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From the Editors

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We welcome you all to Volume 23 of Ethnomusicology Review. In times of uncertain political futures and precarity, we hope these pieces help all of us remember the way music creates, maintains, and reforms communities.

After nearly two and half years of social precarity–wrought by the global COVID pandemic and numerous political reckonings across the world– the works presented in this volume demonstrate the complex and nuanced ways in which social cohesions are realized, fragmented and pluralized through musical practice. For some marginalized communities, engaging pragmatically and syncretically with dominant-culture practice is vital to the makeup and survival of their distinct and unique group identity. Yet in the context of other marginalized groups, the demarcation of a unique identity may be realized through modes of contradistinction to dominant cultures and its markers of privilege. At the center of these processes, musical practice and conduct often plays a pivotal role in the way groups orient themselves, both internally and externally, along intersections of power and privilege.

First, we feature an article on the make-up of a plurality of queer spaces at a small liberal arts college in New England. The musical spaces centered in this article feel like relics of a past and intimate pre-pandemic time– the college party. The article deftly describes the ways in which gatherings of queer students, while carving out a space that centers the LGBTQIA community within a larger college community, is still maintains an reinforces whiteness in terms of both musical choice and its corresponding codes of cultural conduct. Central to this piece is a consideration of leisure, and an analysis of diverging student attitudes and definitions concerning "party music." Ultimately, the author demonstrates how these issues are predicated on modes of listening that are enculturated by intersections of race, sexuality, and gender.

The article that follows considers the practice of group song in British Jewish synagogues. Understanding Jewish Synagogue music as both synchronous with British society more generally, as well as effective in carving out a Jewish identity in the country, the author demonstrates that British Jewish choral practices are not just mere adaptation of their local Christian counterparts, but unique in their aesthetic combination of British Christian harmonics with Hebrew scripture. Moreover, that these Jewish musical practices also blur the boundaries between choir and congregation, demonstrates how groups employ music as an intermediary device that cements secular social relations into a collective spiritual body.

Social Modes of Listening: How Racial Identity and Music Shape Hook-up Culture and Erotic Capital at Same-Sex Colleges

Holland Rhodd-Lee

Imagine: you're a college student; it's Friday night and you and your friends plan to pregame in your room before heading over to a party you were all invited to.[1] You make sure the drinks and playlist are ready for the pregame and include songs from Drake, Syd, Raevyn Lanae, Lizzo, Migos, Cassie, Frank Ocean and some current Top 40 songs. Your friends arrive, and after finishing a 6-pack of Angry Orchard Rosé Ciders, they're ready to go to the party. Although you know the party's host through a mutual friend, no one in your group knows what to expect. Nevertheless, you're all excited to attend because after a rough week you're all going to let loose and dance. Before leaving your room, you play "Suncity" by Khalid to get everyone excited for the party. You all start to feel the effects of the alcohol: you're a little buzzed and slowly start swaying to the infectious beat. As the song progresses, you begin to relax and allow yourself to be taken in by the music. You're normally self-conscious about how you look when dancing, but in this moment, you don't care because you feel safe being yourself and letting loose in front of your friends. After dancing to two more songs, you all head over to the party where you're greeted by the sounds of people drunkenly yelling the lyrics of "Primadonna" by MARINA. This isn't what any of you were expecting, but you all decide to give the party a chance. In the hour that you and your friends have been at the party, most of the music that's been played are songs by SOPHIE, MARINA, Natalia Kills, QT, and La Roux. You don't recognize any of the songs played as dance music so you're pleasantly surprised when "MIA" by Bad Bunny starts playing. At this point you expect everyone to be dancing but no one does. Instead, everyone is engaged in conversations about the latest protest they attended, or a lecture that they thought was inspiring and thought provoking. At this point, you all agree that the pregame in your room was more fun and decide to leave.

The scenario outlined above is one that is all too familiar to the students I interviewed at Bryn Mawr, Smith, and Wellesley Colleges. Many of the students, especially students of color, with whom I spoke described nearly identical experiences at parties they attended. Having been a queer student of color at Wellesley, I was familiar with this experience. The fact that individuals attending different schools reported similar party experiences interested me and made me want to understand music's effect on social participation in queer spaces.

I first began researching music's relationship to queer nightlife scenes in 2017 while still a student at Wellesley. I conducted ethnographic research on the student bar, Punch's Alley – commonly known as "The Pub" – as part of a class project. [2] The Pub functioned as a queer nightclub on Thursday nights – also known as "pub nights" – and was an epicenter for queer hookup culture at Wellesley.[3] I gathered ethnographic data from student interviews which highlighted the importance of music in mediating the social dynamics of queer hookup and party culture as well as who feels comfortable engaging in the hookup culture within such spaces.[4] However, my search for scholarly material on this subject revealed that: 1) very little ethnographic musical scholarship exists on college-aged students; 2) none of it looks at historically same-sex colleges; and 3) none exists on queer nightlife scenes on college campuses.

While my initial findings demonstrated the important role music plays in mediating the social dynamics of queer hookup and party culture as well as who feels comfortable engaging in such spaces, they also raised additional questions about the roles racial identity and cultural background play in this context. The students of color I consulted expressed concerns about participating in predominantly white spaces, like The Pub, because they did not feel welcomed or safe. Unfortunately, this is a common problem for many students of color who attend predominantly white institutions (PWIs). They often have difficulty navigating social environments within these institutions because most student spaces were designed for a predominantly white student population. As a result, students of color find these spaces uncomfortable since they were not designed for them or meet their needs.

Most of the queer students of color I interviewed stated that they often felt othered and objectified in predominantly white queer spaces due to the erotic capital their white peers ascribed to their intersectional identities. Based on these accounts, it became clear that further examination of these scenes was needed to understand how racial identity influences how queer students of color are treated. Further study provided new insight into the interplays of music, historically same-sex institutions, social participation, queer nightlife, and racial identity.

This article explores how music, space, racial identity, and cultural background intersect, and informs who feels included/excluded from queer hookup culture at Bryn Mawr, Smith, and Wellesley Colleges. Using institutional data and student policies, student interviews and playlists provided by students I collected over a two-year period, I examine: 1) what effect school policies have on the formation of party culture; 2) the relationship between music, space, and party culture; and 3) music's relationship to hookup culture and erotic capital.[5]

To do so, I draw upon the works of scholars in the fields of ethnomusicology, sociology, musicology, Black, and queer studies to understand the role of music, racial identity, and cultural background in queer hookup spaces. My findings reveal that the answer is more nuanced and complex than anticipated. While many of the scholarly frameworks on the social use of music, such as Thomas Turino (2008) and Ola Stockfelt (2006) contextualize music's relationship to identity formation, space, and social participation, they do not address how race influences the social affordances of music, and they lack the needed vocabulary and nuance to address the social isolation felt by people of color (POC) whose listening practices are shaped by their cultural backgrounds. To address this oversight, I incorporate scholars whose work utilizes intersectional frameworks to discuss blackness within queer studies (Johnson 2016; Reed 2016), analyze the experiences of POC in white hegemonic power systems (hooks 1992; Cohen 2004; Story 2016), and investigates the links between music and race (Rodano and Bohlman 2000) to provide a more complete reference point from which to draw conclusions.[6]

Student Life Policies and Campus Cultures

Before delving into hookup and party cultures at Bryn Mawr, Smith, and Wellesley Colleges and how music and racial identity fit into them, I will provide some historical

context about each college and their student social life policies. Bryn Mawr, Smith, and Wellesley are members of the Seven Sisters Colleges that were founded between 1837 and 1889. Guided by religious beliefs and practices, their mission was to educate women and provide them with similar opportunities only afforded to men at the Ivy League schools – which helped distinguish them from the 50 other women's colleges popping up across the country in the mid to late 19th century (Harwarth et al. 2005). At these colleges, student spaces, like dormitory common areas, were designed to discourage large group gatherings on campus in hopes of preserving women's purity (Harwarth et al. 2005). As a result, students wanting to socialize in large groups, had to do so off campus oftentimes at a neighboring men's college (Harwarth et al. 2005). These practices were in line with societal norms of the time; however, many legacies from that era, such as the design of common areas, still dictate how students socialize today.

Student Life Policies: Drugs and Alcohol

This brings me to Bryn Mawr, Smith, and Wellesley's current student life policies. My research and analysis of their dorm spaces, event, and drugs and alcohol policies aligned with the experiences of students I interviewed in regards to their ability to access their institutions' policies. It also revealed how instrumental these policies are to the formation of social life, and party and hookup culture at these colleges.

A reoccurring theme I heard was that student life policies, especially ones pertaining to parties, greatly affected queer hookup and party cultures at Bryn Mawr, Smith, and Wellesley. Many students, especially those from Smith and Wellesley, stated that the policies were inaccessible and detrimental to the formation of queer social life on their campuses, whereas Bryn Mawr students attributed their prolific party and hookup culture to their school's policies. These comments intrigued me and prompted me to review the policies myself. When I did, I immediately understood why students felt as they did. Bryn Mawr provides all incoming students with a student handbook during orientation that includes state and federal drug and alcohol laws, the college's own drug and alcohol policies, and general information on institutional resources available to students pertaining to drugs and alcohol. This level of transparency and accessibility allowed students to feel confident about their understanding and application of these policies.

Comparatively, Smith and Wellesley's drug and alcohol policies are less accessible and provide less detail. Smith's policy is centrally located on its website, though it was not easy to find. It provides general guidance on alcohol consumption but fails to educate students about state and federal drug and alcohol laws, or its purpose. Wellesley does not have a student handbook so locating their drugs and alcohol policies was even more difficult. Wellesley's policy contains information about the purpose and intent of its policy but does not mention state or federal laws or provide information on institutional resources.

