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Rebel Fans: Women and Music Culture in the 1960s

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Nicolette Rohr

June 2018

Dissertation Committee:
Dr. Brian Lloyd, Chairperson
Dr. Catherine Gudis
Dr. Molly McGarry

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The Dissertation of Nicolette Avie Rohr is approved:

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Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

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I always loved to read the liner notes when I got a new album, and eventually I poured over book acknowledgments too, learning who was involved in what and how much love and labor goes into any project. This road felt lonely sometimes, but it was filled with many good souls and kindly spirits, and this finished product would not have been possible without the financial and intellectual support of a great many people and the love and prayers of many more. It is my pleasure to have the chance to thank some of them here.

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For my Mom and in memory of my Dad

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Rebel Fans: Women and Music Culture in the 1960s

by

Nicolette Rohr

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in History
University of California, Riverside, June 2018
Dr. Brian Lloyd, Chairperson

Popular music was integral to the 1960s and to the lives of the many young people who bought records, listened to the radio, went to concerts, joined fan clubs, and forged communities around music. For many young women, music and fandom became terrains of cultural rebellion through the experiences, connection, access to new ideas, and participation in public culture that each provided. When these experiences were lived in public, as they were so visibly at the height of Beatlemania, popular music fandom became a major current in American culture and challenged many gender conventions in families, relationships, dress, behavior, and public spaces. Images of women as fans in the 1960s—from screaming Beatlemaniacs to the ubiquitous "hippie chicks"—are well known in the era's visual record and the smiling, sometimes frantic, faces of fans and the sound of their screams have been integral to recent commemorations of the decade. While these screams and images are significant, alone they do not reveal the rich stories of connection and meaning that made up sixties music culture and the unique experiences of women's fandom that were integral to the 1960s. By locating fans as individuals and communities in the folk revival, Beatlemania, and the rock music of the counterculture, this project explores women's experiences as fans and illustrates the ways in which music

and fandom shaped women's participation in a vibrant music culture and in political culture as well. By taking women's music fandom seriously as a broad and important cultural impulse, this project explores how it both reflected and shaped many of the decade's crucial developments and charts connections between music, music fandom, women's liberation, and the cultural rebellions of the era.

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Do you believe in magic, in a young girl's heart?

How the music can free her, whenever it starts

And it's magic, if the music is groovy

It makes you feel happy like an old-time movie

I'll tell you 'bout the magic and it'll free your soul

But it's like tryin' to tell a stranger 'bout rock and roll

~ The Lovin' Spoonful, "Do You Believe in Magic"

Introduction

The attempt to make sense
of trying to make sense
of something that possibly
makes no sense
makes a sense of its own;
a sense that is often more akin
to music than to reason.
~ Robert Hunter, "A Note on Method," *A Strange Music*, 1991

"'You know, they should teach a course in rock 'n' roll.'
'Yeah, it'd be a lot of fun.'
'There'd be problems…it'd have to be a year, maybe a two year course.'
'Come on…they teach the whole history of European intellectual thought or political theory in one year—that's 2500 years of material! Rock's fifteen at the most.'
'Well, seventeen, if you count *Sixty-Minute Man* by the Dominoes, in 1951. But the thing is, people really *care* about rock 'n' roll, it's part of them, even if they only know it subconsciously, or when it hits them. I mean, who really cares if you leave out Marsilius of Padua. But everyone has their greatest song, and they'd scream if you left it out, and they should. Two years.'"
~ Conversation at the Avalon Ballroom, San Francisco, as told by Greil Marcus, "Who Put The Bomp in The Bomp De-Bomp De-Bomp," in *Rock and Roll Will Stand*, 1969

2014 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Beatles' arrival in the United States in February 1964. The year, during which I advanced to candidacy and began work on this dissertation, was filled with commemorations and recollections in newspapers, special edition magazines, television programs, museum exhibits, and all over the Internet. The images broadcast on news clips and featured online showed the smiling, somewhat apprehensive faces of John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr as they arrived at John F. Kennedy Airport and played on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, but more often, the images were of young women—smiling, screaming, sometimes on the verge of fainting. These images are the markers of Beatlemania, the epochal event of fandom, and they speak to the significance and centrality of fans, not only to Beatlemania but to the history of the 1960s, the history of youth culture, the history of popular music, and the history of women in the United States.

Images of music fans in the 1960s—from Beatlemaniacs to the ubiquitous "hippie chicks" of San Francisco or Woodstock—are common in the visual record of the era, included in countless montages and photo spreads and often used to signal the sixties. But as much as these smiling, sometimes frantic, faces are seen or their screaming voices are heard in documentary footage and live recordings, the experiences and stories behind them have too often been glossed over in histories of the 1960s as well as histories of popular music. Music and music fandom—from Beatlemania to rock festivals to the very serious act of listening to records—held great significance in the lives of individuals, the communities they formed around music, and the national culture in which they participated in the 1960s. Music fandom was lived in bedrooms and living rooms, in front of televisions and radios, at music festivals and concerts, in school, at church, on the subway, in the street. Fans bought records, lunch pails, posters, playing cards and a range of commodities, *and* invested great personal, sometimes political, meaning in the music they listened to and trespassed gendered codes of public behavior in displaying their fandom in a highly visible, audible, public way. In many cases, fans also enmeshed themselves in vibrant music cultures, either as part of a fan club or community or as active participants in a world increasingly shaped by popular music, and often claimed cultural and political identifications as fans. In a time when young women were told, even more pronouncedly and unforgivingly than they usually have been, how they should act, how they should look, what they should like, what they should want, and how they should behave, thousands of young women found solace, community, solidarity, and a range of new ideas in music and embraced their favorite music and musicians with a level

of feeling that was sometimes transformative. Fans, especially the screamers, criers, and fainters easily dismissed as some combination of silly, crazy, and, of course, girly, were a part of a generative historical development because of their connections to music, lived privately and publically. By locating these fans as individuals and communities in some of the various spaces and scenes in which they developed during the 1960s, I explore the role of popular music in the lives of young women during this period and illustrate the ways in which music and experiences of fandom shaped women's participation in a vibrant music culture and in political culture as well.

Fandom was not the exclusive domain of young women, as many explorations of folk and rock music driven by male audiences suggest, and the Beatles, too, in Nick Bromell's words, "pierced the souls" of boys.[1] "The boomers born after World War II, both men and women," Tim Riley argued, "learned much of what they know about how to be young, how to seek and earn love, and how to struggle toward adulthood from the popular music they listened to."[2] In addition, there are arguably common ways in which people connect to popular culture regardless of gender.[3] At the same time, Beatlemania itself was a particularly gendered term to identify the reactions of female Beatles fans

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Epigraphs: John Sebastian, "Do You Believe in Magic," on The Lovin' Spoonful, *Do You Believe in Magic*

[1] Nick Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows: Rock and Psychedelics in the 1960s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 23. Although not necessarily branded as fandom, many studies of popular music, and folk and rock in particular, rely heavily on male sources or are written from male perspectives. This tendency has early roots in rock journalism, as I explore in Chapter Five.

[2] Tim Riley, *Fever: How Rock 'n' Roll Transformed Gender in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), xi-xii.

[3] See Mark Duffett, *Understanding Fandom: An Introduction to the Study of Media Fan Culture* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 77-78; 191-207.

and, in its most public form, was about women, more than men, and more than the Beatles. The fandom of screams, tears, and fan clubs (in many cases) was the purview of young women, partly by design, playing on the marketing of male adoration (as the Byrds sang, "if you make the charts the girls will tear you apart").[4] But participants still made it distinct by the ways they behaved and the meanings they drew, particularly in light of the storied sixties. Moreover, the proximity of sixties music fandom to the women's liberation movement makes these transgressions and connections particularly unique.

There were varying iterations of these meanings and connections surrounding music, from the fandom of girlish screams that has been too often dismissed to the quieter fandom of the folk revival that has been largely overlooked. Of course, not all women behaved one certain way, not all women were fans, and not all of their experiences rendered the same meanings. The women of the folk revival might have looked down on the women who idolized rock and roll stars; what one woman found imprisoning another found liberating, and for different reasons. I do not presume that many of the women I study considered themselves to be acting politically when they screamed and shouted, or that they usually recognized what I see as the importance of their actions. This argument comes from placing them in historical context and conceiving of the political in broad, everyday terms, as it came to be seen in the 1960s. These politics are not usually intentional and seldom in concert, they are collective but not because of any traditional organizing, and compared to so many examples of dramatic political action in this era in particular, they are easy to miss or dismiss. But it is those developments that make them

[4] Jim McGuinn and Chris Hillman, "So You Want to Be a Rock 'n' Roll Star," on The Byrds, *Younger Than Yesterday* (Columbia, 1967).

all the more important to understand. Thinking broadly about how and where change happens, I look to concert halls, festival grounds, record stores, and anywhere where there was a radio.

I also look not only at these women in their time and their experiences of fandom, but at the world that watched them. Part of what makes fandom in this moment so important was its wide cultural presence, so that people who had no interest in popular music were forced to pay attention to fans, not necessarily because the music was appealing to them but because the fans and their images were pervasive (and sometimes because they blocked streets and occupied spaces and made it difficult to get to work or walk down the street). In an age of national media, one did not need to be a Beatles fan to live through Beatlemania, or like any of the music played at Woodstock for the event to be important.

The national media also connected people through shared experiences of listening and hearing, helped offer glimpses of other worlds of Beat poets, folkies, and hippies, and helped make those cultures part of national culture, to the extent that there was one, through language, fashion, and music. As rock critic and radical feminist Ellen Willis explained,

> When we think of 'the crowd' in connection with pop music we tend to think first of live performance, yet I would argue that historically the primary crowd, the crowd that's central to understanding the relation of music and audience, has been the mass-mediated crowd that was in the first place brought together and held together by radio, records, and the public images of pop performers introduced mainly through TV. [5]

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[5] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; "The Crowd," panel, Stars Don't Stand Still in the Sky: Music & Myth conference, February 14, 1997. MC 646, 10.24. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

As Willis notes, this “was the day to day pervasive experience,” and it was this that that “built a community that was also in some sense a movement.”[6]

The folk revival may have been concentrated in Greenwich Village or the hippie life in San Francisco, but there were ripples of both communities crisscrossing the country. In Austin, Texas, a friend of Janis Joplin’s remembered, everybody was “trying to figure out what people were wearing in Greenwich Village.”[7] My hometown of Riverside, California and its neighboring communities were home to a vibrant folk revival, and my extended family was able to shed light on how the high sixties looked in eastern South Dakota. I have tried to pay attention to both the famous places and the countless other places where all of this was enacted and reenacted. There’s a lot more to be learned about specific scenes and spaces. At the same time, it’s clear that part of the power of music and fan culture lay in sonic spaces and places imagined and accessed through music. Moreover, participation in a national culture through fandom and through coverage—the sense that you were “in the news”—was part of what made music fandom significant for young women.[8] As Willis continued,

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[6] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; “The Crowd,” panel, Stars Don’t Stand Still in the Sky: Music & Myth conference, February 14, 1997. MC 646, 10.24. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[7] Alice Echols interview with Jack Jackson, in Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company, 1999), 41.

[8] I have drawn on several accounts of Greenwich Village, San Francisco, Austin, and Cambridge and referenced some collections of a particular concert venue, but throughout this process I have also learned a lot about how the folk revival and sixties music fandom looked here in Riverside, California, and been interested in the contexts of the South and Midwest that sometimes carried a different set of fan practices and transgressions. Although I have paid attention to centralized scenes and to their reverberations in

> The mass-mediated crowd embodied the paradox of mass freedom in that each of us integrated the music into our lives or our lives into the music in our own way, listened and discussed it with our friends, responded to it according to our own particular filters, and at the same time shared it across an enormously heterogeneous spectrum of the population.[9]

There was an individual connection, connection with friends and fellow fans, and a connection through "the crowd."

The public nature of fandom and of music cultures in the 1960s in particular not only made music fans visible in what was for many people everyday life but brought music and many young people onto a contested terrain of space and the very notion of public—essential struggles of the 1960s.[10] Although there was certainly a difference between what was tolerated in leisure culture versus political culture, and although this distinction was marked by race, these claims to space were significant affronts to gendered codes of public behavior. Even where music was concerned, as Jacqueline Warwick notes, "Girls' musicking has generally not revolved around the culture of the street or the call of the road."[11] Many women claimed both—the street and the road—in Beatlemania, the folk revival, and the rise of the counterculture as they enacted fandom in

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cities, suburbs, and rural areas, there is a lot of room for studies that focus on music scenes and fan communities regionally or in particular locations.

[9] Ellen Willis Papers, "The Crowd," February 14, 1997. As an example, Willis explained, "watching Elvis Presley on Ed Sullivan—me, my parents, my cousins in Washington, D.C., the working-class kids in my high school, all kinds of people I wouldn't meet till years later. I don't mean that I was self-conscious about any of this at the time, yet the echo of that experience was part of my enjoyment of Elvis and inchoate sense of his importance."

[10] See Daphne Spain, *Constructive Feminism: Women's Spaces and Women's Rights in the American City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016).

[11] Jacqueline Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Culture: Popular Music and Identity in the 1960s* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 24. As Warwick notes, this was for good reason: lack of access, threat of danger, prohibition by parents, and social controls that made women fear the loss of respectability.

public spaces and took to the road for music. Music and music fandom provided a means for many young people, including young women and people of color, to claim public spaces for their own pleasure and to begin to assert, albeit in sometimes small (but sometimes very dramatic) ways, their rights as participants in public culture and, in some cases, their "right to the city."[12] This looked different in suburban, rural, and urban areas, but the connection to the national and public was shared, and part of the significance is the role of national media in bringing all of these women together. Throughout this project, I have tried to pay attention to *where* fandom happened and to the politics of the spaces, large and small, where fans were, and sometimes where fans weren't.

These spaces, not to mention sounds—what music reached who and how they received it—were shaped by many factors—material, physical, musical, social, political, cultural. The parameters of this project are set along lines of time (the 1960s), space (the United States), and gender, and are influenced by race and class. I necessarily turn my attention to the postwar world in which many of my subjects were born and grew up, and I trace some of their lives into the subsequent years, but my research is grounded in the parameters of the 1960s, contested as they may be.[13] I note the global dimensions of popular music fandom, especially fascinating in the 1960s, but I focus specifically on the

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[12] Spain, *Constructive Feminism*, 16. As Spain discusses, Henri Lefebvre argued that inhabitants of cities were in constant struggles to assert their "right to the city." In Chapters Two and Four I discuss the battles with the police in Washington Square Park and in the Sunset Strip riots of 1966 which underscore this point.

[13] See Van Gosse, "Postmodern America: A New Democratic Order in the Second Gilded Age," in *The World the Sixties Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America*, ed. Van Gosse and Richard Moser (Philadelphia: Temple, 2003), 1-36:2; Tom Hayden, *The Long Sixties: From 1960 to Obama* (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2009).

United States in order to deal with one national media and in order to address one set of historical circumstances and consequences.[14] This is a history of young people—baby boomers born in the 1940s and 1950s with few exceptions—although I note that there were also older and younger music fans, and I write a little bit about their parents' generation in each chapter.[15] This project is not organized specifically along lines of race or class, but many of the women whose words wound up here have origins in the white middle class, making this primarily a history of white women. The racial politics of the 1960s play a role in every chapter, and I have been increasingly aware, as I researched, of the presence of racial boundaries in music scenes *and* of the diversity of audiences, even among musical genres considered to be mostly white. Music fandom is a form of leisure culture, and young people of even modest means were more likely to join fan clubs and attend concerts, but it's not clear to me that they were more likely to be fans or to forge

[14] Throughout the course of my research I caught many glimpses of the global dimensions of sixties music fandom and the ways in which music culture was almost global in scope. As examples, the skiffle craze in Britain was akin to the folk revival in the United States, and there are numerous connections between Britain and the United States, from Beatlemania and the British Invasion to mod London and Dylan and Hendrix's popularity in Great Britain. There are also some contrasts, and Beatles fandom was different in France and Japan and the Philippines than it was in Britain and the United States. I hope future studies will shed light on comparative global fandoms and on a transnational music culture. For a note on global comparisons, see C. Lee Harrington and Denise D. Bielby, "Global Fandom/Global Fan Studies" in *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*, ed. Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harringon (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 186.

[15] I occasionally use "women/woman" and "girl/girls" interchangeably, in part because some of the fans I write about as twelve-year-old girls are the same twenty-year-old young women I write about in the last chapter. Beatlemania is the main example where the fans involved are quite young, and in some cases children. At the same time, as much as music culture and music fandom were driven by young people, there were fans and listeners of varying ages, and there were parents who liked the music their children listened to, along with those who were annoyed or incensed. This was not the place to explore the intergenerational influences of popular music, but I hope to see and contribute to more work on this in the future as well as look at music as a space to see more nuances in popular understandings of the generation gap. I often felt that those parents bopping their heads along at Shea Stadium had stories to tell too, and I heard voices that suggested there were families where music brought people together more than it drove them apart.

connections to music. With all these considerations in mind, I have tried to avoid writing about "women," *writ large*, because of the many distinctions of race, class, sexuality, region, religion, and background or tried to qualify "many women" and explain which women and why.[16]

I also include a range of fan experiences, public and private, including screaming and shouting and the resonance found on a record. Fandom happens on a personal level, enabled by a number of commercial forces but forged individually, by feeling. Fan studies scholars have debated the distinctions between fan and consumer, affirming that it is the "degree of emotional, psychological, and/or behavioral *investment*," "'active' *engagement*," and "issues of community, sociality, self-identification…" that distance fans on a continuum with consumers.[17] That investment can take on a range of meanings, and the quest to define a fan is made more interesting by the proclivity of fans to judge each other—she's just a casual fan, he doesn't know all the words, and so on—but my point is that I include a range of connections to music in exploring music fandom.

To give voice to these connections, better understand the experiences of women as fans, and understand their world, I draw on a range of sources from the era and recollections of the era. In many ways, these sources are diffuse and incomplete, found

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[16] See Gerda Lerner, *Why History Matters: Life and Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 132. I make note of sexuality, particularly in Chapter Two, however the discussion is somewhat limited by what sources allow, and there is much room for more research.

[17] According to Daniel Cavicchi, the phrase "fan" itself came into usage with the growth of mass consumerism in the early twentieth century. Daniel Cavicchi, "Loving Music: Listeners, Entertainments, and the Origins of Music Fandom in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*, ed. Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harringon (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 247. Also see Harrington and Bielby, "Global Fandom/Global Fan Studies," and Mark Duffett, *Understanding Fandom: An Introduction to the Study of Media Fan Culture* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 20-23.

in fragments in contemporary newspapers and magazines, subsequent recollections and memoirs, film clips and documentaries, scrapbooks and archives, oral histories and conversations. I have relied heavily on newspaper and magazine sources for accounts of concerts—details like whether or not an ambulance had to be called—and some quotes from fans, as well as the often snide, perplexed perspectives of the journalists covering the event. I include major national publications as well as music journals and fan magazines, considering what these women might have read as well as who wrote about them and how. I have watched a lot of footage and listened to a lot of screams, from *Festival!* and *Woodstock* to more recent documentaries. The records of organizations run by teenage girls, let alone their personal papers, have not been granted much importance over the years, but I am grateful in particular for collections at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Library and Archives and Special Collections at UC Santa Cruz. The Ellen Willis Papers at the Schlesinger Library were invaluable, and it has been timely that my years in graduate school coincided with a great interest in Willis and her work.[18] Willis looms large in this project, and I draw on her voice as both critic and fan, and on Alice Echols, Wini Breines, Susan Douglas, and other female scholars of their generation for their work and ideas as well as the personal observations and recollections they offer. I have also drawn from many memoirs of women growing up and entering adulthood in the 1960s, some of the music world and others that merely reference music but make important connections and help to provide more in-depth reflections. As Anwen Crawford has

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[18] As Devon Powers notes in *Writing the Record*, a history of the early years of rock criticism, Willis's reputation underwent a "profound renewal" in the years after her death and spurred, perhaps, by the publication of *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, the collection of music writing through which I first encountered Willis. See Powers, *Writing the Record: The Village Voice and the Birth of Rock Criticism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 3-4.

suggested, memoir provides a more ready realm for women to "dissect all that is maddening and wonderful about popular music."[19] Relying on memoirs and essays written long after the sixties led me to include the voices of many women who are now quite well known, but these reflections also allowed me to include some participants' ideas about their experiences to provide larger context. I have also drawn on invaluable collections of oral histories and conducted a few conversations in the course of this research.[20]

At times, I have felt that fans were both everywhere and nowhere in the sources of the sixties, and that music was always in the background. The voices of fans are hard to hear sometimes, but historians need to pay more attention to the music people listen to and what it means to them, as well as how and where and why they listen to live and recorded music. Audiences are essential to the stories of popular music—no one becomes popular without an audience—but fans are often relegated to numbers—one million sold, an audience of 20,000—or, at best, simplified aggregates—they screamed, they cheered, they booed, the crowd went wild. As Lori Twersky put it, "Actually, the

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[19] Anwen Crawford, "The World Needs Female Rock Critics," *The New Yorker*, May 26, 2015. https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/the-world-needs-female-rock-critics.

[20] Although I relied upon collections of oral histories and conducted conversations in the course of this project, I was reluctant to design this project as an oral history and more interested in drawing on diverse sources and considering media portrayals from the time along with recollections. A different project would incorporate oral histories more extensively and collecting more oral histories would certainly add to understandings of this topic, and would likely make the connections between music and political activism even clearer.

Female Teenage Audience is composed of individuals."[21] This project is about both the strength in numbers and those individual experiences.

The study of fandom and of popular music fandom in particular is in many ways an emerging field.[22] Although now quite distinct from many of the assumptions of the Frankfurt School scholars of the mid-twentieth century, whose Marxist critiques often dismissed fans as "passive and easily manipulated," the field traces roots to this body of scholarship.[23] The study of popular music as a whole has been influenced by the assumption, as Bromell explained it, "that popular culture purveys false consciousness to a mass society caught up in a deluded quest for the unattainable satisfactions promised by capitalism."[24] Fandom, it was assumed, was surely "a clinical obsession, an outpouring of repressed sexual energy, or misguided means of seeking spiritual transcendence."[25]

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[21] Lori Twersky, "Devils or Angels? The female teenage audience examined," *Trouser Press*, April 1981, in *Rock She Wrote: Women Write About Rock, Pop, and Rap*, ed. Evelyn McDonnell and Ann Powers (London: Plexus, 1995), 178.

[22] Duffett makes a distinction between fandom research as "a very broad, long-standing, multi-disciplinary body of scholarship that takes fandom as its primary focus" with roots in sociology, anthropology, and psychology, whereas fan studies is "a much narrower area which has emerged from cultural studies," mostly during the twenty-first century (Duffett, *Understanding Fandom*, 2). For a good overview, see Mark Duffett, *Introduction to Popular Music Fandom: Identities, Roles, and Practices* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 1-15 and Duffett, *Understanding Fandom*, 54-70 and 86-87. Also see Simon Frith, "Rock and the Politics of Memory," in *The 60s without Apology*, ed. Sohnya Sayres, Anders Stephanson, Stanley Aronowitz, and Frederic Jameson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 59-69 and Mike Denning, "Rock Music," in *The 60s without Apology*, 327-328.

[23] See Duffett, *Introduction to Popular Music* Fandom, 1-15; Candy Leonard, *Beatleness: How The Beatles and Their Fans Remade The World* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2014), xix; Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, eds. *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York: Continuum, 2007). Moreover, as these authors explain, Adorno argued that fans and audiences could not produce new research or discoveries because they merely repeated existing languages and mirrored hype.

[24] Nick Bromell, "Music, Experience, and History," *American Quarterly* 53 (2001): 165-177: 166, DOI: 10.1353/aq.2001.0002.

[25] Duffett, *Introduction to Popular Music Fandom*, 1-15: 1-2.

Pathologizing fandom in this way, insisting that it was something to be pitied, reflected mistrust of mass culture as well as an elitist scholarship of seeing fans as "other," non-intellectuals drawn to mindless entertainment—after all, fan comes from *fanatic*.[26]

The changes in mass culture in the 1960s, with Bob Dylan leading the way, contributed to slow changes in media scholarship and cultural studies; as I discuss in Chapter Four, it became hard to argue that the music of the high sixties wasn't worthy of scholarly inquiry.[27] Although this awareness towards the art of the so-called counterculture remained dismissive of the fandom of, say, screaming girls, it blurred the lines of popular and not, mass and not, culture and not. In the 1970s, scholars at the School for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham, England, including Simon Firth, Angela McRobbie, and others, began to pay more attention to popular music and what it meant to the people who listened to it, recognizing music and music fandom as complex and worthy of far more study than it had previously been granted.[28] Much of this body of work naturally focused on Britain and was concerned with issues of authenticity and identity. These British scholars paved way for studies devoted to "observed and recorded data about the way rock fans themselves understand their

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[26] Henry Jenkins helped bridge this gap in *Textual Poachers* (1992) by being forthright about his position as both fan and researcher. Joli Jensen was also significant in suggesting that fans and scholars held important similarities. See Joli Jenson, "Fandom as Pathology: The Consequences of Characterization," in *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, ed. Lisa Lewis (London: Routledge, 1992), 9-29. Also see Duffett, *Introduction to Popular Music* Fandom, 1-15: 5-6.

[27] See Duffett, *Introduction to Popular Music* Fandom, 1-15: 2.

[28] See Bromell, "Music, Experience, and History," 166; Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber, "Girls and Subcultures," in *The Subcultures Reader*, ed. Ken Gelder and Sarah Thornton (London: Routledge, 1997; 2005, second ed.), 105-112. See also Angela McRobbie and Simon Frith's important article, "Rock and Sexuality," which first appeared in *Screen Education*, 29 (1978), London, printed in McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture* (New York: Routledge, second ed., 2000).

participation in music."[29] A bit late to the game, this development coincided with the emergence of the new social history and the transformations in the field of history during the 1960s as more women and people of color entered the academy. More recently, scholars including Mark Duffett, Daniel Cavicchi, and Joli Jensen have come to view fans with greater agency, ascribing political connotations to fandom and looking at fans as creative and generative rather than merely responsive.[30] Part of the effect of this work has also been to illustrate that fans are, of course, historical and to trace the ways in which fandoms—music, movies, sports—have been shaped by modern technology, media, and other developments.[31] These studies have also helped challenge ideas of fandom as aberrant behavior.[32] They also suggest the ways in which recognizing fandom engages stories of women, young people, and people of color, leading historians in particular to pay more attention to diverse leisure cultures.[33]

The field remains somewhat diffuse, perhaps naturally so, as a subfield of musicology, sociology, media studies, and history, to some extent. While this literature is

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[29] See Bromell, "Music, Experience, and History," 166.

[30] See Jensen, "Fandom as Pathology," 10.

[31] See Duffett, *Understanding Fandom*, 1-5. Sports fandom remains the most widely accepted form of fandom. The movie fans of the 1920s and bobbysoxers of the 1940s both represent important events of fandom.

[32] See Mark Duffett, "Directions in Music Fan Research: Undiscovered Territories and Hard Problems," *Popular Music and Society*, 36:3 (2013), 299-304: 299-300. Duffett makes the important point that while John Lennon's assassin is often referred to as a fan-gone-bad, he was really a former fan and a seriously deranged man posing as a fan for access to Lennon (Duffett, *Understanding Fandom*, 107-113).

[33] As Kathy Peiss and others have demonstrated, leisure cultures have long been used as a space of freedom and claiming autonomy as well as city streets as temporary spaces of expression, sexuality, and freedom. See Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

important to my research for this project, I do not, particularly, seek to theorize fandom or to pathologize it, but rather recognize it is a human tendency and insist that what's more interesting is how fandom is enacted and what it means to people.[34] This terrain has been charted best by journalists, especially the rock critics formed in part by the sixties—Willis chief among them. Historians, so far, have been less intrepid, but this argument has made glimmers elsewhere, and I draw on work by Alice Echols, Norma Coates, Susan Douglas, Nick Bromell, Barbara Ehrenreich, Gloria Hess, and Elizabeth Jacobs to explore what Ann Powers and Evelyn McDonnell called "the link between women's liberation and the love for rock 'n' roll."[35] This project weaves together some of these ideas and points suggested in the 1960s and since, by scholars and fans alike, with historical evidence to offer a more encompassing account of this connection. Echols suggested in *Shaky Ground* that "Future studies may very well uncover ways in which young white women and girls also harnessed rock's subversive and rebellious possibilities," and that this work might provide "a better understanding of white women's

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[34] Paul McCartney makes this point in *The Beatles Anthology*, comparing screaming Beatles fans to boys at a football game.

[35] See Evelyn McDonnell and Ann Powers, Preface, *Rock She Wrote*, 1; Ann Powers, "The Love You Make: Fans and Groupies," in *Trouble Girls: The Rolling Stone Book of Women in Rock*, ed. Barbara O'Dair (New York: Random House, 1997); Barbara Ehrenreich, Elizabeth Hess, and Gloria Jacobs, "Beatlemania: Girls Just Want to Have Fun," in *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, ed. Lisa A. Lewis (London: Routledge, 1992). The Ehrenreich et al article places Beatlemania in the context of the sexual revolution and suggests its radical importance, however this is somewhat undermined by the glib approach spelled out in the title, "Girls Just Want to Have Fun." They also make the claim that Beatlemania was the first major outburst of the decade to feature women, which ignores the visibility of women in the civil rights movement, the student movement, and others. Thanks to Daphne Brooks and Pop Con 2016 for insights on this. Tim Riley also explores changes in ideas about gender changed with rock music beginning in the 1950s in *Fever: How Rock 'n' Roll Transformed Gender in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), however Riley focuses on performers as role models but does not engage fan stories, sources, or voices.

side of the sixties generational revolt—the women's liberation movement—that is so vital a part of the sixties story."[36] This is the understanding I pursue in this project.

This is not a music history, but it's about music at its core. There are many existing studies of the folk revival, the Beatles, and popular music in general in the 1960s, although academic publications are far outweighed by the continuous outpouring of popular presses, and the experiences of fans are often glossed over in both. The exception may be Beatlemania, but still, the broader meanings and implications, as well as the complexity of the experience, have been far less examined, or too easily dismissed.[37] As Adam Gopnik wrote, "the afterlife of the Beatles shows how it was that people came to write the Gospels: Don't tell me what it means, just tell me again what happened."[38] Moreover, there has been limited attention to female fandom in the sixties beyond Beatlemania and, significantly, beyond what has often been considered hysterical behavior. Similarly, the popularity of music during the sixties remains widely recognized but told through the stories of big names and personalities—Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix,

[36] Alice Echols, *Shaky Ground: The Sixties and Its Aftershocks* (New York: Columbia, 2002), 74.

[37] Such dismissals frame screaming girls as hysterical and fans as mere consumers. Andre Millard's book, *Beatlemania: Technology, Business, and Teen Culture in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012) grants scholarly attention to Beatlemania, however it does little to grant fans much agency or to explore the event of Beatlemania in their lives. Most importantly, while Millard acknowledges the significance of fans and the importance of Beatlemania to so many of them, he devotes most of his book to the forces shaping the Beatles' historical moment, from the port city of Liverpool to the popularity of minstrelsy and Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, and only alludes to the developments Beatlemania may have influenced. I argue that Beatlemania went far beyond the commercial and transcended what could be constructed by record executives and advertising firms. To be sure, these developments were enabled by technologies of modernity, and especially of the postwar world—the car, especially when owned by teenagers and especially when it had a radio; the teen market and the very invention of the teenager itself; the rise of mass advertising and consumer culture. Still, as I detail in Chapter Three, these developments cannot account entirely for Beatlemania or any other experiences of fandom. Record companies made similar early efforts for other bands that met much less significant ends.

[38] Adam Gopnik, "Carry that Weight: Why do the Beatles endure?" *The New Yorker*, May 1, 1995, 80.

Janis Joplin—rather than the people who listened to their music and embedded it with their own meanings. As Warwick contends, "most of the celebrations of the 1960s music in histories of the period are lopsided, focusing disproportionately on the music that was important to white, middle-class males who participated in (or at least sympathized with) left-wing political movements."[39] That's not to say that those experiences were not important, but that the approach makes only part of their impact understood, and means that women are often cast aside. This project is not about the people who made music in the 1960s—although because so many of them were fans and listeners some of them do make appearances in the pages that follow—rather, it is about the people—the many, many people—who listened to music.

This project is very much a sixties history, but I have tried to resist the drama and the nostalgia that has often characterized this era.[40] The sixties were dramatic, but they did not occur in a vacuum, and in the realm of daily life, we do a disservice to the people who lived through the sixties when we think of them and their time as outside of the normal laws governing humanity. As David Farber contends, placing the sixties within history explains most of the major developments during the decade—not making them any less exciting.[41] As the music of the era suggests, the sixties were very much a part of Dust Bowl, Depression, and New Deal America and entirely a part of World War II, its

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[39] Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Culture*, 4.

[40] See Winifred Breines, "Whose New Left?" *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 2 (Sept. 1988): 528-545; M. J. Heale, "The Sixties as History: A Review of the Political Historiography," *Reviews in American History* 33, no. 1 (March 2005): 133-152; David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994).

[41] Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 3-4.

horrors, and its aftermath, namely the domestic and consumer cultures that defined the postwar nation. I have tried to take both politics and culture into account, or to think of both in broader terms, remembering that the day after the Beatles played their storied set on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act, and that political and cultural movements unfolded together.[42]

I use the term "popular music" to describe a broad body of music produced in the sixties, including folk music (which was certainly popular), rock and roll (and then rock), R&B and Motown, and the range of genres and styles, evolving, colliding, and reforming in this period. Beatles, Bob Dylan, Rolling Stones, Beach Boys, Joan Baez, Animals, Monkees, Hendrix, Joplin, Dead, John Lee Hooker, Judy Collins, Byrds. I make some distinctions about rock music in Chapter Four, but I sometimes use the terms popular music, rock and roll, and rock interchangeably, although I have tried to use the parlance of the day. Especially because this project is about people who listen to music more than it is about music itself, I have not concerned myself with these genre classifications very much (even though some of the people who listened certainly did). In Chapter Two, for example, I am interested in both constituencies: the folk purists who rejected the Kingston Trio and Peter, Paul, and Mary as too commercial, and also the folk fans who were drawn to these popular folk acts. Although I note certain patterns, with Beatlemania being the most salient example, and I have focused on examples I found to be particularly illustrative, I am not always interested in who fans screamed for as much as how they expressed their attachments to music and what those attachments meant. This is a

[42] Carole King, *A Natural Woman: A Memoir* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2013), 120.

somewhat unwieldy approach at times, but I believe it reflects more accurately the world that people live in. As George Lipsitz writes, "Yet in music, no less than in politics, there was no one distinct sixties experience. Instead, music making in the sixties emerged from a plurality of experiences, all riddled with contradictions."[43] Music in the sixties was significant for its depth as well as its diversity. Scenes were important, but so was whatever was on the radio. Bands at Monterey and Woodstock played folk standards and rock and roll classics too, many folk fans couldn't help but listen to the Beatles, and in spite of the tiresome question, plenty of people liked both the Beatles and the Stones. Fandom is about devotion in one sense, but in the sixties, music fandom included participation in a broad music culture. It's important to remember, though, as Lipsitz reminds us, that along with the Beatles and the Stones and Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin, sixties charts and airwaves were dominated by Brenda Lee, Connie Francis, and Pat Boone.[44] (Music culture, however, was less so). There's a lot of music I don't include, and nearly every day I'd hear a song and wonder what the women who heard it in the sixties thought when it came on the radio.[45] The music to which I've tried to pay attention is music that sparked comments like "then everything changed" and "nothing

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[43] George Lipsitz, "Who'll Stop the Rain? Youth Culture, Rock 'n' Roll, and Social Crises," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 208.

[44] Lipsitz, "Who'll Stop the Rain?," 209.

[45] There is a lot of music not mentioned in this project and more to be said about Motown, surf music, and the Rolling Stones. I never engage country music, partly because I am interested in audiences that are broader in cultural scope and somewhat more racially mixed. As such, there are a lot of fans that are not included in this project. A different study might explore the fandom of women of color more intensively. This project suggests the ways in which audiences in the folk revival, at the height of Beatlemania, and in the worlds of rock and roll were shaped by the racial politics of their time. I hope there will be future studies devoted to the role of race, class, and sexuality in shaping audiences and fandom.

would ever be the same" in the sources. In the end, Mike Marqusee writes, "What matters in the history of popular culture, in the end, is not merely how many people buy a product but what that product means to them, the role it plays in their lives, its shaping power over their imaginations."[46] This widespread power and the exclamations above, as Bromell argues, make it fair to call this music "revolutionary music."[47] I consider the revolutionary actions and ideas the music invoked in the people who heard it, and how it influenced their lives in a revolutionary era.

Although the multifaceted experience of fandom is reflected in each chapter, each scene that I study here more or less reflects one facet of this experience that it best represents: being drawn to rebellion through rock and roll, finding space in folk music, letting loose and defying authority in Beatlemania, listening and imagining liberation in rock music, and, to a certain extent, taking the stage, both as musicians and in the emergence of the women's liberation movement. In Chapter One, I establish the historical context of American women and youth culture in the post-war era, as well as the state of popular music and precedents of fandom when the 1960s began, establishing the early connections between rock and roll and liberation, as well as the anxieties it provoked.

In Chapter Two, I turn to the folk revival of the late 1950s and early 60s and the women who found refuge in its ballads, politics, and coffeehouses—the songs and the spaces. The women who participated in the folk revival as performers and audiences

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[46] Mike Marqusse, *Wicked Messenger: Bob Dylan and the 1960s* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), 4.

[47] Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 23-24.

(which were certainly overlapping categories) made cultural and political statements by allying with folk music, its aesthetic, and its politics and challenged postwar femininity in their dress and display—how they wore their hair, how they sat, the clothes they chose. Moreover, as personal recollections reflect, many women found enduring significance in the music of the folk revival itself and in the inspiration of the people they met there. Folk music is rarely associated with fandom, but the level of investment and the height of popularity in the sixties suggests that it should be. This chapter is also significant because in the breadth of research on the folk revival there is so little attention to gender.

Chapter Three focuses on Beatlemania and explores the intensity of fandom in individual lives as well as its collective force in the public displays of young women. Contemporary sources as well as the memoirs and recollections of fans suggest that the "mania" of Beatlemania was grounded in intense personal experiences and feelings of connection to the Beatles. Though for most fans Beatlemania was about the Beatles, to many observers Beatlemania seemed to be about crazed young women. These images of women—gathered together, screaming and shouting, sometimes up against police barricades—made up an important part of the visual culture of the 1960s, seen on streets and transmitted through newspapers and magazines and on television sets. The screams and shouts of fans, their confrontations with police officers and charges towards the stage, their sheer love and passion for the Beatles challenged the confines of their gender and codes of public behavior. Ultimately, I argue, these women and their public images represent an important precursor to the sexual revolution and women's liberation movement that emerged later in the decade.

In Chapter Four, I move to the high sixties and the music of the counterculture. In this chapter I examine the centrality of recorded and live music to countercultural movements and the responses of women to rock and roll after 1965, paying particular note to the music itself and the power of listening. Popular music was a central force in the emerging counterculture, especially as it came to conceive of and embrace rock music as an art form. Serious listening, which affirmed the importance of popular music, represented personal meaning as well as community, and live music became one of the integral and shared experiences of the countercultural lifestyle. Listening to innovative music gave many young people new ideas and new ways of imagining the possibilities for their lives. This included traveling from suburbs to cities to see concerts, or traveling to festivals—in places like Monterey and Woodstock, New York—with friends and forming communities of listeners and embracing alternative lifestyles, dress, and display. The counterculture traded in imagery—flowers, peace signs—soon embraced by advertisers but also grounded in the politics of the New Left and the quest for alternative approaches to everyday life.[48] With long hair and what became a pretty standard outfit, many women performed this lifestyle while often engaged in a range of revolts, writing their parents "Beautiful People letters," in the words of Tom Wolfe, a story dramatized on *Sgt. Pepper* in "She's Leaving Home," devoting themselves to alternative lifestyles,

[48] As Echols wrote, "The flower child wasn't invented out of whole cloth by the media, however. Reporters could always find young people who fit the profile easily enough" (Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 30).

and, in some cases, struggling with the increasingly apparent limits to liberation when it came to sex and gender.[49]

Throughout this project I foreground the argument that when women marched through streets for reproductive rights, or when one hundred women famously protested the 1968 Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City, they were not the first unruly women of the sixties.[50] Fans had been acting up all the while, and music was an important part of their journey through the decade. As the decade turned, it's important to know not just what women were reading or seeing on the news, but what music was running through their heads. In Chapter Five, I engage more deeply in the complicated intersections of gender and popular music and consider the role of fandom as a precursor to the women's liberation movement, the connections between music and politics, and the role of women as performers in, subtly and overtly, making music a battleground of women's liberation.

I conclude by reflecting on the power of some of these images and memories and considering their commemorations, especially in this decade of fiftieth anniversaries, and preservation. I explore the public history of sixties popular music and popularity of what might be called rock and roll tourism and discuss the ways in which many of the gaps in scholarship are echoed in public, and how the power of fandom might be harnessed to change that.

Throughout this project, I explore the role of popular music in women's lives and the role of women's fandom in American culture in the 1960s, looking at fandom not as

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[49] Tom Wolfe in Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 20.

[50] Alice Echols, "Nothing Distant About It," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 149.

hysterical and popular music not as peripheral but at both as integral to people's lives, in the everyday and in the big picture, especially in the sixties, especially among women. In her study of mass media, Susan Douglas wrote we "must rewatch and relisten, but with a new mission: to go where the girls are. And, as we consider the rise of feminism, we must move beyond the standard political histories of a handful of feminist leaders and explore the cultural history of the millions who became their followers."[51] This project tells a story of the sixties and of popular music by going where the girls are, and where the fans are too. It explores the rise of feminism on the radio, on records, at concerts, and in shouts and screams and yeah yeah yeahs.

[51] Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994), 10.

Chapter One

Little Boxes: Prologues and Precedents

Little boxes on the hillside, little boxes made of ticky-tacky
Little boxes on the hillside, little boxes all the same
~ Malvina Reynolds, "Little Boxes," 1962

"We are all in little boxes, and somebody has to go in and rip your fuckin' head open for you to allow something else in."
~ John Lennon, *Rolling Stone*, 1971

Daly City, California sits on a hill above San Francisco. After World War II, Westlake, a suburban development of homes replete with nearby shopping centers, sprung up near Daly City, with homes built more or less uniformly, constructed quickly, cheaply, and largely for the young families growing in the postwar baby boom, anxious to buy homes and live on their own.[1] Most of the men living in these homes worked and earned the money to pay for them, often with the help of the GI Bill, while their wives often stayed home and cared for their children, homes, and the gleaming modern appliances and furniture they bought to fill them.

This was the world Malvina Reynolds wrote and sang about in "Little Boxes," later recorded by Pete Seeger and revitalized in the twenty-first century as the theme song for the television series *Weeds*. This was also the world into which many people who would shape the sixties were born. Those "little boxes made of ticky-tacky" were the markers of postwar America, both in reality, as they sprung up in suburbs across the country, and symbolically: uniform, synthetic, somewhat soulless—the way many people

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Epigraphs: Malvina Reynolds, "Little Boxes" (Schroder Music Co., 1962); John Lennon in Jann S. Wenner, "Lennon Remembers, Part Two," *Rolling Stone*, February 4, 1971.

[1] See Rob Keil, *Little Boxes: The Architecture of A Classic Midcentury Suburb* (Daly City, CA: Advection Media, 2006).

would come to remember the 1950s. The suburban tracts dotting the landscape were critiqued by Reynolds, Seeger, and a fair share of cultural commentators, but they were also embraced by a great many Americans, anxious to own new homes and start families after years of Depression and war.[2] Similarly, rock and roll, that cataclysmic sound in world history, and the countercultures formed around music in this same era were criticized as corrupting the bright young boys and girls of the postwar world, but for many of them, music was a very real outlet and a means of accessing a wider world from places like Westlake. Ways of hearing this music and of seeing and experiencing these little boxes, literal and figurative, set the scene for the 1960s and shaped ways of seeing the era ever since.

Those houses and the lives of the people who lived in them were influenced by the historical circumstances of the postwar nation—the GI Bill, the Interstate Highway Act, the expansion of technology, and growth of white-collar and middle-class jobs.[3] When World War II ended in 1945, the United States emerged as the strongest and most powerful nation in the postwar world, with few economic competitors as Europe rebuilt and Germany and Japan were prevented from competing, and with a clear and compelling victory in the war against fascism. Even as military spending remained robust in the early days of the Cold War, the United States government was careful to avoid a postwar

[2] See David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 10-11.

[3] See Wini Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Books, 1988), 4. For more on postwar families see Elaine Tyler May, "Cold War—Warm Hearth: Politics and the Family in Postwar America," in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order*, Steven Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) and Stephanie Coontz, "'Leave It to Beaver' and 'Ozzie and Harriet': American Families in the 1950s," in Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

economic downturn and carefully planned the conversion of wartime industries to consumer products. At the same time, the government worked to ensure the expansion of American consumer culture and the spending power of American families, particularly through the GI Bill, which secured middle-class status for thousands of families through home loans and college educations. This postwar affluence was uneven, particularly along lines of race, and unattainable for many, but it was also significant: houses made of ticky-tacky were the wildest dreams of many of their inhabitants.

After World War II, Americans married younger—the average marriage age for women was twenty—and had more children than in any generation in history.[4] More men attained the education necessary to secure their family's status in the middle class; more women (though not as many as was sometimes thought) were ostensibly freed by this affluence to quit their wartime jobs, or compelled to move aside for returning male veterans, and dedicate themselves to domestic bliss made simultaneously easier and more complicated by a range of new products. More families lived in nuclear households with only parents and children, while grandparents and extended family were off in the city or a different suburb. More children had more stuff than ever before, and, when they grew up, as teenagers, had more money to spend and more products and activities to spend it on than ever before. As teenagers, these children claimed a conviction that they were entitled to pleasures denied to their parents, who had been raised in Depression and hardened by war. They were ready to spend, not save, and to have fun, and maybe work

[4] Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 11.

hard eventually, but not now.[5] The atmosphere of affluence inspired a sense of confidence and, perhaps, helped create the relative stability that enabled young people more time and money for leisure, more time to consider deeper questions in life with less worry about simply getting by, and a greater sense of entitlement to a good life. This demographic and this attitude were essential to the 1960s: in 1965, forty percent of the U.S. population was under 25.[6] As sociologist Wini Breines explained, "The youthful social movements of the 1960s, including the civil rights and black power movements, were in part a testament to the sense that good things were a birthright."[7] The question, then, was what those good things were. There were little boxes for that too, and the fact that parents and teenagers had different opinions on the matter helped create the fissures of the new generation gap.

American society in the 1950s was rife with contradictions between public image and private experience. The images of the fifties, propagated at the time and celebrated since, were much different than the realities. This is true in any time and place, but it was particularly, and painfully, heightened in the fifties. In making this distinction, we must not dismiss that images matter and that the gap between real and not can be felt very painfully by those whose reality does not match the image. The America of postwar affluence, Cold War consensus, domestic bliss, and purported cultural conformity existed

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[5] See Grace Elizabeth Hale, in *A Nation of Outsiders: How the White Middle Class Fell in Love with Rebellion in Postwar America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). Hale discusses this dynamic and the generation, she notes, *Life* magazine called "the luckiest generation."

[6] Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 57.

[7] Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 5.

in quiet tension with the realities of economic inequality, racial injustice, social diversity, and thousands of private frustrations. As Bob Dylan described it, "America was still very 'straight,' 'postwar' and sort of a gray-flannelled suit thing. McCarthy, commies, puritanical, very claustrophobic and whatever was happening of real value was happening away from that and sort of hidden from view…."[8] This was the world Holden Caulfield called "phony" and that many people joined in criticizing as such, whether by taking to the road, idolizing James Dean, getting involved with the Beats, or, as this project will outline, embracing and aligning themselves with music.[9] There were challenges to the Cold War consensus, doubts about America's moral supremacy, growing commitments to the civil rights movement, and interest in burgeoning cultural and intellectual change, but much of it was hidden from view or dismissed as aberrant, laying the groundwork for important countercultures that grew steadily and came to shape the sixties.

In the same way that U.S. foreign policy in the postwar-turned-Cold War era centered on containing communism and preventing the Soviet Union from expanding its influence, domestic policy both officially and more often unofficially sought to contain individuals in intimate ways. American culture and society suggested, often in clear terms and with federal policy, where and how people should live, whether by targeting homosexuality, seeking to reverse the trends of premarital and extramarital sex that had occurred during the war years, or containing the body itself through consumer products

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[8] Cameron Crowe, interview with Bob Dylan, liner notes for *Bob Dylan: Biograph* (Columbia Records, 1985), in Mike Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger: Bob Dylan and the 1960s* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), 16.

[9] See Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 12. The examples of fifties countercultures outlined in this section are drawn from Brian Lloyd, History 30 lectures, University of California, Riverside, Spring 2011.

promising to tame hair, perfect skin, augment breasts, and destroy odors. Women were discouraged women from working and earning as they had during the war years, although polls showed that over 80 percent of them wanted to continue working when the war ended.[10] As Breines so aptly described the experience of many women, "[L]ike the undergarments that constricted our bodies…the 'rubber coffins' that were girdles, the breasts squeezed out and up—the culture constricted our minds and our spirits."[11] In spite of the images of contentment promoted during the postwar era and commemorated ever since, the period was rife with disjunctions, and although the narrowly prescribed confines of gender, sexuality, race, and class organizing society were unstable, they were highly claustrophobic and very real for the people living under and around them. This atmosphere and the overt opposition to people of color, homosexuality, and wider roles for women existed in clear tension with and as backlash to the changes of the last decades. In the 1950s, as Breines wrote, "Anxiety over the loss of separate spheres and the integration of the sexes and races was articulated in the celebration of whiteness and traditional domestic femininity."[12] In many ways, this was a desperate gasp to assert control and sharpen the lines between black and white and men and women.

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[10] As Breines writes, "In the 1950s, hair, too, had to stay in its place" (149). See Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 10; 33; Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 242. Re: polls, see Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994), 46. Also see May, "Cold War-Warm Hearth."

[11] Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, xiv; Jacqueline Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Cultures: Popular Music and Identity in the 1960s* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 23.

[12] Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 11.

As many historians have documented, postwar America celebrated what Alice Echols called a "resurgent ideology of domesticity."[13] Advertisements and advice columns triumphed the image of the "happy housewife," devoted to her husband and content with the comforts of suburbia and the expanding array of products in the postwar boom. This image was most attainable among the white middle class, yet even there, many women found the glorification of domesticity, narrowly prescribed choices, and high expectations unfulfilling, a widespread feeling Betty Friedan exposed in 1963 as postwar America's "mystique of feminine fulfillment."[14] As Friedan began her seminal work, "[I]t was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States."[15] Friedan examined the ways in which women were instructed "to seek fulfillment as wives and mothers" and shed light on the widespread experiences of boredom, frustration, and unhappiness among many women in these prescribed roles. The cultural reinforcement of women's roles as wives, mothers, and consumers alienated women from their own choices and contributed to feelings of inadequacy, as women experienced a chasm between public ideal and private reality. Friedan, as Ruth Rosen commented, "emphasized the claustrophobic character of domesticity."[16] Frequent discussions of marriages,

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[13] Alice Echols, "Nothing Distant About It," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 153.

[14] Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Norton, 1963. 2001 ed.), 61.

[15] Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 57.

[16] Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin, 2000), 8.

motherhood, and women's "conditions" in women's magazines suggest that the feminine mystique was an unstable construct, but it deeply shaped the private struggles and experiences of American women and excluded them from public life in meaningful ways.[17] As Rosen explained, "[F]or war-weary women and men, the feminine mystique, with its illusion of clear gender roles, brought with it a sense of social order. But the feminine mystique also crippled the lives of many American women."[18]

There were surely many moments and entire lifetimes of genuine happiness and fulfillment in this world of ranch homes and hoola hoops. The problem, as Friedan detailed, was that not everyone wanted those lives in the first place or found them so satisfying once they attained them. The issue was being told to want something then criticized for finding it unfulfilling. As Laurie Stone wrote in an oft-quoted excerpt:

> I have a memory of myself at eleven or twelve, trying to imagine my future. There would be a house with grass around it. There would be a white picket fence around the house. And there would be a married woman standing in the backyard, staring over the fence. I knew I would be unhappy. I knew I would not want to be there, but I imagined this future nonetheless.[19]

The dominant images of gender, family, and domestic fulfillment were so pervasive as to make many of life's choices inevitable, and so sunny and cheerful as to convey the sense that one ought to be as happy as the people depicted in advertisements. So if you had the house and the white picket fence and the kids and the fully stocked refrigerator, how dare

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[17] As Sara Evans wrote, "Clearly the feminine mystique was already in the process of erosion, even as it reached its zenith." Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 14.

[18] Rosen, *The World Split Open,* 35.

[19] Laurie Stone, "Memoirs Are Made of This" (1983) quoted in Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 127.

you complain? The pain was also marked by privilege. In part, that is what made this particular experience so confusing.

This was true for both men and women, but the narrowness was heightened by gender. When the fifties ended, seventy percent of all American women were married by the time they turned twenty-four, with an average marriage age of twenty. They had spent their youth on the consuming quest of "going steady" and of finding a husband.[20] Two out of every three women dropped out of college before graduation, often because of marriage.[21] For the young women who went to college, there was an understanding endorsed by many families and schools alike that college was a place to meet a husband, and not to pursue other interests or ambitions. Once married, women were expected to want and be content in the realm of hearth and home, and to do it all just right, while looking just right as well. Who knows how many mothers actually vacuumed in pearls, but the fact that their television and magazine counterparts did, and during a period of major growth in advertising, set a standard that left many women falling short when they or their houses did not look just so, or when they went to work, as many of them did.

This constellation of expectations and gender roles was primarily white. Indeed, for many families, postwar affluence included the labor of women of color, who were thus prevented from meeting the happy housewife standard themselves.[22] Many suburban tracts were not open or welcoming to families of color, sometimes explicitly,

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[20] See Victor Brooks, *Last Season of Innocence: The Teen Experience in the 1960s* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012).

[21] Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 50.

[22] See Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 49; Rosen, *The World Split Open*, 32.

and the story of suburban expansion is also the story of the neglected neighborhoods of color, left behind in the shift away from urban centers and decline of downtowns. These roles were not, however, as distinguished by class. While many working, rural, and urban women would never attain the domestic ideal of the dominant culture and had to work outside the home to support their families, they were still expected to aspire to the middle-class standard, smiles and all, and to feel inferior for not achieving it.[23]

Along with the façade of the happy housewife, the gap between public sexual attitudes and private sexual practices exposed another contradiction of the era. As premarital sex, marital infidelity, and sexual activity increased during World War II, postwar society underwent attempts to "contain" and reverse the sexual trends of the war years.[24] Yet despite the promotion of sexual virtue, the practices of Americans changed little in the postwar period. The Kinsey Reports, released in 1948 and 1953 for men and women respectively, revealed the disjunction between what Americans thought, said, and did about sex.[25] Furthermore, as ideas about women's capacities for and rights to sexual pleasure evolved, they remained largely deferential to men, while women remained constrained by the illegality of abortion and limited access to birth control. By the mid-fifties, Gerri Hirshey wrote, "women—more specifically, white middle-class women—

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[23] See Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 242-244; Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 30.

[24] Rosen, *The World Split Open*, 15-16.

[25] Alfred C. Kinsey et al, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Philadelphia: Saunders, 1953). See Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 63.

were not supposed to have (or admit to) appetites of any kind."[26] Helen Gurley Brown's *Sex and the Single Girl* represented new ideas and possibilities for young white women of means, but still within relatively narrow realms of femininity.[27]

Young women growing up in the fifties and early sixties encountered highly contradictory messages about sexuality and what it meant to be a woman in the United States. In the words of Sara Evans, these young women grew up "in an era that commoditized sexual titillation while it reasserted repressive norms."[28] They were surrounded by sex in a way that women in previous generations had not been, but with similar if not stricter admonitions making sex and sexuality taboo. Young middle-class white people in particular were "reared in a culture of respectability," as Beth Bailey has written, and "told that a single sexual misstep could jeopardize their bright futures."[29] When the 1960s began, "they found themselves living on the ambiguous frontiers of sexual freedom and self-control opened up by the birth control pill."[30] While many women increasingly engaged in sexual activity, the claiming of sexual pleasure and, certainly, public displays of sexuality, remained limited. In January 1964, weeks before the Beatles' arrival in the United States, *Time* magazine ran a feature about sex and

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[26] Gerri Hirshey, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place: The True, Tough Story of Women in Rock* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2001), 37.

[27] For more on sexual culture during the 1950s, see Amanda H. Littauer, *Bad Girls: Young Women, Sex, and Rebellion before the Sixties* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015). Babette Faehmel, *College Women in the Nuclear Age: Cultural Literacy and Female Identity, 1940-1960* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012) is also of interest.

[28] Evans, *Personal Politics*, 23.

[29] Beth Bailey, "Sexual Revolution(s)," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 239.

[30] Evans, *Personal Politics*, 23.

sexuality in the United States, reporting, “The U.S. seems to be undergoing a revolution of mores and an erosion of morals that is turning into what Reich [Dr. William Reich] called a ‘sex-affirming culture.’”[31] Indicating the divergent attitudes on the subject, some readers responded positively to the study while others, Mrs. Al Schramm of Dubuque, Iowa, for one, complained: “I tore up the Modern Living section about sex in the U.S. before I read it.”[32] In public, anyway, sex and sexuality remained deeply contested, especially for women.

The daughters of the feminine mystique grew up in a much different world than their mothers had—one depressed and war-torn, another affluent and confident, victorious if also anxious. Many of them were also keenly aware of their mothers' discontent and “developed a deep suspicion of marriage and motherhood not by reading Friedan but by observing life in a ‘normal’ family.”[33] Young girls often had more education and exposure to the world through media than many of their mothers had, and they were treated equally with their brothers and male classmates in some regards, but never in the realm of opportunity. Whatever their skills and interests, it was assumed they would abandon them upon marriage, and widely understood that without marriage, they had no hopes of social approval, validation, or fulfillment.[34] Girls were punished more often than boys for showing signs of aggression or for failing to display good

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[31] “The Second Sexual Revolution,” *Time* (January 24, 1964), 54-59: 54.

[32] Mrs. Al Schramm, Letter to the editor, *Time* (January 31, 1964), 6-8.

[33] See Coontz, *A Strange Stirring*, 96. Coontz acknowledges Rosen and Breines in making this point. Rosen also details this mother-daughter dynamic in *The World Split Open*.

[34] See Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 34-35.

manners, but also chided not to be taken advantage of and to enforce good behavior among men too.[35] This was a vexing world to observe and to enter.

The messages of postwar culture were significant in part because they could be communicated so rapidly and vibrantly through new media. As people moved away from the urban centers where they had lived closer together, they became connected in a different way as the technological innovations and consumer culture of the postwar era created a new national market. Baby boomers were also "television children, the first generation of them"—connected to a whole wide world, and all its terrors, and all its curiosities—in a way so few had been before.[36] Carole King remembered that as a young Carol Kane growing up in the 1950s, "I would have felt even more socially inferior had it not been for the entertainment and inspiration I drew from TV and radio."[37] This worked to offer glimpses of other worlds and possibilities, as well as clear messages about how to look and act. King remembered, "the way women were depicted on television gave me the idea that society expected little more from a young girl than being attractive and helping men accomplish great things."[38] There were things women could do and things they could not. Janis Joplin called her childhood in Port Arthur, Texas a "drag, a big drag." She recalled, "I was one of the girls who always wanted to do things that my

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[35] Re: aggression and manners see Robert Sears, Eleanor Maccoby, and Harry Levin, *Patterns of Child Rearing* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957) and Lois Meek Stolz, *Influences on Parent Behavior* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 177-78 and 62, in Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 63.

[36] Ellen Sander, *Trips: Rock Life in the Sixties* (New York: Scribner, 1973), 4. Douglas also explores this point in *Where the Girls Are*.

[37] Carole King, *A Natural Woman: A Memoir* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2013), 24.

[38] King, *A Natural Woman*, 25.

mother said I couldn't because only boys get to do those things."[39] Only boys could be rebels, for instance, while girls had to help them stay on track, or wait for them to return from the road, and keep smiling. "I think it's very hard," Ellen Willis wrote, "for people who grew up after the '60s to understand how much of a watershed they were … in the 50s there was a coherent white middle class conservative culture that, while there were plenty of violations of it going on all the time under the surface, was hegemonic as a public norm."[40] She continued, "it was like a culture where everyone, not just homosexuals, had to be in the closet on some level."[41]

These closets and little boxes containing women (and everyone else) in the fifties were ultimately, and not surprisingly, counterproductive. While many young women did grow up with significant material advantages, the lack of fulfillment—social, emotional, cultural, and otherwise—they encountered often led them to reject those privileges and to identify with marginalized people and with rebels of varying kinds.[42] This identification was spiritual more often than material, through loneliness, almost, through a shared feeling that you didn't quite fit. These feelings and this rebellion were expressed in different ways, many of them having to do with music.

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[39] Janis Joplin interview broadcast on a Louisville, Kentucky radio station, summer 1970, tape courtesy of Myra Friedman, in Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company, 1999), 14.

