addition, Browner includes works written by Native American composers that reflect these musical practices, and/or return them to their communities. Her examples include non-Native composer Charles Cadman’s *Shanewis* (1918), based on his ethnographic transcriptions of Native American performances, and the Quapaw/Cherokee composer Louis Ballard’s *Incident at Wounded Knee* (1974), which uses a compositional style derived from his

[140] Ibid., 9, 15–16.

heritage. Composers do not themselves have to be Native American for their music to be considered part of this category; I will address this point and its implications further below.

The middle of the continuum is indexical music, which attempts a Native American sound without directly using Native American musical sources. Elliott Carter's *Pocahontas* (1939), based on a mythologized depiction of its title character, is one work Browner places at the indexical point in the continuum. Finally, pieces at the symbolic end of the continuum are defined as those with no Native American musical sources, and no attempts at imitating the sound. Rather, they are "Indian inspired," which Browner defines as taking inspiration from Native American literature, literature about Native Americans, or representations of parts of traditional Native American cultures, such as the medicine wheel or ceremonial dances.[141]

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[141] Ibid., 11, 17–18.

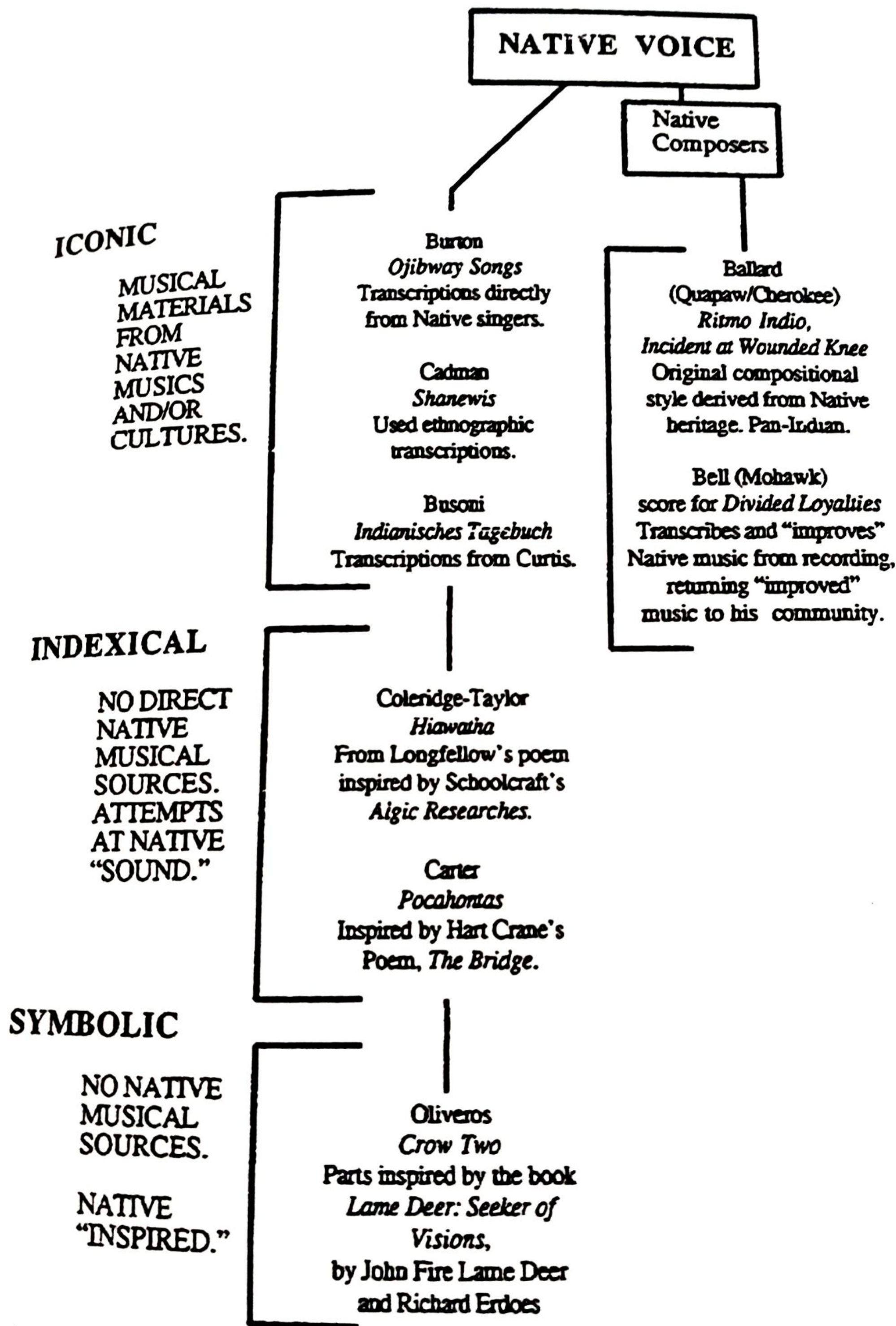

Fig. 3.1: Browner's continuum of the Native Voice. "Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890–1990," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1995, 17.

Browner's metric of the Native voice provides a good model for examining the Beatles' stylistic explorations. Each of the composing Beatles had understanding of various kinds in styles other than what we would now call classic rock, and that understanding allowed them to create informed musical references to those styles. Other members in the Beatles' creative world assisted with realization as well, by bringing in their abilities in orchestration and technology (producer George Martin and engineer Geoff Emerick) or by applying knowledge they had in common with the Beatles (avant-garde artist Yoko Ono). I adapt Browner's continuum and terms to reflect this situation in the Beatles' music. I use the term "source music" in the way Browner uses "Native voice." The source music is used as a measure of how closely the Beatles' stylistic applications resemble the sounds and composition methods of the music they reference. What that source music is changes depending on the musical topic under examination. For example, with regards to the music hall topic, I analyze Paul McCartney's topical treatment of this music through comparison to this style's structures and practices.

I also apply Browner's classifications of various points on her continuum. In my own work, an iconic example of drawing on the source style includes musical structures, composition techniques, timbres, and other musical material also used in the source music's practice. An example of an iconic use would be reversed and looped tape as primary tactics in referencing musique concrète, as these are common techniques in this style of music.[142] Harrison's application of raga in his Indian-influenced songs also constitutes an iconic use, with Hindustani classical music as the source. Browner's mid-point in her continuum,

[142] Barry Schrader, *Introduction to Electro-Acoustic Music* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982), 16, 35.

indexical, has no direct Native musical sources, but still attempts at a Native American "sound."[143] In the Beatles' music, I describe indexical source styles similarly: they attempt to reference the sound, but do not use material directly from the source. An example of an indexical use would be the guitar solo on "Taxman," often described as Indian in flavor.[144] This solo has a similar timbre to a sitar and bears a vague aural similarity to Hindustani melodic shapes, but does not draw directly on material from the source style. Finally, a symbolic use of source style, reflecting Browner's description, uses no elements directly from the source style. A symbolic use example in the Beatles' music would be the lyrics of "Within You, Without You." Separated from the rest of the song, they describe concepts probably drawn from Indian spiritual ideas, but do not have a direct link to those sources. Iconicity, in the context of my work, does not mean that the musical reference is superior to one that is more indexical or symbolic; it simply means that the influence of source music is present and traceable.[145]

Browner's continuum does have one potential weak point. Some of the musical examples that she describes as iconic involve ethnographic transcriptions of Native American singers and melodies. The composers using these melodies (such as Cadman) were not always Native American. As shown in fig. 3.1, "Native composers" is a separate category under the iconic end of the continuum. Thus, while a non-Native composer may have used materials directly from Native American musical practices, the composer's level of study or interaction with the people varied widely. Busoni's *Indianisches Tagebuch* (*Indian Diary*)

[143] Browner, "Transposing Cultures," 17.

[144] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 49.

[145] Please see chapter 4 for more details.

(1915) is a good example Browner provides: Busoni did base the pieces in this work on tribal musical systems, and attempted some level of interaction and study with the peoples whose music he wished to use. Nevertheless, as Browner points out, his interactions with Native Americans remained minimal and he did not abandon his preconceived opinions of them. There is also no evidence offered that Busoni gave back to the communities he drew his musical sources from, financially or otherwise.[146] Even though he may have used source music, Busoni's particular usage seems almost parasitic.

To further hone Browner's continuum as an assessment for accuracy to source musics, I find Yayoi Uno Everett's investigation of East Asian and Western synthesis in art music particularly helpful. She argues that composers who have expertise in two or more cultures' musical practices demonstrate their knowledge in compositions by drawing on specific musical elements, or on wider cultural resources as methods for composing. To better compare the differences between synthesized compositions and earlier forms of musical Orientalism, Everett creates a taxonomy of compositions and techniques used to integrate Asian and Western materials. She provides three broader criteria—transference, syncretism, and synthesis—and develops seven specific compositional strategies within them. Transference refers to borrowing or appropriating East Asian "cultural resources (text, music, philosophy)" within a solidly Western musical context. In syncretism, musical resources from both Asian and Western practices are used to create a piece, such as adopting an Asian performance technique for a Western instrument. Finally, Everett uses the term synthesis to describe pieces that transform both Asian and Western musical idioms to the

[146] Browner, "Transposing Cultures," 17, 85–87.

point that “they are no longer discernible as separable elements.”[147] A reproduction of Everett’s taxonomy is below as fig. 3.2.

Strategies	Sample Compositions
Transference	
1. Draw on aesthetic principles or formal systems without iconic references to Asian sounds	Messiaen, *Turangalîla* Symphony (1949) John Cage, *Music of Changes* (1951) Messiaen, *Sept Haïkaï* (1962)
2. Evoke Asian sensibilities without explicit musical borrowing	K. Stockhausen, *Inori* (1973–74) Isang Yun, Concerto for flute & orch. (1977); *Gong Hu* for hrp. & str. (1984) Jôji Yuasa, *Scenes from Bashō* (1980) Kaija Saariaho, *Six Japanese Gardens* (1998)
3. Quote culture through literary or extramusical means	Benjamin Britten, *Curlew River* (1964) Joseph Schwantner, *Sparrow* (1979) John Zorn, *Forbidden Fruit* (1987)
4. Quote preexistent musical materials in the form of a collage	Tan Dun, *Symphony 1997: Heaven, Earth, Man* (1997)
Syncretism	
5. Transplant East Asian attributes of timbre, articulation, or scale system onto Western instruments	C. Wen-chung, *Willows Are New* (1957) T. Mayuzumi, *Bunraku* for cello (1961) Y. Matsudaira, *Portrait* (1968) Isang Yun, *Piri* for oboe (1971) Chinary Ung, *Mohori* (1975) T. Takemitsu, *Itinerant* for flute (1989) Qigang Chen, *Poème Lyrique* (1990)
6. Combine musical instruments and/or tuning systems of East Asian and Western musical ensembles	A. Hovhaness, Symphony No. 6 (1963) T. Takemitsu, *November Steps* (1967) L. Harrison, *Pacifika Rondo* (1963); *P’ip’a Concerto* (1991) Zhou Long, *Shi Jing* Cantata (1989) Makoto Shinohara, *Cooperation* (1988); *Yumeji* (1992), etc.
Synthesis	
7. Transform traditional musical systems, form, and timbres into a distinctive synthesis of Western and Asian musical idioms	T. Mayuzumi, *Nirvana* Symphony (1958) C. Wen-chung, *Metaphors* (1960); *Pien* (1966) Y. Matsudaira, *Bugaku* (1961); *Rōei* (1966) Isang Yun, *Loyang* (1962), *Réak* (1966) John Cage, *Ryōanji* (1983–84); T. Takemitsu, *Fantasma/Cantos* (1991)

Fig. 3.2. Yayoi Uno Everett’s taxonomy of compositional strategies integrating Asian and Western musical material/sources. “Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music:

[147] Y.U. Everett, “Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music,” 5, 15, 18–19.

Historical Contexts, Perspectives, and Taxonomy." In *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, eds. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 16.

Everett's taxonomy is a useful counterweight to Browner for two reasons. First, it recognizes that even if some works do use musical material from the culture they reference, those usages do not necessarily create a cultural synthesis. Where Browner's continuum might put *Symphony 1997* and pieces from category 5 in the same place (iconic), Everett finesses the definition of "iconic" a bit further by separating quotation/collage from techniques that explicitly involve more composerly knowledge of an Asian musical system. Collage or drawing on aesthetic principles, while they can involve familiarity with Asian cultural resources (as was the case with some of John Cage's Asian-inspired works), does not *have* to involve knowledge to work.[148] Separating more experience-based techniques allows for a clearer distinction between pieces that are based in cultural knowledge and those that may be more parasitic in nature.

Second, when applied to my specific project, Everett's taxonomy provides a useful further set of terms for how Harrison and the Beatles approach musical references to India. For example, categories 5 and 6 in fig. 3.2 describe the process and final result of "Within You, Without You" (1967). The song combines an ensemble of Indian instruments with a Western string section (category 6). In addition, both ensembles are tuned to, and perform within, Indian systems (categories 5 and 6).[149] Everett's taxonomy further specifies the

[148] Everett and Lau's book has a lecture by Cage which discusses his encounters with Japanese experimental composers in the late 1950s/early 1960s and the mutual influences that ensued. As we will see in chapter 5, Yoko Ono was one of those composer-performers and provides a clear link between the Beatles and Cage (in addition to their general interest in Cage's compositions). See "Contemporary Japanese Music: A Lecture by John Cage," ed. Frederic Lieberman, in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, eds. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 193–198.

[149] Y.U. Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music," 16.

distinction between less knowledge-based musical references and those that require some level of knowledge, both generally and when applied to the Beatles' music. As will be discussed further in chapter 4, there are still some potentially troubling elements to Harrison's particular use of Indian musical material, whether or not it is based in deep engagement. However, given the importance of training and stylistic understanding to the Beatles' interactions with topicality, I find Everett's additional terminology useful for my own classifications and analyses.

Browner and Everett dialogue particularly nicely with discussions around the exotic in topic theory circles. Catherine Mayes and Jonathan Bellman, for example, both discuss the fact that the "exotic" topics they study have more to do with Western conceptions of the source music/culture than with any sort of accurate representation.[150] Both scholars ask: How can or does a musical work's structure rely on musical stereotypes, and what does that say about broader societal power structures and their role in the creation of stereotypes?[151] Browner's and Everett's concerns with musical appropriation, and the problems and questions it can lead to, are very much in concert with these discussions of exotic topics.

Their work also shows that, in some cases, a certain degree of knowledgeable reference and effort to accurately portray source music on the composer's part does matter to analysis. Browner and Everett concern themselves with exotic musical references that demonstrate accuracy, and both find that not all musical references are stereotypical. They show that when source music is drawn upon, a different interpretation can arise than pieces

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[150] Catherine Mayes, "Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy Styles," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory,* ed. Danuta Mirka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 217. See also Jonathan Bellman, "'Ongherese,' Fandango, and Polonaise: National Dance as Classical-Era Topic," *Journal of Musicological Research* 31, no. 2–3 (2012), 95.

[151] James Buhler, *Theories of the Soundtrack* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 197–198.

that claim to reference it (but instead rely on musical stereotypes). As one of the topics I examine here is deeply connected to concerns around appropriation and use, I find their concerns with such matters reflected in my own work.

Essential, Frequent, and Idiosyncratic Topical Features

My second key method is an adaptation of Johanna Frymoyer's weighted hierarchy of topical features. Described in her 2017 article "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study of Schoenberg's Ironic Waltzes," her hierarchy provides a systematic way to analyze topical identification. Not every feature of an established topic is present in every example of it; therefore, one must decide how important topical characteristics are relative to the topic's overall identity. While many topical analyses seem to construct these hierarchies implicitly, Frymoyer argues that an explicit construction allows the analyst to better decide when a potential reference is a "vague allusion," or a fully fledged topic.[152] A weighted hierarchy of features demonstrates which features are necessary for a topic to be present and more than an allusion, and helps describe the process of topical abstraction. Her method represents a way of ensuring that implicitly constructed hierarchies of features are made clear, demonstrating that topic theory can be carefully and systematically applied, even in a repertoire that seems to resist systematization. As the music I study draws on many different styles and influences, and is not an easily systematized repertoire, Frymoyer's hierarchy is a useful model for presenting in a careful and clear manner the topics I analyze.

Frymoyer's hierarchy also addresses specific composers' individual choices that contribute to fully fledged topics, as shown in her discussion of Schoenberg's realizations of

[152] Johanna Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study of Schoenberg's Ironic Waltzes," *Music Theory Spectrum* 39, no. 1 (2017), 84–85.

the waltz topic. Frymoyer's model allows us to understand a musical topic as something more than a set of conventions. Rather, a topic is a space for expansion within conventions, through a composer's creative treatment of (or challenge to) those conventions.[153] A weighted hierarchy of topical features helps the analyst address how a particular instance (token) of a broader topic (type) may retain its identity, while also remaining flexible and stylistically adaptable.[154] The model makes space for composers' distinctive choices and presentations of topics, at the idiosyncratic level, and provides nuanced interpretations of the many ways music can mean something to its listeners. Frymoyer's model is useful for discussing topics in the Beatles' music, as creative expansion within a topic's conventions often occurs through the application of expertise.

The hierarchy of features that Frymoyer proposes contains three levels. At the highest level are a topic's essential features: those that are present in all fully formed instances of the topic. For the waltz topic, those characteristics include a triple meter, moderate tempo, melody-plus accompaniment texture, and stronger rhythmic stress on beat 1 ("oom-pah-pah" accompaniment). In the middle lie frequent characteristics: those that are not essential to a topical identification and are not strong enough to form a token on their own. They may, however, "contribute to the topic's markedness and help nuance its expressive content."[155] Frequent features of the waltz topic include hemiola effects and particular rhythm patterns in melodic motives. Stylistically particular or idiomatic features are at the bottom of the

[153] Ibid., 84, 87, 92, 101.

[154] From Robert Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 44–45: "A type is an ideal or conceptual category defined by features or a range of qualities that are essential to its identity. A type...does not exist at the level of perception, though acts of perception are fundamental to its inference. A token, on the other hand, is the perceptible entity that embodies or manifests the features or qualities of the type."

[155] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 85.

hierarchy; they are present in certain topical examples, such as a specific composer's works, or a certain style or school of composition. However, these do not appear in all realizations of topics. For example, inverting the range of "oom-pah-pah" accompaniment to high-low-low (as opposed to low-high-high) is an idiosyncratic characteristic of Schoenberg's waltz tokens; slight anticipation of the second beat is a stylistically particular characteristic associated with the Viennese waltz. An example of what Frymoyer's hierarchy looks like, as applied to the waltz topic, can be found in figure 3.3.

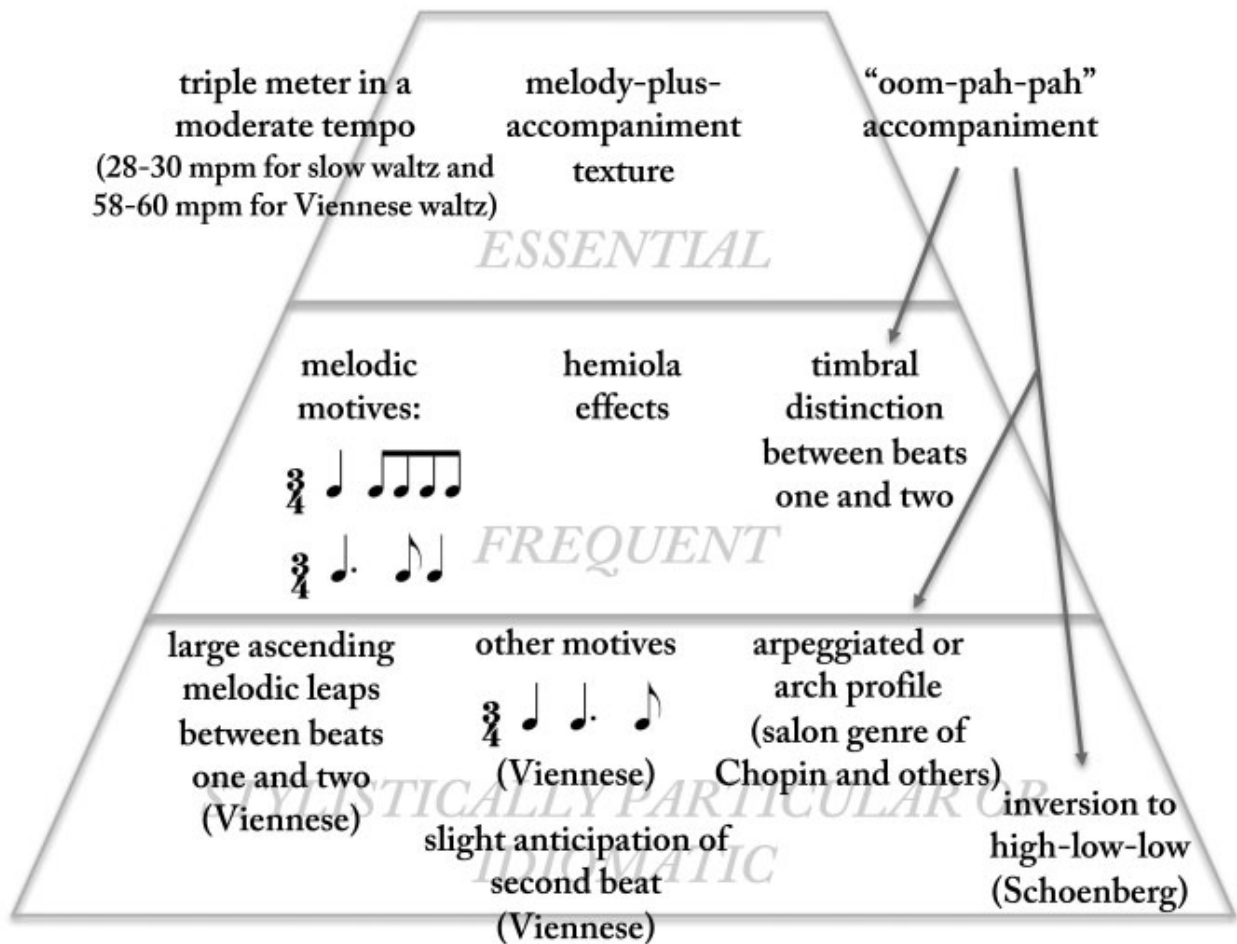

Fig. 3.3: Frymoyer's weighted topical hierarchy for the waltz topic. "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study of Schoenberg's Ironic Waltzes," *Music Theory Spectrum* 39, no. 1 (2017), 92.

In my own research, I apply Frymoyer's hierarchy of topical features to Indian music and the music hall as topics in British rock of the 1960s. Below I will describe the hierarchical features of the Indian topic, with details on Beatles examples and their idiosyncratic treatments beginning with the chapter 4 analyses.[156] Frymoyer states that when a feature is present in all tokens of a topic, that feature is essential, a definition that I follow.[157] In the Beatles' music, where the Indian topic is strongly present, three instrumental timbres serve as essential topical features: the sitar and sitar-like sounds, the tambura, and the tabla. One of these instruments alone is sufficient, or they may be used in combination. The Rolling Stones' "Paint It, Black" (1966) is a particularly well known rock song that includes a sitar, doubling lead singer Mick Jagger's vocal. Perhaps due to Harrison's experience with the instrument, the sitar is the strongest recurring presence on Beatles songs exhibiting the Indian topic.

Sitar-like instrumental sounds also classify as an essential feature for the Indian topic. The Yardbirds' "Heart Full of Soul" (1965) has an introductory guitar figure with a ringing open D string, frequent string bends, and distortion. The Kinks' "See My Friends" deploys the Indian topic by creating a drone effect with static harmonies and bass.[158] In both cases, the Western instruments mimic the sound of a sitar. The Yardbirds example references the sitar's several drone strings, tuned to the tonic (*sa*) and fourth or fifth (*ma* and *pa*), fine

[156] I use the term idiosyncratic rather than Frymoyer's "idiomatic" to emphasize that the Beatles' knowledge-based realizations are unique to them as a group.

[157] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 85.

[158] William Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music A History Through Musical Topic Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2017), Google Play Books edition, 65–66.

oscillations in pitch, and performance technique of "pulling" on the sitar.[159] The Kinks' drone effects, likewise, are a reference to the constant presence of *sa* on a sitar's drone strings.[160] McCartney's guitar solo for "Taxman" (1966) is often cited for its similarity to the sitar as well.[161] While one could classify sitar-like timbre as a frequent feature of imitation (see below), mimicking the sitar specifically is done in all instances of the Indian topic, where other imitations are not.

While not present as often as the sitar, there are two other instruments serving as essential features. The tambura, a plucked string instrument that provides drones on important pitches in ragas, often appears in the Beatles' songs, beginning with Lennon's "Tomorrow Never Knows" (1966). The tabla, a pair of pitched drums used to accompany many instruments in the Hindustani tradition, are also an essential feature, appearing on Harrison's Indian-influenced songs: "Love You To" (1966), "Within You, Without You" (1967), and "The Inner Light" (1968). The sitar, tambura, tabla, or a combination appear in all instances of the Indian topic; so, these instruments form an essential feature of the Indian topic in the weighted hierarchy I devise for that topic.

Frequent features, Frymoyer's next level of topical hierarchy, are features that strengthen topical associations, but are not strong enough to evoke the topic on their own.[162]

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[159] Pulling is very similar to string bending on a guitar. The performer bends or "pulls" from one note to the next rather than moving to a different fret. However, a sitar can pull many more notes from a single fret than a guitar can. A good quality sitar will allow a player to pull five pitches from the same fret.

[160] Part of the sitar's drone-heavy timbre also comes from its sympathetic strings. The set of sympathetic strings, beneath the played strings, is tuned to the raga a performer is using. Because of this, a correctly tuned sitar will ring sympathetically to every played pitch in the raga.

[161] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 49.

[162] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 85.

For the Indian topic, there are several such features, including imitative vocal and instrumental techniques; other Indian instruments; and drones created by other means than the tambura. In accordance with Frymoyer's definition of frequent feature, these Indian topical features often appear alongside the essential features of sitar/sitar-like sounds, tambura, tabla, or a combination. On "Paint It, Black," for example, Jagger's melodic line is sung in the flat, somewhat nasal tone seen as imitative of Indian classical singing.[163] "See My Friends" accomplishes its drone without a tambura, instead relying on a static bass line and harmonies.[164] Some Beatles examples also include vocal or instrumental mimicry, but like their contemporaries' instances, these features are less clearly connected to India. With the exception of Harrison's Indian-inspired songs, instrumental and/or vocal imitation do not come paired with any essential features, weakening their connection to India specifically. The Beatles' songs also include several methods of creating drones besides using a tambura, such as static harmonic structures and the harmonium, a drone instrument that often accompanies Hindustani vocal performance.[165]

Non-essential Indian instruments play important roles in several Beatles songs. For example, in Harrison's "The Inner Light," several other Indian instruments appear besides the essentials, such as the *shehnai* (a double-reed instrument) and *bansuri* (a type of flute). Like imitation and non-tambura drones, I classify them as frequent features for two reasons. First, these instruments are not in all instances of the Indian topic in the Beatles' or their contemporaries' music. Second, I question the extent to which a listener would recognize

[163] Gerry Farrell, *Indian Music and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 174, 182.

[164] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 65–66.

[165] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 36, 49, 57.

these instruments as Indian without knowledge of Indian music, or without the presence of the sitar, tambura, or tabla. They provide "vague allusions" to a topic, as Frymoyer puts it, but do not evoke a topic strongly enough to be called full-fledged topical moments.

Idiosyncratic features, the third level in Frymoyer's hierarchy, provide further associative power and are also a space where a composer can choose to reference a specific time period within the broader source music, or create references unique to them.[166] It is at this third level that the Beatles, mainly through George Harrison's influence, make a (for rock music) unique contribution to the Indian topic: raga. Familiarity with this branch of Hindustani music theory is an essential part of a sitar player's training, and this was likely also the case for Harrison. It was also likely the case for several other rock musicians who took up the sitar around the same time, such as Rolling Stone guitarist Brian Jones.[167] However, what makes Harrison's Indian-influenced songs notable is that he chooses to apply his training and knowledge, and that its influence is traceable in his songs. I argue that raga constitutes an idiosyncratic feature of the Beatles' Indian topic, and is how they expand upon the Indian topic's possible means of association. Harrison also applies knowledge of rhythmic cycles (tal), performance structure, and (unusually for a topical reference) form in his Indian topical realizations.

At this stage, one might ask: Why both Browner and Frymoyer's methods together? Expanding a bit upon Browner's definition, iconic works are those that draw musical elements directly from their source music. In the styles I examine using weighted

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[166] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 85.

[167] Jonathan Bellman, "Indian Resonances in the British Invasion, 1965–1968," in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 297.

hierarchies—Indian music and the music hall—iconic features may be at different levels of the weighted hierarchies, depending on where the composers deploy their stylistic knowledge. For example, Harrison's use of raga to organize "The Inner Light" is both an idiosyncratic feature and iconic: it draws directly on how Hindustani music theory and practice are structured. Even in the case of musique concrète, where a hierarchy cannot be developed (discussed further in chapter 5), iconic features as defined by Browner can still be found and measured in their accuracy. "Tomorrow Never Knows," for example, uses tape reversal and loops to build the soundscape, compositional techniques drawn directly from the source music. The Beatles' grasp of their source musics' stylistic norms, which I measure using Browner's continuum, is how they create topical instances that give their songs a distinctive sound.

Conclusion

The multifaceted methodology I apply here provides a model for defining topics in a stylistically varied context, and takes into account questions of how stylistic knowledge influences realizations of topics and creates a characteristic Beatles sound. Tara Browner's continuum of closeness is at the core of my process in this project. Adapting her method, with Yayoi Uno Everett's taxonomy of compositional strategies, allows me to examine exactly how the Beatles' knowledge is being applied and how true to the source musical practice these informed references are, whether they are topics on their own, part of a developing set of topical characteristics, or blended with the context of rock songs. Johanna Frymoyer's hierarchies of weighted features are particularly useful for examining the Beatles' Indian topic and references to the music hall. Through adapting her work, I describe how the Beatles draw on conventional features, while at the same time carving out a space

for their own contributions. Stylistic knowledge and exploration are a large part of what makes the Beatles sound like the Beatles, and Frymoyer and Browner/Everett together provide models for analyzing how the band makes that happen. I will now turn to three case studies to show these processes in action: Indian classical music, musique concrète, and the music hall.

Chapter 4: "Within You and Without You": The Indian Topic

In 1965, George Harrison played a sitar on the Lennon-McCartney song "Norwegian Wood," released on *Rubber Soul*.[168] "Norwegian Wood" marks both the first release of a song including sitar to a broad (Western) audience, and the first time the Beatles used Indian music topically.[169] Shortly after this, Harrison became the Beatle most interested in exploring Hindustani classical music on the group's records.[170] From 1965 to 1968, he studied under master sitar player Ravi Shankar, learning Hindustani performance practice and musical structures.[171] During and after Harrison's studies, many of his songs incorporate timbral and structural elements directly from Hindustani classical music. His understanding of Hindustani classical music is what makes the Beatles' instances of the Indian topic so distinctive.

This first case study addresses the Beatles' first form of interacting with topicality: using their knowledge of source styles to creatively manifest a topic that existed before them. In this chapter, I demonstrate how Harrison uses his training in Hindustani classical music to create singular realizations of the Indian topic. The way Harrison deploys his knowledge challenges the notion sometimes expressed in topic theory, such as Jonathan Bellman's account of dance topics, that an "exotic" musical topic does not need to reflect the practice or

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[168] Mark Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions: The Official Story of the Abbey Road Years 1962-1970* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 1988), 63.

[169] William Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music: A History Through Musical Topic Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), Google Play Books edition, 73. A demo take of the Yardbirds' "Heart Full of Soul" does feature a sitar, but the band deemed the track unsuitable for release.

[170] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through* Rubber Soul (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 313. The sitar on "Norwegian Wood" was initially Lennon's suggestion.

[171] George Harrison, *I Me Mine: The Extended Edition*, 2nd ed. (Guildford: Genesis Publications, Ltd., 2017), 55.

conventions of the source music.[172] Source accuracy is not generally expected of exotic topics and references.[173] Harrison's, however, resemble Hindustani musical materials and practices in several ways. To show the features' accuracy, I draw on Hindustani music theory in addition to my adaptations of Frymoyer, Browner, and Yayoi Uno Everett.

At the same time, the Beatles' inclusion of Hindustani classical music raises questions of colonial influences and cultural appropriation, and demonstrates the complexities surrounding intercultural musical encounters. Harrison's Indian-influenced songs show, to use Everett's terminology, a high level of syncretism: blending both Asian (in this case, Hindustani) and Western musical materials in a single piece.[174] However, this high level of syncretism does not mean that the songs are true representations of Indian musical performance. Harrison's topical explorations of Indian music, although they change the way in which the topic's associations come about, also do not attempt to change those associations. Syncretism and deep engagement with the source do not free Harrison's songs from troubling implications. I will give particular attention to Harrison's status as a member of a historically colonial power and this situation's implications in the context of decolonization and identity politics, in its own section in the background.[175]

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[172] Jonathan Bellman, "*Ongherese*, Fandango, and Polonaise: National Dance as Classical-Era Topic," *Journal of Musicological Research* 31, no. 2–3 (2012), 71.

[173] Derek B. Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," *The Musical Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (Summer 1998), 326–327.

[174] Yayoi Uno Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music: Historical Contexts, Perspectives, and Taxonomy," in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, eds. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 18.

[175] It should be noted here that many of the players on Harrison's songs were Indian musicians, trained in theory and performance and with considerably more experience than Harrison himself. Given that their improvisation was part of the recording process, for example the *tabla* on "Love You To," some of the structural elements I describe in this chapter could be attributed to the session musicians' decisions. However, as the primary songwriter, Harrison directed the performers as much as he allowed them to improvise. For this

Background: Orientalism/Exotic Topics, Raga Rock, and the Problem of Colonization

The Indian topic has a long history in Western music, appearing at first as part of a wider Orientalist trend in Western art music.[176] By the late eighteenth century, though India was well known as a geographic location, Europeans were just beginning to consider India as an idea. The British in particular had practical reasons to study India's past and living cultures. Colonial aspirations and trade demanded familiarity with Indian languages, and occasionally with other elements of culture, including music. However, Indian music did not fit neatly into Western ideas of musical structure, notation, or performance practice. Indian music could not be notated according to European standards, because of its very different concepts of pitch, rhythm, and tuning from Western music.[177] For example, Indian music does not use time signatures as Western musicians understand them. Rather, rhythm or tal consists of repeated cycles anywhere from five to sixteen beats in length.[178]

One trend in late eighteenth and early nineteenth transcriptions was the creation of "Hindustani Airs," arrangements of Indian music for European instruments. These pieces and songs represent many issues surrounding notation and performance.[179] While initially transcribed from live performances of Indian music, many of these arrangements were inaccurate approximations of their source. For example, some ragas require the player to

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reason, I take most of the compositional decisions as Harrison's, though I still wish to acknowledge the session musicians' roles in the final products.

[176] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 310.

[177] Gerry Farrell, *Indian Music and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 16, 18–19, 21–22.

[178] Nazir A. Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music: Their Structure and Evolution* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd., 1995), 29.

[179] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 31.

provide microtonal oscillations around an individual pitch, and these oscillations are part of the raga's essence. Here, fixing pitches in a Western staff presents a skewed view of how performers actually treat pitches, and takes away part of the meaning of that raga. Metrical organization was often notated along Western lines, rather than cyclical tals.[180] Key signatures and harmonizations, two elements not present in Indian music, were often added to Hindustani Airs.[181] For the music to succeed commercially and aesthetically in Britain, it had to conform to Western norms; to approach Indian music on its own terms was not a concern.[182] The prevailing attitude toward Indian music in the late eighteenth century privileged Western listeners' habits, and is a model example of a colonizing act: the perspective of the colonized peoples did not matter.

The forced submission of Indian music to Western norms, and the lack of obligation to understand it on its own terms, worsened during the nineteenth century. As British colonial power and control extended over all levels of life in India, songs *about* Indian or broader Oriental subjects became much more popular than songs that tried to reproduce Indian music in any way. Musical cues for India became difficult to distinguish from musical cues pointing to other countries in "the Orient." For example, Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* (1864) allegedly bases one of its cues for India on a "Hindostanee Melody," but there is little about it that sounds as if it based on actual Indian music. Delibes' *Lakmé* (1883) does not even include an Indian melody, instead relying on "languidly rising and falling sequential melodies" (by now

[180] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 322.

[181] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 39.

[182] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 309.

an Orientalist cliché) to suggest India.[183] The idea was to represent the colonizers' conceptions of life in India, rather than to imitate or present the reality of the country.[184] Movement away from the source music also neatly tied in with British colonial efforts, helping to recreate India as a place of exotic adventures and dangers, while minimizing darker realities of colonization such as sexual and labor exploitation.[185]

This small survey of the treatment of Indian music is a part of a much larger trend: lack of concern for maintaining non-Western source musics' integrity. Eighteenth and especially nineteenth-century composers gave little to no care to distinguishing exactly which part of "the Orient" a piece of music was referencing.[186] "Oriental" sounds were used to signify the East in general, as a place that was simply different from Western Europe.[187] Yayoi Uno Everett, in presenting her taxonomy of compositional strategies for combining Asian and Western materials, addresses these kinds of pieces in her historical background:

> A quest for the 'exotic' has led a host of composers, including Puccini, Saint-Saëns, Sullivan, Holst, and others, to adopt Western approximations of Asian melodies in their operatic and symphonic works...New World conceptions of the Orient permeated fin-de-siècle Parisian artistic culture, tinged with the Romantic ideal and fascination with the unknown. Ravel's *Schéhérazade* (1903) presented such a fantasy, equating the Orient (which stretched in his imagination from Persia to China) with sensuality and the bizarre.[188]

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[183] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 81, 96–98.

[184] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 326.

[185] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 84, 98.

[186] Ibid.: 16. See also Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 309.

[187] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 309.

[188] Y.U. Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music," 2.

The othering effect at play here means that the list of Orientalist musical characteristics is quite lengthy, and includes some characteristics drawn from Indian music. Augmented intervals, approximated Arabic modes and Indian ragas, pentatonic scales, and timbres mimicking traditional instruments are a few.[189] For example, in Camille Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* (1877), an Arabic-infused Bacchanale (allegedly utilizing *maqam hijaz*) is accompanied by castanets.[190] Musical elements from two different cultures, Arabic and Spanish, are used to signify the same cultural and physical sphere.

Lack of cultural distinction, according to some scholars, should not be surprising. As Derek B. Scott says, "[M]usical Orientalism has never been overly concerned with establishing distinctions between Eastern cultures, and...an interchangeability of exotic signifiers proved to be commonplace rather than astonishing."[191] The purpose of Orientalist signifiers is to represent an idea of the Other, an idea which relies on culturally learned recognition of what "the Other" looks and sounds like.[192] Exotic topics function very similarly. In an article on exotic dance music in the eighteenth century, Jonathan Bellman argues that the dances' purpose was to communicate particular ideas, including stereotypes, about the referenced countries.[193] The dance topics, particularly the fandango and *ongherese*, communicate the audience's conception of Spanish and Hungarian music and people, rather than reflecting the musical or cultural reality of either nation.

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[189] David R. Reck, "Beatles Orientalis: Influences from Asia in a Popular Song Tradition," *Asian Music* 16, no. 1 (1985), 86.

[190] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 313.

[191] Ibid., 312–313.

[192] Edward Saïd, *Orientalism* (Vintage Books, 1979), 71–72.

[193] Bellman, "*Ongherese*, Fandango, and Polonaise: National Dance as Classical-Era Topic," 77, 81.

Further, while some distinctions between "Oriental" cultures and their signifiers may have occurred, to distinguish between those cultures was not of great importance.[194] In *Orientalism*, Edward Saïd explains: "In a system of knowledge about the Orient, the Orient is less a place than a *topos*, a set of references."[195] Because Orientalist signifiers were used to represent the audience's thoughts about the broadly defined Other, it did not matter whether that Other place was signified with both "Spanish" and "Japanese" sounds, or "Indian" and "Egyptian" sounds. Rather, what mattered was that the music was recognizably Other.[196] Catherine Mayes describes this situation with the Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy styles as well. Both topics are more about Western Europe's ideas of the two countries than about the countries' differences and accurate musical practices.[197] Musical differentiation would not become a concern for Orientalism until the twentieth century, and even then was not guaranteed.[198] Exoticized music plays to the audience's expectations or ideas of the referenced culture; whether or not the reference resembles cultural reality is beside the point.

The 1960s and Raga Rock

The 1960s saw a resurgence of interest in India in Western popular music and culture. With greater interest came growing tension between the continued status quo of Orientalist musical references, and challenges to that status quo. Indian musicians and other types of

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[194] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 326.

[195] Saïd, *Orientalism*, 177.

[196] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 312, 327.

[197] Catherine Mayes, "Turkish and Hungarian-Gypsy Styles," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 218.

[198] Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," 323, 326.

performers, such as dancers, had been visiting the West for many years before the 1960s.[199] For example, sitar player Ravi Shankar's first visit to the West was as part of his older brother Uday's dance troupe.[200] However, during the 1950s Ravi Shankar's recordings and performances started to receive international attention, partly due to collaborations with and support from Western classical musicians, including classical guitarist Andrés Segovia and violinist Yehudi Menuhin. By the 1960s, Shankar had established himself as a major representative of, and spokesperson for, Indian classical music in the West.[201]

Shankar's popularity in the West coincided with the developing hippie counterculture in Britain and America in the 1960s. This counterculture would latch onto Indian spiritual and philosophical ideas with a frenzy, but with variable levels of commitment to understanding these ideas or music's role in them.[202] Some members of the hippie counterculture learned to meditate or play an Indian instrument, the sitar being particularly popular, or visited India itself. However, dedication to adopting these cultural elements into one's life and fully understanding their importance was still optional for many. For example, although all four Beatles and various associates spent time at Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's ashram in India, learning transcendental meditation, only one (Harrison) continued associating with Indian and Bangladeshi communities. Indian cultural ideas and practices

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[199] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 111, 144.

[200] Ravi Shankar, *Raga Mala: The Autobiography of Ravi Shankar*, 2nd ed. (New York: Welcome Rain Publishing, 1999), 36–37.

[201] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 170.

[202] Countercultural interest in "alternative" philosophical and spiritual ideas was not limited to India. The hippies also mined Native American and Zen Buddhist symbols, religious/spiritual traditions, literature, and visual art for ideas, again with variable levels of commitment to those ideas' home cultures and function. See Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 69–72.

were often treated as a popular trend entangled with alternative lifestyle choices: drug experimentation, sexual freedom, and so on.[203] Ravi Shankar identified the issues here when he pointed out that the large number of audience members taking psychedelic drugs during his concerts were missing the point: "[C]oncentrate on the music, and don't mix it up with sex and drugs. To me, my music is sacred...You don't need this extra stimulus. Give it a chance!"[204] Much as the situation was in the nineteenth century, understanding the realities of life in India and music's role in culture was rarely a high priority in the 1960s.