The inaccessibility of the policies coupled with their ambiguous language resulted in Smith and Wellesley students being the least informed about their school's student life policies which produced discomfort socializing in event spaces on these campuses. This point is important because understanding institutional student life policies is critical to

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students' perceptions about the number of spaces available for large social gatherings on campus, like parties, as well as their comfort level using these spaces. For example, Wellesley students believed that throwing parties in dorm common areas was prohibited – which is not true. Unlike Bryn Mawr and Smith, Wellesley does not have a formal party policy. The closest it come to one is its "Alcohol Use at Student Parties" statement which is found in the appendix to its drugs and alcohol policy:[7]

> All events sponsored by students at which alcohol will be served must be registered in advance with the Office of Student Involvement. These procedures apply to all student events held in Wellesley College common spaces, including, but not limited to, parties, receptions, dinners, mixers, or other social events sponsored by student groups associated with the College.[8]

Student Life Policies: Events and Parties

My ethnographic data also revealed that the degree of transparency and accessibility of event policies at each college directly correlates to the creation/proliferation of social life on each campus. For example, Smith students were more knowledgeable of their school's policies than their Wellesley counterparts, however they rarely utilized common spaces for parties or more intimate social gatherings because the onus of securing and preparing the event space fell on them and required a great deal of institutional oversight. Raina (they/them), a sophomore at Smith of African descent,[9] expressed frustration with Smith's party culture and stated that "much of the issue with Smith's party culture [stem from] the policies."[10] When I asked for clarification, they explained the various types of parties that are permitted under the current policy; they further added that Smith's party guidelines adversely affect students of color:

> One of [the party types] is a house-specific party wherein the houses complete their regular traditions and they're simple parties. They're boring. Smith dining will do special catering for it. It's very lowkey, everything ends at like 11. And that's basically just to uphold the [tradition of having a party] in every house so that when Smith students grow older and they have children, they would go live in the house and do the same traditions that they had done thirty years prior. The other type of party that we have [are] house parties. They're registered still, and what I mean by registered is that you fill out a form through the Office of Student Engagement, you inform them that you are having a party, you are telling them that if you want to have a registered party, everyone at campus has to be available to attend the party. There's no restrictions so, if I wanted to have a party and I only wanted POC, I could not register it. They would not approve my party because it's not open to the white students on campus. So, if I wanted to have a party that was POC-only, it would technically be an illegal party. So, this registered party has campus police on standby outside the house throughout the whole party. Campus police will just sit in their car with their bright lights on and just stand outside any entrance of the house that is held in. And the parties have to end at about 12:30. Usually Smith students end parties at that time anyway so that's not that big of a deal. And so, those are the two types of parties that you can legally have on campus. Otherwise, you have an unregistered party and that basically just is like–with these registered parties, you can't serve your own alcohol and that is the main proponent of why a registered Smith party is bad, because you cannot serve alcohol at a registered party. So, an unregistered party is usually thrown in the basement of these houses... [If] it happens in a basement, maybe there's free liquor and those are bad...The main issue with the policy is [that] there's literal policing at these parties. It's very intimidating to walk up into a house and expect to be relaxed and have fun when there's a [campus police] car waiting outside to get you in trouble at any second. The lights are bright [and] it's a dark, dark, dark campus.

Raina also explained that under Smith's event policy a gathering of 10 or more people is considered a party and must be registered with the College.[11]

> Gatherings of 10 or more students in student rooms or apartments are considered parties and must be registered with the coordinator of house events in the Department of Residence Life. In a residence house, the event must be held in a public space of the house and is not to include the house corridors or student rooms.[12]

Interestingly, another sophomore named Sonia (she/her), who identifies as Black, also mentioned that parties not registered with the Office of Student Engagement are deemed "illegal."

> **H**: even if you just have a party or a kickback in your room, you'd have to register it if it's more than eight people?[13]
> **S**: Yeah, but no one ever does. Like I've had a lot of people in my room before and… I never registered it or anything. People don't really register.

Sonia's and Raina's accounts demonstrate a clear disconnect between the rules that govern student socializing, and the actual types of socialization that occurs at Smith. Predominantly white queer spaces feel unsafe and unwelcoming to queer students of color and makes them feel that their options for spaces to socialize are limited. The twin requirement to register all gatherings of 10 or more people and open them to the entire campus creates institutional barriers for queer students of color who wish to host events exclusively for their community.[14]

Though Smith's event policy is applicable to all students, Sonia and Raina's anecdotes coupled with Smith's predominantly white student body (Table 1) is illustrative of an institutional bias that caters towards white students and normalizes the ways in which they socialize. While queer students of color could theoretically create spaces (like parties) exclusively for their members, as Raina articulated, they are not comfortable doing so because they do not feel as though Smith's policies were designed with them in mind.

	White	Asian-American	International	Latinx	Black	Multicultural	Pacific Islander and Unknown
Wellesley	36.4%	20.6%	13.5%	12.6%	6.2%	6%	5%
Bryn Mawr	37%	12.3%	23%	9.2%	6.1%	5.5%	8.2%
Smith	47.7%	9.3%	13.9%	11.5%	6.6%	4.8%	6.9%

Table 1: Composite Overview of the Student Demographics at Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, and Smith Colleges.[15]

This was one of the many differences I noticed between Smith, Wellesley, and Bryn Mawr and it made me wonder if social life for students of color at Smith would be different if they did not face such stringent policies that systematically disenfranchised

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them. Smith's use of policies that create a false sense of inclusivity perpetuates the notion of whiteness as normative while simultaneously othering non-white identities through social barriers. As Black and queer theorist Kaila Adia Story notes, coupling the notion that whiteness is unraced with systems of power, like white supremacy, allows white people to distance themselves from their racial privilege while simultaneously designating people of color as the racial other (Story 2016). Through this racial dynamic, white people can maintain "an economic, social, political, and cultural advantage over people of color" (Story 2016).

I also found it interesting that both Smith's and Wellesley's student life policies do not clearly outline and provide guidance about how students can and should socialize in on-campus event spaces. Yet, when addressing policy violations, they are very clear and detailed about the types of actions and activities that violate their policies. This is not the case for Bryn Mawr who clearly defines the term party as it relates to its campus:

> A Party is an event, wet (with alcohol) or dry (without alcohol), where 30 or more people gather at one time in a residential dorm space. Wet parties cannot be held in public spaces. Public spaces include: The Campus Center, College Hall, Goodhart, Applebee Barn, Cambrian Row, Schwartz Gymnasium, all corridors, stairwells, landings, basements, attics and courtyards, laundries, all dining halls, Pembroke Dance Studio, classroom buildings, the Computer Center, The Dorothy Vernon Room, Canaday Library, and outdoors on college grounds. Bryn Mawr Student Handbook (2018: 59).

Danielle (she/her), a white senior at Bryn Mawr, explained the logistics of throwing a party. Students must register the event with the Student Activities Office and have a functioning personnel plan that assigns the roles of host, server, and bouncer.[16] To help students navigate and understand this system and its rules, the college uses a level system that is included in the handbook (Table 2).

Level	Occupancy	Number of Hosts Needed	Number of Bouncers Needed	Number of Servers Needed	Approved Residence Hall
1	30-60 people	2	None	2	Batten, Brecon, Denbigh, Merion, Pembroke East and West, Radnor, Erdman, Rhoads North and South, Rockefeller
2	61-100 people	2	3	2	Erdman, Rhoads North and South, Rockefeller
3	101+ people	Not specified (Hosts must meet with Student Activities and Campus safety 2 weeks prior to event)	Not specified (guests are required to sign in)	Not specified (21+ must wear wristbands)	Not specified

Table 2: Bryn Mawr's Party Levels System Overview. Bryn Mawr Student Handbook (2018: 60).

In addition to registering the event and having the appropriate personnel, everyone – including "the bouncers, servers, and hosts – must "be party-trained, which is just like an online alcohol training" and needs to "wear a button that says Bouncer or Host."

It is clear that how a school enforces its student life policies plays a role in mediating the hookup and party culture on its campus as well as the level of comfort students, especially those of color, feel participating in them. As seen above, students at these colleges experience their institution's policies in both positive and negative ways. Wellesley's and Smith's policies foster social environments where queer and non-white students feel unsafe and unwelcome. At Smith, student policies mandated inclusivity and criminalized unsanctioned gatherings which had the unintended consequence of making students of color feel more marginalized and unsafe since they were not allowed to congregate and form community spaces exclusively for themselves. In contrast, Bryn Mawr's policies encouraged students to safely interact with each other at parties and foster inclusive social environments for all identities.

Queer Culture at PWIs

Even though all three colleges have policies that in some form or fashion create obstacles for students of color to connect and socialize, the broader challenge for queer students of color is how to navigate their institution's social and event policies in a manner that feels authentic and retains their individual and collective agencies.

When I asked non-white students to describe their school's queer culture, they responded that it was "very white." They often mentioned their struggles navigating queer spaces where their white classmates placed value on their racial identity in a fetishistic way which made maintaining a sense of self that felt authentic difficult. For example, Wrenn (they/them), another sophomore at Smith and a student of Latinx-descent, remarked that they felt that Smith's queer culture seemed "very limited." They noted that "most everyone I would say who goes to Smith is queer, which is very interesting because it's not that way at a lot of schools," but "when you think about queer culture at Smith, it doesn't include everyone." They asked me if I understood what they meant, and I responded that I did. I recounted that during my first visit to Smith in the Fall of 2018, I was struck by the campus' lack of diversity. In retrospect, my initial observation and Wrenn's description of Smith's queer culture made sense because, as the demographic breakdown above showed, white students comprise the majority of Smith's student body.

Wrenn's response to my question gave me a better understanding of the campus and also a sense of how their experiences in this subculture shaped their perceptions of their college experience as a whole. However, their description of Smith's queer culture as limited and "dominated by white lesbians," also gave me the impression that they felt excluded from Smith's queer social scene because they did not fit the stereotype of the typical queer Smith student. When I commented that I, as well as other Wellesley students, shared similar sentiments about the queer culture at Wellesley, Wrenn nodded in agreement and then remarked that white people have been normalized as "the standard of queerness" and is probably what people think of when they envision queerness at Smith. This particular exchange interested me because it echoed points made by Alison

Reed and Story that the voices of queer POC, in this case students, are largely erased from white social spaces, which in this case are PWI's. When I commented that it sounds like Smith's queer social hierarchy favors white lesbians, Wrenn enthusiastically agreed, adding that they felt that Smith's queer culture was "dominated by upper-middle class queer white women." Their description of Smith's queer culture sounded almost identical to that of students at Wellesley and Bryn Mawr, which also have predominantly white student populations.

Beyond the erasure of POC's from queer spaces – which are often imagined as white – the students I spoke with also expressed feeling objectified by their white peers. Like other predominantly white spaces, POC do not experience the same level of comfort or privilege as their white queer counterparts in such spaces because they often feel othered and erased while simultaneously fetishized by their white classmates because of the erotic capital ascribed to them (Green 2008). As Wrenn noted, this is especially true for non-white and non-cisgender students, like themselves, who often feel like their intersectional identities are further fetishized in white queer environments. For instance, most of the masculine presenting students of color described being fetishized and objectified by white queer students who often saw their combined identity of non-white and masculine gender identity as extremely attractive and desirable. The multiple levels of objectification and fetishization students like Wrenn and other masculine presenting students of color experience in white queer spaces (i.e., parties) detracts from their individual agency and justifiably makes them feel uncomfortable.