[40] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Ellen Willis, "Lessons of the New Left," CUNY, February 1990. MC 646, folder 9.20. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[41] Willis, "Lessons of the New Left," February 1990. MC 646, folder 9.20. Schlesinger Library.

[42] See Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*; Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Cultures*.

Bill Haley and the Comets singing "Rock Around the Clock," Carole King remembered, divided her "world into Before Rock and Roll and After Rock and Roll."[43] "What is this thing called rock 'n' roll," an article in the *New York Sunday Times Magazine* asked in January 1958. "What is it that makes teen-agers—mostly children between the ages of 12 and 16—throw off their inhibitions as though at a revivalist meeting? What—who—is responsible for these sorties? And is this generation of teen-agers going to hell?"[44] The last part of the question, certainly, underscores the level of concern with which many Americans regarded rock and roll.

Many children of middle-class 1950s households—newly affluent and not entirely content with the suburban domesticity of their childhoods—responded eagerly to rock and roll.[45] Rooted in African American music and enabled by the expansion of a national media, rock and roll reverberated across the airwaves, thanks in part to Cleveland DJ Alan Freed, and connected the suburbs and cities through sound.[46] The radio changed people's lives in a way that is hard to fathom in the twenty-first century. "The radio was

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[43] King, *A Natural Woman*, 28.

[44] In Mark Kurlansky, *Ready for a Brand New Beat: How "Dancing in the Street" Became the Anthem for a Changing America* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2013), 30.

[45] For more on this history, see Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness and Race Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). For more on the opposition to rock and roll, see Linda Martin and Kerry Seagrave, *Anti-Rock: The Opposition to Rock and Roll* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1988). Also see Glenn C. Altschuler, *All Shook Up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[46] For more on Freed, see Peter Guralnick, *Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1994), 175-176.

kind of a glimpse into another world," one woman remembered.[47] Picking up a distant station, especially, tuning in late at night, was a way to both access and imagine different people and places. Soon, live shows, movies, magazines, and, certainly, record sales, made the popularity of the emerging genre, particularly among young people—the teenagers born after the war—hard to ignore. Bobbysoxers had swooned for Frank Sinatra in the 1940s, but Elvis Presley, along with rock and rollers like Little Richard, Chuck Berry, and Jerry Lee Lewis, created an energized fan base of teenagers wild for rock and roll music. "Teenagers are my life and triumph," Presley said, noting the importance of this demographic to his success. "I'd be nowhere without them."[48] This power was economic in part, a remarkable example of teenage spending power and market influence. Dick Clarke bestowed vast power on a "select cadre of Philadelphia high school students" – "a thumbs-up or –down from these kids could begin or end a career."[49] This popularity was of particular importance in this era when, as David Farber wrote, "The car one drove, the cigarettes smoked, the TV shows watched, the products consumed became a common language signaling who one was and wanted to be."[50] Embracing rock and roll music meant you were young and at least somewhat wild. Doing so publically was often in defiance of family, school, and church authorities alarmed by rock and roll.

[47] Jamie Nicol Bowles in *The Beatles Are Here! 50 Years After the Band Arrived in America, Writers, Musicians, and Other Fans Remember*, ed. Penelope Rowlands (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2014), 43.

[48] Quoted in Guralnick, *Last Train to Memphis*, 351.

[49] King, *A Natural Woman*, 107.

[50] Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 11.

These concerns were deeply informed by racial and sexual anxieties. In the first half of the twentieth century, American music charts were segregated along racial lines, dividing hit songs into lists for "popular music," which ostensibly appealed to the so-called "general audience" (of white people), "hillbilly music," which became Country and Western (and now just Country) and which applied to a different audience of white people, semi-segregated by region and class, and "race records," which referred to music and other recordings made by African Americans and marketed to black audiences. Of course there is a complex history here, especially in that all of the genres had shared origins in the blues and a more common audience than the charts let on. Nevertheless, these distinctions, even when "race records" became Rhythm and Blues, or R&B, created boundaries that, however artificial, perpetuated real racial boundaries in American society, making music another terrain of racial segregation. As the story goes, it was famed record producer Sam Phillips, founder of Sun Studios and Sun Records in Memphis, who reportedly figured he could make a fortune if he could find a white person to sing black music and sell it to white people. He of course found Elvis Presley, and he didn't actually make a fortune, but Elvis did, and Phillips is often credited with helping to make the boundary-crossing music that meant so much to the twentieth century. Although jazz and blues artists had reached and resonated with many white listeners, they had not caused the pandemonium of the mostly white teenagers, many of them young girls, surrounding Elvis, or gained the popularity of black rock and rollers. The popularity of Elvis and the emerging rock and roll music of the 1950s, and especially the anxiety surrounding that popularity, was significant in part because of the fact that white

people were buying, playing, and going crazy over music akin to what one might find on a "race record." "Black boys were white teen sex idols, and, in the alarm adults expressed, we sensed the racist implications," Ellen Sander remembered, recalling a long history of racial and sexual anxieties surrounding white women and black men.[51]

The anxieties surrounding these boundaries were heightened by the backlash against the advances of the civil rights movement.[52] As Echols put it, "To many segregationists, rock 'n' roll was nothing less than an NAACP plot to pull white men 'down to the level of the Negro.'"[53] White men, like Buddy Holly or Elvis Presley, did not necessarily make rock and roll sound any better to many white Americans.[54] As Brian Ward contended, the rhythm and blues of black artists and the rock and roll of whites were both "bitterly attacked by white adults, who saw them as nothing less than part of a systematic assault on core, essentially white middle-class American social, sexual, and racial values."[55] As Ward explained, "Adult white resistance to rock and roll in the 1950s depended crucially on the fact that it sounded 'black,' even when sung by some whites."[56] At the same time, not all black parents approved of the sexual innuendo

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[51] Sander, *Trips*. 7.

[52] Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, see especially 9-12.

[53] Martin and Seagrave, *Anti-Rock*, 41, quoted in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 331.

[54] Holly was a unique figure as a songwriter and in the version of masculinity he presented. Something of a "nerd," some suggested, with glasses and a hiccupping voice, he nevertheless insisted on the same kind of love as Chuck Berry, singing "Rave On" and other songs. See Tim Riley, *Fever: How Rock 'n' Roll Transformed Gender in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), 27-28. Riley also discusses Roy Orbison as a rock and roller without the tough guy persona.

[55] Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, 2.

[56] *Ibid.*, 6.

in the music their children played, and some found the music counterproductive to the cause of racial advancement, tied up as it was in the politics of respectability.[57]

The opposition of white moms and dads was not limited to the Jim Crow South—unlikely places such as Santa Cruz, California joined in rock and roll bans, and riots between black and white audience members at rock and roll shows happened not only in North Carolina but in Massachusetts as well.[58] Music, indeed, was a terrain of politics, not just for teenagers but for their parents as well. Rock and roll did not absolve or abolish American racism (nothing ever has); as David Roediger has written of liking Motown or admiring black baseball players, "these tastes did not supplant racism."[59] Still, they helped erode the starkness of those categories, bridging segregated markets, and leading black girls to "swoon over" Frankie Avalon and whites to dance to Chubby Checkers' "Twist."[60] As King remembered, "not only was Alan Freed's stage integrated, the audience was polychromatic."[61] "During the show, as black and white teenagers danced in separate groups, each seemed to accept one another's presence in the same audience without animosity."[62] In 1950s America, this did not go unnoticed. King

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[57] *Ibid.*, 106. Granted, this opposition was less loud and violent than among white parents.

[58] *Ibid.*, 107; 114.

[59] David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991), 4, in Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, 217.

[60] See Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, 167.

[61] King, *A Natural Woman*, 39.

[62] *Ibid.*, 40.

remembered, “The predictors of doom said, ‘If Alan Freed is allowed to stay on the air, his ‘race music’ will lead to miscegenation, free love, drugs, and anarchy!’ They may have been onto something.”[63]

Rock and roll crossed many boundaries governing American culture and society, laying the groundwork for a redrawing of ideas about race and respectability, as well as sexuality. King remembered, “The Big Beat [Alan Freed’s show] was bigger, louder, and more sexually stirring than any music I’d heard before.”[64] “The platters Alan played fed every cell of my body, mind, heart, and soul.”[65] Elvis emblematized this well: he trespassed racial boundaries with his music, and he “violated taboos against personal expression and physicality.”[66] As Bobbie Ann Mason wrote, “Teenagers went wild with excitement; their parents went wild with anxiety over Elvis’s overt sexuality.”[67] Elvis’s pelvis, for instance, was censored three times when Presley appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.[68] The *New York Times* reported that Presley had “no discernable singing ability,” and the *Daily News* called his popularity “the lowest depths” of popular music.[69] It wasn’t just the music. *America*, the Catholic weekly, reported that Presley’s live appearances were “obscene,” and, worst of all, sent the “youngsters” wild, literally

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[63] *Ibid.*, 43.

[64] *Ibid.*, 40.

[65] *Ibid.*, 44.

[66] Bobbie Ann Mason, *Elvis Presley* (New York: Viking, 2003), 5-6. Also see Riley, *Fever*, 2-3.

[67] Mason, *Elvis Presley*, 5.

[68] Bailey, “Sexual Revolution(s),” 235.

[69] Quoted in Guralnick, *Last Train to Memphis*, 284.

rolling in the aisles.[70] "It was fun to put the local town movie theater managers uptight by mobbing *Blackboard Jungle* and *Love Me Tender*, Ellen Sander remembered."[71] "That first flash of being in an unruly crowd, that first rush of *power*."[72]

This power was generated by the music as well as the youth culture around it. The anxious responses of mainstream society heightened the appeal of youthful rebellion. As Mason explained, "Elvis amplified their first whispers of dissatisfaction with postwar America."[73] Early rock and roll was one of the places, like folk music and Beat poetry, where people found something they didn't think was phony, something that felt real, something that resonated. Imagine, sitting on a bed alone in a suburban bedroom hearing "I am so lonely, I am so lonely, I am so lonely, I could die." It's often forgotten now, in light of *Happy Days* re-runs and the watered-down music that came next, but rock and roll was deeply subversive in the many ways that it countered the dominant culture's expectations of behavior and trespassed racial and sexual boundaries. Operating on the American fault lines of race and the postwar tensions surrounding gender and sexuality, it was laced with the dangerous. Although rock and roll was popular and grew more mainstream, it was also countercultural. As Michael Kramer wrote, "From its emergence in the 1950s, the genre of rock 'n' roll had always been an oddly commoditized expression of revolt; at the same time, as a music of cross-racial, gender-bending class-

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[70] *Ibid.*, 284.

[71] Sander, *Trips*, 2.

[72] *Ibid.*, 2.

[73] Mason, *Elvis Presley*, 49.

defying dimensions, it never lost noncommercial energies of civil confrontation and experimentation."[74] "Good Golly Miss Molly" may sound kind of silly now, but it wasn't then, not to parents anyway—"when you're rockin' and a-rollin', you can't hear your mama call." And what was Little Susie, in the Everly Brothers song, going to tell her mama and her pa? Ooh-la-la!

While the rock and roll music of the 1950s was charged with sexuality, it was received in a context of deep sexual anxieties. Aptly reflecting the tensions of the era, the advent of rock and roll sparked fear about the music's implications for the teenage audience and American culture at large, driven largely by the physicality and sexuality of the musicians, music, and soon, the fans. Elvis did indeed make the papers with his hips and hair and pelvis, but the real story was about the crowd, the fans, the girls. The frenzied teenage response to Presley's boundary-crossing music in particular secured the role of rock and roll in shaping the emerging sexual revolution. Again, bobbysoxers had swooned for Sinatra (and earned him the nickname "Swoontra" as a result), and film fandom helped make screaming young girls part of entertainment culture.[75] An animated cartoon depicted "a crooning rooster" in a henhouse met with the hens shrieking "FRANKIE!"[76] Screaming girls were well established, but contemporary accounts of

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[74] Michael J. Kramer, *The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 13.

[75] Karen Schoemer, "Old Blue Eyes, Young at Heart," *L.A. Style*, April 1991, in *Rock She Wrote: Women Write About Rock, Pop, and Rap*, ed. Evelyn McDonnell and Ann Powers (London: Plexus, 1995), 265.

[76] Schoemer, "Old Blue Eyes, Young at Heart," 265. For more on bobbysoxers see Kelly Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox: The Emergence of Teenage Girls' Culture, 1920-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) and Patrick Burke, "The Screamers," *Daedalus*, 142:4 (2013): 11-23. Also see Shayla Thiel-Stern, *From the Dancehall to Facebook: Teen Girls, Mass Media, and Moral Panic in the United States, 1905-2010* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014) for more on Elvis, among others.

Presley suggested that, measured by force, scale, or the depth of sexual and racial anxieties unleashed, the frenzy Presley initiated outdid the bobbysoxers and any earlier precedents.[77] In the 1950s, Glenn Altschuler wrote, "rock 'n' roll became the focal point for anxiety that cultural life in the United States had become sexualized and teenagers addicted to the pleasures of the body."[78] For his gyrations, the fact that he was singing black music, and especially the response of his young female fans, Elvis was dubbed "a disturbing kind of idol" by *Life* magazine.[79] "During the nineteen-fifties," Willis contended, "the eagerness of politicians to avow their anti-Communism was matched only by the alacrity with which journalists and celebrity pundits attacked the then new rock and roll."[80]

It's not really surprising, given the context, that there was a backlash to rock and roll music and that it was specifically gendered. Coupled with racial trespassing, rock and roll became a terrain of sexual rebellion and laid the groundwork for sexual revolution as early rock and rollers tapped into the discontent of the 1950s (as well as the ripe market of teenagers) and young people responded with intense emotion and devotion. Yet while the rock and roll of the 1950s was charged with sexuality and loosened, for many, the era's sexual confines, it was also received in a context of sexual

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[77] Thiel-Stern, *From the Dance Hall to Facebook,* 103.

[78] Altschuller, *All Shook Up*, 67.

[79] Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, 110.

[80] Ellen Willis, "Pop Blues," April 1968, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps: Ellen Willis on Rock Music*, ed. Nona Willis Aronowitz (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 193.

anxieties and was ultimately watered down and tamed, repackaged by the likes of Pat Boone and Dick Clark. To further commercialize the growing genre, musicians and promoters constructed a purposefully "sexually unthreatening" image in answer to the anxieties of many Americans and countered the clout of rock and roll, rendering it an influential yet still peripheral and unstable force in American culture and society.[81] Thus rock and roll was unleashed in the 1950s, but also swiftly subdued. And, as the story goes, Elvis joined the army, Chuck Berry went to prison, Little Richard "found religion," and Buddy Holly was dead—killed in a plane crash in an Iowa cornfield with Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper, a few nights after playing for a young Robert Zimmerman in Duluth, Minnesota. Rock and roll seemed to have died too, and in its place on the teen scene came more and more "bubblegum"—toned down, carefully packaged, and not nearly as exciting as the discovery of rock and roll had been a few short years earlier.

This context provides an important prologue for the stories of rock and roll, fandom, and gender in the sixties. Women's fandom in the 1960s was preceded and informed by the cultural and gendered politics of the 1950s, including the rigid gender roles of the postwar era and the emergence of and anxiety surrounding rock and roll. As Echols writes, many of the famed sixties rebels "bore the scars of having grown up in the fifties."[82] She contended, "in truth, virtually no one—not even the most determined rebels—escaped the fifties unscathed."[83] Rock and roll music and its fandom set an

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[81] Altschuller, *All Shook Up*, 82.

[82] Echols, *Shaky Ground: The Sixties and Its Aftershocks* (New York: Columbia, 2002), 147.

[83] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, xiii.

extraordinary precedent, but it was also fought and rejected and made off limits to many. The 1950s may seem a tired foil to the ruptures of the sixties, and the distinctions between them were not as stark as often presented, but enough memoirs and recollections reveal that living through the fifties was a lasting, painful experience for many people, especially for many young women. "Coming of age in the Fifties was pure pain," Sander wrote.[84] Although the fifties were once glorified and remain so in some circles, the demonization of them by historians can sometimes seem overwrought—were they really that bad? And indeed, isn't it possible that the 60s were the same experience for some people? (The girl who really wanted to get married and have kids and fill her refrigerator with casseroles but was seen as unimportant and trivial for staying home?) Yes. But what was so significant was the gap between image and reality. The expectations were pervasive in American culture and society and the criticisms for falling short reached many Americans' lives in intimate ways. As Willis reflected, "having lived through the fifties, I find it impossible to romanticize them. In spite of rock and roll, they were dull, mean years—at least for middle-class high-school girls."[85]

Rock and roll, did, however, as Willis noted, help people cope, as music often has, and offered a glimpse of another set of possibilities and a means of access to forms of rebellion. As Sander reflected, "I don't know how we could have made it through the acceleration of shocks without our trusty companions: transistor radios tuned to the rock and roll in the air and a stack of 45s, as intimate as a diary, the common denominator of a

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[84] Sander, *Trips*, 1.

[85] Ellen Willis, "Into the Seventies, for Real," in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 114-115.

Fifties' teen social life."[86] Music was a source of refuge, both personal and communal. "Everything else that was happening was beyond us, forced upon us by circumstances beyond our control. But our music was ours, it was us, it represented us and it created us. It gave us something wholly our own, young, youth-oriented, and inviolate."[87] Echols remembered, "When I turned five in 1956 I began listening to rock 'n' roll. I went to sleep at night with a little cream-colored transistor radio beside my pillow quietly playing the same Top 40 songs I watched teenagers dance to on *American Bandstand*. Music was no sideshow in my life. I holed up for hours in the basement listening to rock 'n' roll records."[88]

This kind of a holing up was a new luxury in some ways but also an understandable, often urgently felt, refuge and escape. Rock and roll came of age along with the Algerian War and the Cuban Revolution and the Berlin Wall, the sit-ins at a Greensboro lunch counter and the Freedom Rides, the ever-present threat of the bomb, and it burst into little boxes, literal and figurative—people, houses, ideas—shattering or at least reshaping them. The excitement of the music and the sense that there were other people out there like you listening to it, maybe in their own little boxes, and that there were more exciting people out there making the music, who perhaps you just might meet someday, was an escape that while often temporary offered a glimpse of something different, a glimpse that helped shape many visions for the future. Rock and roll reached

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[86] Sander, *Trips*, 1.

[87] *Ibid.*, 1.

[88] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 10.

young people in sometimes-lonely suburbs in houses that were often tense and bore the burdens of the closets and categories and expectations that had brought them there. In many cases, it sent them out as different people.

Rock and roll was countercultural but also extremely popular. As Breines contended, its popularity "suggests that teenage girls were drawn to otherness."[89] Of course they were, when normal was so unappealing to so many. The element of rebellion was also part of the appeal, and rock and roll was widely romanticized by white American teenagers who found in it a touch of the exotic, even if they didn't articulate it that way then. As Breines wrote, "The music was both safe *and* potentially disruptive…. It provided a version of rebellion without requiring one to be a rebel."[90] There were ways of being more rebellious, certainly, all of which reflected the discontent of the postwar suburbs, and each of these countercultural communities left important legacies for the rebellions of the 60s; each of them also became increasingly mainstream, which tells something about the general feelings towards the era's prevailing cultural values and the appeal of these rebellions.[91] Rock and roll in the fifties was a way to be rebellious without necessarily having to go anywhere—you could stay in your bedroom and upset your parents plenty. But it was a way to access other worlds.

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[89] Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 129.

[90] *Ibid.*, 155.

[91] "The Beats had gone pop…" Robert Christgau wrote, "with the critical bust-outs of Ginsberg's Howl and Kerouac's *On the Road* and San Francisco Chronicle columnist Herb Caen's coinage of the term 'beatnik.'" Robert Christgau, *Going Into The City: Portrait of A Critic As A Young Man* (New York: Dey St., 2015), 117.

Rock and roll may have been manufactured, mediated, and tamed, but the music and its resonance with young Americans unleashed a powerful force in world history. As the song goes, "I don't care what people say, rock and roll is here to stay." Rock and roll music continued to be integrated throughout the early 60s. In late 1963, *Billboard* stopped publishing separate pop and R&B charts because so many of the same records were on both.[92] New music—especially Motown—grew more and more popular across wide audiences (so wide, of course, that they crossed the Atlantic, and found their way to John Lennon, and Paul McCartney, and the other artists who would comprise the so-called British Invasion).[93] This music, by the Supremes or the Temptations, might be the first or the closest encounter white youth had with black culture.[94] It was perhaps ironic, as Annie Gottlieb noted, that white teenagers found freedom in black music at the moment African Americans were engaged in a widening movement against oppression.[95] But there was something empowering about the sound and the boundaries crossed to make and hear this music.

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[92] Gerald Early, "I'm A Loser," in *In Their Lives: Great Writers on Great Beatles Songs*, ed. Andrew Blauner (New York: Blue Rider Press, 2017), 31-48: 36.

[93] Berry Gordy intended Motown music to be popular across racial lines. Gordy's refusal to confine the music he produced to the black market was "the really revolutionary thing" about Motown. This meant that some saw Motown as "more white" than other soul music being made at the time, but it certainly never meant that black people didn't like it. See Gerald Early in Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 169, and Paul R. Kohl, "Reading between the lines: Music and noise in hegemony and resistance," *Popular Music and Society*, 21:3, 3-17:11. 1997.

[94] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 170.

[95] Annie Gottlieb, *Do You Believe in Magic? The Second Coming of the Sixties Generation* (New York: Times Books, 1987), 30. Eric Lott describes this concept as "love and theft." See Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993).

As Grace Elizabeth Hale wrote that "middle-class white kids learned that rebellion sounded black," it also sounded female sometimes.[96] The girl groups, as Jacqueline Warwick has argued, sang songs that sounded like "girl talk," inviting girls to join in from their bedrooms or wherever they listened.[97] Cyndi Lauper wrote, "The Supremes sounded like they were my age, like they were my friends, and I would sing with them constantly."[98] They talked about boys, sure, but with unique, somewhat unexpected depth (think "Will You Love Me Tomorrow"). Susan Douglas reiterated, "girl group music was really about us—girls."[99] Beginning in 1960, the Shirelles, the Dixie Cups, the Shangri-Las, and the Marvelettes, sang with, to, and for girls (but the Beatles loved them!) and topped the charts while doing it. The girl groups' music has often been dismissed as sappy nothingness (after all, they were just girls) – not really rock and roll.[100] Although it drew on a similar vocabulary, girl group music had its own sound as well as its own look. As Warwick points out, "the steps that Elvis took to appear sexy and dangerous did not involve the same degree of self-denial and discipline that girl singers needed to seem demure and feminine…."[101] Especially considering the role of race and double standards of respectability, black women dared not rebel when it

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[96] Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders*, 49.

[97] Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Culture*. Also see Riley, *Fever*, xiv; 36-38.

[98] Cyndi Lauper, "My Four Friends," in *The Beatles Are Here!,* ed. Rowlands, 64.

[99] Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 83.

[100] As Douglas notes, *The Rolling Stone History of Rock & Roll* proclaimed "The female group of the early 1960s served to drive the concept of art completely away from rock 'n' roll" and represented "the low point in the history of rock 'n' roll" (*Ibid.*, 86).

[101] Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Culture*, 64.

came to clothes. Still, women seem to have found something exciting about them. They sang about experiences and feelings common to many of their listeners, often with a note of humor and healthy dose of confidence, and they became superstars while doing it. Donna Gaines remembered, "the girl groups reside at the core of my feminine identity."[102]

The idea of this music, or any music, resting at the core of a young woman's identity or, moreover, of music fandom being anything more than a passing phase was a stretch for even those who were watching carefully. At the same time, in spite of concerns for the American teenager, the depth of those young women's feelings was glossed over and widely dismissed. As Breines noted, "Middle-class white girls' disaffection was barely discernible because no one thought to consider it and because its expression was often oblique."[103] Music fandom is one of the places we can detect it. The resonance of rock and roll music and of the girl groups and the expressions of music fandom—dancing at a concert, waiting around for a glimpse or a touch, writing fan letters and love letters—all reflected a yearning, the depths of which are hard to ever completely erase. [104] When it was clear that all of these things were widely felt, sought, and celebrated, music fandom became an important part of American culture.

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[102] Donna Gaines, "Girl Groups: A Ballad of Codependency," in *Trouble Girls: The Rolling Stone Book of Women in Rock*, ed. Barbara O'Dair (New York: Random House, 1997), 103-115: 107.

[103] Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 129.

[104] Ann Powers notes some of these practices in the 1950s and the historical precedents of fans being forward with the objects of their fandom. Powers argues that the female fans of the 1950s were just as raucous and revolutionary as those of Beatlemania. See Ann Powers, *Good Booty: Love and Sex, Black & White, Body and Soul in American Music* (New York: Dey St., 2017), 135-154.

There were many musicians who made important contributions in this era, but their fans were just as important. Fan clubs, concerts, dance parties, and all of that listening, holed up, helped make music matter, to individuals and to the society in which they lived. As fans were dismissed as silly teenagers, there was already more to being a fan than simply buying more records and tickets and magazines. This was about escape, attachment, and empowerment. These subcultures and countercultural trends are often driven by male narratives: Elvis and Chuck Berry and Little Richard and, behind the scenes, Sam Phillips and Alan Freed, are responsible for rock and roll. As Breines writes, "When fifties defiance was and is portrayed … young white women are invisible."[105] All of these cultures would have meant far less without the women who were drawn to them, but the stage was set confining women to supporting roles. That would be true in music as well, but women, not only as performers but as fans, were unlocking music as a site of liberation, listening in little boxes while slowly breaking out of them.

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[105] Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 130.

Chapter Two

"For The Love of Barbara Allen": Women and Fandom in the Folk Revival

What's that I hear now ringin' in my ear?
I hear it more and more
It's the sound of freedom calling
Ringing up to the sky
It's the sound of the old ways falling
You can hear it if you try
~ Phil Ochs, "What's That I Hear," 1964

Frail my heart apart
And play me little shady grove
Ring the bells of rhymney
Till they ring inside my head forever
~ Anna McGarrigle, "Goin' Back to Harlan"

In the opening scene of *Festival*, Murray Lerner's film documenting the Newport Folk Festival in the early 1960s, hordes of people—most of them young—run through a large open field, excited and full of glee as they enter the famed weekend festival to see Bob Dylan, Joaz Baez, Pete Seeger, Odetta, Peter, Paul, and Mary, and a host of other performers that fell under the genre called "folk." Later that fall, there would be "a huge mob" waiting for Dylan outside Carnegie Hall after his concert there in October of 1963, then charging the limousine, "pounding on the roof and slapping at the windows, yelling to get Bob's attention."[1] In a letter he wrote his girlfriend Suze Rotolo the next year,

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Epigraphs: Phil Ochs, "What's That I Hear" on Phil Ochs, *All the News That's Fit to Sing* (Elektra, 1964); Anna McGarrigle, "Goin' Back to Harlan" (Garden Court Music, 1995).

[1] Suze Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time: A Memoir of Greenwich Village in the Sixties.* (New York: Broadway Books, 2008), 256. Rotolo also discusses this as "a turning point" in Robbie Woliver, *Bringing It All Back Home: 25 Years of American Music at Folk City* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 85. Maria Muldaur recalled a similar scene at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, as did Donovan: "The audiences were beautiful. They mobbed Dylan and me—or maybe I should say they mobbed Dylan and I was with him. They were just like pop fans…" In Elijah Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric: Newport, Seeger, Dylan, and the Night That Split the Sixties* (New York: Dey St., 2015), 178; 213.

Dylan complained, "god damn them screamin girls."[2] He began traveling with bodyguards "to help protect him from the hordes of teen-age admirers," *Life* magazine reported in 1964.[3] The same year, Richard Farina wrote that Dylan's Berkeley audience was "electrified," their applause "potent, overwhelming, unmitigated."[4] Sean Wilentz recalled of Dylan's famous performance at New York's Philharmonic Hall on Halloween, 1964, "Many of the songs, although less than two years old, were so familiar that the crowd knew every word."[5] These were folk fans.[6]

The "folk furor" would not equal the volume or tenor of Beatlemania, erupting around the same time Bob Dylan began to reach larger and larger audiences, and "folk fan" sounds almost incongruous, but it was an event of fandom nonetheless. When *Hootenanny*, the television show created as folk's popularity grew, was recorded on college campuses, students trampled through locked gym doors in an effort to get good seats.[7] By Newport '64, *Sing Out!* reported, "'the people' so loved by Pete Seeger" became "'the mob' so hated by Dylan."[8] But how had it happened that there was a mob

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[2] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 299-301.

[3] *Ibid.*, 300.

[4] Richard Fariña, "Baez and Dylan: A Generation Singing Out," *Mademoiselle*, August 1964, in *Younger Than That Now: The Collected Interviews with Bob Dylan* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2004), 2.

[5] Sean Wilentz, *Bob Dylan in America* (New York: Doubleday, 2010), 87.

[6] Dylan had a different relationship with fans than many performers of the day; he would never pretend to care about them in the way the Beatles would, or even Joan Baez, and he recoiled as Dylan fandom came to be closely associated with looking to Dylan for answers. See Dylan's discussion of this in Nat Hentoff, "The Cracklin', Shakin', Breakin', Sounds," in *Younger Than That Now*, 26.

[7] Ronald D. Cohen, *Rainbow Quest: The Folk Music Revival and American Society, 1940-1970* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 198-199.

[8] Paul Nelson, "What's Happening." *Sing Out!* Vol. 15, No. 5. November 1965. 6-8:7.

of people clamoring over folk music? What did it mean that someone like Dylan—raspy, unconventional, ironic—became a teen idol, featured in *Seventeen* magazine? Or that someone like Baez became a heroine to young women, inspiring them to grow their hair long, pick up guitars, and rise up singing, or to join SNCC or CORE or protest the growing conflict in Vietnam, or sometimes all of these things?

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, many Americans, many of them young people, were increasingly drawn to folk music. These "folkies" listened to and sang songs that were old and new, traditional and topical: English ballads, sea shanties, cowboy songs, blues, jazz, Woody Guthrie, Odetta, songs that could be found on Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Music* and heard on a Sunday afternoon in New York City's Washington Square Park, and, eventually, the "finger-pointin'" songs and newspaper ballads of Phil Ochs and Bob Dylan. All of this and more, somehow, fell into the folk genre, and in the context of the 1960s, it was a new creation—a revelation to many young people, both musically and because of the communities and ideas formed around it.[9] Although grounded in tradition, the folk movement created a new musical form, a new cultural space, and a new set of social and political geographies in the United States. What became known as the folk revival took root in clubs and on college campuses across the nation, flourished in folk circles, and grew increasingly popular in the early sixties, eventually dominating music charts, air waves, television specials, and influencing the fashion, politics, and music of the revolutionary era. Though often portrayed as staid and serious, as many of its devotees were, the folk revival of the 1960s

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[9] As Dylan told Izzy Young of the genre classification, "People have to name it something so they call it folk music" (Izzy Young Journals, #23, October 20, 1961, in *Younger Than That Now*, 11).

was also exciting and often revelatory for the people who participated in it as performers, listeners, and fans.

Although much has been written about this period and about the musical and political importance of the folk revival, little attention has been granted to the experiences of the women who were a part of the folk revival not only as musicians but as fans and members of its ever growing audience.[10] Women were integral to the folk revival as both performers and participants.[11] Embracing the movement's participatory ethos, they picked up guitars, banjos, mandolins, and autoharps, gathered to learn songs and to sing together, and congregated with like-minded men and women in coffeehouses and clubs throughout the country, taking part in a countercultural movement that emerged in the rigid 1950s and grew increasingly popular and influential in the sixties. For many of these women, the personal and political meanings they encountered and claimed in folk music, the spaces where it was played, and the communities and relationships formed around it marked significant moments of personal growth as well as cultural rebellion.

Women's presence in the coffeehouses, clubs, and spaces of the folk revival was not prohibited by male folkies and was spurred on by the inspiration of prominent

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[10] Joe Hickerson, in *Wasn't That a Time! Firsthand Accounts of the Folk Music Revival*, ed. Ronald D. Cohen (Scarecrow Press, 1995), 13-23: 22 Although he does not allude to gender, in his outline of areas for potential study regarding the folk revival, Hickerson suggests "We need to explore the autobiographies and personal reminisces of Revival participants. A) How Did People Discover and Get Into the Revival? How did people get into folk music?" Benjamin Filene alludes to this in *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), in which his main "protagonists" are all men, whose "stories are intended to illuminate the work of other brokers, both male and female, who are not directly represented" (6). As Filene then writes in the accompanying note, "It might be argued that even as men and women pursue the same basic strategies of folk music collecting, they bring different perspectives to the task. This hypothesis would be worth exploring in a future study" (237; note 4).

[11] Alice Echols wrote, "Folksingers Joan Baez, Odetta, and Mary Travers of Peter, Paul, and Mary also provided an opening wedge for women" (Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, xv).

performers like Odetta, Mary Travers, and Joan Baez. However, women's presence in these scenes and spaces was significant in the context of the prevailing postwar culture and in light of mainstream gender codes of dress, behavior, and display. The women who participated in the folk revival, both as performers and fans—particularly overlapping categories in folk circles more than any other—trespassed boundaries of gender, race, and the political and cultural attitudes governing American society. Although the divides they crossed to be "folkies" differed according to whether they hailed from liberal or conservative families, lived in cities or suburbs, and when, where, and to what degree they embraced folk music, its politics and its lifestyle, the women who were a part of this music and the communities surrounding it embraced countercultural spaces, different styles of dress and living, and left-wing political affiliations in the contexts of the conservative fifties, the Cold War, civil rights movement, and escalating conflict in Vietnam. For these women, folk music was a political space both overtly and more subtly, through the ways they dressed, sat, talked, the spaces they inhabited, the lifestyle they rejected to do so, as well as the new ideas and new possibilities presented by folk musicians and often the songs themselves. This could also be a frustrating space for women as they ultimately encountered many of the same gender barriers of mainstream society; the folk movement could be empowering and disempowering at the same time. Still, many women claimed folk music and the communities formed around it as a space of political, social, and cultural change and personal freedom. Women's connections to folk music and the ways in which those connections were made visible constituted early acts of rebellion in a decade that would come to be defined by it.

"Real, Gritty, Authentic:" Folk Music and Youthful Rebellion

In Marge Piercy's 1982 novel *Braided Lives*, a young college student named Jill attends a party in the early 1960s where folk music is played. Jill calls it the "only music actually sung and played" among her friends. "Pop music is crooners soggily serenading our parents. White rock music belongs to the high-school crowd none of us were in with. Black music I knew only because I lived in a partly Black neighborhood. We think folk music is real, gritty, authentic."[12] As the 1950s ended and the 60s began, more and more young people like the fictional Jill found folk music and found in it something "real, gritty, authentic," something unique and often defiant in the midst of the uniformity of postwar culture.[13]

This appeal was heightened by the expansion of consumer culture after World War II and growth of the new suburban culture of housing tracts, new schools, shopping centers, and the roads to reach them. American consumer culture was spurred by the postwar "baby boom" and expansion of the teen market, as well as the very notion of the teenager, crafted in part by advertisers anxious to sell the image of teenage life and all of the products it required. The teen market was both developed and bolstered by the growth of a youth culture of leisure. More American families were affluent and fewer teenagers were expected to contribute to their family economies. Young people were expected to stay in school longer, and if they worked, they were more likely to keep their

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[12] Marge Piercy, *Braided Lives: A Novel* (New York: Summit Books, 1982), 99.

[13] Dylan, of course, wrote in the context of this chasm and reflected this defiance and the pride in youthfulness, resentment of hypocrisy, and confidence of many young people in both his lyrics and attitude. For more, see Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders*, 86.

wages as spending money, perhaps supplemented by an allowance from their parents. Whatever the sources, the generation of young people coming of age after World War II spent and spent often, and largely on entertainment. They saw movies, including scores of films intended for their audience alone, watched television, including new shows marketed just to them, and bought transistor radios, record players, and record after record after record. The recording industry grew dramatically following World War II, and by 1960, the music market was a well-established profit machine, driven in large part by teenagers.

The momentous advent of rock and roll in the 1950s spurred the teen market and shaped teen culture, and American culture more broadly, in incalculable ways. To the white audiences who responded to it, rock and roll music was new, edgy, exciting, sensual, tinged with the weight of its roots in black music and all that carried in the United States. These same characteristics made rock and roll controversial and countercultural due to the deep racial and sexual anxieties surrounding it and the boundaries many performers and fans crossed in playing and listening to it. Folkies and rock and rollers were often at odds with each other, but they came from the same place—musically, in part, and as expressions of discontent in the fifties. They were both countercultural movements that resonated with young people—often white and middle class.

By mid-decade, however, rock and roll was being repackaged as "pop"—safer and more suitable for all (read: white) audiences. The commodification of popular music was not new, but it was becoming more obvious and less palatable to many listeners,

including many young people and especially those on the emerging New Left. Grappling with the realities of the postwar world in which they had grown up, many young people were increasingly skeptical of advertising and consumer culture and uninterested in music carefully produced just for them. The manufactured quality of so much of this music—written by teams of songwriters brought to Tin Pan Alley to write songs that teenagers might like, performed by carefully selected artists, produced and recorded by professionals trained to make commercially successful products—reflected the consumer culture of the postwar period all too well. The music seemed inauthentic, over-produced, unimportant.[14]

In this space of highly commercial music and growing criticism of commercialism, the folk revival flourished, attracting young people to folk music, broadly defined, and to the lifestyle, values, and politics that went along with it. The way Joni Mitchell remembered it, "then this thing happened. Rock & roll went through a really dumb vanilla period. And during that period, folk music came in to fill the hole."[15] In the context of the late 1950s and early 1960s, folk music was a space where young people embraced political ideas and activism, created counter-cultures that challenged the

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[14] As Dylan put it, "The thing about rock 'n' roll is that for me anyway it wasn't enough. Tutti Frutti and Blue Suede Shoes were great catchphrases and driving pulse rhythms and you could get high on the energy but they weren't serious or didn't reflect life in a realistic way. I knew that when I got into folk music, it was more of a serious type of thing. The songs are filled with more despair, more sadness, more triumph, more faith in the supernatural, much deeper feelings … life is full of complexities and rock 'n' roll didn't reflect that." Dylan, *Biograph*, in Mike Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger: Bob Dylan and the 1960s* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), 39.

[15] "Joni Mitchell," interview with Cameron Crowe, 1979 in *The Rolling Stone Interviews*, ed. Peter Herbst (New York: St. Martin's, 1981), 376-391: 380.

prevailing powers of mass culture, and encountered and experimented with new ideas about relationships, love, and living.

Folk music, put simply, is the music of the folk: the songs people sing. The "folk" designation, not usually used by the people with whom "folk" songs originated, reflects the appeal of this music during its various waves of popularity as a celebration and often a romanticization of the past and the rural in the face of the modern and urban. (As folksinger Dave Van Ronk put it, "One of the first things that must be understood about these [folk] revivals is that the folk have very little to do with them."[16]) There was a great gulf between the people with whom this music originated—rural poor—and the people with whom it resonated in the 1950s and 60s—often white, suburban, and affluent.[17] Yet the constituencies that embraced this music shaped it in turn, especially in the 1960s, and embedded old songs with new meanings.

This particular revival in the popularity and commercial success of folk music traces its roots to the song collecting of Alan Lomax, Charles Seeger, Harry Smith and others and to the politics of the Popular Front and celebration of the common man during the Great Depression.[18] These traditions continued in smaller circles throughout the war years and into the postwar era, spurred by the Almanac Singers in the 1940s and then the

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[16] Dave Van Ronk with Elijah Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougal Street: A Memoir* (Cambridge: De Capo Press, 2005), 28.

[17] This is not coincidental, as Eric Lott's work indicates. See Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993).

[18] See Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (London: Verso, 1997).

Weavers, who made the Leadbelly song "Goodnight, Irene" the greatest hit of 1950.[19] The woeful lullaby (of sorts) along with "Wimoweh," "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine," and "So Long, It's Been Good to Know Ya," created a remarkable but brief moment of commercial popularity and success before the Red Scare sent folk music and the people and politics associated with it underground for much of the decade.[20] The blacklisting of Pete Seeger and others meant that popular folk performers were prevented from giving large concerts to what had been growing audiences as well as prohibited from performing on television in the age when popular music was increasingly transmitted through that medium.[21] Maligned by its association with communism, folk music was driven underground for much of the fifties, but it continued to thrive on a smaller scale, particularly on college campuses and in clubs and coffeehouses around the country. During this period, Doc Watson, The Greenbrier Boys, and others developed steady followings of devoted listeners and people aligned with folk music and rural traditions as a rejection of the prevailing trends—musical, political, social, cultural—of the times. Their fan bases embraced an aesthetic they deemed authentic and unadulterated in an age of mass production and marketing. Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music*,

[19] It's worth noting that the Weavers changed "I'll get you in my dream" to "I'll see you in my dreams" and left out the verse about morphine. See Stephen Petrus and Ronald D. Cohen, *Folk City: New York and the American Folk Music Revival* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 76.

[20] For more on folk music and the folk revival, see Robert Cantwell, *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); Filene, *Romancing the Folk*; and Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*. For a much earlier overview, see Oscar Brand, *The Ballad Mongers: Rise of the Modern Folk Song* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1962).

[21] According to Ronnie Gilbert, Pete Seeger "wished fervently" for the Weavers to be on television "because of the medium's potential to reach the American people with folk music." See Gilbert, *A Radical Life in Song: A Memoir* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 80. Also see Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 43.

released in 1952, became a prized possession for the many listeners who learned folk songs—nearly a hundred—from the collection. In 1958, folk made a commercial comeback when the Kingston Trio made the Appalachian ballad "Tom Dooley" a radio hit. The clean-cut Trio appeared to have little in common with the folkies congregating in clubs and coffeehouses, especially from those folkies' often exclusive perspective, but they did record and make popular what was conceived of as a folk song, helping to draw steady audiences of young women and men to old songs that were new to them, or new songs written to sound old, and to engage many of them in making this music as well.[22]

Folk music seemed increasingly appealing at the dawn of the 1960s, especially to those who were frustrated by the superficiality of mainstream culture and the music it produced (as Bob Dylan put it, "I just thought of mainstream culture as lame as hell and a big joke") and who were increasingly resistant to the politics and the contradictions of Cold War America.[23] Seventeen-year-old Vivian Gorner explained, "I suppose that rock 'n' roll is a kind of folk music, too, but it all sounds alike and has no individuality, as folk

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[22] The Trio "walked away with … the hearts of untold hundreds of teenage girls," the *Daily News* reported (in Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric*, 118). Joan Baez remembered, "Before I turned into a snob and learned to look down upon all commercial folk music as bastardized and unholy, I loved the Kingston Trio." See Joan Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With: A Memoir* (New York: Penguin, 1987), 57. Suze Rotolo remembered that the Kingston Trio's album cover "earned scorn because the trio looked so collegiate and square in the photo" (*A Freewheelin' Time*, 140). It was after 1958, Robert Cantwell writes, that "folksongs, and original songs conceived and performed as such, enjoyed an unprecedented commercial popularity, inspiring thousands of young middle-class men and women to learn songs, to accompany themselves on folk instruments … to search out and lionize authentic folk musicians, and finally to dress, groom, speak, comport themselves, and even attempt to think in ways they believed compatible with the rural, ethnic, proletarian, and other marginal cultures to whom folksong was supposed to belong" (*When We Were Good*, 2).

[23] Bob Dylan, *Chronicles: Volume One* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 35.

music does."[24] Folk music offered a (mostly) non-commercial alternative to the pop music that had superseded the early surge of rock and roll in 1950s. Sixteen-year-old Janet Bronson told "Molly" of the *Chicago Tribune*, "this is no professional payola song, but the real expression of people."[25] Although the music was not quite as pure and untouched by commercialism as its devotees claimed, it was rooted in deep traditions and it was not as rooted in the market forces operating in Hollywood and Tin Pan Alley. Moreover, the music itself appealed to many young people—it wasn't particularly complicated to play, and the sounds and songs were timeless and deeply human—appealing qualities in the political and cultural contexts of the times.[26] Folk music burst into little boxes as well and offered an inviting space to those who felt they didn't fit; as Suze Rotolo, a folk devotee later emblazoned in the era's imagery as the woman walking next to Bob Dylan on the cover of *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, put it, "The folk world included everything that wasn't easily classifiable."[27] That went for music as well as people. As Sis Cunningham of the Almanac Singers said of the folk revival, "I think people were beginning to be enthusiastic about folk music because, you know, it wasn't

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[24] Molly, "Folk Music Catches the Ear of City Teen," *Chicago Daily Tribune*. Mar. 20, 1960. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *Chicago Tribune*.

[25] Molly, "Folk Music Catches the Ear of City Teen."

[26] Re: "not particularly complicated" – "Folk music was so easy," Joni Mitchell joked, "I was a professional in six months" (in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, xv); Paula Ballan said of bluegrass, "It was so easy. If you knew six chords you could play nine hundred songs. If you could sing harmony—Jesus, you could be part of a million groups. I'd go over to all these different groups and sing with them. But at six o'clock the police came, and they were nasty." Paula Ballan in Robbie Woliver, *Bringing It All Back Home: 25 Years of American Music at Folk City* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 14.

[27] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 128.

the thirties or the forties anymore. It was the fifties. You know, the fifties were very fucked up."[28]

The political situation surrounding American folk music made it a subversive, countercultural brand, especially in the context of the 1950s, and it grew, following the Red Scare hysteria that sent Pete Seeger and the Weavers underground, outside of the commercial mainstream and among people who embraced the politics of the out-of-power left. Many early folk devotees had affiliations as "red-diaper babies," children of Communists, for whom folk music was connected to political organizing.[29] As folk music grew more popular, it is fair to say that many fans were not particularly aware of the communist roots of their new favorite music. Still, aligning oneself with folk music was a political marker, a cultural and political identity, connected first to the labor values of the Popular Front and the Old Left and then to the New Left and the student movement, civil rights movement, and peace movement growing at the time.[30] The

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[28] Quoted in David Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street: The Lives and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Fariña and Richard Fariña* (New York: Picador, 2001), 10.

[29] Mary Travers had grown up in Greenwich Village listening to folk music and learning from her parents' union politics. Suze Rotolo was a "red diaper baby." Joan Baez, also, came from a comparatively progressive background. Thus for many of the movement's most prominent women, the overt politics were not as transgressive as the subtle. See Judy Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes: My Life in Music* (New York: Crown, 2011), 78; Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 22. Although many older and more established members of the folk movement mistrusted the emerging New Left, largely aligned with the growth of the youth movement, its politics grew closely connected to the folk revival. As Dave Van Ronk wrote, "as an orthodox leftist I was also a very strong critic of the student movement and the New Left. Of course, I agreed with a lot of their stances—I was strongly pro-civil rights and strongly-antiwar—but most of those people were not really radicals, just a bunch of very pissed-off liberals. They had no grounding, and indeed no interest, in theory, and their disdain for studying history and learning economics infuriated me" (Van Ronk with Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougall Street*, 199-200).

[30] The politics of the folk movement traced longer roots to union organizing and the Popular Front, not to mention a close alignment with communism (hence the blacklisting of Seeger and others). As Dave Van Ronk notes, "The New York branch of the folk revival was strongly influenced by the Communist outlook…" (Van Ronk with Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougall Street*, 30).

iterations of folk music that emerged in the late 1950s had less to do with the labor movement and little to do with the Communist Party, but the genre remained politically aligned and signaled clear political affiliations—one side, as the famous labor anthem "Which Side Are You On?" suggests. (James Farmer wrote new lyrics for the union anthem "Which Side Are You On?" singing, "Come all you freedom lovers, and listen while I tell, of how the freedom riders came to Jackson to dwell," reflecting the mobilization of folk music for new political causes, namely peace and civil rights.[31]) As Rotolo explained, "Folk music was the antiestablishment music, the music of the left."[32] One student described it, "You are going to find folk music wherever you find a group of people who are concerned. … The kind of people who join student Peace Union [*sic*] and CORE or go on Freedom Rides are the kind of people who will like folk singing."[33] This included the outpouring of topical and political songs—*Broadside* was intended to collect and share the songs "arising out if the peace, labor, civil rights movements in different areas"—as well as the affiliations and partnerships between folk performers, audiences, and political organizations dedicated to particular causes.[34] According to Cohen, folk

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[31] Guy and Candie Carawan, *Sing for Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement Through Its Songs* (Montgomery: New South Books, 2007), 39. Len Chandler wrote more alternate verses: "Come all you bourgeoisie black men with all your excess fat. A few days in the county jail will sure take care of that" and "Come all you high-tone college girls, pronounce your final 'g's, / But don't you forget your grandma, she's still scrubbing on her knees." See Len Chandler, in *Wasn't That a Time!,* ed. Ronald D. Cohen, 127-141: 137.

[32] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 45.

[33] In Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 202.

[34] Malvina Reynolds, Correspondence, *Sing Out!* 10. 4 (Dec. 1960), 2. *Broadside* disseminated topical songs and made itself overtly political in doing so. Its pages were filled with headlines and news clippings that inspired, or that the editors hoped would soon inspire, songs.

audiences at the University of Texas "identified as outsiders, alienated from the dominant fraternity and sorority crowds. The university's overwhelmingly conservative students still preferred the twist, but a growing group of rebels drifted to folk music, as it increasingly connected to the civil rights movement."[35] (One of these rebels of course was a young Janis Joplin).

The politics of the folk revival were both subtle and overt; the songs one sang, the way one dressed, and his or her very presence in some of the spaces associated with folk music were all subversive in their own quiet ways, but the folk revival held and was associated with clear political positions as well. The folk revival was intricately connected to the emerging New Left as more and more of its devotees became connected to the student, civil rights, and anti-war movements and as the participatory and often populist ideals of folk music came to influence these movements in turn. As John Cohen of the New Lost City Ramblers wrote in 1959, on the cusp of the 1960s, "The emphasis is no longer on social reform or on world-wide reform. The effort is focused more on a search for real and human values."[36] The humanistic values reflected in the Port Huron Statement were similar to the themes of folk music that resonated with the often-overlapping audience. As Maggie Puner, eighteen, wrote in *Seventeen*: "Folk music is living music, an expression of human emotions—despair, joy, hope. It has no ulterior motives, just a few basic hopes: to preserve the heritage of every country throughout the

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[35] In Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 202.

[36] John Cohen, "In Defense of City Folksingers, *Sing Out!* 9 (Summer 1959) in Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 22.

world in song; to express firsthand the thoughts of the people, be they about the outlaw Jesse James or the atom bomb; to become a part of the mind and heart of everyone willing to let it."[37] The songs that expressed this ideal were essential to the folk movement, and so was the process of making and sharing them.[38] Folk music became "the site of resistance to the centralization of power."[39] While the music often flourished on college campuses, its devotees rejected many of the values surrounding higher education in the postwar era. In lifestyle and in lyrics, folkies valued simplicity, emotion, authenticity, and egalitarianism. Even if folkies were not "movement people" and even as the particular political positions of folkies grew less stark as the music became more mainstream, the politics of lifestyle and sensibility—distrustful, non-conformist, frequently oppositional—were significant.

The participatory ideal of folk music welcomed young people eager to learn the guitar and banjo, learn songs, and write their own songs as well. For a young middle class man from the suburbs to learn to play the banjo, or a young woman to play the guitar, offered a sense of connection with another life—a world of troubadours and cowboys and miners—and a way of participating in cultural production in an era of mass

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[37] In Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 200.

[38] To borrow the folksinger Dave Van Ronk's definition, "In the 1950s, as for at least the previous two hundred years, we used the word 'folk' to describe a process rather than a style. By this definition…folk songs are the musical expression of preliterate or illiterate communities and necessarily pass directly from singer to singer." "It follows," he continued, "that the original authors of folk songs are usually unknown, and even when we do know something about them, the information is not necessarily relevant" (Van Ronk with Wald, The Mayor of MacDougall Street, 27-28). See Filene, *Romancing The Folk* regarding the construction of the term "folk," the quest for authenticity, and its memory.

[39] Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, "Mistaken Dichotomies," *Journal of American Folklore* 101 (April-June 1988), 151, quoted in Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 350.

production and consumption.[40] Guitar sales grew throughout the period, and this was an audience that, when Bob Dylan asked for an E harmonica during his acoustic set at the infamous 1965 Newport Folk Festival, was willing and able to oblige. "Audiences would clap and stomp along and participate in the music they were experiencing," Ellen Sander remembered. "When it was over, audience and performers would applaud each other with an ovation that was as lusty as it was genuine."[41] Folk music was enthusiastically inclusive and, led by Pete Seeger, embraced the participatory principle—"learn to play the banjo," "won't you join me," "rise up singing…."[42] As Seeger said, "I sang songs about people from all walks of life, and I talked about how anyone from any walk of life could sing this kind of song himself. What I was getting at was the idea of flip-flopping the power structure, so every individual had some power, rather than all the power being centered on a few organizations or just one. I said 'Sing with me. Sing by yourself. Make your own music. Pick up a guitar, or just sing a capella. We don't need professional singers. We don't need stars. You can sing. Join me now…."[43] (Despite Seeger's insistence, there were many a star eventually created from rising up singing).[44] As Irwin Silber wrote, "Perhaps the greatest effect of the folksong surge has been the

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[40] Also see Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders*. Note that this is somewhat similar to the DIY craze of the 1950s.

[41] Sander, *Trips*, 11.

[42] Cantwell notes the connections between Seeger's participatory ethos and the affiliations of folk music with communism, labor, union politics, and the American Left (*When We Were Good*, 89). For more on Seeger's "passion for audience involvement," see Filene, *Romancing The Folk*, Chapter 5.

[43] Pete Seeger quoted in Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 8.

[44] At the same time, the early years of the folk revival saw few traditional stars. As Hajdu writes, "The budding folk revival, while not quite Pete Seeger's proletarian dreamscape, had relatively few celebrities, and most of them were little known to the general public" (*Positively Fourth Street*, 27).

revival of the almost-lost art of people making their own music for themselves. The hundreds of thousands who have learned that music-making can be one of the most rewarding and self-fulfilling experiences that life offers, have discovered, in some small way, that the system can be beaten by those who will do it themselves."[45] In the context, Peter Yarrow wrote, singing was "an act of liberation and an assertion of freedom."[46] It was also an expression of activism, both in the content of the songs and the process of singing them.

The folk revival connected people around the world and across the country, giving young people who had never been and probably never would be union members the chance to sing "Which Side Are You On?" in earnest.[47] Moreover, it gave young white people who may have never met black people the opportunity to embrace songs like "Michael, Row The Boat Ashore," "Oh, Mary Don't You Weep," and other negro spirituals, the chance to embrace and identify with African Americans in the crucial stages of the civil rights movement, translating into political affiliations and actions. "Listening to and playing folk music," Susan Douglas wrote, "was one way that kids who didn't ride down south on freedom buses or go to sit-ins could participate, if only vicariously, in the civil rights movement." Moreover, she continued, "There was a critically important resonance between this music and what we saw in the news from

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[45] Irwin Silber, "Folk Music – 1963," *Sing Out!* 13.4 (October-November 1963), 2-3: 3.

[46] Peter Yarrow, Foreword, *Folk City*, 10.

[47] "Which Side Are You On?" traces its roots to Harlan County, Kentucky and the National Miner's Union, namely one miner's wife, Mrs. Florence Reece, who wrote the words, "fitted" "to an old hymn tune." See Pete Seeger, *American Favorite Ballads: Tunes and Songs As Sung By Pete Seeger* (Oak Publications, 1961). Folk music also offered a certain global sensibility. *Sing Out!* had global distribution and published correspondence from China, Hungary, USSR, Mexico, England and Scotland.

Selma and Birmingham."[48] A song like "Birmingham Sunday," written by Richard Fariña about the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church and first recorded by his sister-in-law Joan Baez, connected people to the struggle as it unfolded.[49]

This was not a simple relationship. Julius Lester articulated the frustration, asking:

> What did they know of the songs we would sing in church and in the field, songs the old folks sang when they were ironing or just settin' on the porch in the evening as the sun went down and the frogs came out? Nobody has ever hated them. And who was this Joan Baez talking about all her trials would soon be over. The bitch was white, wasn't she? Plus, she was good-looking and was making money. The only kind of trials she could have had was deciding whether she should fly first-class or tourist….Blacks have always served as a path which whites have used to try and get out of the concentration camps of their souls.[50]

Ellen Sander more or less agreed: "There was always something fraudulent, a hint of dilettantism, about the linkage of folk artists and fans and civil action. The movement really had very little to do with the black man. What we were really searching for—and finding—was our own psychic liberation."[51] At the same time, music was clearly a part of the movement, and folk singers were often activists as well.[52] The Highlander Folk

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[48] Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994), 146.

[49] Richard Fariña, "Birmingham Sunday." Baez recorded the song on *Joan Baez/5* (Vanguard, 1964).

[50] Lester in Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 207.

[51] Sander, *Trips*, 34.

[52] As examples, Bob Dylan and Pete Seeger visited Greenwood, Mississippi in 1963 and folk performances often benefited CORE or other organizations. The SNCC Freedom Singers were a part of the folk circuit, supported by Pete and Toshi Seeger (see Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 301). Joan Baez was deeply committed to the civil rights movement, although her early performances in the South drew few black audience members. In part, this was due to the segregation ordinances in place that prevented African Americans for attending, as well as the distance between her followings in New England and on the West

School connected folk music and civil rights organizing, and the music that came out of both helped spread the cause of civil rights outside each community. This included the incessant singing of civil rights organizers on the march and in the field. As Julian Bond remembered, "As a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) from 1960 through '65, despite being unable to carry a tune, there was seldom a day when I could not drown my voice in a chorus of others—at mass meetings, on marches and protests, or sitting in the SNCC office."[53] Music offered a measure of comfort and empowerment. Candie Anderson, later Candie Carawan when she married Highlander Folk School leader Guy Carawan, remembered singing in the Nashville City Jail after being arrested during the sit-ins in 1960: "For two white girls, alone in a cell and only in sound's reach of the other students, the music offered a bond of friendship and support."[54] Folk songs were a part of the soundtrack to the March on Washington and the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley, broadcast to the entire nation through coverage of these events.[55] Everyone heard "Blowin' in the Wind," saw Dylan and Baez and Peter, Paul, and Mary, there on the stage with the movement's leaders and the sea of supporters, black and white.[56]

Coast and the cultural differences in the audiences (see Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 192). See Hale for more on SNCC and the folk revival (*A Nation of Outsiders*, 87).

[53] Julian Bond, Introduction to Carawan, *Sing for Freedom*, IX.

[54] Carawan, *Sing for Freedom*, 5.

[55] Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 225. See Calvin Trillin, "March on Washington," *The New Yorker*, September 7, 1963.

[56] The performances at the March on Washington also exposed the divides within the folk movement, echoing those of the civil rights movement, not that anyone was paying attention to them on that momentous day. As Marqusee commented of Dylan's performance of the song at the March on

Many performers and promoters used concerts as sites of political change, awareness, and recruitment. An advertisement for a Bob Dylan concert in Amherst advertised that all proceeds from the sale of buttons and stickers would go to SNCC.[57] The famed Newport Folk Festival was not just a concert but a place for SNCC to gather and recruit.[58] At the 1963 festival, Joan Baez led a march from the festival to a rally at a Newport park, where James Forman and the Freedom Singers drummed up support for the coming March on Washington later that summer.[59] At Newport, Mike Marqusee writes, the organizers could bill Bob Dylan and Fannie Lou Hamer on the same stage because they "could safely assume that the audience would share a political as well as a musical ethic."[60] There was a straightforward association between music and politics; it was unlikely that a Young American for Freedom would show up at the Dylan concert at U Mass. Sharing their views on civil rights on stage, Richard Farina wrote, Dylan and Baez "were confident that a majority of their listeners felt the same way."[61]

Washington, "when everyone else was singing about freedom and deliverance and unity, Dylan was outlining a class-based analysis of the persistence of racism" (*Wicked Messenger*, 10).

[57] "Bob Dylan To Sing At U. Mass Concert," April 21, 1964, *Smith College Weekly*, Vol. XII, No. 40. Smith College Archives, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.

[58] Hale argues that activists "learned that playing the part of 'the folk' provided access to white middle-class sympathy and support outside the South." SNCC, she notes, used the Freedom Singers concerts to raise money and teach "folk fans about the southern civil rights struggle" (*A Nation of Outsiders*, 87).

[59] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 301.

[60] Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger*, 153.

[61] Fariña, "Baez and Dylan: A Generation Singing Out," 2. For Dylan, this ultimately became part of the turn off from the whole folk scene. He told Paul J. Robbins in 1965, "Sure, you can make all sorts of protest songs and put them on a Folkways record. But who hears them? The people that do hear them are going to be agreeing with you anyway." See The Paul J. Robbins Interview, *L.A. Free Press*, March 1965, in *Younger Than That Now*, 37.

