THE BRITISH NATIONAL DAILY PRESS AND POPULAR MUSIC C.1956-1975

Gillian A. M. Mitchell

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INTRODUCTION

Rock 'n' roll music first featured prominently in British newspaper headlines in the late summer of 1956, when it was reported that juvenile 'riots' were occurring in London cinemas during screenings of *Rock Around the Clock*, a film-vehicle for American singer Bill Haley. According to one publication, in a cinema located in Paddington, 'in-the-groove teenagers' leapt out of their seats to dance to Haley's infectious rock 'n' roll music, while a youth allegedly assaulted the manager of the premises as he attempted to restore order.[1] Meanwhile, in Dagenham, a 'very large crowd […] creat[ed] a considerable disturbance' in the streets following ejection from a screening of the film.[2] As the surrounding crowd 'rant[ed] and rav[ed]', two young men defied police orders to leave the scene, and were eventually arrested, while, elsewhere in the capital, 'about 120 youths' began 'shouting, whistling, and jumping over flower beds' following their removal from another screening.[3] The disturbances gradually spread beyond the Greater London area. At a cinema in Burnley, Lancashire, '[e]xcited young people did £150 worth of damage', the *Manchester Guardian* reported; the manager tried, in vain, to restore order to his premises by temporarily halting the film screening. By the end of the evening, '[s]eats had been broken and torn, lamp bulbs had been […] smashed against the wall, and fire hoses turned on'.[4] Troubles were reported in various locations, from Bootle to Welling; meanwhile, 'youths and girls' who jived in the aisles of the Davis Theatre, Croydon, during screenings of the film were summarily 'ejected' from the premises; 'fighting' subsequently began outside the cinema, and two youths were arrested.[5] As the incidents became increasingly national phenomena, the press listed locations – including Blackburn, Preston, Brighton and Gateshead – in which local Watch Committees had pre-empted trouble by banning the film altogether.[6] In South London, meanwhile, Sunday night screenings of the film were cancelled by the Gaumont cinema-chain, as 'Sunday riots' caused by 'rhythm-crazy youths' had erupted in the city during the previous week.[7] The Rank organization similarly limited showings of the film in areas of the capital where, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, ' "the Teddy Boy" influence is strong'.[8] Nevertheless, such measures did not eliminate reportage of further disturbances. Similar incidents around Southeast London

featured in the papers until mid-September, while the most serious of all the troubles – at least according to the reportage – occurred in Manchester on the 9th and 10th of the same month. The *Daily Mirror* announced the episodes with breathless descriptions of '1,000 rock 'n' roll rioters tak[ing the] city by storm'.[9] The manager of the Gaiety Cinema on Oxford Street was allegedly sprayed by a fire extinguisher, fireworks were reportedly ignited outside the cinema and, following their removal from the premises, 'hundreds of youths blocked Peter Street […] with frantic jiving'.[10] The Manchester incidents seemed, however, to represent the climax of the situation. By late September, reports of trouble or of arrests connected to the screenings began to fade and, finally, to disappear altogether from the newspapers.[11] Nevertheless, while the disturbances had been at their most prevalent, the press had scarcely concealed its outrage, describing the misbehaviour of the 'gangs' of 'rock 'n' roll-crazed youngsters' in highly disapproving and often inflammatory terms.[12] The music which remained at the heart of the disturbances was equally resoundingly condemned. For Don Iddon of the *Daily Mail*, this was not music, but 'TNT'.[13] The politically conservative *Mail* by no means possessed the monopoly on sensationalist coverage, but it was certainly responsible for one of the most infamous early evaluations of rock 'n' roll. The 'cannibalistic […] music of the delinquents' was, as far as the paper was concerned, 'deplorable. It is tribal. It is from America [… and] surely originated in the jungle.'[14]

Many of the youngsters who subsequently claimed to have witnessed, or participated in, the cinema incidents believed them to have symbolized a concerted rebellion against people who held opinions of this nature – a bid for freedom and self-assertion on the part of a 'restless [postwar] generation', which, bolstered by increasing affluence and outlets for self-expression, sought to bring an end to outdated, repressive cultural values. In expressing its disapproval of such 'rebellious' behaviour, the press was, apparently, firmly aligning itself with such conservative expressions of authority, speaking unequivocally for those adults who simply 'couldn't relate to or identify with' rock 'n' roll, and thereby illustrating perfectly the much-discussed, and apparently ever-widening, generational divide.[15] As far as writer Pete Frame was concerned, of equal significance was the fact that the press had presented a heightened and highly selective version of events – and its skewed emphasis upon a scattering of exceptional occurrences actually served to exacerbate the situation. 'Basically, the whole episode was press driven', he declared. In publicizing 'a few isolated incidents', the newspapers encouraged 'a handful of unimaginative buffoons' to embark on 'imitation binges. It set a pattern which has kept smug tabloid editors happy ever since.'[16] Thus, a fundamentally insensitive and unsympathetic – even amoral – press not only collectively and unequivocally reflected prevailing adult hostility towards rock 'n' roll, but

also, somewhat irresponsibly, inflamed the situation further while in pursuit of sensational 'scoops' and the undivided attention of readers.

Beginning with a detailed consideration of these notorious reports on the 1956 disturbances, and proceeding to examine key moments in the development of popular music, as recorded and commented upon by newspapers, this book explores the reactions of the national daily press to popular music in the postwar period. The era between the rock 'n' roll 'heyday' of the mid-to-late 1950s and the rise of the Beatles in the early 1960s is afforded the closest scrutiny; however, the final chapter provides some succinct, exploratory coverage of developments in press attitudes towards the diversifying popular music scene of the later 1960s and early 1970s. The work assesses the accuracy of the perception, voiced by both popular and scholarly commentators, that an uncomprehending and intolerant press both consistently reflected and actively promoted adult hostility to popular music. It also challenges the tendency to assume that a collective 'press stance' on popular music existed during this period, by observing and tracing differences and contrasts in coverage and attitude among various key national newspapers, and by positioning such opinions within the context of the internal dynamics and cultures of the publications in question.

The book forms part of a broader research investigation into the responses of adults and authorities to rock 'n' roll and its musical successors, and on the impact of these on intergenerational relations. The wider project endeavours to demonstrate that the reactions of adults towards the music were considerably more diverse than has traditionally been argued.[17] In this respect, the newspapers, as presented in this short work, may be seen both to reflect such divergent responses and to help, in their own right, shape and direct them to a significant extent. This work, nevertheless, also aims to contribute to scholarship on the evolution of mainstream newspaper perspectives on popular music during these decades – an area which merits greater scholarly exploration than it has hitherto received – and to the broader study of the dynamics of the postwar British newspaper industry. As a short-form work, it is, inevitably, concise in its scope, and some topics command greater attention than others – although amid such concision the book nonetheless explores considerably the coverage and characteristics of the various newspapers, both individually and collectively. It attempts, also, to suggest areas which could be developed in future scholarship.

Focus and Scope of the Work

The book focuses particularly on a selection of the most significant national daily titles. All of the chosen papers are now available as digitized archival

resources, making them particularly convenient choices for a study of this nature; Adrian Bingham notes the opportunities which such databases afford newspaper historians. Their sophisticated search functions certainly facilitate detailed, comparative content analysis with considerable ease.[18]

Nevertheless, the choice of newspapers has not been influenced solely by considerations of access. While they collectively provide a representative 'snapshot' of the national press in the mid-twentieth century, they also, individually, symbolize different aspects of the ever-evolving British newspaper industry, as well as highlighting different approaches and reactions to developments in popular music. The *Times* and (Manchester) *Guardian* constitute the principal examples of 'serious' papers (although limited references are made to the *Daily Telegraph*), while the *Daily Mirror, Daily Express* and *Daily Mail* represent the popular press (with some discussion of the post-1969 *Sun* towards the end of the book).

It is regrettable that the study cannot encompass significant Sunday titles such as the *News of the World* (which offered highly distinctive – even notorious – coverage of sociocultural developments during this period), the *Sunday Times* (entirely separate, in this era, from the daily *Times*) or the *Observer*, although these are occasionally mentioned, for contextual purposes, in the study.[19] Indeed, the strong emphasis on 'independence' of outlook, which was promoted by David Astor, the postwar editor of the *Observer*, meant that its coverage of contemporary topics was often distinctively thoughtful, and its attitudes towards popular music are briefly considered in this study.[20] Similarly, undoubtedly an analysis of the reactions of provincial and local newspapers (and, indeed, of the regional editions of certain national titles) to evolutions in popular music would provide enriching insights into regional variations in coverage and attitudes; however, such an endeavour remains beyond the scope of this particular book, which maintains a selective focus on a cross-section of the most significant national 'dailies'.[21]

The dividing line between what tend to be termed 'serious' (sometimes 'quality', 'heavy' or 'highbrow') papers and 'popular' publications was, Jean Chalaby notes, already 'marked' by the early twentieth century, and, 'increas[ing]' over the ensuing decades, it had become a notable feature of the British newspaper market by the postwar period.[22] The *Times*, established in 1785, epitomized the steady, moderate, politically focused 'serious' papers which adapted their style only slowly and steadily, and when necessary; trends in popular culture were certainly not the primary focus of such publications, although the *Times* was not impervious to contemporary fashions, and often proved an insightful, and even at times groundbreaking, commentator on such matters during this time.[23] The *Guardian*, founded in 1821, offers an ideal example of a newspaper which was undergoing considerable transition by

the mid-twentieth century.[24] A national publication, notwithstanding its strong northern focus, it was moulded by the powerful editorial voices of C. P. Scott and his heirs. The paper, though under-resourced and struggling by the 1940s, gradually redefined itself, dropping the 'Manchester' designation from its title in 1959 and moving its editorial headquarters to London in 1964.[25] From the mid-1950s onwards, it evolved into the distinctively left-leaning publication which remains recognizable today; despite financial concerns, it 'found a purpose and an audience which allowed it to seem to speak for a generation'.[26]

Alongside these 'heavier' titles developed 'popular' publications, designed for those seeking a lighter diet of news, liberally mixed with attractive 'features' such as society gossip, sport or show-business coverage. Alfred Harmsworth's pioneering *Daily Mail*, established in 1896, became 'an immediate commercial success' with its 'lower middle-class readership'.[27] Harmsworth also began the *Daily Mirror* in 1903 for 'gentlewomen'; when this proved unsuccessful, the paper began to specialize in illustrated news, and in 1911 its circulation figures had reached the million-mark.[28] During the 1930s, the *Mirror* further evolved from a 'lightweight picture paper with Conservative loyalties' to a publication catering to 'left-leaning' working-class readers.[29] The *Mirror* also espoused a distinctive 'tabloidized' style; reduced size for ease of reading and the centralized positioning of banner headlines and illustrated front pages increased its popularity. Various innovative columns and features also enhanced the success of the paper.[30] Its reputation for adopting an 'unashamedly sensationalist' approach also grew throughout this era.[31] However, it was during and immediately after World War II that the paper 'came of age mentally', according to editorial director Hugh Cudlipp, commenting with credibility upon social and political issues.[32] It continued to grow exponentially after the war, becoming the most widely read of the popular papers by the early 1960s. The paper also developed an inimitable approach to popular culture, cultivating a close identification with 'youth', and a markedly strong interest in popular music, which make it particularly significant for this study.

The *Daily Express*, founded in 1900 and purchased in 1916 by the Canadian-born Lord Beaverbrook, was the first popular title to rival the *Mail*, distinguishing itself by presenting news (rather than advertisements) on its front page.[33] Edited by the dynamic, perceptive Arthur Christiansen, the paper became, via its 'strong feature articles[,] […] constantly inquiring approach […] [and] concentration on the personal and the concrete rather than the abstract', enviably distinctive by mid-century.[34] Pro-imperialist and aspirational, the *Express* grew steadily throughout the mid-century, eclipsing the *Mail* in popularity. However, it struggled, by the early 1960s, to match the ever-increasing popularity of the *Mirror*, and to balance its traditional political stance and style with the need to reflect changing times.[35]

Nevertheless, that these diverse titles managed to survive throughout this period is in itself noteworthy. Economic pressure and competition characterized the postwar newspaper industry. Despite the threats posed by television and radio, newspaper readership figures remained high throughout this period, with 80 per cent of British households still purchasing a daily morning newspaper in the early 1960s.[36] However, the industry was becoming increasingly streamlined, with the larger national newspapers monopolizing the field, superseding local publications, and consumers tending to purchase one title, where previously they might have bought several.[37] The end of newsprint rationing in 1956 also reinvigorated competition among newspapers; publications were under pressure to fill more pages, and the support of advertisers became increasingly vital.[38] Popular papers, less attractive to the most exclusive of advertisers, were forced to fight harder to maintain, and to increase, their circulation; this struggle proved too much for several hitherto well-known popular titles, including the populist *Daily Sketch* and left-wing *Daily Herald*.[39]

All of the titles in question, however, were forced, at various junctures during this period, to recognize and adapt to the changing tastes of their readership; the manner in which popular music featured in such adaptations becomes an important theme within this work. All were aware that theirs was a ruthless business, and that, amid changing times, they faced an uncertain future. Popular music, with its powerful links to ideas of youth and modernity, symbolized this social upheaval particularly potently. Because they faced such pressures to maintain circulation, and also due to their 'lighter' social focus and greater receptiveness to contemporary fashions, the popular papers responded to popular music more readily and consistently during the first half of this period, and, as a result, their coverage features particularly prominently throughout the work. Nevertheless, by the end of the period, the attitudes of the serious press towards the ever-evolving music scene had developed considerably, and these shifts are highlighted in the final two chapters of the work.

As this work demonstrates, the extent to which these newspapers, both collectively and individually, responded to the music, and gradually and variously attempted to acknowledge it as an increasingly significant facet of modern culture, certainly reveals much about the changing social significance of the newspaper industry during this period. It also serves to challenge one-dimensional impressions that the newspapers did no more than reflect monolithically, and promote, wider adult hostility towards the music.

Defining 'popular music' with precision and accuracy, particularly when exploring this period, presents distinct challenges. The breadth and vagueness of this label divides scholars considerably; it is, however, used in this work fairly flexibly and descriptively to characterize the various forms of music which

found popularity, particularly among young people, in Britain during this period. The musical style identified as 'rock 'n' roll', which became particularly popular during the late 1950s, inevitably dominated early press coverage, and the book considers, in close detail, the ways in which this style was understood by contemporary observers. However, especially in the latter portion, the work increasingly considers 'popular music' more broadly, incorporating such styles as skiffle, traditional jazz, 'beat' and rock music, all of which found particular favour with the young at various points throughout this period. This reflects the manner in which the press, in keeping with the wider British public, gradually expanded its own understanding, and appreciation, of the many influences within contemporary 'pop' as the 1960s progressed, and, particularly, of the diverse manner in which the concept of the rhythmic 'beat' manifested in various disparate styles in this period – a development which appeared to foster greater appreciation of the contemporary music scene.[40]

Chapter Outlines

The opening chapter provides a detailed examination of press coverage of the 'riots' which occurred during *Rock Around the Clock* cinema screenings in 1956. Since these incidents constituted the first occasion on which rock 'n' roll featured significantly in British headlines, they accordingly inspired the earliest efforts of the newspapers to explain the genre to their adult readership. Much of the coverage was, clearly, far from generous, ranging from alarmist, outraged condemnation to ridicule and dismissal. The viewpoint of Pete Frame, that the newspapers were, collectively, representative of, while also helping to shape, broader public objections to rock 'n' roll, has also been widely expressed by scholars, from sociologists such as Stanley Cohen and Paul Rock to historian Martin Cloonan.[41] For this reason, the coverage of these incidents is accorded considerable attention. Particular patterns which emerged in the coverage – such as the linkage of the cinema incidents to wider fears of juvenile disorder and 'Teddy Boys', or the associations between rock 'n' roll and primitive, sexually charged rhythms – were not without historical precedent. Juvenile delinquency had, of course, long excited public consternation, and worries about earlier imported jazz styles had anticipated some of the fears which rock 'n' roll later evoked. However, the particular manner in which these concerns were reported during the cinema episodes helped to cement, in the public domain, certain novel variants of such older, established images of youth culture and popular music which could be, and indeed *were*, in turn, redeployed and developed still further on future occasions. Stanley Cohen's pioneering work on the responses of press and authorities to the 'seaside battles' between 'Mods' and 'Rockers', which occurred some eight years

later, in 1964, demonstrated that newspaper coverage of these incidents not only sensationalized and distorted events, demonizing and marginalizing the participants in the process, but also had a 'self-fulfilling' effect.[42] As reportage increasingly magnified the incidents, it inadvertently encouraged their proliferation, inspiring defiant youngsters to solidify their identification with the hitherto relatively fluid labels of 'Mod' and 'Rocker'. As Cohen himself argued in an earlier study, co-written with Paul Rock, this enduring and influential theory of 'moral panic' also appeared applicable to aspects of the 1956 incidents, particularly regarding press portrayals of the involvement of 'Teddy Boys' on these occasions.[43] In 1956, as in 1964, the extensive press coverage of the disturbances also, as Frame suggested, seemed to incite further 'copycat' incidents.

Clearly, certain key 'ingredients' of moral panic, as outlined by Cohen and as developed by subsequent scholars, emerged in press reports on the cinema disturbances. However, such a label, while relatively useful within this context, has its limitations when attempting a balanced understanding of press responses to rock 'n' roll. Writing in the early 1970s, Cohen, as a sociologist influenced by contemporary politics, ultimately sought to identify patterns of press reaction which subsequently contributed to broader social and legalistic responses to those youngsters who had been deemed delinquent 'folk devils'. Exploring subtleties within press coverage was not his priority. Frame, similarly, presents a vivid account of 1950s musical culture, but, in writing principally for the popular market, he largely prizes bold, arresting narratives over contradictory evidence. Cloonan is most interested in observing particular, recurring themes within societal responses to rock 'n' roll. In his survey of press reactions to popular music, he draws general distinctions between 'tabloids' and 'broadsheets', but does not focus in detail on particular titles. He, equally, recognizes that there was some variation in coverage – particularly acknowledging the role which the press played in 'promot[ing]' popular music – but he highlights this broadly overall.[44] This work aims to serve as a complement, and supplement, to such scholarship by exploring the nuances, and identifying and separating the various 'strands', which appeared within coverage of the incidents in newspapers, both individually and collectively.

As the first chapter demonstrates, particular thematic and tonal patterns of coverage were certainly discernible across the various newspapers, both serious and popular, with particular motifs appearing in several publications simultaneously. Reactions were often sweepingly condemnatory, as alarmist ideas were fused together to create, for the readers, arresting images of unmitigated disorder and horror. It is possible, nevertheless, to perceive two significant, albeit frequently intertwining, 'strands' of reaction emerging from

the press coverage of the 1956 incidents – those which focused on the misbehaviour of the youngsters who 'rioted', linking their misdemeanours to wider concerns about delinquency and 'Teddy Boys', and those which explored rock 'n' roll itself, attempting to contextualize it, and to explain the peculiar hold which it seemed to have over its audience. Distinguishing in this way between 'social' and 'musical' objections to rock 'n' roll helps to generate subtler, more detailed appraisals of initial press reactions. The inflammatory tone and structure of all such coverage, nevertheless, does appear to indicate the presence of certain core elements of 'moral panic', as defined by Cohen and others.

However, as the second chapter argues, while tracing and carefully analysing such patterns remains a valuable exercise, it is crucial to note that the stress on 'press-generated moral panic' which has dominated previous coverage of the 1956 incidents serves to obscure other vital facets of newspaper responses to the music – such as the more balanced and tonally varied coverage which did appear, frequently, in all highlighted papers during 1956, or the fact that most publications recognized that many readers were neither persuaded nor impressed by their alarmist reports, or else appreciated that the public, while absorbing the sensationalist stories, scarcely exhibited any real concerns. Even more critically, the strong emphasis on overall patterns of coverage leaves no room for the possibility of contrast *between* newspapers. It is evident that particular newspapers possessed distinctive political leanings, sociocultural perspectives and production methods. In his 1975 work *Paper Voices*, A. C. H. Smith explored the manner in which newspapers, through their content, style and tone, 'already in a complex relationship with a body of regular readers', create particular and distinctive 'persona[e]' or 'personalit[ies]', and gradually assume 'something like a collective identity' for themselves.[45] While historians have incorporated such insights into considerations of other key areas (particularly political coverage), this has not been widely integrated into previous studies of press reactions to popular music. Both in Cohen's original work, and in later works by scholars such as Cloonan or Damien Phillips (who explored media reactions to rock festivals in the early 1970s), the predominant emphasis remains on patterns of coverage, and there is limited exploration of differences among titles.[46] There is, thus, a need to explore the 1956 'riots' and early newspaper reactions to rock 'n' roll by placing them within the context of British press history, and the evolving characteristics of the individual newspapers chosen for the study.

Building upon this insight, Chapter 3 demonstrates the ways in which the papers, collectively and individually, continued to evolve their responses to popular music into the 1960s and beyond. That rock 'n' roll had 'become respectable' seemed now to be the prevalent view of the papers, and influenced

their continuing coverage in various ways as they began, tentatively, to present somewhat more benign and tolerant appraisals of popular music – for instance, via more neutral and supportive stories concerning individual musicians (particularly those from Britain), or by exploring or suggesting ways in which popular music could be deployed for the betterment of society. The significant role played by the *Daily Mirror* in promoting such ideas is accorded particular attention here. Such positive coverage by no means provides any sort of irrevocable proof that the newspapers supported popular music; more alarmist stories concerning the music, and its young practitioners and fans, still emerged periodically, particularly within the popular papers, and ventures aiming to appeal to popular music fans were undoubtedly driven by commercial considerations, as well as by the need to eclipse competing titles in terms of sales and esteem. Nevertheless, that 'paper voices' were diverse with regard to popular music is beyond question.

The 'press-generated moral panic' paradigm also risks overlooking a particularly important component of this shifting response to popular music – namely, the gradual evolution of the 'pop column' and pop criticism in the mainstream papers from the late 1950s onwards. This is the principal subject of the fourth and fifth chapters of the work. As the papers increasingly reflected the diverse interests of their postwar readers, via various specialist 'features', popular music columns, usually comprising record reviews, interviews or opinions on new trends, became integral to this new outlook. However, although there has been some academic study of popular music coverage in the postwar press, such works tend, overall, to show greatest interest in the more sophisticated, 'serious' rock criticism which emerged during the late 1960s in the highbrow papers. Although commentators acknowledge that popular newspapers – in particular the *Daily Mirror* – developed strong interests in popular music, few have analysed the nature of this coverage in detail. As Bingham demonstrates, scholars have often been inclined to overlook the positive contributions of the popular press in general, and those who have discussed the music coverage of such newspapers have tended to dismiss it as banal, ill-informed and often embarrassingly inauthentic, ultimately reflecting an older person's misguided perceptions regarding what is au courant in the pop world.[47] This chapter makes no grandiose claims for the early 'pop' coverage of any of the daily papers, neither serious nor popular, but it aims to address critical oversights in the scholarship by exploring the treatment of the music in the press, focusing in particular on the period from the 1950s 'heyday' of rock 'n' roll to the era of 'trad' jazz, 'twist' and 'beat' in the early 1960s. Within pop columns, new narratives concerning the music were being constructed. The content and tone of these narratives certainly

differed depending on the newspaper in question – the significant example of the *Daily Mirror*, which so self-consciously aimed to court youth, and which used music to this end in remarkably enterprising ways, again becomes a strong focus of this chapter. The chapter does, however, note that the popular papers in general – including the *Express* and the *Mail* – showed disproportionately strong interest in exploring popular music in cultural terms before the late 1960s. Critical to such explorations were the distinctive 'voices' of individual columnists, from the thoughtful, incisive Kenneth Allsop of the *Daily Mail*, and his enthusiastic younger colleague Adrian Mitchell, to the focused approach of Judith Simons in the *Daily Express* and the unremittingly energetic Patrick Doncaster, 'the *Mirror*'s DJ', who attuned his pop coverage to the confident, exuberant outlook which his paper developed. Although such reporters, of necessity, conformed to certain editorial requirements, and while some commentators criticized the early columnists for espousing an approach which appeared to date rapidly, their writing on pop remained, in this formative era, highly individualistic and often quite exploratory. The chapter highlights, however, that the rise of 'Beatlemania' constituted something of a turning point for press attitudes towards popular music; the 'beat-group' era seemed to effect a change of approach in the serious titles. Gradually, they too began to scrutinize the music more thoroughly, and on its own terms.

As the final chapter demonstrates, this newfound critical interest in popular music on the part of the serious papers would only intensify by the dawn of the 1970s. By this time, rock music was becoming ever more widely acknowledged as a distinctive art form, and as music papers such as *Melody Maker* developed their coverage to reflect this, the serious daily press increasingly followed suit, with columns by writers such as Geoffrey Cannon and Richard Williams epitomizing efforts to capture the raw, complex dynamism of the contemporary music scene. Such efforts, however, were less evident in popular titles, which, by now, faced fresh challenges; the success of the formula adopted by the *Sun* after its 1969 purchase by Rupert Murdoch forced many of these papers to alter, and simplify, their content in order to remain viable competitors. Pop coverage became, as a result, increasingly equated with 'show-business' or 'celebrity gossip' in the popular papers. The treatment of popular music in this sector of the press had, admittedly, never evolved significantly, for all its prevalence, and it had always depended for its credibility on the approach of individual columnists. However, by the 1970s, greater polarization in pop coverage between the highbrow and popular press was increasingly evident, just as the divide was widening in other respects. Despite this, the final chapter posits that it is important not to overstate the decline of musical coverage within the popular titles; they could still prove themselves

capable of demonstrating their appreciation and enthusiasm for the sounds of the day in surprising and enterprising ways.

Many British adults would probably have had their first extensive discursive encounters with rock 'n' roll, skiffle, 'beat' and other pop phenomena via their daily newspapers. The need to analyse the manner in which the press presented such music to their readers is all the more compelling because of the largely unchallenged accusations of engendering 'moral panic' which have so often been levelled at newspapers – commencing with their extensive coverage of the 'cinema riots' of 1956.

Chapter 1

'TEDDY BOY RIOTS' AND 'JIVED-UP JAZZ': PRESS COVERAGE OF THE 1956 CINEMA DISTURBANCES AND THE QUESTION OF 'MORAL PANIC'

Introduction

Rock 'n' roll had attracted little attention from the major national daily newspapers prior to mid-1956; with the exception of a few articles in the *Daily Mirror* which highlighted the gradual spread of the American trend to Britain, there was scant coverage of the genre in the press.[1] Bill Haley's music had featured prominently in *Blackboard Jungle*, a sensationally violent film depicting American high school life, which had been screened in British cinemas in 1955. However, while more controversial than the markedly innocuous *Rock Around the Clock*, it caused neither widespread consternation nor any significant reported disruption in Britain.[2] Those incidents of unrest, vandalism and violence which occurred in and around cinemas the following year during screenings of *Rock Around the Clock* were, thus, principally responsible for bringing the music to the attention of the press and, correspondingly, to elements of the wider public.

Although, while ongoing, these disturbances clearly inspired much feverishly anxious coverage within various newspapers, by late September, reports of trouble, or of arrests or convictions, connected to the film screenings began to fade and, finally, to disappear altogether. This was, to an extent, only natural, as the film had largely reached the end of its circulation period in British cinemas – furthermore, since it had been so widely banned by this time, its potential for 'causing' further trouble had been considerably limited by authorities. Police and local councils had also increasingly prepared themselves for trouble as the reports of unrest had intensified. When the film was screened in a Cleveleys cinema in December 1956, the *Guardian* reported that Alsatian dogs had patrolled the premises; perhaps unsurprisingly, given such security, 'no [significant] trouble' was observed.[3] The timing of the incidents

also contributed to their perceived significance; they were, undoubtedly, eventually eclipsed by turbulent events unfolding in the wider world, and particularly by the Suez Crisis.

Although, prior to the autumn of 1956, rock 'n' roll would have been familiar to some adults – particularly those with teenage children – the stories of the cinema 'riots' constituted the first occasion on which the music became headline news, and was purposely brought to the attention of the British public by the press. This initial flurry of sensational interest was certainly short-lived. Rock 'n' roll did reappear occasionally in the headlines in late 1956 and early 1957. For example, the *Daily Express* revealed that a scheduled performance at the venerable Royal Albert Hall by American jazz musician Lionel Hampton had been cancelled because the first concert of his October 1956 British tour had witnessed '[r]ock 'n' rollers jiv[ing] riotously in the aisles'.[4] Stories overtly linking rock 'n' roll to instances of worrying juvenile behaviour also occasionally resurfaced.[5] Screenings of Haley's second film, *Don't Knock the Rock*, in early 1957, sparked several reports of fresh unrest in cinemas in Hendon and Blackpool, but these stories were brief and unremarkable.[6] Otherwise, if this follow-up title had led to more widespread disturbances, most newspapers seemed either unaware of, or else not unduly concerned by, the situation, and, when Haley himself visited Britain in 1957, coverage was, largely, either neutral or predominantly positive. Never again would rock 'n' roll, as a news story, attract such a storm of unremitting press attention, but its introduction to wider society via the pages of the newspapers had certainly been controversial and dramatic.

As the media principally responsible for bringing the stories of the cinema episodes to the public, the newspapers undoubtedly influenced the manner in which their readers reacted to and understood both the incidents as they unfolded, and the music which was so consistently identified as one of their principal causes. It is unsurprising that commentators from Cohen to Cloonan have focused so intensively on the negative and alarmist reportage; there is abundant evidence of widespread condemnation and quasi-hysterical coverage, from the *Mail*'s suggestion that the music constituted 'TNT' to the *Mirror*'s descriptions of 'rock 'n' roll rioters tak[ing] a city by storm'. Such statements typified the tone of the reportage in the popular papers, but also, occasionally, in more highbrow publications. In considering the question of whether this style of coverage helped to contribute to a 'moral panic' surrounding rock 'n' roll, this first chapter demonstrates that several of the 'key ingredients' required for such episodes were clearly present in the newspaper reports.

Defining and Understanding 'Moral Panic'

The concept of 'moral panic' has been much debated and developed by scholars of various disciplines over the past five decades; as an academic term it has become increasingly multifaceted since it was explored by Jock Young and, more famously, by Stanley Cohen, in his *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, a study of the 1964 'clashes' between the Mods and Rockers on the south coast of England.[7] Since the phrase has entered common parlance, 'becom[ing] popular as few other sociological concepts have', the potential for misleading or oversimplified interpretations has undoubtedly increased – Nachman Ben-Yehuda emphasizes that, whatever images it may evoke, it should not be equated with either mass hysteria or 'physical panic'.[8] Ben-Yehuda succinctly defines the concept as 'the creation of a situation in which exaggerated fear is manufactured about topics that are seen (or claimed) to have a moral component'. Central to such episodes are particular groups or figures who are cast as 'folk devils'; gangs, criminals and, of course, youth subcultures have, Ben-Yehuda demonstrates, variously been presented as agents, and symbols, of particular moral ills.[9] Indeed, as Angela Bartie notes, there has been a cyclical quality to such incidents. While postwar 'panics' often stressed the 'modern' nature of the perceived crises, ultimately, as Bartie, and others such as Bill Osgerby and Keith Gildart, argue, 'the same anxieties appear with startling regularity' across the various episodes.[10] That young people frequently featured at the centre of such episodes during the postwar decades is also evident.[11] For Jock Young, the incidents on which such 'panics' focus, and the 'folk devils' perceived as their principal agents, frequently highlight an 'underlying moral uneasiness' concerning particular aspects of society. (For example, the 'panic' surrounding the 'Mods and Rockers' ultimately seemed related to anxieties concerning a new 'world of consumption and immediacy which undermined the austerity and discipline of post-war Britain'.[12]) As Gildart notes, '[T]he [perceived] enemy is a deeper symptom of wider problems within society.'[13]

The vital role played by the media as prime 'manufacturer' of episodes of moral panic, and as key generator of a sense of crisis, has also been crucial to the development of the theory. The behaviour of the mass media – and particularly the press – became fundamental to Cohen's original study of the Mods and Rockers. Examining newspaper coverage of the 'clashes' between these two allegedly 'rival gangs' in 1964–1965, Cohen argued that the style and content of the reportage afforded the incidents an ordered significance which they did not necessarily possess in reality, and also incited further trouble by giving the groups in question 'a stimulus to action'.[14]

Coverage across several newspapers, Cohen argued, frequently exaggerated the violence of these incidents – habitually referencing 'riot[s]' or 'org[ies] of destruction' – and described the youngsters involved as having operated in 'gangs', implying a 'structured' aspect to the group identities of the Mods and Rockers.[15] The tendency to repeat such ideas throughout reportage on the events, and to use them to frame coverage of any later, apparently comparable, incidents, created a monolithic 'dominant perception' of the situation, to which 'all subsequent happenings' were 'assimilat[ed]'.[16] Such reportage also became 'self-fulfilling'; galvanized by such demonization, or by the promise of publicity, youngsters would duly assume the parts which press and public now expected them to play.[17] As the 'deviants' fulfilled 'expectations of how [they …] should act', the authorities rallied against them, alienating and marginalizing them still further.[18] This provided the hitherto 'loose collectivities' of the Mods and Rockers with 'a structure they never possessed and a mythology with which to justify the structure'.[19] Thus, argued Cohen, 'a spiral of deviancy amplification' was created.[20]

Although Cohen's theories are now over 40 years old, many of his original observations remain crucial to continued understanding of 'moral panic'. The risk of oversimplifying or selectively quoting his work to create a convenient, diluted version of moral panic theory remains ever present; as a sociological concept, it has evolved to become increasingly complex, and engaging with it in this more limited fashion risks minimizing the diversity of multidisciplinary scholarship on the subject.[21] Nevertheless, there is value in considering how far Cohen's basic framework for this concept was evident during the 1956 cinema incidents, particularly because of the extent to which he focused on the role of the press in establishing and sustaining the 'panic' of 1964, and also because the existing scholarship on the cinema disturbances and early British reactions to rock 'n' roll (including Cohen's own analysis of these incidents in his work on Teddy Boys) has so strongly emphasized concerted press hostility and negative reactions.[22] In many respects, the newspaper coverage of the 1956 episodes clearly anticipated that of the 1964 seaside 'battles', as analysed by Cohen, in its scope and content.[23]

Elements of 'Moral Panic' in Press Coverage of the 1956 Cinema Incidents

Particular elements required for the potential generation of moral panic are certainly identifiable when examining stories relating to the incidents across the key newspapers. Undoubtedly the press deployed sensationalist, exaggerated language when creating what Cohen termed their first 'inventories' of the incidents. As they '[took] stock of what [had] happened' and offered their

initial reactions, the press inevitably influenced the manner in which the public discovered, and understood, the incidents.[24] The inflammatory alarmism which Cohen perceived in press reaction to the Mods and Rockers was certainly abundantly evident here, and exhibited in 'serious' and popular papers alike. The *Guardian* wrote of 'frenzied rock 'n' roll fans' and 'a mob of youths' 'stamp[ing] their suede shoes in the jive'.[25] The *Times* headlines highlighted 'police dogs dispers[ing a] London crowd' as 'a gang of about 50 youths' hurled lightbulbs around a cinema.[26] Both of these papers usually deployed the muted label of 'disturbances' when describing the incidents; popular newspapers, however, readily described the proliferation of 'riots'. The *Mirror* had already established a reputation for creating arresting, deliberately sensationalist headlines, accompanied by compelling illustrations, and its reportage of this story continued such a trend.[27] The '1,000 Rock 'n' Roll Rioters' report painted a lurid image of 'a thousand screaming, jiving, rhythm-crazy teenagers surg[ing] through a city […] sweeping aside a police cordon and stopping traffic'.[28] In the aftermath of the first London disturbances, meanwhile, the *Express* carried a front-page story on 'Five Rock 'n' Roll Riots', in which the 'Rock 'n' Roll film' had been seen to 'set rhythm-crazed Teddy Boys and Teddy Girls rioting'.[29] In its coverage of the Manchester disturbances, the *Mail* evoked similar images of 'rhythm-crazed Rock 'n' Roll teenagers terroris[ing] a city'.[30]

Lack of precise statistics and detail, for the sake of amplifying the threat, also robbed the stories of subtlety; Cohen argued that the national papers, more than the local press, were particularly guilty of such sensationalism, tending to ignore specific context in order to intensify the drama.[31] The coverage outlined above clearly prized vivid prose over precision; where examples were included, they tended, particularly in popular papers, to emerge towards the end of the pieces in question.[32] Similarly, if precise numbers of participants were cited, as opposed to descriptions of 'stampedes' or 'hordes', they seemed rather too exact to be wholly accurate.[33] Declaring that, ultimately, some 60 youngsters had been charged over the incidents, Pete Frame wryly remarked that 'one would have thought it was 60,000 from the way the newspapers reacted'.[34]

In his discussion of the Mods and Rockers coverage, Cohen also highlighted another trend which was equally evident during the 1956 episodes – namely, 'the reporting of non-events' in such a manner as to maintain the threat of imminent catastrophe. Reports of the increasingly widespread banning of the film were often presented thus, as exemplified by headlines such as 'More Towns Ban Film: Disorders Fear after "Rock and Roll" ', which appeared in the *Times* on 13 September; the eyes of readers were just as likely to be drawn, in this case, to the words 'disorders' and 'fear' as to the heralding of the banning.[35] Coverage also, at times, overtly highlighted the fact that some

who misbehaved did so because they sought publicity; they were consciously fulfilling the expectations of authorities and the public. One *Guardian* reporter, writing on further 'scuffles' in Manchester cinemas, saw 'three Teddy Boys' observing a photograph of a previous incident displayed on a newsagent's billboard and 'shouting: "That's us, brother, that's us." '[36]

Regarding one of the most central components of Cohen's moral panic – that of the creation and scapegoating of the 'folk devil' – one could argue, in fact, that more than one social group was cast in this role in 1956. Some reports placed the blame straightforwardly on 'teenagers', a much-discussed entity in post-austerity Britain; despite the breadth of such a category, it should be highlighted that by the mid-1950s the term had come, in some quarters, to connote certain negative attributes. Seen by some as an unwelcome by-product of a society obsessed with materialism and gimmickry, and overindulging its youth, 'the teenager' was often considered a shallow, vacuous creature, prodigiously affluent but otherwise culturally sterile and ill-educated.[37] Richard Hoggart's original description of the 'depressing' spectacle of the aimless, American-fixated 'juke box boys' perhaps typifies this perception (although David Fowler has persuasively argued that Hoggart's much-quoted views have been distorted by subsequent commentators).[38] Nevertheless, negativity surrounding 'the teenager' proliferated in this era. Beyond its literal demographic meaning, the term also frequently connoted an unruly, or overtly delinquent, element within working-class culture. As David Simonelli suggests, whereas in America 'the teenager was middle class by commercial design[,] in Britain he was working class by cultural association'; 'his' image was that of an individual 'aggravated with his life prospects and bored [with] the adult world'.[39] For the *Express* columnist Eve Perrick, the term evoked 'a picture of a bunch of rowdy youngsters'.[40]

Attention was also frequently drawn to the misbehaviour of girls, partly because the 'jiving' which occurred during the film frequently involved the active participation of young women. While, at times, 'terrified' female audience members were portrayed as victims of the chaos, other reports suggested that, in the quoted words of one cinema manager, they had been 'far worse than the boys' – thus implying a further breakdown of social convention.[41] A *Guardian* report highlighted that, to minimize further disruption at Manchester's Gaiety Cinema, 'a gang of girls' had been turned away, while a Burnley cinema manager reportedly considered 'unescorted young girls' especially 'troublesome'.[42] Meanwhile, a *Mail* report blamed one of the London incidents on 'a red-haired young girl with a pony-tail hairdo'.[43]

Ultimately, however, as press coverage of the incidents developed further, the greatest blame was increasingly placed upon the much-feared 'Teddy Boy'. Teddy Boys had been causing consternation since the early 1950s, and their

association with 'violence, aggression and murder' had been explored extensively by the press by this time.[44] Although initially named after his distinctive Edwardian-style clothing, 'Teddy Boy' presently became 'a general term of abuse', readily connoting delinquency.[45] Cohen and Paul Rock argued that, by 1955, the fashion for Teddy Boy–style clothing was already waning, but the perception that the group posed 'a serious threat' prevailed, and was actually intensified during the cinema troubles, as commentators maintained that rock 'n' roll music had a particular appeal for them.[46] Thus, the manner in which Teddy Boys and their apparent 'hooliganism' came to play leading roles in reportage represented, in this sense, a continuation, even a refuelling, of a previously established 'moral panic' revolving specifically around their behaviour in public spaces.[47] The manner in which coverage frequently 'superimpose[d] […] the Ted and the Teenager' has also been noted by John Davis.[48] One *Mail* report readily blended descriptions of 'a solid army of teenagers' and 'stampedes of jiving Teddy boys and their girlfriends'.[49] The labels, if not interchangeable, were certainly mutually reinforcing.

