

Electric, Eclectic, Canadian: Issues of Genre and Identity in the Music of the Guess Who

by

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Bachelor of Music (Music History, University of Western Ontario, 2003)
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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

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Conducting musical analyses over three case studies, Electric, Eclectic, Canadian: Issues of Genre and Identity in the Music of the Guess Who considers issues of genre, culture, and identity in the music of Canadian rock band the Guess Who. The first case study discusses soft rock transformations in the songs “These Eyes” (1968), “Laughing” (1969), and “Undun” (1969). The second case study examines changes in audience identification with the song “American Woman” (1970), performing comparative analyses of the Guess Who original release to Lenny Kravitz’s version (1999). The final case study discusses ideas of authenticity in the folk rock-inspired protest songs “Hand Me Down World” (1970), “Share the Land” (1970), and “Guns, Guns, Guns” (1972), comparing them to the iconic songs “For What It’s Worth” (Buffalo Springfield, 1967), “Big Yellow Taxi” (1970), “Ohio” (Neil Young, 1970) and “Southern Man” (Young, 1970). The conclusions summarise various musical and socio-political aspects of the Guess Who’s output and places it in relation to questions of national identity.

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Dedication

For all of their love, support, phone calls, long distance charges, plane tickets, time, patience, advice, and for sharing my passion in music, Electric, Eclectic, Canadian: Issues of Genre and Identity in the Music of the Guess Who is dedicated to three very important people:

Judith Ann Dalby

Mom Extraordinaire, who gave me the love of folk, classical, and the Horn, and who was always near, no matter how far

Paul Dalby,

Incomparable Father, counsellor, armchair music expert and the person who had me listening to blues and rock music before I was even born

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Loving Husband, endlessly patient, buyer of fine chocolates, Finale expert, Guitar Hero, and the King of Music Nerd-dom

Chapter 1: “*Shakin’ All Over*”: An Introduction to the Influences of the *Guess Who*

A crowning achievement of any rock band is to have a song rated number one on the U.S.-based *Billboard* charts. It was not until 1970 that the Guess Who, a Canadian rock band, realised this dream. In the early to mid 1960s the Guess Who was unable to garner substantial radio airtime, even within Canada. Under the name Chad Allen and the Expressions, the band recorded a cover of “Shakin’ All Over”¹ for Quality Records in 1965. Quality did not want to market the single using the band’s original name and instead sent the single to various North American radio stations with the question “Guess Who?” printed on the label, hoping disc jockeys would think the single was recorded by an established (and popular) British band² and, therefore, give the single more air-time. This event had a profound effect on the band’s musical career, because “the gambit worked [...] the upside for [the band]: they had a hit. The downside: the new band name stuck. They had become the Guess Who.”³ The stunt had another unforeseen effect as well: the group was pigeonholed as a cover band and, until the end of the decade, its career was characterised by a struggle to define its own style and sound. 1969 saw the establishment of an identifiable Guess Who sound with the release of “These Eyes,” (see Appendix A) which peaked at number six on *Billboard*’s singles charts.⁴ This

¹ Originally recorded and released by Johnny Kidd and the Pirates, 1960, which reached number one on the U.K. charts for the week of August 4, 1960.

² Throughout their career, the Guess Who’s sound has been likened to many groups from the Britain: most notably The Beatles and The Who. This is no surprise, considering that according to the band members, their primary, early influences were bands from Britain (both before and after the British Invasion).

³ Michael Hill, essay in accompanying booklet, *Anthology*, performed by the Guess Who, BMG Heritage 82876 54850 2, issued 2003. Compact disc.

⁴ Randy Bachman and Burton Cummings, “These Eyes” in *Wheatfield Soul*, performed by the Guess Who, RCA LSP-4141, recorded 1968. Vinyl record.

characteristic sound was then redefined in 1970 with the number one hit “American Woman,” (see Appendix D) the first song by a Canadian group to earn this top rating simultaneously in Canada and in the United States.⁵ Although “American Woman” is the best-known song by the Guess Who, and the one which has garnered the most critical acclaim, it is not wholly representative of the Guess Who’s musical style. From the group’s humble beginnings as a cover band in Winnipeg, Manitoba⁶ to its successful transformation into an internationally recognised rock band, the Guess Who’s oeuvre is marked by stylistic eclecticism, reflecting a multitude of genres and socio-political influences. Between 1970 and 1975, the band continued to expand its sound with hits such as “Hand Me Down World” and “Share the Land” (see Appendices F and G respectively). “Guns, Guns, Guns” (see Appendix H) represents a musical fusion of several rock styles while containing folk-inflected lyrics. These eclectic styles then come together to form what could be considered a characteristic genre in its own right: “Canuck rock.”

Primarily, this thesis explores the ways in which genre and subgenre blend in the Guess Who’s music. The songs analysed demonstrate the band’s successful adaptation of stylistic aspects from soft rock, jazz, 1950s rock ‘n’ roll, blues, and Brit rock to form a distinct sound recognisable as the Guess Who’s own. The various genre styles influence structure, vocal harmonisation and declamation, instrumentation, equipment, and

⁵ Randy Bachman, Burton Cummings, Garry Peterson, and Jim Kale, “American Woman” in *Anthology*, performed by the Guess Who, BMG Heritage 82876 54850 2, issued 2003. Compact disc. When “American Woman” reached number one on Billboard’s charts, not only was it a simultaneous hit in both Canada and the U.S., but also it supplanted The Beatles at the top of the charts for three weeks.

⁶ Prior to 1965 the Guess Who was known by several different names (e.g. Chad Allen and the Expressions). Their performances at local dance halls and high school dances consisted of covering different rock music songs, primarily those by British bands. Due to the band’s ability to produce an almost exact replica of the original songs, the Guess Who became the premiere rock band in Winnipeg. From the covers they performed, the band was inspired to write their own music.

production. By examining lyrics and style elements (and their specifically musical manifestations) this thesis aims to demonstrate that the Guess Who's fluid application of various musical styles from rock's subgenres enabled the group to emphasise the text and meaning of songs on an individual basis. These analyses are focused through three case studies that examine predominant styles in the Guess Who's oeuvre between 1968 and 1972. Each case study is devoted to a songs that exemplify a distinct rock subgenre: the first examines the band's adoption of the soft rock ballad and British influences in the songs "These Eyes" (1968) and "Laughing" (1969, see Appendix B), as well as the synthesis of the soft rock ballad and jazz styles in "Undun" (1969, see Appendix C).⁷ Strong blues-based and British Invasion rock styles are prominent in "American Woman," (1970) and this second case study focuses on how these styles are incorporated in the original release and then goes on to show how these basic musical materials are used to convey other meanings in Lenny Kravitz's (b. 1964) 1999 cover version of the song (see Appendix E).⁸ The different styles of socio-political protest produced expressed through folk music borrowings are explored in the third case study. "Share the Land," (1970) "Hand Me Down World," (1970) and "Guns, Guns, Guns" (1972) are compared to the iconic folk songs "For What It's Worth" (1967, see Appendix I) and "Big Yellow Taxi" (1970, see Appendix J) as well as the famous protest songs "Ohio" (1970) and "Southern Man" (1970, see Appendices K and L respectively), in which the folk and rock genres are famously blended. The concluding chapter summarises various musical and socio-political aspects of the Guess Who's output, examines aesthetic

⁷ Randy Bachman, "Undun" in *Canned Wheat: Packaged by the Guess Who*, performed by the Guess Who, RCA LSP-4157, recorded 1969. Vinyl record.

⁸ Lenny Kravitz, "American Woman" in *Greatest Hits*, performed by Lenny Kravitz, Virgin Records US B00004ZB9D, issued 2000. Compact disc.

evaluation and issues of authorship, and discusses the results in relation to the questions of national identity.

Although songs are analysed according to their most prominent musical styles, these are not mutually exclusive. Also, while the terms 'genre' and 'style' are often interchangeable, here 'genre' denotes a music category that is made up of several subgenres, all of which are linked through common elements of 'style.' For example, while soft rock and hard rock are very different in sound and timbre, they are linked through stylistic elements common to rock music, such as instrumentation, driving beat, form, and production. The term 'rock' has become a 'metagenre' that transcends historical epochs and evokes multiple musical and cultural ideologies.⁹ Consequently, here 'rock' is treated as an umbrella term for several subgenres and as a signifier of a larger, varied musical culture in the 1960s and 1970s. Songs may contain more than one genre and/or stylistic influence and will certainly be heard differently by different audience members. Definitions of rock and its subgenres are flexible and dynamic, subject to the changing tastes of audience members; as such, historical context is often a deciding factor when assigning subgenre and style characteristics to particular pieces of music. The reader should remember that while 'rock' is an ever-evolving term that encompasses and transcends rigid definition, the subgenres discussed in each case study are intrinsically tied to the *Zeitgeist* within which the subgenres were created.¹⁰ Due to the social contextualisation of subgenre analyses, it makes sense to examine these songs

⁹ Stuart Borthwick and Ron Moy, *Popular Music Genres*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 3. See also, Keir Keightley, "Reconsidering Rock" in *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, ed. Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 109-142.

¹⁰ Borthwick and Moy, *Popular Music Genres*, 3. For example, the British-Invasion style of rock music fused American rock 'n' roll with R&B, skiffle, 'beat', do-wop and soul musics. This style is historically linked to British bands that made their American debut in the early 1960s (c. 1964-5).

in chronological order; however, chronology need not be the deciding factor in identifying the stylistic elements within each song.

The musical analyses make use of a variety of approaches that reflect the pluralistic harmonic and melodic strategies employed in rock music. Based on a hermeneutic and semiotic approach, this style of analysis may be considered ‘holistic’ as it considers the various musical elements alongside issues of conception, transmission, and reception as factors that influence the music’s effect.¹¹ Some of the primary elements examined are voice leading, vocal declamation and harmonisation, timbre, rhythm as an expressive device, harmonic and melodic strategies, as well as tonality/modality. Other aspects, such as duration, register, motifs or ‘riffs’, instrumentation, dynamics, and production techniques also need to be addressed in any musical analysis of pop music. Since the musicians themselves rarely notate their music prior to recording and releasing songs, transcriptions into musical notation are made from studio recordings when necessary. These realisations are based on traditional notation; however, modern rock music language is employed when necessary and appropriate to best describe the music. Keyboard tablatures are employed as well as standard guitar chord notation as it appears in piano, voice and guitar sheet music. Where possible, commercially published songbooks (such as *The Randy Bachman Collection*)¹² have been consulted to clarify issues of tonal centre, chord voicing, instrumentation, and lyrics. However, these sources are used with care as many of the songs therein transcribed have been transposed into alternate keys, rhythms have been simplified, and vocal ranges

¹¹ Philip Tagg, “Analysing Popular Music: Theory, Method, and Practice,” in *Reading Pop: Approaches to Textual Analysis in Popular Music*, ed. Richard Middleton, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 78.

¹² Randy Bachman, *The Randy Bachman Collection*, transcribed by Andy Robyns (Milwaukee WI: Hall Leonard Corporation, 1994).

changed to suit a more general audience. Descriptions of timbral qualities are integral to contextualising the analyses and musical examples since “a large number of important parameters of musical expression [are] either difficult or impossible to encode in traditional notation.”¹³

Methodological approaches to rock music analysis, laid out in such books as *Rock: The Primary Text*, *Expression in Pop-Rock Music: A Collection of Critical and Analytical Essays*, and *Reading Pop: Approaches to Textual Analysis in Popular Music*,¹⁴ inspired the decision to employ traditional harmonic and rhythmic analytical methods to study the music of the Guess Who. These analyses are tempered with descriptions of timbral qualities (which also vary between recordings), recording equipment and production elements that affect the recorded sound. In particular, Philip Tagg’s hermeneutic-semiological method (summarised in “Analysing Popular Music: Theory, Method, and Practice”)¹⁵ has been the basis for identifying the musical and non-musical factors necessary for understanding the conception, transmission, and reception of the Guess Who’s music. Moreover, audio producer/engineer Matt Weston is owed a debt of gratitude for lending his time and expertise in dissecting the audio recordings.

Reception is a significant factor in the studies that follow, since the Guess Who’s attempts to incorporate different musical styles stemmed not just from purely intramusical, disinterested motives, but also from the band’s desire to reach a diverse audience and garner positive critical attention. In the band’s ambition to attain fame and

¹³ Philip Tagg, “Analysing Popular Music: Theory, Method, and Practice,” 75.

¹⁴ Allan F. Moore, *Rock: The Primary Text: Developing a musicology of rock*, 2nd ed., (Aldershot U.S.: Ashgate, 2001). *Expression in Pop-Rock Music: A Collection of Critical and Analytical Essays*, ed. Walter Everett (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000). *Reading Pop: Approaches to Textual Analysis in Popular Music*, ed Richard Middleton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

¹⁵ Philip Tagg, “Analysing Popular Music: Theory, Method, and Practice,” 71-103.

fortune, individual members of the Guess Who allowed industry standards of success and public image to affect their personal relationships, songwriting methods and production techniques. Primarily, these pressures affected the personal and professional relationship between lead guitarist Randy Bachman (b. 1943) and frontman and keyboard player Burton Cummings (b. 1947). After Bachman left the band in 1970 there were several other personnel changes between 1970 and 1975 that contributed to the band's diversity; however, the instability may have been a factor in the Guess Who's inability to recreate the success of "American Woman."

In the decades since 1975, the Guess Who's music has been relegated to the 'nostalgia' market with only a few 'canonised' songs¹⁶ receiving airplay on the 'oldies' radio stations, despite the fact that the band released close to twenty full-length studio albums between 1965 and 1975.¹⁷ The band's popularity has enjoyed a resurgence since 1999, but the Guess Who remains largely ignored by scholars; while other Canadian artists, most notably Neil Young, have garnered musicological attention in recent years,¹⁸

¹⁶ Most notably "These Eyes," "American Woman," "Share the Land," "Hand Me Down World," "No Time," and "Rain Dance."

¹⁷ The Guess Who's reception in Canada is often linked to the Canadian content ('Cancon') regulations stipulated by the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). These regulations, which required each Canadian radio station to broadcast a minimum of thirty percent of Canadian Content, first came into effect in 1971. While the Guess Who had achieved international success prior to the definition of Canadian Content, its continued presence on Canadian radio stations is surely, in part, due to broadcasters need to satisfy the Cancon rules. However, since the Guess Who's disbanding in 1975, there has been a wealth of Canadian popular music artists who satisfy these CRTC regulations (e.g. Loverboy, Trooper, The Tragically Hip, Alanis Morissette, Nickelback, Sarah McLachlan, The Tea Party, Sloan, and etcetera) and yet the Guess Who have yet to be supplanted on radio playlists by these bands. While Cancon would have contributed to the continued broadcasting of Guess Who's music, it is intrinsic qualities of the music itself which is primarily responsible for the Guess Who's lasting popularity. In essence, the Guess Who created music that continued to resonate with Canadian audiences and therefore, would have remained a part of the so-called national consciousness and endured on its own merit. Cf. documents on the *Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission* website <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/home-accueil.htm> (accessed 04 September, 2009) and *Media Awareness Network* <http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/index.cfm> (accessed 06 September, 2009).

¹⁸ See for example William B. Echard, *Neil Young, embodiment, and stylistic diversity: A social semiotic and musicological perspective*, (Toronto: York University, 2000).

the Guess Who's music has yet to become an object of scholarly discourse. Most writings that discuss the Guess Who either focus on sociological, biographical issues or are purely journalistic in nature. Most recent newspaper articles and magazine interviews avoid critical arguments, preferring instead to review specific performances or to rehash anecdotes surrounding the recording of the band's most noteworthy commercial successes. In 1995, John Einarson published a comprehensive biography on the band that draws upon his personal contact with band members.¹⁹ Although Einarson's connections to the band may be seen as beneficial to his text, his close relationship with Randy Bachman often leads to a one-sided view of controversial events in the band's history. This shortcoming, as well as a lack of well-documented primary sources, detracts from the biography's authority as a scholarly resource.

In a scholarly study such as this, the audio records serve as the most important primary sources. Commercially-produced recordings of popular music often capture a moment in time in the lives of the performers and in their musical development; the very genre of a song may change over the course of live performances and subsequent recordings. As a result, this study will focus on the original (or re-issued) recordings. Journalistic sources consulted support music chart information pertaining to audience and critical reception of the songs. In particular, *Billboard's Top Ten Singles Charts 1955-2000*, has proved particularly useful to this end. A song's position on the Billboard Chart gives an indication of its commercial success (since most chart information is based on grossed capital), even if it says nothing about artistic merit. Biographical information in this thesis relies mostly on interviews given by the Guess Who, the aforementioned

¹⁹ John Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of the Guess Who*, (Kingston ON: Quarry Press Inc., 1995).

biography by John Einarson, and Robin Elliot's article "The Guess Who and 'The Stigma of Being Canadian'".²⁰ Taken together, these sources provide a rich foundation of primary material that serves to contextualise the musical analyses presented in the central chapters of this thesis.

Secondary literature ranges from methodological, critical, and analytical sources, to historical accounts and sources examining the development of sociological subcultures and styles. The essay collections *Rock and Popular Music: Politics, Policies, Institutions* and *On Rock: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word*, edited by Simon Frith and *Canadian Music: Issues of Hegemony and Identity*²¹ present clear and concise methods for contextualising music with socio-political situations. The topics covered by sources discovered in the bibliographies of these collections aided in identifying relevant socio-political issues addressed in the lyrics of the Guess Who and how these lyrics are communicated musically. This is particularly evident in our study of the use of "American Woman" in both the films *Austin Powers: the Spy Who Shagged Me* and *American Beauty* (both released in 1999) as way of tracking the evolving nature of audience identification and social interpretation of the song itself and rock music in general.

Without disregarding the sociological impact of the group, this thesis will focus squarely on the music itself, with the hope that it will spawn further scholarly attention on the Guess Who's repertoire: attention that is merited by its importance to the

²⁰ Robin Elliot, "The Guess Who and 'The Stigma of Being Canadian'," in *Music in Canada: a Collection of Essays*, Vol. 1., Ed. Guido Bimberg, (Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1997), 151-164.

²¹ *Rock and Popular Music: Politics, Policies, Institutions*, ed. Tony Bennet, Simon Frith, et. al., (London: Routledge, 1993). *On Record: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word*, ed. Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin, (London: Routledge, 1990). *Canadian Music: Issues of Hegemony and Identity*, ed. Beverly Diamond and Robert Witmer, (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press Inc., 1994).

development of Canadian rock music. Between 1962 and 1975, the band not only adapted musical styles from Britain and the United States, but also continued to seek commercial and critical success in the popular music industries of these nations. Such attempts to gain audiences abroad may also have been a factor in the band's eclecticism. At the height of the band's popularity abroad, it may be fair to say that the Guess Who was a net 'exporter' of this fusion of British and American styles. While rock music may not be indigenous to Canada, the Guess Who were the first band to promote a distinctly Canadian sound which fuses various rock subgenres, while writing lyrics with Canadian socio-political underpinnings.

Chapter 2: “*These Eyes*,” “*Laughing*,” and “*Undun*”: *The Soft Rock and Jazz Styles of the Guess Who*

1968-1970

In 1969, the Guess Who broke into *Billboard's* top ten singles chart with its ballad, “These Eyes.” Peaking at number six on the American chart, this song would have a significant impact on the band’s career. “These Eyes” enjoyed much airplay on AM commercial radio, to which its soft rock sound was well suited. Later, two more Guess Who songs, “Laughing” and “Undun,”²² also charted well, reaching the tenth and twenty-second positions respectively. Like “These Eyes,” these songs lent themselves to the commercial music mostly heard on AM radio stations at the time. Despite the similarities, and shared soft rock sensibilities, these three songs are quite different from one another. The analytical presentations that follow will focus on aspects of orchestration, vocals, studio production techniques, subgenre influences and historical contextualisation, in order to explore the differences between the songs as well as to establish their connections with the conventions of the soft rock style.