In the political context of the time, Dylan, Baez, and their cohort had more and more reason to be confident that the young people who made up their fan base also supported civil rights, felt solidarity with the students at Berkeley, and were concerned with the cause of peace. The world of the 50s in which they had all grown up was giving way to a new era, bolstered by the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960 and, more so, by the growing strength and visibility of movements for peace and civil rights and the new cultural values of young people, shaped by the folk revival. The political sensibilities of SNCC and SDS were clearly aligned with folk music and were furthered by the participatory ethos and quest for authenticity shared by both. As Alice Echols wrote, "Music wasn't just background noise; it was a declaration of difference."[62]

For many folkies, these shared beliefs percolated in physical spaces where they could gather to share music and like-minded company. In these sites, the rebellious politics of folk music blossomed into an alternative culture with its own modes of public decorum and display. Even as it was more frequently recorded and sold on records, folk music was intimately connected to the physical spaces where it was performed, or where people gathered to sing together—clubs, coffeehouses, record stores, college campuses, hoot nights in homes or dorms, and the music festivals that became so popular in the 1960s. Folk fans claimed a form of rebellion (albeit somewhat more subtle) in traversing the countercultural spaces where folk music was shared.[63] For many young people,

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[62] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 21.

[63] These folk scenes represented subcultures in many ways. For more on subcultures, see Ken Gelder, "The Field of Subcultural Studies," in Gelder, ed. *The Subcultures Reader*, second ed. (London: Routledge, 1997; 2005), 1-15:1). Gelder explains, "Subcultures are groups of people that are in some way represented

leaving the suburbs for big cities—whether to see a show, find a record store, or to strike it out on their own—was an important part of the era. It was as if they were each the poor wayfaring strangers they sung about. The music may have been romantically rural, but for many young people, it was an invitation to an urban life they had been separated from in postwar suburbs. Rotolo remembered, "Most of the people I knew were trying to get away from a secure place, which was what had brought them to the Village."[64] In New York City, Greenwich Village was its own world, and the center of the folk world in many ways.[65] Gerde's Folk City was a few blocks from Washington Square Park, which was a few blocks from the Folklore Center on MacDouglal Street, and many folksingers and folk fans lived scattered between.[66] This was a world much different from suburbs, a world where you didn't need a car, and could happen upon people playing the guitar or banjo. "Why would I go anywhere?" Dave Van Ronk would say while in the Village. "I'm already here."[67]

Greenwich Village, or North Beach or Cambridge, reflected particular politics in and of themselves. As Rotolo described it, "To choose to live in Greenwich Village meant more than just freedom to be an artist and run wild. Couples living in sin could

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as non-normative and/or marginal through their particular interests and practices, through what they are, what they do and where they do it."

[64] Van Ronk with Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougal Street*, 161.

[65] The best descriptions of Greenwich Village during this time are found in Dave Van Ronk, *The Mayor of MacDougal Street*, Suze Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, Bob Dylan, *Chronicles*, and Stephen Petrus and Ronald D. Cohen, *Folk City*. See also Ellen and Irene Kossoy in Cohen, *Wasn't That a Time!*, 188-197.

[66] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 13.

[67] Lawrence Block, "Foreword: Back in The Day," in Dave Van Ronk with Elijah Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougal Street*, xi-xv: xiii.

rent an apartment, interracial couples had an easier time of it, and homosexuals, albeit still called fags and dykes, were pretty much let alone."[68] Rotolo described the Village as a place for "people who knew in their souls that they didn't belong where they came from."[69] (This of course was a different era, as Rotolo notes, "when New York City was affordable" that "people who felt they didn't fit into the mainstream could take a chance and head there from wherever they were."[70])

Folk singers and fans from in and out of the Village gathered in Washington Square Park on Sunday afternoons to sing and play and listen and learn. These Sunday afternoon gatherings had started in the mid-1940s; as one of those fans described it, "The great majority of collegians were still grey-flannel members of the Silent Generation, ready to sign on for a corporate job with a good pension plan. The rest of us who didn't fit that mold, those of us who'd always sort of figured there was something wrong with us, sat around the fountain in Washington Square singing 'Michael Row the Boat Ashore'

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[68] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 102. Although this, too, had limits; Hettie Jones writes that she and LeRoi Jones were one of half a dozen interracial couples in Greenwich Village in the late 1950s, and endured plenty of prejudice because of it. See Hettie Jones, *How I Became Hettie Jones* (New York: Grove Press, 1990), 37. Greenwich Village had a long tradition of alternative living, dating back to the days when John Reed and Edna St. Vincent Millay lived there. In the 1930s, it became a hotbed for coffeehouses, which often doubled as folkhouses—Café Wha, the Why Not?, the Bitter End, and eventually Gerde's Folk City. According to Cantwell, this association began when Dominic Parisi imported an espresso machine to Caffe Reggio in 1935 (Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 286). See also Hajdu, Positively Fourth Street, 59.

[69] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 4.

[70] *Ibid.*, 13.

and feeling very proud of ourselves for being there."[71] Rotolo remembered, "I looked forward to Sunday in the Square with my friends and to that particular atmosphere."[72]

> The atmosphere in Washington Square Park was lively. Groups of musicians would play and sing anything from old folk songs to bluegrass. Old Italian men from the neighborhood played their folk music on mandolins. Everyone played around the fountain and people would wander from group to group, listening and maybe singing along. … There were poets reading their poems and political types handing out fliers for Trotskyist, Communist, or anarchist meetings and hawking their newspapers.[73]

This was an alternative, somewhat rebellious space. As Diane Di Prima wrote, "There was even risk in singing: city ordinances against music in the parks, on the streets, police raids that would suddenly turn into riots."[74] These gatherings grew so large, and increasingly diverse, with black men and gay men congregating freely, that they were banned in 1961 [*New Yorker* cartoon].[75] In response, these folk devotees formed the "Right to Sing" committee and protested the ban. The controversy surrounding these gatherings reflected the cultural politics surrounding the folk community. As the city sought to develop fine arts and culture—opera, orchestra, and the like—folk music had no place in this vision, nor did most folkies in this particular conception of park use and access to public space. The papers tended to oppose the local organizers, publishing such

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[71] Block, "Foreword: Back in The Day," xii. See also Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric*, 141-142.

[72] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 46.

[73] *Ibid.*, 46.

[74] Diane Di Prima, *Recollections of My Life as a Woman: The New York Years* (New York: Viking, 2001), 112.

[75] Rotolo also discusses these Sunday afternoon gatherings in her memoir (*A Freewheelin' Time*, 45). Also see Di Prima, *Recollections*, 112-113 and Petrus and Cohen, *Folk City*, 120.

exciting headlines as "Folk Singers Riot in Washington Sq."[76] *Times* coverage of Washington Square referred to "the boys with beards or banjos and many of the girls with long hair or guitars" fighting "with fifty policemen in clashes across the square."[77] Beards, banjos, long hair, guitars. These were descriptors of rebellion in the 1950s and early 60s.

This atmosphere or something similar existed in smaller enclaves throughout the country.[78] The Folklore Center on MacDougal Street published Folk Music Guide USA, offering a complete listing of folk clubs and folk concerts, festivals, club dates, and campus appearances of folksingers in the United States, allowing fans to seek out similar spaces in other parts of the country.[79] As Dylan remembered of the folk scene, "It was a whole community, a whole world that was all hooked up to different towns in the United States. You could go from here to California and always have a place to stay, and play somewhere, and meet people."[80] San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, and Los Angeles all had folk scenes, not to mention the myriad campuses across the country.[81] The Gate of

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[76] Petrus and Cohen, *Folk City*, 128.

[77] Paul Hofmann, "Folk Singers Riot in Washington Sq." *New York Times*, April 10, 1961. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

[78] Hickerson, in *Wasn't That a Time!*, 18 Those who traveled to concerts or happened upon folk centers carried the music back not only to their own folk clubs, but to kitchens and living rooms across the country. Hickerson outlines the various scenes and venues in which the folk revival unfolded as cities, campuses, camps, clubs, living rooms, lounges, parks, hoots, coffeehouses, stores, concerts, festivals, retreats, etc.

[79] See ad in *Sing Out!* Vol. 9, No. 3 (Winter 1959-1960), 30.

[80] Kurt Loder, "Bob Dylan: The Rolling Stone Interview," June 1984, in *20 Years of Rolling Stone: What A Long Strange Trip It's Been*, ed. Jann Wenner (New York: Friendly Press, 1987), 425.

[81] Van Ronk asserted that New York and Greenwich Village have been given too much credit for the folk scene, noting that other cities had performance spaces designated for folk music before New York did (Van Ronk and Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougal Street*, 122-123).

Horn in Chicago, the Second Fret in Philadelphia, the Golden Vanity in Cambridge, assumedly named for the song about the ship, the Troubadour and the Ash Grove in Los Angeles. Before Bob Dylan was looking for another world in Greenwich Village, he found one, briefly, in Dinkytown, Minneapolis, and heard Judy Collins at the Gilded Garter in Central City, Colorado before he set out for New York.[82] When she became devoted to folk music, Collins remembered, she didn't yet know the music "had already taken root in eclectic clubs such as the Gate of Horn in Chicago, the Village Gate in New York, and the Purple Onion and the Hungry i in San Francisco…." Instead, she found the Denver Folklore Center. There, Collins recalled, she "spent every cent [she] had on records" and "met other singers, whose lives were all about learning, trading, sharing, and finding songs."[83] It was there that she bought Carolyn Hester's *Scarlet Ribbons* and "listened over and over to her sweet, lilting voice."[84] Linda Ronstadt sang in Tucson clubs before she left for Los Angeles in 1964. Emmylou Harris frequented Greensboro's Red Door while she was a student at the University of North Carolina (and penned a letter to *Sing Out!).*

The coffeehouse culture in all of these places made them unique spaces. Joan Baez remembered her father taking her family to Harvard Square "to see a new phenomenon, the 'coffee houses,' where you could order a cup of coffee or tea, no

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[82] Dylan writes about Dinkytown in *Chronicles*. See p. 237-8, especially. Also see Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 55.

[83] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 35.

[84] *Ibid.*, 85. For more on the Denver Folklore Center and folk scene, see Weissman, *Which Side Are You On? An Inside History of the Folk Music Revival in America* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 120-123.

alcohol, and sit around in a stimulating intellectual atmosphere. The Harvard students brought in their books to study, and people played guitars and banjos and sang."[85] At Tulla's Coffee Grinder, Baez remembered, "I saw the guy under the tiny orange lamp, leaning over his classical guitar, his hair a soft yellow in the diffused light, playing 'Plaisir d'Amour.' I was entranced. I wanted a classical guitar, I wanted to learn that beautiful, sweet, haunting melody, and I wanted to move into Harvard Square and fall in love with every guitar player and singer I met, and never think about going to college or studying or taking exams or being normal."[86] While many people who moved to Harvard Square thought plenty about college and exams and the "normal" lives they would lead afterwards, the coffeehouse counterculture enabled young people like Baez to claim an alternative lifestyle and imagine a different future. As Jim Rooney and Eric Von Schmidt write in their history of the Cambridge folk scene, within all of the era's prevailing institutions, "there was a small group, a miniscule number, who simply couldn't get with it. They were looking elsewhere for stimulation and [a] new phenomenon was occurring that would fulfill some of their needs. It was called the coffee house."[87] Coffeehouses facilitated community as well as the sharing of music and embrace of an alternative lifestyle. Paula Kelley and Joyce Kalina owned and operated Cambridge's Club Mt. Auburn 47 together and described the atmosphere as "natural" and "relaxed"; "Nobody

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[85] Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With*, 57.

[86] *Ibid.*, 57-58.

[87] Jim Rooney and Eric Von Schmidt, *Baby, Let Me Follow You Down: The Illustrated Story of the Cambridge Folk Years*, second ed. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), 14.

bothers anybody here."[88] When asked how her ambitions shifted from painting to music, Joni Mitchell began her response, "Well, in Saskatoon there was a coffeehouse…."[89]

Hoot nights, or hootenannies, popular especially on college campuses as well as folk clubs, gave anyone the opportunity to sign up and share a song (or skit, or story, in some cases). John Cohen, Tom Paley, and Izzy Young (two of whom would go on as the New Lost City Ramblers, a perfect name in this revival if there ever was one) started holding hootenannies at Yale in the early 1950s, replicating the folk gatherings, or "hoots," already forming at Oberlin, Cornell, and elsewhere.[90] "Folksings" at the University of Texas "brought together all the nonconformists, all the kids who felt like 'displaced persons.'"[91] (As it turned out, there were a lot of kids like that—gatherings at Berkeley, Chicago, and elsewhere ultimately garnered thousands of participants).[92] These gatherings were social and sometimes political affairs because of the like-mindedness of the people who would show up as well as spaces for fledgling musicians—men and women—to try out new songs, new instruments, new styles. In folk circles and societies, people of all talents met to share music, asking, "Do you have a song?" to each participant, who had often brought a new song (although it may have been

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[88] Rooney and Von Schmidt, *Baby Let Me Follow You Down,* 17.

[89] Malka Marom, *Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2014), 16.

[90] Ray Allen, *Gone to the Country: The New Lost City Ramblers and the Folk Revival* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 32.

[91] Interview with Michael Bloomfield by Tom Wheeler, in Jas Obrecht, ed. *Blues Guitar: The Men Who Made the Music* (San Francisco: Miller Freeman Books, 1993), 262, in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 46.

[92] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 46-47.

three hundred years old) to share and pass on.[93] Songs were treasures—highly prized artifacts (as they were thought of by many of the most devoted folkies) to be shared and passed on. Folk publications like *Sing Out!* and *Broadside* helped share songs and form community among folk devotees. These were publications dedicated to publishing songs: *Sing Out!* more often traditional songs and *Broadside* contemporary, topical songs. Both speak to the centrality of songs in the folk movement; in the crudest mimeographing possible, *Broadside* professed that their "aim [was] not so much to select and decide as to circulate as many songs as possible and get them out as quickly as possible."[94] One folk fan remembered being "overwhelmed" by folk music once she found it; there were so many songs and so much to learn.[95]

These magazines and recordings helped share songs and styles, but much of this music was transmitted live, in person, by listening.[96] (Folk audiences, however, were markedly different from the rock and roll audiences they often disdained and certainly than those to come in the 60s. One man remembered seeing Joan Baez in Cambridge and breaking up with his girlfriend at the time for talking to him while Baez sang. "'Can't you be quiet until she finishes?' That was the beginning of the end of us."[97]) Whether it

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[93] Meeting of former and current members of the Riverside Folk Song Society. September 25, 2015. Riverside, California.

[94] *Broadside*, Feb. 1962. Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Library and Archives, Cleveland, Ohio.

[95] Caryl Jorgensen. Interview with author. July 16, 2015. Custer, South Dakota.

[96] Ray Allen described *Sing Out!* as a fan magazine. The publication did include profiles of folksingers, information about performances, and ads for instruments, but it was also dedicated to sharing songs. See Allen, *Gone to the Country*, 36.

[97] Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby Let Me Follow You Down,* 56. Von Schmidt and Rooney also point out that a distinction in the audience emerged between folk insiders and the audiences that paid to get into the

was a club regular or Joan Baez, countless folkies and fans remembered being entranced by a live performance that inspired them to learn to play or to keep coming back to hear more music.[98] Baez and Dave Guard of the Kingston Trio were both in attendance at a San Francisco Weavers concert before either had gained popularity as folksingers.[99] Seeger said that Baez told him it was after that concert that she "looked herself in the mirror and said, 'I can be a singer, too.'"[100] Many memoirs and recollections of the folk revival recount a sort of "then everything changed" moment upon encountering folk music, reflecting both the readiness and openness to change in this historical moment (and especially among this audience) as well as the importance of these performances.

Like the Hoots at Yale, college campuses often provided spaces for sharing songs by housing coffeehouses on or near campus. After being cramped into an apartment for the first Yale hoots, John Cohen secured permission to use campus space for the Friday night gatherings.[101] Students might seek permission to use a space or casually claim an off campus spot as folk territory. More informally, dorm rooms became impromptu places for concerts; all one needed was a guitar. "My roommate and other girls in my dorm would flop on beds, lean against bureau tops, stand in corners, and crowd the

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clubs: "The people on the inside were a scene in themselves. They sort of tolerated the audience, but they really thought they were fools—because they paid to get in" (57).

[98] As Robert Cantwell wrote, "At last Pete Seeger came to Chicago's Orchestra Hall, and spread wide his arms as we sang to him, and it changed me. It was thirty years ago, and I have not changed back" (Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 248).

[99] *Ibid.*, 5.

[100] Quoted in Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 8.

[101] Allen, *Gone to The Country*, 32.

already-messy floors" on evenings at Sarah Lawrence, Carly Simon recalled, when "music was the only thing that mattered."[102] This happened in Cambridge and Berkeley as well as Ann Arbor and Austin and on and on. At Augustana College in Sioux Falls, it was the furnace room, a concrete basement of the women's dorm, that became "The Jabberwock."[103] As one woman remembered, "We just thought it was the greatest thing in the world, and at the time it was…for us."[104]

Folk music was not usually what led young people to college—to the contrary, they usually entered college with a plan soon to be derailed once they fell in with the folk crowd—but something they found once there.[105] (Bonnie Raitt was an exception, choosing to attend Radcliffe so she could be close to the Cambridge folk scene she had heard so much about, although by the time she got there in the late sixties, it was no longer the place to be.[106]) Although folk music had strong anti-academic tendencies, its prevalence on college campuses was clear—so much so that *Hootenanny* was shot at a different college campus every week.[107] Carolyn Hester also noted that the proximity of

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[102] Carly Simon, *Boys in the Trees* (New York: Flatiron Books, 2015), 110-111.

[103] Caryl Jorgensen. Interview with author. July 16, 2015.

[104] *Ibid.*

[105] As Von Schmidt and Rooney explain in the Foreword to *Baby, Let Me Follow You Down*, "Education is the key to the American Dream. You go to grade school, you go to high school, you go to college. *At least.* Then you go on to have a career as a doctor, lawyer, teacher, businessman—something substantial and secure. You become a responsible member of society. So it was that most of us came to the Cambridge/Boston area in pursuit of a diploma. We certainly didn't come to participate in a musical scene. No scene existed" (11).

[106] *Ibid.*, 308-309.

[107] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 151. For more on *Hootenanny*, see Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric*, 102.

NYU to the Village clubs was essential to the success of the folk community there: "NYU students were our first audience, and word quickly spread to other campuses."[108] By 1963, the UCLA Folk Song Club was the largest within the university's Student Recreation Association.[109] This popularity coincided with the expansion of public colleges and universities connected to increased enrollment thanks to the G.I. Bill and Baby Boom and to the growth of research and development programs as part of the military industrial complex. As campuses were growing and enrolling more students, "The students," as Richard Farina wrote of those Dylan played for at Berkeley in 1964, were "seeking a more profound language and finding such language in folk music," and therefore "looked to folk musicians as their spokesmen."[110]

Folk fans came together at festivals to see the most popular names, learn from the most talented performers, and join together in song. As John Cohen described of the Second Annual Folk Festival at the University of Chicago in 1962, "The basic idea of this festival is that traditional folk music has appeal and meaning and that a festival can succeed without commercial drawing artists if the basic idea is strong enough."[111] The draw, however "went beyond concert performances," Elijah Wald explained, "one of the great attractions of Newport was the broader social experiences."[112] "Audiences for the

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[108] Petrus and Cohen, *Folk City*, 267.

[109] Albert Goldberg, "The Folk Music Boom in U.S. --- What's Behind It?" *Los Angeles Times*, May 12, 1963. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *Los Angeles Times*.

[110] Fariña, "Baez and Dylan: A Generation Singing Out," 3.

[111] John Cohen, "Report from Chicago: Part I." *Broadside*. March 1962. Los Angeles edition. Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Library and Archives, Cleveland, Ohio.

[112] Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric*, 119.

Newport festivals consisted, quite naturally," Ellen Sander wrote, "of young people who came to be a part of something."[113] The Newport Folk Festival was the most famous; it was in Newport, Robert Cantwell recalled, that he knew he had "reached the wellsprings of the folk revival." "Guitars and banjos were everywhere. Young people thronged the streets, thousands of us, all studiously and precisely unconventional."[114] By 1963, there were almost 50,000 people at the Newport Folk Festival, running towards the stage in Murray Lerner's *Festival*.[115] Rotolo remembered, "The festival was energizing because the music was so good and the feeling of being on the brink of something big was in the air. Folk music had won the day, moving out to unite discontented kids everywhere who were waiting for a ticket to ride."[116] Like Washington Square Park, Newport also became a locus of criticism towards the young people gathered there. The Newport town council introduced a resolution to ban the festival from its home at Peabody Park, supported by letters about the people and music from angry citizens of Newport: "some of the lyrics advocate the overthrow of all parental, church, and police authority."[117] Peter, Paul, and Mary remembered their experiences at Newport as reminding them "that old barriers

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[113] Sander, *Trips*, 37.

[114] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 17.

[115] Irwin Silber, "Folk Music – 1963," *Sing Out!* Vol. 13, No. 4 (October-November 1963), 2-3: 2; "Folk Festivals Are 'In,'" 24-27:24.

[116] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 232.

[117] Quoted in Bruce Jackson, editorial, *Sing Out*! 14 (January 1964), 2, quoted in Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 302.

could, and were, coming down. They also revealed how meaningful and natural togetherness could be."[118]

The spaces where folk music was played were also often racially integrated, or at least more welcoming than other places in these early years of the modern civil rights movement. Rotolo portrayed folk spaces as racially integrated islands in a sea of segregation. Although there were often complex racial dynamics at work within them, folk communities were unique, and in some cases subversive, for their more progressive stances on race and civil rights. At Newport, Baez recalled, "There were black blues singers with broken-down guitars, and white kids trying to sound like them."[119] Rotolo, a young white woman, devotee of John Lee Hooker, insisted to her friends at Gerde's Folk City that they listen to him play, and getting up her nerve to go talk to him when his set had ended.[120] Baez stipulated in her contract that she would only play for integrated audiences.[121] Photographs of many of these scenes, especially on both coasts, show black and white audiences and suggest that was part of the politics of the folk revival. Martin Luther King, Jr. called Odetta the queen of folk music, and to many, she was, although the title was more often given to Joan Baez (who was half-Mexican, although not

[118] Peter Yarrow, Noel Paul Stookey, and Mary Travers, *Peter, Paul, and Mary: Fifty Years in Music and Life* (Watertown, MA: Imagine, 2015), 50.

[119] Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With*, 71.

[120] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 24-25.

[121] Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With*, 125-126. Of course, as noted previously, this did not necessarily lead to an increase in her audiences.

everyone realized that.)[122] As Judy Collins remembered, "The community of folk music seemed to be one of the only places it was common to be in mixed company."[123] The folk scene in Austin's "Ghetto" was characterized as "apolitical," yet it still posed a major affront to the customs of the day; as Alice Echols wrote, "In their dress, drug use, disregard for materialism, and, perhaps, most of all, their interracialism, they were suggesting transgressive alternatives to other young people."[124] After all, as Grace Elizabeth Hale notes, "At a time when the FBI listed racially integrated gatherings as a sign of Communist influence, the racially mixed folk music scene with its miscegentated history and its live mixing of black and white performance seemed subversive to many Americans."[125]

These spaces and communities were essential to folk music and to the experience of the emerging following of folk fans. From who was there, what was going on, how people dressed to the music played and the content of the lyrics, these spaces facilitated the flourishing of communities—folk circles, audience regulars, and the informal affiliation of young people "in the know" about Folkways records, playing the banjo, and

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[122] On King's title for Odetta, see Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 73. "The first thing that turned me onto folk singing was Odetta," Dylan said. "Right then and there, I went out and traded my electric guitar and amplifier for an acoustical guitar, a flat-top Gibson" (Dylan in Ron Rosenbaum, The Playboy Interview. *Playboy*, March 1978, in *Younger Than That Now*, 115-116). For reactions to and accounts of Odetta, see Grace Slick with Andrea Cagan. *Somebody to Love? A Rock-and-Roll Memoir* (New York: Warner Books, 1998), 57-58; Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 72-73; Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With*; Dylan, *Chronicles*; Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*.

[123] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 143.

[124] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 52; Breines also notes the importance of this interracialism in *Young, White, and Miserable*, 142.

[125] Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders*, 92.

the very best coffeehouses. As one fan remembered, “When you met anyone else who was into it, you were members of the same club, and I still thought of it as a very small club. There may have been a lot of us out there who thought that way, but we didn’t know that. We thought we were special.”[126] Coming together for concerts and congregating in clubs helped young people find each other and become more visible. By being in these sites and spaces, folk fans and especially young people claimed political affiliations, encountered other people dissatisfied with the dominant culture, and found alternative ways of living and thinking through music, for folk music was a mythical space as well as a physical one. This was in many ways a migration of minds, allowing young people in particular to take refuge in ideas and imagine other worlds.

Even those who could not or did not uproot themselves for the outposts of the emerging counterculture participated in intellectual and emotional journeys, looking for something, encountering new ways of living, and occupying alternative spaces in the landscape of little boxes. Beyond the physical sites of cultural rebellion, folk music transported listeners to distant places and allowed them to traverse landscapes of the rural past, or perhaps the imagined future. Folk audiences—performers, devotees, and a growing fan base at the beginning of the 1960s—were drawn to the tradition as well as relevance of the songs they received as folksongs. In an age dominated by advertising and consumerism and defined by the threat of the bomb, these songs and many of the people who sang them offered connections to something that seemed timeless and meaningful. The themes of love, heartbreak, hope, and fear weaved throughout songs of

[126] John Cooke, quoted in Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 12.

sixteenth century England, Appalachia, and the American West resonated with young people in the postwar world, living with the knowledge of nuclear power and the looming threat of the Cold War. Indeed, a folk revival unfolding in Britain reflected similar roots, and shaped American music as well. In an uncertain time, folk music charted connections to a shared humanity throughout time. It also offered an education of sorts about the past, and about rural life for many of the urbanites that embraced folk music. Diane Di Prima wrote of the folk songs she sang along to in Washington Square Park, "They gave to city-bound creatures like myself their first taste of the West, of what those spaces might be like…"[127] The music was imbued with historicity and regionalism; at a time when everything seemed new and homogenous, folk songs sounded distinct—not the same songs on the radio everywhere, but the sound of Kentucky itself, or the songs of the nineteenth century, received as authentic even as they changed from performer to performer.[128] Many folkies embraced and romanticized the characters and lives of the songs they sang—gypsies, vagabonds, cowboys, sharecroppers. Quite literally, many of the young people drawn to folk music were devoted to it "for the love of Barbara Allen," the protagonist of the Scottish ballad sung and recorded by Joan Baez, Simon and Garfunkel, and many more.[129] They loved songs of heartbreak and true love, and even if

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[127] Di Prima, *Recollections*, 113.

[128] As Hajdu explained, "A music that gloried in the unique and the weird, folk challenged conformity and celebrated regionalism during the rise of mass media, national brands, and interstate travel" (*Positively Fourth Street*, 10).

[129] For more on "Barbara Allen," see Dave Marsh, "Barbara Allen," in *The Rose and The Briar: Death, Love and Liberty in the American Ballad*, ed. Sean Wilentz and Griel Marcus (New York: Norton, 2005) 9-17. Note: I disagree with Marsh's harsh take on Emmylou Harris's lovely rendition of the song.

they were written in and about times and places that might seem to be a world away, the stories were not so different from the heartache of teenagers in 1950s America—songs about "the treachery of misplaced affection," Linda Ronstadt remembered.[130] The tragedy of Barbara Allen and Sweet William was supposedly real and, if not, entirely believable, and although it had happened some four hundred years earlier, it felt like it had happened just yesterday. The themes were almost the same as those of the pop music played on the radio: "I'll never grow false to the boy I love" or "I wish to God I'd never seen him," being "slighted" like Barbara Allen, unrequited love, springtime love, true love. That connection, though some mix of nostalgic and self-absorbed, validated many young people's feelings.

These ballads highlighted the romance and heartache of love and youth as well as the emerging youth rebellion, as Annie's (sometimes Ellen) parents would not allow her to be with Willie Moore, and she killed herself, dying for love in the logic of a teenage ballad (and so did Willie Moore in the end; "last heard of him was he's in Montreal where he died of a broken heart").[131] As Elie Siegmeister wrote in her introduction to *The Joan Baez Songbook* in 1964, folk songs made people "feel like new branches on an old tree—and this strengthened us."[132] Baez later remembered, "The melodic, repetitive songs of love forsaken spoke to my young and fragile heart, and I would sometimes get

[130] Linda Ronstadt, *Simple Dreams: A Musical Memoir* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013), 27.

[131] The version of the song Joan Baez recorded uses "Annie." Others, including the version recorded by Kate and Anna McGarrigle, use "Ellen."

[132] Elie Siegmaster, "Folk Music: The Long View," in *The Joan Baez Songbook*, ed. Maynard Solomon (Ryerson Music Publishers, 1965), 13.

so carried away with a song that I wept while trying to learn it."[133] For Judy Collins, it was "The Gypsy Rover" that "stopped [her] in [her] tracks." "It literally made me tremble. I knew at once it was meant for me."[134] The song was old, but to her, it "was as fresh as a new day."[135] The song told "an age-old story that won my teenage heart, grabbed me by the soul, and changed my life forever."[136] Collins wrote as a future performer, but the resonance she expressed seems common. As one woman remembered of hearing Baez sing English and Scottish ballads in Cambridge in the late fifties, "when she sang about lost love, and she sang all these English ballads, it somehow seemed important. So that for young people at that time, who were searching for things to be serious about—that was very powerful."[137] These traditional songs held the power to connect past, present, and future and chart a course of a shared humanity across time and space. A teenage girl said at the time that folk music made her feel "part of the whole story."[138]

Willie Moore and Sweet Annie. Barbara Allen and Sweet William. Mary Hamilton. John Riley. Pretty Saro. Tom Dooley. Gypsy Davy. The woeful Rose (Rose, Rose). The whistling Gypsy Rover. These people existed long ago and far away, but the songs passed down through centuries and across oceans through folk traditions

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[133] Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With*, 59.

[134] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 15.

[135] *Ibid.*, 15.

[136] *Ibid.*, 15.

[137] Quoted in Hadju, *Positively Fourth Street*, 21.

[138] Molly, "Folk Music Catches the Ear of City Teen."

kept them alive and made their lives relevant, tragic, and exciting to young people at the dawn of the 1960s, coming of age in an uncertain world. Tied up as they were in nostalgia and perhaps fantasy at times, songs about these people and others like them were real to young listeners because they could relate to them, exciting because they were often rebellious, romantic because they were usually in love or lovelorn, tragic because someone almost always died, and unique because they sounded different than anything playing on the radio or being played on *American Bandstand*. The music was both relevant and romanticized. For children who had grown up with many advantages, the idea of having none was often wildly romantic (a la Robert Zimmerman, middle class Minnesotan, turned Bob Dylan, troubadour).[139] These were, after all, kids who had grown up watching, and dressing up as, Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier. These young people were some combination of serious and naïve, devoted and yearning, put off by their privilege and yet completely enabled and entitled by it, confident in the future but living with the constant fear of nuclear threat. If there would be a world, it would be theirs.[140]

Folk music and the communities surrounding it reflected all of these themes and contradictions. Old and new. Hopeful and fearful. Young and world-weary. In the words of Collins, music captured young people's "conflicting feelings of disenchantment

[139] Hale calls this "playing the folk" (*A Nation of Outsiders*, 87).

[140] The rise in popularity and commercial success of folk music was enabled in part by the rise of mass consumer culture and the ascendancy of the teenage market, which greatly expanded the record business. Most folk fans, however, were college-aged and young adults, rather than teenagers. See Petrus and Cohen, *Folk City*, 102.

and romantic idealism…."[141] This was the spirit of the times in many ways, reflecting the experience of war, knowledge and fear of the bomb, affluence of the fifties, and the fears and tensions that existed within all of it.[142] As Cynthia Gooding wrote in *Sing Out!*,

> Most of us were initially drawn to folk singing by nebulous and partly indefinable reactions and yearnings. We love the traditional values and the honesty of the songs and of the rural performers. We wish to reassert the usefulness of ancient virtues, to find a link between past peasant cultures and ourselves that would demonstrate that in a bewildered time, there are roots we can touch and evoke in song.[143]

This quote expresses the nostalgia and, at times, naiveté of many folkies who romanticized "rural" and "peasant," not to mention assumed "traditional values" and "ancient virtues" were not only definable, but found in the Great Britain. At the same time, Gooding perfectly expresses the appeal. As American society embraced the new and modern in cars and kitchen appliances, folk devotees celebrated the traditional and timeless. Diane Di Prima wrote, "The music spoke of a vast human tapestry in which war, death, hunger, love and betrayal figured large. And into which our postadolescent drama fit easily: we saw our lives drawn against a larger background and knew for once they would not overwhelm us."[144] So this otherworldliness conveyed through the music was not pure nostalgia but a revelation; listening was not mindless escapism but a meaningful refuge. The embrace of the downtrodden or outcast, both in the music and

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[141] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 5.

[142] As Pete Seeger wrote as preface to the music to "Oh, Mary Don't You Weep," "In times of doubt and fear, when threat of atomic war hangs over our heads, this old spiritual has become almost my favorite song."

[143] Cynthia Gooding, "Concerning Copyrights." *Sing Out!* Vol. 11 No. 1 (Feb.-Mar. 1961), 24.

[144] Di Prima, *Recollections*, 112.

among the audience, was part of the appeal of folk music in this moment; it also suggests part of the reason so many women claimed folk music as a transgressive space. Di Prima called folk music "a music of human frontiers: the actual frontiers of the West … and the frontiers of behavior, human spirit, and an underworld of woman spirit. *O hold your tongue, my sovereign liege* stood beside Wild women don't worry sung by Ida Cox. The songs were peopled with outlaws—whores, gamblers, murderers, political rebels, deserting wives—as well as with semi-outlaws: union leaders, lovers who loved outside their class. The songs were about risk, which we were just learning to love, and love for its own sake."[145] Judy Collins said of "Pretty Polly," the traditional song in which a young woman is murdered, "I have always been attracted to such songs because they speak to the appalling violence that has been perpetrated against women for so long."[146] The connection to this history of cruelty, suffering, and violence and experiences of vulnerability resonated with many women, and while the heartbreaking ballads may not have eased one's pain in any material way, their popularity is illustrative of the same complexities and claims many women encountered and made in the folk revival: something empowering and frustrating, sad and joyful at the same time.[147] Folk songs helped connect women to a shared history and community and, on the cusp of the 1960s,

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[145] *Ibid.*, 112.

[146] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 244.

[147] Special thanks to Heather Booth for her insights on this idea during a Pop Conference panel in 2017.

imagine a different life and perhaps, a different future. Folk music offered a new way to be and, in response, folk fans "made music the center of their lives."[148]

"All the girls seemed mysterious:" Women in The Folk Revival

Looking back, Bob Dylan remembered that when he first saw Joan Baez, playing on television, "I couldn't stop looking at her, didn't want to blink. … It was like she'd come down from another planet."[149] "She was something else," Dylan said, "almost too much to take."[150] Baez was certainly the most famous of the women associated with the folk revival, but as memoirs and contemporary accounts suggest, she was not alone in seeming she'd come down from another planet. The women involved with folk music as audiences and performers were distinct, seemingly new types of women. They didn't want to end up like their mothers, stuck in the suburbs, but they weren't like the single girls Helen Gurley Brown wrote about either. As a man from South Boston who fell into the Cambridge folk scene remembered, "All the girls seemed mysterious."[151]

Together, and with the example of Baez, Mary Travers, and others, the women of the folk world made the non-conformist, countercultural values and aesthetics of the folk revival increasingly accessible and mainstream, challenging and redrawing prevailing gender boundaries as they sat, sang, and listened. Whether moving or traveling to New York, Cambridge, or San Francisco, beginning folk circles, or frequenting coffeehouses and folk clubs, many women claimed alternative spaces through the folk revival and the

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[148] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 45.

[149] Dylan, *Chronicles*, 254.

[150] Bob Dylan interview with Bill Flanagan. March 22, 2017. bobdylan.com

[151] In Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby Let Me Follow You Down*, 56.

musical communities they fostered. In doing so, these women forged a space for themselves and embraced a new political agenda and a new realm of possibilities for their lives and relationships. In the various phases of the folk revival—from gathering in coffeehouses to buying the records that made Peter, Paul, and Mary and Joan Baez chart-toppers and national names—the presence and participation of young women—often college-aged and young adult—was significant in the popularity and growing meaning of this music.[152] For those young women, the music, spaces, and meaning they found and sought to claim for themselves represented challenges to the prevailing social, cultural, and sexual mores, shaping and influencing their own lives and American culture more broadly.

When the folk revival began as a counterculture of the fifties, the women who were a part of this movement were more akin to the women of the Beat generation in their clear embrace of an alternative lifestyle and, albeit incomplete, clear challenge to prevailing gender conventions. Dylan called them "rebel girls," part of his Twin Cities scene in the early sixties, along with "real live poets" and folk singers, "more stimulating and free-spirited" in "a self-ruling world, aloof and detached from the mainstream."[153] These women often hailed from the urban, leftist families that made up the folk base, but as time went on, they were joined—and their communities shaped by—scores of young women and men, often middle-class and often from the suburbs, who embraced the look, lifestyle, and music known as folk, making it mainstream. As Joyce Maynard wryly

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[152] Regarding the age of folk audiences, see Petrus and Cohen, *Folk City*.

[153] Bob Dylan, interview with Bill Flanagan.

recalled of Baez, "She was the champion of nonconformity and so—like thousands of others—we joined masses of her fans."[154] John Cohen wrote of Baez, "Joan has had the education and freedom which comes from an educated and fairly comfortable family background. The fact that she can find a way to revolt from such a family already reveals her as the rebel that she is. This situation is not unique with Joan, but is the dilemma of so much of contemporary American youth."[155] Like Baez, scores of young people of comfortable means, and often with families less adventurous than the Baezs, claimed folk music as a place to be rebellious.

In the 1960s, more and more women found refuge in the ballads, politics, and coffeehouses—the songs and the spaces—of the folk revival. The presence of women in this new cohort of folksingers stood in contrast to previous folk revivals. On Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music*, released in 1952, there were few female voices, and those that were there were usually accompanying rather than leading.[156] This essential collection speaks to the experience of women participants and listeners in encountering music that they loved but that did not necessarily have a significant space within. Part of what was unique about the moment of the early sixties was the ways in which women did claim a voice and presence, and provide an example for the many followers of the folk movement. The very existence of these women as folksingers was inspiring to many, particularly to other young women, and so was their manner. Charting

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[154] In Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 200.

[155] John Cohen, "Joan Baez." *Sing Out!* Vol. 13, No. 3 (Summer 1963), 5-9:6.

[156] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 209.

her path towards music, Bonnie Raitt remembered, "Then I heard Joan Baez and fell in love."[157] These women seemed new, unique, and striking. Dylan saw Baez as different than Peggy Seeger, Jean Ritchie, and Barbara Dane, all established before her.[158] Baez, Susan Douglas remembered, "signaled a new kind of female performer, one who eschewed makeup, satin dresses, and sexual come-ons, and instead played her own guitar, dressed simply, sang social protest songs, and talked oppositional politics between numbers."[159] As Peter and Paul explained it, "Mary was politically a feminist and a remarkable role model for young women. Her directness and the way she interacted with men, as well as the manner in which she stood her ground when being challenged with what she saw as an abuse of authority, was a study in fearlessness and courage."[160] What would it have been like to hear Mary Travers singing "If I had a hammer…" for the first time? To many women, it would have been a revelation: this strong and uniquely beautiful woman belting out a clear message, written by the blacklisted communist Pete Seeger, no less.

The women performers of the folk genre were an integral part of the draw for many members of the audiences, and particularly compelling to many young women. While women in the Beat circles had been "minor characters," as Joyce Johnson put it, women were essential to the folk revival as both audiences and performers and the voices

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[157] In Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby, Let Me Follow You Down*, 308.

[158] Dylan, *Chronicles*, 254.

[159] Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 146.

[160] Yarrow et al, *Peter, Paul, and Mary*, 96.

of Baez and Travers were among the most powerful in the movement.[161] It's worth noting, as David Hadju explains, that "the first hit record by a woman of her generation on the folk idiom—and a best-seller with virtually no advertising, promotion, or 'tour support' (beyond a concert or two each month, mostly at universities)—*Joan Baez* was the talk of the coffeehouses."[162] It was Baez's prominence and popularity that helped grant credence to the young Bob Dylan.[163] Albert Grossman would remark that when people saw a Peter, Paul and Mary concert, all they really saw or heard was Mary.[164] Her voice was clear and arresting, her movements free and graceful, and her hairstyle was "culture-changing."[165] "Mary avoided the dance moves common to so many female performers of the time. Instead, her movements were direct responses to her emotions, and were never choreographed."[166] There was an authenticity not only to the music but to the musicians, and it translated to the audience as well. Baez, Travers, and a host of

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[161] Initially, folkies were closely associated with beatniks, at least in press portrayals. There were many distinctions however, and this was particularly the case among women. Among the Beats, many explain, women were wanted, but not respected. See Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 188; Joyce Johnson, *Minor Characters* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983). (Cohen, 188.) It's also worth noting, however, Johnson's insistence that she and other women were "thrilled" "to be near the convergence of all that was alive in America" (in Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 145). For more on Beat women, see Wini Breines, "The 'Other' Fifties: Beats and Bad Girls," in *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, Joanne Meyerowitz, ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 382-408. Regarding folk women, meanwhile, the media did what it often does and pitted women against one another, as if there could be only one queen of folk, while the community of men was widely accepted. See Robbie Woliver, *Bringing It All Back Home*, 92.

[162] Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 61.

[163] See, among others, Wilentz, *Bob Dylan in America*, 90.

[164] Yarrow et al, *Peter, Paul, and Mary*, 38. For more on Grossman's selection of Mary, see Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric*, 93; 96.

[165] Yarrow et al, *Peter, Paul, and Mary*, 38.

[166] *Ibid.*, 38.

other performers became women the women in their audiences sought to emulate. *Sing Out!* and, soon, college-aged magazines like *Co-ed* featured ads to sell guitars specifically to women, featuring more glamorous versions of Baez playing seriously, with their long hair perfectly straight, sometimes with a handsome man or with a group, signaling that they've found a community and, with their introspective looks, may be finding themselves too.[167]

Although frequently portrayed as the sort of mindless fans *a la Bye, Bye Birdie*, women were not immune to noticing the commercial and mass produced music or joining in the critique that sparked so much interest in folk music. Janis Joplin later remarked of rock and roll in the late fifties and early sixties, "It seemed so shallow, all oop-boop. It had *nothing*."[168] Then, Joplin said of hearing Leadbelly, a bluesman revered among folk circles, that the music was "like a flash. It *mattered* to me."[169] As Maria Muldaur put it, "When rock 'n' roll got diluted with teen ditties, I turned away from it and realized there was a cornucopia of interesting music just waiting to be explored and listened to."[170] Muldaur said she was "magnetized into music," and she was not alone.[171] In many ways, folk music and the folk community spoke to people who felt disconnected, unaffected, like they were misfit or missing something. One woman later wrote to Ronnie Gilbert:

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[167] See especially "Introducing the New York Martin," printed in *Sing Out!* October/November 1961, p. 66.

[168] "Rebirth of the Blues," *Newsweek*, May 26, 1969, 84, quoted in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 21.

[169] *Ibid.*, 21.

[170] Quoted in Kathleen Mackay, *Bob Dylan: Intimate Insights from Friends and Fellow Musicians* (London: Omnibus Press, 2007), 60.

[171] Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby, Let Me Follow You Down*, 183, in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 45.

"I'd felt like an alien in the 50's culture-nothing fit. Then I heard you Weavers and it was like the first chunk of my heart's homeplace, coming into its own!"[172] One woman called the music of the folk revival "the music that touched my insides, gave me strength, taught me lessons; the music I held fast to despite the jeering of peers who were interested in rock and roll, and thought me crazy."[173] Upon hearing Carolyn Hester, Nanci Griffith remembered, "folk music became my first love. Carolyn Hester's voice through my transistor radio gave me wings to fly and a place to be…."[174]

A place to be. For those who sang, played, and performed, especially, these songs allowed them to travel to other places and assume different lives, finding belonging and identity across an airwave or on a record. For those who played and found spaces where they could listen to live music, this sense of connection, often shared through the very act of singing along, represented one of the movement's most unique features. More than any other genre, folk music was participatory. When I asked a woman who listened to and sang folk music in college in the 60s what had drawn her to the music, "the fact that I could be a part of it" was key to her response.[175] Seeing live music and participating in the folk process by singing or playing along and having an opportunity to perform were unique to the folk movement and often unique experiences for many women. Jill

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[172] Letter to Ronnie Gilbert from Jean Mayes, September 20, 1986, Ronnie Gilbert Papers, Box 1 of 4, Fan Mail, 1980s, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Mass.

[173] Letter to Ronnie Gilbert from unclear name, July 20, 1982, Ronnie Gilbert Papers, Box 1 of 4, Fan Mail, 1980s, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Mass.

[174] Nanci Griffith, liner notes to Nanci Griffith, *Other Voices, Other Rooms* (Elektra, 1993).

[175] Caryl Jorgensen. Interview with the author. July 16, 2015. Custer, South Dakota.

Henderson, a folk fan in the Cambridge scene, remembered walking into Café Yana one night and hearing "Twelve Gates to the City" (or "O! What A Beautiful City") and finding herself singing along: "I knew the words to the song—don't ask me how or why—and I started to sing along."[176]

This participatory ideal reflected the movement's political alliances with the New Left, student, civil rights, and peace movements and their premise of inclusivity and the idea that everyone could and must act to affect change.[177] There was a lot of overlap between women who organized and became activists and those who frequented the folk scene; with Baez and Travers as examples, there was an important connection between the spheres of participation. Travers, Susan Douglas remembered, "told us we had a right—even a duty—to express and act on our sense of political outrage."[178] Refusing to appear on programs that blacklisted Pete Seeger, refusing to pay the portion of her income taxes in accordance with defense spending, Baez, John Cohen wrote in 1963, set "a spunky example for her followers."[179] Those followers often stood in solidarity with Baez (and Travers and Odetta and so on) but more importantly with sharecroppers and with SNCC and with those who traveled south on Freedom Rides and to form Freedom Schools; in some cases, they were one and the same. The music "reinforced, quite powerfully, the notion that not just young men, but young women too, needed to speak

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[176] In Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby, Let Me Follow You Down*, 57.

[177] As Echols wrote, "In their egalitarianism, informality, and sense of community, the folksings mirrored the political movements of the sixties" (Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 47).

[178] Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 148.

[179] John Cohen, "Joan Baez." *Sing Out!* Vol. 13, No. 3 (Summer 1963), 5-9:8.

out and to take to the streets if they had to."[180] Even for women who were not activists, aligning oneself with folk music and the politics it clearly proclaimed was an affront to the Cold War consensus, not to mention the prevailing ideas about women, family, and gender roles, and offered a way to be involved with something that seemed important.[181] As Douglas remembered, "the folk revival movement wore its seriousness and self-importance like a black armband. You didn't dance to this music; you read Bertrand Russell to it, or discussed the existence of God, or tried to implement the principles of the Port Huron statement—in other words, did men's work."[182] Compared to the things women were supposed to do and want, folk music, although it often seemed tame, was rebellious, in part for this very reason. Moreover, it was usually more than a hobby or extracurricular—it took up time and money and often signaled a major shift in one's life course. Collins remembered of getting into folk: "I looked for material wherever I could, haunting the record stores with my precious babysitting money in hand, buying records of old sea chanties and English folk songs."[183] Although the folk revival became commercially successful, aligning oneself with folk music remained a way to identify with a counterculture outside of the mainstream. "Why should we buy you a guitar," two parents ask in a 1965 cartoon, "just so you can sing against our way of life?"[184]

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[180] Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 146.

[181] See *Ibid.*, 145.

[182] *Ibid.*, 148-149.

[183] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 35.

[184] Drawing by Donald Reilly, *The New Yorker*, 1965, printed in *Sing Out!* February/March 1966, p.1. Print, in Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Library and Archives, Cleveland, Ohio.

Women's presence in the physical sites and spaces associated with folk music often represented significant trespasses of social boundaries. Malka Marom recalled, growing up in Canada, that she had never been in a club, bar, or coffeehouse alone or at night before attending a folk show: "'Only streetwalkers go out alone late at night,' my mother had drilled into me ever since I reached puberty."[185] Just showing up might be a political act itself. It meant being out at night in many cases, often traveling alone, and being interested and often passionate about music and the folk community—not necessarily the pursuit of a husband or mastery of domesticity. Most empowering, for many women, were the other women they encountered through folk music. Along with the performers, who many women described with a sort of awe and inspiration, finding other women like you or like you wanted to be was also exciting and often affirming. In that way, many recollections recount homosocial tendencies, suggesting in spite of its frustrations, the folk revival could be a "female positive space."[186]

For many women, these spaces were significant in part because they found that gender mattered less, or appeared in different ways, than it did in mainstream life and leisure culture. Coffeehouses and folk communities were often spaces where women could meet and be around different types of men, more apt to be interested in having a conversation with them or, certainly, singing with them.[187] In many ways, singing

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[185] Marom, *Joni Mitchell*, ix.

[186] Thanks to Elaine Lewinnek for discussing these insights.

[187] That's not to say these dynamics were without condescension; it was often a frustrating experience. There was also labor involved. Sander remembered, "There were a half-dozen or so girls with apartments all around the centers of music without whom many young folksingers never would have gotten along.

together could be conducive to this—everyone had their part and was valued. As Peter Yarrow put it,

> Listening to, or singing along with, traditional folk songs allowed us to enter a world that was not only a departure from the superficiality of the times, but also one that symbolized a break with what had been plaguing society: aberrations such as the artificiality of relationships between men and women with prescribed 'proper' ways to converse and treat one another; prescribed ways for men to assert their dominance and for women to 'keep their place'; prescribed ways of maintaining the stratified layering of who was important and who was superior to whom; prescribed ways that assured the continuing oppression of people of color…[188]

The content of the music and the communities formed around it created space for new ideas about gender and relationships, among other things. That's not to say these dynamics were without male condescension, but the gender dynamics—from performers to audience and among the audience itself—were unique and alternative. (The fact that many of these places did not serve alcohol may have heightened the sense of difference and ease. The people who were there were really there for the music—or maybe the company, or maybe the coffee, but in either case, not to drink.[189]) Footage from *Festival!* and recollections from the Cambridge folk scene and others indicate that folk fans often congregated in groups of friends—mixed gender or not—but the tendency towards or the

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Beatific lovelies, young matriarchs of the scene, they'd care for and house the music boys who didn't have rent or supper for themselves" (Sander, *Trips*, 11).

[188] Yarrow in Petrus and Cohen, *Folk City*, 9.

[189] Several of the campus coffeehouses were strictly no-alcohol, and Dylan remembered The Café Wha? in Greenwich Village as "liquorless" (Dylan, *Chronicles*, 9). Buffy Sainte-Marie remembered, "Coffee was the 'drug.' It wasn't alcohol. You didn't see people drinking much. I didn't see many drugs around." See CineFocus-Paquin Pictures, *Buffy Sainte-Marie: A Multimedia Life*, in Blair Stonechild, *Buffy Sainte-Marie: It's My Way* (Fifth House Ltd., 2012), 66. (Although Dylan remembered it differently: "Drugs were always in the folk clubs and in the jazz clubs, but outside of those places I never really saw too many drugs." Lynne Allen, "Interview with an Icon: Bob Dylan Grants an Audience." *Trouser Press*, December 12, 1978, in *Younger Than That Now*, 167.)

pressure to be in a couple was not as strong as it was in the world of *American Bandstand*.

In the most established folk circles, women often had more credence as performers and ran with a crowd more ready to accept different kinds of women. Among newer folk fans, however, the prevailing gender boundaries of the day often persisted and remained steady. Seeking spaces for themselves did not necessarily mean that they found those spaces to be magically welcoming. Rotolo recalled the bartender at Gerde's Folk City advising her, "Girls gotta guard their cherries" as he topped a drink with a maraschino.[190] Her presence there in the first place as a seventeen-year old girl was acceptable only because she was accompanied by an older man. Like their Beatnik predecessors and New Left allies, male "folkies" often failed to extend their revolutionary principles to gender. Rotolo remembered the realization that the freedom granted to Bob Dylan as an artist and a man did not extend to her. "Females were guests, not participants."[191] They were still, as they were in SNCC and SDS, expected to make the coffee. Musicians' girlfriends were "chicks," their wives were "old ladies."[192] Rotolo said of Dylan, "I couldn't stand the idea of being called 'his chick.'"[193] She continued, "Since this was before there was a feminist vocabulary, I had no framework for those feelings yet they were very strong. I couldn't define it, but the word chick made

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[190] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 16.

[191] *Ibid.*, 182.

[192] *Ibid.*, 254. See Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby, Let Me Follow You Down*, 76.

[193] Quoted in Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 115.

me feel as if I weren't a whole being."[194] Taking in art films as part of the Greenwich Village scene, Rotolo recalled, "I identified with the men in the film, not the women, who seemed insignificant in the midst of these wild, funny, and offbeat guys. I wanted to be them but I didn't know how. I envied their freedom."[195] Alix Dobkin remembered:

> I felt equal then, but looking back I could see that there were certain things I took for granted that reflected a lack of male privilege. But at the time I felt very much a peer in the group. I just didn't allow any space for feeling inferior, although there was all this male bonding. I would watch their poker games but I could never play. I used to sit around and bring them coffee. It never occurred to me that I had a right to be playing with them.[196]

This was still a world dominated by men.[197] The majority of editors of *Sing Out!* were men; men owned record shops; men booked clubs. Baez was one of the only women to headline at the Newport Folk Festival in 1960, along with Odetta and Mahalia Jackson. It was assumed that Ian Tyson wrote all of Ian and Sylvia's songs, when Sylvia was in fact a songwriter.[198] "Even for women folksingers, Rotolo recalled, "their positions was not quite the same."[199] Malvina Reynolds, part of an older generation but still an important player in the folk movement when the sixties began, wrote to *Sing Out!* from Berkeley:

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[194] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 254.

[195] *Ibid.*, 208.

[196] Alix Dobkin in Woliver, *Bringing It All Back Home*, 93.

[197] Cohen writes that most of the influential people behind the scenes were "virtually all white men" (*Rainbow Quest*, xi).

[198] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 138.

[199] *Ibid.*, 273.

Dear Editor:
If anyone calls me The Singing Housewife again, I'll scream.
To get out of the kitchen has been my favorite dream.
So I went to college and took a course
In Gaelic and physics and radio (Morse)
And also German and French
And I went to work at a machinists' bench
And I studied the raising of bees
And I learned to ride a horse,
So please!
I look like a housewife, and I can cook.
I can also write songs, and can read a book
And make a cat's cradle out of string,
I can dance a polka that shakes the floor
I can decipher a baseball score,
And I can't sing.
So please don't call me The Singing Housewife any more.[200]

That Reynolds had to make this argument to a progressive publication like *Sing Out!* underscores the complex boundaries she negotiated. Ronnie Gilbert remembered being "the girl" in the Weavers, not quite used to being in charge of her career, playing hostess, even when she was in charge.[201] Gilbert also remembered resenting comments about her dress and appearance, ten years before Joan Baez stepped foot on stage. She remembered an early account of the Weavers in which she was referred to as the "sweaterish girl singer."[202] Barbara Dane was referred to as a housewife when Pete Seeger was of course

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[200] Correspondence, *Sing Out!,* Vol. 9, No. 3 (Winter 1959-1960), 51.

[201] Gilbert, *A Radical Life in Song*, 122. Also see Ronnie Gilbert, interview by Kate Weigand, transcript of video recording, March 10, 2004, Voices of Feminism Oral History Project, Sophia Smith Collection, pp. 17. Gilbert remembered, "I was the girl in the band, and I hated it. I hated that every time we got a review, they would talk about me as the chick. They would always talk about what I wore. They never talked what the men wore. They always talked about what I wore. So it was very, very split, you know."

[202] Gilbert, *A Radical Life in Song*, 67.

referred to as a folksinger.[203] *Sing Out!* couldn't seem to resist noting that the manager's assistant at McCabe's in Santa Monica, then McCabe & Kahn, was attractive.[204] And even John Cohen, in his profile of Baez, referred to her as "a small and beautiful girl."[205]

Girlish, virginal, pure.[206] Singing women were often romanticized, either playing the part or pigeonholed as the fair and tender maidens they sang about. The fact that some of folk's most prominent figures were women of color—Odetta, Buffy St. Marie, and, though not everyone saw her this way, Joan Baez—contributed to this romanticizing.[207] There was a prevalent sense that "folkie women" were "more sensitive and gentle."[208] There could be a tokenism to the women invited on stage and the ways in which they were discussed. As David Dunaway notes, "New York's radical folk music

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[203] "Nightclubs," *Time*, November 24, 1958, http://www.barbaradane.net/TIme.html

[204] Philip Drammond. "Folk Music in Southern California." *Sing Out!* Vol. 10 No. 3 (Oct.-Nov. 1960), 44.

[205] John Cohen, "Joan Baez." *Sing Out!* Vol. 13, No. 3 (Summer 1963), 5-9:5.

[206] As Van Ronk described, "The thing about Baez … was that like almost all the women on that scene, she was still singing in the style of the generation before us. It was a cultural lag: the boys had discovered Dock Boggs and Mississippi John Hurt, and the girls were still listening to Cynthia and Susan Reed. … So whereas the boys were intentionally roughing up their voices, the girls were trying to sound prettier and prettier and more and more virginal. To a great extent, I think that had to do with wanting to make themselves desirable to the boys, and certainly the boys could not have been more encouraging—we were all entranced by that virginal warble. But the result is that the women were still singing in the styles of the 1940s and 1950s, and that gave them a kind of crossover appeal to the people who were listening to Belafonte and the older singers, and to the clean-cut college groups" (Van Ronk with Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougal Street*, 167).

[207] Baez recalled, "I was the only Mexican around and I was basically a loner when I was a kid. I spent a lot of time with myself. It gave me the opportunity to learn about myself and certainly gave me the time to get totally involved in folk music" (in Woliver, *Bringing It All Back Home*, 93). Also see Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders*, 86.

[208] Although as Lori Twersky continued, "folk proved to have its share of bitches" (Lori Twersky, "Devils or Angels? The female teenage audience examined," *Trouser Press*, April 1981, in McDonnell and Powers, *Rock She Wrote*, 179).

community was not as free of sex-role stereotyping as their rhetoric suggested."[209] The gender arrangements of most folk circles also echoed the constellations of the times. As Rotolo put it, "Many women were relegated to the background because that was the way it was, not because men were bad."[210] This could be a vexing situation. Women were being used, to make coffee, to make copies, to look pretty, catching glimpses of new ideas then encountering the same old ones. The folk movement highlighted gender boundaries by continuing to impose them on women and demonstrating that even the most progressive men were slow to embrace the idea of women's liberation, but it also offered a space for women to begin to challenge those boundaries and to claim a different kind of lifestyle and sense of possibilities.

Dress was another realm of politics, and in some ways, folk culture reinforced traditional gender roles, romanticizing and glorifying the maidens fair from the folk songs they all listened to and sang. Baez recalled waiting anxiously for her hair to grow long once she got into folk music in Boston, "like all the fair and tender maidens in all of the long and tragic ballads."[211] At the same time, the style of women in the folk movement represented its own form of subtle politics. It was also a way of disregarding the dominant beauty industry standards; "with their plain clothes, strong voices, and indifference to lipstick," female folk singers made "norms about female behavior and

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[209] David King Dunaway, *How Can I Keep from Singing: Pete Seeger* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), 256.

[210] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 254.

[211] Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With*, 58.

appearance" seem "frivolous and unnecessary."[212] Many folk fans fashioned their identities as part of the countercultural community by how they wore their hair, how they sat, the clothes they chose—conforming to a particular style in one sense but at the same time rejecting the style and gendered expectations of mainstream culture and the hallmarks of postwar femininity.

The look was important. Before Dylan "plugged in" at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965, the audience had first noticed that he didn't "look" right—he was wearing a leather jacket and a flamboyant shirt. A few years earlier, and at a time when performers were highly styled, Nat Hentoff wrote of Dylan and Baez in *The New Yorker*, "Dylan is always dressed informally—the possibility that he will ever be seen in a tie is as remote as the possibility that Miss Baez will perform in an evening gown…."[213] These decisions were an affront to the expectations of the era. As Robert Cantwell described, "Allied to the interest in folk music, moreover, was an intriguing new style of uncertain origin: young women with long, natural hair, peasant skirts, handcrafted sandals and barrettes, young men whose hair had been clipped by their girlfriends, not by the barber, with sideburns or beards, workshirts, handmade leather belts with brass buckles."[214]

The "uncertain origin" had something to do with the movement's emphasis on authenticity and the sense of history reflected in the music. "Clothes were inspired by traditions we assimilated," Ellen Sander remembered, "fieldhand funkiness, nomadism,

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[212] Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 148.

[213] Nat Hentoff, "The Crackin', Shakin', Breakin' Sounds. *The New Yorker*, October 24, 1964, in *Younger Than That Now*, 14.

[214] Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 324. Also see Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders*, 93.

tribalism, and whatever hybrid the mixture produced."[215] As Marqusee explained, "In manner and dress, unadorned plainness was preferred. Anything standardized or mass manufactured was despised."[216] Wearing denim was a way to express solidarity with southern sharecroppers; wearing vintage clothes and handmade jewelry marked identification with rural people and the opportunity folk culture offered for self-fashioning. Indeed, wearing one's hair long, choosing not to wear makeup, going barefoot—this was all part of the politics of folk music too.[217] In the context of the emerging generation gap, it wasn't the music of the folk revival that bothered many parents as much as it was the look.[218] In 1959, on the cusp of the sixties, the *Smith College Weekly*, a newspaper for the women's college, remarked on the declining formality of dress—Bermuda shorts![219] As Rotolo explained, "The early 1960s were still under the auspices of the 1950s dress code. People were expected to dress properly for the occasion. Women and girls did not wear pants—let alone blue jeans—to restaurants, offices, theaters, schools, or the dentist's office. It was unheard of. … The whole point of living in Greenwich Village was that you didn't have to cater to conventions of this sort.