Some scholars see the trendiness of all things Indian as a continuation of nineteenth-century Orientalist attitudes. William Echard, for example, argues that what made India-centric Orientalism so appealing to members of the British and American counterculture in the 1960s was that they saw it as "the reverse image of everything the counterculture disliked."[205] Referencing Indian music, art, and spiritual ideas became a method of transcending oneself and one's own culture.[206] 1960s counterculture provided just the right environment for a new type of Orientalism, centered on the East and its people as an idealized space in which one could attain true enlightenment.

During the 1960s, a new subgenre of rock music arose that was a manifestation of broader interest (committed or not) in India: "raga rock." In this subgenre, rock musicians adopted timbres and textures similar to those of Indian music.[207] Simply including Indian

[203] Brian Ireland and Sharif Gemie, "Raga Rock: Popular Music and the Turn to the East in the 1960s," *Journal of American Studies* 53, no. 1 (2019), 58–59, 66–68, 74–75.

[204] Shankar, *Raga Mala*, 202.

[205] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 70.

[206] Ibid., 69–70.

[207] Reck, "Beatles Orientalis," 103.

instruments, particularly the sitar and tabla, on a popular recording was a common technique.[208] The plucked and fretted sitar was particularly approachable for guitarists, because of its close timbral similarity to the electric guitar and both instruments' ability to play extremely "bent" notes.[209] Similarly, the tabla, a pair of pitched drums common in Hindustani classical music, became a timbral extension of the standard rock drum kit.[210] Imitations of Indian music also became topical signifiers in raga rock, much as they were in the Orientalist parlor songs and operas of the nineteenth century. Echard describes some of these imitation-based signifiers: drones, modality similar to ragas, inclusion of notes beyond the twelve-tone scale, and imitation of playing and singing styles, such as a flat and nasal singing tone.[211] These characteristics of raga rock fall under Everett's broader concept of transference. They are borrowings from Indian music at various levels, or at least the Western conception of Indian music's general sound, appearing within a clear Western context of rock.[212] The wave of raga rock would last until the late 1960s, when use of Indian timbres in popular music faded somewhat.

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[208] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 179–180.

[209] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 74. As mentioned in chapter 3, "bending" as a guitar technique refers to pulling a string from its usual pitch to a higher pitch. This technique allows a player to stay on the same fret, rather than moving to a different fret.

[210] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 179–180.

[211] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 74.

[212] Y.U. Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music," 15.

Strategies	Sample Compositions
Transference	
1. Draw on aesthetic principles or formal systems without iconic references to Asian sounds	Messiaen, *Turangalîla* Symphony (1949) John Cage, *Music of Changes* (1951) Messiaen, *Sept Haïkaï* (1962)
2. Evoke Asian sensibilities without explicit musical borrowing	K. Stockhausen, *Inori* (1973–74) Isang Yun, Concerto for flute & orch. (1977); *Gong Hu* for hrp. & str. (1984) Jôji Yuasa, *Scenes from Bashō* (1980) Kaija Saariaho, *Six Japanese Gardens* (1998)
3. Quote culture through literary or extramusical means	Benjamin Britten, *Curlew River* (1964) Joseph Schwantner, *Sparrow* (1979) John Zorn, *Forbidden Fruit* (1987)
4. Quote preexistent musical materials in the form of a collage	Tan Dun, *Symphony 1997: Heaven, Earth, Man* (1997)
Syncretism	
5. Transplant East Asian attributes of timbre, articulation, or scale system onto Western instruments	C. Wen-chung, *Willows Are New* (1957) T. Mayuzumi, *Bunraku* for cello (1961) Y. Matsudaira, *Portrait* (1968) Isang Yun, *Piri* for oboe (1971) Chinary Ung, *Mohori* (1975) T. Takemitsu, *Itinerant* for flute (1989) Qigang Chen, *Poème Lyrique* (1990)
6. Combine musical instruments and/or tuning systems of East Asian and Western musical ensembles	A. Hovhaness, Symphony No. 6 (1963) T. Takemitsu, *November Steps* (1967) L. Harrison, *Pacifika Rondo* (1963); *P'ip'a Concerto* (1991) Zhou Long, *Shi Jing* Cantata (1989) Makoto Shinohara, *Cooperation* (1988); *Yumeji* (1992), etc.
Synthesis	
7. Transform traditional musical systems, form, and timbres into a distinctive synthesis of Western and Asian musical idioms	T. Mayuzumi, *Nirvana* Symphony (1958) C. Wen-chung, *Metaphors* (1960); *Pien* (1966) Y. Matsudaira, *Bugaku* (1961); *Rōei* (1966) Isang Yun, *Loyang* (1962), *Réak* (1966) John Cage, *Ryōanji* (1983–84); T. Takemitsu, *Fantasma/Cantos* (1991)

Fig. 4.1. Yayoi Uno Everett's taxonomy of compositional strategies integrating Asian and Western musical material/sources. "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music: Historical Contexts, Perspectives, and Taxonomy." In *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, eds. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 16.

Indian music's sudden appearance on the rock scene provoked mixed responses. Many musicians were concerned that Indian sounds would be nothing more than a musical fad, performed by musicians who had not taken the time to understand the music's theoretical and philosophical depths. Shankar, for one, was disappointed with the reception and treatment the sitar received, and frustrated when his concerts were billed as primitive or folkloric rather than classical. Guitarist Jimmy Page nicely sums up concerns surrounding the sitar and its use in popular music, issues tied up in cultural appropriation, colonial history, and cultural respect. He states: "I think at the moment it's rather a status thing. A lot of people say they've got sitars and they sit together and have sessions, but as yet nobody has produced any evidence. Probably everyone will end up playing them like guitars...it depends if they use them with taste."[213] In other words, the main concern was that rock musicians would continue to treat Indian music in an Orientalist fashion, where uses of undistinguished "Eastern" signifiers would be enough to reference India without challenging audiences' preconceptions of what India was really like.

With all this in mind, one might ask why it is interesting that the Beatles use elements of source music in their topical realizations. If a topic represents an idea, and accuracy to the source is not a priority, why does it then matter that the Beatles' realizations of the Indian topic were somewhat accurate? I argue that the added accuracy to the source music is what allows the Beatles to create topical realizations unique—or idiosyncratic, to use Frymoyer's term—to them. Both in the context of the 1960s and of earlier time periods, the inclusion of topical features that are both clear about their association and drawn from source musical practices is unusual and distinctive to the Beatles, though it is not separable from potentially

[213] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 173–174, 177.

problematic implications. The stronger connection to source musics, accomplished through the Beatles' stylistic knowledge, is how they expand on methods for referencing other styles.

George Harrison was not the only or even first rock musician to explore the Indian topic, though he is perhaps the best known for it.[214] Several other British and American rock musicians created raga rock songs during the 1960s, especially the style's heyday of 1965–1968.[215] The Rolling Stones' "Paint It Black," the Yardbirds' "Heart Full of Soul," and the Kinks' "See My Friends" (discussed in greater detail in chapter 3) are three oft-cited examples. All of these songs were released or recorded around the same time as the Beatles' first experiment with Indian sounds, "Norwegian Wood." The idea of referencing Indian music was in the air in 1965, and more than one artist was responsible for the increased use of Indian sounds in popular music.

Where George Harrison differs from his contemporaries lies in his treatment of Indian music, specifically Hindustani classical music, as a topic. Harrison stands out because he uses his training in the sitar and Hindustani music theory when composing his Indian-influenced songs. One can see the main principles of ragas at work in these songs: emphasis on specific central pitches, characteristic motions, correctly omitted pitches, and more. Because his realizations of the Indian topic draw on their source music, through Harrison's experience with Hindustani music, he can both create a distinctive sound for the band and innovate within the Indian topic's conventions. Nevertheless, that stronger connection does not make the Beatles' version of the Indian topic more culturally enlightened (or better in any

[214] Jonathan Bellman, "Indian Resonances in the British Invasion, 1965–1968," in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 293.

[215] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 72–73, 76–77.

way) than their contemporaries' versions; the inclusion of source music elements simply makes them different.

The hierarchy I devise here (fig 4.2), based on Johanna Frymoyer's hierarchy of features for twentieth-century waltz topics, classifies various Indian topical features in 1960s British rock. Harrison's songs expand on topical convention by being examples of syncretism and/or synthesis between Indian and Western musical practices. Raga, tal, and formal components function at the idiosyncratic level of the hierarchy. Harrison's adoption of Hindustani organizational techniques allows him to expand the Indian topic in a way that is closer to Hindustani musical practice than the accepted norm in rock music at the time.

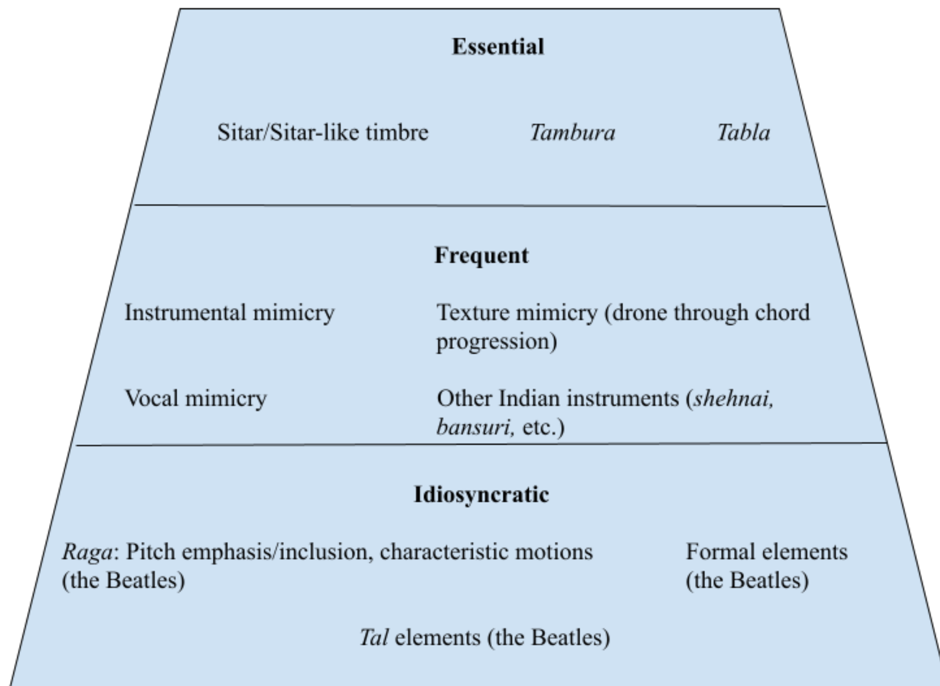

Fig. 4.2: Weighted hierarchy for the Indian topic in British rock of the 1960s.

George Harrison and the Problem of Colonization

The analyses of this chapter attempt to make two points: first, that George Harrison's training in Hindustani musical practice and theory allows him to use those concepts musically; and second, that their use is distinctive to the Beatles. The references made, and the way in which they are made, are analogous to works Browner places on the iconic end of her continuum. While these pieces' composers are not always Native American, they use musical materials based on performance transcriptions, and show "intent to portray 'Indian-ness' through the use of authentic music."[216] I argue that Harrison's realizations of the Indian topic function in a similar way: using Hindustani musical elements in a way somewhat accurate to their practice in the home culture.

Nevertheless, it is important not to conflate the terms "accurate" or "iconic" with "automatically more culturally respectful." A brief discussion of decolonization and identity politics, and how these concepts apply to Harrison and his music, will help show why. In *Native Studies Keywords,* indigenous studies scholar Kirisitina Sailiata defines decolonization as follows: "Decolonization makes the positive intervention of 'unsettling' settler colonialism. It suggests that we do not have to accept the current colonial conditions and can transform them."[217] Catherine Walsh and Walter Mignolo additionally argue that at the heart of decoloniality is a push for another way of existing and thinking that is not tied to Eurocentric ideas and ideals: "[D]ecolonization undoes, disobeys, and delinks from this

[216] Browner, "Transposing Cultures," 17–18.

[217] Kirisitina Sailiata, "Decolonization," in *Native Studies Keywords*, eds. Stephanie Nohelani Teves, Andrea Smith, and Michelle H. Raheja (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2015), Google Play Books edition, 301.

matrix [of colonial power]; constructing paths and praxis toward an otherwise of thinking, sensing, believing, doing, and living."[218]

The need for decolonial analysis and action arises, in large part, from the fact that in order for colonization to take place, the indigenous peoples of the colonized land must be erased from the landscape. Erasure may take several different forms—mass murder and assimilation into the colonizing culture are two that come to mind—but common to these varied forms is the need to erase indigenous perspectives as well as physical existence.[219] Sailiata additionally points out that to decolonize does not mean to act as if it is possible to remove the effects of colonization on communities. The way both settlers and settled think and live has been permanently shaped by colonialism and its legacy. What is possible is organization and resistance against continued colonial struggles, and ensuring that perspectives not rooted in Eurocentrism are heard and attended to. [220] Decolonization at its most effective recognizes, prioritizes, and forwards the voices of those who have been erased.

When viewed with the nature of and reason for decolonization in mind, Harrison's Indian-influenced songs effectively demonstrate that musical iconicity is not a guarantee of an incorporated indigenous perspective. While the songs incorporate elements of Hindustani music that Harrison was able to include through his engagement with the source music, they do so in a context that is still solidly Western: the context of rock songs. Despite the mostly

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[218] Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh, *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 3–4.

[219] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1., no. 1 (2012), 6, 9.

[220] Sailiata, "Decolonization," 302.

Indian instrumentation and raga-based melodic materials, the songs I analyze here are still rock numbers, with verses and repeated sections (choruses, refrains) and lyrics sung in English. References to sitar performance format and form are still fragmentary in nature and do not have a strong effect on the songs' formal layout. On the one hand, these fragmentary or transitory musical references bolster the argument for Indian music as a topic, rather than a true stylistic fusion, as I will discuss further in the analyses. But on the other hand, when viewed with decoloniality in mind, the songs present a Western, Eurocentric picture of how a rock song is structured. Although Hindustani musical performance and musical structures deeply change the sound of the songs, and this means that the songs can be analyzed from the source music's perspective, the songs do not abandon Western constructs of musical form and organization or privilege Indian music as the overall framework.

Further highlighting the point that incorporation of knowledge does not make an unproblematic topical instance are the Beatles' other instances of the Indian topic. The Beatles' musical references to India did not always involve Harrison's knowledge. This is especially true of early examples, such as "Norwegian Wood" and "Tomorrow Never Knows," but is also true of songs released after Harrison's sitar lessons began. "Blue Jay Way" (1967) is at best tenuously connected to Harrison's stylistic knowledge, as it does not show the same level of integration of Indian and Western musical materials as other songs I examine. What these instances and Harrison's more deeply engaged songs have in common is the overall context and framework of rock songs, organized according to Western musical norms. Iconicity, or source music's presence and traceability via analysis, does not automatically make songs that apply it more culturally sensitive or enlightened.

Harrison's own identity, and how it interacts and intersects with colonial legacies, also has to be taken into consideration when analyzing his music and its implications. Despite his training, application of that training, and engagement with the music's spiritual and philosophical significance in its home community, Harrison was a British citizen. He was a member of the nation that colonized India, and profited financially from his use of the colonized culture's music.[221] While there were efforts made later in Harrison's life to give back to the communities who make and listen to Hindustani music, profits from the Beatles' records (as far as I am aware) did not return to those communities.[222]

Previous generations of scholars discussing music and identity politics occasionally argued that musical appreciation can become part of identity. For example, Simon Frith's 1996 "Music and Identity" argues that identity is a continually developing process and that music is part of that process, as both aesthetic and lived experience. According to Frith, musical appreciation "is a process of musical identification, and the aesthetic response is, implicitly, an ethical agreement."[223] Identity is constructed here as an ideal, something that a listener would like to be rather than something that they intrinsically are, and music gives listeners a direct experience of what that ideal could be.[224] However, Frith's argument here

[221] Many thanks to ethnomusicologist Sunaina Kale for providing me with this criterion of cultural appropriation in music.

[222] For example, Harrison organized the 1971 benefit Concert for Bangladesh at the behest of Ravi Shankar. In 1974, Harrison served as producer for Shankar's album *Music Festival From India*, and the two toured together for both Shankar's album and Harrison's solo album *Dark Horse* (1974). See George Harrison, *I Me Mine: The Extended Edition*, 2nd ed. (Guildford: Genesis Publications, Ltd., 2017), 57; and Ravi Shankar, *Raga Mala: The Autobiography of Ravi Shankar*, 2nd ed. (New York: Welcome Rain Publishing, 1999), 220, 223–225, 227.

[223] Simon Frith, "Music and Identity," in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds. Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc., 1996), 109, 114.

[224] Ibid., 123–124.

has two points that provoke disagreement or troubling questions. First, with regards to identity as ideal rather than lived experience, the suggestion that lived experience does not inform identity seems improbable. As Tuck and Yang point out, the identity colonial structures place on indigenous peoples of North America has a very strong effect on those peoples' lives, from where they live to the quality of education to which they have access.[225] Second, with regards to musical appreciation as musical identification, a question arises: What does it mean, then, when a performer or listener has an aesthetic response to a message that is potentially hurtful to certain groups, such as perpetuation of a stereotype?

More recent scholarship around music, decolonization, and identity politics argues instead that, for all parties involved, colonial legacy is an inescapable part of identity. Walsh and Mignolo, for example, state: "When your life experience is touched and formed in and by the Third World, geopolitics matter; or when you realize that as a citizen of the First World you belong to a history that has engendered coloniality and disguised it by the promises and premises of modernity, you encounter coloniality from the two ends of the spectrum."[226] Similarly, Tuck and Yang argue that even seemingly benevolent attempts at settler-indigenous relations likely have colonialist elements. One of these settler moves to innocence that seems applicable to this project is the adoption of indigenous peoples' practices and/or knowledge. In the context of indigenous North American peoples and settlers, the adoption of love of the land and willingness to learn from its inhabitants makes the settler deserving of acceptance or even stewardship of the first inhabitants' indigeneity.

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[225] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," 22.

[226] Walsh and Mignolo, *On Decoloniality*, 5.

I draw attention to this particular settler move to innocence because it disproves the idea that deep engagement with source music and its home culture lessens or negates politics and history of identity. Adoption of an "indigenous" perspective (like other examples Yang and Tuck discuss) is an attempt to relive a settler's guilt without making significant structural or social change.[227] One could read Harrison's incorporation of Hindustani musical material and performance elements as a *musical* version of the adoption phenomenon. While the songs analyzed in this chapter expand the methods by which the Indian topic can be realized, they do not do much to change or elaborate on the topic's associations of spirituality and sensuality, even when those associations are based in stereotype. Nor (as I have pointed out) do the source musical elements fundamentally change the musical lens through which they are filtered: the Western rock song. The songs did bring attention to Indian music in the West—that is undeniable—but whether that attention truly furthered decolonization in India or in relation to its peoples is much more debatable.

With all of these things in mind, I will now turn to my examination of the Indian topic in 1960s British rock and the Beatles' idiosyncratic realizations of it. While the main focus of my analyses will be the musical elements, I will also discuss moments in the topical realizations that reflect some of the concepts and issues outlined here, particularly lyrics.

The Beatles and the Indian Topic

Essential Features

Much like earlier and contemporary usages, the Indian topic in the Beatles' music initially relied on timbral signifiers and imitation. In "Norwegian Wood," the sitar doubles

[227] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," 9–10, 14–15. As a moment of full disclosure and honesty, I realize that my own analysis of Harrison's Hindustani musical materials could be construed as a settler move to innocence on my part.

the acoustic guitar during the introduction and the solo. It also occasionally intervenes during the verses and bridges.[228] Within the hierarchy I describe for the Indian topic, "Norwegian Wood" does possess an essential feature: the sitar. I adopt Frymoyer's definition of topical features: essential features are those present in all instances of that topic.[229] Sitar-like timbres, such as Paul McCartney's guitar solo for "Taxman," are also an essential feature.[230] The solo features blistering distortion, resulting in some bleed-through from one pitch to another, and is highly ornamented with string pull-offs and hammer-ons.[231] Many scholars, including Beatles expert Walter Everett, have cited this solo as similar in sound and feeling to the sitar. The sitar is one of three Indian instruments that the Beatles use each time they reference India in their songs, beginning with "Norwegian Wood." The other two instruments in the essential category are the tambura and tabla, described in chapter 3. These three instruments and sitar-like sounds are essential features because, in some combination, they are present in all fully fledged examples of the Indian topic in the Beatles.

Essential features, in Browner's terms, do not have to behave in an iconic way: they do not have to draw on Hindustani classical music.[232] In "Norwegian Wood," the sitar is tuned and played much more like a guitar than a sitar. None of the elements of Hindustani

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[228] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through* Rubber Soul, 314.

[229] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 85.

[230] Generally, the Beatles stuck to their primary instrument roles: Lennon on rhythm guitar, McCartney on bass, Harrison on lead guitar. However, if a part was too difficult or one of the band members volunteered a musical idea for a song (as McCartney did here), the other band members would allow it, or at least listen to see what the offering sounded like.

[231] A pull-off is a guitar technique in which the player creates a second note by pulling their finger away from the string's previous note. A hammer-on is the reverse, where the player creates the second note by firmly pressing the higher note with their finger.

[232] Browner, "Transposing Cultures," 17.

sitar performance are in this song: slow exploration of a raga, short improvisations within the raga with emphasis on certain left- and right-hand playing techniques, or use of the accompanying strings.[233] The sitar has been tuned to match the equal-tempered acoustic guitars as well. In a Hindustani classical context, the sitar is generally tuned with some form of just intonation, so the effect here is an out-of-tune instrument.[234] Further, there is nothing particularly characteristic about the melody from a sitar player's perspective. Improvisations performed within a raga emphasize that raga's characterizing movements, and draw attention to important pitches by ending on or oscillating around those pitches.[235] Although the sitar is present, Harrison's playing in "Norwegian Wood" does not reflect how a sitar player moves within a raga. I would classify the sitar here as between iconic and indexical. It directly references India by virtue of timbre, being an Indian instrument, but the playing style is not based on sitar playing techniques or Hindustani musical materials.

Frequent Features

The range of the Beatles' Indian topical features goes well beyond three instruments. Like their contemporaries, the Beatles also incorporate non-tambura drones and imitative vocal and instrumental techniques into the Indian topic.[236] These features clearly reference India only when paired with one or more essential features. Lennon's "Tomorrow Never

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[233] The names of these performance elements, in order, are alap*, tans* (many different kinds, with their own names specifying right- or left-hand emphasis), and *jhala*.

[234] Suvarnalata Rao, Wim van der Meer, and Jane Harvey, *The Raga Guide: A Survey of 74 Hindustani Ragas*, ed. Joep Bor (Monmouth: Wyastone Estate Ltd., 2002), vii. Lewisohn's description of the recording process intimates that Lennon's guitar part was worked out before the sitar.

[235] Bimalakanta Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas* (New Delhi: Om Publications, 2005), 16, 31.

[236] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 72–73.

Knows" not only includes the tambura, but also has an extremely static "harmonic" structure centered on C. I place qualifying quotes around harmonic, as the song is primarily based on drones rather than fully voiced chordal accompaniment. Producer George Martin's string arrangement for Harrison's "Within You, Without You" (1967) also classifies as a type of imitation. The cellos and violins play swooping lines alongside the *dilruba,* a bowed and fretted string instrument, gliding to their pitches rather than landing directly. The technique allows the instruments to echo the Indian instruments' sounds, and helps the whole ensemble stay in tune.[237] The frequent features on both songs appear alongside essential features (sitar, tambura, tabla), strengthening the reference to India and Indian music. The static harmonic structure in "Tomorrow Never Knows" is another indexical reference, while the strings in "Within You, Without You" are iconic. The string parts, as I will discuss further in the analysis of this song, are rooted in Indian musical ideas, as they double the raga-based *dilruba* parts.

The Beatles also have some imitative examples less clearly associated with India. On Harrison's "I Want To Tell You" (1966), McCartney provides a vocal imitation during the fade-out, which has been described as similar to the *gamak* in Indian vocal and instrumental playing.[238] However, without any essential features to clarify the reference, I hesitate to say that these moments alone are strong enough to constitute the Indian topic. For example, the drone-like features on "Tomorrow Never Knows" (without the tambura) could also suggest

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[237] George Martin and Jeremy Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 203. Because they are fretless, cellos and violins are able to deal with playing in various temperaments, and mold more easily to differences in intonation than fixed-pitch instruments.

[238] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 49, 57. A *gamak* is a quick movement up or down between two adjacent pitches, and has a jerky, shaky sound.

Gregorian chant as a topic, or the more general folkloric as a topic.[239] These imitation-based examples are somewhere between indexical and symbolic in Browner's terms: they may be Indian-inspired, and may attempt at an Indian sound, but these elements are unclear and are not based in Indian musical practice or materials in either case. Further, while these two songs might reference India, they are also missing the element of understanding (and syncretism arising from that understanding) present in later offerings. Their sounds are striking, but resemble their source much less than "The Inner Light" or "Within You, Without You."

In addition to imitative features used by their contemporaries, the Beatles explore other Indian timbres as frequent topical features. Several types of stringed instruments from around the Indian subcontinent make appearances, in addition to the more northern sitar and tabla. For example, the ensemble in "Within You, Without You" includes the *dilruba* and *svaramandal*, a zither-like instrument, as well as all three essential timbres.[240] Harrison's later song "The Inner Light" (1968) also has an expanded timbral palette. In addition to the essential timbres of sitar and tabla, the *shehnai*, a double reed instrument, plays a prominent role in the song. The harmonium, a common accompanying instrument for singers, provides the drone in lieu of the tambura. Finally, "The Inner Light" also includes the *pakhavaj*, a two-headed drum with a low and mellow tone, and the *bansuri,* a type of flute. Most of these instruments are common instruments in the Hindustani tradition.

All of these additional Indian timbres behave in the way frequent topical features do: they appear topically only if one or more of the essential features is also present. The *shehnai*

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[239] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 68–69.

[240] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 103.

appears in no songs other than "The Inner Light," and the *dilruba* does not appear without one of the essential features. They may, perhaps, not be strong enough to reference India on their own, especially as it is not clear how familiar listeners are with such timbres.[241] Like vocal imitation, less familiar timbres from India may be mistaken for other, non-Indian instruments. The *shehnai* is somewhat similar in sound to the Middle Eastern *mizmar*, for example. When paired with the essential features of sitar, tambura, and tabla, however, the reference to India becomes much clearer. For this reason, I classify additional timbres from India as frequent features of the Beatles' Indian topical realizations. Where these instruments fall on Browner's continuum and in Everett's taxonomy varies by song, so I will assess their iconic/indexical/symbolic natures in the individual analyses.

Idiosyncratic Features

Thus far, I have discussed the essential and frequent features of the Indian topic in the Beatles' music. There is significant overlap between the Beatles' various features, and those used by their contemporaries and even older repertoires referencing India, such as Hindustani Airs. Particularly with the frequent features, the Beatles use many features that were already previously established, namely imitative vocal and instrumental timbres. Harrison's songs substantially expand the possible timbral palette for the Indian topic. However, later artists also included less familiar Indian timbres, possibly influenced by the Beatles.[242] For the Indian topic, the element that makes the Beatles sound like the Beatles, and no one else, does not lie in the essential or frequent levels of a topical hierarchy.

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[241] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 85.

[242] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 93–94.

The most distinctive features in the Beatles' realizations can be found at the idiosyncratic level. At this level, Harrison uses his own stylistic knowledge of and deep engagement with Hindustani classical music to contribute features not seen in other artists' realizations of the topic, or the Beatles' earlier examples. Harrison has three Indian-influenced songs that present the topic in this way, and a fourth often cited as Indian-influenced: "Love You To," from *Revolver* (1966); "Within You, Without You," from *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967); "Blue Jay Way," from *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967); and "The Inner Light," released as the B side to the single "Lady Madonna" (1968). Each of these songs ("Blue Jay Way" excepted) can be matched with a specific raga, through pitch inclusion/omission and emphasis, and raga-specific movements between and around those pitches.[243] In addition, Harrison includes elements of performance forms and rhythmic cycles (tal) in the songs. These three songs are examples of syncretism, and can be analyzed from a Hindustani perspective because of the stylistic understanding Harrison brings to them. Table 4.1 presents an overview of the Beatles songs discussed in this chapter that use the Indian topic, and shows the features present on each song.

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[243] Details further below on why, from the perspective of informed musical reference, "Blue Jay Way" comes across as less strongly Indian-influenced than the other three songs.

Table 4.1: Quick, chronological (by release date) view of Beatles songs with various Indian topical features. For songs with more than one composer, the bolded name is the primary composer.

Song	*Composer*	*Album*	*Essential Feature(s)*	*Frequent Feature(s)*	*Idiosyncratic Feature(s)*
"Norwegian Wood"	**John Lennon**/Paul McCartney	*Rubber Soul* (1965)	Sitar	Sitar drone (low *pa* string)	None
"Taxman"	George Harrison	*Revolver* (1966)	Sitar-like timbre (electric guitar solo)	None	None
"Love You To"	Harrison	*Revolver*	Sitar, tabla, tambura	None; vocal imitation and *svaramandal* cited in previous scholarship	Characteristic pitch omission, emphasis, and movements of raga *Bhimpalasi*; *tintal* (Lewisohn); formal influence (Farrell/Everett)
"I Want To Tell You"	Harrison	*Revolver*	None	Vocal imitation (McCartney harmony outro)	None
"Tomorrow Never Knows"	**Lennon** / McCartney	*Revolver*	Tambura	Drone via chord "progression" (CM with neighbor BbM)	None
"Within You, Without You"	**Harrison**; string parts George Martin	*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967)	Sitar, tambura, tabla	*Dilruba, svaramandal*, instrumental imitation (cello and violins)	Characteristic pitch omission, emphasis, and movements of raga *Jog*; *tintal*; *jhaptal* solo (Farrell, Everett)
"Blue Jay Way"	Harrison	*Magical Mystery Tour* (1967)	None	Hammond organ drone, instrumental (cello) and vocal imitation	Pitches of *Todi that*/raga *Multani* (Everett), some oscillation on expected pitches
"The Inner Light"	Harrison	Single, B side to "Lady Madonna" (1968)	Sitar, tabla	Harmonium, *shehnai, bansuri, pakhavaj*, vocal imitation	Characteristic pitch omission, emphasis, and movements of raga *Jog*

Notes on Hindustani Music Theory and Terminology

For the purposes of these analyses, some words on Hindustani musical organization and terminology are necessary. First, in this music, the drone pitch is a crucial factor in both tuning and performance. Drone instruments, such as the tambura and harmonium, are a constant force throughout a raga performance. These instruments always include the tonic pitch, called *sa* in Hindustani terminology, and will usually include the fourth or fifth above, depending on which raga is selected. The drone *sa* is crucial to Indian music, both Hindustani and Carnatic, because the raga must be tuned in relation to *sa*. Different performers playing the same raga may place *sa* at different pitch levels, but the structure of intervals remains the same, and therefore the raga remains the same.[244] For example, if two instrumentalists playing raga *Jog* place their *sas* at C and D respectively, but both build the correct intervals from their individual *sas*, they are still both performing raga *Jog*. The Harrison songs I analyze here use drones on various pitches as their foundation, and include *sa* as part of the drone instruments' sound.

The drone instrument's tuning often reflects another important concept in *Hindustani* classical music. Each raga has a pair of central pitches that help characterize it in performance. *Vadi*, sometimes called the principal note, is the more emphasized pitch in the pair. A musician gives *vadi* prominence by stressing it, repeating it frequently, or creating improvisations that move around it or land on it. *Samvadi* is the pitch a fourth or fifth away from *vadi*, depending on the raga being used. While performers do not give *samvadi* as much attention in improvisation, it and *vadi* together help determine which raga the performer is playing. For example, the *vadi* and *samvadi* for raga *Jog* are *pa*, the fifth, and *sa* respectively.

[244] Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music*, 65.

In a performance of this raga, one would expect to hear the drone instrument(s) tuned to these two pitches. An experienced listener would also expect improvisations landing on, or moving away from and back to, these pitches, especially *pa*. While *sa* is important regardless of the raga for tuning reasons, *sa* is not always included in the *vadi/samvadi* pairing. Ragas emphasizing instability tend to use other pitches for *vadi* and *samvadi*: for example, the highly unstable raga *Marwa* uses *dha* and *ga* (the sixth and third scale degrees) as *vadi/samvadi*.[245] Part of determining which raga is being used in each of my case studies involves working out *vadi* and *samvadi* by listening for emphasis on particular pitches in the drone instruments and in phrases.

How ragas treat their pitches, from general pitch inclusion and emphases to specific movements, is a third important organizational element in Hindustani classical music. Hindustani music distinguishes between ragas and the more general, seven-pitch collections from which they come: *thats* (roughly pronounced "tut"). A *that* does not have specific characteristics and cannot convey or represent emotion. The word "raga" refers to a specific set of rules for using notes in a given *that*: the number of notes played (usually five to seven), patterns of ascent and descent, emphasized pitches, and characteristic movements between and around notes in the raga.[246] Each raga's distinctive characteristics are what distinguish it from others in its *that* and make it instantly recognizable. To return to raga *Jog* as an example, *Jog* and its relatives, ragas *Desh* and *Khamaj*, both take the same *that* as their generating pitch collection.[247] *Khamaj that* includes all unaltered or natural pitches except for

[245] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 15–16, 31, 276.

[246] Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music*, 38, 46.

[247] Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 1, 114.

the seventh scale degree, *ni*, which is lowered.[248] However, each of these ragas includes different patterns of ascent and descent, emphasizes different notes, and includes distinctive phrases that cannot be used in the other ragas. Raga *Jog* omits the second and sixth scale degrees, *re* and *dha*, while raga *Khamaj* includes both pitches in descent.[249] They belong to the same parent collection, but utilize the possible pitches differently.[250]

Performance format is another realm of Hindustani classical music, specifically sitar performance, that Harrison references in a knowledgeable way. A Hindustani classical performance begins with an ametric, improvisatory section called alap, where the performer explores a raga's characteristic movements and important pitches. The next section is *jor*, using the melodic material from the alap, but adding a pulse (though it is still ametric). From there, the tabla join in with the *gat*, a repeated slow, medium, or fast short melody in a particular tal, which gradually increases in speed over the time of the performance.[251] In a sitar performance, both the sitar and tabla players improvise, and specific types of improvisation occur in a particular order. For the sitar, improvisation types move from focusing on left-hand techniques to right-hand as the tempo increases. The last large section of a performance is *jhala*, short melodic notes on the sitar presented with a tonic pedal on the accompanying high strings (*cikari* strings). A live performance of a single raga can be any

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[248] Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music*, 47.

[249] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 205, 226.

[250] Ragas are also sometimes classified according to emotions they are supposed to represent, or times of day or season they should be played (see Roychaudhuri 22–24). As there is no correlation between these classifications and Harrison's lyrics, I do not examine them here.

[251] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 181–182. A performer may present a slow, medium-tempo, or fast *gat* in the same raga; a performance will generally feature at least a slow and a fast *gat*.

length, depending on how long a player focuses on any particular element, but tends to last at least twenty or thirty minutes.

Finally, a comment on note abbreviations and terminology. I refer to the seven notes in a *that* by their Hindi names. The tonic pitch is always labeled as *sa*, and the rest of the names are as follows: *re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni*. These names are abbreviated: *S, R, G, M, P, D, N*. They correspond to Arabic numeral scale degrees: *S* = ^1, *R* = ^2, *G* = ^3, *M* = ^4, *P* = ^5, *D* = ^6, and *N* = ^7. I include Arabic numerals alongside the Hindi abbreviations. The terms *komal* and *tivra*, "lowered" and "raised" respectively, are also used for ragas that include altered versions of the basic notes.[252] I indicate *komal* notes with a straight downward arrow, and *tivra* notes with a straight upward arrow (for example, ↓R and ↑M; Arabic numerals ↓^2 and ↑^4). While these alterations have been notated with flat and sharp signs respectively, I choose to use arrows because "lowered" and "raised" in a Hindustani context do not mean exactly the same thing as "flat" and "sharp."[253] For slides up or down to pitches, I notate the slide with a curved arrow pointing up or down. For example, a slide up to a pitch and back down again would be notated like so: *S*⤴ *G*⤵ *S*; Arabic numerals ^1⤴ ^3⤵ ^1. For oscillation on a single pitch, where a player gives microtonal changes in tuning without changing pitch, I notate the oscillated pitch with a squiggly line after the oscillated pitch.[254] Oscillation on the pitch *ga* in an improvisation would look like this: *M-P*⤵ *-G*~; Arabic numerals ^4-^5⤵ -^3~.[255]

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[252] Literal translation: "Komal" = "soft"; "tivra" = "acute."

[253] Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music*, 46. Christopher Doll also uses up and down arrows in place of flats and sharps in his monograph *Hearing Harmony: Toward a Tonal Theory for the Rock Era* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), though for different reasons.

[254] These types of oscillation can be thought of as similar to vibrato in Western music.

[255] I have adapted these notation marks from the graphic notation in Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*.

Analysis 1: "Love You To"

While "Norwegian Wood" may have been the first Beatles song to use a sitar, as I have described, there is not much specifically Indian about its use besides timbre. "Love You To," from *Revolver* (1966), was Harrison's first song influenced by more than timbre (example 4.1). In his autobiography *I Me Mine*, he says: " 'Norwegian Wood' was an accident as far as the sitar part was concerned but this ["Love You To"] was the first song where I consciously tried to use the sitar and tabla on the basic track."[256] Harrison wrote the song after beginning sitar lessons with Ravi Shankar, but he had not been taking lessons for long, a year at most.[257] Possibly because of lack of experience, "Love You To" is the least compliant with Hindustani theory and playing styles of Harrison's Indian-influenced songs. Nevertheless, as Harrison's first foray into incorporating source music elements, the song remains an important one.

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[256] Harrison, *I Me Mine*, 100.

[257] Ibid., 55.

"Love You To" (*Revolver*, 1966)

Sa/S (pitch center) = C	*That* (generating scale): *Kafi*: S R ↓G M P D ↓N Two *komal* (lowered) pitches; all others unaltered *Vadi/Samvadi*: M/S *Tal*: *Tintal* (16 beats)	*Raga*: *Bhimpalasi* Ascent: ↓N S ↓G M P ↓N S Descent: S↓N D P M↓GRS Characteristic Features: M, P, and S as landing points; ↓G-S-R-S and parallel ↓N -P-D-P; oscillation on ↓G and ↓N

Formal Sections, Instrumentation, and Timestamps

0:00-0:38 Introduction Sitar, *tabla*, *tambura*	0:39-0:57 Verse 1 Instrumentation same throughout	0:58-1:07 Refrain 1	1:08-1:27 Verse 2	1:28-1:38 Refrain 2	1:39-1:54 Solo	1:55-2:04 Refrain 3
2:05-2:24 Verse 3	2:25-2:35 Refrain 3	2:36-2:59 Outro				

Lyrics

Verse 1	Refrain 1	Verse 2	Refrains 2 and 3	Verse 3	Refrain 4
Each day just goes so fast, I turn around, it's past, You don't get time to hang a sign on me.	Love me while you can, Before I'm a dead old man.	A lifetime is so short, A new one can't be bought, But what you've got means such a lot to me.	Make love all day long, Make love singing songs.	There's people standing round, Who'll screw you in the ground, They'll fill you in with all their sins, you'll see.	I'll make love to you, If you want me to.

Topical Features

Essential:	Frequent:	Idiosyncratic:
Sitar, *tabla*, *tambura*	None	*Raga, tal,* formal references to *alap* (intro) and *jhala* (outro)

Example 4.1: Song roadmap for "Love You To," including topical features.

"Love You To" presents several essential features for the Beatles' realizations of the Indian topic. As Harrison describes, sitar and tabla are two of the more prominent instruments in the song. In fact, the song begins with only these instruments, in a slow introduction somewhat akin to the alap section in a Hindustani classical performance (0:00–0:35). The tambura also plays a role in "Love You To," providing the drone *sa*.[258] Though it is very low in the mix, it has louder moments at 0:50 and during the instrumental fade-out (2:35–2:38). Presence alone is enough to make the sitar, tambura, and tabla essential features; they do not have to play in a way informed by source music. However, in "Love You To"

[258] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 40.

these essential features do perform in mostly iconic ways. For example, Harrison asked the tabla player Anil Bhagwat to play a 16-beat tal (*tintal*) "in the Ravi Shankar style," and to improvise, as a tabla player would in a traditional sitar concert.[259] While *tintal* is not kept strictly here as it would be in a sitar concert—whenever the tal stops in the song, it restarts back on beat 1—tal can still be heard, counted, and identified. This is an instance similar to a phenomenon in Frymoyer's topical hierarchy: an essential feature can be realized more specifically at another hierarchy level.[260]

"Love You To" relies most heavily on the essential features of sitar, tabla, and tambura. Previous scholarship has identified some moments in the song that may classify as frequent features, and so I will address them here. Walter Everett states that a *svaramandal* opens the song with two quick arpeggiations, at 0:00–0:04.[261] However, I would argue that these sounds are actually a sitar's sympathetic strings being played, not a *svaramandal.* First, the strings' timbre is extremely bright and thin; a *svaramandal* has thicker strings, and thus a more robust sound. Second, counting the number of pitches played in the introductory moment, there is a total of eleven, in the right range for the number of sympathetic strings on a sitar (11 to 13); a *svaramandal* has many more strings.[262] Finally, and perhaps most convincing, a common performance technique in Ravi Shankar's *gharana* is to open the alap and entire performance by running a fingernail across the sitar's sympathetic strings.[263] As a

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[259] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 72.

[260] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 92.

[261] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 41.

[262] Many thanks to ethnomusicologist and sitar instructor Scott Marcus for discussing these listening points with me.

[263] A *gharana* is a particular tradition of instrumental and vocal teaching and performance style. The *gharana* is based on the idea of a teacher-student lineage (i.e. a student's teacher, the teacher's teacher, and the

disciple of Shankar, Harrison (as the likely player) would have been expected to use the same technique in his own playing. The *svaramandal* does appear on several Beatles songs but, as shown here, does not occur in every instance of the Indian topic.

Gerry Farrell also makes an argument for vocal imitation, another possible frequent feature, on “Love You To.” I am not entirely convinced that Harrison is trying to imitate a singing style, based on what Farrell classifies as imitation. According to him, Harrison’s vocal delivery is in a flat, nasal tone that several other raga rock musicians used to reference or imitate Indian singing styles.[264] However, Harrison’s vocals tend to be more nasal and flattened in general, whether he is referencing Indian music or not.[265] Likewise, there is not much of a difference in vocal tone across Harrison’s three Indian-influenced songs, aside from a higher part of his range in “The Inner Light.” Further, the analysis of “Within You, Without You” that follows makes no mention of a nasal, flat singing tone.[266] For these reasons, I do not believe that vocal imitation is a frequent feature being used in “Love You To.”

At the idiosyncratic level, Harrison uses his deep engagement with Hindustani classical music to create a very distinctive feature for the Indian topic: raga as organization. “Love You To” utilizes the characteristic movements and pitch emphases of raga

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teacher before that are from the same *gharana*). A performer can usually tell which *gharana* another performer is from based on performance choices, favored improvisation styles, and in the sitar’s case, instrument design, stringing, and tuning. Ravi Shankar’s and Vilayat Khan’s are the two primary sitar *gharanas* in modern times.