Soundtrack to Queer Nightlife

Cultural Modes of Listening

A common refrain I heard from students of color was that large queer campus parties were not fun or the same as parties they would attend at home in part because most were thrown by their white peers and the music selected was either Top 40s songs or throwback music – which didn't live up to their expectations, or standards of what they considered a party. For many non-white students, the music played in dance and party spaces did not fit within what Stockfelt terms their "genre-normative mode of listening" (2006).[17] This mode of listening is shaped by the environment in which one grows up which, for many non-white students, does not include Top 40s songs – or other music popular to predominantly white listeners.

For instance, Donna (they/them), a senior at Wellesley who identifies as Black, worked at The Pub, and described the music played at pub nights as either very dated or a mix of recent Top 40s songs.[18] When asked for examples they responded that The Pub would have Akon, Chris Brown, and Drake themed pub nights and that "they did a lot of Justin Timberlake nights" as well. Sonia and Raina also shared similar stories about Smith parties. Raina, in particular, told me that they felt that "every Smith party turns into a throwback party without that being announced as the theme." They explained that the music played was mostly "2007 to 2012 throwback music" which they felt gave the parties a "middle school vibe, because usually the lights are on [and] not a lot of people

are there, and they're standing and they don't know how to dance." Here is how Raina described a typical Smith party scene:

> H: So like, it's not really an environment that lets you have parties even though you technically have the space for them.
> R: People don't show up so it's like an empty room with music playing really loudly. It's just people standing in a corner, and since it's this really embarrassing old middle school throwback, it's like exactly what, you know, a middle school party looks like. It's students standing around like waiting for something to happen, waiting for the party to get good. And so it's just people talking like over really old music and so what you hear is academic talk and like, Chris Brown from 2009.

When I asked Raina to give me more examples of music typically played at these parties, they replied that it was a mix of mostly throwbacks and some contemporary music. For example, they mentioned that one "would for sure hear early Lady Gaga [and] Katy Perry" but also added that popular music, like trap, and a lot of Drake would also be played because the "white people here love Drake so Drake is at every party." They went on to say that they found this trend "really interesting because it's not stated in the theme that it's a throwback party but that is what you're hearing."

I was intrigued by Raina's observation because it echoed a recurring theme I noticed across my interviews. Regardless of the school, the music played at parties is dominated by songs that are at least seven years old even though more contemporary music is available. Interestingly, Sonia agreed with Raina's observations about Smith parties, but told me that a different trend occurs at queer parties. According to Sonia most of the queer parties turn "into kick-backs even though they were supposed to be parties." When I asked her to explain what she meant, she replied that it is typical to hear a lot of pop music, like Charli XCX, or SOPHIE or "just very weird" music that is "still pop and it's still upbeat but…Very white queer."

Donna, Raina, and Sonia all described these parties as "very white" and that mostly "white queer people" would be present. Donna grew up in a multicultural community in Atlanta where music served as both a link to cultural heritage and social gathering device. The music that they heard in parties at home, like "hip-hop, neo-soul, rap, reggae"– in other words, black music – was strikingly different from the music they heard in The Pub. Donna explained that "different genres of black music" was consumed "by a variety of demographics back home," including white people who lived in the area. They continued, "coming up here, the music that was being played in The Pub was like older, and like something that I would consider outdated, like music from like two years ago." To Donna, who was accustomed to hearing recently released music at parties and other social gatherings, "it felt like [The Pub] had gone back in time." Donna's experience exemplifies how queer parties, and the hookup culture they foster, do not feel inclusive to students of color. This disconnect between genre-normative modes of listening and the perceived normative social scene is yet another illustration of how predominantly white institutions, like Wellesley, Smith, and Bryn Mawr, can be isolating to students of color.

As I have noted, these spaces are predominantly white, thus students of color are not afforded the same opportunity to make similar spatial relationships to these spaces nor can they translate the social cues embedded within the music because they do not possess the appropriate cultural mode of listening for these white queer environments. Stockfelt argues that the mode of listening that the listener adopts in any situation is dependent on how the person chooses to listen (Stockfelt, 2006). To choose how one wants to listen, one must first possess the adequate mode of listening required to properly do so. However, as highlighted above, students of color are not given the option to choose which mode of listening they want to adopt because they do not possess the adequate mode of listening for the situation.

The twin dynamics of not being able to relate to the social cues expressed in the song, coupled with the prevalence of white students at the party creates an indirect social barrier between students of color and their white counterparts. As a result, students of color feel othered in predominantly white parties because they are unable to understand the expected social conventions that are relayed through the songs played. This in turn magnifies their impression that the space is not meant for them and that they are not welcomed.

DJs and Throwback Culture

With this in mind, I will now turn to the playlists heard in these party spaces to highlight my point. According to Danielle, there are "a couple students who are known to be really great DJs" at Bryn Mawr. She shared two different Spotify playlists that two of her friends created for parties. Both of her friends are students of color and are highly sought after to spin at house parties because they are "really great at curating playlists" and "people will come to hear them DJ because they know they're going to choose really great music." One of the playlists Danielle shared with me was created by her friend, Asa and is titled, "House Party." It features music from notable 1990's Hip-Hop artists like JAY Z, 50 Cent, N.W.A., 2Pac, Ice Cube, The Notorious B.I.G., Run–D.M.C., Salt-N-Pepa, Busta Rhymes, as well as songs by B2K, Mary J. Blige, Sean Paul, Ying Yang Twins, Backstreet Boys, Rihanna, Ja Rule, and Daddy Yankee. Many of the songs on the playlist, like "Promiscuous" by Nelly Furtado, "Bump, Bump, Bump" by B2K, "Check Yo Self" by Ice Cube, "Pon de Replay" by Rihanna, and "Rompe" by Daddy Yankee are at least 10 years old and were popular in the mid/late 1990's and early 2000's.

This struck me as strange until Danielle explained that students at Bryn Mawr really love music-themed parties. Asa's playlist was for a party that Danielle attended two years ago where music from the 1990's and early 2000's was the theme. She described the party as "one of the best parties [she's] ever been to" and that "people really loved the music." I heard similar responses from Wellesley and Smith students when discussing themed parties on their campuses. Apparently, students love to attend themed parties; however, they must be able to understand the theme's cultural context. For example, if someone decides to host a Halloween themed party, most people know how to dress and what type of social behaviors to expect. In contrast, if someone decides to host an ABBA-themed party, only people familiar with the group and their music would understand the social

context conveyed by this theme. Consequently, theme parties only make sense to participants who possess the appropriate knowledge about that environment.

Music-themed parties are also popular because they allow students to dress in clothing that typifies a period and gives them an opportunity to dance to music from that period with their friends. One would not expect themed parties to be so popular on college campuses; however, when viewed from the lens of Turino's theory of the social participation of music, and Stockfelt's modes of listening, their popularity makes sense. Musically themed parties owe their popularity to the important social cues they convey; additionally, they contextualize the expected rules of participation for the event. For example, Danielle enjoyed 1990's and early 2000's music-themed parties because the theme communicated the objective of the party – which was to listen to, and dance to, 1990's and early 2000's music as they did in middle school.

For many, middle school was an important period in their lives because it was when they began to socialize with their peers in group settings that foregrounded music (i.e. parties). It also represents a transitional time when they began to explore forms of socializing that up until that point, was considered exclusively for adults. The onset of puberty creates the need for additional social rules around bodily autonomy, and boundaries to become foregrounded in every situation where group activities, like dancing and parties occur. Social cues and behaviors that were previously given little or no thought suddenly become essential to understanding what is happening in one's social environment. Behaviors that were previously considered platonic and socially acceptable, such as asking someone to dance, are now seen as romantic gestures and only acceptable in certain social contexts.

Hence, themed parties – like the 1990's and early 2000's parties Danielle attended – puts students at ease and gives them a sense of comfort due to their longing for a familiar social setting (i.e., culturally-dependent mode of listening). They know and understand the rules of engagement at these gatherings which eliminates the need to spend time and energy learning which social behaviors are acceptable, and which are not. In this way, music-centered party themes reproduce a genre-normative mode of listening that is familiar to participants and allows them to fully comprehend the social codes embedded within the music played (i.e., the participant's social mode of listening). Even though themed parties communicate the social rules of engagement to participants, they may not feel inclusive to everyone because only participants familiar with the culturally-dependent mode of listening can understand the theme of the party.

Racially-informed Modes of Listening

Context-dependent spatial relationships

Having a cursory understanding of the environments in which queer hookup culture occurs and the different types of social gatherings that contribute to queer social environments is vital for any discussion of music's relationship to queer hookup culture. My experience as an undergraduate taught me that social gatherings such as dorm parties and pregames can be differentiated from one another by three factors: 1) location, 2) the

type of music played, and 3) the context in which the gathering takes place. In the scenario presented at the beginning of this article, I provided an example of a pregame and a dorm party. Both take place in dorm rooms but are distinguishable from each other because of context and, in this instance, chronology. A pregame can be considered a type of dorm party, however, students would not refer to it as such because pregames are considered gatherings that take place before going to a designated (read: primary) social event.

To illustrate this point, let's break it down: you and your friends met in your dorm room with the intention of attending a party together. This first type of social gathering can be distinguished as a pregame because: 1) the location is your room, 2) the artists you have chosen fit what Stockfelt calls the "genre-dependent mode of listening," and 3) you and your friends are gathering with the intention to drink and socialize in an intimate setting before heading out to the primary event (i.e., the party you were all invited to).

Even though you were all socializing and dancing with each other, the pregame was not the main objective of the evening (i.e., the primary event). Rather, it was a vehicle that helped your group reach the end goal of the night: attending the party. This distinction is important because it relates to what I call "context-dependent spatial relationships"–which tells a participant what type of social event they should expect to participate in, and is crucial for understanding how location, music selection, and culturally-dependent modes of listening determine what type of gathering occurs.[19] Additionally, it is also necessary for understanding how sound and space create environments where sexual behaviors can manifest.

Social Modes of Listening

Social modes of listening can be influenced by social identifiers, like queerness and racial identity. As I have stated, there are many factors that go into forming social modes of listening. For example, context-dependent spatial relationships (i.e., themed parties) can influence how one relates to the social environment as well as provide a point of reference for how to interpret the social behaviors exhibited in that environment. This raises the question, do queerness and race inform a person's social mode of listening?