Soft rock (also known as Lite or Easy Rock) is often described as a style, which employs elements of rock, but in a less aggressive manner. It has a gentler sound and tends to lack the driving beat typical of harder styles. Soft rock Lyrics often focus on love relationships and typically have a non-confrontational character.²³ Songs are usually

²² Randy Bachman and Burton Cummings, “Laughing” in *Canned Wheat: Packaged by the Guess Who*, performed by the Guess Who, RCA LSP-4157, recorded 1969. Vinyl Record.

²³ The term was coined in the mid 1960s and the genre grew popular in the 1970s. Currently, soft rock music is also known as ‘Adult Contemporary.’ With notes from *dolmetsch online*, s.v. “soft rock,” <http://www.dolmetsch.com/index.htm> (accessed 30 May, 2009). *Dictionary.com*, s.v. “soft rock,” <http://dictionary.reference.com> (accessed 30 May, 2009). *Grove Music Online* s.v. “Rock: soft rock” (by

composed in a ballad style with a standard form of alternating verses and choruses (usually VVCVBC etc., where V stands for verse, C for chorus and B for bridge).

Perhaps the best known Guess Who song next to “American Woman,” “These Eyes” is a typical soft rock ballad with its slow to moderate tempo, its light instrumentation, and its romantic subject matter. A mellow-sounding electric keyboard, bass guitar as well as lead and rhythm guitars accompany the solo vocal line, until a string and instrumental orchestration is eventually introduced. The use of a string orchestra to sweeten the sound is another typical effect in a soft rock ballad.²⁴ The repetitive lyrics present a first person narrative of lost love. Furthermore, the recording techniques and electronic effects employed lack the heavy distortion so typical of the rock music sound generally, in order to maintain a soft, acoustic sound. Although this song is in many ways a typical member of the soft rock genre, certain features lend it uniqueness as well. Unusual for a pop song, for example, is the vocal line, which covers a remarkably wide range (Example 2.1).

Example 2.1: “These Eyes.”

Lead Vocal, vocal range.

Last iteration of “are crying...” (3:28)



“You broke it...” (0:57)

“You spoke it...” (1:47)

Stephen Holden), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed 30 May, 2009). Merriam-Webster Online, s.v. “soft rock,” <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/> (accessed 30 May, 2009).

²⁴ ‘Sweetening’ in popular music is usually done with a string section. The sound of the strings are said to have a softening effect on the sound.

This range allows singer Burton Cummings to sing in an “unrepressed, ‘ecstatic’ form of worship” that clearly emulates some soul singers.²⁵ Without compromising intonation, Cummings’ voice displays a free and unbridled emotion that expresses a sense of authentic pain and loss, in keeping with the theme of the song’s lyrics. Another distinctive element of the song is the limited role assigned to the lead and rhythm guitars in shaping the sound and form of the song. The rhythm guitar is restricted to an ostinato line and often blends so thoroughly into the texture that it becomes nearly inaudible, all the more so since it is not introduced until the beginning of the first verse, at which time the voice and drum kit also enter. Although the rhythm guitar may be heard through most of the song, it does not play the main rhythmic ostinato, which is instead maintained by the electric keyboard. The lead guitar plays ‘shot’ chords²⁶ on the fourth beat of each measure and is used more for colour than for the prominent soloist role more typical of rock music. Of the three guitars used (lead, rhythm, and bass), the bass guitar has the most conspicuous part, playing a melodic hook that accompanies the keyboard’s ostinato. Example 2.2 illustrates the simplicity of the bass guitar motive— an eighth-note anacrusis moving up to a double-dotted half note a perfect fourth higher; this somewhat innocuous figure takes on the role of a recognizable hook in the recording through the prominent place it is given by the production team in the final mix.

²⁵ Borthwick and Moy, *Popular Music Genres*, 10.

²⁶ Short, often staccato, chords that are quickly strummed to emphasise specific beats, offbeats and/or rhythms.

Example 2.2: “These Eyes.”

Bass guitar hook and keyboard ostinato.

The musical score is in 4/4 time and consists of two staves: Piano (top) and Bass (bottom). The Piano part features a repeating ostinato of chords: D m7, Cmaj7, and C. The Bass part features a repeating hook of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2. The score is divided into four measures, each corresponding to one of the chords. The first measure is D m7, the second is Cmaj7, the third is C, and the fourth is C. The bass line starts on the first beat of each measure, while the piano ostinato begins on the second beat. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

This prominence reveals the interaction between the bass and keyboard. The bass' rhythm emphasises the first beat of each measure, while the keyboard's ostinato begins only on the second beat; thus, the keyboard part serves as a response to the bass line. The tied eighth-note to the quarter-note in the keyboard's ostinato further accentuates the bass line's quarter-note anacrusis by slowing the rhythm of the keyboard ostinato. Beginning in the second verse, the bass line is further reinforced by the addition of a vibraphone playing whole notes that are articulated on the first beat of each bar (usually the tonic of the chord). The slow motor speed of the vibraphone allows its vibrato tone to blend with the bass guitar and its decay to fade seamlessly with the swelling of the string orchestra. Since the vibraphone plays only on the first beat of each measure and resonates throughout the rest of the measure, the bass guitar's anacrusis remains a prominent rhythmic figure and textural feature.

As the vibraphone is introduced in the second verse, so too are a solo trumpet and a string orchestra. The trumpet has a mellow, yet brilliant tone that is neither bright nor harsh. Its tone is clear and dry, cutting through the dense texture of the string orchestra, vibraphone, and the band's instruments. Like the bass guitar, the trumpet has a motivic

hook that interacts with other instruments: it intensifies the vocal line and reinforces the harmonic progression. The trumpet's motive usually arpeggiates a tonic chord immediately after each ascending transposition of a major second.²⁷ Although movement by ascending major second is not atypical in pop music, it is the frequency and number of transpositions that are a unique feature of "These Eyes." There is a continuous sequence of modulations at the end of the song until the recorded version eventually fades out. During the fade out, each transposition happens immediately on beat one of its measure and a trumpet arpeggio, which expresses the new tonic chord, then follows. Example 2.3 illustrates one such instance of transposition (in this case, from C major to D major) and the accompanying trumpet arpeggio.

Example 2.3: "These Eyes."

Trumpet arpeggio used to reinforce a preceding modulation.

The musical score for "These Eyes" illustrates a modulation from C major to D major. The score is divided into three parts: Lead Vocal, Trumpet in C, and Keyboard. The vocal line has the lyrics: "these eyes have seen a lot of love but they're never gonna see a-nother one like I had with you These eyes". The trumpet part shows an arpeggiated chord in D major. The keyboard part shows a sequence of chords: C+, IV7/2, I7, IV7/2, I7, D+, I, IV7/2, I7.

²⁷ The term 'transposition' is used because, since none of these shifts are prepared by tonicisations, they cannot rightfully be called modulations.

While trying to establish their individuality as songwriters, the Guess Who sought recording and orchestration techniques that would help establish the group in the same lineage as British rock groups, most notably The Beatles. For “These Eyes” the use of orchestral instruments, particularly the string orchestra, would link their sound to The Beatles albums *Abbey Road* and *Let It Be* and groundbreaking producers and arrangers such as Sir George Martin and Phil Spector.²⁸ These musical associations may have been motivated by the Guess Who’s personal and professional search for critical and commercial reception.²⁹ Recording elements included the use of equipment and instrument models that would give the Guess Who a tone similar to The Beatles and then contemporary R&B groups. The rhythm and lead guitars have distinct tones that help to pierce through the dense orchestral texture and one or more of the guitars may be played through an overdriven Fender amplifier with a reverb that was likely a Fender Blues Deluxe.³⁰ all of these techniques and equipment were also employed by The Beatles and other British Invasion bands. The timbral contrast between the guitars and the string orchestra may have clashed had it not been for the mixing abilities of the audio engineer, who struck a balance between the sweetness of the strings and the piercing quality of the guitars. Together, with the lack of heavy distortion, the sustained notes of the strings and the tonal contrasts blend in order to create a soft rock sound.

²⁸ Sir George Martin was responsible for the string arrangements heard in almost all of The Beatles songs that used such orchestration. Most notably, the songs “Yesterday” (1965, from the album *Help*) and “Eleanor Rigby” (1966, from the album *Revolver*) were ground breaking for combining a rock band with string ensembles. For the album *Let it Be*, Phil Spector arranged/produced all the instrumental backing tracks for that album.

²⁹ Although positive reception may have been the band’s aim, according to John Einarson (in *American Woman: The Story of the Guess Who*), the Guess Who’s emulation of popular British bands led to negative critical reception – with some critics complaining that the Guess Who’s music was nothing more than a poor derivation of the originals.

³⁰ Matt Weston, personal interview with author, 13 November 2008.

The chorus itself returns to C-major, but rather than using the dominant chord to help define the tonal centre, there is a deceptive feeling of the dominant (G-major) being established through the use of sub-dominant seventh chords (F-major7/G). These chords are voiced over $\hat{5}$ (G), which strengthen the feeling of a move to the dominant before the tonic of C major is repeatedly asserted. The chorus contains the only instance of seventh chords in this particular voicing,³¹ which confers a distinctive sound on the beginning of the chorus which is different from the verses, despite the fact that these sections begin with the same lyrics (“These eyes...”). The second half of the chorus is the same as the first, only transposed up by a whole tone. After this chorus, the key returns to C major for the third verse. Overall, the use of short verses, followed by a pre-chorus and chorus are somewhat atypical in pop music. For “These Eyes,” the repetitive lyrics and truncated formal sections reinforce the meaning of the song’s lyrics, since it sounds as if the singer were dwelling on the idea of his lost love.

Another atypical way in which form is articulated can be seen in the changes in the rhythmic ostinato of the electric keyboard (see Example 2.5). Instead of using lyrics and/or key changes to signal the move from verse to chorus or bridge, the Guess Who manipulate part of the song’s hook to demarcate the difference in sections. The differentiation is needed because the various formal elements share similar characteristics and the lyrics are repeated without variation.

³¹ The bass note is the dominant of the key (i.e. G of C Major) but is played under the sub-dominant chord of F-major7.

Example 2.5: “These Eyes.”
Changes in the keyboard’s rhythmic ostinato.

a) Verse

Dm7 Cmaj7 C

C+: ii7 I7 I

b) Pre-Chorus

Am G C Am G C

a: i bVII III i bVII III

c) Chorus

Fmaj7/G Cmaj7 Fmaj7/G Cmaj7 Fmaj7/G Cmaj7

C+: IV7 I7 IV7 I7 IV7 I7

The straight eighth-notes of the pre-chorus (Example 2.5b) may seem unrelated to the syncopated rhythms of the verse and chorus. When heard, the passage depicted in Example 2.5b, sounds like an extension of the ostinato heard in the verse and an introduction to the ostinato in the chorus: it serves as a rhythmic transition between the two more obvious variations seen in Examples 2.5a and c. The notable difference between the rhythms of the verses and the choruses is that the syncopated motive is shifted from the first to the second beat and the tie removed (seen in Example 2.5a)

between the last eighth note and the quarter, in favour of articulating the half note (see Example 2.5c) and, during the chorus, there is no long, sustained note. This change articulates the structure because it lends a sense of urgency to the chorus that is not felt in the verse or pre-chorus. It is as if the motive ‘could not wait’ for beat two to arrive, instead anticipating it on beat one, and thereby driving the beat forward through rhythmic repetition.

The ballad style of “These Eyes” is also heard in the song “Laughing,” also considered another typical example of the soft rock genre. Similar to “These Eyes,” “Laughing” is performed in a slow to moderate tempo, has repetitive lyrics, shared subject matter (lost love), and a simple structure. The instrumentation also has certain similarities with “These Eyes,” with the bass guitar again taking on a prominent role, while leaving out both electric keyboard and string section. Sonically, “Laughing” differs from “These Eyes” in its use of vocal harmonies, its faster tempo and intense mood changes between verse and chorus, as well as in the structure defined by rhythmic and metric elements. A tambourine adds timbral colour and rhythmic interest when it sounds on beat four of each measure in the second half of each verse and sounds throughout the chorus. The rhythm guitar reinforces the tambourine’s part in the verse, playing shot chords on beat four that are reminiscent of “These Eyes.” During the chorus, it is difficult to delineate the different roles assigned to lead and rhythm guitars. Although, like “These Eyes,” there is no solo lead guitar part here, during the choruses, the vocals are shadowed by a guitar line. Preceding each verse and continuing through the first two lines therein, a guitar plays a fairly static rhythmic ostinato consisting of straight quarter notes in the treble range, played without vibrato (Example 2.6).

Example 2.6: “Laughing.”
Guitar intro/rhythmic ostinato.

The musical notation shows a guitar part in 4/4 time, key of A major (two sharps). The melody consists of a series of eighth notes: A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6. The rhythm is a steady eighth-note pattern. Above the staff, the letter 'A' is written above the first measure. Below the staff, the chord progression is indicated as 'A+' for the first measure and 'I' for the subsequent measures.

The vocal harmonisations in the verses and chorus are what set “Laughing” apart from both “These Eyes” and “Undun.” Of the three songs, “Laughing” is the only one to use the rich vocal harmony afforded by the band’s four members. Here, the Guess Who showcases two of its influences: early 1950s do-wop and Brit rock. During the verses, the band members sing a series of chords on the syllable “ah” under Cumming’s lead vocal line (see Example 2.7a), which is reminiscent of early Elvis recordings that feature similar backing vocals textures; for example, “Hound Dog” (1956) (see example 2.7b). Example 2.7 illustrates the similarities in the backing vocals of both songs; the voices sing in close harmony and often move in parallel motion. Also the syllable “ah” is sustained over four measures before being reiterated. During the chorus of “Laughing”, the style of the song changes; the band members switch from singing a single, sustained syllable, to repeating the word “laughing,” and then joining Cummings in the declamation of the line “you took away everything I had you put the hurt on me.” The change in backing vocals is illustrated in Example 2.7, in which the first part (2.7a) not only depicts the rhythmic simplicity of the backing vocals, but also shows the parts progressing from two-voiced octaves to the final, five-voice tonic chord in first inversion.

comparable to that of contemporary British bands.³² By incorporating two different styles of popular music, the Guess Who enriches the texture of “Laughing” in a way that could appeal to audiences of several music genres, not just soft rock fans.

Example 2.8: “Laughing.”

Vocal Harmonisations in the Chorus.

b) Chorus

The musical score for the chorus of "Laughing" is presented in two systems. The first system shows the lead vocal line and the backing vocal line. The lead vocal line is in treble clef, 4/4 time, and features a melody with lyrics: "Cause you're do-in' it to me? It ain't the way it should be. You". The backing vocal line is in the same clef and time, providing a harmonic accompaniment with lyrics: "Laugh - ing" and "laugh - ing". Above the lead vocal line, the chords D, B m7, D, A, and B m7 are indicated. The second system shows the lead vocal line and the backing vocal line. The lead vocal line is in treble clef, 4/4 time, and features a melody with lyrics: "took a-way ev'-ry thing I had you put the hurt on me". The backing vocal line is in the same clef and time, providing a harmonic accompaniment with lyrics: "took a-way ev'-ry thing - I had you put the hurt on me". Above the lead vocal line, the chords D, E, and A are indicated. The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time.

The type of reverberation used in “Laughing” may also point to Brit rock influence on the Guess Who. Unlike “These Eyes,” whose ‘British’ sound derived mostly from the orchestration, the ‘British’ associations of “Laughing” are a result of the recording techniques. “Laughing” sounds as if the band used a reverb chamber similar to the one employed in The Beatles’ album *Abbey Road* and that was also popular with

³² Characteristic examples of this style /sound of vocal harmony is heard by the British Invasion groups The Searchers (e.g. the remakes “Needles and Pins” [1964] and “Don’t Throw Your Love Away” [1964]), Moody Blues (e.g. “Go Now” [1964]), Peter and Gordon (e.g. “I Go to Pieces” [1964]) and The Tremeloes (e.g. “Silence is Golden” [1967] and “Here Comes My Baby” [1967]).

1960s R&B groups.³³ Reverb chambers give a more natural sounding reverb effect than reverb plates, which were favoured by such bands as Led Zeppelin,³⁴ which characteristically sound “bright and extremely dense, with little or no impression of individual early reflections. The reverb builds very quickly and decays smoothly with a maximum undamped decay time of several seconds.”³⁵ Choosing the softer effect of the reverb chamber for “Laughing” suggests conservative and meticulous recording techniques that are neither ‘edgy’ nor experimental.³⁶ It is likely, however, that this rather neutral choice was not a conscious artistic decision on the part of the band. Rather, at this early stage in the Guess Who’s recording career, it was the result of decisions made by producers reluctant to have the band’s sound stray excessively from contemporary mainstream norms. Such hesitation to experiment with the band’s sound might also be attributable to the Guess Who’s early struggle to gain airplay, which motivated them to keep their sound production simple and unadventurous (compared to The Beatles’ later recordings or the psychedelic influences of Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix) in order to gain mainstream, popularity.

At the same time, the Guess Who explored various genre influences amenable to the then narrow confines of soft rock styles. Although soft rock and jazz are parts of two different metagenres, when stylised, elements from each are easily amalgamated within

³³ Weston, interview, 13 November 2008. A reverb (or echo) chamber “was either a room or a closed-in box capable of producing reverb by using a speaker to project the sound, the room to create the reverb, and a microphone at the other end to pick up the reverb.” These chambers were made of material that easily reflects sound and were common before electronic reverb devices were invented and became affordable. *About.com* s.v. “Echo (Reverb) Chambers” (by Joe Shambro), <http://www.about.com> (accessed 15 May, 2009).

³⁴ Weston, interview, 13 November 2008.

³⁵ Paul White, “Vintage Advantage: Understanding and Emulating Vintage Effects,” *Sound on Sound: The World’s Best Music Recording Magazine*, January 2001, <http://www.soundonsound.com/sos/jan01/articles/vintage.asp>, (accessed 20 May 2009).

³⁶ Weston, interview, 13 November, 2008.

individual musical works. The composition of “Undun” was heavily influenced by Bachman’s jazz guitar background.³⁷ Adapting elements of rhythm, vocal style, instrumentation, improvised soloing, harmonic language, and instrument timbre, “Undun” displays a stylistic idiom more akin to jazz than to rock. These jazz aspects are expressed in various ways. For example, despite being—like “These Eyes” and “Laughing”—in simple duple metre, the rhythmic structure is more complex than the other two songs. While the previous songs contained straightforward rhythms, “Undun” abounds with numerous offbeat and fractional-beat rhythms, particularly in the lead guitar. Rather than the driven beat typical of rock styles, these rhythms create a more relaxed atmosphere that carries associations with softer forms of easy-listening jazz music. The vocal line also sounds more rhythmically complex because it uses faster rhythms than “These Eyes” and “Laughing” and because of shorter durational values and abrupt articulations. For example, each line of text in the verses usually ends with two consecutive offbeat declamations. As a result the lyrics sound ‘clipped’ or prematurely truncated. Consonants are strongly articulated and Cummings often sustains them (particularly “n”) in addition to vowels. Also atypical of rock music is a brief cadenza-like moment at the end of the song when Cummings sings a cappella on the line “She’s come undun” over dominant harmony. The instruments resume playing on the second syllable of ‘undun,’ as if this cadenza were a signal to move to the end of the song. Jazz musicians often use similar techniques (whether unaccompanied voice or solo

³⁷ As a young man, Bachman received lessons from Canada’s pre-eminent jazz guitar player, Lenny Breau. Breau was an acclaimed guitarist by the age of 20, known for his facility in many styles including jazz, country, flamenco, and folk. Active in pop and Jazz Music, Breau attempted to emulate piano styles on his guitar by “replicating a pianist’s capacity for simultaneous linear and chordal development.” Having received informal music lessons from various musicians as a child, Breau himself offered such mentoring to a young and developing Bachman. Bachman himself has often acknowledged Breau’s continuing influence throughout his career and in 2004 released a jazz album entitled *A Jazz Thing*. With notes from, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Lenny Breau” <http://thecanadianencyclopedia.com> (accessed 25 May 2009).

instrument) after a vamp as a way to move into a different section of a tune. When taken together, these aforementioned stylistic elements produce a vastly different vocal line than that heard in “These Eyes” and “Laughing.” Cummings also adds a scat solo that is then mimicked by a flute solo, both of which are strong markers of jazz. Adding to this is the use of altered chords, so distinctive of jazz. Example 2.8 shows the use, in the introduction, of a series of repeating $ii^{\phi 4}_3 - V$ chords in E minor which then lead to I, constitutes a typical jazz progression.

