

When I Grow Up: The Development of the
Beach Boys' Sound (1962-1966)

Volume One

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of

Philosophy

December, 2013

Abstract

The Beach Boys are an American rock group whose career has spanned over fifty years. However, it was between 1962 and 1966 that the group had most of their chart success and that their unique ‘sound’ was crystallised. This study takes a broad, big-picture overview of the Beach Boys’ repertoire from this period and charts the development of their sound through the apprentice-craft-art (ACA) framework.

The concept of a ‘sound’ is able to draw together the musical, technological, sociological and historical elements that, when combined, create the sound of the Beach Boys during the 1962-1966 period. The flexibility of this concept means that areas often overlooked in popular music studies and in studies on the Beach Boys in general (particularly the roles of production and instrument types), are able to be woven into analyses of more traditional musical elements (such as song structure or chord progressions).

To investigate their sound, this study analyses song structure, rhythmic feels, instrumentation, chord progressions, lyrical themes and vocals from 101 songs that the Beach Boys released on nine studio albums from the 1962-1966 period. The aim of these analyses is to give a detailed understanding of how the Beach Boys’ sound developed over time. Included in these musical analyses is a discussion of instrument types and production styles, which also have an impact on the Beach Boys’ sound. Musical findings are contextualised with important socio-cultural considerations that also contribute to the Beach Boys’ sound, such as their home in Southern California, their complicated personal histories, their relationship to surf music, and the construction of their “California myth”. The combination of the musical, the social and the historical gives a cohesive understanding of the way they constructed their sound.

In his study of the Beatles’ song structures, Covach (2006) used a ‘craft to art’ model to chart how their use of song structures changed over time. The Beach Boys, as musical contemporaries of the Beatles, also show a similar progression in their music. However, they also experienced an earlier ‘apprentice’ phase when the group was still figuring out their instruments, finding their voices and solidifying their own sound. The three-part movement from apprentices, to craftsmen, to artists (ACA) best suits the way the Beach Boys’ music grew and changed between 1962 and 1966; almost all of the elements that make up their music – song structure, rhythmic feels, instrumentation,

chord progressions, lyrical themes, and vocals - clearly follow these three distinct periods of musical and personal growth.

One of the advantages of a large-scale study of the Beach Boys' music is that there is enough scope to use varied methodological approaches to analyse and represent musical findings. A combination of empirical methods (statistics, tables and spreadsheets), colour coding (graphs and charts), traditional notation, and socio-cultural considerations have been used to show large-scale trends over time, musical correlations, and to make analysis findings as accessible as possible. The use of visual methods in this study is a contribution to a wider trend in popular music research, which has accepted the role of traditional musical analysis, but also sought ways to augment it with methods that best represent the way popular music sounds.

When the Beach Boys sang "Will I dig the same things that turned me on as a kid? Will I look back and say that I wish I hadn't done what I did?" on "When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)", we hear the tension between being a *boy* while also wanting to be *man*. When we listen to the early albums of the Beach Boys, we also *hear* that development from boy to man; this study charts the progression, the changes, and the development of the Beach Boys' unique sound during the early to mid-1960s.

Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

(Signed) _____

Jade ORegan

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Acknowledgements

“Help me Rhonda, help help me Rhonda!”

Thank you to my “Super Supervisors” Dr. Donna Weston and Dr. Dan Bendrups for your advice, guidance and support to finish this project. Firstly, to Donna: thank you for seeing me through this entire process, for always making time for me, for encouraging me when I am unsure of myself, and for your kind understanding during my most difficult personal time in 2010. You are my supervisor, my boss and colleague, but also my friend. I am so happy to know you. Thank you. To Dan: thank you for coming on board to help me half way through my thesis process, I know this study would not be as strong without your input and experience. You also make an excellent cup of tea!

Thank you to the staff at the Bachelor of Popular Music program at Griffith University (Queensland Conservatorium). Your support has meant the world to me, and I consider the place my “second home”. Thanks to Charlotte Hoffman for your happy face, the cups of tea and lunchbreaks together, to Brett Voss for fixing my computer problems, and to Julie Sutherland for the chats and always answering all my annoying admin questions and making everything look so easy. Thanks also to Brendan Anthony: you never gave up in me as an awkward and anxious girl in your classes so long ago, and have never forgotten this. I am so happy we are friends, and my thesis is so much better from your encouragement. Thanks also to Caleb James for being my office pal this year and making the space a brighter place to be.