I would argue that they do. As I have demonstrated, determining the appropriate context-dependent modes of listening is heavily influenced by the cultural and racial environment in which one was raised. For example, Raina went to a party in their white friend's dorm room expecting it to be a dorm party but found that it was actually a kick-back. Raina did not consider this gathering a party because music by SOPHIE was playing and everyone was "sitting around, smoking weed, doing whippets, and literally just sitting and talking." SOPHIE's sound can be described as experimental electronic music. Picture listening to PC computer game music mixed with EDM and a range of disjointed voice samples. That is what it is like to listen to SOPHIE. Raina's white friend and Raina had different ideas about what constitutes "party music." For Raina, music by SOPHIE is out of place in a party designated for dancing because it does not have a clear rhythmic danceable pattern (i.e., does not fit their culturally-dependent mode of listening). On the other hand, it is appropriate for the sonic environment of a kickback (i.e., genre-normative mode of

listening) because the music played at kickbacks is meant to fill space but not too much that it becomes foregrounded and overpowers conversation.

For many students of color, music by artists like Solange, Sampha, Raevyn Lanae, and SOPHIE fit the mode of listening associated with kickbacks because they create a "chill" and laid-back vibe commonly associated with this form of gathering. Music conveys the desired type of socialization and allows students, like Raina, to understand: 1) what type of socializing is taking place, and 2) the appropriate type of social behaviors. All the students of color I spoke with at Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, and Smith, agreed that the party Raina described would be considered a kickback because the vibe and sonic atmosphere expressed did not fit their criteria of a party.

On a similar note, Sasha (she/her), a white student from Wellesley, explained that she generally goes to pub nights when she has "something hard due that day" or wants "to get a dance workout in."[20] Unlike the other people whom I spoke with, Sasha is not uncomfortable going to pub nights by herself. She told me that she sometimes "just has the social stamina" to go by herself "and have that awkward period of time" where she has "no idea who is there." Other times she "generally [goes] with a buddy" or the 4 or 5 people with whom she went on a winter session trip. In my conversation with Sasha, we mostly talked about her music taste and what she thought about The Pub playlists. She described her taste as "more like alt rock, or oldies and early 2000's," and described the songs played on pub nights as "definitely not [her] taste" because it is "more like groovin' music" and not "jumpable."

Similar to playlists, the presence of a particular group of students in a party space can significantly influence the type of music played in that space – this relates back to the context-dependent spatial relationships. For instance, all the Wellesley students I interviewed agreed that the rugby team used to be the initiators of pub nights; a fact that is exemplified in this excerpt of my conversation with Sasha:

> **H:** So, do you think whoever enters pub night kind of shapes the kind of music that's played?
> **S:** Yeah, well for the most part. Like if Frisbee shows up the music stays a little bit more popping. But, if like I don't know. What's like a defining group that makes the music really slow down?
> **H:** I don't know. I just keep hearing that generally whoever starts pub nights is typically rugby and that once rugby shows up then everyone else shows up.
> **S:** Very true, but they show up from the hoop and sometimes they leave and go [back] to the hoop and you're like "where are all the friends?" As soon as there's a bad song everybody leaves and goes to the hoop and then you have to go rile them up and be like "come back!"
> **H:** So, what would you describe as like a bad song?
> **S:** A song that people don't know and people don't really want to dance to.
> **H:** Do you have any examples? Like something that you were just like "yeah, this isn't really a good song to dance to."

S: The problem is that generally if I don't like the song, I also don't know the song… So, I guess an example would be if Eminem played like that wouldn't be a great song to dance to.

H: So, would you call Drake or the Weekend or someone along those lines like "less dancey" or more of a bad song to play?

S: Sometimes I think Drake works but like you can't have multiple Drake songs you know? You have to have like one and then four other songs and then like maybe another.

H: So Drake is more like going to listening parties as opposed to like "I came here to dance."

S: Yeah, because his music is just like you're trying to move in a circle and like you really can't because you just end up doing the stupid dance that he does on YouTube.

H: So, I guess kind of going back to what you were saying about how when more people show up the music kind of changes and is a little bit more slow, do you notice any kind of change (in the music) when a certain group of people enter? Like does the music change?

S: When people start to enter pub, which is often generally Rugby or Frisbee, the music at first gets faster and gets more dancey.

H: So that's what you would think about as like not good for dancing?

S: I would say that Rihanna could bridge that gap with some of her songs, but not necessarily all of her songs.

H: Like some of her newer stuff not as much?

S: Yeah, like her older stuff yeah. Because that's also stuff that you could scream the lyrics to at the top of your lungs in a drunken stupor, so like yeah. That's sort of like what I'm saying like 2008 to 2010 where people still know the lyrics [to songs].

H: So, things that you listened to in like middle school or high school?

S: Yeah! Where you had time to memorize lyrics because you would drive places and things like that.

H: So like things you heard on the radio a lot more?

S: Yeah, I guess like stuff from back in the radio days.

The genre-normative mode of listening is influenced by the cultural environment in which an individual was raised. Both Raina and Sasha enjoy upbeat music, but there are other sonic qualities, such as vibe and feel, that determine if a song can be classified as party music. For example, music by SOPHIE has an upbeat tempo that can be likened to those found in conventionally agreed upon party songs; however, other sonic qualities, like feel and the vibe, would not meet Raina's criteria for what party music should sound like. Conversely, Sasha would likely define music by SOPHIE as party music because it meets her sonic criteria of being "jumpable."

Conclusion

As these narratives demonstrate, music has the power to function both as a social unifier and a signifier of who feels included or excluded from a space. They also demonstrate how queerness and racial identity can influence culturally-dependent modes of listening.

Raina's and Sasha's stories shows that an understanding of the social environment as well as the type of social gathering, are equally important for determining who participates in queer hookup spaces and their level of comfort in doing so. This is an important distinction because it relates to context-dependent socializing, which informs a participant of what type of social event they will join. As my findings suggest, music played in social settings are differentiated from each other by location, musical selection, and its context-dependent mode of listening. Furthermore, we see that in all social environments in which students participate, music dictates the social context because it communicates the types of social behaviors expected and required in a given situation. Understanding how location, music selection, and the context-dependent spatial relationships determine the type of gathering that occurs is essential for understanding how sound and space create environments where sexual behaviors can manifest.

Notes

[1] Pregame is colloquial term used to describe a social environment where one consumes alcohol in advance of attending a larger social event. It can be used both as a verb and noun. A larger discussion on pregames and hookups in co-educational setting is given in Lisa Wade's *American Hookup* (2018).

[2] This work is titled "The Social Modes of Listening: How Racial Identity and Music Shape Hook-up Culture and Erotic Capital at Same-Sex Colleges." It was presented at the 2018 annual meeting of the Northeast Chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology and was awarded the Lise Waxer Undergraduate Writing Prize for best student paper.

[3] In a 2016 article for *The Guardian*, Lisa Wade, who has conducted extensive research on hookup culture in American universities and colleges, provides a succinct working definition of hookup culture that aligns with my usage of the term in this article. She states that "hookup culture is an environment that idealizes and promotes casual sexual encounters over other kinds, regardless of what students actually want or are doing."

[4] The term "party" is ubiquitously used at all three schools to refer to different forms of socializing that revolves around party environments. At Wellesley and Smith, the term "party," in part, appears to be driven by policy distinctions about places where students may socialize. However, the distinctions as to the subcategories of parties appears to be student driven and not administratively derived. This is an interesting observation because it indicates that party culture is universal since students are the definers and designators of what is considered party culture. I find this explanation credible because certain terms, such as kickback, are used in the same way by students at all three colleges. This suggests that at all three schools there is a shared understanding amongst students of how party culture is organized.

[5] This work underwent Wellesley College's IRB review process and was approved. In accordance with the approved consent form distributed to participants, all names were changed to protect their privacy. In total, I interviewed three students from Smith, two from Bryn Mawr, and included 2 Wellesley student interviews that I repurposed from my 2017 research paper on Punch's Alley. The Wellesley students whose material is presented in this work were all given copies of the IRB consent and agreed to have their experiences included in this paper.

[6] The research presented in this article is taken from my senior undergraduate honors thesis, titled "The Social Modes of Listening: How Racial Identity and Music Shape Hook-up Culture and Erotic Capital at Same-Sex Colleges," which was conducted advised by Professors Petra Rivera-Rideau and K. E. Goldschmitt, and was awarded the 2019 Billings Award in Music by Wellesley College. This research received no funding and, as a result, I relied on interviews to gain an understanding of Bryn Mawr and Smith's queer hookup and party cultures.

[7] Wellesley's drug and alcohol policy does not define the types of social events covered by the policy, nor does it codify its guidelines or resources for students which makes it difficult for them to ensure that they are complying with the college's social policies.

[8] Wellesley College Student Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy, Appendix A.

[9] Some students didn't disclose how they identify racially so I've decided to use terms like "student of African-descent" or "student of Latinx-descent" instead of assuming their racial identity.

[10] The referenced states: "Each undergraduate Smith student is a member of the social system and is welcome to participate in all social events taking place on campus and in residential houses. The social system is funded through the student activities fee (SAF) and by the college" (Smith College Social Events Policies, Procedures and Guidelines).

[11] According to students, rooms at Smith can hold up to 15-20 people.

[12] Smith College Social Events Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

[13] A kickback is a social gathering where music is played in the background while everyone engages in conversations.

[14] My conversations with Sonia, Raina, and Wrenn revealed that Smith students are more likely to have "illegal" parties because they have autonomy over who is allowed to attend, the music played, and the venue. To reiterate Raina's earlier point, registered parties provide institutional benefits such as event space and funding. They emphasized that this form of regulation not only creates obstacles and additional challenges for historically disadvantaged groups, but also forces them to gather in spaces without adequate resources and which could also be deemed "unsafe." An unintended consequence of these requirements is that certain groups of students (like students of color) who are more likely to host unregistered parties, as a way to circumvent the restrictions registered parties impose, are stigmatized by the institution for violating its policies. While it is important to note that this problem is not exclusive to historically disadvantaged groups, the impact appears to be most felt by students of color who are presented with little or no options for sanctioned safe social spaces by their institution.

[15] Information for this table was gathered from Offices of Institutional Research at Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, and Smith Colleges.

[16] The number of hosts, bouncers, and servers required for a party is dependent on the size of the function and whether alcohol will be served. Hosts are given an extensive list of responsibilities that include communicating the party details to the dorm president, as well as coordinating with housekeeping to ensure that the space is restored to its original condition. Additionally, hosts are tasked with managing all the event logistics while server and bouncer responsibilities are restricted to the party itself. Server tasks include serving alcohol to guests that are 21 years or older, monitoring the alcohol consumption of guests during the event, and marking guests' hands every time they are served.