Example 2.9: “Undun.”

Introduction, Lead guitar rhythms into verse 1.

The musical score for "Undun" is presented in two staves: Lead Vocal and Lead Guitar. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Lead Vocal part begins with a rest for the first three measures, followed by the lyrics "She's come un - dun" in the fourth measure. The Lead Guitar part features a series of chords: F#ø7/C B, F#ø7/C B, F#ø7/C B, and Em. Below the guitar staff, the chords are labeled as e-, iiø3⁴, V, iiø3⁴, V, iiø3⁴, V, and i.

The bridge, for example, contains an $i9$ chord sustained over the bass guitar, which moves chromatically between $\hat{5}$ and $\#6$ (B, C, C#, C). Such chromaticism is not common in mainstream styles of rock in general, or in soft rock in particular,³⁸ acting to

³⁸ Of course there are exceptions, in particular ‘art’ rock and ‘progressive’ rock bands such as Pink Floyd; however, the Guess Who would have been exposed to these bands during their career and were possibly influenced by them over time. However, it is more likely that that the harmonic structure of “Undun” is a product of Bachman’s jazz guitar background than any other then contemporary influence.

further amalgamate stylised jazz and soft rock in “Undun.” Connected to this, there are numerous seventh chords that suggest a dual modality of Aeolian and Dorian. There is movement between these modes, facilitated by transitions between $\hat{6}$ and $\#\hat{6}$ (C and C-sharp). For example, during the verses, the chord progression is Em-A-G-F $\#m7$ -B7, (i-IV-III-ii7-V7 in Roman numeral analysis). The C-sharp of the ii7 (F $\#m7$) chord, which is built upon an E-melodic minor scale, gives the hint of the Dorian mode with its raised sixth scale degree. Since the A (IV) chord also has a C-sharp, the sensation of a move to the Dorian mode is reinforced. The song shifts quickly between hints of both Dorian and Aeolian modes³⁹ throughout the song, while keeping the tonal centre of E. These modal shifts, in addition to the diatonic seventh and half-diminished chords, reiterate the influence of jazz styles in “Undun” (since jazz music often experiments with modality) and demonstrate a sophisticated harmonic language not typical to popular music.⁴⁰

Elements of soft rock are present in the production values of “Undun.” The guitars are recorded with mellow and soft sounding effects pedals. This softness is also present in the solo flute ‘cadenza’ and further underscored by the use of an amplified acoustic rhythm guitar. During the bridge a distinct echo of the acoustic guitar is heard in the right-hand side of the mix, despite this guitar being recorded on the left.⁴¹ This effect was possibly achieved through the use of the aforementioned reverb chamber. Despite being recorded by several microphones, the drums sound dry and almost muted. This acoustical effect was possibly produced by resting tea towels over the tops of the

³⁹ The Aeolian sections (E-natural minor) occasionally use $\#\hat{7}$ (D $\#$) thus indicating a possible move to the harmonic minor scale.

⁴⁰ Conventionally, popular forms of music are often based on one particular mode and use simple harmonic progressions that emphasise I, IV, and V in particular.

⁴¹ Weston, interview, 13 November, 2008.

drumheads.⁴² However they were produced, these effects give “Undun” its unique sound, while simultaneously tying it to the lineage of Brit Rock; audio Engineer/Producer Matt Weston indicates that the aforementioned production techniques were popular with British Invasion bands (especially The Beatles). The sound of the reverb chamber also links “Undun” to the sound production techniques of “These Eyes” and “Laughing.” Maintaining links to commercially successful groups and the band’s own previously released material may have been strategies for gaining favour with conservative commercial audiences, despite the stylistically divergent idiom of “Undun.”

Comparing the three Guess Who songs illustrates the diverse paradigms of soft rock. Such stylistic variety seems surprising in a subgenre, which was in its developing stages at the time of the Guess Who’s first commercial successes. Among these three songs, audience members would have heard a mix of styles ranging from R&B, do-wop and jazz, in addition to the more conventional rock elements. Taken as a whole, these songs clearly demonstrate the Guess Who’s early ability to create diversity within their oeuvre, while giving pride of place to soft rock elements. These soft rock markers are important in assessing the impact the Guess Who’s early sound had on audiences outside of Winnipeg. When forming in the early 1960s, the Guess Who was revered for its ability to assimilate and imitate any rock style and/or group, including the harder-sounding rock sounds associated with The Rolling Stones and The Who. However, their first internationally acclaimed commercial releases were strongly associated with soft rock, allowing them to receive airplay on AM radio stations. These stations, which targeted audiences with so-called conservative-music tastes, limited their playlists to

⁴² Weston, interview, 13 November, 2008.

‘easy listening’ forms of pop, which excluded the somewhat abrasive sounds of bands like The Who, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix.⁴³ The Guess Who’s music was thus segregated—first on the radio, and then in audience’s perceptions—from the most innovative rock currents of its time. We see here how the term ‘rock’ and each of its subgenres cease to solely identify musical styles, but also come to signify a sense of differentiated *cultures*. Within these cultures ‘true’ rock defines itself not only by what it is, but also by what it is not. The newly formed rock current, with its anti-establishment ethos, is by definition opposed to ‘the mainstream.’⁴⁴ Unfortunately for the Guess Who, their early hits, while critically and commercially successful, gave the impression that it did not possess the same pedigree as the popular (and risky) British Invasion groups. “An important part of rock’s taste war against the mainstream [was] conducted in gendered terms, so that ‘soft,’ ‘sentimental,’ or ‘pretty’ bec[a]me synonyms for insignificance, terms of dismissal.”⁴⁵ Therefore, the Guess Who sought to overcome rock’s internal cultural stratification as it moved forward into the 1970s. The Guess Who’s sound began to incorporate elements of these harder styles of rock. This metamorphosis in sound would produce their most resounding hit, “American Woman,” and launch the band towards more socially conscious subject matter in its songs.

⁴³ For further information on radio formats see, Jodi Berland, “Radio Space and Industrial Time: The Case of Music Formats,” in *Canadian Music: Issues of Hegemony and Identity*, ed. Beverley Diamond and Robert Witmen, (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press Inc., 1994), 173-192.

⁴⁴ Numerous scholars have commented on the irony of this, given how most rock music is recorded, produced, distributed, and consumed by masses of people who participate in mainstream or mass culture(s). For two compelling articles that summarise these parameters see Simon Frith, “Pop Music” and Keir Keightley, “Reconsidering Rock” in *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, ed. Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 93-108 and 109-142.

⁴⁵ Keightley, “Reconsidering Rock,” 117.

Chapter 3: *Interpreting Emblems and Icons: The Guess Who, Lenny Kravitz, and the “American Woman”*

1970 vs. 1999

“American Woman,” undoubtedly the best-known song by the Guess Who, marked a significant shift in the Guess Who’s style from its soft rock songs of the late 1960s. Released in 1970, “American Woman’s” heavy guitar riff and cynical lyrics combined to create a rock anthem redolent with anti-U.S. sentiment, pointedly directed at that country’s involvement in the Vietnam War. Throughout the song the phrase “American Woman” is used metaphorically to represent U.S.-based social politics as a whole, and thus, listeners may interpret the recurring lyric “get away from me” as a bold anti-American statement. This social interpretation transformed over time as its target audience aged and socio-political conditions changed. In the 1999 film *American Beauty*, “American Woman” is used to evoke the 1960s atmosphere of protest and rebellion against the status quo. Also in 1999, the rock musician Lenny Kravitz recorded a cover version of “American Woman” for the movie *Austin Powers: the Spy Who Shagged Me*.⁴⁶ Musical changes in this 1999 version make it more than a mere cover version and effectively reinterpret the lyrics for a younger generation. Kravitz’s “American Woman” is no longer a socio-political symbol, but a seductive woman from whom the singer attempts to escape. The difference in social interpretations is reflected in the musical style of each version. Comparing the two versions reveals differences in tempo,

⁴⁶ *American Beauty*, directed by Sam Mendes, 122 min. [USA]: Dream Works Home Entertainment ASIN: B00003CWL6, issued 1999. Digital Video Disc. *Austin Powers: the Spy Who Shagged Me*, directed by Jay Roach, 95 min. [USA]: New Line Home Entertainment, ASIN: B00001U0BN, issued 1999. Digital Video Disc.

instrumentation, recording techniques, vocal harmonisations and declamation, and the use of guttural sounds. In addition, scenes from the *Austin Powers* sequel and *American Beauty* serve as visual evidence of the new connotations with which the song had become imbued. Through these transformations the song “American Woman” becomes a commentary on the evolution of audience identification with the musical and social content, reflecting shifts in North American social and political conditions.

“American Woman” is undoubtedly a hard rock⁴⁷ anthem that musically expresses the discontent of the lyrics. Prominent electric distortion of the rhythm guitar, strong backbeat emphasis, and Cummings’ gruff and strained vocal timbre, give this song a quality distinct from the Guess Who’s previous commercial successes. In combination, these general characteristics display the same emotional intensity as heard in the lyrics “get away from me/let me be” and “I don’t want to see your face no more/I got more important things to do then spend my time growin’ old with you.” In conjunction with the hard rock sounds, “American Woman” has elements of blues music – a genre that is now intrinsically tied to most rock styles. The studio version of the song (as opposed to the radio edit) includes an acoustic guitar introduction with Cummings singing the lyrics “American woman/she gonna mess your mind,” then proceeding to spell the word “American.” Performed with a slow, shuffle-style beat by two acoustic guitars and Cummings singing in an improvisatory manner with a gruff, yet soft timbre, the introduction is evocative of rural-style blues (e.g. there are neither electric instruments or

⁴⁷ Hard rock or heavy rock is a subgenre of rock music that began to be defined in the mid 1960s. It is characterized by a harsh, loud amplified sound, electric guitar distortion, strong presence of bass guitar and drums in the mix, and, often, the use of keyboard instruments. Hard rock has strong ties to blues music as well as psychedelic rock. With notes from notes from *dolmetsch online*, s.v. “hard rock,” <http://www.dolmetsch.com/index.htm> (accessed 30 May, 2009). *Dictionary.com*, s.v. “hard rock,” <http://dictionary.reference.com> (accessed 30 May, 2009).

drums). Example 3.1 shows that the shuffle-style is primarily maintained by the consistently repeated rhythm in the second guitar, over which the first guitar plays small melodic riffs. Taking its tonal centre as G, the introduction also has numerous instances of the ‘blue note’, which, in this modality, is C#;⁴⁸ the consistent use of this note in addition to Bb (lowered third) and F (lowered seventh) modifies the G pentatonic-minor scale into a blues scale. Once the vocal line enters, the lyrics begin in a semi-improvisatory scat style and the first guitar also begins playing in a similarly ‘free’ style (see Example 3.1). Blues elements are also heard in the rest of the song “American Woman,” through the riff (illustrated in Example 3.6a), which uses notes of the E pentatonic minor scale. While the characteristic blue note is omitted from riff itself, the use of the pentatonic minor scale gives the impression of blues-style because of the use of the lowered third and lowered seventh notes.

The “American Woman” ‘prologue’ is similar to Led Zeppelin’s “Bring It On Home,” (1969) which also begins with a traditional-sounding blues tune.⁴⁹ Example 3.2 shows that “Bring It On Home” also has a shuffle-style rhythm in the guitar a harmonica playing solo riffs in place of a lead guitar.⁵⁰ Not pictured in the example (due to limitations of space) is an improvisatory vocal line that enters partway through the introduction that is similarly styled to the vocal line of “American Woman’s” introduction. Given similarities between these two songs, perhaps the “American Woman” introduction is an attempt by the band to establish their blues-rock style in the

⁴⁸ The blue note is the added raised fourth (or lowered fifth) to a pentatonic minor scale, of which comprises most blues music. Example 3.1 has been notated using C# (raised fourth), but the music may also be realised using Db.

⁴⁹ Willie Dixon, “Bring It On Home,” in *Led Zeppelin II*, performed by Led Zeppelin, Atlantic Records SD 8236, recorded 1969. Vinyl Record.

⁵⁰ Please note that due to limitations in the notation, the example does not fully account for pitch-bending, tremolo, or vibrato techniques.

same vein as harder rock bands such as Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones. In essence, by invoking their British hard rock contemporaries, the Guess Who may have attempted to lend credibility to its new sound in the same way that it invoked The Beatles to authenticate its soft rock music.

Example 3.1: “American Woman.”

Selection from the Acoustic Introduction.

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system shows the beginning of the acoustic introduction. The Lead Vocal part consists of four measures of rests, with a note in the final measure. A note below the vocal staff indicates "(improvisatory vocals using nonsense syllables)". The Lead Guitar part features a melodic line of eighth notes in the first two measures, followed by a whole note chord (G5) in the third and fourth measures. The Rhythm Guitar part provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes, starting in the second measure. The second system continues the instrumental introduction with similar patterns for all three parts. The third system introduces the vocal line. The Lead Vocal part has lyrics: "A mer i can woman gonna mess your mind" and "A mer i can woman she gonna". The Lead Guitar and Rhythm Guitar parts continue their respective parts from the previous systems.

Example 3.2: “Bring It On Home.”
Selection from the Acoustic Introduction.

The image displays a musical score for the acoustic introduction of the song "Bring It On Home." It consists of four systems of music, each with two staves. The top staff in each system is for the Harmonica, and the bottom staff is for the Guitar. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 12/8. The guitar part features a prominent, driving riff of sixteenth and eighth notes, starting with an E5 chord. The harmonica part provides a melodic line that complements the guitar's rhythm. The score is written in a clear, professional notation style.

Musically, “American Woman” is instantly recognisable and memorable for three reasons: the guitar riff, the lead guitar solos, and Cummings’ distinctive vocal timbre. Like “These Eyes” the hooks are in the foreground of the mix. The radio edit of the song begins with the song’s most recognizable element: a four-chord power riff (illustrated in Example 3.4a). Beginning on an anacrusis, this riff is played by two rhythm guitars with the second acting as an echo of the first. The riff is comprised constantly of moving sixteenth and eighth-notes that give it forward motion and drive. It is made indelible in

the listener's mind because it becomes an ostinato repeated throughout the entire song. A percussive instrument (akin to a tabla drum) punctuates the riff. The effect strikes on beat one of each measure and then bends its pitch downwards while fading over the next few beats. The timbre of the rhythm guitars is cleanly distorted and without reverb. After its initial two repetitions, the riff connects to the lead guitar, which solos briefly before the first verse. This solo is then repeated before each verse and is used as the basis for the now famous extended lead guitar solo in the middle of the song. The form of "American Woman" is loosely based on the standard alternation of verses and choruses, except that the chorus is more rightly classified as a 'refrain.' This labelling is appropriate because the refrain of "American Woman, get away from me/American Woman, mamma let me be" is textually altered throughout the song and is connected to the beginning and ends of each verse without being delineated as a separate chorus. There is no bridge, but instead the extensive lead guitar solo takes over after the second verse. The lyrics themselves are repetitive and pithy, and are sung expressively. Cummings' timbre highlights the anger expressed in the words ("get away from me," "I don't need your war machines" etc.) and changes colour as he sings over an impressive range—much in the same way as "These Eyes" musically conveyed authentic emotion through the breadth of its vocal range. Taking all the aforementioned elements together, it is an understatement to say that "American Woman" departs significantly from the soft rock style of "These Eyes," "Laughing," and "Undun."

The studio version of "American Woman" served to express anti-American and anti-war sentiments throughout the early 1970s. The song's message was so powerful that the Guess Who was asked to omit the song from its playlist when it performed at the

White House in the latter part of 1970.⁵¹ Nevertheless, according to the band members, the song did not begin as a political statement, but rather as an on-stage improvisation during a Canadian tour date in 1969. According to the Guess Who, during the concert in question, Bachman broke a string in the middle of one of the sets. After replacing the string, he tested his tuning on stage by playing a “heavy three chord power riff reminiscent of Led Zeppelin’s “Whole Lotta Love.”⁵² The rest of the band joined him and started jamming when singer Burton Cummings “looked out over all these fresh-looking Canadian girls and sang ‘American Woman, stay away from me.’ [After the concert a fan with a cassette recorder] came back stage and played the song back to [the band].”⁵³ Cummings later stated that “American Woman” was not to be taken as an anti-American statement, but as a pro-Canadian one;⁵⁴ however, it is hard to deny the strong anti-American sentiment expressed in the lyrics as they were recorded in the studio version. The song may have been conceived as a type of love, celebrating the seemingly different sexuality of Canadian women in comparison to American women, but the studio version refined the lyrics and the anti-American and anti-Vietnam war statements were made more predominant. Bachman once commented on this:

As Canadians, we thought we were going to the great big wonderful USA [...] and instead we were finding the bad side of the USA. The Vietnam War, the racial tension, all

⁵¹ The White House performance was in honour of the visit of Prince Charles and Princess Anne. Greg Leskiew described the visit: “Here was [President Nixon] one of the most hated politicians of the hippy generation...and your subculture tells you this guy’s bad.” Burton Cummings continued, “I had mixed emotions...All the guests were white, all the military aids were white in full military dress, and all the people serving food were black...the way the White House was landscaped it kind of looked like you were in Alabama in the 1840s before Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation...it was terribly racist and this was 1970.” Excerpted from Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of the Guess Who*, 123-124.

⁵² Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of the Guess Who*, 95.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

those problems. To be down south and actually hit your first ghetto, it was unbelievable. I think later on it might have come out in our ‘American Woman’ – ‘I don’t want your war machines, I don’t need your ghetto scenes.’⁵⁵

Tapping into the strong anti-Vietnam war and international anti-USA sentiments prevalent in 1970, RCA further capitalised on “American Woman’s” cynical lyrics and the fortuitous social timing of its release.⁵⁶ Iconographic promotional material released by RCA (reproduced in Example 3.3) depicted the Statue of Liberty as an elderly and dishevelled woman—an image that resonated with the anti-US sentiment of the time. As shown in Example 3.3, an elderly woman posing as the statue seems to be scowling at the camera. Her stern expression is quite the opposite of the real statue’s serene countenance. The iconic crown and liberty flame have been severely damaged, but they are still held aloft despite being tarnished. Perhaps this is a not-so-subtle way of showing the paradox between the American Declaration of Rights in which freedom is guaranteed for all (symbolised in the torch held aloft by the crowned woman) and the realities of segregation and other forms of racial discrimination so prominent in American culture in the 1960s and 1970s (symbolised in the fact of the torch and crown being tarnished).

⁵⁵ Interview quoted in Greg Potter, *Hand Me Down World: The Canadian Pop-Rock Paradox*, (Toronto: Macmillan Canada, 1999), 57.

⁵⁶ RCA was the Guess Who’s U.S. record label at the time.

Example 3.3: “American Woman.”

RCA Promotional poster for the album *American Woman*.⁵⁷



⁵⁷ Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of the Guess Who*, 102.