There was also a widespread perception among the press, corresponding with Cohen's observations on the Mods and Rockers reports, that those who orchestrated the cinema 'riots' operated in 'gangs'. 'A gang of thirty Teddy-suited youths' was seen by the *Mirror* to spearhead the troubles in Manchester; the *Mail* observed 'a gang-leader' inciting the crowds of 'rowdy hooligans' to 'rock' and 'ignore the cops'.[50] According to the *Mirror*, one 'gang of fifty hoodlums' had arrived in a lorry before the screening, suggesting a premeditated campaign.[51] The Gaiety manager had, as highlighted, banned a 'gang' of girls, while the *Mirror* announced the Manchester disturbances via the headline 'Rock 'n' Roll Gang Move In.[52]

Considerations of Old and New in Press Explanations for the 'Riots'

Alongside such immediate reportage developed more extensive editorials and opinion-columns which attempted to explain the incidents, and within these could be found indications of the deeper social anxieties which Cohen believed underscored episodes of moral panic. Unsympathetic writers such as Perrick blamed the cult-like status which society had bestowed on teenagers, arguing that excessive public focus on their collective malaise was fuelling a culture of violence. Confident that readers were weary of such 'teenage twaddle', she took particular issue with the jargon-laden pronouncements of psychiatrists on 'the spontaneous combustion of flaming youth for ever seeking a means of self expression'. Perrick warned readers of 'the monster teenage cult' of America, where 'the unrepressed, uninhibited little dears,

having gone through R &R, rhythm 'n' blues, bop 'n' boogie, jive and jitterbug', could not ease their 'frustrations', and had now begun to indulge in 'organised gang warfare'. For Perrick, the solution was straightforward. 'If Rock 'n' Roll, Elvis Presley, Teddy Boy suits etc' could cause misbehaviour in a manner akin to 'alcohol', she argued, then they ought to be similarly 'restricted'.[53] *Daily Mail* commentary on both music and disturbances shared many of Perrick's concerns, but was often more blatant in its disgust. Like Perrick, Don Iddon, who lived in New York, held up the American example as a warning to Britons. The 'communicable disease' of rock 'n' roll had already 'infected so many American teenagers', declared Iddon, that authorities were now trying to censor its performers. The proceeding denunciation of rock 'n' roll as 'cannibalistic and tribalistic' was not, in fact, Iddon's own assessment, but that of American doctor Francis Braceland, who also apparently argued that the 'musical disease' of rock 'n' roll 'appeals to adolescent insecurity and [encourages] teenagers to [do] outlandish things like wearing zoot suits or ducktail haircuts'. Iddon was sympathetic to such views of a music style growing ever 'more suggestive', even 'pornographic'. The 'riots' which it apparently provoked could lead to 'jail' for many of its fans.[54] The following day, this theme was augmented by an equally notorious report on the 'deplorable and tribal' music from 'the jungle'.[55]

The serious press was somewhat more 'measured and level-headed' in its reactions, although its analyses often echoed many of the same motifs.[56] Remarking on the 'strange […] "rock 'n' roll" outburst', the *Guardian* wondered 'what rhythms are needed to set people dancing in […] a [cramped] cinema gangway […]? Perhaps it is a case for anthropologists to study, an echo in staider surroundings of tribal dances to the drum.'[57] A detailed consideration of the first Manchester disturbances gratuitously described the dancers as resembling 'savages drunk with coconut wine at a tribal sacrifice'. The apparent links between dangerous sexuality and rock 'n' roll, already causing concern in America, were also highlighted. 'The rhythm of the music suggests […] what "rock 'n' roll" is about. Indeed the meaning of the slang words would horrify most parents more than the behaviour of the children.'[58] Such reportage seems to link the 'riots' to a various social anxieties, from neuroses connected to racial and sexual issues to questions of national identity in relation to the growing might of the United States.

Regarding the latter, the precise impact of the United States upon British reactions to rock 'n' roll is debatable. Versions of the 'cinema riots' certainly occurred in America, with news stories highlighting considerable violence during such episodes. However, similar incidents developed in other countries, including Denmark and Germany, and outraged authorities often responded with stringent sanctions.[59] The temptation to perceive these condemnatory

adult reactions as a transnational generational stance is considerable, and Linda Martin and Kerry Seagrave, in their study of the 'opposition' to popular music, certainly perceive events in this way.[60] Nevertheless, a sense of 'British' perspective did emerge from press coverage. Although Iddon and Perrick used American examples to bolster their condemnations of rock 'n' roll, they did not believe that the British situation would reach such extremes.[61] Responding to young correspondents who had criticized his initial 'TNT' report as 'utterly stupid […] rot', emanating from a man who was '[t]oo old at 44' to appreciate the music, Iddon re-emphasized the 'dangerous alliance between the Rock 'n' Roll extremists and the teenage terror gangs' in cities like New York, but nonetheless conceded that it was unlikely to reach such levels in Britain.[62]

The embracing of rock 'n' roll still clearly represented, for some, another worrying manifestation of the allure of American culture for so many British youngsters.[63] Recent scholarship on this subject deploys more sophisticated models which stress ambivalence and contradiction, rather than a polarized impression of either unilateral hostility or unquestioning absorption, in British reactions to American culture. The development of transatlantic mutuality and 'peculiarities of cultural exchange' have also been explored.[64] Nevertheless, as Brian Ward has argued, British people during this period were frequently inclined to view their own culture as morally superior to that of the United States.[65] This also frequently extended to matters of race relations. Although comparisons between rock 'n' roll and alleged 'jungle music' or 'tribal rhythms' abounded – conductor Sir Malcolm Sargent's declaration that the music effectively constituted 'an exhibition of primitive tom-tom thumping' appeared in various reports – such ideas were, largely, expressed quite flippantly, and, despite their insensitivity, usually avoided specifically targeting particular ethnic groups.[66] Dick Bradley suggests that, on the whole, the racism of British reactions to rock 'n' roll was not as intense as that which developed in America.[67] Others disagree; Hilary Moore links objections to jazz in post–World War I Britain to perceived threats to white supremacy posed by imperial decline.[68] However, for Mica Nava, while racism was undoubtedly present in 1950s Britain, it 'had no settled connotations' as yet.[69] Lacking the immediate, defining context of segregation or racial politics which faced Americans in the late 1950s (while incidents of serious violence, such as the 1958 Notting Hill riots, must be acknowledged, there was, nevertheless, no direct equivalent of white supremacist Asa Carter, who expressly targeted US rock 'n' roll performances) racialized sentiments related to rock 'n' roll, though undoubtedly present, tended to be expressed in a looser, more generalized fashion in Britain.[70] Fundamentally, it appears that ideas of 'savagery' were largely utilized, albeit carelessly, to articulate deeper but broader concerns about the behaviour of young Britons – the fear that, with the help

of 'the primitive beat' of rock 'n' roll, and, amid a culture which focused so intensely on them for good or ill, they were growing out of control, sexually and socially. This, ultimately, seemed one of the deepest underlying fears of the commentators as they expressed their concerns, not only via racial or class-based language but also via the comparisons which they made between their situation and that of America. Different 'strands' emerged in the discourse, but arguably the most fundamental concern remained for the future stability of society, and the threats which youthful licence might pose to this.

Press reactions to these incidents certainly reiterated older sociocultural fears surrounding unruly youth and delinquent subcultures. As Bartie highlights, however jarringly novel commentators believed such incidents to be, there were usually precedents to influence the reportage. It could nonetheless be argued that certain novel 'variations' on the older 'themes' did appear in reportage in 1956 – this was particularly the case regarding the manner in which rock 'n' roll itself was described and discussed. In some respects, in fact, rock 'n' roll and its 'rhythms' were more than simply the 'soundtrack' to these disturbances; if one wishes to explore these incidents through the 'moral panic' lens, then rock 'n' roll, alongside teenagers and Teddy Boys, almost seems an additional 'folk devil' in its own right. So pervasive in press coverage was the idea that the music represented an active agent of unrest, hypnotizing and corrupting the youngsters, ultimately it was as extensively blamed for the troubles as were any of the human players. The broader social anxieties which the newspapers reflected as they responded to the incidents were, thus, accompanied, and boosted, by concerns which focused on rock 'n' roll itself, and on the peculiar powers which it allegedly possessed.

'Rock 'n' roll' was not, of course, a particularly well-established term in Britain at this time. The extensive scholarly debates over its musicological foundations attest to its highly fluid character.[71] However, in 1956, the British press considered itself entrusted with the task of explaining and contextualizing it for its audience, and of demonstrating how, and why, it had become so fundamental to the disturbances. Despite the academic disagreements over rock 'n' roll, in many popular accounts today its novelty and fresh, innovative character for young 1950s listeners are almost taken for granted, due principally to the fond recollections of those who were teenagers at that time. Less concerned with musicological debate, such individuals principally associated the term with the exciting freedoms of youth, and this idea remains prominent in the public domain today.

However, although the intensive focus on rock 'n' roll during the cinema incidents did represent a novel thread within an older tapestry of social anxieties, and while press coverage in 1956 repeatedly sensationalized the music as a disturbing new departure, it must equally be stressed that, paradoxically,

when reporters discussed the phenomenon in detail they also increasingly emphasized that, musically, it was anything but innovative. As Sargent was quoted as remarking, in the course of his 'tom-tom thumping' dismissal of the music, 'The amazing thing about rock 'n' roll is that youngsters […] believe that there is something new and wonderful about [it].' This, he believed, was far from true. '"Rock 'n' roll" has been played in the jungle for centuries.'[72] Others attempted greater musicological precision as they assessed its roots, while acknowledging that this was not a straightforward enterprise. Ultimately, many decided that the music was essentially a variant of jazz, and it was when it was related to this established musical style that the contradictory concept of rock 'n' roll as something simultaneously old *and* new was particularly emphasized in the press.[73] Jazz itself had no shortage of definitions or generic variants, and by the postwar period in Britain it had become a richly eclectic entity, encompassing everything from the melodic 'swing' sounds of the Ted Heath or Jack Hylton Orchestras to the complexities of 'modernism' and the upbeat nostalgia of New Orleans–style 'revivalism'.[74] 'Jazz', as the writer and musician Steve Race remarked, 'is a word which means something different to each person.'[75] Certain 'prettified' British jazz variants had developed post World War I, partially in response to fears relating to the 'American' (and often specifically the African American) roots of the genre.[76] However, as Peter Bailey highlights, British jazz musicians in the interwar period were 'likely both to proclaim and disclaim' their links to American styles.[77] Furthermore, George McKay has demonstrated the inherent, distinctive cosmopolitanism of British jazz, as it was shaped not only by American influences, but also by European and global styles.[78]

It was certainly not unreasonable for the papers to perceive rock 'n' roll as a form of jazz. In the broadest sense, both genres shared cultural roots, and both were fundamentally defined by dynamic rhythms. Furthermore, jazz musicians had made particularly significant contributions to the earliest development of rock 'n' roll in Britain.[79] Before the British tours of American acts, or the emergence of young British performers, such as Tommy Steele or Cliff Richard, certain enterprising British jazzmen – such as Tony Crombie and Art Baxter – recognized the value of styling themselves as rock 'n' rollers.[80] Performers like these seemed to satisfy a public hunger for live rock 'n' roll before the British scene was fully established. They were, however, greatly aided by the musical ambiguities of rock 'n' roll; Crombie later remarked on the 'irony' of the fact that his band remained, effectively, a 'swinging' jazz outfit, performing just as it had done while working for (jazz bandleader) Ronnie Scott, while consciously 'trading on the rock 'n' roll fever' by refashioning its image.[81] Similarly, as the press observed, Lionel Hampton blended rock 'n' roll numbers into his jazz sets when he visited Britain, to the excitement of young

fans.[82] Some reporters, such as the *Mirror*'s Patrick Doncaster, or Kenneth Allsop, who reviewed jazz records for the *Mail* at this time, were aware of the rock 'n' roll dalliances of jazzmen like Crombie and Hampton, and could thus observe the ostensible links between the two genres.[83] Jazz had certainly gained in popularity since the war, and by the early 1950s it had become 'the pop music of the day', with considerable youth appeal.[84] Indeed, only a year prior to the cinema disturbances, a *Mirror* feature on British teenage culture had stressed the centrality of music identified as 'jazz' to their world, thereby highlighting another potential strand of continuity between the styles.[85]

However, some of those journalists who appreciated jazz frequently shuddered at such linkages. Anthony Sampson, writing for the Sunday *Observer* on the cinema disturbances, remarked that, while 'South London teenagers' were clearly enthralled by the 'mysterious' qualities of rock 'n' roll, deeming it 'different from the old jazz […] to the jazz experts its pedigree is dull and not very respectable'. Sampson explored the origins of the 'rough mongrel' music, but ultimately deemed it 'a naked, aggressive type of jazz which most jazz pundits despise'.[86] In a piece on the British jazz saxophonist Johnny Dankworth, Allsop reassured those who feared that 'the battle for better music [was being …] lost to the Rock 'n' Roll ravers' ('that lunatic beat which has all the subtlety of a cave-man slugging his mate') should be 'hearten[ed]' by the arrival of Dankworth, who proved that 'the course of true jazz runs cheeringly smooth'.[87] As Allsop knew, British jazz was undergoing a vital transition in this period, developing as an outlet for intellectualism as its status as an 'art form' – music for serious, intent listening – began, at least partially, to supersede its former 'social function' as an 'accompaniment for dancing'.[88] Since the war, the jazz world had also been intensely 'faction[al]', with rivalries emerging between practitioners of the 'traditional' revivalist sound of Ken Colyer or Chris Barber, and the supporters of the modernism of Dankworth or Ronnie Scott.[89] In 1958, David Boulton noted the continuing survival of both stylistic variants in Britain, so that 'we must think not of one but of two jazzes; therefore not of one but of two futures'.[90] Nevertheless, such diversity also contributed to a rich dynamism within the scene. Speculating on the future of jazz, Boulton hoped for further diversification, but he criticized performers who had 'turned to the craze [of rock 'n' roll] as a golden opportunity for making a little money', thereby causing a temporary 'slump' for jazz.[91] His work suggests that, for all its possibilities, jazz had reached a critical crossroads, with potential for development and decline equally apparent. Allsop's column on Dankworth certainly conveyed similar anxieties that his beloved jazz, having progressed so far, might be tainted by association with rock 'n' roll and pushed into a regressive position if commentators continued to link the genres together. As Roberta Freund Schwartz demonstrates, these anxieties

also emerged in the more specialist British music publications – including *Melody Maker*, which had been reporting on the jazz and dance-band scene since 1926 – highlighting deeper fears that 'crude' rock 'n' roll would undermine jazz and, indeed, blues music, for which a growing British specialist audience was also developing.[92]

The cultural validity of jazz was, however, not universally accepted, and the term still carried negative connotations in less enthusiastic quarters. Older readers would no doubt remember the controversy surrounding this genre in prewar press coverage, and so to contextualize rock 'n' roll in this way, once again, created links, indirectly, with older sociocultural anxieties.[93] During the interwar period, as different variants of jazz music accompanied novel dance-trends, which often necessitated greater 'physical contact' between couples, consternation about the moral integrity of both the music and its associated dances was frequently expressed by 'a vocal minority of clergy, social commentators, intellectuals and journalists'.[94] Highlighting, in particular, the manner in which 'moral and aesthetic critiques' merged in 1920s press reports linking 'youth crime' to the 'dancing craze [accompanying] adapted jazz "melodies" ', Martin Cloonan argues that '[b]y the time that rock 'n' roll had arrived the press had a long tradition to draw upon'.[95] Rock 'n' roll was, thus, perceived in some quarters as a novel manifestation of an already disreputable form of music.[96] For one *Express* reporter, rock 'n' roll constituted 'a weird and disturbing new form of jazz', and, for another, 'primitive, hotted-up jazz music'.[97] Don Iddon referred to 'the musical eccentricity' which was rock 'n' roll as 'super jived-up jazz'.[98] A condemnatory letter on rock 'n' roll from a military captain which featured in the Scottish *Daily Mail* straightforwardly conflated it with 'barbaric' jazz.[99]

Ultimately, therefore, the relationship of rock 'n' roll to jazz was perceived in different ways by press commentators, depending on their own musical tastes and levels of expertise, but the discussions of this subject generally led towards further condemnation of the ostensibly younger musical style. Jazz aficionados scorned it for corrupting their beloved music, while more conservative and perhaps less musically inclined reporters deployed the term 'jazz' almost instinctively, as they recalled the era in which this music had been denounced for its licentious connotations. Remembering the earlier disreputability of jazz, such critics accordingly, and readily, drew parallels with the newcomer rock 'n' roll. These variations in the discourse certainly highlight the transitional, dynamic cultural status of jazz in Britain at this point in the 1950s – but seldom were the conclusions drawn particularly favourable as far as the musical integrity or quality of rock 'n' roll were concerned.

Generally seeing little artistic merit in the genre, reporters frequently found themselves stressing its status as yet another facet of youth-driven

commercialism. Shortly before the disturbances were reported, Patrick Doncaster commented on the impact which rock 'n' roll was making in America, and attempted to attain suitable 'perspective[s]' on the trend, in anticipation of Crombie's forthcoming British tour. 'This stimulating rhythm […] is not new', he observed, 'but it has been taken up commercially', principally for 'teenagers'. 'The kids want it', so its success was assured. Doncaster's own opinion on the music at this point was not positive; the reporter, a keen jazz pianist, declared it 'about as musical as the flushing of a sewer' and hoped that it would not linger in Britain.[100] The music was, however, already generating great prosperity for the transatlantic record industry, and, as the *Guardian* later reported, despite having 'caused riots', the low-budget *Rock Around the Clock* appeared set to become 'the producers' biggest foreign-market money-maker'.[101] For Anthony Sampson, meanwhile, the music was 'frankly, and triumphantly, commercial'.[102] Thus, although some reporters took somewhat more care than others in attempting to understand the phenomenon, overall, the journalistic consensus appeared to be that, despite its sensational reception in cinemas, the genre was, at best, little more than a vulgar distant relation to jazz, and of negligible significance. Ultimately a 'craze' or a marketing ploy, a crude rehashing of old styles, it was seldom considered a worthwhile musical form.

Diminishing, or even dismissing outright, the musical validity of rock 'n' roll allowed some reporters to promote the argument that it was fundamentally a source of unrest even more vehemently. Some acknowledged that, if rock 'n' roll did possess any distinctive features, its 'rhythm' and 'driving beat' must be the most significant of these. Indeed, the suggestion, implicit in the *Mirror*'s early definition of rock 'n' roll as 'the latest dance rhythm from America', that the genre *was*, rather than *had*, a rhythm, was frequently repeated, whether by accident or design.[103] 'It's rhythm for young people', the paper declared on 1 September, while quoting a psychiatrist who suggested that this was 'music stripped bare – a persistent, insistent beat, the essence of primitive music'.[104] Bandleader and *Express* columnist Cyril Stapleton had, similarly, suggested that the music '[was] a stomping, emotional rhythm'.[105] Whatever musical niceties it possessed were subordinate to its all-consuming, 'obvious' beat.[106] However, it was, frequently, this very 'rhythm' which was seen to be its most dangerous quality. Those who misbehaved in cinemas were frequently deemed 'rhythm-crazy' or 'rhythm-drunk', incited, almost against their will, to 'riot' by the 'beat'.[107] The cult-like status of this 'beat' was established via such descriptions of the 'rioters' as 'rock devotees', 'rhythm-crazed youngsters' or 'rock addicts', and the *Guardian* reporter who had likened the youngsters to 'savages drunk with coconut wine' declared that he had observed a policeman 'shak[ing]'

some of the miscreants in order to expunge 'the spirit of the "rock" '.[108] The frequently quoted opinion of the bishop of Woolwich, expressed in a letter to the *Times*, that 'the hypnotic rhythm' and 'wild' qualities of the music had a 'maddening' effect on young enthusiasts was certainly extensively explored by the papers.[109] Shortly after the disturbances were first reported, the *Mirror* (increasingly developing a reputation for arresting publicity 'stunts') organized an experimental 'rock 'n' roll party' to which it invited diverse guests – including a vicar, 'three young typists', a psychiatrist and 'four teenage boys' discovered on a street corner (this final group was highlighted meaningfully via italics). The purpose of the 'party' was to discern 'what […] this music really do[es] to people'; as the records began, 'feet were tapping […] heads jerking to the jungle beat'. 'You can't sit down to this music', one of the girls declared. This idea of 'the jungle beat' causing listeners to lose self-control clearly piqued the interest of Tony Miles and Patrick Doncaster, the *Mirror* reporters who arranged the 'party', and it permeated their coverage of the event. One of the teenage boys recalled seeing some of his peers 'really carried away' in the cinemas; although he found this absurd, and insisted that the music 'wouldn't make [him] go round hitting people', clearly such ideas were sufficiently persuasive to some reporters to merit such suggestive exploration.[110]

Almost inseparable from concerns about the rhythms of rock 'n' roll was the intense press focus on the physical movements which youngsters had performed. These seemed, at times, to be considered as dangerous as any of the more overt violence which was reported. While at times this movement was described as uncontrollably 'savage', in keeping with commentary on the 'jungle' origins of the music ('ranting and raving', 'writhing and screaming'), it was most frequently described as 'jiving', perhaps to establish a more contemporary image, or to remind audiences that this particular form of dance was, in itself, hardly uncontroversial.[111] Coverage of the 'riots' typically highlighted two types of misdemeanour – the public displays of dancing, both within and outside the cinemas, and often accompanied by 'shouting' or 'singing'; and the more serious incidences of vandalism and violence. However, there was a tendency, among some reporters, not to distinguish among such behaviours. As James Nott suggests, '[L]inks were made [during these incidents] between youth, dance, and uncontrolled behaviour.'[112] The *Mirror* revealed, in one of its liveliest reports on the incidents, that young people in the Gaiety Cinema had 'overwhelmed a police squad […] jived in the aisles, fought a hosepipe battle, and later surged through the city streets throwing fireworks'.[113] Once again, the act of 'jiv[ing] in the aisles' seemed every bit as disorderly as the rest. Suggestions that powerfully rhythmic music could provoke unnatural enchantment were certainly, as Nott suggests, 'well-rehearsed' by this

time – once again linked to fears, expressed particularly strongly during the interwar 'jazz age', concerning young people's unhealthily excessive enjoyment of dance.[114] Anxieties about 'dangerous' rock 'n' roll became increasingly intense in America, where the 'African big beat' was blamed for arousing 'uncontrollable sexual urges in unsuspecting young people'.[115] While early British responses to the 'beat' seemed less intense, milder variants of these arguments did appear in some reports. When placed alongside the contemporary fears of delinquency and social chaos, the notion of the harmful 'beat' seemed ever more a frightening departure from the norm – a jarring, unwelcome symbol of a dangerous new culture, and the reportage of the papers on rock 'n' roll frequently reflected this. There were, in fact, many occasions on which the status of rock 'n' roll as a musical term was submerged altogether in the coverage.[116] When reporters wrote of 'rock 'n' roll gangs', 'rock 'n' roll youngsters' or 'rock 'n' roll riots' – perhaps especially in headlines, where, as Angela Smith and Michael Higgins note, there is a heightened need to create something eye-catching, 'pithy and attractive' for the readership – they were using the musical term, somewhat sensationally, principally for the images of social malaise which it could readily evoke.[117] Observing the American 'teenpix' industry of the 1950s, which specialized in sensationalist films about delinquent youth, Peter Stanfield notes that terms such as 'rock 'n' roll generation', when used in the publicity for such films, represented 'no more than a sensational and highly topical tag upon which to build an advertising campaign for what [were] essentially […] social problem pictures'. Rock 'n' roll music per se did not always feature in the films, but clearly the term was already laden with eye-catchingly controversial connotations.[118] Ultimately, like 'Teddy Boys', rock 'n' roll became, in some British press reports, scarcely more than an arresting, alliterative label synonymous with jarring social disorder and postwar upheaval. As Smith and Higgins suggest, newspaper headlines depend 'on a reader and writer sharing background knowledge of a phrase's or text's earlier use, and carrying this knowledge into the current use'.[119] 'Rock 'n' roll' very rapidly developed such a familiarity, or notoriety, in late 1956, within both press and public circles.

Conclusion

Clearly, therefore, press coverage of the 1956 cinema incidents, both serious and popular, contained many of the essential elements of 'moral panic' as originally identified by Stanley Cohen. In their demonization of 'Teddy Boys', 'teenage gangs' and, indeed, rock 'n' roll itself, their exaggerated language, and their inclination to rationalize the incidents by relating them to various deeper social anxieties, the press augmented established fears concerning

juvenile delinquency, reiterated and further developed older concerns about the corrupting power of particular musical genres and anticipated the manner in which, some seven years later, they would respond to a similar perceived youth 'crisis' in the shape of the confrontations between Mods and Rockers. The assertions of commentators like Pete Frame that the newspapers played a key collective role in generating negative attitudes towards rock 'n' roll were certainly not groundless.

Chapter 2

BEYOND 'MORAL PANIC': ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON THE PRESS AND SOCIETY

Introduction

While 'moral panic' clearly provides a useful tool with which to explore the 1956 cinema incidents, there are, inevitably, limits to the extent to which such a model can be used to explain, entirely, a particular incident or situation. The interests and perspectives of sociologists and historians will naturally differ in the manner in which they interpret particular social circumstances; additionally, as Jock Young himself pointed out, both he and Cohen were influenced by the radical sociocultural discourses of the late 1960s. The 'new generation of sociologists became', he argues, 'advocates for the emerging subcultures of youth and fierce critics of […] the various agents of social control'.[1] Generational affiliation, thus, informed their judgements of the situations which they examined, and their work, although retaining relevance today, was also a product of the era in which it was written.[2] Subsequent scholars, while still finding much value in the concept of 'moral panic', have endeavoured to question and update it in various respects, offering additional readings of social situations which do not necessarily contradict the original concept wholesale, but which allow other interpretations to run alongside and intermingle with it, and, where appropriate, supersede it.[3] This chapter reconsiders the validity of 'moral panic' interpretations outlined in the previous chapter by widening its perspectives on the press coverage of the 1956 episodes – first, by assessing the manner in which society and the wider public responded to the reports, and second, by analysing the more tonally varied coverage which appeared in the various papers even as the disturbances were ongoing. While it is difficult to draw unilateral or definitive conclusions concerning such variations, they may be explained as much by the nature of the newspaper business at this time as by any significant wholesale shifts in press or public understanding of rock 'n' roll.

Gauging Public Reactions to the 'Riots'

Scholars have frequently tried to gauge just how deeply moments of apparent moral panic affect society. To what extent, and in what ways, do the anxieties engendered by the 'panic' take root? Cohen himself recognized that such episodes can be fleeting, and need not make a deep imprint on society. This was not a requirement for a moral panic, although his examination of the manner in which legal and societal authorities branded and later dealt with the key 'folk devils' during the Mods and Rockers incidents certainly suggested a pattern of (often harsh) reaction which might inform future responses. Yet Richard Grayson found little evidence that the responses from authorities had been profoundly altered by the episodes. He shows that, despite widespread media coverage of the seaside clashes, neither of the principal political parties advised tackling 'hooliganism' repressively or legislatively, preferring to advocate more holistic, family-based solutions.[4] David Fowler notes that this apparently 'low-key' government reaction towards the Mods and Rockers was 'nothing new'; a similar disinclination to adopt harsh legal measures to deal with Teddy Boys had been demonstrated in the 1950s.[5]

Equally crucial has been assessment of public reactions both to the 1956 incidents and to their depiction in the press. Again, Cohen did not assume that public support for media-generated moral panic was a necessity; while some consternation about the incidents was evident, it was also the case that some of his interviews with the public in 1964 actually highlighted a 'credibility gap' between press and public, and he noted the 'overwhelmingly critical, if not hostile' response which many exhibited towards the media for its depiction of the incidents.[6] Chas Critcher equally asserts that incidents of moral panic do not (contrary to the assumptions of those who conflate the term with mass hysteria) require public support for their development. 'The media neither reflect nor create public opinion; they construct it.'[7] Nevertheless, Angela McRobbie and Sarah Thornton feel that much moral panic literature tends to under-explore the wider societal reactions to particular incidents. Moral panic, they argue, can too easily become 'a metaphor which depicts a complex society as a single person who experiences sudden fear about its virtue'.[8] There is a danger that public reactions can either be ignored, or simply assumed to be broadly in line with – or, indeed, inexorably influenced by – those of political and media authorities. Undoubtedly, public responses can reveal much to scholars about the extent to which such incidents affected society, and about how people viewed the stories promoted by the papers which they continued to buy so avidly during this period.

Precisely because the 1956 cinema incidents represented the first occasion on which rock 'n' roll received extensive public attention in Britain, and because

of the 'narrative' of generational disunity which has persistently surrounded these incidents in popular memory, it is particularly helpful to follow the advice of McRobbie and Thornton and consider, in detail, the nature of the public reaction to the often-alarmist newspaper coverage in 1956. Considerable outrage was, predictably, expressed in some quarters. A Glasgow man declared that the 'fifth-rate music' that was rock 'n' roll inevitably 'appeal[ed] to […] moronic youths' who would be bound to cause disturbances 'even if […] hymns' were performed.[9] A Manchester resident, meanwhile, believed that the cinema 'scenes' represented 'a terrible indictment' of modern times, and that those who had participated ought to receive 'medical treatment'. The film itself was, he added, 'utter rubbish'.[10] Even more doom-laden views of rock 'n' roll were expressed at times. 'These salacious vibrations', one man opined, might overthrow Christianity if they were allowed to proliferate.[11] However, such overblown expressions of disapproval were not typical. Responses to the situation could, equally, be benign and generous, and inclined to distrust press depictions of the cinema incidents. One man declared that the 'rock 'n' roll disturbances' simply bespoke the exuberance of youth; these were 'natural, healthy, and precious phenomena' which older people ought to celebrate.[12] Meanwhile, a 39-year-old mother of four argued that 'rock 'n' roll criticism' had been grossly overstated; she, however, found the music 'most entertaining'.[13] Voices of support from within the entertainment industry also emerged, to counterbalance the strident criticisms of figures such as Sir Malcolm Sargent. Jan Ralfini, former musical director of the London Palladium, endorsed the music, believing that appreciation of its qualities could easily traverse generational boundaries. 'Young and old, even the musicians, anyone hearing it just can't sit still.' He believed that such a desire to dance had been 'missing for a long time'. Ralfini, an experienced show-business veteran, strongly disputed the idea that the music was dangerous.[14]

Many members of the public seemed quite capable of perceiving, for themselves, the parallels between the rock 'n' roll press reports and earlier incidents which had involved rhythmic music and dancing. However, although such continuity had intensified condemnation in some quarters, it could equally become a means of attaining suitable perspectives on the events in question. A London woman located a press report of a 1938 Benny Goodman concert in which youngsters were described as 'writhing, grunting and dancing […] in the aisles'. 'So', she wondered, were the 'rock 'n' roll kids' so far removed from 'their parents […] the swing kids of 1938?'[15] Youth work specialist Dr Josephine Macalister Brew, automatically linking rock 'n' roll to the dancing which accompanied it, believed that it could be compared favourably to older trends, suggesting that it was not 'any more dangerous […] than the Charleston', which she remembered her siblings performing, and 'certainly

not as vulgar as the "Black Bottom" of that time'.[16] Similarly blending considerations of music and accompanying dance, Mrs M. Wakefield, president of the National Council of Women, declaring that the vilification of youngsters 'ma[de her] rather sick', believed that there was 'no harm' in rock 'n' roll dancing. Indeed, she considered 'country dances' to have been 'worse' than anything which had been recently reported.[17] Such comparisons were certainly interesting – not merely for their reasonable stances, but also for their articulation of what precisely they believed had been deemed problematic and jarring about rock 'n' roll by the press and other detractors. Its links to dancing and public displays of excitement figured most prominently in such reactions, but emphasizing that such behaviour was not new allowed these commentators to defuse the sense of alarm which surrounded the recent events.

Furthermore, any impression that the reading public absorbed, wholesale, the stories recounted by their newspapers was quickly dispelled by the extent to which people were inclined to blame the press for stirring up further trouble by weaving overblown narratives around the incidents (just as, according to Cohen, readers would do in response to the Mods and Rockers incidents). Many observers in 1956 argued that if the papers stopped reporting on the disturbances, they would surely cease. 'The press are offering a challenge to the Teddy Boys' via such extensive coverage, declared an official from the Cinema Exhibitors' Association, who believed that reports had been exaggerated.[18] A 17-year-old boy who appeared in court over his participation in the incidents equally believed that the press had encouraged further trouble by producing 'over-colourful' accounts of what had actually occurred. He had attended an early, largely uneventful, Manchester screening, but the subsequent reports which described the manager being sprayed by fire hoses had, he believed, encouraged further antagonism. 'No one in their right senses would behave like that.'[19] Individual adults who declared that they had actually attended the film, rather than simply reading about it, also offered perspectives which contrasted considerably with the generalized sensationalism of the reports. A Putney resident who had seen the film '[o]ut of curiosity' certainly agreed that the production was of inferior quality overall. However, 'the music and dancing' had thrilled him to the extent that he had been able to forgo his indigestion medication. It was also observed that, despite a heavy police presence, the young audience, many members of which had attended the screenings several times, watched the film quite placidly. Ultimately, he believed that the film had presented a much-needed challenge to a 'stale and stuffy' British society.[20]

These diverse reactions to the incidents, expressed in such a range of ways, may certainly be tentatively perceived as brief but revealing glimpses into the complexity of social attitudes during the late 1950s. The responses also show

that individuals were quite capable of creating their own interpretations, not only of what appeared to be happening in cinemas, but also of press interpretations of such occurrences. An image of a public which refused to be duped by newspaper 'hype', and remained rather suspicious of sensationalist reporting, certainly emerges, and readily challenges the straightforward assumption that rock 'n' roll triggered any widespread public concern. Despite the anti-press feeling which Cohen had discerned during the Mods and Rockers incidents, people nevertheless continued to buy newspapers avidly during this period, often displaying great loyalty and affection towards their favourite titles. Enjoyment of a paper did not automatically require unquestioning absorption or acceptance of its entire contents, however.[21] Measuring how precisely the public 'read' their newspapers – in terms of how they interpreted materials presented to them, or the influence of coverage on their viewpoints – certainly poses considerable logistical problems for scholars.[22] Nevertheless, a 1948 Mass Observation report on newspaper readership demonstrated that, even when they expressed fondness for a particular publication, individuals could still form independent, and frequently quite critical, viewpoints on the bias or reliability of its contents.[23] This clearly remained the case into the mid-1950s.

What must equally be recognized, however, is that all of the reactions and responses detailed above were, in fact, printed by the newspapers themselves, either via 'letters to the editor' or as extensive quotations within reports and commentaries. This very fact necessitates a note of caution; as Adrian Bingham emphasizes, 'It is impossible to tell whether letters [in newspapers] have been edited, altered, or even invented', and assessing whether 'the balance of opinion on the letters page accurately reflects the balance of all letters received' presents considerable difficulties. Nevertheless, analysing letters and public viewpoints printed within newspapers is not without value – not least because, as Bingham notes, they 'reveal the views that editors wanted to see voiced in the paper's columns'.[24] In this respect, evidently most of the major national papers were prepared to depict a fairly balanced and varied viewpoint via the letters which they published during the 1956 disturbances.[25]

Furthermore, corroborating evidence of public reactions of a similar nature, both positive and negative, are reflected in other contemporary sources. A letter written by a resident of Bolton to the town's Watch Committee in early October 1956 first praises its members for 'ban[ning]' the 'rock & roll film', then proceeds to deliver a furious diatribe about the 'awful' 'goings-on' of 'youths, termed as teenagers – that silly name […] [W]hat they want is a good jailing, with 3 months hard labour, they get let off too easily.'[26] Prior to the banning, however, the town's Watch Committee received another more moderately worded letter, from the Education Committee of the Co-operative Society, which supported the local banning of the film, but declared that the

Committee was certain 'that the majority of young people in Bolton are quite capable of witnessing this film without indulging in stupid demonstrations'. They feared, however, that 'a minority of youngsters' might be affected by reported unrest elsewhere, and concluded that 'it is undesirable for this type of challenge to the good sense of young people to be permitted'.[27] Such a letter is, in itself, interesting not only as an important indication of how this 'crisis' was viewed in one particular location, but also because of the manner in which support for the banning was articulated by the committee. The tone was somewhat conservative in its underlying assumptions, but signs of a patent effort to be restrained and reasonable, and to trust the morals of local youth over more sweeping generational assumptions, are also discernible.