[264] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 184.

[265] Matthew Bannister, “The Beatle who became a man: *Revolver* and George Harrison’s metamorphosis,” in *“Every Sound There Is”*: *The Beatles’* Revolver *and the Transformation of Rock and Roll*, ed. Russell Reising, Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 184–185. Bannister does not mention a flat, nasal tone specifically, but the tone could well be part of Harrison’s “poor” singing compared to Lennon and McCartney.

[266] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 183–188.

Bhimpalasi, a raga from *Kafi that*. Previous analyses, Gerry Farrell's among them, identify the *that* at work here. Walter Everett notes that the pitch collection used is the same as *Kafi that,* but prefers to describe it as in Dorian mode. He presents evidence of Dorian as a mode Harrison used often, and states that no raga is present in the song.[267] *Kafi that* does contain the same pitches as Dorian mode. However, I instead argue that a raga (*Bhimpalasi*) is present because its characteristic movements and pitch emphases are part of the song's structure.

Kafi that uses five natural pitches and two lowered ones, *komal ga* and *komal ni: S-R-↓G-M-P-D-↓N*; Arabic numerals: ^1-^2-↓^3-^4-^5-^6-↓^7.[268] Within this framework, raga *Bhimpalasi* omits *komal ga* and *dha* in ascent, while including them in descent.[269] The *vadi* and *samvadi* for this raga are *ma* and *sa* respectively, meaning that one should expect to see these pitches emphasized and used as landing points for improvisations and phrases.[270] However, performers also treat *pa* as a strong note, and all three—*sa, ma,* and *pa*—are acceptable landing points. As each raga does, *Bhimpalasi* has several characteristic movements and treatments of pitches. Chief among them are a motion from *komal ga* to a repeated *sa* including *re* between the two *sas*: ↓*G-S-R-S*; Arabic numerals ↓^3-^1-^2-^1. Characteristic movements in ragas may often be repeated on other important pitches in the raga, something like a musical analogy.[271] Because of this, an analogous motion beginning

[267] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 41.

[268] Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music*, 47.

[269] Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 40.

[270] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 103.

[271] Ethnomusicologist and sitar instructor Scott Marcus (UCSB) refers to this feature as "raga symmetry."

on *komal ni* is also characteristic: ↓*N -P-D-P*; Arabic numerals ↓^7-^5-^6-^5.[272] Approaching *sa* with a slow slide from the *komal ni* below it (↓*N* ⤴ *S*; Arabic numerals ↓^7 ⤴ ^1) is another characteristic of *Bhimpalasi*. Microtonal oscillation, or "swaying," on *komal ga* and *komal ni* is also common, both on individual pitches and longer movements: *M-P* ⤵ -↓*G* ~; Arabic numerals ^4-^5 ⤵ -↓^3~.[273] If "Love You To" uses raga *Bhimpalasi* in some capacity, an analyst should expect to see at least some of these pitch emphases and characteristic motions.[274]

As none of Harrison's compositions are Hindustani classical performances, none of them are flawless executions obeying every requirement of the raga. Yet it is Harrison's drawing on the source music, and the experience he needs and has to do so, that expands on and pushes the Indian topic's conventions. These topical expansions begin with "Love You To." The most notable influence of raga *Bhimpalasi* is the emphasis on several of its characteristic motions. For example, there are two motives in the sitar that repeat several times throughout the song: *M-P-D-*↓*N ~D-M-P* (0:33–0:36), and ↓*N -D-*↓*N ~D-*↓*G -P* at (0:58–1:05); Arabic numerals ^4-^5-^6-↓^7 ~^6-^4-^5 and ↓^7-^6-↓^7~^6-↓^3-^5. Both of these are very similar to the characteristic motion *P-*↓*N-D-P-M*; Arabic numerals ^5-↓^7 -^6-^5-^4. The slow ↓*N* ⤴ *S* slide, Arabic numerals ↓^7 ⤴ ^1, is adhered to as well, both during the introduction and first verse (0:17–0:19 and 0:41–0:43). Harrison does give stronger prominence to *pa* rather than the *vadi*, *ma*. More phrases end on *pa*, particularly the sitar

[272] Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 40.

[273] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 103.

[274] The "basic scale" (included pitches and ascent-descent pattern), *vadi/samvadi*, and characteristic movements are the first things players learn in a new raga. Other considerations—related ragas, exceptions to the basic rules—usually come after a player has been working with a raga for some time.

motives and the vocal line in the chorus: ↓*N*-↓*N -D-M-P* (0:58–1:04); Arabic numerals ↓^7-↓^7-^6-^4-^5. However, *ma* ends the climactic vocal melisma at the end of each verse in a long drop from *sa*, giving it prominence (1:20–1:25).

"Love You To" also draws formal elements from Hindustani classical music.[275] As Farrell points out, rock and pop technique, aesthetics, and time constraints in the 1960s were not amenable to the kind of lengthy explorations in Hindustani classical music. So, any possible formal references to Indian music in rock songs of the time had to be fragmented. "Love You To" does, in a compressed fashion, follow the usual performance sequence of a sitar concert.[276] The first thirty seconds present an ametric, improvisatory exploration of raga *Bhimpalasi's* pitches and some characteristic motions, as a performer would in alap. Harrison references *jhala* as well, playing the *cikari* strings at the start of the outro, with an uptick in tempo (2:35), as one would expect at the end of a sitar performance.[277] However, Farrell seems equivocal in his assessment of form in "Love You To," as he describes it as "fragmented" and "a simple sketch of the larger-scale structure of an Indian performance."[278]

From a topical perspective, the fact that the formal references are fragments of Hindustani performance suggests that "Love You To" actually does present a topic, not a true stylistic fusion. By definition, a topic is an imported and often fragmented version of a larger

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[275] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 40–42.

[276] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 182–183.

[277] David Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 173. Temperley distinguishes between "coda" (an ending with non-chorus material that ends at a specific moment) and "outro" (an ending section with non-chorus material that fades out), a practice I follow here.

[278] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 184.

genre or style, presented in a context it does not normally appear in.[279] Because Harrison shortens or excludes Hindustani formal elements, I read formal references here as topical features; a fusion of two styles would be more likely to draw on formal conventions more significantly than Harrison does here. Further, "Love You To" remains fundamentally in a Western rock form. The flavor of alap and *jhala* notwithstanding, the introduction and outro as sections are both common elements in non-raga rock music of the 1960s. There is also no *gat* in a traditional sense, as one would expect to hear a *gat* beginning on the same beat each time the tal cycle repeats; the melody of this song repeats on different beats in the tal. Although the verses and choruses repeat melodic material, this is also generally what verses and choruses do in Western rock songs.[280] In addition, the tabla act more as a marker of Western-style verse endings, rather than helping keep a Hindustani classical form. Tal in this song stops and restarts on beat 1 at the verse ends, rather than continuing (0:50–0:56), which does not occur in classical settings. Because the timbres presented here would have been foreign to (Western) listeners in the 1960s, that otherness may disguise the fact that "Love You To" still has a form rooted in Western traditions. The Hindustani formal references' "fragmented" nature, and the song's overall Western form, suggest that this is an instance of a topic, not a true stylistic fusion.

The idiosyncratic features presented here—raga characteristics, *vadi/samvadi* emphasis, and formal elements—fall into the iconic end of Browner's continuum. Harrison, usually credited as the sitar player, demonstrates enough knowledge of the instrument and

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[279] Danuta Mirka, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2.

[280] Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock*, 153, 172–173.

playing techniques for someone else trained in Hindustani classical music to recognize the elements of source music at play.[281] He is certainly an inexperienced player at this stage: his sitar lessons with Ravi Shankar had only been occurring for a year by *Revolver's* release in 1966.[282] The imperfect intonation and somewhat aimless improvisations during the solo and outro also attest to the player's inexperience, making Harrison a likely candidate.[283] However, the influence of raga *Bhimpalasi* is audible in this song. There are slow slides between and oscillations on the correct pitches for this raga, as well as emphasis on *vadi (ma)* in a key moment during the song. Similarly, the song references formal influences from Hindustani classical performance, though not consistently enough to constitute a stylistic fusion. These elements are what Yayoi Uno Everett describes as syncretism: the combination of Asian and Western musical material at a procedural level in compositions.[284] Harrison may be a green player on this track, but he possesses enough understanding to present recognizable elements of a specific raga and Hindustani performance norms, and to use those aspects to innovate within topical conventions.

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[281] Lewisohn 1988, Farrell 1997, and Everett 1999 all state that Harrison was the most likely sitar player.

[282] Harrison, *I Me Mine*, 55.

[283] A more experienced player would be able to keep pulled pitches in tune, where the player on this recording does not. Also, ideally a sitar player creates improvisations that emphasize characteristic movements or raga symmetry, and the solo and outro material rely more on traveling around the scale.

[284] Y.U. Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music," 18. The example does not map exactly onto specific categories in the taxonomy. But if we consider Harrison's vocal as a "Western instrument" (due to the English lyrics), category 5—transplanting scale systems, timbres, or articulation of Asian instruments onto Western instruments—is probably the closest descriptor of what's happening here.

The formal elements' fragmented nature is also why I describe "Love You To" as an example of syncretism rather than synthesis. Synthesis, to Everett, involves transforming traditional timbres, forms, and systems on both ends, to the point that Asian and Western influences are "no longer discernible as separate elements" (16, 19). "Love You To" (along with my other case studies in this chapter) is still recognizable as a Western rock form, if a strikingly different and transformed one; Hindustani and Western elements are still separable from one another.

Lyrically speaking, "Love You To" is a particularly clear example that use of iconic musical elements does not mean the song is free from problematic elements. As Echard points out, musical references to India in 1960s popular genres often connect to mystical or philosophical lyrics. While lyrics can be drawn directly from Indian philosophies or religious texts, inspiration from the source culture is not always taken.[285] Harrison's Indian-influenced songs follow the general pattern of emphasizing spirituality and philosophical ideas, and do not do much to change this association. However, the songs specify an idea common to several Asian philosophies, but especially to India: the illusory or temporary nature of our everyday experience. "Love You To" begins establishing a connection between fleeting existence and the Indian topic from its first lines: "Each day just goes so fast / I turn around, it's past." In the first refrain and second verse, the narrator twice emphasizes that our time on this earth is short, and one should appreciate it while it's there: "Love me while you can / Before I'm a dead old man" and "A lifetime is so short / A new one can't be bought."[286] While "Love You To" seems more focused on a temporary existence, Harrison's later Indian-influenced examples will expand the association out to discuss not only life's temporary nature, but also that this temporariness is itself an illusion.

The lyrics of "Love You To" also communicate an association with both India and "the Orient" in general: as a place connected to freer sexuality and sensuality. As shown in example 4.1, the refrains focus on this element of meaning. "Love me while you can / Before I'm a dead old man," "Make love all day long / Make love singing songs," and "I'll make

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[285] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 67, 71.

[286] Hunter Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics: The Stories Behind the Music, Including the Handwritten Drafts of More Than 100 Classic Beatles Songs* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2014), 157.

love to you / If you want me to."[287] The association between "the Orient" and sexual freedom or permissiveness was well established by the 1960s, and became particularly associated with India in American and British minds through the popularity of the *Kama Sutra* and other examples of erotic Eastern literature.[288] "Love You To" thus presents a combination of musical features drawn directly from Indian musical practice while lyrically perpetuating a popular stereotype about India.

Analysis 2: "Within You, Without You"

A year after "Love You To," Harrison presented another song deeply influenced by Hindustani classical music. "Within You, Without You" was released on *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), and none of the other three Beatles contributed to the track. All of the Indian instrument players were from the Asian Music Circle in London. The band's producer George Martin scored and conducted the Western string section, eight violins and three cellos, based on Harrison's directions.[289] Harrison's own words on the song are much more specific about both pitch and rhythm construction, and highlight the effect continued sitar lessons and practice had on the song's composition:

> This [the songwriting period] was during the *Sgt. Pepper* period, and after I had been taking sitar lessons with Ravi Shankar for some time, so I was getting a *bit* better on the instrument. I was continually playing Indian music exercises, the melodies of which are called Sargams, which are the bases of the different Ragas. That's why around this time I couldn't help writing tunes like this which were based upon unusual scales.[290]

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[287] Ibid.

[288] Ireland and Gemie, "Raga Rock: Popular Music and the Turn to the East in the 1960s," 68.

[289] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 103, 107.

[290] Harrison, *I Me Mine*, 110.

While Harrison uses some Western terminologies, the "unusual scales" comment likely refers to idiosyncratic features in the song. "Within You, Without You" uses elements of both raga *Jog* and two tals*,* 16-beat *tintal* and *jhaptal*, a 10-beat cycle split into two smaller groups of five (see example 4.2 below). Of Harrison's three Indian-influenced songs, "Within You, Without You" is one of the most documented in its recording process, and the stories both Harrison and Martin tell demonstrate a distinct leap in Harrison's stylistic knowledge between 1966 and 1967.

"Within You, Without You" (*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band,* 1967)

Sa/S (pitch center) = C#/Db

Thaat (generating scale): *Khamaj*: S R G M P D ↓N
All pitches unaltered except *ni* (lowered or *komal*)
Vadi/Samvadi: P/S
Tal: *Tintal* (16 beats) and *jhaptal* in solo (10 beats)

Raga: Jog
Ascent: S G M P ↓N S
Descent: S↓N P M G SG S
Characteristic Features: P, M, and S as landing points; S⤴️G⤵️S P⤴️↓N⤵️P; quick ascent G-M-P and parallel P-↓N-S; long ascent G-M-P-↓N-S

Formal Sections, Instrumentation, and Timestamps

0:00-0:30	0:31-1:13	1:14-1:57	1:58-2:22	2:23-3:46
Introduction	Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Solo
Tambura, dilruba, svaramandal, tabla	All instruments	Strings enter	All instruments except sitar	Sitar, *tabla, dilruba,* string section, *svaramandal*
3:47-4:32	4:33-4:54	4:55-5:04		
Verse 4: As verse 3	Verse 5: As verse 3	Outro: *Dilruba, tambura*, laughter		

Lyrics

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5
We were talking about the space between us all, And the people who hide themselves behind a wall Of illusion; never glimpse the truth; then it's far too late, when they pass away.	We were talking about the love we all could share, When we find it, to try our best to hold it there. With our love, with our love we could save the world, If they only knew.	Try to realize, it's all within yourself, no one else can make you change. And to see you're really only very small, and life flows on within you and without you.	We were talking about the love that's gone so cold, And the people who gain the world and lose their soul. They don't know, they can't see; Are you one of them?	When you've seen beyond yourself, then you may find peace of mind is waiting there. And the time will come when you see we're all one and life flows on within you and without you.

Essential Features	Frequent Features	Idiosyncratic Features
Sitar, *tambura, tabla*	*Dilruba, svaramandal,* vocal and instrumental imitation	*Raga, tal* (two), formal references to *alap* and *tihais* (improvised ending phrases)

Example 4.2: Song roadmap for "Within You, Without You."

Like its predecessor "Love You To," "Within You, Without You" uses all three potential essential features in the topical hierarchy I have devised. The tambura enters first,

played by Harrison and Beatles assistant Neil Aspinall, establishing both the drone and *sa* (C#/Db in this song).[291] The tabla enter at 0:22, playing *tintal*, and switch to *jhaptal* for the instrumental solo. While the sitar, played by Harrison, does not appear until later in the song (2:27), it is part of the solo and thus plays a prominent role on the track. Again, even though the essential features do not need to behave in an iconic fashion, the instruments here do. The sitar trades solos with the *dilruba* and string section, mirroring the solo trading between sitar and tabla in a traditional performance.[292] The tabla, too, play in a way informed by the source music. Martin describes Harrison discussing tal with the tabla player: "Indian rhythms can be extraordinarily difficult, and I have a fond memory of George [Harrison] speaking in a strange tongue, emphasizing the accents with a wag of his head - 'Ta-ta ticky ta, ticky tick ta ta' and so on. The Indian musicians cottoned on instantly."[293] What Martin describes here are *bols*, the syllables used to teach tabla players the correct hand strokes to use as they play various tals, and to represent the sounds of particular strokes in performance.[294] Harrison's own engagement with and experience learning Hindustani classical music are woven into the song's fabric, in that he used them to communicate with the performers.

"Love You To" had a relatively sparse timbral palette, with only the essential timbres. "Within You, Without You" expands that palette considerably. Of the timbral frequent

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[291] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 103.

[292] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 184–185.

[293] George Martin and William Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends: The Making of Sergeant Pepper* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1994), 125.

[294] For the basic strokes in *tintal* (16 beats), players use the syllables "dha," "din," "ta," "tin," and "tete." Other syllables can be used for more intricate patterns beyond the basic tal. The words here suggest that Harrison was requesting a specific pattern beyond the basic tal, and could effectively communicate this to the tabla player.

features, the *dilruba* is probably the most striking because of its many roles on the track. It enters early in the song (0:04), with an ametric melodic improvisation similar to alap. The *dilruba* also doubles Harrison's vocal line through the entire track, and is one of the solo instruments. Here we see a frequent feature drawing on source musical practice and creating an instance of iconicity.[295] Harrison recorded his vocal track after the *dilruba* had been recorded, meaning that he adapted to the instrument's tuning rather than it adapting to his own sense of pitch.[296] During the rehearsals and recording sessions, Harrison was captured on audio teaching the *dilruba* player both the main melody and an ending figure that made it onto the final mix, using Indian *sargam* (solfege) syllables to describe the melody: "*Ga, ma pa, ni...ni dha, ga, pa, re, pa, ma, ga.*"[297] The svaramandal also appears at the beginning of the track (0:18–0:21), and the end of the solo section (3:30–3:34). The svaramandal only plays twice, but performs a very important role. During both moments, the svaramandal plays the pitches of raga *Jog* in their correct ascending order.

Harrison may also be using vocal imitation, another frequent feature in the Beatles' Indian topic. One of the characteristic movements of raga *Jog* (further details below) is a slow slide up a major third and back down to the starting pitch, specifically from *sa*. Harrison's vocal line, however, seems to rely more on the idea of slides rather than the exact execution. For example, much of the vocal line in the verses involves descending slides between each pitch (0:35–0:41). In the notation I use, the line would look like this: ↓*N-D*⤵*G-*

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[295] Browner, "Transposing Cultures," 17.

[296] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 107.

[297] Nitin Sawhney, "Archive on 4: *All Things Must Pass* at 50," November 21, 2020, in *BBC Sounds: Archive on 4*, produced by TBI Media, online radio broadcast, 0:00–1:03, https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000pljn.

P⤥ *R-P*⤥ *M*⤥ *G*; Arabic numerals ↓^7-^6⤥ ^3-^5⤥ ^2-^5⤥ ^4⤥ ^3. The vocal imitation here would fall somewhere between iconic and indexical on Browner's continuum.[298] Slides may evoke Hindustani music, and even particular ragas, as is the case here; a certain type of slide is a characteristic of *Jog*. But Hindustani classical music and Indian musics in general are not the only styles that use slides. Without further features to confirm the reference, slides alone are not strong enough to point specifically to India.

Instrumental imitation, another frequent feature in the Beatles' realizations of the Indian topic, is also present on "Within You, Without You." Martin describes how his string arrangement was written:

> I worked very closely with him [Harrison] on the scoring of it, using a string orchestra...I was introduced to the dilruba, an Indian violin, in playing which a lot of sliding techniques are used. This meant that in scoring for that track I had to make the string players play very much like Indian musicians, bending the notes, and with slurs between one note and the next.[299]

Martin uses many descriptors drawn from Western musical thinking: "Indian violin," "bending," "slurs." However, what is striking here is the prominence given to Indian sounds and playing styles. Two years previously, with "Norwegian Wood," the sitar adapted to Western tuning and performance considerations; now, the situation has been reversed. Further, the strings were recorded after the basic track, which was exclusively Indian instruments.[300] Because of recording order, and when Martin and the string players were brought in, Martin's string arrangements are iconic. Though the instruments themselves are

[298] Browner, "Transposing Cultures," 17. Browner herself recognizes that not all references to Native American musics can be neatly classified on the continuum, a phenomenon I see here.

[299] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 203.

[300] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 103.

not Indian, the material they play is drawn directly from the source music. The *dilruba* and Western strings' combination on the song also places "Within You, Without You" in category 6 of Everett's taxonomy: combining musical instruments and tuning of Western and Asian ensembles (see fig. 4.1).[301]

With Harrison's deep engagement with Indian music imprinted into the track, it is not surprising to find raga characteristics among the idiosyncratic features present here. "Within You, Without You," like the song that will follow it ("The Inner Light"), uses raga *Jog* as its general framework. *Jog* is one of several ragas belonging to *Khamaj that*. The *that* includes all natural notes except for the seventh note *ni*, which is lowered (*komal*): *S-R-G-M-P-D-↓N*; Arabic numerals ^1-^2-^3-^4-^5-^6-↓^7.[302] Farrell's analysis in *Indian Music and the West* describes the song as a mix of *Kafi that* and *Khamaj that*, but does not name a specific raga. The lack of raga is explained by the *dilruba* introduction, which to Farrell's ears, only presents the pitches of the raga and not characteristic movements.[303] In traditional Hindustani performance practice, *thats* are generally not mixed in the way Farrell suggests here. I also cannot divine any strong reason for *Kafi*, as there is no *komal ga* anywhere in the song. Perhaps the shared *komal ni* across the two *thats* was the basis for Farrell's decision, but there is no confirmation of this in the text. As for the raga, Farrell does not examine the many instrumental lines in the song, or Harrison's vocal line, for examples of characteristic movements.

[301] Y.U. Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music," 16.

[302] Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music*, 47.

[303] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 185, 187.

Similarly, Everett's analysis of "Within You, Without You" suggests *Khamaj that*, and he also does not believe that a specific raga is at work in the song. While I agree with Everett on the *that*, I do not agree with his assertion that a raga is not present. First, as he states that there is no specific raga, he mentions that "Within You, Without You" contains prominent motives that function as characteristic movements do in a raga.[304] From the perspective of Hindustani theory, this statement is a bit of an oxymoron. If there are characteristic motives present that behave in particular ways, a raga is present. Second, as I will discuss shortly, the song presents several characteristics that suggest raga *Jog* as the framework.

In terms of pitch treatment, *Jog* omits the second and sixth scale degrees, *re* and *dha*, in both ascent and descent.[305] The *vadi* and *samvadi* are *pa* and *sa* respectively, meaning that performers consistently stress these two pitches, or use them as ending points for phrases. However, *ma* is also treated as an important note.[306] All three are acceptable landing points for improvisations, though *pa* and *sa* are more common.[307] *Jog's* characteristic movements include a slide up to *ga* from *sa* and back to *sa* in the descent, and quick ascent up from *ga* to the fifth *pa*: *S*⤴ *G*⤵ *S* and *G-M-P*; Arabic numerals ^1⤴ ^3⤵ ^1 and ^3-^4-^5.[308] These motions may also be repeated at the other important pitches in the *raga*. For example, the movement *S*⤴ *G*⤵ *S* can be repeated at *pa*: *P*⤴ ↓*N*⤵ *P*; Arabic numerals ^5⤴ ↓^7⤵ ^5.

[304] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology, 112.

[305] Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 90.

[306] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 205–206.

[307] Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 90.

[308] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 205.

Likewise, the *ga-ma-pa* ascent motion may be played with *sa* as the landing point: *P-↓N-S*; Arabic numerals ^5-↓^7-^1.[309] Finally, a longer straight ascent from *ga* to *sa* is another characteristic of Jog: *G-M-P-↓N-S*; Arabic numerals ^3-^4-^5-↓^7-^1.

"Within You, Without You" utilizes several of these principles and characteristic movements, though there are passages that (contrary to the pitch requirements of *Jog*) include *re* and *dha*. The song features reasonably accurate treatment of the *vadi/samvadi* pair in raga *Jog*, *pa/sa*. The tambura is tuned to *pa* and *sa*, as would be expected. Harrison's vocal line features two climactic points, one of which is *sa* (1:02–1:05). The vocal line gives a bit more prominence to *ma* than *pa*, with *ma* being the other climactic vocal point at 1:46–1:49. However, *ma* is another important note in raga *Jog* and one option for common phrase landings.[310] In contrast to Farrell's observation, several moments also present correct ascent-descent patterns of *Jog*.[311] The *svaramandal* introduces the raga by playing the ascent pattern: *↓N-S-G-M-P-↓N-S* (0:18–0:21); Arabic numerals ↓^7-^1-^3-^4-^5-↓^7-^1. During the solo, when Harrison's more melodically free vocal line is absent, all instruments exclude *re* and *dha*, as would be expected in a traditional performance of *Jog* (2:44–2:57).

The song also emphasizes several characteristic movements of *Jog*, particularly the long, straight ascent from *ga* to *sa*: *G-M-P-↓N-S*. The first melodic snippet on the track, in fact, is the *dilruba* presenting this movement, with emphasis given to *sa* by quick drops to *ni*: *G-M-P-↓N-S-↓N-S-↓N-S-↓N-S* (0:04–0:08); Arabic numerals ^3-^4-^5-↓^7-^1-↓^7-^1-↓^7-

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[309] Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 90.

[310] Ibid.

[311] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 185.

^1-↓^7-^1.[312] The performers emphasize the characteristic movement *G-M-P-↓N-S*; Arabic numerals ^3-^4-^5-↓^7-^1. Harrison reaches the vocal climactic moment on high *sa* by using the movement (1:02–1:05, 1:41–1:44), a choice a classical performer would likely make at a similar climactic moment. When the *dilruba* and sitar play in unison during the solo, the line strongly emphasizes the *G-M-P-↓N-S* movement, Arabic numerals ^3-^4-^5-↓^7-^1, as well (2:47–2:49, 3:14–3:16 with string section). Finally, there is a *tihai* at the end of the solo, an improvisation repeated three times before landing on important beats in the tal and *gat*. *Tihais* serve as markers for the end of an improvisation section, and a return to the *gat* in a performance. The *tihai* at the end of the solo is based on the characteristic motion *S⤴ G⤵ S*; Arabic numerals ^1⤴ ^3⤵ ^1. The performers combine it with a second motion, straight movement between *ma* and *ga*: *M-G-M-G⤵ S-G-M-G⤵ S-G-M-G⤵ S* (3:24–3:27); Arabic numerals ^4-^3-^4-^3⤵ ^1-^3-^4-^3⤵ ^1-^3-^4-^3⤵ ^1.

"Within You, Without You" is a Beatles song, and not a strict classical performance of raga *Jog*. So, the performers take some liberties, particularly with the normally excluded pitches *re* and *dha*. For example, as the audio of Harrison shows, the song's melody does include *re* and *dha*.[313] As such, when the *dilruba* shadows the vocal line, it also includes the two pitches. They appear at moments in the instrumental solo, such as the beginning of the first *dilruba* break (2:29–2:35), which is melodically based on Harrison's vocal line in the verses (0:30–0:42). In a purely Hindustani context, these uses of *re* and *dha* would be

[312] Since the pitch actually changes to *komal ni*, these quick drops away from *sa* are not considered oscillations; they are *gamaks*.

[313] Sawhney, "Archive on 4: *All Things Must Pass* at 50," November 21, 2020, 0:00–1:03, https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000pljn.

considered *be-raga*, a term meaning "outside the raga" and implying that the performance is not a proper presentation of *Jog*.

However, as this is not a traditional presentation of raga *Jog*, the inclusion of *re* and *dha* does not mean that the influence of *Jog* is inaudible or negated. Aside from the very clear outlining of *Jog* by the *svaramandal* at the beginning of the song, and the presence of characteristic movements, the instrumental lines omit the pitches when not playing material based on Harrison's freer vocal line. The vocal line, as we will also see in "The Inner Light," treats *dha* and occasionally *re* more freely than the instrumental lines, using *dha* in particular as resting spots in longer phrases (0:54–1:05). Because of this, it is not a surprise to see an improvisation based on the freer vocal line also including *dha*. Finally, there is a variant of *Jog* that includes *komal re* and *komal dha*, as well as a raga that uses both forms of the two pitches *(Jogmaya)*. Though unusual, ragas occasionally take characteristics from other ragas: Roychaudhuri describes the variant of *Jog* I mention here as a mix of *Jog* and ragas *Bhairavi* and *Gunkari*.[314]

In any case, the fact that "Within You, Without You" does not consistently obey the characteristics of *Jog* supports the interpretation of Indian music as a topic in the song, for two reasons. First, the references that do match with a strictly classical version of *Jog*—characteristic motions, *vadi/samvadi* emphasis, the correct ascent pattern in the *svaramandal*—are fleeting and do not extend through the entire song.[315] Second, characteristics drawn from *Hindustani* classical music are idiosyncratic features for the Beatles. As shown by the Beatles' other instances of the Indian topic, as well as those of their

[314] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 205, 207.

[315] They are also salient, to a listener familiar with Hindustani musical practice.

contemporaries, referencing the source music in the particular way Harrison does is not required for a topical realization. The key point is not that the allusions to *Jog* are perfect; rather, it is that they are present, distinctive to the Beatles, and can be shown through comparison to the source music.

As is the case with "Love You To," "Within You, Without You" has some formal influences from Hindustani classical music. Everett points out that the song's introduction is alap-like, with ametric improvisation from the *dilruba* until the tabla enter (0:00–0:22).[316] The solo features several instruments trading short melodic "breaks" with one another, a feature in solo sitar performances between the sitar and tabla.[317] Finally, several instruments perform improvisatory *tihais*, the most noticeable of which is at the end of the solo section (3:24). I would argue that there are additional *tihai*-like constructions at other key moments in the song: at the end of the second verse (1:51–1:55), and a parallel moment after the fourth verse (4:25–4:29). They are not complete *tihais*, as the landings are not right on beats in the tal, a key component of these ending formulas. But the melodic element of *tihais*, a threefold repetition of an idea, is definitely present.

However, "Within You, Without You" is not constructed around these formal and performance elements in the way a Hindustani classical performance is, suggesting that this song indeed presents a topic. First, there is a sudden return to alap-like playing just after the instrumental solo (3:27–3:40).[318] Once the alap section is over and tal enters the performance, there is no return to alap in Hindustani classical performance. The melody also

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[316] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology, 112.

[317] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 184–185, 187.

[318] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the Anthology*, 112.

does not line up with tal in the way a *gat* does. Farrell observes that the first time the verse enters, Harrison begins on beat 15. However, the second verse begins on beat 8; in a classical performance, the *gat* will begin and end consistently on the same beats.[319] The specific way the transition between *tintal* and *jhaptal* occurs here also would not happen in a Hindustani classical performance.[320] A move from a slow *gat* in *tintal* to a faster *gat* in *jhaptal* is possible, but these are two different segments of a performance, and the return to a slower tempo here is not possible. The full *tihai* in the song also marks the end of a significant formal section, the solo, rather than improvisation endings.[321] Since "Within You, Without You" presents fragments of Hindustani form and remains more Western than Indian in its form, I view Indian music as a topic here rather than a full fusion of styles. Much as they are in "Love You To," the idiosyncratic features presented here are iconic, as their application is based on stylistic experience with Indian music. The features also make the song an example of syncretism by virtue of their working at the procedural level of composition, even if some of them (like the *tihai*) perform different functions than they do in Hindustani classical performance.

"Within You, Without You" continues one Indian topical association begun in "Love You To": the idea that a temporary existence is an illusion, and that the soul continues on after one life has ended.[322] The first verse lays out those unaware of the illusory nature of life

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[319] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 186.

[320] The slow and fast *gats* may use different *tals*, for example *ektal* (12 beats) for slow and *tintal* (16 beats) for fast. However, in a traditional Hindustani performance, I have never seen a change in *tal* during the same *gat*.

[321] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 187. The *tihai*-like moments referenced on p. 74 also mark important formal sections, the ends of verses.

[322] Hinduism's view of the continuing soul is expressed in two ideas. First, a soul continually reincarnates in different bodies until it has learned all the spiritual lessons necessary for its full development

as a topic of discussion: "We were talking about the space between us all / And the people who hide themselves behind a wall / Of illusion; never glimpse the truth." In the third verse, the narrator argues that detachment from one's current physical form and existence is how to escape the illusion, and each person is ultimately the only one who can liberate his or her soul. Both of these ideas are in accordance with Hindu philosophy: "Try to realize it's all within yourself, no one else can make you change / And to see you're really only very small, and life flows on within you and without you." Freedom from the reincarnation cycle, and spiritual bliss, can only be accomplished by understanding everyday existence as temporary: "When you've seen beyond yourself, then you may find peace of mind is waiting there / And the time will come when you see we're all one, and life flows on within you and without you." Several of Harrison's songs after "Within You, Without You," including his final Indian-influenced song with the Beatles ("The Inner Light"), continue this pattern of associating the Indian topic with lyrics discussing the illusion of our temporary existence.

Analysis 3: "The Inner Light"

My third example, "The Inner Light," is Harrison's last Indian-influenced song with the Beatles (example 4.3). The song was recorded in early 1968 at EMI's recording studio in Bombay, with the session musicians Harrison had been working with for his film soundtrack *Wonderwall*. It was released as a single, the B side to "Lady Madonna," later that year.[323] By this time, Harrison had been studying the sitar and Hindustani music theory and philosophy

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(karma). Second, once the soul has taken care of its karma, it is released from the reincarnation cycle into *Brahman*, a supreme being and force of creation. This description is, of course, an extremely simplified version of Hindu beliefs, but demonstrates that temporary existence is an illusion. Only the body in each lifetime is temporary, not the existence of the soul.

[323] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 132, 134. Because it was not a Beatles recording, I do not discuss *Wonderwall* here, but it was another of Harrison's strongly Indian-influenced musical projects.

under Shankar for three years.[324] The song's general form remains recognizable as a common Western popular music form: verses and short refrains alternate with instrumental introductions, solos, and outro material.[325] As with Harrison's other Indian-influenced Beatles songs, "The Inner Light" includes features from all levels of the weighted topical hierarchy I have devised for the Indian topic.

"The Inner Light" (single, 1968)

Sa/S (pitch center) = Eb	*Thaat* (generating scale): *Khamaj*: S R G M P D ↓N All pitches unaltered except *ni* (lowered or *komal*) *Vadi/Samvadi*: P/S	*Raga: Jog* Ascent: S G M P ↓N S Descent: S↓N P M G SG S Characteristic Features: P, M, and S as landing points; S⤴G⤵S P⤴↓N⤵P; quick ascent G-M-P and parallel P-↓N-S; long ascent G-M-P-↓N-S

Formal Sections, Instrumentation, and Timestamps

0:00-0:02	0:03-0:25	0:25-1:03	1:04-1:26	1:27-2:04
Pre-Introduction	Introduction	Verse 1	Solo	Verse 2
Sitar, harmonium	*Shehnai*, *tabla*, *pakhavaj* enter	*Bansuri* enters	As introduction	As verse 1
2:05-2:18	2:19-2:31			
Verse 3	Outro			
As verse 1	All instruments			

Lyrics

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3
Without going out of my door, I can know all things on earth. Without looking out of my window, I can know the ways of heaven. The farther one travels, the less one knows, The less one really knows.	Without going out of your door, You can know all things on earth. Without looking out of your window, You can know the ways of heaven. The farther one travels, the less one knows, The less one really knows.	Arrive without traveling; See all without looking; Do all without doing.

Topical Features

Essential:	Frequent:	Idiosyncratic:
Sitar, tabla	*Shehnai, bansuri, pakhavaj,* vocal imitation	*Raga*

Example 4.3: Song roadmap for "The Inner Light."

"The Inner Light," like the songs that came before it, uses various Indian timbres as essential features. The sitar plays one of the most prominent roles, though it is not clear

[324] Harrison, *I Me Mine*, 55.

[325] Following Drew Nobile's practice in *Form as Harmony in Rock Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), I call repeated text attached to a longer verse a refrain.

whether session performers or Harrison himself played it. During the introduction and instrumental breaks, the sitar performs several solos alongside the *shehnai* (0:05–0:14). Another essential feature, the tabla, also performs throughout the song.[326] They are occasionally buried underneath the louder *pakhavaj*, but can be most clearly heard during the verses (0:29–0:48). The tambura is not present. The timbres, particularly the sitar, in "The Inner Light" are iconic uses of Indian instruments.[327] The sitar is both present and performs in ways informed by Hindustani classical music, drawing on raga *Jog* as further discussed under idiosyncratic features.

Continuing down the hierarchy, "The Inner Light" includes several frequent Indian topical features. The *shehnai* is one of the most prominent, trading solos with the sitar, and playing in unison with it during the second half of the introduction and solo breaks (0:14–0:27, 1:20–1:29). It also doubles Harrison's vocal line at the ends of the refrain (0:58 and 2:00). Other Indian instruments used on this recording include the harmonium, *bansuri*, and *pakhavaj*. The harmonium, in addition to being a commonly used instrument in Indian music, provides the drone *sa* (Eb) in lieu of the tambura throughout the piece. The *bansuri* provides contrasting melodic material to Harrison's vocal line during both verses and refrains (0:29–1:04). The *pakhavaj* drum performs rhythm with the tabla throughout. While these instruments appear on "The Inner Light," most of them do not appear on other Beatles songs. As many of these instruments would likely have been unfamiliar even to raga rock listeners, their immediate association with India is less strong than the essential features.

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[326] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 132.

[327] Browner, "Transposing Cultures," 17.

Harrison also uses vocal imitation, another frequent feature, at several moments in "The Inner Light." During the verses, he slides down a major third rather than moving straight to the pitch at the ends of phrases (0:36 and 0:46). A similar slide occurs partway through the refrain, down a major second (0:55). A slide up a major third and back down to the starting pitch is a characteristic movement of raga *Jog*, as I describe in further detail below. However, the specific scale degrees here are *dha* and *ma* (^6 and ^4), not *ga* and *sa* (^3 and ^1), as we would expect in a classical performance of *Jog*. The major second slide, from *sa* to *komal ni* (^1 to ↓^7), also is not characteristic of *Jog*. Similarly to "Within You, Without You," the vocal slides are somewhere between iconic and indexical. A particular type of slide, *ga* to *sa*, actually is characteristic of the raga at play here. Nevertheless, without other features to confirm that Harrison is referencing India, slides alone are not strong enough for signifying when they are alone. Harrison also mixes in a major second slide, which attempts an Indian sound, but is not exactly drawn from the raga. Because the slides do not occur between the "correct" pitches for the raga, I classify them as imitative.

Like "Within You, Without You," "The Inner Light" takes raga *Jog* as its overall framework, a raga belonging to *Khamaj that*. As I have already discussed the *that* and raga construction, a short summary will suffice here. The *that* includes all natural notes except for *komal ni*: *S-R-G-M-P-D-*↓*N*; Arabic numerals ^1-^2-^3-^4-^5-^6-↓^7.[328] Within this framework, raga *Jog* omits *re* and *dha* from both ascent and descent.[329] The *vadi* and *samvadi* for this raga are *pa* and *sa* respectively, though *ma* may also be treated as a sustained pitch or landing point in improvisation. *Jog's* characteristic movements include a slide up to *ga* from

[328] Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music*, 47.

[329] Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 90.

sa and back to *sa* in the descent, and quick ascent up from *ga* to *pa*: *S*↗ *G*↘ *S* and *G-M-P*; Arabic numerals ^1↗ ^3↘ ^1 and ^3-^4-^5.[330] These motions may also be repeated at *pa*: *P*↗ ↓*N*↘ *P* and *P*-↓*N-S*; Arabic numerals ^5↗ ↓^7↘ ^5 and ^5-↓^7-^1.[331] Finally, the straight ascent *G-M-P*-↓*N-S* is also characteristic of *Jog*; Arabic numerals ^3-^4-^5-↓^7-^1.

"The Inner Light," while not a flawless execution, utilizes several defining characteristics of raga *Jog*. *Pa*, the *vadi* in this *raga*, often functions as a landing point for phrases in the sitar and *shehnai*, and the song features several extended rests on it. Three of the sitar's interjections during the verses, for example, land on *pa* as well as oscillating around it with *dha* and *ma* (0:32–0:45). Extended rests on *pa* also occur at important sectional breaks in the song. Before each verse, both the sitar and the *shehnai* hold *pa* as long as possible, giving it extra emphasis (0:23–0:27).[332] One would expect to see significant emphasis given to *pa* in a performance of *Jog,* and that emphasis is definitely present here. The *samvadi* of *Jog, sa*, also receives a good amount of emphasis, though in reflection of its less prominent role, not as much as *pa*. For example, the *shehnai* and sitar's first solos both land on *sa* (0:00–0:09). *Pa* receives more emphasis in the instrumental lines than any other pitch, with *sa* close behind, correctly reflecting the *vadi/samvadi* pairing in *Jog*.

"The Inner Light" also features several characteristic movements of *Jog*. The quick ascent *G-M-P* (^3-^4-^5), with *sa* as a quick pickup to the movement, is played at the end of each instrumental section, for example at the start of verse 1 and the end of the first solo

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[330] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 205–206.

[331] Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 90.

[332] Because the sitar is a plucked string instrument, unpulled pitches decay quickly; pitches played by pulling the string (see chapter 3) last a little longer.

(0:25 and 1:26). Another characteristic motion, shifts around *ma* in a longer descent between *pa* and *sa*, occurs in the final short verse: *(G)-P-M-G-M-G-S*; Arabic numerals (^3)-^5-^4-^3-^4-^3-^1 (2:10–2:22).[333] Here, *ma* gains prominence through the drops to *ga* below, and subsequent returns. The song's use of raga *Jog* to organize its melody and accompaniment is an idiosyncratic feature in the Beatles' Indian topic.

"The Inner Light," similarly to "Within You, Without You," takes some liberties with pitch treatment of *re* and *dha*. For example, in the *shehnai's* first solo during the introduction, the player treats *dha* as a very quick neighbor to the more crucial pitch *pa* (0:05). Likewise, the *shehnai* also runs quickly past *re*. Harrison's vocal line treats *dha* somewhat more freely, with slides from *dha* down to *ma* at the ends of verses (0:36 and 0:46). Again, however, these moments that would be considered *be-raga* (outside the raga) in a strictly classical presentation of *Jog* do not invalidate the passages that do keep to the raga. For the most part, the song excludes *re* and *dha*. While the pitches appear occasionally, they are in a strictly ornamental capacity. None of the musicians treat *dha* as a landing point for a phrase, oscillate around it, or otherwise emphasize it. When *dha* does appear in an instrumental line, it is a neighbor to *ni* or *sa*, or passes at such speed that it is almost unnoticeable.

Once again, "The Inner Light" presents elements of Hindustani classical music in a somewhat fragmented way. The song is almost entirely Indian timbres, and the sitar performs some characteristics of raga *Jog*, but also includes passages that contradict a strict performance's norms. However, none of Harrison's Indian-influenced songs are strictly classical, and all remain in Western popular song forms. Further, the songs demonstrate an

[333] Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 205. In addition to being a characteristic movement, this motion also repeats three times, a tihai-like construction similar to those in "Within You, Without You."

understanding of tal, performance format, and how ragas move and emphasize specific pitches. Harrison's application of his own training yields a blend of Indian and Western musical materials in terms of compositional procedure. This syncretism creates a distinctive sound for the group, and stretches the conventions of the previously established Indian topic. The inclusion of source music elements is how the Beatles create a topical reference entirely their own.