Twenty-nine years later, the release and promotion of Lenny Kravitz's version was marked by very different circumstances and served a very different social function from the original. The 1999 cover version of "American Woman" was released in accompaniment to the second *Austin Powers* film and the subsequent music video further served to promote the song and film. This new version is heard only during the closing credits of the film. The Guess Who version is heard during the film, and is used to support its plot—the title character having travelled back in time to 1969—and to introduce the sexually aggressive lead female character, Felicity Shagwell (played by Heather Graham).⁵⁸ As the audience quickly learns, Shagwell is a buxom, seductive CIA agent who is as promiscuous as her last name suggests. The song is meant to symbolise her character: the song's 'American Woman' is literally a sensual, seductive woman, instead of the metaphor of socio-political strife that it was in 1970.⁵⁹ In the DVD commentary for *Austin Powers: the Spy Who Shagged Me*, actor Mike Myers mentions that "if [in the first *Austin Powers*, our lead female] was proper, 90s, and English, the antidote to that would be free, American, uninhibited." Director Jay Roach continues by saying that Graham "has a Goldie Hawn quality that people connect to and [...] in some shots she has

⁵⁸ *Austin Powers*, DVD, during Chapter 10: "Austin's Pad:" 26 min. 58 sec. The song is replayed shortly after in a scene where Shagwell re-enters the plot, rescuing Austin Powers from mortal danger. Shagwell drives up to Powers in a convertible car painted with the American flag. It is interesting to note that in the film, Powers travels back in time to 1969, yet the song was not released until 1970, thus proving the strength of the song's emblematic power.

⁵⁹ The author wishes to remind readers that this metaphor stems from the studio release of "American Woman" and not its conception during the previously mentioned onstage improvisation. Furthermore, it is recognised that the language of the lyrics limits the effectiveness and depth of the metaphor. It is possible that the song was never fully appreciated as an anti-U.S. song because of the literal meaning of "American Woman," which may have been likened to songs such as "California Girls" (Beach Boys, 1965) where the lyrics point to a specific type of woman.

a Bridget Bardot thing. [Graham] goes from innocent and cute [to] occasionally dangerously sexy.”⁶⁰

Kravitz’s version also emphasises the sexual nature of the ‘American Woman.’ In keeping with modern popular music promotional tools, the new version was released with a music video that focuses on the sexual prowess of the ‘American Woman.’ Graham appears in the video, scantily clad in vibrant red, posing and dancing seductively while other women wear small black leather outfits, dance in front of Kravitz and/or ride motorcycles. Kravitz performs the song in front of a large American flag made of neon lights (which later explodes into fireworks) and he is the only male who receives extended screen time throughout the video. The images and message of the video are quite aggressive and explicit in their representation of sexuality, ‘Americanism’ and the connection between the two. The overall connotation of sexuality and sensuality is not as innocent as described by Myers in DVD commentary: there is nothing innocent about Graham’s performance. Despite the lyrics of “get away from me” and “let me be,” Kravitz’s performance seems to encourage the women to pay attention to him and to entice Graham to continue her seductive dancing.⁶¹ This paradox plays on a ‘commercial’ type of irony in which the audience is teased (in every sense of the word) by hearing one message yet seeing another. It reinforces the idea that Graham’s sexuality is a dangerous one, in that she (or her character) is playing sexual games with an unpredictable, virile, and strong male, whose protest or desire could turn violent at any moment. Perhaps, then, the images of Graham (or her character) are the new version of

⁶⁰ *Austin Powers*, DVD, during Chapter 15: “I’m a Believer:” 41 min. 23 sec. to 40 min. 45 sec. with commentary.

⁶¹ *Austin Powers*, DVD, Special Features menu: Music Videos menu: Lenny Kravitz “American Woman.”

the Statue of Liberty promotional poster. Instead of a still image of a decrepit old woman with a marred torch and crown, the audience is presented with a seductive performance suggesting a lap-dance during the video in which the viewer is seduced into the socio-political bed by a buxom ‘bombshell’ who is trying to have ‘us’ forget about the past and buy into a new façade of the American Dream. The problem of meaning arises, however, when listening to the lyrics. The presence of the original lyrics in the 1999 version suggests that the socio-political issues from the 1960s still exist. Instead repairing the social injustice, the American image is being metaphorically polished and re-packaged in the ‘establishment’s’ hopes of deceiving a new generation. This ‘package’ is presented by a beautiful, seductive woman (in this case, Graham), who appears confident and strong – a woman who may prove irresistible to many.

When separated from its particular visual reference, each version of “American Woman” musically validates its social implication. The Kravitz version makes use of modern recording technologies, changing textures, vocal declamation and harmonisation, and word painting to reinforce the idea of a sexually aggressive woman. The original version uses few texture changes; however, Cummings’ vocal technique contains more instances of pitch bending and gruff timbre to emphasise the political statements such as “war machine.” The dichotomy between the two versions is best exemplified in the third verse: the lyrics are the same for both versions except for a few adjustments in pronunciation and colloquialisms. These slight vernacular differences (as shown in Example 3.4) are usually present to accommodate the musical metre with the metre of the text.

Example 3.4: “American Woman.”

Lyrics for both versions of “American Woman,” verse three.

The Guess Who Version

Don't come a 'hanging around my door
 Don't want to see your face no more
 I don't need your war machines
 I don't need your ghetto scenes
 Coloured lights can hypnotize
 Sparkle someone else's eyes

Lenny Kravitz Version

Don't come hangin' round my door (a)
 Don't wanna see your face no more (b)
 I don't need your war machines (a)
 I don't need your ghetto scenes (b)
 Coloured lights can hypnotize (a¹)
 Sparkle someone else's eyes (b)

In the Guess Who version, Cummings emphasises the words “war” and “ghetto” both through his declamation and a change in rhythm. He extends “war” just past the expected metrical duration, making it the longest duration in the line, while also bending the pitch (b¹) and colouring his voice to sound rougher. Through these techniques, Cummings also breaks with the predominantly syllabic text declamation of the entire song; thus, “war” becomes the aural focal point of the line as well as the verse. For the word “ghetto,” Cummings changes from an expected rhythmic figure of two eighth notes (consistently used in the two previous verses) to a sixteenth, dotted eighth note figure. Highlighting the pejorative words “war” and “ghetto” in the aforementioned ways imply a personal significance of the socio-political issues to Cummings himself. In contrast, the Kravitz version emphasises the last two lines of the third verse, and his methods of emphasis differ from those of Cummings. First, the Kravitz version does not have the same fluidity in rhythmic structure. The vocal lines conform to a similar rhythm and an exactness of tempo throughout the song.⁶² The words are set syllabically and each text line is reinforced by the same percussive elements. Kravitz mainly relies on textural

⁶² This rigidity is possibly more a by-product of Kravitz's recording techniques; since he records each individual part separately, the exactness of rhythm and tempo are needed so each part can be synchronised as it is dubbed over the last.

changes in the guitar and vocal parts to draw listener's attention to the lines "Coloured lights can hypnotize/Sparkle someone else's eyes." Texturally, the lines are paired in a modified rondo form of ababa¹b (see Example 3.4), juxtaposing textures in order to give emphasis to the lyrics. The lines "Don't come hangin' round my door" and "I don't need your war machines" (a) have the lead vocal part harmonised primarily in tenths. "Don't want to see your face no more," "I don't need your ghetto scenes," and "Sparkle someone else's eyes" (b) make use of solo voice, punctuated by the rhythm guitar. This texture adds rhythmic drive while setting up the listener's expectations for the return of the thicker vocal texture of the (a) line; however, after "...ghetto scenes" the audience's expectations are circumvented by a hybrid texture (a¹) that combines elements from the original (a) and (b) textures. "Coloured lights can hypnotize" (a¹) uses the solo voice from the (b) texture and omits the rhythm guitar as in the (a) texture. As a result, the listener's ear is drawn to this seemingly new texture. The entire verse is unified by various percussive elements (hand clapping, continuous eighth notes played by the open high-hat cymbal, and the constant bass drum pattern), but "Coloured lights..." is the focal point of the verse (and perhaps the song) because the audience anticipates a different textural event from the one Kravitz delivers.⁶³

The distinctions between the textual emphases in each version of "American Woman" are reinforced by their respective tempi and musical style. The Guess Who version has a faster tempo and hard-driving rock beat, which adds a sense of urgency and desperation to the vocal declamation, serving as a musical commentary on then contemporary negative social-political events. In contrast, Kravitz's version has a slower

⁶³ Lenny Kravitz, "American Woman" in *Greatest Hits*. 2:17-2:34.

tempo and a funk-infused musical style that contributes to a more relaxed character, supporting the less controversial, sexual nature of “American Woman” as necessitated by the content of the *Austin Powers* film with which the version was associated. In addition to the divergence in social interpretation and the difference in tempo, Kravitz took further steps to establish his version as musically independent from the original. Kravitz was able to take advantage of modern recording techniques and equipment that, generally, lend a fuller sound to the instrumental parts. Also, by using vocal harmonisations and by manipulating solo and rhythm guitar material, Kravitz emphasises his stylistic differences from the original. Only Cummings sings the Guess Who version whereas Kravitz overdubs his vocal solo with two vocal harmony parts in certain sections of the song. Kravitz also uses several effects for all the vocal parts (lead and backing). Each vocal part is at least doubled⁶⁴ and uses some style of distortion. Towards the end of the song, the lead vocals are heavily distorted, as if Kravitz were singing too loudly into the microphone. This overdriven effect may have been achieved by overdriving a preamp or by singing through a guitar amplifier.⁶⁵ Such effects simultaneously link Kravitz’s version to and demarcate it from the original. The distorted vocal timbre is similar to the effects of Cummings’ declamatory technique; however it differs in that there are many more effects used in Kravitz’s version. Kravitz makes numerous guttural sounds throughout the song to punctuate lines of the text. Such sounds are often associated with soul music singers like James Brown, but also with primal emotions and urges. It is safe to say that since this song is sexually explicit in its visual representations, the sounds

⁶⁴ The same vocal part is overlaid (or doubled) several times to give either the effect of having a stronger/louder voice or having more singers per part.

⁶⁵ Weston, interview, 13 November 2008.

themselves are associated with sex and sexual urges. Kravitz also uses self-quotation towards the end of “American Woman.” He references his previously released song “Fly Away” when he declaims “Babe I gotta go/I gotta get away/Babe I gotta go/I wanna fly away.”⁶⁶ This material uses both the text and melodic line from his earlier song.

Radical changes are also heard in the guitar material. Kravitz omits the acoustic prologue and the iconic Bachman guitar solo that is heard at the beginning and between verses of the Guess Who version.⁶⁷ In place of Bachman’s solo, Kravitz uses a talkbox solo. This device has a timbral quality that adds colour to the somewhat sparse texture. The talkbox also reinforces the aforementioned synthesis of funk music and connects Kravitz’s performances to 1990s rock music styles.⁶⁸ When comparing the two extended guitar solos, it is obvious that Kravitz builds upon the motifs set forth by Bachman. The general shape and contour of Kravitz’s version is a reduction of Bachman’s and, where Bachman plays sustained notes, Kravitz substitutes repeated notes. Example 3.5 illustrates that Bachman’s solo lasts for approximately 16 measures, while Kravitz’s solo is performed over approximately half that number of measures. Since Kravitz’s solo plays for half the length of Bachman’s, one could argue that Kravitz de-emphasises the guitar in his version. In contrast, the Guess Who version was immortalised by Bachman’s guitar material. Despite this difference in length, the contours are similar in that both solos seem to arrive at a climax at their respective midpoints. Kravitz also mimics Bachman’s style when he reaches the climax. In measures 10 through 12 of

⁶⁶ Lenny Kravitz, “Fly Away” in *Greatest Hits*, performed by Lenny Kravitz, Virgin Records US B00004ZB9D, issued 2000. Compact disc.

⁶⁷ Bachman, Cummings, Peterson, Jim Kale, “American Woman” in *Anthology*. 1:15-1:37. Lenny Kravitz, “American Woman” in *Greatest Hits*. 0:00-0:20.

⁶⁸ Lenny Kravitz, “American Woman” in *Greatest Hits*. 0:46-0:57.

b) Kravitz Solo

Guitar

Bends to C

Slide-off

Another interesting divergence from the original is the way in which Kravitz simplifies the modality of his solo in comparison to Bachman's. The Guess Who's "American Woman" centres on E as its tonic, whereas the Kravitz version centres on C. Both versions primarily use the Dorian mode; however, the Guess Who version simultaneously uses the Mixolydian mode on E for the lead guitar solo parts (see Example 3.5a) and does not change tonal centre. Kravitz's version does not make use of the Mixolydian mode: its guitar solo (Example 3.5b) shifts down a semi-tone to centre on the B-natural minor scale for the first four measures before moving back to C.⁷⁰

As previously mentioned, the rhythm guitar's hook is perhaps the most recognizable element of the Guess Who's "American Woman." The riff (Example 3.6a) is instantly recognizable as belonging to "American Woman" because of its musical interest and distinct guitar timbre. Kravitz changes the riff slightly for his version,

⁷⁰ Pitches heard in the recordings may not be exactly reproduced since the artists often bend pitches and may use electronics (such as effects pedals) that distort the exact pitch by microtonal intervals.

beginning it not on the anacrusis but on the downbeat of the first measure (Example 3.6b). This change illustrates the funk influence in the latter and may be reminiscent of the guitar riff from “Kiss” by Prince.⁷¹ Kravitz’s sparse use of the riff punctuates the texture and possibly defines its form.⁷²

Example 3.6: “American Woman.”

Rhythm Guitar Riffs from both versions.

a) Guess Who Version



type of preamp unit developed by Garnet Sound innovator Gar Gillies.⁷³ This preamp, known as the Herzog, “boosts and distorts the guitar’s signal before it hits the actual amp, which then boost[s] and distort[s] it again.”⁷⁴ The result is a velvety sound with subtle tremolo and smoothness in sustained and bent pitches.⁷⁵ Kravitz’s guitar timbre relies on moderate to heavy distortion – an almost dirty sounding guitar when compared to Bachman’s. By changing the famous guitar riff, omitting Bachman’s opening guitar material, shortening the extended lead guitar solo, and using a vastly different timbre, Kravitz alters some of the most distinct elements of the original version.

Despite all the changes, however, Kravitz’s version has a more static or square feeling in rhythm and form, which could be a result of the overdubbing process – a process that often requires precise execution of rhythm and tempo while recording each individual line. Also, Kravitz uses a drum machine for all the percussive elements; therefore, the handclaps, tambourine, and drums sound exactly the same throughout the song. Since the colour, timbre and timing do not change, unless later manipulated electronically during mixing, the song loses a sense of spontaneity and excitement felt on recordings with all live players.⁷⁶ The Guess Who’s version retains elements of its

⁷³ Garnet Sound is based in Winnipeg, Manitoba and became the Guess Who’s primary supplier of amplifier and other sound equipment throughout their career. According to Weston, The Herzog was developed after Bachman had blown a number of amps trying to replicate the desired timbre by plugging the output of one amp into the input of another.

⁷⁴ Weston, interview, 13 November 2008.

⁷⁵ The timbre and sustain became so popular after the release of “American Woman” that other amplifier makers began including effects labelled the ‘American Woman Tone’. Supposedly these effects settings do not authentically replicate the original to the point where the Garnet website states that “the Herzog connects like a typical stompbox but it retains all the elements critical to a vintage tube tone...this is the combination that delivers the creamy overdrive and singing sustain that made American Woman Tone famous.” *Garnet Amplifier Company*, s.v. “Herzog,” <http://www.garnetamps.com>, (accessed 30 May, 2009).

⁷⁶ It must also be said that these feelings are also only felt if the album is not subjected to heavy edits and overproduction during the mixing and finishing stages. In 2009, critics often slighted the album *Chinese Democracy* by Guns and Roses as being overproduced.

improvisatory origins, because the four musicians could collaborate on each take and make immediate adjustments to rhythm, tempo, instrumentation, recording levels, and any improvisatory vocals by Cummings.

As with many pop songs, as Guess Who fans moved through the decades, their personal identification with the song evolved. “American Woman” transformed from a symbol of their present to become an emblem of their past and represented nostalgic feelings of youth and the spirit of times gone by. This change in audience reception is well illustrated by the 1999 film *American Beauty*. Like the *Austin Powers* sequel, Sam Mendes’ film *American Beauty* uses the original version of “American Woman” for its emblematic power; however, instead of representing overt sexuality (as in *Austin Powers*), the song is used to symbolise lost youth and the rebellion against adult responsibilities. The main character, Lester Burnham (portrayed by Kevin Spacey), suffering a mid-life crisis, is desperately trying to regain a sense of his youth. After quitting his job and blackmailing his boss for almost sixty thousand dollars, Burnham, while smoking marijuana, drives to a fast-food restaurant listening and singing to the original version of “American Woman.” When he arrives at the pick-up window, he sees a “help wanted” sign and asks for a job because he wants “the least possible amount of responsibility.”⁷⁷ In this context the song represents Burnham’s freedom from the confines of the burdens of adulthood. In an effort to regain his days of youthful protest against the status quo, the song acts as a catalyst for Burnham to begin living his adult life in the same manner he did as a teen: as a carefree non-conformist. Although he anticipates his wife’s rage, he quits his job and in so doing restores for himself a

⁷⁷ *American Beauty*, DVD, Blackmailing scene, Chapter 14: 51 min. 20 sec. to 53 min. 02 sec., “American Woman,” Chapter 15: 55 min. 25 sec. to 57 min. 15 sec.

modicum of vitality and sexual potency. In a later scene, Caroline berates her husband for his irresponsible behaviour.⁷⁸ Burnham retorts that Caroline's preference would be for him to remain in a job where his employers disrespect him while his wife "keeps [his] dick in a mason jar under the sink." This powerful rebuke is not only the result of years of sexual frustration, but also a demonstration of Burnham's newfound power and recovered virility.

Meanwhile, the sense of discontent and rebellion is felt not only by Burnham, but by his wife Caroline (Annette Bening) as well. The Guess Who song articulates the couple's feelings: "American Woman" begins to play towards the end of a scene in which Burnham's wife is seen having an illicit affair, which cuts immediately to the aforementioned scene in which Burnham listens to the song in his car. The audience therefore associates the song with two rebellious contexts, one sexual the other social. What is most interesting about the transition between these two scenes is that while "American Woman" is connected to a strongly sexual scene, Caroline Burnham does not herself become a sexualised symbol. Her sexuality is portrayed as a weapon of rebellion since she denies her husband the sexual pleasure that she voraciously bestows on another. Caroline Burnham embodies both the symbolic and literal interpretations of "American Woman" – she is a negative symbol to be rebelled against and the literal woman, dangerous in her sexual aggression. Caroline Burnham becomes the rebel and the object of rebellion described in the Guess Who's song.

American Beauty may be seen as a vehicle through which the song's interpretation shifts from the Guess Who's symbolic 'American Woman' to Kravitz's

⁷⁸ *American Beauty*, DVD, Chapter 17: 1 hr. 04 min. 56 sec. to 1 hr. 07 min. 25 sec.

literal female character. Since the original target-audience had moved into another stage of life by 1999, its personal identification with the song having evolved, it was appropriate for Kravitz to re-interpret the lyrics of “American Woman,” reinventing the song in line with contemporary rock conventions well understood by younger listeners. As evidenced by its many accolades (among them a Grammy award for Kravitz’s performance), “American Woman” has been successfully translated, socially and musically, for different generations and international audiences. Despite the shifts in its interpretation and representation, “American Woman” has retained one of its original characteristics: the aspect of protest. It began as an improvised celebration of perceived Canadian women’s sexual appeal (versus that of American women), was refined into a protest against symbols of the establishment and its social injustices, transitioned through a generational protest against the responsibilities which come with age, and became an individual’s mock protest against a literal figure of sexuality and sexual aggression.

In February 2005, Bachman and Cummings were inducted into the Canadian Song Writer’s Hall of Fame. In an interview for CBC’s programme *Canada Now*, they discussed Kravitz’s musical changes to “American Woman.” Bachman in particular mentioned Kravitz’s omission of the opening guitar solo, and the addition of vocal harmonies and differences in phrasing, commenting further that these elements contributed to the individuality of Kravitz’s version. It is notable that neither Bachman nor Cummings mentioned the obvious difference in textual interpretation. Perhaps this is evidence that Bachman and Cummings recognise that their song is possibly appreciated more for its musical style than for its political message. In *American Beauty*, Burnham cannot remember all of the lyrics as he sings along with the song, but he is able to give a

perfect vocal rendition of the guitar solo. Although the anti-US message may have gotten lost on the way from 1970 to the present day, the enduring appeal of “American Woman” allows it to remain an emblem of rebellion and an icon of the social importance of rock music.