Thank you to the staff at the Brisbane JMC Academy: to my boss Sean Foran, for his constant interest in and support of my work, and to Colin Webber, who understood the struggle of finishing this thing and was always understanding.

Thank you to my Griffith University study-buddies: To Seb Gazca and Lauren Istvandity, your friendship has made this journey so much less lonely. Our fun times at meetings, in the office, or at conferences have been real highlights for me – we are writing gods! To Narelle McCoy, thank you for all the tea, Scotch Finger biscuits, lunch dates and long chats. You have given me so many laughs over the last few years, and I am really lucky for my thesis journey to have run parallel with yours.

To my incredible students at Griffith University and the JMC Academy over the last three years: thank you for your interest and curiosity in my work, your constant encouragement and kind words. Every time you asked “Have you REALLY written that

much!?" it made me feel kind of proud of my work. I am so fortunate to spend time with such talented and special young people, and I have learned so much from you all.

To my friends in the Super PhD Musicology Club: thank you for encouraging me, joining in all of my discussions, for helping to workshop my ideas, and giving me your advice. It is humbling to call so many intelligent and kind people my friends and colleagues. With extra special thanks to John Encarnacao.

Thank you to Probyn Gregory, Nelson Bragg and Darian Sahanaja, who have helped me with my work so much, and have answered some important questions that no one else could. Thank you for helping to organise that lovely evening back in 2010 where I was able to spend some time with Brian Wilson, I will always be thankful to you for helping making that possible.

To my incredible friends who have loved me, supported me, listened to me, who sent me encouraging messages, posted cards and sent special care packages: I could not have done this without your help. Thank you to Mandy Harris and Luke Harris, Shay Richardson, Lucy Gardiner, Fiona Laughton, Marty Hesse, Lindsey and Tim Odom, Megan Burn, Paris Rosemont, Kelly Carpenter, Felicity Cull, Tim and Emma Coyle, Danny Yau, Mel Harris, Cass Scully, Tom Sowonja and my Car Crazy Cutie, Bree De Rome. Thanks also to my Pom Pom Playgirl Evie Kay for her proofreading help in the appendices.

To Marg Halpin, thank you for caring for me as if I were part of your family, I have appreciated it so much. My Mum was so lucky to have had you as her best friend. To Tess Sheldon, there is no way I could have ever finished this without your help. Thank you for keeping me together, for making me tea, and for your thoughtful gifts and encouragement. You are an incredible lady.

Special thanks to Michael Carpenter, my amazing friend with whom I have had so many conversations about the Beach Boys. And not only that, who organised for me to spend some time with Brian Wilson in the hopes it would inspire me to keep working. It did! Thank you for listening to my ideas and helping me find answers to my questions. There are parts of this paper that could not have been completed without your help and encouragement, and I feel that part of our friendship will always be tied up in Beach Boys' songs. To Casey Atkins, my Sydney study-buddy, thank you for your thoughts on some of the more tricky parts of my transcriptions.

Thank you to my Dad, Matthew O'Regan, who introduced me to the music of the Beach Boys as a young girl because he just knew I would understand it like he did. He was right. He let me steal his records and never give them back (sorry, Dad!), took me to so many Brian Wilson and Beach Boys shows, and has constantly encouraged my love of music in every way. I know I have inherited his endless excitement and enthusiasm for music, and for that I am forever grateful to him. The thesis could never have happened without him.