[17] In his article 2006 "Adequate Modes of Listening," Stockfelt postulates that different listening practices, or modes of listening, are connected to the specific listening situation in which they are used. What he means by this is that how people relate to, and experience music is shaped by the environment in which they are listening. He defines adequate listening as the act of hearing music according to a given social situation, and the "predominant sociocultural conventions of a subculture to which the music belongs." He expands upon this point by introducing the concept of "genre-normative modes of listening" which he defines as the environment one most associates as the appropriate listening situation for a specific genre of music.

[18] Donna is one of the Wellesley students I originally spoke with in 2017 as part of my Punch's Alley research. Their interview was repurposed for this work.

[19] This term adapts Stockfelt's language to examine the connection between spatial relationships, identity, and cultural-dependent modes of listening.

[20] Sasha is another Wellesley student I originally spoke with in 2017 as part of my Punch's Alley research. Their interview was repurposed for this work.

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Calling Each Other To Prayer: Group Song in British Reform Synagogues

Rachel Adelstein

In the 2014 film *The Theory of Everything*, Jane Hawking sits down with her mother and a cup of tea to describe the frustrations of being both wife and caretaker to her husband, physicist Stephen Hawking. Jane's mother listens to her daughter describe her physical toil and her emotional isolation, and comes up with a possible source of stress relief. "Jane, I think you should join the church choir." Jane responds, "That is the most English thing anyone has ever said." Beneath Jane's dry wit is a significant kernel of truth. Group song, whether in formal choirs or in informal social settings, has been a marked feature of British cultural life for several centuries, and the practice continues today. One of the hallmarks of the Church of England is its choral tradition, which descends from the fourteenth-century tradition of English choral liturgical singing (Samama 2012:98). Choral societies and choral festivals are popular all over the UK, and private foundations raise significant sums of money specifically to fund youth choirs. Many regions of the UK have their own local traditions of group song, ranging from pub singalongs to the male-voice hymn choirs of Wales.

Jewish communities in Britain enjoy group singing as much as any other British Christian or secular community. Especially in congregations belonging to the Movement for Reform Judaism (MRJ), both choral and congregational harmony infuses worship. On any given Sabbath morning, the service leader of the week at Cambridge's Beth Shalom congregation will start the service with "Mah Tovu," ("How Beautiful Are Your Tents") the prayer that opens the Sabbath morning service, and the congregation will sing it as a two-part canon. Later in the service, they may sing another two-part canon setting of the final verse of Psalm 150, and render Louis Lewandowski's setting of the final lines of Psalm 92 in semi-improvised harmony. Congregants at London's Finchley Reform Synagogue (FRS) sing in harmony with each other under the careful but informal instruction of their cantor. Some MRJ congregations maintain dedicated synagogue choirs, which sing choral settings of the liturgy and the Psalms that date from the beginnings of Jewish Reform in the mid-nineteenth century, as well as the occasional newly-composed piece. However, British synagogue choirs rarely sing to a silently appreciative congregation. In some communities, the congregations may choose to sing along with the choir; other communities have chosen to disband the choir in order to facilitate congregational song. Beyond the synagogue, Jewish performance choirs offer harmonic renditions of Jewish liturgy in community settings alongside non-Jewish choirs. Whether Jewish singers are part of a choir or a congregation, or even a congregation that effectively becomes its own choir, their participatory–and often harmonic–sound shapes both the aesthetic and the self-conception of British Reform worship. The deliberate focus on communal liturgical song rather than prayer led by a privileged solo singing voice helps to mark the congregation as British as well as Jewish.

This essay is grounded in ethnographic participant-observation work that I conducted in the United Kingdom between 2014 and 2017. During this time, I attended worship services at congregations both in London and elsewhere in Britain, and interviewed congregants and clergy about how they perceived the role of music in worship. I sang as a member of the Kol Echad choir in Cambridge and attended workshops and music fairs

sponsored by the MRJ and the Zemel Choir of London. I begin my argument with a discussion of the roles that choral and congregational song play in British Reform synagogues. While congregations do draw distinctions between these two forms of group song, in practice the distinctions are not as clear-cut as they might appear at first glance. Following this discussion, I examine the codification of group song in synagogues through the 1899 "Blue Book" and the MRJ's 2012 publication *Shirei Ha-T'fillot* ("Songs of Prayer"). I explore instances of group song in other British cultural venues, establishing the larger culture of group song of which British Reform Jews are a part.

I then discuss in detail two Reform congregations, Beth Shalom in Cambridge and FRS in London. In many ways, these two congregations are very different from each other in the style, language, and formality of their worship. Beth Shalom takes a relatively conservative approach to ritual, and chooses not to have any clergy in a formal position of leadership. By contrast, FRS is known for its highly liberal, American-influenced worship aesthetic, and employs three rabbis and one cantor to lead its services. Being so different from each other in their worship and leadership practices, Beth Shalom and FRS can be said to represent the breadth of variation in practice among British Reform synagogues. However, their approaches to group song and the relationships between the congregations and the choirs associated with them are surprisingly similar.

While many scholars, primarily historians and sociologists, have written about the position of British Jews as a minority within an increasingly multicultural society, relatively little attention has been paid to the cultural context of British Judaism, and the ways in which British Jews negotiate both halves of this dual identity. British Reform Jews do not live in isolation from their surrounding culture; indeed, they are so well integrated into British cultural life that the sharp increase in antisemitism from the Labour Party that began in 2015 caused shock and surprise as well as anger in Jewish Labour supporters. The musical performance of progressive Anglo-Judaism is marked by creative adaptation. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both Jewish and non-Jewish composers working for Reform congregations incorporated elements of the British sacred choral tradition into new vocal music for Jewish worship. Contemporary British Reform communities take note of contemporary trends in progressive Jewish music coming from the United States and Israel, and adapt them to meet the needs of British Reform liturgy. Additionally, a few Anglo-Jewish composers are creating new works designed explicitly to suit British Reform tastes for group liturgical singing.

The Voices of Congregation and Choir

Choirs have been an important source of collective song in British synagogues since the middle of the nineteenth century. David M. Davis (c. 1853 – 1932) led some of the first synagogue choirs in the country, at the Orthodox East London, New West End, and St. John's Wood Synagogues, between roughly 1875 and 1925 (Rubinstein and Jolles 2011:201). Additionally, Hampstead Synagogue debuted a mixed-voice (SATB) choir in 1892 (Chernett 2010). As Reform Judaism gained strength in the twentieth century, many Reform synagogues also employed choirs. The choral tradition in British Reform synagogues reached its peak in the middle of the century. Although choirs have declined in popularity during the 1970s and 1980s, some Reform synagogues still employ them, either regularly for Sabbath services or for special occasions. In addition to synagogue choirs, several Jewish choral societies perform liturgical music as concert repertoire. These include the Zemel Choir and the London Jewish Male Choir–both based in

London–and Kol Echad, based in Cambridge. Such choirs often perform their repertoire at concerts hosted in synagogue buildings, whether or not the choir "belongs" to that synagogue.

However, as important as choral singing is to the sound of Anglo-Jewish prayer, it is not the only form of group song practiced in Reform synagogues. For many Reform congregations, the performative sound of the choir is less important than the participatory sound of congregational singing. Rabbi Dr. Barbara Borts traces this shift to the 1960s, when the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain (RSGB), the precursor to the MRJ, turned its attention to the performance of synagogue music. An RSGB sub-committee on music attempted to disseminate choral music to Reform synagogue choirs, but the notation did not always lead to beautiful choral singing. As Borts observes, the music:

> . . . had also taken on the patina of folk song, in that it was often transmitted aurally to choristers who may or may not have read music, and who, in turn, transmitted the music to newer synagogues. As melodies were not always practised from the original, or even a written score, they were sometimes recalled inaccurately. (Borts 2020:58)

By the time the RSGB decided to compile a *siddur*, or prayer book, of its own in 1977, its leaders wished to move away from European-style classical music and reclaim a sense of agency for the congregation as well as a somewhat nebulous concept of "Jewishness." Philip Roth of Edgware and Hendon Reform Synagogue in London recalls that the synagogue's choir ceased to sing at full strength for Friday night services in the 1980s.

> They wanted to make the service more participatory and less choral. More chanting, that sort of thing. And there just wasn't the need for a choir. So we decided, we don't really need a choir. For a while, we did just do it as a quartet rather than a full choir. And we had sort of two quartets that used to do it on alternate weeks (Roth 2016).

Borts suggests that this moment "is perhaps the beginning of the desire for 'authenticity,' a wish to incorporate the music most associated with Jewishness, that of the Yiddish worlds" (Borts 2020: 60). Because of this increasing association between concepts of "Jewishness" and "authenticity," and the largely monophonic Yiddish table songs of Eastern Europe, congregational interest in synagogue choirs began to decline shortly after the release of the new *siddur*. As Jonathan Friedmann has observed, this movement toward simpler and more participatory music took place in the same decade as a similar movement among liberal American synagogues that drew on the musical repertoires of the Reform and Conservative youth movements (Friedmann 2012:77). Indeed, as the RSGB and congregants themselves took a new interest in more broadly accessible melodies, they imported a few newly-composed melodies by American composers including Jeff Klepper and Debbie Friedman (Borts 2020:64).

Today, rabbis, cantors, lay leaders, and musicians serving Reform synagogues work to bring music directly to congregants. Many of the workshops at the biennial Shirei Chagigah festival of Jewish music and learning involve teachers demonstrating new music to interested participants and offering tips and techniques for teaching music to congregations and encouraging them to sing with confidence during worship. Some synagogue musicians even compose new liturgical music that can perform double duty,

featuring melodies and simple harmonies appropriate for congregational singing, in addition to full choral arrangements for those congregations that employ choirs. In a demonstration workshop at the 2015 Limmud festival in Birmingham, composer Joseph Finlay announced that the audience would "hear tonight my attempts to find a Jewish synagogue sound which is fun, participatory, but also sort of true to me." Finlay explained that the demonstration was to be understood as a workshop rather than a concert, adding "the point is probably to learn some more melodies that you can take home to your synagogues" (Finlay 2015).

Because of a distinct lack of professional musical leadership in contemporary MRJ synagogues this kind of lay musical transmission works relatively slowly but, as I describe later in this essay, synagogue congregations do learn new melodies from each other. However, a great deal of synagogue repertoire, as well as the aesthetic that still exercises significant influence over congregational musical taste, comes from two collections of synagogue music, published over a century apart. The 1899 "Blue Book" and the 2012 *Shirei Ha-T'fillot* represent two different styles of liturgical music, and take opposing approaches to presenting it. Nonetheless, both publications focus on and promote the idea that group song, whether choral or congregational, is the sound of a British synagogue.