Chapter 4: *Re-defining Image: The Guess Who's Style and Lyrics in the Face of Change*

1970-1972

In the wake of “American Woman’s” success, the Guess Who continued integrating various popular styles in their music. Incorporating elements of folk and folk rock genres seemed a natural next step for the group; this genre’s inclusion followed in the wake of the protest song-style lyrics of “American Woman,” suited the musical background of new band members, and seemed to carry on in a musical tradition in which other Canadian artists had become successful, notably, Joni Mitchell (b. 1943), and fellow Winnipegger Neil Young (b. 1945). The late 1960s inaugurated “an era and a subculture that was often overtly politicised in opposition to establishment values and policies.”⁷⁹ The era’s musically ‘serious’ or ‘authentic’ voice was often heard in folk music. This ideology of authenticity became a dividing line not only between folk and rock (which also thought of itself as a serious voice of opposition to the mainstream), but also tended to create a schism between artists considered ‘serious’ and others merely ‘mainstream.’ Integrating elements of folk music, then, was a way for musicians to reconnect rock music with its roots since “while many musical cultures contributed to the formation of rock, the culture of ‘folk’ expressed so many ideas that would become central to rock, and in [an] explicit...fashion.”⁸⁰ Generally speaking then, it seems as if a musician/group of musicians made overt musical ties to folk, then the music would restore a sense of expressive authenticity (apparently lacking in some pop and rock

⁷⁹ Borthwick and Moy, *Popular Music Genres*, 49.

⁸⁰ Keightley, “Reconsidering Rock,” 120.

music), elevating rock above the triviality of mass culture. This influence of folk music left its mark on the lyrics of the Guess Who's songs, with members penning texts that commented on issues of social segregation and environmentalism. Musically, the Guess Who maintained strong ties to hard rock styles; however, such styles were employed in an earnest attempt to underscore the lyrics. The three most obvious examples of this folk rock idiom can be heard in the lyrics of "Hand Me Down World," "Share the Land," and "Guns, Guns, Guns."⁸¹ These songs will be compared in this chapter to the iconic folk songs "For What It's Worth" and "Big Yellow Taxi," as well as to the folk rock songs "Ohio" and "Southern Man."⁸² The analyses presented will demonstrate how each of the Guess Who songs retains its own musical individuality, while blending formal, musical, and lyric ideas of late 1960s and early 1970s folk with established protest rock music conventions. The results are discussed in terms of the genre expectations associated with the folk idiom, and its emphasis on 'authentic' expression.

As a serious alternative to mass mainstream culture, folk culture thought of itself as genuine because it "intertwined social and aesthetic concerns, bringing them together in the folk concept of authenticity."⁸³ These values create musical experiences that are organically connected to a community, usually evoking a romanticised ideal of rural life, which honours meaning in the lives of ordinary people. Generally speaking, folk music

⁸¹ Burton Cummings, "Share the Land" and Kurt Winter, "Hand Me Down World" in *Share the Land*, performed by the Guess Who, RCA LSP-4359, recorded 1970. Vinyl record. Burton Cummings, "Guns, Guns, Guns," in *Anthology*, performed by the Guess Who, BMG Heritage 82876 54850 2, issued 2003. Compact disc.

⁸² Joni Mitchell, "Big Yellow Taxi," in *Big Yellow Taxi [Single]*, performed by Joni Mitchell, Reprise/Wea ASIN: B000002MCD, issued 1995. Compact Disc. Stephen Stills, "For What It's Worth," in *Retrospective: The Best of Buffalo Springfield*, performed by Buffalo Springfield, Elektra/Wea ASIN: B000002IAZ, issued 1990. Compact Disc. Neil Young, "Ohio" and "Southern Man," in *Neil Young: Greatest Hits*, performed by Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young, Warner Brothers ASIN: B00063EMJ6, issued 2004. Compact Disc.

⁸³ Keightley, "Reconsidering Rock," 121.

is identified as having lyrics that address important socio-political issues (usually in the form of protest) and clear and simple form (verse, chorus, verse, chorus etc.); artists perform with acoustic instruments that simplify the musical and textural content. Vocally, folk musicians vary greatly; some (like Joan Baez, James Taylor, and Joni Mitchell) sing with a clear tone and discernible lyrics, while others (Bob Dylan, Arlo Guthrie, Neil Young) have a perceived lack of virtuosity in their vocal performance. The sparser texture, acoustic rather than electric instrumentation and style of declamation are conceived to underscore the lyrics and the messages contained therein. Arguably, folk music is a gentler music style in keeping with the idea of peaceful community protests. In Joni Mitchell's iconic song, "Big Yellow Taxi," for example, the original recorded version uses a solo singer, a single acoustic guitar, a few hand drums and an occasional muted triangle. The instrumentation in no way interferes with or overpowers the singer's voice, thus allowing her lament for a green paradise lost to a paved parking lot to be clearly heard. The song's form helps make the lyrics indelible; after a short instrumental introduction, there follows a pattern of four verses alternating with a repeated chorus. The melody returns unaltered in verse and chorus and the first line of the song ("They paved paradise and put up a parking lot") is also used as the last line of the chorus, which goes on to be repeated several times at the end of the song; thus, the lyrics are easily remembered and become a listener's primary focus.

As folk began influencing rock musicians (and vice versa), electrified instruments – especially electric guitars – became a staple of a new style of rock: folk rock. Most famously, Bob Dylan crossed the folk and rock barriers when, in the mid 1960s, he began

playing folk music with electric guitars.⁸⁴ The Guess Who's image was in the process of reinvention when a sudden personnel change affected the band's output. Following the success of "American Woman" in 1970, Randy Bachman left the Guess Who. In searching for a new lead guitarist, the remaining members decided to hire two musicians: the Winnepeggers Kurt Winter (1946-1997) and Greg Leskiw (b. 1947). Having five members afforded the band a richer, denser instrumental texture and opportunities for complex, five-voice vocal harmony. The addition of a second lead guitar player led to extended improvised guitar solos during live performances.⁸⁵ Winter and Leskiw came from different musical backgrounds and playing styles. While Winter was oriented towards rock music, Leskiw had a predilection for folk. Winter was also seen as being the more experienced performer and songwriter, having been a member of the Winnipeg rock band Brother, while Leskiw, having backed duo Bill and Carole Ivaniuk in their folk rock group Wild Rice, was considered "a more eclectic player [drawing] on a variety of influences in his style."⁸⁶

Neil Young, on the other hand, began as a solo artist in Canada before moving to the U.S. As a part of the bands Buffalo Springfield and Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, Young gained credibility in the folk genre and folk rock subgenre. "For What It's Worth," written and performed by Young's bandmate Stephen Stills (b. 1945), is strongly rooted in the folk style, despite its use of electrified and amplified instruments. "Ohio" and "Southern Man" (penned by Young) typify the folk rock protest style with their electrified and heavily distorted guitars and explicit lyrics. Both songs express social

⁸⁴ In 1965, at the Newport Folk Festival, Dylan played an entire electric set, backed by electric blues/rock 'n' roll band, the Paul Butterfield Blues Band.

⁸⁵ Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of The Guess Who*, 124.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

criticism directly related to the American context: “Ohio” is a musical rebuke of the 1970 Kent State University shootings, and “Southern Man” is an indictment of racism in the American south. “For What It’s Worth” is an early example of folk and rock genre fusion. The song was reportedly written as a musical reaction to escalating civil unrest in West Hollywood, California. Patrons of the club Pandora’s Box and law enforcement officials were ‘clashing’ over the club’s closing. Stills hoped that the song would bring attention to escalating violence between the ‘youth culture’ and the ‘establishment.’ Musically, the song reflects ideals of community and peaceful protest. Furthermore, audiences have received it as an authentic expression of folk culture. The song’s form conforms to traditional folk style (alternating verses and chorus) and has an acoustic guitar for the rhythm, but also uses an electric guitar for the lead/solo guitar line. The electric guitar’s timbre, which uses bell-like harmonics, has a sharp, cutting quality that contrasts somewhat with the mellow mood of the song. However, despite the contrast, the electric guitar suits the song’s message; the timbre is a ‘wake-up call’ much in the same way as the lyrics ask the listener to start paying better attention to “what’s going down.” At the same time, the singer maintains a calm feeling through his smooth vocal timbre in a moderate range, and the drumming is soft and muted, likely using brushes instead of sticks. This mellow mood helps the song sound calmly resolute without aggressiveness. Adding to this are the backing vocal harmonisations during the chorus sections. Although not a ‘staple’ of folk music, these types of harmonisations are a frequent addition to folk and folk rock music.⁸⁷ Using such vocal harmonies creates the aural effect of voices uniting, presenting a sense of solidarity and support for the song’s

⁸⁷ For example, Ian and Sylvia Tyson’s song “Four Strong Winds” (1964).

message. The vocal harmonies of “For What It’s Worth” are gentle and appear in the choruses only—a suitable touch considering that, in music, “chorus” literally means group. The message of the song becomes communal and seems all the more urgent because several people are singing “Everybody look what’s going down.”

Moving forward to 1970, the Guess Who released the album *Share the Land*. The first single from this album, “Hand Me Down World” peaked at number 17 on *Billboard’s* Top 100 list in September of 1970. Recalling the mood of “American Woman,” the song has a less desperate and aggressive tone. Although antagonistic in character (like “American Woman”), “Hand Me Down World’s” use of unified background vocals and a moderate tempo creates a less aggressive atmosphere. The lyrics indict a morally bankrupt society that wallows in collective ignorance of socio-political issues and is complicit in the environment’s destruction, and speaks from the standpoint of a younger generation eager to solve the problems of the world inherited from its predecessors.⁸⁸ For example, the lyrics “Anybody here see the sky weeping tears for the ocean/Don’t give me no hand me down shoes...Don’t give me no hand me down world/I’ve got one already” firmly articulate the singer’s discontent.

While “Hand Me Down World’s” form is conventional and the lyrics are in the same vein as “Big Yellow Taxi” and “For What It’s Worth,” musically “Hand Me Down World” is quite different from these early folk-inspired hits. The mood of “Hand Me Down World” is the element which most obviously differentiates it from folk songs. It is rock-oriented with a faster, driving tempo, distortion effects, gruff vocal timbre (lead voice), and foreground mixing of the bass guitar. There is no sense of peaceful protest.

⁸⁸ Another Canadian group, Five Man Electrical Band, had a hit single with a similar song, “Signs” (1970) that also addresses the negative social effect of exclusionist ideas. Five Man Electrical Band was originally known as the Staccatos, who had appeared with the Guess Who on the album *A Wild Pair* released in 1967.

There are a number of drum fills that make use of toms and snare drums, and throughout the song, splash and high-hat cymbals are heard. These percussion colours thicken the texture and underscore the predominant rock style. The malcontent expressed in the lyrics is emphasised by the distortion timbres, Cummings' vocal timbre and a sense of stress created by muted strumming. "Hand Me Down World" has a descending bass line ostinato that propels the song forward at a moderate tempo. The bass, slightly distorted, has a bounce-like quality, creating a march-like quality. This line is accented by quarter-note cymbal strikes, illustrated in Example 4.1. The 'drive' of the bass and drums do not allow for a relaxed, peaceful feeling as heard in "For What It's Worth." Rather, "Hand Me Down World" takes on a purposeful mood, as if the performers themselves are marching past. A similar technique is used in Neil Young's "Ohio," where a plodding feeling is created by repeated, firmly plucked bass guitar notes also emphasised by the drum set. Both songs fade-out while the backing vocals repeat a refrain ("don't give me no hand me down world" and "four dead in Ohio" respectively), while the lead singer improvises lyrics based on the song's theme. These fade-outs create a sense of the bands marching by – or perhaps the listener is walking past these protests – and in doing so, the songs continue but become faint in the listener's ear. In contrast, "Share the Land" begins plaintively, moving through brooding verses into semi-celebratory choruses. The bass guitar is as predominant in the mix as with "Hand Me Down World;" however, it does not have forward motion. Instead it seems to emphasise the first beat (and occasionally the third) and then either sustains through the rest of the bar or quietly plays faster rhythms on the same note. The drums seem to have a quieter presence in the overall mix than heard in "Hand Me Down World." Cummings plays chords on a

keyboard that dominate the mix, while the guitars are primarily used rhythmically instead of soloistically.⁸⁹ These elements, combined with the moderate tempo, create a relaxed ambience that lacks the sense of urgency heard in “Hand Me Down World.”

Example 4.1: “Hand Me Down World.”

Descending, walking bass-line and drum kit, from the introduction.

The musical score for Example 4.1 is presented in three systems. The first system shows the introduction of the piece, featuring a descending, walking bass line and a drum kit. The Electric Guitar part is in the treble clef, playing a series of chords: B⁵, B⁵/A, B⁵/G#, and B⁵/G. The Bass Guitar part is in the bass clef, playing a descending, walking bass line. The Drum Kit part is in the common time signature, featuring a cymbal (Cym.), snare drum (S.D.), and bass drum (B.D.) pattern. The second system shows the continuation of the bass line and drum kit, with the Electric Guitar part playing a series of chords: F#sus4, E, and a section of muted strumming. The third system shows the continuation of the bass line and drum kit, with the Electric Guitar part playing a series of chords: V, IV, and bIII.

The atmospheres of “Hand Me Down World” and “Share the Land” are coloured by Cummings’ distinctive, rough vocal timbre. Although Cummings does use some

⁸⁹ The exception to this is during the introductions and short guitar solo during the bridge, which will be discussed later.

lyrical singing, his ‘screaming’ timbre sonically connects “Hand Me Down World” and “Share the Land” to “American Woman.” His tone greatly contrasts with that of Stephen Stills’ voice in “For What It’s Worth,” but may be likened to Neil Young and Robert Plant of Led Zeppelin. Here we encounter a great irony in the Guess Who’s reception history. “These Eyes” and “American Woman” sounded like authentic expressions of emotion, something that “Hand Me Down World” and “Share the Land” seemingly lacked; this, despite the songs being performed by the same singer with similar vocal qualities and timbre. “Hand Me Down World” was criticised by *Rolling Stone* magazine as “a collection of clichés and phrases lifted from the other hit songs.”⁹⁰ Although “Share the Land” reached number ten on music charts, some radio stations that misinterpreted its community-oriented theme as something akin to Communism banned the song.⁹¹ These obstacles in the songs’ reception suggest that the lyrics do not effectively communicate the author’s message. These criticisms and misinterpretations may stem from the broad nature of the lyrics. For example, “Hand Me Down World” contains generalities such as “Anybody here see the noise, see the fear and commotion...Anybody here see the love, see the hate, the emotion;” Neil Young’s “Ohio” starkly contrasts this style of reference with explicit lyrics such as “Tin soldiers and Nixon’s coming...This summer I hear the drumming, four dead in Ohio.” Where Young makes, clear specific references to the Kent State University shootings, the Guess Who lyrics leave room for interpretation. The same may be said of “Share the Land,” which does not indicate a precise body of land or space to share, whereas “Signs” (1970, see Appendix M) by Five Man Electrical Band details particular instances of societal discrimination. Since 1970 saw the release of

⁹⁰ Paraphrased in Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of the Guess Who*, 120.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 122.

numerous songs criticising socially constructed class barriers, the Vietnam War, and addressed environmentalism, the generalities in the Guess Who's music may have seemed like hackneyed stereotypes of contemporary songs that better elucidate the era's socio-political discord.⁹²

Despite the detracting comments concerning "Hand Me Down World" and "Share the Land," the Guess Who continued to incorporate socially conscious, folk-styled lyrics in its music. Released in 1972, "Guns, Guns, Guns" represents a new approach by the Guess Who to the protest song: the lyrics do not protest *per se*, but instead, like "Big Yellow Taxi" bid a wistful farewell to Mother Nature: "Eagle all gone and no more Caribou [...] Godspeed Mother Nature/I never really wanted to say goodbye." In presenting the subject of nature's destruction in this manner, the members of the Guess Who seem resigned to the doomed fate of Mother Nature. The melancholic tone of the song is stylistically different from the rock-oriented "Hand Me Down World" and, where "Share the Land" displayed characteristics of celebration, "Guns, Guns, Guns" is cast as a lament. It is interesting to note the change in Cummings's vocal style between the two songs from the album *Share the Land* and "Guns, Guns, Guns"; the songs from 1970 use a mix of lyrical singing with his rough, screaming timbre akin to the "American Woman" vocals. "Guns, Guns, Guns" on the other hand has Cummings singing with a lyrical tone in slightly lower register than previous recordings. This difference could be due to changes in the singer's voice over the years, or possibly to an attempt to match his tone to

⁹² In addition to "Share the Land," "Hand Me Down World," "Signs," "Big Yellow Taxi," "Ohio," and "Southern Man," the songs "El Condor Pasa (If I Could)" by Simon and Garfunkel, "Fortunate Son" by Creedence Clearwater Revival, "Volunteers" by Jefferson Airplane, "War" by Edwin Starr, and "War Pigs" by Black Sabbath were all released in 1970.

the emotional expression of “Guns, Guns, Guns.” Indeed, in this lowered register and smoother timbre, Cummings embodies the defeatism expressed in the song’s lyrics.

Previously, it was stated that backing vocals were not a ‘staple’ of folk music; however, the songs from *Share the Land* and “Guns, Guns, Guns” make use of backing vocal harmony. Like “For What It’s Worth” these consonant harmonies usually serve to emphasise each song’s chorus and reinforce their respective moods. Generally the moods emphasise communal unity; therefore, the use of backing vocals to accompany the lead voice underscores the song’s demands for community values and the erasure of socio-political barriers. This sense of unity is greatly intensified during the a cappella chorus of “Share the Land” because the sudden transition from accompaniment to a cappella focuses the listener on the lyrics and the removal of instruments promotes the vocal harmonies. The vocals of “Hand Me Down World” reflect they lyrics’ aggressive rejection of environmental destruction and social segregations. The chorus lyrics of “Don’t give me no hand me down shoes/Don’t give me no hand me down love/Don’t give me no hand me down world” are reinforced by doubled lead and backing vocals that start in unison with the lead vocal line and then move in parallel motion a minor third below the lead (see example 4.2). Since the all the vocals are doubled in unison, the lyrics sound like a violent rejection, a hostile protest voiced in concert. This mood is heightened by the fact that a listener is able to hear different qualities of voices singing; therefore, unlike the Kravitz version of “American Woman” the same, single voice is not doubled, but instead several different voices on each line have been doubled and mixed.

Example 4.2: “Hand Me Down World.”
Lead and backing vocals for the chorus.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of vocal lines. The first system shows the first two measures of the chorus. The second system shows the final two measures. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: G5, F5, C5, F5 F#5, G5, F5 in the first system; and C5, F5 F#5, G5, F5, C5, G5, F5 in the second system.

Lead Vocal
 Don't give me no hand me down shoes Don't give me no hand me down

Backing Vocals
 Don't give me no hand me down shoes Don't give me no hand me down

love Don't give me no hand me down world I got one al-read - y

love Don't give me no hand me down world I got one al-read - y

Hearing the different vocal timbres in close harmony adds an almost naturally sounding distortion or ‘gruffness’ to the song, further emphasizing its atmosphere. The backing vocals of “For What It’s Worth” move in similar motion; this is seen when comparing the realised vocal parts in Examples 4.2 and 4.3. Despite the difference in mood between the two songs, the effect is the same: support for the song’s message. What is different between the two songs is the balance heard in the final recorded mix. Where “Hand Me Down World” has the same balance between lead and backing vocals throughout the song, “For What It’s Worth” progressively increases the presence of the backing vocals in each subsequent iteration of the chorus. Also, in the third instance of the chorus, “For What It’s Worth” adds a third voice on the last two chords. Therefore,

“Hand Me Down World” sounds as if the vocalists have been unified from the start of the song; “For What It’s Worth” gives the effect of gathering people to its thought/cause throughout the song.