The debate about 'the rock 'n' roll film' also spread to other media. The question of whether Watch Committees had been justified in banning *Rock Around the Clock* was, according to Pete Frame, posed during an edition of a BBC radio panel discussion programme – most likely the edition of *Any Questions?* which was broadcast by the BBC Home Service on 18 September 1956.[28] According to Frame's account of the programme, while Liberal Party candidate Jeremy Thorpe recycled the argument that the music was primitive in its origins, and Conservative Sir Robert Boothby deplored the film and all that seemed associated with it, Labour's Emmanuel Shinwell, echoing the viewpoint of the Putney spectator, declared that the music constituted a bid for 'free[dom]' on the part of otherwise stifled youngsters, and their desire to enjoy themselves should not be repressed.[29] The contents of the letters and quoted opinions which appeared in the newspapers, thus, were echoed in discussions conducted in other spheres.

Furthermore, even if edited or doctored, the public opinions which appeared in newspapers still frequently offered a variety of reactions, and even, at times, put forth counterarguments to those expressed within the very papers in which they were published. This surely highlights another significant oversight of the original conception of moral panics, and particularly of its description of the role played by the press within such episodes – namely, that it can minimize or obscure not merely the diversity within the coverage, and the manner in which contrasting stances could be adopted simultaneously, but also the extent to which, collectively and individually, journalists and editors, like the reading public, frequently acknowledged the fact that there could be various explanations for incidents like these. Reappraising press responses to Teddy Boys during this period, Adrian Horn demonstrates that, while undoubtedly the newspapers did contribute considerably to public concern relating to this group, 'there *was* more neutral reporting'. Exploring coverage in the *Mirror* during the 1955–1956 period, Horn argues that 'the paper took a consistently balanced view' of the group in question; 'the tone of the

reporting was light-hearted and viewed Teddy Boys with the faint amusement usually reserved for British eccentrics.'[30] Press coverage of the 1956 cinema disturbances was, similarly, far from one-dimensional. Adrian Bingham argues that, while scholars should not 'ignore, minimise or excuse the undoubted viciousness' which the press has often exhibited towards certain minorities or subcultural groups (in this instance Bingham focuses on popular papers), 'there seems to be an almost wilful desire on the part of historians to ignore any sign of originality, complexity or progressive thought in popular newspapers'.[31] Such oversight has certainly extended to scholarly coverage of press reactions to the 1956 incidents, and to the music with which they became associated. However, a multiplicity of tones and stances was abundantly evident across the newspapers, both popular and 'highbrow'.

'Rhythm for Young People': Balanced Press Perspectives on the 1956 Incidents

While, as demonstrated, reportage in news columns often tended to be the most inflammatory, particularly in the popular press, more reflective editorials and commentaries would frequently attempt a balanced perspective, or at least highlight and explore various possible explanations for the incidents. Comparatively nuanced pieces appeared, such as the 'Special Correspondent' article published by the *Times* on 15 September, which began by expressly examining the idea that the much-discussed 'hypnotic rhythm' of rock 'n' roll had caused the 'disturbances', while acknowledging that 'not everyone [would] agree' with this notion. Contextual issues were outlined – including the fact that the film 'had been shown in nearly 300 cinemas' before any trouble emerged, and had been screened uneventfully in Glasgow and Sheffield (cities deemed by no means devoid of 'young potential troublemakers'). The author acknowledged that exaggeration of reportage, as well as news of similar incidents in America, could have contributed to the disturbances. This piece also offered thoughtful consideration of the location of these incidents; ' "audience participation" is bound to have some limits in a cinema', it suggested, even while entertaining the idea that such actions could be deemed 'legitimate' for a film of this nature. Rock 'n' roll might be considered a 'less tuneful' update on the public dancing craze which was instigated by the 1930s 'Lambeth Walk', but its showcasing in the 'unsuitable' surroundings of the cinema was considered unfortunate. It was noted, however, that radio and dance halls were increasingly catering to the tastes of young people, allowing them to express themselves more freely, either at home or in more suitable venues. The report did, nevertheless, endeavour to explore what *precisely* had occurred during these incidents, rather than simply

creating amorphous images of generalized misbehaviour. A commentary like this by no means straightforwardly supported either rock 'n' roll or its excited fans, and elitist undertones were detectable, but, in its measured attention to specific circumstances, it struck a reasonable note overall.[32] Rather more ebullient were the *Mirror*'s 'rock 'n' roll party' item and the broadly comparable exploration by the *Express* of 'this crazy summer's weirdest craze' – but both pieces, as eye-catching 'features' designed to debate contemporary ideas, nonetheless tried to showcase varied viewpoints on both the music and associated disturbances. The psychologist who attended the *Mirror*'s party argued that the music, although harmless for most, could potentially incite a boy to vandalism if he became sufficiently 'aroused'. However, the vicar attendee, after having been persuaded to dance to Haley's record, declared the music 'an exciting rhythm and enormous fun'. Insisting that he would commend the style to his parishioners, he observed, frankly, that '[i]t is a primitive rhythm, but the honest truth is that people are just as sensual and primitive as they ever were'; 'dancing' remained a particularly 'primitive' pastime for many. The article concluded that the 'rhythm for young people' could be 'fun', even if musically 'unendearing and monotonous'; however, its 'danger' lay in its potential to become 'a ready-made fuse' for potential troublemakers.[33] The *Express* 'analysis' on the 'day after the biggest Rock 'n' Roll riots' similarly asked various individuals, including some of its own columnists, a 'teenage secretary' and the obligatory psychiatrist, their views on the music (questions included whether or not the music represented 'frankly an appeal to basic sex instincts'). Again, opinions diverged greatly. 'Woman's editor [and] mother' Joy Matthews had loved the music, which had made her long to 'get rocking', and denied that it was harmful. However, columnist Tom Pocock suggested that the music 'br[ought] out the ape-man – or, rather, ape-boy' in its fans. The psychiatrist concurred that the music could negatively affect 'maladjusted' or 'primitive' people, but declared that he had enjoyed the film, 'particularly the dancing', and believed that the music had merely been an 'excuse' for troublemakers.[34] Ultimately, while the discussion remained partially couched in sensationalism, the report highlighted that only one out of the five people interviewed recommended banning the film. A range of views was still highlighted, and several opinions were not wholly one-dimensional. Even the notorious, outraged 'Rock 'n' Roll Babies' *Mail* piece, which was subsequently quoted by Dominic Sandbrook, among others, as evidence of the 'apocalyptic' perception which the paper (and, implicitly, much of society) held of the music, offered some revealing (and less widely cited) counterarguments in its second half.[35] 'To [use rock 'n' roll to] argue […] that our boys and girls are decadent or that the country is going to the dogs is ridiculous.' All individuals, the report argued, could feel 'the primitive

herd instinct', and should not, therefore, judge the behaviour of others. It was natural for youngsters to feel exhilarated amid such excitement; however, while contemporary youth was surely 'a grand generation', 'the discipline of work and service' was nonetheless required 'to knock the rock 'n' roll out of these babies'.[36] Degrees of disapproval, and of what Bingham and Conboy term 'a rhetoric of binarism', were, thus, in evidence.[37] Some commentators feared the music but not its exuberant fans, while others viewed the music as intrinsically harmless, but dangerous if placed in the 'wrong' young person's hands.

Rock 'n' Roll beyond the News: Making a 'Feature' of the Music

As this *Mail* article highlights, it was possible for reports to exhibit not merely a range of opinions, but also a variety of tones that could, at times, overlap and even contradict one another. 'Rock 'n' Roll Babies', with its almost jarring shift from inflamed outrage to measured support for the younger generation, exemplifies this particularly starkly, but the *Mirror*'s 'rock 'n' roll party' report seemed to exhibit similar tendencies towards a variant of what Eamonn Forde terms 'polyglottism' in its contents, maintaining the sense of social crisis which surrounded the music while simultaneously demonstrating that there was, nevertheless, 'fun' to be had from the situation.[38] The fact that this was a feature article, rather than a straightforward news report, allowed the writers more room for exploration, and this they did, in the flamboyant manner for which the *Mirror* had become renowned. The excitably 'with-it' preliminary title ('Well Dig, Dig, Dig, Let's Go!'), the arresting, prominent photograph of the smiling, jiving vicar and the unexpected cross-generational rapprochement conveyed by the descriptions of the disparate partygoers united by the compelling 'beat' maintained the reader's focus on the issues at stake, but dressed them in a light, even disarming, fashion. This was not the only occasion on which such multi-tonal coverage occurred in the *Mirror*; buried amid the edition of the paper which featured the sensationalist '1,000 Rock 'n' Roll Rioters' story was a shorter report, containing a photograph of a lithe jiving couple, on a film-screening at the Davis Theatre, Croydon. 'As the rhythm hotted up' and the couple danced, '[h]undreds of other youngsters […began …] yelling and tapping their feet'. However, the cinema manager reportedly remarked that, while the youngsters had 'really let themselves go', the atmosphere remained friendly and no misbehaviour was reported.[39] Beneath this story was an italicized indication that the '1,000 rioters' report could be read on page five of the same edition; no reconciliation of the disparate stances was attempted.

Similarly, when removed altogether from news-related coverage and placed in a much lighter portion of the newspaper's offerings, rock 'n' roll could assume an entirely different hue. On 19 September, the *Mirror*'s celebrated 'agony aunt' Marjorie Proops began her column with an anecdote about the 'strain' on 'her poor old feet' after she had 'd[one] a rock 'n' roll' with a younger partner. This anecdote segued into a reflection, not on the music or its associated problems, but on the difficulties faced by modern young women in finding a suitable husband.[40] Indeed, as it became apparent to the press in late 1956 that 'Teddy Boys' and working-class 'teenagers' were not the only British devotees of rock 'n' roll, both the *Mirror* and the *Mail* developed a particular fixation with the apparent appropriation of the music by the upper classes and members of the Royal Family. Once again, such features, presented even as the disturbances were ongoing, offered different-hued perspectives on the music and its social reception. Stories on lavish 'society' parties which featured rock 'n' roll appeared in both of these papers throughout autumn 1956 and beyond. One *Mirror* headline insisted that 'Rock 'n' Roll [had been played] At [the] Duke [of Kent]'s 21st Party', although the report itself mentioned that the party, attended by the Queen and Prince Philip, only featured one performance of 'Rock Around the Clock' by society bandleader Paul Adams and Orchestra.[41] Another, earlier, deftly presented item, 'Bill (Rock 'n' Roll) Haley Cables the Queen', had actually focused on the alleged *intention* of the singer to telegraph the monarch, following reports that she enjoyed his film. Beyond this section of the story were two further items, highlighted by bullet-points (or 'blobs', as the writer Keith Waterhouse described this stylistic 'round-up' reportage device much favoured by the *Mirror*), on disparate incidents of recent unrest – namely, the discovery of rock 'n' roll–related graffiti in Taunton, Somerset, and a rock 'n' roll 'riot' in New York.[42] This highlighting of the potential respectability of the music, while continuing to attract readers with further scandals, was typical of the bold style adopted by the *Mirror.* However, the paper had, as Robert Frost and John Allen observed, a keen understanding of 'the insatiable appetite' of the readership 'for details of its Royal Family', and ultimately made this, and the Queen's alleged love for Haley's music, the central attraction of the story.[43] The *Mail* seemed even more intensely fascinated by the appeal of rock 'n' roll to elite socialites. As Colin Seymour-Ure notes, while the *Mail* pursued its own distinctive news coverage, it also avidly purveyed 'chat and gossip, regaling readers with trivia about the great and famous'.[44] The 'Tanfield's Diary' gossip column increasingly highlighted the participation of upper-class youth in rock 'n' roll dances. This was not an unprecedented phenomenon – jazz, and other modern music and dance styles, had often featured at high-class parties in the interwar period, while vocalist and writer George Melly noted the extensive involvement of

upper-class musicians in postwar jazz ensembles.[45] Reporting on a 'U-class' party at Soho's Gargoyle Club in late September 1956, 'Tanfield' observed that 'the Rock 'n' Roll craze that set the Elephant and Castle stomping' had now 'hit the West End set with a bang' as some 20 dancers had participated in 'three aristocracy-round-the-clock' sessions. Bandleader Alan Kane, responding to a request for rock 'n' roll, played Haley numbers as the exclusive clientèle danced indefatigably. As the session ended, 'dishevelled couples were still beating time' – not unlike their rather less privileged counterparts in south-east London.[46] Certainly, in this instance, the club-owner declared that the incident would not be repeated, and other West End venues reportedly limited rock 'n' roll performances, sometimes in response to protests from older clients.[47] However, the column often observed the presence of rock 'n' roll at various prestigious functions, from the exuberant Chelsea Arts Club Ball to a New Year party at the Dorchester Hotel.[48] The apparent love of Princess Margaret for rock 'n' roll was repeatedly highlighted by the paper – 'dispell[ing]', as one reporter commented, 'any lingering doubts that rock 'n' roll is non-U' – and there was a growing fascination for unconventional young aristocratic rebels, such as Tony Moynihan or the Earl of Wharncliffe, who performed rock 'n' roll part-time.[49] By no means was all of the coverage of such stories predominantly fawning and subservient in tone. Bingham and Conboy note the steady 'ero[sion]', postwar, of the 'deference and restraint that characterised the popular press's coverage of monarchy and celebrity'.[50] The *Mirror* was not, apparently, afraid to question the privilege of the aristocracy (with the upper classes, usually 'charm[ed]' by Hugh Cudlipp, proving that they were 'equally good at showing they could take a joke').[51] Meanwhile, Barry Norman, who became deputy writer of the Tanfield Column when he joined the *Mail* in the late 1950s, considered the material which he (and most gossip writers) presented – albeit 'pretty innocuous' by modern standards – to be frequently '[s]nide' and '[p]rurient', often highlighting occasions where the 'great and good, or at least the richer and better known than us' became subjects of gossip.[52] Undoubtedly there was an undertone of disapproval for the activities of the 'rock 'n' roll earls', and the exuberance of the aristocratic partygoers was noted. However, the placement of these stories in such gossip columns, or within entertainment or 'softer' news items, meant that they were generally framed to suit such a placement in the paper, and reported on as instances of glamorous (if uninhibited) socializing, rather than through the 'social problem' framework adopted in instances where the participants were 'teenagers' or 'Teddy Boys'. As A. C. H. Smith highlights, '[T]raditional newspaper categories – front-page news story, feature, woman's page, gossip, sport, leader column – represent on-going schemes of interpretation', and '[b]y situating an event within one or another of these categories, a newspaper signifies

to its readers where it considers the event to "belong", in what context it is to be understood.'[53] While double standards may have been in operation in some cases, such upper-class 'counter-narratives' concerning British rock 'n' roll demonstrated that coverage of the music, even in this formative era, had multiple dimensions, and several possible natural 'homes', within the papers. Rock 'n' roll, thus, appeared in various contexts, and the editors saw no reason to explain such apparent contradictions.

'Paper Voices' and Popular Music

In some respects, such tonal variation could be explained, if not wholly by an honest desire for balance and integrity of coverage, then at least partially by the journalistic need to ensure that what readers would deem most attractive would remain uppermost. By this point, the *Mirror* had firmly established its famously distinctive approach; with its vivid front pages, arresting headlines and a journalistic style which aimed to inform yet entertain its readers, the paper was patently unafraid to promote sensationalist reporting as a valuable tool in its own right.[54] As Hugh Cudlipp remarked in 1953, 'Sure [the paper] is sensational, and it is proud of being sensational.'[55] That readers admitted to enjoying such coverage, while remaining fully aware that it was often deliberately setting out to scandalize or provoke them, was highlighted in the postwar Mass Observation readership surveys.[56] The *Mirror* developed its own particularly distinctive method of presenting such stories, but, as Jean Chalaby highlights, competitors such as the *Mail*, while acquiring a 'respectable' demeanour, had also long acknowledged the power of sensationalist coverage as a 'means of attract[ing] readers'.[57] It, too, 'revitalized' its image in the 1930s, adopting a more 'readable' typeface and 'attractive' layout.[58] Despite its longstanding association with the 'preoccupations of the respectable middle classes', the *Mail* also recognized that greater deployment of shock tactics might help to boost circulation figures in an era of intensifying competition.[59]

Indeed, the need to outflank competitors effectively drove the papers, and particularly the popular press, during this precarious 'hire-and-fire' era. Derek Lambert, who began his journalistic career with the *Mirror* in 1953, recalled the thrill inherent in the 'primitive excitement of pulling off an exclusive to the chagrin of your competitors'.[60] Ensuring that one's own newspaper retained primary access to the 'best' stories was crucial, and papers maintained a watchful eye on one another. Donald Edgar of the *Express* recalled that the exacting editor, Arthur Christiansen, 'always read all the other newspapers and compared their stories with those in the *Express.* […] To his mind there were no excuses if [another] paper had a better story.'[61] This intense rivalry

also manifested itself in such phenomena as 'Transfer Syndrome' – when the early editions of a particular newspaper introduced an especially interesting story, rivals would ensure that their later editions included such items in their headlines.[62] Such considerations certainly offer a more practical, prosaic perspective on the transformation of certain stories into major news phenomena. They also highlight how individual journalists responded to the wider pressures exerted by their employers, and found themselves forced, perhaps, to sacrifice ambition or originality for the sake of conforming to particular editorial expectations and the 'collective identit[ies]' of the papers in question.[63] Traditional 'moral panic' accounts tend not only to ignore differences between newspaper titles, but also to neglect the particular challenges faced by those many disparate individuals who, collectively, comprised 'the press'. The 'voices' of the editors and subeditors who bore responsibility for the viability and presentation of the stories, and of the individuals who gathered materials and produced the reports, frequently under great time pressures and with no advance knowledge of how the incidents in question would resolve or develop, tend not to be considered in such accounts. Donald Matheson notes the way in which the demanding professional 'machine' of newswriting routinely stymied those seeking consciously to 'tell it "the way it [was]"' and develop more sophisticated approaches.[64] Although by no means robbed of freedom of expression – the editorial cultures of both the *Mirror* and the *Express* were frequently praised by employees for their hearty encouragement of 'good ideas' – individual reporters and editors were undoubtedly forced to make certain compromises as they advanced along their chosen career paths, conformed to professional expectations and attuned their own 'voices' to those of the papers for which they worked.[65]

The business of locating prime stories was often challenging and unpleasant. As a newcomer to journalism in the mid-1950s, Lambert frequently found himself embroiled in 'the tedium', as he described it, 'of door-stepping a premises […] to solicit a quote and receiving, instead, a thump on the ear' – but he equally recognized that '[t]he beauty of the reporter's lot was its unpredictability' and inherent 'drama'.[66] '[E]very day', he revealingly commented, 'contained the elements of a novel. An Old Bailey murder trial, an elopement to Gretna Green, a rail crash, a Teddy Boy brawl, a riot as Bill Haley and his Comets rocked around the clock.'[67] That Lambert mentioned Haley, and the 'riots', specifically among these recollections is quite significant. Despite the extent of press coverage given to the 1956 incidents, remarkably few of the memoirs written by journalists of this era mention them – indeed, from Lambert's comments it is difficult to be certain whether he is referring to the cinema disturbances or to Bill Haley's subsequent British tour. What this may be seen to demonstrate, ultimately, is how stories such as these – or reports on

a 'Teddy Boy brawl', for that matter – were, overall, simply grist to the mill of an aspiring reporter in an era of keen inter-newspaper competition.

Understanding that stories like these – alongside murder or elopement or domestic incidents – contained the crucial elements of 'drama', which would provide good and evocative 'copy', was important, but Lambert's memoirs highlight the essential transience of their significance for journalists. Indeed, for both Lambert and Edgar, the truly pivotal event of this period was the Suez Crisis.[68] This international incident, unfolding as the cinema disturbances were still ongoing, increasingly overshadowed domestic events and undoubtedly afforded, for many, a sense of perspective on other developing stories.[69] Lambert was dispatched to Egypt to cover the crisis for the *Mirror*, and although at the time he felt that the ambitions which the experience awakened in him were not immediately recognized by his employers, it clearly helped him to mature as a journalist.[70] Edgar, similarly, vividly recalled his own eventful sojourn in Cairo.[71] Evidently neither of these writers considered occurrences on the domestic front, however useful in the pursuit of a helpful 'scoop', to equate with unfolding international developments.

Stories like the 'riots' or the 'Teddy Boy brawls' would, inevitably, emerge and subsequently fade over time, to be supplanted by other broadly comparable incidents, but, as far as pressurized reporters like Lambert were concerned, provided that they served the paper well, enhancing its circulation, such items had fulfilled their function. As Cudlipp himself remarked, the front page of a paper (and particularly the *Mirror*) remained a 'versatile canvas where readers may one day be warned of Suez and the next day be invited to a ball'; tonal changes were inevitable and even vital.[72] Considerations like these – of the imperative requirement, during this difficult era, to 'sell', and often to sensationalize, for economic, more than for social, reasons – once again confound simplistic assumptions about what the papers were endeavouring to achieve as they focused on particular social problems. Highlighting this does not, of course, negate the fact that the papers, regardless of motivation, potentially, and even carelessly, helped to create an impression of crisis by overemphasizing the incidents in the first place. Nevertheless, the tone of the coverage was, clearly, not one-dimensional, even as it sought to grip its readers. In the case of the 1956 cinema disturbances, both the *Mirror* and the *Mail* offset sensationalist headlines with more moderate statements or coverage, suggesting, in the case of the *Mirror*, the potential 'fun' of rock 'n' roll, and in the *Mail*, the essential virtue of the young. They also lent further subtlety to the 'narrative' by presenting, often in a vivid, if occasionally ambivalent, manner, stories of aristocratic rock 'n' roll devotees – but, ultimately, the need to showcase engaging material remained the paramount consideration.

Conclusion

Coverage of the disturbances, thus, while following certain predictable patterns and although undoubtedly conveying key characteristics of 'moral panic', clearly exhibited a considerable range of tones. This can be observed not merely by comparing different newspaper titles, but also by examining different styles of coverage within particular publications, and even within the same single edition of a newspaper. The understanding that stories of crime, violence and youthful misdemeanours held a certain attraction for readers, however handled by the reporters in question, did not necessarily disprove that the newspapers and their staff harboured genuine concerns about the incidents, but commercial considerations certainly represent additional potential complications in readings of press coverage which are too narrowly intent on tracing deliberate and one-dimensional patterns of outrage or conservatism. 'Riots' and 'brawls' (perhaps particularly when involving 'Teddy Boys' or newsworthy groups of youth in general) were, in short, not without entertainment value – whether they were being reported on in alarmist detail within the news pages, or, indeed, providing scope for further column inches via debates, discussions or special features. It was little wonder that, during this period, the newspapers seized upon the opportunity to exploit them in such a wide variety of ways. Readers, in turn, often seemed keenly aware of the intentions of the newspapers as they embarked on such an enterprise – but this did not necessarily affect their loyalties to their titles of choice.

Chapter 3

'ROCK 'N' ROLL HAS BECOME RESPECTABLE': THE PRESS AND POPULAR MUSIC COVERAGE BEYOND 1956

Introduction

The flurry of press coverage on the cinema disturbances was short-lived and, as highlighted, beyond the autumn of 1956 rock 'n' roll ceased to feature so prominently in headlines or news columns. If the papers had helped to create a 'moral panic' around the music to any extent at all, then it was of short duration. Of course, Cohen himself recognized that such episodes, however intense they might seem in the short term, were often brief, regardless of their longer-term repercussions. While clearly elements of the coverage of the cinema disturbances demonstrated marked 'variations' on set 'themes' concerning youth subcultures and delinquency which had been well established by this time, and which would re-emerge subsequently, rock 'n' roll itself did not generally become an enduring or intrinsic element of such discourses. By late 1956, the general conclusion arrived at by most newspapers, and apparently by sectors of the public, seemed to be that a minority of troublemakers had spoiled what was otherwise the innocent, high-spirited fun of a majority of young cinemagoers. Noting similar findings in the Mods and Rockers reportage, Cohen remained cynical, suggesting that this sort of media argument – blaming trouble on a 'Lunatic Fringe' – only brought about further demonization of alleged miscreants and manufactured further, unnatural dichotomies among youth groups.[1] However, the shock-ridden stories concerning rock 'n' roll had, apparently, served their purpose, however such a purpose might be defined, and, as reports of the disturbances abated, the focus of the newspapers altered accordingly.

Nevertheless, however routine or superfluous the stories of Teddy Boys or Haley may have seemed to reporters like Derek Lambert, it was certainly not the case that youth culture mattered to the papers only when it could be exploited for sensation. As highlighted, the newspapers faced something of a crossroads in the late 1950s; rapid changes within the industry and threats from

competing media made it vital for them to scrutinize closely their images and identities if they were to ensure long-term survival. Success, in short, might depend on how effectively they could engage with deeper social changes, of which a visible and affluent youth culture might be considered a particularly potent symbol. This became especially vital to the popular newspapers in the increasingly competitive post-austerity era; while the more serious titles certainly offered commentaries on youth culture whenever they deemed this to be timely or appropriate, their engagement with this sector remained, at least in the short term, more detached.

Undoubtedly, the *Mirror*, more than any other paper, recognized that there was value in the concept of 'youth' beyond its ability to provide a few sensational headlines. Neither the *Express* nor the *Mail* could keep pace with its more successful rival in this regard, but both gradually recognized that modernization was key to survival, and reconciled with 'youth', to a certain extent, in their own distinctive manner. This chapter explores evolving understanding of popular music, and of its young enthusiasts, within the press – and, in this chapter, especially among popular titles – once the furore of 1956 had subsided. Examining, in particular, the mythology surrounding the *Daily Mirror*'s youth-orientated populism, it observes the uncertain path which the papers often pursued as they strove to remain up-to-date, while avoiding alienating older readers. It also highlights continuing tendencies to explore popular music and youth culture in a manner which, though perhaps inclined towards a more positive stance overall, could still frequently appear contradictory and conflicted.

The Paper of Youth? The Postwar *Daily Mirror*, Youth Culture and Popular Music

By the late 1950s, the *Mirror*, boosted considerably by its robust wartime coverage, had found itself in an enviably strong position. The dynamic Hugh Cudlipp, who was given considerable credit by *Mirror* director Cecil Harmsworth King for the increasing success of the paper during this time, believed that the 'perceptive and mature' attitude towards the unfolding European crisis, and increasing support for the war effort, helped the paper gain credibility and influence.[2] The paper was also considered to have contributed to the remarkable victory of the Labour Party in the 1945 elections; Martin Pugh has demonstrated that the nature of the *Mirror*'s support for this party requires careful contextualization, and King himself emphasized that the paper was not 'uncritical' in its attitude towards Labour.[3] Nevertheless, although the re-establishment of a Conservative government in 1951 muted somewhat the *Mirror*'s political assertiveness, the paper undoubtedly developed an effective

and distinctive voice via its approach to such events. From this point onwards, however, it was predominantly the unique sociocultural focus of the paper which allowed it to surpass both the *Mail* and the *Express* so remarkably.

Though remaining informative, the *Mirror* increasingly stressed its commitment to the entertainment of its readers, aiming to promote an optimistic vision of postwar British culture. Cecil King believed that, in an era in which people 'listened into the BBC news every morning', it had become futile for newspapers, particularly popular titles, to continue to prioritize the acquisition of exclusive news stories; 'people buy the *Mirror*', he declared in 1969, 'not for the day's news, but to be entertained on their way to work and at lunch'.[4] In this way, the *Mirror*, under the direction of the ambitious Cudlipp, found a unique position for itself within the market. News reportage certainly remained within its pages, and increasingly the paper found inimitable means of demonstrating its distinctive social conscience, either via bold 'stunts' which often concealed a serious message behind an entertaining veneer (the 'rock 'n' roll party' typified this practice) or through more serious, jarring tactics designed to challenge complacent attitudes towards social injustices.[5] By the early 1960s, this latter tendency was epitomized by the investigative 'Shock Issue' feature, 'in which most of the paper was devoted to one urgent social and political theme', from inner-city poverty to the underfunded Youth Service.[6] However, the paper simultaneously expended considerable energy on attractive features, recognizing that it was the focus on 'entertainment' which 'maintain[ed] the mass circulation'.[7] Once again, its presentation of such entertainment helped it to survive – for example, by 'embracing show-business whole-heartedly' in order to complement, rather than challenge, the provision of competing media.[8] The ambition and versatility of the newspaper was also reflected in the many subsidiary enterprises with which it became involved. Cudlipp became a 'major shareholder' in Lew Grade's Associated Television (ATV), one of the first franchises of Independent Television after its establishment in 1955. The paper also produced many accessible publications on myriad political and cultural topics; it even, via its famous '*Mirror* dinghy', helped to make the hitherto exclusive sport of sailing more accessible to 'ordinary' Britons.[9]

The ever-intensifying interest of the *Mirror* in youth became a key component of its postwar approach. In fact, focus on the younger generation had been an established facet of the paper long before this era of 'teenage revolution'.[10] Strong links between the paper and newer youth culture styles were, however, already firmly established by the late 1950s. Of all of the major national daily newspapers, the *Mirror* was most attractive to this demographic sector. The Hulton Readership Survey of January 1956 confirmed it as the most popular 'daily' for 16- to 24-year-old participants, with 38.7 per cent

favouring the *Mirror* (21.7 per cent preferred the *Express* and only 7.5 per cent the *Daily Mail*).[11] By 1959, 44 per cent of this age-group declared that they read the *Mirror*, 29 per cent the *Express* and 17 per cent the *Mail*.[12] The *Mirror* was anxious to court this age-group further, not least because of its reputed affluence. By this point in the 1950s, the newspapers were keen to exploit the growing discipline of market research, commissioning surveys in order to understand readers' tastes.[13] The *Mirror* sought to provide many features, both within and beyond its pages, aimed at 'the teenage consumer'. A weekly 'Teen Page' allowed youngsters to air their views on various issues.[14] The paper stridently championed the cause of the Youth Service in 1960, as the Albemarle Committee recommended expansion of organized leisure facilities for the young.[15] It declared 1966 as 'The Year of Youth', and throughout this year, under the supervision of emergent reporter John Pilger, it repeatedly presented youngsters positively, highlighting their good deeds and aspirations.[16] It was no coincidence that Adrian Horn observed that the most positive coverage of Teddy Boys had emanated from the *Mirror*; the mission both to cater for Britain's youth, and to restore its good name was extensively proclaimed by the paper throughout this era.[17]

The importance of popular music to teenagers had been acknowledged by the *Mirror* some time before the cinema incidents; besides observing young people's interests in jazz in the mid-1950s, it had also, since 1954, been organizing 'disc festivals' featuring chart singers, such as David Whitfield and Jimmy Young, who remained comparatively popular with youngsters after the advent of rock 'n' roll.[18] As highlighted, before the cinema disturbances inspired the papers to problematize rock 'n' roll, the *Mirror* had commented, fairly benignly, on its popularity in America. The paper had clearly been as culpable as any of its counterparts for sensationalizing the 'riots'. However, as it increasingly recognized the importance of rock 'n' roll to its young readers, and as the disturbances faded from prominence, it sought to capitalize on the trend more creatively and constructively. Indeed, if it was the case that rock 'n' roll had had a bad reputation in Britain initially, then the *Mirror*, having undoubtedly helped to construct such a reputation during the 1956 'riots', subsequently assisted considerably in promoting its rehabilitation.

The *Daily Mirror* and Press Responses to Bill Haley's 1957 Tour of Britain

The first step on this pathway towards redemption took the form of a particularly ambitious publicity venture. When Bill Haley toured Britain in 1957, the *Mirror* sponsored the initiative (with assistance from the Grade Brothers' Agency), and apparently deployed limitless resources in its promotion,

endeavouring to generate unprecedented excitement among younger readers as, liberally deploying modern parlance, it relentlessly urged all 'hep-cats' to participate.[19] Noel Whitcomb, the suave author of the paper's 'jaunty energetic gossip column', frequently participated in the paper's 'public relations' ventures, and was duly dispatched across the Atlantic to accompany Haley to Britain.[20] Anticipation of the tour was heightened by Haley's 'daily column', dictated to the reporter. Readers were also invited to enter competitions to win places aboard 'the rock 'n' roll train' which would convey Haley from Southampton to London Waterloo, and to board the QE2, as it approached Britain, to meet Haley in person. Haley's British roots and homely Americanism were also reinforced by the *Mirror*'s coverage. (The paper even reported on a visit which the singer had allegedly made to a hospital-bound child.)[21] It was, admittedly, not difficult to present Haley, a 31-year-old married father of four children, in this benign manner.[22] As an emblem of rock 'n' roll, he appeared to personify moderation and mature respectability, and had, in fact, disappointed some British fans when they finally saw him in person.[23] Nevertheless, ultimately, the tour was remarkably successful, with many youngsters still eager to join in the excitement, and the competitions run by the paper apparently attracted over 50,000 entries.[24] This was the sort of participatory, community ethic which the *Mirror* promoted so effectively during this period, and choosing rock 'n' roll as its focal point proved prodigiously effective in this instance.

As highlighted, if there was trouble during the 1957 tour, then most newspapers chose not to dwell excessively on this aspect. None seemed particularly eager to reawaken, wholesale, the former concerns about rock 'n' roll. Certainly, neither George Gale of the *Express* nor Kenneth Allsop of the *Mail*, both of whom were dispatched to cover the arrival of Haley's 'rock 'n' roll train' into Waterloo Station, was impressed by the crowds of excited youngsters which surrounded the singer as he arrived in the capital. Describing the event as 'the battle of Waterloo', and observing '[p]olice f[ighting] with savage necessity to […] save [a woman from] being trampled' as 'children [were] tossed like jetsam in the swaying human tide', Gale declared that the 'panic' was 'very nasty'.[25] Allsop, similarly, declared that 'the most hysterical – and dangerous – welcome to Britain […] of any American bobby-sox rave-of-the-moment' had greeted the singer. He observed Haley's wife 'sobb[ing] with fright', and spotted four women fainting amid the clamour. 'I say this soberly: it was a frightening and ugly experience', he declared. 'And, it is claimed, this is carefree teen-age high-jinks.'[26] Neither reporter explicitly mentioned that this was the initiative of a rival publication, although Gale did mock the list of instructions given to the 'cats' aboard the 'rock 'n' roll train', and, elsewhere in the *Mail*, Tanfield noted 'the synthetic frenzy' into which teenagers had been 'whipped' by 'a well-organised publicity operation'.[27] However, although

both writers described the scene via such terms as 'stampede' and 'frenzy', neither referred to the 1956 cinema incidents as a means of contextualizing his story. Gale actually conceded that, despite his distaste for the crowds, he did not 'mind rock 'n' roll, and [had …] nothing against Mr. Haley at all'.[28] Neither of these reporters or publications commented extensively on Haley's tour thereafter – in sharp contrast to the extensive daily coverage which the *Mirror* naturally accorded the venture.

More serious papers, meanwhile, were not oblivious to the events, but largely observed them calmly and positively. The *Telegraph* observed the clamour surrounding Haley's arrival with little consternation, blending its reportage of the event with some objective context on the development of Haley's music.[29] The *Guardian* also adopted a largely approbatory, if at times amused, viewpoint. A report on the reception of Haley at Waterloo wryly observed what it seemed to consider the *faux* ingenuousness of the '"Mirror" people', who 'acted […] as though they were the Sorcerer's Apprentice', unable to 'understand why so many hep cats had turned up'. However, although the excitable throng was observed, the report ultimately remarked that, while '[a]t Waterloo the rioting was even better organised than at Southampton […] bigger, noisier, apparently more dangerous', thanks to the railway policemen, 'it was all over in five minutes'.[30] Coverage of Haley's concerts similarly observed scant cause for alarm, stressing, instead, the remarkably orderly character of the performances. Norman Shrapnel, who attended Haley's trouble-free concert in Manchester, remarked that the sedate, even subdued, affair, apparently attended by numerous adults, highlighted 'how far we have got from the days when rocking was supposed to be a sinful orgy of young destructive degenerates'.[31] For the *Observer*, Anthony Sampson described Haley's performance at London's Dominion Theatre with typically sharp insight, from the 'Teddy Boys and Teddy Girls' who dominated the audience, and the anxious ushers reassured by the abundance of plainclothes police in attendance, to the 'mums and dads [who] clapped out of time and sang' as though attending a 'panto'. ('Others', noted Sampson, 'looked glum and sociological.')[32] The short performance, which formed part of a Variety-style programme (the typical format for rock 'n' roll performances in Britain during the earliest days of the genre), ended with the customary rendition of the national anthem. Ultimately, like Shrapnel, Sampson seemed to find the evening remarkably tame. 'The teddy boys slouched out, defeated.' Sampson's report implied, at times, that the uneventful nature of the performance was due as much to adult vigilance as it was to a naturally virtuous audience. However, his conclusions also stressed a progression from 'the bad old days' of 1956, when the music was deemed responsible for 'juvenile delinquency'. Perceived then as something 'nasty, sexy, suggestive and un-English', it now seemed to prove that the

country remained 'virile, and robust.' 'Like Marilyn Monroe, rock 'n' roll', he concluded, 'has become respectable.'