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[215] Sander, *Trips*, 23.

[216] Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger*, 40.

[217] Also see Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 146.

[218] Caryl Jorgensen, interview with the author.

[219] *Smith College Weekly*, Vol. VIII No. 1 (August 1959), Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Mass.

And we didn't."[220] Women in the folk movement, Douglas wrote, helped illustrate "that challenging norms about femininity itself was, in fact, political."[221]

Folkies often wore their hair long and, compared to their 1950s *Cosmo* girl counterparts, largely unstyled, embracing what was often referred to as a "Bohemian" look. Some women wore their hair short, described in Boston's *Record American* as "short-haired women sport[ing] near masculine dress."[222] Travers, as students at Smith College reported in 1962, had "striking blond hair and a tendency to toss it, along with the rest of her, in her own brand of The Twist."[223] "Yes, it was Mary Travers who more than anyone else was responsible for those long, lank and often iron-straight manes of hair favored for the last decade by adolescent girls of all ages," although she does not seem to have done it intentionally: 'Yeah, it was me who started the straight hair, but I didn't know it was me. It was really by accident, that look. I always wanted to have curly hair, but mine is very thin and doesn't set."[224] As *Time* magazine declared in features on so-called "folk-girls," "It is not absolutely essential to have hair hanging to the waist—but it helps. Other aids: no lipstick, flat shoes, a guitar."[225] Flat shoes—imagine that in the world of vacuuming in heels! Eye makeup was in, lipstick and blush

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[220] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin Time*, 220.

[221] Douglas, *Where the Girls Are,* 148.

[222] In Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby Let Me Follow You Down*, 60.

[223] Sally W. Smith and Ellen J. Feuer, "Peter, Paul, Mary Present Revisal," *The Sophian*, Vol. X, No. 35, (April 10, 1962,), 2.

[224] Jan Hodenfield, "Mary Travers: More Than Just A Moment." *New York Post*. February 17, 1973.

[225] In Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 188.

were out.[226] No nylons or stockings either. In contrast to the predominant styles of the 50s, the folk style was described by *Mademoiselle*: "a girl might go in for wrought-iron jewelry or long straight hair or a Mexican cotton skirt or handsome hand-crafted leather sandals…"[227] Baez remembered her attire from the Newport Folk Festival: "wearing knit tops from Latin America or India, nondescript skirts or blue jeans, dangling earrings like my heroine, Odetta, and sandals with thongs that laced up to just below the knee."[228]

Like Baez styled herself in part after Odetta, many of her fans styled themselves after her. After falling in love with Baez, Bonnie Raitt remembered, "I wanted to pierce my ears and grow thin cheekbones."[229] A Boston radio journalist remembered the feeling of being surrounded by Joan Baezs at the Newport Folk Festival in 1963, as women in the audience had modeled their appearances on Baez's.[230] In *Home Fires*, Donald Katz recounts that in 1962, fifteen-year-old Lorraine Gordon, in addition to traveling from Long Island to Greenwich Village to hear music in Washington Square, emulated Joan Baez in both appearance and guitar style.[231] Baez and others became unlikely style icons for many women drawn to folk music, and then others as their influence spread through the world of sixties style. As one folk fan interviewed in Festival explains, some women may have dressed that way during the workweek, but at Newport they could dress how

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[226] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin Time*, 152.

[227] Montgomery, "Folk Furor," 99, quoted in Cantwell, *When We Were Good*, 328.

[228] Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With*, 70-71.

[229] Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby Let Me Follow You Down*, 308.

[230] Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 166.

[231] In Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 157.

they pleased—"when we get away," she said, "we really get away."[232] They were still conforming to *a* style, just not *the* style that appeared pervasive and felt oppressive. They were also influential—annual sales of dungarees increased nearly fifty percent in 1961, and dress shoe sales reached a historic low.[233] It seems to have been personally meaningful as well. As Wini Breines remembered of her garb traveling from Long Island to Washington Square Park, "I imitated a style of dress that identified me with the opposition. … My rebellion was only style, not yet anything more dangerous, but it was important to my sense of self."[234] Folksinger Barbara Dane said of Baez: "She seemed like somebody who was absolutely free and in charge of herself, even though she was young. With the bare feet and the straight hair, she looked like this creature who could do her own thing."[235] Being barefoot was an essential part of descriptions of Baez in the early 1960s.[236] Baez called herself a "rebellious, barefoot, antiestablishment young girl."[237]

Photographs of hootenannys and folk festivals depict many women displaying themselves casually—often barefoot, sometimes cross-legged, intent on listening.

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[232] *Festival*, Murray Lerner (Patchke Productions, 1967). As Hale notes, a 1959 *Mademoiselle* article made fun of a woman singing in Washington Square Park who wore a false hair piece to make her appear long but worked during the week as a fashion copy editor (See Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders*, 95). Also see Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric*, 63, regarding the weekend fans.

[233] Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 116.

[234] Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 137.

[235] Quoted in Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 61-62.

[236] Von Schmidt and Rooney, *Baby Let Me Follow You Down*, 42.

[237] Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With*, 91. (confirm #)

Debbie Green, who befriended Baez when they were students together at Boston University, remembered that although she thought Baez "looked kinda straight" when she first saw her, the fact that she was sitting on the floor "communicated" something to Green.[238] As a burgeoning bohemian at the University of Texas in the early sixties, friends remembered Janis Joplin's clothes, hair, and lack of makeup, but also the way she acted; her "refusal to act like a lady" was "'positively revolutionary,'" one remarked.[239] It was so noticeable at the time that the *Daily Texan* ran an article on her, long before her music career and rise to fame, titled "She Dares to Be Different!"[240] This was an early message of an important truth of the sixties.

The people who participated in the folk revival—both men and women—trespassed boundaries and expectations in their politics, their plans, the values they embraced, the way they dressed. In many ways, the look translated to the feel and behavior of these women, including their relationships with men. This was exemplified by images—photographs as well as imaginations—of some of the folk movement's leading characters as well as the people who populated folk songs. As Hajdu described, "Baez and Dylan offered an image of courtship that was notably different from the dream dates at beaches and amusement parks in the teen movies that summer. … Joan and Bob showed that social and political ideas could stimulate and bring people of their generation

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[238] Rooney and Von Schmidt, *Baby Let Me Follow You Down*, 18.

[239] Echols interview with Ramsey Wiggins, quoted in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 41.

[240] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 41. See Pat Sharpe, "She Dares to Be Different!" *Summer Texan*, July 27, 1962.

together as well as (or at least in addition to) swimsuits and thrill rides."[241] Before the brief romance of the king and queen of the folk (and before the king decidedly threw off his crown), Dylan and Suze Rotolo were etched into the dreams and memories of the millions of young people who saw their picture on the cover of *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*. Oh to be freewheelin' with someone like Bob Dylan or the woman beside him on the album—side by side, smiling, somehow conveying a sense of friendship as well as love, not to mention walking through the New York streets so many dreamed of visiting. [image of cover] As Collins said of the Don Hunstein photo shoot for the album, "The fact that they were in love shows everywhere in that picture."[242]

This ideal was reflected in many of the lyrics written during this period by songwriters that were part of the folk genre, including Eric Anderson, Tom Paxton, John Sebastian, and others. In "Darling Be Home Soon," recorded by the Lovin' Spoonful, Sebastian portrays a companionable relationship akin to that depicted on the cover of *The Freewheelin'*.

> Come and talk of all the things we did today
> Here and laugh about our funny little ways…
> It's not just these few hours
> But I've been waiting since I toddled
> For the great relief of having you to talk to…
> And now a quarter of my life has almost passed
> I think I've come to see myself at last
> And I see that the time spent confused
> Was the time that I spent without you
> And I feel myself in bloom.[243]

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[241] Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 168.

[242] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 135. See also Jane and Michael Stern's discussion of the cover in *Sixties People* (New York: Knopf, 1990), 104.

[243] John Sebastian, "Darling Be Home Soon," Alley Music Corp. and Trio Music Company, Inc., 1967.

Donovan's lyric in "Catch the Wind," "In the chilly hours and minutes of uncertainty / I long to be in the warm hold of your loving mind," alluded to some form of male vulnerability and brought a woman's mind into the first verse of a love song.[244] These notions were somewhat new in the mainstream and signaled a new set of possibilities for men and women.

For more and more people as the sixties went on, folk music became something to be studied, something to obsess over, something to love. It was important to be in the know—to memorize the lyrics, and be on the cutting edge; an ad in *Sing Out!* admonished readers, "Discover Jerry Jeff Walker before everyone else does."[245] In spite of its critiques of consumerism, the folk revival spawned a collectors culture. Folk music and the communities forged around it were peripheral, and increasingly popular in part for that very reason. As Susan Montgomery noted in a *Mademoiselle* story on the folk trend, "Students choose these records because, ironically, they think they are uncommercial. They like folk music because the whole country isn't signing it…."[246] Of course, it was the rejection of the commercial market that spawned a new, and quite successful, market for folk music, in which this tension between popular and peripheral would go on. While some folksingers approached their music as gospel to be shared, leading group singing, teaching songs, and encouraging their audiences to "rise up

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[244] Donovan, "Catch the Wind" (Pye Records, 1965).

[245] In *Sing Out!* Vol. 18, No. 4 (October-November 1968).

[246] Montgomery, "The Folk Furor," 118, quoted in Cantwell, 332.

singing," there was continuous concern and debate about the place of commercialism in music, and for folk music more particularly.[247] One writer called Baez's *Time* cover "the kiss of death" and maligned commercial folk music with the "instant culture" of the era.[248]

But the folk revival was a musical as well as commercial revival; indeed, the growing popularity and commercial success of folk music was what made the moment unique. Peter, Paul, and Mary's recording of "Blowin' in the Wind" reached number two on the charts, a remarkable feat for a "folk song."[249] As Collins remembered, "The music we loved and sang in those smoky little clubs all over the country was becoming the pop music of an entire generation."[250] It also meant that the counterculture was edging in on the culture, and that had everything to do with the scores of people who flocked to folk audiences and bought folk music. The bits and pieces of the "folk" started to appear in

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[247] There was an irony, of course, that the folk ethos of sharing and participating also ran into territorial squabbles. Who was most authentic? Who was too commercial? Who could sing what and how should they sing it? Songs that really belonged to everyone sometimes became the purview of only a few. This reflected the growing popularity of folk music; it might not have mattered so much to Dave Van Ronk that Dylan famously "borrowed" his interpretation of "House of the Rising Sun" if Dylan had not recorded it, on Columbia, and became famous soon thereafter. Joni Mitchell explained, "The territorial thing in the folk scene was part of why I began to write my own songs" (Malka, *Joni Mitchell*, 18). (Although she might have been able to identify with Van Ronk given Judy Collins' success with her "Both Sides Now"). Artists like Mitchell and Dylan also began writing more and more of their own songs—were those folk songs? Dylan was crowned king of folk although he wrote much of his own music (and had little interest in such a label). But in addition to adopting folk styles, Dylan first wrote in the immediate context of the time with folk styles. "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll," "The Ballad of Hollis Brown," and "North Country Blues," tell human stories and can be easily-received as folk songs in the storytelling tradition of "Mary Hamilton," "Barbara Allen," and "Willie Moore."

[248] Dan Armstrong, "'Commercial' Folksongs – Product of 'Instant Culture.'" *Sing Out!* Vol. 13, No. 1 (February-March 1963), 20-21.

[249] Greil Marcus, *Like A Rolling Stone: Bob Dylan at the Crossroads* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005), 39n.

[250] Collins, *Sweet Judy Blue Eyes*, 137.

the wider cultural landscape. Guitar sales were on the rise. Fashions changed. President Johnson invoked the folk anthem "We Shall Overcome" in his speech on civil rights.

While they sang along in Washington Square Park and at the hoot nights and song circles formed across the country, the emergence of the folk star—the royal treatment surrounding Baez, for instance—changed the participatory element of folk and created an audience of ardent and devoted listeners.[251] Concerts, of course, were more expensive than Hoots, which were often free, or maybe fifty cents per person (although Rotolo remembered her group of young friends perfecting sneaking into these shows so well that they stopped buying tickets).[252] Folk audiences changed as the brand became more popular and the audiences became larger in the early sixties.

The folk revival began as a countercultural movement but grew increasingly mainstream by mid-60s, as did the style and politics it promoted.[253] When Dylan

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[251] Although these gatherings continue to this day, the growing numbers of folkies (to borrow a term from contemporary coverage) changed part of the dynamic and made concerts, where the distinction between performer and audience was clearer, more common. The expectation among folk devotees was that several people would share songs and play, often informally, and that no one person would necessarily lead and certainly not "headline." As John Cohen described the Hoots at Yale, "The idea was seldom for everybody to sing along—more it was to encourage each person to be able to sing and play for himself and not to be afraid to perform for everybody else" (Cohen, quoted in Allen, *Gone to The Country*, 32). Baez and Dylan, however, were headliners, names in lights, people other people came to see. As folk music gained popularity, folksingers became recording artists, with products to sell, and modest celebrities with followings and fan bases. By the time folk music was really popular, the growing audience of listeners was more likely to know the songs on the radio—Peter, Paul, and Mary singing Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind," for instance—than they were the traditional ballads that had formed the foundation for the movement. With an audience came other considerations. While some folk musicians were also folklorists, often academically trained, who would preface their music with lengthy explanations, larger audiences were not as keen on this practice, and influenced this part of the folk style by discouraging it (see Van Ronk with Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougal Street*, 45.

[252] Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time*, 49-50.

[253] The political affiliations of the music also grew more complicated. As Dylan said the next year, "Me, I don't want to write for people anymore—you know, be a spokesman. … I'm not part of no movement….I just can't make it with any organization…" (Hentoff, "The Cracklin', Shakin', Breakin', Sounds" in Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger*, 103).

famously plugged in at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965, he signaled a shift in the folk world that mirrored those occurring in the movement's political affiliates—the Old and New Lefts had officially parted ways as the politics of the Popular Front became less and less relevant to young people (and the humanism articulated by so many young students struck their union forbearers as self-indulgent). In the same year, SNCC expelled its white members and adopted a new slogan: black power. The participatory ideal of the New Left and of folk musicians, and in particular those beginning to look inside themselves rather than at the chaotic world around them (led by Dylan) won the day. The values of this growing community would come to shape the music and counterculture still to come in the decade as well as its audience and the ideas about gender enacted within it. The folk world fractured, but its legacy impacted that entity we call the sixties, especially in people coming together for seeing, hearing, and singing along to music. This spoke to the growing meaning of music as well as the opportunities for expression that came from singing along or from trying out a new song, often liberating for women and men alike, and the power of gathering as a countercultural community becoming increasingly visible. As Sander wrote, "It was the first real rush of power since mobbing *Love Me Tender*."[254] Indeed, one of the significant ways of seeing folk as a fandom is recognizing how much it mattered to people and the ways in which they were angry when folk changed. While some girls were still clamoring to get close to Dylan, in 1965, a girl stormed the stage with scissors, angry at Dylan and ready to either hurt him or cut the

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[254] Sander, *Trips*, 34.

cord.[255] Judy Landers recorded the "disappointment" in her Newport Folk Festival scrapbook, handwritten with snapshots of Dylan.[256] There were folk fans, and they weren't just urban Bohemians but they were teenagers and college kids and suburban middle class kids who liked what they heard and saw and felt and used the framework of fandom to express it.

Plenty of people had grown up immersed in this world of folk music and left-wing politics, but more and more chose it for themselves and shaped it in turn. What does it tell us that so many young people were drawn to this world and carved lives for themselves within it? Between the context of the times and the content and aesthetic of the music, folk music resonated with many young people. The musical and cultural revival of folk music was made possible in part by the emergence of mass media: the development of the teenage market, the production and popularity of records, the connections to Britain and the folk revival there, the invention of television, the all important transistor radio. But it also speaks to the real experiences and strivings of large communities of young people and the power of the folk songs they listened to and sang together.[257] In this chapter I argue that the popularity of folk music and the expressions of fandom surrounding it reflect the quest for authenticity, the participatory ethos of the

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[255] Robbie Robertson describes the violent response in his memoir. See Robbie Robertson, *Testimony* (New York: Crown Archetype, 2016), 231, and others. For more on fans at the Newport Folk Festival, see Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric*, 1; 128; 215.

[256] See Wald, *Dylan Goes Electric*, photo center.

[257] On media, see B.A. Botkin, "The Folk Song Revival: Cult or Culture." *Sing Out!* Vol. 15, No. 1 (March 1965), 30-32:31. It's worth noting of course that the folk revival may have owed even more thanks to "mom and pops" enterprises; Weissman outlines the infrastructures that supported folk scenes: music stores with old and new instruments, venues with live acoustic music, music teachers, DJs and promoters, college campuses (Weissman, *Which Side Are You On?,* 132.

era, and the countercultural rejections of mainstream culture and embrace of leftist politics in both activism and lifestyle. Moreover, given the period's prevailing gender roles, women's participation in this world suggests both a yearning for a different set of politics, spaces, and people and an active embrace of new ideas about love, relationships, looks, and, if only as inklings, their roles and possibilities as women. While we can't know just how many women enmeshed themselves in this world, the fact that women were visible within it and that the music resonated among more and more women is significant. Although many contemporary explorations of the folk revival found in the mainstream media were somewhat glib and dismissive, assuming a tone they frequently did where youth culture was concerned, ignoring the earnestness of many of these folk fans does them a disservice.[258] Even when they were following a fad, women in the folk revival also found and shaped real differences, not only of music but also where politics and culture were concerned. Folk music was a catalyst for much of the revolutionary change of the 1960s.[259] The folk revival influenced the ways people dressed, sat, and sung for the rest of the decade, not to mention the successes of the civil rights movement, the origins of the movement against the Vietnam War, and, because of women who claimed spaces, wore their hair long, and sung out, the movement for women's liberation.

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[258] Susan Montgomery was accused of this in her *Mademoiselle* article, "The Folk Furor." See Cohen, *Rainbow Quest*, 168, for more on this.

[259] Fifty years later, Jackson Browne said, "That is what made the 60s happen. The 60s happened because all kinds of college kids started getting in their two-seater MGs with their Ray Bans and driving to the Newport Folk Festival" In *Troubadours: The Rise of the Singer-Songwriter* (Hear Music, 2011).

Chapter Three

She Loves You YEAH! YEAH! YEAH!
Feeling, Screaming, and Claiming Space in Beatlemania

The million children
the thousand worlds
bounce in their seats, bash
each other's sides, press
legs together nervous
Scream again & claphand
become one Animal
in the New World Auditorium
--hands waving myriad
snakes of thought
screetch beyond hearing
~ Allen Ginsberg, "Portland Coliseum," 1965

A Hard Day's Night, the Beatles' 1964 film, shows the band being chased through train stations, streets, and hotels, running from fans, tripping over each other, climbing walls, jumping on a newspaper truck, Paul disguised with a mustache, hoping to evade the screaming girls following the Beatles at every turn. "The place is surging with girls," the bands' manager lamentingly warns trying to shepard the band through the crowds.[1] The dizzying epic of Beatles life depicted in the film was fictionalized, but not much. Actually, in spite of the crowd shots and chase scenes, the film only partially conveyed the hurricane that Beatlemania really was.

The Beatles and screaming young women are commonly connected images, understood together as "Beatlemania." In the presence of, or sometimes at the very thought of, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr, young women wept, screamed, and fainted, creating chaos in concert venues, airports, and cities,

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Epigraph: Allen Ginsberg, "Portland Coliseum," in *In My Life: Encounters with the Beatles*, ed. Robert Cording, Shelli Jankowski-Smith, E.J. Miller Laino (New York: Fromm International, 1998), 17-18.

[1] *A Hard Day's Night* (1964), dir. Richard Lester (Burbank: Buena Vista, DVD ed. 2002).

and disrupting performances, traffic, and general decorum. By sheer scale, Beatlemania was and is the epochal event of fandom. Bobby-soxers swooned for Sinatra, fans fainted for Elvis, and teen girl fandom had already been dramatized, somewhat mockingly, in *Bye, Bye Birdie*, but contemporary accounts of Beatlemania—from Ed Sullivan, fascinated journalists, and legions of perplexed parents—reflected a sense of newness and strangeness about fans'—and almost exclusively young women's—response to the Beatles.[2]

These fans, most of them young women born after 1945, drove and shaped and defined Beatlemania.[3] They listened to records and waited for Beatles songs to be played on the radio, formed fan clubs, studied the Beatles' music and lives, adopted, to varying degrees, the bands' attitudes and interests, camped out to buy new records and concert tickets, collected memorabilia, defended the band to their families, teachers, local newspapers (and perhaps a few stubborn friends), occupied city streets, stormed airports and train stations, screamed and shouted, fought with police officers, and claimed concert venues as sites of expression, release, and joy.

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[2] Nick Bromell called Beatlemania "an extraordinary, indeed in the twentieth-century United States a *singular* phenomenon." Nicholas Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows: Rock and Psychedelics in the 1960s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 24. Also see Jonathan Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love: The Beatles, Britain, and America* (New York: Harmony Books, 2007), 179-181.

[3] The Beatles affected just about everyone, but most of the screaming girls who made Beatlemania were born after 1945 and, the youngest of them, as late as 1960. They were a tad younger than the Beatles, and they were the ultimate Boomers. Candy Leonard helps define this demographic in *Beatleness: How The Beatles and Their Fans Remade The World* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2014). As Leonard notes, "There were about fifty million young people in the Beatles' potential core fan base when they came to America—more potential fans than any previous performers could possibly have had in their lifetimes" (1).

"Even in notoriously snooty Greenwich Village," Alice Echols wrote, "folk music veterans were intrigued."[4] Suze Rotolo loved John Lee Hooker and Odetta, but she also loved the Beatles, and hung a poster of them in her Greenwich Village apartment. "I just adore them," Joan Baez wrote of the Beatles in a letter to her parents in 1964.[5] When the Beatles asked to meet Baez when the two acts met at Red Rocks, "I just instantly went to jelly," Baez remembered.[6] After Janis Ian saw *A Hard Day's Night*, she and her friends sang Beatles songs all the way home, "just as we would have sung folk songs, and we all started learning them next day on the guitar…."[7] The cautious stalwarts of authenticity in the folk revival may have been intrigued by, and some downright angry about, the Beatles, but much of the folk audience couldn't help but join the millions of people around the world, many of them women, most of them young, in being far more than intrigued when it came to the Beatles: they were fans, and together they made fandom mean something new.

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[4] Alice Echols, *Shaky Ground: The Sixties and Its Aftershocks* (New York: Columbia, 2002), 25. Greil Marcus also remembered going to Saint Michael's Alley, the "one outpost of bohemianism" in Palo Alto "where they played only folk music." The week after the Beatles were on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, however, they were playing *Meet the Beatles.* See Greil Marcus, in *The Beatles Are Here! 50 Years After the Band Arrived in America, Writers, Musicians, and Other Fans Remember*, ed. Penelope Rowlands (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2014), 8-9.

[5] Joan Baez, *And A Voice to Sing With: A Memoir* (New York: Penguin, 1987), 106. Mary Travers also remembered loving the Beatles, but, she said, "I couldn't stand the screaming." See Robbie Woliver, *Bringing It All Back Home: 25 Years of American Music at Folk City* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 131.

[6] Kurt Loder, *Rolling Stone* Interview with Joan Baez (1983) in *The Rolling Stone Interviews: The 1980s*, ed. Sid Holt (San Francisco, Rolling Stone, 1989), 89.

[7] Janis Ian, in *The Beatles Are Here!: 50 Years After the Band Arrived in America, Writers, Musicians, and Other Fans Remember*, ed. Penelope Rowlands, (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2014), 126.

This fandom was an act of love and devotion, and also a "rehearsal for rebellion."[8] In the context of changing ideas about gender and sexuality in the 1960s, the Beatles, Beatlemania, and especially Beatles fans played important roles in challenging gender conventions, loosening sexual confines, and contributing to the broader cultural transformations of the 1960s. "If I were to try to summarize the admonition to young women of my generation," Helen Swick Perry wrote, "it would be 'Control yourself.'"[9] But the young women who loved the Beatles were out of control. That loss of control, both of oneself and of society, held important implications for American women and American culture. The experience of Beatlemania represented a significant moment in the lives of many American women. When this experience was lived in public, Beatlemania became a powerful current in American culture as women violated highly gendered codes of public behavior and claimed public spaces for themselves and their fellow fans, challenging gender conventions by displaying intense emotion—often sexually-charged—in an unprecedentedly public way. Thus the experience of Beatlemania and of being a Beatles fan, both in its personal intensity and expression of fandom as a collective force, was a meaningful and generative historical development for women and for American culture.

While many young men were also devoted Beatles fans, and while the Beatles certainly held important roles in their lives and development in the 1960s, Beatlemania was a particularly gendered term to identify the reactions of female Beatles fans. In its

[8] See Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994).

[9] Helen Swick Perry, *The Human Be-In* (London: Penguin, 1970), 198. Perry was older than most Beatles fans, but still expresses a widely shared admonition of the era.

most public form, Beatlemania was about women, more than men, and more than the Beatles. Though for most fans Beatlemania was about the Beatles, to many observers Beatlemania seemed to be about crazed young women. The images of those women—gathered together, screaming and shouting, sometimes up against police barricades—made up an important part of the visual culture of the 1960s, seen on streets and transmitted through newspapers and magazines and on television sets. While these women were often characterized as acting hysterical on account of their gender, I argue they were really trespassing the boundaries of their gender by rejecting its confines and expectations about public behavior and sexuality. The screams and shouts of fans, their confrontations with police officers and charges towards the stage, their sheer love and passion for the Beatles violated codes of public behavior and helped redraw ideas about gender, as well as fandom itself. Beatlemania was not explicitly political, but it was radical in its force and its challenge to established order and expectations, especially surrounding gender, and marked an important cultural development in its protracted neglect for public decorum and the intensity of emotion felt and displayed by women.

All My Loving

Beatlemania began in Britain, where the Beatles were born, British fans made them successful, and the British press coined the term to describe the crowds and the screams surrounding the Beatles. When the band came to the United States in February 1964, the fans and the media alike had a model for the Beatles' arrival yet still characterized it as an "invasion," the four young men as "conquering" America. The Beatles "took" America during a period when it was unusual for British acts to make it in

the United States, adding a new dimension to the band's success and elevating their global popularity. But they didn't do it alone, and even with extensive marketing and promotion, both the band and the industry had doubts about the band's success in America; it was dependent upon the fans—fans made the Beatles successful in the United States, fans made Beatlemania. Cynthia Lennon remarked of the Beatles' first American tour, "It was Beatlemania all over again, but bigger, louder and wilder."[10] "What do you think of America?" a reporter asked at the Beatles' first press conference in the United States; "They all seem out of their minds," Ringo replied.[11] The Beatles' unprecedented success in the United States resonated on multiple levels, but it was remarkable in large part due to the intense reactions of millions of young women.

Photographs, footage, and individual recollections and memoirs suggest that this "mania" was grounded in many women's intense personal experiences and feelings of connection to the Beatles, forged in bedrooms, staring at Beatles posters and pictures pasted all over the walls and even ceilings while listening to records and waiting anxiously for the Beatles to be played on the radio.[12] Although the seriousness of fans' appreciation was doubted by many critics—they were "just girls" after all, and the

[10] Cynthia Lennon, *John* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2005), 132.

[11] Martin Goldsmith, *The Beatles Come to America* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2004), 134.

[12] *The Beatles Anthology* (Apple, 1995) series provides a wealth of footage of Beatlemania in full force. For materials for the peak years of Beatlemania, see volumes 3-5, as well as the conclusion of touring in volume 6. The first American tour is covered in volume 3, including footage of *The Ed Sullivan Show* appearances and several live appearances, including the Washington Coliseum concert. This remarkable documentary project provides the screams and visual images necessary to fully grasp the tenor of Beatlemania and witness the reactions of young women. More recently, Ron Howard's *Eight Days A Week: The Touring Years* (Los Angeles: Capitol Records, 2016) has brought new footage to light.

Beatles, presumably, weren't very good—Beatlemania began with music, and history would prove that those girls were onto something.

Fans were formed first across the airwaves, listening to the radio in their bedrooms, waiting for a Beatles song to come on, sometimes all night, girls remembered, with their transistor radios tucked under the covers. Penelope Rowlands remembered, "I can still recall how electrified—shocked!—I felt by the first [Beatles song] I ever heard; from its thrilling opening drum roll to its curious last chord, 'She Loves You' took me somewhere else."[13] Like the music of the folk revival, the Beatles' music struck many fans as new, exciting, and, although not by folk standards, "authentic." There was something different about it, and it could take you to other places and turn you on to new ways of thinking, feeling, and being. As one woman said of *Beatles '65*: "It melted me."[14] Another called "She Loves You" "pure joy on a piece of plastic."[15] "I always tried to listen to the Beatles by myself," one fan remembered, echoing the deeply personal, interior experience and connection many fans forged.[16] Every time she heard "Do You Want to Know a Secret," one fan remembered, "I felt my body dissolving into a puddle on the floor."[17]

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[13] Penelope Rowlands, Introduction, *The Beatles Are Here*, xvi.

[14] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 75. Female, b. 1956. I have included Leonard's notation on interview subjects to provide more information when quoting from them here.

[15] *Ibid.*, 265. Female, b. 1954.

[16] Verlyn Klinkenborg, "Good Bye, Mitzi Gaynor," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 39.

[17] Pat Kinzer Mancuso, *Do You Want to Know a Secret?: The Story of the Official George Harrison Fan Club* (West Conshohocken, PA: Infinity Publishing, 2013), 6.

The Beatles were sometimes fans' first taste of their own music, not their parents.[18] They were also, as the story goes, a breath of fresh air in a world of popular music dominated by bubblegum and American Bandstand. Amanda Vaill remembered, "When my classmates listened in rapture to Frankie Valli and Bobby Vinton, I gritted my teeth; I hated these teen heartthrobs' amped-up accompaniment and melismatic vocalizing."[19] The Beatles, though, she liked. Cathy McCoy-Morgan recalls the feeling that "nothing was going on" when she was a kid and putting up with "crappy music like Paul Anka." "Then the Beatles came and it was something so new, and so fresh and so wonderful."[20]

From their earliest performances in Liverpool and Hamburg, something about the Beatles resonated with their audience. For one, it's worth noting, the Beatles were good. When they debuted in America, they had years of playing and performing together under their belts and they loved a wide variety of music and were fans themselves.[21] As Robert Christgau wrote, "Clearly, the genius of the Beatles – whatever it is – preceded the hype. There was something there that turned on all those kids who hung around The Cave in Liverpool."[22] In 1961, an article in Liverpool's *Mersey Beat* called the band "the stuff

[18] Joe Queenan, "Tools of Satan, Liverpool Division," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 4.

[19] Amanda Vail, "We Saw Them Standing There," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 10.

[20] Garry Berman, ed. *"We're Going to See the Beatles!": An Oral History of Beatlemania As Told by the Fans Who Were There* (Santa Monica, CA: Santa Monica Press, 2008), 51.

[21] Thanks to Greil Marcus and Pop Con 2016.

[22] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Robert Christgau, "Defending the Beatles." *Cheetah*, Vol. 1, No. 8 (May 1968), 71. MC 646, folder 6.8. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

that screams were made of."[23] When Jann Wenner asked Lennon why the Beatles had made it so very, very big, he responded, "Because we were performers, and what we generated was fantastic."[24]

This attraction was about both words and music. The Beatles and the rock and roll music, as well as British beat, they represented, shared roots with the music of the folk revival: the British Isles, the English ballad, the Skiffle craze, combined with the songs of enslaved people in the American South, the music made at Parchman Farm, making its way north, to Chicago, giving birth to the blues, creating rock and roll, reaching Elvis and Sam Phillips, traveling back to Liverpool, where John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr were born and grew up in wartime Britain. Along Albert Dock, Liverpool sailors brought back highly sought after and prized American records, often recorded by black musicians or, if not, influenced by their musical traditions. The four Beatles listened to this music under the blue suburban skies and along the Mersey, and picked up guitars and wrote songs, spurred by other musicians, many of whom were singing songs written in and about the American South and by African Americans. The four young men from Liverpool loved rock and roll music, often written and performed by black men, and women (the Beatles especially loved the Shirelles, the Marvelettes, and other girl groups), and they played that music back to American teenagers. In America, many of the songs the Beatles performed would have been labeled "race music" had it been played by people less white and less

[23] Quoted in Andre Millard, *Beatlemania: Technology, Business, and Teen Culture in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 31.

[24] Jann S. Wenner, "John Lennon: The Rolling Stone Interview," January 1971, in *20 Years of Rolling Stone: What A Long Strange Trip It's Been*, ed. Jann Wenner (New York: Friendly Press, 1987), 101.

English than Lennon, McCartney, Harrison, and Starr, for even as Elvis had trespassed the racial boundaries permeating the American music industry, the black influences on his music were not lost on many white Americans, and especially on white American parents. However to hear John Lennon sing about taking his love "on over cross the tracks" to hear a "wailin' sax" and "rockin' band," "blowin' like a hurricane," or about "drinkin' homebrew from a wooden cup," and the "folks getting' all shook up," was different than hearing Chuck Berry sing it. Although they were heavily influenced by American music and culture, the Beatles existed outside of the paradigm of American race relations and racial violence. It's worth noting that in the same way that the Beatles had no qualms about listening to what might have been called a race record in the United States, the vast majority of Americans did not understand or care about the class distinctions the Beatles carried in England, where their Liverpool accents proclaimed their working-class status; in America, they were just English accents and made them sound somewhat sophisticated. They had their own boundaries to cross when it came to playing the music they liked; McCartney's father told his son and John Lennon that they needed to change the "yeah yeah yeah" refrain of "She Loves You" to "yes yes yes." "Yeah," he said, wasn't proper, and it sounded too American.[25] The Beatles sent their particular brand of rock and roll music back to the United States, to America with love, where it initiated the so-called British Invasion of more rock and roll artists from across

[25] I learned this on the National Trust Tour of John Lennon and Paul McCartney's family homes in Liverpool.

the Atlantic, all of them playing music influenced by both sides of the ocean.[26] Of course, while it was called the British Invasion, the music itself strongly reflected American traditions, and the African roots of those traditions. Any connotation of blackness would have made it a much more threatening invasion to the mostly white American parents who often bemoaned it already. Still, the Beatles never hid the fact that they loved American music, and that much of the music they loved was made by black people.[27]

Beatles fans often found sensuality, physicality, and intense emotion in the Beatles' music. Most often, it was male fans who took their lead, picked up guitars, and learned to play the music, but girls, more likely to want to meet and marry a Beatle than to be a Beatle, were also influenced musically. One fan remembered she learned to play her guitar "by picking out the riff to 'I Feel Fine.'"[28] Chrissie Hynde bought her first guitar after watching the Beatles play "I Want to Hold Your Hand."[29] Cyndi Lauper recalled that she and her sister would dress up as the Beatles and perform for their family

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[26] The Rolling Stones and the Animals were both more influenced by the blues than the Beatles ever were.

[27] Ian MacDonald summarizes this well: "Reviving the Fifties' rock-and-roll rebellion in the mid-Sixties with cover versions of records by Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Larry Williams, and The Isley Brothers, The Beatles acted as a major conduit of black energy, style, and feeling into white culture, helping to restore it to its undernourished senses and thereby forwarding the 'permissive' revolution in sexual attitudes." See Ian MacDonald, *Revolution in the Head: The Beatles' Records and the Sixties* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 9.

[28] Klinkenborg, "Good Bye, Mitzi Gaynor," 39.

[29] Chrissie Hynde, *Reckless: My Life as a Pretender* (New York: Doubleday, 2015), 17.

with mops.[30] And countless women found solace and refuge and joy in the Beatles' music.

The lyrics also resonated with young women. "What a relief!" Jane Tompkins recalled, "Their voices did not have that authoritarian baritone of a lot of male singers who declared, with every note, the supremacy of the male point of view."[31] Early on, their arrangements often mimicked the styles of the girl groups they loved. Moreover, many of their lyrics reflected a sense of reciprocity in relationships—"and the same goes for me, whenever you want me at all, I'll be here, yes I will, whenever you call"—and male vulnerability—"if I fell in love with you would you promise to be true and help me understand, 'cause I've been in love before and I've found that love was more than just holding hands"—uncommon in most rock and roll. "The Night Before," as Candy Leonard put it, is "basically a man asking, 'Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?'"[32] There are exceptions to this—"if I catch you with another man, that's the end little girl"—but the Beatles helped destabilize strict gender confines and codes of behavior for men and women with their music as well as their image.

Along with the music, there was also something about the Beatles themselves. Young people responded to the Beatles' youth and energy and sensibility, their blend of

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[30] Cyndi Lauper, "My Four Friends," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here!,* 64.

[31] Jane Tompkins, "I Want to Hold Your Hand," in *Reading the Beatles: Cultural Studies, Literary Criticism, and the Fab Four*, ed. Kenneth Womack and Todd F. Davis (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 215-219: 216.

[32] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 81.

"sentimentality with irreverence," as Ellen Willis put it.[33] Somehow, in spite of the mass media and mass market, they seemed so truly themselves. One fan wrote, "they're just the opposite of all the former phony, sexy, sullen teen-age idols."[34] They may have debuted dressed up in Edwardian suits, but their coolness and rebelliousness peeked through, especially in Lennon and Harrison. As one fan, seventeen when the Beatles first arrived, said of Lennon: "He was different. He looked intelligent. He looked like someone who might sing 'We Shall Overcome,' or at least appreciate it. He looked very cool; interesting, alienated; almost a fifties tough look."[35] One fan remembered them as "proudly on the fringe of society."[36]

It's hard to imagine the most famous people in the world being on the fringe of society, but the Beatles' attitudes and sensibility seemed to echo critiques of mainstream culture and the Cold War. The Beatles had been influenced by countercultural movements in Europe, particularly in Lennon's tenure as an art student and in the band's friendship with German "exis." Their irreverent humor also reflected a youthful (and working-class Liverpool) challenge to authority. Amanda Vaill remembered that before the Beatles came to the United States she had read about them in *Time* and about Lennon's daring humor at the Royal Variety Performance, asking, "For our last number, I'd like to ask your help. The people in the cheaper seats clap your hands. And the rest

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[33] Ellen Willis, "The Big Ones," February 1969, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps: Ellen Willis on Rock Music*, ed. Nona Willis Aronowitz (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 81.

[34] Valerie Harris, Letter to the Editor, *Life* (Aug. 28, 1964), 21.

[35] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 41.

[36] *Ibid.*, 110.

of you, if you'd just rattle your jewelry." "I thought that was pretty cheeky and pretty classy at the same time."[37] Kay Sloan remembered, "They were a new breed of cocky, cool guys … the Beatles made fun of authority, made it all seem absurd, even laughable. It was a new kind of power."[38] Bonnie Raitt loved John Lennon, her favorite Beatle, because of his looks, music, artwork, and because of his "wicked, irreverent wit that skewered the hypocrisy and stupidity around him."[39] The Beatles "talked back," they weren't intimidated by adults, but they weren't like James Dean because they were smarter than James Dean.[40] They were somewhat unlikely rebels because their power was in their wit and their humor and fun-lovingness in a drab adult world. The Beatles partook in the youthful rebellion surrounding them. When asked at an Indianapolis press conference what they would do if the fans made it past the police lines, the band responded, "die laughing."[41] The fandom they inspired could be a bit much for the band, and they did little to encourage it, but they didn't do anything to stop it either.

The Beatles were fun and funny, and they interacted with countercultural trends in the United States by inspiring broad experiences of personal pleasure and intense feeling. One of the iconic scenes from *A Hard Day's Night* shows the Beatles escaping the television studio full of stodgy show biz folks, running around in an empty for the length

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[37] Amanda Vail, "We Saw Them Standing There," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 10-11.

[38] Kay Sloan, "You Say You Want A Revolution, in *In My Life: Encounters with the Beatles*, ed. Robert Cording, Shelli Jankowski-Smith, and E.J. Miller Laino (New York: Fromm International, 1998), 26-30: 30.

[39] Bonnie Raitt in *Memories of John Lennon*, ed. Yoko Ono (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), 225.

[40] See Leonard, *Beatleness*, 67. No offense to James Dean.

[41] David Humphrey, *All Those Years Ago: Fifty Years Later, Beatles Fans Still Remember* (Louisville: Butler Books, 2014), 13.

of a song, exclaiming “we’re out!” The Beatles gave their fans that sense: “we’re out!” This sense of freedom played a crucial role in the development of youth culture in the 1960s. To many, the Beatles represented unbridled happiness in a culture where authentic feeling was restrained. One young fan remembered “the overriding sense that they were having fun” and that “the freedom they expressed was palpable.”[42] They seemed to suggest that there was a different way to be. Margot Adler wrote in a letter home in 1965, “Do you have any idea what the Beatles mean to people here? They are GOD. … Why are they idolized? Because the Beatles have freed themselves completely from the bonds of convention.”[43] Caroline Marsh reflected, “The Beatles made me realize anything in life was possible. They were just so far out of my realm of experience. It was as though they were from another planet. It was as though, *there is life somewhere else.*”[44] One woman remembered, “They were my salvation until I could find real people who made me feel like they made me feel.”[45] While the Rolling Stones, as Nick Bromell notes, were *cool*—they often seemed aloof and indifferent, and they crossed boundaries but they were the traditional ones—namely aggressive sexuality; this made them more conservative and importantly, “less unsettling,” than the Beatles in the long term.[46] The Beatles and their fans’ embrace of joy was revolutionary. The “pure

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[42] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 27. Female, b. 1955.

[43] Margot Adler, *Heretic’s Heart: A Journey Through Spirit & Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), 111.

[44] Caroline Marsh, “I’ve Just Seen a Face,” in Jim McBride, “Yeah, Yeah, Yeah” *Rolling Stone* (Feb. 16, 1984), 31-57: 33.

[45] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 263. Female, b. 1954.

[46] Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 25.

joy" and energy, the intensity of experience, was part of broader sixties trends promoting new realms of experience, from the meditative to the psychedelic, both of which the Beatles experimented and helped to popularize.

The Beatles were also different kinds of men. For one thing, their hair, supposedly was very long. (As Ellen Sander later commented, "It's hard to believe but there was actually a time when it was agreed that the Beatles had long hair."[47]) In their implicit challenges to gender conventions, the Beatles were right on the cusp of the changes of the 1960s. As Rotolo recalled in her sixties memoir, "The Beatles appeared clean-cut, but they had long hair. Confusing. Something was in the wind that just might get out of hand."[48] The Beatles' haircuts were one of the earliest representations of their novelty, but as others appeared—in their image, music, and, certainly, the attitudes and behaviors of their fans—the Beatles both reflected and shaped the dramatic changes of the sixties. McCartney later remarked, "Short hair equals men, long hair equals women. Well we got rid of that small convention for them. And a few others too."[49] The fact that they were fun and funny and seemed comfortable being themselves also made them appealing and empowering to many women and men alike. They weren't afraid to be loving, seemed respectful and companionable towards women, and they had fun together.

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[47] Ellen Sander, *Trips: Rock Life in the Sixties* (New York: Scribner, 1973), 74.

[48] Suze Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time: A Memoir of Greenwich Village in the Sixites* (New York: Broadway Books, 2008), 320.

[49] Paul McCartney quoted in Steven D. Stark, *Meet the Beatles: A Cultural History of the Band That Shook Youth, Gender, and the World* (New York: Harper, 2005), 21. See also Nicholas Schaffner, *The Beatles Forever* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977), 17.

As Leonard wrote, “Their obvious affection for each other was clearly on display for the world to see, a new twist on male camaraderie.”[50] Another fan remembered, “their brotherly affection for each other was beautiful.”[51] In all of this, Leonard wrote, “they communicated a new proposition about maleness”—one that, clearly, many women found attractive.[52] Cultural observers have contended that young women responded so intensely to the Beatles in part because of their non-threatening attitude and appearance.[53] The Beatles earned mass popularity and endeared the adoration of millions of women in spite of criticisms about their perceived femininity and trespassing of traditional gender boundaries. As the women’s movement would soon work to combat deeply embedded gender stereotypes, fans’ embrace of the Beatles and more fluid ideas about gender worked to erode strictly defined categories of male and female.

Although some women expressed, both at the time and in retrospect, that they were waiting for something and found it in the Beatles, many young Beatles fans found something they may not necessarily have been seeking when the bought their first Beatles album or concert ticket. Whether or not they had explicitly intended to, frenzied, feverish Beatles fans rejected the emptiness which characterized many suburban homes, Madison Avenue offices, and women oppressed by the feminine mystique. Beatlemania privileged experience and personal feeling. The businessmen and advertising executives beginning

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[50] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 25.

[51] *Ibid.*, 82.

[52] *Ibid.*, 31.

[53] As Stark and others have noted, the Beatles and the image they projected helped to challenge prevalent gender confines in American culture. See Stark, *Meet the Beatles* and Jon Wiener, *Come Together: John Lennon in His Time* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 47-50.

to engender criticisms were interested in selling Beatles records and merchandise, but not the experience of Beatlemania, which so often caused women to "lose control," go "outside" of themselves, or to undergo intense interior experiences. In this sense, by influencing growing emphasis on personal authenticity and experience, Beatlemania served as a bridge between the peripheral countercultures of the fifties and widespread cultural movements of the sixties.

For many young women, the Beatles were a passion. They devoted time and money (and a lot of energy) to listening to their music and learning everything about them, devoting themselves, in some measure, to the band and its individual members as well as to their own fan clubs and fan communities. They concocted elaborate, often daring, plans to see and meet the Beatles, and they dreamed, dreamed, dreamed. This was an encompassing feeling, a can't-stop-thinking-about-you fandom that invaded and informed many if not all aspects of young women's lives. "Obsession. That's a good word to describe my relationship with [the Beatles]," one fan later wrote.[54] "In school, at home, in bed – wherever – THEY hovered over my thoughts…."[55] Some fans remember that Beatles fandom made it hard to concentrate on anything else.[56] Fans decided the Beatles were important, to them and beyond them, and they devoted themselves to studying, discussing, defending, and promoting them. Laura Tarrish recalled going to the library with her best friend on Saturday mornings so they could do research on the

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[54] Dee Elias, *Confessions of a Beatlemaniac: A True Story of a fan who broke all the rules to meet the Beatles* (Authorsbound.com, 2014), 3.

[55] Elias, *Confession*s, 5.

[56] Barb Morgan, personal letter to the author, November 17, 1997.

Beatles.[57] "I saved all the clippings, learned all the words to their songs, knew every fact about them, had complete sets of bubblegum cards," one fan remembered. "None of this served to make me popular, but it did give me a certain air of authority... My inner world … became increasingly enriched with colorful new people, places, ideas, and actions. I began to truly enjoy the time I spent with myself, instead of wondering what was wrong with me."[58] Nanci Newman remembered, "When their albums became available in the states, I always bought two copies. I wasn't a collector. I simply wanted an extra album in case I wore the first one out."[59] Some people were collectors though; at Syracuse, there was a dorm room named "Lennongrad" for its décor.[60] Many girls also exchanged letters with pen pals in England, reflecting the Anglophile trend of the mod sixties as well as the formation of fan communities.[61] Beatlemania created a cultural space for women to pursue their own interests and passions. The young girls who became collectors, curators, and experts regarding all things Beatles, and who depending on where they lived, may have also waited for hours outside hotels, charged the stage during a Beatles concert, and openly challenged police authority, were asserting what *they* wanted. Self-determination is one of the primary objectives of liberation, and these young women

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[57] Laura Tarrish, in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here!*, 184-185.

[58] Catone, *As I write this letter*, 42-43. Part of Beatlemania's power, Bromell contends, lay in this "indifference to ridicule, to what other people thought of you" (*Tomorrow Never Knows*, 24.)

[59] Nanci Newman in Humphrey, *All Those Years Ago*, 37. She continued, "I still have a sealed copy of every Beatles album released. I am not sure how much they are worth, but I wouldn't sell them anyway."

[60] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 73.

[61] Jane Smiley recalls her Anglophilia as well and the joys of catching glimpses of England while watching *A Hard Day's Night* in Jane Smiley, "I Want to Hold Your Hand," in *In Their Lives*, Blauner, ed., 15-22: 20-21.

deployed fandom as a tool for defining their own lives, charting an often-unwitting course towards liberation.[62] As one fan wrote, "I think that The Beatles acted as a catalyst for me. They started my whole process of self-discovery…."[63] Another fan wrote of the Beatles, "They gave me the courage to be different and to think for myself."[64]

In addition to these interior experiences, Beatlemania was also communal and collective. After Ed Sullivan, Candy Leonard wrote, "Beatlemania was the social contagion resulting from millions of kids sharing their Beatle enthusiasm with their friends and siblings after seeing the group on television."[65] Fandom was a means to community and connection; fans wanted to mark their fandom, to make it clear that they were "in the know," that they were "Beatle people." As Leonard notes, "It was important to be identifiable as a Beatle fan—to tell the world you were part of this new thing; that you were a Beatle celebrant."[66] This worked both ways. One fan remembered, "If people didn't like the Beatles, you didn't want to be around them."[67]

Beatles Fan Clubs were spaces for women to join forces and act on their devotion. As English writer Karl Dallas said, "Young people had worked themselves up for the

[62] Connie Brown and Jane Seitz, "'You've Come A Long Way, Baby': Historical Perspectives," in Robin Morgan, *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement* (New York: Vintage, 1970) 3-28: 28.

[63] Catone, *As I write this letter*, 67.

[64] *Ibid.*, 64.

[65] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 29.

[66] *Ibid.*, 50.

[67] *Ibid.*, 95. Female b. 1947. I feel the same way.

Beatles and gotten fairly organized about it."[68] The Beatles fan club was an extensive apparatus, derived from the Beatles (and Brian Epstein and Freda Kelly) themselves and spread across thirty-five countries.[69] While Dylan, when asked about his fan mail in 1965, explained, "I don't have time to read all of it, but I want you to put that I answer half of it. I don't really. A girl does that for me," the Beatles treated their fans with respect, and their management understood the importance of recognizing and rewarding fans.[70] Some fans also founded fan clubs dedicated to each individual Beatle.[71] Fans also found a measure of power and authority within fan clubs and communities, formal and informal. The president of the Louisville chapter of the Beatles Fan Club was given press credentials to cover the Beatles Indianapolis show.[72] Fan club leaders were often given special privileges.[73] Fan clubs, whether formally chartered or informally assembled in schools and neighborhoods (and often on school buses) were places where women could discuss the Beatles with the attention they all knew they deserved. In and out of fan clubs, fans held Beatle parties and attended Beatle Rallies, usually sponsored

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[68] Quoted in David Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street: The Lives and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Fariña and Richard Fariña* (New York: Picador, 2001), 250.

[69] See Millard, *Beatlemania*, 128.

[70] Nora Ephron and Susan Edmiston, "Bob Dylan Interview," Positively Tie Dream, August 1965, in *Younger Than That Now*, 65.

[71] According to Pat Kinzer Mancuso, President of the Official George Harrison Fan Club, George's was the only fan club formed for an individual Beatle that was actually sanctioned by the Beatles. Pat Kinzer Mancuso, *Do You Want to Know a Secret?*, i.

[72] In Humphrey, *All Those Years Ago*, 35.

[73] Elias, *Confessions*, 109-110.

by disc jockeys and radio stations.[74] Many fans also celebrated each Beatle birthday with a celebration, saving the biggest celebration for her favorite Beatle.[75]

Picking a favorite Beatle was a major pastime, oft discussed in fan clubs and on school buses, in lunchrooms, and around the dinner table.[76] Ones' favorite Beatle might change from time to time, especially where friends were concerned—"as a practical matter, you couldn't have the same favorite as your closest Beatle buddies"—but it was important to have one to focus your energies on.[77] As one fan explained, "There could be no sharing, because we were each going to meet our favorite, fall in love, and marry them!"[78] Even Janis Joplin had a favorite Beatle (George). She wrote to her family,

> guess who was in town last week—Paul McCartney!!! (he's a Beatle). And he came to see us!!! SIGH Honest to God! He came to the Matrix & saw us & told some people that he dug us. Isn't that exciting!!!! Gawd, I was so thrilled—I still am! Imagine—Paul!!!! If it could only have been George….Oh, well. I didn't get to see him anyway—we heard about it afterwards. Why, if I'd known that he was out there, I would have jumped right off the stage & made a fool of myself.[79]

"George Harrison was the most important person in my life," Penelope Rowlands remembered. "I knew that he would understand me as no one else did, and that I would

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[74] *Ibid.*, 7-10.

[75] *Ibid.*, 86. Elias explained that at the celebration of Paul's birthday, she got to blow out the candles on the cake since she loved Paul the most (87).

[76] The "favorite Beatle" tradition was enabled by the fact that the media presented the Beatles as four distinct individuals—John, Paul, George, and Ringo—while, as Jacqueline Warwick notes, "girl groups stressed the importance of the ensemble by de-emphasizing the singers' individual identities." (*Girl Groups, Girl Culture*, 79).

[77] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 41.

[78] *Ibid.*, 41.

[79] Janis Joplin, "Love, Janis" (letter to family, April 1967), in *"Takin' It to the Streets": A Sixties Reader*, ed. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995; third ed., 2011), 238-240: 240.

do the same for him."[80] "On a scale of one to ten, I would give George a 500," another fan said.[81] After a boy wrote a love poem in her math book, Mary Norris reflected in her diary, "He's okay, but I prefer Paul McCartney."[82] When she considered becoming a nun, this same fan planned to be named for St. Paul, although she wrote in her diary, "I'll only be a nun if I don't marry Paul."[83] This fan was particularly upset by Lennon's "more popular than Jesus" remark and confided to her diary, "I wish Paul would tell him off, the Beatles would break up, & Paul would enter a seminary."[84] Another fan ordered engraved stationery as Mrs. Paul McCartney.[85] Other fans wrote to each other as Mrs. McCartney and Mrs. Starr.[86]

Fandom constituted a new realm of experience for many young women. The uninhibited *feeling* surrounding the Beatles represented an early iteration of the emphasis on experience and authenticity, as the folk revival had, which would characterize the youth and political movements of the 1960s. Women wept for the Beatles, or perhaps not *for* them, but in their presence and at the thought of them. Women at the time and in retrospect discussed how "alive" the Beatles made them feel. One fan described an "out-of-body experience, almost—taken to a whole different place" and the "pure emotion that

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[80] Penelope Rowlands, "In Love with Gorgeous George," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 20.

[81] Olivia Anne Morris Fuchs in Humphrey, *All Those Years Ago*, 35.

[82] Mary Norris, "Sister Mary Paul McCartney," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here!*, 90.

[83] *Ibid.*, 91.

[84] *Ibid.*, 96.

[85] Laura Tarrish, in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here!*, 184.

[86] Elias, *Confessions*, 6.

does that."[87] Carol Moore called the band "part of some new, religious, spiritual experience."[88]

In an era when fame was indeed manufactured, it was easy to be skeptical about Beatlemania and to belittle the screaming fans, as observers in both Britain and America did.[89] There was no reason, when the first screams were heard, to think that they would subsist into the twenty-first century. The consumer culture and marketing practices of post-war America encouraged teenage and female consumption and, to an extent, provided young people with the opportunity to dedicate their time and money to the Beatles.[90] The organization of fan clubs and production and marketing of a wide range of fan ephemera—socks, clocks, watches, books, not to mention records as well as movies—were well-orchestrated attempts to import the wild success of Beatlemania into the United States and to capitalize on the popular teenage market. Yet while teenagers responded to the market, particularly the large scale marketing campaigns waged prior to the Beatles' arrival in the United States to generate excitement and revenues, they also drove it intensely. Women bought Beatle wigs, posters, pins, and every other imaginable product. They also supported an under the table market of, almost certainly, false goods belonging to or supposedly touched by the Beatles. "Beatle paraphernalia flooded the market at such a fast rate that it had taken all my allowance money," one fan

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[87] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 127; 128.

[88] *Ibid.*, 191.

[89] See Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love*, 161-169.

[90] For more on Capitol Records and the marketing campaign preceding the Beatles arrival, see Millard, *Beatlemania*, especially chapters one and two.

remembered.[91] Young people were encouraged to like the Beatles by advertisers and radio DJs, but they made being fans mean more than anything that could be bought, claiming the music and the band for themselves. They forged deeply personal and meaningful experiences and found love and joy in the Beatles music and their experiences as fans, and as the Beatles sang, "can't buy me love."

You know you make me want to shout

Many meaningful experiences of Beatlemania were lived in bedrooms and living rooms, in front of televisions and with transistor radios, but at Beatles concerts and outside box offices, hotels, and airports, women put their fandom on display and demonstrated emotionally, often sexually charged responses to the Beatles in public, if in the midst of a frenzied crowd. In doing this, in "surrender[ing] absolutely to their passions," as Bromell writes, Beatles fans asserted and expressed themselves in a highly public way and helped to challenge and redraw many of the boundaries and expectations, many of them highly gendered, governing American society.[92]

Thousands of fans welcomed the Beatles when they landed at New York's newly renamed John F. Kennedy International Airport on February 7, 1964.[93] Hundreds surrounded the Plaza Hotel where the Beatles stayed during their first visit to New York City. Their arrival and public events would "dwarf the adulation previously directed at

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[91] Elias, *Confessions*, 5.

[92] Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 24.

[93] Barbara Ehrenreich, Elizabeth Hess, and Gloria Jacobs, "Beatlemania: Girls Just Want to Have Fun," in *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, ed. Lisa A. Lewis (London: Routledge, 1992), 86. Accounts of the exact numbers vary but are consistently in the thousands.

pop stars."[94] Two days after the band's frenzied welcome, the Beatles performed on *The Ed Sullivan Show* to a television audience of over 73 million, the largest audience in television history at that time.[95] The studio had only 700 seats for the more than 50,000 requests for tickets they received.[96] In its sheer scale, Beatlemania quickly distinguished itself as a new force in American popular culture. Many musicians have elicited excited responses from fans; what distinguished, and continues to singularize, the Beatles is the scale and force of their fandom.[97] While not all female Beatles fans reacted with equal intensity, the commercial popularity and extensive contemporary coverage of the Beatles indicate that there were *a lot* of Beatles fans. Mary Norris remembered, "Even my dorkiest classmates had buttons—'I love Ringo' or 'I love George….'"[98] As Lionel Tiger plainly put it, "The reaction of these female adolescents was sweeping because there were millions of them…."[99] There's power in numbers. One fan remembered of

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[94] Millard, *Beatlemania*, 22.

[95] Goldsmith, *The Beatles Come to America*, 147.

[96] Vince Calandra, "Act Naturally," in Jim McBride, "Yeah, Yeah, Yeah," *Rolling Stone* (Feb. 16, 1984), 31-57: 39.

[97] "What got Beatlemania noticed was its scale." (Millard, *Beatlemania*, 33). Ehrenreich et al concur: "There had been hysteria over male stars before, but nothing on this scale" (85).

[98] Norris, "Sister Mary Paul McCartney," 88.

[99] Lionel Tiger, "Why, It Was Fun!," *Rolling Stone*, February 16, 1984, 28.; Also see Ehrenreich et al: "In its intensity, as well as its scale, Beatlemania surpassed all previous outbreaks of star-centered hysteria" (86). Stark commented, "Female fans had gone mad for Elvis, Frank Sinatra, Valentino, and even Franz Liszt in the past. But the world has seen nothing before—nor has it since—to rival the pandemonium that greeted the Fab Four everywhere they went" (3). Also see Millard, *Beatlemania*, 22.

arriving at Shea Stadium, "I didn't realize how much they meant to so many people until I saw it."[100]

The Beatles' appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* became an institution in American cultural history and memory almost immediately. As Paula Lewis remembered of the broadcast, "Some people couldn't watch it because it was Sunday night and they had to go to church. Those people were really outcasts in lots of ways. They really had missed an important thing."[101] "Watching them on Ed Sullivan was my initiation as a teenager," one fan remembered.[102] "I was elated," Susan Douglas explained, "actually filled with joy."[103] The excitement surrounding the broadcast and within the theater itself provided the entire nation with an introduction to the experience of Beatlemania. The appearance, wrote Larry Wolters of the *Chicago Tribune*, "was the first time an American television audience had seen [the Beatles] in lunatic action."[104] More importantly, the television event provided a glimpse of Beatles fans in their own "lunatic action." During the broadcast, two young girls were shown "licking their lips" "'in a manner that surely confirmed the worst fears of every disapproving parent tuned in that night.'"[105] Young women's reactions at CBS studios and in front of televisions across

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[100] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 87. Female born 1955.

[101] Berman, *"We're Going to See the Beatles!"*, 77.

[102] Catone, *As I write this letter*, 89.

[103] Douglas, *Where The Girls Are*, 114.

[104] Larry Wolters, "Beatles Arrive on TV—and Girls Flip Wigs," *Chicago Tribune*, (Feb. 10, 1964), C7.