While "The Inner Light" and "Love You To" demonstrate different levels of inspiration from source music, lyrically the two songs demonstrate that iconic topical features do not eliminate or excuse problematic elements. Like the two songs that came before it, "The Inner Light" emphasizes the importance of breaking out of illusions. However, in this song's case, the illusion seems to be that metaphysical understanding come from outside sources. The narrator explains that the real source of spiritual knowledge is inner reflection: "Without going out of my your door / I can know all things on earth / Without looking out of my window / I can know the ways of heaven." In the second verse, the change in pronoun from "I" to "you" shows the listener that they, too, are the source of their own spiritual wisdom.[334] The lyrics of "The Inner Light" were not directly inspired by Indian philosophy; rather, they were a translation from a poem in the *Tao Te Ching*.[335] The song, while continuing the association of Indian sounds with awareness of illusion, thus presents a lack of differentiation: multiple Asian cultures, through the lyrics, are matched with the same topical features.

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[334] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 255.

[335] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the Anthology*, 152. The translation was supplied to Harrison by Cambridge Sanskrit Scholar Juan Mascaró.

A Contradictory Case: "Blue Jay Way"

Harrison has one other song often cited as a strong example of Indian influence. "Blue Jay Way" was released on *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967), the first Beatles album released after *Sgt. Pepper* (example 4.4).[336] Harrison himself describes the song as "slightly Indian" in mood, but does not elaborate.[337] Walter Everett's brief analysis of this song describes it as based on a Lydian scale with occasional lowered ^3. "Blue Jay Way" is the only song for which Everett offers possible ragas as the structural framework. The song is, according to him, "related to ragas *Kosalam* and *Multani*, but not replicating their practice."[338] Farrell's account of both "Blue Jay Way" and "The Inner Light" is very brief as well. He simply describes them as further examples of the Beatles' successful attempts at fusing rock and Hindustani classical music.[339]

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[336] Ibid., 132.

[337] Harrison, *I Me Mine*, 112.

[338] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the Anthology*, 132.

[339] Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, 188.

"Blue Jay Way" (*Magical Mystery Tour*, 1967)

Pitch Center = C

Thaat (generating scale): *Todi:* S-↓R-↓G-↑M-P-↓D-N
Possible influence from *raga Multani*: P as landing point; oscillation on *komal ga*

Instrumentation: Vocals, strings, cello, Hammond organ, drums, bass (no Indian instruments)

Formal Sections, Instrumentation, and Timestamps

0:00-0:22	0:23-0:49	0:50-1:09	1:10-1:32	1:33-1:51
Introduction	Verse 1	Chorus 1	Verse 2	Chorus 2
Cello, Hammond organ (ametric)	Vocals, bass, drums enter		Cello reenters	
1:52-2:14	2:15-2:32	2:33-3:52		
Verse 3	Chorus 3	Outro		

Lyrics

Verse 1	Chorus	Verse 2	Verse 3	Outro
There's a fog upon L.A. And my friends have lost their way "We'll be over soon," they said; Now they've lost themselves instead.	Please don't be long, Please don't you be very long. Please don't be long, Or I may be asleep.	Well, it only goes to show, And I told them where to go. Ask a policeman on the street; There's so many there to meet.	Now, it's past my, bed, I know, And I'd really like to go. Soon will be the break of day, Sitting here in Blue Jay Way.	Please don't be long, please don't you be very long, don't belong ad lib

Topical Features

Essential:	Frequent:	Idiosyncratic:
None	Vocal and instrumental imitation, drone via organ	Vague resemblance to *raga Multani*

Example 4.4: Song roadmap for "Blue Jay Way."

From the perspective I develop in this chapter, however, "Blue Jay Way" does not display musical evidence of Harrison's training and experience with Hindustani music, and more resembles Frymoyer's "vague allusion" to a topic than a fully fledged realization.[340] First, at the highest level of the hierarchy, none of the essential timbres—sitar/sitar-like timbre, tambura, and tabla—are present. Because these essential features are absent on "Blue Jay Way," I hesitate to call the song an example of the Indian topic, even if (as we shall see shortly) there are features and possible features from other hierarchical levels.

[340] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 84–85.

"Blue Jay Way" has a few frequent features of the Indian topic. The Hammond organ provides a drone on *sa* (C), and the cello provides instrumental imitation using slurs and slides between pitches (0:18–0:20, 1:29–1:31). Harrison's vocal line also slides between pitches, particularly during the choruses (0:48–1:06). There are no additional Indian timbres on the track. Without the essential features and the clearest sonic link to India, the frequent features' connection to Indian music and its associations is much less clear. In terms of incorporating knowledge, I would classify these frequent features as fully indexical: they do not draw directly on Indian musical practice or materials. In addition, unlike the source musical elements in the previous case studies, none of the potential characteristics in "Blue Jay Way" represent syncretism; playing a drone and sliding between pitches do not require any specific knowledge of Indian compositional or performance practice. These characteristics are more similar to Everett's examples of transference: a borrowing has probably been made here (keeping Harrison's training and "slightly Indian" comment in mind), but they do not deeply transform the Western context.[341]

At the idiosyncratic level, "Blue Jay Way" is a bit contradictory when considering the Beatles' other idiosyncratic realizations of the Indian topic. The pitches used do line up with a *that*, *Todi that.* This family of pitches is what a Western theorist would call extremely chromatic, with raised and lowered pitch forms: *S*-↓*R*-↓*G*-↑*M*-*P*-↓*D*-*N*; Arabic numerals ^1-↓^2-↓^3-↑^4-^5-↓^6-^7.[342] *Todi that* is the basis of some Hindustani classical music, and is perhaps the explanation for Harrison's "slightly Indian" description. Walter Everett's suggestion of raga *Multani* is the closest to what happens in "Blue Jay Way." *Multani* omits

341 Y.U. Everett, "Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music," 15.

342 Jairazbhoy, *The Rags of North Indian Music*, 47.

komal re and *komal dha* in ascent, but includes them in descent.[343] The *vadi* and *samvadi* are *pa* and *sa* respectively, and emphasis on *ni* and *komal ga* via oscillation is characteristic of *Multani*. “Blue Jay Way” does include some of these elements. Harrison’s vocal line caps off each verse with a phrase landing on *pa* (0:40–0:46). Oscillations on *komal ga* also appear in the vocal line and the cello, which doubles the vocal (1:08–1:12).

However, none of the characteristic movements of *Multani* are present in the song. For example, one might expect to see long, straight ascents from *komal ga* to *sa*, or a looping movement that incorporates *komal ga* while moving to *pa*: ↓*G*-↑*M-P-N-S* and ↑*M*-↓*G*-↑*M-P*; Arabic numerals ↓^3-↑^4-^5-^7-^1 and ↑^4-↓^3-↑^4-^5.[344] Neither these, nor any other characteristic motion, are present in “Blue Jay Way.” The closest examples are Harrison’s phrases leading up to *pa,* and these phrases do not otherwise have elements linking them directly to *Multani*. The idiosyncratic features in “Blue Jay Way,” unlike those in Harrison’s other three Indian-influenced songs, are indexical and examples of transference. They are likely attempting an Indian sound, but do not draw on the actual musical material simply because they draw on a particular set of pitches, or emphasize a single important pitch. In this case, I agree with Walter Everett’s assertion that while the song may use the pitches of *Multani*, it does not behave in the way we expect a song based on that raga to behave.

Finally, the topical association established in “Love You To” and “Within You, Without You” is not brought to bear in “Blue Jay Way.” The song presents a narrator waiting for a lost friend on a foggy night. Unlike the earlier songs’ narrators, the narrator of “Blue Jay Way” does not seem to be thinking about the illusory nature of our daily existence. He

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343 Rao et. al., *The Raga Guide*, 122.

344 Roychaudhuri, *The Grammar of North Indian Ragas*, 295.

simply describes waiting for his friends, and mental suggestions about what those friends should do, such as "Ask a policeman on the street" (for directions). The line about the lost friends, "We'll be over soon, they said / Now they've lost themselves instead" could potentially suggest that the friends are spiritually lost, caught in the illusion that the needs of this lifetime are more important than anything.[345] However, compared to the clarity of both feature and association in Harrison's other songs, to read the lost friends as "spiritually lost" seems to me an interpretive stretch. No other lyrics in the song suggest being lost as a spiritual condition, and the lack of strong features indicating the Indian topic further lessens the association.

Using Frymoyer's terminology, "Blue Jay Way" is an example of a vague allusion to the Indian topic. To Frymoyer, the presence of essential features determines what counts as a full-fledged instance of a topic. Without those essential features, a potential topic's referential power is much weaker.[346] "Blue Jay Way" does contain elements from the frequent, and possibly idiosyncratic, levels of the hierarchy I have devised for the Indian topic. However, the fact that essential features are missing affects the topic's associative power. "Blue Jay Way" is also an unusual example when compared to the Beatles' more idiosyncratic versions of the Indian topic. While the group's songs do not have to incorporate knowledge of Indian music to create the topic, Harrison's Indian-influenced songs all do except for "Blue Jay Way." The lack of direct connection to a specific raga, even in a fragmentary form, is surprising for a song so often described as Indian-influenced. The pitch

[345] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 245.

[346] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 84–85, 98.

content and Harrison's treatment of *ga* may be derived from Hindustani practice, but is the relation obvious to a listener unfamiliar with the style without the help of essential features?

Conclusion

George Harrison's experiments with structuring songs around ragas and elements of performance formats, while not perfect executions, demonstrate a high level of understanding how the source music works. He brings his knowledge of a separate musical style into a rock idiom, and uses that knowledge to build on, and deepen the associations of, topical elements that already existed in popular music. It is this insistence on using elements of the source music, particularly at the idiosyncratic level, that gives the Beatles' music a distinctive sound and allows them to manifest topical references creatively.

Harrison's Indian-influenced compositions, however, demonstrate that when it comes to intercultural connection, there are no simple or straightforward answers. One might argue that Harrison's continued inclusion of more appropriative topical features is a bit troubling. Vocal imitation existing alongside actual ragas, for example, may strike some scholars as an unfortunate continuation of Western ears and minds misunderstanding Indian musics. In addition, some of the song lyrics depict and perpetuate Orientalist stereotypes, such as the East as a place of intense sensuality. Finally, Harrison's own status as a member of a colonizing culture, and the complexities it brings to his uses of Indian music, must also be taken into account. In spite of Harrison's deep engagement with Indian music, basing Western rock songs on ragas does not make an authentic performance of Hindustani music, particularly not when the creator is not (and cannot be) an example of an Indian perspective. Attempts to fuse two different musical traditions are often fraught, especially when one tradition's culture has held power over others. Harrison's Indian-influenced songs challenge

their listeners to think about what it means to incorporate one's musical knowledge, both "within" one's home musical culture and "without" it.

Chapter 5: "Now Let's Play It Backwards": *Musique Concrète* and the Psychedelic Topical Field

In April 1966, John Lennon presented a new song for the Beatles' album-in-progress, *Revolver*.[347] "Tomorrow Never Knows," heavily inspired by Timothy Leary's *The Psychedelic Experience*, had an esoteric quality to its lyrics that Lennon wanted to capture. Lennon's altered vocals, run through a rotating speaker by engineer Geoff Emerick, and drummer Ringo Starr's dense drum sounds helped create a mystical aural effect.[348] Starr and Emerick, however, contributed one other element to the song: a tape loop of the drum pattern. Paul McCartney in particular was enamored with the loop, and created several of his own when he returned home that night.[349] Several of McCartney's tape loops became part of the final track, such as seagull-like noises (either McCartney's laughter in reverse or a sped-up guitar) and a wine glass being played.[350]

By early 1966, McCartney and to some extent Lennon were deeply interested in avant-garde ideas and techniques, including musique concrète.[351] Splicing, reversing, looping, and otherwise manipulating tape were all techniques from this style that the Beatles

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[347] Mark Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 1988), 70.

[348] Geoff Emerick and Howard Massey, *Here, There, and Everywhere: My Life Recording the Music of the Beatles* (New York: Gotham Books, 2006), 8–10, 12. Leary's book was itself an adaptation of the Tibetan Book of the Dead. Emerick stuffed a sweater into Starr's bass drum to achieve the heavy sound.

[349] Thom Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music, and Culture*, 5th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016), Apple Books edition, 1,367.

[350] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*: 72; Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37. "Distorted guitar" is the more common citation.

[351] George Martin and Jeremy Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 175.

drew on.[352] The band's references to musique concrète, however, were not the result of random experimentation. Both Lennon and McCartney exposed themselves to avant-garde music, including musique concrète, and both used the knowledge they attained to create references to it.

This chapter discusses the Beatles' second form of interacting with topicality: contributing, through knowledge of musique concrète, to the psychedelic topical field. Primarily described by Robert Hatten and William Echard, a topical field is an overarching interpretive frame within which topics can operate.[353] Given the Beatles' pivotal role in bringing rock and the avant-garde together, their informed contribution of musique concrète's compositional techniques greatly impacted the sound of "the psychedelic" in music from the 1960s on. Musique concrète is thus part of a topical field developing in the 1960s around the idea of psychedelic experience. This chapter presents a starting point for demonstrating how musique concrète's compositional techniques establish the psychedelic as a song's interpretive frame by examining those processes in the music of one band.

In addition to demonstrating how the Beatles gained and applied their knowledge of musique concrète composition, I model my search for meaning on Thomas Johnson's study of tonality as a topic in post-tonal genres by analyzing text choices along with particular references.[354] As a component of the psychedelic, musical references to musique concrète are

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[352] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 575, 591, 604.

[353] Robert Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 83. See also William Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music: A History Through Musical Topic Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), Google Play Books edition, 19.

[354] Thomas Johnson, "Tonality as Topic: Opening a World of Analysis for Early Twentieth-Century Modernist Music," *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 4 (2017), http://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.4/mto.17.23.4.johnson.html, 5.1.

likely to appear in conjunction with text related to psychedelic subject matter, for example depictions of altered reality or drug experiences. With textual confirmation, it is easier to gain a sense of what a composer may be trying to say with a particular reference. I argue that in the Beatles' music, musique concrète heralds an altered or alternate reality in the world of the song, associations tied to a broader, developing psychedelic topical field. The Beatles' understanding of musique concrète techniques is their contribution to the psychedelic topical field, and to the development of what "counts" as a psychedelic reference in rock music.

Background: Historical Context, the Beatles, and the Avant-Garde

Musique concrète is one of many types of avant-garde music that emerged in the early twentieth century. Classified today under the broader "electroacoustic music," musique concrète began as a series of sound experiments by radio engineer-turned-composer/theorist Pierre Schaeffer in the late 1940s and early 1950s.[355] Like several other branches of avant-garde art music, musique concrète explores the possibility of using environmental sounds—trains, everyday speech, cans or bottles clinking, and so on—as material for musical composition.[356] Schaeffer defined musique concrète as a compositional method in which the composer works with prerecorded sound and builds a piece out of experimentation with these sounds.[357]

[355] Peter Manning, *Electronic and Computer Music*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 20.

[356] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 185.

[357] Daniel Teruggi, "Musique Concrète Today: Its reach, evolution of concepts and role in musical thought," *Organised Sound* 20, no. 1 (2015), 52.

Manipulation of those original sounds is a key component. In *In Search of a Concrete Music*, Schaeffer argues that for appropriate separation of sound from both musicality and context, those sounds' origins cannot be recognizable. He states:

> [E]ven if noise material guaranteed me a certain margin of originality...I was brought back to the same problem: tearing sound material away from any context, dramatic or musical, before giving it form. If I succeeded, there would be concrete music. If not, there would be nothing but stage and radio sound effects.[358]

Schaeffer's philosophical ideal for musique concrète was that for a piece to be a true example, any aural resemblance between compositional material and its originating sound had to be removed. Complete severance of sound and generating source does not always fully materialize in practice; musique concrète pieces exist where the generating sound can still be identified.

Schaeffer's initial definition of musique concrète has occasionally confused students, for two reasons. First, the contemporary German school of *elektronische Musik*, which uses sounds generated by sine wave generators or other such machines, uses similar techniques of sound manipulation to musique concrète.[359] Second, both schools of composing are concerned with using sounds often considered non-musical as their raw material for composition. However, Schaeffer himself drew several distinctions between the French and German schools. Aesthetic difference was the primary one: part of musique concrète, according to Schaeffer, was the composer subordinating their will to experimentation.[360]

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[358] Pierre Schaeffer, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, trans. Christine North and John Dack (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 38.

[359] Gaël Tissot, "The First Electroacoustic Pieces by Karlheinz Stockhausen: Technologies and Aesthetics," *Organised Sound* 13, no. 3 (2008), 168; Manning, *Electronic and Computer Music*, 42.

[360] Schaeffer, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, 38, 170. As other scholars have pointed out, the memories of World War II were also fresh in the minds of both schools, and did not make for a friendly relationship; see Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 231.

Elektronische Musik composers may begin with an idea of their compositions; musique concrète composers, at least by Schaeffer's definition, do not. Further, and in part because of this aesthetic difference, the type of sounds, their generating source, and what the composer could manipulate also differ. For example, musique concrète's primary method of sound generation/capture was the 78 disc, and later magnetic tape, meaning that precise pitches and durations cannot be changed without major ramifications. But *elektronische Musik*'s sound generation method was, at least in the early days, the sine wave and square wave generators; pitch and duration can be precisely controlled here.[361] Even though the differences between the German and French approaches had begun to dissolve by 1955–1956 in terms of listening experience, it is still possible to distinguish between their original methods and aesthetic differences.[362]

Some composers, however, challenged the difference between musique concrète and *elektronische Musik* even in the schools' earliest years. Pierre Schaeffer's colleague Pierre Henry, a composer, was among the first musique concrète composers to disagree with Schaeffer's more severe philosophical positions on how to compose the music.[363] Most relevant for our purposes here, however, is Karlheinz Stockhausen. In his early compositional career, Stockhausen was most strongly affiliated with the German *elektronische Musik* and its procedures rooted in serialism. However, Stockhausen did work at Schaeffer's studio in 1952 before his move to *elektronische Musik*, composing his early

[361] Tissot, "The First Electroacoustic Pieces by Karlheinz Stockhausen," 168.

[362] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 224.

[363] Ibid., 221.

piece *Étude Concrète* (1952) using musique concrète techniques.[364] After a brief period composing strictly with *elektronische Musik* techniques from 1953 to 1954 (*Studie I* and *Studie II*), Stockhausen's music began to incorporate both machine-generated sounds and acoustic or "natural" sounds, combining the generating material choices from both musique concrète and *elektronische Musik*.[365] One of the most prominent examples is *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1955–1956), which features manipulated recordings of both a youth choir and electronically generated sounds.[366]

While the Beatles' avant-garde references lean most toward musique concrète techniques first associated with Schaeffer, Stockhausen was the composer mentioned most often by McCartney and Lennon as an influence. For example, McCartney lists *Gesang der Jünglinge* as his favorite Stockhausen piece.[367] Lennon, too, was familiar with *Gesang der Jünglinge*, as well as the later Stockhausen piece *Hymnen* (1966–1967).[368] Both pieces, while incorporating Schaeffer's ideas, include preexisting sounds in addition to electronically generated ones. Though Lennon and McCartney were also familiar with other avant-garde artists, such as John Cage and Luciano Berio, Stockhausen is one of few composers they refer to by both name and pieces.[369] Finally, out of the many faces on the cover of *Sgt.*

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[364] Hans Ulrich Obrist, *A Brief History of New Music* (New York: JRP Ringier & Les Presses du Réel, 2014), 10–11, 15–16.

[365] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 271.

[366] Obrist, *A Brief History of New Music*, 11.

[367] Barry Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1997), 221.

[368] Carlton J. Wilkinson, "John Lennon's 'Revolution 9,'" *Perspectives of New Music* 46, no. 2 (2008), 226.

[369] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 233; Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 32.

Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967), Stockhausen is the only Western art music composer.[370] The Beatles' references to musique concrète most closely resemble Schaeffer's ideas, but Stockhausen may also have provided an important bridge between the rock band and the French school. They certainly respected him enough to familiarize themselves with his works, and put his face on an album cover.

Given that the composer the Beatles mention most was not a musique concrète composer for much of his career, one might ask: Did the Beatles see the techniques they used as specific to musique concrète, and not as signifiers of electronically mediated music in general? Examination of the Beatles' own words on the subject, and of the specific techniques the group relied on, suggests so. Lennon certainly connects unaltered real-world sound and loops to musique concrète in his account of "Revolution 9": "It was just abstract, *musique concrète*, loops, people screaming."[371] McCartney's accounts tend to lump musique concrète's compositional techniques under the broader label of the avant-garde.[372] However, as I will show, the musical techniques themselves also suggest musique concrète specifically as the branch of electronic music the Beatles were going for. The way they apply its compositional techniques comes directly from musique concrète as Schaeffer and other

[370] Stockhausen is fifth from the left of the top row.

[371] George Harrison, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and Ringo Starr, *The Beatles Anthology* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, LLC, 2000), 307. As I discuss in its own section, "Revolution 9" is considered a full musique concrète piece.

[372] See for example Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 15; Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 232–235; and Doyle Greene, *Rock, Counterculture and the Avant-Garde, 1966–1970: How the Beatles, Frank Zappa, and the Velvet Underground Defined an Era* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2016), Apple Books edition, 71.

pioneers of this practice conceived of it.[373] Additionally, McCartney was familiar with Schaeffer's theoretical ideas, as discussed further in the next section.

Musique concrète is not the only avant-garde technique the Beatles explored in their music. Elements of indeterminacy also work their way into certain Beatles songs. For example, "A Day in the Life" (1967) famously applies indeterminate principles during the orchestral transitions. Lennon and McCartney together decided the transition length, the arbitrarily chosen 24 bars. McCartney, meanwhile, suggested that the orchestra fill those bars by playing from their lowest note to their highest, leaving the timing of the ascents up to individual players (1:45–2:15).[374] A second example is Lennon's "I Am the Walrus" (1967), where Lennon randomly tuned into a radio broadcast during the outro.[375]

However, I focus here on musique concrète for three reasons. First, "avant-garde music" is far too broad to be a workable musical topic, at least in the current research context. There are also many types of music that could be classified as avant-garde; to lump them all under a single topical umbrella risks not acknowledging important stylistic differences. Second, even though the Beatles explore other avant-garde ideas, their treatment of musique concrète is the most consistent from its first appearance in their music (1966) to

[373] It is also possible that musique concrète, for most of the 1960s, was the only electronic music the Beatles *could* have worked with. As Emerick discusses, EMI and the staff at Abbey Road Studios were notorious for spending as little money as possible, both on everyday items and technological advances. For example, the studio did not have the equipment needed for eight-track recording until 1968, well into the Beatles' career and after other industry leaders had acquired that equipment; see Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 70, 176. To put it plainly, the Beatles might very well have been willing to experiment with techniques from *elektronische Musik* if the technology had been available to them. The use of musique concrète specifically may have arisen, at least in part, from the practical consideration of available technology.

[374] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 325–327.

[375] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 134–135. Lennon captured part of a BBC broadcast of *King Lear*, which would later serve as "evidence" for the "Paul is Dead" conspiracy theory. The technique is reminiscent of John Cage's pieces using radio, as well as of *Hymnen*.

their breakup (1970). Third, references to musique concrète in the Beatles and other 1960s artists are an important factor in the then-developing psychedelic topical field, discussed in greater detail further below.

Threads of Influence: Paul McCartney and Yoko Ono

Unlike the Indian topic, in which informed musical references come from a single person (George Harrison), the Beatles' treatment of musique concrète shows two people's familiarity with the style. By the mid-1960s, both John Lennon and Paul McCartney had begun to explore the avant-garde art scene in London. McCartney had become involved in running the Indica Bookshop and art gallery, and sought out opportunities to educate himself about avant-garde art of all kinds.[376] Lennon, meanwhile, met avant-garde artist, and his future spouse, Yoko Ono in early November 1966.[377] Both Beatles would draw on composition techniques from musique concrète, as well as other avant-garde styles, through the middle period of the band's career.[378] Lennon would even go on to create a full musique concrète work, "Revolution 9," for *The Beatles* (1968), popularly known as the *White Album*, about which more below.

In terms of developing stylistic knowledge of musique concrète, McCartney was more proactive than Lennon, and began his self-guided education sooner. Biographer Barry Miles, and McCartney himself, date the beginning of McCartney's experiments with tape to 1965.[379] He was already interested in the London avant-garde scene more broadly, and part

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[376] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 211.

[377] Jon Wiener, "Pop and Avant-Garde: The Case of John and Yoko," *Popular Music and Society* 22, no. 1 (1998), 6.

[378] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There, and Everywhere*, 214.

[379] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 219.

of this exposure came from his association with actress Jane Asher and her family. McCartney met art critic and gallery owner John Dunbar through the Ashers, and Dunbar became something of a ticket into the avant-garde scene for McCartney. He explored many elements of this sphere: art, film, literature, and business with the Indica Bookshop.[380] The Indica put McCartney in touch with several important figures in the London avant-garde scene: Dunbar, art dealer Robert Fraser, and writer Ian Sommerville.[381] In addition to these knowledgeable connections, McCartney had the advantage of decreased pressure to tour, which allowed him (and the other Beatles) to explore his own interests more deeply.[382] But it was his expeditions into avant-garde music that would have the most lasting impact on the Beatles, and on rock music.

McCartney's initial experiments with tape manipulation seem to have been driven both by interest in the sounds and possible compositional ideas. He began with tape reversal, which would become an important component of the band's references to musique concrète. McCartney also created tape loops, and experimented with speed manipulation. Though the main purpose of these sounds was to have an interesting piece of music to share at parties and hangouts, McCartney also had bigger ideas. He states: "They were great little things and I had great plans for them, they were going to be little symphonies, all made with tape loops."[383] McCartney even entertained the idea of releasing a solo album of this kind of

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[380] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 32. The Ashers, as Miles describes, were a well-connected, upper-class family with both the means and interest to pursue London's "high" culture.

[381] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 211, 224. Sommerville was writer William Burroughs' collaborator and one-time partner.

[382] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There, and Everywhere*, 113. McCartney, unlike Lennon, also did not have the restrictions of a home and family life that needed attention.

[383] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 218–220.

music, but the idea ultimately did not come to fruition.[384] Even before he gained familiarity with avant-garde composers and theories, McCartney was keen to explore the musical possibilities of manipulated sounds.

McCartney moved rather quickly from these initial experiments to active learning. In producer George Martin's words, he "went on a veritable bender of culture."[385] McCartney attended several concerts of music by Stockhausen and lectures by Luciano Berio. Some of the pieces McCartney heard at these events included Berio's *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* (1958) and *Laborintus 2 (Un Omaggio a Dante*) (1966).[386] While these composers, particularly Stockhausen, are not confined strictly to musique concrète, they do utilize some of the style's techniques. McCartney also spent time listening to records by several other post-tonal composers, such as John Cage and Morton Subotnick, and discussing the works and possibilities of avant-garde music with friends. Among those discussion topics were theoretical backgrounds of the music, including the experiments and ideas of Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry.[387]

McCartney also continued his musique concrète compositional experiments. In addition to the released Beatles numbers I discuss in this chapter, McCartney created a full musique concrète piece for an avant-garde music festival in London in 1967. *Carnival of*

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[384] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 33. Lennon would follow through on the idea in his late-1960s collaborations with Yoko Ono.

[385] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 175.

[386] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 32; Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 234. An interesting side point is that shortly after the lecture McCartney attended, Berio's wife Cathy Berberian released an album of operatic treatments of Beatles songs.

[387] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 233–234. According to George Martin, McCartney also took lessons in tonal music theory around this time, but the lessons did not last long; see George Martin and William Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends: The Making of Sergeant Pepper* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1994), 35–36.

Light was composed in early January of 1967, with all Beatles participating and under McCartney's direction. The unreleased piece consists mainly of distorted instruments, real-world sounds both altered and unaltered, and vocal effects such as screams and randomly shouted phrases. Through the *Carnival of Light* project, the Beatles met several composers associated with the avant-garde BBC Radiophonic Workshop, such as Delia Derbyshire and Brian Hodgson.[388] McCartney demonstrated an interest in both the theory and the methods behind avant-garde musical styles, developing his own knowledge of them through early experimentation and seeking out information on them. Like Harrison's knowledge of Hindustani classical music, McCartney's self-developed understanding deeply informs the Beatles' treatment of musique concrète.

McCartney, perhaps, was the earlier driver of avant-garde influences in the Beatles' music. There is another person, however, who had an impact: Yoko Ono. Her high-profile marriage to John Lennon, and the vitriol it aroused in the Beatles' fan base, have unfortunately overshadowed her career and key role in the 1960s New York avant-garde scene.[389] However, long before she met Lennon and allegedly broke up the Beatles, Ono was a well-known avant-garde artist in her own right.[390] She was a founding member of the

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[388] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 1,369, 1,371–1,372. As *Carnival of Light* was not released as a Beatles single or track on an album, and (as of 2016) still has not been made available to the public, I do not discuss it in depth beyond the comments here.

[389] Midori Yoshimoto, *Into Performance: Japanese Women Artists in New York* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 4.

[390] A recurring Beatles myth is that Ono's presence in Lennon's life was the deciding factor in the Beatles' breakup. To be fair, Ono's presence in the recording studio and supposed insistence on giving musical feedback was awkward. As a general rule, very few people outside the Beatles' immediate circle were allowed into the studio, let alone wives and girlfriends. Nevertheless, there is plenty of evidence that shows that Ono's influence was a) not driven by Ono herself, and b) only one of many strains on the Beatles' relationship as a band. Emerick, for example, describes Ono as uncomfortable in her early studio visits, and reluctant to give her musical opinion until Lennon pushed her to offer it. Emerick implies that Lennon likely resented the leadership role McCartney had taken during the *Sgt. Pepper* and *Magical Mystery Tour* sessions. Allowing Ono into the studio may have been a power play by Lennon: his way of demonstrating who was in charge of the band.

avant-garde Fluxus movement in the early 1960s. The movement's primary organizer, George Maciunas, places her squarely in his history of the group as early as 1962.[391] Ono used her loft in New York as a performance space for experimental art of all kinds, which included some of the earliest Fluxus "events," which she often helped to organize. Aside from being a member of Fluxus, Ono had connections with several other important avant-garde artists, including composers. For example, her first husband, composer Toshi Ichiyanagi, was a student of John Cage, and Ono met Cage through the connection.[392] Ono and Cage recognized kindred spirits in each other, as well as a shared interest in Zen philosophy, and Ono participated in several Cage performances even after she and Ichiyanagi separated.[393]

Ono's visual art is an early example of both performance art and intermedia.[394] Her performance works, such as *A Grapefruit in the World of Park* (1961) and *Sky Piece for Jesus Christ* (1965) incorporate elements of dance, music, poetry, and improvisatory

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Power plays aside, the Beatles' relationships with each other were already suffering under multiple strains. Martin and Emerick both describe the band's attempts to take over more of their own finances and business enterprises, following their manager Brian Epstein's death in 1967, and the disagreements and stress that resulted. Harrison was increasingly frustrated with his subordinate status, especially as he was growing as a songwriter and musician. Finally, according to Miles and Emerick, both Lennon and McCartney split up with long-term partners during the *White Album* sessions, and Lennon was struggling with a heroin addiction; presumably, neither situation lessened the tension. The Beatles' disintegration was a long process, and had many variables in addition to the sampling I discuss here. To blame their breakup solely on Ono is an oversimplification at best and, as the "Yoko myth" has racist and sexist undertones on top of everything else, actively malignant at worst.

[391] Wiener, "Pop and Avant-Garde," 4. Ono is often described as joining Fluxus in 1964, but she was a presence in it much earlier.

[392] Yoshimoto, *Into Performance*, 84–86. The Beatles seem to have learned about Cage before Ono became part of their circle.

[393] Barbara Haskell and John G. Hanhardt, *Yoko Ono: Arias and Objects* (Layton: Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 1991), 35.

[394] Yoshimoto, *Into Performance*, 1. "Intermedia" refers to "indefinable media that fall between preexisting categories."

"everyday" actions. *A Grapefruit in the World of Park* presents, among other things, a performer speaking about peeling a grapefruit and squeezing lemons. Ono is also well known for her "instruction pieces": paintings or objects accompanied by directives for the observer to follow.[395] For example, *Painting to Hammer a Nail* (1966) invites the viewer to pound a nail into a small white canvas.[396] The instruction may also tell the viewer to complete the work in his or her mind, as in *Pointedness* (1964). Ono has also presented works in bronze sculpture, music, and film, the last two often in collaboration with John Lennon.[397] While Ono does not cite a specific influence from John Cage's work (despite their clear connection), there is something Cagean and/or Duchampian about the ideas her art explores.[398] She emphasizes that art can be created out of the everyday, and her pieces often cannot be completed without the viewer's participation.

Ono was also quite knowledgeable about and experienced with post-tonal music composition and techniques, including musique concrète and electronic music forms. She studied music composition and literature at Sarah Lawrence College, and was particularly drawn to post-tonal music and its compositional techniques.[399] I have already discussed her connections to John Cage, and just as her visual art incorporates elements of the everyday, so do several of her musical works. *Silent Piece* (1972), for example, consists of a performer

[395] Haskell and Hanhardt, *Yoko Ono: Arias and Objects*, 4–6.

[396] Elizabeth Ann Lindau, " 'Mother Superior': Maternity and Creativity in the Work of Yoko Ono," *Women & Music* 20 (2016), 62.

[397] Haskell and Hanhardt, *Yoko Ono: Arias and Objects*, 8, 63, 114, 134. The accompanying instruction to *Pointedness* states: "This sphere [a three-dimensional object] will be a sharp point when it gets to the far corners of the room in your mind."

[398] Yoshimoto, *Into Performance*, 84.

[399] Ibid., 82.

playing an imaginary instrument and Ono silently screaming into a microphone; the idea of silence as music is akin to Cage's *4'33"* (1952).[400] Holmes points out that some of her early 1970s works combine electronic music techniques with her text-based pieces, such as *Yoko Ono Plastic Ono Band* (1970) and *Fly* (1971).[401] Finally, at least one of Ono's instruction pieces incorporates techniques from musique concrète, well before her association with the Beatles. In *Tape Piece IV: Moving Piece* (1963), the instruction reads, "Take a tape of the sound of the stars moving. Do not listen to the tape. Cut it and give it out to the people on the street. Or you may sell it for a moderate price."[402] *Tape Piece IV*, if it were to be realized outside of an audience member's mind, involves capturing environmental sound and physical manipulation of the resulting tape. The piece is, at a minimum, a response to (and shows awareness of) ideas associated with musique concrète. Ono's connections with the avant-garde art world knowledge of post-tonal music set her up as an important source for the Beatles' own education, particularly for John Lennon.

As mentioned above, Ono's connection with the Beatles began in late 1966. John Lennon visited her exhibition *Unfinished Paintings and Objects* at the Indica Gallery on November 9th. Ono's *Ceiling Painting*, in which the viewer climbs a ladder and uses a magnifying glass to see the word "yes" painted on the ceiling, particularly captivated Lennon. He found Ono's art exciting because it challenged his own preconceptions about the avant-garde.

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[400] Haskell and Hanhardt, *Yoko Ono: Arias and Objects*, 53. Lennon and Ono performed this piece together in 1972.

[401] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 1,379.

[402] Haskell and Hanhardt, *Yoko Ono: Arias and Objects*, 65.

> It was positive…all the so-called avant-garde art at the time and everything that was supposedly interesting was all negative, this smashing-the-piano-with-a-hammer, break-the-sculpture boring, negative crap...And just that 'yes' made me stay in a gallery full of apples and nails instead of walking out.[403]

After meeting at the exhibition, Lennon and Ono corresponded via mail, with her sending him examples of instruction pieces.[404] He also became her patron, funding her 1967 exhibition *Half-a-Wind*.[405] Once the pair began a romantic relationship in 1968, Ono continued her electronic music explorations, often with Lennon as a collaborator. For example, the two albums *Unfinished Music No. 1: Two Virgins* (1968) and *Unfinished Music No. 2: Life with the Lions* (1969) feature vocalizations and prerecorded real-world sounds, with and without manipulation.[406] It was also after meeting Ono, and with contributions from her, that Lennon recorded "Revolution 9," the Beatles' only released musique concrète piece.[407] Lennon and Ono's contributions to each other's projects would continue until Lennon's murder in 1980. While Ono's influence may have been stronger in Lennon's solo career, her ideas and methods did make a transfer into some of the Beatles' music as well.

Lennon and McCartney both bring their self-guided knowledge of musique concrète into the Beatles' music, particularly in the mid-1960s. George Martin and Geoff Emerick play key roles in the realization of these ideas as well.[408] The compositional techniques the

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403 Lindau, " 'Mother Superior,'" 62–63.

404 Ibid., 63.

405 Wiener, "Pop and the Avant-Garde," 6.

406 Lindau, " 'Mother Superior,'" 69. A particularly sad example is "Baby's Heartbeat" (*Life with the Lions*), which contains recordings of Lennon and Ono's miscarried child's heartbeat fading.

407 Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 135. See also Greene, *Rock, Counterculture and the Avant-Garde, 1966–1970*, 71–72.

408 George Martin suggests that the Beatles left realization up to him because they felt they did not have to learn the skills themselves, given that they had someone on staff with the required skills. This applies to

Beatles' team draws on include the following, all but one of which are commonly used techniques for musique concrète as defined by Pierre Schaeffer:

- *Speed Manipulation*: Deliberately recording a vocal or instrumental part slower or faster than the song's intended tempo, and then correcting the tape speed to intended tempo in the final recording mix. The aural effects of speed manipulation depend on the type; for example, the sped-up vocal track for McCartney's "When I'm Sixty-Four" (1967) results in a higher key and more youthful sound, whereas the slowed guitar on Lennon's "I'm Only Sleeping" (1966) results in a yawning, sluggish timbre. Speed manipulation can be combined with the other tape manipulations listed here: reversal, loops, and splicing.
- *Reversal*: Playing an instrumental or vocal part in reverse. The Beatles use two forms of reversal on their recordings. The first is to simply thread the taped part in reverse onto the tape recorder, resulting in gibberish sounds (when using a vocal part) or a unique timbre such as the seagull-like sounds on "Tomorrow Never Knows."[409] The second form of reversal on Beatles tracks is to write out a part, play it end to beginning, and then thread the tape backwards. In this second form, while the tape is physically backwards, the resulting part comes out in the correct order on the final mix. The double-reversal I describe here tends to have an otherworldly, muddled timbre, where the instrument is still recognizable, but drastically altered. In both reversal forms, it is possible to hear the flipped sound envelope of the tape with close

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both McCartney's attitude toward arranging for "classical" references, and Lennon's attitude toward complex musical and technical issues. See Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 139, 200–201.

[409] Threading the tape itself backwards is also called *backmasking*. I use "reversal" in this dissertation because of the second reversal form the Beatles use.

listening; sound produced by most acoustic instruments normally will begin loud on the first attack and gradually fade, but reversed sound will begin with a soft attack and quickly grow louder before abruptly dropping out.[410]

- *Tape Loops*: Segments of tape whose ends have been attached to their beginnings, resulting in a repeating sound.[411] The most striking aural feature of a tape loop is the consistent repetition, but loops may also have speed manipulation or reversal that affect the timbre. For example, McCartney's squawking sounds on "Tomorrow Never Knows" were reversed tape loops. Tape loops will also give a vocal/instrumental part a cyclical, swirling, or repetitive feel.
- *Splicing*: Cutting a larger piece of tape into smaller segments, and then reattaching them in the composer's desired order. Creating tape loops does require "splicing" tape together in the sense of "attaching"; this is how the loop repeats itself. However, in the context of this project, "splicing" refers to tape segments that do not loop, such as the fairground effects in Lennon's "Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!" (1967). The aural effects of splicing depend on both the generating sounds and other manipulations that may be present, but generally splicing creates an aural "wash" of the sounds being used.
- *Unaltered/Unedited Real-World Sounds*: Environmental sounds, for example train whistles, street traffic, crowd chatter or screams, animal noises, or rattling chains. "Unaltered" here means that the sounds are still recognizable and matchable to their

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[410] Many thanks to Benjamin Levy for talking over the mechanics of tape and sound envelopes with me.

[411] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 9. The image of a snake eating its own tail may be a good analogy for tape loops' physical appearance.

generating source, even if some light effects are applied. Lennon's backing vocal for "Lovely Rita," for example, involves vocal sounds that have had heavy tape echo applied; however, the sounds are still recognizable as a human voice.[412] Specific aural effects depend greatly on the types of generating sound, but the Beatles tend to use unaltered real-world sounds for humorous effect or to highlight the universe being presented in the song. In "Yellow Submarine" (1966), for example, the Beatles' team uses water, metallic items, and recordings of machinery to paint an aural picture of an underwater machine.

Table 5.1 presents an overview of the Beatles songs discussed in this chapter that use various musique concrète compositional techniques, and which techniques are on each track (marked with **X** for "on the track," and blank for "not on the track").

[412] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 101.

Table 5.1. Quick, chronological (by release date) view of Beatles songs with various musique concrète compositional techniques. For songs with more than one composer, the bolded name is the primary composer.

Song	*Composer*	*Album*	*Speed Manipulation?*	*Reversal?*	*Splicing?*	*Loops?*	*Un-altered Real-World Sound?*
"Rain"	**John Lennon**/ Paul McCartney	Single, B side to "Paperback Writer" (1966)	**X**	**X**			
"I'm Only Sleeping"	**Lennon**/ McCartney	*Revolver* (1966)	**X**	**X**			
"Yellow Submarine"	Lennon / **McCartney**	*Revolver*	**X**		**X**		**X**
"Tomorrow Never Knows"	**Lennon**/ McCartney	*Revolver*	**X**	**X**		**X**	
"Strawberry Fields Forever"	**Lennon**/ McCartney	Single, double A side with "Penny Lane" (1967)	**X**	**X**			
"Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!"	**Lennon**/ McCartney	*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967)	**X**	**X**	**X**		
"Lovely Rita"	Lennon/ **McCartney**	*Sgt. Pepper*	**X**				**X**
"Good Morning, Good Morning"	**Lennon**/ McCartney	*Sgt. Pepper*		**X**	**X**		**X**
"Flying"	Harrison/ Lennon/ McCartney/ Starr	*Magical Mystery Tour* (1967)		**X**		**X**	

"Revolution 9"	**Lennon**/ McCartney	*The Beatles* (1968)	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**

The methods used to reference musique concrète, however, are much clearer than what those references mean. I suggest that for the Beatles, musique concrète signifies various levels of alternate, altered, or skewed reality, tying references to the style to the psychedelic topical field developing in the mid and late 1960s.

Musique Concrète and the Psychedelic Topical Field

Musique concrète presents an interesting challenge for topical analysis. Unlike the Indian topic, musical allusions to musique concrète are less immediately recognizable to listeners. Musique concrète is not nearly as old as Indian music, and does not have as long a history of being referenced in popular music, making it more difficult for listeners to immediately grasp a reference to musique concrète.[413] The timbres resulting from the same compositional technique can vary widely; for example, the same technique of tape loops was used in "Tomorrow Never Knows" to create both the drum pattern and McCartney's squawking sound effects. The variation in sonic results from the same technique only compounds the potential difficulty of recognizing musique concrète as itself, a requirement of a musical topic.[414] In addition, some of the Beatles' uses of compositional techniques do not draw much attention to themselves; the speed manipulation of "Rain" or "Strawberry Fields Forever," for instance, are less immediately salient than the "Tomorrow Never Knows" tape loops. Finally, partly due to sonic variation, musique concrète as a potential

[413] Meaningful references to Indian music in Western popular genres stretch back at least to the mid-nineteenth century. Please see chapter 4 for more details.