The Newfound 'Respectability' of Rock 'n' Roll

It was revealing that, in making the aforementioned statement, Sampson should compare rock 'n' roll to a particular individual. After Haley's tour, coverage of rock 'n' roll in most papers tended, increasingly, to focus on specific performers, rather than deploying the abstract, menacing descriptions of the music which had typified earlier coverage. As the careers of British rock 'n' rollers such as Tommy Steele, Marty Wilde and Cliff Richard gathered pace from 1957 onwards, the genre became increasingly personalized, even 'domesticized', for the press, and individual performers became ever more central within coverage.[33] Steele, in his own right, contributed particularly considerably to the increasing 'respectability' of rock 'n' roll, as his managers worked tirelessly to present him as a home-loving son of Bermondsey; newspaper stories on the singer readily acknowledged this.[34] While Cliff Richard reportedly caused more consternation, owing to his stronger resemblance to Elvis Presley and his hip-swivelling dance moves, such worries quickly abated, and the glossy publications on the singer produced by the *Mirror* in the early 1960s stressed that he was as 'respectable' as either Steele or Haley.[35]

Sampson also noted that key to the newfound acceptability of rock 'n' roll was the endorsement of the music by such high-profile establishment figures as 'Prince Charles's dancing teacher', and the increasingly expressed belief that the music was 'a recognised cure for frustrations, repressions, and boredom'.[36] Such 'rehabilitative' notions of rock 'n' roll, which extricated it from its erstwhile 'social problem' status and reappraised it as an acceptable pastime, also became a notable strand within press reports post 1956.[37] In 1958, the *Mirror* showcased Marguerite Vacani, dancing teacher to the royals; Vacani became 'an expert rock 'n' roller', and had begun to teach the dance form to blind children, believing that this had therapeutic benefits for them.[38] Other variations on the *Mirror*'s distinctive reinvention of rock 'n' roll included coverage of religious representatives who sought to use music to attract a younger congregation (the efforts of Camberwell's Reverend Geoffrey Beaumont and his 'rock 'n' roll Mass' were particularly highlighted).[39] Commencing with the inclusion of the 'jiving' cleric at the 'rock 'n' roll party' in 1956, the paper enthusiastically embraced the idea of the 'hep vicar' as a benign, slightly humorous British character 'type' (an embodiment, perhaps, of the sort of British eccentricity which both Adrian Horn and Andrew Marr noted as being particularly loved by the paper).[40] Yet the *Mirror* was not the only paper to feature such redemptive coverage. The *Mail* also noted the absorption of

rock by the clergy, highlighting the activities of Church of England Youth Council chairman Reverend John Oates, who deemed the music 'a wonderful way' to reach 'East End kids' ('so please don't knock the rock', the report supportively concluded).[41] A February 1957 story, entitled 'Rock 'n' Recover', revealed the 'prescri[ption]' of rock 'n' roll dancing for disabled children at a Kent hospital – again, reversing earlier negative appraisals of the dance styles associated with the genre – while a Dover secondary school observed that rock 'n' roll gave its pupils 'confidence'.[42] Significantly, this story appeared in the *Mail*'s 'Far and Near' column, which presented snippets of positive, and often comical, news. Whenever rock 'n' roll featured in this column, it invariably lost its negative or sinister connotations – highlighting, once again, the importance of Smith's observations on the 'distinctive idioms' which particular portions of a newspaper's coverage could possess, and on how these frame understanding of certain events or phenomena.[43]

Similarly constructive viewpoints were reported in the *Guardian* from a National Union of Teachers conference; one schoolmaster remarked that it was possible to progress, musically, from 'Lonnie Donegan to [Mozart's] "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" '.[44] Rock 'n' roll, it seemed, could now claim to be a legitimate form of music. The *Guardian* also highlighted such 'novelty' stories as the naming of a street in Brighouse, Yorkshire, as 'Presley Drive' – that the idea, supplied by the teenage son of a building contractor, had been 'unanimously approved' by the local council certainly suggested, in this case, a cross-generational acceptance of rock 'n' roll belying the divisive image which had pervaded earlier press coverage.[45] Indeed, adult support for the genre, whether implicit or overt, continued to feature in rock 'n' roll–related stories, even when the writers did not overtly highlight it; from parents lurking in the cinemas to teachers acknowledging the value of the music, adults now claimed at least a marginal status in the world of rock 'n' roll. Undoubtedly, therefore, much coverage after September 1956 increasingly depicted rock 'n' roll as a potential asset – whether as a source of exuberant but harmless fun, via the Haley tour, or as an educational and spiritual tool, as with the various teachers and ministers who sought to harness its potential in various respects.

The Persistence of Sensationalism and Contradiction in Press Coverage of Popular Music

In noting this gradual rehabilitation of the music, it is important not to overstate any conscious intentions within the papers, either individually or collectively. Even as more balanced reportage increased, negative coverage still appeared, highlighting that rock 'n' roll still possessed some residual scandalous connotations as far as editors were concerned. The *Mail*, particularly,

persisted in using the term sensationally in headlines throughout 1957 and beyond. 'Brilliant Kathleen Dies after Rock 'n' Roll' told the story of a promising dancer who had suffered a fatal brain haemorrhage during a rock 'n' roll dance. Despite the headline, however, the tragedy 'could have happened at any time'.[46] A story involving two nurses who were acquitted of playing rock 'n' roll records instead of assisting a pregnant patient was heralded via the headlines 'Rock 'n' Roll Birth Row' and 'The Rock 'n Roll Nurses Cleared'.[47] 'Riots' could still result from rock 'n' roll, too. In early 1958, the paper reported on '9 Teddy Boys' who had been 'held after [a] Rock Film Riot', as though transporting its readers back to the heated days of September 1956.[48] Such inconsistencies were bound to arise in the transient, reactive world of newsmaking, and one must, thus, avoid overemphasis either of the negative or, indeed, the positive stories about the music, which were printed post 1956.

Rock 'n' roll musicians themselves were not always portrayed as paragons of decency, and allegations of misbehaviour could attract considerable press attention. Brian Ward has highlighted the rather lurid attention paid by various newspapers (the *Mirror* included) to the revelations concerning the personal life of Jerry Lee Lewis, which emerged during the singer's 1958 British tour.[49] The troubles experienced by the emergent British pop singer Terry Dene, following his arrest for disorderly conduct and his subsequent inability to complete National Service, also attracted the attention of the *Mirror*.[50] However 'respectable' rock 'n' roll appeared to have become by this point, it could still readily be drawn back into its erstwhile, sensational, 'social problem' framework.

Similarly, alarmist coverage concerning subsequent youth subcultures and trends, echoing an all-too-familiar range of incendiary terminology, continued to appear throughout the 1960s and beyond. As Cohen demonstrated, the Mods and Rockers reawakened press fixation upon 'gangs' of 'rioting' youngsters; the late 1960s skinhead 'movement' similarly inspired coverage of violent, thuggish teenagers.[51] Hippies, featured increasingly in the media during the late 1960s, also frequently excited consternation; although some commentators were inclined to find their ideals amusing, or even to admire their professed pacifism, their unconventional and anti-establishment behaviour could equally attract criticism and fear – as evidenced by 1969 newspaper coverage of the 'battles' between 'hippy' squatters and authorities in Piccadilly.[52] Bill Osgerby, Martin Cloonan and Keith Gildart, meanwhile, have highlighted elements of 'moral panic' inherent in some press coverage of punks during the mid-1970s.[53] Attitudes towards youth, thus, could be cyclical, as much as they showed evidence of progression or evolution; it was easy for journalists to reassert older narratives of delinquency when pertinent incidents presented themselves.

Furthermore, while the *Mirror* was, clearly, frequently vocal in its endorsement of youth culture and rock 'n' roll after 1956, James Thomas notes that it is important not to accept wholesale the sense of mythology which those associated with the paper often constructed around it.[54] Its apparent populism and special appeal for youngsters should be scrutinized. Despite its professed support for youth, the paper was as capable as any of its counterparts of stirring up alarmist reportage on their activities whenever this was deemed necessary or advantageous in some respect. The *Mirror* was among the newspapers criticized by Cohen for its Mods and Rockers coverage, and it clearly continued to perceive value in sensational stories involving rebellious subcultures.[55] Once again, such dualism – wherein young people could find themselves admired, and subsequently, or even simultaneously, deemed dangerous or problematic – was perhaps little more than an inevitability of the newspaper business, particularly by this time, but a curious mixture of tones was certainly evident within the pages of the *Mirror*. Even the manner in which the early feature on jazz and teenage culture, which the paper presented in 1955, highlighted this paradoxical stance in a bold, centrally positioned paragraph which managed to connote both thrilling admiration and a sense of latent threat. 'It's loud. Violent, Unpredictable. Sizzlingly ALIVE – and that's what grips the vibrant youngster of 1955.'[56] Certainly, the successful 'formula' which show-business columnist Donald Zec believed the paper to espouse by this time – 'roughly sex, sincerity, and sensation' – contained strong elements of this sort of paradox.[57] The potential for contradiction between these latter two qualities was certainly considerable (the first quality certainly developed its own unique trajectory within the paper), but this was an enticing contradiction which the *Mirror* embraced considerably successfully during this period.

Undoubtedly the paper faced important transitions during the late 1950s. Having established itself, comparatively recently, as the distinctive voice of the British working people, it by no means lost this facet of its identity, and many of the columnists who had helped to establish this 'voice', including 'Cassandra', Marjorie Proops and Edwin Radford, provided important continuity. However, as Conboy notes, by 1959, the *Mirror*, its political fervour dampened by a further General Election victory for the Conservative Party, had ceased to deploy the slogan 'forward with the people'; as a result, he argues, the paper 'took a step away' from its working-class adult readership. The shift in focus, however, was not instantaneous, and had no short-term damaging impact on sales.[58] Thus, the very mixed handling of stories and items involving youth, and the persistent depiction of young people as alien 'others', despite the corresponding increase in youth-orientated material and supportive stories, may perhaps be explained, in part, by the shifts in identity and focus which the paper was undergoing during this time.

However, even the more sympathetic coverage of youth which appeared in the paper seemed, to some critics, fundamentally and, at times, embarrassingly adult-driven. Hugh Cudlipp was, by this time, in middle age, and, although the paper recruited younger columnists throughout this period (including John Pilger and Michael Grade), the preponderance of senior positions was held by men who could no longer be considered youthful.[59] The paper was, some suggest, more certain of its stance in those cases where it pursued the idea of youth as maligned or disadvantaged, and requiring robust defence – via its exposé of the Youth Service, for instance, or during its 1966 'Year of Youth'. Here, it was easier to place young people within the more firmly established frameworks of the paper; as Cudlipp had stated, the *Mirror* 'barked for the under-dog when he wasn't getting a square deal', and young people were, perhaps, easier to handle when they seemed to fit into this category.[60] Youth culture trends, on the other hand, were more difficult to understand and to articulate, particularly within the compressed tabloid format, and this inevitably led, at times, to misunderstanding and misrepresentations, which at least some younger readers found inauthentic and misguided. Matthew Engel recalled the paper's proud, capitalized declaration that 'youth' should be allowed to 'shout its head off' – but, in his view, the paper 'never really came to terms with the noise'.[61] Chris Horrie perceived limitations in the attempts of Cudlipp or co-editor Jack Nener to shape the *Mirror*'s youth orientation; as men whose 'outlook was shaped essentially by the 1930s […] and the trauma of the war', their ability to understand youth culture was inevitably restricted.[62] Smith, meanwhile, suggests that the paper was able to embrace youth culture in this period as long as 'the traditional, "good-scout" image of clean, helpful youth' remained uppermost.[63] Although aware of the powerful concept of the 'generation gap' and clearly embracing this notion in its rhetoric to a considerable extent, overall, it seemed to prefer expressions of youth culture which still allowed for some adult participation. While the establishment of the 'Teen Page' did highlight a tentative acceptance of 'a teenage subculture independent enough to contradict established values', the subheading for the feature remained 'for the young of all ages', and frequently the emphasis was placed on aspects of youth culture which seemed accessible to the older generation.[64] The 1956 'rock 'n' roll party' feature, with its image of light-hearted intergenerational cooperation, typified its approach in this respect. The participation of the various adults in rock 'n' roll dancing was meant to be seen as surprising, even amusing, but that the writers perceived scope for such involvement remained equally significant.

It was, similarly, revealing that the paper's competition to meet Bill Haley aboard the QE2 was won by the 35-year-old mother of a teenage girl. Mrs Ann Macbeth jocularly described herself as 'a square' who needed to be

'educated' on youth trends; her excited daughter, described (positively) as a true 'rock 'n' roll teenager', was, of course, allowed to accompany her on the trip.[65] Apparently finding it easiest to discuss youth culture where there was potential for adult participation (even if this caused amusement), it could still largely accept the idea of distinctive teenage identity. However, if this travelled beyond the understanding of the parent generation, it potentially threatened the strong community ethic – the 'folksy neighbourliness' – on which the paper had built its reputation, and on which it continued to thrive.[66] Where youth seemed to breach such boundaries, the potential for alarmism, ridicule and demonization was reawakened. Smith suggests that the *Mirror* was incapable of understanding the values of the hippies because this anti-materialistic group compromised its core belief that 'the lively independence of young people […] revitalize[d] the old moral values'; the paper thus tended to portray hippy ideals as either 'potty or criminal'.[67] Certainly, more discursive pieces, such as John Pilger's commentary on the movement in America, or Donald Walker's comparatively balanced report, which presented various opinions on the counterculture, alongside supportive readers' letters, did appear.[68] Similarly, while the 'Teen Page' was seldom daringly scandalous or provocative, it nevertheless lent considerable support to the notion that youngsters should be allowed to 'let off steam' concerning issues which frustrated them, and published letters were often unapologetically frank and irreverent. Smith's assessment does not perhaps account fully for the varied tones found within the feature.[69] Nevertheless, its rebellious stance never grew out of proportion. Likewise, positive appraisals of hippies were, overall, comparatively scarce, and articles which either ridiculed or criticized those who appeared to espouse hippy ideals prevailed.[70] Despite the paper's eagerness to present young people positively, its ability to accept and understand particular varieties of youth culture often proved limited.

Furthermore, while the desire of the *Mirror* to engage with ordinary Britons in enterprising and meaningful ways undoubtedly displayed considerable 'sincerity', and has subsequently attracted much admiration in both popular and scholarly quarters, the paper nonetheless remained a commercial operation, fundamentally governed by the need to make a profit and to supersede its competitors.[71] Its efforts to appeal to youth were, naturally, motivated as much by financial as by social or cultural considerations, and it could not remain immune to a certain desire to benefit from the economic potential of this market, even while intending to represent its best interests.

Once again, it is by listening to the 'voices' of individual journalists that this further paradox becomes particularly apparent. The impression generated by Noel Whitcomb's coverage of his time on the QE2 with Bill Haley was of a joyous, exuberant happening; Haley was apparently excited by

the forthcoming tour, and his journalist-companion eagerly dispatched daily updates. The whole affair was enwrapped, by the *Mirror* and Whitcomb, in layers of light-hearted excitement as the newspaper energetically supported the tour. The columnist's 1990 memoir, however, told a rather different story.[72] Here, Whitcomb openly and amusedly acknowledged that, despite the fervency of the *Mirror*'s expressed interest in youth, neither he nor the editors knew anything significant about rock 'n' roll. In fact, the *Mirror*'s sponsorship of the tour was, apparently, an alternative strategy adopted by the paper after the failure of an initial plan to lure Elvis Presley to Britain for a prearranged tour. Whitcomb suggested that this plot had failed partly because the paper, although determined to capitalize on current fashions, had confused Presley with Haley.[73] Whitcomb admitted that he himself was hardly in his natural milieu among rock 'n' rollers, but he readily agreed to accompany the singer on the QE2. (This was no hardship, since the 'man about town' journalist deemed himself part of an exclusive 'club' of regular travellers on the liner.)[74] He recalled Haley as a 'timid man with a kiss-curl', nervous of the 'screaming' audiences and often a reluctant performer. In remarkably stark contrast to the tone adopted in *Mirror* reportage, and in coverage within most papers, he depicted the tour as almost dangerously chaotic ('[r]iot followed riot' was his revealing description of the event), but ultimately the venture was a commercial triumph for the paper, and the exuberant crowds only added to the spectacle. 'The *Mirror* was naturally delighted about this eye-catching success.'[75] Whitcomb's memoir, of course, presents the point of view of one individual, and that he was 'dubious about his calling [as a popular journalist] while enjoying its fruits' was certainly suggested by one reviewer.[76] Nevertheless, the contrast between the highly enthusiastic tone which Whitcomb's coverage of the tour assumed, and the account in his memoir of the background machinations, as men with minimal appreciation for contemporary music nevertheless strove to find novel ways to help their newspaper 'create news about itself', is certainly marked.[77]

It is particularly interesting to compare Whitcomb's account with the private writings of the *Mail*'s Kenneth Allsop, a reporter who, ostensibly, had little affection for rock 'n' roll. Not only had he expressed distaste, in his column, for the encroachment of the genre on his beloved jazz, and frequently denounced its musical validity, but he had also been relatively negative in his reportage of the arrival of Haley in Britain. However, in the introduction to *Scan*, a 1965 compilation of writings, Allsop reflected on the hectic frustrations which the business of journalism so often comprised. 'It is, much of the time, a rather desperate life – [that of] the hired conjurer scrabbling inside the hat in the panicky hope that there are still some pigeons to be pulled out for the audience.'[78] The 'unpredictable, last-minute

despatch' and 'the opportunity (the obligation, moreover) to record [events] with […] immediacy and vividness' for his audience had, he said, taught him that 'first impressions are almost always right, or at least in journalism they have to be, for there is never time for fine qualification'. For this reason, Allsop, an aspiring novelist (like so many of his peers within the world of journalism), relished the opportunity to produce 'longer pieces for less urgent publications'.[79] Among such pieces reproduced in *Scan* was 'The Elvis Era', an exploration of the roots of rock 'n' roll. Considering its 1960 publication date, and the fact that rock music criticism had barely been established at this point, it is notably exploratory and insightful, and in marked contrast to the tone which his column often displayed. Here, 'rock', for Allsop, although 'a shotgun wedding of […] traditional forms given a deliberately manufactured crudity and amplification [,…] was by no means a lamentable development'. The roots of the genre in hillbilly and the blues were fully explained by the author, who was a great enthusiast of the latter musical form (shortly after his piece on Haley, he conducted a detailed interview with blues singer Big Bill Broonzy for the *Mail*), and he noted the manner in which rock 'n' roll had afforded 'the synthetic concoctions of Tin Pan Alley […] a badly needed blood transfusion of earthiness, beat and vitality'.[80] Perhaps Allsop would still have defended his 'first impressions' of Haley's arrival in Britain, and his column continued, periodically, to bemoan the impact which such performers had made on the music scene, but clearly these were not the sum total of his views on rock 'n' roll. When afforded the opportunity to write at greater length on the subject, Allsop proved an insightful commentator. Indeed, his views on popular music appeared to evolve as the 1960s progressed. Allsop's daughter, Amanda, later demonstrated that her father had been an enthusiastic observer of the modern music scene. He had particularly loved the Beatles (possibly more than she herself had done), even seeking to 'convert' a sceptical American friend to their music; Bob Dylan had similarly inspired him.[81] The letters exchanged between father and daughter during the 1960s, and published in 1974, a year after the writer's untimely death, depict a man who was by no means 'anti-fun, […] anti-pop-records, anti-Beatles […] or anti-any of the exciting and enjoyable parts of being a teenager'.[82] This is not to suggest that the more mixed, changeable views expressed in his earlier *Mail* columns were not heartfelt as he recorded them, but producing meaningful appraisals without the benefit of hindsight, or time for revisions, was undoubtedly a pitfall faced by all journalists. Perhaps with such factors in mind, Allsop himself declared, in a 1963 column, that he wished to 'reserve the right of inconsistency'.[83] Thus, once again, 'paper voices' proved more multi-tonal and deceptive than superficial impressions might suggest, and

the straightforward 'pigeonholing' of particular writers and newspapers regarding their motivations and viewpoints becomes more difficult.

Embracing the Modern Age? Reappraising the Attitudes of the *Daily Express* and *Daily Mail* towards Youth and Popular Music

Chris Horrie suggests that the *Mirror* managed to establish a successful youthful following largely because its closest competitor, the *Daily Express*, failed considerably to keep pace with changing times.[84] In comparison to the bright confidence with which the *Mirror* now appeared to speak for Britons, young and old, both the *Express* and, indeed, the *Daily Mail* seemed less certain of their respective positions. Both papers had, historically, been extensively shaped and ideologically defined by their owners; the *Mirror*, on the other hand, evolved more independently, and was no longer shackled to the same conception of proprietorship, despite the connections of Cecil King to the Harmsworth dynasty.[85] However, Lord Beaverbrook's conservative, imperialist political outlook continued to influence the paper, even after his death in 1964.[86] This image of 'formidable stolidity' did not help the *Express* amid the competitive environment of the 1960s. Once filled with 'optimism', 'the paper of the young and hopeful', imbued with the ambitious, entrepreneurial ethic espoused by Beaverbrook, it became, increasingly, attractive only to 'the middle-aged and defeated', according to R. Allen.[87] The decline of the paper should not be overstressed; its circulation figures remained respectable, if consistently lower than those of the *Mirror*, and Mark Abrams noted in a 1968 survey that, of all titles, the *Express* attracted the most disparate demographic in terms of social class and educational level, 'maintain[ing] a high readership figure across all sections of the adult population'.[88] Nevertheless, its postwar image, particularly when compared to that of the *Mirror*, seemed lacking in dynamism and definition.

Meanwhile, the *Mail*, of a broadly conservative character, despite the distinctively populist tone which it had pioneered, and counting on the support of readers for traditional British sociocultural values, struggled to assert a strong identity in this 'quieter' period of its existence, according to Adrian Bingham.[89] The paper, which had traditionally been favoured by older readers, saw little reason to court youth excessively at this time, and would not experience a significant resurgence until its tabloid relaunch under the editorship of David English in 1971, when, with a more sharply defined sociopolitical stance, it would steadily reassert a stronger influence on the world of journalism.[90]

Nevertheless, despite such struggles, and although they seemed unable to rival the dynamism of the *Mirror*, both the *Express* and the *Mail* survived this

uncertain period, where many of their other competitors fell by the wayside. Neither was it the case that they displayed no interest in, or support for, youth culture. Unsympathetic and alarmist coverage, as highlighted, continued in both papers into the 1960s and 1970s, but more measured and varied responses also emerged from columns and lighter features; multifarious tones inevitably continued to appear in the papers, just as they had done in the late 1950s. As Roy Greenslade noted, although in many ways the *Mail* remained 'conservative' in this era, it nevertheless boasted some of the most acclaimed writers – including 'class act' feature writer Vincent Mulchrone, and the 'utterly brilliant' columnist Bernard Levin.[91] Highly individualistic writers like these prevented the paper from becoming too monotonous, and challenged the straightforward denunciations of its critics – but even within its more prosaic news coverage, the stance of the *Mail* was never uniform. While the paper may have described hippies 'on the rampage', it also included a jocular feature on an East London company which manufactured '30,000 hippy bells a week'.[92] In the midst of the 'summer of love', as reports of drug-taking, anti-establishment young hippies proliferated, Anne Scott-James, another imaginative commentator, used her *Mail* column to mount a pointed and revealing criticism, not only of the extremes towards which such coverage so often tended, but also of the counterarguments which, she felt, overemphasized the wholesomeness of youth. 'The fact is, teenagers are just like the rest of us', she stated. '[I]t's damaging to keep discussing "The Young" as though they were some separate tribe. […] They're individual people. And the teenagers *I* know wish to be so regarded.'[93] In the early 1970s, the paper began a 'Junior Mail' feature wherein younger readers could write to the paper to air their views; again, while such edited inclusions necessitate caution, they certainly allowed varied teenage viewpoints to be aired on such contentious contemporary subjects as punk rock.[94]

The *Express*, meanwhile, catered for younger readers via its early 1960s 'Go! Go! Go!' column (to which both trad jazz clarinettist Acker Bilk and Beatle George Harrison ostensibly made 'guest' contributions); this section centred upon popular music, but also included – perhaps as a reinvigoration of its traditional upwardly mobile ethic – multifarious items on fashion, trends and lifestyle.[95] Ann Leslie, who worked as show-business columnist for the *Express* in the 1960s, developing connections with many of the most prominent figures in the 'swinging sixties' entertainment world, later recalled having been told by her employers that they had engaged her, at the age of 22, in order to reflect 'the voice of youth'.[96] Although uncertain about such a label, Leslie quickly became a distinctive, modern presence within the paper; Jonathan Aitken identified her as one of the 'Young Meteors' of 1960s London, considering

her to constitute a bold, fresh voice in journalism.[97] Although Leslie felt that *Express* readers retained their traditional conservatism, her presence on the paper still demonstrated that the editors were attempting to move with the times.[98]

Smith also observed more sympathetic coverage of hippies in the *Express* during the late 1960s. Lengthier articles explored, 'unhysterically', their alternative lifestyles, and, although conclusions were not necessarily invariably favourable, Smith suggests that '[t]he spillover from hippie culture into the world of fashion […] allowed [*Express* gossip columnist] William Hickey to link the aristocracy of pop with the [… lifestyles] of his more conventional champagne acquaintances'.[99] The fact that both these papers remained in broadsheet format in this period, their pages tightly packed with many disparate items, allowed authors to expand upon their ideas.[100] Anne Scott-James, who also edited and contributed a full-page feature to the *Sunday Express*, later spoke of the 'acres of space' which the format allowed her 'to fill with [her] exuberant opinions'.[101] The *Mirror*, by this stage, had devised an inimitable formula within its columns, firmly established upon Cudlipp's strong understanding of 'the combined power of words and images'.[102] Although its key writers still displayed great singularity in their contributions, the tendency towards a 'punchier', more impactful style – '[e]xcitable, exuberant, always vigorous, sometimes vitriolic', as Keith Waterhouse later described it – prevailed in the overall character of the paper, becoming its 'virtual copyright'.[103] This approach, although accounting considerably for the appeal of the paper, did not always promote the thoroughness of exploration which remained evident in its two principal rivals during this time. Neither the *Mail* nor the *Express*, thus, should be 'written off' as being entirely disengaged from, or disinterested in, contemporary culture during this period. They did not extensively or rigorously pursue the 'teenage market' as the *Mirror* tended to do, but this comparative detachment may actually have allowed writers greater freedom, at times, to produce appraisals of youth music and trends, which were notably nuanced and considered.

Conclusion

Clearly, coverage of rock 'n' roll beyond 1956 grew generally more benign, with the *Mirror* serving as a particularly significant champion of the musical and cultural tastes of youth as its own popularity with this sector grew into the 1960s. The newspaper world remained ambivalent about certain aspects of youth culture, and could not resist opportunities to reawaken anxieties about the young whenever this was deemed necessary or useful in some respect;

nevertheless, it is evident that a greater variety of 'voices' concerning both youth and its chosen music styles emerged, across all papers, from the late 1950s onwards. Just as the *Mirror* was not the unequivocal supporter of youth and its culture that it subsequently appeared to be, so too were its main rivals, the *Express* and the *Mail*, not entirely backward nor condemnatory in their approaches to popular music.

Chapter 4

ADVENTURES IN 'DISCLAND': NEWSPAPERS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF POPULAR MUSIC CRITICISM, C. 1956–1965

Introduction

The growing recognition of the importance of popular music styles to readers – and particularly to the all-important youth market – was, clearly, acknowledged by the major newspapers, and, in particular, the popular titles, by the late 1950s. This awareness was further reflected in the development of columns specifically dedicated to the music, comprising record reviews, commentary on the industry and reports on specific artistes. It is upon the evolution of such columns, particularly within the popular press, but subsequently, and increasingly, in the serious titles, that this chapter focuses. Once again, exploration of this dimension of newspaper coverage of popular music allows scholars to look beyond straightforward perceptions of condemnatory attitudes and moral outrage. It also highlights that, at least initially, and contrary to prevalent opinion, the popular press demonstrated greater initiative in bringing the music – as *music* – to their readers. While acknowledging the various popular music critics whose work appeared in the popular press at this time – from Judith Simons of the *Express* to Adrian Mitchell and Kenneth Allsop of the *Mail* – the chapter highlights the particularly distinctive contribution made by Patrick Doncaster, the *Mirror*'s pop columnist throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, in this regard.

The steady increase of enthusiasm for popular music styles exhibited by the popular press arguably peaked in the early 1960s as the popularity of the Beatles soared. Significantly, it was also at this point that the serious newspapers began, steadily, to take more consistent note of contemporary musical developments. The particular importance of 'Beatlemania', both as a cultural phenomenon and as a pivotal moment within which the cultural validity of popular music was widely acknowledged by various sectors of the press, must therefore be acknowledged.

Popular Music Coverage in the Daily Press: The Popular Newspapers as Pioneers

Between 1956 and the emergence of the 'beat groups' of the early 1960s, serious papers certainly seemed less eager to respond to, or comment extensively upon, the new popular music trends, notwithstanding occasional features on prominent performers or particular concerts. Facing less concerted pressure to cultivate a populist dynamic to increase sales, they responded to and engaged with popular culture phenomena inconsistently during this time. George Melly asserted that, during the formative years of British rock ' n' roll, 'the quality papers had either no interest in pop, or, more likely, were totally unaware of it'.[1] Nevertheless, if this appraisal was accurate, then the situation did not remain static. Melly himself contributed regular pop columns to the Sunday *Observer* – and, indeed, the *Sunday Times*, which underwent a period of growth during the 1960s, also proved itself a keen observer of contemporary social and cultural developments (not least via its celebrated magazine, established in 1962, which included far-sighted and vivid observations on the unfolding trends of the 'swinging' sixties). These developments included popular music, which was represented in the paper predominantly via the columns of Derek Jewell.[2] The *Guardian* exhibited some early, largely sympathetic interest in popular music trends, principally through the writings of Stanley Reynolds. Michael Hann later dubbed Reynolds 'the father of modern rock journalism' for his sensitive popular music commentary. As Hann observes, however, Reynolds largely 'reported' – he did not 'review albums or gigs', and his interest in popular music lay more in establishing its social significance than in exploring its musical characteristics.[3] Melly also proved an insightful observer of the nascent British pop scene of the early 1960s, although Jennifer Skellington perceives his coverage as 'sometimes derogatory or humorous [in] tone', and often less than fully apposite as a result.[4] Melly himself later revealed that, as a 'jazzer', with some experience of jazz and television criticism, he had not considered himself a natural commentator on the pop scene.[5] However, his exploration of The Who, about whom he wrote in 1965, demonstrates an effort to understand the group's distinctive dynamic and controversial image honestly and sensitively.[6] Melly had discovered that the managers of such groups sought coverage of their charges in the serious papers, in order to boost their credibility, and, in responding to their requests, he played an important role in helping to establish a legitimate place for popular music within the highbrow press.[7] Having mastered the difficult art of 'spin[ning] a sentence' on jazz, he learned how to approach subsequent pop styles in a thoughtful and pertinent, yet succinct, manner.[8] Scholars have also noted the 'reserved' stance of Derek Jewell, particularly towards the Beatles, suggesting that he

'dismiss[ed] them' because they represented 'mass culture'.[9] Like Melly, Jewell, too, acknowledged the difficulties of developing a suitable vocabulary for pop writing, although he himself felt that his style evolved in step with the music scene, and, while his early appraisals of the Beatles may not have been uniformly glowing, and limited in their musical descriptions, there was no doubting his great, and ever-increasing, enthusiasm for the diverse music scene which he reviewed throughout this period.[10] Nevertheless, much of the coverage of popular music, where it existed, in the serious press during the late 1950s and early 1960s often seemed detached in tone. The *Times* had, as highlighted, proven a reasonable commentator on the 1956 'riots', and by the early 1960s the paper had begun to produce thoughtful and largely balanced articles on the direction of the popular music industry.[11] However, its coverage remained somewhat patchy and intermittent. The *Guardian* responded to musical developments a little more thoroughly and consistently, but there was little concerted effort to create a dedicated space for the music within serious papers before the mid-1960s.

The popular press, however, showed considerably greater interest in including commentary on popular music styles from the mid-1950s onwards. As Adrian Bingham argues, the tendency of historians to minimize the sociocultural significance of the popular press has often meant that such innovative aspects of its evolution have been overlooked. Commenting on popular music – or 'pop' (and at times 'pops', as the various component styles were frequently, pithily, described) – was part of a wider acknowledgement that there existed new cultural forms which were making a discernible impact on British sociocultural life. Although they might be dismissed by some as mere 'mass entertainment', these cultural forms were recognized by popular journalists as interesting, emergent entities. As Paul Rixon notes, '[P]art of the role of [the] popular papers was to reflect on popular culture, to write about people's interests and leisure time', and the 'media industries' supported such coverage and endorsement.[12] The rise of television criticism in postwar newspapers provides an interesting comparative case in point; both Peter Black of the *Mail* and Clifford Davis of the *Mirror* helped to establish the television review as an integral feature of the cultural output of the newspapers.[13] As John Ellis notes, by the 1970s, the *Times* had begun to give 'serious attention' to television, but it was in the popular papers that the importance of the young medium was first acknowledged.[14] This was also the case with popular music.[15] Reviews of records, whether popular, jazz or classical, predated the rock 'n' roll era in both types of paper, but consideration of new music styles and of their young performers – especially as the value of courting teenage readers was acknowledged – was readily integrated into the 'disc columns' of the popular papers, and in many respects gave them a renewed vitality and focus in the late 1950s.

Rock 'n' Roll as Music? Acknowledging 'the Beat'

It was perhaps inevitable that, as one of the most vivid and newsworthy of music trends, rock 'n' roll should find its way into such record columns. While, initially, it was treated somewhat dismissively as a transient aberration, gradually coverage grew more thoughtful and measured. The writers endeavoured to make sense of its popularity, but their particular portions of the papers did not need to rely on sensationalist reportage to succeed. Here, in fact, it was possible to be more opinionated, certainly, but also more reflective. By early 1957, there was some uncertainty, among music columnists, as to how precisely this controversial style could be integrated, not only into their writings, but also into the wider music scene, now that the clamour of late 1956 had receded. As a social phenomenon, the music had evidently been vilified and, subsequently, largely rehabilitated, and its commercial appeal for the young had also attracted much comment; but what of its credentials and longer-term future as a form of music?[16]

Coverage which considered rock 'n' roll in conjunction with other, concurrent musical trends began to appear, much of it attempting to come to reasonable terms with the genre. There were many who were inclined to dismiss any possibility of its longevity. Making predictions for the year ahead, 'Paul Tanfield' had decided that the genre would 'die' in 1957, and, certainly, in the period surrounding Bill Haley's visit to Britain, there was considerable speculation among commentators regarding whether it was now in terminal decline.[17] On a visit to Tin Pan Alley, Kenneth Allsop was bewildered by the range of predictions of the next potential 'craze' – some touted skiffle as the next phenomenon, while another official declared this trend moribund, insisting that 'the ballad' was re-emerging.[18] Bill Haley himself, as a veteran musician with roots in country and 'western swing' music, had frequently suggested in interviews that rock 'n' roll was little more than a transitional, if lucrative, trend.[19] Jonathan Kamin later suggested that, in America, 'frequent pronouncements that the music was dying', having been a mere 'passing fad', served as a deliberate 'tactic', deployed by detractors who were desperate to diminish its impact and hasten its disappearance.[20]

Yet, certainly among most music writers of the British popular press, no such straightforward decline for rock 'n' roll was observed in 1957. Both Patrick Doncaster of the *Mirror* and Cyril Stapleton of the *Express* acknowledged predictions that calypso, a rhythmic Caribbean style popularized by Harry Belafonte, would become the next trend, but neither was especially convinced. 'Calypso has been with us too long to make an impact', Doncaster suggested, while noting that popular pianist Winifred Atwell, a great favourite with British audiences, continued to include rock 'n' roll material in her stage

act.[21] Stapleton equally noted the overfamiliarity of calypso in Britain, and predicted a longer future for rock 'n' roll. His reasoning for this was, however, quite revealing. 'Why? Because rock 'n' roll was new', he stated, curiously contradicting so many of the press dismissals of 1956. 'Nothing like it had been heard for many, many years.'[22] Stapleton, a bandleader with backgrounds in jazz and light orchestral music, was not renowned for his support of rock 'n' roll, but he had nevertheless, from the first, advised the public not to 'blame the music' for the cinema disturbances.[23] Ultimately, however, both at that time and subsequently, Stapleton could conceive of rock 'n' roll as music; for him the trend now seemed to convey fresh originality, rather than remaining merely a dangerous fad or a reconstituted jazz variant.[24] By measuring rock 'n' roll against other trends in this way, Stapleton, Doncaster and Allsop were, certainly, continuing to treat it as a genre which largely derived its legitimacy from popularity, rather than from musical pedigree. Their views on it also remained decidedly ambivalent, tending in some cases towards the negative. Yet simultaneously, albeit paradoxically, their speculations also allowed rock 'n' roll to become, if not legitimized, then at least acknowledged as a distinctive musical form, rather than simply as a social phenomenon, or a derivative gimmick. For good or ill, it had now earned a place within the wider sphere of popular music. None of the writers dismissed it completely, and all three, in company with fellow disc critics and music columnists, attempted to understand both why it might survive, and to consider how best to articulate the contribution which it was making, and indeed could make, to the evolving pop scene.

Certainly, the tendency to 'write off' rock 'n' roll persisted intermittently on both sides of the Atlantic throughout the remainder of the 1950s, intensifying after Elvis Presley was inducted into the US Army in 1958, and following the disappearance of key American performers either through scandal (Jerry Lee Lewis and Chuck Berry) or death (Buddy Holly and Eddie Cochran). Nevertheless, considering the stylistic differences among such performers highlights the inherent fluidity of rock 'n' roll as a musical genre. Declaring its 'death' remained, thus, very difficult, and this was something of which critics in Britain became increasingly aware by the end of the 1950s. They were now more inclined to consider the ways in which it might live on, and even evolve further. In 1959, *Express* writer Peter Evans attempted to rationalize the persistence of the genre as he, too, highlighted the perceived progression of rock 'n' roll from 'fad' to musical form. '[P]undits [had] predicted a loud, short life' for rock 'n' roll in the mid-1950s, he stated, and in 1958 television executives were still decrying it as a moribund 'gimmick', but by 1959 the style remained 'still the most powerful force in "pop" music today'.[25] Importantly, however, as far as Evans was concerned, it had progressed and infused other musical forms with its all-important 'beat'. He made an effort

to explain the different ways in which this had occurred. A variant which he dubbed 'hard rock' remained visible via the records of Elvis Presley and Marty Wilde; some 'THREE beat ballads' also featured in the Top Ten; and popular singer Brenda Lee deployed a 'slow, distinctively-modern rock beat'. Evans acknowledged such developments as vital to the survival of rock 'n' roll, but ultimately he attributed its durability to a subtle but significant generational shift. 'After four years there is a new generation of teenagers revitalising the old beat.' Similarly, a Tin Pan Alley publicist informed Allsop that, despite the multifarious predictions concerning the future of popular music, 'the solid beat' which rock 'n' roll had introduced was here 'for keeps. The public still want it and they'll go on wanting it now.'[26] Doncaster also noted how the 'the dusting over' of a record 'with a beat' could 'fresh[en]' its sound, regardless of its generic origins.[27]

This revitalized concept of 'the beat' – a beat for a slightly younger teenager, as Evans suggested – thus, allowed rock 'n' roll, in the eyes of these critics, to contribute to the wider music scene in frequently innovative and refreshing ways. In a similar vein, articles which focused on particular aspects of the music scene often highlighted the manner in which different genres could coexist and even overlap, rather than being seen as trivial fads which were perennially competing with one another, or else categorized in an arbitrary hierarchy. A piece by Allsop on the proliferation of 'coffee cabarets' depicted such premises as catering to a variety of teenage tastes – blues, folk, jazz, skiffle and rock 'n' roll were all showcased for enthusiastic young patrons.[28] In 1957, Doncaster and Tony Miles visited the coffee bars of Soho, as part of another *Mirror* feature on teenage life, and similarly noted the confluence of music styles present; with jazz, skiffle and rock 'n' roll evident, the district had become 'a breeding ground for talent'.[29] In an earlier feature on 'serve-yourself disc bars' in London, wherein youngsters could sample a range of records 'for lunch' ('[s]omething sweet from Doris Day, [or a] platter […] of Bill Haley's tasty Comets? A garnishing of jazz […]? An emotional helping of Presley?') Doncaster inimitably presented rock 'n' roll as part of a wider range of musical choices which young people could make, as they built their consumption of diverse musical forms into their everyday routines.[30] Although the press had not hesitated to capitalize on the potency of the 'rock 'n' roll' label in 1956, there was, as both Michael Brocken and Peter Stanfield have highlighted, a great deal of 'intertextuality' among music styles.[31] There was an essential fluidity to all of the prevalent popular genres, just as there had been with rock 'n' roll.[32] Many of the young British rock 'n' rollers – including Tommy Steele, Cliff Richard and Adam Faith – had begun as skiffle musicians, and Lonnie Donegan, the foremost skiffle performer, had previously performed in Chris Barber's jazz band. Doncaster's commentary had

also inadvertently highlighted the survival, in mid-1950s Britain, of a slightly older, postwar melodic popular style, which was typified by vocalist Doris Day or by British singers Frankie Vaughan and Alma Cogan. In musical terms, and in a context which largely divorced it from its original negative social significance, thus, rock 'n' roll had always possessed uncertain stylistic boundaries, but now this served to assist the critics further in presenting it, and its once-notorious 'beat', as constituting but one strand in a prodigiously varied pop music tapestry which was growing more discernible and vibrant at the dawn of the 1960s.