Example 4.3: “For What It’s Worth.”
Lead and Backing Vocals from the Chorus.

Chorus 1

E D A A7

Lead Vocal

Stop hey what's that sound ev-ery-bo-dy look what's go-in' down _____

Backing Vocals

Stop what's that sound ev-ery-bo-dy look what's go-in' down _____

Chorus 2

E D A A7

Stop hey_ what's that sound_ ev-ery-bo-dy look what's go-in' down _____

Stop what's that sound ev-ery-bo-dy look what's go-in' down _____

Chorus 3

E D A A7

Stop hey what's that sound ev-ery-bo-dy look what's go-in' down _____

Stop what's that sound ev-ery-bo-dy look what's go-in' down _____

For its chorus, “Share the Land” uses backing vocals in a different way from both aforementioned songs. Instead of moving in parallel motion to the lead and singing the same lyrics, the backing vocals sing in parallel octaves repeating the lines “Shake your hand/Share the Land” (illustrated in Example 4.4). While these vocals create the same sense of unified purpose heard in “For What It’s Worth” and “Hand Me Down World,” it also sounds like a group chant, and underlines what seem to be the most important lyrics of the song. Towards the end, these vocals are repeated dozens of times while Cummings performs vocal improvisations over top until the song fades out. Such repetition is similar to the ending of “Big Yellow Taxi” where Mitchell repeats, “They paved paradise and put up a parking lot,” with the same effect of making the songs lyrics indelible to the listener’s mind; however, Mitchell’s song does not fade-out.

Example 4.4: “Share the Land.”
Backing Vocals for the Chorus.

The musical score for "Share the Land" is presented in two systems. Both systems are in the key of B major (indicated by four sharps: F#, C#, G#, D#) and 4/4 time. The first system shows the lead vocal line with lyrics: "May-be I'll be there to shake your hand, may-be I'll be there to share the land that they'll be". Above the lead vocal line, chord symbols B, F#, E, and B are placed. The backing vocal line consists of single notes in parallel octaves with lyrics: "Shake your hand share the land". The second system shows the lead vocal line with lyrics: "gi-ving a-way when we all live to-gether we're talk-in 'bout to-gether now". Above the lead vocal line, chord symbols F#, E, and B are placed. The backing vocal line is empty, indicated by a horizontal line with a double bar line at the end.

As shown in the above example the chorus of “Share the Land” repeats.⁹³ The backing vocals sing “Shake your hand, share the land” while Cummings sing separate (but related) lyrics. This simple repetition highlights the song’s central message – a technique also employed in the protest song “Guns, Guns, Guns.” The treatment of the vocal harmonisations separates the background vocals from the lead using different lyrics; however, this is done in the verses rather than the choruses. Example 4.5 illustrates that after each line of the verse, the backing vocals respond chant-like singing “Guns, Guns, Guns” on the same notes at the interval of a perfect fourth. After the final line, “You be the red king, I’ll be the yellow pawn,” the backing vocals sing and sustain the syllable “ah” on a somewhat dissonant chord. The aural discomfort created by the dissonance is strengthened by a crescendo in the backing vocals. This moderate use of dissonance leads into the chorus and underscores the lyric’s dismay at the destruction of nature. During the chorus, backing vocals are used to highlight and punctuate selected words, deviating from the constant vocal harmonisation heard in “Hand Me Down World” and the iconic “For What It’s Worth” and “Southern Man.” Example 4.6 illustrates the backing vocals harmonization of the lead in the chorus of “Guns, Guns, Guns.” The backing vocals underscore “Mother Nature” and “God speed Mother Nature;” perhaps mostly an aesthetic choice, the instances of harmony may be interpreted as a second person spontaneously calling out to Mother Nature.

⁹³ The backing vocals repeat exactly as shown; however, the second time through there are changes to the lead vocal line. In the interest of clarity, these changes have not been notated.

Example 4.5: “Guns, Guns, Guns.”
Lead and Backing vocals, Verse 1.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems, each with a lead vocal line and a backing vocal line. The lead vocal line includes lyrics and a melodic line. The backing vocal line includes a bass line and the words "Guns guns guns".

System 1: Lead Vocal: E^5 A - mer-i-can hunt-er bring 'em up the north side Run. Backing Vocals: Guns guns guns.

System 2: Lead Vocal: take the mo-ney here's a bul-let for your boy - friend Ea -. Backing Vocals: Guns guns guns.

System 3: Lead Vocal: - gle all gone and no more ca - ri bou You. Backing Vocals: Guns guns guns.

System 4: Lead Vocal: be the red king I'll be the yel-low pawn God speed mo-ther na - ture ____ ah na - ture ____ B^m .

Example 4.6: “Guns, Guns, Guns.”
Lead and Backing vocals, Chorus.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems, each with a Lead Vocal line and a Backing Vocals line. Chord markings (Bm and A) are placed above the staff lines.

System 1:
 Lead Vocal: God speed moth-er na - ture ____ Never really wanted to say good-bye
 Backing Vocals: ah ____ na - ture ____

System 2:
 Lead Vocal: Good speed Moth-er Na - ture ____ you know that I'm cal - lin' you now never really wanted to say
 Backing Vocals: Moth-er Na - ture ____

System 3:
 Lead Vocal: good-bye God speed Mother Na - ture ____ Never really wanted to say good bye
 Backing Vocals: God speed Mother Na-ture ____

System 4:
 Lead Vocal: God speed Moth-er Na - ture ____ Ne-ver rea-ly want-ed to say good bye
 Backing Vocals: Na-ture ____

Instrumentation and orchestration are other important factors when identifying the ties between folk and rock genres in the music of the Guess Who. Focusing on these aspects reveals that the Guess Who prefer heavier sounds of electrified instruments to the acoustic counterparts used in folk. Electric guitars allow the players the use of several effects, primarily distortion, to enhance the affect of the respective song. Distortion and muted strumming in “Hand Me Down World” emphasise the aggressive and almost

impatient tone of the lyrics. The introduction to “Share the Land” has two simultaneous lead guitars, playing the same line two octaves apart. The riff is also repeated after each chorus to facilitate the return to A-minor (for each verse) from A-major (in the choruses).⁹⁴ Here the guitars are used soloistically, but throughout the rest of the songs, they are treated rhythmically. The first lead guitar is in the extreme high range of the instrument, played with a crying or wailing quality produced because it “sounds a little washy, perhaps [employing] a very slow and shallow tremolo [effect] or a heavy amount of vibrato.”⁹⁵ Such electronic effects emphasise the plaintive, sorrowful lyrics that follow this riff. Both lead guitars use distortion, but the lower lead is played through “a hotly driven amp, causing [the sound] to break up by hitting the tubes too hard.”⁹⁶ The guitar parts are also panned throughout the song in a manner similar to Jimi Hendrix’s recordings. The first lead “starts on the right, with the [second] on the left. They end up completely panning through each other and ending up on the other side.”⁹⁷ The effect of this type of panning, used in stereo recordings, is that of a psychedelic rock music experience because the recording does not just set spots for each instrument and leave them.⁹⁸ While perhaps too subtle an effect for the average listener, the presence of such production elements demonstrates a deeper level of genre blending by the Guess Who.

“Guns, Guns, Guns” also displays a connection to ‘psychedelia’ in its introduction and in its audio engineering. During the extended instrumental introduction the perception of beat is somewhat ambiguous because, depending on how you hear the

⁹⁴ The shifting tonality around the centre of a single pitch (in this case, A) is reminiscent of the modal changes heard in “Undun.”

⁹⁵ Weston, interview, 13 November, 2008.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

subdivision, it could be counted in either a fast 4/4 or a moderately slower (or possibly, more broad) tempo of 8/8. Such ambiguity may be connected to the free-form styles heard in some psychedelic music, where artists (notably Jimi Hendrix) would subvert strong metrical beats while soloing. Here, it is not until just before the first verse that the sense of metre stabilises at the more moderate groove, which continues throughout the song. Contributing to the introduction's 'destabilised' feel is the competition between the piano, the first and the second lead guitar. It is possible to misconstrue the opening as metrically dissonant because of the offbeat rhythms and accents in the piano against the seemingly directionless, improvisatory lines in the two lead guitar lines. This metrical dissonance results from the improvisatory character of this section, akin to a jam session: the first guitar is playing lyrical, tremolo ideas while the second guitar plays more rhythmic figures. Both guitars sound as if they are improvising around the piano ostinato. The two lead parts also have distinctly different timbral qualities, leading to competition for the listener's attention. As with "Share the Land," there are small connections to psychedelic rock through mimicry of Jimi Hendrix-style distortion. Like folk, psychedelic music was attributed 'authentic' music status because songs were perceived as organic expressions of their creator's life (read drug induced) experiences. The influence of psychedelia combined with elements of folk protest should have lent the crucial element of authenticity to "Guns, Guns, Guns." However, the inopportune timing of the song's release inevitably hurt its reception in the U.S. The song's meaning was misunderstood because its release coincided with an assassination attempt on George Wallace.⁹⁹ Subsequently, several American radio stations banned "Guns, Guns, Guns" – an event that cost the band a "chance to score with a strong single."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ George Wallace was governor of Alabama at the time. He was shot four times by Arthur Bremer, who had

Here again is evidence that the Guess Who's lyrics detracted from the group's reception in its later career. Although "Guns, Guns, Guns" has less ambiguous lyrics than "Hand Me Down World" and "Share the Land," (for example, the line "Eagle all gone and no more caribou" definitively addresses nature's destruction) there are lyrics written as an impenetrable metaphor. Specifically, "You be the red king, I'll be the yellow pawn" seems like a vague reference to *Alice in Wonderland* or *Alice through the Looking Glass*; however, this is not the case. Cummings's lyrics are neither an homage to any literary reference nor clearly explain the meaning/role of red kings and yellow pawns. The reference may actually refer to the Russians (red kings) and the Chinese (yellow pawns) and their roles in the cold war or perhaps the destruction of Native peoples (or red men) and the use of Chinese people (yellow pawns) in creating North American railroads; however, there is no literature to substantiate these interpretations. In any case, this line is suggestive of some Bob Dylan's lyrics, which are often obscure in meaning (for example, "Get sick/get well/hang around a ink well/hard to tell if anything is goin' to sell" from "Subterranean Homesick Blues" [1966]). Since Dylan is often thought of as a music auteur – the idyllic poet/musician – Cummings' lyrics may seem as a pastiche of Dylan instead of a genuine attempt at poetic expression of dismay. Furthering this idea of poor imitation is the fact that many poet/musicians were not necessarily trained vocalists. Dylan, in particular, often sang in an inaudible and instinct fashion and, for whatever social/cultural reason, such performances were credited as authentic expressions of emotions. In contrast to Dylan's style of vocal performance is Cumming's clear and distinct enunciation and virtuosic vocal style. It may be that

originally planned on assassinating President Richard Nixon.

¹⁰⁰ Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of The Guess Who*, 144.

Cummings sings too well to be thought of as an auteur or as an authentic poet/musician.¹⁰¹ Also, up until this time, the Guess Who had only acknowledged rock musicians as part of its influences. Therefore, it is possible that, in addition to ideas of cliché and pastiche, all three folk-influenced songs were viewed as inauthentic because the band did not have credible ties to folk culture.

Moving away from the lyrics, musical and formal connections with iconic folk songs are seen in “Guns, Guns, Guns.” The song’s form is somewhat standard, but is closer to that of Young’s “Southern Man” than “For What It’s Worth” or “Big Yellow Taxi.” Example 4.7 compares the structural format to “Guns, Guns, Guns” and “Southern Man” to that of “For What It’s Worth.”¹⁰²

Example 4.7: “For What It’s Worth,” “Guns, Guns, Guns,” and “Southern Man.”
Structural format and total playing time.

“For What It’s Worth” (2:41)	“Guns, Guns, Guns” (5:02)	“Southern Man” (5:32)
Introduction	Introduction	Introduction
Verse 1	Verse 1	Chorus
Chorus	Chorus	Verse 1
Verse 2	Instrumental break	Guitar Solo
Chorus	Verse 2	Chorus
Instrumental Break	Chorus [Fade-out]	Verse 2
Verse 3		Guitar Solo [Fade-out]
Chorus		
Verse 4		
Chorus [Fade-out]		

The Buffalo Springfield tune is considered a ‘classic’ folk song and its form standard; therefore, the example illustrates how “Guns, Guns, Guns” and “Southern Man” derivate

¹⁰¹ Dr. Jonathan Goldman, personal interview with author, 02 September, 2009.

¹⁰² The form of “Big Yellow Taxi” is almost exactly that of “For What It’s Worth” and is discussed earlier in this chapter; thus, it is omitted from this comparison.

from the convention. Despite having more components than the latter songs, “For What It’s Worth” plays for approximately half the time. There are many musical conventions that would affect such a difference, primarily the increased use of extended instrumental solos. Arguably, lyric repetition in the chorus of “Guns, Guns, Guns” is a substitute for further verses,¹⁰³ while the guitar solos of “Southern Man” speak for the performers – where words fail, the guitar can express the protagonist’s anger and frustration. Adding to this idea of words failing, all three songs fade-out at the end, as if the performers themselves are left with no other choice than to repeat the same message over and over. The use of a fade-out for all three songs points to a larger trend in music developing at that time. Fade-outs were used to give a song the sense of timelessness; since the music does not stop, it does not and cannot end, hovering outside of all temporality. Appropriately, the three Guess Who songs follow this recording technique also heard in the iconic songs by Young and Buffalo Springfield.

Formal structure is similar between the Guess Who songs: each follows a pattern of alternating verses and choruses and end with a lead-vocal improvisation superimposed over repetitions of the fading-out chorus. Strictly speaking, “Hand Me Down World” may be seen as the most formulaic of the three songs, with its standard rock song structure,¹⁰⁴ whereas “Share the Land” uses a guitar riff to articulate the different formal components. Like “Share the Land,” “Guns, Guns, Guns” uses short instrumental breaks

¹⁰³ The chorus is comprised of a single line (“God speed Mother Nature, never really wanted to say good-bye”) that is repeated at least four times in the first chorus and then repeated endlessly until the song fades out.

¹⁰⁴ Although this (verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, verse, chorus) has become the ubiquitous format of most popular music styles, it is an important element to consider when analysing music between 1965 and 1975 as music genres began drastically fragmenting into multiple subgenres. Comparing structural formats is often an excellent method of connecting songs with specific lineages, no matter their aesthetic classifications.

to mark the divisions between verses and choruses; however, the general structure of the latter two songs are easily seen as simple variations of the aforementioned standard formula. Repetition of lyrics plays a role in constructing verses and choruses, particularly in “Hand Me Down World” and “Guns, Guns, Guns,” which have repeated lyrics in all verses (see Example 4.8).

Example 4.8: “Hand Me Down World” and “Guns, Guns, Guns.”
Repeated lyrics.

a) “Hand Me Down World”

Verse 1:

Anybody here see the noise, see the fear and commotion/**I think we missed it**
Anybody here see the love, see the hate, the *emotion*

Verse 2:

Anybody here see the long-distance cheer for the notion/Well, **I think we missed it**
Anybody here see the sky weepin' tears for the ocean

Verse 3:

Anybody here see the fuzzy-wuzzy lovin' cup explosion/**I think we missed it**
Anybody here see the changing of the year and *emotion*

b) “Guns, Guns, Guns”

Verse 1:

American hunter, bring 'em up the north side (Guns, guns, guns)
Run, take the money, here's a bullet for your boyfriend (Guns, guns, guns)
Eagle all gone, and no more caribou (Guns, guns, guns)
You be the red king, I'll be the yellow pawn

Verse 2:

Shoot a few, knock 'em down, cost you half a buck now (Guns, guns, guns)
Babe give you kisses if you hit a rubber duck now (Guns, guns, guns)
You be the red king, I'll be the yellow pawn (Guns, guns, guns)
Eagle all gone, and no more caribou (Guns, guns, guns)

Structurally, the Guess Who seemed to put more emphasis on the final, repeating chorus than on creating a balance between all parts; this final chorus takes up nearly one-third of the song's total playing time, while each verse and the first chorus are individually much shorter in duration. "Share the Land" and "Guns, Guns, Guns" have prominent piano parts, while all three songs employ guitars and drums in fairly conventional ways. "Share the Land" also has an added colour with tubular bells played in the background. At first glance, it is tempting to see the structural similarities between the songs as a sign of the band's waning compositional creativity. However, it is possible that a retreat to safer, 'tried and true' song structures was, initially, a way of balancing the varied influences of the band's new line-up. It might also be seen as an attempt to capitalise on their previous successes. In other words, since "American Woman" received overwhelming commercial and critical acclaim, the Guess Who may not have desired to change their song-writing formula. Instead, the band opted for similarly constructed material in an attempt to create continuity between the albums *American Woman* and *Share the Land*. Indeed, after these two albums, the band once again began to branch out musically between 1972 and 1975.¹⁰⁵

Many of the musical elements analysed are also seen in the songs of the previous chapters; however, as the personnel of the Guess Who changed, so too did their connections to different styles. For example, although the Guess Who had used vocal harmonies in several songs before these, the overall effect in these songs is a deepening of ties to the folk rock genre because the vocal lines highlight the lyrics' call for stronger community ties and unity. Musically speaking, there is little overt material to link the

¹⁰⁵ Much of the experimentation coincided with further personnel changes, particularly with the addition of progressive rock guitarist, Domenic Troiano in 1974.

Guess Who with this genre. However, the combination of lyrics with vocal harmonies seems to fuse their Brit-style with the folk idioms of Buffalo Springfield and Joni Mitchell, and the rock protest songs of Neil Young. Chronology is significant here in elucidating this web of influence. Most of the songs analysed were released nearly simultaneously with hits by Young, The Beatles and other popular artists between 1969 and 1972. Therefore, it is unjustified to label the Guess Who's music as derivative, because they were creating and releasing material alongside their contemporaries.

Incorporating socio-political protest lyrics in songs influenced by a variety of musical genres, the Guess Who emitted socio-political messages palpable to a mainstream audience. For example, the lyrics of "Ohio" and "Southern Man" make explicit references to specific historical events, while the Guess Who lyrics are more general in nature. In "Ohio," Young declaims, "This summer I hear the drumming, four dead in Ohio [...] soldiers are gunning us down" and "Southern Man" refers to slavery with the lines "I saw cotton and I saw black/Tall white mansions and little shacks [...] I heard screaming and bullwhips cracking." This greatly contrasts with the relatively non-confrontational lyrics of the Guess Who lyrics, such as these: "Have you been around/Have you done your share of coming down/On different things that people do...Did you pay your dues/Did you read the news/This morning when the paper landed in your yard/Do you know their names/Can you play their games," or "Anybody here see the love, see the hate, the emotion/Don't Give me no hand me down shoes/don't give me no hand me down love/don't give me no hand me down world, I've got one already." While neither the Guess Who's music nor lyrics reach the same emotional intensity as Young's, it may be said that the band's mainstream sound was a more thorough blend of

the folk and rock genres, politely bringing the protest to a wider audience.¹⁰⁶ The Guess Who's songs may be less intense in lyric content and expressive devices and, therefore, the intention of each song not as clear as other folk rock protesters. However, while attempting to retain a more mainstream audience, the Guess Who was able to disseminate their messages to a broader audience: the conservative, white-collar audience of the AM band, which had the wealth and power necessary to effect real socio-political and socio-economic change at that time.