The Blue Book and *Shirei Ha-T'fillot*

Although it is formally associated with the United Synagogue and Orthodox worship, *Kol Rinnah U-Todah* ("The Voice of Prayer and Praise"), affects the musical lives of Reform congregations as well. Rabbi Francis Lyon Cohen (1862 – 1934), then the rabbi of Borough Synagogue in London, and David M. Davis, at that time the choirmaster of
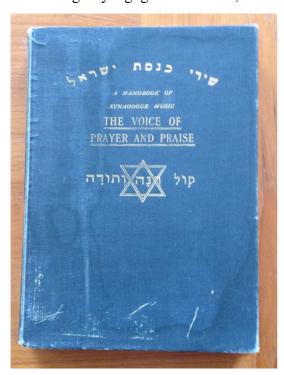

Figure 1. The cover of Kol Rinnah U-Todah ("The Voice of Prayer and Praise"), commonly called the Blue Book. Photograph by author.

the New West End Synagogue, compiled the book at the request of the Choir Committee of the Council of the United Synagogue. Cohen and Davis had previously collaborated on an earlier collection of liturgical music entitled *Shire Keneset Yisrael: The Handbook of Synagogue Music for Congregational Singing* ("Songs of the Community of Israel"), published in 1889. Danielle Padley observes that this collection did interest at least twenty synagogues, although it would soon fade out of regular use (Padley 2019:10). Cohen and Davis re-edited and re-published this book in 1899 as *Kol Rinnah U-Todah*, the version remembered and used today. Known informally as the "Blue Book" for its blue cover (see Figure 1), the book contains multiple settings of common synagogue prayers, drawn from composers adhering to both the Orthodox and Reform traditions. Its stated purpose is to encourage group harmony singing in Anglo-Jewish worship; in the 1948 Preface to the reprinted Third Edition

> Attention is drawn to the fact that this volume is not merely one for the Choirmaster and his choristers. It is essentially 'A Handbook of Synagogue Music for Congregational Singing,' and an aid to worshippers to participate chorally in the Religious Services, and not simply to listen to a Choir. (Cohen and Davis 1899:viiib)

Musicologist Alexander Knapp suggests that part of the reason that Cohen and Davis wished to encourage congregational singing was to "reduce congregational acceleration through the prayers by providing for them to be sung together rather than having them merely read" (Knapp 1996 – 1998:183). To this end, the Blue Book features both longer prayer texts and shorter congregational responses printed in hymnal-like grand staff notation, with the texts transliterated into the Roman alphabet. The book is compact enough that a congregant could hold it easily and sing along with other congregants following the notation and the transliterated text. Slowing the congregation's movement through prayer texts by means of communal singing would help them to advance through the liturgy together and might also help them to focus on the intentionality of their prayer.

Figure 2. A selection from the Blue Book, showing tonic sol-fa notation above the grand staff. Cohen and Davis 1899:28.

In addition to the staff notation, the Blue Book also features tonic sol-fa notation for the soprano and alto lines above the grand staff (see Figure 2). Tonic sol-fa notation consists of letters representing the degrees of the Western scale (do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti) and punctuation marks, including colons, dashes, and vertical bars, to indicate measures, beats, and note values. This has been a part of the Blue Book since its original publication. The 1899 Preface makes its purpose clear.

> Remembering the extent to which our choir-boys and the pupils of Religion Classes are drawn from Elementary Schools, the Editors have presented the Soprano and Alto parts in the Tonic Sol-fa as well as in the Staff Notation. (Cohen and Davis 1899:vi)

Cohen and Davis included tonic sol-fa notation in order to enable the broadest possible group participation in the music of the synagogue. Its presence, explicitly stated to be for children, indicates the degree to which British Jews were integrated into larger British culture.

Tonic sol-fa notation was formalized in the middle of the nineteenth century by the educator John Curwen (1816 – 1880), who based his system on an earlier system of hand gestures developed by Sarah Glover (1785 – 1867), a teacher who lived in Norwich (McGuire 2009:17; see also Bennett 1984:57). Tonic sol-fa notation was cheap to produce and easy to teach, and Curwen published several instructional manuals and songbooks using the system. The English Education Department officially recognized it in 1860, and English primary schools adopted the system in the 1880s and 1890s (Russell 1987:30; see also McGuire 2009:24). By the turn of the twentieth century, British Jews of all social classes enrolled their children in local state schools, where they received the same education as other children, including instruction in choral singing from tonic sol-fa notation. The songbooks used in schools contained a mixture of English folk songs and simple Christian hymns. However, on the Sabbath, Jewish schoolchildren who attended services at synagogues that used the Blue Book could apply the musical skills that they had learned in school to Jewish liturgy and hymnody. The social movement associated with tonic sol-fa singing was evangelical and Nonconformist. It promoted the idea of learning music and singing in large choirs as a form of social and moral uplift, along with temperance and missionary work (Wright 2012:173; see also Russell 1987:26). Whether out of choice or by necessity, Anglo-Jewish families aligned themselves with this particular working-class group musical movement, and then elected to adopt it into their own musical culture.

Although the Blue Book was a project of the Orthodox United Synagogue, it had, and continues to have, a significant impact on Reform congregations as well. Some of this impact comes from Reform congregants who moved into Reform from Orthodoxy. Sheila Levy of Beth Shalom in Cambridge recalled that the music she heard growing up Orthodox in Liverpool was "very much from the Blue Book" (Levy 2015). Levy retains her love of the Blue Book today and uses melodies from that source when she takes a turn leading services at Beth Shalom. Reform synagogues that are older and more established than Beth Shalom draw from the Blue Book as well. Danielle Padley told me that, at Edgware and Hendon Reform Synagogue in London, "We use the Blue Book quite a lot, not exclusively," observing that the choir director programs music from the Blue Book often enough that the choir knows her code for it. "She'll just go 263, and we know that that's page 263 of the Blue Book, which is Havu L'Adonai. You get to know it by that" (Padley 2015). The Blue Book's impact on Anglo-Jewish life is so powerful that, when Cantor Zöe Jacobs described the production of the Movement for Reform Judaism's music compilation, *Shirei Ha-T'fillot*, she recalled that "we were talking about it for a while as being the Reform Blue Book" (Jacobs 2015).

Both the Blue Book and *Shirei Ha-T'fillot* feature a significant amount of music intended for group harmony singing. Much of this music is by British composers. David M. Davis either composed or arranged many of the selections in the Blue Book. Several composers whose music shaped the sonic space of British synagogues are represented in the Blue Book as well. Among them are Julius Israel Lazarus Mombach (1813 – 1880), the choirmaster of the Great Synagogue in London from 1840 until his death, the pianist and

composer Charles Salaman (1814 – 1901), and Abraham Saqui (c. 1824 – 1893), the first choirmaster of the Liverpool Old Hebrew Congregation on Princes Road.

Similarly, *Shirei Ha-T'fillot* features contemporary British composers of Jewish music, including the singer-songwriter Judith Silver, professor of composition at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Malcolm Singer, composer Julian Dawes, and composer Joseph Finlay, the former musical director of Hendon Reform Synagogue in London, and current director of the London Jewish Male Choir. The book includes a range of opportunities for harmony singing. For congregations with choirs, or performance groups, the editors sought out a variety of choral music. There are also several canons that allow non-choral congregations to sing in harmony as well. The ethos behind the collection of *Shirei Ha-T'fillot* is one of inclusivity. In her introduction to the compilation, Rabbi Sybil Sheridan writes that

> The focus has shifted from passive appreciation to full participation. Spirituality is perceived less in the beauty of words and melody performed than in the beauty of words and melody recited and sung in community and with gusto. (Sheridan 2012:1)

It is in the spirit of encouraging the widest range of participation possible that *Shirei Ha-T'fillot* includes multiple settings of texts. Some settings are simple unison lines that can be sung as congregational chants, or in canon. Some settings are more complicated, in order to offer a greater musical challenge (Sheridan 2012:3). There are melodies with short call-and-response sections, and melodies in which a cantor or a songleader involves the congregation in a longer dialogue. Throughout the book, Sheridan and her co-compilers emphasize group song and provide several options so that both highly musical and less musically confident congregations may have the opportunity to sing.

Group Song in the United Kingdom

This emphasis on group song in the British Reform tradition stems partly from the fact that full-time cantors are relatively rare in this movement. At present, only a few Reform congregations in the UK employ full-time cantors. Cantor Zöe Jacobs has worked at Finchley Reform Synagogue since 2009, and Radlett Reform Synagogue hired Cantor Sarah Grabiner in 2019. Cantor Cheryl Wunch worked at Alyth, also in London, in 2014 and 2015. And most recently, Cantor Tamara Wolfson joined Alyth in 2020. All four are graduates of what is now the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College in New York City. This relative scarcity of full-time, professionally trained cantors is a situation that is likely to continue, as there is no accredited cantorial school in the UK. Although informal training networks exist, especially through the Masorti movement's Skype-based European Academy for Jewish Liturgy, accredited, professional cantorial training must still be undertaken overseas, in the United States or in Israel, and thus remains a difficult undertaking for aspiring British Reform cantors. Other synagogues may employ part-time lay cantors, many of whom may have trained informally or via apprenticeship.

In the absence of cantors, a congregation's music director, sometimes assisted by a choir, has often assumed the role of leading the liturgy in British Reform congregations. As Jewish Reform movements sprang up in Western and Central Europe and in the United States, the Reformers attempted to modernize Jewish worship and bring religious

practices into line with the aesthetics and social rhythms of the local community. In a post-Emancipation society, this type of worship reform might help congregants integrate into society beyond a ghetto. Most of the Reform movements shortened the liturgy, adjusted the start time of services, allowed certain prayers to be said in the vernacular rather than in Hebrew, and introduced a sermon into the Sabbath morning service (Endelman 2002:95). In Britain, both Orthodox and Reform synagogues adopted a set of ritual reforms that borrowed both form and vocabulary from the Church of England. Michael Myer observes that, by the middle of the nineteenth century, both British Reform and Orthodox synagogues used words such as "vestry" and "wardens" to describe the architecture and functionaries of synagogues, the latter wearing clerical gowns along with rabbis (Myer 1988:178). Sharman Kadish describes this aesthetic, especially in Orthodox synagogues, as "traditional Jewish content dressed up in English packaging," drawing particular attention to top hats and dog collars worn by clergy (Kadish 2002:393). At the West London Synagogue today, the wardens still wear top hats as a symbol of their role in ensuring that the service runs smoothly.