'Everyone Loves It': Reappraising the Critical Vocabulary of Popular Press Music Columnists

The very fact of placing rock 'n' roll in the pop music columns, of course, allowed it to be discussed within a very different context, in comparison to its earlier placement in news reports. Nevertheless, the genre was by no means the principal preoccupation of those columnists who discussed popular music. Their remit was, of course, considerably wider, as they explored the multifarious facets of the contemporary music business via record reviews, reports on the inner workings of the industry (such as the work of session musicians or advances in recording technology), and interviews with performers, both veterans and newcomers.[33] There were, undoubtedly, challenges inherent in creating a fresh perspective for every column, and in conveying a particular focus within such limitations of wordage. As was so often the case with the daily papers during this time, there was little in the treatment of the music that was excessively premeditated, as writers continued to react to developments, building stories around particular perceived phenomena or professing opinions which were not always proven correct in the longer term. While the practice of focusing on the latest aspiring chart stars continued to provide the human dimension which had so often been missing from coverage in 1956, it was also the case that many of these newcomers frequently vanished without a trace from the scene. This served to emphasize the ephemeral nature of the columns in which they had been included; the predictions and viewpoints of columnists were not always proven accurate. Both Kenneth Allsop and Derek Jewell highlighted the difficulties which journalists faced when writing on such matters under pressures of time, and without the benefits of 'hindsight'. 'Inconsistencies', both had cause to argue, were inevitable.[34]

Nevertheless, the pop columns of the daily press gave 'ordinary' readers, most of whom, in the case of the majority of papers, were, realistically, unlikely to be of the teenage demographic, new perspectives on the modern music scene. They helped to enhance awareness of the many styles on the market,

and rendered all of them – rock 'n' roll included – a more intrinsic part of daily life and leisure. What they were later accused of failing to manage, however, was to create a critical vocabulary which was adequate for the analysis of such styles. Discussing and reporting on industry-related matters generally presented no great semantic difficulties, but assessing the quality and appeal of a newly released pop record, particularly within limited spatial confines, was undoubtedly more deceptively challenging. Rixon has noted that highbrow detractors of the work of early television critics frequently complained that their writing 'lacked critical rigour', and questioned its 'objectivity'; finding a suitable tone and devising apposite vocabulary certainly did prove challenging for the pioneering critics, and this was also the case for the pop writers of this period.[35] All too often, the critics could provide no more than short, simplistic assessments, some of which were not especially musically orientated. For example, in 1962, the *Express* record reviewer Jane Gaskell and fashion columnist Patricia Young collaborated to consider, for 'Go! Go! Go!', how 'a girl' might 'spot the boy who has what Go! Go! takes'. Illustrated descriptions of the sartorial choices of different categories of men were provided, alongside suggestions for records with which girls might 'bait' each one (the latest single by Mike Sarne was tipped for success, since 'everyone loves it').[36] Patrick Doncaster, who presided over the popular music content of the *Daily Mirror* until the mid-1960s, developed his own inimitably *Mirror*-friendly, pithy style in disc reviews. Frankie Vaughan's latest album consisted of 'good old good ones. And happy.' The Allisons' recording of 'an attractive ditty' called 'Words' also earned approval ('Words' can't fail', Doncaster cheerfully concluded).[37]

It is easy to quote selectively from such columns to argue that these critics were out of touch, either too old or too removed from the music scene to understand what it entailed. It must also be recognized that amid the abundance of different popular styles in the years preceding the rise of the Beatles was a range of 'novelty' songs which were intentionally ephemeral; devising a serious critical vocabulary for such numbers would have seemed absurd. However, by no means did all of the writing assume a one-dimensional character, and there were clear attempts made by some critics to develop a descriptive range which was better suited to the music under discussion. Although his intermittent writing on early 1960s pop music for the *Mail* was not always sympathetic, and his more lyrical prose reserved for his beloved jazz or blues, Kenneth Allsop was, as noted in the previous chapter, certainly not one-dimensional in his views of the music scene, and he did, at times, write very constructively on those younger performers in whom he spotted potential. The precociously sonorous voice of Helen Shapiro, for example, transfixed him.[38] 'Her voice has an organ richness and power; her attack [and] audacity […] her jazz feeling' all bespoke an 'eerie maturity', he argued. Shapiro

had, he concluded, 'a natural immensity of talent' – although this praise was tempered by the fact that he felt that the older songs which she performed live better reflected her abilities than the 'pleasant but unremarkable' numbers which had attained chart success. Thus, Allsop was willing to praise a pop singer warmly, and he endeavoured to articulate the musical qualities which had inspired his admiration, even though his appreciation of her contemporary pop numbers clearly had some limitations.[39]

Similarly, the fashion-focused column to which Jane Gaskell contributed was not truly representative of the style which she espoused. She, too, tried to present more perceptive appraisals within record reviews, often within extremely limited spatial constraints. 'Cliff [Richard] soft-focuses a voice like velvet' was her evaluation of the singer's latest ballad; British duo Miki and Griff, meanwhile, embodied '[r]esonant rhythmic world-weariness'.[40] While assessments of the literary merit of such reviews are always dependent on the subjective viewpoint of the appraiser, there is no doubt that, as the 1960s progressed, record reviewers increasingly attempted to provide readers with more than straightforward enthusing or automatic predictions of a hit or miss, and often strove to convey essence of sound and impact intelligibly and discursively. The *Express* certainly gave Judith Simons ample room to explore the topics which she had chosen for her music columns, affording them a certain thematic cohesion. Conscious of her status as a 'pioneer[ing]' female music writer, she also frequently paid particular attention to emergent female artists and industry representatives, and, less inclined than her male counterparts to dwell on their physical attributes, highlighted, and let them articulate, their aspirations in a more equitable manner.[41] Meanwhile, Adrian Mitchell, popular music columnist for the *Daily Mail* between 1963 and 1964, was an informed and empathetic young commentator on the scene. He recalled with enthusiasm his time spent 'on the lapels of the pop machine', as he revelled in the 'deadly struggles' and 'dramatic' qualities of the weekly charts; the love which he felt for the music of this era became deeply embedded in the poetry for which he subsequently became more celebrated.[42]

Writing about popular music was, as Melly highlighted in 1970, a challenging task even for the most enthusiastic or accomplished critic. 'Pop has been consistently prejudiced against the written word', he argued, 'in favour of that which is spoken or sung.' Furthermore, pop was, for Melly, 'communal, tribal, a shared experience', whereas writing and reading constituted 'solitary activities'.[43] An inherent incompatibility had, thus, to be overcome by anyone seeking to write about any variety of pop. At this formative stage, the daily press pop music writers contended with many challenges as they attempted to discern, and to shape in turn, what their readers sought from their coverage of the music.

Indeed, the problems which beset the early popular music writing within the newspapers were also experienced by those who wrote for the more specialist music press. Neither *Melody Maker* nor its more youth-centric rival, *New Musical Express* (*NME*), had, as yet, devised more sophisticated or distinctive means of encapsulating popular styles. *Melody Maker* had been including features on the youth-driven pop market since the mid-1950s, and had largely overcome its initial hostility towards rock 'n' roll et al., but, although the paper had been featuring extensive, musically orientated analysis of jazz since the 1930s, it had not yet made sensitive and pertinent criticism of newer styles an integral aspect of its coverage.[44] *NME*, at this time, remained more of a fan-centric publication, inclined to mirror teen magazines and broader 'show-business' papers in the style and scope of its coverage, rather than present detailed considerations of record styles.[45] Ultimately, most publications continued to respond to the popular styles by straightforwardly reporting on the activities of the musicians, and the record reviews which appeared in these publications betrayed many of the same semantic limitations as those of the popular press.[46]

Patrick Doncaster and 'Discland': Pop Criticism, '*Mirror*-Style'

As one group of scholars argues, it was not until after 1964 that the journalists on these specialist music papers 'start[ed] treating pop and rock music seriously'.[47] This, in turn, paved the way for the gradual development of comparable and regular provision of 'pop as music' within the serious daily press – a development which will be highlighted in the final chapter.[48] Nevertheless, the extent to which the popular music of the late 1950s and early 1960s inspired or even necessitated such 'serious' treatment from critics is questionable. What remains particularly distinctive about the contribution of Patrick Doncaster to the *Daily Mirror* was the manner in which the writer used his column to construct a vision of British pop (or 'Discland', as he dubbed the world in which he operated) which overtly revelled in its ephemeral lightness, its positive communality and social function. Doncaster was an experienced writer, and his pioneering columns brought to the world of popular music the sort of dynamism and exuberance which chimed perfectly with the broader vision of the paper at this time. He had been writing on popular music for the paper since the early 1950s, and his columns had acknowledged the existence of a distinctive youth market, and the trend-driven nature of the business, some years prior to the more widespread media 'discovery' of the teenager.[49] He became features editor, and later the principal show-business editor, of the paper. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Doncaster, although a prolific writer, did not publish any personal memoirs; he is, however, remembered by associates

and colleagues as an inimitable and influential figure within the industry, an exuberant presence on Fleet Street with an 'enormous' 'list of contacts' and 'immediate access to the stars'.[50]

However, particularly since the Haley tour promotion, popular music had been very much at the heart of the paper's renewed youthful focus, and Doncaster endeavoured to encapsulate this and deliver it, '*Mirror*-style', to his readers. While the tenor of Doncaster's record reviews scarcely denoted intensive engagement with the artistic merits of pop, they were nonetheless deceptive in their simplicity, with subtly positioned themes or jokes often used to bind together an otherwise disparate set of new releases. Such reviews usually formed the culminating portion of the column; prior to this would be presented two or three key items of pop 'news', frequently entailing an interview with a particular musician (often, but not invariably, a newcomer – the column forged its own distinctive means of 'humanising' pop by accommodating both younger stars and older performers), followed by various shorter items, often on such subjects as the recent successes of other performers, particular trends which the columnist had observed (often with an accent on the whimsical or eccentric) or brief 'spotlighting' of particular performers or songs which he deemed remarkable or likely to succeed. For example, a February 1959 column boasted, as its main feature, an enthusiastic interview with 'stick of Discland dynamite' Cliff Richard, who was, the writer assured his readers, 'a big, big bet' for future success. Following this was a report on pianist Russ Conway, who, though typifying a style redolent of the earlier 1950s, remained very successful throughout the decade, and a brief comment on various recently released cover versions of traditional ballads, all of which variously dealt with ill-fated young women. The column concluded with news of comic singer Michael Flanders, who had recently released a version of the carol 'The Little Drummer Boy'.[51] A June 1961 column commenced with a feature on the trad jazz singer Bob Wallis, presented via a light-hearted anecdote about money which the vocalist apparently owed to Lonnie Donegan. A shorter item on Helen Shapiro's latest 'melodic' single ('she sings it like a seasoned star') prefigured a round-up of other recent releases, with Doncaster noting a proliferation of 'oldie' songs afforded a modern treatment.[52] Humour pervaded the column, with anecdotes about misunderstandings, performers' pet animals and unexpected occurrences abounding, and every subsection was punctuated by *Mirror*-style dramatic headings, 'blobs' and emphases. Doncaster presented his 'Discland' as a world of dynamic activity, in which *doing*, taking full part, was paramount. Melly's suggestion that pop was fundamentally 'communal', 'a shared experience', was readily manifested in his writings. The Haley competition was only one of many participatory ventures sponsored by the paper via Doncaster's column – the annual *Mirror* 'Disc Festival' gave readers the

opportunity to 'be the impresarios' by choosing the acts which they wished to see participate. There was also a chance to win 'lunch with the star of your choice' by suggesting a song-title suitable for the individual in question.[53] In 1962, Doncaster invited readers to 'pen a message of greeting' to American singer Bobby Vee as he arrived in Britain; winners would receive a 'personal recorded message' from Vee.[54] The social function of popular music was also regularly highlighted by Doncaster, such as in his pieces on 'disc bars' and coffee houses, and in a 1956 piece entitled 'Tape-Mates', which focused on 'The World Tape Pals Organisation', wherein individuals corresponded with one another via the exchange of music cassettes.[55] When the twist, first popularized in America by singer Chubby Checker, became a social dance phenomenon in Britain, the *Mirror* bought the publication rights to the accompanying song and Doncaster published the sheet music in his column, encouraging readers to '[p]rop it up on the old joanna and bang out "The Twist" '.[56]

Although he tended, on balance, towards enthusiasm for most new releases, he was not uniformly uncritical, and could be firm in his disapproval.[57] He also demonstrated willingness to adapt to changing times; having initially expressed dislike for 'shockin' rockin' in 1956, he nonetheless faithfully, and quite enthusiastically and meticulously, traced the further development of rock 'n' roll, and its early practitioners, throughout this period.

The columnist still had his particular favourites; his own musical formation had taken place during the immediate postwar heyday of revivalist jazz, and *Mirror* colleague Mike Molloy recalled that he 'reserved his greatest adulation' for Frank Sinatra.[58] When trad jazz experienced a surge of popularity, and musicians began, as he observed, 'jazzing up everything in sight', Doncaster could not conceal his enthusiasm.[59] 'Trad is booming', he observed in 1958 as he outlined the rise to popularity of Acker Bilk. Briefly explaining the origins of this style, Doncaster contended that Bilk and his band were not necessarily 'giants', but 'thousands […] want them – AND THAT IS THE YARDSTICK. […] Me? I couldn't be more pleased if trad were my brother!'[60] The columnist appeared on surer ground when discussing the reinvigorated popular jazz scene, which certainly captured the teenage imagination considerably, immediately prior to the 'beat group' phenomenon.[61] Doncaster himself served as pianist in a jazz band dubbed 'the MM All-Stars', led by Bob Wallis, which comprised a mixture of jazz professionals, *Melody Maker* writers and newspaper columnists (including, at various points, Adrian Mitchell of the *Mail* and Mike Nevard of the *Daily Herald*, who later became principal popular music critic of the post-1969 *Sun*). He proudly showcased the band within his column, observing that he and his fellow band-members were 'addicts', unable to resist performing jazz together.[62] Doncaster clearly had his own personal musical standards, but his reputation as a 'talented feature writer'

was recognized by fellow journalists of all ages.[63] As principal music writer on the most widely read of the popular newspapers, he also wielded considerable influence.[64] Bands were aware that a favourable review in his column could greatly affect their fortunes. His 'enthusias[tic]' endorsement of the somewhat controversial Rolling Stones as they established themselves on the music scene in 1963 gave the group a considerable boost; he later declared that he had found the group 'sufficiently interesting […] and important' to give them prime position within his column.[65] In general, however, regardless of the precise subject of his column, Doncaster's writing revelled in the dynamic variety of the music business, fully embracing and reflecting its trend-led, ever-changing character.[66] In the introduction to *Tops of the Pops*, an edited collection of his *Mirror* columns, Doncaster encouraged his readers to 'take the exciting Discland trail' with him. '[T]his world of the spinning disc, twirling, whirling boys and girls to fame', brought no certain success, but it was nonetheless thriving, and, whether a record succeeded or forced its young performer back to 'the office or the factory', the enterprise remained 'a great adventure'.[67] The drama of the transient pop world, thus, remained the foundations upon which Doncaster's columns were constructed.

The writer has been criticized, retrospectively, for his approach, which did not, for some, date particularly well.[68] However old-fashioned the style and appraisals of Doncaster's columns may appear from a contemporary perspective, and in comparison to the more sophisticated work of the subsequent generation of rock critics, they nevertheless epitomized a particular and distinctive approach to pop writing which served to embody perfectly, and with a distinctive verve, the manner in which the *Mirror* wished its readers to understand popular culture, and also to highlight how deeply the paper wished to court youth, while simultaneously maintaining a respect for previous generations and their tastes and heritage.

'Beatlemania' and the Press: A Turning Point

With the emergence of the Beatles and their fellow 'beat groups' in the early 1960s, the interest of the press in popular music was considerably intensified and revitalized – and this interest was also reflected quite markedly, albeit initially more reservedly, in the *Times* and the *Guardian*. Indeed, in many ways it was the phenomenon of the Beatles which prompted something of a turning point within press coverage of popular music, as the serious papers began, steadily, to acknowledge the form more systematically and thoughtfully.

Following the 'persuasive', positive piece which Maureen Cleave wrote on the group for the London *Evening Standard* in February 1963, the interest of the press was piqued, and coverage of the Beatles in the daily papers increased

exponentially. This was, effectively, the greatest popular music 'scoop' since the fevered days of autumn 1956, although the 'narrative' would certainly develop in a very different direction on this occasion. Ian Inglis argues that, to a greater extent than the music press, the national newspapers helped to establish a positive image of the group, and, by extension, popular music, in the British consciousness.[69] Not all commentators were necessarily surprised by the arrival of the Beatles, however; the shrewd foresight of some of the popular press critics must be acknowledged in this respect. Musically, the arrival of the groups was seen by commentators like Doncaster to be the logical conclusion of the 'beat' strand within pop which had been evident since the first days of rock 'n' roll, and continued via the subsequent trends for trad jazz and the twist. 'It's going to be a Big Beat of a year again', he predicted for 1964, as the Beatles continued to enjoy their first phase of success. However, Doncaster agreed with Beatles producer George Martin that 'the Beat mood [would] continue and […] spread more widely' to other facets of the music industry.[70] The arrival of groups thus helped to create a sense of continuity, strengthening existing tendencies which columnists had highlighted to shape their understanding of contemporary pop. Judith Simons termed the music of the Beatles 'rock 'n' roll with a homemade touch'; its status as a distinctively domestic progression of the original style was once again highlighted.[71]

Some aspects of the 'Beatlemania' phenomenon, however, seemed unprecedented, and this once again allowed a form of popular music associated with youth (and with discernible rock 'n' roll influences) to reappear in news reportage, as well as in the cultural features of the papers.[72] Coverage of the 'chaos' which surrounded the Beatles wherever they appeared throughout 1963–1964 did, at times, redeploy some of the stylistic devices used during the 1956 disturbances, with banner headlines announcing 'sieges' and 'riots' featuring in both serious and popular papers.[73] Discussions on the 'hysteria' also reignited debates on the 'safety' of the music, as psychiatric neuroses and involuntary responses were once again linked by commentators to the pop phenomenon.[74] Young women were also frequently placed at the centre of this particular 'problem', just as their misdemeanours had been emphasized by elements of the press in 1956.[75] Nevertheless, the ultimate findings of such reports tended to be more sympathetic than those of 1956. A three-part investigation on beat group popularity conducted by the *Express* quoted a psychiatrist who linked the excitable reactions of youngsters to the fact that they constituted the so-called bulge generation, the 'million extra children' born postwar. This was a 'lonely' group which had been 'made to feel an educational burden' from its earliest days.[76] One report even directly reversed earlier assumptions about popular music by suggesting that 'beat' was reducing the crime rate; despite its (typical) deployment of a misleading hint of

danger, the *Mirror* story, headlined 'Beat-city's teen crimes slashed', recorded a reduction in juvenile crime in Liverpool and quoted a 'senior [police] officer' who believed that 'beat groups' were removing youngsters from 'street corners'.[77](A variation on this stance also appeared in the *Times*.[78]) The general enthusiasm for the Beatles, which frequently crossed generational boundaries, was reflected abundantly in the newspapers at this time; even those who, like Merrick Winn of the *Express*, felt personally uncertain of the calibre of the songs acknowledged that the music 'bursting out of Britain's teenagers' via the beat groups 'must surely be [a] good [thing]'.[79] In some respects, therefore, the advent of the Beatles allowed some of the ghosts of 1956 finally to be laid to rest.

Changing trends in pop had become, by this time, a familiar facet of the British cultural landscape – the popular press having undoubtedly helped to contribute considerably to such awareness (and even to the construction of such trends) via their coverage – and as a result, 'Beatlemania', for all its perceived novelty, was equally, in the eyes of some observers, more of a fresh variation on an older, familiar, response to popular music than it was an unprecedented cause for alarm.[80] The manner in which the Beatles 'personalised' the beat group trend so effectively and, in the eyes of many, so positively, also seemed to lessen the extent of the concern. A psychiatrist interviewed by the *Mirror* suggested that adults looked upon the Beatles almost as surrogate children, such was their pride in the 'freshness and innocence' which they seemed to embody, and, in praising the Beatles, he seemed to suggest that their fans, likewise, should be acknowledged for 'recognis[ing] the honesty' inherent in the image of the group.[81] As Adrian Mitchell whimsically remarked in August 1963, while observing the 'family' appeal of the group, 'to hear anti-Beatle talk nowadays is unusual as a four-legged bike'.[82] Naturally, negative reactions did emerge; Mitchell's own paper printed a letter from a disgruntled reader who despaired at the excesses of 'Beatlemania'.[83] Screaming girls were accused by another *Mail* reader of degrading women in general, while a further letter expressed alarm at the dangers inherent in hysterical reactions to the group.[84] However, such negative responses seemed, largely, in the minority, and were not extensively highlighted by the press during this time.

Unsurprisingly, the *Mirror* embraced the Beatles with particular zeal. The paper's coverage of the group comprised not only extensive reports on their activities, but also routine inclusion in the columns of Doncaster, as he continued to report on the 'Big Beat' in its many incarnations, and commentary by his colleague Don Short (who later asserted that he had invented the term 'Beatlemania', and who would largely assume responsibility for the pop coverage of the paper in the later 1960s).[85] Such was the fame of the group that they also attracted the attention of the paper's eminent show-business

writer Donald Zec, who interviewed them several times throughout the 1960s, adopting a more exploratory approach than that of Doncaster or Short. Andy Davis suggests that the 'undying enthusiasm' of the *Mirror* for the Beatles was intrinsically linked to its identity as a populist, pioneering tabloid newspaper.[86] However, the paper also, naturally, recognized the commercial potential of such extensive features on the Beatles. 'The fans would', the editors realized, 'get their parents to buy the *Mirror*', further recognizing that '[they] only had to grow a little older before they would buy a copy of it each day themselves.'[87] The paper thus used the group as another weapon in its battle to secure the much-desired younger readership, and sharpened this tactic by producing 'souvenir magazines' on the group's American activities and 1963 Royal Variety Performance appearance.[88] As Davis highlights, the paper employed photographers to accompany the Beatles almost everywhere they went throughout the 1960s – an initiative which resulted in a particularly rich archive of photographs documenting the hectic lives of the group during this era.[89] 'They sold papers', one photographer, Alisdair Macdonald, later remarked, 'and the *Mirror* was *the* paper.'[90]

There appeared, for some, a natural symbiosis between the Beatles and the *Mirror* during the early 1960s, with their mutually breezy, irreverent outlooks and popular appeal. Inevitably, however, amid the intensely competitive environment of the postwar newspaper world, the other popular papers could not afford to ignore the Beatles. The *Mail* exhibited marked enthusiasm for the group; Adrian Mitchell believed that he had conducted their first press interview in 1963, and his expressive writing covered the beat group scene extensively.[91] Beatles biographer Hunter Davies noted the manner in which the *Mail* eventually 'stopped using the word Beatle in headlines', adopting instead 'the same little drawing of four Beatle haircuts […] to illustrate every story'.[92] Elsewhere, the paper eagerly embraced public, and youthful, enthusiasm for all matters Beatle-related, and utilized the popularity of the group by securing their support for its 'Youth in Action' Oxfam fundraising campaign of Christmas 1963.[93]

The *Express*, meanwhile, inadvertently developed a significantly close association with the group. Derek Taylor, who worked as theatre critic on the paper's northern edition, wrote a warmly enthusiastic review of a Beatles concert in May 1963. At 30, he did not consider himself the natural target audience of the group, but he became convinced of their distinctive importance and appeal.[94] His employers at the *Express* ultimately agreed, and, in fact, the column which the paper attributed to George Harrison was principally Taylor's handiwork, although eventually, as Taylor's friendship with the group developed, the work became more of a joint effort between journalist and Beatle, and, Taylor tellingly admitted, acquired a more authentic quality as a result. Ultimately, such

was Taylor's closeness to the Beatles that he left the *Express* at Brian Epstein's behest and became press officer to the group.[95] Judith Simons, in turn, came to consider herself a good, and trusted, friend to the various group members.[96] The approbation which 'the older generation' frequently expressed towards the Beatles has been widely highlighted – the MBEs which the group received in 1965 were awarded partly in recognition of the 'export' benefits which their success had brought to Britain, and they were courted by politicians and public figures of varying cultural persuasions.[97] They became integral to the increasingly widespread belief that Britain 'produce[d] the best pop', and the popular newspapers readily promoted this idea.[98]

As highlighted, the *Guardian* and *Times* also featured the Beatles extensively, if in a more discursive and less overtly enthusiastic manner, but the general tenor of their reportage remained largely positive. From the *Guardian*, Michael Braun's 1964 piece 'A Hard Night's Chat', adapted from his forthcoming book on the group, sought the 'real offstage voices' of the Beatles, and Stanley Reynolds observed the group, and its cultural context, sympathetically and with interest. A *Times* review of the 1963 Beatles Christmas Show certainly noted that nothing the group did could be heard amid the screaming, but declared that the group members nevertheless showed 'skill, shrewdness and liveliness of personality' while embodying 'everyday adolescence'; a review of the group's performance at the Royal Variety Performance, meanwhile, declared that the 'musical naivety' of the Beatles blended ideally with its 'electronic sophistication' and enhanced the 'engaging, irreverent cheerfulness' of the group.[99] It was also, of course, William Mann, music critic of the *Times*, who famously praised the skills of the Beatles by dubbing John Lennon and Paul McCartney the 'outstanding composers of 1963' and by taking approving note of their usage of 'flat submediant key switches' and 'pandiatonic clusters'.[100] Widely considered 'clean', 'presentable' and 'professional', the Beatles may not necessarily have alleviated all deep-seated anxieties about youth and the potential for 'riots' which their preferred forms of music could still create.[101] However, there is no doubt that they helped to create a new focus of interest, and potential source of income and new readership, for the press at all levels, and its understanding of, and attitude towards, popular music was affected accordingly.

Conclusion

However dated the critical commentary of Patrick Doncaster may appear today, its distinctiveness undoubtedly constituted a particularly vibrant contribution to the youth-orientated and populist cultural outlook of the *Mirror* during this period. Nevertheless, the openness to popular music which

Doncaster espoused was reflected, to a large extent, in the arts columns of the other major daily popular papers. In this respect, they played a key role in helping their readership to recognize the validity of modern popular styles in musical terms. The difficulties of such writers in capturing effectively, in words, the essence of the music must be recognized. Nevertheless, increasingly, their 'discovery' and recognition of the importance of 'the beat' within the post-1956 and pre-Beatles music scene gave them a great deal of scope for thoughtful and wide-ranging coverage. The recognition by critics like Doncaster that popular music was as much a social as a musical phenomenon also enhanced the opportunity for positive and inventive commentary.

The arrival of the Beatles was, in effect, the greatest pop 'headline' since the 'riots' of 1956, but, by this time, attitudes had evolved sufficiently to allow the group to be received largely positively by the press and its readership. The popular papers had undoubtedly paved the way for this greater positivity – although, certainly, the Beatles, equally, constituted something quite unprecedented. This perceived freshness and inimitability was observed by the serious papers, and it was from this point onwards that they began, unevenly but tangibly nonetheless, to acknowledge the artistic validity of popular music. This trend would continue to gather momentum as the 1960s progressed, and as the music scene continued to evolve dramatically. As the final chapter will demonstrate, however, it was amid such evolutions, and against a backdrop of increasing economic pressure and intensifying competition, that the popular press, despite its marked early positivity, seemed to lose its grasp of contemporary popular culture.

Chapter 5

REVERSALS AND CHANGING ATTITUDES: NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF POPULAR MUSIC FROM THE LATE 1960S TO THE MID-1970S

Introduction

The final chapter considers succinctly the manner in which shifting dynamics, both in the music world and in the newspaper industry, effected something of a reversal in approach between the popular and the serious press. As the popular music scene grew increasingly diverse and experimental during the latter half of the 1960s, and as shifting economic dynamics intensified the struggle, particularly among the popular titles, for readership and revenue, the enthusiasm of the popular press for the contemporary pop scene appeared somewhat compromised by the late 1960s. It was at this point that the serious newspapers began to appear more pertinent and viable fora for critical writing on popular music – a state of affairs which remained prevalent into the late 1970s and beyond, as newspapers such as the *Times* and *Guardian* found themselves, in the eyes of some, superseding even the dedicated music press in terms of the perceived effectiveness of their popular music-related content.

Nevertheless, it is important not to dismiss outright the 'post-Beatlemania' coverage of the popular press. Younger critics within these titles were able to reinvigorate popular music criticism to a considerable, albeit uneven, extent, and the *Daily Mirror*, although struggling by the early 1970s to keep pace with its bold *parvenu* rival *The Sun*, demonstrated, somewhat unexpectedly, that it had not lost its erstwhile enthusiasm for pop irrevocably.

Changing Fortunes, Reversing Trends: Evolutions within the Press and Popular Music Worlds during the Late 1960s

By the mid-1960s, as the global success of the Beatles grew to almost unimaginable proportions, changes within the British newspaper world, and innovations within the pop scene which would affect the manner in which the press understood and related to it, were beginning, gradually, to unfold. The increasing

sophistication of popular music, particularly as performed by the Beatles and other influential groups (such as the Rolling Stones or The Who), led eventually to the transformation of 'pop into art' and to its broad recategorization as 'rock'.[1] 'Rock', although as fluid a generic construction as any other during this period, gradually came to denote greater artistic integrity, originality and sophistication – in essence, a genre which, like the earlier jazz styles, was seen to inspire serious listening, rather than appearing a simple accompaniment for dancing or leisure.[2] In 1967, *Rolling Stone* magazine began publication in San Francisco, and, through its vibrant prose and intense, empathetic engagement with the music scene, contributed to the 'establish[ment] of a critical apparatus' for rock music writing, better suited to its unique idioms.[3] These advances were keenly observed by the British music press, and by the end of the 1960s, Jack Hutton, editor of *Melody Maker*, effected a radical shift in his paper's popular music coverage; with the arrival of a younger generation of writers, mostly near-contemporaries of the Beatles, popular music coverage became more sympathetic and, it was judged, better suited to the increasing sophistication and variety of the music, while also helping, in its own right, to further the notion that the music deserved such sustained critical attention.[4] A more appropriate vocabulary began to emerge, devised by writers who felt greater generational and cultural affinity with the performers whom they sought to appraise. The 'underground' press of the 1960s counterculture, which had developed its own highly distinctive idioms and approaches to rock, also exerted an influence on the style of the coverage in the more mainstream titles.[5] British music journalism enjoyed a 'boom' period; in 1970, Hutton left *Melody Maker* to establish the rock-focused *Sounds*, and by the mid-1970s, the *NME* had similarly undergone a particularly dramatic 'editorial overhaul' of its image and stance, developing a style of rock criticism which was distinguished by its frequently cynical intellectualism and by the highly 'idiosyncratic' individualism of its various writers.[6]

By the mid-1960s, the 'serious' daily newspapers had also begun to take more careful note of advances in popular music, recognizing that, through its increasing complexities, it might now merit inclusion in arts coverage.[7] William Mann's lauding of the Beatles via the conventional language of classical music criticism certainly caused amusement in some quarters.[8] Nevertheless, it equally reflected increasing acknowledgement of the fact that popular music could be considered to possess artistic merit. By this point, many music critics of the mainstream press and journalists of the music papers shared a belief that a more suitable language should be devised for the evaluation of popular music. As Melly highlighted in 1970, Geoffrey Cannon helped to pioneer rock writing for the *Guardian*, contributing a regular column to the paper from 1968 to 1972.[9] According to Derek Malcolm, the paper was, by the mid-1960s,

developing a dual identity, with the older 'camp' espousing 'old liberal *Guardian* values', increasingly joined by 'the hippy camp' of younger writers, of which he himself, as a 'long-haired film critic', was part.[10] The paper undoubtedly intensified its interests in rock music as part of this evolving identity and increasingly catholic arts coverage. However, the problems inherent in developing an 'authentic' vocabulary for describing rock music continued, Melly felt, to manifest themselves in Cannon's writing. '[P]rais[ing] extravagantly where he can', Cannon often adopted, in Melly's view, 'a mandarin style which frequently earns him a place in *Private Eye's* "Pseuds Corner" '.[11] Tony Palmer, another early *Guardian* rock critic, seemed 'tough[er]' than Cannon, but ultimately Melly considered the approach of *Melody Maker* to steer an ideal course. 'Less self-conscious' and 'frequently more to the point' than the work of the *Guardian* columnists, its rock coverage was, for Melly, robust and 'extremely well-written', and often included 'admirable interviews in depth' as well as continued coverage of all aspects of the business, 'transitory' styles included.[12]

By the late 1960s, the *Times* had also begun to include more considered reviews and features on the modern rock and pop world. William Mann reviewed subsequent Beatles albums in the late 1960s, and the humourist and musician Miles Kington also contributed perceptive reviews of rock concerts and albums during this time.[13] Richard Williams, while working as deputy editor on *Melody Maker*, wrote record reviews for the paper from 1970 onwards, at the behest of the arts editor John Higgins.[14] The reviews of Kington and Williams were well-informed and fluent, yet concise and succinct, and thus seem in keeping with Melly's appraisals of the style adopted by *Melody Maker*'s staff during this time. There was no doubt that serious papers were acknowledging, and reflecting, the increasing diversity and public awareness of the music world by this point, introducing empathetic writers with particular expertise, rather than relying solely on more established, 'in-house', columnists. Nevertheless, Melly's comments clearly demonstrate that British rock criticism, particularly within mainstream journalism, remained in a formative state in the early 1970s, still endeavouring to find a suitable 'voice' for itself, and opinions on how this voice ought to sound were inevitably varied. Rixon acknowledges that, by the end of the 1960s, there was certainly a greater acknowledgement, in cultural circles, of the artistic validity of popular culture forms, and frequently 'they bec[a]me the main focus of public and critical debate'. Nevertheless, this did not automatically entail the demise of the 'old cultural hierarchy' – and in many ways its values continued to permeate attitudes towards criticism of the popular arts.[15] Mann continued to adopt classical music references as a means of contextualizing the music of the Beatles, but even among younger writers, such tendencies and traditions were difficult to avoid altogether.[16] That this music was something to be 'taken

seriously' was widely recognized – yet amid such seriousness, critics were, at times, still inclined to look to older forms of 'highbrow' arts criticism for their vocabulary and direction.[17]

As the 'serious' press reversed its early tepidity towards popular music and began, increasingly, to include more ambitious and sensitive coverage of the subject, the popular papers, by contrast, and despite their initial openness to the pop world, now seemed rather more reluctant to evolve their critical approach. While popular music remained an important feature of their composition, the style of the coverage generally struggled to adapt to the complexities of the changing scene. Chris Charlesworth, working as a young reporter for *Melody Maker* by the early 1970s, believed that the majority of the older music critics for the popular press were largely unable, by this time, to understand the contemporary rock world, and generally appeared 'a bit lost' as they faced these evolutions within the industry.[18] Many of those who had begun as pop writers, including Simons, Short and Doncaster, eventually became 'show-business' editors on their respective newspapers – but, as Charlesworth highlights, the concept of traditional 'show-business', often embodied by performers with roots in Variety Theatre, was, particularly by this point, not considered especially compatible with the modern rock world.[19] Largely trained to reflect the style of what Jonathan Aitken called 'the old Fleet Street', with its emphasis on 'scoops' and 'news sense', they seemed increasingly obsolete amid a rapidly altering music world, and as a 'new Fleet Street' style, predicated upon 'good writing and original ideas', began to predominate.[20] Popular press coverage tended to remain at a superficial level, with little evident development in the manner in which music was described, and an increasing focus on lifestyle and 'gossip' emerged by the late 1960s. Rixon observes that, as the tabloid era gathered pace in the early 1970s, much of the coverage of the popular arts by this sector became increasingly 'welcoming' for readers, but also, accordingly, more 'subjective' in its style, with less concerted effort to devise or maintain any particular critical focus or tone.[21]

Just as popular papers had often struggled to accommodate more strident, revolutionary forms of youth culture, so too did they often tend to present negative coverage of artistes who were generally deemed unappealing, incomprehensible or morally dubious. The Rolling Stones were often particularly singled out for this sort of treatment in the press, viewed, from the first in fact (and despite Doncaster's supportive coverage), as the dangerous antithesis to the clean-cut innocence of the Beatles, and this perception prevailed throughout much of the period.[22]

Interestingly, it was the *Times* which, famously, distinguished itself from other publications in its robust defence of Mick Jagger during his well-publicized 1967 conviction (three months' imprisonment and a £100 fine) for possession

of drugs.[23] The paper was not, as John Grigg remarked, politically or culturally predisposed to support 'social and moral developments in the Sixties'; while it had never been unilaterally condemnatory of popular music, and although, by the end of the decade, it had, as highlighted, begun to feature reviews of rock and pop music more regularly, it had hardly exhibited adventurous approbation of the contemporary music scene.[24] However, William Rees-Mogg, who became the editor in 1966, recognized that it was unwise to appear 'too stuffy, or to be manifestly out of sympathy with the young'; instead, he saw value in 'winning [their] confidence' amid changing times.[25] His defence of Jagger ultimately hinged, not on an endorsement of the singer's reportedly licentious lifestyle, but on the fact that he believed that he had been made a scapegoat by authorities. A 'purely anonymous' young man would not have been so harshly sentenced.[26] The sentence was ultimately overturned, and David Fowler notes that many older readers wrote to the *Times* in support of this decision.[27] While Rees-Mogg had supported Jagger largely on legal, rather than on cultural, grounds, his editorial was published at a time when the attitudes of popular and serious papers towards popular music were, apparently, diverging once again, and even, perhaps, reversing. The Rolling Stones' drugs 'bust' was, reportedly, 'pre-empted by a tip-off to the police' from the popular Sunday paper *The News of the World*, and, certainly, Chris Charlesworth felt that the popular press was increasingly showing itself to be on 'the "wrong" side', as far as younger music fans were concerned – unable to accept the more radical and experimental aspects of the evolving rock scene, and more likely to adopt a condemnatory tone when discussing them.[28] Such attitudes were, of course, not wholly one-dimensional or absolute – Fowler notes that several popular papers, including both the *Mail* and the *Sunday Express*, endorsed Rees-Mogg's editorial, whatever their views of the musicians in question – but undoubtedly some journalists were struggling, by this time, to understand or support changes to the music scene.