To my incredible partner Tim Byron, I could never have done this without your help, your love, your patience and your constant support. You asked me about my work almost every day, talked with me into the night, helped me get my ideas together (especially the statistics), read over my drafts, reminded me why I started this project, and how you knew I would get to the end of it. You never even once got sick of hearing the Beach Boys, either! You have been beside me through my entire candidature, saying "Don't worry, baby" while you counteracted all of my anxiety with your logic, love and humour. "Thank you" doesn't even begin to express my gratitude, Tim. God only knows what I'd be without you.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my beautiful Mum and best friend, Wendy O'Regan. She adored music, encouraged my love of reading and learning at a very early age, and loved and supported me through all of my studies. When I was accepted into the PhD program, she rang me squealing down the phone because she was so excited for me. She passed away from cancer in November, 2010, and I wasn't able to finish my thesis in time for her to see it. Mum, I did this for you. I hope I would have made you proud.

Introduction

"Early in the morning we'll be starting out, some honeys will be coming along..."

It is a Friday night and I am sitting in a Gold Coast club waiting for a local Beach Boys cover band to begin their set. I took my seat and looked up at the stage. It kind of looked like the video clip from the 1980s Beach Boys hit "Kokomo"; there were flower leis decorating the microphones, plastic palm trees dotted around the set, and old surf movies playing on a giant screen. As the cover band began their set, I couldn't help but feel it was like watching a cartoon version of the Beach Boys, where small things (like the plastic palm trees representing California) were amplified to extremes to almost comedic effect, while the subtleties of the Beach Boys music and image which connect with me so emotionally were completely lost. At the time I couldn't quite put my finger on what was missing, because the musicians were professionals, and every note of the music was played in the right place. However, now I understand that while sitting in my seat, I was think about how the Beach Boys' "sound" is made up of notes and rhythms, as well as their history, personalities, their home, their image, and the technology they used to record their music too. All of these things play their part.

.....

Flash forward to a year and a half later and I am sitting backstage at the Enmore Theatre in Sydney before Brian Wilson plays with his band. I am in Brian's dressing room, telling him about my PhD research on the Beach Boys' music. He seems shy, but he gradually begins to open up after a few questions and answers. We are talking about how he puts his music together, particularly the vocal harmonies, and what makes the Beach Boys' sound so unique. He paws at a keyboard at one end of the dressing room and starts to teach me a vocal harmony to "Love and Mercy" and for a couple of choruses, we sing together. It was one of the nicest moments of my life. Later, standing outside the theatre with a friend, he says laughing, "I could pin-point the moment where your brain exploded back there!" He was probably right.

As I walked back up the stairs to get to my seat before the show, Brian's dressing room door was ajar and I heard him tinkling on his keyboard. I paused to listen as he played the chords to "Surf's Up" alone in his dressing room. At the time, I couldn't really believe what I was hearing. All I could think of was that this sounded like the Beach

Boys. Was it the fact that it was Brian himself playing? Is Brian the “Beach Boys?” No. I don’t believe so. But there was a combination of musicality and vulnerability, of hope and of sadness, which created a perfect coming-together of the Beach Boys’ sound. The cover band had the notes, the instruments, the arrangements – the lead singer even attempted Mike Love’s strutting stage mannerisms – and musical notes were in the right place, but the meaning was wrong. Brian didn’t have all the notes and arrangements around him, but listening to him playing some lonely chords in his dressing room, the meaning felt right.

These two subjective experiences inspired me to think about what it was that made up the Beach Boys’ sound, what made it so unique, and how it changed over time. It was through thinking about the concept of their sound that I began to try and find a way to make these subjective experiences objective through a detailed study of their 1960s musical repertoire.

What is a “Sound”?

Music is typically described in terms of its “sound”; record companies use the term to market albums, journalists use it to compare music in reviews, musicians use it to explain their work and listeners use it to discuss music. This idea of “sound” links together fundamental musical elements such as structure, harmony, melody, tonality and rhythmic feels. Additionally, it also links together specific musical equipment, instrument types, effects and production techniques that also contribute to creating a distinctive sound. Beyond the physicality of the music, more intangible, socio-cultural elements may also affect a particular sound, such as the time and place in which the music is made, and the historical backgrounds of the writers and performers. All of these elements – the music itself, the production that is used and the time, place and history of those who create it – contribute to a particular sound.