During the middle of the nineteenth century, British synagogues adopted the choir at roughly the same time as the Anglican Church revived the institution. Nicholas Temperley describes the institution of the modern Anglican church choir, featuring choirboys set apart from the rest of the congregation, wearing robes and singing in harmony as the congregation listens, as the result of an Anglican revival that began in the 1830s. Church leaders debated the form that worship music should take, eventually instituting robed choirs around 1850. Temperley cites the rise of the middle class and the allure of elegance and grandeur as motivations, observing that

> In a period of great social mobility, the new and growing middle-class public was anxiously looking for symbols of its new status. It turned its back on both rural traditions and the industrial society that supported it. Hence there was great appeal in the paid, semi-professional, robed parish church choir, singing cultivated liturgical music which was in sharp contrast with the congregational hymnody of dissenting chapels, and which approached the aristocratic dignity of cathedrals. (Temperley 1979:277)

The most famous of these choirs is the all-male King's College Choir from Cambridge. The soprano and alto lines are sung by boys, most of whom attend the nearby King's College School, and who give the choir what Leo Samama describes as "a crystal-clear, slightly sharp, but extremely well-projected choral sound" (Samama 2012:99). These institutions are the model for a choral infrastructure that encompasses both religious and educational choirs, very few of them permanent professional organizations (Samama 2012:98). In addition to the ancient universities, roughly fifty other Anglican cathedral schools provide selected students with choral scholarships, which can pay up to £1,500 per year, in exchange for singing in the choir. While some single-sex choirs remain in university colleges and cathedrals, many churches employ mixed-voice, SATB choirs made up of men and women.

Even largely independent concert choirs can maintain intimate relationships with churches and their congregations, as their directors may also hold jobs as church musicians. The choir Cambridge Voices performs under the baton of its founder, Ian de Massini, who is also the Director of Music at St. Columba's United Reform Church in

Cambridge. On May 23, 2015, Cambridge Voices held a twelve-hour choral marathon to help raise funds for the repair of the church's roof (see Figure 3). The choir invited passersby to stop in and select any piece of music from the choir's significant classical and sacred repertoire, which the choir would sing. Donation boxes placed near the repertoire lists encouraged listeners to support the church's appeal for roof repair. A church might also host choirs performing for charity. On December 12, 2016, Little St. Mary's Church in Cambridge invited local choirs to raise money for Red Balloon, a charity that helps children who cannot attend school because of bullying. Some choirs were associated with local churches, while others came from Cambridge colleges and local schools. The Jewish choir Kol Echad also received an invitation and contributed two pieces to the concert.

Figure 3. A poster advertising the twelve-hour choral marathon to raise money to repair the roof of St. Columba's church in Cambridge. Photo by author.

Communal singing plays a significant part in British popular culture as well. Outside of religious and academic institutions, choral and other group singing remains a popular leisure activity in the UK. Although the organized choral movements of the 1840s intensified and codified British choral activity, the tradition of working-class choral singing was established long before then, especially in Yorkshire and Lancashire in England (Russell 1987:23). The tradition of popular choral singing is especially powerful in Wales. Following the 1966 Aberfan Mine Disaster, members of the coal tip removal committee found themselves in need of social and emotional support. They formed the Ynysowen Male Voice Choir, which continues to meet and perform into the present day. The choir's website explains that the original mandate of the choir was to "perform for charity, to give thanks to everybody who had contributed to the disaster fund that had been set up during the time of the Aberfan tragedy" (Ynysowen Male Voice Choir 2018). In less emotionally charged circumstances, a charity might decide to sponsor a singalong performance of a large choral work from the Western classical canon, and booklets of Christmas carols might be passed around at an informal holiday gathering. Denise Neapolitan, a fiddler living in Cambridge, describes pub music sessions she has attended in the UK and in Ireland.

> The singer will usually start it off, often accompanying himself on guitar, sometimes a cappella. And then, gradually, other musicians will join in, either with the musical instruments or harmonizing. A lot of folk songs have a certain kind of call and response to them, too. So you'll have people joining in on that or joining in on the choruses mostly. (Neapolitan 2015)

Choirs also maintain a visible and audible presence in sports and reality television programming. Since 1927, the FA Cup Final has included a rendition of the hymn "Abide

With Me." This tradition has proved popular enough that, at the 2015 Final, the hymn was led by a choir made up of sixty-four fans of the teams that progressed to the third round of competition. A BBC television program called *Songs of Praise* sponsored the choir and hosted a competition for the privilege of participating (Stone 2015). A similar fan choir sang the hymn to open the competition in 2018 as well (Standard Sport 2018). In 2006, the BBC engaged choir director Gareth Malone to host a reality show called "The Choir." Several variations of the show aired between 2006 and 2016. In each variation, Malone teaches the art of choral singing to a group of people who have never had the opportunity to participate, including the pupils of a comprehensive school in Middlesex, the residents of a working-class housing estate in Watford, and a group of military wives and girlfriends living on two British Army bases in Devon. Malone himself has received royal recognition for his services to music, and the BBC supplies lists of choirs and resources for workplaces and organizations wishing to institute their own choirs similar to those that have appeared on Malone's show (BBC 2020). Similarly, in 2008, the BBC aired a second choral-themed reality show, "Last Choir Standing." This show functioned as a competition among amateur choirs, of whom roughly one thousand entered the initial, pre-taping rounds of competition (BBC 2020B). And when the political action group Citizens UK held a pre-election rally on May 4, 2015, nearly half of the total program was devoted to performances by a school orchestra and local singing groups, including one group made up of singers from FRS, led by Cantor Jacobs.

In the world of community and leisure choirs, a singer's ability to read music does not necessarily present a barrier to participation. While the ability to read musical notation is an advantage if one wishes to sing in either a religious or a leisure choir, it is not a requirement for participating in many such groups in the UK, much as the tonic sol-fa movement had hoped. Those singers who do not read musical notation at all learn their parts by ear from the singers around them. Some singers who learned to read tonic sol-fa, but who are not necessarily adept at reading staff notation find ways to translate their parts into tonic sol-fa in order to learn them. Ruth Bender Atik of Leeds recalls singing in a synagogue choir as a teenager in the 1960s:

> Quite a lot of the choristers, even at that time, apart from knowing tonic sol-fa, also couldn't read music. So a lot of it was by ear. For example, I went to sing alto after a while, and I moved from the sopranos to the altos. And you just had to sing what the person next to you was singing. (Bender Atik 2015)

One notable side effect of this oral transmission of polyphony is that a single piece of music may develop many variations in its harmony, according to the vagaries of the singers' memories. It is notable that many British leisure choirs, as well as the choirs of some minority religious traditions, such as Reform Judaism, place more value on the presence of harmony than on the strict adherence to the specific harmony of the printed page.

Although it was born in the nineteenth century, when the West London Synagogue officially declared itself Reform shortly after its consecration in 1842, the British Reform movement came into its own in the middle of the twentieth century. Synagogues were founded in an environment where the predominant local worship tradition involved choirs and congregational hymn singing. Outside of the synagogue, choral societies, pub singing, and other group vocal events formed an integral part of local social life. In a

culture where school children could earn money for choral singing, community choirs offered opportunities to get out of the house and socialize with the neighbors, and hymn singing formed part of the pageantry of sports. Overall, British Reform Jews encountered and participated in group song from an early age. In the absence of the charismatic, operatic cantors who drew crowds to American synagogues, the music of British Reform took on a communal, multi-voiced character.

Harmony singing is an important part of this worship aesthetic. It does require some form of leadership, and as a result, the line between choral music and congregational music has become blurred, with both forms of synagogue song existing on a spectrum rather than as separate entities. Some synagogues have formal choirs, seated apart from the congregation, that sing in harmony as the congregation listens; this is the role of the choir at the West London Synagogue. There are also synagogues in which the congregation sings entirely on its own, as is the case with Beth Shalom in Cambridge. However, the division has never been absolute. Danielle Padley observes that organist and choir director Charles Garland Verrinder (1839 – 1904) hosted rehearsals at WLS for interested congregants as well as for the choir, "a measure to ensure decorum during services whilst promoting congregational participation" (Padley and Wollenberg 2020:179). Some contemporary synagogue choirs, such as the choir of Edgware and Hendon Reform Synagogue, wear ordinary clothing, and may sit very close to the congregation, thus encouraging congregants to sing with them for parts of the service. At other synagogues, such as Bromley Reform Synagogue, the "choir" consists of a small number of congregants (roughly six to eight) who get together to practice the music of the liturgy and sit together to take on an informal leadership role during the service. Finally, as I discuss later in this essay, Cantor Zöe Jacobs of Finchley Reform Synagogue prepares interested congregants to sing the music she has chosen for that week and scatters them throughout the congregation, providing musical support without the formality of a choir. This practice is similar to one that Marsha Bryan Edelman describes in synagogues in the United States, "creating the illusion that these singers are just 'regular members of the congregation,' extemporaneously harmonizing, rather than devoted amateurs who have spent hours to master their parts" (Edelman 2021:41). While the organization of the dispersed singers at FRS is less formal than what Edelman describes, the effect is similar.

Even if not all British Reform congregants are musically literate or members of an official choir, they appreciate and value harmony singing as a part of worship. The harmony may take the form of a round or canon structure, or there may be an accepted descant to accompany a melody, or there may be enough congregants who are familiar with a work to sing harmony parts as a composer or an arranger wrote them down. Ruth Bender Atik recalled absorbing harmony from a young age listening to the choir at the Liverpool Old Hebrew Congregation.

> The clergy had accepted a mixed choir from sometime around wartime, when a lot of men were called up. Women and small boys, I guess, did most of the singing. So I used to listen to it. I used to love harmony, and I used to hum along. And then when I was about fourteen, I met somebody through my parents. And I said I'd love to sing in the choir, and they said okay. (Bender Atik 2015)

Even if congregants do not know the "official" harmony of a piece, they may improvise. Many British Reform congregants are familiar with Louis Lewandowski's setting of the last verses of Psalm 92, "Tzaddik Katamar."
[1] Whether or not a given congregation knows the exact harmony lines that Lewandowski composed, congregants will often add their own harmonies to the familiar melody, approximating both Lewandowski's harmonic structure and a two-part canon passage that appears in the second half of the piece. Other congregants may have learned harmony parts from service in other choirs, allowing younger congregants to pick up the harmonies by sitting next to them and listening. Some congregations may choose an even simpler form of harmony, singing in parallel thirds. Bender Atik explained how her current Reform congregation, Sinai Synagogue in Leeds, approaches harmony singing.