[105] Gerald Nachmann, *Right Here On Our Stage Tonight: Ed Sullivan's America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 359.

the country reflected the beginning of the experience of Beatlemania as a cultural event that could not be ignored. Within the studio, the Beatles' appearance provided a preview of Beatlemania, both in the response of fans and the logistical complications they caused. As Sullivan said on the show, "Yesterday and today our theater has been jammed with reporters and photographers from all over the nation, and these veterans agree with me that the city has never witnessed the excitement stirred by these youngsters from Liverpool who call themselves the Beatles."[106] The pandemonium of fans within the studio complicated the production, making it so the soundmen could not hear the music and cameramen and crewmembers could not hear directions.[107] The audience was wild with anticipation. Ed Sullivan reportedly warned them, "If you don't keep quiet, I'm going to send for a barber."[108] The studio and television audiences illustrated the very personal connection many young women developed to the Beatles and the ascendancy of youth culture.[109] When the Beatles sang "I Want to Hold Your Hand," Amy Bloom remembered, "it looked like girls in the audience were actually dying."[110] Amanda Vaill remembered seeing the audience on *Ed Sullivan*, "normally full of people who looked like our parents" but, on this night, "what we saw was ourselves reflected back at us: teenaged girls and young women, dressed in proper little wool jumpers or tidy tailored

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[106] *The Ed Sullivan Show* footage on *The Beatles Anthology*, vol. 3 (Apple, 1995, DVD ed. 2003).

[107] Nachman, *Right Here On Out Stage Tonight*, 359.

[108] *Ibid.*, 355.

[109] "Beatlemania is an example of the growing cohesiveness of youth separate from the adult world" (R.M. Cooper, Beatlemania: An Adolescent Contraculture, McGill University, Department of Sociology, 1968, 3).

[110] Amy Bloom, "Norwegian Wood," in *In Their Lives*, ed. Blauner, 59-62: 60.

suits with circle pins on the collar, all gasping and clutching their faces in paroxysms of innocent desire, primal but somehow not prurient."[111]

These images and footage of women in the presence of the Beatles—attending concerts, welcoming them at airports, waiting for a glimpse outside the band's hotel—demonstrate the intense energy and feverish excitement that characterized Beatle fandom. The fans who were there, many of them young white women, screamed, cried, fainted, attempted to cross police barriers and to be as physically close to the Beatles as possible. Proximity was important; you wanted to see the Beatles and to be as near to them as possible. Fans waited outside hotels, where the Beatles were or just might be staying, on watch. When the Beatles arrived in New York City in August 1964, the *New York Times* reported almost 2,000 girls "squealing" outside Delmonico's Hotel, beginning at dawn and lasting throughout the day, without a glimpse of the Beatles.[112] They were watched by nearly one hundred policemen, eighteen mounted on horseback, and twelve private guards.[113] Outside the Delmonico, Vickie Brenna-Costa remembered, "every time someone opened a window we would start screaming even if only the blinds moved."[114] In Miami, young fans clamored at the hotel where the Beatles were staying, ringing every doorbell in hopes of a Beatle answering the door.[115] When the Beatles visited Los

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[111] Amanda Vail, "We Saw Them Standing There," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 13.

[112] McCandlish Phillips, "Concentration of Squealing Teen-Agers Noted at Hotel," *New York Times* (Aug. 29, 1964), 9.

[113] *Ibid.*, 9.

[114] Vickie Brenna-Costa, in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 70.

[115] Nachman, *Right Here On Our Stage Tonight!,* 367.

Angeles, one fan remembered, "As I walked through the winding streets of our neighborhood, it occurred to me that the Beatles were breathing the same Greater Los Angeles Metropolitan air as I was. The thought was dizzying."[116] Other fans even felt the same way about having the Beatles in the same country: "Oh my God—the Beatles were here, and we were breathing the same air as THEM!!"[117] When the Beatles came to Cleveland, Mary Norris remembered, she was "certain that Paul would be feeling hemmed in by the constant travel and the strain of being on tour" and thus "invited him to dinner," providing detailed directions and instructions for taking the bus.[118] Cyndi Lauper went to see the Beatles land in New York City in 1965. "We waited and waited, and finally the limo came. So I screamed and *covered my eyes*. Then I realized I had covered my eyes, so I looked up right away and saw the backs of their heads. It was incredible."[119] Other fans went to see Peter and Gordon, not because they were fans but because Peter Asher's sister, Jane Asher, was McCartney's girlfriend, "so, it was mandatory that we take a good look at Peter Asher," one later explained.[120]

The Beatles coming to your town, or even state or region, was about the most exciting thing that could happen, but concerts were the ultimate communion, with other fans and with the Beatles, the crowning event of fandom. At 18, Joyce Kirsch sought the

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[116] Noelle Oxenhandler, "Swimming to John," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 55.

[117] Kinzer Mancuso, *Do You Want to Know a Secret?,* 6.

[118] Norris, "Sister Mary Paul McCartney," 97-98.

[119] Lauper in "Yes, I Remember It Well," 27.

[120] Elias, *Confessions*, 20.

help of her congressman to secure tickets to the Beatles' 1964 show in Indianapolis. "Please HELP me! I need two tickets to the Beatles' Performance at the Indiana State Fair! Could you use all the influence you can possibly muster to obtain these tickets for me?" She added, "Since you're a Democrat, I know you will take an interest!" as well as the persuasive argument, "I just ask for two tiny seats—which doesn't sound like much compared to the size of the auditorium."[121] For one night, you were in the same place at the same time as the Beatles, breathing their air (except for the fans who stopped breathing and passed out), sharing their space. Although fans usually left sweaty and sometimes disoriented, many invested a great deal of thought into what they were going to wear, how they would do their hair, and how they would get to the Beatles. Dee Elias remembered, "First, I had to lose weight and let my nails grow long …" as well as visit the venue in advance so she knew exactly where her seat would be. She also planned "mob clothing," which she defined as something "difficult to be ripped off by hysterical fans."[122] Anne Brown remembered that after the Beatles concert she attended at the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, Florida, she stayed in the stadium and "just crawled all over everything, investigating."

> I took handfuls of gravel from below the bottom step, where you'd get down from the stage—they had to have all stepped there. I kept handfuls of that gravel in a Baggie for years. Then I went on the stage and pried up splinters from where each one of the Beatles had been standing and singing. I was careful to document which splinter belonged to which

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[121] Joyce Kirsch to Congressman John Brademas, July 15, 1964, courtesy Indiana State Archives, printed in Humphrey, *All Those Years Ago*, 27.

[122] Elias, *Confessions*, 27; 47.

> Beatle. … The gravel and the splinters were particularly exciting because they certainly had had contact with Beatle feet.[123]

At a 1964 performance in Cleveland, a group of fans broke through the police barrier and managed to make it on stage. Police ordered the Beatles off stage mid-song and threatened to cancel the rest of the show. The same thing happened in Kansas City two days later.[124]

The concert was fans' ticket to ride. They came to see and be near the Beatles, but the concert experience transcended the Beatles as fans claimed concert venues as sites of personal freedom and expression. Claire Krusch, who saw the Beatles in Atlantic City in 1964, described the experience of a Beatles concert: "there was so much energy, you could just feel it. You could feel the electricity in the air, the adrenaline rush. It was incredible. … But as soon as those guys came onstage, the place went nuts, and everybody stood on their seats and screamed—just like you see on all those clips. That's exactly the way it was."[125] "When the Beatles came out," Carol Cox recounted, "it was mass chaos. … Everything just erupted."[126] Female fans screamed, cried, and fainted. Footage reveals that while there was a semblance of dancing, it often descended into strange, unsteady movements and convulsions. Police chased fans around Shea Stadium as they jumped barricades and crossed barriers to be closer to the Beatles. First aid

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[123] Anne Brown, in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here!*, 107.

[124] Mark Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Chronicle* (London: Chancellor Press, 1996 ed.), 171. Dee Elias also discussed the Cleveland performance in *Confessions*, 75.

[125] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 124.

[126] *Ibid.*, 181.

booths were often set up at concerts for the fans who were overcome enough to faint, or those rustled by the crowd. Tents were set up at Shea Stadium for audience members who passed out.[127] At Shea Stadium, New York DJ Murray Kaufman ("Murray the K") remembered, "I went under the stands, and it was as if I were in a disaster area. The New York police and special police were carrying girls out in dead faints, others in hysteria, screaming and thrashing around."[128] Leslie Brody described the audience at Shea Stadium: "Everywhere girls were panting, about to faint, recovering from fits, weeping, embracing, praying."[129] It was also very hot, without air conditioning and with the clamor of bodies; the fainting, no doubt, was partly from the heat, but also from overwhelming, indescribable excitement.[130]

For many women, seeing the Beatles constituted a highly emotional and often physical realm of personal experience. "I could barely see them because my vision was blurred with tears. I kept wiping and straining my eyes," Dee Elias remembered.[131] Barbara Allen, who saw the Beatles in Philadelphia in September 1964, remembered, "We were just so overwhelmed with our emotions. You were just so happy you were

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[127] *Ibid*.,173;123.

[128] Murray Kaufman, in *The Beatles: An Oral History*, ed. David Pritchard and Alan Lysaght (New York: Hyperion, 1998), 197-198. Extensive footage of fans at the Beatles' famous Shea Stadium concert, as well as the Beatles recollections of the experience, are included in *The Beatles Anthology*, volume 5. The Beatles show there in 1965 was the largest concert audience in history to that point.

[129] Leslie Brody, *Red Star Sister: Between Madness and Utopia* (St. Paul: Hungry Mind Press, 1998), 21.

[130] Penelope Rowlands, "In Love with Gorgeous George," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 24-45.

[131] Elias, *Confessions*, 75.

delirious."[132] JoAnne McCormack remembered Beatles concerts as an "emotional roller coaster."[133] Despite the massive crowds, concessions sold poorly at Beatles concerts – the fans were too focused, or perhaps sick, to eat.[134] Many fans recall being "carried away."[135] (As one fan put it, "You get caught up in it, like guys at a football game."[136]) Della Ravitz of Los Angeles was a sophomore at Hamilton High School when she fainted while watching a closed-circuit performance of the band at the Baldwin Theater and was rushed to the hospital by ambulance. Ravitz reported that she had never fainted before, "except once when The Beatles were on the Ed Sullivan show."[137] "I just got excited and started screaming. They let loose and they make you feel loose." Fans' frequent comments about "letting loose" call forth the liberating elements of fandom.[138]

Feeling loose was not something that many of these women had been raised to seek or indulge, but it was something they chased when it came to the Beatles—sometimes literally. At the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, Anne Brown remembered:

> I was so excited at that concert, but then I had a moment of thinking I couldn't hear them. I don't know what came over me. I got mad—and I just made the decision that I was going to charge the stage. Which is really not like me. At any rate, I made that decision. I made my way

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[132] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 127; 128.

[133] *Ibid.*, 172.

[134] Kane, *Ticket to Ride*, 49, in Millard, *Beatlemania*, 26.

[135] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 281.

[136] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 126. Elias remembered being lectured by the Cleveland police chief about acting like an adult and thinking, "I wonder if he has ever seen adults' conducting themselves at a football game!" (*Confessions*, 76).

[137] "'They Let Loose,'" *Los Angeles Times*, (Mar. 15, 1964), A.

[138] *Ibid.*

> down to the railing between the seating area and the stage and I just went over it. I hung on the rail, then I dropped, dropped down to the ground, maybe eight or ten feet. And then I got up and started running toward the stage. This is the best moment of Beatlemania for me. There was this din going on all the time and, when the screaming girls saw somebody going across the field, it just went up. Way up. It got louder—I don't know how many decibels—and it gave me such a rush as I ran. I was just carried by that.[139]

Of course, the next part of the story is that two policemen chased her, knocked her out, and had to give her smelling salts, and escorted her out of the stadium. "That was a big, big moment for me. I was as un-well-behaved as I could be without pushing things too far. It was great."[140] This fan was excited about the Beatles, but the experience was most meaningful because of her own rebellion. As Denise Bristol, who saw the Beatles in Indianapolis, put it, "Seeing the Beatles is more of a feeling than an observation."[141] You were there with thousands of other people—and with the Beatles!—but what happened was really about you. This was the feeling that moved women to scream, cry, weep, pray. Linda Cooper recalled, "I never was one of the girls who screamed and all that, but I would just sit there and cry! … [B]y the time they finished at the end of the show, all that was left of the handkerchief was the border. I ate the whole thing while watching them."[142] In her diary entry after seeing the Beatles at Forest Hills in August 1964, Valerie Volponi wrote, "My sister Pam went hysterical, and we had to calm her down. I

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[139] Brown, in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here!*, 108-109.

[140] *Ibid.*, 109.

[141] Denise Bristol in Humphrey, *All Those Years Ago*, 66.

[142] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 74.

couldn't laugh, cry, or scream. I just stared...."[143] Images of young women at Beatles concerts illustrate the chaotic mixture of emotion and energy that constituted the experience. While there was often an exuberance which characterized Beatles events, from the stage through the crowds, many fans, like the one in the image below, appear genuinely upset watching the Beatles. It was a bewildering experience for many young women. Janet Lessard asked her mother years later, "'Can you remember anything I said?' and she said, 'All I can remember is when you came home, I asked you how it was and you burst into tears. And for one week I would say to you 'What was the concert like?' and you would start talking and just start crying.' … And I know other girls who went through this with us say the same thing."[144] A Memphis newspaper described the Beatles concert there in 1966 as "a commentary on uninhibitedness," after describing sixteen year old Emily Strider from Charleston, Mississippi who drove to Memphis to see the Beatles: "Emily … started to cry. Then she started to scream. Then she started shaking her head wildly and pounding her knees with her fists."[145] Whether or not they meant to, young women like Strider challenged ideas about gender and behavior in public, visible spaces.

Screaming became the most distinguishable characteristic of Beatlemania. To increasingly and unprecedentedly large audiences, the Beatles played to fans who could

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[143] *Ibid.*, 120.

[144] *Ibid.*, 133. For more on crying, see Tom Lutz, *Crying: The Natural and Cultural History of Tears* (New York: Norton, 1999).

[145] Thomas BeVier, "Show by the Beatles Is a Scream," *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, Aug. 20, 1966, in *America in the Sixties—Right, Left, and Center: A Documentary History*, ed. Peter B. Levy (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), 168.

not hear them for their own screaming. Live recordings of the Beatles demonstrate constant screaming that often drowned out the sound from the stage.[146] Part of this can be attributed to primitive technology, but to be sure, fans could have heard the Beatles, and the Beatles could have heard themselves, if the audience would have refrained from screaming. Today, security guards wear earplugs at concerts because the sound is so loud, but, as the photographer Henry Grossman explained, policemen at Beatles concerts didn't cover their ears because of the music but because of the screaming.[147] Again, fans were the story, and the sound. We can't listen to a live recording of the Beatles without the screams. As an article in the *New York Times* quipped, "Twenty-nine hundred ecstatic Beatlemaniacs gave a concert early last evening at Carnegie Hall, accompanied by the thumping twanging rhythms of the Beatles."[148] A *Chicago Tribune* article wryly commented, "The Beatles, who play and sing a violent form of rock 'n' roll, may actually have been playing and singing. The audience couldn't tell. All it heard most of the time was its own screaming."[149] "I never felt people came to hear our show," Ringo later commented, "I felt they came to see us."[150]

It seemed a hysterical, unreasonable response: the people who loved the Beatles' music most prevented themselves from hearing it in what was often the one chance

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[146] See *The Beatles Anthology* recordings, especially volume 2 (Capitol, 1996). The recording of "Rock and Roll Music" offers a good example.

[147] Henry Grossman, in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 30.

[148] John S. Wilson, "2,900 Voice Chorus Joins the Beatles," *New York Times*, February 13, 1964.

[149] "Beatles' Teen Fans Scream Thru Concert." *Chicago Tribune* (Feb. 13, 1964), 2.

[150] *The Beatles Anthology*, volume 5; The Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology* (San Francisco: Chronicle, 2000), 186.

they'd have to hear it live. Although Beatlemania was unique, screaming, however alarming in the moment, was not. Accounts of nineteenth-century concerts reference the screams and impolite noise of the audience, often urban and working class.[151] Early twentieth century audiences were reminded to keep quiet and respond to performances politely, admonitions that grew harder to maintain with the advent of swing and, certainly, rock and roll.[152] By 1964 it's clear that American audiences understood that it was rational and polite behavior to be quiet during a performance, and, at the same time, that if there was a place to scream, it was a concert. This was heightened for girls, who faced sharper admonitions against being rowdy or raucous but founds greater anonymity and seemed less threating in the space of a concert. Fans knew screaming was common at Beatles concerts, thanks in part to media coverage of Beatles fandom, and hearing other screamers made it more inviting (although surely frustrating for a fair share of fans who were trying to hear), but given the number of fans who expressed surprise at their own screaming, the screaming seems to have been an often spontaneous, in the moment reaction rather than a learned response.[153]

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[151] For more on nineteenth century audiences and early audience histories, see Daniel Cavicchi, "Loving Music: Listeners, Entertainments, and the Origins of Music Fandom in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*, ed. Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harringon (New York: New York University Press, 2007); Patrick Burke, "The Screamers," *Daedalus*, 142:4 (2013): 11-23; Shayla Thiel-Stern, *From the Dancehall to Facebook: Teen Girls, Mass Media, and Moral Panic in the United States, 1905-2010* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014).

[152] These admonitions especially reflected tensions of race and class as well as gender. See Burke, "The Screamers," 13-14.

[153] Note that screaming as a response was well established before the Beatles ever arrived in the United States and was both what led to "Beatlemania" being labeled as a phenomenon and what caught Ed Sullivan's attention while traveling abroad and led him to bring the band to America.

The screams are something to hear and see, even fifty years on, but there was a difference between seeing the screams on television and hearing, or joining in with them, in person. At the time and in retrospect, women voiced a common refrain that they did not know why they were screaming and seem to recall it as a spontaneous response. As thirteen-year-old Diane Ambosino said in 1964, "I just don't know why I scream. It's just because they're Beatles."[154] Penny Wagner recalled, "I remember ripping part of my hair out of my head, screaming, non-stop screaming—we couldn't talk after the concert we were screaming so bad."[155] One fan remembered, "The day after the concert was just de facto that you couldn't speak because you'd been screaming so much. It was a badge of honor because it meant that you'd been there."[156] Marilyn Strawbridge recalled, "I am not sure how long the Beatles played, but I screamed every minute they were on stage. I couldn't hear or speak for days."[157] "Well," Mary Ann Collins remembered of her experience at a Beatles concert,

> —I leapt out of my seat, I don't know how many feet up in the air, and screamed my head off. I mean, screamed like a banshee. I just totally forgot everything I had just been saying the minute before about 'I certainly hope people act responsibly and maturely.' I just screamed, I could not help it. It was like I had no control over myself whatsoever. … You were just given over to the experience.[158]

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[154] Gail Cameron, "We've Got 'em, Luv, and It's All Gear," *Life* (Feb. 21, 1964), 33.

[155] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 129.

[156] Jamie Nicol Bowles, in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 45.

[157] Marilyn Strawbridge in Humphrey, *All Those Years Ago*, 61.

[158] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 138-139.

Again, allowing oneself to be given over to the experience in such a way was a significant thing for these women to do. Women even screamed in theaters watching *A Hard Day's Night*, which parodied the spectacle of Beatlemania and the screaming fans themselves.[159] It was the sight of the Beatles, and how funny they were, and all the fun they seemed to be having that led so many women to "give in." The Beatles didn't even have to be there, live in person—fans also screamed watching *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help!* in movie theaters and at Beatle Rallies, even listening to a DJ's story about meeting the Beatles.[160] Dee Elias remembered, "At the premier of … *A Hard Day's Night*, the fans were as frenzied as if the Beatles were performing live." "As soon as the first Beatle face appeared, ear-shattering screams rang out! In unison, the fans echoed loving, adoring, nerve-gripping screams."[161] When tickets went on sale at Cleveland's Public Hall, a news crew arrived to cover the pandemonium of young girls after tickets; the Beatles wouldn't be there for months—the fans were the story.[162]

Some saw the screaming as an indication that girls were not seriously interested in the music, although more fans remember it as proof that they were almost too interested.[163] Fans were described as "mindless," "pathetic, dull, and vacuous."[164] To

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[159] Stark, *Meet the Beatles*, 160.

[160] See Elias, *Confessions*, 10. Elias remembered screaming so hard during Beatles films that she ended up with laryngitis (53).

[161] *Ibid.*, 54.

[162] *Ibid.*, 30.

[163] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 53.

[164] Millard, *Beatlemania*, 29.

others, the screams reinforced gender categories, adding fuel to the fire of the idea that fans were irrational—just silly girls. Tamara Levitz asserted that "the shrieking female screams" of Beatlemania "assured women's subjugation as the desiring fans of Beatlemania."[165] While fans were often characterized as acting hysterical on account of their gender, especially when considering the origins of the word *hysterical* as unique to women, from the Greek *hystera*, meaning womb, women were really rejecting the confines of gender and its expectations about public behavior and public sexuality. Even if it was more acceptable for women to display such emotion, compared to the era's prevalent attitudes, women's reactions to the Beatles and their public displays of fandom, which Beatles fans were increasingly coming to define, ignored everything about how women were supposed to behave and control themselves by exhibiting raw emotion and emerging sexuality without deference to public codes of behavior. Furthermore, these screams were vocalizing something, using this non-verbal vocality as a form of expression. "In those remarkable performances during the height of Beatlemania," Jacob Smith writes, "the scream became a complex language of its own, a form of wordless mass communication."[166] But what did the screams say? I'm happy, I'm excited, I can't believe I'm here with the Beatles, I love the Beatles, I want to meet the Beatles, I want my life to be like the Beatles'. They also seem to communicate sadness sometimes, or a sense of loss—I feel trapped, I feel confused, I need to scream. As Bromell writes, "It

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[165] Tamara Levitz, "Yoko Ono and the Unfinished Music of 'John & Yoko': Imagining Gender and Racial Equality in the Late 1960s," in *Impossible to Hold: Women and Culture in the 1960s,* ed. Avital H. Bloch and Lauri Umansky (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 217-239: 228.

[166] Jacob Smith, *Vocal Tracks: Performance and Sound Media* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 156.

was a noise that vocalized so much: desperation, desire, excitement, anger."[167] Screaming was also an expression of freedom, a way to partake in the same fun the Beatles seemed to be having all the time, to give in to the way you felt. In what other situation could fans have screamed so freely? It wasn't so much that it was acceptable as that there was no way of stopping it. Police barricades could, usually, keep women away from the Beatles physically, but what could anyone do about the screams? In listening to and watching the screams of Beatles fans, I feel that I have never truly screamed, not like them. What does it really mean to scream? Other scholars have drawn parallels between these fans and the primal scream therapy that would become popular later in the decade, embraced by John Lennon and Yoko Ono among others.[168] Indeed, release seems to be central. What it *does* to scream is to reject everything about the way you are supposed to be and act. Even if this became a recognized response to the Beatles, it was never the rational response, and it was always an affront to decorum.[169]

Women who screamed, cried, and clamored at Beatles concerts and appearances lived their experiences of fandom in a public way, challenging expectations of female behavior by displaying their sexuality to a wide public audience. Screaming is not particularly attractive and it's certainly unladylike; as the fans demonstrated, but it can also carry sexual overtones, part of what made it so dramatic and concerning. The reactions of many fans were charged with sexual desire, challenging the sexual repression

[167] Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 26.

[168] As Smith writes, "In the next decade, both Lennon and the generation of screaming fans that attended his concerts further redefined the cultural meaning of the rasp" (Smith, *Vocal Tracks*, 156).

[169] I am indebted to Katherine Kinney for her notes and suggestions on sound, screaming, and the voice.

and hypocrisy of the 1950s and contributing to changing ideas about sex and sexuality in the 1960s. Many Beatles fans were young girls, not yet teenagers and too young to have fully experienced Elvis's heyday, but the Beatles represented an important element in the development of these young women's sexuality in an era of sexual revolution.[170] Janet Lessard recalled, "we weren't really into boys or anything like that. And all of a sudden these four guys come around with their charm, their music, their witty remarks, and it just kind of hit us like a ton of bricks."[171] Despite the sense that the Beatles themselves were not overtly sexual and appeared to many to be generally harmless (aside from their supposedly long hair), their female fans wrought havoc in concert venues and major American cities while the Beatles toured there and concerned observers with their sexually charged expressions of fandom.

One element of women's connection to the Beatles was undeniably sexual.[172] The intensity of fans' reactions can be characterized as intense, highly personal, and often orgasmic. Betty Taucher recounted the powerful experience of watching the Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, "We were feeling the TV and touching it and screaming. … I had to clean the TV after that. … We were embracing the TV and touching them and screaming, the whole nine yards. And after it was done I remember we were just lying

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[170] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 29. As Barbara Allen recalled, "In that time period, we had missed all the Elvis excitement 'cause we were little kids in the '50s."

[171] *Ibid.*, 74.

[172] Although for many understanding came later. Linda Cooper explained, "The music just kind of caught me—it was exciting, and it was romantic, as much as I understood at the time. Years later I was thinking, well now I know why everybody was screaming, it was all of this sexual energy, but at the time I was stupid or naïve, or too young to understand what the heck was going on." *Ibid.*, 46.

on the floor and it was like, 'Oh my God, what was that.'"[173] Regarding Ed Sullivan, another fan wrote to her friend, "When THEY came on TV, I was downstairs sitting in a chair. I was screaming and crying and having fits, too! At the end of the show I just lied across the chair and cried. Then I went upstairs and listened to every one of their records and cried."[174] "I think I had my first orgasm at a Beatles concert," one woman remembered, "then again, how would I have known?"[175] Vicki Peterson, who went on to become a member of the Bangles, remembered John Lennon as her first sexual fantasy: "…he made me feel so funny inside."[176] More explicitly, one woman, who admittedly went on to become a prominent "groupie," was seventeen when she became a Beatles fan in 1964 and, as she put it, "Catholic." But the nature of her "crushes" on the Beatles and other British musicians began to change. "Without realizing it, I was experiencing sexual attraction to musicians but almost as if it was to the music itself. I mean the sound of a catchy pop tune would make my vagina kind of flicker and flutter … My spinal cord would tingle, I'd get goose bumps."[177] Jane Tompkins described her early-1960s self as "prudish and afraid of many things, especially sex and everything related to it." But upon

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[173] *Ibid.*, 75-76.

[174] Elias, *Confessions*, 4.

[175] Jeannette Catsoulis. "The Beatles Awaken a New Sensation." *The New York Times*. August 17, 2015.

[176] Vicki Peterson, in *Memories of John Lennon*, ed. Yoko Ono (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), 213.

[177] Lisa L. Rhodes, *Electric Ladyland: Women and Rock Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 143-144.

hearing "I Want to Hold Your Hand," she recalled, "It made me want to jump up and down."[178]

Acting on this—jumping up and down—and displaying these feelings made concerts sites where major social and cultural changes, particularly related to gender, were enacted and made visible. Deployed as political spaces, people came together at concert venues—in concert—and challenged the traditions and customs of the world in which they'd grown up, often by disregarding them. For women in particular, concerts were where many of the era's inhibitions, social controls, and gendered codes of behavior were trespassed—where women jumped in the moat erected in front of the stage at the Hollywood Bowl to get closer to the Beatles, where normally well-behaved girls ended up on stage stealing Mick Jagger's tambourine, or where teenagers from the suburbs punch the police officers standing between them and the Beatles.[179] It's worth noting, of course, that most accounts of these incidents concern white women who, although they were trespassing highly gendered codes of public behavior and faced consequences for these intense acts of fandom in their own families and sometimes minimal run-ins with the law, had less at stake in getting arrested over the Beatles.

The audiences that received the music of the Beatles and the other acts of the British Invasion are often classified as white, so much so that sociologist Candy Leonard, in her recent book *Beatleness*, goes as far as to write "Beatles fans, like many other white Americans…" Many Beatles fans were white, but it is foolish to assume that all were,

[178] Tompkins, "I Want to Hold Your Hand," 215-216.

[179] The Mick Jaggerstory happened in San Bernardino, California, where the Rolling Stones played their first show in the United States. See John Weeks, "Rolling Stones performed first American show in San Bernardino." *The Sun*. 3 May 2013.

not only because images and recollections prove otherwise, but also because the sheer scale of Beatlemania made it a broad experience, so that even people who had no interest in the Beatles music were drawn into the mania.[180] Images and footage of the massive crowds gathered waiting for the Beatles at a hotel, airport, or in a concert venue often show women of color, and recollections indicate that the audiences were never all white—there were Puerto Rican fans in New York, Japanese Americans in Los Angeles, African Americans in Florida, and on and on, yet these voices are much harder to locate and not as widely noted in contemporary coverage of Beatlemania. These audiences, even if they were majority white, were also significant to the social and cultural significance of Beatlemania.

Twentieth-century concert audiences, in spite of the price of the ticket, have often included low and middle-income people, many young people, particularly young women, and, with varying degrees of welcome, many people of color. These spaces of leisure track cultural, social, and political changes, reminding us to think more broadly about why and how and where change happens. Concerts were important gathering places in the sixties, but they were also sites of segregation and integration, spaces divided by the

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[180] A poll of a branch of the Beatles fan club reported that the average fan was between 13 and 17, white, female, Christian, and middle class (Gloria Steinem, "Beatle with a Future," *Cosmopolitan*, Dec. 1963, in Millard, *Beatlemania*, 121). Of course, there were millions of fans who never joined an official club. Additionally, the Beatles regularly toured with black opening acts, usually up to four groups, who sometimes attracted their own audiences. Carl Chancellor was an eleven-year-old African American living in a largely black Cleveland neighborhood when the Beatles debuted on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964. "There was something very different about these 'white boys,'" he said. "Maybe it was the hair, or the fact that they were from across the pond, or their devil-may-care attitudes. But whatever it was that made them different, what resonated most for me was that they *defined themselves*." An important 60s lesson if there ever was one. He added, "The Beatles cemented their cool with me when they posed for the famous photo of them in the ring at the end of a jab by Ali." See Chancellor, "Of Beatles, Boomers, and Black History," February 18, 2014, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2014/02/18/84236/of-beatles-boomers-and-black-history/.

lines of race permeating American society and one of the many places where those boundaries were often trespassed and at times overcome. In the sixties, as Martha and the Vandellas sang, they were “a chance for folks to meet.” In certain parts of the country, however, the realities of segregation precluded some African American fans from being able to participate in fandom to the fullest extent, namely by being unwelcome at local venues by local promoters, or being fearful for their safety in the chaos that was a Beatles concert, a fear heightened by the threat of racial violence. The fans of color who came though, along with the Beatles themselves, helped make popular music concerts one of the terrains on which the politics of race unfolded.

On their second tour of the United States later in 1964, the Beatles played Convention Hall in Philadelphia following race riots in the city. The band was reportedly disgusted by that the audience of 13,000 seemed to be all white. A few days later they learned, following their performance in Toronto, that their upcoming show at the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, Florida would be segregated by seating, with African Americans allowed only in upper balconies. At the Toronto press conference, the Beatles threatened not to show up if they weren’t assured the audience would have no color bar, and to walk off stage if they saw that it did. “We’ve all talked about this,” McCartney said, “and we all agree that we would refuse to play. We’re going to watch things closely. We know that they sometimes try the trick of saying that the crowd isn’t segregated but all they do is put a few Negroes in one corner of the stadium.”[181] “We never play to segregated

[181] Paul McCartney summed up their position when he told a reporter in 1966, "It wasn't out of any goody-goody thing; we just thought, 'Why should you separate black people from white? That's stupid, isn't it?'"

audiences," Lennon claimed, "and we're not going to start now. I'd rather lose our appearance money. We understand that in Florida they only allow for negroes to sit in the balconies at performances, but we will not appear unless negroes are allowed to sit anywhere they like!"

The Gator Bowl show was the Beatles' only appearance in the southern state of Florida and it was precipitated by the controversy over the segregation of the audience. The local promoter agreed that the audience and seating arrangement would not be segregated, still the following day, *The Florida Times-Union* ran an editorial calling the group "a passing fad…fitted to the mores, morals and ideals of a fast-paced, troubled time." For good measure, they added that their music sounded "high pitched monotone." The paper did not mention the segregation controversy, but made its position on the Beatles and their fans clear—they were indeed a part of the changes of the era and the challenges to tradition therein.

Kitty Oliver was one black teenager from Jacksonville who went to the Gator Bowl show. She remembered, "I loved The Beatles, and had seen *Hard Day's Night* seven times. Where I sat, there were two other black kids. I ran into them accidentally as I found my seat. I went alone. … I remember that I sat in the high-up least expensive seats, because that is all my family could afford. It was scary in the sense that I didn't know what to expect."[182] Once the Beatles started to play, however, Oliver said she forgot about any possible danger. "There were a lot of girls screaming, and I was

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See Bill Demain, "All Together Now: Civil Rights and the Beatles' First American Tour," April 18, 2012, http://mentalfloss.com/article/30477/all-together-now-civil-rights-and-beatles-first-american-tour

[182] Demain, "All Together Now."

screaming too."[183] How integrated the audience at The Gator Bowl actually was is difficult to determine, especially as, in the end, 9,000 of the 32,000 ticket holders were not able to attend to the show due to complications caused by Hurricane Dora. Still, this was an important statement for the Beatles to make and it aligned them, loosely, with the civil rights movement, or at least against the system of American racism, complicating the idea that they were just mindless entertainment. The following year, in 1965, The Beatles demanded a rider be added to their contract before playing at Cow Palace in San Francisco stating, "Artists will not be required to perform before a segregated audience."[184] These statements were some of the things that heightened the anti-Beatles sentiments, especially in the South, of the mid-60s, compounded of course by Lennon's remark that The Beatles were more popular than Jesus Christ (not that they should be, just that people seemed to scream much more for the Beatles). This provoked not only Beatles bonfires where fans burnt Beatles records and memorabilia, but also appearances by the Klan, in full garb, outside of their shows. All of this is to suggest the band and their fans were engaged in the politics of race in the midst of one of the most pivotal popular music events of the century, and that their concerts, in addition to their profound

[183] "I think The Beatles did a lot in terms of bridging cultures, and that was something very new at that time," says Oliver. "They came from another country and another culture, so that made them intriguing to many black people. These people were different and they were singing some R & B songs that were familiar to us" (Demain, "All Together Now").

[184] The Cow Palace itself wasn't a segregated venue, but many of the housing areas around it were deeply entrenched in racial disparity due to housing ordinances that famously prevented the Giants' Willie Mays from being able to buy a home in some parts of the city. The contract, with rider, by the way, recently sold for more about $23,000, some $20,000 more than expected.

importance to gender conventions crossed other boundaries as well.[185] Women were engaged in a range of rebellions through their fandom, and women of color, meanwhile, trespassed two codes of decorum and faced harsher and more immediate consequences in doing so. Music fandom though was one of the terrains of rebellion, and this had everything to do with its growing presence in public life during the sixties.

The public nature of Beatlemania made it a broad cultural experience, not limited to Beatles fans but recognized by Americans who watched television or read the newspaper, and certainly by those living in large cities where the Beatles played and fans brought traffic to a halt and interfered with everyday spaces and routines. There was no escaping the Beatles. As Steven Stark commented, Beatlemania "became a part of American life."[186] As early as 1964, the "Beatle phenomenon" in the United States was described as a "world-shaking cataclysm."[187] This public chaos caused by women was what made this moment so unique.

By the 1960s, women had access to, if not significant power within, public spaces. The development of American consumer culture was built in part by promoting women's access to the market and pursuits of leisure, and the post-war economy was

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[185] In many ways, these relationships continued through the decade, with Smokey Robinson, The Supremes, and Jimi Hendrix covering Beatles songs, Billy Preston becoming the so-called fifth Beatles, and capped off by Richie Havens playing "Freedom" and Jimi Hendrix "The Star Spangled Banner" (Havens opened, Hendrix closed) to a crowd at Woodstock that was, although mostly white, apparently welcoming to the mixed audience that was there. Of course had some of the white hippies, running naked in the mud, whose images became so very iconic been joined by their black counterparts, Americans' reactions to them may have been even more severe. (In the context of festivals, it's worth noting that the person killed most brutally at Altamont was black.) For more on Hendrix, see Lauren Onkey, "Voodoo Child: Jimi Hendrix and the Politics of Race in the Sixties," 189-214 in Braunstein and Doyle, *Imagine Nation*.

[186] Stark, *Meet the Beatles*, 152.

[187] Gail Cameron, "The Cool Brain Behind the Bonfire," *Life* (Aug. 28, 1964).

deceivingly dependent upon women in the workplace. It was not uncommon for women to be alone in public, on city streets, at airports, concerts, and record stores. It was uncommon, however, for women to claim these sites and use spaces of the everyday—street corners, airports, movie theaters—for passionate personal pleasure, dancing, screaming, crying, and weeping.

Young people from recently suburbanized America often traveled to cities to see the Beatles. "Going into the city" was part of the fun. The Beatles "brought music out of the juke box and into the street."[188] Journalist Larry Kane described the novelty of young women traveling alone without a parent or guardian, "grasping their transistor radios, holding onto plastic purses and autograph books…" on their way to see the Beatles. "I realized that, for many of these young women, their love and passion for the Beatles seemed to be the beginning of liberation and the end of innocence," Kane wrote.[189] Riding the subway to get to the Beatles' hotel, Penelope Rowlands remembered, "made the adventure even more illicit—I wasn't meant to take it alone."[190]

The Beatles were described as "occupying" New York City, although they themselves were effectively barricaded in hotel rooms.[191] Hotels in Los Angeles and San Francisco evicted the Beatles due to the chaos they brought with them, not because they

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[188] Warren Hinkle, "The Hippies' World," 381-384 in *The History of Popular Culture…Since 1815*, ed. Norman F. Cantor and Michael S. Wethman (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 384.

[189] Larry Kane, *Ticket to Ride: Inside the Beatles' 1964 Tour that Changed the Worl*d (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2003), 72.

[190] Rowlands, "In Love with Gorgeous George," 21.

[191] Nachman, *Right Here On Our Stage Tonight!*, 357.

were a hard-partying, room-wrecking band, but because of the mayhem their fans created.[192] As McCandlish Phillips commented in the *New York Times*, "The Beatles, an English quartet, managed to keep their heads here yesterday while everyone around them was losing hers."[193]

The enthusiasm and determination of fans were often disruptive beyond the sheer volume of their screams. As fans camped out in cities, waiting at airports, hotels, and concert venues, they accessed, and interfered with, common spaces as well as ticketed concert venues. As the Beatles departed from New York, three New York City policemen "were felled," their ribs crushed as the "crowd surged forward," and six girls "collapsed in a crushing mob" of over 5,000 "Beatlemaniacs."[194] In Seattle, "a screaming crowd of teenagers" reportedly "trapped" the Beatles in their dressing room for an hour as police and "a group of sailors" worked to help the band exit amidst a "milling, hysterical throng."[195] This was the scene in city after city. "It took 240 policemen," the *New York Times* reported, "to keep things tolerable" as "teen-age girls" caused "traffic jams and confusion in the Times Square area."[196] Penelope Rowlands recalled of this scene, "For two days that August, the corner of 59th Street and Park Avenue became an encampment. Thousands of girls clustered behind barricades. Police patrolled on

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[192] *Life*, Aug. 28, 1964.

[193] MPhillips, "Concentration of Squealing Teen-Agers Noted at Hotel," 9.

[194] "Milling Mob Sees Beatles Off for Home," *Los Angeles Times* (Feb. 22, 1964), 8.

[195] "Ambulance Rescues Beatles From Fans," *Los Angeles Times* (Aug. 22, 1964), 3.

[196] Gay Talese, "Beatles and Fans Meet Social Set," *New York Times*, September 21, 1964, in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 16.

horseback. Tourists stopped by."[197] In September 1964, after the Beatles' unprecedented arrival, the New York Port Authority announced that "'highly publicized celebrity arrivals'" to Kennedy, La Guardia, and Newark airports would no longer arrive at main terminals and high-profile passengers would disembark in spaces "'not visible or accessible to the public.'"[198]

Local promoters were under contract to hire a special force of at least one hundred security guards to protect the band and hold back the crowds, although police officials soon worried that one hundred would not be enough.[199] Beatles press secretary Derek Taylor remarked, "They've all seen crowds before … but what they've never seen is a Beatle crowd."[200] Disc jockeys sometimes distributed "Beatle Safety Patrol Armbands," asking fans to pledge not to push, grab, tear clothes, pull hair, or throw jelly beans at the Beatles, as fans often did once they caught word that the Beatles liked them. "No one wore the armbands or took the pledge seriously except the disc jockeys," Elias remembered.[201] In Miami, a plate-glass door was shattered, twenty three windows were broken, and a dozen chairs torn up as fans rushed the airport.[202] Streets closed in New

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[197] Rowlands, "In Love with Gorgeous George," 21.

[198] "Officials to Subdue Teen-Age Welcomes," *New York Times*, (Sept. 6, 1964), 37.

[199] Ehrenreich et al, "Beatlemania," 86; *Life*, Aug. 28, 1964.

[200] Derek Taylor to Larry Kane on audio CD, "Interviews with the Beatles," in *Ticket to Ride*.

[201] Elias, *Confessions*, 63.

[202] Goldsmith, *The Beatles Come to America*, 158.

York City.[203] As Ed Sullivan himself commented of the Beatles' appearance on his show,

> I have never seen any scenes to compare with the bedlam that was occasioned by their debut. Broadway was jammed with people for almost eight blocks. They screamed, yelled, and stopped traffic. It was indescribable. … There has never been anything like it in show business, and the New York City police were very happy it didn't and wouldn't happen again.[204]

Beatles fans were considered a public nuisance in American cities. This image shows policemen attempting to contain the young crowd outside the Warwick Hotel in New York City in August 1965.[205] Though mostly joyful, the crowd illustrates both the physical occupation of space as well as the force of fans and efforts of police authority to control their presence. In their defiance of order, Beatles fans exhibited increasing assertiveness over public space. When policemen in Washington, D.C. sought to control the crowds gathered at Union Station awaiting the Beatles, one girl moaned as police seized another girl, "'You can't throw her out, she's president of the Beatles fan club.'"[206] As Ehrenreich et al describe, "In the mass experience of Beatlemania … a girl who might never have contemplated shoplifting could assault a policeman with her fists, squirm under police barricades, and otherwise invite a disorderly conduct charge. Shy, subdued girls could go berserk."[207] Bill Eppridge, a photojournalist who photographed

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[203] Nachmann, *Right Here On Our Stage Tonight!,* 357.

[204] Ed Sullivan in Pritchard and Lysaght, eds., *The Beatles: An Oral History*, 151-152.

[205] Kane, *Ticket to Ride*, 139.

[206] Jerry Doolittle, "Beatles Arrive, Teen-Agers Shriek, Police Do Their Duty, and That's That," A1.

[207] Ehrenreich et al, "Beatlemania," 89.

the Beatles on their first American tour, recalled leaving the Plaza Hotel with *Life* reporter Gail Cameron. When a group of the girls assembled outside the hotel asked Cameron if the Beatles had used the pen she was holding, screaming fans knocked Cameron down and attempted to wrestles away the pen. Eppridge had to pull fans off of her before they could both escape, running down the street to get away.[208] Remembering the strangeness of the experience, Janet Lessard remarked, "It was completely unlike us. I can't understand why we were doing it."[209]

"I didn't know why" appears as a common theme among recollections of Beatlemania. Penny Wagner recounted, "I started screaming and carrying on, and my mother didn't know what to do with it—my grandmother thought something was wrong with me."[210] Maryanne Laffin described her tears: "I cried. I remember just sitting there crying. I didn't know why."[211] It was a new and often bewildering experience for young women. At the same time, the news media seemed fascinated by Beatlemania, covering it as a news story and eager to explore and analyze it in special features and articles. Thanks to this fascinated, perplexed, sometimes scolding media, these girls became unwitting celebrities (Vickie Brenna-Costa, pictured in one of the most famous images of Beatlemania, didn't see her photo in the *New York Times* until over forty years later) and

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[208] Bill Eppridge, in *Memories of John Lennon*, ed. Ono, 45.

[209] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 133.

[210] *Ibid.*, 73.

[211] *Ibid.*, 74.

also came to see their experiences as part of a larger cultural event.[212] "What the press called 'Beatlemania,'" Leonard wrote, "made me realize there was a big world out there and that I was part of it."[213] "Young people, of any age, didn't particularly care what adults thought about the Beatles, but the cultural chatter about them made them seem even more important."[214] Some fans engaged with this unfolding conversation by writing letters to the editor, defending the Beatles or explaining their fandom. Dee Elias remembered, "I felt like a celebrity having my letter appear in the newspaper. I think my mother sent copies to all the relatives."[215]

Tell Me Why

At the time and ever since, scholars and cultural observers have attempted to explain why this happened, especially the screaming. The most common explanations seem to be that music had gone south and people were bored and eager for something new, that women were sexually repressed and in need of an outlet, and that the nation was sad in the aftermath of President Kennedy's assassination and found their joy in the Beatles.[216] There is probably a grain of truth in each of these theories. But it's perhaps

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[212] Vickie Brenna-Costa, "A Letter," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 17.

[213] Leonard, *Beatleness*, xv.

[214] *Ibid.*, 36.

[215] Elias, *Confessions*, 55.

[216] These are sort of underwhelming propositions, especially regarding Kennedy. Kennedy and the Beatles, actually, shared a lot of characteristics that made them appealing to young people and defined the tone for the new decade—funny, smart, young, and entertaining at press conferences. One fan remembered "The Beatles had the same energy [as Kennedy]. JFK didn't have a crew cut; he had style and wit; he teased reporters at the press conference. Like the Beatles, he had youthful energy that made everything seem possible" (See Leonard, *Beatleness*, 55. Female, b. 1946). There were also echoes of music fandom in responses to Kennedy and, later, his brother, Robert. In a Nixon campaign memo, speechwriter William

more interesting to note how perplexed these observes were. Why did this matter so much? Why was it so concerning? It was unique, for one, but it was also troubling.

Beatlemania could partly be attributed to behaviors characteristic of mobs and crowds, and while fans had "gone mad" before, contemporary sources reflect the newness of Beatlemania and concerns motivated by its public nature. As Abram Chasins commented at the time, "Up to a point, it is a familiar phenomenon…. In its unprecedented duration and degree of intensity, however, Beatlemania is far more than an outburst of common hero worship."[217] Before the Beatles had even broken up, a sociology dissertation thesis asserted that there had been no other "singing craze" "with such a mass appeal over so large an area for so long a period of time."[218] Many contemporary commentators noted the novelty of Beatlemania as a cultural event. As David Dempsey wrote in the *New York Times* in 1964, "What is happening here is significant. Although idolatry in popular music is nothing new, the method of expressing this idolatry seems to be changing. …an audience that once swooned in the presence of

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Gavin explained the "aural, tactile, suffusing younger generation." The popularity of Bobby Kennedy, he argued, had to do not with logic but with television: "it's a total *experience*, a tactile sense—thousands of little girls who want him to be president so they can have him on the tv screen and run their fingers through the image of his hair." Memo by William Gavin of Richard Nixon's 1968 reelection staff, quoted in The Selling of the President 1968 by Joe McGinnis, in Howard, Gerald, ed. *The Sixties: Art, Politics and Media of our Most Explosive Decade*. New York: Paragon House, 1991.

[217] Abram Chasins, "High-Brows vs No-Brows," in *The Beatles Reader: A Selection of Contemporary Views, News & Reviews of The Beatles In Their Heyday*, ed. Charles P. Neises (Ann Arbor: Pierian Press, 1984), 91.

[218] Cooper, Beatlemania, 1.

its favorite singer, or at best squealed, has given way to a mob that flips."[219] Sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and religious leaders offered input.

Rev. David A. Noebel, a "Christian crusader," charged "rock 'n' roll, beat music or simply Beatle-music" with "preparing [teenagers] for riot and ultimately revolution to destroy our American form of government and the basic Christian principles governing our way of life."[220] Noebel imagined a communist conspiracy in the Beatles' apparent power over young people and accused the Beatles of "helping to overwhelm our youth with this destructive type of 'music.'"[221] "With the previously instilled inhibitions prohibiting the teenager from committing acts of sexual and other delinquency, the external excitatory music creates exactly the opposite desires. The ensuing internal conflict causes a severe clash or collision of the two forces and the teenager breaks down with a mental condition identifiable as artificial neurosis."[222] Noebel quoted Dr. Bernard Saibel, a "child guidance expert" who attended a Beatles concert in Seattle, who argued, "*This is not simply a release … but a very destructive process* in which adults allow the children to be involved—allowing the children a mad, erotic world of their own without the reassuring safeguards of protection from themselves."[223] Saibel cautioned that "children" needed this protection from themselves—more probably, he felt he needed

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[219] David Dempsey, "Why the Girls Scream, Weep, Flip," *New York Times Magazine* (Feb. 23, 1964).

[220] David A. Noebel, "Rhythm, Riots and Revolution," in *"Takin' It to the Streets": A Sixties Reader*, ed. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 376.

[221] *Ibid.*, 377

[222] *Ibid.*, 378

[223] *Ibid*., 379. Italics included in original.

protection from the changes sweeping the country and affecting generational relations and public culture.

With highly visible crowds and images of fans, Beatlemania presented the emerging generation gap simmering in the previous decade. "Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command," Bob Dylan sang in 1964, and Beatles fans demonstrated that quintessential truth of the sixties more and more forcefully. Cherie Zaslawsky remembered the Beatles' appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* as "a rift … between the generations" in her house. "Suddenly we were plunged into rebellion, along with a whole generation, and for us, long hair and 'Yeah, yeah, yeah!' won out."[224] As columnist Jack Smith wrote in the *Los Angeles Times*, "A man who has never gone to a Beatles concert has never really made contact with the teen-age generation."[225] As early as 1964, Jon Margolis noted, "It was an uprising. It was as though millions of well-bred, well-groomed suburban teenagers were rejecting, implicitly but unmistakably, everything their parents held dear."[226] A contemporary newspaper article characterized Beatlemania as "teenage backlash to adult authority."[227] Jack Parr commented, "Doesn't it bother you to realize that in a few years these girls will both raise children and drive cars?"[228] In a letter to the editor in February 1964, Joseph Di John of Milwaukee wrote, "Someone

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[224] Nachman, *Right Here On Our Stage Tonight!*, 356.

[225] Jack Smith, "Adult Takes in a 'Concert,'" *Los Angeles Times* (Aug. 29, 1966), 3.

[226] Jon Margolis, *The Last Innocent Year: America in 1964, The Beginning of the "Sixites,"* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1999), 140-141.

[227] Phillips, "Concentration of Squealing Teen-Agers Noted at Hotel," 9.

[228] Jack Parr quoted in Stark, *Meet the Beatles*, 34.

should bring to the attention of the public the apparent lack of talent which the Beatles display and the lack of taste which their followers display." He continued, "But the Beatles do have an important function in our society: they shamefully show the immaturity of our teenagers. Youth's seemingly irrational outbursts of emotion and their unswerving loyalty do nothing more than cancel any respect that adults may have had for adolescent values." To Di John, young Beatles fans displayed a "total lack of intellectual, emotional, and social maturity."[229] As Di John illustrated, Beatlemania was "an affliction" in the minds of many adults.[230] One woman remembered her father catching she and her sister "fawning over" their collection of Beatles photos and magazines then taking it all outside and burning it in front of them; "After all these years, that can still bring tears to my eyes."[231] These critics, of course, only made young people like the Beatles more. Nancy Gordon wrote in a *Life* letter to the editor, "My parents, and their middle-aged, middle-class, middle-minded generation deserve Humperdinck and Jones. If the Beatles are 'too complicated' for them, that generation is obviously too simple."[232]

While newspaper sources do reflect concerned voices about the sexuality surrounding the Beatles, the alarm, at least before Lennon's 1966 remark about the Beatles becoming more popular than Jesus Christ, was mostly voiced in short letters to

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[229] Joseph Di John, Letter to the editor ("Agonizing Beatles"), *Chicago Tribune*, (Feb. 14, 1964), 12.

[230] Ehrenreich et al, "Beatlemania," 87.

[231] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 1. Female, b. 1951.

[232] Nancy Gordon, Letter to the editor, *Life*, Oct. 9, 1970.

the editor, complaining about the pandemonium or the haircuts. (However one fan remembered their family was prohibited from watching the Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show* because the local diocese had identified the Beatles as "tools of Satan."[233]). Many parents seemed to understand how fun the Beatles were, but the fear and anxiety other parents expressed was motivated more by their daughters than by the Beatles. Articles describing "teen-age backlash" and the frenzied exhibitions of Beatles fans often characterized the Beatles themselves as "courteous" and "polite."[234] While young women's reactions to the Beatles were often charged with sexuality, the Beatles, as Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie note, "did not, despite the screaming audience, treat the audience as their sexual object."[235] In the sexual atmosphere of a Beatles concert, the Beatles did little more than show up on stage and their public image was not overtly sexual. They could be handsome, charming, exciting, and funny, but they were not explicitly or aggressively sexual in the manner of Elvis or the Rolling Stones. Compared to the controversy of some musicians in the previous decade, the Beatles were a relatively safe band to like. As one fifteen year old commented, "they sing decent songs, they're not dirty or anything like a lot of the rock 'n' roll groups here."[236] Lennon distinguished

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[233] Joe Queenan, "Tools of Satan, Liverpool Division," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 1.

[234] Phillips, "Concentration of Squealing Teen-Agers Noted at Hotel," *New York Times* (Aug. 29, 1964), 9.; Jerry Doolittle, "Beatles Arrive, Teen-Agers Shriek, Police Do Their Duty, and That's That," *Washington Post, Times Herald* (Feb. 12, 1964), A1.

[235] Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie, "Rock and Sexuality," in Simon Frith, *Taking Popular Music Seriously: Selected Essays* (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 52.

[236] Cameron, "We've Got 'em, Luv, and It's All Gear," 33. Roz Chast remembered it this way: "They were sexy, for sure, but not smarmy or creepy. I wouldn't say they were 'wholesome,' either, which implies a kind of rosy-cheeked, outdoorsy earnestness that has never, ever appealed to me. No. This was something else entirely" (Roz Chast, "She Loves You," *In Their Lives*, ed. Blauner, 1-4: 2).

the Beatles from musicians who "wiggled, all sexy, in their acts." "We didn't rely on wiggling," he said.[237] This image made significant contributions to ideas about gender, but the fans did the most important work.

Young American women encountered the Beatles in a context of sexual anxieties, unstable gender constructs, and the emerging youth culture which gave some confidence if not as women then as young people, the master consumer, inheritors of the earth. Their responses to the Beatles were bold, infused with emotion, and characterized by what was widely seen as troubling sexual energy. Journalist Vance Packard commented, "The youngsters in the darkened audiences can let go all inhibitions in a quite primitive sense when the Beatles cut loose. … they are momentarily freed of all of civilization's restraints. The Beatles have become particularly adept at giving girls this release."[238] The Beatles probably were "adept" at enabling some measure of the fun and joy and freedom people felt when listening to their music or watching them live (in which case they were not listening to their music because it could almost never be heard) but their fans were also assertive in claiming music and fandom as their own spaces and means of access to a range of liberating experiences.

Many of the young women who screamed for the Beatles were the daughters of the women Betty Friedan interviewed and wrote about in *The Feminine Mystique*. Aware

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[237] John Lennon in *The Beatle Anthology*, 163.

[238] Vance Packard, "Building the Beatle Image," *Saturday Evening Post*, 1964, in *The Beatles Reader: A Selection of Contemporary Views, News & Reviews of The Beatles In Their Heyday*, ed. Charles P. Neises (Ann Arbor: Pierian Press, 1984), 12. In the Cold War context, Packard commented, "One reason why Russia's totalitarian leaders frown on rock-'n'-roll and jazz is that these forms offer people release from controlled behavior" (12).

of the lack of fulfillment of their mothers and the narrow confines of the life they could expect, young Beatles fans found another world in the Beatles and their music and claimed personal pleasure in music and in the acts of fandom. In most cases, girls did not like the Beatles, and certainly did not become hysterical over them, to get boys to like them. The acts of Beatlemania—fan club membership, record buying, traveling to concerts, waiting outside hotels—were unrelated activities to the pursuit of marriage and conventionally defined domestic bliss. Advice books for young women and girls in the 1950s and early 1960s advised a woman to "bury her own interests and impulses in order to please and flatter a man into proposing."[239] Some women may have quieted their Beatle love in hopes of a marriage proposal, but many clearly had no intent of burying their own interests when it came to the Beatles. If life's ambition for women in the 1950s was the pursuit of a husband, young women in the sixties challenged that expectation by claiming their own pleasures and interests, experiences to which they would cling and which would manifest in many ways. While the Beatles contributed to the generation gap with their irreverent humor and youthfulness, their female fans demonstrated it with their rejection of order and convention and their fervent, insistent love for the Beatles. "I tasted something," Marcy Lanza recalled, "I was totally going outside of myself—it was total freedom. Once you tasted it, you had to have more. The way you lost yourself in a crowd—there was something about the Beatles that went way beyond the Beatles."[240] Journalists and scholars writing a the time seemed to understand that to an extent, but

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[239] Stephanie Coontz, *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 15.

[240] Marcy Lanza quoted in Stark, *Meet the Beatles*, 153.

they missed the point of the political significance; they didn't know what was happening all around them, or going to happen, certainly.

"A girlish democracy"

The Beatles were at the center of the hurricane of Beatlemania, but it was driven and defined by girls, forging what Debbie Geller called "a girlish democracy"[241] The screaming girl, the Beatles fan, Susan Douglas contends, became "the most prominent image of teenage girls in the mid-60s."[242] Though for most fans Beatlemania was about the Beatles, to many observers Beatlemania seemed to be about crazed young women, and in the visible energy of their fandom, these Beatles fans collectively displayed young women as an evolving force in the 1960s. As a running news story and as a social and cultural phenomenon, Beatlemania was widely covered and discussed. Images of unruly women began to enter newspapers and magazines regularly at a time when media portrayals of women promoted a homogenized portrait of suburban contentment. These images were early visuals of the emerging intersections of young people, public space, and political activism that came to characterize the 1960s. Beatlemania demonstrated the power and potential of young people early in a decade of youthful revolution. Robert Shelton wrote that the Beatles had created a "monster" and "had better concern themselves with controlling their audiences before this contrived hysteria reaches

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[241] Debbie Geller, "America's Beatle Hangover," in Rowlands, *The Beatles Are Here*, 75 and online (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/3466587.stm). Thanks to Greil Marcus for suggesting this piece to me.

[242] Susan Douglas, *Where The Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994), 112.

uncontrollable proportions."[243] While a poster decreed the Beatles, "Our Leaders," the young girls were really leading the way. As *Newsweek* noted in 1965, "The young successfully 'Beatle-ized' the nation, and many think they may be about to 'Berkeley-ize' it as well."[244]

Fans could take satisfaction from "knowing that the Beatles were who they were because girls like oneself had made them that." They had risen "to world fame on the acoustical power of thousands of shrieking fans."[245] And not only that, the coverage, the attention, the analysis, was all about fans, and almost all about women. Writing about the protests at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Ellen Willis wrote, "Visibility is the difference between a movement and ten thousand people in search of one."[246] Many of the era's political movements would make this point clear. Beatles fans found each other and showed themselves to the world, implicitly asserting themselves as young women with the power to block city streets, crowd subways, run police barricades, and perturb police officers. Beatlemania was not explicitly political, yet it was deeply political in its force and in its challenge to order and expectations. However unwitting some fans were, their screams and shouts, confrontations with police officers and charges towards the stage, and their sheer love and passion for the Beatles challenged the confines of their gender and codes of public behavior.

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[243] *New York Times*, 29 Aug. 1964, 6, in Millard, *Beatlemania*, 27.

[244] *Newsweek*, 22 March 1965, 43, in Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protest in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 94.

[245] Ehrenreich et al, "Beatlemania," 103.

[246] Ellen Willis, "Learning from Chicago," in Willis, *Beginning to See the Light: Pieces of a Decade* (New York: Knopf, 1981), 135.

These women and their public images represent an often ignored precursor to the sexual revolution and women's liberation movement that emerged later in the decade. Between the publication of *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963 and the emergence of the women's movement in 1968, Beatlemania was one of the forces in American culture and the lives of American women which contributed to developing ideas about women, gender, sex and sexuality. Examining Beatlemania in the context of changing ideas about gender and sexuality in the 1960s illustrates the roles of Beatles fans in challenging gender conventions and contributing to the broader cultural transformations of the 1960s. Explaining the social mores surrounding public exhibition and the role of the Beatles in shifting them, Carol Moore reflected,

> I think what happened with a lot of young girls at the time was—before then, there was this whole thing growing up in the '50s about being the 'good girl,' the reserved girl, and not getting too excited in public. And the Beatles just broke our inhibitions, I think much more than Elvis, partially because the whole baby-boom generation was so much bigger, and then there were four Beatles. So it really did have a big psychological effect. And then of course, everything happened after that, in the '60s.[247]

What did happen in the sixties had a lot to do with Beatlemania. "It was the 1960s," Jane Tompkins later reflected. "It was the 1960s that was happening in the Beatles' songs, but in 1963 and 1964, we did not know that yet."[248] It's important to remember that the Beatles did not occur in a vacuum. They were received within a context of racial segregation, growing movements for civil rights, and the emerging, embattled domestic politics of the 1960s. As a reminder of this, one Cleveland fan's diary is interspersed

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[247] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 145.