Many popular music scholars have recognised the connection of these musical and social elements. Everett (1999) sees musicology, cultural, social and media studies, critical theory and reception history “as complementary and informative to the well-read, well-balanced listener” (p. xi). Similarly, Brackett (2000) argues that “musical meaning is socially constructed – even the type of musical meaning that seems to derive from internal musical relationships.” He continues, “Nevertheless...I remain convinced that the *sounds* of music – the way they are produced, the way they differ from one another, the way they resemble each other, the relationship between specific gestures and their effects – are important” (p. x).

Middleton (1990) argues that studying “diverse musics [from] a point of view deriving from one perspective, and methods which simply aggregate varying perspectives, are equally unsatisfactory. The musicologist has to recognise the existence and the interaction – within a society, within a history – of different musical problematics” (1990, p. 125). Further, Middleton (2000) argues that “the best ‘new musicology’ of pop has grasped the need to hear harmony in new ways, to develop new models for rhythmic analysis, to pay attention to the nuances of timbre and pitch inflection, to grasp textures and forms in ways that relate to generic and social function, to escape from “notational centrality” (p. 4). From this, Middleton (2000) notes the importance, but also the difficulty in considering the “deeper, conceptual contradictions within the traditional musicological paradigm” in order “to locate music’s meaning in its objectively constituted sound-patterns” (p.4). This “deeper meaning”, which incorporates many musical and non-musical elements, could also be thought of as an understanding of a “sound” in that it incorporates not only musical elements, but the way elements connect and relate to each other.

Moorefield (2005) opens his study of popular music production noting that “the concept of a *sound* in the sense of stylistic choice, and the ability to capture it and meld it” has “grown in importance,” and also that a particular sound lies not only in “virtuosity or harmonic complexity, but in a mood, an atmosphere, an unreal combination of sounds” (pp. xiii-xv). Finally, Covach (1999, p. 466) reinforces this point by noting that that “socially-grounded interpretations of popular music... are incomplete whenever they cannot account for the specifically musical aspects of the music. A musicological account of popular music can co-exist with a sociological account; the two approaches are complementary.” That these scholars agree that an interdisciplinary approach is necessary for a cohesive understanding of “sound” suggests that the study of the Beach Boys’ sound would benefit from such an approach. The Beach Boys’ music is harmonically sophisticated, explores specific lyrical themes, and employs production techniques (such as reverb and echo) in distinctive ways. Furthermore, their music is inextricably linked to Californian ideals and youth culture in the 1960s. A study that does not incorporate parts of all of these elements would therefore be inadequate for understanding the Beach Boys’ sound.

Thesis Question

This study aims to chart the progression of the Beach Boys' sound over the 1962-1966 period, combining a detailed analysis of specific musical elements (such as structure, rhythm, instrumentation and so forth) while also weaving in important contextual information, production styles, and the group's personal and cultural histories. The early-to-mid 1960s is a particularly interesting period of the Beach Boys' long musical history for several reasons. Firstly, it is the time period where the group achieved most of their commercial success. Between 1962 and 1988, the Beach Boys had 36 Top 40 singles in the United States, however, 22 of these were hits during the 1962-1966 period (66%). From these 22 singles, three songs from this period reached #1 on the Billboard Top 40: "I Get Around", "Barbara Ann" and "Help Me Rhonda" (Whitburn, 2004). Put simply, two thirds of the Beach Boys' hits occurred in the first 5 years of their now 50-year career.

Secondly, it was during this period of time that Brian Wilson assumed total creative control of the group, and was at his most competitive and creative. He, with the help of his lyricists (most often Mike Love), wrote all of their original musical material, arranged the vocal harmonies and produced the tracks in the studio – an unprecedented level of creative control at the time for a pop musician on a major recording label. In the early 1960s, the measure of a single's success was its chart position, and Brian Wilson strove to produce as many hits of the highest quality as time would allow. He was also spurred on by his healthy competition with the Beatles, whose music he both admired greatly and also aimed to surpass. After *Pet Sounds*' weak performance in the charts, Brian Wilson moved on to produce his most ambitious work *Smile* in 1967: a conceptual, almost through-composed record where songs blended into each other, used melodic motifs in three different "suites", and which he referred to as his "teenage symphony to God" (Carlin, 2006, p. 91). For reasons both complex and controversial, *Smile* never eventuated, and Brian Wilson began a long descent into alcohol and drug abuse, which further exacerbated his mental illness. Although he continued to contribute to Beach Boys albums, his period of complete creative control was coming to an end, as other members of the Beach Boys, particularly Dennis and Carl Wilson, stepped up to fill the space which Brian could no longer fill. The early years of the Beach Boys career were the busiest, most successful, and possibly the happiest time in the group's long history, and thus, this study will focus only on that five-year period.