[414] Robert Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 514.

standalone topic does not have a consistent, conventionalized meaning across various artists. Frank Zappa, for example, mixed avant-garde (including musique concrète) and popular elements as a method of critiquing both popular audiences and avant-garde composers and their supporters.[415] The Beatles, as I will show, connected musique concrète's compositional techniques to altered or alternative reality. As musical topics rely on convention and historical context for their signification, an unrecognizable topic is an oxymoron.[416]

Even if the case for musique concrète as a topic in its own right is somewhat shaky, I argue that the Beatles interact with both the style and topicality, drawing on a concept developed by Robert Hatten and William Echard: the topical field. In a book on musical meaning in Beethoven, Hatten describes a topical field as a general interpretive framework for a piece of music. Large expressive areas such as "tragic," "pastoral," or "heroic" are topical fields within which more musically specific topics can operate.[417] For example, "military/heroic" can be both a topical field and a topic; it is a *topic* when a) it does not extend across a whole piece, and b) particular musical elements, such as drum riffs and march or fanfare figures, make it especially salient.[418] As Hatten puts it in relation to the pastoral:

> [T]o reduce the pastoral to a thematic type or topic, or even to an elaborated group of such types, would be to miss an important aspect of its contribution to our sense of genre in those works where the topic becomes the central theme and premise. The pastoral as a topical field can serve as an interpretive

[415] Greene, *Rock, Counterculture and the Avant-Garde, 1966–1970*, 203, 277–278.

[416] Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military, and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 8–9.

[417] Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*, 295.

[418] Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works," 514, 523.

> frame for a movement or cycle of movements, prescribing an overall outcome (or perspective on that outcome) regardless of intervening events.[419]

As Raymond Monelle points out, the concept of a topical field is particularly useful when a topical reference seems to determine an entire movement or work's character.[420] Beethoven's Sixth "Pastoral" Symphony, for example, may have specific musical characteristics associated with the pastoral as topic, but as the title implies, the idea of the pastoral informs the entire symphony. Hatten's distinction between topic and topical field is one of extent: Is the reference to the pastoral fleeting, or does it determine the overall mood of a movement or work?

William Echard's *Psychedelic Popular Music* applies the concept of topical field to the psychedelic in popular music. He argues that a set of style characteristics that developed in the 1960s, when connected to particular lyrical and cultural ideas, constitutes a meaningful framework for listeners to interpret a song as psychedelic: a psychedelic topical field. Within this field of the psychedelic, Echard identifies several preexisting and new topics with specific musical characteristics working within the larger framework, among them space, surf, and spy topics. In addition to showing how the psychedelic as a topical field developed in the 1960s, Echard further argues that this development allowed for new genres of popular music, most notably psychedelic funk and space rock. What makes psychedelic music such a ripe site for topical analysis, to Echard, is the music's consistent association with alternate/alternative realities, introspection, and expanding one's consciousness. Even during

[419] Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*, 83.

[420] Monelle, *The Musical Topic*, 245.

the topical field's development between 1965 and 1970, the meaning of psychedelic rock was made clear primarily through lyrics.[421]

The 1960s in general, and the Beatles in particular, were key to the development of psychedelic rock and the psychedelic topical field. Discussions of psychedelic experiences in literature and art, mainly accomplished through drug use, date as far back as the fifteenth century with the first European explorations in North America. However, beginning in the 1950s and early 1960s, active scientific research and political debate over psychoactive drugs helped push the development of psychedelic attitudes and practices. The mid and late 1960s saw the spread of psychedelia in popular culture, in which recreational drug use and experiences became more visible alongside mainstream (Western) popular culture. As I have described in previous chapters, the mid-1960s were also when the Beatles' period of heaviest stylistic experimentation began. The songs examined in this dissertation were released between 1965 and 1968, squarely within the timeframe for the developing psychedelic topical field.

The Beatles were crucial players in establishing the sounds of psychedelic rock for several reasons. First, as Echard points out, the Beatles were early adopters of several techniques that later became part of the psychedelic as an overall interpretive framework for songs. Tape speed experiments, "unusual instruments" such as Western orchestral instruments and the sitar, metric surprises, and tonal ambiguity were all areas that the band explored just before their psychedelic period (roughly late 1965 to 1967).[422] Second, the Beatles and their production team had resources of all kinds to take their experimentations to

[421] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 19, 103–104, 176, 212, 216.

[422] Ibid., 22–23, 103–104.

a drastic level. Between the band's decision to stop touring in 1966 and their demonstrated power within EMI, the Beatles had the time, the money, and the creative freedom to experiment in the studio as well as at home.[423] Finally, the Beatles had a high success rate with album sales and chart positions by the mid-1960s, though they were not the only commercially successful group to write psychedelic music at the time.[424] As such, the Beatles' experiments in psychedelic sounds reached a lot of listeners, making the group leaders in bringing those sounds to greater public attention.

With these things in mind, what is special about the way the Beatles interact with the psychedelic as a topical field? I argue that the band's lyrically psychedelic songs, those that celebrate or present altered or alternative states of reality throughout the entire song, use references specifically to musique concrète. As Echard discusses, the primary association attached to psychedelic sounds is altered or alternative states of consciousness or reality, often (but not always) achieved through drug experiences. The Beatles create informed references to musique concrète in songs that explicitly explore these themes; in other words, that treat the psychedelic as the interpretive framework for the whole song. While Echard identifies Indian classical music and the music hall as parts of the psychedelic topical field as well, the Beatles' handling of these two source musics differs from musique concrète.[425] For the most part, in the songs that use the Indian topic or the music hall topic, the lyrical narrators are not framed as out of everyday reality in the way that the narrators in this chapter are. Nothing in the lyrics of "Love You To" (1966) or "Your Mother Should Know" (1967)

[423] Please see chapter 1 for more details.

[424] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 42–43.

[425] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 72–74, 103–104, 108–109, 176, 200.

suggests that the narrator is *not* a part of the usual reality.[426] Knowledge-based application of musique concrète's compositional techniques are the Beatles' primary method to musically place the narrator and/or listener in a world removed from everyday reality. Given the band's importance to the development of the psychedelic topical field, their incorporation of training and knowledge into that field is a key contribution.

1966: "Rain," "I'm Only Sleeping," "Yellow Submarine", "Tomorrow Never Knows"

Of all the compositional techniques the Beatles could draw from musique concrète, speed manipulation and tape reversal seem to have been the favorites. The Beatles' team had toyed with speed manipulation before 1966: for example, George Martin achieved the harpsichord-like solo on Lennon's "In My Life" (1965) by playing it at half speed on the piano and doubling the tape speed for the final mix (1:28–1:46).[427] However, this decision was made more out of practical necessity than a desire to use avant-garde techniques. Martin wanted a Baroque-like sound for the solo, and the "wind-up piano," as he called it, achieved the desired effect.[428] From 1966 on, the group would use reversal and speed manipulation, both slowing down and speeding up, in a way more deliberately informed by musique concrète.

The Beatles' first released exploration into musique concrète compositional techniques began almost by accident. "Rain," released as the B side to "Paperback Writer" in

[426] There is one exception: "Within You, Without You" (1967) presents a narrator who wishes for others to escape the illusions of everyday reality, and is ruled by the Indian topic (see chapter 4). The possibility of troping, as may be happening in "Tomorrow Never Knows" (1966; the song uses both a tambura and musique concrète techniques), may also contradict this but is beyond the scope of this chapter.

[427] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 65.

[428] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 134.

1966, includes both tape reversal and speed manipulation.[429] The song is perhaps better known for reversal, and for the story of how reversed tape became part of the final mix. According to Lennon, he accidentally played a demo track of "Rain" backwards at home, and was blown away by the sound.[430] George Martin, however, recalls that *he* demonstrated the effect to Lennon and the group decided to include it on the track.[431] Regardless of whose idea it was, Lennon's reversed vocals add a striking timbre during the outro (2:35–2:43). Harrison also provides reversed guitar on the track throughout. While reversal was either an accident or a suggestion from someone with little recorded knowledge of musique concrète (Martin), its inclusion on "Rain" still set a precedent for future songs, which did employ reversal based on knowledge of its use as a composition technique.[432] Speed manipulation is also present on "Rain." The band recorded the rhythm track faster than playing tempo, resulting in a texture change when the tape played back at normal speed.[433]

As Echard points out, both tape reversal and speed manipulation are important aspects of the psychedelic topical field. He argues that the manipulation of speed in particular, especially slowing of speed, matches well with psychedelic associations of altered time or timelessness, mental reflection, and dreamlike or trancelike states. I would

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[429] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 83.

[430] Hunter Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics: The Stories Behind the Music, Including the Handwritten Drafts of More Than 100 Classic Beatles Songs* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2014), 141.

[431] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 44. The stories surrounding "Rain" are, perhaps, a reflection of just how much of a team effort the Beatles' records were.

[432] Martin states that he had some experience with hearing and creating musique concrète; see Harrison, Lennon, McCartney, and Starr, *The Beatles Anthology*, 242. However, the extent of Martin's experience and theoretical understanding of musique concrète is less clear than McCartney's or Lennon's.

[433] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 74.

additionally posit that reversal is one of several musical elements that communicates psychedelic associations by creating a soundscape that is otherworldly or unexpected in some way. Song characteristics such as metric unpredictability, tonal ambiguity, and sudden breaks in form are all examples that Echard gives as key pieces of the psychedelic topical field.[434] Given that reversing tape creates unusual timbres, and often divorces the sound produced from its generating source, reversal contributes to the idea of psychedelic as something outside of and different from ordinary experience.

"Rain" sets a precedent in terms of association as well. The song's psychedelic nature is, in large part, due to the references to musique concrète; the Beatles realize the psychedelic topical field by applying their knowledge. Lyrically speaking, the compositional techniques of musique concrète come paired with a discussion of reality, possibly one that has been altered through meditation or hallucinogenic drugs.[435] The lyrics emphasize the mind's power in determining one's emotional and mental reality. The first two verses mock those who allow external circumstances, such as weather (metaphorical or literal), to determine their behavior.[436] In the final verse, the narrator tries to explain that whether an event is negative or positive depends mostly on one's state of mind: "Can you hear me, that when it rains and shines / It's just a state of mind / Can you hear me?" (2:03–2:23). The chorus, too, demonstrates the narrator's perspective on reality and the mind: "Rain, I don't mind / Shine, the weather's fine" (0:49–1:13). The pairing of musique concrète techniques with altered, alternate, or semi-realities in song lyrics—thus tying those compositional techniques to the

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[434] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 56, 62, 103–104, 176.

[435] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 45.

[436] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 141.

developing psychedelic topical field—would grow stronger as the Beatles referenced the style more often.

A second 1966 Beatles song, often described as psychedelic, features prominent tape reversal and speed manipulation. "I'm Only Sleeping," released on *Revolver* (1966), includes both compositional techniques. Harrison's guitar solo is reversed, and takes on the more complex second form of reversal. Harrison wrote out the solo in the correct direction, played it end to beginning on guitar, and then the group reversed the tape (1:33–1:44).[437] As Lewisohn describes, the method used here allows for both the unusual timbre of backwards tape, and a melodic solo. Lennon's vocal track and the rhythm track were both treated with speed manipulation, in both directions: the voice track was sped up, and the rhythm track slowed down.[438]

The sheer amount of manipulation on "I'm Only Sleeping" matches well with its lyrics, which present a lethargic narrator sleeping and dreaming the day away.[439] However, the lyrics do not pose sleepiness, dreaming, or the halfway state between sleep and waking as a problem. The state of semi-reality described in the song is pleasant, one the narrator does not wish to leave, particularly in the second and third chorus: "Please don't spoil my day / I'm miles away / And after all, I'm only sleeping" (0:55–1:07). The second verse even suggests that the partial reality of being asleep, or half awake, is preferable to usual reality's pace: "Everybody seems to think I'm lazy / I don't mind, I think they're crazy / Running

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[437] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 124. McCartney later overdubbed the same solo, resulting in a doubled backward solo!

[438] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 77–78.

[439] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 151.

everywhere at such a speed / Till they find there's no need" (0:35–0:55). Musique concrète is tied once again to a song espousing the good in an altered state of reality.

While the Beatles may have been the best known musicians to use elements of musique concrète, and to be affected by other avant-garde influences, they were certainly not the only ones. Other rock artists in the mid and late 1960s, most notably Frank Zappa and the Velvet Underground, were interested in combining avant-garde ideas and popular music and used the same methods to do so. For example, both Zappa and the Beatles used tape reversal and speed manipulation. The second part of Zappa's "The Return of the Son of Monster Magnet" (1966) presents a gradual speeding up of tape playback until the instruments and voices are unrecognizable. "Are You Hung Up?," released on the parodic *We're Only In It for the Money* (1967), features a reversed guitar solo.[440] Much like the Indian topic's essential and frequent features, some musique concrète usages and techniques are not unique to the Beatles.

Nevertheless, there is an element of musique concrète, as defined by composers after Pierre Schaeffer, that the Beatles seem to have explored in depth. Unedited sounds from everyday life, such as cars or birdsong, also qualify as musical material in musique concrète.[441] Schaeffer's theories did not allow for unaltered everyday sounds, as he believed true musique concrète was completely abstracted from its original sound source and meaning.[442] Composers who worked with Schaeffer were among the first to expand the

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[440] Greene, *Rock, Counterculture and the Avant-Garde, 1966–1970*, 39, 47, 227, 265. Zappa and the Beatles were also aware of each other's music, as a dispute between Zappa and McCartney over the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover demonstrates; see Greene 261–262.

[441] At a minimum, as Greene points out, the Beatles were more commercially successful during the 1960s than Zappa or the Velvet Underground. Because of this, the average listener would likely have perceived unedited real-world sounds as unique to the Beatles, even if they may not have been the first.

[442] Schaeffer, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, 38.

possible options for material to unedited real-world sounds. For example, Pierre Henry and Luc Ferrari, two of Schaeffer's earliest collaborators, grew to resent Schaeffer's insistence on sound manipulation. Both of these composers would write pieces that incorporated unaltered environmental sounds into their works, alongside manipulated sound.[443] Musique concrète meant, for them, music built from sounds in the natural world, manipulated or not.

As discussed, the Beatles' references to musique concrète align well with several of Schaeffer's techniques for composing musique concrète. The techniques they use most often are all tape manipulations of some kind: reversing, speed manipulation, loops, and splicing. In other words, they are compositional techniques that Schaeffer would have demanded of a musique concrète piece. However, the emphasis here seems to be on the techniques themselves, not Schaeffer's philosophical ideals (though they were familiar with his ideas to some extent). As such, the Beatles also use unaltered real-world sounds in pieces that feature other compositional techniques of musique concrète, and sooner than their contemporaries. My next song example, "Yellow Submarine," was released before Zappa became established in the rock world, and before the Velvet Underground's first album.[444] Because of these factors, the Beatles' incorporation of unedited real-world sounds differentiates their references to musique concrète from their contemporaries'.[445]

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[443] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 221.

[444] Greene, *Rock, Counterculture and the Avant-Garde, 1966–1970*, 217, 234, 374. *Revolver*, the album "Yellow Submarine" is on, was released in August 1966. While Zappa's *Freak Out!* came out in June 1966, it sold poorly, unlike *Revolver*. The Velvet Underground's first album, *The Velvet Underground and Nico*, was released in 1967.

[445] Greene discusses several other differences in the three bands' approach to the avant-garde and popular music. As I have mentioned, Frank Zappa's primary aim in combining avant-garde and popular elements was to critique and criticize both types of audiences, an aim missing in the Beatles (with the possible exception of "Revolution 9"). The Velvet Underground focused primarily on dissonance and minimalist techniques, where the Beatles favored musique concrète and indeterminacy.

"Yellow Submarine" is the earliest example that uses a combination of Schaffer-esque musique concrète techniques and unaltered real-world sound to suggest an alternate reality. Released on *Revolver* (1966), this tune presents the whimsical situation of sailors living in a technicolor submarine under the sea.[446] The song is a fairly straightforward rock/popular form, with alternating verses, choruses, and two short solos. Speed manipulation occurs in "Yellow Submarine," but not reversal. Starr's lead vocal, as well as the backing vocals, were recorded slow so that they could be sped up later.[447] For the brief brass band solo (1:05–1:10), Emerick and Martin cut up pieces of a brass band recording, randomized the pieces, and spliced them together.[448] The second, longer solo is made up of unmanipulated real-world sounds. Lennon swirled metal chains in a tub of water, and also blew bubbles into a bucket of water (1:27–1:36). Recordings of the ocean (0:19–0:52), clinking glasses and background sounds (perhaps a party onboard; 0:53–1:05), machinery noises, and ad-libbed faux nautical terms (1:27–1:46) can also be heard on the track.[449] All of these sounds are recognizable; they have not been subjected to the kinds of manipulation Schaeffer demanded.[450]

"Yellow Submarine" uses these techniques of musique concrète to present a world that is fairly removed from ordinary reality. The song does not dive immediately into the

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[446] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 163.

[447] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 80.

[448] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 123.

[449] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 81. See also Emerick and Massey, *Here There and Everywhere*, 120, 122.

[450] Collage elements of this kind were also important features of Fluxus pieces and other Dada-inspired avant-garde movements, providing another possible connection between the Beatles' musique concrète references and Yoko Ono.

alternate underwater world explored in the lyrics. In the first verse, the narrator begins by hearing about the nautical life secondhand: "In the town where I was born / Lived a man who sailed to sea / And he told us of his life / In the land of submarines" (0:00–0:17). After the first verse, however, the listener is plunged, so to speak, into a world separate from the one in which the song began. The next verses describe life aboard the submarine: living under the waves, the crew, and the beauty of the ocean and sky.[451] The submarine may resurface from time to time, as the reference to the "sky of blue" possibly suggests, but there is no mention of the crew interacting with the people left on land. Once again, musique concrète techniques and materials are presented alongside lyrics that describe a world removed from the everyday, an alternate reality.[452]

The final song of this section, "Tomorrow Never Knows," is possibly the most psychedelic offering from 1966 and also one of the most informed by musique concrète. While it was released on *Revolver* late in the year, it was actually the first *Revolver* track to be worked on in the studio.[453] Drawing on Timothy Leary's *The Psychedelic Experience* for its lyrics, "Tomorrow Never Knows" is one of the Beatles' more lyrically intense songs, with a timbral palette to match.[454] Both tape reversal and speed manipulation are on the track:

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[451] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 163.

[452] Echard (107–108) also presents several additional associations of the sounds in "Yellow Submarine" that are cognate with the psychedelic, including adventure/exploration, mysticism and magic, and intensely vivid descriptions of nature.

[453] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 70.

[454] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 34–35.

among the many sound effects are a slowed Mellotron-like sound providing a first solo and a reversed guitar for the second solo (0:56–1:30 and 1:08–1:24).[455]

The song also includes, for the first time, tape loops of various sound effects. As previously discussed, the experimentation with loops began with a recording of Starr's drum pattern.[456] McCartney, already familiar with the concept through his own experimentation and knowledge, created more loops at home after the session ended. With help from Emerick and several other staff members, the band auditioned McCartney's loops: "We played them every conceivable way: proper speed, sped up, slowed down, backwards, forwards. Every now and then, one of the Beatles would shout, 'That's a good one,' as we played through the lot. Eventually five of the loops were selected to be added to the basic backing track."[457] The loop sounds are scattered throughout the song, and include a rubbed wineglass rim (1:28), the first solo (0:56–1:30), and a seagull-like noise resulting from looping and other manipulations (first entrance 0:08–0:12).[458]

The method of playing with raw sounds, and allowing the compositional choices to grow out of the sounds, is very similar to Pierre Schaeffer's ideal method of composing musique concrète. Not only do the composer's decisions arise out of experimentation with the sounds, but those sounds are also manipulated and removed from their original source.[459] Tape loops, however, are not used in every musique concrète reference in the Beatles' music.

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[455] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 70, 72. It is not clear what this first solo instrument is; Everett 1999 provides the Mellotron-like description.

[456] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 1,367.

[457] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 111–112.

[458] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 37.

[459] Schaeffer, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, 38.

In fact, the Beatles use loops relatively little, as compared to speed manipulation and reversal.

"Tomorrow Never Knows" continues along the association path initially set up with "Rain." Like the other tracks in this section, "Tomorrow Never Knows" emphasizes altered reality and its virtues. Opinions vary as to what the nature of that altered reality is: meditation, drug states, illusory reality, and so on. Nevertheless, the song goes further than mocking those who do not open their minds ("Rain"), or simply recommending alternative realities ("I'm Only Sleeping"). It is a command to accept such an altered state from the very beginning: "Turn off your mind, relax and float downstream / It is not dying, it is not dying / Lay down all thought, surrender to the void" (0:12–0:32). In the second half of the song, after the solos, the narrator also suggests what a person might learn by entering such an altered reality: "That love is all and love is everyone" (1:26–1:32) and that death is merely an illusion (1:42–1:47).[460]

"Tomorrow Never Knows" presents a stronger separation from everyday reality. The narrators of "Rain" and "I'm Only Sleeping" frame altered or alternate realities as an escape from ordinary life; they have not left it completely. Even "Yellow Submarine" begins in a recognizable, everyday world before departing from it. In "Tomorrow Never Knows," on the other hand, there is no suggestion that the narrator himself uses altered reality as a brief escape, or is even connected to ordinary reality at all. Rather, the song reads as a call from someone permanently inhabiting an alternative space. As Echard describes, loops further contribute to the psychedelic topical field by creating unpredictable nonsense or "garble" sounds; I would add that endlessly repeating tape loops also communicate the psychedelic

[460] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 177–178.

associations of timelessness or altered time that speed manipulation can achieve.[461] The Beatles use the techniques of musique concrète in "Tomorrow Never Knows" to bolster the psychedelic messages explored in the lyrics, and present a narrator steeped in an alternative world from everyday reality.

1967: "Strawberry Fields Forever," "Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!", "Lovely Rita," "Good Morning, Good Morning"

As the Beatles moved into 1967 and the recording sessions for *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, (1967), they continued to create psychedelic songs using their knowledge of musique concrète techniques. The pattern of associating musique concrète with altered or alternative realities also continues and develops in this time period, beginning with the first recording sessions for John Lennon's "Strawberry Fields Forever."[462] The song was initially inspired by Lennon's memories of Strawberry Field, a Salvation Army orphanage near his childhood home in Liverpool.[463] Both tape reversal and speed manipulation are present in the song, though not as frequently as the other examples in this section. Drummer Ringo Starr overdubbed a reversed cymbal onto the track, in addition to unaltered percussion (1:26–1:42). The same process as "I'm Only Sleeping" was used to achieve the effect: notate the pattern, play it end to beginning, and then reverse the tape. Lennon's vocal track provided

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[461] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 62. Echard mainly focuses on musical elements that create a sense of endless repetition, such as repeated riffs or rhythmic gestures.

[462] "Strawberry Fields Forever" and its accompanying single release, McCartney's "Penny Lane," were both originally intended for *Sgt. Pepper*. However, as George Martin describes, recording label EMI mandated that the Beatles needed to release a single in early 1967. The two songs were thus released as independent singles, although they would be released on the American version of *Magical Mystery Tour* later in the year as well. See Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 199, 202.

[463] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 75. Lennon and his friends often climbed the walls and played on the grounds with the children living there, and Lennon and his family attended annual neighborhood festivals on the site. Strawberry Field is now a combination tourist attraction, with exhibitions on the site's history and Lennon's connection to it, and public garden.

speed manipulation. His vocals were recorded slowly, and consequently sounded faster during playback.[464]

"Strawberry Fields Forever" uses speed manipulation in another way. Lennon wanted to use two different takes for the final song mix; however, the takes he liked were in different keys (A and Bb) and at different tempi. Emerick and Martin resolved the problem by speeding the lower key up, and slowing the higher key down, until the two essentially met in the middle.[465] Although this instance of speed manipulation was mostly for practical reasons, the effect it has on the sound emphasizes the psychedelic tone of the lyrics. Scholars and sources describe the sound, both of Lennon's voice and of the texture Martin and Emerick's edit created, as "unreal" (Everett), "dreamlike" (Everett) and "dreamy" (Lewisohn), and even "hallucinogenic haze" (Lewisohn).[466] As we have seen in previous examples, the manipulation of speed can communicate psychedelic associations of trancelike states or a sense of altered time or timelessness.[467]

As Echard discusses in his analysis, "Strawberry Fields Forever" connects the musique concrète techniques of speed manipulation and reversal to a psychedelic version of reality. A physical location inspired the song, but the place the lyrics describe becomes much more. Lennon once again gives us a narrator who prefers an alternative to everyday reality. The narrator has always been on a higher plane of awareness than those around him, and this has resulted in self-consciousness: "No one I think is in my tree / I mean, it must be high or

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[464] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 87, 89–90.

[465] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 79.

[466] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 87; W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 79.

[467] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 103–104.

low" (1:21–1:29) and "Always, no, sometimes think it's me" (2:07–2:12). The narrator sees the narrow-mindedness of others around him: "Living is easy with eyes closed / Misunderstanding all you see" (0:34–0:43). However, he does not seem to be bothered by others' opinions any longer. He has a place where he can escape, one separate from everyday reality. Strawberry Fields is that place, presented in the chorus: "Let me take you down, 'cause I'm going to / Strawberry Fields / Nothing is real / And nothing to get hung about" (0:10–0:32).[468] In the space that is Strawberry Fields, there is no pressure to conform to or consider reality as we know it. Whether that space is a meditative state, a drug trip, or simply one's imagination and private mental world, "Strawberry Fields Forever" presents a place where the narrator and listener can find relief, if we choose to let him take us there. The idea of a space beyond the limitations of ordinary mental states or realities certainly reflects meanings attached to the psychedelic, and informed references to musique concrète create a soundscape to match.

"Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!" is perhaps the song most removed from ordinary reality in this chapter. Released on *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), this Lennon song presents a bizarre circus world, where horses waltz and men leap over hoops of fire.[469] Lennon lifted most of the lyrics from a Victorian (1843) circus poster that he found in an antique shop.[470] George Martin and Geoff Emerick were especially crucial in realizing the song's overall sound. As often happened, Lennon had an idea of the atmosphere he wanted,

[468] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 183.

[469] Ibid., 216.

[470] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 110.

but had trouble both communicating it in musical terms and executing the vision.[471] For example, according to Martin, Lennon said that he wanted to "smell the sawdust" of a fairground, and that he wanted the music to "swirl up and around."[472] Martin, with help from Emerick, found a way to successfully translate Lennon's mental picture into sound.

Though the song's form is still rooted in popular song tradition, alternating verses and solos and including a short introduction and coda, musique concrète techniques create the soundscape that dominates the song.[473] As usual for the Beatles' musique concrète references, speed manipulation and reversal are both present. During the solo section, chromatic runs and chords on two organs, as well as a guitar solo from McCartney, were recorded at half speed and doubled for playback (1:00–1:26).[474] Some of the taped calliope effects were also reversed for the final track.[475] The Beatle team achieved those taped calliope sounds through another composition technique, splicing. "Mr. Kite" already had a circus atmosphere, due to the organs and a series of harmonicas.[476] Martin suggested that they add the calliope to the track to heighten the circus feel, and when they could not find a hand-operated model, they used recorded snippets of a calliope playing.[477] Emerick and

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[471] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 99.

[472] Martin and Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends*, 89; Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 204.

[473] David Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 173. The situation with "Mr. Kite" is very similar to how the Indian topic strongly pervades Harrison's Indian-influenced songs, but still remains a topic because of the form.

[474] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 110.

[475] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 99.

[476] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 110.

[477] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 99.

Martin cut up tape into two- to three-second lengths, tossed them into the air, and scrambled them into an appropriately random order before splicing them together.[478]

Of the songs using musique concrète techniques, "Mr. Kite" is furthest removed from everyday reality, and hence one of the most psychedelic offerings from this time period. As discussed, a Victorian circus poster inspired the lyrics and atmosphere of the song. Many of the lyrics were directly lifted from names and phrases on the poster. For example, that the circus is for the benefit of a Mr. Kite; Mr. Henderson performing "somersets...on solid ground"; and the line describing acrobatic leaps "[O]ver men and horses, hoops and garters / Lastly through a hogshead of real fire."[479] In this sense, the world described in the song does have some grounding in reality. Ostensibly, the advertised circus performance did actually happen, although a century before Lennon wrote a song about it (which distances the event from the present).

However, from a solely lyrical perspective, "Mr. Kite" presents a world completely separated from the ordinary from the beginning. Much as the narrator of "Tomorrow Never Knows" already inhabits the alternate reality into which he invites the listener, the narrator of "Mr. Kite" is entirely steeped in the circus world. There is no suggestion of the circus as an escape from the narrator's ordinary reality, or as a temporary alternative to that reality. Each verse stays firmly rooted in the circus world, a reality removed from our own.[480] The sense of complete separation from everyday reality in the lyrics, in line with associations the

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[478] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 168.

[479] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 215–216. There is a scan of the original poster on page 215.

[480] There is a third song that uses a high level of musique concrète composition techniques. "Flying," released on *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967), includes both reversal and tape loops; see Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 123. However, as the track is instrumental, verifying associations through lyrics is not an option.

psychedelic topical field was developing, is conveyed with an extremely high number of informed references to musique concrète.

Two songs on *Sgt. Pepper* further continue the association pattern that has been established for musique concrète as part of the psychedelic topical field: “Lovely Rita” and “Good Morning, Good Morning.” Both songs contain fewer elements drawn from the source music than the others analyzed in this chapter. Perhaps in line with their shorter list of techniques, out of the songs that use informed references to musique concrète, these two are also the most grounded in everyday reality. That reality, however, is still skewed in both songs. “Good Morning” discusses the predictable existence of a narrator stuck in suburbia, a reality he seems bored and frustrated with. “Lovely Rita,” meanwhile, transforms a mundane situation—receiving a parking ticket—into a series of romantic hijinks with the meter maid.[481] The songs are rooted in everyday situations and places, but have been given slight twists, twists not strong enough to remove them distinctly (or completely) from ordinary life.

Of the two, “Lovely Rita” displays more of the compositional techniques in question. The narrator initially receives a parking ticket, but falls in love with Rita, the militaristic and self-sufficient meter maid writing the ticket. The song contains speed manipulation and unmanipulated real-world sounds. McCartney’s lead vocal, as well as the rhythm track, were subjected to slow recording, and sounded much faster on playback.[482] As for unaltered sound, the other Beatles blew across combs wrapped in studio toilet paper, resulting in a kazoo-like sound (0:27, 0:49–0:51).[483] Lennon also provided vocal effects during the coda, though these

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[481] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 224, 226–227.

[482] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 100.

[483] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology, 113.

were slightly altered as his vocal track had heavy tape echo on it (2:12–2:42).[484] Finally, Everett states that there is the sound of a cork popping as the narrator and Rita go out for dinner, but it is very low in the mix and difficult to hear (1:27).[485] While the speed manipulation is perhaps less communicative of psychedelic associations, as slowing down tape is usually what Echard cites as creating a dreamlike sound, speeding up the tape still affects the voice's natural sound and may give it an unusual or unexpected quality. Much like the unaltered sounds in "Yellow Submarine," the comb sounds and Lennon's vocal effects contribute to the psychedelic topical field by creating unpredictable nonsense sounds.[486]

"Lovely Rita" is definitely a song grounded in a real-world, somewhat ordinary experience: receiving a parking ticket. Most of the side events in the song are also rooted in ordinary life, such as going out for tea and dinner, and an attempted romantic encounter. However, the character of Rita is a fanciful presentation of a meter maid. She appears tough and mature to the narrator: "In a cap, she looked much older / And the bag across her shoulder / Made her look a little like a military man" (0:41–0:49). She also appears self-sufficient financially and emotionally. She pays for the date, and the narrator does not seem to have been successful wooing her: "Got the bill, and Rita paid it / Took her home, I nearly made it" (1:30–1:35).[487] The song presents listeners with a fleshed-out character, where under the ordinary circumstances of getting a parking ticket, one might never even know the

[484] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 101.

[485] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology, 113.

[486] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 62.

[487] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 224.

meter maid's name.[488] "Lovely Rita" is a romantic twist on everyday events, but does not attempt to leave or drastically change ordinary reality. The smaller number of musique concrète references reflects the slightly skewed reality; there are fewer elements of the source music, matching the less wildly psychedelic version of reality presented in the song.

"Good Morning, Good Morning," in terms of musique concrète techniques, is the least strong out of the examples in this chapter.[489] Lennon wrote the song at his suburban home, inspired by a jingle for cornflakes cereal on the television in the background.[490] Despite its mundane subject matter, the song is musically disorienting, with multiple meter changes, oddly placed rhythmic accents, and phrases of unusual length.[491] The song has only one compositional technique from musique concrète: unaltered environmental sounds. During the final section, Martin and Emerick overlaid unaltered tape segments of various animal noises: a rooster crowing, cats and dogs, horses and sheep, lions, elephants, and finally a foxhunt (1:57–2:41). According to Lewisohn and engineer Emerick, Lennon requested that each animal presented be capable of frightening or eating its predecessor.[492] Although the sound effects were prerecorded, they are still recognizable as each of these

[488] Some accounts state that a real meter maid named Meta Davis, who gave McCartney a ticket, inspired the song. However, McCartney has not confirmed this as far as I am aware.

[489] Several other, later Beatles songs include only unaltered real-world sounds: "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" (1969) and "Octopus' Garden" (1969), for example, include a hammer striking and anvil and underwater sound effects. Both of these songs present similar alternate realities ("Octopus' Garden") or skewed realities ("Maxwell") as the songs examined in this chapter. However, as they rely mainly on unmanipulated environmental sounds, I have omitted them for length.

[490] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology, 114; Martin and Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends*, 73.

[491] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology, 115–116. "Good Morning, Good Morning" is not the only Lennon track with unusual metrical characteristics. "All You Need Is Love" (1967) and "Happiness is a Warm Gun" (1968) are two other examples with high metric instability.

[492] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 105.

animals.[493] Echard also points out that long passages of sound effects are another key component of the psychedelic topical field, particularly as introductions or (as in this song) outros.[494]

"Good Morning, Good Morning" has the fewest elements of musique concrète out of the songs in this chapter. Accordingly, the version of reality presented in the lyrics is not so much altered or alternate as it is slightly skewed. The narrator describes concerns of life in suburbia: grudgingly going to work, walking past a school, tea time, and evening television shows. None of these activities, however, seem to bring the narrator any pleasure. He wanders aimlessly about: "Heading for home, you start to roam, then you're in town" and "Then you decide to take a walk by the old school" (0:38–0:42 and 0:59–1:04). Those around him also wander through the day, "half asleep," at least until five o'clock (0:48–0:50). Even then, once the working day is over, the narrator must return home and is unable to enjoy a night on the town. As if to underline the pointlessness of it all, the word "nothing" permeates the lyrics: "Nothing to do," "nothing to say," "nothing doing," "nothing has changed."[495]

"Good Morning, Good Morning" presents a dark twist on the everyday reality of suburban life. The activities and situations remain rooted in ordinary reality, but are framed as part of a predictable, routinized existence where nothing ever changes. The predictability is not a comfort to the narrator, but rather is a boring and even stifling lifestyle he seems to resent. Like "Lovely Rita," "Good Morning, Good Morning" is much less psychedelic than

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[493] Emerick and Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere*, 178. The Beatle team found the sounds in the EMI sound effects library; they did not go into the world and record the sounds themselves, unlike Schaeffer and his associates.

[494] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 106–107.

[495] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 226–227.

other examples, but there is still something noticeably off about the reality it presents. Both songs' small amount of compositional techniques from musique concrète align with the less psychedelic, but still skewed, nature of the settings.

"Revolution 9": When Reference Becomes Style

Thus far, I have discussed Beatles songs that utilize musique concrète as part of a broader topical field. Compositional techniques from this style appear in the broader context of rock songs, and have specific associations in the Beatles' lyrics. What happens when the referenced style overruns a piece? "Revolution 9," a Lennon offering on *The Beatles* (the *White Album*; 1968), presents all of the elements I have outlined. But "Revolution 9" is also divorced from the norms of rock form I have been treating as context. For this reason, I view "Revolution 9" as a full musique concrète piece, not an instance of musique concrète as a means to a topical end.

"Revolution 9" began as a six-minute outtake from another Lennon song, "Revolution 1," also on the *White Album* (1968).[496] The piece was primarily a collaboration between Lennon and his new partner, Yoko Ono; the two were responsible for generating and assembling most of the sounds, though George Harrison and George Martin did assist at late project stages. The descriptions of material on the final track read almost like a textbook musique concrète piece. Reversed violins, Mellotron, and symphonic pieces make up part of the texture. Tape loops are also present, most notably a male voice repeating the phrase "number nine."[497] There are unaltered real-world sounds as well: voices reciting random

[496] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians*: Revolver *through the* Anthology, 174.

[497] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 137–138.

lines of text; sounds of a crowd at a football match; and gunfire.[498] All of these are recognizable, not subjected to the kind of manipulations Schaeffer demanded. Given the spread of musique concrète compositional techniques here, one would think "Revolution 9" would be a good candidate for another example of the Beatles contributing to the psychedelic topical field.

However, "Revolution 9" does not have a recognizable rock form. In an article on the piece, Carlton J. Wilkinson splits the piece into three large sections: 0:00–5:00, 5:00–6:56, and 6:56–8:22. Differences in texture and the choice/type of manipulation of the raw sounds determine the sectional boundaries.[499] While textural changes and choice of instruments can help delineate sections in rock music, within the constraints of 1960s–1970s classic rock, lyrics and harmonic structure are much more crucial to determining formal boundaries. "Revolution 9" does not have these rock-rooted delineations; rather, how it delineates sections is much more akin to musique concrète pieces. For example, the Waltz movement of Schaeffer and Henry's *Symphonie pour un homme seul* (1949–1950) has three large sections. Both the generating sound source—voices and orchestral strings—and how they interact change through the piece. The first and second section include both sound sources, though one section features them in alternation (first), and the other together (second). The third section features only the strings.[500] The piece's sectional boundary occurs when there is a change in the included sounds, or when the nature of their interaction changes.

[498] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 1,373; W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 176.

[499] Wilkinson, "John Lennon's 'Revolution 9,'" 196. Everett's discussion of the piece is extremely detailed in descriptions of the effects, but does not discuss a potential form.

[500] Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music*, 213–215.

“Revolution 9” handles its musical material in a similar way. As Wilkinson describes, each of the larger sections in the piece emphasizes a different blend of sounds. As shown below in fig. 5.1, section 1 focuses most heavily on orchestral and choral instruments, while section 2 has a larger number of real-world sounds such as guns, fire hoses, and vocal sounds. Although some parts do overlap (the B minor piano chord, crowd sounds), overall the textural blends in the two sections are fairly distinct.

Time Point	Guide Voice	Section	Description	Structure
				Intro
0:00	Intro	I-Intro	Conversation	
				A
0:09		I-A	Bm Piano	
	0:11		Guide Voice	
0:30			Backward Piano	
0:54			Choir/Orchestra	
1:00			Oboe, Crowd, Paired Voices	
1:10			Backward Piano, Bm Pno/Voices	
1:30			6/8 Strings, Paired Voices	
			Clar. & Pizz. Bass, Rising Chord	
1:57	1:57	I-B	Baby, Paired Voices, Guide Voice, Ebm Choir	B
	2:11			
2:26			Backward SA Choir, Massed Loops, Crowd	
2:43			Backward SA Choir, Lennon Singing	
3:00	3:00	I-C Traffic	Backward SA Choir, Guide Voice, Paired Voices, Crowd	C
3:30			Children Playing, Rewinding Tape	
	3:37			
3:45			Crowd, Plane Buzz, Bugle Buzz	
			Bm Pno/Voices, Struggling Voice	
	3:57			
4:00		I-D	Backward Piano, Bm Pno/Voices	A'
4:14			Crowd Noise, Lennon: "Alright"	
4:27	4:27		Massed Loop Crescendo	(trans)
5:00		II-A Riot	Fire Hoses, Crowd and Bass	C'
5:39		II-B Flames	Flames, Backward SA Choir, Paired Voices	
5:53		II-C Guns	C Major Orch., Struggling Voice	
			Sci-Fi Guns, Wild West Guns	
6:17			Backward SA Choir, Bm Pno/Voices	A''
6:25			Massed Loops (overlaid)	C''
	6:31			
6:39		II-D Children	Bm Piano/Voices, Children Playing	A'''
6:52			Military Band	(trans)
6:53			"Take this, Brother . . ."	
6:56		III-A	Piano, Radio, Yoko's Voice	D
7:56		III-B Crowd	Cheering ("Block that Kick")	C'''
8:21				end

Fig. 5.1. Wilkinson's roadmap through "Revolution 9," showing textural groups and changes in each section. "John Lennon's 'Revolution 9,'" *Perspectives of New Music* 46, no. 2 (2008), 199.

"Revolution 9" is also divided into sections in ways drawn from musique concrète pieces. Both small- and large-scale sections are determined by noticeable articulations in the texture: loop entrances, sudden changes from one set of material to another set, and so on. The most pronounced textural changes and/or articulations split the pieces into its largest sections. For example, both the beginning and end of the second section (5:00 and 6:52) are marked with what Wilkinson calls a splice: "all previous sound is cut off without fading and replaced instantaneously with wholly different material."[501] Much like *Symphonie pour un homme seul*, the sectional boundaries in "Revolution 9" occur when the instrumentation changes, or the nature of their interaction changes.

I agree with both Wilkinson's and Everett's assertions that "Revolution 9" is a musique concrète work, but with an additional reason. One of the issues in topic theory is to develop and define the context in which a topic functions. Without a clearly delineated context, it is difficult at best to describe a topic, let alone tease out its associations.[502] Lennon and Ono add an element of the source style that reflects the difficulties around context: form. As the piece is so rooted in musique concrète, and so far removed from the broader stylistic context of rock, I do not view it as an example of topicality arising from musique concrète techniques. In "Revolution 9," from the perspective I develop here, I find an example of a musical reference overrunning a piece until the style referenced becomes the style of the piece itself.

Nevertheless, "Revolution 9" remains cognate with the idea of the psychedelic topical field. By 1968, the Beatles had been using compositional techniques from musique concrète

[501] Wilkinson, "John Lennon's 'Revolution 9,'" 196, 198.

[502] Johnson, "Tonality as Topic," 1.2.

for two years. The songs released in those two years that used those techniques developed a consistent association pattern: musique concrète as a flag for alternative or altered realities, connecting the techniques to broader ideas of the psychedelic. Several other bands had begun using musique concrète's compositional methods in their psychedelic music by 1968 as well. The Beatles' contemporaries—Frank Zappa and the Velvet Underground, and artists that came after them (Pink Floyd, Soft Machine, the Nice)—would further evolve references to both musique concrète and other avant-garde musical ideas, as well as continuing to fold references to the avant-garde into the broader category of psychedelic music.[503] For these reasons, "Revolution 9" still matches well with the psychedelic topical field. The meanings attached to the techniques in the Beatles' earlier songs are sufficiently established to maintain the connection, even if "Revolution 9" is a full piece in the vein of the source style.