Most conspicuously, given its initial enthusiasm, the *Mirror* did not appear to adjust particularly well to the stylistic developments occurring within popular music during the later 1960s, just as it had, apparently, largely failed to appreciate or respect the counterculture as a social movement. This lack of tolerance was highlighted most pointedly by shifts in its treatment of the Beatles by the end of the decade. Photographer Alisdair Macdonald recalled that the pressures of fame, and the intensifying desire for privacy, increasingly rendered the Beatles less receptive to incessant press intrusions. '[T]hey were no longer being helpful to us', he recalled, and, as a result, 'everyone started knocking them'.[29] Don Short continued to write extensively on the Beatles during the late 1960s, but, as a representative of 'the old Fleet Street', he was 'renowned' more 'for his story-getting abilities', rigorously pursuing exclusive

news on the group, than as a writer who took particular interest in musical content or style.[30] Indeed, remarks made subsequently by George Harrison and John Lennon suggest some wariness of the reporter, for all his friendliness towards them.[31] The lifestyle changes adopted by the group members, as they increasingly embraced, and indeed influenced, the stylings and *mores* of the counterculture, seemed to render them less palatable to *Mirror* journalists. Donald Zec seemed particularly bewildered by John Lennon and Yoko Ono when they undertook their 'bed-in' for peace in 1969; apparently considering the 'hairy' pair to resemble 'a couple of chumps, or chimps', Zec seemed to demonstrate the relative inability of the *Mirror* to remain open to shifts within either the popular music world or the changing social and cultural outlook of those who populated it.[32]

By the end of the 1960s, the *Mirror* was, however, facing wider challenges wrought by changes within the newspaper industry. The paper had encountered unprecedented and increasing success throughout the decade, reaching its peak with a reported circulation of 5.28 million in 1967.[33] However, when in 1969, Australian tycoon Rupert Murdoch purchased the struggling *Sun* from the Mirror newspaper group, he managed to undermine the primacy of the *Mirror*, not merely by capturing the essence of its traditional populist stance, but also by blending this with a style which was considerably more vivid and 'brash'.[34] The topless 'Page 3 Girl' became the most notorious manifestation of this new format, and pun-ridden headlines were also intrinsic to the paper's distinctive style. Conboy highlights that the *Sun* also endeavoured to trump the *Mirror*'s traditionally interactive, community-orientated approach by promising to answer readers' letters within 48 hours.[35] John Pilger did not consider the *Sun* a straightforward successor to the *Mirror*, arguing that it 'mined none of the *Mirror*'s political populism' and was 'a new invention, a hybrid'.[36] Nevertheless, Larry Lamb, who moved from the *Mirror* to become editor of the *Sun* when it relaunched in 1969, believed that the new paper was able to thrive largely because the *Mirror* had lost touch with its core readership. Absorbing the findings of a market research report which the original, *Mirror*-operated *Sun* had commissioned from Mark Abrams in 1964, the *Mirror* had come to believe, Lamb argued, that 'a huge new market of middle-class readers was waiting to be tapped'.[37] However, as far as Lamb was concerned, 'nothing [was…] further from the truth', and, in capitalizing on this perceived error by directing its appeal squarely towards working-class readers, the refreshed *Sun*, he argued, began its ascendancy.[38]

Lamb certainly recognized that any newspaper which hoped to compete seriously with the *Mirror* must attract a younger readership by engaging extensively, and authentically, with both youth culture and popular music. He engaged the writer/musician Mike Nevard to provide the pop coverage for the

revamped paper, and later asserted that the contributions of the enthusiastic columnist rapidly attracted a young readership to the *Sun*.[39] In fact, a younger generation of popular music columnists did begin to appear within the pages of other rival popular papers by the 1970s. Michael Cable contributed his expertise to the *Daily Mail* before transferring to the *Sun* in the late 1970s, and Pauline McLeod was remembered by Chris Charlesworth as an enthusiastic and well-informed younger contributor to the *Mirror*.[40] Rixon's observation that the manner in which the softer, more entertainment-focused popular press commentary on popular culture forms proved 'welcoming' to many readers should, similarly, not be overlooked – in other words, some readers apparently enjoyed the lighter styles of commentary presented by the popular papers by this time. Furthermore, as highlighted in the third chapter, features such as the 'Junior Mail' also afforded some youth-orientated reflections on contemporary musical and cultural developments. Nevertheless, amid increasing economic pressures and rapid cultural change, the popular press did not, it seems, truly seize the initiative to develop its own authentic 'voice' for popular music during this time, and found itself unable to articulate adequately the changes within the music scene. As a result, the contrast between the increasingly specialist and intensive coverage in the music press and the rather more staid, superficial reportage within the popular papers became increasingly stark.

It is, of course, important not to accept unquestioningly the notion that the dedicated rock press was invariably a disinterested and virtuous champion of the music which it analysed. Despite the tonal sophistication and 'independence' of many of its commentators, music journalism remained an integral facet of the wider industry, shaping the perspectives of marketing officials and frequently, Frith suggested, 'confirm[ing]' the preexisting tastes of readers rather than trying to shape or alter them.[41] Indeed, ultimately the cultural primacy of the styles of 'serious' rock journalism which emerged within the dedicated music press during the late 1960s were comparatively fleeting. Music papers were, themselves, not immune to economic fluctuations, and further changes within the music industry during the early 1980s began to render obsolete those earlier rock writing styles which were seen, broadly, to reflect the values of the 1960s counterculture. Publications such as the youth-focused *Smash Hits*, begun in 1978, evolved a tighter 'house-style' which diluted the individuality and intellectualism which had characterized much 1970s rock criticism, and greater competition within the market had an increasingly 'fragmenting' effect, gradually lessening the cultural influence of the rock writer.[42] Popular papers continued, via writers like McLeod or Cable or David Wigg of the *Express*, to comment informatively on developments within the popular music world.[43] The *Sun* maintained its experimental pop coverage via John Blake's 'Bizarre' column, begun in 1982, which included features on key

artistes alongside broader reports on youth culture.[44] However, the tendency, among the popular papers, to present the rock music world through the lens of scandal or 'showbiz' gossip certainly increased during the early 1980s, as competition among the papers, and in particular between the *Mirror* and the *Sun*, intensified.[45]

Meanwhile, according to Jennifer Skellington, it was by this point that coverage of rock and pop within the serious broadsheet press truly came of age. This flowering was the result of various factors. The transferral of the newspaper industry from Fleet Street to the district of Wapping in 1986, she argues, resulted in more efficient production methods for the press, and this allowed for 'fatter newspapers', containing colour supplements within which rock music coverage found a suitable home. While many of those who became rock writers for the serious newspapers at this time, including Richard Williams and David Sinclair, migrated from the struggling specialist music press, they were aware that the broader readership of the mainstream newspapers might require a more accessible, yet nonetheless thoughtful, form of music coverage. All of these considerations allowed quality press music critics to 'invent a new voice for rock and pop coverage in a befitting tone for the quality press', striking a suitable balance between contextual reportage, sociopolitical context and detailed yet comprehensible criticism of the music itself. It was, thus, ultimately amid the pages of broadsheets like the *Times* or *Guardian* that rock criticism found its most sustainable and enduring voice within the national press, according to Skellington's assessment.[46]

Postscript: Discland Revived? The *Daily Mirror* 'Pop Club'

For those who lamented the apparent decline in influence and identity of the *Mirror* throughout the 1970s, the purchase of the paper by Robert Maxwell in 1984 seemed a decisive watershed. The paper was often accused of moving increasingly 'down market', aping the style of the *Sun* in order to remain viable in the tabloid era, and losing the influence of those respected writers, such as John Pilger or Keith Waterhouse, who had contributed so extensively to its 1960s apogee. However, for James Thomas, it is more accurate to state that the paper exhibited 'a split personality' from this era onwards, 'unsure whether to imitate [the *Sun*] or seek to remain aloof', and that *Mirror* readers still perceived clear differences between the two titles.[47] Nevertheless, despite its survival, the paper would never wholly regain the influence or the confident distinctiveness which it had seemed to possess during the 1950s and 1960s.

When exploring the gradual decrease in impetus of the *Mirror* during the 1970s, it is easy to present a linear account of increasing disengagement with

youth and to decry a limited understanding of popular music. However, it is equally inaccurate to assume that it gave up altogether on its young readers, or upon its former, Doncaster-era perception that pop and community were inextricably linked. The instigation of the *Mirror*'s 'Pop Club' by veteran television critic Clifford Davis in 1976 constitutes something of a curious 'postscript' to the narrative of the newspaper's approach to popular music.

All too aware, by this time, of the strong counter-attractions of the *Sun* for younger readers, Davis proposed the creation of a 'pop club' to *Mirror* editor Mike Molloy because, despite having reached 'the ripe old age of fifty-nine', he recognized that 'pop' constituted the 'all-consuming passion' of his teenage son and others of his age group.[48] This represented an extension of the 'club culture' which the paper had espoused for many years as part of its public outreach; Noel Whitcomb's 'Punters' Club', which exchanged racing tips and offered discounted race tickets to enthusiasts, had partially inspired the idea.[49] Davis envisaged 'discounts on discs; cut-price seats at concerts; big prizes in free-to-enter Pop Club contests and similar benefits', and, although 'rock and pop fans […] in their early teens and young twenties' were the primary market for the club, he equally hoped to include 'middle-of-the-road music lovers' too.[50] Invigorated by editorial 'support and enthusiasm', Davis, undaunted by his comparative seniority, undertook to organize the club himself, and was gratified by its rapid, remarkable success. Within a few months of its establishment in February 1976, membership had 'topped 150,000' and by 1980 it had reached 300,000.[51] Davis proudly outlined the significance of this victory. 'We succeeded on two counts: we were the first popular newspaper to recognise the importance of rock and pop music in the lives of our young readers and we were the first to cater for this with some tangible benefits.'[52] The critic did not mention the distinctive relationship which the *Mirror* had cultivated with the pop world during the 1960s, but he clearly felt that, by this point in the mid-1970s, the paper had firmly re-established itself as a pop-friendly publication. The free membership and varied, creative promotions offered by the club echoed the generous communality for which the *Mirror* had become renowned from the 1930s onwards. However, importantly, for Davis, the success of the club also demonstrated that the paper was still capable of moving with the times, providing 'positive proof' to the 'advertising department [that] a young readership' existed for the paper, 'since half our members were below seventeen years of age'. After its first year, the club had, crucially, generated some '£250,000 worth of extra advertising revenue from concert promoters, record companies and other firms wishing to interest youngsters in their products'.[53] Davis had been somewhat ambivalent towards popular music in the 1960s.[54] He had begun his working life as a Variety performer, and had been, by his own admission, deeply

steeped in an older entertainment culture. However, by 1976, recognizing that most Variety theatres 'had become supermarkets', he accepted the need for adaptation. (It was also gratifying to Davis that, despite its subsequent launching of a comparable 'Pop Shop' venture, the *Sun* had acknowledged the superior success of the *Mirror*'s club.)[55]

In many ways, the pop club, as described by Davis, almost seemed to reassert many of the older core values of the former *Mirror*, including the cross-generational respect which Davis expressed towards the interests of young club members, even as he sought to cater to older music fans simultaneously. Commercial interest, and the opportunity to tap the young for revenue also, of course, remained crucial to the venture. Yet it also hinted at a further evolution in the paper's attitude towards pop – a move, in some respects, towards a surer recognition of the 'everyday' manner in which fans consumed their music, and a turning away from the relentless need to stress sensational elements for the sake of attracting attention. In this respect, it is revealing that the nominated patrons of the club were not, as might perhaps be expected, former Beatles, but Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones, who continued, according to Davis, to 'help the club in many ways', facilitating competitions and backstage access for club members at concerts. The 1978 annual produced by the club certainly demonstrated the wide-ranging nature of its scope and remit; Rod Stewart, Queen, the Who and Mick Jagger were highlighted in its diverse articles, alongside more chart-orientated outfits such as Wings, the Bay City Rollers and David Essex, and, overall, the disparate contributions to the publication showcased a dynamic and enthusiastic attitude towards the multifaceted music scene of late 1970s Britain.[56] The Pop Club, thus, afforded the *Mirror* a very timely second chance to recognize the potential of the popular music world, and, in this case, it managed, at least in the short term, to rise to the challenge with considerable effectiveness.

Conclusion

It appears, therefore, that, by the 1970s, the serious press overcame its initial tepidity towards popular music, and its evolving coverage of the genre appeared to strike the most effective tone for the tastes of its musically inclined readers. Nevertheless, it remains important not to overstate or oversimplify the manner in which the popular papers appeared increasingly to disengage themselves from the contemporary music scene. Certainly, the complexities of the late 1960s and early 1970s rock world, and its various moral and cultural ambiguities, apparently proved beyond the comprehension of some of the popular press critics – particularly those of the 'older generation'. Nevertheless,

although the cultural landscape of popular journalism was changed irrevocably in the post-1969 '*Sun* era', the keen interest in pop exhibited by this sector of the press did not necessarily degrade irrevocably or vanish without a trace – as highlighted particularly distinctively by Clifford Davis's successful, and very typically *Mirror*-esque, 'Pop Club' initiative, which seemed to suggest that the paper's original ethic of populism and broad support for youth had not been vanquished altogether during the 'tabloid era'.

CONCLUSION

The reactions of British newspapers to rock 'n' roll, and popular music more broadly, have, since the 'cinema riots' of 1956, frequently been viewed by scholars monolithically and straightforwardly, and explored largely by those who seek evidence of disapprobation and misunderstanding. For some, the press reactions to the music constituted a clear example of 'moral panic', as developed in the work of Cohen and fellow sociologists. When deployed with subtle caution, this complex term may still provide a useful means of exploring the 1956 incidents and broader press responses to rock 'n' roll. Many of its key elements were evident in the newspaper coverage, and reiterated during future incidents in which popular music was seen to be involved. There is, nevertheless, a danger that, particularly when deployed too loosely, the term may become misleading, encouraging straightforward conclusions regarding 'press reactions' which can ignore important variations within the coverage. In assessing why 'modern press history' has tended not 'to flourish in Britain', Peter Catterall notes that, all too often, '[n]ewspapers are means not ends', their stories used as illustrative examples of wider social trends, but less extensively analysed as historic artefacts in their own right.[1]

Ultimately, this work has endeavoured to show that, while useful, the 'moral panic' framework for exploring press responses to popular music must be deployed alongside other considerations – in particular, recognition of the internal changes which the newspaper industry was undergoing during this time; the divergence between 'serious' and 'popular' newspapers in their responses to popular music; and, perhaps most significantly, the challenges which individual newspapers faced as they attempted to locate and assert their 'voices' during a time of intense competition and uncertainty. The temptations to exploit popular music, and the expressions of youth culture with which it was closely associated, for 'shock value', as a means of attracting attention and generating greater revenue, never completely disappeared. However, equally, with increasing recognition of the value and persistence of the various popular music styles, the press ceased to treat rock 'n' roll and its musical relations predominantly as sources of social disorder, and to recognize their

cultural, musical and commercial potential. Some publications exhibited signs of this recognition more effectively than others, at least in the short term. The *Mirror* was particularly proud of its embracing of popular music, and in columnist Patrick Doncaster the pop industry, in all its variety, found a particularly timely ambassador, as his 'Discland' became an exciting world, grounded in a light-hearted community spirit. The popularity of the Beatles also widely afforded opportunities for press exploitation of modern musical culture, and, once again, the *Mirror* possessed the initiative and means to capitalize on this particularly extensively.

Nevertheless, ultimately greater financial and economic pressures overcame both the *Mirror* and most of the popular papers, meaning that, while they had led the way in facilitating public understanding of the music, their own conception of the genre quickly appeared dated and unable to evolve effectively – although their coverage of pop should not be 'written off' entirely. However, it was at this point, by the late 1960s, that serious newspapers such as the *Guardian* and the *Times*, inspired by concurrent developments within music journalism and by their own more secure economic position, began to rise considerably more effectively, and with a greater degree of enduring success, to the challenge of explaining popular music to their readership.

Contradictions and dualities were always present within the pop coverage of virtually all newspapers throughout this period. Attempting to use either positive or negative aspects of this coverage of the music as 'proof' of a particular, collective 'press reaction' thus proves very difficult. In many respects the tonal and attitudinal ambiguity which can frequently be found in press treatment of popular music may be explained as much by the nature of newspapers as ever-changing, daily publications, produced by a wide range of individuals under great pressure of time, as by any concerted desire to convey a decisive opinion. Contradictions appeared not merely within any given individual title, but also within the pages of the same edition of a particular newspaper. Ultimately, for these reasons, it remains risky to draw any conclusions concerning a unilateral 'press' stance on the subject.

There are, certainly, many facets of the topics explored in this work which would benefit from further scholarly scrutiny. Detailed further study of the approaches to popular music of any of the individual titles featured in this work would certainly prove beneficial, as would comparisons between weekend and daily national publications, and between local and national papers – both in terms of their news coverage of the music and of their dedicated disc columns. Closer analyses of the approaches of columnists, of various backgrounds, to particular genres of music or groups of artistes would also augment the scholarship. Equally, it would undoubtedly be valuable to trace elements of the narrative into the 'punk era' and beyond, exploring further evolutions in the

pop-related stories and features presented in the various key titles featured in the work, and analysing the evolving language and tone of such stories.

While it remains difficult to assess precisely the influence of newspaper coverage of popular music on the viewpoints of the readership, one of the most valuable insights provided by such coverage in this period lies, arguably, with the manner in which the newspapers, in responding to cultural changes and attempting to explain them to their readers, helped, not so much to shape, as to *set the tone*, for some of the broader adult responses to popular music during this period. The press variously displayed a distinct mixture of horror, cautious approval and a sort of envy mingled with a desire to 'have a go' and participate, albeit rather tentatively, in the musical culture themselves. Equally, they frequently exhibited a recognition that popular music was something which could be exploited – whether for commercial gain, or through a desire to influence, or even exert control over, readers – but that it also, simultaneously, represented a force which could be harnessed for good. Elements of all of these varied responses, exhibited so extensively by the British press, are, equally, detectable in the manner in which the wider British adult population – from parents and educators to religious figures and entertainers – responded to the various styles of popular music, from the era of Bill Haley to the advent of 'beat groups' and beyond. That the press both mirrored and shaped broader social attitudes towards popular music is vital to recognize – but these attitudes were, clearly, more complex than many have assumed.

NOTES

Introduction

1 '"I Didn't Hit Rock and Roll Film Man", says Riot Cinema Boy', *Daily Mirror*, 31 August 1956, 3.
2 '"Rock and Roll" Disturbances', *Times*, 4 September 1956, 5.
3 Ibid.
4 '"Rock" and Wreck in Film Frenzy', *Manchester Guardian*, 4 September 1956, 12.
5 'Youths Ejected by Police: Dancing during "Rock" Film', *Manchester Guardian*, 10 September 1956, 1; 'Police Eject "Rock and Roll" Youths', *Times*, 10 September 1956, 5.
6 'More Towns Ban Film: Disorders Fears after "Rock and Roll"', *Times*, 13 September 1956, 6; 'More Bans on "Rock 'n Roll" Film', *Times*, 18 September 1956, 5; 'Rock 'n' Roll Film Ban in Two Towns', *Daily Mirror*, 12 September 1956, 7.
7 Quotation from George Fallows, 'Rock 'n' Roll Film Barred on Sundays', *Daily Mirror*, 6 September 1956, 9; see also 'No "Rock and Roll" Film on Sunday: South London Decision', *Times*, 6 September 1956, 10.
8 "Rock and Roll Film Banned by 7 Councils: Fear of Disorders', *Daily Telegraph*, 13 September 1956.
9 Chris Reynolds, '1,000 Rock 'n' Roll Rioters Take City by Storm', *Daily Mirror*, 10 September 1956, 5.
10 '"Rock" Devotees Turn Hose on Cinema Manager', *Manchester Guardian*, 10 September 1956, 12. See also 'More Scuffles with Police after Rock n Roll Film: Ejection from Cinema Taken Unkindly', *Manchester Guardian*, 11 September 1956, 16.
11 The concerns occasionally resurfaced, but were not resurrected wholesale by the press. For instance, 'Dogs Patrol a Cinema: Rock 'n' Roll Warning', *Manchester Guardian*, 14 December 1956, 2, highlighted fears surrounding a later (and ultimately uneventful) screening of the film in Cleveleys, near Blackpool.
12 'Rock 'n' Roll Gang Move In', *Daily Mirror*, 11 September 1956, 3.
13 Don Iddon, 'Call It Music? This Is TNT!', *Daily Mail* (Scottish edition), 4 September 1956, 6.
14 Ibid.; 'Rock 'n' Roll Babies', *Daily Mail* (Scottish edition), 5 September 1956, 1.
15 Pete Frame, *The Restless Generation: How Rock Music Changed the Face of 1950s Britain* (London: Rogan House, 2007), 189.
16 Ibid. Historiography on youth culture is extensive; see, for example, John Springhall, *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta Rap, 1830–1996* (London: Macmillan, 1998), David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain c.1920–c.1970* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Adrian Horn, *Juke Box Britain: Americanisation and Youth Culture, 1945–1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

17 Gillian A. M. Mitchell, *Adult Responses to Popular Music and Intergenerational Relations in Britain, c.1955-1975* (London: Anthem Press, 2019), forthcoming.

18 Adrian Bingham, 'Ignoring the First Draft of History? Searching for the Popular Press in Studies of Twentieth-Century Britain', *Media History* 18, no. 3–4 (2012): 311–26 (311–12).

19 On the *News of the World*, see Laurel Brake, Chandrika Kaul and Mark W. Turner, eds, *The News of the World and the British Press, 1843–2011: 'Journalism for the Rich, Journalism for the Poor'* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). For succinct commentary on the development of the *Sunday Times* and *Observer*, see Stephen Fay, 'Death of the Posh Sundays', *British Journalism Review* 20, no. 2 (June 2009): 47–53.

20 On the *Observer*'s history, see Anthony Sampson, *The Anatomist: The Autobiography of Anthony Sampson* (London: Methuen, 2008), 45–47.

21 See Rachel Matthews, *The History of the Provincial Press in England* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017). A number of papers had northern or Scottish editions; the Scottish *Daily Mail* is occasionally cited, although the articles in question were largely reproductions of the national contents.

22 Jean Chalaby, *The Invention of Journalism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 167–71.

23 One group of scholars notes the 'path-breaking' review of the Beatles' work which William Mann contributed to the paper in 1963. See Gestur Gudmundsson, Ulf Lindberg, Morten Michelsen and Hans Weisenthaunet, 'Brit Crit: Turning Points in British Rock Criticism, 1960–1990', in *Pop Music and the Press*, ed. Steve Jones (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 41–64 (49); this, and the paper's famous expression of support for Mick Jagger following his arrest for drugs offences in 1967, are discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.

24 A detailed history of the newspaper appears on the Guardian News and Media Archive website at http://www.theguardian.com/gnm-archive/2002/jun/06/1 (accessed 19 May 2016).

25 Several testimonies gathered for the *Guardian*'s Oral History Archive discuss the move from Manchester to London. See, in particular, John Course, interview with Leslie Plommer, 17 March 1998, The Guardian News and Media Archive, OHP/13.

26 Andrew Marr, *My Trade: A Short History of British Journalism* (London: Macmillan, 2004), 94.

27 Martin Conboy, *Journalism: A Critical History* (London: Sage, 2004), 173; Kevin Williams, *Get Me a Murder a Day! The History of Mass Communication in Britain* (London: Arnold, 2002), 55–57. See also the work of S. J. Taylor on the *Mail*, in particular, *The Reluctant Press Lord: Esmond Rothermere and the Daily Mail* (London: Phoenix, 1998), and *An Unlikely Hero: Vere Rothermere and How the Daily Mail Was Saved* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002).

28 Williams, *Get Me a Murder*, 57.

29 Mathias Haeussler, 'The Popular Press and Ideas of Europe: The *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Express* and Britain's First Application to Join the EEC, 1961–1963', *Twentieth Century British History* 25, no. 1 (2014): 108–31 (112). 'Lightweight picture paper …' quotation from Martin Pugh, 'The *Daily Mirror* and the Revival of Labour 1935–1945', *Twentieth Century British History* 9, no. 3 (1998): 420–38 (424).

30 These included columnists such as 'Cassandra' (William Connor), the daring comic-strip character of 'Jane', extensive use of photography and the 'Old Codgers'' responses to readers' letters. See Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London: Sage,

2002), 127–28; Hugh Cudlipp, *Publish and Be Damned! The Astonishing Story of the* Daily Mirror (London: Andrew Dakers Ltd., 1953), 266–67; Adrian Bingham, *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life and the British Popular Press 1918–1978* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 208–19.

31 Conboy, *The Press*, 127–28.

32 Hugh Cudlipp, *Walking on the Water* (London: The Bodley Head, 1976), 76.

33 Conboy, *Journalism*, 174.

34 Lewis Chester and Jonathan Fenby, *The Fall of the House of Beaverbrook* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1979), 23. See also Mathias Haeussler, 'The Popular Press', 111.

35 R. Allen and John Frost, *Voice of Britain: The Inside Story of the Daily Express* (Cambridge: Patrick Stevens, 1983), 5–6; see also Haeussler, 'The Popular Press', 111; and Chester and Fenby, *Fall of the House*, 22–23.

36 See statistics cited in Haeussler, 'The Popular Press', 110.

37 Ibid. The trend towards single purchases was noted in an interview with Mr. J. P. O'Connor, director of the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), in *Advertiser's Weekly*, reprinted in the *IPA National Readership Surveys Bulletin* no. 3 (11 October 1957) L 1–2. See also Chester and Fenby, *The Fall of the House*, 33.

38 Williams, *Get Me a Murder*, 217. On the impact of newsprint rationing, see Sally Bailey and Granville Williams, 'Memoirs Are Made of This: Journalists' Memoirs in the United Kingdom, 1945–95', in *A Journalism Reader*, ed. Michael Bromley and Tom O'Malley (London: Routledge, 1997), 351–77 (353).

39 Williams, *Get Me a Murder*, 215–16.

40 On the difficulties of precise definition, see Motti Regev, 'The Pop-Rockization of Popular Music', in *Popular Music Studies*, ed. David Hesmondhalgh and Keith Negus (London: Arnold, 2002), 251–64.

41 Paul Rock and Stanley Cohen, 'The Teddy Boy', in *The Age of Affluence, 1951–1964*, ed. Vernon Bogdanor and Robert Skidelsky (London: Macmillan, 1970), 288–320; Martin Cloonan, 'Exclusive! The British Press and Popular Music. The Story So Far …', in Jones, ed., *Pop Music and the Press*, 114–33; and Chapter 13, 'Pressed into Censorship?', in *Banned! Censorship of Popular Music in Britain: 1967–92* (Aldershot: Arena/Ashgate, 1996), 259–70.

42 Stanley Cohen, 'Mods and Rockers: The Inventory as Manufactured News' and 'Sensitization: The Case of the Mods and Rockers', in *The Manufacture of News: Social Deviance, Problems and the Mass Media*, ed. Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (London: Constable, 1973), 226–41 and 360–68. Cohen's classic, full-length study of the wider 'Mods and Rockers' phenomenon is *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (London: McGibbon & Kee, 1972).

43 Rock and Cohen, 'The Teddy Boy'. See also Bill Osgerby, 'Stanley Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* Revisited', in *Reassessing 1970s Britain*, ed. Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton and Pat Thane (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 187–211 (193–94).

44 Cloonan, 'Exclusive!', 116, 130.

45 A. C. H. Smith, *Paper Voices: The Popular Press and Social Change, 1935–1965* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975), 11–12, 21.

46 Damien Phillips, 'The Press and Pop Festivals: Stereotypes of Youthful Leisure', in Cohen and Young, eds, *The Manufacture of News*, 323–33.

47 One important exception is Ian Inglis's '"I Read the News Today, Oh Boy": The British Press and the Beatles', *Popular Music and Society* 33, no. 4 (2010): 549–62. Inglis credits

the national newspapers with initiating positive coverage of the group, thereby helping to improve pop's reputation. The author does, however, argue that, before 1963, the papers were interested only in the scandalous 'newsworthiness' of popular music.

Chapter 1 'Teddy Boy Riots' and 'Jived-Up Jazz': Press Coverage of the 1956 Cinema Disturbances and the Question of 'Moral Panic'

1 See 'The King of Western Bop', *Daily Mirror*, 1 March 1956, 15; Lionel Crane, 'Rock Age Idol: He's Riding the Crest of a Teenage Tidal Wave', *Daily Mirror*, 30 April 1956, 9.

2 See 'One Film Not Seen at Venice: American Youth in "The Blackboard Jungle"', *Manchester Guardian*, 17 September 1955, 5; the American ambassador to Italy had called for a ban on screenings at the Venice Film Festival, but the critic found the film too 'nasty' and 'far-fetched' (and, indeed, too American-centric) to ring true. 'Rock Around the Clock' was the film's opening theme-song. Loose anecdotal accounts sometimes describe disturbances in British cinemas during *Blackboard Jungle* screenings. If such incidents did occur, then the national press certainly did not highlight them.

3 'Dogs Patrol a Cinema: Rock 'n' Roll Warning', *Manchester Guardian*, 14 December 1956, 2.

4 John Lambert, 'The Big "Hamp" Stamp', *Daily Express*, 22 October 1956, 5.

5 For instance, 'Rock 'n Roll Ban on Children', *Times*, 26 January 1957, 4, reported on the hosting of controversial schoolchildren's lunchtime 'rock 'n' roll sessions' by the Mecca chain, and reappraised the morals of the music. Other stories were somewhat eccentric. 'Rock 'n' Rollers Punished', *Manchester Guardian*, 22 March 1957, 16, described youths who had broken into a museum and performed rock 'n' roll on antique instruments.

6 See 'Cinema Damaged during Rock 'n Roll Film', *Times*, 4 February 1957, 8; 'Rock 'n Rollers Break Seats', *Daily Mail*, 4 February 1957, 1; 'Council to Discuss Rock 'n' Roll: Disturbances at Cinema', *Manchester Guardian*, 19 February 1957, 14.

7 For recent historical accounts of this 1960s youth culture phenomenon, see David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain, c.1920–c.1970* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 127–43; and Keith Gildart, *Images of England Through Popular Music: Class, Youth and Rock 'n' Roll, 1955–1976* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 87–147.

8 Nachman Ben-Yehuda, 'Moral Panics – 36 Years On', *British Journal of Criminology* 49, no. 1 (January 2009): 1–3 (1–2).

9 Ibid., 1–2.

10 Angela Bartie, 'Moral Panics and Glasgow Gangs: Exploring "the New Wave of Glasgow Hooliganism", 1965–1970', *Contemporary British History* 24, no. 3 (September 2010): 385–408 (386–87). The quotation, cited in Bartie, comes from Angela McRobbie and Sarah Thornton, 'Rethinking "Moral Panic" for Multi-Mediated Social Worlds', *British Journal of Sociology* 46, no. 4 (December 1995): 559–74 (561). See also Bill Osgerby, 'Stanley Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* Revisited', in *Reassessing 1970s Britain*, ed. Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton and Pat Thane (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 187–211 (188–89); and Keith Gildart, 'The Antithesis of Humankind: Exploring Responses to the Sex Pistols' Anarchy Tour 1976', *Cultural and Social History* 10, no. 1 (2013): 129–49 (130).

11 Osgerby, 'Stanley Cohen', 188.
12 Jock Young, 'Moral Panic: Its Origins in Resistance, Ressentiment and the Translation of Fantasy into Reality', *British Journal of Criminology* 49, no. 1 (January 2009): 4–16 (12, 14 (the quotation paraphrases Cohen)).
13 Gildart, 'The Antithesis', 130.
14 Stanley Cohen, 'Sensitization: The Case of the Mods and Rockers', in *The Manufacture of News: Social Deviance, Problems and the Mass Media*, ed. Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (London: Constable, 1973), 360–68 (361).
15 Stanley Cohen, 'Mods and Rockers: The Inventory as Manufactured News', in ibid., 226–41 (228, 229–30, 231).
16 Cohen, 'Sensitization', 362.
17 Cohen, 'Mods and Rockers', 234.
18 Cohen, 'Sensitization', 363–65.
19 Ibid., 365.
20 Ibid., 366–67.
21 For the non-specialist, Chas Critcher, *Moral Panics and the Media* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2003) remains particularly helpful. Osgerby, 'Stanley Cohen' also offers succinct analysis of the concept, and Cohen's work, from an historian's perspective. The articles which appeared in the *British Journal of Criminology* 49, no. 1 (January 2009), also offer fresh perspectives on moral panic.
22 Paul Rock and Stanley Cohen, 'The Teddy Boy', in *The Age of Affluence, 1951–1964*, ed. Vernon Bogdanor and Robert Skidelsky (London: Macmillan, 1970), 288–320 (308–12).
23 Osgerby notes the significance of Cohen's earlier work with Rock in 'Stanley Cohen', 193–94.
24 Cohen, 'Mods and Rockers', 226.
25 '"Rock" Devotees Turn Hose on Cinema Manager', *Manchester Guardian*, 10 September 1956, 12.
26 'Rock and Roll Disturbances', *Times*, 11 September 1956, 8.
27 On the evolution of the *Mirror*'s distinctive approach, see Hugh Cudlipp, *Walking on the Water* (London: The Bodley Head, 1976), 242–45. For useful discussion of Cudlipp's memoirs, see Bailey and Williams, 'Memoirs Are Made of This', 359–62.
28 Chris Reynolds, '1,000 Rock 'n' Roll Rioters Take City by Storm', *Daily Mirror*, 10 September 1956, 5.
29 'Five Rock 'n' Roll Riots', *Daily Express*, 3 September 1956, 1.
30 'Rock 'N' Roll Terrorises a City', *Daily Mail*, 10 September 1956, 5.
31 Cohen, 'Mods and Rockers', 228. Coverage in the Manchester local press certainly does betray similar tendencies towards garish coverage (e.g., 'As Oldham Bans the Riot Film: Teddies Roll Up for Rock 'n' Roll', *Manchester Evening Chronicle*, 10 September 1956, 1; 'Riot Film to Stay – If Hooligans Let It', *Manchester Evening Chronicle*, 11 September 1956, 1). However, by 12 September, the same paper reported that 'Rock 'n' Roll [Was] Just Rollin' Along' (9), and that troubles were now 'under control' in Manchester. Similarly, readers' letters often linked the disturbances to troubles specifically affecting Manchester, such as poverty and lack of youth facilities. (See 'Readers' Views on Rock 'n' Roll', *Manchester Evening Chronicle*, 11 September 1956, 7.)
32 In the *Mirror*'s '1,000 Rock 'n' Roll Rioters' piece, for example, details of locations, and of the manager's name, are introduced late in the article, while the remainder consists largely of attention-grabbing, general descriptions of disorder.

33 Again, the Reynolds piece cites the figure of '1,000 rioters', while later contending that 'a gang of thirty Teddy-suited youths' had been the ringleaders, and that 'fifty youths and girls' climbed on to the stage of the Gaiety cinema.
34 Pete Frame, *The Restless Generation: How Rock Music Changed the Face of 1950s Britain* (London: Rogan House, 2007), 188.
35 'More Towns Ban Film: Disorders Fear after "Rock 'n' Roll"', *Times*, 13 September 1956, 6. See also 'Rock 'n' Roll Film Ban in Two Towns', *Daily Mirror*, 12 September 1956, 7, the first line of which boldly reinforces the banning of 'that riot-rousing rock 'n' roll film'.
36 'More Scuffles with Police after Rock 'n' Roll Film', *Manchester Guardian*, 11 September 1956, 16. See also 'Rhythm', *Manchester Guardian*, 11 September 1956, 6.
37 On the postwar fixation with youth as the ultimate symbol of the 'new age', see Bartie, 'Moral Panics and Glasgow Gangs', 387.
38 See Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working-Class Life, With Special Reference to Publications and Entertainments* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1958 (1977 reprint)), 246–50; David Fowler, 'From Juke Box Boys to Revolting Students: Richard Hoggart and the Study of British Youth Culture', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 10, no. 1 (2007): 73–84.
39 David Simonelli, *Working Class Heroes: Rock Music and British Society in the 1960s and 1970s* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013), 7.
40 Eve Perrick's Page, *Daily Express*, 15 September 1956, 3.
41 '"Rock" Addicts At It Again', *Manchester Guardian*, 5 September 1956, 1. '"Rock and Roll" Disturbances: Film Halted in Manchester', *Times*, 11 September 1956, 8, highlights that '[g]irls in the audience struggled to get outside' and 'Rock 'n' Roll Gang Move In', *Daily Mirror*, 11 September 1956, 3, similarly mentions '[t]errified girls struggl[ing]' to escape during the Manchester incidents.
42 '"Rock" Devotees Subdued', *Manchester Guardian*, 6 September 1956, 14.
43 '"Rock" Film off for a Day', *Manchester Guardian*, 17 September 1956, 12; 'Rock 'n' Roll Jams a City', *Daily Mail* (Scottish edition), 7 September 1956, 1.
44 Quotation from Adrian Horn, *Juke Box Britain: Americanisation and Youth Culture, 1945–1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 127.
45 Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (London: McGibbon & Kee, 1972), 41.
46 Rock and Cohen, 'The Teddy Boy', 308–10. 'Rock 'n Roll Film Off', *Daily Mail*, 6 September 1956, 1, refers to 'rock 'n' roll Teddy Boys'.
47 '300 Police Rout Rockers', *Daily Mail*, 13 September 1956, 1, describes the incidents as episodes of 'Teddy Boy hooliganism'.
48 John Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain: Images of Adolescent Conflict* (London: Athlone Press, 1990), 164.
49 'Rock 'n' Roll Jams a City'.
50 Ibid.; Reynolds, '1,000 Rock 'n' Roll Rioters'.
51 'Rock 'n' Roll Gang Move In'.
52 Ibid.
53 Eve Perrick's Column (15 September 1956).
54 Don Iddon, 'Call It Music? This Is TNT!', *Daily Mail* (Scottish edition), 4 September 1956, 6.
55 'Rock 'n' Roll Babies', *Daily Mail* (Scottish edition), 5 September 1956, 1.
56 On the *Times*, see Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, 163.