[248] Tompkins, "I Want to Hold Your Hand," 217.

with the personal reflections of a young girl, news about the Beatles and her love for McCartney, as well as lines like "Race riots on the east side. Civil War II on the way…."[249] A few days after the Beatles landed in New York in February of 1964, met by unprecedented and badly behaved crowds of young women, an article in *The New York Daily News* claimed, "[Beatlemania is] a relief from Cyprus and Malaysia and Viet Nam [sic] and racial demonstrations and Khrushchev. Beset by trouble all around the globe, America has turned to the four young men with the ridiculous haircuts for a bit of light entertainment."[250] Maybe, but there is much to suggest that the Beatles and their fans' legacies were far from "light," and that rather than simply an outlet, mindless entertainment, the Beatles and many of their counterparts were a part of all of those things—a part of the 60s—intertwined with the politics of the era through their music, their performances, and by the fans who bought their records and went to see them. The sixties were characterized by powerful popular music, civil unrest, challenges to convention, and young people in the streets—all of which were loudly proclaimed by Beatles fans. Beatlemania exhibited the public disruption and urban chaos that would characterize the protest movements of the 1960s. By the end of the 1960s, crowding of streets and public spaces, displays of public sexuality, and, by previous standards, unconventional women, were not so extraordinary. The screaming and crowding and occupying came from a similar impulse, Bromell contends, as that which "would drive young people just a few years later to seize university buildings and city streets," the

[249] Norris, "Sister Mary Paul McCartney," 95.

[250] Anthony Burton, *New York Daily News*, February 11, 1964; as quoted in Bruce Spizer, *The Beatles are Coming! The Birth of Beatlemania in America* (New Orleans: 498 Productions, 2004).

"direct action," espoused by the New Left.[251] Kay Sloan remembered that the memory of charging the stage at a Beatles concert, "the beat of the music in my blood and the iron grip of the policemen's clutch on my arm" came back to her a few years later when she "fled Mississippi to be a student at Berkeley one summer" and marched to an anti-war rally at Golden Gate Park with policemen charging into her midst. It wasn't the first time Sloan had dealt with the police. Although some of her fellow protestors were singing "Let It Be," it was thanks to the Beatles, she remembered, that "Letting things be would never again be possible."[252]

"It was not a musical phenomenon to me," Walter Cronkite remarked of Beatlemania. "The phenomenon was a social one."[253] While many would argue the Beatles were in fact a musical phenomenon (they are), Cronkite was correct to observe the social implications of Beatlemania. Connected to the larger issues and events of the decade, the Beatles and their fans were instrumental in the broadening of American society and culture in the 1960s and the myriad of changes, both personal and public, for individuals and the larger culture. In unique ways, the Beatles empowered young women by inspiring them to assert and empower themselves, and, perhaps unwittingly, the Beatles and their fans—Beatle people—challenged expectations about gender and public behavior that affected the development of the sexual revolution, women's movement, and 1960s. Leslie Brody reflected, "I can say as one of that mad crowd that I didn't consider

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[251] Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 24-25.

[252] Sloan, "You Say You Want A Revolution," 30.

[253] Walter Cronkite quoted in Stark, *Meet the Beatles*, 33.

myself crazy, I was weeping for joy at their famous concert in Shea Stadium, way, way up in the bleachers."[254] This public embrace of joy and feeling foreshadowed the countercultural values developing as the sixties progressed. One fan explained, "They taught me to speak out on things, motivated me to look at what was going on around me, the war, civil rights, and to write."[255] As one fan explained, "you had to be there to understand that the Beatles influenced every single thing that was going on at that point, especially if you were young. They influenced our way of thinking, the clothing they were wearing, guys grew their hair—you couldn't live through that era without being influenced by the Beatles."[256] Further illustrating the integrality of the Beatles and the sixties, Murray Kaufman said,

> I think the greatest impact The Beatles had on our lives was their attitude. Their music and attitude said it all for us. … They kept changing with us. They kept pace with us. The Beatles inspired a lot of the political and social revolution that took place, because from a subliminal standpoint The Beatles represented change. The feeling that people had was that social change couldn't happen that fast. That changed because we saw The Beatles change right in front of our eyes.[257]

The Beatles were wildly influential, but largely because of the ways their fans claimed and adopted and enacted music and fandom. In their claiming of personal pleasure and public spaces, Beatles fans contributed to the larger revolutions of a revolutionary decade. Historian Beth Bailey has explained, "What we call the sexual revolution was an

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[254] Brody, *Red Star Sister*, 21.

[255] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 268. Female, b. 1950.

[256] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 282.

[257] Kaufman, in *The Beatles: An Oral History*, 317.

amalgam of movements that flowed together in an unsettled era. They were often at odds with one another, rarely well thought out, and usually without a clear agenda."[258] Beatlemania was a unique and important one of these movements. Public displays of sexuality, seen in the often orgasmic reactions of fans at Beatles concerts, would become another element of sixties culture as the decade progressed. The rejection of conventional propriety in public, the intensity of young women's experiences as Beatles fans, and their public displays of sexuality marked important developments in the 1960s. Bailey argued that the sexual revolution "grew from these tensions between public and private—not only from tensions manifest in public culture, but also from tensions between private behaviors and the public rules and ideologies that were meant to govern behavior."[259] At Beatles concerts, airports, hotels, and in living rooms across the country tuned to *The Ed Sullivan Show*, women "let loose," tapping into the "strange stirring" and going public with challenges to convention and implicit demands for freedom.

As Beatles fans, women shaped and participated in a broader and less confined culture and the changes, both public and private, articulated by second wave feminism. Before consciousness raising groups, they gathered to talk about their feelings for the Beatles, and when words failed, they screamed. When women marched through streets, or when one hundred women famously protested the 1968 Miss America Pageant in

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[258] Beth Bailey, "Sexual Revolution(s)," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 257.

[259] Bailey, "Sexual Revolution(s)," 235-236.

Atlantic City, they were not the first unruly women of the sixties.[260] The women's movement and sexual revolution dramatically altered the world in which many Beatles fans had grown up. With their screams, shouts, and tears, young women actively contributed to this shift in their lives and possibilities by claiming their personal interests and sexuality, embracing the emotion and energy of the Beatlemania, and publicly demonstrating their passion and power. The liberation of being a fan, ranging from sexual, political, and public, and from transformative to not at all, shaped women's lives in different ways. Cathy McCoy-Morgan recalls the feeling that "Everything changed. The hairstyles, the clothing, everything was more free."[261] For many women, this sense of freedom was directly linked to the larger changes for women in the sixties and seventies. "The women's movement didn't just happen," Marcy Lanza said, "It was an awareness that came over us. For many of us, that began with the Beatles. They told us we could do anything."[262]

The influence and popularity of the Beatles has endured into the twenty-first century, and the precedent of Beatles fans and Beatlemania continues to hold cultural meaning. When President Obama visited Europe in the spring of 2011, a Member of Parliament likened the excitement and fanfare surrounding his visit to "political

[260] Alice Echols, "Nothing Distant About It," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 149.

[261] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 51.

[262] Marcy Lanza quoted in Stark, *Meet the Beatles*, 137.

Beatlemania."[263] "Yeah yeah yeah" conveys the Beatles, and Beatles fans made lasting contributions to popular music and fandom. Fandom in the Beatlemania mold was made; not long after the Beatles went home, the Dave Clark Five came to the United States, and all five were injured by fans.[264] The Beatles "forever altered the size and scope of touring. Nobody thought of booking a ballpark for a band in 1963, but once the Beatles attracted fifty-five thousand people to Shea Stadium, the age of the stadium rock concert had begun."[265] Less obviously but more significantly, Beatles fans demonstrated the scope of what it could mean to be a fan and illustrated, as individuals and a collective group, the possibilities of fandom as a potentially transformative, sublime experience.

Looking back, Carol Cox explained, "I can't articulate it all these years later. There was something about them. They were fresh, they were new, there was just something really special and magical. I wish I could pinpoint it. I still get it now, to this day. When I see the Sullivan shows, it takes my breath away."[266] Almost fifty years later, some fans make a "pilgrimage" to Kennedy airport every February 7 to commemorate the Beatles' arrival in the United States; some celebrate John, Paul, George, and Ringo's birthdays and convene with their fellow fans to remember their experiences as Beatles fans.[267] After the Beatles parted ways, one fan wrote that she had

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[263] Paul Wooton, "Obama's Europe visit: redefined ties and a touch of 'political Beatlemania'," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 30, 2011, 08827729.

[264] Arnold Shaw, *The Rock Revolution* (London: Crowell-Collier Press, 1969), 95.

[265] Goldsmith, *The Beatles Come to America*, 170.

[266] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*, 75.

[267] *Ibid.*, Maggie Welch (265-266); Debbie Levitt (266).

"grown up from a raving maniac to a sane admirer of the Beatles" but "No single force ever gave [her] so much in life."[268] "They informed how I thought about the world. I was framing an identity for myself, and they were validating it and informing it."[269] Fans discuss the Beatles as changing, even saving, their lives and contributing to the shaping of their identities.[270] Joanne McCormack called Beatlemania "probably one of the best things in my life."[271] Another said, "My life would be vastly altered if they had never been."[272] For the individual women who screamed, sobbed, and fainted at Beatles concerts, the Beatles were clearly meaningful and the experience of Beatlemania formative.

In a winning entry to a 1966 Beatles essay contest, Ann Wilson, who would go on to make music herself, wrote, "They have led us to a new way of looking, acting, thinking, and moving; to a new and sensitive way of expressing ourselves in music; to freedom in conformity.[273] The Beatles offered a new way to be in the world. Their fans seized, claimed, and shaped their own ways and charted a new path through the decade and their lives.

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[268] Temperance Snow, Letter to the editor, *Life* (May 15, 1970).

[269] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 254. Female, b. 1955.

[270] Berman, *We're Going to See the Beatles*: JoAnne McCormack (273), Maggie Welch (279-280), Betty Taucher (278).

[271] *Ibid.,* 273.

[272] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 255. Female, b. 1952.

[273] Ann Wilson, quoted in Daisann McLane, "Heart Attack," *Rolling Stone*, May 15, 1980, in *Rock She Wrote*, ed. McDonnell and Powers, 291.

Chapter Four

Peace, Love, and Music: Women, the Counterculture, and Music Culture

The politics of pop lie in what people do with it, how they use it to seize a moment, define a time, cull meaning around official knowledge.
~ Simon Frith, "Rock and the Politics of Memory," 1984

You better start swimmin'

In 1965, as the Beatle-ized nation was indeed becoming increasingly "Berkeley-ized," Bob Dylan released a new single called "Like A Rolling Stone," sending his piercing voice, with the startling additions of electric guitar, piano, and drums, howling the refrain "How does it feel?" ("*feeeeeeeeel*???") across radio airwaves and into bedrooms and cars and coffee shops across the country.[1] This simple but groundbreaking lyric and the force with which it was delivered captured the mood of this moment, at mid-decade, when folk musicians were plugging in their electric guitars, and, with Dylan leading the way, writing the lyrics that forged a new art form. It also reflected a turn in the growing counterculture, where new ideas were developing rapidly about how the political movements of the day were conducted, how society might be organized, and how life should be led. This shift was not a rejection of politics as much as a radical

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Epigraph: Simon Frith, "Rock and the Politics of Memory," in *The Sixties Without Apology*, Sohnya Sayres, Anders Stephanson, Stanley Aronowitz, and Frederic Jameson, eds. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 59-69: 68.

[1] *Newsweek*, 22 March 1965, 43, in Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protest in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 94. It's worth noting that while "Like A Rolling Stone," *Highway 61 Revisited*, and Dylan's performance at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival get the hype, Dylan had indicated his new direction already when he released *Bringing It All Back Home* earlier that year. As Griel Marcus describes "Like A Rolling Stone," "There's a harsh edge—the acrid tone that was everywhere in 1965, the sound of the time…" See Greil Marcus, *Like A Rolling Stone: Bob Dylan at the Crossroads* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005), 142. Also see Nicholas Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows: Rock and Psychedelics in the 1960s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 130.

interpretation of what politics was and how to go about it—one that would have profound influences on some of the decade's most dramatic transformations, women's liberation among them. A few short years later, Carol Hanisch would coin the phrase "the personal is political" and women across the country would ask each other the question: "how does it feel?"[2]

As the sixties unfolded, the politics of the growing counterculture extended to the personal as young people raised questions about life in the United States and explored deeper meanings of freedom. As the New Left helped catapult the counterculture from its marginal status in coffeehouses and at hootenannies into a visible and integral component of the sixties, it broadened the counterculture's questions about lifestyle and expression. Dylan told Phil Ochs, who wrote more overtly political songs in the traditional vein of folk music activism, "'The stuff you're writing is bullshit, because politics is bullshit. It's all unreal. The only thing that's real is inside you. Your feelings.'"[3] Dylan echoed the feelings of many young people coming to believe that meaningful change would not come through traditional political avenues but rather through the efforts of individuals experimenting with new ways of living and creative ways of engaging others in their experimentation. Politics, then, included questions of freedom and lifestyle—dress, music, relationships, and the most basic institutions. Many members of the counterculture did not seriously engage the political analysis of the New

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[2] See Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin, 2000).

[3] Mike Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger: Bob Dylan and the 1960s* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), 63.

Left or the organizing apparatus of the civil rights and peace movements, but their fundamental criticisms of society absorbed their rebellions and reflected the emerging idea that the personal and political were closely aligned—as one slogan went, "The revolution is about our lives."[4]

Popular music was a central force in the emerging counterculture, especially as its growing number of adherents came to conceive of and embrace rock music as an art form.[5] "Talk about epiphanies!" Ellen Willis said of hearing Dylan's *Bringing It All Back Home* for the first time: "In a flash the two sides of my life, the 'serious' bohemian/ folkie/ literary side and the trivial, illegitimate, teendream side, came together."[6] Much has been written about the impact of Dylan's groundbreaking music on other artists, but Willis encapsulates this moment for fans and listeners. Folk was rock, rock was folk, smart girls rocked, rockers were smart, the radio was high art, art was on the radio.

Dylan had introduced, at almost lightning speed, a brand new form, his own epic poetry fused with rock and roll. Dylan had also started listening to the Beatles, and so had some of his fans.[7] Suze Rotolo remembered, "[The Beatles] had taken over the

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[4] Doug Rossinow, "'The Revolution Is about Our Lives': The New Left's Counterculture," in *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s*, ed. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 99-124; Brian Lloyd, "The Form is the Message: Bob Dylan and the 1960s," *Rock Music Studies* 1, no. 1 (2014): 58-76, DOI: 10.1080/19401159.2013.876756; Debra Michals, "From 'Consciousness Expansion' to 'Consciousness Raising': Feminism and the Countercultural Politics of the Self," in *Imagine Nation*, ed. Braunstein and Doyle, 41-68: 45.

[5] As Allen Ginsberg said, "It was an artistic challenge to see if great art can be done on a jukebox, and he proved it can" (Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger*, 152).

[6] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; "The Paradox of Rocklit," Vienna, 1995. MC 646, 10.5. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[7] See Tim Riley, *Hard Rain: A Dylan Commentary* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), 9.

airwaves and our lives; folk music wasn't what it used to be."[8] Soon, the Beatles weren't what they used to be either. Their lyrics grew more complex and their records increasingly innovative. Even the covers of *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver* took some fans by surprise, and *Revolver's* closing track, "Tomorrow Never Knows," was either a thrilling revelation or an unsettling shock to its wide and attentive audience. At the same time, Beatles concerts and appearances grew increasingly chaotic and somewhat perilous amidst the race riots and urban unrest in American cities, and the band's changing sound made live performance more difficult, along with the fact that no one could hear the music anyway. The band stopped touring after playing San Francisco's Candlestick Park in August 1966.[9] Though the end of touring removed the physicality of the concert experience, the elevated art form of Beatles' records created a new experience of listening for fans and, like Dylan's mid-sixties masterpieces, a new standard of popular music. The evolution of four "mop tops" in suits singing three-minute love songs into the long-haired (now without exaggeration) psychedelic countercultural figures capable of "A Day in the Life" and "Strawberry Fields Forever" exemplified the rapid and dramatic transformations of the 1960s, molding and echoing the shifting styles, sensibilities, and gender roles during the same period.

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[8] Suze Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time: A Memoir of Greenwich Village in the Sixties.* (New York: Broadway Books, 2008), 302.

[9] Note that when the Beatles played Candlestick Park for that last show in August 29, 1966, *Revolver* had already been released yet they played not one song from their latest, some say greatest, album. The innovative music was more difficult to perform live, no doubt contributing to their decision to end touring, along with the chaos. See Steve Meacham, "The Untold Story of the Beatles last concert," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, August 28, 2016.

Dylan and the Beatles lost some fans on this journey, but these ruptures were never as tidy as broad histories of the era suggest—it was never so stark or simple as plugging in or tuning out.[10] Fans changed with the Beatles, and people continued listening to and singing the songs that were sung in Washington Square Park and campus coffeehouses—sometimes in those exact spaces, or sometimes along with the radio or records, increasingly in new forms and by new bands. But something had changed, and this new music led to new forms of fandom and shaped fans as well. As *Downbeat* put it in 1968, "The Beatles have used their tremendous popularity not as a crutch but as springboard to artistic growth; the fascinating thing has been that their fans have grown with them."[11] Together, fans and musicians shaped their political, social, and cultural world and made music a central part of their rebellions.

In her seminal piece on Dylan published in *Cheetah* in 1967, Willis declared that Dylan had "made a revolution."[12] Dylan seems to have known what he did in terms of music, but as for the other parts of the revolution, he wasn't interested. He wrote later,

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[10] Even if the folk revival waned after Dylan plugged in, plenty of folkies followed Dylan wherever he went, and plenty of them kept singing folk music—Pete Seeger and his ilk, but also young women and men who had fallen into folk late in the game and kept singing the songs and frequenting the spaces of the folk revival, or new spaces created as the folk revival rippled across the country. For instance, the Jabbewock at Augustana College, referenced in Chapter Two, didn't open until 1967, an example that reminds us that the stark divisions of periodization are seldom so simple. According to Charles Perry, "A lot of hippies, in fact, were folkies who had followed Dylan in his switch to rock." See Charles Perry, *The Haight-Ashbury: A History*, (New York: Rolling Stone Press, 1984), 5-6.

[11] *Downbeat*, January 1, 1968, in Luke Crompton and Dafydd Rees, *Rock and Roll, Year by Year* (London: DK, 2003), 193.

[12] Ellen Willis, "Before the Flood," *Cheetah*, 1967, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, ed. Nona Willis Aronowitz (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 3.

"Whatever the counterculture was, I'd seen enough of it."[13] True to form, Dylan, as David Hajdu writes, was largely "indifferent to the audience."[14] The audience, however, was not indifferent to him. They learned his songs and quoted them in letters, drove to Woodstock and roamed the town in search of Dylan, and they listened.[15] The ideas Dylan sang—"It is not she or he or them or it that you belong to," "Don't follow leaders," "Propaganda, all is phony," "He who is not busy being born is busy dying"—were gaining ground around the world and becoming deeply held beliefs among Dylan's audience. Like Beatles fans, these devoted listeners helped make a new kind of revolution—both at the concerts and festivals where they came together and showed themselves to the world, and behind closed doors, where the music subtly but insistently changed their ways of thinking about the world, their plans for their lives, and their political aspirations. "The true revolution of the Sixties," Ian MacDonald contended, "was an inner one of feeling and assumption; a revolution in the head. Few were unaffected by this and, as a result of it, the world changed more thoroughly than it could ever have done under merely political direction."[16] This chapter is about revolution in

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[13] Bob Dylan, *Chronicles: Volume One* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 120.

[14] David Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street: The Lives and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Fariña and Richard Fariña* (New York: Picador, 2001), 280. Ellen Willis added, "At each stage he has made himself harder to follow, provoked howls of execration from those left behind, and attracted an ever-larger, more demanding audience. He has reacted with growing hostility to the possessiveness of this audience and its shock troops, the journalists, the professional categorizers." (Willis, "Before the Flood," 2.)

[15] Geraldine Goldberg, "Bob Dylan: AWOL or MIA," in Susan Reynolds, ed. *Woodstock Revisited: 50 Far Out, Groovy, Peace-Loving, Flashback-Inducing Stories From Those Who Were There* (Avon, Massachusetts: Adams Media, 2009), 84-86: 84.

[16] Ian MacDonald, *Revolution in the Head: The Beatles' Records and the Sixties* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 25.

the head and about the women who listened to the music of the counterculture in the mid to late sixties and the meanings they found there. While little of this music seemed to address women's liberation explicitly, I mine this music and the culture around it to illustrate the role of rock music—on records and in live performance—in women's lives. I explore both the individual experience of listening and the communities formed around music, from be-ins and happenings to the community forged by *Sgt. Pepper*. I consider what this new music led the women who listened to it to feel and imagine and how being participants in a broader music culture influenced their lives. Rather than devoted fans of one particular group, more of the women included in this chapter were participants in a wide world of music, listening to many artists, reading rock publications, attending live concerts, and embracing rock styles and sensibilities in a range of ways.[17] In this chapter I explore the way rock fans dressed, the politics they embraced, the communities they formed, and the role of music in their lives at a moment immediately preceding, then concurrent with, the women's liberation movement.

While the story of rock and roll in the early sixties is often about screaming young women, the narrative of rock music in the late sixties is usually about men with guitars—long solos, long hair, smashing and burning and throwing guitars. Even where audiences are concerned, the counterculture was so male-dominated that men were sometimes assumed to be the only ones listening.[18] The silence surrounding women echoes real

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[17] Perhaps one indication of the extent of this culture is that most major media no longer treated music fans as the aberrant young people fawning over Elvis and screaming for the Beatles, but more as a fact of life.

[18] See Judy Kutulas, *After Aquarius Dawned: How the Revolutions of the Sixties Became the Popular Culture of the Seventies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 22. As Kutulas notes, "Male rebellion defined rock authenticity. Male consumers mattered more than females when it came to

exclusions and slights, but leaving women out of the story of rock music makes that story unintelligible. Only in filling in this gap can we appreciate how integral women were to this revolutionary world and how integral it was to the lives of many women. Too often women in the counterculture have been cast as sex objects (as they were often seen at the time) or seen only in terms of the era's fashion, or drugs, or "hippie" lifestyle. All of these things are important aspects of the counterculture, but there were also women, like men, who were there for the music, or who found their way to the counterculture and, perhaps, to drugs or communes or other affronts to traditional society, because of music. I argue that this music was a part of the project of liberation on which many of them were embarking. There were also women who never moved to a commune or went to a be-in but who found a revolutionary and sometimes liberating space in listening to music. I am interested in these women in particular, and as sources have allowed, I have tried to pay attention to what historians rather uncreatively call "ordinary people." We've inherited images of groupies and hippie chicks and flower children, and these people were real enough, but I'm also interested in the people—and there were a lot more of them—who approached all of this in a more piecemeal way or whose only real attachment to the counterculture was the music.[19] What drew young women to the music? What meaning

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rock as they had more money and were assumed to have better taste. … Girls, the record industry assumed, chose their music based on the cuteness of the performers and not the quality of the songs" (22).

[19] Groupies were an important part of this culture as well, but they are not my primary interest in this chapter because their proximity to the band, roles in touring and promoting, and relationships with musicians (often sexual) made them distinct from the vast majority of music fans who would never meet, become friends, or sleep with the musicians they loved. None of that is to say that the women (and men) who were groupies did not love and appreciate the music, but they were in an inner circle most fans would never enter and, although some may have dreamed of it, many did not really want to enter in reality. As Kathryn Kerr Fenn explained, "Without direct contact, one was not a groupie." (7). The world groupies entered once they were "with the band" was often abusive and exploitative, both sexually and in terms of

did they find there? How did it influence their politics—both in the context of the late 1960s but also the politics of the everyday that meant so much to the counterculture and were influencing various liberation movements as well? These are the questions that drive this chapter.

Dealing with the counterculture and its music (let alone politics, or even worse, gender politics) is a broad and unwieldy endeavor. Like most everything in the storied decade, the counterculture itself, let alone its meaning and impact, and let alone the music in and around it, were and remain contested. Decades later, as Howard Brick wrote, historians still have a "sketchy formula" for what the counterculture really was and why it mattered.[20] It ended in 1967, it began in 1967; New Left or apolitical; Diggers, hippies,

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the loose system of labor groupies performed in the era before a professional infrastructure of touring was developed ("band-*aids*" as in *Almost Famous*). It is important to recognize that too often this was seen as the only avenue available to women in music; as Jacqueline Warwick wrote, "those girls who do follow musicians are often considered 'groupies' more enchanted with the glamour and sex appeal of rock stars than with their music" (Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Culture*, 24). Still, many women maintained this experience as a site of liberation, and it would do them a disservice to ignore both their sexual agency and the meaning they found in music. At the same time, it does other listeners and fans a disservice to presume or imply, as many people did and still do, that the women who loved a band or artist were groupies or wanted to be and did not really care about the music (as groupies were presumed to care mostly about sex and proximity to fame). In a time when women's roles in the music world were so limited, the logic, as Amanda Petrusich points out, implied that "women became groupies because what else could they possible do to mediate or amplify the sublime experience of reacting to these songs?" (Of course, as Petrusich notes, just ask Janis Joplin, or Ellen Willis). Groupies were portrayed as sexually promiscuous, subservient to men, and, often, dumb, meanwhile the media's focus on groupies, aligning woman-as-fan with sexual promiscuity, served to undermine women's non-groupie fandom. Kathryn Kerr Fenn offers an in depth study of groupie history and culture in her dissertation, "Daughters of the Revolution, Mothers of the Counterculture: Rock and Roll Groupies in the 1960s and 1970s" (Duke University, Department of History, 2002). Also see Amanda Petrusich, "'We Support The Music!': Reconsidering the Groupie," *The New Yorker*, December 29, 2015. I am also grateful to have heard Ann Powers discuss groupies at the 2016 Pop Con. Ann Powers, "Hard Rock, Sex Sounds, and the Groupie System: Life at the Riot House, 1973," EMP Pop Conference, Seattle, April 16, 2016.

[20] Howard Brick, *Age of Contradiction: American Thought and Culture in the 1960s* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 114.

Merry Pranksters; a select few or the entire nation.[21] Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle defined the counterculture as "an inherently unstable collection of attitudes, tendencies, postures, gestures, 'lifestyles,' ideals, visions, hedonistic pleasures, moralisms, negations, and affirmations."[22] In this chapter, I treat the counterculture broadly and with recognition of how diffuse and wide reaching it became, and I argue that had a lot to do with the music. The music of the counterculture, also, was broad and unwieldy, and there is so much to say, regarding gender and sexuality alone, about the Doors, the Dead, Jefferson Airplane, and so many performers, so I have tried to focus on women listening to music and participating in a broad, vibrant, and important music culture.

Counter-culture

In 1960, sociologist J. Milton Yinger used the phrase "contra culture" to describe juvenile delinquency in the United States. Nearly ten years later, in 1969, Theodore Roszak "borrowed, and slightly altered," the term, describing so much of what had already happened in the sixties with a new term: "the counter culture." Soon, the two words were one, and as the decade ended, historians had a term to start describing whatever had just happened.[23] What became known as the counterculture grew

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[21] As Robert Christgau wrote, the "counterculture," was never as homogenous as that potentially useful term implied…." Christgau, *Going Into The City: Portrait of A Critic As A Young Man* (New York: Dey St., 2015), 175.

[22] Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, "Introduction," in Braunstein and Doyle, *Imagine Nation*, 10.

[23] This information comes from Michael J. Kramer, *The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9. See J. Milton Yinger, "Contraculture and Subculture," *American Sociological Review* 25, 4 (October 1960): 625-35; Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition* (1969).

increasingly mainstream as the 60s wore on, but the styles and sensibilities that defined it remained a way of distinguishing oneself from the dominant culture and its values, mores, and styles (and often from one's own family). It was also, both in a broad sense and in very specific ways, a community, tied together by a shared set of books, records, clothes, and general attitudes, and bound by shared experiences.

The origins of the people who made up the counterculture, broadly defined, the people Americans soon came to call "hippies," were often traced to San Francisco and the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, although the counterculture was far more expansive than the media usually granted.[24] "Hippie" was the Beat term for a young wannabe, a derisive term among both the Beats who looked down on these hippies and ordinary citizens who usually referred to them dismissively or with a mix of fascination, perplexity, and disgust.[25] Hippies had clear roots in Beat culture, folk circles, and the New Left, but they were unique. As Leonard Wolf explained, "Beat was dark, silent, moody, lonely, sad—and its music was jazz. Hippie is bright, vivacious, ecstatic, crowd-loving, joyful—and its music is rock. Beat was the Lonely Crowd; hippie, the crowd that tired of being lonely."[26] Also, simply, there were more of them.

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[24] For more on the Haight, see Charles Perry, *The Haight-Ashbury* and Helen Swick Perry, *The Human Be-In* (London: Penguin, 1970). Ralph Gleason's *The Jefferson Airplane and the San Francisco Sound* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1969) offers another early history. See also David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 168-169.

[25] Alice Echols, *Shaky Ground: The Sixties and Its Aftershocks* (New York: Columbia, 2002), 19. Also see Leonard Wolf, ed., *Voices from the Love Generation* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), xxi.

[26] Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, xxi. Wolf continued, "The key, no doubt the causal, is acid—LSD" (xxi).

Like the Beats, the hippies grew on the West Coast. By 1966, California was the clear epicenter of a new scene whose music was being exported around the country, stemming the tide of the British Invasion.[27] In 1967, the Human Be-in, "A Gathering of the Tribes," featuring Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, Country Joe and the Fish, Quicksilver Messenger Service, and Big Brother and the Holding Company, drew 25,000 people to Golden Gate Park, and inspired a second "Be-In" of 10,000 in New York City's Central Park soon after.[28] This subculture of "beautiful people" in and around San Francisco grew far beyond the city and held great appeal for young people who heard what was going on there—the music, the fashion, the drugs. Many of them set out for San Francisco, and after all they had been invited: as Big Brother sang, "So come to San Francisco," with the added promise to "feel more," and Scott McKenzie reminded young people to wear flowers in their hair for the "love-in there."[29] San Francisco became a tourist destination that summer, with bus tours of the Haight and a swarm of not only young hippies looking to feel more, but all manner of people just wanting to look at the curious culture they read about in magazines. There were even more young people brought west to attend the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967.

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[27] "In October 1966, *Melody Maker* warned its readers about this psychedelic movement and the 'freak brigade,' citing the fact that only nine British groups were left in the *Billboard* Top 50 album chart." See Brian Southall, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band: The Album, The Beatles, and The World in 1967* (Watertown, MA: Imagine, 2017), 94.

[28] Crampton and Rees, *Rock and Roll*, 178; Southall, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band*, 96.

[29] Scott McKenzie's version of John Phillips' "San Francisco (Be Sure to Wear Flowers in Your Hair)" debuted in May 1967.

Anxious to be a part of the celebrated Summer of Love, young people came to San Francisco in droves, and the Haight soon started to sour. There were too many people for the small enclave, and too many drugs, not just being shared communally, as some envisioned, but often being sold by career criminals.[30] The scene was becoming less beautiful and more dangerous. As the Summer of Love ended and Haight-Ashbury grew inundated with tourists and addicts, a funeral procession was held for the hippie. A day of mourning followed, and on the third day the hippie rose again, resurrected as "the free man," no longer walking the Haight, his spirit rising and spreading throughout the city and beyond.[31] This ritual was marked by sadness—the end of an era, the death-by-popularity of a scene, the realities of lack of resources—but it held a very real grain of truth. The San Francisco scene was forever changed by its own national import and by the throngs of people who came in search of their own meanings, but the images and ideas it broadcast changed the nation by changing young people.

Soon, what was going on in San Francisco was replicated in a range of ways all around the country, and it was driven by young people, forging a distinct youth culture.[32] The *Time* "Man of the Year" in 1966 was not one man but, in the magazine's words, "a

[30] See Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 186 and Joan Didion, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1968).

[31] Swick Perry, *The Human Be-In*, 3-4.

[32] See Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 169. The town of Woodstock, too, grew inundated with fans. See Barney Hoskyns, *Small Town Talk: Bob Dylan, The Band, Van Morrison, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix and friends in the Wild Years of Woodstock* (Boston: DeCapo Press, 2016).

generation: the man—and woman—of 25 and under."[33] As George Lipsitz noted, "To many observers at the time, the most important change in American society during the sixties seemed to be the emergence of youth as a distinct political and cultural force."[34]

These young people were the subject of an unfolding generational "crisis" amplified by the media but rooted in real pain and division in homes across the country. For all of the imagery of the Summer of Love and the beautiful people, the counterculture's aspirations were always tempered by the prevalence of drugs and addiction and by the fractured commitments of the community itself. There were disagreements about tactics, conflicts over division of labor, racial tensions, arguably untenable ageism, and frequent sexual violence.[35] The counterculture was predicated by the affluence of American society and often shaped by who had the ability to "check out" and live without any income or obligations.[36] Although it forced the now obvious point

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[33] Robert C. Cottrell, *Sex, Drugs, and Rock 'n' Roll: The Rise of America's 1960s Counterculture* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015), 195.

[34] George Lipsitz, "Who'll Stop the Rain?" in *The Sixties*, ed. David Farber, 206-234: 206.

[35] Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness and Race Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 3. According to Brian Ward: "By the mid 1960s, blacks rarely bought white records anymore, although the white market for black music remained buoyant…." Although racial barriers were less fixed in the counterculture (Hendrix, for instance, was the epitome of psychedelia) than in the mainstream and footage of the counterculture includes black, Asian, native, and Chicano participants, the hippies were largely white, and while they dabbled in yoga and Eastern meditation, loved Hendrix and Otis Redding, and embraced ethnic and cultural difference through fashion, as Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo argues, the counterculture "couldn't compete with the vibrant, focused, and well-organized ethnic power movements of the same period in which activists of color engaged in their own struggles to transform the broader culture, strengthen their communities, and create alternative institutions." See Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius: Women of the Sixties Counterculture* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009), 36.

[36] As Alice Echols wrote, "on the convictions that wealth and comfort bred spiritual and emotional impoverishment and strangled all authenticity and soulfulness." See Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company, 1999), xii.

that money can't necessarily buy happiness for a generation of people trained to believe that it more or less could, this could be read as a gratuitous position in the face of real poverty and hardship; and, indeed, it was viewed that way by the many Americans who worked hard for the money and material possessions they had, many of whom were these people's parents.[37] Along with lines of class and age, the counterculture was also shaped by mainstream divisions of race and gender and driven, primarily, by white men. Although the counterculture was mixed-company and never as brazenly sexist as the Beats, it never seriously questioned that same sexism.[38] As Ann Powers put it, "The counterculture was a great place to be a white male."[39] Still, for all its faults, there was something important about the brand of politics put forth by the counterculture. "It seems to me," Herbert Marcuse wrote in 1967, "that the only viable social revolution which stands today is the Youth, as on the West Coast. They are totally pervasive and fascinating. This group no longer cares about Marxism. But they do have an immense social import. A revolutionary impact."[40]

The counterculture was grounded in the politics of the New Left, but the politics of the counterculture were distinct from the formal activism of the Left, both Old and

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[37] Full converts to the counterculture often came from affluent backgrounds and had little responsibility to their families. These attitudes often rubbed many working class communities the wrong way. See Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*, 35.

[38] See *Ibid.*, 10; 35. For more on sexism in the counterculture, see Rosen, *The World Split Open*, 126.

[39] Ann Powers, "Lament for the Death of My Cock: Jim Morrison as Phallic Disruptor." Pop Conference, Museum of Popular Culture, Seattle, April 21, 2017.

[40] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Herbert Marcuse, *Washington Free Press*, quoted in *Cheetah*, March 1967, p. 4. MC 646, 6.8. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

New.[41] They were inventive in their quest for alternative ways of living and arranging society and their embrace of everyday life as a radical realm of political change.[42] The hippies did not invent the politics of lifestyle of course, but they helped make them a defining characteristic of the sixties and shaped the growing awareness of the political connotations of personal choices. The politics of the counterculture were viewed as apolitical at times in that they were not as interested in the formal affiliations and tireless organizing that had characterized SDS, SNCC, and other organizations at the beginning of the decade. Many hippies had their roots in those organizations and had come to see them as not enough, venues for changing laws but not lives. As the decade went on and movement politics fractured and radicalized, more young people embraced the politics of lifestyle, enacting their politics through where and how they lived, how they talked, what they ate, and what they wore, and coming to see these realms as the more radical and more meaningful avenues for political change.

In San Francisco, the Diggers articulated a more radical form of politics, rejecting official ideas about property ("take it, it's yours'"), money ("money is an unnecessary evil"), and daily life while embracing creative ways of seeking change by enacting it, performing it daily, in street theater and free concerts as well as a "crash pad" and "free store."[43] As David Farber asserted, "The Diggers … were the nearest thing the

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[41] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 30. As Echols also wrote, "The flower child wasn't invented out of whole cloth by the media, however. Reporters could always find young people who fit the profile easily enough." For more on the right clothes, see Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, xliii.

[42] See Margot Adler, *Heretic's Heart: A Journey Through Spirit & Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), 110-111.

[43] Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 169.

counterculture had to a visionary core."[44] Although they were always few in numbers, they were far in reach, however incomplete the changes they sought eventually became. Their essential premise that marching and protesting were ineffective and that the best way to address the ills of American society—consumerism, racism, the war—was by rejecting it entirely and carving autonomous alternatives laid the groundwork underpinning the politics of the counterculture writ large. Even those who never made it to San Francisco or had little sense of who the Diggers really were had a basic realization of this philosophy and enacted these politics in a range of ways: living arrangements, ideas about careers, dress and display.[45] They didn't march together but they lived together, ate together, listened to music together, and together they were engaged in waging revolution.

Even for those on the outskirts, being a hippie was a way of being rebellious and marking oneself a rebel, down for the count against mainstream culture and its values (and against the war, and the bomb, and maybe the police). Judy Collins described her style in 1968 as more hippie than folk, explaining, "I would always wish to have people know in what area of society I live. That's why my hair is long and my clothes are far out. It says something about me that they have to deal with."[46] Self-fashioning was an important part of countercultural politics. As Echols wrote, "Beautiful people dressed to underscore their freakiness, appropriating the clothes of other times and cultures—Davy

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[44] *Ibid.*, 169.

[45] See "The Quintessential Digger Manifesto" [Cat. No.: DP025] The Diggers Archive.

[46] Reva Berger, "Judy's Tuned In," in *West*, February 18, 1968, 26.

Crockett buckskin, military surplus, Buddhist robes, Edwardian suits, Errol Flynn pirate shirts, Native American headbands, capes, cowboy and Beatle boots, hats—bowlers, stove pipe, cowboy, Eskimo, anything—and beads, of course."[47] (Eclectic, and, note, influenced by music culture). Clothes were a way of being beautiful, a way of celebrating the values espoused by the counterculture, but also a way of rejecting mainstream culture and the rigid fashions of the fifties and early sixties. Dylan later said that the counterculture was all about clothes, and indeed, the counterculture has been dismissed as some combination of naïve, superficial, clothes-obsessed, and drug-obsessed, all of which it was, in part.[48] The counterculture was pretty profitable for those who played their cards right, but it was also grounded in very real beliefs about life in the United States in the 1960s.[49] Sure, people bought records and they dressed a certain way and maybe they were persuaded to buy a VW Bug because of the advertisers who grew hip to the hippies (or, as *Mad Men* left us believing, a coke, with the world singing in

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[47] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 20.

[48] Bob Dylan's take on Woodstock: "that wasn't about anything. It was just a whole new market for tie-dyed T-shirts. It was about clothes" (In Mick Brown, "'Jesus Who's Got Time to Keep Up with the Times?'" *Sunday Times*, July 1, 1984, in *Younger Than That Now*, 191). Todd Gitlin, author and activist, once asked cynically "whether the youth culture [would] leave anything behind but a market." Aside from conservatives bitterly blaming those "dirty hippies" for so many social ills, the most common criticism may have been that the counterculture was all about consumption, about stuff. As Thomas Frank and others have documented, these cultures were marketed to specifically and often successfully (Don Draper teaches us this from Esalen) and capitalized on for years to come. See Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). As Echols notes, "the media sometimes treated hippies like comic relief, a diversion from race riots, assassinations, and the horror of the ever-escalating war in Vietnam" (*Shaky Ground*, 31). Meanwhile, they seldom entertained the idea that the hippie lifestyle may have been a response to those same events. In fact, as the decades have passed, it seems that many of the people who were affiliated with the counterculture have joined in with snide comments about their own naiveté, or chosen to remember that small window of the sixties as all fun and games, ignoring its political roots and aspirations. See Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 9. Also see *The Big Chill*.

[49] See David Farber, "The Intoxicated State/Illegal Nation" in *Imagine Nation*, 17-40.

perfect harmony; "We repeat, this is not an ad for Coke"), but what drew most people to the counterculture was rooted in real ideas and experiences and significant for the inventive alternatives they offered for individuals and society more broadly.[50]

This was especially true of the era's music. As the sixties wore on, "and roll" was dropped and "rock" was born—edgy and innovative.[51] Rock too would be written off as another product in a consumer culture, and it was (a massively successful one, as record sales soared and surpassed movie sales, and as rock records took over an increasingly large majority of the market). But it was also far more. For one thing, it was art, and the rapid pace of change and innovation was clear to most everyone paying any attention at all; Dylan and the Beatles were elevated as icons and innovators in their own time, and the music writing of the time—the emerging world of rock criticism—reflected the momentousness of new music and the breadth of innovation released on a regular basis. Those short years saw "a complete upending of the pop music scene," one writer claimed in 1969.[52] Even the shift towards the album, as opposed to the dominion of singles, demonstrated the shift towards pop music as culture and the album as art form.[53] Most significantly, the meaning people seemed to find in music itself—listening, playing, dancing along—gave it landmark status in the wider culture.

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[50] See Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, especially his discussion of "hip capitalism."

[51] As Christgau explained, "The term 'rock,' as opposed to both 'pop' and 'rock and roll,' became a metonym for this counterculture" (Christgau, *Going Into The City*, 9).

[52] Arnold Shaw, *The Rock Revolution* (London: Crowell-Collier Press, 1969), 1.

[53] See Lisa L. Rhodes, *Electric Ladyland: Women and Rock Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 19.

Influenced by the style and politics of the folk revival and by the energy, devotion, and innovation of Beatlemania and the British Invasion, rock fans in the mid to late 60s formed new communities around music. As Willis explained it,

> Then the folk thing died. Because Lyndon Johnson sang 'We Shall Overcome'; because Dylan went rock. And most of all because we were tired of apologizing for what we were—not oppressed workers, not Southern Negroes, but middle-class kids. When Dylan and the Beatles showed us how to accept our origins without joining the corporation or the country club, we went with them.[54]

It was music, then that helped form and create culture and community for many young people, particularly of the white middle class, and that transcended traditional society and politics. In 1966, student activists at Berkeley sang "Yellow Submarine" as part of a demonstration; "They did NOT sing 'We Shall Overcome,' the *Examiner* story made clear.[55] "Yellow Submarine" lent itself to the political philosophies of the counterculture ("And we live a life of ease, everyone of us has all they need"), but it was not an overtly political song. This and countless other moments marked a shift in both music and politics and illustrated that a song was no longer expected to be overtly political for a listener to find and to carry political meaning. Youth in 1968, Ralph Gleason wrote, were "Trained by music and linked by music…."[56] This training and community-making came through listening, alone and in groups, and in coming together where live music was played.

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[54] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; *Cheetah*, March 1968. MC 646, 6.8. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[55] Lynn Ludlow, San Francisco *Examiner*, December 11, 1966, quoted in Helen Swick Perry, *The Human Be-In*, 56.

[56] Ralph Gleason, *Rolling Stone*, June 22, 1968, in Crompton and Rees, *Rock and Roll*, 197.

Music was important to individuals as well as for the larger significance of both the music and community. "For the sixties music listener," Jeanne Simonelli wrote, "music was about individual meaning. Enhanced by various and sundry mind-altering experiences, listening to a particular album track was a personal and unique journey."[57] Listening to music, and not only listening but *experiencing* music, as Jimi Hendrix asked, helped form what historian Michael Kramer calls "the republic of rock." As he writes, "for those who took refuge in it simply by listening and responding to music, this country of sonic experience mattered immensely."[58] Listening to music—let alone music that was innovative and pushed boundaries—tied this community together by shared experience. "Rock music became important to the claim that citizenship was both political and cultural because as it offered spaces of aesthetic interaction in the realm of leisure and entertainment, it also connected individuals to larger structures of power."[59]

Rock music also helped make the values and fashion and lifestyle of the counterculture more interesting and appealing to young people across the country. As Echols wrote, "Rock music was key to the Haight's popularity, what made this new bohemia go mass."[60] In 1967, the Monterey Pop Festival broadcast this music to the nation and sent people swarming to the West Coast as the epicenter of the new scene; it

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[57] Jeanne Simonelli, "Foreword: Rediscovering Music and Meaning," in Linda K. Randall, *Finding Grace in the Concert Hall: Community and Meaning Among Springsteen Fans* (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2011), x.

[58] Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 9.

[59] *Ibid.*, 11.

[60] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 18.

was an exciting scene, all these beautiful people gathered together, the "major turn-on, though," Robert Christgau wrote of Monterey, "was the music."[61] *Rolling Stone* magazine was established in San Francisco later that year.[62] When the magazine debuted, it declared itself "Not simply a music magazine but also about the things and attitudes that music embraces."[63] This explained well the idea of a music culture and the centrality of music to the counterculture. Willis described this cultural importance:

> Rock became identified less with particular superstars or sounds than with a whole life-style; 'psychedelic' music was not so much a sound as a spirit. In 1965, the average person, asked to associate to the phrase 'rock and roll,' would probably have said 'Beatles;' by 1967 the answer would more likely have been 'hippies,' 'drugs,' or 'long hair.' [64]

Rock was a culture, and although it too grew increasingly popular and mainstream, it remained counter to the dominant society. It may have been the Summer of Love, but there was a war raging that, in 1967, was still supported by many Americans, who looked down on those hippies and their music as the real social ill. The criticisms were often about their laziness and naiveté and dismissed the music as noise, but there were deeply subversive politics being communicated through the music, in form, lyrics, and the surrounding culture.

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[61] Robert Christgau, from "Anatomy of A Love Festival," in Christgau, *Any Old Way You Choose It: Rock and Other Pop Music, 1967-73* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973), 22.

[62] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 184.

[63] Crampton and Rees, *Rock and Roll*, 188.

[64] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Ellen Willis, "Records: Rock, Etc," July 6, 1968, *The New Yorker*. MC 646, 6.10. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

The festivals and happenings of the mid-to-late sixties illustrated a different kind of politics. These gatherings were seldom organized for or against any particular cause, but their existence—their happening—represented a radical form of sixties politics: there's another way to be. The Monterey Pop Festival in 1967 put the beautiful people on display. "It was the first, there had never been anything like it," Ellen Sander wrote, "and the excitement was contagious. Never before had so much fine rock and roll been assembled in the same place at the same time and—good Lord!—fifty thousand, *fifty thousand* people! We were incredulous, it was beyond our wildest dreams, unheard of for the times."[65] By the time they got to Woodstock, Joni Mitchell sang, "they were half a million strong." As a woman in Woodstock remarked, "it was like an army."[66] This was the epochal event of the counterculture, and, again, it had music at its center: its official name was the Woodstock Aquarian Music and Art Fair.[67] Woodstock was far more festival than fair, however. At the end of the summer in the last year of a long decade, people who loved music came together to hear an all-star line up near (an hour from) Woodstock, New York, an area celebrated by the counterculture for Dylan and the Band's connection to it. It turned out there were nearly half a million people who made the trip, not to mention thousands more stuck on the road or turned back by the crowd, and millions more, probably, who wanted to go. There were a lot of people interested in "three days of peace, love, and music." Surely some people grew frustrated and many

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[65] Ellen Sander, *Trips: Rock Life in the Sixties* (New York: Scribner, 1973), 92.

[66] *Woodstock: Three Days of Peace and Music*. DVD. Directed by Michael Wadleigh. Warner Home Video, 1970; 2009.

[67] Andy Bennett, Introduction, *Remembering Woodstock* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004), xiv.

were deterred by the miles of traffic headed to Max Yasgur's farm, but many people remember the good vibes. "'It was a cheerful traffic jam. … Somebody in our car spoke to a girl in a blue Volks next to us and, not having yet caught the tone, remarked that the jam was a drag. 'Oh, no,' she said quickly. 'Everyone here is so beautiful.'''"[68] Two years after Monterey, the beautiful people were on display again, and there were a lot of them. As Greil Marcus wrote of the common question as Americans saw pictures of the crowd at Woodstock, "Whoever saw so many people in the same spot, all with the same idea? Well, Hitler did, and General MacArthur did, and Mao, but this was a somewhat better occasion. They came to hear the music, and they stayed to dig the scene and the people and the countryside."[69] *They came to hear the music.*

Woodstock was not the first or last major festival of the sixties, and some would argue that Monterey had more impact or that Altamont was a more fitting end to the decade. It has remained, however, the iconic event of the era, the defining moment of what would become known as the Woodstock nation, reflecting, to a much larger degree, what had been going on all over the country. Although largely unenchanted by Woodstock overall, Willis soon remarked, "in a town where you can be busted for walking down the street in long hair music is a powerful reminder that you are not alone as you feel. It was this need to be part of the national counterculture that drew kids from

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[68] "A Fleeting, Wonderful Moment of 'Community," *The New Yorker*, in *Takin' It to The Streets*, ed. Bloom and Brienes, 506.

[69] Greil Marcus, "The Woodstock Festival," September 1969, in *20 Years of Rolling Stone*, ed. Jann Wenner, 55.

all over the country to the Woodstock festival."[70] It was a place to be free. "'We felt as though it were liberated territory,' one person remarked."[71] Rozanne Reynolds remembered the excitement she felt heading toward Woodstock: "For three days, I could be with … people who loved music—*my people*."[72] It was the music, Susan Reynolds remembered, that bound those thousands of people together. "One after another, musicians and groups played the songs that we already loved or would grow to love. They were our anthem, our identity, and the demarcation line from that of our parents."[73] "'Nobody wanted to let go of what we'd had there. What we'd had was a fleeting, wonderful moment of what you might call 'community.''"[74] As Marcus wrote, "everyone there was a rock & roll fan and knew how to dance and have a favorite song. People just like those everyone hangs out with, but this time it seemed as if they were all in one place at one time. They weren't though—not yet."[75] There were more at home, and probably more stuck out on the road to White Lake. But like Beatles fans before them (and like many of them there had already done) they showed themselves to the world.

Granted, not everyone felt this way and not everything was song and celebration (after all, Joni Mitchell hadn't actually been there). In his coverage of Woodstock for

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[70] Ellen Willis, "Stranger in A Strange Land," December 1969, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 188.

[71] "A Fleeting, Wonderful Moment of 'Community," 506.

[72] Rozanne Reynolds, "Grooving on the Weekends," in *Woodstock Revisited*, 61-65: 63.

[73] Reynolds, "Coming Around Again," in *Woodstock Revisited*, 1-6: 4.

[74] "A Fleeting, Wonderful Moment of 'Community," 508.

[75] Marcus, "The Woodstock Festival," 56.

Rolling Stone, Marcus quoted a young girl, "I love all these people, they're all beautiful, and I never thought I'd be hassled by so many beautiful people, but I am, and I'm going home."[76] At Woodstock, it felt hot, humid, and crowded being one of the beautiful people, and then it rained. Much of the coverage of Woodstock reflected anarchy, and while the people who had been there wrote in to tell *Time* and other publications that they hadn't gotten it right, it was true that festivals could be dangerous places, particularly for women and for people of color. Altamont would make this clear a few months later when the Hells Angels stabbed and killed a black fan as the Rolling Stones played "Under My Thumb" and three other fans died—one by drowning and two run over in their sleeping bags.[77] The Woodstock film also shows people who were ready to leave, explaining, "I have to get back." The worries about money, traffic anxieties, exhaustion from the rain and mud and crowd (a hot shower in a clean and quiet suburban home suddenly sounded somewhat appealing).

The fact that these people had been there, nonetheless, was a watershed moment that illustrates the popularity of the counterculture and its music as well as its politics. Woodstock was seen by many of the people there as a beginning, and by those watching as a vision—here were all these people and they seemed to get along. "The amphitheater was a mass of people, but there was no pushing.'"[78] It was also soon seen by many as the end; "If Monterey was the beginning, Woodstock was the end." (It was, after all, almost

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[76] *Ibid.*, 54.

[77] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 264; Crompton and Rees, *Rock and Roll*, 217.

[78] "A Fleeting, Wonderful Moment of 'Community," 507.

1970). Al Aronowitz called it "a wake." But as Marcus also wrote, after quoting Aronowitz, "Woodstock was not a wake. It was a confused, chaotic founding of something new, something our world must now find a way to deal with. The limits have changed now; they've been pushed out."[79] What was pushed out was what was so important, especially for women. These festivals put the radical politics of the counterculture to work, if only for weekends at a time, and offered alternatives: liberated territory, "armies" of beautiful people, celebrations of freedom with music at the center.

As the counterculture grew and became more mainstream, some of the enclaves and communities where it had percolated, like the Haight, fractured under pressure. Indeed, two of the widely known facts related to the counterculture are that Woodstock and Haight-Ashbury were both disaster areas in terms of infrastructure and services. What does that tell us but that they were overburdened by the number of people who flocked to the mecca and to the seminal event of the counterculture? Still, there was a remarkable sense of power in shared experience and a pervasiveness of countercultural styles and sensibilities that impacted American culture. The level of visibility and the strength in numbers were forms of understanding and empowerment. Like the small folk clubs where travelers found refuge, music connected people and places, offering *a* counterculture in places across the nation. Marilyn Young remembered: "Traveling around the country to participate in various antiwar activities, I can remember the sense of surprise, arriving after dark in Cairo, Illinois, a place as distant from the familiar as a foreign country, at finding that I felt instantly at home: the same outrage, the same dope,

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[79] Marcus, "The Woodstock Festival," 56.

the same music, the same struggle."[80] That extent, and the popularity of the music, shows how many people wanted to be a part of this world, even if they entered it to varying degrees. It also reminds us that as we remember the rock stars—Beatles, Hendrix, Joplin—the real influence of the counterculture came from all those people who listened to them and traveled to see them or started dressing like them or imagined something different because of their music. "The group is onstage making magic," Sander wrote, "but the real rock and roll stars are in the audiences, their faces failing open, their hearts leaping into the light."[81]

She's Leaving Home

The seriousness—the art—of rock music in the high sixties was conveyed in part by the men—rock critics, activists, college students—who embraced it and granted legitimacy to popular music, making music not for screaming but for listening, not for fawning over or filling time but for understanding. *Monterey* shows women listening, unlike Beatlemaniacs, and listening intently, sometimes with eyes closed. Compared to Shea Stadium or the Hollywood Bowl, the police at Monterey had it pretty easy. The documentary shows a lone sheriff smiling warmly at passer-bys. This comparison was noted at the time, and even in 2017, Monterey was characterized as "a total aesthetic and artistic success, the first mass gathering of rock fans that didn't include thousands of

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[80] Marilyn B. Young, "Foreword," in *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s,* ed. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1- 4: 3.

[81] Sander, *Trips*, 102.

screaming teenage girls."[82] "It was a coming-out party for a slightly older, definitely more relaxed rock audience, more interested in listening to the music than screaming for Paul or Mick or Davy."[83] After the Beatles' video of "Hey Jude" debuted in the United States on the Smothers Brothers, *The Christian Century* commented that the audience surrounding the Beatles while they sang was "very ordinary looking and did not act like Beatle fans; they just stood there and sang, swaying gently in the easy pulse of the rhythm."[84] The idea, of course, was that the music wasn't for screaming girls anymore. Rock music was the purview of men in the press—mainstream and underground—and the women in the music scene were often portrayed as mindless or were merely excluded.[85] Women were there though, listening, going to concerts and festivals, and embracing the styles and sometimes the values of a broad music culture.

Coverage of the new youth culture reflected the emergence of a clear "new woman"—the hippie chick. She was young, had long hair, wore eclectic styles but still looked somewhat simple and natural. Like women in folk clubs, hippie women were often barefoot, casual, and, as photos and memories indicate, comfortable. Relaxed. Echols wrote, "Being beautiful was more than copping a look … it was an attitude, a

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[82] Al Sussman, "The World of Sgt. Pepper Pop Music Came to a Crossroads in 1967," in Bruce Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper: A Fans' Perspective* (New Orleans: 498 Productions, 2017), 60-76: 66.

[83] Sussman, "The World of Sgt. Pepper Pop Music Came to a Crossroads in 1967," 66.

[84] Charles E. Fager, "Be Grateful Parents," in *The Christian Century*, vol. LXXXVI, No. 3 (Jan. 15, 1969), 92.

[85] See Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*, 24-27, re: male-dominated institutions and objectification of women in the underground press.

stance, a vibration. Weirdness mattered, and so did a mellow vibe."[86] The hippie chick, though, was a ubiquitous but silent image. She was quiet and serene, assumed to be not very bright, or at least very naïve, and didn't even get to scream like her Beatlemaniac sister. Like Beatles fans, these "chicks" were often derided as dimwits, in this case there for the sex, or clothes, or drugs, or perhaps because they were bored, or stupid. Some of those things may be true, but they were also there for the music and many of them found within it a liberating potential, and at a consequential moment. Many women fashioned themselves as hippies and performed a countercultural lifestyle—one needed the right clothes (and perhaps the right vocabulary)—yet that should not discount that these women were often engaged in a range of revolts, writing their parents "Beautiful People letters," devoting themselves to alternative lifestyles, and, in some cases, struggling with the increasingly apparent limits to liberation when it came to sex and gender.[87] If being a hippie was rebellious, being a hippie chick was even more so. As Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo explains, parents' "incomprehension and anxiety loomed even larger when it came to their daughters."[88] Boys were allowed to go through a rebellious phase, but girls were not given this allowance or agency; girls who transgressed gender roles were often seen as victims, too naïve to have pursued these wayward lifestyles on their own—after all, some of these girls were the same "airheads" who had screamed for the Beatles.[89]

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[86] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 20.

[87] Tom Wolfe in Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 20; John Lennon and Paul McCartney, "She's Leaving Home," *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band* (Parlophone, 1967).

[88] Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*,11.

[89] *Ibid.*, 11.

Women in the counterculture were often seen as young girls who had been taken advantage of, and sometimes they had been, but there is much to suggest that they felt drawn to the counterculture and attached to its music, and often took risks to be part of both. As Lemke-Santangelo illustrates, "hippie women were very busy carving out new roles and identities, taking themselves seriously, and crafting—along with New Left and counterculture lesbians—an alternative feminism that emphasized difference rather than the social construction of gender and championed the development of a woman-centered and identified culture."[90] This was not always apparent in the sexist counterculture and certainly not in the world of rock music, but music is one of the ways to crystalize women's claims to revolutionary ideas through revolutionary music.

It's hard to know what any great majority of women found and felt through music when record reviews were written almost exclusively by men (this was *serious* music after all) and when, with more men and less screaming, the media was less attentive to women. Many women, in glimmers and memories and, sometimes, in the rock writing they did then and since, do express, however, the devotion and passion of fans. Listening in their bedrooms, dancing along with friends, going to concerts, and sometimes picking up their own guitars, rock music was an important part of many women's lives and participation in the 1960s. Music led women on a series of migrations—physical journeys to concerts, festivals, and happenings, but also explorations of the imaginative world created through rock and roll songs. Part of what made this moment unique was

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[90] Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*, 23.

the ways in which music served as a catalyst, spurring young people, scores of women included, to pick up, leave home, and seek out new lives. “We’re leaving our bewildered nuclear families to become part of a tribe that’s forming,” Roberta Price wrote, “Bob Dylan’s our script writer. *He not busy being born is busy dying…To live outside the law you must be honest…She’s got everything she needs, she’s an artist, she don’t look back…*We hear irresistible messages in the rock and roll melodies uniting us….”[91] Throughout the sixties, the runaways leaving home created an internal migration of young people to cities, to festivals, and to countercultural spaces. These migrations made them more visible, changing many urban spaces in particular, and also upended many traditional ideas about family and relationships, particularly for women. Getting to these places where they could see each other and be together and, as Joni Mitchell sang, try to get their souls free, often meant leaving home and family in a departure immortalized by the Beatles in “She’s Leaving Home.” As Charles Perry remembered, “at the very beginning of the Summer of Love, the most popular musical group in the world was recording the story of a teenage runaway….”[92] (The track was also the first of the Beatles’ to include a female musician, harpist Sheila Bromberg in the gorgeous opening solo.[93]) One fan remembered the resonance of first hearing “She’s Leaving Home,” driving with her mother when “in a few short weeks [she] too would be leaving home.”

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[91] Roberta Price, *Huerfano: A Memoir of Life in the Counterculture* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 53, quoted in Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*, 34.

[92] Perry, *The Haight-Ashbury*, 199.

[93] Mona Simpson, “She’s Leaving Home,” in *In Their Lives: Great Writers on Great Beatles Songs*, ed. Andrew Blauner (New York: Blue Rider Press, 2017), 127-133: 127.