Conclusion

To say that the Beatles were the only band to imagine musique concrète as a possible musical reference is an oversimplification. Their contemporaries were also beginning to explore "avant-rock" around the same time. Nevertheless, with *Revolver* (1966) the Beatles became one of the first rock bands to experiment with avant-garde compositional techniques and ideas. They were certainly the band with the most commercial success to attempt the blend in the mid-1960s. While they experimented with ideas from multiple branches of the avant-garde, namely musique concrète and indeterminacy, musique concrète seems to have been the favorite in the Beatles' music. McCartney and Lennon's (via Ono) expertise in its compositional techniques, ideas, and theories allows them to create informed musical

[503] Greene, *Rock, Counterculture and the Avant-Garde, 1966–1970*, 454–455. For context, the keyboard player in the Nice was Keith Emerson, who would achieve stardom when he became part of Emerson, Lake, and Palmer.

references to musique concrète. The connection in the Beatles' music between musique concrète and altered or alternative states of consciousness makes the references to the style an example of the psychedelic topical field developing in the mid-1960s.

This chapter presents a phenomenon that will become of great interest in the next chapter: blurring the boundary between a musical reference and the overall context. With "Revolution 9," the Beatles presented a full musique concrète piece. Until "Revolution 9," musique concrète had been used as a reference within a broader context of rock form and conventions; with the context removed, "Revolution 9" becomes an example of the style. By extension, when a song is built almost entirely with influences from a different style, can we say that a topic is present? The idea of topic blurring into context is taken to extremes with my next case study, a favorite of Paul McCartney's: the music hall.

Chapter 6: "Paul's Granny Music": The Music Hall, Parody, and Topicality

Late in 1966, during the early recording sessions for *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, Paul McCartney decided to revive an old song: "When I'm Sixty-Four." The song dated back to the Beatles' early performing career, but had not yet been used for an album.[504] As Walter Everett and Tim Riley point out, the song was always meant to evoke the sound of the music hall and vaudeville, even in its early form.[505] The final version of the track on *Sgt. Pepper* incorporates several elements of the music hall's sound. Producer George Martin scored a part for several clarinets, and he and engineer Geoff Emerick sped up McCartney's vocal track slightly to accomplish a more old-style sound.[506] The song has an easily sung melody that moves mostly in steps and thirds, with few leaps. Harmonically, it very closely follows tonal norms of chord resolution and key relations. "When I'm Sixty-Four" relies heavily on secondary dominants (0:31–0:37) and emphasizes vi during the bridges (0:38–1:03); all but one of these secondary dominants resolve to their usual targets, and vi is a fairly common goal for tonicization or modulation.[507] These qualities can also be found in many of the music hall songs from which "When I'm Sixty-Four" took inspiration. McCartney incorporates elements of the music hall as an affectionate parody of the style.

[504] Mark Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 1988), 89.

[505] Walter Everett and Tim Riley, *What Goes On: The Beatles, Their Music, and Their Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), Kindle edition, 25.

[506] George Martin and William Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends: The Making of Sergeant Pepper* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1994), 35. McCartney emphasizes that the sped-up vocal track also made him sound younger, but that the primary idea behind it was to help achieve that (as he put it) "rooty-tooty variety sound."

[507] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 112.

In this chapter, I explore the Beatles' third type of interaction with topicality: playing with the boundary between topic and context. Music hall references in the Beatles provoke two interesting questions for a topical reading: At what point does the line between topic and context become blurred or even disappear; and to what purpose? The two source musics discussed in chapters 4 and 5, Indian classical music and musique concrète, lean towards topic/topical element because musical references to them can be differentiated from the overall rock style. While two of the McCartney songs analyzed here treat the music hall as a topic, by virtue of fleeting or surface references, two of them do not. In addition to music hall songs' shared musical characteristics with rock songs, particularly formal sections, McCartney plays with the boundary between the two by extending the music hall topic's features over entire songs. Drawing on Esti Sheinberg and Yayoi Uno Everett's examinations of musical parody, I suggest that McCartney deploys knowledge of a style's conventions to explore multiple kinds of parody, and to present an ambivalent stance toward both the source music and the British past connected to it.[508]

Background: The Music Hall and Related American Traditions

In Great Britain, the music hall was one of the most common traditions of popular theatre and musical performance, particularly in the Victorian period. The music hall's roots lie in "tavern music halls," which dated back to the eighteenth century but reached a height of popularity during the 1830s and 1840s. These smaller venues primarily existed to sell alcohol and meals, but also included entertainment (professional and amateur) as part of a

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[508] Esti Sheinberg, *Irony, Satire, Parody and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich: A Theory of Musical Incongruities* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000), Apple Books edition; Yayoi Uno Everett, "Parody with an Ironic Edge: Dramatic Works by Kurt Weill, Peter Maxwell Davies, and Louis Andriessen," *Music Theory Online* 10, no. 4 (2004), https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.04.10.4/mto.04.10.4.y_everett.html.

meal price, and generally catered to the working and lower-middle classes.[509] During the mid-nineteenth century, the tavern halls were rebranded as "music halls," a name which meant a general-purpose concert hall at the time and awakened more aspirational and middle-class associations.[510] In this rebranded music hall, the performance was what customers paid for; while it was still possible to purchase drinks or food, the area for dining was a separate space from the performance.[511] The music hall would remain an entertainment option across the U.K. through the early twentieth century, when it gave way to film and the radio after a gradual decline in the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods. However, elements of music hall performance survived into newer genres such as radio and television comedy performance and shows.[512] Efforts have also been made to preserve the sound of the music hall through collection and care of wax cylinders and 78 rpm disc recordings from late in the period.[513]

The music hall is simultaneously an overarching style and sound, and a family of many song types and performance considerations. Anthony Bennett argues that even with a wide variety of characters and song types, the music hall developed a distinct, overarching sound and style between the 1860s and 1880s. Instrumentation of music hall songs relied on

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[509] Peter Davison, *Contemporary Drama and the Popular Dramatic Tradition in England* (London: Macmillan, 1982), 16–17.

[510] Dagmar Kift, *The Victorian Music Hall: Culture, Class and Conflict*, trans. Roy Kift (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 20. The term "music hall" would come to mean a venue specifically for variety-style entertainment later in the century.

[511] Richard Anthony Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History* (Stroud: Sutton, 2005), 5. As the nineteenth century went on, music halls would abandon the attached dining spaces and serve only as performance venues.

[512] Davison, *Contemporary Drama and the Popular Dramatic Tradition in England*, 18, 48.

[513] Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History*, 284–285.

a core of piano and singer, and often a small orchestra. Violin and double bass, flute, cornet, and clarinet made up the basic combination that could be doubled depending on space and funds. Improvisation on some level was expected from all the parts, but particularly from the singer, whose songs often included patter and asides to the audience (especially in comedic songs).[514] Waltz and polka rhythms were common metrical choices, particularly in song choruses, and melodies tended to have balanced phrases with one or two motives and at least one phrase repetition, making at least the choruses easy for the audience to sing along to. "Forgive and Forget" (J.H. Lester and Sam Torr, 1887) is a particularly good example of balanced phrases, as shown in example 6.1.[515] Music hall melodies could be written to formulas and set patterns that the audiences were already familiar with, but a small amount of deviation from the pattern was acceptable.[516]

[514] Anthony Bennett, "Music in the Halls," in *Music Hall: Performance and Style*, ed. J.S. Bratton (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1986), 1, 7–8. See also Davison, *Contemporary Drama and the Popular Dramatic Tradition in England*, 19.

[515] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 10, 13–14. "The Custom of the Country" (G.W. Hunt, 1876) references polka rhythms through dotted values and syncopation.

[516] Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History*, 147.

Example 6.1. Balanced phrase structure in the melody of "Forgive and Forget." Reproduced from Anthony Bennett, "Music in the Halls," in *Music Hall: Performance and Style*, ed. J.S. Bratton (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1986), 14.

Harmonically, although later songs could be more adventurous, music hall songs are fairly basic in chord choice and modulation options. Songs tend to modulate to the dominant or submediant, if they even modulate at all. "Polly Perkins of Paddington Green" (Harry Clifton, 1864) for example, stays entirely within the tonic, while "Did You Ever Go to Hampstead in a Van?" (author and date unlisted) modulates from G major to D major in the B section.[517]

[517] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 11–13. As Bennett points out, later music hall songs (1890s onward) did include more disjunct melodies and extended chromaticism. Greater use of such moments meant that they lost the significance or markedness they had in earlier music hall songs.

Within the overarching sound described above, music hall songs came in a variety of types and characters they emphasized. Given the music hall's roots in pub culture catering to working and lower-middle class audiences, the everyday lives and events of that audience was the overarching theme in music hall songs. Lyrical song topics ranged from romantic and family relations, to money and employment issues, to differences between urban and country living.[518] The characters that performers presented in these songs, accordingly, also came in all types: soldiers and sailors, married couples, working single women, immigrants, clerks, and men (and women) about town are just a few examples. Broadly speaking, songs fell into one of two major categories, comic and sentimental. Both male and female performers could sing in any of these genres, although a performer tended to specialize in one genre and often a particular type of character.[519]

Comic songs, as the name implies, presented humorous situations, usually with a large dose of parody. The "swell song," a type of comic song, presented a male character who had wealth (or put up a front of having it) and used it by showing off: "Typically, the swell was a lordly figure of resplendent dress and confident air, whose exploits centred on drink and women; time, work and money scarcely intrude as the swell struts his way across town in the company of other 'jolly dogs.'"[520] The parody in the swell song, particularly if

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[518] Kift, *The Victorian Music Hall: Culture, Class and Conflict*, 37.

[519] For example, singer Bessie Bellwood, most active in the 1870s and 1880s, specialized in songs presenting character studies of working-class women; see Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History*, 172. An exception was the "seriocomic" performer, which Baker describes as someone who performed an even mix of comical and more serious or sentimental songs.

[520] Peter Bailey, "Champagne Charlie: Performance and Ideology in the Music Hall Swell Song," in *Music Hall: Performance and Style*, ed. J.S. Bratton (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1986), 49. The song "Champagne Charlie" (George Leybourne and Alfred Lee, 1868), as its use in the chapter title implies, is a prototypical swell song.

the character was merely pretending to be wealthy, lay in mocking middle and upper-class values or people who aspired to those values. Sentimental songs presented more serious takes on topics that could be treated in comic songs. For example, immigrants and their situations could be presented as either stereotypical characters to be laughed at (comic songs), or as sympathetic characters missing their homelands and trying to build lives in their new homes (sentimental songs).[521]

The music hall is a British tradition, but one very closely related to both British and American forms of popular entertainment. Perhaps the highest similarity is between American-style variety and vaudeville. In *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima: Variety Theater in the Nineteenth Century*, musicologist Gillian Rodger points out several shared elements between American variety and British music hall. Both have roots in working and lower-middle-class entertainment, though both would eventually expand their acts to attract patrons from multiple social levels. Both traditions presented a mix of comedic and more serious songs, with high levels of parody and audience-performer interaction, and both were considered lesser or "illegitimate" forms of theatrical performance. Variety/vaudeville and the music hall are also musically similar, both possessing singable melodies, little rhythmic complexity, and tonal, relatively conventional harmonic explorations.[522]

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[521] Paul Maloney, " 'Flying Down the Saltmarket': The Irish on the Glasgow Music Hall Stage," *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* 36, no. 1 (2009), 19–20. Irish immigrants were also common characters in the American variety/vaudeville tradition, although sympathetic portrayals in sentimental songs were more common; see Gillian M. Rodger, *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima: Variety Theater in the Nineteenth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 92.

[522] As Rodger points out, until the 1870s and 1880s American variety and vaudeville were the same tradition, only going by the name "variety." The term "vaudeville" was adopted as a means of distinguishing more family-friendly performances from the older and more sexualized "variety."

However, there are several differences between American and British traditions that manifest in the Beatles' references to music from these contexts. First, as Rodger points out, criticism of the upper-middle and upper class in American variety was sharper than the same criticism in the British music hall. Variety song texts portrayed the upper classes as uncaring or insincere in their desires to help the less fortunate, whereas in the music hall it was more common to frame the upper classes as merely silly or ineffective. Second, the relationship between American variety and minstrelsy was much more fluid than it was in Britain. American performers specializing in caricatures, including blackface, moved freely between minstrel shows and variety performance.[523] While minstrel shows were also present in Britain, with some music hall performers even beginning their careers as blackface performers, minstrelsy and the music hall were seen as separate performance genres.[524] Finally, the music hall as a performance space was more open to female performers and perspectives for longer than American variety. Very few women performed in the early spaces for variety, concert saloons; in addition to female performance being seen as not respectable, it was actively dangerous for them to perform, as concert saloon keepers encouraged flirtation between their customers and employees to sell more alcohol.[525] The music hall, on the other hand, did not have the element of attractive females as an alcohol-

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[523] Rodger, *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima*, 5–6, 54, 99, 115–116, 118. It is possible that the less sharp critique in the music hall is related to attempts to cater to middle-class audiences as well as the working classes; this trend came earlier in Britain than in America.

[524] Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History*, 215. Performers who began in minstrelsy often stopped performing these acts once they had transitioned into the music hall.

[525] Rodger, *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima*, 31, 86–87.

selling tactic, meaning that the music hall environment was a friendlier space for women for much longer.[526]

Given the similarities between American variety and British music hall, a few thoughts on terminology in this chapter are necessary here. I refer to the referenced style throughout this chapter as "music hall," both because many characteristics McCartney draws most heavily on come from conventions specific to the music hall, and to emphasize the British connection. Further, while the terms "music hall," "vaudeville," and "variety" are sometimes used interchangeably, these three names meant different things in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[527] There are enough key differences between performance considerations and content to distinguish American and British traditions, and characteristics specific to the music hall can be found in McCartney's references to the style.

Experience and Realization: Paul McCartney and George Martin

With Indian music and musique concrète, the record of how the Beatles gained their knowledge is fairly well documented, both by the band members themselves and secondary sources. Harrison took lessons in the sitar, performance, and theory of Hindustani classical music in a traditional, guru-disciple relationship with Ravi Shankar.[528] McCartney and Lennon taught themselves about musique concrète by seeking out composers, performers,

[526] Kift, *The Victorian Music Hall: Culture, Class and Conflict*, 175–176. Some other, smaller differences between variety and the music hall include: greater emphasis on dance acts in variety; broader range of repertoire for male and female impersonators in the music hall; and more integration of what we would now consider circus acts (feats of daring, strong men, trapeze artists) in variety. See also Rodger, *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima*, 39–47; and Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History*, 105–112.

[527] By the 1920s in Britain the terms were functionally interchangeable. American vaudeville and British music hall had the same type of acts, and it had become common practice for singers to tour each other's countries and adopt each other's songs, lyrical topics, and performing styles.

[528] William Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music: A History Through Musical Topic Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), Google Play Books edition, 173–174.

and theoretical works in addition to listening to pieces and experimenting in their own songs (see chapter 5). Both forms of knowledge development and exposure can be easily traced in sources, and both involve deliberate seeking of knowledge. Although one method (Harrison's) involved formal training, the Beatles' understanding of Hindustani classical music and musique concrète came about through both general exposure and more directed actions.

The music hall is a different case from the other styles I examine in two ways. First, documentation of how McCartney gained knowledge of the music hall is more limited. Both McCartney himself and secondary sources on the Beatles make fewer references to the music hall and his experiences with it than musique concrète. Many of these anecdotes about the music hall are also less specific than stories told about the Beatles' interactions with Indian music or Western avant-garde art music. For example, descriptions of McCartney's tape loop experimentation for "Tomorrow Never Knows" often take up several pages, where the songwriter's words on writing "When I'm Sixty-Four" as a music hall spoof take up less than half a page.[529] Complicating the issue is that often, a song will be described as sounding like the music hall, but there is scant (or no) detail about *why* that influence is audible.[530] The expectation that readers will automatically know what the music hall sounded like, or put the pieces of small details together, strikes me as similar to early examples of topic theory. Why

[529] Barry Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1997), 218–221, 319.

[530] See for example W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 112–113; Jon Stratton, " 'Ob-la-di ob-la-da': Paul McCartney, Diaspora, and the Politics of Identity," *Journal of Cultural Research* 18, no. 1 (2014), 20; and George Martin and Jeremy Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 201. Everett's account is the clearest in this regard, as he lists musical characteristics—keys, chromatic usages, instrumentation, chord progressions and resolutions—that can be verified in accounts specifically about the music hall.

a topic had particular features and not others was not always explained, seemingly operating on the "I know it when I hear it" principle.[531]

Second, when McCartney's experiences with the music hall are discussed in greater depth, the stories do not show the same kind of directed seeking out of knowledge that the other two styles do. McCartney, as I show in chapter 5, listened to pieces and attended concerts, discussed the music and ideas with friends and colleagues, and applied what he learned about musique concrète composition in the recording studio. The music hall, in contrast, seems to have been more a general musical environment that McCartney had exposure to. On a personal level, McCartney came from a musical family. His father Jim was a self-taught musician and composer, and he had played piano and trumpet in his own jazz band in the late 1920s.[532] Although the band played jazz and swing tunes, Jim McCartney enjoyed music hall songs and related popular tunes such as Tin Pan Alley songs, and he played them for his sons and extended family at home.[533]

(Paul) McCartney also describes a more intimate connection his father had with the music hall: "I grew up steeped in that music-hall tradition. My father once worked at the Liverpool Hippodrome as a spotlight operator...He was very entertaining about that period and had lots of tales about it. He'd learned his music from listening to it every single night of the week, two shows every night, Sundays off."[534] Finally, McCartney also describes his

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[531] Johanna Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study of Schoenberg's Ironic Waltzes," *Music Theory Spectrum* 39, no. 1 (2017), 84.

[532] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 22.

[533] Martin and Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends*, 34.

[534] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 23.

father teaching him and his brother harmony through demonstration.[535] With these stories, McCartney does not show explicit seeking out of the music hall, but he lived with and learned a great deal of music from a knowledgeable source.

The music hall influence in McCartney's life also extended further than his family. Music hall songs and performance were a part of British popular culture during McCartney's childhood in the 1940s and 1950s. As British theatre/music hall scholar J.S. Bratton points out, during the Victorian and Edwardian periods in England, the music hall was everywhere.[536] Between the halls' presence and popularity and wide availability of printed sheet music, the songs and sounds of the music hall were a well-established presence.[537] In addition, by the time McCartney was growing up, the music hall's heyday (roughly 1880s to 1920s) was within living memory for people like Jim McCartney and his parents. Even today, relatives of the music hall such as pantomime survive in British popular culture and consciousness.[538] Exposure to the songs, structural conventions, and instrumentation of the music hall would have been difficult to avoid for a person growing up in this environment.[539] Jim McCartney's experiences with the music hall and knowledge of its musical conventions, and sharing them with his sons, provided an even more direct connection.

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[535] Ibid.

[536] J.S. Bratton, "Introduction," in *Music Hall: Performance and Style*, ed. J.S. Bratton (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1986), x.

[537] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 2.

[538] Pantomime material is similar to the music hall, both musically and in terms of content (gag humor, occasional off-color songs and topics). However, "panto" shows primarily focus on fairy tales, fantastical stories, and fables, and are geared more directly toward families with children. Pantomime is also primarily associated with Christmas in the U.K. See Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History*, 238–239.

[539] This is not to say that exposure means a person will enjoy the music they hear. John Lennon was particularly disdainful of McCartney's music hall evocations, even though both would have been familiar with the style's sound on some level.

Producer George Martin also plays a key role related to expertise in the Beatles' music hall references. Although he did not have as close a connection to the music hall as McCartney, Martin did have experience with the instruments and musical ideas used in music hall numbers. He was the only person on the Beatle recording team with a university education in music.[540] He studied composition at the Guildhall School of Music, with piano and oboe as his primary instruments. The program, as he describes, also included music theory, harmony/counterpoint, conducting, and orchestration.[541] Martin thus brought another kind of understanding to the Beatles' recording environment: knowledge of the orchestra and (tonal) Western art music.

Because he had both the knowledge and a good working relationship with the band already, Martin became the primary arranger and conductor on tracks with orchestral parts from 1965 on. He also played an intermediary role between the Beatles and classically trained musicians, transcribing pitches one of the Beatles (usually McCartney) wanted and passing those on to the session musicians.[542] Essentially, Martin could translate between the sounds the Beatles wanted and the notational/technical language needed for the session players to understand. Martin brought his university training to many Beatles songs

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[540] Kari McDonald and Sarah Hudson Kaufman, " 'Tomorrow never knows': the contribution of George Martin and his production team to the Beatles' new sound," in *"Every Sound There Is" The Beatles'* Revolver *and the Transformation of Rock and Roll*, ed. Russell Reising, Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 140.

[541] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 26–27.

[542] McDonald and Kaufman, " 'Tomorrow never knows,'" 143, 146. Some of the most distinctive sounds on mid and late-1960s Beatles tracks were Martin's contributions. In addition to several tracks in this chapter, a small sample includes: "In My Life" (1965), performed piano solo with tape speed manipulation (see chapter 5); "Eleanor Rigby" (1966), composed string parts and vocal harmony arrangement; "A Day in the Life" (1967), conducting and advising the orchestra on how to play separately; "All You Need is Love" (1967), assembled collage of musical excerpts during outro; "Within You, Without You" (1967), composed Western string parts in collaboration with Harrison (see chapter 4); and "Something" (1969), composed and conducted string parts.

(including tracks discussed in previous chapters), but his knowledge is particularly relevant to the Beatles' music hall references because orchestral instruments are a part of the stylistic sound.

The Music Hall as Topic in 1960s British Rock

Between McCartney's knowledge of music hall songs' organization and Martin's experience working with orchestral instruments, several songs in the Beatles' "canon" realize the music hall sound very effectively. The music hall, in two cases in this chapter, can be described as a topic. Building once more on Frymoyer's weighted hierarchies of topical features, I present a feature hierarchy for the music hall topic in 1960s British rock. Most of these are, to use Browner's term, iconic music hall references: they come directly from the source music. Much like the Beatles' Indian topic, features' iconicity is spread across all three levels of the music hall's hierarchy.

Essential Features

The music hall topic has three essential features: the piano; melodic characteristics similar to the music hall such as range, rhythm, and timbre; and conventionally resolved secondary dominants. The piano was integral to music hall songs and performance, as one of the core ensemble timbres.[543] 1960s British rock songs that reference the music hall reflect the instrument's importance to that style by giving it prominence, either through placement in the song or bringing it forward in the overall mix. For example, several songs on the Kinks' *The Kinks are The Village Green Preservation Society* (1968) give the piano leading roles in songs deploying the music hall as a topic. It opens "Do You Remember Walter?" with loudly mixed, pounding chords (0:00–0:10) and helps mark the boundaries between sections, such

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[543] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 7.

as returning for the first instrumental link (0:48–0:53). In “Sitting By the Riverside,” the piano’s connection to the music hall or similar traditions is reinforced by its timbre: the instrument sounds reminiscent of a player piano (0:00–0:07). The Rolling Stones’ “Cool, Calm & Collected” (1967) treats the piano similarly, with a hammering playing style and prominent place in the mix (0:00–0:28).

In Beatles examples, the piano takes a core or prominent role as well. It introduces “Martha My Dear” and “Honey Pie,” as a solo instrument or performing only with the vocal. The instrument moves forward in the overall mix at key structural moments, such as the starts of bridges in “When I’m Sixty-Four.” In “Your Mother Should Know,” the piano supports the entire song harmonically.

The second essential feature is “singable” melodies: melodic design with high similarity to music hall melodies. Music hall tunes, particularly in the early and middle Victorian period, tended to stay around an octave in range, with an emphasis on conjunct motion and small leaps. As audience participation was important to music hall performance, songs needed melodies (or at least choruses) that were easy for an audience to learn and sing along with.[544] The range and melodic motions of songs using the music hall topic reflect the tendencies of music hall songs. The Kinks’ “Sitting By the Riverside,” in addition to the piano, has an overall melodic range of F3 to G4, just barely over an octave. The melody also mostly uses conjunct or neighboring motions, with minimal and small leaps. Songs that have slightly wider ranges, such as the Kinks’ “Village Green” and the Stones’ “Cool, Calm &

[544] Ibid., 11, 13–14.

Collected," will have ranges of an octave, plus or minus a step, in individual sections.[545] "Sitting By the Riverside" and "Village Green" in particular are relatively easy to sing, even on first listen, as the ideal would have been for a music hall number. The singable melodies may also be swung or have smaller, quicker rhythmic values. For example, the Kinks' "All of My Friends Were There" has both a small range and a quick, skipping, patter-like melodic line (0:05–0:26 and 1:14–1:36). Similarly to "Martha My Dear," "All of My Friends Were There" clearly separates its music hall references from the rock-heavy sections, using the music hall references only in the verses.

The Beatles' music hall-inspired songs also reflect the general singability of music hall tunes. While the McCartney songs' overall ranges are large compared to the Kinks, each melody includes individual sections with ranges of an octave, plus or minus a step. These sections, like music hall melodies, are mostly conjunct with small leaps of a fourth or less. Further, during each song's repetition of the title as a refrain or refrain-like moment, McCartney does not embellish or change the motive attached to the repeating lyrics. The musical and lyrical repetitiveness, much like music hall choruses, provide listeners with an anchor that would be easy to sing along with after very few listens. The melodies of all four McCartney songs analyzed in this chapter are also swung rhythmically and emphasize syncopation, giving them a bouncing, up-tempo quality. Finally, in his accounts of "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie," McCartney refers to using vocal timbre to reference the sound of older musical styles, which I will discuss further in the analysis sections.

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[545] It is possible, due to the salience of reed instruments, that "Village Green" is a trope of the music hall and the medieval as a topic. For a definition of troping, see Robert Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 68–69.

Another essential feature is conventionally resolved secondary dominants in the songs' harmonic progressions. While rock music of the 1960s and early 1970s does not shy away from secondary dominants, in songs deploying the music hall topic, they resolve according to the norms of Western tonal art music. This conventionality is a much stronger reflection of the music hall than it is of other rock songs at the time.[546] "Village Green," for example, presents two secondary dominants in C minor, V7/III and V7/V. Every time these two chords appear, they are always resolved to their expected target chords: V7/III to III (for example 0:12–0:14 and 0:41–0:43) and V7/V to V (0:57–1:01 and 1:39–1:43). All four of the McCartney songs analyzed in this chapter heavily feature conventionally resolved secondary dominants: V/V to V, V/ii to ii, and so on.

Frequent Features

The most immediately noticeable frequent features in the music hall topic are timbres. Clarinets, strings (particularly violins), flute, and brass instruments, namely the trumpet and flugelhorn, do not always appear in instances of the music hall topic. However, like the piano, these instruments also served as core ensemble members in music halls.[547] The number of music hall-associated instruments on each McCartney song varies but, with the exception of "Your Mother Should Know," at least one is present in each example. They can be found in non-Beatles examples as well, such as strings on the Kinks' "Village Green" (1:30–1:39) and "Starstruck" (1:06–1:25). Another Kinks tune, "Phenomenal Cat," has the

[546] As David Temperley describes, rock songs do use harmonic patterns common in tonal music, but these progressions sound quite different in a rock context. Conventionality in their handling (i.e. following tendencies of common-practice tonality) is less strictly adhered to in rock songs. See David Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 59.

[547] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 7–8.

flute as its most prominent timbre throughout the song.[548] The Rolling Stones' "Something Happened To Me Yesterday" (1967) includes several prominent horn moments in addition to the piano timbre (for example 0:00–0:04 and 1:39–2:13). As done for the Indian topic in chapter 4, I group these instruments together under the label of "other core music hall instruments."

Certain lyrical elements also fall into the frequent feature category. As described in the background section, music hall songs are often character-driven, with a focus on the activities and struggles of working and lower-middle class life. Two of McCartney's four main music hall-inspired songs present similar storylines as the music hall numbers that came before them. "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" give us narrators and/or other central characters reflective of the types of characters and activities seen in music hall songs, most notably working women and domestically focused, British hobbies. "Honey Pie" and "Your Mother Should Know" give listeners another reference to music hall performance: nonsense syllables and spoken asides. Improvisation of this type was an expectation of music hall singers and (to some extent) instrumental performers, particularly in comedic songs.[549] In addition, the use of nonsense syllables, particularly in repetitive song sections such as choruses, was a key feature of very early music hall songs from the 1840s and 1850s.[550] Although these moments in McCartney's songs were likely not improvised by the time they appeared on a final recording, they give the songs a live or improvised touch.

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[548] The flute timbre was possibly generated by a Mellotron.

[549] Davison, *Contemporary Drama and the Popular Dramatic Tradition in England*, 19.

[550] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 20.

The Kinks' music hall references occasionally present characters similar to McCartney, such as the narrator's ex-girlfriend Daisy and her grocer husband in "Village Green," but these characters are usually much more ambiguous in their class status than McCartney's characters. The narrator's friend in "Do You Remember Walter?", for example, may have working or lower middle-class origins, but the lyrics do not confirm it. Likewise, the female character of the Rolling Stones' "Cool, Calm & Collected" does not have any characteristics tying her to a specific class. All three bands, however, give examples of nonsense or improvisatory singing or vocal effects. The Kinks' "Starstruck" and "Phenomenal Cat" both give large sections over to it: the solo in "Starstruck" (1:04–1:18), and the choruses in "Phenomenal Cat" (1:13–1:29 and 1:55–2:25).[551] One of the Rolling Stones (presumably) whistles a countermelody during "Something Happened To Me Yesterday," as if in response to the sung melody (1:01–1:04). The outro in the song also features a spoken segment, in which singer Mick Jagger bids the listener/audience farewell on behalf of the band and the producer (4:18–4:42). Like McCartney's examples, while these moments were likely not improvised in the songs' released versions, they give the songs an improvised or live sound.

Finally, the "oom-pah" (or "oom-pah-pah" in threes) accompaniment pattern constitutes another frequent feature for the music hall topic. Music hall songs were not particularly harmonically adventurous, often staying within the tonic key or modulating only to the dominant or submediant.[552] In addition, like the related American variety songs,

[551] The vocals in "Phenomenal Cat" received some manipulation as well, occasionally giving the nonsense syllables a chipmunk-like timbre. (Possibly the cat singing?) The effect, at least to my ears, reinforces the nonsensical lyrics.

[552] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 12.

rhythmic simplicity was a characteristic of music hall numbers.[553] Given the simplicity of both harmony and rhythm in music hall songs, it stands to reason that bass lines would tend to be rudimentary as well, and the oom-pah accompaniment pattern fits this idea. Bennett's discussion of the music hall's stylistic patterns bears this out: several of his musical examples, such as "I'm Getting a Big Boy Now" (1880) and "The Bachelors' Club" (1895) show the "oom-pah" pattern in their piano reductions, in both groups of two and groups of three.[554]

Despite its salience, the oom-pah accompaniment pattern is not used in all instances of the music hall topic. Three of the Beatles songs analyzed here present this accompaniment pattern, though the extent to which it is used varies, from very fleeting moments ("Martha My Dear") to throughout the song ("Honey Pie"). Likewise, the Kinks' and Rolling Stones' topical instances do not always use the pattern, but it comes paired with at least one essential feature when present. "Something Happened To Me Yesterday" mixes the oom-pah pattern with stepwise bass lines (0:07–0:33). Meanwhile, the Kinks' "Sitting By the Riverside" and "All of My Friends Were There" include the oom-pah texture, and it is particularly noticeable during the latter song's verses (0:05–0:26 and 1:14–1:36).

It is worth briefly noting that for McCartney in particular, oom-pah patterns and other relatively simple bass lines were not his usual method of bass playing by the mid-1960s. Rather than simply presenting chord members in straightforward rhythms, McCartney's bass

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[553] Rodger, *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima*, 118.

[554] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 13–15, 20.

lines after 1965 tend to mix chord members with more melodic and fluid motions.[555] To use Allan Moore's term, melodic bass playing became a part of McCartney's and the Beatles' idiolect during the mid and late 1960s.[556] Considering McCartney's general playing preferences, the oom-pah accompaniment in the bass (usually played by McCartney himself) seems particularly striking and a strong candidate for a topical feature.

Idiosyncratic and/or Stylistically Particular Features

In chapter 4, I referred to the third hierarchical level as "idiosyncratic," due to the features' specificity to the Beatles. However, for the music hall topic I additionally borrow one of Frymoyer's terms: "stylistically particular." The phrase describes features that connect a topical instance to a particular time period or school of composition, thus specifying the reference's meaning further.[557] Time period connection happens occasionally in the music hall topic. For example, the Rolling Stones' "Something Happened To Me Yesterday" includes a saxophone in its ensemble; as I will discuss in my analysis of "Honey Pie," the saxophone is a possible specification to the 1920s, the end of the music hall's heyday.[558] "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" include several musical and/or technical effects that specify the 1920s. I will describe these stylistically particular moments in greater detail in the analyses. Fig. 6.1 shows my weighted hierarchy of features for the music hall topic, and Table 6.1 gives a quick view of the Beatles songs in this chapter, listing features present.

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[555] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 13. My own recommended listening for McCartney's melodic bass lines: "Michelle" (1965), "Here, There, and Everywhere" (1966), "Penny Lane" (1967), and "Something" (1969).

[556] Allan F. Moore, *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 120.

[557] Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century," 85.

[558] Barry J. Faulk, *British Rock Modernism, 1967–1977: The Story of Music Hall in Rock* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), Ashgate e-Book edition, 81.

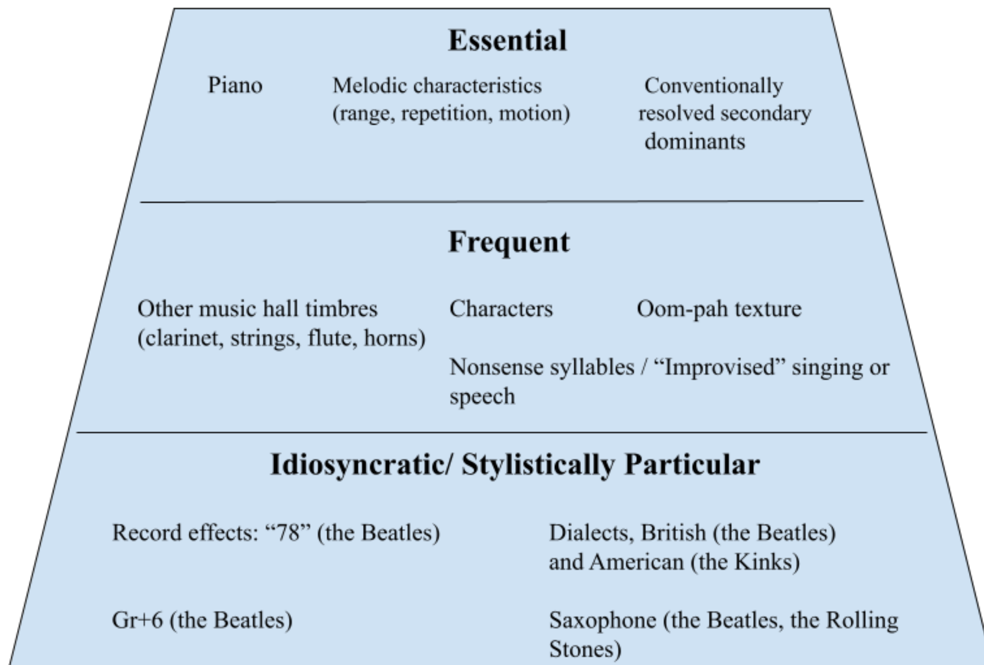

Fig 6.1. Weighted hierarchy of the music hall topic in British rock of the 1960s.

Table 6.1. Quick, chronological (by release date) view of Beatles songs with various music hall topical features. For songs with more than one composer, the bolded name is the primary composer.

Song	*Composer*	*Album*	*Essential Features*	*Frequent Features*	*Idiosyncratic and/or Stylistically Particular Features*
"When I'm Sixty-Four"	John Lennon/**Paul McCartney**	*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967)	Piano, melodic design, secondary dominants with conventional resolution	Clarinets, music hall-specific characters, oom-pah pattern	Dialect imitation (possible reference to comedic "dialect songs"), accelerated lead vocal
"Your Mother Should Know"	John Lennon/**Paul McCartney**	*Magical Mystery Tour* (1967)	Piano, melodic design, secondary dominants	Nonsense syllables, improvisatory singing	None
"Martha My Dear"	John Lennon/**Paul McCartney**	*The Beatles*, AKA the *White Album* (1968)	Piano, melodic design, secondary dominants (few)	Strings, brass, oom-pah pattern	None
"Honey Pie"	John Lennon/**Paul McCartney**	The *White Album* (1968)	Piano, melodic design, secondary dominants	Clarinets, music hall-specific character, improvisatory singing, oom-pah pattern	Saxophone, Gr+6 chord, 78 vocal effect (1920s specification)

Parody and the Music Hall in the Beatles

The music hall's treatment in the Beatles' songs is a bit inconsistent: sometimes it is a clear topic, and sometimes the distinction between topic and context is more fuzzy. The music hall functions as a clear topic in two of the songs, "Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear." While some features are present, they are often fleeting instances or

surface phenomena, such as timbral choices or accompaniment patterns. The other two songs, however, present some complications. In “When I’m Sixty-Four” and “Honey Pie,” the references to the music hall are anything but fleeting. Melodic design, for example, applies across all sections of both songs, and any rock timbres present are overshadowed by music hall associated timbres, as the guitar is in “When I’m Sixty Four.” The time span of the reference to the music hall is much longer, resulting in two songs that no longer resemble rock songs at all.

Compounding the issue is the fact that music hall songs and rock songs share distinct formal similarities: alternating verses and choruses/refrains, and auxiliary sections (intros and outros, solos).[559] Although the time course of the Indian topic and musique concrète references in other Beatles songs is also extended, formal resemblance between context and source music is not an issue.[560] However, when formal overlap is combined with a high number of topical features, differentiating context and topic becomes a bit messy. McCartney’s songs muddy the waters even further by including so many music hall features that, essentially, they become more music hall than rock. The combination of feature overload with formal resemblances in “When I’m Sixty-Four” and “Honey Pie” blurs the line between topic and context, and does not in the two others (“Your Mother Should Know” and “Martha My Dear”).

McCartney’s music hall-inspired songs provoke two questions. First, what might explain the inconsistency in the music hall’s treatment? All four songs are cited as drawing

[559] Drew Nobile, *Form as Harmony in Rock Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), Kindle Books edition, 39–40, 115.

[560] Indian topical features and musique concrète techniques are consistent through many of the songs (particularly those deploying the Indian topic). However, these source musics do not have the same level of formal similarity, or affect the overall rock form/context. Please see chapters 4 and 5.

on the music hall, or inspired by it in some way (about which more below), yet the extent to which that influence manifests splits the songs into two groups. Compared to the Beatles' treatment of Indian music and musique concrète, the relative inconsistency in the music hall's treatment is striking. One possible explanation is that the kind of topicality presented in each song is linked to the nature of *parody*.

In a book on irony, parody, and the grotesque in Shostakovich, Esti Sheinberg defines parody as one of several manifestations of ironic intent. All types of irony include two opposed levels or layers of meaning; the person creating the irony and the observer or listener detect the less obvious meaning through a hint or a clue in the explicit message. Irony is very similar to metaphor in that both types of communication are based on incongruity through difference of the terms compared. Irony, however, assumes that there can be no agreement between the message's incongruous parts. For example, the phrase "I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys" is a poetic metaphor when the speaker is (or is assumed to be) a young woman in love. If the speaker were an older woman, the incongruity implied between a metaphorical "first flowering" and the woman's assumed experience, based on her age, would give the remark an ironic edge.[561]

As a type of irony, parody is composed of two such incongruent layers taken from preexisting cultural contexts: visual art, music, stylistic genres or periods, and so on. Sheinberg writes:

> Parody is characterized by its structure more than by its content. In all cases the two layers of meaning in parody will be structural, one of them being an item that was ripped out of its original context and the other a new context. Usually parody will contain some distortion of the alluded style, mostly by its exaggeration...It can satirize, in which case one of the layers is exaggerated or presented in a derogatory light; it can pay a tribute, in which case it uses a

[561] Sheinberg, *Irony, Satire, Parody and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich*, 145–146.

> contextualized, yet undistorted quotation; and it can point to an unresolvable contradiction, if neither (or both) layer(s) is (are) distorted.[562]

Within the overarching definition, she distinguishes between two types of parody. The first, satirical parody, frames one of the two meaningful layers as the one that should be preferred. For example, Debussy's "Golliwogg's Cakewalk" (*Children's Corner*, 1906–1908) parodies Wagner's Tristan chord by transferring it into a piece in the style of an African-American minstrels' cakewalk. The leitmotif's placement into the new context of a light entertainment piece, and the incongruity between the clumsy accompaniment and over-emotional, exaggerated Wagner reference, make the Tristan chord sound somewhat ridiculous. By drawing so much attention to the Tristan chord, through both incongruity and exaggeration, Debussy labels the "high" art as the layer to be mocked, creating a satirical parody.

Non-satirical parody, on the other hand, presents two clashing stylistic layers without exaggerating or distorting either. Debussy's "The Little Shepherd" (*Children's Corner*, 1906–1908) is an example of non-satirical parody. The composer uses a reference to his own previous piece, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1895), to parody a child's perception of the pastorale by using the motif for the faun's sexual yearning. While the stylistic difference is clear between the *Prélude* excerpt and the overall context of the piece, "a 31-bar-long, naïve, childlike piano miniature," neither element is overly exaggerated or distorted in the way Debussy distorts the Tristan chord in "Golliwogg's Cakewalk."[563] It is not a lack of clash or incongruity that makes a piece non-satirical parody; it is the absence or low level of exaggeration in the incongruity.

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[562] Ibid., 84.

[563] Ibid., 316, 318, 325–328.

Yayoi Uno Everett's exploration of parody and ethos provides a useful expansion on Sheinberg's satirical versus non-satirical parody. Everett defines parody as an appropriation of a preexisting musical style that is intended to highlight it in some way. She then argues that an analyst's task in studying parodic music is to determine what *ethos* lies behind the parody. Ethos can be found in how the borrowed element's new context transforms and/or subverts its meaning.[564] For example, direct musical quotations in the pieces of Charles Ives or Alban Berg are recontextualized and incongruous in their new contexts, but do not generate any oppositions in meaning and are examples of neutral ethos. Everett's neutral or deferential ethos connects with Sheinberg's non-satirical parody: the quotations in Berg or Ives have not been exaggerated or mocked, just moved into a new context. Likewise, in satirical parody the parodic devices used communicate an ethos of ridicule or scorn.[565] Following Sheinberg's recommendation to take into account a composer's historical context and experiences with the parodied style, I determine the ethos underlying McCartney's music hall tunes by examining primary and secondary accounts of the attitudes they present toward the source music.[566]

Sheinberg's description of parody bears a striking resemblance to Mirka's definition (which I use here) of a musical topic: "an item that was ripped out of its original context" being placed into a new context.[567] However, while topics can be used for parodic purposes, they do not necessarily need to be parodic. For example, as pointed out by Tamara Balter's

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[564] Yayoi Uno Everett, "Parody with an Ironic Edge," 4–5.