57 'Rhythm'.

58 '"Rock" Devotees Turn Hose'. Regarding 'the meaning' of the term, rock 'n' roll was considered to have derived from an African American term for sex; US disc-jockey Alan Freed is often credited with naming the genre (or at least contributing to its more widespread use) when he began to play rhythm-and-blues records to white teenagers in the early 1950s. See Peter Gammond, *Oxford Companion to Popular Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 208.

59 See Britt-Mari Persson Blegvad, 'Newspapers and Anti Rock and Roll Riots in Copenhagen', *Acta Sociologica* 7, no. 3 (1964): 151–78, on comparable incidents in Denmark in 1957. On Germany, see Uta Poiger, *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley: California University Press, 2000), 85–91.

60 Linda Martin and Kerry Seagrave, *Anti-Rock: The Opposition to Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1993), 79–84.

61 Declarations concerning worse conditions in the United States should not, of course, be taken at face value. US newspaper coverage of rock 'n' roll was not unilaterally negative. Dorothy Barclay, 'Library Rocks 'n' Rolls, and Books Come Later', *New York Times*, 24 May 1956, 24; and Gertrude Samuels, 'Why They Rock 'n' Roll – And Should They?', *New York Times*, 12 January 1958, 16, explored more positive, educational, 'respectable' uses of rock 'n' roll.

62 Don Iddon's Diary, *Daily Mail*, 26 September 1956, 6.

63 The 'horror comics' scare of the earlier 1950s, involving imported, violent American comics, led to the 1955 Children and Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act. John Springhall perceives this 'classic moral panic' as a 'British reaction to [an] Americanized threat'. See *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta Rap, 1830–1996* (London: Macmillan, 1998), 146.

64 Quotation from Kelly Boyd, 'Cowboys, Comedy and Crime: American Programmes on British Television, 1946–1955', *Media History* 17, no. 3 (2011): 233–51 (233). On Americanization, see Neil Campbell, Jude Davies and George McKay, eds, *Issues in Americanisation and Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004); Peter Bailey, 'Fats Waller Meets Harry Champion: Americanization, National Identity and Sexual Politics in Inter-War British Music Hall', *Cultural and Society History* 4, no. 4 (2007): 495–509; Horn, *Juke Box Britain*.

65 Brian Ward, '"By Elvis and All the Saints": Images of the American South in the World of 1950s British Popular Music', in *Britain and the American South: From Colonialism to Rock and Roll*, ed. Joseph P. Ward (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 187–204 (199–200).

66 See 'Sir M. Sargent on "Tom-Tom Thumping"', *Times*, 18 September 1956, 5; 'Sir Malcolm on Rock 'n' Roll: "Tom-Tom Thumping"', *Manchester Guardian*, 18 September 1956, 5. Although Africa is not explicitly mentioned in the examples above, the notion that African Americans, via their 'slave roots', had been responsible for the 'rhythms' of the music is strongly implied here. Kofi Agawu offers an appraisal of the 'construction' of this notion in 'The Invention of "African Rhythm"', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48, no. 3 (1995): 380–95.

67 Dick Bradley, *Understanding Rock 'n' Roll: Popular Music in Britain, 1955–64* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1992), 89.

68 Hilary Moore, *Inside British Jazz: Crossing Borders of Race, Nation and Class* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 24–25.

69 Mica Nava, quotation from review of Frank Mort, *Capital Affairs: London and the Making of the Permissive Society* in *Social History* 36, no. 3 (2011): 366–68 (367).

70 On Carter, see Brian Ward, 'Civil Rights and Rock and Roll: Revisiting the Nat King Cole Attack of 1956', *OAH Magazine of History* 24, no. 2 (April 2010): 21–24.

71 Literature on this topic is extensive, but for succinct, helpful summaries of the diverse characteristics of rock 'n' roll, see Keir Keightley, 'Reconsidering Rock', in *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, ed. Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 109–42 (110–16); and John Pearson, '"That's the Stuff You Gotta Watch": The Background to Rock 'n' Roll', *Irish Journal of American Studies* 6 (1997): 39–86.

72 'Sir M. Sargent'. Sargent's biographer Richard Aldous, commenting on his dislike of 'loud' popular music, suggests that the conductor 'was happy to appear old-fashioned, even bufferish, because he was content to carry on with his musical life exactly as it was and sought no new challenges'. See *Tunes of Glory: The Life of Malcolm Sargent* (London: Pimlico, 2002), 229.

73 On the roots of rock 'n' roll, see D. W. Brogan, '"Elvis the Pelvis" and the Big Beat', *Manchester Guardian*, 8 November 1956, 7.

74 Jim Godbolt, *A History of Jazz in Britain, 1919–50* (London: Northway Publications, 2005), 274–77.

75 Steve Race, *Musician at Large* (London: Methuen, 1979), 110.

76 Moore, *Inside British Jazz*, 25.

77 Bailey, 'Fats Waller', 497. Concern over the roots of jazz (particularly with regard to issues of race) is discussed extensively in Goldbolt's book *A History of Jazz in Britain*, particularly 33–50.

78 George McKay, *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2005); see also Andrew Blake, 'Americanisation and Popular Music in Britain', in Campbell et al., eds, *Issues in Americanisation and Culture*, 147–62 (151–53).

79 On the impact of rock 'n' roll on the British jazz scene, see Dave Gelly, *An Unholy Row: Jazz in Britain and Its Audience 1945–1960* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2014), 109–11.

80 See David Boulton, *Jazz in Britain* (London: W.H. Allen, 1958), 87–88; Frame, *The Restless Generation*, 194–97. Baxter and Crombie appeared in the 1957 film *Rock You Sinners!*, a rather obscure vehicle for early British rock 'n' roll. An interesting appraisal of the film appears on the BFI's 'screenonline' website at http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/1403028/index.html (accessed 14 May 2018).

81 Tony Crombie, interviewed by Tony Middleton, *The Oral History of Jazz in Britain* (British Library Sound Archive C122/257-C122/259), Part 3 of 6, 04:05–08:30. See https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Oral-history-of-jazz-in-Britain/021M-C0122X0258XX-0100V0 (accessed 15 May 2016).

82 Noel Goodwin, 'What I Dig and Don't Dig', *Daily Express*, 22 October 1956, 5 (Goodwin did not 'dig' Hampton's rock numbers!). Gildart also highlights the intensification of youthful white working-class enthusiasm for jazz during the late 1950s and early 1960s. See *Images of England*, 55.

83 Patrick Doncaster, 'Do We Want This Shockin' Rockin'?' *Daily Mirror*, 16 August 1956, 12; Kenneth Allsop, 'Let the Kids Have Fun Is His Motto', *Daily Mail*, 28 October 1956, 8, highlighted Hampton's dislike of the 'sweeping condemnation' of teenagers, whom he wished to 'encourage'.

84 Moore, *Inside British Jazz*, 40. Gelly also explores the developing associations between youth culture and jazz in the postwar period. See *An Unholy Row*, particularly 60–65, 99–108 and 127–39.

85 See Colin Byrne, 'Wow! What's a-Popping Here?' *Daily Mirror*, 9 July 1955, 2. A timeline on the National Jazz Archive website suggests that the 1950s was 'the last decade in which jazz remained a youth culture'. See http://www.nationaljazzarchive.co.uk/timeline (accessed 18 May 2016).

86 Anthony Sampson, 'Dig That Crazy Jive, Man!' *Observer*, 16 September 1956, 11.

87 Kenneth Allsop, 'I'm Not Fighting Over Jazz, Says Mice-Man Johnny', *Daily Mail*, 14 November 1956, 4.

88 The 'art form/social function' quotation is from Howard Rye and Jeffrey Green, 'Black Music Internationalism in England in the 1920s', *Black Music Research Journal* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 93–107 (94); the 'accompaniment for dancing' from Dave Laing, 'The Jazz Market', in *The Cambridge Companion to Jazz*, ed. Mervyn Cooke and David Horn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 321–31 (322). See also Kenneth Allsop, 'It's Easy to Keep Hip with the Joneses', *Daily Mail*, 24 May 1958, 4.

89 Moore, *Inside British Jazz*, 40.

90 Boulton, *Jazz in Britain*, 136.

91 Ibid., 87.

92 Roberta Freund Schwartz, *How Britain Got the Blues: The Transmission and Reception of American Blues Style in the United Kingdom* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 60–63.

93 See Martin Cloonan, *Banned! Censorship of Popular Music in Britain: 1967–92* (Aldershot: Arena/Ashgate, 1996), 241–42.

94 James Nott, 'Contesting Popular Dancing and Dance Music in Britain during the 1920s', *Cultural and Social History* 10, no. 3 (2013): 439–56 (439–41). See also Melanie Tebbutt, *Being Boys: Youth, Leisure and Identity in the Inter-War Years* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 203.

95 Cloonan, *Banned!* 259–260. Cloonan discusses 'beatist' critics who perceived 'causalist' links between rhythm and delinquency.

96 See also 'Jazz-and-Dope Story of Army Man's Weekends', *Daily Mirror*, 24 February 1956, 5, in which [a] young soldier – a jazz fan' appeared in court charged with 'smoking drugs'.

97 'This Crazy Summer's Weirdest Craze', *Daily Express*, 12 September 1956, 5; 'Five Rock 'n' Roll Riots'.

98 Don Iddon, 'Rock 'n' Roll Is Musical Dynamite', *Daily Mail*, 4 September 1956, 6.

99 Mailbag, *Daily Mail* (Scottish edition), 11 September 1956, 6.

100 Doncaster, 'Do We Want'.

101 'Mr Katzman's Winning Formula: "There's Money in Rock 'n' Roll"', *Manchester Guardian*, 15 September 1956, 7.

102 Sampson, 'Dig That Crazy Jive, Man!'

103 '"I Didn't Hit Rock and Roll Film Man", Says Riot Cinema Boy', *Daily Mirror*, 31 August 1956, 3.

104 Patrick Doncaster and Tony Miles, 'The Mirror Throws a Rock 'n' Roll Party Just to See What Gives', *Daily Mirror*, 1 September 1956, 7.

105 Cyril Stapleton, 'This is the Scene That Sends Them', *Daily Express*, 5 September 1956, 3.

106 'Stimulus behind Rock 'n' Roll Disturbances: Suggested Effects of Disorder Reports', *Times*, 15 September 1956, 4.

107 George Fallows, 'Rock 'N' Roll Film Barred on Sundays', *Daily Mirror*, 6 September 1956, 9; 'Rock 'n' Roll Terrorises a City', 5.
108 'Rock Devotees Turn Hose'.
109 William Woolwich, 'Rock 'n Roll: To the Editor of the Times', *Times*, 14 September 1956, 9. This passage also quoted in 'Stimulus Behind Rock 'n' Roll Disturbances.'
110 'The Mirror Throws a Rock 'n' Roll Party'.
111 'Jive', originally an African American term for deception/fooling, later became 'another name for jazz and hence a verb meaning to dance to that music, essentially in the Lindy or jitterbug style' (Gammond, *Oxford Companion*, 298). James Nott observes that, although 'the dance preference of the majority of young people' by the 1950s, jive remained closely associated with Teddy Boys. *Going to the Palais: A Social and Cultural History of Dancing and Dance-Halls in Britain, 1918–1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 155–56.
112 Ibid., 289–90.
113 'Rock 'n' Roll Gang Move In'.
114 Nott, *Going to the Palais*, 289; 281–82.
115 John Haines, 'The Emergence of Jesus Rock: On Taming the "African Beat"', *Black Music Research Journal* 31, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 229–60 (230, 233–34).
116 One of the most striking examples of this entailed the term's being used as a verb in the headline of a story concerning a judge who sentenced a group of Manchester 'rioters'. See 'Magistrate: Pity Police Can't 'Rock 'n' Roll You', *Manchester Guardian*, 12 September 1956, 8.
117 Angela Smith and Michael Higgins, *The Language of Journalism: A Multi-genre Perspective* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 71–73.
118 Peter Stanfield, 'Crossover: Sam Katzman's "Switchblade Calypso Bop Reefer Madness Swamp Girl" or "Bad Jazz": Calypso, Beatniks and Rock 'n' Roll in 1950s Teenpix', *Popular Music* 29, no. 3 (October 2010): 437–55 (439–40).
119 Smith and Higgins, *The Language of Journalism*, 72.

Chapter 2 Beyond 'Moral Panic': Alternative Perspectives on the Press and Society

1 Jock Young, 'Moral Panic: Its Origins in Resistance, Ressentiment and the Translation of Fantasy into Reality', *British Journal of Criminology* 49, no. 1 (January 2009): 4–16 (8).
2 See Louise A. Jackson, 'The Coffee Club Menace: Policing Youth, Leisure and Sexuality in Postwar Manchester', *Cultural and Social History* 5, no. 3 (2008): 289–308 (291). Jackson highlights the recent 'critiques' of the Birmingham School of sociologists (which 'extended' Cohen's perspectives on youth), including the need to examine the manner in which subcultures are 'cultural constructs', and increasing awareness that 'teenage' culture predates the 1950s.
3 Nachman Ben-Yehuda notes that the early theories of moral panic tended to give scant consideration to how such episodes might arise in multicultural societies, where values may be less 'monolithic'. See 'Moral Panics: 36 Years On', *British Journal of Criminology* 49, no. 1 (January 2009): 1–3 (2). McRobbie and Thornton highlight that some groups demonized by moral panics may value being depicted thus, and may even actively further the 'panic' for their own advantage. They also examine the impact of multimedia influences on 'moral panic'. See Angela McRobbie and

Sarah Thornton, 'Rethinking Moral Panic for Multi-mediated Social Worlds', *British Journal of Sociology* 46, no. 4 (December 1995): 559–74 (560); and Keith Gildart, 'The Antithesis of Humankind: Exploring Responses to the Sex Pistols' Anarchy Tour 1976', *Cultural and Social History* 10, no. 1 (2013): 129–49 (131).

4 Richard Grayson, 'Mods, Rockers and Juvenile Delinquency in 1964: The Government Response', *Contemporary British History* 12, no. 1 (1998): 19–47 (38–39, 41–43).

5 David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain c.1920–c.1970* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 142–43.

6 Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (London: McGibbon & Kee, 1972), 69–70. Nevertheless, public concern about Mods and Rockers certainly did emerge, as Cohen himself acknowledged (70). Gallup Polls from August 1964 revealed that 'two in three of the public saw [the seaside incidents] as serious and two in three wanted heavier penalties for the unruly teenagers'. One in three people polled during the Eastertime disturbances at Clacton, however, felt that they had been exaggerated by the press. See Robert J. Wybrow, *Britain Speaks Out: 1937–87: A Social History as Seen through the Gallup Data* (Basingstoke; London: Macmillan, 1989), 71.

7 Chas Critcher, *Moral Panics and the Media* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2003), 137–38.

8 McRobbie and Thornton, 'Rethinking Moral Panic', 567.

9 'Mailbag', *Daily Mail* (Scottish edition), 6 September 1956, 6.

10 Letters to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 19 September 1956, 6.

11 'Mailbag', *Daily Mail* (Scottish edition), 11 September 1956, 6.

12 Letters to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 25 September 1956, 6.

13 'Mailbag', *Daily Mail*, 9 October 1956, 6.

14 'Rock 'n Roll', *Daily Mail*, 5 September 1956, 3.

15 'Rocked 'Em in '38', *Daily Mirror*, 17 September 1956, 14.

16 'Rock & Roll Not Feared', *Daily Telegraph*, 20 September 1956, 7.

17 '"Nothing Wrong" with Rock 'n' Roll', *Manchester Guardian*, 7 December 1956, 4.

18 'Rock 'n' Roll Scenes: Press Blamed', *Manchester Guardian*, 19 September 1956, 2. The viewpoints of cinema managers were particularly important, as they were charged both with keeping order and with ensuring that their cinemas continued to make a profit. *Rock Around the Clock* was a particularly lucrative film – therefore managers would often express a moderate or balanced viewpoint on the incidents.

19 'Magistrate: Pity Police Cannot Rock 'n' Roll You', *Manchester Guardian*, 12 September 1956, 8.

20 Letters to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 19 September 1956, 6.

21 Sofia Johannson's work on readers' interpretations of the 'trivial' tabloid journalism of the modern-day *Mirror* or *Sun* offers interesting perspectives on this issue, challenging the idea that consumers absorb such stories unquestioningly. See 'Gossip, Sport and Pretty Girls: What Does "Trivial" Journalism Mean to Tabloid Newspaper Readers?', *Journalism Practice* 2, no. 3 (2008): 402–13.

22 Mathias Haeussler, 'The Popular Press and Ideas of Europe: The *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Express* and Britain's First Application to Join the EEC, 1961–1963', *Twentieth Century British History* 25, no. 1 (2014): 108–31 (110). See also Adrian Bingham, *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life and the British Popular Press* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 8.

23 See *Mass Observation Panel on Attitudes to Daily Newspapers (July Directive 1947)* (Mass Observation, January 1948). The reasons given for choices of newspaper are illuminating. Some admitted to buying the *Daily Mail* because they seemed to be 'irresistibly attracted by something they dislike' (25); others reported that they bought the *Express* because they disagreed with its viewpoint. The *Daily Mirror*, meanwhile, 'ha[d] its faults' but was 'so vigorous that it [was] a pleasure to read' (30).

24 Bingham, *Family Newspapers?*, 9.

25 The *Mirror* was renowned for its active 'correspondence' with readers. One respondent to the 1948 MO Directive enjoyed the paper because 'a considerable amount of [it …] is written by the readers' via various letters features (30–31). Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy comment on the 'rhetoric of inclusivity' which this encouraged. 'The *Daily Mirror* and the Creation of a Commercial Popular Language: A People's War? A People's Paper?', *Journalism Studies* 10, no. 5 (2009): 639–54 (645).

26 Letter to the Bolton Watch Committee, 8 October 1956, from File ABCF/23/61 *Correspondence, Circulars and Extracts of Reports Connected with Town Entertainments September 1956–June 1959*, Bolton History Centre (Archives and Local Studies Service), Lancashire.

27 Letter to Chairman of the Watch Committee from Education Secretary of Education Committee, Bolton Co-operative Society Ltd., 11 September 1956. In ibid.

28 Details of this edition of *Any Questions?* at http://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/3d1b5ab43dc942c6aa6930be07ffa5ff (accessed 25 April 2016).

29 Text quoted by Pete Frame in *The Restless Generation: How Rock Music Changed the Face of 1950s Britain* (London: Rogan House, 2007), 191–92.

30 Adrian Horn, *Juke Box Britain: Americanisation and Youth Culture, 1945–1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 132–33; emphasis in the original.

31 Adrian Bingham, 'Ignoring the First Draft of History? Searching for the Popular Press in Studies of Twentieth-Century Britain', *Media History* 18, no. 3–4 (2012): 311–26 (318).

32 'Stimulus behind "Rock 'n' Roll" Disturbances: Suggested Effects of Disorder Reports', *Times*, 15 September 1956, 4.

33 Patrick Doncaster and Tony Miles, 'The Mirror Throws a Rock 'n' Roll Party Just to See What Gives', *Daily Mirror*, 1 September 1956, 7.

34 'This Crazy Summer's Weirdest Craze', *Daily Express*, 12 September 1956, 5.

35 Dominic Sandbrook, *Never Had It So Good: A History of Britain from Suez to the Beatles* (London: Abacus, 2005), 461. Ian Inglis also uses this passage to demonstrate the initially condemnatory attitudes towards popular music which were held by the press. See 'I Read the News Today, Oh Boy: The British Press and the Beatles', *Popular Music and Society* 33, no. 4 (October 2010): 549–62 (553). Martin Cloonan also highlights the story in *Banned! Censorship of Popular Music in Britain: 1967–92* (Aldershot: Arena/Ashgate, 1996), 260.

36 'Rock 'n Roll Babies', *Daily Mail*, 5 September 1956, 1.

37 Bingham and Conboy, 'The *Daily Mirror*', 639–54 (644).

38 Eamonn Forde outlines his concept of journalistic 'polyglottism' ('many tongues'), denoting the 'idiosyncratic voices, styles and opinions' of mid-1970s British rock writers, in 'From Polyglottism to Branding: On the Decline of Personality Journalism in the British Music Press', *Journalism* 2, no. 1 (2001): 23–43 (24–25). The term is helpful here, despite the differing contexts.

39 'Jiving in the Aisle', *Daily Mirror*, 10 September 1956, 26.

40 Marjorie Proops, 'Blame the Cost of Loving, Girls!', *Daily Mirror*, 19 September 1956, 11.
41 'Rock 'n' Roll at Duke's 21st Party', *Daily Mirror*, 10 October 1956, 3.
42 'Bill (Rock 'n' Roll) Haley Cables the Queen', *Daily Mirror*, 20 September 1956, 5.
43 Robert Allen and John Frost, *Daily Mirror* (London: Patrick Stevens, 1981), 59.
44 Colin Seymour-Ure, 'Northcliffe's Legacy', in *Northcliffe's Legacy: Aspects of the British Popular Press, 1896–1996*, ed. Peter Catterall, Colin Seymour-Ure and Adrian Smith (London: Macmillan, 2000), 9–25 (12).
45 George Melly, *Revolt into Style: The Pop Arts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 22.
46 The story appeared in 'Lady Pakenham Lends Her Garter to the New Mrs. Hugh Fraser' (Tanfield's Diary), *Daily Mail*, 26 September 1956.
47 'Now No Rock 'n' Roll for Royalty' (Tanfield's Diary), *Daily Mail*, 1 November 1956.
48 'It Was Rocking 'n' Rolling All the Way' (Tanfield's Diary), *Daily Mail*, 1 January 1957.
49 On Princess Margaret (whose private life inspired considerable press fascination throughout this period), see Kenneth Ames, 'Even the Marines Get Hep: Princess Calls for "Rock" Film', *Daily Mail*, 1 October 1956, 1; 'Princess Margaret Rocks in a Cinema', *Daily Mail*, 15 February 1957, 1 ('non-U' quotation from this report). On Wharncliffe and Moynihan, see 'Tony and That Rock 'n' Roll Party', *Daily Mail*, 29 September 1956, 1; 'Assault Charge: But He Was on His Way to Australia', *Daily Mail*, 3 October 1956, 1; Paul Tanfield, ' "I am not an incompetent, good-for-nothing at all", Says Working Earl', *Daily Mail*, 7 August 1959, 10; 'Spotlight on a Drumming Earl: Strictly Rock 'n' Roll', *Daily Mail*, 12 November 1956.
50 Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Century: The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present* (Oxford: Peter Lang Ltd., 2015), 110. A Gallup Poll on the subject, conducted in 1955, saw public opinion fairly 'evenly divided' regarding the appropriateness of press coverage of the royals. See Wybrow, *Britain Speaks Out*, 42.
51 See Ruth Dudley Edwards, *Newspapermen: Hugh Cudlipp, Cecil Harmsworth King, and the Glory Days of Fleet Street* (London: Secker & Warburg, 2003), 256–57; and Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, 115–16. Cudlipp himself argued that the paper remained critical of the notion that 'the good things in life should remain the monopoly of those upstairs'. This sense of 'social justice' was, however, often expressed via light-hearted (if 'meaningful') 'stunts' – for instance, the *Mirror* version of the debutantes' ball (involving ordinary young women) or the lavish hospitality arranged by Lady Docker for Yorkshire miners' wives. Hugh Cudlipp, *Walking on the Water* (London: The Bodley Head, 1976), 405–6, 402. On the 'debs' ball', see Dudley Edwards, *Newspapermen*, 256–57.
52 Barry Norman, *And Why Not? Memoirs of a Film Lover* (London: Pocket Books, 2002), 105.
53 A. C. H Smith, *Paper Voices: The Popular Press and Social Change, 1935–1965* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975), 18–19.
54 For analysis of the *Mirror*'s style, see Bingham and Conboy, 'The *Daily Mirror*'.
55 Hugh Cudlipp, *Publish and Be Damned! The Astonishing Story of the Daily Mirror* (London: Andrew Dakers Ltd., 1953), 249.
56 Questioned on the *Daily Mirror* in the 1948 survey on daily newspapers, a retired person stated that the paper showed keen awareness of 'the average person's love of the sensational, the meretricious, and the utterly stupid'. See *Mass Observation Panel*, 30.
57 Jean Chalaby, *The Invention of Journalism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 163–64.

58 Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London: Sage, 2002), 118.
59 Adrian Bingham, 'The Voice of "Middle England"? The *Daily Mail* and Public Life' (article accompanying Cengage Digital Archive of the *Daily Mail*), 6. See also Conboy, *The Press*, 166.
60 Derek Lambert, *And I Quote* (London: Arlington Books, 1980), 24. 'Hire-and-fire' quotation on p. 11.
61 Donald Edgar, *Express '56: A Year in the Life of a Beaverbrook Journalist* (London: John Clare Books, 1981), 103.
62 Lambert, *And I Quote*, 31.
63 Smith, *Paper Voices*, 22–23.
64 Donald Matheson, 'Scowling at Their Notebooks: How British Journalists Understand Their Writing', *Journalism* 4, no. 2 (2003): 165–83 (170).
65 Clifford Davis, the first television critic for the *Mirror*, recalled the supportive environment of the paper in this regard, in *How I Made Lew Grade a Millionaire … And Other Fables* (London: Mirror Books, 1981), 197–98, as did Bill Hagerty in his interview with Louise Brodie for the Oral History of the British Press (British Library, 2007) C638/13 (3 of 5), https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Press-and-media/021M-C0638X0013XX-0003V0 (40:00–40:17) (accessed 22 May 2018). Columnist Jean Rook emphasized the encouraging ethic of the *Express*. Interview reprinted in R. Allen and John Frost, *Voice of Britain: The Inside Story of the Daily Express* (Cambridge: Patrick Stevens, 1983), 153.
66 Lambert, *And I Quote*, 23.
67 Ibid.
68 On popular press reactions to Suez, see Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, 51–54.
69 Gallup Polls highlight the prominence of the Suez Crisis in the public consciousness from late 1956 to early 1957. Wybrow, *Britain Speaks Out*, 47–48.
70 Lambert, *And I Quote*, 125–39. Lambert returned to find that the *Mirror* 'was pioneering the hula-hoop craze', and he was commissioned to give a hula-hooping demonstration in Hammersmith Palais (139).
71 Edgar, *Express '56*, 133–49.
72 Hugh Cudlipp, *At Your Peril* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962), 135.

Chapter 3 'Rock 'n' Roll Has Become Respectable': The Press and Popular Music Coverage beyond 1956

1 Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (London: McGibbon & Kee, 1972), 59–61.
2 Hugh Cudlipp, *Walking on the Water* (London: The Bodley Head, 1976), 76; Cecil H. King, *Strictly Personal: Some Memoirs of Cecil H. King* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969), 108–9.
3 Martin Pugh, 'The *Daily Mirror* and the Revival of Labour, 1935–1945', *Twentieth Century British History* 9, no. 3 (1998): 420–38 (420–21); on the politics of the paper, see also King, *Strictly Personal*, 119; Maurice Edelman, *The Mirror: A Political History* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1966), 149; Kevin Williams, *Get Me a Murder a Day! The History of Mass Communication in Britain* (London: Arnold, 2002), 224.
4 King, *Strictly Personal*, 105.
5 This 'crusading' aspect of the paper is often highlighted, although Geoffrey Moorhouse also played a crucial role in the development of investigative journalism

in the *Guardian* during the mid-1960s (Geoffrey Moorhouse, interviewed by Martin Wainwright, 22 January 2002, The Guardian News and Media Archive, OHP/60).

6 See John Pilger, *Heroes* (London: Vintage, 2001), 51.

7 Mike Randall, *The Funny Side of the Street* (London: Bloomsbury, 1988), 50.

8 Robert Allen and John Frost, *Daily Mirror* (Cambridge: Patrick Stevens, 1981), 61.

9 Michael Grade, *It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time: An Autobiography* (London: Macmillan, 1999), 39. Grade worked as reporter and sports columnist for the *Mirror*, 1960–1966. On the 'Mirror dinghy', see Andrew Jackson, 'Labour as Leisure: The Mirror Dinghy and DIY Sailors', *Journal of Design History* 19, no. 1 (2006): 57–67. Examples of the *Mirror*'s 'Spotlight' book series include Paul Bareau, *Britain and Europe: A Daily Mirror Spotlight on the Common Market* (London: Daily Mirror, 1961); and Keith Waterhouse, *Daily Mirror Spotlight on the Future of Television* (London: Daily Mirror, 1958).

10 Cecil King highlights the paper's support for the National Youth Orchestra and the National Exhibition of Children's Art during the 1930s (*Strictly Personal*, 132–33). Cudlipp also notes longer-standing interest in 'the younger generation' (*Walking on the Water*, 82).

11 *The Hulton Readership Survey 1956: Condensed Report* (London: British Market Research Bureau Ltd/Hulton Press, 1956), 5. The most popular publications for this age-group were the Sunday *News of the World* (43.4 per cent) and the weekly *Radio Times* (46 per cent).

12 Mark Abrams, *Teenage Consumer Spending in 1959: Part II Middle Class and Working Class Boys and Girls* (London: Press Exchange, 1961), 8.

13 Williams, *Get Me a Murder*, 217–18. See also Ian Blyth, *The Making of an Industry: The Market Research Society 1946–1986: A History of Growing Achievement* (London: Market Research Society, 2005).

14 On 'Teen Page', see John Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain: Images of Adolescent Conflict* (London: Athlone Press, 1990), 170.

15 'Shock Issue: Scandal of the Youth Service'/'The Youth Scandal', 4 February 1960, 11–13, 24.

16 Articles on the 'Youth Crusade' featured throughout 1966. For example, John Pilger, 'Big Backing for the Mirror's Crusade', *Daily Mirror*, Tuesday, 4 January 1966, 1–2; and John Pilger, 'The Bold New Plan for Britain's Youth', *Daily Mirror*, 15 March 1966, 11. On the *Mirror* and postwar youth, see A. C. H. Smith, *Paper Voices: The Popular Press and Social Change, 1955–1965* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975), 160–67; and Chris Horrie, *Tabloid Nation: The Birth of the Daily Mirror to the Death of the Tabloid* (London: Andre Deutsch, 2003), 100–101.

17 Horn himself notes that the paper was 'sympathetic to Teddy Boys and teenagers in general'. *Juke Box Britain: Americanisation and Youth Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 133.

18 On Disc Festivals, see Patrick Doncaster, ed., *Discland: The Fabulous World of the Gramophone Record* (London: Daily Mirror Publications, 1956); and Randall, *The Funny Side of the Street*, 50.

19 Patrick Doncaster, 'Don't Miss That Rock 'n' Roll Choo-Choo', *Daily Mirror*, 25 January 1957, 11.

20 'Jaunty…' quotation from Hugh Cudlipp, *Publish and Be Damned! The Astonishing Story of the Daily Mirror* (London: Andrew Dakers Limited, 1953), 242.

21 'Haley Answers Little Sick Sonia … and the Stuffed Shirts', *Daily Mirror*, 15 February 1957, 2.

22 See my own 'Reassessing "the Generation Gap": Bill Haley's 1957 Tour of Britain, Inter-generational Relations and Attitudes to Rock 'n' Roll in the Late 1950s', *Twentieth Century British History* 24, no. 4 (2013): 573–605.
23 See George Melly, *Revolt into Style: The Pop Arts in the 50s and 60s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 45.
24 Statistic cited in Hugh Cudlipp, *At Your Peril* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962), 135. See also Matthew Engel, *Tickle the Public: One Hundred Years of the Popular Press* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1996), 191.
25 George Gale, 'The Battle of Waterloo', *Daily Express*, 6 February 1957, 5. Gale was a renowned figure in postwar British journalism. See Dennis Griffiths, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the British Press, 1422–1992* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1992), 257. On Allsop, see ibid., 73.
26 Kenneth Allsop, 'Women Hurt in Rabble Babble', *Daily Mail*, 6 February 1957, 1.
27 Tanfield's Diary, 'Mr Kiss Curl Gets Down to Work and Everything Is Wunnerful', *Daily Mail*, 7 February 1957.
28 Contributing to the *Express* 'weirdest craze' feature during the 1956 'riots', Gale had commented favourably on rock 'n' roll, declaring that he owned some rock records. 'This Crazy Summer's Weirdest Craze', *Daily Express*, 12 September 1956, 5.
29 'Rock 'n' Roll Youths Greet Bill Haley', *Daily Telegraph*, 6 February 1957, 7.
30 'Crazy Man, Crazy on the Southampton Line', *Manchester Guardian*, 6 February 1957, 5.
31 Norman Shrapnel, 'Just Like Everybody's Favourite Brother', *Manchester Guardian*, 14 February 1957, 16.
32 Anthony Sampson, 'Don't Knock the Rock', *Observer*, 10 February 1957, 10.
33 John Davis discusses 'pop stars as news' in *Youth and the Condition of Britain: Images of Adolescent Conflict* (London: Athlone Press, 1990), 170–71. The popular press grew adept at such coverage, as epitomized by the columns of Patrick Doncaster, discussed in Chapter 4. In serious papers, see 'Now Youth Is Rich Enough to Call the Tune', *Times*, 19 December 1957, 5; 'Keeping It Groovy With Marty Wilde', *Observer*, 8 November 1959, 4.
34 'The Cult of Tommy Steele: Film and Frenzy', *Manchester Guardian*, 11 June 1957, 5, highlights the 'Britishness' of Steele, and, although not unilaterally supportive, acknowledges his singular achievements.
35 Martin Cloonan notes that Richard modified his stage-act after criticism from the *New Musical Express* was reported in the *Daily Sketch*. See 'Exclusive! The British Press and Popular Music. The Story So Far …', in *Pop Music and the Press*, ed. Steve Jones (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 114–33 (115–16). The *Mirror*'s books were Cliff Richard, *Me and My Shadows: A Daily Mirror Book* (London: Daily Mirror, 1961) (discussion of his image on 49–50); and *Cliff Richard's Top Pops* (presented by Patrick Doncaster) (London: Daily Mirror Publications, 1963).
36 Sampson, 'Don't Knock the Rock'.
37 I observed this aspect of the coverage in 'Reassessing "the Generation Gap" ', 598–99.
38 'Why Madame V Was Blindfolded for Rock 'n' Roll', *Daily Mirror*, 10 March 1958, 2.
39 Mary Brown, 'Rockin' in the Aisles', *Daily Mirror*, 3 October 1959, 13.
40 Horn, *Juke Box Britain*, 132–33; Andrew Marr, *My Trade: A Short History of British Journalism* (London: Macmillan, 2004), 97.
41 'Rock 'n Rail', *Daily Mail*, 31 March 1959, 3.

42 'Now It's Rock 'n Recover', *Daily Mail*, 16 February 1957, 5; 'Five Rs at This School', *Daily Mail*, 28 January 1957, 5.
43 Smith, *Paper Voices*, 18.
44 'Teachers' Views on Rock 'n' Roll: Sugaring the Pill', *Manchester Guardian*, 4 January 1957, 2.
45 'The Rock 'n' Rolling English Road: "Presley Drive"', *Manchester Guardian*, 8 January 1957, 12.
46 'Brilliant Kathleen Dies after Rock 'n Roll', *Daily Mail*, 15 April 1957, 5.
47 Denis Holmes, 'Rock 'n Roll Birth Row', *Daily Mail*, 5 January 1957, 3; The Rock 'n' Roll Nurses Cleared', *Daily Mail*, 11 January 1957, 5.
48 '9 Teddy Boys Held after Rock Film Riot', *Daily Mail*, 24 February 1958, 5. (The film was Elvis Presley's *Jailhouse Rock*.)
49 Brian Ward, '"By Elvis and All the Saints": Images of the American South in the World of 1950s British Popular Music', in *Britain and the American South: From Colonialism to Rock 'n' Roll*, ed. J. P. Ward (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2004), 189–214 (206–9).
50 See Ned Grant, 'Terry Dene Drops Out of Show', *Daily Mirror*, 20 February 1958, 5; Ned Grant, 'I'm All Mixed Up, says Terry Dene', *Daily Mirror*, 22 February 1958, 22.
51 See 'Public Opinion on the Bovver Boys', *Daily Mirror*, Monday, 9 February 1970, 8, on the 'skinhead cult'.
52 The *Mirror* amusedly described an inaccurate American hippy prediction of the end of the world ('End of the World Is Nigh, Say the Hippies', *Daily Mirror*, 14 June 1968, 8). For more inflammatory coverage, see Arliss Rhind, 'Hippy House Ready to Repel Attack', *Daily Express*, 18 September 1969, 9; Colin Pratt and George Hunter, 'Hippies Lose – By a Walkover!', *Daily Express*, 22 September 1969, 1; and 'Hippies on Rampage', *Daily Mail*, 28 December 1971, 4 (concerning squatting in Ibiza holiday villas).
53 Bill Osgerby, 'Stanley Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* Revisited' in *Reassessing 1970s Britain*, ed. Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton and Pat Thane (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 187–211 (188); Martin Cloonan, *Banned! Censorship of Popular Music in Britain: 1967–92* (Aldershot: Arena/Ashgate, 1996), 261–65; Keith Gildart, 'The Antithesis of Humankind: Exploring Responses to the Sex Pistols' Anarchy Tour 1976', *Cultural and Social History* 10, no. 1 (2013): 129–49 (133).
54 James Thomas, 'Reflections on the Broken Mirror: The Rise and Fall of Radical Journalism Reconsidered', *Media History* 9, no. 2 (2003): 103–21 (103–5).
55 Cohen noted that the *Mirror*'s assistant editor admitted that the Mods and Rockers incidents had been 'a little over-reported' (*Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, 228).
56 Patrick Doncaster and Tony Miles, 'Down among the Ooblies', *Daily Mirror*, 18 January 1955, 7.
57 Donald Zec, 'Fiddlin' My Way to Fleet Street', *British Journalism Review* 11, no. 1 (2000): 12–20 (17).
58 Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London: Sage, 2002), 133.
59 In the 1973 BBC television documentary *Cudlipp and Be Damned* (transmitted 27 November 1973), Cudlipp reflects on his ability to relate to the young (47:05–47:20) (viewed at BFI National Archive, London. Ref. VBI4326).
60 Cudlipp, *Walking on the Water*, 402. On the *Mirror*'s questioning of myths of affluence, particularly where youth was concerned, see Pilger, *Heroes*, 53–54.
61 Engel, *Tickle the Public*, 195.