What may be said is that from the point of view of lyrics, in moving from "These Eyes" through "Guns, Guns, Guns" a marked increase in the use of symbolism and metaphors can be observed. This reaches a kind of apotheosis in "Guns, Guns, Guns," whose lyrics are well-nigh impenetrable. For example, "These Eyes" expresses the pain of lost love in limpid prose; the literal and metaphorical symbol of the 'American Woman' is quite clear. "Hand Me Down World" and "Share the Land" speak in decipherable generalities, but "Guns, Guns, Guns" contains obscure lyrics about red kings and yellow pawns, which are incongruously placed alongside the relative clarity of the rest of the song's lyrics. Since it is difficult to surmise what Cummings might have meant by these lyrics, it is understandable to view the lyrics as inauthentic and merely aping the extended metaphors heard in progressive rock music (such as Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd). However, it is a disservice to the Guess Who to simply dismiss their songs as poor imitations of other bands. If anything, the songs are reflections of the lack of a

¹⁰⁶ Young's own style of music is vastly eclectic in its own right, incorporating sounds from the softer side of folk such as "Harvest Moon" and "After the Gold Rush" to the harder, rock sounds of "Ohio," "Cinnamon Girl," and "Rockin' in the Free World." It is almost as if Young's music takes the messages of folk music and turns them into angry rock anthems of loud, peace-breaking protest. His unique vocal timbre is high-pitched and often 'warbly' and he often sings slightly off-key; the quality of his voice is atypical of both folk and rock music.

clearly articulated Canadian identity in popular music. The Guess Who's fusion of American and British rock sounds attempted to achieve an original synthesis of these styles and offer astute social commentary from a Canadian perspective. The end result may have, at the time, sounded clinical and derivative; however, with the overwhelming amount of music being produced in the late 1960s/early 1970s, it is impossible to escape intersecting influences and even more difficult to establish one's own sound in the wake left by the global popularity of The Beatles.

The Guess Who's foray into folk-rock-styled protest songs was the culmination of several overlapping musical influences and socio-political events. However, the songs were being released as the fervour folk rock was piquing, and after 1970 the Guess Who did not 'move on' as other artists. Since "the seeds of a scene's decline are always present within its own distinct uniqueness,"¹⁰⁷ the astute social critiques of folk rock would ultimately give-way to other subgenres of rock music. By 1972 the musical movement turned towards progressive and glamour rock in the early 1970s and the Guess Who was 'still' releasing commercially-designed folk rock songs. The band rejected glam rock (as heard in its 1973 song "Glamour Boy")¹⁰⁸ outright and its attempts to fuse its established sound with 'prog' rock were not received well by audiences. It seems that the band, which had successfully adapted so many genres, had reached an insurmountable creative wall. Barring this, the Guess Who's music remained in demand across Canada. It seemed as if it had created a sound that, despite its familiarity with American and British styles, resonated with Canadian listeners. The protest songs, in particular, gave a

¹⁰⁷ Borthwick and Moy, *Popular Music Genres*, 50.

¹⁰⁸ Burton Cummings, "Glamour Boy" in #10, performed by the Guess Who, Nimbus 9 APL1-0130, recorded 1973. Vinyl record.

sense of sound place – a nationality to Canadian rock. Lyrics like “Don’t give me no hand me down world” may have unintentionally articulated with an audience that is characteristically indistinguishable from the people of the U.S. – despite being from a different nation with a different style of democracy. Also, “shake your hand, share the land” has the characteristic politeness often ascribed to Canadians. “Guns, Guns, Guns,” may sing about the extinction of the eagle, but it also states that there are “no more caribou.” In these small, simplistic ways, the Guess Who articulated its national identity with a sound that has transatlantic appeal. As of 2009, “Hand Me Down World,” “Share the Land,” and “Guns, Guns, Guns” maintain their socio-political significance (addressing issues of environmentalism) in a distinctly Canadian voice.

Chapter 5: *Conclusions: Finding a Canadian Voice for Rock Music*

1975-2009

As a young, impressionable Canadian group, the Guess Who attempted to create its own distinct rock sound by co-opting and reinterpreting the various musical styles – whether the 1950s Rhythm and Blues sound associated with Elvis, or the hard, guitar-dominated Americanised sound of the British Invasion – that they used to hear on North Dakota radio stations. The Guess Who stands out as one of the most successful attempts in Canada to fuse rock subgenres into a convincing personal style. Its sound broke away from the acoustic, folk-inflected sound that had previously dominated Canadian artists’ repertoires (such as Gordon Lightfoot).¹⁰⁹ However, the group’s reception in the U.S. was inextricably linked with mainstream ideology following the commercial success of “These Eyes” and “American Woman.” After 1970, critics increasingly relegated the band to the more frivolous side of the pop/rock divide, implicitly repudiating the band’s claims to ‘authentic’ expression, the defining myth of ‘serious’ rock music beginning in the late 1960s. As Simon Frith observed, “rock was a musical form that defined itself against pop,”¹¹⁰ and the Guess Who’s music, while strongly rooted in rock styles, contained pop idioms appealing to mass culture music tastes. During this period, however, sales remained strong in Canada. The band’s reception in Canada, particularly after disbanding in 1975, may have also been affected by the Canadian content rules imposed by the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

¹⁰⁹ Gordon Lightfoot (b. 1938) is not that much older than the members of the Guess Who and his style of folk music is closely associated with Canadian identity.

¹¹⁰ Frith, “Pop Music,” 100.

Even if the Guess Who's music continued to be broadcast in partial satisfaction of 'Cancon', it is likely that a distinctive Canadian mode of socio-political expression made its international debut in certain songs by the Guess Who. From the band's humble beginnings in 1962 through its dissolution in 1975, the music of the Guess Who constantly evolved, adapting the fast-developing subgenres of rock 'n' roll. As the genre diversified, the members of the Guess Who assimilated their favourite styles in an attempt to individualise the band's sound and define Canadian rock music on an international scale. The Guess Who did not break new musical ground but it did "absorb current pop trends, [...] filter them through a keen understanding of rock music history and experience, and play back at Americans a sound that was at once new and familiar."¹¹¹

Like 'rock,' the term 'pop' has become a vague indicator of a large body of diverse musical styles. However, 'pop' music is often treated with disdain by 'serious' listeners and critics because, unlike 'serious' music genres [i.e. rock, folk, art music, etc.] "pop is not driven by any specific ambition except profit and commercial reward."¹¹² As discussed in chapter four, audiences increasingly perceived the Guess Who as a commercial band in the wake of the mainstream popularity accrued by "These Eyes" and "American Woman." As a result, the band was seen as artistically insincere, (according to the familiar categories of Romantic aesthetics which inform judgments of taste and value in late 20th-century rock music as much as they do in 19th-century concert music). The sudden mass popularity may have had a detrimental effect on critical reception of later hits such as "Hand Me Down World" and "Share the Land," since the Guess Who –

¹¹¹ Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of The Guess Who*, 11-12.

¹¹² Frith, "Pop Music," 96.

supposedly lacking overt, credible ties to folk music - could find its emotional and artistic honesty called into question.

Aesthetic evaluation of the Guess Who runs into problems of attribution of authorship. Considering that so much of what is distinctive about the Guess Who has to do with that nebulous category called 'the sound' (i.e. the timbre that results from a host of factors related to the recording, mixing and mastering of the music), it is fair to ask *who* is responsible for the band's unique sound: the band members, their recording technicians or their manager/producer Jack Richardson. Invariably all recording artists are subjected to a certain amount of artistic control on the part of those who record their music in the studio. In the case of the Guess Who, it has been conjectured that, especially in their early days, the band's chosen audio engineers wielded a considerable amount of control of artistic decisions made in their studios. Author Ralph Chapman argues that it was in fact Richardson who crafted the sound for which the Guess Who is best known in their most acclaimed successes. Although the hit singles from the album *Share the Land* bear the undeniable mark of the Guess Who's distinctive sound, just *who* was responsible for this sound, given the numerous personnel changes which followed Bachman's departure, and which continued well into the mid-1970s. Or, more importantly, is it possible to ascertain how the sound engineers approached maintaining the band's distinct sound in the face of so many changes? One answer is the continuing presence of Jack Richardson, who supervised the engineering process on each album during the period examined here. Richardson often had input into the models of instruments and amplifiers that the band members used, exerting influence over the recording and mixing process.¹¹³

¹¹³ Ralph Chapman, personal interview with author, 04 September, 2008. Richard's supposed influence seems akin to that of the 'fifth Beatle,' George Martin.

The motivations behind Richardson's choices then become relevant: was he more concerned with creating songs that mimicked the earlier commercial hits so that the band would continue to generate revenue, or was he attempting to maintain continuity throughout the years as best he could in the face of the Guess Who's expanding musical horizons and frequent personnel changes? It is of course impossible to attribute authorship to a single person in a collective activity as complex as album production. As Richardson himself observed, "I'm more like a traffic cop in the studio [...] You have democracy and you have dictatorships, and everything falls somewhere in between those two dimensions. I lean more toward democracy."¹¹⁴ These unanswerable questions notwithstanding, it is doubtless that the distinctive sound was created collaboratively between band members and the recording team.

Between 1972 and 1975 the Guess Who struggled to create more progressive-sounding songs and concept albums while maintaining their commercial success. Most critics and mainstream fans consider the resulting recordings as unsuccessful artistically as they were commercially.¹¹⁵ Chapman argues that Richardson's control over the amount of studio recording time allotted to the band affected the sound of their final products, suggesting that limited studio time compounded the problem of creating cohesive concept-styled albums.¹¹⁶ It is also possible that the band did not accrue sufficient live performance either, which would have helped develop its sound. Although

¹¹⁴ Dan Daley, "Jack Richardson" *Mix Online*, http://mixonline.com/mag/audio_jack_richardson 01 July, 2001 (accessed 20 January, 2009).

¹¹⁵ For example, Einarson's comments that the album *Flavours* sounded like "a marriage [of various styles] that some where along the way broke down." (*American Woman: The Story of the Guess Who*, 179).

¹¹⁶ Chapman's argument is that The Guess Who was unable to become a prominent studio group (like The Beatles) because Richardson always limited their time in the recording studio. Instead of honing their skills while in the studio and streamlining their albums, the Guess Who would pick an appropriate number of songs, rehearse them in Winnipeg for weeks on end before travelling to an American recording studio (usually in L.A. or New York) and cobbling an album together from disjointed singles.

the Guess Who did tour extensively in the early to mid 1970s, the numerous personnel changes would leave a lasting effect on the band's sense of cohesive sound. After having joined the band in 1970, Leskiw left only two years later and was replaced by Donnie McDougal on rhythm guitar. Later that same year (1972) Jim Kale also left the Guess Who and was replaced by Bill Wallace on bass guitar. Then in 1974, Domenic Troiano, a progressive rock musician, replaced Winter. This latest addition hurt the Guess Who's musical reception with some Canadian fans. Troiano was seen as an 'outsider' because he came from Toronto rather than Winnipeg. His style was thought to be incongruous with the Guess Who sound, and his participation in the group a betrayal of the band's proud Winnipeg roots. All of these factors conspired to prevent the Guess Who from sustaining their commercial success. As years went by, audiences and critics seemingly lost interest and enthusiasm for the band that had once been credited with stimulating the Canadian rock music industry. It might be possible that had the band been given more studio and live performance time in which to 'gel' the various musical sounds each new member brought, the final years of the Guess Who would have been more artistically (and indeed commercially) successful.

However, it may be that the very commercial appeal of the Guess Who's music in the years leading up to 1970 negatively affected its reception among scholars and critics. Even though the false dichotomy of rock verses pop reflects audience fragmentation of popular music into taste hierarchies,¹¹⁷ it does not provide for useful musical analysis and aesthetic evaluation. For example, authors have focussed numerous studies, anthologies, scholarly discourses, and historiographies on the music of The Beatles, despite the band's

¹¹⁷ Borthwick and Moy, *Popular Music Genres*, 61.

enormous (and apparently inexhaustible) commercial appeal. Such material success has never discouraged scholars and popular authors from examining The Beatles' music as artistically valuable. Therefore, to ignore the Guess Who's music on the basis of genre distinctions (or tastes) is to miss the distinctive way in which this band defined the subgenre (often dubbed) 'Canuck rock.' The individual musical elements and influences were not a Canadian invention, but the stylistic fusion achieved by the Guess Who had yet to be seen within the country's borders. Ironically, it could be that the dearth of scholarly studies on the Guess Who is explained by the fact that that band's music is not perceived as sufficiently 'Canadian.' Author Jason Schneider once commented that he omitted the Guess Who (and other Canadian rock artists) from his book *Whispering Pines: the Northern Roots of Canadian Music...from Hank Snow to The Band* because, to him, "Canadian music is [...] folk-based music."¹¹⁸ Limiting the scope of his book seems reasonable, but to exclude numerous artists from the definition of 'Canadian music' based on genre distinctions seems naïve. Neither folk nor rock is authentically Canadian in origin, but instead both have been adopted and transformed by Canadian artists. Folk music-making may have a longer history within Canada, but this genre did not originate there, and thus, it difficult to accept rock's exemption. Furthermore, various folk music cultures "presented perhaps the richest and most fully articulated source of ideology for what would become rock culture."¹¹⁹ Considering this point, then, rock music may be seen as authentically Canadian, because it would have developed from and in opposition to folk and mainstream genres as the rock genre did in the U.S. Moreover, the Guess Who's music would have naturally stemmed from folk influences that were articulated in

¹¹⁸ Jason Schneider, radio interview by Jian Ghomeshi. *Q*, CBC Radio One. Air date: 15 July, 2009.

¹¹⁹ Keightley, "Reconsidering Rock," 119.

rock styles. Ironically, Schneider was a contributing author to the book *Have Not Been the Same: The CanRock Renaissance, 1985-1995*, which explores “a time when it became cool to be Canadian [...] when an exciting new generation of artists created a new canon of CanRock.”¹²⁰ The language of the book’s title and publisher’s note suggest that, prior to 1985, a canon of ‘CanRock’ already existed, but was somehow thought to be unsuitable. The contents of the book reveal the authors’ hierarchical taste values: they only discuss ‘underground’ artists, a distinction which privileges artists who eschew mainstream tastes. Even if one could objectively codify mainstream conventions, they could not be applied universally. For example, contemporary artists such as The Tragically Hip and Sloan are thought to have an ‘underground’ appeal because they do not market themselves in the U.S., despite the fact that these bands are household names in Canada. That bands so manifestly mainstream (in Canada, at least) can still enjoy the aura of being ‘underground’ shows that the very distinction mainstream/underground can neither be reduced to the question of material success, record sales, nor valued as artistically ‘honest.’ Consequently, evaluation of the music of the Guess Who must be careful not to dismiss the band’s production as ‘merely’ mainstream or commercial, as if nothing more needs to be said about the structure and reception of these artworks.

In effect, issues of authenticity are inextricably linked to ideological definitions of genre, culture, and the nature of the mainstream. These ideals are relevant to the reception history of the Guess Who because “this preoccupation with ‘authenticity’ helps rock culture constantly to draw lines of division within the mainstream of popular music—

¹²⁰ Publisher’s Note, *Have Not Been the Same: The CanRock Renaissance, 1985-1995* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2001). *Amazon.ca* <http://www.amazon.ca> (accessed 20 July, 2009).

lines which divide some versions of rock from others.”¹²¹ Throughout this thesis, it has been suggested that there exists a perceived authenticity of the early songs of the Guess Who (“These Eyes,” “Laughing,” “Undun”) as well as their crowning success “American Woman” verses a perceived ‘inauthenticity’ of its later protest songs, “Hand Me Down World,” “Share the Land,” and “Guns, Guns, Guns.” It is frustratingly difficult to capture this distinction in purely musical terms however. As mentioned in chapter four, the songs were performed by the same singer in a comparable vocal style, with similar instrumental timbres, arrangements, chord progressions, melodic contours, formal structures, etc., but other extra-musical elements clearly affected audience and critical reception. Borthwick and Moy state that concepts of emotion and honesty cannot be inscribed in musical texts because they are negotiated between performers and audiences.¹²² The reception history of the Guess Who suggests a process of meandering negotiation in reaction to the fickle demands of the audience. Any appreciable detachment from the “values of ‘roots’ and social reality”¹²³ may mean a negative shift in audience acceptance. However, such values are also subject to change, depending on geographical location and nationality. In his book, *Genre in Popular Music*, Fabian Holt discusses the peripheral attention ‘roots’ and revival musics garner from scholars. He specifically names Canadian artists The Band, Joni Mitchell, and Neil Young as being virtually ignored in academic histories of popular music “not only because of taste biases, but also because they have not been identified as key figure of a major collective

¹²¹ Keightley, “Reconsidering Rock,” 131.

¹²² Borthwick and Moy, *Popular Music Genres*, 10.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 61.

movement or style (nor have they been superstars).”¹²⁴ The same may be said of the Guess Who, whose impact is measured and weighed in conjunction to ‘foreign’ standards of artistic and commercial success; it is according to these same standards that the band’s musical ‘honesty’ (authenticity) may be summarily dismissed. Conversely, such reactions may be seen as ‘inauthentic’ because they stem from authors who did not experience the Canadian reaction to the band. Meanwhile, Canadian authors have yet to address the music of the Guess Who in a way that highlights the band’s positive and overwhelming impact on the Canadian music industry and meaningfully discusses the songs’ role in shaping a distinctly Canadian sound. This minimal attention is due in part to the abovementioned issues of taste hierarchies and also to the iconographic precepts of rock culture. Fabian Holt best articulates the notion when he states, “generic categories are indexed by displaying typical genre elements in the music as well as in its social context and iconography.”¹²⁵

Indeed, iconography could have played a role in the mixed success of the band. The various members of the Guess Who rarely ‘looked’ like typical rock musicians. Photos that appear in books and on albums, as well as images from live television performances show the band members dressed in styles that (stereotypically) would be more conventional for mid-western bands. Furthermore, there was a general lack of uniformity of style when the band appeared in public or in photos. The Guess Who did

¹²⁴ Fabian Holt, *Genre in Popular Music*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 49.

¹²⁵ Holt, *Genre in Popular Music*, 49.

not ‘look the part’ and, ironically, displaying the members’ individual tastes, however authentic, hurt the band’s acceptance in rock culture.¹²⁶

In any form of popular music, there is a degree of musical and cultural uniformity suggested by generic terms and classifications. Labelling the Guess Who as *either* a ‘rock’ band *or* a ‘pop’ group trivialises the ability of the band to fuse musical styles. As demonstrated in chapter one, the Guess Who manipulated elements of soft rock ballad styles to create original songs with wide public appeal. This originality extended to the incorporation and transformation of jazz concepts into the rock genre. When creating “American Woman,” the band improvised on-stage in a blues-based rock style, also making use of heavier rock elements. This improvisation was later refined and coupled with socio-politically conscious lyrics that refract the American experience in a manifestly Canadian spirit.¹²⁷ The subtle fusion of folk and rock elements with psychedelic recording techniques in “Hand Me Down World,” “Share the Land” and “Guns, Guns, Guns” created songs with mainstream sensibilities that have appealed to audiences until the present day. The themes of these songs are also universal and timeless. Young’s “Ohio” and “Southern Man” may have strongly captured the *Zeitgeist* of 1970, but the messages contained in Guess Who’s environmentally conscious protest like “Guns, Guns, Guns” currently maintain their socio-political importance in the face of, for example, climate change.¹²⁸ Other signifiers of the band’s continuing emblematic status are numerous pop culture appearances, charitable activities (for example in the

¹²⁶ In a televised appearance at an awards show in the early 1990s, as the band Aerosmith was accepting an award, singer Steven Tyler stated “It’s incredible how expensive it is to look this cheap.” His comment highlights the great irony of rock culture imagery – that to look ‘authentic’ one must conform to cultural expectations.

¹²⁷ Lester Bangs, quoted in Einarson, *American Woman: The Story of the Guess Who*, 11.

¹²⁸ This is not to say that Young’s songs are currently aesthetically unimportant, but that the lyrics are not easily applied to contemporary events and social climate.