[565] Ibid., 4, 6, 12.

[566] Sheinberg, *Irony, Satire, Parody and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich*, 333.

[567] Ibid., 84.

examination of topics in Beethoven, the learned style can be a non-ironic evocation or an ironic one.[568] Topic theorists have suggested several ways topics can become parodic. Robert Hatten, for one, argues that troping plays a key role. When a topic merged with the prevailing style (or with another topic) is combined with a more clearly delineated topic that contradicts the context, parody or satire ensues.[569] Raymond Monelle suggests that irony or parody can come from a topic's placement. The learned style, for example, tends to occur in the middle of pieces, so beginning a piece with it frustrates a listener's expectations.[570] Finally, Balter's examination of learned style parodies in Beethoven demonstrates that manipulating the conventions of a topic can create a parodic effect. For example, the Second Trio of Beethoven's Op. 4 Quintet (1796) presents a breakdown in canonic writing after three entrances, *sforzandi* on weak beats, and syncopation that add up to give the learned style allusion a comic effect.[571] In all cases, a topic becomes parodic through some kind of incongruity: between topic and context, through surprising placement, or undermining through compositional choices.

McCartney's music hall treatments explore both satirical and non-satirical parody through differing kinds of topicality. The songs most resembling the source music ("When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie") are non-satirical, while the songs treating the source

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[568] Tamara Balter, "Canon-Fodders: Parody of Learned Style in Beethoven," *Journal of Musicological Research* 32, nos. 2–3 (2013), 216.

[569] Robert Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 515. Parody, or at least irony, may also occur when a topic that is incompatible with its surroundings (incongruous?) appears to comment on those surroundings; see Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works," 516–517.

[570] Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 9.

[571] Balter, "Canon-Fodders: Parody of Learned Style in Beethoven," 203–204.

music as a topic (“Your Mother Should Know” and “Martha My Dear”) are satirical. As Sheinberg discusses, non-satirical parodies do not exaggerate or distort their referenced styles, even if the difference is still audible. In “When I’m Sixty-Four” and “Honey Pie,” so many topical characteristics are drawn upon that, between the features’ number and their time course, the stylistic clash between music hall and rock becomes almost unnoticeable. The juxtaposition is noticeable within the context of the songs’ albums as a whole, particularly “When I’m Sixty-Four,” but when viewing the songs alone, the music hall characteristics are not marked.[572] In addition, these two songs are consistently described as gentle, affectionate parodies of the music hall, both in the literature and by primary sources.

“Your Mother Should Know” and “Martha My Dear,” on the other hand, give listeners much more fleeting and topical uses of the music hall. In the case of the former, the features that are present are fewer in number: for example, aside from the piano, “Your Mother Should Know” does not use any music hall-associated timbres (clarinets, horns, strings). “Martha My Dear” has more salient features, but does not extend most of them across the entire song, as done in the non-satirical parodies. The stylistic clash between rock and music hall is particularly audible in “Martha My Dear,” as the two styles’ timbres do not mix during each song section, making them sound both more noticeable and more exaggerated. In addition to these characteristics suggesting satirical parody, these songs are consistently described as less genuine in some way than “When I’m Sixty-Four” or “Honey Pie.”

[572] “When I’m Sixty-Four,” while not the only song on *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) that references the nostalgic, is certainly the one most closely resembling a Victorian music hall number. As for “Honey Pie,” *The Beatles* (1968, also known as the *White Album*) is virtually an album by four solo artists rather than a cohesive band, and thus stylistic inconsistencies do not necessarily stand out as marked. Further, as similar to music hall numbers as the songs may be, they are not being performed in the context of an actual music hall.

Understanding the relationship between topicality and parody in McCartney's music hall tunes addresses my first question of explanation. However, it does not fully answer the second question provoked by these songs: What meaning(s) might a listener take from them? How is a listener supposed to interpret the mix of satirical and non-satirical parody? I posit that the music hall's varying kinds of topicality and levels of parody signify that, for the Beatles, the music of older generations (and, by extension, the people themselves) is equally a target for respect and mockery.

Parody, Englishness, and Ambivalence

The Beatles' music hall-inspired songs engage with two different kinds of topicality, and with two different kinds of parody. But why change from one version of topicality and one type of parody to the other? Music hall and Victorian culture scholar Barry J. Faulk's work on modernism in British classic rock may help provide an interpretation. In *British Rock Modernism, 1967–1977*, Faulk argues that rock groups of this time period referenced the music of Britain's past to establish rock music's status as art. The music hall became established as a symbol of Britishness during the Victorian era, and the image of the music hall as an emblem of firmly British class solidarity and community was still a powerful one for the Beatles' generation (those born during World War II). However, by the mid-1960s British rock musicians were beginning to focus on establishing rock music as an art in its own right. The Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and the Kinks all drew in some way on the music hall within this context as a way to ironically comment on the British past and establish rock music's hegemony.[573]

[573] Faulk, *British Rock Modernism, 1967–1977*, 1, 4–5, 8, 11, 15.

The Beatles' made-for-TV film *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967), Faulk argues, is a specific manifestation of ironic commentary on Englishness and Britain's cultural past. The film shows the Beatles traveling around the English countryside on a bus tour, with an assortment of fictional characters, and was conceived of (mostly by McCartney) as a surreal, yet home movie-esque project. Miles describes it as "a very simple idea – to get on a bus with a few friends, drive around, improvise a few scenes and film everything that happened."[574] Naturally, the film segments would include Beatles songs as well as acted sequences and various shenanigans unrelated to music. The film was not well received upon its release, and remains a somewhat obscure Beatles project today.

Faulk, however, argues that *Magical Mystery Tour* presents a fairly sophisticated destabilization of ideas of traditional Englishness. The movie plays on tropes of traditional Englishness from the beginning and overarching concept. The holiday bus tour, through the countryside and often to the seaside, was a working and lower-middle class pastime particularly common in northern England. Various film segments also present images strongly connected to Victorian and early Edwardian pastimes: mechanical rides, waxwork displays, "freak shows," a variety-style theatre, and in the final sequence, a trip to a casino framed as part of an English seaside resort.

However, all of this imagery rooted in traditional Englishness is accompanied by surreal presentations of the Beatles themselves as elements of chaos bringing a more modern way of life to the English pastoral, and past. For example, the "I Am the Walrus" segment shows the group miming the song in animal costumes in the countryside, "[turning] an anti-institutional rant into a dark carnival...it shatters the peace of the countryside otherwise

[574] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 351–352.

presumed in the film, as if the barbarous effects of English institutions had spread to infect the countryside."[575] Other song segments similarly turn images of Englishness on their heads: Harrison's "Blue Jay Way" framed as a film showing in a tent that magically resembles a variety theatre; the "camp spectacle" of the final sequence set to "Your Mother Should Know." *Magical Mystery Tour* invokes images of traditional Englishness, including imagery and sounds associated with the music hall, only to make them unfamiliar and exotic, visions of folk life through a modernist, futuristic lens.[576]

Faulk suggests that for the Beatles, by 1967, older images of the English past needed reworking, or at least reframing. McCartney's satirical music hall parodies, and the sequence accompanying "Your Mother Should Know" in the film, seem to bear this out. However, when one considers the four songs in this chapter, McCartney's handling of music hall references shows a level of contradiction that is less striking in the *Magical Mystery Tour* film alone.[577] McCartney parodies the music hall in all four songs analyzed here, but only two of the parodies ("Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear") are satirical. The other two, "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie," parody the music hall with affection and non-satirically.

I would argue that, given the Beatles' explorations of British cultural past and McCartney's own experiences with the music hall, the two kinds of topicality (and parody) in his music hall-inspired songs reflect an ambivalence toward that cultural past. As Faulk

[575] Faulk, *British Rock Modernism, 1967–1977*, 48–49, 65, 68–69, 70, 72.

[576] Ibid., 47, 70–72.

[577] Faulk points out that one sequence, "The Fool on the Hill" (which shows McCartney gamboling around alone in the countryside), privileges nature over celebrity and metropolitan culture in more traditional ways. The sequence, thus, strikes Faulk as out of place when compared to, say, the inversion of the natural world in "I Am the Walrus."

discusses, the Rolling Stones and the Kinks both draw on the music hall, but each band's music seems to present a single opinion on the music hall and British past. *The Kinks are The Village Green Preservation Society*, in his words, "is replete with songs about looking back, and characters who long to return to an earlier version of the national past."[578] A certain level of sentimentality is present on the album that is only present in two of the McCartney songs I analyze. Likewise, *The Rolling Stones' Rock and Roll Circus* (1970) used music hall and circus imagery to reconnect working-class British identity with rock music; however, the Stones found that representing the working-class community (of which they were never a part) would not necessarily create such a community.[579] Faulk's description suggests that the Kinks present a sentimental take on the music hall, while the Rolling Stones' treatment of it presents a lack of sentimentality.

McCartney's music hall-inspired numbers differ from those of his contemporaries by neither siding with sentimentality, nor completely abandoning it. "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" present non-satirical parodies, framing the music hall and, by extension, the British past as something to be respected. That McCartney in particular would have this view of the music hall makes sense, given his musical tastes and background. Although McCartney was deeply interested in the avant-garde and British underground, he also had the keenest appreciation of the four Beatles for older popular music forms and the music hall in particular.[580] In addition, McCartney had a direct link to the source music through his father Jim; the other three Beatles, while aware of the music hall, did not have a familial link to

[578] Faulk, *British Rock Modernism, 1967–1977*, 118.

[579] Ibid., 87–88, 102.

[580] Ibid., 72, 74.

it.[581] The combination of genuine enjoyment and the music hall's connection to an important and respected figure in McCartney's life could be contributing to the non-satirical side of his parodies.

At the same time, "Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear" are satirical parodies, taking a more tongue-in-cheek attitude toward the music hall and the ideas of Englishness it evokes. As Faulk discusses, the Beatles were part of a larger trend in mid and late-1960s British rock of distancing themselves from traditional ideas of Englishness and the British past. Bands at this time appropriated the music hall's sounds and stylistic components to "represent everything that rock was supposedly not."[582] As McCartney was a key player in rock's development during the 1960s, and someone interested in avant-garde ideas and perspectives, that he would view the music hall as a subject for mockery also makes sense. The four songs analyzed in this chapter, seen as a whole, thus present a two-sided significance to the Beatles' music hall references: the style, and by extension the cultural ideas of the British past that it evokes, can be treated with both respect and ridicule.

Non-Satirical Parodies: "When I'm Sixty-Four," "Honey Pie"

The first and oldest McCartney song that references the music hall is "When I'm Sixty-Four." Though its official recorded release was on *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), the song actually dated back to the Beatles' active performing days in the early 1960s. In its earliest form, "When I'm Sixty-Four" was an instrumental inspired by

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[581] McCartney was the only Beatle with professional musicians as immediate relatives. Lennon, Harrison, and Starr's immediate and physically present families did appreciate and enjoy music. Some, including Lennon's mother and Harrison's father, were amateur musicians themselves. However, unlike Jim McCartney, none of them performed music professionally or were directly connected to the music hall. See Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through* Rubber Soul (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 12, 14, 119.

[582] Faulk, *British Rock Modernism, 1967–1977*, 1.

McCartney's father's piece "Walking in the Park with Eloise."[583] Jim McCartney had turned 64 the previous year, possibly accounting for the song's revival.[584] The song has been described variously as "quaint and touching" (Everett), nostalgic (Everett), and an example of McCartney's appreciation for the music hall and vaudeville (Lewisohn, Martin).[585]

"When I'm Sixty-Four" makes use of all three essential features for the music hall topic. The piano is mixed particularly loudly during the bridges, bringing it forward in the overall sound (0:38–0:44 and 1:34–1:47). The melody is relatively simple to sing, as it uses mostly stepwise motion or leaps to small intervals (thirds and the occasional fourth), and is swung and heavily syncopated throughout. The melody's range across the entire song is larger than most music hall songs have; the lowest point is an Eb3, the highest an Ab4. Within each individual section, however, the range is much smaller. For example, as shown in example 6.1, in the verses the melody stays within the F3–F4 octave with the exception of an E neighbor; the bridges similarly stay close to an octave in range.[586]

[583] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 112.

[584] Martin and Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends*, 34.

[585] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 141, 190; Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 89; Martin and Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends*, 36.

[586] Bridge 1 (0:38–1:03) stays within an octave, but as bridge 2 (1:34–1:59) adds some sung lyrics ("Every summer we can rent a cottage in the Isle of Wight, if it's not too dear"), the melodic range is a tenth.

When I get ol - der, lo-sing my hair Ma-ny years from now

Will you still be sen-ding me a val-en- tine, birth-day gree- tings, bot-tle of wine?

If I'd been out till quar-ter to three Would you lock the door?

Will you still need me, will you still feed me When I'm six-ty four?

Example 6.2. Verse melodic range of "When I'm Sixty-Four." Reproduced from Tetsuya Fujita et. al., *The Beatles Complete Scores* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation and Wise Publications, 1993), 1,010–1,011.

Further, the refrain of "Will you still need me, will you still feed me / When I'm sixty-four?" is the only set of lyrics that does not have any melodic embellishment across the song (0:31–0:36, 1:27–1:32, and 2:23–2:28 for comparison).[587] The lack of melodic changes in the refrain, working together with the lyrical repetition, provides the song with a strong anchor that could be remembered with only a few listens. Although "When I'm Sixty-Four" does not have a chorus, one can easily see a music-hall audience picking up the refrain's lyrics and tune quickly enough to sing along.

Secondary dominants with conventional resolutions play an important role in the song as well. As Everett discusses in his analysis, "When I'm Sixty-Four" has the most extensive use of secondary dominants on all of *Sgt. Pepper*.[588] Example 6.3 below shows the secondary

[587] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 220–222.

[588] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 113.

dominants of verse 1, in root position and with rhythm values indicating the amount of musical time the chord stays the same.[589] In the verses all but one of these secondary dominants resolve directly to their expected targets: V7/IV resolves to IV ("would you lock the door," 0:27–0:30) and V7/V to V7 (0:34–0:36). The Bb major chord on "will you still feed me" can be construed as V/ii (0:32–0:33); ii and V/V in this key have the same root (Eb in this key), and a chain of tonicizations along the circle of fifths is not uncommon in tonal terms. McCartney handles secondary dominants here with a conventionality that is less common in rock music, but quite common in music hall songs.

Example 6.3. The author's reduction and annotation of verse 1 secondary dominants in "When I'm Sixty-Four."

From the frequent features category, the most noticeable is the clarinet timbre, arranged by George Martin. From Martin and Geoff Emerick's descriptions, the clarinets

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[589] As my point here has more to do with the nature of the chords themselves than specific voicing (and "proper" voice leading is not always of concern in rock songs), all chords are shown in root position with doubled roots.

were the solution to McCartney's desire to have "a kind of tooty sound."[590] Clarinet and piano, both members of core ensembles in music hall numbers, are the most prominent sounds on the track. The clarinets (two regular and one bass) open and close the song in the instrumental introduction and outro (0:00–0:10 and 2:29–2:37), as well as providing contrasting material and interjections to McCartney's lead vocal.

"When I'm Sixty-Four" also shows a strong lyrical connection to the music hall. Music hall songs presented a wide variety of characters, many of them belonging to the working and lower-middle classes of Victorian Britain. (Any members of higher classes, such as the swell, were mostly presented as laughable rather than something to aspire to.) As such, song topics centered on the struggles, successes, and humor in working and lower-middle class life.[591] While the characters in "When I'm Sixty-Four" are perhaps from a more modern era, they are very similar to those shown in music hall songs. The focus is on domestic concerns and activities, particularly in the second verse: "I could be handy, mending a fuse / When your lights have gone / You can knit a sweater by the fireside / Sunday mornings, go for a ride / Doing the garden, digging the weeds / Who could ask for more?" (1:06–1:25).[592] These unassuming activities, the particularly British idea of visiting the U.K. coast for a summer holiday, and reference to pulling together savings for such a holiday may suggest that the narrator and his love interest might belong to the working or

[590] Martin and Hornsby, *All You Need Is Ears*, 201; Geoff Emerick and Howard Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere: My Life Recording the Music of the Beatles* (New York: Gotham Books, 2006), 137.

[591] Kift, *The Victorian Music Hall: Culture, Class and Conflict*, 37–38.

[592] Hunter Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics: The Stories Behind the Music, Including the Handwritten Drafts of More Than 100 Classic Beatles Songs* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2014), 221–222.

middle classes. Much like the refrain's melody, the story told in "When I'm Sixty-Four" would not be out of place in a music hall setting.

The song also makes consistent use of the oom-pah accompaniment pattern in the bass. During the verses, the bass notes fall on beats 1 and 3 of each measure, with the occasional small chromatic line leading up to the end of the second line, "Birthday greetings, bottle of wine" (0:10–0:37). The bridges switch the accompaniment pattern slightly, piano and bass playing quarter notes on each beat together, but the rest of the song uses the oom-pah pattern. The accompaniment's salience is only made stronger by the bass' forward presence in the final mix, as well as occasional doubling from the clarinets (0:00–0:07, 2:29–2:37).

Finally, the song includes two stylistically particular features that may point to a more specific association than the music hall in general. Martin and Emerick raised the overall key from C major to Db major during mixing by speeding up the tape.[593] The point of this exercise was to make McCartney sound younger, "as if he were, say, a 16-year-old looking forward to being 64."[594] However, as McCartney himself points out, the speed manipulation meshes well with other aspects of the song that communicate a music hall sound.[595] McCartney also includes a slight accent in the second bridge, rolling the "r" in "grandchildren" (1:49–1:51). This "homey brogue," as Everett describes it, may be a reference to a specific type of music hall song, the dialect song.[596]

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[593] Martin and Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends*, 35.

[594] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 91.

[595] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 319.

[596] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 113. Dialect songs are those, usually comedic, sung in a particular regional accent and portraying a character from that area. For example, Cockney and Newcastle dialect songs were particularly popular; see Dave Harker, "Joe Wilson:

Many of the methods used to reference the music hall in “When I’m Sixty-Four” also apply to the second song in this section, “Honey Pie.” Released on *The Beatles* (1968), referred to from here by its popular title the *White Album*, “Honey Pie” presents a narrator mooning over a film star in America.[597] The time period McCartney evokes in this song is the 1920s, toward the end of the music hall’s heyday and the time by which British music hall and American vaudeville were indistinguishable.[598] Despite the later setting, the song still relies on the same topical features to create a music hall sound.

Beginning with essential features, “Honey Pie” prominently uses the piano, the main core of music hall ensembles. Though less crucial than it is in “When I’m Sixty-Four,” the piano still plays an important role on the track, being the only accompaniment to McCartney’s vocal during the introduction (0:00–0:38). Melodic design in “Honey Pie” communicates the idea of the music hall both in terms of fixed and improvisatory elements. The melody is somewhat more difficult to sing and follow than “When I’m Sixty-Four.” Overall range for the song is wider, spanning two octaves from lowest point (D3) to highest point (D5 during the outro; 2:24–2:27). The melody is also more disjunct, with some leaps of fifths and sixths. However, within each fully sung section, the melody spans smaller ranges. For example, the introduction’s melodic range is within a seventh (D3–C4), and the bridge

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‘Comic Dialectical Singer’ or Class Traitor?” in *Music Hall: Performance & Style*, ed. J.S. Bratton (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1986), 119. Hunter Davies also suggests that McCartney approximated a Lancashire accent on the track, which might be difficult for American ears to pick up; see Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 220. The Kinks’ Ray Davies also includes a reference to dialect in “Village Green,” mimicking an American accent.

[597] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 302–303.

[598] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 158; W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 189.

stays within an octave (G3–G4), though with some larger leaps (1:06–1:19). The melody is also swung throughout.

Medium swing

You be- came a le - gend of the sil - ver screen And now the

5

thought of mee - ting you makes me weak in the knee.

Example 6.4. Bridge melodic range of "Honey Pie." Reproduced from Tetsuya Fujita et. al., *The Beatles Complete Scores* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation and Wise Publications, 1993), 420–421.

Similarly to "When I'm Sixty-Four," the repeated title at the beginning of each verse presents the same motive of outlining the tonic triad (0:39–0:40, 0:52–0:53, 1:19–1:20, and 2:12–2:13 for comparison). The repetition of both motive and lyrics gives the title a refrain-like feel that can provide listeners with an anchor to sing along with.

The third essential feature, secondary dominants, can be found throughout "Honey Pie." Like "When I'm Sixty-Four," the song both heavily uses them and resolves them to the expected target chords. For example, at the end of the introduction V7/V resolves to V, creating a push toward the first verse (0:23–0:38). The verses include a similar progression as "When I'm Sixty-Four": a resolution from V7/ii to V7/V, and onward to V7 (0:44–0:48).[599] Both of these instances of secondary dominants are shown in example 6.5 below. Once again, the conventionality with which McCartney handles secondary dominants is a much stronger reflection of the music hall than it is of other rock songs at the time.

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[599] McCartney uses the same construction V/ii-V/V-V7 (with possible reading of V/ii as V/V/V) in "Your Mother Should Know."

Slow and improvisatory

Medium swing

Piano

And if she could on - ly hear me This is what I'd say: Ho-ney Pie

G: V7/V V7/V V7 V7 V7 I

7

Pno.

You are ma - king me cra - zy, I'm in love, but I'm

I Gr+6 V7/ii

10

Pno.

la - zy, So won't you please come home?

V7/V V7 I

Example 6.5. The author's reduction and annotation of introduction and verse 1 secondary dominants in "Honey Pie."

For frequent features, George Martin once again provided a clarinet arrangement, present throughout the song.[600] Lyrics provide another connection between "Honey Pie" and the music hall. Like "When I'm Sixty-Four," "Honey Pie" is a strongly character-driven song. As McCartney describes, he envisioned the narrator as a performer singing to an actress he admires.[601] While there is no indication of the narrator's class status as there is in "When I'm Sixty-Four," there is of Honey Pie: "She was a working girl / North of England way / Now she's hit the big time / In the U.S.A."[602] The working woman and the immigrant, which could sometimes be the same character, were common presentations for female performers in both the music hall and American vaudeville.[603] As a working-class woman who is also an immigrant to America, Honey Pie is a character that would not seem out of place in a music hall number.

The oom-pah accompaniment pattern is consistent throughout the bass part in "Honey Pie." After the introduction, the bass plays the pattern in the same places as "When I'm Sixty-Four": on beats 1 and 3 of each measure (0:39–0:52 as an example). There are occasional moments where the bass plays walking or scalar lines, such as 0:46–0:47 and 1:00–1:01, but the majority of the song uses the oom-pah pattern for the bass. Similarly to "When I'm Sixty-Four," the bass' loudness in the overall mix draws attention to it, making the accompaniment even more noticeable.

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[600] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 158.

[601] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 497.

[602] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 302.

[603] J.S. Bratton, "Jenny Hill: Sex and Sexism in Victorian Music Hall," in *Music Hall: Performance & Style*, ed. J.S. Bratton (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1986), 104; Rodger, *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima*, 87, 92; Maloney, " 'Flying Down the Saltmarket,'" 19–20.

The three auxiliary sections—the introduction, solo, and outro—present a frequent feature not on “When I’m Sixty-Four”: “improvisatory” singing and spoken asides. The introduction of “Honey Pie” unfolds slowly and with little fixed rhythm, almost as if the narrator is writing its music and lyrics on the spot. The outro, meanwhile, presents McCartney singing and scatting material over the clarinets and saxophones (2:22–2:40). McCartney also gives verbal interjections, spoken and sung, during the solo, as if emulating a live performer encouraging the band (1:32–1:58). Although it is unlikely that these were true improvisations released on the final mix, they communicate the idea of improvisation, an expectation in music hall performance.

“Honey Pie” includes several stylistically particular features that connect the song to a specific time period: the 1920s, the end of the music hall’s heyday. First, Martin’s arrangements for the song include parts for five saxophones (two alto, two tenor, and one baritone); as far as I am aware, the saxophone was not used much or at all in Victorian-era music hall songs.[604] The saxophone’s presence then perhaps explains the later, 1920s sound of this song as compared to others in this chapter. “Honey Pie” also uses a vocal effect in the introduction: manipulating McCartney’s voice to give it the sound of a shellac record (0:09–0:16). Lewisohn explains: “[T]he vocal line ‘now she’s hit the big time!’...was heavily limited, chopping off the signal at both ends of the frequency range, and superimposed with the sound of a scratchy old phonograph, to make the end product like a vocal from a very early and worn 78 rpm record.”[605] Early music hall recordings were made on both wax

[604] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 190.

[605] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 159. To my ears, the effect also sounds like a radio broadcast with poor reception.

cylinders and 78s, though the 78 format would have been more common by the 1920s.[606] Both features tie the evocation of the music hall to a specific time period.

Walter Everett's analysis of "Honey Pie" points out a harmonic surprise that I also classify as a stylistically particular feature. The song uses the German augmented sixth chord (Gr+6) several times during the verses (for example 0:42–0:43 and 0:55–0:57, on the words "crazy" and "tragic"), as shown below in example 6.6.[607]

Example 6.6. The author's reduction and annotation showing Gr+6-V7/ii resolution in verse 1 of "Honey Pie."

While augmented sixth chords may be a bit adventurous for earlier music hall songs, they are less so for songs closer to the 1920s, McCartney's referenced time period.[608] Everett further states that the specific use and resolution here of the German augmented sixth (Gr+6 to V7/ii) can be found in only one other rock-adjacent song, Jelly Roll Morton's

[606] Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History*, 284.

[607] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 189. Given the placement of the chord with the lyrics—"crazy," "tragic," and "frantic"—might the Gr+6 be an instance of word painting?

[608] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 12–13, 21.

"The Pearls." The use of this particular chord resolution thus further separates "Honey Pie" from a clear rock context.[609]

From a topical perspective, it would seem that "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" are strong candidates for the music hall as a topic. I hesitate to label them as such here, primarily because of two points: the features' *number* and *consistency* when compared with overall musical form. "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" combine a high number of extended topical characteristics with formal similarity. The songs' formal layout is shared across both rock and older popular song styles, including the music hall: verses plus refrain, with alternating "bridge" sections and the auxiliary introduction and outro.[610] Formal similarities alone do not mean that the music hall as a topic is impossible; McCartney's satirical parodies do frame the style as a topic and share formal elements at the same time. However, music hall features are also consistent through large sections of the songs (the oom-pah accompaniment), or the entire song. Between shared formal characteristics and the number and time course of topical features, "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" come across as examples of McCartney composing in a music hall style, rather than brief references to it.

I have established that McCartney enjoyed music hall and American vaudeville songs, and was able to reference the music hall based on his own knowledge. But why allow the reference to go so far? In the case of "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie," the answer seems to be for affectionately parodic purposes. Several scholars use the same or similar terms to describe both songs as affectionate or genuine: "charming" and "touching"

[609] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 189.

[610] Nobile, *Form as Harmony in Rock Music*, 94.

(Everett), “a vaudeville-style charmer” (Lewisohn) and “an affectionate tribute” (O’Grady).[611] “Honey Pie” yields similar descriptions: “quaint” and “lovely” (Lewisohn); and “well crafted and authentic...the words have just the right tone and engender a warm nostalgia” (Everett).[612]

Firsthand accounts of the songs’ writing and recording processes tally with secondary sources. Between its inspiration from Jim McCartney’s music, and the man’s sixty-fourth birthday inciting its revival, Martin reads “When I’m Sixty-Four” as a tribute to (Paul) McCartney’s father and the music he performed and enjoyed.[613] McCartney himself, meanwhile, describes “Honey Pie” as a salute to 1920s musicians: “I very much liked that old crooner style, the strange fruity voice that they used, so ‘Honey Pie’ was me writing one of them to an imaginary woman, across the ocean, on the silver screen, who was called Honey Pie.”[614] The general consensus on the two songs’ nature as tributes suggests that any parody in them comes from a place of affection: gentle teasing of something admired and loved, rather than mockery.

These accounts of “When I’m Sixty-Four” and “Honey Pie” seem to reflect Sheinberg’s description of non-satirical parody. The music hall has been recontextualized in

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[611] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 113, 141; Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 89; Terence O’Grady, “*Sgt. Pepper* and the diverging aesthetics of Lennon and McCartney,” in *Sgt. Pepper and the Beatles: It Was Forty Years Ago Today*, ed. Olivier Julien (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 28.

[612] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 158–159; W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 190.

[613] Martin and Pearson, *With A Little Help From My Friends*, 34, 36. Martin does offer the interpretation of “When I’m Sixty-Four” as a tongue-in-cheek commentary on the negatives of growing old. However, as Martin himself admits, this interpretation is based mainly on his personal relationship with McCartney and familiarity with his personality, rather than on musical characteristics or songwriting circumstances.

[614] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 497.

the sense that it is on a rock album, being emulated by a rock band. However, looking at just the songs themselves, music hall characteristics are unmarked here. Unlike the songs in the next section, "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" do not treat music hall features as fleeting references; they are simply what the song *is*. Descriptions of the two songs also demonstrate, in Yayoi Uno Everett's words, neutral or deferential ethos. Though they may parody the music hall, the style's recontextualized elements are not juxtaposed against or in conflict with the overall song context.[615] In the case of these two songs, McCartney draws on his knowledge of the music hall to create non-satirical parodies of the style.

Satirical Parodies: "Your Mother Should Know," "Martha My Dear"

So far, we have seen two McCartney songs that use references to the music hall to affectionately parody the style itself. This is accomplished through using elements of the source music to such an extent that the songs resemble actual music hall numbers more than rock songs. However, not all of the Beatles' music hall-inspired songs rely on source music characteristics to the same extent. Two songs that do not—"Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear"—present the music hall as a topic, a reference that can be separated (though not as clearly as Indian classical music or musique concrète) from the context of a rock song. The fleeting nature of the music hall references in these two songs correlates with a satirically parodic edge absent from "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie." I will turn to analyses of these topical treatments now.

"Your Mother Should Know," released on *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967) in the U.S. and U.K., plays an important role in the film of the same name. In the film of the same name, the song accompanies, in Everett's words, "tinsel-spangled Busby Berkeley-styled dance

[615] Y.U. Everett, "Parody with an Ironic Edge," 5–6.

finale with a cast of thousands," including the four Beatles themselves in white tuxedos.[616] McCartney wrote the song as a promotion for intergenerational understanding: "I've always hated generation gaps. I always feel sorry for a parent or a child that doesn't understand each other...In 'Your Mother Should Know' I was basically trying to say your mother might know more than you think she does. Give her credit."[617] In spite of the film styling and positive opinion expressed on older generations, the song's treatment of the music hall is much more surface-level and fleeting, and more satirical, than in McCartney's non-satirical parodies.

"Your Mother Should Know" includes all three possible essential features for the music hall topic. The piano is consistently prominent in the mix throughout the song, striking a chord on each beat in the verses (0:04–0:25 for example). Melodically speaking, the overall range is just over an octave (E3–F4) and has some leaps of fourths and fifths, but not so many that it is uncomfortable to sing; see example 6.7 below.

Example 6.7. Verse 1 and overall song melodic range of "Your Mother Should Know." Reproduced from Tetsuya Fujita et. al., *The Beatles Complete Scores* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation and Wise Publications, 1993), 1,112–1,113.

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616 W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 132.

617 Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 355.

"Your Mother Should Know" is also the most melodically and lyrically repetitive song in this chapter. Where the other three songs have contrasting bridges, "Your Mother Should Know" uses two short organ solos as contrasting material (0:47–1:01 and 1:31–1:45). Both the melody and lyrics in the verses repeat material; the melody is repeated with little variation in each verse. As for the lyrics, the first line of verses 1 and 3 is the only lyric that changes: "Let's all get up and dance to a song" versus "Lift up your hearts and sing me a song."[618] The high level of repetition in this song, as a chorus or particularly catchy refrain in the music hall would, makes the tune very easy to pick up and sing along with.

"Your Mother Should Know," once again, presents several examples of the third essential feature: conventionally resolved secondary dominants. As shown in example 6.8 below, the verses present two, V/ii and V/V, and both resolve to their expected targets (0:08–0:11 and 0:18–0:20 respectively). The end of the first verse also features V/vi resolving conventionally to vi at the start of the second verse (0:24–0:26). In addition, the song centers on C, with heavy emphasis on vi during the verses.[619] The submediant is a common goal for modulation or tonicization in both common-practice tonality and in the music hall.[620]

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[618] Verse 2 is an exact lyrical repeat of verse 1.

[619] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 141.

[620] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 12–13.

Piano

Let's all get up and dance__ to a song that was a hit be fore your mo-ther was born

C: vi IV (MM7) V7/ii ii

5

Pno.

Though she was born a long,__long time a go,__ Your mo-ther should know__

V7 I V7/ii V7/V

9

Pno.

Your mo-ther should know.__ Sing it a- gain. Let's all get up and dance...

V7 I V7/vi vi

Example 6.8. The author's reduction and annotation of verse 1 and 2 secondary dominants in "Your Mother Should Know."

In terms of frequent features, "Your Mother Should Know" does not utilize any music hall-associated instruments other than the piano. It has the weakest timbral connection to the music hall, and is the only song of the four in this chapter that does not include an arrangement from George Martin. The song's instrumentation is much more rock-based: the second most prominent timbre is an electronic organ, played by John Lennon, and the rest of the ensemble is made up of electric bass, modern drum kit, and tambourine.[621]

The song also does not have a particularly strong lyrical connection to the music hall. "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" give listeners specific characters, who bear

[621] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 141.

similarities to music hall song characters to some degree. In "Your Mother Should Know," the narrator does not take on a particular persona, and the characters of the mother or the addressee are not developed (except to tell us that the mother "was born a long, long time ago"). However, the final verse is partly sung on the syllable "da," as if the narrator has either forgotten or become tired of the words. Though it may be a tenuous connection, McCartney's nonsense syllables and the improvisatory feel they give the final verse do have a precedent in the style he was trying to reference: music hall songs, particularly those of the 1840s and 1850s.

The final frequent feature, the oom-pah accompaniment pattern, is missing from "Your Mother Should Know." The bass in this song mainly reinforces the piano, playing repeated notes and occasional walking lines in quarters. During verses 2–4, McCartney plays more in his usual bass style, adding active eighth-note figures echoing the rhythm of the phrase "your mother should know" (0:39–0:46). The song does not make use of any stylistically particular features.

The final song I will discuss here is "Martha My Dear," a song which takes its title from McCartney's pet sheepdog Martha (1966–1981).[622] In terms of instrumentation, the song is much more akin to "Honey Pie" or "When I'm Sixty-Four" than to "Your Mother Should Know." The piano is once again a prominent instrument on the track, opening the song with a fairly long solo (0:00–0:19). The instrument is also consistently loud and forward in the final mix.[623] The relationship of the timbres, both piano and other music hall-

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[622] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 159. Multiple sources note that while the title came from the dog, the song was not *about* her.

[623] McCartney states that "Martha" was written primarily on and for the piano, beginning as a two-handed piano exercise; see Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 497–498.

associated instruments, to sung sections is different than in the other three songs in this chapter: they perform only during the verses. The bridge-like section (Everett and Riley describe it as a retransition) gives instrumentation over to the rock-based ensemble (0:59–1:15).[624]

Melodically, “Martha My Dear” has the least in common with music hall tunes. Like “Honey Pie,” the overall song range is large, spanning almost two octaves from lowest point (D3 in the bridge) to highest (Bb4). The verses remain within the F3–F4 octave; however, as can be seen in example 6.9, the other sections have much wider ranges that are well above an octave (0:38–0:58, 0:59–1:17, and 1:39–2:00).

Medium swing

Hold your head up, you sil-ly girl, Look what you've done.___ When you find

5

___ your- self_ in the thick of it, Help your self_ to a bit of what is all___ a-

7

round you, Sil - ly girl.___

Example 6.9. Verse 2 melodic range of “Martha My Dear.” Reproduced from Tetsuya Fujita et. al., *The Beatles Complete Scores* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation and Wise Publications, 1993), 664.

The melody is also quite disjunct, particularly in the contrasting sections: leaps of a fourth to a sixth regularly occur here. Aside from the repetition of the title at the beginning

[624] W. Everett and Riley, *What Goes On*, 194–195.

and end of each verse, there is little in the song that an audience could easily latch onto and sing along with quickly. The confinement of a more music hall-appropriate range to specific sections suggests that the style functions as a topic in this song.

"Martha My Dear" includes a few conventionally resolved secondary dominants. V is tonicized during the first verse, and vi (in F) during the second; in both cases, the secondary dominants resolve to their expected targets (0:25–0:28 and 0:53–0:56). However, the "retransition" presents a secondary dominant that is not resolved: V7/V in F moves instead to vi. (1:01–1:08).[625] "Martha My Dear" is the only song of the four that does not consistently resolve its secondary dominants, treating them more freely. Example 6.10 below shows the secondary dominants in verse 2 and the unresolved V7/V.

[625] This could be read as similar to a deceptive resolution, with vi as the target rather than V.

Medium swing

Piano

Hold your head up, you sil - ly girl, Look what you've done. When you find

F: vi ii I I

5

Pno.

your self in the thick of it, Help your self to a bit of what is all a-

V V V7/vi

7

Pno.

round you, Sil-ly girl. Take a good look a - round you, Take a good

vi ii vi V7/V

11

Pno.

look, you're bound to see That you and me were

vi V7/vi IV (MM7)

14

Pno.

meant to be for each o- ther, Sil-ly girl.

IV (MM7) vi ii

Example 6.10. The author's reduction and annotation of verse 2 and the "retransition" of "Martha My Dear."

In terms of frequent features, George Martin provided arrangements for strings and a small brass section (trumpet and flugelhorn).[626] Violin and cornet were two additional members of core music hall ensembles, and here their relatives work together with the piano to achieve the sound.[627] However, timbres seem to be the only frequent feature that is really present. Lyrical considerations do not strongly reflect music hall elements present in McCartney's other songs. "Martha My Dear" does have two characters, the narrator and his love interest Martha; this two-character dynamic is similar to those in other songs in this chapter. However, resemblance to specific music hall character types is not in the lyrics. "Martha My Dear" does not tell us much about Martha as a person. She is perhaps a bit aloof or distanced from the narrator, from his requests of "don't forget me," "remember me," and "be good to me."[628] The narrator also describes her as "silly," though as McCartney points out, this can be construed as an abstract expression of affection.[629] Unlike Honey Pie and the unnamed couple in "When I'm Sixty-Four," there is no specification of Martha as a working-class person, or depiction of her daily activities or concerns.

The final frequent feature, oom-pah accompaniment, is present in "Martha My Dear." During the piano introduction, McCartney's left-hand part mostly plays this pattern in bouncy eighth notes (0:00–0:18). The electric bass takes over in the first verse, and uses the pattern fairly consistently throughout the song, playing it as eighth notes on each beat. McCartney changes the pattern during the rock-heavy retransition, but this is the only time he

[626] Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions*, 159.

[627] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 7.

[628] Davies, *The Beatles Lyrics*, 280–281.

[629] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 498.

does not hold the accompaniment pattern himself (0:59–1:19). The horns double the oom-pah accompaniment through the song, and take over performing it from the bass during the retransition. Between the number of instruments playing it, and their forwardness in the overall mix, the oom-pah pattern is the second most noticeable frequent feature used. Stylistically particular features are absent from the song.

In both songs, the music hall is treated as a much clearer topic. "Your Mother Should Know" includes essential features of the music hall topic, but the number of features used is smaller and less consistent. The song presents a combination of essential features, the minimum required to say that a music hall topical instance is occurring: piano timbre, a particular melodic design, and secondary dominants with conventional resolutions. However, McCartney does not draw on the other characteristics available to him for the most part. Of the features that enhance the topic's associative power, frequent and/or stylistically particular features, only "improvised" nonsense syllables are included. Mainly due to instrumentation, it is easier to differentiate between the broader context (a rock song) and the reference (the music hall). Walter Everett's analysis also points out rhythmic irregularities that, surprising as they may be in a rock song, would be extremely out of place in a music hall revival number. He notes that the harmonies change in "a very unbalanced roll of anacrustic harmonies, so the eleven-bar phrase [at 0:04–0:26] seems to be divided oddly but intriguingly as 4+1+2+3+1."[630] Although the essential topical features in "Your Mother Should Know" are not exactly fleeting—melodic characteristics and the piano extend through the whole song—they are surrounded by musical elements much more associated with rock music.

[630] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 141. Several McCartney songs, as Everett discusses, have this type of unbalanced or odd-numbered phrase; "Martha My Dear" and "Yesterday" come to mind.

"Martha My Dear" gives listeners even more drastic distinctions between topic and context. It is similarly metrically chaotic to "Your Mother Should Know": as Everett and Riley discuss, the meter changes in the song multiple times.[631] It also presents key relations that, put simply, would not be found in music hall songs. Much of the song spends its time in F with tonicizations of the submediant in that key (Dm). This choice of new key, II in relation to the home key of Eb major, is an unusual one, particularly when compared to the music hall. Most music hall songs, if they modulate at all, travel to the dominant or submediant.[632] In contrast, a move from home key to a key a half or whole step away is much less surprising in rock songs.[633] The overall song form is also quite sectional in terms of instrumentation. As I have shown, the music hall-associated timbres, oom-pah accompaniment, and melodic range are confined to specific sections, and essentially hand the song over to rock timbres during the retransition. The music hall characteristics that are present have clear beginnings and ends, and are more fleeting than those in "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie."

McCartney has already shown willingness to write, almost verbatim, tributes to the music hall based on his grasp of its stylistic norms. So why do "Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear" treat the source music so differently? I posit here that these two songs, by treating the source music as a clearly perceptible *topic*, give listeners the second type of parody: satirical parody. Sheinberg defines satirical parody as a parody that draws

[631] W. Everett and Riley, *What Goes On*, 194–195.

[632] Bennett, "Music in the Halls," 12–13.

[633] Walter Everett, *The Foundations of Rock: From "Blue Suede Shoes" to "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 283. A modulation by half-step accomplished by simply jumping from the home key to the new key, rather than with a pivot, is called a "truck driver modulation." McCartney's move to II in "Martha" is a bit smoother, and is not permanent, but works on a similar principle.

attention to a meaningful layer as the one to be mocked.[634] Much like the commentary on McCartney's non-satirical parodies, there is scholarly consensus on "Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear." However, the descriptions of these two songs suggest that they are less genuine than "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie." "Your Mother Should Know," for example, provokes the following comment from Everett: " 'When I'm Sixty-Four' is a quaint and touching number improved by its *Sgt. Pepper* surroundings, but 'Your Mother Should Know' is little other than a curiosity; McCartney apparently hoped that rich pitch and rhythmic tricks would allow him an empty salute to the Astaire era."[635] Everett and Riley describe "Martha My Dear" as "the sturdiest, most sardonic number" of McCartney's numbers inspired by older genres, with a bite to its presentation of music hall sounds.[636] Lewisohn, meanwhile, describes it as sentimental, but it is unclear if that sentimentality is genuine.[637]

Primary sources also suggest that "Mother" and "Martha" were not intended to pay tribute to the music hall, or generations familiar with it, in the same way as the non-satirical songs (or at all). McCartney states that he wrote "Your Mother Should Know" as a promotion for intergenerational understanding, as a means of communicating that older generations might be worth attending to. "Martha My Dear," meanwhile, seems to be one of McCartney's (if I may) silly love songs: "[O]n a surface level they [songs based on characters rather than experience] do mean something to me but on a surface level they are

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[634] Sheinberg, *Irony, Satire, Parody and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich*, 316.