This concept of a *sound* encompasses musical, cultural and personal information about the Beach Boys and their recordings, and in order to examine the way the Beach Boys' music sounds, and how these elements relate to each other, several different methodological approaches have been used in the collection and analysis of musical data and representation of findings.

Methods Used in this Study

Much of this study is based on the empirical collection and interpretation of data, from tables of tempos, to the number of particular chords used, to the numerical division of lead vocals. Some more qualitative data, such as lyrics, was made quantitative through the categorisation and coding of lyrical themes, so that this information could be rearranged as needed. These empirical methods meant that a large amount of information could be gathered from one pool of data, and that this data could be arranged in different ways to show or highlight parts of the Beach Boys' sound. For example, data on tempo could be arranged by song, by year, or by album, but also by lyrical theme, or by chord progression, meaning that relationships between musical elements could be uncovered.

The information gathered from the collection of data is represented in the analysis chapters in several kinds of charts (bar, line and pie charts, area and donut graphs, and other info-graphics) to show the changes to the Beach Boys' music over time, and to view and compare musical findings. Colour coding is also used throughout the analysis chapters to denote the different albums and to clearly and quickly show large amounts of data in a small space. These colours will be explained in detail in the methodology chapter (Chapter 2).

In addition to empirical and visual methods of data interpretation and representation, more traditional, musicological approaches are also used throughout this study. In Chapter 4 on rhythmic feels, traditional rhythmic transcription is used to show the relationship between different instruments in Beach Boys' songs, however, in the interests of accessibility, these transcriptions are always referenced with a time code and underscored with lyrics so that a musically untrained reader may follow along easily. In Chapter 8 on vocals, some traditional notation is used to represent the different kinds of melodies sung by Mike Love and Brian Wilson as lead vocalists, though these notations also include time code reference, lyrics and a melodic contour line to make the findings as clear as possible.

These methods are employed for three different reasons; Firstly, they were most suitable for a large-scale musical analysis such as this, and were useful to illuminate parts of the Beach Boys' music they may otherwise have been missed in a more traditional analysis. Secondly, these methods often came out of the process of the data collection, meaning that the analytical method was dictated by the music itself. Thirdly, this study, and the methods used within it, aims to contribute to the growing body of literature that uses alternative methods of analysis to best get at the way popular music sounds. These ideas will be expanded upon in more detail in the methodology section (Chapter 2).

This study arranges much of its findings in chronological order, so that patterns and trends can be discovered, and a deeper understanding of the way their music grew, changed and became increasingly more sophisticated over time. It was during the 1962-1966 period that the Beach Boys' unique sound was crystallised, and the development of their sound is best viewed through the framework of the apprentice-craft-art model.

The Apprentice-Craft-Art Model

The following section will outline the apprentice-craft-art model that underpins the findings in the analysis chapters. In his 2006 article about the Beatles, John Covach applied a "craft to art" model to frame the group's development, with a particular focus on changes to formal structure. He explains:

Craftsperson refers to an approach that privileges repeatable structure; songs are written according to patterns that are in common use. When innovation occurs within this approach, there is no difficulty with the idea of duplicating this innovation in subsequent songs. Opposed in a loose way to this craftsperson approach is the *artist* approach. Here, the emphasis is on the non-repeatability of innovations; the worst criticism that can be levelled against a creative individual according to this approach is that he or she is "rewriting the same song over and over again" (Covach, 2006, p. 39).