(The reason? The Beatles! "Since February 1964 I had saved every penny with the goal of visiting London upon my graduation from high school, and now, with the lyrics of 'She's Leaving Home' firmly planted in my head, it was soon to come true."[94]) "All over America," Echols wrote, "kids who had dropped out of the mainstream were sending their parents what Tom Wolfe dubbed the 'Beautiful People' letter. After a perfunctory apology for having vanished without a word, the writer would then go on:

> I won't bore you with the whole thing, how it happened, but I really tried, because I knew you wanted me to, but it just didn't work out with [school, college, my job, me and Danny] and so I have come here and it really is a beautiful scene. I don't want you to worry about me. I have met some BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.[95]

This impetus can be summed up by a line at the core of rock and roll, sung by the Animals (and later written about by Gerri Hershey): "We gotta get out of this place."[96] Getting out, going away also reflected the counterculture's roots, emulating those Beat odysseys or the one Dylan took to get to New York in 1961. Music was often part of why they left.

These journeys were especially consequential for women. It was acceptable, to an extent, for men to indulge in an "on the road" period, but women lacked the same examples and vagabond heroes setting out on their own, carefree, with no particular

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[94] Leslie Samuels Healy, in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 110. McCartney reportedly wrote "She's Leaving Home" after reading about Melanie Coe, a seventeen year old girl who ran away from home and had three years prior won a television dancing contest and been presented her prize by McCartney (Southall, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, 43). Also see Simpson "She's Leaving Home," in *In Their* Lives, 127-133.

[95] Tom Wolfe, *Electric Kool Aid*, 121, in Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 20.

[96] See Gerri Hershey, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place: The True, Tough Story of Women in Rock* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2001).

agenda aside from getting away.[97] Even among the Beats, it was the guys who got to go on the road. “Leaving home” and not knowing where you were going, especially if traveling alone, was not encouraged but tolerated when men did it. Striking out to go find some beautiful people, to dance in parks or even to go to a festival was not, in the dominant view, as acceptable or understood for women. But drawn to music and freedom and hungry for something different and perhaps liberating, that is what many women did in the late sixties. This rupture with the suburbs, with families, and with what they were supposed to want was often starker for women, laced with the threat of limited options later, and this independence was particularly fraught (and more dangerous) for women. As Helen Swick Perry wrote of the “runaways” in Haight-Ashbury, “the girls were discovering that life could be fun even for girls, as the Beatles indicate in their song [“She’s Leaving Home”], and that home often created a permanent chastity belt for the girl’s emotions and feelings, held in place formerly by parental fears for the physical safety of the girl child and the necessity for protecting her from stigma and disgrace as she matured.”[98] This uprootedness constituted a rejection of the domestic values governing the world in which many women had grown up.

Although these migrations sometimes took people to places off the beaten path, they often, especially when connected to music, traced routes from the suburbs to the urban centers left behind a generation before. As Echols and other historians have noted, this generation performed a “reverse migration” from the suburbs their parents had

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[97] See Grace Elizabeth Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders: How the White Middle Class Fell in Love with Rebellion in Postwar America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 43.

[98] Swick Perry, *The Human Be-In*, 180.

pioneered back to the cities they had left.[99] Urban spaces were gathering places and exciting places of discovery, sometimes assuming mythical proportions and filling romantic visions, like San Francisco ("be sure to wear flowers in your hair") or, for a short time ("won't you please come to Chicago?"). The street, Sander wrote, "was where we lived, learned, worked, played, taught, and survived; it was where you oriented yourself among it all. Naturally, it was the best place that anyone who wanted to could find and play and make and go hear music."[100] The fact that these inner-city dreams and scenes often took place in the very places the parents of suburban kids had tried to save them from made the generation gap even wider.[101] Ann Wilson remembered, "We were physically *here*," referring to the Seattle suburb where she and her sister Nancy grew up, "But most of the time we lived *out there*."[102] Even before they left they were somewhere else.

Regardless of where they started, women also participated in a series of temporary migrations to countercultural spaces, concerts, festivals, be-ins, and happenings. Live music became one of the integral and shared experiences of the countercultural lifestyle. Young people often traveled from suburbs to cities to see concerts, or traveled to festivals with friends and formed communities of listeners, finding each other and putting what Otis Redding called "the love crowd" on full

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[99] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, xii.

[100] Sander, *Trips*, 9-10, in Lipsitz, "Who'll Stop the Rain," in Farber, ed., *The Sixties*, 206-234: 214.

[101] See Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 59.

[102] Ann Wilson, quoted in Daisann McLane, "Heart Attack," *Rolling Stone*, May 15, 1980, in *Rock She Wrote*, ed. McDonnell and Powers, 296.

display.[103] Concert spaces were where the "liberating exuberance of rock and roll" often occurred and was shared and made visible.[104] As in the folk revival, these spaces were part of what made this music unique and significant for women. As Willis wrote, "A rock concert is generally an overt or covert invitation to rebellion…."[105] For women in particular, concerts were the spaces where many inhibitions, controls, and gendered codes of behavior were challenged, through behavior, dress (and undressing), and sometimes the very act of being there. Even if only for a night, live music was an essential part of the experience—the physicality, the dancing, the sound, the crowd. By mid-decade the clubs that had fostered a folk scene and nourished the likes of Bob Dylan and Joan Baez were changing, too small or too old fashioned, sometimes, or too resistant to accommodate new sounds.[106] New countercultural spaces were emerging in their wake, less secretive, more public (sometimes in parks, in daylight, as public as possible). These spaces were more radical and, in a word, rougher than most folk clubs had been. They also shared the revolutionary spirit of much of the music and an atmosphere, set by strobe lights, film clips, amplifiers and loops, that often reflected the music (and the drugs).

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[103] In Christgau, *Going Into The City*, 180.

[104] Ellen Willis, "Introduction: Identity Crisis," in *No More Nice Girls: Countercultural Essays* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1992), xii.

[105] Ellen Willis, "Elvis Presley? In Person?" July 1972, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 37.

[106] Although folk music flourished in many circles, the vibrant scenes in major cities peaked in 1963-64. See Stephen Petrus and Ronald D. Cohen, *Folk City: New York and the American Folk Music Revival* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 188. Ronnie Gilbert wrote, "By 1966, the club scene was changing. The big news was rock show and go-go clubs featuring topless dancers in cages. Coffee houses and clubs like San Francisco's Hungry-I and Purple Onion, Chicago's Gate of Horn and Mother Blues, and New York's Gaslight and Bitter End, which had made the reputations of artists like Odetta, Joan Baez, Phil Ochs, and Bob Dylan, were folding, trying new policies, or just barely hanging on, their audiences reduced to true believers." See Gilbert, *A Radical Life in Song: A Memoir* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 137.

Paul Williams called these West Coast venues “induction centers.”[107] Sharing them with other people forged community. As Kramer wrote, “Performers and audiences blurred into a vital space of interaction and association. Normative roles fell away and the boundaries between self and group as well as between humans and technology grew ambiguous, fluid, and open to change and transformation.”[108] This was a fertile space.

It was at concerts that women often displayed their connections to music in public, reflecting changing standards of behavior, display, and sexuality. Concert audiences seem to have been quieter and more subdued, listening intently, than they’d been for the Beatles a few short years before. They were still enthusiastic, however. One woman wrote into *Rolling Stone* that she could “feel” Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young’s “vibrations from outside the Fillmore. Incredible, incredible!” Following in that enthusiastic vein, she wrote, “I could hardly contain myself. Their voices sent my warmest emotions to the top of my head, I felt like I was going to be carried out of my seat” and “I couldn’t keep still … My mind is blown, completely blown.”[109] Jim Morrison was often regarded as a “sex symbol,” compared at the time to Elvis and James Dean for the reactions to his raw sexuality at Doors shows (and because of the famous poster that adorned so many bedrooms and dorms).[110] (It may be worth noting that the

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[107] Paul Williams, “The Golden Road: A Report on San Francisco,” *Crawdaddy!*, July-August 1967, 6, quoted in Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 3. As Kramer rightly notes, this language was particularly meaningful in the context of Vietnam.

[108] Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 35.

[109] Carol Pryor, letter to the editor, *Rolling Stone*, November 15, 1969.

[110] Digby Diehl, “Pop Heavy,” *West*, February 18, 1968, 35.

Doors also relied upon local young women to pack venues for them). At Woodstock, music fans ran through the mud, stripped naked, and from the looks of the footage, they seemed to be listening too. As Carlos Santana played, more and more came to their feet, dancing braless.

More so than at a Beatles concert and certainly more than in the folk revival, dancing was a key element of the rock concert experience. When the Byrds, a Beatles-Dylan merger of sorts, left Los Angeles for their first national tour, Sander reported, "All over they would set audiences dancing. Time and again on that first tour they would start cold, everyone sitting down, watching, listening, and all of a sudden they'd get up and dance as if possessed."[111] There was a physical element to the feeling of the music that was often a site of expression and response. According to Kramer, many women "experienced dancing to the Grateful Dead as liberating."[112] Rosie McGee remembered, "I was barely aware of my body as I merged with the music and danced away the hours" in "the most un-self-conscious and transcendent moments I have had in my life."[113] Carolyn Adams Garcia called this dancing "an emotional entangled group spirit calling to the potent human energy welling up."[114] At the height of Beatlemania, Beatles fans were both organized and out of control. They formed fan clubs, planned trips and excursions,

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[111] Sander, *Trips*, 81.

[112] Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 53.

[113] Rosie McGee, *Dancing with the Dead—A Photographic Memoir: My Good Old Days with the Grateful Dead and the San Francisco Scene, 1964-1974* (Rohnert Park: Tioli Press & Bytes, 2012), 88, quoted in Michael J. Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 53.

[114] Carolyn "Mountain Girl" Adams Garcia, "Foreword," in McGee, *Dancing with the Dead*, 10, quoted in Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 53.

assembled scrapbooks, and picked favorite Beatles, but in the space of the concert, their most frequent expression was that they didn't know what they were doing. In the rock scene, women expressed a more conscious and intentional understanding that the music would overtake them, that they could use it as a way to reach new experiences. Albeit on LSD, one woman remembered a Grateful Dead show in Los Angeles where she "stood close to the band and let the vibrations engulf [her]."[115] This woman claimed the music as a means for this sort of personal experience. Another woman remembered of the Dead: "They started in my toes and every inch of me was quivering with them…they made a journey through my nervous system…traveling each tiny path, finally reaching the top of my head, where they exploded in glorious patterns of color and line…."[116]

These behaviors were in many ways serious affronts to the gender codes of the era. The media coached and counted on women to be scrutinizing themselves at every moment, ridden with the certainty that everyone else was scrutinizing them too—is my hair under control, is my face shiny, are my clothes right? This was one of the claustrophobic contradictions of suburban life—the space and the right to privacy and the values to affirm it, but the ceaseless feeling that everyone was watching you. Even as people moved from the front stoop to the back yard, they seemed to obsess that their lives (and their lawns) were the subject of neighborhood gossip. But like those unflattering screamers, giving into the music was a way to claim an interior experience. These spaces and the behaviors within them allowed young people, and young women in particular, to

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[115] Clair Brush, quoted in Wolfe, *Electric Kool-Aid*, 275, in Kramer, *Republic of Rock*, 53.

[116] *Ibid.*, 53.

escape, if only temporarily, the constraints of their upbringings and dominant culture. Even when temporary, those escapes were affronts to mainstream culture because they suggested that one did not care whether the neighborhood was watching or not, rejecting one of the values of postwar America.[117]

This energy and visibility—occupying space and dressing and behaving a certain way within it—were essential to the politics of the sixties. Starting with the Sunset Strip riots in 1966, attempts to regulate and restrict music fans' presence and access to space could be violent and contested. In San Francisco, the Straight Theater's appeal for a dance permit was rejected on the grounds of a "high instance of crime" "near folk rock dances."[118] The police presence at concerts, and the ordinances, like those folkies fought in Washington Square Park and in San Francisco and Los Angeles, were about controlling young people and the countercultural lifestyle, in line with the same attempts to control speech and to restore law and order, as Ronald Reagan promised to do while running for governor of California in 1966 and Richard Nixon for president in 1968. This widespread concern about young bodies, and particularly young women's bodies, displayed with abandon in public spaces, underscores one of the rebellious dimensions of women's participation in music culture. These concerns were often accompanied by questions—from the media and parents alike—about why they weren't in school (when sometimes they were), or how they ought to have something better to do, or needed to be settling down. Embracing music and dancing and the values of the counterculture

[117] See Kenneth Cmiel, "The Politics of Civility," in *The Sixties*, ed. David Farber.

[118] In Perry, *The Haight-Ashbury*, 223.

showed that many women were privileging music, experience, and community more than individual pursuits of career, education, and marriage—*living* their politics.

The way these women describe experiences of becoming one with music, of feeling communion with a band or an audience echo the feelings women found in the folk revival or even listening to the Beatles: "there's something else out there," "another life is possible." In short, women were "leaving home" in more ways than one and physical migrations prompted personal ones as well. They were running away, they were leaving the suburbs, they were rejecting domesticity, they were dressing and dancing in all the wrong ways, but they were also discovering new ideas about how to live and imagining other places where these lives might be more possible. Music gave many listeners the idea that such places existed and were worth finding. For many people, after all, listening to music was the most access they had to the counterculture. Catherine Hiller remembered that she "dressed the part of a hippie" but never really considered herself to be one (she was too rational, she remembered, and ate meat). Still, she said, "what I revered about the counterculture was its music, songs that inspired me to protest and to dance, music that was relevant and inventive and radically different from the lovesick laments of the past."[119] Jeanne Simonelli called herself "a card-carrying hippie" in 1960s New York City, "but never much of a concert goer."[120] For some women in particular, the dangers of the counterculture—sexual abuse, drug culture, the realities of poverty and homelessness, and the threat of urban crime—prevented the physical

[119] Catherine Hiller, "With the Film Crew," in Reynolds, *Woodstock Revisited,* 138-140:138.

[120] Jeanne Simonelli, "Foreword: Rediscovering Music and Meaning," in Randall, *Finding Grace in the Concert Hall*, ix.

participation. Shedding light on listening is important in this period to try to understand those who didn't partake in the wild musical happenings but were a part of music culture nonetheless.

"My first listening of Sgt. Pepper," Ellen Berman remembered, "was the most profound personal musical listening experience that I have ever had. Everything changed. Everything was beginning. Everything was ahead."[121] Imagine, in the summer of 1967, going to the record store to buy the Beatles' latest album: *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. You're used to hearing something new from the Beatles, and you've heard this one is really something, and you could tell things were taking a turn with "Strawberry Fields Forever" and "Penny Lane," and you see the Beatles on the cover in their shiny, neon suits surrounded by persons dead and alive, appearing to be at a funeral? You take it home, close the door. Little could prepare you for listening to it. Is it a concert? Is it a musical? Is there something you're missing? What are all of these new sounds and instruments? Who is Billy Shears? For some fans, the album was evidence the Beatles had gone "stark raving mad."[122] But to others, it was "captivating."[123] The album meant "everything," many fans remembered.[124]

Sgt. Pepper pushed boundaries of all kinds, and although nothing like it was ever quite replicated, it led the way for the music that followed. It emblematized most boldly

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[121] Ellen Berman, in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 110.

[122] Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 44. Leonard also quotes some fans distaste for these changes in *Beatleness* (124-125; 132-133).

[123] Kris Spackman Tash in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 91.

[124] Karen Rothman in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 91.

that the music of the era was innovative and rebellious itself and that it helped create a space for its listeners to claim those values and attitudes in their own lives. As one fan remembered, "The Beatles were evolving and taking us all along with them. My world was changing."[125] "We loved them," another listener said of the Beatles, "so we grew and changed with them."[126] "I'm glad I gave in to my initial resistance of the changing Beatles. They were leading the way, ahead of their time and unafraid."[127] One woman recollected, "It made me aware that things didn't have to be as they were."[128] There was a symbiotic relationship between revolutionary music and revolutionary people.

Part of the significance of *Sgt. Pepper* was its cultural import and wide influence. It wasn't only the music but the style. The album's release, accompanied by not one live appearance, was a cultural event that dominated the summer and connected more people through music culture. "The music came at you from everywhere," Willis said of *Sgt. Pepper*:

> It was a communal event, and yet private at the same time. This didn't mean everyone loved the album. There were already arguments about whether all this fancy studio stuff the Beatles and every other group were getting into was going too far. … The point is at that moment there was this electric sense of collective engagement—and in response to an album that not only wasn't being performed, but by virtue of its technology couldn't be performed. There was the sense that everyone was connected to each other through the Beatles—from 12 year old girls who were turned

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[125] Ellen Berman, in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 110.

[126] Kris Spackman Tash in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 91.

[127] Pat Dinizio, in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 104.

[128] Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 117, from Leonard, *Beatleness* (Female, b. 1954).

on by Paul McCartney to musicologists who were analyzing their chord structures.[129]

"'Sgt. Pepper' is for everyone," Haight-Ashbury's Ron Thelin said, "it's for mothers and fathers. It's for policemen, it's for meter maids, and we all mutually can share it."[130] Langdon Winner called the release "the closest that Western civilization has come to unity since the Congress of Vienna in 1815."[131] *Sgt. Pepper* drew on so many vocabularies and was yet unlike anything anyone had ever heard. It was also unlike anything anyone had ever seen, and the packaging—the colorful class photo cover, that psychedelic but simple poster as a gift inside, and the lyrics!—added a material element to the excitement. A fan club president in New Jersey remembered that at the initial fan club listening party, "What first struck us all was the album cover art."[132] Another remembered, "as soon as I held it in my hands, I knew it was something special."[133] Even in 1967, one fan remembered meeting friends over Beatle magazines at the neighborhood drug store, and when *Sgt. Pepper* was released, the friends were so excited, "so proud" of the "precious new Beatles album" that they took a picture of themselves proudly holding the centerfold in front of one of their homes in Ohio.[134] Another fan

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[129] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; "The Crowd," panel, Stars Don't Stand Still in the Sky: Music & Myth conference, February 14, 1997. MC 646, 10.24. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[130] Ron Thelin in Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, 219.

[131] Langdon Winner, "The Strange Death of Rock and Roll," in Marcus, *Rock and Roll Will Stand* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 38-57: 52.

[132] Debbie Gendler Supnik in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 99.

[133] Pat Dinizio, in Spizer *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 104.

[134] Kris Spackman Tash in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 91.

remembered, "We spent the entire summer listening to the album, talking about the songs and about the guys' new look (mustaches!) and colorful clothes."[135] The lyrics were printed on the album, especially helpful in the case of *Sgt. Pepper*, and also a sign of growing investment in albums. Berman remembered, "I would listen intently to each one while reading the printed lyrics on the back cover."[136] Living through that summer seems to have brought many people a clear awareness of living through history—it wasn't only the marches, but the music, these new sounds coming through the stereo, the new style of albums, the new way of dressing, everything full of color. The whole thing was exciting, but listening was important. One fan remembered driving with her mother in New York when the album came on the radio. "I calmly told my mother not to open her mouth, that this was important to me."[137] While it's a trope of sorts that those screaming girls left the Beatles behind and let the serious young men lead the way on *Sgt. Pepper*, a Beatles fan club president from New Jersey remembered taking *Sgt. Pepper* into her English class, recognizing the cultural importance and literary value of the record (another remembered that their sixth grade teacher allowed students to hang the sleeve on their classroom bulletin board). "For the first time it was the boys who shared interest. Their excitement

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[135] Karen Rothman in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 91.

[136] Ellen Berman, in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 110.

[137] Leslie Samuels Healy, in Spizer, *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 110.

for the innovative sound was intense. *Sgt Pepper* securely established The Beatles as the musical geniuses we girls knew they were all along."[138]

Sgt. Pepper led the pack in many ways, but the breadth of innovative music was central to this era's significance. There was new music out all the time. Rock stars were icons. The music of this short era was in many ways that which defined the decade itself: Hendrix, Joplin, the Dead; Dylan and the Beatles both transcended their fame so quickly they were revered in their own time.[139] (As Dan Sullivan wrote in the *New York Times* in early 1967, "The funny thing about teenage idols is that some of them turn out to be idols."[140]) The mania and screaming may have faded, but music culture was perhaps even more pervasive. People found individual meaning in music that was new and compelling and often a sense of belonging, as music was essential to the larger community of the counterculture.[141] Music helped people make sense of the time. As Nick Bromell put it, "The rock audience felt there was a marvelous correspondence between this rapidly changing music and their own rapidly evolving souls."[142]

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[138] Debbie Gendler Supnik in Spizer *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 99; Nancy (Cuebas) Riley, in Spizer *The Beatles and Sgt. Pepper*, 108.

[139] Nick Bromell wrote, "the Beatles' audience began to invest them with a moral authority I think no pop singers (except possibly Bob Dylan) have had before or since. They were musicians who were also prophets and healers" (Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 31). Speaking also of his friend Jackson Browne, Steve Noonan said in early 1968, "Some people are beyond criticism. Like the Beatles: they're not people, they're spirits. How can you criticize a spirit?" See Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Tom Nolan, "The Orange County 3," *Cheetah*, January 1968, 79. MC 646, 6.8. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[140] Dan Sullivan, "Beatles: More Than A Mania," *New York Times*, March 5, 1967.

[141] See Chester Anderson in Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, xxxiii.

[142] Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 17.

Hendrix famously asked his audience is they were experienced, affirming the belief that listening to rock music in 1967 "now mattered," as Bromell put it, "because it offered new and useful ways of being in the world."[143] "The Love Crowd," as Redding called them, was different; "critical, unhysterical, intelligent," in Robert Christgau's words, but "its attitude toward intelligence and maturity [was] stubbornly emotional and childlike. It reveres enthusiasm."[144] They demanded to be turned on, Christgau wrote. It wasn't just about high art in a critical sense but on an emotional level as well. In this time when music meant so much, the act of listening took on great meaning. This often-private experience had long been part of the story for fans of pop music, lying on their beds listening to a new record or carrying a transistor radio around town. As the sixties wore on, new stereo technology and, sometimes, the allure of marijuana or LSD, were also essential to listening.[145] Listening to records made people "inward screamers," as Willis described of her Stones fandom.[146] Far more than they had just a few short years before, people started to talk about listening to records as if they were trying to learn something, looking for answers. Many listeners, as Kramer writes, "used rock to think."[147] As a young Wellesley student wrote in a letter to the editor, "So many people today sense a deep spiritual void in their personal and communal lives; there are too few

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[143] Nick Bromell, "Music, Experience, and History," *American Quarterly* 53 (2001): 165-177: 165. DOI: 10.1353/aq.2001.0002.

[144] Christgau, *Any Old Way You Choose It*, 23.

[145] See Rhodes, *Electric Ladyland*, 20.

[146] Willis, "The Big Ones," February 1969, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 78.

[147] Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 13.

instances of truly joyous celebration. In response to the situation today's young people are creating and performing music with a spontaneity and intensity that is heartening."[148] "Week after week we go inside the music," Sandy Darlington wrote in 1968, "and as they play and we listen and dance, the questions and ideas slowly germinate in our minds like seeds….This music is more than entertainment. It describes and helps us define a way of life we believe in."[149]

The music was often imbued with feeling, responding, often to Dylan's question. Although she'd written in 1964 that she hoped Dylan's style hadn't changed too much, Dylan's *Bringing It All Back Home*, Willis said, taught her that she should "always take [her] pleasure seriously."[150] Like the music of the folk revival, Dylan, in particular, inspired many "then everything changed" moments. For Lucinda Williams, it took one listen—51 minutes, 33 seconds—of *Highway 61 Revisited*, and "the whole world had changed."[151] For Joni Mitchell, it was hearing "Positively Fourth Street," Dylan's scathing single, that made her realize her music and poetry could be combined. "I'd

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[148] Cynthia Snyder, "Rock, but not Plainsong," letter to the editor, *The Christian Century*, vol. LXXXV, No. 38 (Sept, 18, 1968).

[149] Sandy Darlington, *San Francisco Express Times*, vol. I, no. 8, March 14, 1968, 11, in Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 75.

[150] Willis, "The Paradox of Rocklit," MC 646 10.15, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University. In a letter to her family postmarked February 22, 1064, Willis wrote, ""Saturday night Bob Dylan is giving a concert in Berkeley, and we're going. I've heard that his singing style has changed a lot from his first record – the one I've played to death. I hope it hasn't changed too much." (MC 646, Box 1).

[151] Lucinda Williams, Facebook page, mgmt. August 27, 2015.

never heard anger expressed in a song. And I thought, This means it's wide open, you can write about anything. It was brilliant."[152] Mitchell said of Dylan,

> There was something about the negativity of some of his expression which even appealed to me. Everybody has that need for negative expression, in spite of Jesus and be good to everybody, you know. And the fact that he had the nerve to come out in music and to speak his mind so openly … I think that his influence was to personalize my work. I feel this towards you, for you, or from you. Or because of you I feel this way.[153]

Mitchell's point is a good one, because what we remember about this era is the peace signs and mellow vibe, but really, as a war raged in Vietnam and American cities erupted in riots, it was also about negative expression, about claiming the right to protest, regardless of the venue—college campus, Pentagon, kitchen table. (Fans protested too, making their opposition, particularly to Dylan and, in some places, the Beatles, abundantly, sometimes violently clear).[154] Mitchell's quote also reflects the expressive value many women claimed in rock music. As Willis wrote, "Dylan's great contribution was to enlarge our capacity for freedom, help us break out of mental and emotional, musical and lyrical boxes."[155] For women, especially, that capacity could lead to all sorts of things.[156]

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[152] Echols, "The Soul of a Martian," in *Shaky Ground*, 212. Mitchell also discussed this with Malka Marom (*Joni Mitchell*, 101).

[153] Marom, *Joni Mitchell*, 101.

[154] See See Robbie Robertson, *Testimony* (New York: Crown Archetype, 2016).

[155] Willis, "Dylan and Fans: Looking Back, Going On," February 1974, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 97.

[156] Few allowed, however, that women might be capable of this serious listening. Women, or girls, like those screaming Beatlemaniacs, liked pop, not rock. Simon Reynolds and Joy Cross describe the rock v. pop distinction with men possessing the "correct response" of "male connoisseurship, discerning and discriminating" and women the "degraded feminine fan-worship (superficial, hysterical, idolatrous, at once

Like folk fans, many rock fans were interested in what was real and turned off by what they felt was not. As Malvina Reynolds wrote of Dylan to Willis in 1966, "His tremendous popularity amongst his own generation is understandable. They are thoroughly turned off of the clichés of happy-happy propaganda of the status quo, its advertising and its foreign policy."[157] The music also reflected women's experiences. The woman the Beatles sang about in "Ticket to Ride" had not only been living with one of them, listeners could presume, she left because she needed to feel free. "Ruby Tuesday" did the same thing—"Don't question why she wants to be so free, she'll tell you it's the only way to be."[158] It stands to reason that the music reflected real situations unfolding around the Beatles and the Stones, but by communicating it to their millions of fans, they helped normalize and at once spectacularize and bring visibility to the changes in lifestyle and relationships. As the popularity of *Sgt. Pepper* and LSD and light shows attests, however, they determined this not so much by the folk preoccupation with the authentic but by the quest to define what mattered, what helped you live. As John Cunnick described in 1967, "Go to a house and someone hands you a joint in front of a record player and it's assumed…that you are going to sit for a couple of hours, not

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fickle and blindly loyal)." See Simon Reynolds and Joy Press, *Sex Revolts: Gender, Rebellion, and Rock 'n' Roll* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 5.

[157] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Malvina Reynolds to Ellen Willis, December 19, 1966. MC 646, Box 1. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[158] John Lennon and Paul McCartney, "Ticket to Ride," on The Beatles, *Help!* (Parlophone/Capitol, 1965); Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, "Ruby Tuesday," on The Rolling Stones, *Between the Buttons* (Decca, 1967).

talking, hardly moving, living to music."[159] Music was important to people in an interior way—they let music become part of their lives as they listened. Maggie Gaskin remembered rock and roll as the first stirrings of hippiedom:

> Rock-and-roll had been really rank and ugly and childish and I had put it down about five years before that as being nothing I wanted any part of…. Then Bob Dylan went and recorded that album with electronic music behind it and it blew my mind. I just really got upset because he had sold out and done this horrific electric thing. It was just sacrilegious and horrible and awful. And it really upset me. That was the first symptom to me that there was really something changing, because it took everybody along with it…. And it sort of *made* us change. Then I noticed that every time we did get used to them, we'd adjust and adjust to the way it was being done, and we'd get our heads straight about it, and then they'd jump way out again, screw everybody's mind up again, then we'd get used to them again….They kept us running after them, and running into a happier thing, and into a more joyful thing, a more colorful thing. They were the main things that did it: The Beatles and Dylan….[160]

Serious listening, which affirmed the importance of popular music, represented personal meaning as well as community. As Sander put it, "Rock and roll was creating a continent of community whose prime emergence, whose sense of communication all revolved around the music."[161] As Willis said, "Rock was the lingua franca of a crowd that could connect without demanding the subordination of the self to the group, and the strangeness and serendipity of that connection was part of the deep primal pleasure of the

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[159] John Cunnick, *Helix* (Seattle) vol. 2, no. 8, December 11, 1967, not paginated, in Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 1.

[160] Maggie Gaskin in Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, 85-86.

[161] Sander, *Trips*, 73.

music."[162] Some women remember singing along as an integral part of listening. As Susan Douglas contends that singing along to the Girl Groups is a form of "girl talk" that prefigured the consciousness raising of the late sixties, singing along to Janis Joplin or Grace Slick or Mick Jagger, turning his misogynism on its head, was often a powerful form of expression, if a private one; sing loud![163] Diana Stork remembered singing along to "Piece of My Heart" in her dorm room, "feeling strong," and forging friendships while singing along, in a "bonding experience—loud and powerful." "The song made us feel strong and that we could do anything."[164] Holly Near remembered lying on her bed as a high school student "dying over every note of 'Piece of My Heart.'"[165] When she saw Janis for the first time with Big Brother and the Holding Company, she remembered that she and her friends "listened and watched as if we were seeing into our futures."[166] As Kramer wrote of rock music, "the music seemed to offer the sensation—and even the preliminary structures—of a better future."[167] Thus music too was a way of leaving home, if you didn't physically leave, because it expanded your world and helped you

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[162] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; "The Crowd," panel, Stars Don't Stand Still in the Sky: Music & Myth conference, February 14, 1997. MC 646, 10.24. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[163] See Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, and Jacqueline Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Cultures: Popular Music and Identity in the 1960s* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

[164] Diana Stork, "Reminiscence," in Dorothy Marcic, *Respect: Women and Popular Music* (New York: Texere, 2002), 92-93: 92.

[165] Holly Near, with Derk Richardson, *Fire in the Rain…Singer in the Storm* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1990), 35.

[166] Near, *Fire in the Rain…Singer in the Storm*, 34.

[167] Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 21.

imagine different possibilities. Many people were runaways, even the ones who didn't go anywhere.

Janis Joplin was one of these runaways herself. She left Port Arthur, Texas for Austin and then, with some comings and goings, Los Angeles and finally San Francisco, where she helped forge a new sound and scene. Her migrations were rooted in her feelings of exclusion, of not belonging, of unhappiness. They were also driven by music. As a young student, Joplin found refuge and freedom in music. She couldn't fit—her hair, her skin, her language, her attitude were never quite right, and even as she became a rock star, she was plagued by the feeling of not belonging. Joplin exploded the gender categories that oppressed her, but that didn't mean it didn't hurt. Joplin trespassed gender boundaries on stage and with her image in ways that offended many women but inspired others. Echols' own experience underlies the point she makes in *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, her study of Joplin and her time: "In her music, I heard freedom, which was what she longed to communicate."[168] Joplin, Willis wrote:

> belonged to that select group of pop figures who mattered as much as Dylan in importance as a creator/recorder/embodiment of her generation's history and mythology. She was also the only woman to achieve that kind of stature in what was basically a male club, the only Sixties culture hero to make visible and public women's experience of the quest for individual liberation, which was very different from men's.[169]

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[168] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 311. Also see Laura Joplin, *Love, Janis* (New York: Villard Books, 1992).

[169] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Ellen Willis, "Janis Joplin." *Rolling Stone*, Nov. 18, 1976, 60. MC 646, 7.13 Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

Joplin claimed access and pushed the boundaries of both gender and rock and roll. As Echols wrote, "Janis was like an invading army, seizing that rock 'n' roll land of desire in a way no white woman ever had."[170]

In the twenty-first century, Joplin seems an example of the gratuitousness of the counterculture—its indulgence, unsteadiness, and proclivity for hurting oneself and others—a cautionary tale rather than cause for celebration. Joplin was not, necessarily, a feminist hero, but she rebelled against rigid identity roles surrounding gender and sexuality. What was significant about her was her rejection of traditional femininity (in some forms) and her role in bringing that up on stage in rock and roll. In Echols' constellation, "Her refusal to sound or look pretty prefigured feminism's demolition of good-girl femininity, and much of her music, most notably 'Women Is Losers,' protests women's powerlessness in matters of the heart."[171] Joplin was particularly unique in her appearance and her presence; as Echols wrote, "Janis made fashionable the frizzy, electric hair many white teenaged girls had struggled daily to iron into modish straightness. Janis … can take substantial credit for liberating American women from the tyranny of weekly beauty salon visits."[172] (Although it is hard to think women have ever been truly liberated from the appearance of this expectation). She also went braless, rejected the girdle, and often went without makeup, subjecting herself to cruel comments

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[170] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, xvi.

[171] *Ibid.*, 306.

[172] *Ibid.*, xvii.

about her acne-scarred skin.[173] From Joplin's perspective, the girls in the front—"country club" girls—rejected her affronts to traditional femininity. "The girls are going, 'Oh my God, she may be able to sing, but she doesn't have to act like that!'"[174]

Joplin also embraced the counterculture's attention to feeling; even as she became strung out and eventually overdosed in an attempt to dull her feelings, on stage she let loose and embraced the full range of her emotions, suggesting to the audience that they might do the same.[175] Janis herself understood this:

> You know, it's a thing I do….If you can get them once, man, get them standing up when they should be sitting down, sweaty when they should be decorous, smile when they should be applauding politely…I think you sort of switch on their brain, man, so that makes them say: 'Wait a minute, maybe I can do anything.' Whoooooo! It's life. That's what rock 'n' roll is for, turn that switch on, and man, it can be all.[176]

She seemed to understand the ways in which her example was also gendered:

> People aren't supposed to be like me, sing like me, make out like me, drink like me, live like me, but now they're paying me $50,000 a year for me to be like me. That's what I hope I mean to those kids out there. After they see me, when their mothers are feeding them all that cashmere sweater and girdle ---- [expletive deleted by the *New York Times*], maybe they'll have a second thought—that they can be themselves and win.[177]

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[173] Lillian Roxon, "A Moment Too Soon," in Robert Somma, ed. *No One Waved Good-bye* (New York: Outerbridge & Dienstfrey, 1971) 93, in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, xvii.

[174] David Dalton, *Piece of My Heart: A Portrait of Janis Joplin*, rev. ed. (New York: De Capo, 1991), 115, quoted in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 17-18.

[175] See Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 168.

[176] Dalton, 164, quoted in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 188.

[177] Michael Lydon, "Every Moment She Is What She Feels," *New York Times Magazine*, Feb. 23, 1969, 94, in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 188.

Be yourself and win is as good a summary as any for the real message of the sixties. "Be yourself" might seem cliché in 2018, but there was something deeply revolutionary about it in the sixties. It also led to Joplin's encounters with the police at her concerts, underlined by the idea that she was relaying a subversive message. She was banned from the city of Houston "for her attitude in general."[178] "I say anything I want onstage," Joplin said, "I don't mind getting arrested because I've turned on lots of kids."[179]

You shouldn't let other people get your kicks for you

The hippies, Ralph Gleason wrote in 1967, were "building a new set of values, a new structure, a new society."[180] They were not concerned with politics-as-usual but privileged the politics of everyday life. They embraced community, insisted on personal freedom, rejected materialism, and valued beauty. With often-ironic senses of humor (the sly smiles singing "whoopee, we're all gonna die" in Country Joe's "Fixin' to Die to Rag" at Woodstock illustrate this well), they approached life with a sense of play and creativity. They celebrated love, created expressive and colorful spaces, danced and moved freely, and listened to music. Reared in relative comfort and raised in the stark Cold War world of fear and false choices, they envisioned a far different world and tried to set about starting it.

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[178] Myra Friedman, *Buried Alive: The Biography of Janis Joplin* (New York: Harmony, 1992), 307, in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 268.

[179] Laura Joplin, *Love, Janis* (New York, Villard Books, 1992), 263, quoted in Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 268.

[180] Ralph Gleason, "The Power of Non-Politics or the Death of the Square Left" (1967) in Bromell, *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 99.

Although this was seldom a feminist vision, the prospect and process of imagining and embarking upon new ways of living were liberating and appealing to men and women alike. Some historians have contended that feminism "bypassed" the counterculture.[181] Indeed, for all its radicalism, the counterculture, writ large, was fairly traditional and thoroughly sexist when it came to gender and relationships. As Echols wrote, "when it came to relations between men and women, even the counterculture wasn't really counter."[182] The sex in sex, drugs, and rock and roll was defined by male pleasure (and almost always in heterosexual terms). "Hippie chicks," diverse as they were, crossed many boundaries, but they were also often "old ladies," cast as servants to male pleasure. While sixties counterculture is widely criticized as being too radical, out of control, Echols argues, "the problem with the counterculture wasn't that it went too far—the typical view—but rather that its libertinism and its elevation of the far-out masked the ways that the hippie subculture mirrored the values of the dominant culture, especially in regard to women and gays."[183] The sexual revolution that was so much a part of this cultural revolution, and that ultimately spawned longstanding debates among women and feminists, was revolutionary but not at all radical when it came to women's possibilities. Women were still expected to do the housework, make the meals, care for the children. These gender roles were celebrated as natural. As Lemke-Santangelo wrote, "When women dropped out of the mainstream, they helped create an alternative

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[181] See Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius* and Rosen, *The World Split Open*.

[182] Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, xiii.

[183] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 9.

culture that was both novel and familiar."[184] They rejected middle class standards of dress, behavior, and values, but less so where gender was concerned. That's not to say that all women submitted, suffered through, or even felt oppressed by these expectations, but they were all a part of a culture that questioned authority, tradition, and the most basic assumptions about how to live. This attitude gave many of them some good ideas.[185]

Some of these ideas came from women who were taking the stage, battling it out, as rockers. Of course, folkies and girl groups and soul sisters had been on sixties stages already, but there was something different about the sound and style of the women who rocked the counterculture. As Willis wrote, "Rock is, among other things, a potent means of expressing the active emotions—anger, aggression, lust, the joy of physical exertion—that feed all freedom movements, and it is no accident that women musicians have been denied access to this powerful musical language."[186] They were in the band in new ways too and seen as contemporaries of male rock stars in some cases. As Stevie Nicks said, "'Jefferson Airplane was a huge band, and Grace was definitely *part* of that band. … It wasn't 'Grace Slick and the Jefferson Airplane,' it was the Jefferson Airplane. I liked that."[187] (Still, Slick was referred to as "the prettiest member of The Jefferson Airplane").[188]

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[184] Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius,* 59.

[185] As Echols wrote, "And by decade's end, young women, inspired by the go-for-broke risktaking and antiauthoritarianism of cultural and political radicals but angry at the old-timey gender relations that prevailed in both groups, would come together to form the sixties' most far-reaching social movement—women's liberation" (Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 50).

[186] Ellen Willis, "Women's Music," June 1974, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 143.

[187] Stevie Nicks quoted in Brian Hiatt, "Magic & Loss," *Rolling Stone* Issue 1227, January 19, 2015, 40.

Although women like Joplin and Slick made revolutionary inroads on the stage, rock music remained male-dominated, both among artists and in the infrastructure organizing an increasingly profitable and corporate world. Women could dance and get lost in themselves at shows, but that didn't mean that men respected them or regarded their personal reasons for being there in the first place. In San Francisco, KMPX employed women but referred to them as "bird engineers" or "chick engineers" or, worse, "groupies."[189] But while the counterculture may have been male-dominated, that does not mean that women did not carve and claim space within it and find their own meanings. The counterculture was never all male, and women claimed experiences within it that were more deeply countercultural, drawing clear lines between their embrace of a new society and their ways of shaping it as feminists. Karen Durbin explained, "Rock music … provided me and a lot of women with a channel for saying, 'I want,' for asserting our sexuality without apologies and without having to pretty up every passion with the traditionally 'feminine' desire for true love and marriage, and that was a useful step toward liberation."[190] Constance Trouble remembered, "it took a lot of strength to stand up and say, 'I was a hippie, and thoroughly benefited from the experience. I wasn't exploited, brainwashed, duped or oppressed. I was on a personal

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[188] Jane Wilson, "Gracie," *West*, February 18, 1968, 14-18: 14.

[189] Kramer, *The Republic of Rock*, 79 and Rhodes, *Electric Ladyland*, 164-65.

[190] Karen Durbin, "Can a Feminist Love the World's Greatest Rock and Roll Band?" *Ms.*, October 1974, 26, quoted in Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 117.

and collective mission of liberation and I loved almost every minute of it.'"[191] At its height and at its core, the counterculture was wildly sexist, and yet women still found refuge there and in its music in particular. "For all its limitations," Ellen Willis wrote, "rock was the best thing going, and if we had to filter out certain indignities—well, we had been doing that all our lives, and there was no feminist movement to suggest that things might be different."[192] Soon, though, there would be.

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[191] Constance Trouble, interviewed by Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, Berkeley, CA, August 6, 2007, in Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius,* 32.

[192] Ellen Willis, "But Now I'm Gonna Move," October 1971, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 136.

Chapter Five

Both Sides Now: Music and Liberation

I am on a lonely road and I am traveling
Looking for the key to set me free
~ Joni Mitchell, "All I Want," 1971

"All things must pass," Ellen Willis began her column in February 1971, echoing George Harrison's 1970 solo debut not long after the news that the Beatles had broken up; "even," Willis continued, "the most spectacular mass-cultural phenomenon in history."[1] To many fans, it was unthinkable to live in a world without the Beatles.[2] Since then there has never really been a world without the Beatles, or a world without Beatles fans, but still, as the sixties came to a chronological close, there seems to have been a sense of ending, tinged with a feeling of loss. The December 30, 1969 issue of *Look* magazine published a retrospective of the sixties titled "Our Unbelievable Decade." Indeed, the photos of glamorous then grief-stricken Kennedys, mop tops then psychedelic Beatles, and the war raging in Vietnam seemed to encapsulate different centuries rather than just a decade.[3] The sixties had begun with the promising election of John F. Kennedy and triumph of his glamorous young family. Ten years later, John and Robert

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Epigraph: Joni Mitchell, "All I Want," on Joni Mitchell, *Blue* (Reprise, 1971).

[1] Ellen Willis, "George and John," *The New Yorker*, February 1971, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, ed. Nona Willis Aronowitz (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 107.

[2] Candy Leonard recounts fans' feelings of loss and devastation, often akin to a death in the family. See Leonard, *Beatleness: How The Beatles and Their Fans Remade The World* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2014), 246.

[3] Julius Lester, the writer and folk musician, wrote, "To go from sit-in demonstrations at lunch counters in the south to the Black Panther Party, from pacifist demonstrations against nuclear testing to a mass anti-war movement, from the beat generation to a cultural revolution is a ten-year journey almost beyond comprehension. Yet, this is the journey which has been made." See Julius Lester, "To Recapture the Dream," in Mike Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger: Bob Dylan and the 1960s* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005), 5.

Kennedy were dead and Richard Nixon was president, callously overseeing a disastrous war and divided country. Soldiers were still dying in Vietnam, and though bitterly divided, most Americans were distraught by the failing war, gruesome reports from Vietnam, and the ultimate poverty of Cold War policies. A few short months after the resounding celebration of love and music at the Woodstock Festival, four people died at a much different music festival at the Altamont Speedway. 1970 saw the deaths of Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix, both young and both from the substance abuse that was always an ugly underpinning of the counterculture.

The story, then, is that the sixties ended and things fell apart.[4] Many of the earnest young activists who had marched and organized in the early decade grew fatigued and disillusioned. Others were strung out or dead. Many had rejected traditional politics as a viable place to affect change and had left the major institutions of American society behind rather than try to change them. While the summer of love and its aftermath had sent kids to the city, afterwards many of them went up to the country. Some joined communes or moved away from the urban centers that had been so energized and then violent, "going up the country," as the song went, "tired of the way they'd been dogged around." (Or, as Dylan sang, "The sky is erupting, I must go where it's quiet.")[5] Up in

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[4] For more on the 1970s see Beth Bailey and David Farber, eds. *American in the Seventies* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004); Edward D. Berkowitz, *Something Happened: A Political and Cultural Overview of the Seventies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Peter N. Carroll, *It Seemed Like Nothing Happened: The Tragedy and Promise of America in the 1970s* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982); Philip Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Judy Kutulas, *After Aquarius Dawned: How the Revolutions of the Sixties Became the Popular Culture of the Seventies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); David Browne, *Fire and Rain: The Beatles, Simon and Garfunkel, James Taylor, CSNY, and the Lost Story of 1970* (Cambridge: DeCapo Press, 2011).

[5] Canned Heat, "Goin' Up the Country" (Liberty, 1968); Bob Dylan, "Farwell Angelina."

the country, in Woodstock, the Band released *Music from Big Pink* in 1968 and recorded the Basement Tapes with Bob Dylan – stark, wistful, and raw in what seemed a rejection of psychedelia and the gratuitousness of the counterculture.[6] In Nashville, home of the country sound, Dylan seemed to turn his back, again, on the fans eager for direction in the chaos of the late decade and released *Nashville Skyline*, a simple record without any political messages to be found (of course, that probably was the message).[7] The Byrds were embracing Nashville too, and with Gram Parsons and then the Flying Burrito Brothers, revisiting traditional songs and sounds—in 1968, they were singing "I like the Christian life," an embrace of country sounds that was more akin to hippie rebellion than western outlaws but still striking in light of the often-close alliance between country music and conservative politics. Although tinged with its own subtle subversions, traditional country music expressed a backlash to the decade's radical achievements and aspirations: "they don't smoke marijuana in Muskogee."[8] Meanwhile in Los Angeles, a

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[6] This is complicated by definitions of the counterculture. The Band was arguably a part of it, but so was the acid rock to which their music stood in contrast. Moreover, as Marqusee writes, "What Dylan and his friends were doing in the privacy of the basement, without purpose or plan, somehow reflected the needs and mood of a broader public mesmerized and discomforted by a series of titanic social clashes" (Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger*, 227). For more on the Basement Tapes, see Greil Marcus, *The Old, Weird America: The World of Bob Dylan's Basement Tapes* (New York: Picador, 1997).

[7] As Larry Sloman recalls of the release of *Nashville Skyline*, "We were protesting the war, fighting racism,… and Dylan, whether he liked it or not, was our leader…. So what was this *Nashville Skyline*, these moon-June-spoon country songs?" See Larry "Ratso" Sloman, liner notes, *Bob Dylan Live 1975: The Rolling Thunder Revue* (Columbia Records, 2002). Furthermore, as Marqusee notes, "At the time, country and western was viewed as the antithesis of the counterculture, the epitome of the unhip. Nashville was the embodiment of ultrapatriotic, right-wing America, socially, politically and culturally conservative" (Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger*, 282). Dylan's "country" period proved significant and contributed to the emergence of country rock, which won considerable popularity in the 1970s; as Marqusee explains, "The rendezvous of Greenwich Village and Nashville was to have a lasting impact on both country and rock" (Marqusee, *Wicked Messenger*, 285.

[8] Merle Haggard and Roy Edward Burris, "Okie from Muskogee," (Capitol, 1969).

new southern California sound was taking shape with country influences and at the same time, a celebration of the so-called confessional singer-songwriter archetype of James Taylor and Jackson Browne. Like Dylan had embarked to close his eyes and write about what was behind them, Browne said he was "just trying…to write what's around me, inside of me."[9] All of this music—from the basement to the Troubadour to Nashville to Gram Parsons' American desert—reflected a turn, a new era, often considered a retreat from the embattled sixties, akin to Dylan's inward turn at mid-decade.[10] It may not be fair to say any of these artists were retreating as much as they were trying to make sense of things, and it's clear now how deeply all of these artists were influenced by the sixties; still, the story is that things, music included, mellowed out in the seventies, but that story leaves out a lot.

As the decade turned, people, including many more women, were still in the streets and many activists were carrying on, at work on a wide range of objectives that were both logical culminations of the social movements of the sixties but also distinct: black power, red power, brown power, yellow power, gay liberation, women's liberation, environmentalism, welfare rights, the establishment of ethnic studies and women's history courses and departments and the entrance of more women and people of color into the academy. These developments complicate both the periodization of the sixties and the relationship between social movements and musical changes during this period.

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[9] Quoted in Dave Thompson, *Hearts of Darkness: James Taylor, Jackson Browne, Cat Stevens, and the Unlikely Rise of the Singer-Songwriter* (Milwaukee: Backbeat Books, 2012), in Judy Kutulas, *After Aquarius Dawned*, 22.

[10] *Nashville Skyline*, meanwhile, indicated another turn for Dylan. He wrote later, "Whatever the counterculture was, I'd seen enough of it." See Bob Dylan, *Chronicles: Volume One* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 120.

Women were "taking it to the streets" more than "goin' up the country." The music women listened to, how they felt about it, and the ways they talked about it played an important role in how they did this, serving as a site of frustration, rejected by some women as another terrain of exploitation and subjugation, and at once a site of liberation for others, emboldening or at least inspiring. This held for women who listened, making music a part of their lives, and for the women who claimed roles within the music world as artists and as parts of the industry, DJs, and journalists, putting the politics of rock music to work. Music was one of the ways women had participated in public culture throughout the decade. This trend continued as the decade ended and expanded as women redrew their roles in American society. For women, as for musicians like Mitchell, Browne, and Taylor, 1969 was not an ending as much as a beginning, and the reckoning of the counterculture in music and politics was ongoing.[11]

As many cracks in the mold as had opened up in the decade, fracturing the postwar world in many ways, women still faced persistent sexism, and the roles of men and women in society seemed more or less entrenched to many Americans even as the sixties wore on. As late as 1967, David Riesman excluded women from the decade's radical shifts, writing, "If anything remains more or less unchanged, it will be the role of

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[11] Joni Mitchell, Jackson Browne, and James Taylor are often grouped together as the archetypes of the singer-songwriter genre. For more on this genre and this moment, see Browne, *Fire and Rain*; Anne Karppinen, *The Songs of Joni Mitchell: Gender, Performance and Agency* (London: Routledge, 2016); Michelle Mercer, *Will You Take Me As I Am: Joni Mitchell's* Blue *Period* (Milwaukee: Backbeat Books, 2009; originally published 2012, Free Press); Katherine Monk, *Joni: The Creative Odyssey of Joni Mitchell* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2012); Dave Thompson, *Hearts of Darkness: James Taylor, Jackson Browne, Cat Stevens, and the Unlikely Rise of the Singer-Songwriter* (Milwaukee: Backbeat Books, 2012).

women."[12] As it happened, the role of women would change dramatically in the year that followed alone, and the women's movement made many of the decade's most significant transformations. The women's movement that emerged in the late sixties articulated and publicized gender stereotypes, inequality, the oppressively limited choices faced by many women, and, in some instantiations, the ways in which this oppression was compounded by race, class, and sexuality. Combined with the political moment and the cultural changes so many young people were undergoing, the movement would remake the world in significant ways that seem distant now but were revolutionary and profound at the time. "The world split open," to borrow Ruth Rosen's title, and as Robin Morgan put it, "there was nothing distant about it."[13]

This iteration of the feminist movement traced roots to the civil rights movement and organizing of the sixties, both in the language of rights and experience of organizing. It was forged in Freedom Summer and in the movements so many women had worked and organized for, empowered by the struggle, inspired by its successes, and frustrated by their lack of power and respect in the movements for which they had risked their lives.[14] This persistent sexism made clear the need for meaningful and far-reaching changes for "the position of women." That the issue was quickly dismissed and easily derided by men in the movement only made the case clearer. In small groups across the country,

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[12] David Riesman, *Time*, July 21, 1967, in Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin, 2000), front piece.

[13] Rosen, *The World Split Open*; Robin Morgan, quoted in Alice Echols, "Nothing Distant About It," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 151.

[14] See Rosen, *The World Split Open* and Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

women began to articulate and embark upon the project of women's liberation, criticizing confining gender stereotypes and socially constructed ideas about women and extending ideas about liberation and self-determination to women. Eventually taking the form of consciousness raising groups, these gatherings marked women claiming times and spaces to talk, listen, share, and understand. As Kathie Sarachild explained in "A Program for Feminist 'Consciousness-Raising,'" "We always stay in touch with our feelings….We assume that our feelings are telling us something from which we can learn…that our feelings mean something worth analyzing…that our feelings are saying something *political*…."[15]

This had been an essential question of the decade: "how does it feel?" Dylan's lyric and the rock music it ushered shaped and defined the era's social and political movements and the young people who led them. An embrace of feeling was found in the folk movement's interest in authenticity and shared humanity, the Beatles and their fans' public embrace of joy, and the counterculture's sentiment: "the revolution is about our lives."[16] This emphasis on feeling, clearly found in music and music fandom, influenced political life and society and was a distinct feature of youth culture. As The Redstockings' Manifesto proclaimed: "We regard our feelings as our most important

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[15] Kathie Sarachild, "A Program for Feminist 'Conscious-Raising,'" 1968, in Nancy MacLean, ed. *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009), 76-78: 76. These groups began in earnest in 1967. See Sara M. Evans, "Beyond Declension: Feminist Radicalism in the 1970s and 1980s," in *The World the Sixties Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America*, Van Gosse and Richard Moser, eds. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), 52-66: 55. Also see Debra Michals, "From 'Consciousness Expansion' to 'Consciousness Raising': Feminism and the Countercultural Politics of the Self" in *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s,* ed. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 41-68.

[16] See Doug Rossinow, "The Revolution Is about Our Lives: The New Left's Counterculture," in *Imagine Nation*, ed. Braunstein and Doyle, 99-124.

source of political understanding."[17] Ideas would eventually lead to action, but the ideas needed to come first.[18] This emphasis on understanding and paying attention to feelings bears the marks of the sixties both in its attempt to overcome the isolation of modern society, something Americans had been anxious about since the beginning of the decade, and its insistence that these conversations were valid, productive, and should influence how the people who took part acted in the world. As Debra Michals points out, the most noted events of the women's movement were the result of consciousness raising.[19] Consciousness raising also bore the marks of rock and roll, in a way, because although measured (taking turns, for instance), it was defined by an acknowledgement that women had a complex web of angst, frustration, insecurity, along with their joy, to untangle. Rock and roll was not premised on this, but it had been an outlet for women to access it. As music changed at the end of the sixties, a *Rolling Stone* piece in 1969 bemoaned, "Nowadays it's the personal and the poetic, rather than a message that dominates."[20] But couldn't that have been a message? That was a common turn in sixties movements anyway: more meaningful political change would require personal change.[21]

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[17] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Redstockings Manifesto, "Principles." MC 646, folder 1.19. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[18] At the same time, it was a widespread criticism of consciousness-raising that the ideas didn't actually lead anywhere. Also see Michals, "From 'Consciousness Expansion' to 'Consciousness Raising,'" 54.

[19] Michals, "From 'Consciousness Expansion' to 'Consciousness Raising,'" 43.

[20] Uncredited writer, "Joni Mitchell," *Rolling Stone*, 17 May 1969, in Barney Hoskyns, *Joni*, 32-37: 33.

[21] Joni Mitchell seemed to understand this: "everyone wants peace – but it's like some people go to church on Sundays and some don't, but they're still Christians. I feel that a lot of people actively working for peace do it for the wrong reasons – they are saying, 'Look at me, I'm working towards peace', and they are abusing the word." Caroline Boucher, "'My Personal Life is in a Shambles,'" *Disc and Music Echo*, 10 January 1970, in *Joni: The Anthology*, ed. Barney Hoskyns (New York: Picador, 2016), 41-43: 43. It's

The women's liberation movement that emerged in the late 1960s embraced and embodied the sixties maxim "the personal is political." The phrase itself has been attributed to Carol Hanisch, a civil rights activist and women's liberationist who "coined the slogan" in 1968 to suggest that there were "political dimensions to private life," that politics extended beyond Capitol Hill, the White House, or the traditional spaces of political power and could be found, and fought, in homes, kitchens, bedrooms, and the spaces of the everyday.[22] What women wore, how they walked and carried themselves, where they went, who they spent time with, the clothes and make up they wore (or didn't), and the music they listened to (and, perhaps, what it meant to them) all reflected a form of politics, with liberating potential. This was the same politics that made Beatlemania so significant and the same idea embraced by the counterculture, articulated, expanded, and put to work.

In 1968, that fateful year, members of the New York Radical Women organized a protest at the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City.[23] Women picketed outside the convention hall and engaged the tactics of street theater to call attention to the Pageant's—and American society's— objectification of women. They crowned a sheep Miss America, refused to speak with male reporters, and threw symbols of oppression—

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interesting to note that the commercial audience for what became the singer-songwriter genre was disproportionately female, a fact that served to discredit the genre. See Kutulas, *After Aquarius Dawned,* 16.

[22] Rosen, *The World Split Open*, 196.

[23] See Echols, "Nothing Distant About It"; Evans, "Beyond Declension"; Michals, "From 'Consciousness Expansion' to 'Consciousness Raising'"; Susan Douglas, *Where The Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994), especially Chapter 7 "Throwing Out Our Bras."

bras, makeup, high heels—into a "Freedom Trashcan." (Contrary to popular belief, they did not burn the contents of the trashcan, or any other bras). Their demonstration drew attention on the boardwalk and in the media (hence the popular misnomer, "bra burners"). One woman was charged with disorderly conduct.[24] As Hanisch said of the protests, "It was, for its time, a daring act of defiance against everything that women were supposed to be: seen and not heard. Women were valued much more for their appearance than for what we thought or did."[25] This was the watershed moment against this oppressive idea and the most overt expressions of it. But it built upon decades of more subtle subversion—screaming fans among them—and drew attention to the groups of women gathering around the country who, after organizing for civil rights, for free speech, against the war in Vietnam, were organizing for themselves.

The Miss America Pageant also underscored the importance of spectacle and publicity. Consciousness raising was twofold: individual and collective; once your consciousness was raised, how would you raise the consciousness of others? The national media was the way to raise the consciousness of the nation, if Elvis and the Beatles and the Rolling Stones were any indication (a national media that, as Susan Douglas contends, had already influenced many of the women prepared to take to the streets).[26] When the sixties began, Kenneth Cmiel, wrote, "civility was, quite literally,

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[24] Echols, "Nothing Distant About It," 150.

[25] Susan Brownmiller Papers, 1935-2000; Carol Hanisch, "'Bra-Burners,' The 1968 Miss America Protest," *Hudson Valley Woman*, Sept. 1991. MC 523, 21.6. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[26] Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*.

the law of the land."[27] The Supreme Court had ruled that some words were not protected by the First Amendment and that, in Cmiel's words, civility trumped civil rights. Upending civility, however, was essential to the 1960s and nearly all of its chaotic ruptures and spirited movements. Protests, even in their most civil and nonviolent forms, are the clearest example of how "prevailing attitudes toward social etiquette were attacked" in the sixties (particularly effective, Cmiel notes, because they revealed the civility of those assumed to be barbaric and the barbarism of so-called civil society).[28] But the deepest affronts to the very notion of civil society were embedded in how people acted in the counterculture. The hippies looked wrong, spoke weird, and moved through space in ways that were not violent but were offensive—they danced, sometimes naked, sauntered, no particular place to go, and they kissed and touched and had sex in broad daylight. This was called behaving badly by many, but it was a means of accessing authenticity for others and of enacting a personal politics. There was a carelessness and gratuitousness about many of the young people who made up the counterculture, but many of their affronts were intentional, both in the commitment to living differently and in the frequent attempt to offend and upset the prevailing standards of polite society with which they'd been raised.

The underlying principle of civil society—*be nice*—was applied with special force for women. The rules were stricter and the consequences for breaking them were harsher. Even in an era of protest, that's why the very idea of burning bras and the

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[27] Kenneth Cmiel, "The Politics of Civility," in Farber, ed, *The Sixties*, 263.

[28] Cmiel, "The Politics of Civility," in Farber, ed, *The Sixties*, 267.

protests it signaled were so shocking—girls were supposed to be nice. The tactics of the movement drew attention to many of its objectives while also enacting them, seeking to expose and redraw American society in fundamental ways, getting to the core of everyday life—how people acted—in their affronts to the politics of gender and respectability. The public nature, the occupation of space, was what was perturbing: grumbling about the Miss America Pageant in your living room was one thing, taking over the boardwalk was another (like listening to the Beatles at home was one thing, and making people late to work was another). Most women were "spectators" more than participants, "[Y]et spectatorship in 1968—even in the confines of your own home—was a politicizing activity."[29] Watching raised your consciousness (like watching screaming fans, seeing female folk singers, and listening to records).