62 Horrie, *Tabloid Nation*, 100–101.
63 Another example of this appears in the *Mirror*'s 1963 campaign to help lonely pensioners via 'Old Folks Week'. '[T]he Young Ones' were sought for help ('we know what they are made of and what kindnesses they are capable of'). See 'The Young Ones – and the Old', *Daily Mirror*, 14 October 1963, 2.
64 Smith, *Paper Voices*, 160.
65 Patrick Doncaster, 'A Real Square Wins That Free Trip in the QE!', *Daily Mirror*, 4 February 1957, 2; Mitchell, 'Reassessing "the Generation Gap"', 596.
66 Smith, *Paper Voices*, 237.
67 Ibid., 167.
68 For supportive letters, see 'Viewpoint', *Daily Mirror*, 28 September 1967, 6; 'Live Letters', 30 January 1970, 16. John Pilger's article on American youth appeared on 4 October 1968, 16–17; Donald Walker, 'What Is a Hippie?' *Daily Mirror*, 26 September 1969, 9.
69 For example, the 'Teen Page' of 16 April 1960, 11, featuring letters expressing 'anger' about the media depiction of teenagers, a promotion for a school's rock 'n' roll dance sessions and a fairly frank letter about kissing.
70 See, for instance, 'End of the World Is Nigh'; and John Smith, 'Hippies Cage a Boy of Six in Desert for Two Months', *Daily Mirror*, 30 July 1969, 5. Damien Phillips noted that press coverage of hippies frequently 'titillate[d]' viewers with accounts of sexual libertarianism and nudity. 'The Press and Pop Festivals: Stereotypes of Youthful Leisure', in *The Manufacture of News: Social Deviance, Problems and the Mass Media*, ed. Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (London: Constable, 1973), 323–33 (326).
71 Mike Randall, who worked for the *Mirror* during this period, discusses the 'Mirrorscope' feature of the paper, which aimed to present 'important but complex [sociopolitical] developments' in 'layperson's' terms, and mentions the advice bureau which the paper operated for people in difficulties (*The Funny Side of the Street*, 45). Derek Lambert recalls the many people who visited the *Mirror* offices hoping for help or for coverage of their particular stories. Derek Lambert, *And I Quote* (London: Arlington Books, 1980), 186–89.
72 Correspondence between Whitcomb and Hugh Cudlipp on the memoir appears in Box 4/32/3/3/2, Folder HC3/3/2, Mirror Group People, Writers and Executives: General R–Z (Cardiff University Archives and Special Collections).
73 For the vivid account of this abortive plan to bring Presley to Britain, see Noel Whitcomb, *A Particular Kind of Fool* (London: Anthony Blond, 1990), 265–72.
74 'Man about town' is Randall's description of Whitcomb in *The Funny Side of the Street*, 50–51.
75 Whitcomb, *A Particular Kind*, 272–76.
76 See the review of the book by fellow journalist Robert Edwards, 'The Man with the Constant Smile – and Savage Bite', *British Journalism Review* 2, no. 3 (Spring 1991): 61–63 (63).
77 Quote from Cudlipp, *Walking on the Water*, 243.
78 Kenneth Allsop, Introduction, in *Scan* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965), 5–8 (5).
79 Ibid., 7.
80 Kenneth Allsop, 'The Elvis Era', in ibid., 143–47 (144, 145). Allsop said that interviewing had 'increasingly fascinated' him (7). His interview with Broonzy appears in the *Daily Mail*, 20 February 1957, 6.

81 Kenneth Allsop, *Letters to His Daughter*, ed. Amanda Allsop (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1974), 30. Amanda Allsop recalled 'driving with [her father] unwillingly into Stevenage to search the record shops for a then unknown pop group called the Beatles, which he insisted I should hear'. She noted that he often recognized 'fads and innovations' before they became more widespread (xv).

82 Ibid., 13.

83 Kenneth Allsop, *Daily Mail*, 22 October 1963, 8.

84 Horrie, *Tabloid Nation*, 101–2.

85 Historian A. J. P Taylor declared that the newspaper had been 'created' by 'ordinary people'. Quoted in Michael Bromley, 'Was It the *Mirror* Wot Won It? The Development of the Tabloid Press during the Second World War', in *Millions Like Us? British Culture in the Second World War*, ed. Nick Hayes and Jeff Hill (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 93–124 (105).

86 Horrie, *Tabloid Nation*, 101–2.

87 R. Allen with John Frost, *Voice of Britain: The Inside Story of the Daily Express* (Cambridge: Patrick Stevens Ltd., 1983), 117, 8. Mathias Haeussler highlights the paper's longstanding support for 'the cause of Empire' in 'The Popular Press and Ideas of Europe: The *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Express*, and Britain's First Application to Joint the EEC, 1961–63', *Twentieth Century British History* 25, no. 1 (2014): 108–31 (111); Smith explores its endorsement of '[c]ompetitive enterprise by individuals' (*Paper Voices*, 162).

88 Mark Abrams, *Education, Social Class and Readership of Newspapers and Magazines: 1968* (London: JICNARS National Readership Surveys, July 1969), 7. Figures in the *IPA National Readership Surveys Bulletin* No. 7 (30 January 1958), shows that, of 18,327 people surveyed between October 1956 and October 1957, 38.3 per cent preferred the *Mirror* and 32.2 per cent the *Express*. Broadly comparable figures appeared in Bulletin No. 21 (7 October 1960).

89 Adrian Bingham, 'The Voice of "Middle England"? The Daily Mail and Public Life' (article accompanying Cengage Digital Archive of the *Daily Mail*), 2. See also S. J. Taylor, *The Reluctant Press Lord: Esmond Rothermere and the Daily Mail* (London: Phoenix, 1999), 137.

90 Bingham, 'The Voice'; see also S. J. Taylor, *An Unlikely Hero: Vere Rothermere and How the Daily Mail Was Saved* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002); and Paul Harris, 'The Story of the Daily Mail' (Cengage archive article), 6. Circulation figures for the *Daily Mail* were consistently below those of either the *Express* or the *Mirror*; the *IPA National Readership Surveys Bulletin* No. 7 showed the *Mail*'s statistics from October 1957–October 1958 to be 16.7 per cent of 18,327 readers; Bulletin 21, from 7 October 1960, showed the *Mail* at 17 per cent, compared to the *Mirror*'s 37 per cent and the *Express*'s 32.3 per cent.

91 Roy Greenslade, interviewed by Louise Brodie, Oral History of the British Press (British Library Sound Archive, 2007) C638/14 (3 of 9), https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Press-and-media/021M-C0638X0014XX-0003V0 (53:19–55:50) (accessed 20 May 2018). Hugh Cudlipp also came to admire the *Mail* under the editorship of David English. A letter to English, dated 15 February 1993, features among the Papers of Sir Hugh Cudlipp, Box 4/32/3/6–3/7, Folder HC3/6, Personalities Writers and Journalists A-I.

92 William Greaves, 'If You Think All Those Bells Come from India … Think Again', *Daily Mail*, 8 September 1967, 3.

93 Anne Scott-James, *Daily Mail*, 27 July 1967, 6. On James, see Griffiths, *Encyclopedia*, 511–12.
94 For example, 'Punk Paradox', *Daily Mail*, 30 July 1977, 21.
95 For example, David Ash, 'The Nordic Look for Saturday Nights', *Daily Express*, 1 March 1963, 10, highlighted Scandinavian-inspired clothing deemed particularly conducive to dancing the twist or the bossa nova. For an example of the Harrison/Bilk columns, see 'Can the Beatles Beat New York?', *Daily Express*, 7 February 1964, 13. Harrison's column (initially ghost-written by Derek Taylor) is discussed further in Chapter 4.
96 Ann Leslie, interviewed by Louise Brodie, Oral History of the British Press, July–November 2008 (British Library Sound Archive) C636/18 (2 of 6), (https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Press-and-media/021M-C0638X0018XX-0002V0 (0:55–1:15). Leslie interviewed numerous actors, from Marlon Brando to Tallulah Bankhead, and became acquainted with the pop world via her friendship with Beatles press officer Derek Taylor (31:05–56:05).
97 Leslie mentions Aitken's book in her 2008 interview (ibid., 56:31–57:30). See Jonathan Aitken, *The Young Meteors* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1967), 74–75.
98 Leslie, interview, 01:01:35–01:02:21.
99 Smith, *Paper Voices*, 167.
100 Bingham and Conboy note that other popular papers were not immediately compelled to adopt tabloid format. See *Tabloid Century*, 15.
101 Quoted in *Guardian* obituary for Anne Scott-James, 15 May 2009, http://www.theguardian.com/media/2009/may/15/anne-scott-james-obituary-journalist (accessed 24 May 2016).
102 Pilger, *Heroes*, 51.
103 Keith Waterhouse, *Daily Mirror Style: The Mirror's Way with Words* (London: Mirror Books, 1981), 11.

Chapter 4 Adventures in 'Discland': Newspapers and the Development of Popular Music Criticism, c. 1956–1965

1 George Melly, *Revolt into Style: The Pop Arts in the 50s and 60s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 49.
2 For a compendium of Jewell's columns in the paper, see *The Popular Voice: A Musical Record of the 60s and 70s* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1980).
3 Michael Hann, 'Introduction', in *The Guardian Book of Rock & Roll*, ed. Michael Hann (London: Aurum Press, 2008), ix–xiii (x–xi). For an example of Reynolds's approach, see 'Bogus Beat', *Guardian*, 23 October 1963, 9.
4 Jennifer Skellington, 'Defining Qualities: Making a Voice for Rock and Pop Music in the English Quality News Press', in *Litpop: Writing and Popular Music*, ed. Rachel Carroll and Adam Hansen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 109–25 (113).
5 George Melly, interviewed by Caroline Boucher, 16 October 2001, The Guardian News and Media Archive OHP/59, Track 2, 11:50–12:20.
6 George Melly, 'The Who and the Wherefore', *Observer*, 21 November 1965, 24. Melly asks the group about 'their aim musically', and of the intense Pete Townshend he says, 'His self-awareness and his serious cynicism are compelling and touching. But can pop music, which, with all its faults, started as a spontaneous and committed movement, survive such candour?'

7 Melly, interview, Guardian News and Media Archive, Track 2, 12:35–13:20.
8 Ibid., Track 2, 06:10–06:45.
9 Ulf Lindberg, Gestur Gudmundsson, Morten Michelsen and Hans Wiesenthaunet, *Rock Criticism from the Beginning: Amusers, Bruisers and Cool-Headed Cruisers* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 124–25.
10 Jewell, *The Popular Voice*, 11–13. For examples of Jewell's evolving style, see 'Beatles Breaking Out' (15 September 1963) and 'Beatles Breaking Down' (22 January 1967), reprinted on pages 22–24 and 27–30, respectively.
11 See, for example, 'Encouraging Note in the Pop Music World', *Times*, 16 July 1966, 11; Bob Houston, 'British Pop Still on Top', *Times*, 15 September 1965, iv.
12 Paul Rixon, *TV Critics and Popular Culture: A History of British Television Criticism* (London: IB Tauris, 2011), 50.
13 On Black, see John Ellis, 'TV Pages', in *Pulling Newspapers Apart: Analysing Print Journalism*, ed. Bob Franklin (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), 244–52 (244). See also Rixon, *TV Critics*, 51–59. On Clifford Davis, see his own comments on the evolution of TV criticism in *How I Made Lew Grade a Millionaire … And Other Fables* (London: Mirror Books, 1981), 42–43.
14 Ellis, 'TV Pages', 246.
15 Newspaper criticism of the arts evolved considerably during this period. Edward Greenfield discusses the postwar evolution of classical music criticism, particularly within the *Guardian*, in his interview with Stephen Moss, 14 August 2001, Guardian News and Media Archive, OHP/27. Derek Malcolm similarly reflects on film criticism in his interview with Sara Gaines, 15 August 2001, Guardian News and Media Archive, OHP/53. Both critics (as was also the case with Melly) began their newspaper careers writing on other subjects, but gradually they pursued more specialist interests, developing distinctive critical approaches.
16 On this early tendency to emphasize the social aspects of the music, see Martin Cloonan, 'Exclusive! The British Press and Popular Music. The Story So Far …', in *Pop Music and the Press*, ed. Steve Jones (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 114–33 (115–16).
17 Paul Tanfield, 'From a Suite in the Ritz to a "Cell" in the Jungle', *Daily Mail*, 31 December 1956. See also Jack Payne, 'What Happens to Tommy if Rocking Gets Rust on It?' *Daily Mail*, 25 January 1957, 6.
18 Kenneth Allsop, 'Where, Oh Where, Has Elvis Gone?' *Daily Mail*, 24 July 1957, 6.
19 See Dave Duke, 'If This Is Jazz I'm Getting Out', *Manchester Evening Chronicle*, 14 February 1957, 3, written while Haley was in Britain. Duke referred to Haley as 'an astute businessman', determined to 'make the craze [for rock 'n' roll] pay while it […] last[s]'.
20 Jonathan Kamin, 'Parallels in the Social Reactions to Jazz and Rock', *The Black Perspective in Music* 3, no. 3 (Autumn 1975): 278–98 (281–82).
21 Patrick Doncaster, 'What Will Rock the Rock?' *Daily Mirror*, 14 February 1957, 19.
22 Cyril Stapleton, 'Watch Out, You Rockers!', *Daily Express*, 20 February 1957, 8.
23 James Thomas, 'Mr Stapleton Changes His Tune', *Daily Express*, 30 October 1959, 6; see also Cyril Stapleton, 'Don't Blame the Music', *Daily Express*, 5 September 1956, 3.
24 Stapleton also included 'Rock Around the Clock' in 'Cyril Stapleton's All-Star Songbook', a compilation of his favourite numbers which featured as an insert in *Valentine* girls' magazine on 19 January 1957, acknowledging that it had created 'a new trend' in music.

25 Peter Evans, 'What Keeps Rock Rolling?' *Daily Express*, 24 April 1959, 6.
26 Allsop, 'Where, Oh Where'.
27 Patrick Doncaster, 'Eager for Kisses?' *Daily Mirror*, 17 December 1959, 12.
28 Kenneth Allsop, 'Coffee Cabarets Come to Britain', *Daily Mail*, 5 January 1957, 4.
29 'Patrick Doncaster and Tony Miles, FAME … And Free Cups of Coffee!', *Daily Mirror*, 3 April 1957, 2.
30 Patrick Doncaster, 'There's Always "Pop" for Lunch!', *Daily Mirror*, 18 September 1956, 9.
31 Peter Stanfield, 'Crossover: Sam Katzman's "Switchblade Calypso Bop Reefer Madness Swamp Girl" or "Bad Jazz": Calypso, Beatniks and Rock 'n' Roll in 1950s Teenpix', *Popular Music* 29, no. 3 (October 2010): 437–55 (see also Chapter 1); 'intertextuality' is deployed by Michael Brocken (specifically with reference to the '1950s British coffee bar') in *The British Folk Revival, 1944–2002* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 76.
32 This was also noted by Derek Jewell in his Foreword to *The Popular Voice*, 13.
33 For example, Don Nicholl, 'If You've Been Thinking Stereo's Just a Gimmick', *Daily Mail*, 29 May 1961, 10; Don Nicholl, 'Session Boy Makes Good', *Daily Mail*, 18 September 1961, 10; Robin Douglas-Home, 'Jukebox Beat', *Daily Express*, 30 October 1959, 6. Rixon notes a similar diversity of purpose and focus in early television columns in *TV Critics*, 53.
34 Jewell, *The Popular Voice*, 11.
35 Rixon, *TV Critics*, 54.
36 Jane Gaskell and Patricia Young, 'If Jeans Are Really Out …' *Daily Express*, 23 November 1962, 9.
37 Patrick Doncaster, 'Donegan's Dough', *Daily Mirror*, 22 June 1961, 17; Patrick Doncaster, 'Our Citizen Kane Is Going Places', *Daily Mirror*, 5 May 1961, 13.
38 Simon Frith observed 'the amount of attention [which] intellectuals paid' to Shapiro during this period. See *The Sociology of Rock* (London: Constable, 1978), 142, 231–32.
39 Kenneth Allsop, 'How the Fabulous Shapiro Is Shaping Up to Success', *Daily Mail*, 22 November 1961, 8.
40 Jane Gaskell, 'New, Hot and Cool', *Daily Express*, 7 December 1962, 9.
41 See, for example, Judith Simons, 'She Spots the Talent', *Daily Express*, 14 January 1965, 12, on Marion Massey, manager of Lulu. Quotation from Maureen Paton's obituary of Simons, who died in March 2018 at the age of 93 ('Judith Simons, My Dryly Funny, Chain-Smoking Friend', http://www.dailydrone.co.uk/judith-simons-my-dryly.html (accessed 21 May 2018)).
42 Adrian Mitchell, *Adrian Mitchell's Greatest Hits* (Newcastle: Bloodaxe Books, 1991), 9. Many of Mitchell's poems drew inspiration directly from the world of popular music.
43 Melly, *Revolt into Style*, 227.
44 Dave Gelly, *An Unholy Row: Jazz in Britain and Its Audience 1945–1960* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2014), 8.
45 Eamonn Forde, 'From Polyglottism to Branding: On the Decline of Personality Journalism in the British Music Press', *Journalism* 2, no. 1 (2001): 23–43 (24). Chris Charlesworth, who joined *Melody Maker* in 1970, aged 22, discusses the changes to its rock coverage in his blog, *Just Backdated*. See http://justbackdated.blogspot.co.uk/2014/01/melody-maker-1970-part-1.html and http://justbackdated.blogspot.co.uk/2014/01/melody-maker-1970-part-2.html (accessed 17 November 2016).
46 See Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 140, 153. For an account of the formative styles of popular music coverage adopted by both publications, see Jason Toynbee, 'Policing

Bohemia, Pinning Up Grunge: The Music Press and Generic Change in British Pop and Rock', *Popular Music* 12, no. 3 (1993): 289–300 (289–90).

47 Gestur Gudmundsson, Ulf Lindberg, Morten Michelsen and Hans Weisethaunet, 'Brit Crit: Turning Points in British Rock Criticism, 1960–1990', in Jones, ed., *Pop Music and the Press*, 41–64 (45).

48 Cloonan, 'Exclusive!', 118.

49 See, for example, 'Heart Throb Week', in which Doncaster discussed the appeal of singers such as David Whitfield ('Your Heart Will Throb', *Daily Mirror*, 12 February 1954, 7; or 'Jimmy Gets Them Young', *Daily Mirror*, 1 July 1954, 4, on 'screaming teenager' reactions to Jimmy Young.

50 Short biography/obituary of Doncaster on the front page of the revised edition of Tony Jasper, *Cliff: A Biography* (London; Sydney; Auckland: Pan Books, 1993), which Jasper originally co-authored with Doncaster in 1981.

51 Patrick Doncaster, 'Oh Boy – He's in the Mood!', *Daily Mirror*, 5 February 1959, 17.

52 Patrick Doncaster, 'Donegan's Dough', *Daily Mirror*, 22 June 1961, 17.

53 'Remember the Date … It's the Mirror's Big TV Disc Festival!', *Daily Mirror*, 25 October 1956, 11.

54 Patrick Doncaster, 'Frank Muscles In', *Daily Mirror*, 22 February 1962, 23.

55 Patrick Doncaster, 'Love Blooms across the Globe for a Couple of Tape-Mates', *Daily Mirror*, 23 September 1956, 2.

56 Patrick Doncaster, 'Daily Mirror Buys Rights to Chubby Checker Song', *Daily Mirror*, 27 April 1962, 16–17. ('Joanna' is Cockney rhyming-slang for 'piano'.)

57 For example, the review of Connie Francis's latest single in Patrick Doncaster, 'By Golli, This Is War!', *Daily Mirror*, 30 May 1963, 25.

58 Mike Molloy, *The Happy Hack: A Memoir of Fleet Street in Its Heyday* (London: John Blake, 2016), 79.

59 Patrick Doncaster, 'Shane Has a Shadow', *Daily Mirror*, 15 March 1962, 21.

60 Patrick Doncaster, 'Boom, Boom Goes the Trad', *Daily Mirror*, 17 July 1958, 6.

61 See Felicity Green, 'Trad Fad – or Fashions That Stay with it', *Daily Mirror*, 28 September 1961, 13, for an exploration of the ways in which fashion and lifestyle could relate to the genre.

62 Patrick Doncaster, 'The Disc Writers Take Five', *Daily Mirror*, 5 December 1962, 15. Chris Roberts of *Melody Maker* also recalled the band in 'A Mason Grace', a short article contributed to 'Gentleman Ranters' (online reminiscences of former Fleet Street employees). http://www.gentlemenranters.com/june_2011_310.html#cr199 (accessed 27 May 2016).

63 Chris Charlesworth, e-mail interview with author, 23 May 2016.

64 Mike Molloy recalled that Doncaster frequently 'brought famous rock performers' to the pub adjoining the London Palladium theatre, 'so he could play darts and interview them at the same time' (*The Happy Hack*, 78).

65 See Nigel Goodall, *Jump Up: The Rise of the Rolling Stones: The First Ten Years, 1963–1973* (Chessington: Castle Communications, 1995), 15. Ulf Lindberg also recognizes his 'great enthusiasm' for the Stones, and observes his generally 'more positive' approach to the modern music scene. See *Rock Criticism from the Beginning: Amusers, Bruisers and Cool-Headed Cruisers* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 125.

66 See, for example, Patrick Doncaster, 'Themes for '61', *Daily Mirror*, 29 January 1960, 13, in which the 'Discland future' for the new year was predicted (many of his predictions for the previous year had been fulfilled.)

67 Patrick Doncaster, 'There's No Business Like Pop Business', in *Tops of the Pops* (London: Daily Mirror Newspapers Ltd., 1961), 7–9.
68 See Matthew Engel, *Tickle the Public: One Hundred Years of the Popular Press* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1996), 195–96.
69 Ian Inglis, 'I Read the News Today, Oh Boy': The British Press and the Beatles', *Popular Music and Society* 33, no. 4 (2010): 549–62 (552–53).
70 Patrick Doncaster, 'The Sound of '64', *Daily Mirror*, 2 January 1964, 6.
71 Judith Simons, 'Where Will the Big New Sound Come From?' *Daily Express*, 25 September 1963, 6.
72 See, for example, 'Beatlemania!', *Daily Mirror*, 2 November 1963, 3, for a vivid account of the excitement at the group's concerts.
73 See 'Beatlemania! 3,000 Teenagers Besiege Studios', *Daily Mail*, 21 October 1963, 3; Keith Colling, '3,000 Beatles Fans in TV Studios Riot', *Daily Mail*, 21 October 1963, 1; 'Stampede by 7,000 Teenagers', *Guardian*, 28 October 1963, 5; 'Hooliganism "Will Be Stamped Out" ', *Times*, 23 October 1964, 15, described 'hooligans' who 'r[a]n riot' when the Beatles visited Glasgow.
74 See, for example, 'Beatlemania: Why It Makes You Tick', *Daily Mirror*, 6 November 1963, 6.
75 See ibid. on the sexual impact of the Beatles on young women; and Olga Franklin, 'Reading the Beatles' Fan Mail Yesterday', *Daily Mail*, 6 November 1963, 10, on the intense love of young women for the Beatles; 'Youth Warned on Mass Hysteria' appeared in the *Times* on 30 December 1964, 4.
76 Merrick Winn, 'Who Is Being Freed Now? The Teenagers, Of Course!', *Daily Express*, 9 October 1963, 6. The *Mail*'s esteemed columnist Vincent Mulchrone also presented a multipart investigation of the Beatles. 'This Beatlemania: What, I Wondered, Was It All About?' *Daily Mail*, 21 October 1963, 8.
77 'Beat City's Teen Crimes Slashed', *Daily Mirror*, 21 February 1964, 3.
78 'Less Drunkenness among the Young', *Times*, 24 April 1964, 8.
79 Merrick Winn, 'Cheer the New Minstrels!', *Daily Express*, 8 October 1963, 6.
80 See, for instance, Harry Weaver, 'Your Mother Was a Squealer Too', *Daily Mail*, 13 December 1963, 10.
81 'Beatlemania: Why It Makes You Tick'.
82 Adrian Mitchell, 'Amazing How the Off-Beat Beatles Wow All the Family', *Daily Mail*, 16 August 1963, 4. This quip was apparently derived from a comment made by John Lennon.
83 H. R. Pitchford, 'The Beatles', *Daily Mail*, 24 October 1963, 10.
84 Letters, *Daily Mail*, 8 November 1963, 10.
85 Patrick Doncaster, 'Life in the Beat Scene Yet!', *Daily Mirror*, 12 November 1964, 23. On Don Short, see Roy Greenslade, 'Down Memory Lane with the Reporter Who Coined the Term Beatlemania', *Guardian*, 26 March 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2014/mar/26/daily-mirror-thebeatles (accessed 28 May 2016).
86 Andy Davis, *The Beatles Files* (Godalming: Bramley Books, 1998), 7.
87 Barry Miles, Introduction, in ibid., 6.
88 Ibid., 7. For an example of such commemorative publications, see *The Beatles by Royal Command* (London: Daily Mirror, 1963).
89 Davis, *Beatles Files*, 7. Davis's book is a compendium of the *Mirror*'s archived photographs of the Beatles from 1963 to 1969.

90 Ibid., 9; emphasis in the original.
91 See Adrian Mitchell, 'Crawling Up – The Beatles with a Fierce New Noise', *Daily Mail*, 1 February 1963, 10; Adrian Mitchell, 'The Sound of Scouse', *Daily Mail*, 24 May 1963, 14.
92 Hunter Davies, *The Beatles* (London: Cassell Illustrated, 2002), 231.
93 'How You Can Help', *Daily Mail*, 18 December 1963, 13. This campaign is also highlighted in S. J. Taylor, *The Reluctant Press Lord: Esmond Rothermere and the Daily Mail* (London: Phoenix, 1999), 153–55.
94 Taylor's reminiscences are quoted in *The Beatles Anthology* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000), 110, 114–15.
95 Ibid., 114–15.
96 Simons's friendship with the group is discussed in Paton's obituary of the journalist, and similarly, an obituary of the writer which appeared in the *Times*, 5 April 2018, 11, noted that she remained in contact with Paul McCartney throughout her life, and that she had always endeavoured to retain the trust of the group members.
97 See Jeremy Tranmer, 'The Radical Left and Popular Music in the 1960s', in *Preserving the Sixties: Britain and the 'Decade of Protest'*, ed. Trevor Harris and Monia Carla O'Brien Castro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 90–104 (92). As highlighted in an *Express* report on the MBEs, Wilson deemed the groups creators of 'a new musical idiom in world communication' ('The Beatles, M.B.E', *Daily Express*, 12 June 1965, 1). See also Don Short, 'Beatlemania', *Daily Mirror*, 5 November 1963, 16–17, on the Royal Variety Performance appearance.
98 Judith Simons, 'Gathered Moss', *Daily Express*, 29 November 1965, 17.
99 Michael Braun, 'A Hard Night's Chat', *Guardian*, 5 July 1964, 21; 'Seen but Hardly Heard', *Times*, 27 December 1963, 4; reviewed the Christmas Show; 'The Beatles on Parade', *Times*, 5 November 1963, 14, covered the Royal Variety Performance appearance.
100 William Mann, 'What Songs the Beatles Sang', *Times*, 27 December 1963, 4.
101 See also John Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain: Images of Adolescent Conflict* (London: Athlone Press, 1990), 192–94.

Chapter 5 Reversals and Changing Attitudes: Newspaper Coverage of Popular Music from the Late 1960s to the Mid-1970s

1 Ben Winsworth, 'Psychic Liberation in *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*', in *Preserving the Sixties: Britain and the 'Decade of Protest'*, ed. Trevor Harris and Monia Carla O'Brien Castro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 160–72 (165). Winsworth argues that this album played a pivotal role in 'elevat[ing] pop into a place where it transgressed the high culture/low culture boundary' (169).
2 British rock critic Chris Welch argued for the need for 'treating rock just as seriously as jazz'. See Gestur Gudmundsson, Ulf Lindberg, Morten Michelsen and Hans Weisethaunet, 'Brit Crit: Turning Points in British Rock Criticism, 1960–1990', in *Pop Music and the Press*, ed. Steve Jones (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 41–64 (46).
3 Quotation from George Melly, *Revolt into Style: The Pop Arts in the 50s and 60s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 239.
4 Gudmundsson et al., 'Brit Crit', 42.

5 See Simon Frith, *The Sociology of Rock* (London: Constable, 1978), 150–51; also Elizabeth Nelson, *The British Counter-Culture, 1966–73: A Study of the Underground Press* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989).
6 Eamonn Forde, 'From Polyglottism to Branding: On the Decline of Personality Journalism in the British Music Press', *Journalism* 2, no. 1 (2001): 23–43 (24); see also Jason Toynbee, 'Policing Bohemia, Pinning Up Grunge: The Music Press and Generic Change in British Pop and Rock', *Popular Music* 12, no. 3 (1993): 289–300 (290–91).
7 Melly, *Revolt into Style*, 239.
8 See Charles Greville, 'The Beatles Are "Fab", Says the Times Music Man', *Daily Mail*, 28 December 1963, 4; and Jennifer Skellington, 'Defining Qualities: Making a Voice for Rock and Pop Music in the English Quality News Press', in *Litpop: Writing and Popular Music*, ed. Rachel Carroll and Adam Hansen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 109–25 (109).
9 Geoffrey Cannon, 'A Life in Pop Writing', *Rock's Backpages*, August 2012, http://www.rocksbackpages.com/Library/Article/a-life-in-pop-writing (accessed 29 May 2016).
10 Derek Malcolm, interview with Sara Gaines, 15 August 2001, Guardian News and Media Archive, OHP/53, 02:56–03:34.
11 Melly, *Revolt into Style*, 239. 'Pseud's Corner' was a regular feature in the satirical *Private Eye* which aimed to expose writing which the editors considered particularly pretentious.
12 Ibid.
13 William Mann, 'The New Beatles Album', *Times*, 22 November 1968, 9 (on *Magical Mystery Tour*). For Kington, see 'That's Nice', *Times*, 13 April 1970, 12 (on Creedence Clearwater Revival); and 'Light and Sound', *Times*, 9 February 1970, 5 (on Pink Floyd).
14 See Richard Williams, *Long Distance Call: Writings on Music* (London: Aurum Press, 2000), for a compendium of the writer's work. On his background, see Simon Warner, 'Out of His Pen: The Words of Richard Williams' (interview), http://rockcriticsarchives.com/interviews/richardwilliams/01.html (accessed 31 May 2018). Examples of his early *Times* reviews include 'Rock Aristocracy' (on The Who), *Times*, 18 May 1970, 11; and 'Myth and Music', *Times*, 12 September 1970, 19 (on the Grateful Dead, Eric Clapton and the Everly Brothers).
15 Paul Rixon, *TV Critics and Popular Culture: A History of British Television Criticism* (London: IB Tauris, 2011), 104–5.
16 Mann, 'The New Beatles Album', for instance, refers to the group members as 'composers'.
17 Rixon, *TV Critics*, 104–5. See also Skellington, 'Defining Qualities', 113–14; and Ulf Lindberg, Gestur Gudmundsson, Morten Michelsen and Hans Wiesenthaunet, *Rock Criticism from the Beginning: Amusers, Bruisers and Cool-Headed Cruisers* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 106.
18 Generational changes at the *Mirror* in the late 1960s are described by Bill Hagerty in his interview with Louise Brodie for the Oral History of the British Press (British Library, 2007), C638/13 (3 of 5), https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Press-and-media/021M-C0638X0013XX-0003V0 38:00–40:25 (accessed 22 May 2018). Hagerty wrote a pop column for the *Sunday Citizen* before joining the *Mirror* in 1967, at Patrick Doncaster's behest; he largely contributed sports columns to the paper, however.
19 Chris Charlesworth, e-mail interview with author, 23 May 2016.
20 Jonathan Aitken, *The Young Meteors* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1967), 60–62.
21 Rixon, *TV Critics*, 105–6.

22 Judith Simons, 'A New Voice of the Young', *Daily Express*, 28 February 1964, 12, typifies such ambivalence towards the Stones, highlighting their 'doorstep mouths, pallid cheeks and unkempt hair'. See also Derek Jewell's interview with the group, 'Stones Start Rolling', 24 May 1964, reprinted in *The Popular Voice: A Musical Record of the 60s and 70s* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1980), 74–75, which observes the reputation which the group had already acquired. See also Bill Wyman with Ray Coleman, *Stone Alone: The Story of a Rock 'n' Roll Band* (London: Viking, 1990), 204, 486, on press responses to the group.

23 The editorial in question was 'Who Breaks a Butterfly on a Wheel?', *Times*, 1 July 1967, 11.

24 John Grigg, *History of the Times, Volume VI: The Thomson Years 1966–1981* (London: Times Books, 1993), 60.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 61.

27 David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain, c.1920–c.1970* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 186.

28 Charlesworth, e-mail interview. On the *News of the World*'s various exposés of drug culture, see Martin Cloonan, *Banned! Censorship of Popular Music in Britain: 1967–92* (Aldershot: Ashgate/Arena, 1996), 259.

29 Quoted in Andy Davis, *The Beatles Files* (Godalming: Bramley Books, 1998), 9.

30 Quotation from Roy Greenslade, 'Down Memory Lane with the Reporter Who Coined the Term Beatlemania', *Guardian*, 26 March 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2014/mar/26/daily-mirror-thebeatles (accessed 28 May 2016). See also Michael Grade, *It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time* (London: Macmillan, 1999), 46. Grade grew 'pally' with Short while working at the *Mirror*, and occasionally 'pass[ed] on […] the odd snippet of gossip' gleaned from family conversations. See also Derek Taylor, 'Paul McCartney: Your Friendly Press Agent Knew That the Day Would Not Be Easy', *Record Mirror*, 18 April 1970, on the occasion on which Short, boldly prematurely but accurately, announced in the *Mirror* that McCartney was leaving the group. http://www.rocksbackpages.com/Library/Article/paul-mccartney-your-friendly-press-agent-knew-that-the-day-would-not-be-easy- (accessed 28 May 2016).

31 Both group members expressed wariness of the reporter's presence, particularly as they were beginning to experiment with countercultural lifestyles. *The Beatles Anthology* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000), 190.

32 Quoted in Davis, *The Beatles Files*, 148–49.

33 Kevin Williams, *Get Me a Murder a Day! The History of Mass Communication in Britain* (London: Arnold, 2002), 224.

34 Martin Conboy, 'Tabloid Culture: The Political Economy of a Newspaper Style', in *The Routledge Companion to British Media History*, ed. Martin Conboy and John Steel (London: Routledge, 2015), 217–25 (220).

35 Ibid., 220.

36 John Pilger, *Heroes* (London: Vintage, 2001), 544.

37 Dr Mark Abrams, *The Newspaper Reading Public of Tomorrow* (London: Odhams Press, 1964). The study considered the changing lives of Britons, young and old, in terms of such categories as class, occupation, leisure, expenditure, holidays and time spent at home.

38 Larry Lamb, *Sunrise: The Remarkable Rise and Rise of the Bestselling Soaraway Sun* (London: Papermac, 1989), 6. See also Roy Greenslade, 'Night the Sun Came Up',

Guardian, 15 November 1999, for further first-person accounts of the relaunch. Available at http://www.theguardian.com/media/1999/nov/15/mondaymediasection.comment1 (accessed 27 May 2016).

39 Lamb, *Sunrise*, 46.
40 Charlesworth, e-mail interview.
41 Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 152–55.
42 Forde, 'From Polyglottism to Branding', 26–28. On subsequent developments in the music press, see also Toynbee, 'Policing Bohemia'.
43 Before joining the *Express*, David Wigg conducted extensive interviews with the Beatles during the late 1960s/early 1970s, while he was writing the 'Young London' column for the *Evening News*. Excerpts from these interviews were available via www.youtube.com at the time of writing.
44 Peter Chippindale and Chris Horrie, *Stick It up Your Punter! The Uncut Story of the Sun Newspaper* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 172–77.
45 For discussion of such coverage within the *Sun*, see ibid., 305–26.
46 Skellington, 'Defining Qualities', 109–24. See also Michael Hann, 'Introduction', in *The Guardian Book of Rock & Roll*, ed. Michael Hann (London: Aurum Press, 2008), xi–xii.
47 James Thomas, 'The "Max Factor" – a Mirror Image? Robert Maxwell and the *Daily Mirror* Tradition', in *Northcliffe's Legacy: Aspects of the British Popular Press, 1896–1996*, ed. Peter Catterall, Colin Seymour-Ure and Adrian Smith (London: Macmillan, 2000), 201–26 (216–17).
48 Clifford Davis, *How I Made Lew Grade a Millionaire … And Other Fables* (London: Mirror Books, 1981), 196–97.
49 Ibid., 197.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., 198.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid., 199.
54 See Davis, *The Beatles Files*, 15.
55 Davis, *How I Made Lew Grade*, 200–201.
56 Ken Irwin, ed., *The Daily Mirror Pop Club Annual 1978* (London: Daily Mirror, 1978). Page 4 includes a message of endorsement from the Stones, and a catalogue, from Davis, of the club's many activities and promotions throughout the preceding year. Bill Hagerty interviews Mick Jagger, highlighting that, while the musician is now an older family man, he must still be 'thank[ed' for his part in 'spark[ing] a 'youth revolution' 'all those years ago' ('Whatever Happened to Rebel Mick?', 52–53).

Conclusion

1 Peter Catterall, 'Why Not More Press History?', in *Northcliffe's Legacy: Aspects of the British Popular Press, 1896–1996*, ed. Peter Catterall, Colin Seymour-Ure and Adrian Smith (London: Macmillan, 2000), 1–7 (1).

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