Similarly, in her study of visual art, Markowitz (1994) notes the frequent use of the term "arts and crafts," with *art* referring to the "products and practices of painting, sculpture and printmaking" and *craft* referring to "ceramics, weaving and wood and metal work" (p. 55). Although these two terms are often used together, there is a distinct difference between them, particularly in terms of the principles that motivate their creation. Part of the problem, Markowitz (1994) notes, is "that 'art' has a positive evaluative

connotation that “craft” lacks”, suggesting that “art” inspires an aesthetic response in the viewer, while “craft” objects are functional: a chair, bowl, pottery, item of clothing, and so forth (pp. 57-58). Similarly, Kealy (1979) notes this divide in his study of music producers (or what he refers to as “sound mixers”) when he explains that during the 1960s, music producers became more than just “technicians”, rather, they were “artist-mixers” who, with their collaborators, play a role in “how craftsmen attempt to become artists” (p. 4).

These two terms are particularly useful, as they can be arranged as part of a continuum (*from craft to art*), but may also exist simultaneously. In some cases, the two can be used together, such as if an “artist” uses craft elements, (textiles, ceramics), as part of a larger work, or a craft item may incorporate elements which are a creative personal expression. Becker (1978) suggests that there are instances where craft can “become” art, and art can sometimes “become” craft, and further acknowledges that the terms are “ambiguous conglomerations of organisational and stylistic traits and this cannot be used as unequivocally as we would want to use them if they were scientific of critical concepts (p. 863). However, this ambiguity can be useful in a study of popular music, as the flexibility of the two concepts represents well the broad range of popular musical styles and reflects the many flexible methodological approaches to musical analysis. Theodore Gracyk (2007) makes an interesting and thoughtful case for the Beach Boys’ *Pet Sounds* as a piece of art, and he too assumes a flexible model for classification. He notes that the concept of art is “so open, and covers so many different kinds of things” that defining art by a set of narrow criteria is not particularly useful (p. 24).

The terms can also invoke some of the paradoxes that exist when applied to popular music studies. For example, the song writers of Tin Pan Alley were essentially part of a music factory, producing hit after hit for popular crooners, Broadway musicals and Hollywood movies. They were “craftsmen” in that they used a particular set of musical tools (the AABA form, 32-bar lengths, particular chord progressions, such as the ii-V-I turnaround, and so forth) to almost effortlessly produce song after song that had both elements of familiarity and novelty. In their role at the offices of Tin Pan Alley, and in many texts (see Forte, 2001; Furia & Lasser, 2006; Wilder, 1972) they are referred to as “composers”, a term usually reserved for writers of Western Art Music. In essence, these writers were craftsmen, but were simultaneously viewed as artists.

Similarly, the song writers associated with the Brill Building and Motown Records in the 1950s and 1960s used musical tools to craft songs for other singers and vocal groups. So skilled were the writers at Motown that after the success of the Four Tops #1 single “I Can’t Help Myself (Sugar Pie Honey Bunch)” in 1965, Holland-Dozier-Holland wrote another song for the group at short order humorously titled “The Same Old Song” (1965) due to its close resemblance to their previous hit. Inglis (2003) refers to this as the “innovation within predictability” approach, which, like the composers of Tin Pan Alley, many Brill Building and Motown writers employed during the 1960s (p. 225). For a craftsman, as Becker (1978) defines them, their success is measured by their ability to reproduce the same item identically over and over again, however, for the artist, as Covach (2006) describes previously, their worst criticism is that their work resembles something previously created. The “innovation within predictability” approach sums up the craft and art concepts at the same time, with the *innovation* representing the “art” and the *predictability* representing the “craft” of song writing.

Acknowledging the overlap of these two terms, Becker (1978) makes use of the term “artist-craftsman”, where beauty also becomes a criterion for creating, rather than utilitarian functionality (p. 866). He describes the “artist-craftsmen” in detail:

Artist-craftsmen have higher ambitions than ordinary craftsmen. While they may share the same audiences, institutions, and rewards, they also feel some kinship with fine art institutions. They see a continuity between what they do and what fine artists do, even though they recognize that they have chosen to pursue the ideal of beauty they share with fine artists in a more limited area (Becker, 1978, p. 867).