The shock of No More Miss America! was the same fascinated, flustered response that characterized much of the media coverage of the women's movement in the years that followed: derisive, usually missing the point, and peppered with the same dumb jokes that women discussed in consciousness raising groups. At once bold, empowered, visible, deeply embattled, and profoundly personal, the women's liberation movement faced frustrations (frustrations that were not unlike those women encountered in rock and roll). As Joan Didion wrote, "They were being heard, and yet not really. Attention was finally being paid, and yet that attention was mired in the trivial."[30] Many of the women engaged in the movement felt that they were a part of something truly revolutionary and

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[29] Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 153.

[30] Joan Didion, *The White Album* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1979), 113.

frustrated by the ways the media was interested as well as dismissive. The personal politics they insisted on discussing—housework, sex, child care, the stuff of everyday life—were at times laughed off as "women's issues" (that was part of the point). In part, these changes were both years in the making and shockingly sudden, especially in terms of their force. What would have been commonplace in 1968 was often unacceptable in 1969. This was true in the advertising world, an egregious proponent of misogyny, where, as Thomas Frank explains, advertisers were "Faced with an articulate popular uprising" and "quickly changed course."[31] (They changed course, naturally, to profit from "liberation"—*you've come along way baby*). There were real debates within the movement, about the left, lesbianism, marriage, essentialism, radicalism, whether to work for women to be more equitably integrated into mainstream society or reject mainstream society all together, and so on—not surprising given the gravity of the issues at stake, but any tensions were quickly ridiculed: "cat fight!" or "just bitching."[32] The opposition to women who sought to cast off expectations of marriage and motherhood, rejected the comforts many of their mothers had yearned for, or allied with lesbianism and gay liberation, was not surprising. What was more remarkable, perhaps, was how many were drawn to their cause and welcomed the changes they worked for, even in quiet ways ("I'm no women's libber, but…"). As Sara Evans noted, while the divisions within the movement often define its history, "the thousands of women who were drawn to the

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[31] Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 152.

[32] See Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 15.

movement frequently did not know or care which direction they went."[33] The impact of the movement is perhaps more keenly felt not in the dense theoretical debates of the most devoted feminists, but in the ways their ideas reached the majority of Americans (like the thousands of women who never learned to play guitar or never made it to Woodstock but shared a sensibility with people who did). As David Farber noted, while the ambitions of radical feminists were not wholly fulfilled, and while many Americans found them alienating, the movement "succeeded in focusing the nation's attention both on gender inequality and on the immense cultural and political forces that constructed and constrained gender roles in America."[34] Raising the issue was revolutionary—even as it splintered and created incomplete change, the women's movement also transformed the world.[35]

The tendency to leave this story out of the narrative of popular music may have contributed to a similar tendency to leave music out of the story of the women's movement, despite the fact that both forces – feminism and rock – were more or less concurrent and had similarly broad reach in shaping American society. This impetus also has grounding in many feminists' rejection of rock music because of its unabashed misogyny. Not only was rock "a man's world" in terms of material power ("the industry") and in light of the rampant sexism and sexual abuse perpetrated by too many

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[33] Evans, "Beyond Declension," 55.

[34] David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 254.

[35] See Ellen Willis, "Radical Feminism and Feminist Radicalism," *Social Text*, Summer 1984, in *The Essential Ellen Willis*, ed. Nona Willis Aronowitz (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 229-255; Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 240-241. Note that Willis refers specifically to radical feminism.

"rock star" idols, the music itself was laden with lyrics degrading, demeaning, threatening, objectifying, and dehumanizing women. "She's the sweetest pet in the world," the Rolling Stones sang about "the girl who once pushed [them] around."[36] Since the Beatles sang "I'd rather see you dead, little girl, then to be with another man," it's not a stretch of the imagination to assume violence is implied as Lennon sings "that's the end, little girl." The song is called "Run for Your Life" after all, and even on the vaunted *Sgt. Pepper*, he sang about "beat[ing] his woman," which Cynthia Lennon reported he once did.[37] In the midst of the women's liberation movement, Neil Young sang about wanting someone to "keep [his] house clean, fix [his] meals, and go away" in the apparently unironic "A Man Needs A Maid."[38] The misogyny of rock music is difficult to dismiss, but so is its resonance with women. The music women listened to, the ways it made them feel, what it led them to imagine, and what music culture and fandom led them to do are all important to consider to gain a more complete understand of the women's liberation movement in context. Though the approaches and achievements of the movement included traditional realms of political organizing, its changes were so far-reaching that we must look to a range places and parts of life, including the prosaic world

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[36] "Under My Thumb," however, passes the famous "Willis Test," because a reversal of gender roles is plausible, as demonstrated by Tina Turner. Tim Riley argues that in spite of songs like "Under My Thumb," the Rolling Stones' "misogynist reputation came more from their carefully constructed public image than from the songs themselves…" and that although the Stones were certainly sexist, "they just weren't nearly as two-dimensional as their detractors claimed" (96). See Tim Riley, *Fever: How Rock 'n' Roll Transformed Gender in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), 90; 96.

[37] Cynthia Lennon, *John* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2005), 37.

[38] Neil Young, "A Man Needs A Maid" (Reprise, 1972).

of everyday experience, to see how they were enacted. Music, certainly, is one of the places that have been overlooked.

Rock and roll was a terrain of liberation from the beginning, for the people who made it and the people who listened to it. Those women who had grown up with early rock and roll were somewhat older when the movement began, and rock and roll had been dismissed by many as apolitical, especially in comparison to what was to come in the sixties. But for many women, the connection was clear. It's well known that women gained experience in the civil rights movement, but Barbara O'Dair contended that it was the blues and R&B, along with the movement, that trained women in liberation.[39] Alice Echols remembered, "In my experience, the music and the politics were connected. The Supremes and the Temptations didn't sing 'political' songs, but listening to them on WOL, one of D.C.'s two soul stations, made me curious about black culture and black politics."[40] She explained, "my own relationship to rock 'n' roll was profound, even politicizing."[41] The world of folk music had ignited many women's political sensibilities, and the personal and political drama of Beatlemania had connected a different set of women to the larger world. "She Loves You," Roz Chast wrote, offered her "first inkling that there was another world out there," and hearing "that exuberant singing, like nothing [she'd] ever heard before" made her "aware not only that the world existed, but also that

[39] Barbara O'Dair, Introduction, *Trouble Girls: The Rolling Stone Book of Women in Rock*, ed. Barbara O'Dair (New York: Random House, 1997), xxii.

[40] Echols continued, "I'm not sure I would have been so eager to read books like Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver's bestseller *Soul on Ice* had I not been hooked on soul music." See Echols, *Shaky Ground: The Sixties and Its Aftershocks* (New York: Columbia, 2002), 10.

[41] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 10.

[she] deeply wanted to be part of it."[42] "She Loves You," she remembered, "felt like an anthem of liberation."[43] Yet the song, aside from its yeah yeah yeah spirit, was not really about liberation. This was not a unique relationship. Music that was not overtly political and was, sometimes, overtly sexist, was still claimed as liberating by many of the women who listened to it; usually, that was a feeling they claimed entirely for themselves—it wasn't what the songwriters, performers, or record executives intended.

Music was the soundtrack to the rebellion as well, intricately woven into many of the movements. The music was part of what made the sixties "luminous," as Margot Adler described them.[44] "And there was the music," Devra Weber recalled of the political and intellectual communities formed by students in the late sixties. "The nights staying up and playing Bob Dylan, smoking pot, red lights on the lamps, and lots of people over talking, everyone sitting comfortably on a mattress because that's the one piece of furniture in the room except for a chair."[45] Adler described sex, drugs, and rock and roll as merely "the outer trappings of a rich world of ideas."[46] Music was not necessarily a separate entity, it was a part of this world of new ideas.[47] No song is an

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[42] Roz Chast, "She Loves You," in *In Their Lives: Great Writers on Great Beatles Songs*, ed. Andrew Blaunder (New York: Blue Rider Press, 2017) 1-4:1.

[43] Chast, "She Loves You," 2.

[44] Margot Adler, *Heretic's Heart: A Journey Through Spirit & Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), ix.

[45] Devra Weber in Fraser, *1968*, 118 in Rosen, *The World Split Open*, 126.

[46] Adler, *Heretic's Heart*, x.

[47] See Jacqueline Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Cultures: Popular Music and Identity in the 1960s* (New York: Routledge, 2007) for this idea in the context of the girl groups. Warwick also notes the contribution of Susan Douglas and quotes her: "[T]he sense of cultural and social collectivity many young women felt

island, and neither are listeners—we hear songs in our own social and cultural (and political, sexual, aesthetic, etc.) contexts and carry them with us as those contexts are shaped. Brian Ward demonstrates in *Just My Soul Responding* that studying black music and consumption offers "a useful insight into the changing sense of self, community, and destiny among those blacks who rarely left the sort of evidence, or undertook the sorts of activities, to which historians are generally most responsive."[48] A similar idea can apply to gender, and to music made by women as well as music women listened to, including music that seemed oppressive to women.[49]

It is easy to see the ways in which rock and roll songs and musicians have denigrated women and conveyed messages of male supremacy. As Robert Christgau wrote in an early attempt to make sense of the complex gender politics in rock music, titled "Look at That Stupid Girl," rock music was not only male chauvinist, as "almost everything is," but male supremacist.[50] But, he continued,

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when they sang along together with the Shirelles…was about to be extended into a political movement that would change America" (Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 140-1, in Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Culture*, 183).

[48] Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness and Race Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 4. Ward's work is "guided by the belief that the popular cultures of oppressed groups usually contain within them – explicitly or implicitly – a critique of the system by which these groups are oppressed, and thus actually constitute a mode of psychological resistance to their predicament" (4).

[49] As Ward argues in *Just My Soul Responding*, the "sort of psychological empowerment" of music consumed by black audiences "was apparent even among the majority of blacks in America who never marched, sat-in, joined voter registration drives, rioted, or took part in any of the myriad political actions which historians have usually recognized as the outward manifestations of inner transformations in black consciousness during the two decades after *Brown*." See Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, 3-4.

[50] Robert Christgau, *Any Old Way You Choose It: Rock and Other Pop Music, 1967-73* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973), 113.

> insofar as the new feminism results from a certain style of heightened political awareness that began with the new civil rights movement, it can be said to have some of its roots in the adolescent rebellion symbolized by rock and roll. This is a far-fetched rationalization, and there is no need to take it as more than a curiosity, but it does help resolve the paradox. Women like rock not only because it has human value but also because some of that human value is, or has been, good for them *as women*.[51]

This was an early suggestion of the ways in which rock and roll held liberating potential, and to argue that all women like the music they listened to because it never occurred to them that it was sexist or misogynistic is to play into the "stupid girl" myth. In a recent article, Anwen Crawford explained that "Rock music has rarely offered the same tangible promise of social rebellion and sexual freedom that it has given men," acknowledging still that many women sought to find both in rock music all the same.[52] Tangibility is the distinction, but music still allowed many women access to a world of rebellion: the racial transgressions of early rock and roll, the youthful spirit and irreverent humor of the Beatles, the sensuality of rock music. These rebellions were not always matched by real life actions, but listening was a tool of access for many women. As Willis put it, "rock and roll liberated aggression: not only anger, though that was of course part of it, but a sense of entitlement to seize the world, uninhibited by the feminine commandment, thou shalt not offend."[53] Grace Slick remembered, "Jagger's bad-boy-with-attitude persona was something I understood. I didn't copy his singing style or mannerisms, but, from

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[51] Christgau, *Any Old Way You Choose It*, 114.

[52] Anwen Crawford, "The World Needs Female Rock Critics," *The New Yorker*, May 26, 2015.

[53] Ellen Willis, Preface to Barbara O'Dair's *Trouble Girls: The Rolling Stone Book of Women in Rock*, 1997, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 160.

watching him perform and listening to his music, I learned how to let it out and damn the censorship."[54]

Despite its privilege of male pleasure, rock music does seem to have allowed some women access to sexuality. Rock "began to speak for" her, Barbara O'Dair remembered, and songs like "Stray Cat Blues," "Brown Sugar," and "Wild Horses," "defined [her] mood as powerfully as did the anticipation of getting high and making out in dark fields."[55] Rock and roll "came before sex," she remembered, "and sometimes stood in *for* sex."[56] Karen Durbin told Sasha Frere-Jones, rock and roll "was the place where we could be sexual and ecstatic about it. Our lives were saved by that fine, fine music, and that's a fact."[57] Music could allow women access to sexuality without sex, a glimpse, on their own terms. Chrissie Hynde remembered that she didn't have a boyfriend and had little sexual experience as a college student at Kent State, but what she had was music. "I was happy with my relationship with guys on records, in bands."[58] Even then, it was about the music and about how she felt. Her reality was about wanting to be in the band, not with the band. "I wanted to be them, not do them," as she put it.[59]

This was actually an important statement about gender roles and the ways in

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[54] Grace Slick with Andrea Cagan, *Somebody to Love? A Rock-and-Roll Memoir* (New York: Warner Books, 1998),132.

[55] O'Dair, Introduction, *Women in Rock*, xix.

[56] *Ibid.,* xix. Italics included in original.

[57] Sasha Frere-Jones, "Opening the Vault," in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, xiv.

[58] Chrissie Hynde, *Reckless: My Life as a Pretender* (New York: Doubleday, 2015), 75.

[59] Hynde, *Reckless*, 87.

which music transgressed them. Male rock stars may have had more freedom on account of their gender, and women identified with that freedom more than or at the same time that they idolized or adored the men. The characteristics they admired may have been enabled by gender norms, but they were not necessarily gendered—fans did not always adore male musicians because of their maleness; rather, they identified with their attitudes, their relative freedom, and their expression, and they imagined displaying these attitudes themselves on stage. Of rock stars—Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, Jimi Hendrix, Marvin Gaye—O'Dair said, "I objectified these heroes *and* identified with them."[60] This identification could be both inspiring and frustrating. One young woman stopped learning guitar because it didn't seem like an option for her: "for a young girl wanting to play electric guitar, there were no role models. I didn't want to be Joni Mitchell. I wanted to be John Lennon. Electric guitar seemed liberating; it's what I wanted to do but it didn't seem to be an option. For my brother, it was more of a birthright."[61] Whether or not the electric guitar was liberating, the male birthright in music and so many other realms was oppressive. Challenging the birthrights of their brothers and claiming the right to liberation was a part of the women's movement and of music.

Soon, more and more women were playing electric guitars and expressing themselves on stage and on record. Women were prominent as artists throughout the 1960s (and before), and were integral to the folk revival and the Motown sound. The

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[60] O'Dair, Introduction, *Women in Rock*, xix. Italics included in original.

[61] Leonard, *Beatleness*, 44.

Berkeley band Joy of Cooking was unique for its two female leaders and instrumentalists, Toni Brown and Terri Garthwaite.[62] The Ace of Cups was an all-girl band in the Haight that opened for the Band, Jefferson Airplane, and Jimi Hendrix; Hendrix even gave them a shout out when he was asked what he liked about America, and Ralph Gleason named them as a band to keep an eye on—"you'll dig them."[63] Much earlier in the decade, as Jacqueline Warwick has illustrated, the popularity of the girl groups—the Shirelles, Supremes, Marvelettes, Ronettes, Dixie Cups, and on and on—represented a new version of femininity and a vision of women on stage that was exciting to many of the girls who were watching.

> Even a demure girl group song such as the Paris Sisters' dreamy 1961 'I Love How You Love Me' or the Supremes' 1964 'Baby Love' could be exciting and empowering to audiences of girls in the context of a concert. The mere fact of seeing girls on stage performing and earning the applause and approval of fans suggested the possibility of a life of glamour, adventure, and independence from the frustrations of conventional domesticity. When girl groups toured, giving concerts across North America and beyond, they presented irrefutable evidence that females could function in public space and could go boldly into new territories.[64]

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[62] See Robert Christgau, "Joy," *The Village Voice*, April 1971, in Christgau, *Any Old Way You Choose It*, 272.

[63] Kelly Whalen, "Meet the Ace of Cups, the Haight's (almost) forgotten all-girl band." PBS SoCal (pbs.org), Sept. 6, 2017. The Ace of Cups' name can be seen on iconic posters of the era, and the Ace of Cups are seen on film in *Revolution* (1968). It's worth noting that the band left few traces because they never recorded an album (until 2017) and attributed their break up to carrying and raising children.

[64] Warwick, *Girl Groups, Girl Culture*, 203. As Warwick goes on to note, the implications of these women's' presence was heightened by the fact that many of them were women of color, although like Rosa Parks and the carefully selected students among the Little Rock Nine, girl group singers were presented to white Americans in a carefully orchestrated and tightly controlled manner. They also faced real dangers, especially in the South, and indignities such as being seated on garbage cans behind restaurants and given cold food on paper plates, as Martha Reeves of Martha and the Vandellas experienced or being dragged from a bus like Gladys Knight (203-205).

These women seemed like they were in charge, and they also seemed to have fun together, depicting an important image of female friendships. Somewhere in there, in 1963, Lesley Gore recorded "You Don't Own Me," one of the few songs to rival the Beatles' chart positions, which should tell us something about what was going through the minds of the record-buying public.[65]

As the decade turned, more women who had been part of sixties audiences forged places for themselves on the stage and in the recording studio. This increasingly came to mean that it was not only music that inspired and resonated with audiences, but the person themselves. Granted people loved the Beatles, but female performers of various persuasions allowed female multiple avenues of self-visualization. Once again, images of these women and the ways in which they displayed themselves—their decisions about dress, style, and expression, as well as the songs they sang—were powerful cultural markers. As Willis wrote, "It was seeing Janis Joplin that made me resolve, once and for all, not to get my hair straightened. And there was a direct line from that sort of response to those apocryphal burned bras and all that followed."[66] Joplin was widely criticized, by men and women alike, for her appearance and behavior, but her plight shed light on the frustration of women, in rock and beyond, and helped crystallize the inequities many of her fans would organize against.[67] As Echols commented, "From the beginning, women

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[65] In Victor Brooks, *Last Season of Innocence: The Teen Experience in the 1960s* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012), 62.

[66] Ellen Willis, "Janis Joplin," *Rolling Stone*, Nov. 18, 1976, 60. Willis later wrote that she "invest[ed] great hopes in Janis Joplin's hair" (Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; "The Paradox of Rocklit," Vienna, 1995. MC 646, 10.5. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.)

[67] Crawford makes a similar point in "The World Needs Female Rock Critics."

were at a disadvantage because rock developed at a time when women were expected to be sexy, not sexual."[68] Linda Ronstadt remembered Judy Henske telling her recently after her arrival in Los Angeles, "[I]n this town there are four sexes: men, women, homosexuals, and girl singers."[69] Slick and Joplin were supposed to be sexy for men, and although they were the stars, they played on stages full of men and were produced and managed by men. Joni Mitchell acknowledged Dylan's influence on her career, remarking upon hearing "Like A Rolling Stone" that she never knew she could sing all the poetry she was writing, but she was cast off as a "folk singer" more than given credit as a songwriter to Dylan's equal. Mitchell was also infamously named rock and roll's "old lady" by *Rolling Stone* in an issue that included a diagram revealing, or speculating, which of Mitchell's songs were about which of her famous boyfriends (Mitchell meanwhile claimed she'd never met some of the men, and perhaps not coincidentally, she expertly penned "My Old Man" the same year).[70] Like James Taylor singing, "It isn't what she's got to say…" a reviewer of Mitchell commented, "have you ever noticed how much more important is the sound of a woman's voice than what she says with it?" and continued, "Most girls think and speak on a fairly simple level but feel on a deeply complex one."[71] As audiences, women were essential, but as performers they were often

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[68] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 11.

[69] Linda Ronstadt, *Simple Dreams: A Musical Memoir* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013), 39.

[70] See Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 214.

[71] James Taylor, "Something in the Way She Moves." Paul Williams, from "The Way We Are Today," in *The Age of Rock*, ed. Jonathan Eisen (New York: Vintage, 1969) in *Joni*, ed. Hoskyns, 22-25: 23. A note from 2018: Hillary Rodham Clinton has probably noticed that.

belittled.[72] This made music another battleground of women's liberation, as songs written and performed by women changed, fans found resonance in the music and the artists, and women sought more control in the music industry.

The seventies saw a number of leading women performers and songwriters.[73] 1971 was a magical year at A&M in Los Angeles as Joni Mitchell recorded *Blue* in Studio C while Carole King was down the hall recording *Tapestry* in Studio B.[74] In the early 1970s, the number of records by women grew to account for a wider segment of the market and reached higher spaces on the charts.[75] There were "a lot of strong women" in the Laurel Canyon music scene King and Mitchell inhabited in the early seventies.[76] "Because it was the feminist movement," Bonnie Raitt remembered, "and because things were different for the first time you could actually be part of a you know men and women hanging out without it being about dating."[77] Raitt's guitar prowess represented a significant boundary crossing at the time, and with Linda Ronstadt, Karla Bonoff, Rickie Lee Jones, Emmylou Harris, Nicolette Larson, Laura Nyro, Janis Ian, and others, offered

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[72] That "women's music" could somehow be a musical genre itself, independent of aesthetics, reflects the narrow options and small spaces available to women as musicians.

[73] See Sheila Weller *Girls Like Us: Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon, and the Journey of A Generation* (New York: Atria Books, 2008); Katulas, *After Aquarius Dawned*, 31. Riley argues that in spite of the feminist contributions of Joplin and Aretha Franklin, and although very different from one another, it was Mitchell and King who "[got] to the essence of the new woman poetically" (114).

[74] Carole King, *A Natural Woman: A Memoir* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2013), 209.

[75] Katulas, *After Aquarius Dawned*, 27-28.

[76] J.D. Souther in *Troubadours: The Rise of the Singer-Songwriter* (Hear Music, 2011).

[77] Bonnie Raitt in *Troubadours*. Raitt and Browne were a good example of this camaraderie.

a new image of femininity, markedly less rigid compared to the women recording music a decade before them.[78] Ronstadt was significant for reversing the pronouns in many of the songs she sang the Willis test. Their male counterparts like James Taylor and Jackson Browne also embodied some of the sixties' attacks on gender roles by rejecting the toxic masculinity too common in rock, appearing sensitive and introspective (although the details of their biographies suggest that at the time, they were just as misogynistic as many rock stars). The development of the confessional "singer-songwriter" genre among some of these women, though generally seen as milder and less political than the music of the sixties, reflected the ethos of personal politics. Mitchell transcended the confessional singer-songwriter box she was often put in, but the model of exploring and sharing personal thoughts and feelings, about relationships and about the self, was important for many listeners. Shawn Colvin told Mitchell "I don't know what I would have done without you."[79] Rita Wilson remembered listening to Joni Mitchell and reading the lyrics, "obsessed."[80] Malka Marom reflected after seeing her perform live:

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[78] Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo agrees that this cohort of women were able to "break out of such rigid molds." See Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius: Women of the Sixties Counterculture* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009), 23. Women, Riley argued, were subject to a double standard in songwriting credits, too often criticized for not writing all or enough of their own material in a standard of musical masculinity set by Dylan (124). At the same time, Ronstadt, especially, was significant for using reversed pronouns in songs written by men, often claiming desire and power for herself. In this way, many of Ronstadt's recordings passed the so-called "Willis test" to determine the misogyny in songs because the pronouns were successfully reversed. For more on Bonnie Raitt, also see Riley, *Fever*, 123-136.

[79] Quoted in Frank Tortorici, "Elton John, James Taylor Pay Tribute to Joni Mitchell," SonicNet.com, 9 April 2000, in Hoskyns, *Joni*, 256-258: 258.

[80] Wilson in Joanne Kaufman, "Life's Greatest Hits," *New York Times*, 13 March 2016, quoted in Katulas, *After Aquarius Dawned*, 26.

"My chest expanded from the sheer beauty of it."[81] "It moved me to the core, changed me, changed my life."[82]

Lyrics about relationships—"I'm so hard to handle," "you turn me on," "feeling proud to say I love you right out loud"—reflected the many changes wrought by the sexual revolution and women's liberation movement and music as a space for women to be more expressive about their own sexuality—"no regrets, coyote." The successes of Carole King's *Tapestry*, with songs like "I Feel the Earth Move" and lyrics like "I never thought I could get satisfaction from just one man," and Carly Simon's "That's the Way I Always Heard It Should Be" are clear examples of this.[83] The industry took note of these commercial successes and the new audiences they seemed to be reaching, particularly the young white women who were "the first beneficiaries of the women's movement," women who were well educated and reasonably well off (with some money to spend on records and concert tickets).[84] In 1970, advertisements for Mitchell's *Ladies of the Canyon* featured the fictional story of a young woman (twenty three, not a mindless teenager) who feels "there was someone else, even another canyon lady, who really knew."[85] The advertising is somewhat laughable, but it seems to have been grounded in

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[81] Malka Marom, *Joni Mitchell: In Her Own Words* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2014), xii.

[82] Marom, *Joni Mitchell*, 26.

[83] See Katulas, *After Aquarius Dawned*, 23; 26-27. Regarding the album's success, note that it stayed on the charts for six years after its release in April of 1971 (Riley, *Fever*, 116).

[84] *Ibid.,* 28.

[85] *Rolling Stone*, 14 May 1970, 14, in Katulas, *After Aquarius Dawned*, 28; "Joni Mitchell's New Album Will Mean More to Some Than to Others," Reprise Records ad for *Ladies of the Canyon*, May 1970, in *Joni*, ed. Hoskyns, 49-50.

real life experiences. Ellen Sander wrote, "Joni Mitchell writes my life…."[86] A male writer had the nerve to explain (mansplain, in the parlance of 2018) "Joni Mitchell's particular triumph is that girl singers or girl artists of any kind who have really gotten at what it is to be a woman can be counted on the fingers of one hand (if you're generous, use some fingers twice)," but he added, "I have yet to meet a girl who doesn't feel that Joni speaks for her."[87] Judy Kutulas noted that many women related to the vulnerability expressed by female singer-songwriters—"will you take me as I am?"[88]

Mitchell, however, was reluctant to don the label of feminist, and indeed she actively rejected it, insisting "I've never been a feminist."[89] Whatever Mitchell thought, there were women who found power and inspiration in her example.[90] Still, there were others who "distrusted" her for these statements, and as part of the movement there was an impulse of separatism seen in the all women bands and record labels that were a project of women's liberation.[91] "Women's music" had the largest audience among lesbians, but as a part of the women's liberation movement, it reflected the quest in the

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[86] Ellen Sander, "Memories of Joni," Rock's Backpages, October 2012 in *Joni*, ed. Hoskyns, 29-31: 31.

[87] Williams, from "The Way We Are Today," 23.

[88] Kutulas, *After Aquarius Dawned*, 30; Mitchell, "California" (Reprise, 1971).

[89] Mick Brown, "Lookin' Good, Sister," *Daily Telegraph*, 23 February 1991, in *Joni*, ed. Hoskyns, 177-184: 183. She made the same comment in a conversation with Barney Hoskyns in 1994, in *Joni*, 187-203: 191.

[90] Brown, "Lookin' Good, Sister," 183.

[91] Linda Gordon, "The Women's Liberation Movement," in Dorothy Sue Cobble, Linda Gordon, and Astrid Henry, *Feminism Unfinished: A Short, Surprising History of American Women's Movements* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2014).

movement, and other liberation movements, to establish alternative institutions.[92] The Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band, founded in 1969, was forthright about the misogyny of rock music and set out "divesting rock of its sexism."[93] Part of this had to do with the fact that women had been performing and not getting credit; resentment that led to resistance.[94] The label of "women's music" served to dismiss the genre in the world of music (why not just music?), but in some ways it seemed to be more about power than about music anyway.[95] The music seemed to be empowering for some, but of limited reach, and although many unique artists emerged from the groundwork of this category, they did so largely within traditional commercial structures. Women's record labels, like Olivia, produced "women's music," not rock or pop, and "languished" in the back of the record store.[96] Attempts to coopt the airwaves, like in San Francisco, were temporary.[97]

While many women found resonance and community in the world of "women's music," what's perhaps more interesting to consider is how many women, including

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[92] Leslie Berman, "Charmed Circle: Folksingers and Singer-Songwriters," in *Women in Rock*, ed. Barbara O'Dair, 125-135, 128; 130-133. Also see Ronnie Gilbert, *A Radical Life in Song: A Memoir* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 224.

[93] See cwluherstory.org for more; Naomi Weisstein and Virginia Blaisdell, "Feminist Rock: No More Balls and Chains." Ben Kim, "Suffragette City: The Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band." New City, 1994.

[94] Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*.

[95] Jack Haberstram, Pop Conference 2017

[96] Arlene Stein in Echols, "Nothing Distant About It," 161. See Holly Near, with Derk Richardson, *Fire in the Rain…Singer in the Storm* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1990), 120-121, for more on the National Women's Music Festival and women-only audiences. This is not to discount that this movement was important to many women, just to explain that it did not have a major influence on mass culture.

[97] Also see Susan Krieger, "Cooptation: The Story of A Radio Station," Stanford University, Department of Communication, 1975.

radical feminists, did not. As Willis tellingly recalled after seeing a talented pianist, Margie Adam, at the National Women's Music Festival in 1974, "it left me with a traitorous itch to sneak off and listen to 'Satisfaction.'"[98] Willis was both rock and roll fan and radical feminist, and she insisted that the two were related, at least where the 1960s were concerned. Women's music did not necessarily hold the same liberating potential, a dynamic Ellen Willis encapsulates clearly. Echols remembered of the women's studies meetings she attended in the early 70s, "I could never quite get with the program. I listened to the Rolling Stones and Barry White rather than Holly Near."[99] The Stones, it seems, were not only more satisfying but more liberating. In the context of second wave feminism, musical taste and fandom were used, at times, to divide and exclude.[100] This was part of a larger trend among some feminists to reject what they saw as the hallmarks of femininity, especially in dress and display. Willis explained, "Feminism confronted me with yet another sort of tension: a split between my political life and my intense involvement—musical, social, cultural—with rock and roll. Most of the feminists I knew dismissed rock as the man's music."[101] Indeed, some feminists, Willis included, often echoed the sexist claims that Beatles fans or hippie chicks were mindless pawns in a consumerist scheme. But Willis refused to endure such judgments. This speaks to the power of music politically—the music you listen to *is* important—but

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[98] Ellen Willis, "Women's Music," *The New Yorker*, June 24, 1974, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 145.

[99] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 3.

[100] Willis wrote she had been "formed by a time when feminist rock and roll fans were exotic characters, at least to the mainstream media." Willis, Preface to Barbara O'Dair's *Trouble Girls: The Rolling Stone Book of Women in Rock*, 1997, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 160.

[101] Willis, "The Paradox of Rocklit."

it ignored what many women felt that music had done for them. Yes, Mick Jagger wanted you under his thumb, but listening to the Stones had a liberating, not oppressive, quality for many women. Willis summed this up nicely: "There was the whole question of the paradox of why, despite the music being sexist, I nevertheless felt that it was ultimately liberating for me both as a person and as a woman. There was a very complex set of mediations involved there. It has to do with the idea that a liberating form can transcend its regressive content."[102] As a feminist, Willis explained,

> Unsurprisingly, I saw sexist patterns everywhere, in the music and in the culture of both performers and critics. Yet rock and roll still moved me; and starting from what I'd learned since Bringing It All Back Home—that I should always take my pleasure seriously—I had to conclude that I had good reasons for being moved. Rock's invitation to freedom and ecstasy worked its way through the resistant structures of gender polarity and masculine power as it had once worked its way through the sexual constraints of my upbringing, only now I knew what I wanted, and the music was in no small way responsible for that.[103]

Willis often wrote personally, but her reflections and observations seem to have spoken for a great many music fans who felt the same.

It's not surprising, perhaps, that the earliest voices connecting this liberating form to the project of liberation were women's.[104] After her groundbreaking article on Dylan

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[102] Ellen Willis quoted in Evelyn McDonnell, "The Feminine Critique: The Secret History of Women and Rock Journalism," in *Rock She Wrote: Women Write About Rock, Pop, and Rap*, ed. Evelyn McDonnell and Ann Powers (London: Plexus, 1995), 5.

[103] Willis, "The Paradox of Rocklit." For more on rock criticism, see Devon Powers, *Writing the Record: The Village Voice and the Birth of Rock Criticism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013). Also see Daphne Brooks, "The Write to Rock: Racial Mythologies, Feminist Theory, and the Pleasures of Rock Music Criticism," *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture* 12 (2008): 54-62, https://doi.org/10.1353/wam.0.0002.

[104] Note, however, that in the quote above, Willis seems to echo Christgau's early gesture towards this idea. Also note that in addition to Willis, Sander, and Roxon, the writers featured here, Jane Scott is sometimes referred to as "the mother of rock criticism." A writer for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Scott granted early

published in *Cheetah* in 1967, Willis became *The New Yorker's* first rock critic in 1968 and wrote over fifty pieces published in the "Rock, etc." column between 1968 and 1975, with a wider audience than *Rolling Stone* (and certainly any alternative press).[105] Lillian Roxon published *Lillian Roxon's Rock Encyclopedia* in 1969. Ellen Sander chronicled the sixties as a journalist and with her book, *Trips*.[106] They were fans first.[107] Willis remembered:

> I was a rock and roll fan long before I was a writer (or at least a public writer): the music claimed at the moment of its official birth in 1954, when I was 12. Rock and roll was one of the chief pleasures in my life; the other one was reading. Of course I put very different valuations on these activities: reading was serious, rock and roll was not. I accepted without question adults' judgment that rock and roll was trivial, even as I rejected as absurd the equally prevalent—and far more flattering—idea that it was dangerous (this was a period when the media were full of warnings that rock and roll was 'jungle music' that caused juvenile delinquency).[108]

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attention to rock music and its fans as well. She's now memorialized with a statue at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. For more on Scott, see Powers, *Writing the Record*, 14.

[105] With 475,000 readers of *The New Yorker* (to 75,000 of *Rolling Stone*). Frere-Jones, "Opening the Vault," in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, x.

[106] These women have garnered greater respect in the twenty first century, but not on par with their male counterparts and not to the extent that they shaped the field. In 2015, when Jessica Hopper published a collection of music criticism, she titled it *The First Collection of Criticism by a Living Female Rock Critic*. Though somewhat hyperbolic, the title underscores the dearth of women recognized in this field. Sander's Wikipedia page originates in German, and no English tribute has been paid. Willis garnered an Internet following her death.

[107] This is an important point to explore, however, because of the gendered connotations of fandom. Christgau and Marcus were fans too, but their work seems to have been more easily treated as distinct from their personal backgrounds. At the same time, it's possible that each writer's gendered experiences as fans and listeners shaped the attention to fans, and to gender, in their work.

[108] Willis, "The Paradox of Rocklit."

In lieu of a date, she wrote in a letter to her cousin Judy Altman (Oppenheimer), "Friday night almost 11:00 (listening to rock and roll)."[109] Another letter proclaims her love for Earth Angel, in spite of her family's disgust: "I have to play it when my parents go out."[110] Willis's letters and diaries from the 1950s and early 60s are striking—pre-radical, but totally in love with rock and roll. Even as a young teenager, her papers trace her journey through the sixties with sharp wit and keen observations. Three days after President Kennedy was murdered, she wrote to her parents, "Johnson may turn out to be an excellent President, but the spirit, the excitement, the youth & idealism of the Kennedy government is not so easily replaced."[111] Where music was concerned, she was an early critic. In a letter to her family about the 1964 Berkeley Folk Festival, she commented that Joan Baez was "not too articulate."[112] In 1959, she wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Post* in response to an article on teenagers by Sam Levenson expressing the spirit of the young with the tone of a much older person: "when it comes to his remarks on rock and roll, I marvel (as I always do on reading an article of this type) at the extent and violence of the prejudices that have grown up around this music. For some reason, rock and roll has never been judged according to ordinary standards, i.e. whether or not it appeals to the individual listener. Instead, to dislike it is a virtue which

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[109] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; letter to cousin Judy Altman [Oppenheimer], undated. MC 646, 1. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[110] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; letter to cousin Judy Altman [Oppenheimer], undated. MC 646, 1. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[111] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; letter to family post-marked November 25, 1963. MC 646, 1. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[112] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; letter to family, July 2, 1964. MC 646, 1. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

makes a person at once adult, cultured, and moral; to like it, on the other hand is depravity."[113] Willis noted the commercial forces at work: "everyone, no matter how untalented wants to get in on a craze which spells commercial success, and because the originality and freshness that characterized the early rock and roll numbers have fallen victim to mediocre imitation." But on the spirit of rock and roll, her observations were prescient:

> 'It causes juvenile delinquency.' Implied in this statement is the thought, 'Only juvenile delinquents (or the not-actually-delinquent-but unsavory leather-jacket set) like rock and roll.' I believe that this is a powerful explanation of many people's distaste for rock and roll – the fact that it is identified with screaming hero-worshippers, riots, sloppy dress, greasy hair, and speeding hot rods. This picture has an especially strong effect on college students, who for the most part dislike rock and roll because they equate it with everything uneducated, uncultured and unintellectual. This attitude is emotional and unreasonable, considering the fact that rock and roll is enjoyed by many intelligent, collegiate teenagers (until they get into college and start worrying about being thought unintellectual), and even by some adults (my parents, for one example, my class advisor, an educator who likes Elvis Presley, for another).'

"As a teen-ager," she later recalled, "I didn't take all this too seriously; I just thought rock and roll was fun. … *I* did write indignant letters to newspaper columnists who accused rock and roll of causing juvenile delinquency. I wasn't a delinquent! Why didn't they understand?—rock and roll was *fun*. But they really understood more than I. Rock and roll was a sign that changes were coming—the civil-rights movement, the sexual revolution, the youth revolt of the '60s."[114] This is one of the subjects Willis would

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[113] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Ellen Willis letter to the editor of the New York *Post*, March 7, 1959, in response to Sam Levenson article about teenagers. MC 646, 3.8. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[114] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; Ellen Willis, "'Heroes of Rock 'n' Roll,'" *TV Guide*, January 27, 1979, 15-16. MC 646, 7.16. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

investigate as a writer. Her style—sharp and brilliant but also personal and straightforward—upended the traditional style of *The New Yorker*, and especially of the formal criticism of, say, jazz. As much as she wrote about music, she didn't, as some rock critics did, write about *music* in a sonic sense but rather a cultural and often political one.[115] As her daughter, Nona Willis Aronowitz put it, "It wasn't so much the music as it was the context in which it was happening. She wasn't a music nerd. She put music in the context of politics, of what was going on with feminism and the counterculture, rather than devoting herself to music criticism."[116] Willis told her daughter she "was interested in writing about rock and roll as an expression of a radical cultural and political force."[117] In those columns, Willis embraced her intellect and sensuality, her inner-critic and inner-fan, writing about music in sharp prose with abounding knowledge but also an unabashed sense of feeling and passion: how did the music make her feel? could she dance to it? was she a fan?[118]

For the most part, Willis, Sander, Roxon, and others wrote about the same artists their male colleagues covered, and wrote, most often, for the world of rock criticism more that of radical feminism (although in Willis's case, this would change as rock music

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[115] Evelyn McDonnell, "The Female Listen: Ellen Willis's Feminist Critique," Pop Conference, Seattle, 2016.

[116] Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; James Reed interview with Nona Willis Aronowitz, "Her mom rocked and wrote," *Boston Globe*, April 30, 2011. MC 646, 1. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[117] Nona Willis Aronowitz, "Wake Up Call," in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, xvi.

[118] See Willis Aronowitz, "Wake Up Call," xvii.

did).[119] They were not necessarily treated in the same way, unsurprisingly. Women rock writers, Crawford notes, had less liberty to embrace the rock star attitude of their subjects in the way men might (Lester Bangs being the most famous example). And they also had to contend with sex more. "Rock's rebel women," Crawford writes, "…are rarely assumed to be geniuses; often, they are assumed to be whores."[120] There's often a close relationship between music writing and fandom, but men seem to negotiate it with less criticism than women. The expertise and motivations of male critics go unquestioned while women's are often doubted.[121] Rock criticism was born in a quest to distinguish rock music as serious and worthy of criticism, which in context included making clear that it was different from the things women liked. Jann Wenner created *Rolling Stone* as a place where rock and roll was taken seriously. At the time, he said, "it just was considered somewhat rude and very much a teenage-girl phenomenon."[122] Women rock

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[119] See McDonnell, "The Female Listen." Willis's embrace of radical feminism also marked her departure from rock criticism, although she certainly remained engaged with popular music and culture throughout her career. Her interest in both, however, seemed to come from the same place—challenges to hierarchy and tradition, access to social and cultural alternatives, sexual and personal liberation.

[120] As Crawford notes, women in academia—Alice Echols, Daphne Brooks, Gayle Wald, Angela McRobbie—have had an easier time making contributions to this field, although their work appears in the mainstream press more seldom (Crawford, "The World Needs Female Rock Critics"). Nona Willis Aronowitz explained of her mother, "A lot of these critics [at the time] wanted to be closer to the rock stars, to hang out with the rock stars, to sleep with the rock stars. She wasn't that kind of journalist. She was a really great reporter when it came to describing the scene at Newport or Woodstock. But in terms of sitting down with somebody and delving into their personal life, that was not what she was interested in. She was more interested in the way their work was impacting people" (See James Reed, "Her mom rocked and wrote").

[121] A frustrating proposition, as Crawford notes, with which many women who have had conversations about music with men will identify (Crawford, "The World Needs Female Rock Critics").

[122] 'Rolling Stone' Founder Jann Wenner On 50 Years of Rock And Roll History.' May 11, 2017. npr.org. *All Things Considered* interview. Before Rolling Stone, *Crawdaddy!* introduced rock writing that purported to be about music more than musicians, a fandom that not was star-driven and would not likely have called itself fandom. See Powers, *Writing the Record*, 14-15.

writers, actually, had their share of disparagements for teenage girls. Willis often suggested some irritation with "teenies" and was often dismissive of what she perceived to be the hysteria of others. She was a Stones fan who did not receive the Beatles so warmly, though not without controversy, her correspondence includes lengthy appeals and accusations from fans regarding her treatment of the Beatles.[123] At the same time, part of what Willis brought to the world of rock criticism was that she "assessed rock and roll in terms of not only musical form and cultural impact but how it made her *feel*…."[124] It was her experiences as both fan and feminist that shaped her approach, and it was clear in spite of the frustrations, music was essential to her sexual and personal liberation.[125] So taking your pleasure seriously, as Willis wrote, leads to seeing pleasure politically. Rock and roll is a ready space for seeing the complexities and ambiguities of gender and popular culture, politics and leisure culture, oppression and liberation.

Other voices had immediately, two decades prior, connected rock and roll and women's fandom to unruliness and the threat of other rebellions, but as the sixties ended, as the world split open, this wasn't just bad behavior, girls didn't *just* want to have fun, and these transgressions, even if temporary, were a part of generational, cultural, sexual, social, and political rebellions that transcended popular music, fandom, and leisure culture but were also shaped by them in important ways. It stands to reason, after all, that "the most spectacular mass-cultural phenomenon in history" to which Willis referred had

[123] See Ellen Willis Papers, 1941-2011; letters, 1968-1969. MC 646, 3. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

[124] Willis Aronowitz, "Wake Up Call," xvii.

[125] McDonnell, "The Female Listen."

to carry some import.[126] The changes of the 1960s, distant and incomplete as they sometimes seem, were made in many different ways, and music was one realm of change. As Susan McClary posed it,

> The important question is: What qualifies as political? If the term is limited to party politics, then music plays little role except to serve as cheerleader; if it involves specifically economic struggle, then the vehicle of music is available to amplify protest and to consolidate community. But the musical power of the disenfranchised—whether youth, the underclass, ethnic minorities, women, or gay people—more often resides in their ability to articulate different ways of constructing the body, ways that bring along in their wake the potential for different experiential worlds.[127]

These possibilities had to do with the music and the fans. "Rock in the sixties had a redemptive quality," Willis wrote, "it put us in touch with our potential. The Beatles brought out our joy, the Stones our sensuality. Dylan's great contribution was to enlarge our capacity for freedom, help us break out of mental and emotional, musical and lyrical boxes."[128] Greatly concerned with boxes and the breaking out of them, the political organizing of the sixties had precedent in the cultural organizing: Music put people in touch with their bodies in new ways, it helped them express and understand their feelings and be less alone in the world, it shaped what they thoughts and imagined, it helped them find other people like them, it helped them participate in public culture. Even listening alone in her room, O'Dair wrote, "rock & roll ultimately seemed to be about passion in

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[126] Willis, "George and John," 107.

[127] Susan McClary, "Same As It Ever Was: Youth Culture and Music," *Microphone Fiends*, 1994, in *Rock She Wrote*, ed. McDonnell and Powers, 446.

[128] Willis, "Dylan and Fans: Looking Back, Going On," February 1974, in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps*, 97.

public."[129] By enacting fandom in public and being so very visible, music fans made early and important in-roads towards the larger developments of the 1960s. Beth Bailey has explained, "What we call the sexual revolution was an amalgam of movements that flowed together in an unsettled era. They were often at odds with one another, rarely well thought out, and usually without a clear agenda."[130] Music fandom was an important one of these movements, in the sexual revolution and the women's movement and the general unsettling of the sixties. Without rock and roll, Willis "doubted that radical feminism could have happened at all."[131] Piecing the narratives of the sixties, the women's movement, and popular music together suggests that music creates space for opportunity and possibility, that it can be liberating as well as comforting, and that you can be conforming and subversive at the same time, a fan and also a rebel.

Finally, if one of the ultimate goals of the movement, writ large, was to make gender matter less, music, in spite of its vexing web of gender politics, is also a ready space for this project. Joni Mitchell remembered a black and blind piano player who told her she made "genderless, raceless music." "I hadn't set out to make 'genderless, raceless music.' But I did want to make music that crossed … I never really liked lines, class lines, social structure lines, and I ignored them always."[132] And despite her provocations about feminism, Mitchell told Echols in a rare 1994 interview that she felt

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[129] O'Dair, Introduction, xix.

[130] Beth Bailey, "Sexual Revolution(s)," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 257.

[131] Willis, "The Paradox of Rocklit."

[132] Marom, *Joni Mitchell*, xxiv.

music had, for the most part, given her "refuge from the conventions of gender."[133] Because it gave some of her listeners similar refuge, the music was liberating indeed, and the road was less lonely.

[133] Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 219.

Conclusion

Where the Fans Are

Inside the museums infinity goes up on trial
~ Bob Dylan, "Visions of Johanna," 1966

"All our lives, we have watched women from Beatles fans to Anita Hill and Hillary Rodham Clinton breaching barricades and crossing boundaries they weren't supposed to: we have seen how stepping out of line has been punished and how effective—and utterly futile—such punishments have been."
~ Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are*, 1994

In 2015 I traveled to Liverpool, England and, thanks to the National Trust, stood in a small room on Menlove Avenue that had belonged to John Lennon. I peered out the window at the grey English rain, bopped my head along to the Del-Vikings record playing, and imagined John Lennon there, an angry young man finding solace, doing his dreaming, in this small room at his Aunt Mimi's. The woman standing next to me, who was in her sixties and had traveled to Liverpool from Pennsylvania with her lifelong friend, remarked that it had been her teenage dream to be in John Lennon's bedroom. And there we were.

The house on Menlove Avenue is accessible only through a National Trust tour that requires advance reservation and includes a tour of the McCartneys' home on Forthlin Road. Both sites and the tours given there are, naturally, about the two families who lived there, and some about the war, council housing, and the history of Liverpool. But standing next to that woman and her friend, I wondered what else they had seen in Liverpool. I had seen the Beatles Story Museum, the Hard Day's Night Hotel, a replica of the Cavern Club near the original site on Mathew Street, and inside the Liverpool Museum, the stage where John met Paul, praise be, at the Woolton Village Fete. I took a Magical Mystery Tour from Albert Dock through Penny Lane and stopped at Strawberry

Fields and the homes of the other two Beatles. I heard a lot of familiar stories about the Beatles, but I didn't really learn anything new. What I wanted to know about were the women on the tour, but their stories did not seem to be there with Beatles history.

Across the ocean, from Nashville to New York to Los Angeles to San Francisco to Seattle and everywhere in between, from Hibbing, Minnesota to Lubbock, Texas, homes, museums, concert venues, and other historic sites mark the history of popular music. They are also sites of fandom themselves, as fans travel, often great distances and at great expense, to see where it all began, to be in the room where it happened, to look at stuff, to pay their respects, making pilgrimages of sorts and extending their fandom into the murky waters of history, nostalgia, and tourism. Traveling to historic homes, museums, storied venues, recording studios, and the random spots—a corner in Winslow, Arizona, a street sign with an "E" in New Jersey, the Joshua Tree desert where Gram Parsons died—one encounters not just tourists, but fans; these are the people who book their National Trust tours well in advance, and who travel to Cleveland just to go to a museum, and make treks way out of the way to Woodstock, New York and Clear Lake, Iowa, because of the music they love and all that it means to them. Yet in many of these places, and particularly in the large, often corporately run, museums dedicated to popular music, these fans' stories are nowhere to be seen or heard. These places cater to fans in many ways, but they seldom acknowledge fandom as history. Many of these sites echo ingrained interpretations of music history, retelling familiar narratives about familiar people. It's true that John Lennon's and Paul McCartney's houses should be about them, and actually, the National Trust has done a good job offering context for each of their

upbringings in Liverpool, making the McCartney home in particular not just about Sir Paul but about his family and their lives. They actually also throw the fans in there, noting that both families were forced to leave the houses due to the pandemonium of Beatlemania. But at the museums and other historic sites that seek to document and share histories of popular music, the exclusion of fandom limits the historical work these institutions do and serves to re-tell the same stories, again and again, to people who usually already know them. This artist-centric approach is understandable—it's feeding off fandom, and entry fees or tickets sales—but it also ignores the social, cultural, and political importance of popular music communicated in public and, as time marches on, risks losing the voices of many of the people who enacted it—the fans.

This tendency echoes many of the gaps in academic scholarship, as I have suggested throughout this dissertation. It also reflects the influence of the music industry, in both music and fandom. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, opened in 1995 after a fierce fight to bring it to Cleveland (which had a lot to do with tourist dollars), honors rock and rollers themselves and the people who produce and promote them.[1] Perched on Lake Erie in a building designed by I.M. Pei, the Rock Hall, similar to its country music counterpart in Nashville, traffics in stuff. John Lennon's Sgt. Pepper suit, Springsteen's handwritten lyrics to "Born to Run," Jim Morrison's Cub Scout uniform. It's something to see! But it's arranged in an often-confusing array of sensory

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Epigraphs: Bob Dylan, "Visions of Johanna," on Bob Dylan, *Blonde on Blonde* (Columbia, 1966); Susan Douglas, *Where The Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994), 270-271.

[1] See B. Lee Cooper, "Forum: My Music, Not Yours: Ravings of a Rock-and-Roll Fanatic," *Popular Music and Society*, 36:3 (2013), 397-410.

overload, making it unclear where you are supposed to walk let alone what you are supposed to learn. Museums are well poised to communicate historical points, and as the Beatles and Bruce Springsteen and Prince fall farther into history, the stories these places tell are important. Specific exhibits, like *Dylan, Cash, and The Nashville Cats* at the Country Music Hall of Fame, are often more successful at communicating historical lessons and ideas. The rotating exhibitions at The Grammy Museum in Los Angeles often offer nuanced interpretations of music history, which is why *Ladies and Gentleman: The Beatles!*, curated by the Grammy along with Fab Four Exhibits, was a missed opportunity to tell fan stories. The exhibition debuted in New York City in 2014, fifty years after the Beatles did, and has traveled around the country since then, in Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles as well as at the Clinton Library in Arkansas and the Johnson Library in Texas—it is, after all, a sixties story. The exhibit presents a basic narrative of Beatles history: Liverpool, Hamburg, Brian Epstein, "Love Me Do," Beatlemania, America, Ed Sullivan, and so on, and features some awesome artifacts: Ringo's jacket from Abbey Road, John Lennon's National Health glasses, the band's Grammy Award, and a sampling of the Beatles products that flooded the market to help promote and profit from the band, but ultimately the narrative is a conventional and familiar one. This is important history, but for an exhibit on Beatle*mania*, it's ultimately more about the Beatles than about the fans, and Beatlemania was really about fans. The companion film, playing at the Grammy Museum in the Clive Davis Theater, features an array of performers and celebrities, as well as Ringo Starr himself, but not any of the ordinary fans or the screaming girls who broke police barricades and who drove and

defined and shaped Beatlemania. The most attention to fans comes in the form of stuff: the memorabilia, shirts and socks and lunch boxes and even the ticket rejections slips disappointed fans received from *The Ed Sullivan Show*, mounted with a large image of fans behind them. But, although stuff is certainly exciting, Beatlemania was much more than buying stuff. The exhibit text notes that most of the screaming were "female," but the exhibit itself does little to engage the prevailing gender boundaries of the era and the ways in which Beatles fans trespassed them, or what this fandom might have meant in the larger scheme of sixties history, especially for the millions of women who participated. The accompanying curriculum, designed to meet Common Core standards, is light on gender, to put it mildly.

Fan tourism is not new—young Americans in the 1960s started traveling to the London and Liverpool stomping grounds of their heroes, and fifty years on, we do the same, but harnessing histories of fandom and interpreting their significance is a rich opportunity especially as many sites welcome second, third, fourth generation fans. It was at The Grammy that I witnessed a young girl, maybe nine or ten, running through a different Beatles exhibit a few years earlier, exclaiming, "I love The Beatles!" Again, I couldn't help but wonder, milling through the exhibit with women in their 50s and 60s and 70s, many in Beatles t-shirts, what stories *they* had to tell, and how all of our understandings of this history would be different if their voices were more clearly included in this exhibition, and in others. I also felt strongly that they should know that their role in this history mattered. I visited Woodstock, New York while working on this dissertation, then on the hour drive to Bethel Woods, where Woodstock happened and a

museum now stands, I imagined the roads filled with the young people on their way to a music festival, and I stood in the famous field, now adjacent to festival grounds that reminded me more of a country club, with two people who had been there. They were sitting at a picnic table, taking it in. They said they came back every time they were in the Catskills, and I was glad they were there to tell me what that day was like, and glad I was there to listen, but I wondered if there should have been someone there already, ready to record and share stories.

Each evening I visited the Hollywood Bowl while working on this project, I listened to the music being played on stage, but I also thought about all the people who had been there, and about the girls who swam the moat to get to the Beatles. They were a part of the story of this place. Moreover, to fans', memories are inextricably linked to the Hollywood Bowl, or Shea Stadium, or the Washington Coliseum, or, certainly, Liverpool's Cavern Club, filled with bricks in 1973 and turned into a parking lot by a city lacking the foresight to preserve its cultural history (or anticipate the Beatles tourist industry).[2] Much of the commemoration that does exist for select concert venues—small museums, displays of ephemera, a photo and wall text here and there—often focus more on the musicians that have played at a venue than the people who have seen them there. Granted, performers have bigger names and more recognizable images. But how much would it have mattered that the Beatles played the Hollywood Bowl, where they are now featured on one of a series of a signs lining the venue's entrance, if the fans there to see them had not screamed so loudly and swam the mote in front of the stage in an attempt to

[2] Marion Leonard, "The 'Lord Mayor of Beatle-land': Popular Music, Local Government, and the Promotion of Place in 1960s Liverpool," *Popular Music and Society* 36:5 (2013), 597-614.

be closer to the band? That's the story, the fans are the story. But even in an exhibit at the Hollywood Bowl Museum in 2014, fans were mostly in the background.

Music venues and concert spaces are storyscapes, regardless of the artists that played there, because they are deeply connected to individual and collective memories, embedded with personal meanings, and valuable as a place of social capital and community.[3] The Barn at UCR, where I often ate lunch during graduate school, is also where my grandmother and her friends went to see Malvina Reynolds, and a hill near campus that's now covered in houses is where Pete Seeger played in 1963. A few miles away in San Bernardino, the Rolling Stones made their American debut at the Swing Auditorium, a popular venue on the National Orange Show grounds where Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, and the leading acts of the 60s and 70s also played. The building was destroyed in 1981, but I was able to learn a lot about what happened there through the Facebook page and online communities where people post their ticket stubs, event posters, and memories. These sites suggest the ways in which fandom might be deployed in public history and preservation.[4] Attachments to place and the importance of places are not dependent upon preservation, but preservationists and historians should pay attention to these attachments to record the enduring memories of a place and interpret its significance.[5]

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[3] Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 43.

[4] Recent battles over Nashville's Music Row suggest the effectiveness of this idea.

[5] Jeffrey A. "Free" Harris, "Preserving the Sites of American Music," National Trust for Historic Preservation, January 12, 2018. https://forum.savingplaces.org/blogs/special-contributor/2018/01/12/preserving-the-sites-of-american-music

These digital commemorations also reveal the ways in which fans create their own archives, independent of historians. They keep scrapbooks, ticket stubs, sometimes the outfits worn to Woodstock or Beatles concerts. They might sometimes sell them to collectors, or, perhaps, donate them to archives, with someone like me in mind, but most hold onto them, and who could blame them? These are their treasures, their prized possessions, and as much as I relish looking through them in archives, I also understand that impulse to keep. Many, however, may not view this as a conscious decision, particularly because they do not often know the wider historical value of their fandom. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Library and Archives, a part of the museum located not at the museum but on the campus of the Cuyahoga Community College alongside I-90 in Cleveland, has sought to change this by encouraging fans not necessarily to donate their keepsakes but to allow the Archives to scan them on designated days. Billing these days as fans' chance not just to *visit* the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame but to be *in* the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the Rock Hall team scans photos, handbills, programs and other memorabilia, with the understanding that they may become part of the Rock Hall's collection. Participating fans also receive a voucher for a free admission ticket to the museum, which is otherwise kind of steep, a complimentary USB drive with digital, preservation-quality image files of their items, archival-quality sleeves to help preserve original materials, and information on preservation. These days are important not just for future research but because they communicate to fans that their fandom matters and is a part of history. The advertisement to be "in the museum" is fitting. Fans do belong in

the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; without them, the history of rock and roll music is missing an important part of the story.

The span of years during which I wrote this dissertation have been filled with fiftieth anniversaries and commemorations of the 1960s. The March on Washington in 1963, the Beatles' arrival in the United States in 1964, Shea Stadium and Newport in 1965, the Summer of Love in 1967, and, as I finish, the White Album and the tumult of 1968.[6] These commemorations bring important reminders, but they too often tell familiar stories. And fifty years later, they are also shaped by the market and by new fans, from *Beatles Rock Band*. So, fifty years later, how can we turn these stories into histories? And how can we harness the memories unfolding in the comment sections and bring them into the story? The first answer, of course, is that they already are a part of the story. But as for the histories we write and teach, as this project has suggested, we need to go where the fans are. Fans help us understand the importance of cultural products and experiences in people's lives and their social and political significances.

"Fangirl" has become a recognized verb, defined "to behave in an obsessive or overexcited way."[7] This usage speaks to the ways the "fan girls" in this project are remembered, to merit a phrase with such a clear connotation, and the ways they are forgotten, dismissed, and divorced from significance then and now. But then as now,

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[6] Some of the best of these commemorations have come from the California Historical Society. In the spring of 2017, on, as the exhibition title put it, "the road to the summer of love," the California Historical Society advertised a "History Play Date" for families, where kids could "make paper flower crowns and buttons to celebrate the start of the Summer of Love," help make a "psychedelic mural inspired by the art and spirit of the 1960s," and "dress up in the hip styles of the Sixties and take a photo" in a "way back machine photo booth." California Historical Society, Facebook post, April 28, 2017.

[7] Google dictionary search, January 21, 2018.

paying attention to how, where, and why music matters to people helps us understand music as well as a period of time more completely. For many of the women in this project, fandom was more than a phase—it influenced their whole lives, and often continues to this day. That many of their ways of enacting fandom, let alone so much of the music they listened to, endures is a testament to its historical significance. As this project has demonstrated, music and music fandom in the 1960s played integral roles in women's sexual rebellions, social and racial transgressions, political activism, affronts to gendered codes of public behavior, and in the growth of countercultural communities and many of the ideas and attitudes underpinning the women's liberation movement. Music affected people's consciousness, ideas, and behaviors, while fandom and participation in music culture shaped many women's access to and role within public space and public culture. Together, as music fans, individually and collectively, they staged a range of rebellions from subtle to overt and participated in the rebellions of their time that reverberate today.

I conceived of, researched, and wrote this dissertation during interesting times, to say the least. I didn't know this, really, when I started, but as it's turned out, these times have had a lot in common with the turbulent sixties. Seeing women and men marching all over the world, in pussyhat pink, trying to be seen and heard, I have been struck by the power of showing up—the visibility Willis wrote about. I have also been struck by the fierce resistance of carrying on, with unfinished work and with daily life, and it's helped me, here in 2018, reach an important research conclusion I have seen all along: music nurtures and sustains us; sometimes it spurs us to action or changes our minds or inspires

us to do things, but often it just helps us live, and sometimes it helps us wake up and go about our days and go to sleep again in what seem like impossible times. So records offer resistance, and protest is not only marching, but screaming. As Ruth Rosen wrote, people often see revolution as "Bursts of artillery fire, mass strikes, massacred protesters, bomb explosions," however "some revolutions are harder to recognize: no cataclysms mark their beginnings or ends, no casualties are left lying in pools of blood."[8] The revolutions of the sixties were cataclysmic and often violent, but they included radios and records and fans. Listening to music and to fans helps us understand the role each played in the rebellions and revolutions of the sixties, and challenges us to pay attention to the forces shaping our own moment as well.

[8] Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin, 2000), xi.