[635] W. Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology, 141.

[636] W. Everett and Riley, *What Goes On*, 194–195.

[637] Lewisohn, *The Beatles Complete Recording Sessions*, 159.

often fantasy...I mean, I'm not really speaking to Martha, it's a communication of some sort of affection but in a slightly abstract way – 'You silly girl, look what you've done,' all that sort of stuff."[638] Unlike the non-satirical parodies, neither song was explicitly written as a tribute to the music hall. Further, the topical features present are both fewer in number and shorter in time course than those in the non-satirical parodies. The pattern of scholarly description, lack of direct tribute, and different choices in how the features are handled suggest that the songs deploy a different kind of parody.

As Sheinberg describes, satirical parodies point to one of their layers of meaning as the one that audiences should take as the object of satirization. Debussy's parody of Wagner's Tristan chord, as discussed previously, draws attention to the reference and the incongruity between it and its new context (its normative layer), creating a parody.[639] This combination of drawing attention through exaggeration with incongruity labels the Tristan chord as the parody's target. The phenomenon Sheinberg describes in Debussy seems paralleled in McCartney's topical treatments of the music hall. In both "Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear," the music hall's characteristics function within songs that, because of their rhythmic and harmonic quirks, still read as rock songs. Particularly in "Martha My Dear," the music hall elements are juxtaposed with the rock elements, to the point of separate song sections belonging more to one style than the other. As Yayoi Uno Everett points out, when such a high level of juxtaposition happens between musical

[638] Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now*, 355, 498.

[639] Sheinberg, *Irony, Satire, Parody, and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich*, 316.

elements, the parodic devices used communicate an ethos of ridicule or scorn.[640] McCartney still applies his own understanding of the music hall's stylistic norms, but in a satirical form.

Conclusion

As both Robert Hatten and Thomas Johnson point out, clarity of both topic and context is necessary for a topical analysis to be most effective. Hatten argues that in order to be recognized as out of context, and thus potentially a topic, a stylistic reference must be recognizable as itself to the listener.[641] In other words, a listener must be able to tell that the music hall, for example, is the out-of-context style being referenced. Johnson, meanwhile, states that when the context in which a topic operates is unclear or indistinguishable from the topic, topical analysis is incredibly difficult, if not impossible.[642] Paul McCartney's music hall-inspired songs are a good example of the complications arising when one condition is met, but not (always) the other. The stylistic references to the music hall discussed in this chapter do meet Hatten's requirement of recognizability. Many descriptions of these songs state that they musically evoke the style, but do not generally explain why that connection is audible. In both topical and non-topical references to the music hall, McCartney draws on the same set of characteristics.

However, in two song cases, McCartney's music hall references erase the boundary between broader context and source music. "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Honey Pie" draw on so many elements of the music hall, and extend those elements across such large parts of

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[640] Y.U. Everett, "Parody with an Ironic Edge," 12.

[641] Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works," 514.

[642] Thomas Johnson, "Tonality as Topic: Opening A World of Analysis for Early Twentieth-Century Modernist Music," *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 4 (2017), http://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.4/mto.17.23.4.johnson.html, 1.3.

the song, that they no longer resemble rock songs at all. Meanwhile, "Your Mother Should Know" and "Martha My Dear" do treat the source music as topical, presenting much more fleeting references. I argue that when the music hall functions as a clear topic in these songs, the reference creates a satirical parody on the source music; when the boundary between context and topic is less sharp, the song becomes a non-satirical parody. The blend of different kinds of topicality, and of parody, suggests a theme of ambivalence toward Britain's cultural heritage, signified here by the music hall's stylistic characteristics. The songs strike a balance between viewing the music hall, and traditional views of Englishness by extension, as a simultaneous source of admiration and target for mockery. The duality in McCartney's treatment of the music hall shows that stylistic reference, and the reasons or meanings behind it, is not always straightforward.

Chapter 7: "The End of the Beginning": Concluding Thoughts and Future Directions

This dissertation has shown that in their interactions with topicality, the Beatles apply their own stylistic knowledge when creating meaningful references to those styles. Different band members had relatively strong levels of understanding in the three musical styles I focus on: Indian classical music, musique concrète, and the music hall. Though the paths they took to develop their own knowledge varied, the Beatles' references to these three kinds of music all relied heavily on elements drawn directly from the source music. Examination of the band's mid and late-1960s songs showed source music characteristics in multiple areas: instrumentation, rhythm, pitch collections and melody, harmony, form, and methods of composition and improvisation. The Beatles' stylistic experimentation, already considered a hallmark of their music, is much more strongly based in firsthand knowledge than it appears at first listen. The band's inclusion of knowledge-based referential elements means that their music bears a stronger resemblance to source musics than was the norm during the 1960s and early 1970s.

The Beatles' interactions with meaningful musical reference, described here as *topicality*, takes different forms across the three styles examined. George Harrison's Indian-influenced songs present the first form of topicality: realizing a preexisting topic by expanding on its conventions. The Indian topic in the Beatles, in addition to including previously established features such as instrument presence and stylistic imitation, incorporates elements of Indian classical music. Tal, raga structure and characteristic motions, and sitar performance format can all be seen in Harrison's Indian-inspired songs. Harrison would not have been able to incorporate these to the extent he did, and with the level of recognizability they have, without having some knowledge of it himself. While the

songs do not do much to change the associations of Indian music in the West—spirituality, wisdom, even sensuality—they expand upon *how* a meaningful reference to India can be accomplished musically. Harrison's relationship to Indian music, and how his understanding of it influences his compositions, also highlight the complexities (and issues) that can arise when two musical cultures meet.

The Beatles' interactions with musique concrète present a second form of topicality: contributing to a developing topical field. Songs by both John Lennon and Paul McCartney incorporate several compositional techniques drawn directly from musique concrète: tape speed and direction manipulation, loops and splicing, and unaltered environmental or real-world sounds. These elements of the source music are consistently connected to lyrics describing altered or alternative states of being or consciousness. Lyrics tie the band's references to musique concrète strongly to a set of methods and characteristics for meaning to be drawn from, one developing around psychedelic experiences during the mid-1960s.[643] Like Harrison and Indian music, McCartney and Lennon drew on their self-developed understanding of and experience with musique concrète to create meaningful stylistic references. I have also given attention in this chapter to producer George Martin and recording engineer Geoff Emerick, who played particularly key roles in realizing the tape-based soundscapes on *Revolver* (1966) and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967).

Two of Paul McCartney's music hall-inspired songs demonstrate a third form of topicality: pressing and even erasing the line between musical reference and song context. While McCartney's education in the norms of Victorian and Edwardian music hall songs was much more casual, mainly coming through listening exposure and one knowledgeable source

[643] William Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music: A History Through Musical Topic Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), Google Play Books edition, 32–33, 42.

(his father Jim), he understood the style's musical tendencies enough to create recognizable references to it in his own songs. McCartney's music hall evocations draw, to varying lengths, on instrumentation, melodic design, harmonic tendencies, and lyrical elements of the style. Out of the four McCartney songs examined here, two treat the music hall as a marked and recognizable topic, whereas the other two treat it as the song's overall context. Which kind of topicality is used in the songs correlates with the kind of parody McCartney engages in: non-satirical parody with blurred boundaries, satirical parody with clearly delineated topics. I argue further that a possible interpretation for the music hall's two-sided treatment here is a certain level of ambivalence toward the music hall and Britain's cultural heritage. In McCartney's hands, the music hall and the image of Britain that the music is connected to become something to be both respected and derided. The Beatles' music hall-inspired tracks in particular demonstrate that stylistic reference and meaning can be surprisingly complex processes.

Future Research Directions

This dissertation explores one band's interactions with three musical styles, and covers roughly three years of their musical output. As such, I see several possibilities for extending the research begun in this project, both within the Beatles' music as a group and individuals, and within British and American rock music of the 1960s and early 1970s overall.

As discussed in chapter 1, the Beatles' interest in stylistic experimentation began well before the mid-1960s. One extension of the research presented here is an examination of topics in the Beatles' early original songs and/or covers. Several pre-1965 Beatles songs incorporate possible topical features such as instrumentation, playing style, and harmonic

explorations beyond early-1960s rock norms. Nylon-string guitar solos and possibly Latin-inspired rhythms are featured on McCartney's "And I Love Her" (*A Hard Day's Night*, 1964) and the cover "Till There Was You" (*With the Beatles*, 1963); in the latter's case, the guitar was a departure from the original.[644] Chord extensions that evoke Tin Pan Alley and musical theatre, unusual in rock-and-roll at the time, are also included in Lennon's "It Won't Be Long" and "All I've Got To Do" (both *With the Beatles*). In both instances, but particularly with the added "Latin" influence in "Till There Was You," one must wonder why these references were made. Exploring topics in the Beatles' music beyond the three discussed here seems a potentially rich and rewarding project, with or without consideration of the group's stylistic knowledge.

In connection with additional topics in the Beatles' music, I remain curious about the role of exotic topics and references to styles associated with underrepresented communities. Chapter 4 discussed appropriation and colonial history in relation to Indian music, and demonstrated that many factors influence a person's relationship to music of a culture not their own. Indian music was not the only style the Beatles drew on with these kinds of complexities. I have already mentioned "Latin" musical influences; two additional styles that come to mind are Motown and the blues.[645] As was the case with Harrison and Indian music, the Beatles showed a great deal of respect toward their African-American musical influences (Little Richard and Chuck Berry in particular) and, to some degree, the community whose

[644] The two versions may be found at the following links for comparison: https://youtu.be/SHAqAO7w8M8 (the Beatles' cover); and https://youtu.be/JLDsLeVxOaU (sung by Shirley Jones).

[645] See for example: "Got To Get You Into My Life" (McCartney, *Revolver*, 1966); "Yer Blues" (Lennon, the *White Album*, 1968); and "For You Blue" (Harrison, *Let It Be*, 1970).

music they performed and referenced in their own songs.[646] Nevertheless, they were still members of a cultural group with much more power and influence than members of the groups whose music they referenced. What are the implications of such a situation, and how does one interpret the Beatles' (or any group's) stylistic evocations within that context? Particularly in light of recent conversations surrounding inequalities and underrepresented composers and styles in music theory, analyzing the implications of referencing music from traditionally sidelined communities seems more important than ever.[647]

Exploring the Beatles' solo music through a topical lens is another route for further research. Within this dissertation, I have adapted Johanna Frymoyer's weighted hierarchies of topical features for the Indian topic and the music hall in the Beatles. The concept of weighted topical hierarchies has an exciting possible extension, specifically with the Indian topic. Harrison's explorations of raga as a means to organize his songs do not end with the Beatles. At least two of his solo songs, "Living in the Material World" (1973) and "*Marwa* Blues" (2002), may also be analyzed from this perspective. It is possible that in Harrison's solo music, he changes the positions of various features in the hierarchy the Beatles establish for this topic, and that raga becomes a frequent or essential feature for the topic. Movement of a feature up or down a hierarchy is an idea Frymoyer describes in connection with

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[646] Leading up to a 1965 concert in Jacksonville, Florida, the Beatles refused to perform if the audience was segregated. While it's debatable whether the Beatles' refusal was a deliberate statement on racial inequality, taking such a stance in the American South was a notable move at the time.

[647] Some examples in music theory circles include Philip Ewell, "Music Theory's White Racial Frame" (PowerPoint presentation, 42nd Annual Meeting of the Society for Music Theory, Columbus, OH, November 9, 2019); Anna Yu Wang, "The Cultural Binds of Tonal Function" (PowerPoint presentation, 43rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Music Theory (jointly held with the American Musicological Society), virtual meeting, November 7, 2020); and various workshops and musical example compilation efforts, such as "Who Is Allowed To Be A Genius?" (43rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Music Theory, November 14, 2020) and the open access collection "Music Theory Examples by BI-POC Composers" (https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CMnSjvraO1Ho68XUrPpmegBhVmD0pSaQkj17T7MPA6w/edit#gid=0).

Schoenberg's Op. 23 and 24, in the combination of waltz and march that becomes a twentieth-century type all its own. The process arises from the elevation of stylistically particular or idiosyncratic features to the level of essential features.[648] I see strong possibilities of such a phenomenon occurring with raga in Harrison's solo songs.

Another possible expansion on this research is to examine the Beatles' contemporaries in greater depth. As mentioned above, this dissertation covers the work of a single band, and (as I hope to have made clear) the Beatles were not the only rock group engaging in stylistic experimentation during the 1960s. Indian music in particular was a very popular reference point in British and American rock at the time, and musicians' and listeners' levels of experience with India's cultural life varied considerably. At the same time, as Echard shows, psychedelic rock music developed a consistent set of methods for evoking Indian or Indian-esque sounds, some of which the Beatles played a large role in creating.[649] An in-depth study of how Indian music is treated topically in classic rock, with consideration given to the role musical and cultural knowledge plays (or not!) in that treatment, could be a potential research line to pursue. This project could also be incorporated into the larger one described above: a discussion of exotic topics and the issues around incorporating music of underrepresented artists and communities.

Musique concrète, and other types of avant-garde music referenced in rock songs, presents a similar possibility as Indian music. Although musical nods to avant-garde styles were less common in the 1960s, a few artists did reference them, and classic rock bands of

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[648] Johanna Frymoyer, "The Musical Topic in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study of Schoenberg's Ironic Waltzes," *Music Theory Spectrum* 39, no. 1 (2017), 96, 106.

[649] Echard, *Psychedelic Popular Music*, 74.

the early and mid-1970s drew more heavily on them. Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973), for example, has several tracks that are either made up of or prominently feature tape manipulation and effects.[650] I have been left with several questions about avant-garde influences on rock, both in the Beatles' contemporaries and bands following them. Do other bands of the 1960s use musique concrète in the way the Beatles did, as part of a topical field, or as stylistic fusions?[651] To what extent does the associative link between musique concrète's compositional techniques and altered/alternative states of consciousness and realities apply when other artists reference it? Finally, how does musique concrète as a meaningful reference connect to other branches of avant-garde music in rock, such as chance music or minimalism? "The avant-garde topic" is too broad a label, as the body of music the term covers is extremely varied. However, it may be possible that "avant-garde" developed over time into a larger family of interrelated topics. Several lines of inquiry could open up from these lingering questions.

To conclude, the research presented in this dissertation has addressed a few points about the Beatles' interactions with topicality, and three of the source musics they drew on in those interactions. Within those three sources alone, the band shows great flexibility and creativity in developing topical features, contributing to new sets of features and associations, and toying with the line between topic and style. They also demonstrate a high level of stylistic knowledge and willingness to apply that knowledge in musical references, more than was the norm in rock music at the time. However, this dissertation represents a beginning

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[650] Doyle Greene, *Rock, Counterculture and the Avant-Garde, 1966–1970: How the Beatles, Frank Zappa, and the Velvet Underground Defined an Era* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2016), Apple Books edition, 454–455.

[651] I would be inclined to say that Frank Zappa, for example, is closer to a stylistic fusion.

much more than any sort of final word on the Beatles' songs and stylistic explorations. It is my hope that the work initiated here will assist anyone seeking to answer the same question I do: why the Beatles' music, more than fifty years later, still has such a hold on popular music and culture.

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Appendix A: Listening Index

Relevant listening moments in the dissertation are listed here, with appropriate timestamps. All timestamps have been taken from the Beatles Remastered recordings (2009). Please refer to the index as needed through the dissertation. I have also listed optional listening for each chapter below the main tables.

Chapter 1: "The Act You've Known for All These Years": Introduction

Page Number	*Song*	*Timestamp*	*Description of Relevant Moment*
1	"Within You, Without You"	Throughout	Indian instruments, tal, *tihai* and *tihai*-like constructions
6	"Norwegian Wood"	Throughout	Sitar
9	"Tomorrow Never Knows"	Throughout	Compositional technique of musique concrète: Tape loops
11	"Rain"	Throughout	Compositional techniques of musique concrète: Reversal, speed manipulation
17	"Got To Get You Into My Life"	Throughout	Described by Paul McCartney as an "ode to pot"
17; footnote 52	"Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," "I Am the Walrus"	Throughout	Imagery inspired by drug trips
18, footnote 54	"Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da"	0:00–0:10	Piano introduction recorded while performer (John Lennon) was under the influence

Chapter 1 Optional Listening

7: Recommended covers by the Beatles of some of these artists include: "Kansas City/Hey-Hey-Hey-Hey," Little Richard (*Beatles for Sale*, 1964); "Roll Over Beethoven," Chuck Berry (*With the Beatles*, 1963); "So How Come (No One Loves Me)," the Everly Brothers (*Live at*

the BBC, 1994); and “I Got a Woman,” Ray Charles (*Live at the BBC*). All *Live at the BBC* tracks were recorded and broadcast between 1963 and 1965.
10: “Yer Blues” (*The Beatles/*the *White Album*): Vocal timbre, guitar riffs, and formal/lyrical pattern drawn from the blues

Chapter 2: Two Theoretical Worlds Come Together: Literature Review

Page Number	*Song*	*Timestamp*	*Description of Relevant Moment*
39, 41	“Tomorrow Never Knows”	All	Form: Verses, plus introduction, outro, and solo section; based on C Mixolydian
40–41	“I’ve Just Seen a Face”	0:11–0:23	Verse with chords and functions very similar to common-practice norms
46	“Lovely Rita”	All	McCartney as singer is not the same as the song’s narrator, and McCartney as person is distinct from both

Chapter 3: “I Consciously Tried to Use the Sitar”: Source Musics and Weighted Topical Feature Hierarchies

Page Number	*Song*	*Timestamp*	*Description of Relevant Moment*
51	“I Want To Tell You”	2:15–2:24	Vocal imitation of Indian singing
68	“Taxman”	1:13–1:25	Indian-esque guitar solo
68	“Tomorrow Never Knows”	0:00–0:04 and throughout	Example of tambura sound
68	“Within You, Without You”	0:22–0:30	Example of tabla sound

69	“The Inner Light”	Throughout	Harmonium provides drone
69	“The Inner Light”	0:05–0:10	Example of *shehnai* sound
69	“The Inner Light”	0:29–0:33	Example of *bansuri* sound

Chapter 3 Optional Listening

55: *Shanewis* (1918), Charles Cadman: Based on ethnographic transcriptions of Native American performances
55–56: *Incident at Wounded Knee* (1974), Louis Ballard: Compositional style based on Quapaw/Cherokee compositional practice
56: *Pocahontas* (1939), Elliot Carter: Based on a mythologized depiction of title character
67: “Heart Full of Soul,” the Yardbirds (1965): Sitar-like introductory guitar riff 0:00–0:13
67: “See My Friends,” the Kinks (1965): Sitar-like guitar riff and static harmonies/bass 0:00–0:14
67, 69: “Paint It, Black,” the Rolling Stones (1966): Sitar doubles vocal 0:14–0:25

Chapter 4: “Within You and Without You”: The Indian Topic

Page Number	*Song*	*Timestamp*	*Description of Relevant Moment*
73	“Norwegian Wood”	0:08–0:14, 1:04–1:19	Sitar’s first entrance and solo, general sound of instrument
92–93	“Norwegian Wood”	0:22–0:24	Example of sitar interjection
93	“Taxman”	1:13–1:25	Sitar-like timbre and playing on guitar solo
93	“Love You To”	0:35–0:43	Tabla, first full tal cycle, general sound of instrument
93	“Tomorrow Never Knows”	0:00–0:04	Tambura, general sound of instrument
95	“Within You, Without You”	2:53–3:04	Instrumental imitation, Western strings slide between pitches

95	“I Want To Tell You”	2:15–2:24	Vocal imitation
96	“Within You, Without You”	0:04–0:17	*Dilruba*, general sound of instrument
96	“Within You, Without You”	0:19–0:21	*Svaramandal*, general sound of instrument
105	“Love You To”	0:00–0:35	Sitar and tabla “alap” introduction
105	“Love You To”	2:35–2:38	Tambura during fade-out
106–107	“Love You To”	0:00–0:04	Sitar sympathetic strings
109	“Love You To”	0:33–0:36, 0:58–1:05	Characteristic movements of raga *Bhimpalasi*, sitar
109	“Love You To”	0:17–0:19, 0:41–0:43	↓*N* ⤴ *S* (↓^7 ⤴ ^1) slide, sitar
109–110	“Love You To”	0:58–1:04	Vocal phrase landing on *pa* (^5)
110	“Love You To”	1:20–1:25	Descending vocal melisma landing on *ma* (^4)
110	“Love You To”	0:00–0:33	Alap-like introduction: ametric and improvisatory
110	“Love You To”	2:35–2:59	*Jhala*-like outro with increased tempo and *cikari* strings
111	“Love You To”	0:39, 1:08	Melody beginning on pickup to beat 9 and beat 11 in *tintal*
111	“Love You To”	0:50–0:56	Tal stops and restarts
115–116	“Within You, Without You”	0:00	Tambura
116	“Within You, Without You”	0:22, 2:22	Tabla, playing *tintal* and *jhaptal*

116	"Within You, Without You"	2:27	Sitar first entrance
117	"Within You, Without You"	0:04	*Dilruba* first entrance, alap-like introduction
117	"Within You, Without You"	0:18–0:21, 3:30–3:34	*Svaramandal*, playing ascent pattern of raga *Jog*
117	"Within You, Without You"	0:35–0:41	Vocal imitation, slides between pitches
118–119	"Within You, Without You"	2:53–3:04	Instrumental imitation, Western strings slide between pitches
121	"Within You, Without You"	1:02–1:05	Climactic vocal phrase landing on *sa* (^1)
121	"Within You, Without You"	1:46–1:49	Climactic vocal phrase landing on *ma* (^4)
121	"Within You, Without You"	0:18–0:21	*Svaramandal* plays ascent pattern of raga *Jog*
121	"Within You, Without You"	2:44–2:57	Sitar and *dilruba* double, excluding *re* and *dha* (^2 and ^6)
121–122	"Within You, Without You"	0:04–0:08	Characteristic motion plus *tihai*-like melodic figure: *G-M-P-↓N-S-↓N-S-↓N-S-↓N-S*
122	"Within You, Without You"	1:02–1:05, 1:41–1:44	Climactic vocal phrases incorporating characteristic motion *G-M-P-↓N-S*
122	"Within You, Without You"	2:47–2:49, 3:14–3:16	Characteristic motion *G-M-P-↓N-S* (^3-^4-^5-↓^7-^1)

122	“Within You, Without You”	3:24–3:27	Characteristic motion plus *tihai*: *M-G-M-G⤵ S-G-M-G⤵ S-G-M-G⤵ S* (^4-^3-^4-^3⤵ ^1-^3-^4-^3⤵ ^1-^3-^4-^3⤵ ^1)
122	“Within You, Without You”	2:29–2:35	Brief appearance of *dha* (^6) in *dilruba*
123	“Within You, Without You”	0:54–1:05	*Dha* (^6) as brief resting place, but not final land, in vocal
124	“Within You, Without You”	0:00–0:22	Alap-like introduction on *dilruba*
124	“Within You, Without You”	2:27–2:37	*Dilruba* and sitar trade solos
124	“Within You, Without You”	1:51–1:55, 4:25–4:29	*Tihai*-like figures marking ends of verses
124	“Within You, Without You”	3:27–3:40	Return to alap
125	“Within You, Without You”	0:30, 1:15	Melody beginning on beats 15 and 8
128	“The Inner Light”	0:05–0:27, 1:20–1:29	Sitar and *shehnai* trading solos
128	“The Inner Light”	0:29–0:48	Tabla
128	“The Inner Light”	0:14–0:27, 1:20–1:29; 0:58, 2:00	*Shehnai* trading solos with sitar; doubling voice
128	“The Inner Light”	0:00–0:04	Drone on harmonium
128	“The Inner Light”	0:29–1:04	*Bansuri*, contrasting material
124	“The Inner Light”	0:05–0:09	*Pakhavaj*

129	"The Inner Light"	0:36, 0:46, 0:55	Vocal imitation, slides between pitches
130	"The Inner Light"	0:32–0:45	Sitar interjections landing on or oscillating around *pa* (^5)
130	"The Inner Light"	0:23–0:27	Extended land on *pa* (^5) in sitar and *shehnai*
130	"The Inner Light"	0:00–0:09	Sitar and *shehnai* solos landing on *sa* (^1)
130–131	"The Inner Light"	0:25, 1:26	Characteristic motion *G-M-P*
131	"The Inner Light"	2:10–2:22	Characteristic motion *(G)-P-M-G-M-G-S*
131	"The Inner Light"	0:05	*Dha* (^6) as quick, unemphasized neighbor to *pa*
131	"The Inner Light"	0:36, 0:46	Slide *dha* to *ma* (^6-^4) in voice
135	"Blue Jay Way"	Throughout	Hammond organ providing drone on *sa* (^1)
135	"Blue Jay Way"	0:18–0:20, 1:29–1:31	Instrumental imitation, cello slides between pitches
135	"Blue Jay Way"	0:48–1:06	Vocal imitation, slides between pitches
136	"Blue Jay Way"	0:40–0:46	Vocal phrase landing on *pa* (^5)
136	"Blue Jay Way"	1:08–1:12	Oscillation on *komal ga* (↓^3) voice and cello

Chapter 4 Optional Listening

76: *L'Africaine* (1864), Giacomo Meyerbeer: Act 4 contains "Indian" march and ballet
76–77: *Lakmé* (1883), Léo Delibes, "Dome épais le Jasmin"
78: *Samson et Dalila*, Camille Saint-Saëns: Bacchanale allegedly based on *maqam hijaz*

Chapter 5: "Now Let's Play It Backwards": *Musique Concrète* and the Psychedelic Topical Field

Page Number	*Song*	*Timestamp*	*Description of Relevant Moment*
140	"Tomorrow Never Knows"	1:26–2:47	Lennon vocal treated with Leslie speaker
140	"Tomorrow Never Knows"	0:08–0:11	"Seagull" effects
165	"In My Life"	1:28–1:46	Piano solo recorded at half speed and played back at double speed
165–166	"Rain"	2:35–2:43	Reversed lead vocal
166	"Rain"	Throughout	Reversed guitar
166	"Rain"	Throughout	Speed manipulation: Rhythm track
168	"I'm Only Sleeping"	1:33–1:44	Reversed guitar solo
168	"I'm Only Sleeping"	Throughout	Speed manipulation: Lead vocal and rhythm tracks
171	"Yellow Submarine"	Throughout	Speed manipulation: Lead and backing vocals
171	"Yellow Submarine"	1:05–1:10	Splicing: Brass band solo
171	"Yellow Submarine"	1:27–1:36; 0:53–1:05; 1:27–1:46	Unaltered real-world sounds: Chains, bubbles blown in water; clinking glasses, background chatter; machinery and "nautical" terms

172–173	“Tomorrow Never Knows”	0:56–1:30	Speed manipulation: Mellotron-like instrument solo
172–173	“Tomorrow Never Knows”	1:08–1:24	Reversed guitar solo
173	“Tomorrow Never Knows”	1:28	Loop: Rubbed wineglass rim
173	“Tomorrow Never Knows”	0:56–1:30	Loop: “Mellotron-like string sound”
173	“Tomorrow Never Knows”	0:08–0:12	Loop: “Seagull” effect, either McCartney’s laughter or guitar
175	“Strawberry Fields Forever”	1:26–1:42	Reversed cymbal
175–176	“Strawberry Fields Forever”	Throughout	Speed manipulation: Lead vocal
178	“Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!”	1:00–1:26	Speed manipulation: Organs and guitar
178–179	“Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!”	Throughout	Reversal and splicing: Calliope recording snippets
180	“Lovely Rita”	Throughout	Speed manipulation: Lead vocal and rhythm track
180–181	“Lovely Rita”	0:27, 0:49–0:51; 2:12–2:42; 1:27	Unaltered real-world sounds: Combs wrapped in toilet paper; vocal effects from Lennon; cork popping
182	“Good Morning, Good Morning”	1:57–2:41	Unaltered real-world sounds: Animal sounds
184–185	“Revolution 9”	Entire piece; sectional breaks 0:00–5:00, 5:00–6:56, and 6:56–8:22 (Wilkinson)	Includes reversal, speed manipulation, loops, and unaltered real-world sounds

Chapter 5 Optional Listening

144–145: *Étude Concrète* (1952), Karlheinz Stockhausen: Piece composed at Schaeffer's studio
145: *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1954–1956), Stockhausen: Mix of acoustically and electronically generated sounds; a piece cited by both Lennon and McCartney as an influence
145: *Hymnen* (1966–1967), Stockhausen: A piece Lennon cites as an influence
147: "A Day In the Life" (*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*): Orchestral transition featuring indeterminate principles 1:45–2:15
147: "I Am the Walrus" (*Magical Mystery Tour*): Random tune-in to radio broadcast of *King Lear* 3:53–4:33
154: *Tape Piece IV: Moving Piece* (1963), Yoko Ono: Instruction piece that, if realized by an audience member or performer, involves musique concrète techniques
155, footnote 406: "Baby's Heartbeat" (*Unfinished Music No. 2: Life with the Lions*)
169: "The Return of the Son of Monster Magnet" (1966), Frank Zappa: Gradual speeding up of tape
169: "Are You Hung Up?" (*We're Only In It for the Money*, 1967), Frank Zappa: Reversed guitar solo
185: *Symphonie pour un homme seul* (1949–1950), Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry: Sections delineated through generating sound source and/or type of interaction

Chapter 6: "Paul's Granny Music": The Music Hall, Parody, and Topicality

Page Number	*Song*	*Timestamp*	*Description of Relevant Moment*
191	"When I'm Sixty-Four"	Throughout	Melody movement mostly in steps and small intervals (4th or less)
191	"When I'm Sixty-Four"	0:31–0:37	Secondary dominants with conventional resolutions
191	"When I'm Sixty-Four"	0:38–1:03	Emphasis on submediant tonal area (vi) during bridge
225	"When I'm Sixty-Four"	0:38–0:44; 1:34–1:47	Prominent piano (bridges)
225	"When I'm Sixty-Four"	Throughout	Overall song range Eb3–Ab4; verse ranges F3–F4
226	"When I'm Sixty-	0:31–0:36; 1:27–	Refrain without

	Four”	1:32; 2:23–2:28	melodic embellishment
227	“When I’m Sixty-Four”	0:27–0:30; 0:34–0:36	Conventionally resolved secondary dominants (i.e. V/V resolves to V, V/IV to IV, etc.)
227–228	“When I’m Sixty-Four”	0:00–0:10; 2:29–2:37	Clarinet introduction and outro
228	“When I’m Sixty-Four”	1:06–1:25	Verse 2; focus on domestic concerns and activities
229	“When I’m Sixty-Four”	0:10–0:37; 0:00–0:07, 2:29–2:37	Oom-pah bass texture (with some accompaniment from clarinets)
229	“When I’m Sixty-Four”	Throughout	McCartney’s voice treated with speed manipulation for more youthful sound
229	“When I’m Sixty-Four”	1:49–1:51	Accent/Dialect; rolled “r”
230	“Honey Pie”	0:00–0:38	Piano and voice introduction
230–231	“Honey Pie”	Throughout; 1:06–1:19; 2:24–2:27	Overall song range D3–D5 with more disjunct motion; verse ranges D3–C4
231	“Honey Pie”	0:39–0:40; 0:52–0:53; 1:19–1:20; 2:12–2:13	Refrain-like repeated title outlining tonic triad
231	“Honey Pie”	0:23–0:38; 0:44–0:48	Conventionally resolved secondary dominants
233	“Honey Pie”	Throughout	Clarinets
233	“Honey Pie”	0:00–0:19	Introduction; working

			woman/immigrant as narrator's focus
233	"Honey Pie"	0:39–0:52	Oom-pah bass texture
234	"Honey Pie"	0:00–0:38; 1:32–1:58; 2:22–2:40	Improvisational elements: Slow unfolding and little fixed rhythm, scatting
234	"Honey Pie"	0:49–1:02	Saxophone ensemble example
234	"Honey Pie"	0:09–0:16	McCartney's voice treated with tape manipulation for a "shellac" sound
235–236	"Honey Pie"	0:42–0:44	German augmented sixth with specific resolution (Gr+6 to V7/ii; W. Everett)
239	"Your Mother Should Know"	0:04–0:25	Prominent piano (verses)
239	"Your Mother Should Know"	Throughout	Overall song range E3–F4 with occasional leaps
240	"Your Mother Should Know"	0:47–1:01; 1:31–1:45	Contrasting organ solos
240	"Your Mother Should Know"	Throughout	Consistent repetition of all lyrics and song title as refrain
240	"Your Mother Should Know"	0:08–0:11; 0:18–0:20; 0:24–0:26	Conventionally resolved secondary dominants
240	"Your Mother Should Know"	Throughout	Emphasis on vi during verses
242	"Your Mother Should Know"	1:46–1:54	Final verse; partly sung on nonsense syllable "da"

242	“Your Mother Should Know”	0:39–0:46	Active bass (eighth-note figures)
242	“Martha My Dear”	0:00–0:19	Introduction piano solo
242	“Martha My Dear”	Throughout	Prominent piano
243	“Martha My Dear”	0:59–1:15	Bridge-like section/retransition (W. Everett/Riley) featuring rock instrumentation
243	“Martha My Dear”	Throughout; 0:38–0:58; 0:59–1:17; 1:39–2:00	Overall song range D3–Bb4 with disjunct melody; verses range F3–F4, all other sections much wider
244	“Martha My Dear”	0:25–0:28; 0:53–0:56	Conventionally resolved secondary dominants
244	“Martha My Dear”	1:01–1:08	Unresolved secondary dominant: V7/V7 in F
246	“Martha My Dear”	0:19–0:37	String section example
246	“Martha My Dear”	0:38–0:59	Brass section example
246–247	“Martha My Dear”	0:00–0:18; 0:59–1:19	Oom-pah texture (piano left hand and horns)
247	“Your Mother Should Know”	0:04–0:26	Rhythmically irregular harmonic resolutions
248	“Martha My Dear”	Throughout	Metrical changes
248	“Martha My Dear”	Bridges and retransitions (W. Everett/Riley)	Secondary key of major submediant (II, F) with significant tonicizations of vi in that key (Dm)

Chapter 6 Optional Listening

194: “Forgive and Forget” (1887): Balanced phrases and phrase repetition
194, footnote 515: “The Custom of the Country” (1876): Reference to polka rhythms via dotted values and syncopation
195: “Polly Perkins of Paddington Green” (1864) and “Did You Ever Go to Hampstead in a Van?” (date unlisted): No modulation versus modulation to dominant key area
196, footnote 520: “Champagne Charlie” (1868): Example of the comic swell song
203, footnote 542: Recommended arrangements by George Martin for the Beatles: “Yesterday” (1965), strings; “In My Life” (1965), piano solo; “Eleanor Rigby” (1966), strings and vocal harmonies; “A Day in the Life” (1967), orchestral transitions; “All You Need Is Love” (1967), collage outro; “Within You, Without You” (1967), Western strings (see also chapter 4); “Something” (1969), strings.
204–205: “Do You Remember Walter?” (1968), the Kinks: Prominent piano 0:00–0:10 and 0:48–0:53
205; 210: “Sitting By the Riverside” (1968), the Kinks: Piano timbre reminiscent of a player piano 0:00–0:07; singable melody (small range, mostly conjunct or neighboring motion); oom-pah texture in the bass
205–206: “Cool, Calm & Collected” (1967), the Rolling Stones: Prominent piano 0:00–0:28; octave (+/- a step) ranges in individual sections
205–207: “Village Green” (1968), the Kinks: Singable melodic characteristics within individual sections; conventionally resolved secondary dominants 0:12–0:14 and 0:41–0:43, 0:57–1:01 and 1:39–1:43; strings 1:30–1:39
206; 210: “All of My Friends Were There” (1968), the Kinks: Singable (though fast!) and patter-like melody in verses, 0:05–0:26 and 1:14–1:36; oom-pah bass accompaniment in verses
207; 209: “Starstruck” (1968), the Kinks: Strings 1:06–1:25; nonsense syllables 1:04–1:18
207–209: “Phenomenal Cat” (1968), the Kinks: Flute timbre throughout; nonsense singing with occasional vocal effects 1:13–1:29 and 1:55–2:25
208–209; 211: “Something Happened To Me Yesterday” (1967), the Rolling Stones: Horn timbres 0:00–0:04 and 1:39–2:13; “improvised” whistling at 1:01–1:04 and spoken word at 4:18–4:42; oom-pah bass 0:07–0:33; saxophone in ensemble
210: “I’m Getting a Big Boy Now” (1880) and “The Bachelors’ Club” (1895): Oom-pah accompaniment pattern
211, footnote 555: Recommended melodic McCartney bass lines: “Michelle” (1965, “Here, There, and Everywhere” (1966), “Penny Lane” (1967), “Something” (1969).

Chapter 7: “The End of the Beginning”: Concluding Thoughts and Future Directions

Optional Listening

256: “Till There Was You” (*With the Beatles*, 1963), “And I Love Her” (*A Hard Day’s Night*, 1964): Nylon-string guitar solos and Latin-inspired rhythms

256: “It Won’t Be Long,” “All I’ve Got To Do” (both songs *With the Beatles*): Tin Pan Alley and musical theatre-esque chord extensions
256, footnote 645: “Got To Get You Into My Life” (*Revolver*, 1966), “Yer Blues” (*The Beatles*, A.K.A. the *White Album*, 1968), “For You Blue” (*Let It Be*, 1970): Stylistic influence from Motown and the blues
257: “Living in the Material World” (*Living in the Material World*, 1973), “*Marwa* Blues” (*Brainwashed*, 2002): Two Harrison songs that can be analyzed from the perspective of raga
259: Pink Floyd, *The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973): Prominent use of tape manipulation and unaltered real-world sound

Appendix B: Glossary of Indian Musical Terms

General Terms
Carnatic: Southern Indian musical traditions. See *Hindustani* for pertinent further comments.

Gharana: A specific tradition of instrumental or vocal teaching and performance style, based on the idea of a teacher-student lineage A performer can usually tell which *gharana* another performer is from based on performance choices, favored improvisation styles, and in the sitar's case, even instrument design.

Hindustani: Northern Indian musical traditions. Some basic concepts, such as raga and tal, are shared between northern and southern traditions, but there are many differences in genres, instrumentation, performance styles, etc.

Instruments
Bansuri: A side-blown relative of the flute without fingering keys. Can be an accompanying or solo instrument.

Dilruba: A bowed, fretted stringed instrument. Can be an accompanying or solo instrument.

Pakhavaj: A double-headed drum played by hand. Primarily an accompanying instrument.

Shehnai: A double-reed wind instrument similar to the *mizmar* and oboe. Can be an accompanying or solo instrument.

Sitar: A fretted, long-necked plucked string instrument with a row of played strings, and a row of sympathetic strings beneath. A solo instrument, used in Hindustani music.

Svaramandal: A zither-like instrument usually used to accompany singers.

Tabla: A pair of pitched drums played by hand. An accompanying instrument to both singers and other instruments, particularly sitar.

Tambura: An unfretted, long-necked plucked string instrument that provides the drone. An accompanying instrument, primarily for singers.

Rhythm
Bols: Syllables used by tabla players to learn strokes in various tals (see tal)

Tal: A repeating rhythmic cycle that performers follow to improvise and return to the *gat* (see *gat*) at the correct moments. May be any number of beats from 3 to 16; the two tals I discuss here are *tintal* (16 beats per cycle) and *jhaptal* (10 beats per cycle). Used in both Hindustani and Carnatic music.

Tihai: An improvisatory phrase repeated three times, designed to end on an important beat in the tal, most often beat 1 *("sam")*. Signals the end of an improvisation idea or performance section, and also signals a return to the *gat*.
NOTE: *Tihais* also have a melodic component, in which a performer ideally builds it in relation to the improvisation that came before it.

Pitch, *That,* and Raga
Gat: A melody lasting a cycle of tal that repeats; come in slow, medium, and fast varieties. Treated, along with the raga's characteristics, as a base for improvisation.

Komal: A pitch lowered from its unaltered form; notated in chapter 4 with a downward arrow. Example: *Komal ga* = ↓*G*

Raga: A specific set of rules for using pitches in a given *that*. Includes pitches included (5–7), ascent and descent patterns, and characteristic motions between or around select pitches. Sometimes classified according to more esoteric associations: time of day, seasons, emotions, etc.
NOTE: Multiple ragas may belong to the same *that*. Differences in the ragas' pitch emphases, ascent/descent patterns, and characteristic motions determine which raga is at play.

Sa: Basic note of a raga, abbreviated *S*; scale degree 1 of a *that* or raga. All ragas a performer wishes to use will be tuned to whatever pitch the performer uses as *sa.* Drone usually includes *sa* and scale degree 4 (*ma*) or 5 (*pa*), though an unstable raga may require different pitches from the drone to highlight the instability.
Remaining six scale degrees as follows: 2 = *re (R)*; 3 = *ga (G)*; 4 = *ma (M)*; 5 = *pa (P)*; 6 = *dha (D)*; 7 = *ni (N)*.

Samvadi: One of two central pitches that help characterize a raga, the pitch a fourth or fifth away from *vadi*. Used as a point of emphasis, through phrases ending on it or oscillations around it, but the less emphasized of the pair.

Tan: An unrepeated improvisation to be inserted at various places in the rhythmic cycle, and usually followed with a *tihai*. In a sitar performance, there are many kinds of *tans*, emphasizing both left-hand and right-hand playing techniques.

That: Basic collection of seven pitches from which ragas are drawn. May include both "natural" or "unaltered" pitches and altered forms (see *komal* and *tivra*).

Tivra: A pitch raised from its unaltered form; notated in chapter 4 with an upward arrow. Example: *Tivra ma* = ↑*M*

Vadi: One of two central pitches that help characterize a raga, sometimes called the "principal note." Used as a point of emphasis; the more emphasized of the pair.

NOTE: *Vadi* may or may not be *sa* depending upon the raga used. *Sa* and *vadi* are both important to the raga, but for different reasons (*sa* for tuning, *vadi* for raga classification and improvisation).

Sections of a Sitar Performance (In Order of Performance)

Alap: An ametric, improvisatory section that opens the performance of a raga. Ideally alap should present that raga's identifying characteristics.

Jor: Continuation of the melodic material in alap, with a pulse added (but still ametric).

Gat: See general definition for *gat* above. A performer may include a slow, medium, or fast *gat,* and the tempo gradually increases in performance. Within the exploration of the *gat*, a performer should improvise a variety of *tans* and *tihais*. These improvisations gradually move from slower, left-hand techniques to faster, right-hand techniques. The tabla player may also improvise.

Jhala: The final and fastest section of a sitar performance, emphasizing short, rhythmic phrases that incorporate a tonic pedal using the instrument's accompanying (*cikari*) strings.