2003 SARS benefit concert in Toronto), and touring schedule.¹²⁹ This enduring appeal is attributable to the uniquely familiar Guess Who sound. As critic Nancy Edmonds once wrote, “though no one element can be isolated and granted unique function as carrying force for the Guess Who sound, there is something very personal in the best of their material.”¹³⁰

The indefinably personal nature of the Guess Who’s music seemed most prominent in its mainstream hits. Fans and critics supposedly heard this quality less frequently in recordings between 1972 and 1975. The band members were critically and commercially unsuccessful in their experiments with progressive rock styles and attempts to create uniform concept albums. The band existed in an era when “the development of rock culture is crucially tied to a shift from singles to albums and an attendant shift in cultural legitimacy.”¹³¹ American critics, in particular, were quick to dismiss the band’s output and minimise its legacy. However, the Guess Who remained popular with Canadian fans and charted well within Canada. Chapman argues that the progressive rock fusion songs are the ones most misunderstood in the band’s repertoire and merit closer, critical attention.¹³² A musicological study of this repertoire is beyond the purview of this thesis, but could be a fruitful avenue of future research.

Dismissing ideas of ‘mainstream’ and ‘authenticity,’ the fact remains that the Guess Who emerged at the intersection of several indivisible musical influences. Keir Keightley argues, “the distinctions made by rock culture effectively stratify the

¹²⁹ Notably, Randy Bachman’s cameo on an episode of *The Simpsons*, and the Bachman-Cummings 2009 interview on *The Hour* with George Stroumboulopoulos.

¹³⁰ Nancy Edmonds, review of *Wheatfield Soul*, performed by The Guess Who, in *Rolling Stone Magazine* <http://www.rollingstone.com> (accessed 20 July, 2009). Originally published 14 June 1969.

¹³¹ Keightley, “Reconsidering Rock,” 113.

¹³² Chapman, interview, 04 September, 2008.

mainstream of popular music into ‘serious’ (rock) and ‘trivial’ (pop) components.”¹³³

These distinctions may operate in the space of cultural interactions, but, as argued, they are not sufficient to aesthetic evaluation. This thesis demonstrates that the music of the Guess Who amalgamates the ‘serious’ with the ‘trivial.’ The transformation of subgenres that defines the group’s sound did create mainstream hits; however, such reception is not always in the hands of the performers. Audiences react to the sound and judge it according to their own aesthetic and cultural principles.

One primary indicator of the Guess Who’s commitment to ‘Canuck rock’ is the nationality of the band: each member was Canadian and, with the exception of Dominic Troiano, they were all from Winnipeg. One may argue that Neil Young was, and continues to be, a more powerful voice for Canadian music, but it should not be forgotten that much of his early career was spent with the American members of Buffalo Springfield and Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. The members of the Guess Who have continued to reside, work, and play a mentoring role within Canada. While others sought to live abroad, the Guess Who remained at home. In this way the band has been able to stay current with Canadian trends in music and art, as well as abreast of domestic and international socio-political issues. Arguably, the Guess Who did not have to break new ground in defining a Canadian rock sound. The music is timeless, popular, and powerful, and—most indicative of Canadian culture—it is diverse. Audiences champion the music across Canada, giving voice to Canadian artists’ desire to be heard on an international stage. Weston acknowledges the group’s Canadian-ness when, in jest, states that the

¹³³ Keightley, “Reconsidering Rock,” 111.

music “doesn’t sound very edgy or dangerous. Maybe too Canadian?”¹³⁴ This may be a glib remark perhaps, but one which is often echoed in scholarly commentary on Canadian music.¹³⁵

As seen with “American Woman,” the Guess Who created songs that would become emblematic of the 1960s and 70s, being used in current cinema as icons of these earlier eras. The revival of the Guess Who’s popularity since 1999 has brought the band members the critical and possibly the commercial recognition they sought at the outset of their career. Although the music itself has not changed since its original release thirty years ago, its reception has evolved. The Guess Who’s critical reception has become more positive since 1999 as the members reunited and performed at many benefit concerts. It is possible that this positive press has created a nostalgic market for the Guess Who’s most significant hits. The Guess Who may not have enjoyed the same critical and commercial success as its contemporaries (such as The Rolling Stones, The Beatles, and Creedence Clearwater Revival), but a loyal Canadian fan base fuels its resurging popularity. It may also be that in North America’s current socio-political climate, a growing appreciation for the Guess Who’s music has helped to strengthen audience awareness of the songs’ socio-political undertones. As the British Invasion bands adopted American music-styles as their own, so did the Guess Who. The band’s genre adaptations reflect international styles through a distinctly Canadian eye. Perhaps the Guess Who’s music seemed neither as savvy as the British Invasion bands nor as

¹³⁴ Matt Weston, personal interview with author, 13 November, 2008.

¹³⁵ Cf. the Encyclopedia of Canadian music, in which the music of Otto Joachim is said to exude the spirit of compromise, “identified by musicologist Robin Elliott [...] as a trait that ‘has been one of the hallmarks of the Canadian psyche.’” Rick MacMillan and Evan Ware, “Otto Joachim”, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/> (accessed 27 July, 2009).

direct as Neil Young's, but the group evolved, transforming its music despite audience and critics expectations. From the cover of "Shakin' All Over" through "Guns, Guns, Guns," the Guess Who displayed an uncanny ability to imitate, assimilate, and reflect the styles of their favourite bands and artists. The band members stayed true to themselves, adapting their favourite influences into a distinct Anglo-North American blend. It is too reductive to claim that the Guess Who's music was merely derivative. Perhaps it was difficult to distinguish the band's uniqueness in the tumultuous wake of rock's continual generic fragmentation in the 1960s and 1970s. The music of the Guess Who seems to have continued to be well received after the group disbanded in 1975, remaining ingrained in the collective imagination of Canadians. With hindsight it could be said that flexibility is the most identifiable characteristic of the band's output. This quality allowed the band members a diverse resource from which to choose when composing songs. It is difficult to define national identity in terms of genre, especially when dealing with a global phenomenon like rock music, but aspects of the Guess Who's style and development capture the inexpressible nature of Canadian identity. Characterized by the unique guitar sounds and distortion, Cummings unique vocal timbre and range, the use of keyboards, the seamless assimilation of diverse genres (including jazz), and a mix of socially conscious lyrics with mainstream sensibilities, the Guess Who's sound proves itself distinctly Canadian through its diversity.

Appendices: Song Lyrics¹³⁶

Appendix A: “These Eyes” – The Guess Who

- Verse 1: These eyes cry every night for you,
 These arms long to hold you again
- Pre-chorus: The hurtin's on me, yeah, And I will never be free, no, my baby, no no
 You gave a promise to me, yeah, An' you broke it, an' you broke it, oh no
- Verse 2: These eyes watched you bring my world to an end,
 This heart could not accept and pretend
- Pre-chorus: The hurtin's on me, yeah, And I will never be free, no, no, no
 You took the vow with me, yeah, An' you spoke it, you spoke it, babe
- Chorus: These eyes/are cryin'
 These eyes have seen a lot of love/But they're never gonna see another one
 like I had with you
- (Chorus is sung three times)
- Verse 3: These eyes cry every night for you,
 These arms, these arms long to hold you, hold you again
- Chorus: (Chorus is repeated as song begins to fade)

¹³⁶ Lyrics were taken from the following recordings: “These Eyes,” “Laughing,” “Undun,” “American Woman,” “Hand Me Down World,” “Share the Land,” and “Guns, Guns, Guns” in *Anthology*, performed by the Guess Who, BMG Heritage 82876 54850 2, issued 2003. Compact disc. “American Woman” in *Greatest Hits*, performed by Lenny Kravitz, Virgin Records US B00004ZB9D, issued 2000. Compact disc. “For What It’s Worth” in *Retrospective: The Best of Buffalo Springfield*, performed by Buffalo Springfield, Elektra/Wea ASIN: B000002IAZ, issued 1990. Compact Disc. “Big Yellow Taxi” in *Big Yellow Taxi [Single]*, performed by Joni Mitchell, Reprise/Wea ASIN: B000002MCD, issued 1995. Compact Disc. “Southern Man” and “Ohio” in *Neil Young: Greatest Hits*, performed by Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, Warner Brothers ASIN: B00063EMJ6, issued 2004. Compact Disc. “Signs” in *Good-byes and Butterflies*, performed by Five Man Electrical Band, Polydor 2424 020, issues 1970. Vinyl Record. Additional lyrics found in *The Randy Bachman Collection*, transcribed by Andy Robyns (Milwaukee WI: Hall Leonard Corporation, 1994). Five Man Electrical Band, <http://www.fivemanelectricalband.ca/> (accessed 04 September, 2009).

Appendix B: “Laughing” – The Guess Who

- Verse 1: I should laugh, but I cry because your love has passed me by
You took me by surprise you didn't realize that I was waiting
- Verse 2: Time goes slowly but carries on and now the best years have come and
gone
You took me by surprise I didn't realize that you were laughing
- Chorus: (Laughing) The things you're doin' to me
(Laughing) That ain't the way it should be
You took away everything I had you put the hurt on me
- (Chorus is sung twice)
- Verse 3: I go alone now, calling your name after losing at the game
You took me by surprise I didn't realize that you were laughing
- Repeat: Time goes slowly, but carries on and now the best years, the best years
Verse 2 have come and gone
You took me by surprise I didn't realize, that you were laughing
- Chorus: (Chorus is sung twice)
- (Chorus repeated with ad-lib lyrics in lead vocal)

Appendix C: “Undun” – The Guess Who

- Verse 1: She's come undun/She didn't know what she was headed for
And when I found what she was headed for it was too late
- Verse 2: She's come undun/She found a mountain that was far too high
And when she found out she couldn't fly it was too late
- Chorus: It's too late she's gone too far she's lost the sun
She's come undun
- Verse 3: She's come undun/She wanted truth but all she got was lies
Came the time to realize and it was too late
- Verse 4: She's come undun/She didn't know what she was headed for
And when I found what she was headed for Mama, it was too late
- Chorus: (same as previous)
- Bridge: Too many mountains, and not enough stairs to climb
Too many churches and not enough truth
Too many people and not enough eyes to see
Too many lives to lead and not enough time
- Chorus: (same as previous)
- Break: (Scat-style solo, improvising based on vocal melody in the verses)
(Flute solo that mimics scat-style vocal solo)
- Chorus: (same as previous)
- Repeat:
Verse 1 She's come undun/She didn't know what she was headed for
And when I found what she was headed for it was too late
- Repeat:
Verse 2 She's come undun/She found a mountain that was far too high
And when she found out she couldn't fly it was too late
- Chorus: (same as previous)
(Scat-style solo as song fades)

Appendix D: “American Woman” – The Guess Who

American woman, stay away from me, American woman, mama let me be
 Don't come hangin' around my door, I don't wanna see your face no more
 I got more important things to do than spend my time growin' old with you
 No woman, said stay away, American woman, listen what I say.

(Short guitar solo)

American woman, get away from me, American woman, mama let me be
 Don't come knockin' around my door, don't wanna see your shadow no more
 Coloured lights can hypnotize, sparkle someone else's eyes
 Now woman, I said get away, American woman, listen what I say.

(Guitar solo)

American woman, said get away, American woman, listen what I say
 Don't come hangin' around my door, don't wanna see your face no more
 I don't need your war machines, I don't need your ghetto scenes
 Coloured lights can hypnotize, sparkle someone else's eyes
 Now woman, get away from me, American woman, mama let me be.

Go, gotta get away, gotta get away now go go go
 Gonna leave you, woman gonna leave you, woman
 Bye-bye, Bye-bye
 Bye-bye, Bye-bye
 You're no good for me, I'm no good for you
 Gonna look you right in the eye, tell you what I'm gonna do
 You know I'm gonna leave, you know I'm gonna go
 You know I'm gonna leave, you know I'm gonna go, woman
 I'm gonna leave, woman

(Improvised lyrics continue as song fades)

Appendix E: “American Woman” – Lenny Kravitz

American woman, stay away from me, American woman, mama let me be
 Don't come hanging around my door, I don't want to see your face no more
 I got more important things to do than spend my time growin' old with you
 Now woman, stay away, American woman, listen what I say

American woman, get away from me, American woman, mama let me be
 Don't come knocking around my door I don't want to see your shadow no more
 Coloured lights can hypnotize, sparkle someone else's eyes
 Now woman, get away, American woman, listen what I say

(Guitar solo)

American woman, I said get way, American woman, listen what I say
 Don't come hanging around my door, don't want to see your face no more
 I don't need your war machines, I don't need your ghetto scenes
 Coloured lights can hypnotize, sparkle someone else's eyes
 Now woman, get away, American woman, listen what I say
 American woman, stay away from me, American woman, mama let me be

I gotta go I gotta getta away
 Babe I gotta go I wanna fly away
 I'm gonna leave you woman I'm gonna leave you woman
 I'm gonna leave you woman I'm gonna leave you woman
 Bye-bye, Bye-bye
 Bye-bye, Bye-bye

And you're no good for me, and I'm no good for you
 I look you right straight in the eye, and tell you what I'm gonna do
 I'm gonna leave you woman, you know I gotta go
 I'm gonna leave you woman, I gotta go
 I gotta go

I gotta go
 American woman
 Yeah

Appendix F: “Hand Me Down World” – The Guess Who

Verse 1: Anybody here see the noise, see the fear and commotion,
 I think we missed it
 Anybody here see the love, see the hate, the emotion

Chorus: Don't give me no hand me down shoes
 Don't give me no hand me down love
 Don't give me no hand me down world
 I got one already.

Verse 2: Anybody here see the long distance cheer for the notion,
 I think we missed it
 Anybody here see the sky weeping tears for the ocean

Chorus: (Same as previous)

 (Guitar solo)

Verse 3: Anybody here see fuzzy-wuzzy loving cup explosion,
 I think we missed it
 Anybody here see the changing of the year and emotion

Chorus: (same as previous)

 (Improvised lyrics as song fade)

Appendix G: “Share the Land” – The Guess Who

Verse 1: Have you been around/Have you done your share of coming down
 On different things that people do
 Have you been aware/You got brothers and sisters who care
 About what’s gonna happen to you in a year from now

Chorus: Maybe I’ll be there to shake your hand
 Maybe I’ll be there to share the land
 That they’ll be giving away
 When we all live together.

(Chorus is sung twice)

Verse 2: Did you pay your dues/Did you read the news
 This morning when the paper landed in your yard
 Do you know their names/Can you play their games
 Without losing track and coming down a bit too hard

Chorus: (Same as previous, sung twice)

(A cappella chorus with improvised lyrics in lead vocal, repeated as song fades)

Appendix H: “Guns, Guns, Guns” – The Guess Who

- Verse 1: American hunter, bring 'em up the north side (guns, guns, guns)
Run, take the money, here's a bullet for your boyfriend (guns, guns, guns)
Eagle all gone, and no more caribou (guns, guns, guns)
You be the red king, I'll be the yellow pawn (ah)
- Chorus: God speed Mother Nature, never really wanted to say good-bye
God speed Mother Nature, you know that I'm callin' you now
Never really wanted to say good-bye
God speed Mother Nature, never really wanted to say good-bye
God speed Mother Nature, never really wanted to say good-bye
- Verse 2: Shoot a few, knock 'em down, cost you half a buck now (guns, guns, guns)
Babe give you kisses if you hit a rubber duck now (guns, guns, guns)
You be the red king, I'll be the yellow pawn (guns, guns, guns)
Eagle all gone, and no more caribou (guns, guns, guns)
Eagle all gone, and no more caribou (guns, guns, guns)
No more/Eagle all gone, and no more caribou (ah)
- Chorus: (as before, but additional improvised lyrics in lead vocal until song fades to end)

Appendix I: “For What It’s Worth” – Buffalo Springfield

Verse 1: There's something happening here
 What it is ain't exactly clear
 There's a man with a gun over there
 Telling me I got to beware

Chorus: I think it's time we stop, children, what's that sound
 Everybody look what's going down

Verse 2: There's battle lines being drawn
 Nobody's right if everybody's wrong
 Young people speaking their minds
 Getting so much resistance from behind

Chorus: (Same as previous)

Verse 3: What a field-day for the heat
 A thousand people in the street
 Singing songs and carrying signs
 Mostly say, hooray for our side

Chorus: (Same as previous)

Verse 4: Paranoia strikes deep
 Into your life it will creep
 It starts when you're always afraid
 You step out of line, the man come and take you away

Chorus: (Same as previous, repeats as song fades)

Appendix J: “Big Yellow Taxi” – Joni Mitchell

Verse 1: They paved paradise and put up a parking lot
 With a pink hotel, a boutique and a swinging hot spot

Chorus: Don't it always seem to go
 That you don't know what you've got till its gone
 They paved paradise and put up a parking lot

Verse 2: They took all the trees put 'em in a tree museum
 And they charged the people a dollar and a half just to see 'em

Chorus: (Same as previous)

Verse 3: Hey farmer farmer put away that D.D.T. now
 Give me spots on my apples but leave me the birds and the bees... Please!

Chorus: (Same as previous)

Verse 4: Late last night I heard the screen door slam
 And a big yellow taxi took away my old man

Chorus: Don't it always seem to go
 That you don't know what you've got till its gone
 They paved paradise and put up a parking lot
 They paved paradise and put up a parking lot
 They paved paradise and put up a parking lot

Appendix K: “Ohio” – Neil Young

Verse 1: Tin soldiers and Nixon's coming, we're finally on our own
This summer I hear the drumming, four dead in Ohio

Chorus: Gotta get down to it soldiers are gunning us down
Should've been done long ago
What if you knew her and found her dead on the ground
How can you run when you know?

(Guitar solo)

Break: (Melody of Verse, performers singing “na”)

Chorus: (Same as previous)

(Guitar solo)

Repeat: Tin soldiers and Nixon's coming, we're finally on our own
Verse 1 This summer I hear the drumming, four dead in Ohio

Four dead in Ohio (repeated as lead vocal improvises other lyrics)
(Repeats as song fades out)

Appendix L: “Southern Man” – Neil Young

Chorus: Southern man better keep your head
Don't forget what your good book said
Southern change gonna come at last
Now your crosses are burning fast
Southern man

Verse 1: I saw cotton and I saw black
Tall white mansions and little shacks.
Southern man when will you pay them back?
I heard screamin' and bullwhips cracking
How long? How long?
Yeah...

(Guitar Solo)

Chorus: (Same as previous)

Verse 2: Lily Belle your hair is golden brown
I've seen your black man comin' round
Swear by God I'm gonna cut him down!
I heard screamin' and bullwhips cracking
How long? How long?

(Guitar solo, continues as song fades out)

Appendix M: “Signs” – Five Man Electrical Band

Verse 1: And the sign said, “Long haired freaky people need not apply”
 So I tucked my hair up under my hat and I went in to ask him why
 He said, “You look like a fine upstanding young man, I think you'll do.”
 So I took off my hat I said, “Imagine that, huh, me working for you.”

Chorus: Signs, signs everywhere a sign
 Blocking out the scenery breaking my mind
 Do this, don't do that, can't you read the sign

Verse 2: And the sign said “Anybody caught trespassing would be shot on sight”
 So I jumped on the fence and yelled at the house,
 “Hey! What gives you the right to put up a fence to keep me out or to keep
 Mother Nature in? If God was here, he'd tell you to your face, man you're
 some kinda sinner.”

Chorus: (Same as previous)

Bridge: Now, hey you Mister! Can't you read, you got to have a shirt and tie to get
 a seat
 You can't even watch, no you can't eat, you ain't suppose to be here
 Sign said, “You got to have a membership card to get inside” Uh!

(Instrumental break)

Verse 3: And the sign said “Everybody welcome, come in, kneel down and pray”
 But when they passed around the plate at the end of it all,
 I didn't have a penny to pay, so I got me a pen and a paper and I made up
 my own little sign
 I said “Thank you Lord for thinking about me, I'm alive and doing fine”

Chorus: (Same as previous)

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