> There was always a feeling that as long as you were within the chord, you were okay. And that's still the case, because if you don't have a tenor that week, and you don't happen to have the music, well, you'll fill in what you think would pretty much be the tenor line. (Bender Atik 2015)

Bender Atik also stated that the minimum requirements for harmony, as she sees them, consist of a melody line and the third. "It has to be the third." Even in congregations that are less musically inclined than others, there is a sense that group singing is important, whether it comes from a choir or from the congregation, and that some form of harmony is preferable to unison song.

Case Studies

I now describe some of the ways in which this aesthetic of communal song might appear in worship services. I take as my examples Beth Shalom, the Reform community in Cambridge, and Finchley Reform Synagogue in London. Although they are both part of the Movement for Reform Judaism, these two congregations are quite different in character, in size, and in their approach to ritual and leadership. Their similarities lie in the realm of music. Both congregations are highly musical, and both place great value on group song.

Beth Shalom Reform Synagogue in Cambridge is the only Reform congregation in East Anglia. It began in 1976 as an offshoot of the Cambridge Jewish Residents' Association. By 1981, the synagogue was officially constituted, according to its Articles of Association, as Beth Shalom Reform Synagogue. The Articles state that "The ritual to be used at services shall conform to the practices of the Movement for Reform Judaism of Great Britain."[2] As the congregation grew, it occupied a series of spaces in local churches and schools. On June 11, 2015, it moved into its own building. The congregation has never had a full-time rabbi or cantor, although founding member Michael Gait told me about occasional services led over the years by a series of students and student rabbis, including Rabbi Sybil Sheridan–then a student at Girton College. Beth Shalom continues its lay-led tradition today, with congregants taking turns to lead services.

Music, and specifically group song, have been part of Beth Shalom's tradition since its founding. The congregation chooses not to use instruments in worship services. All of the music in worship is sung a cappella by the congregation. In its early years, Beth Shalom had a music director named May Daniels, who attempted to organize a formal choir. The records of the synagogue's Ritual Committee from the 1980s include an

ongoing series of reports from Daniels in which she details her efforts to establish and improve Beth Shalom's music. She writes in 1982 that "I have been visiting Reform and Liberal Synagogues in London to observe their liturgy and music with a view to learning what might help to enrich our own practice," and observes that "The singing at the first HH [High Holy Days – RA] services of Beth Shalom was spontaneously praised by many of the congregants."[3]

Daniels's formal synagogue choir was not popular enough to survive and was disbanded in the early 1990s. In its place, the congregation at Beth Shalom carries the entirety of the music of the service. Members support each other vocally, and those who have joined Beth Shalom from other communities bring new melodies and new harmonies to Beth Shalom. A typical Shabbat morning service at Beth Shalom includes well-known melodies by Mombach, Lewandowski, Salomon Sulzer, and Shlomo Carlebach, some *nusach*–the ancient musical formulas for Jewish prayer, in the Western Ashkenazi tradition–and perhaps a tune or two that is a particular favorite of the congregant leading services that week. Because many of Beth Shalom's congregants originally came from other communities, and because so many of them have contributed favorite tunes to Beth Shalom, the congregation's repertoire is surprisingly large. Lay service leaders do not hesitate to demonstrate new melodies, confident that there are enough strong singers present at most Shabbat services that the congregation as a whole can learn new music within a few months, as happened when a lay leader introduced Meir Finkelstein's setting of "*L'Dor Vador*" ("From Generation to Generation") in 2016. Musically confident congregants provide harmony lines, and newcomers learn Beth Shalom's repertoire by ear.

Although Beth Shalom does not have a formal synagogue choir, it maintains a relationship with Kol Echad, Cambridge's Jewish community choir. The current incarnation of Kol Echad was formed around the year 2000 (Levy 2015). It is open to anyone who wishes to join, regardless of religious affiliation; not all of its members are Jewish. It functions as a concert choir for the Jewish community of Cambridge and the surrounding area, and appears regularly at events sponsored by the pan-denominational Cambridge Jewish Residents' Association, including annual Chanukah and Yom Ha-Atzma'ut (Israeli Independence Day) parties. Many of the members of Kol Echad also attend services at Beth Shalom, and the choir has rehearsal space in Beth Shalom's building. For several years prior to and during the building's construction, Beth Shalom engaged Kol Echad to sing at fundraising concerts for the building project. In addition, Kol Echad has visited Beth Shalom to sing on special occasions. The choir is often present at the annual service on Yom Ha-Shoah, the Jewish day of remembering the Holocaust, and it made a special appearance in 2017 leading the morning service on Shabbat Shirah–the "Sabbath of Song–when the Torah portion containing the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15:1 – 18) is read. However, a majority of members of both of these groups do not want to make their relationship any closer. Michael Gait told me that Kol Echad "should never be thought of as the choir of the synagogue, *ever!*" adding that "the tradition of everybody singing should be kept up" (Gait 2015, emphasis added). Sheila Levy concurred, recalling her childhood in a synagogue with a choir and very little congregational participation, saying "I don't want that for Beth Shalom. I think the participation is very important for it" (Levy 2015).

Music is similarly important in the life of Finchley Reform Synagogue (FRS) in London, although the character of the services and the music is rather different. FRS was founded in 1960 as the Woodside Park and District Reform Synagogue, and has been formally affiliated with the Reform movement since 1962. Its repertoire encompasses contemporary American folk-style worship music and contemporary choral composition as well as older melodies by Mombach, Sulzer, and Lewandowski and a small amount of Western Ashkenazi *nusach*. In 2009, FRS hired Zöe Jacobs to serve as the first Reform cantor in the UK. In collaboration with Rabbi Miriam Berger and choir director Mich Sampson, Jacobs has overseen the development of a strong and varied musical life at FRS. Having a full-time professional cantor is unusual for a British Reform synagogue, and Jacobs functions as a musical leader rather than a solo representative; worship at FRS still focuses on the sound of group song.

In addition to congregational song and Jacobs's cantorial work, FRS maintains a small formal choir under the direction of Mich Sampson. Like many British Reform synagogues, FRS disbanded an earlier version of its choir in the 1980s. Jacobs recalls that, at the time, the congregants of FRS "were falling out of love a little bit with the music of the liturgy." Because of this, the choir became less popular at FRS. "They were not doing what the community wanted them to be doing, and so after a while, they were sort of almost ruled out. They were allowed to sing on the High Holy Days, and even that sort of felt like a bit of the challenge for the community" (Jacobs 2015). However, since Jacobs received her ordination in 2009, she and Sampson have worked to return the choir to FRS, although in a different format that recognizes the congregation's desire to participate in worship as well.

Sampson began to lead the High Holy Days choir in 2012, and under her leadership, its sound improved, and FRS congregants rekindled their interest in hearing it. Following the High Holy Days in 2014, Sampson and Jacobs decided to bring back a modified Shabbat choir as well. Jacobs notes that the choir does not sing for every Shabbat, "because we decided the community might have quite a strong feeling about that." Instead, they sing as a full choir only rarely, but spend the rest of the time enhancing worship in other ways. Jacobs says, "what that means is, there's a gorgeous group of people who sing beautifully, who contribute to the congregational voice, and just build the sound. And that sounds really quite amazing" (Jacobs 2015). As a result, the congregants of FRS come to the worship service far more musically confident than they might have been without Sampson and Jacobs's curated coaching.

As at Beth Shalom, the congregation of FRS participates fully in creating the music of worship. Even if Cantor Jacobs and Rabbi Berger are playing guitars and using microphones, congregants join in with great enthusiasm, singing in harmony, and often joining in on parts of the liturgy traditionally reserved for the service leader. At one Friday evening service, a portion of the congregants sang the call to prayer along with Jacobs, an act that is not part of the formal order of service, in which the service leader sings the call to prayer alone, followed by a congregational response; the next morning, one woman observed, half-jokingly, that Jacobs had tacitly encouraged them to do so by saying "Let's call each other to prayer."

Indeed, Jacobs works deliberately to cultivate and nurture a culture of group song at FRS. Once a month, she holds a music session called Shira, the Hebrew word for "song." Shira

takes place in the hour before the normal Shabbat morning service begins. It is a time when interested members of the congregation can come together with Jacobs to sing, and to learn new music and new harmonies, some of which may appear later that morning in the service. Shira is an entirely voluntary event, and does not necessarily draw all of the same people for each session. The congregants who do attend Shira support and strengthen the rest of the congregation during the regular Shabbat service, and they also serve as support for Jacobs when she chooses to introduce a new composition into worship.

Conclusions

Although their worship services differ greatly from each other in style, Beth Shalom and Finchley Reform Synagogue share both a reverence for music and a sense of what the music of worship should sound like. Beth Shalom combines a conservative approach to ritual and extensive use of Hebrew in its prayers with a strong appreciation for do-it-yourself (DIY) music-making. Worship at FRS is much more contemporary and liberal in style. Here, we hear the use of shorter prayers and more English than one would find at Beth Shalom, and its music is made with a certain amount of formal leadership. However, both of these synagogues demonstrate a commitment to group song, and specifically to multi-voiced group song, that marks them as part of British as well as Jewish culture. When congregants are not singing in the synagogue, they may be singing in a leisure choir, joining in a folk music session or another team activity, or they may simply participate as appreciative audience members.

Both formal choirs and congregational song contribute to the translation of this aesthetic into worship, an aesthetic that resonates and finds parallels in the larger culture of which British Reform is a part. Jacobs observes that "if you're singing with people, and you're facing them, and they're singing one harmony and you're singing another, that develops community" (Jacobs 2015). Musically, British Reform worship emphasizes the value of that communal ideal and the collaborative production of beauty. Even in congregations that do not specialize in highly musical worship, I have seen congregants make at least a small effort to join their voices, if not in song, then at least in a collaborative attempt at melodic prayer. Whether the collaboration comes from a formally trained choir representing the voices of the congregation or the congregation themselves, singing in harmony to become their own choir, congregants in British Reform synagogues find both religious propriety and a sense of Britishness in calling each other to prayer.

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Notes

[1] Louis Lewandowski's setting of Psalm 92, "Tzaddik Katamar," sung by the Kol Echad choir, Cambridge. Recording courtesy of Kol Echad and Danielle Padley.
https://ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/journal/volume/23/piece/1085

[2] I thank Michael Gait for permission to consult Beth Shalom's records from the 1980s; private collection.

[3] Beth Shalom congregational records; private collection.

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