This concept of the artist-craftsmen does well to describe the position many popular musicians found themselves in during the 1960s, who had schooled themselves in the craft of song writing, but were also wanting to expand creatively, whether through the growth of technologies for recording and performing, or through the experience of mind-altering drugs. Brian Wilson is a particularly good example of the artist-craftsman, who took seriously his role in producing pop singles for the Beach Boys (i.e., music with a “purpose”, to dance to, and so forth) but who also felt drawn to experiment with melody, texture and harmony during the 1965-1966 period.

However, in order to first become a craftsman, an enormous amount of work must take place. As Becker (1978) describes, “most crafts are quite difficult, with many years required to master the physical skills and mental disciplines of a first-class

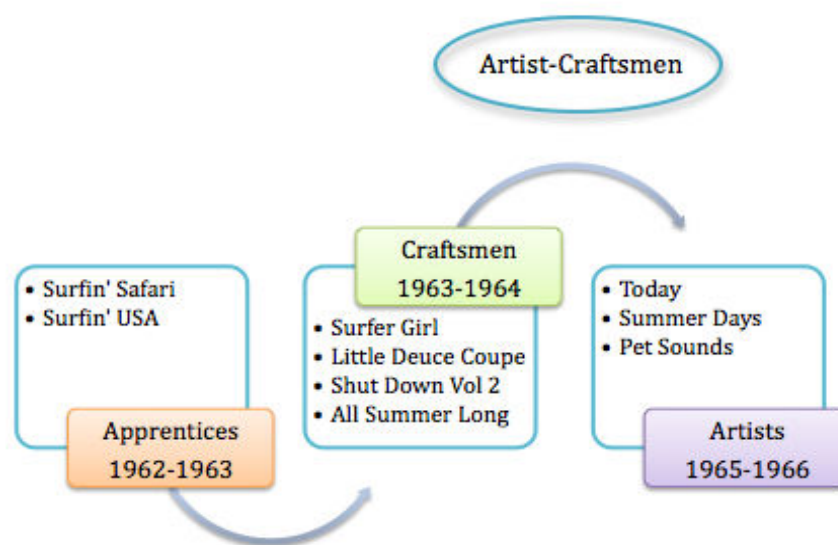
practitioner”, and further, “one who has mastered the skills – an expert – has great control over the craft’s materials, can do anything with them, can work with speed and agility, can do things with ease that ordinary, less expert craftsmen find difficult or impossible” (p. 865). This description of an expert craftsman suits the way in which Brian Wilson approached the creation and production of the Beach Boys’ music and the process by which he learned his skills. While his school-friends were out having fun, the teenage Brian Wilson was in his bedroom constantly repeating Four Freshmen records, working out their individual vocal harmonies, and finding out how they fit together (see Carlin, 2006, p. 22). He studied books about the roles of instruments in the orchestra and experimented with his own two-track voice recorder, often teaching parts to other family member so he could practice the layering of vocal harmonies. The young Brian Wilson dedicated himself fully to the craft of arranging and writing his own music, inspired by the professional songwriters of Tin Pan Alley and the Brill Building. He worked towards being adept at the craft of song writing.

These hours of training amounted to something that was not yet “craft” and not yet “art”. Instead, at this period in time, Brian Wilson was an *apprentice*, learning from the master craftsmen he admired. When Covach (2006) covered craft and art movement of the Beatles music, they did not experience a similar “apprentice” period, largely because the Beatles had many years of performing and writing experience together before they began recording at EMI in 1962. The Beach Boys, however, barely existed as an official ‘band’ before their first recording of “Surfin” became a local hit in 1961, followed closely by “Surfin’ Safari” in 1962. The group of young teenagers who comprised the group had never played a show before the release of “Surfin” and as such, had a lot of learning ahead of them in order to catch up with the success of their first singles. Due to this, the Beach Boys can be seen as having a third connected and important step in their creative history: their beginnings as apprentices.

The Beach Boys apprentice phase is roughly equivalent to their first two records in 1962 and early 1963, *Surfin’ Safari* and *Surfin’ USA*. This one-year period includes a collection of songs defined by basic musical elements, such as 12-bar and simple verse forms, simple rhythmic feels and basic vocal harmonies. During 1963, the group move into their craftsmen phase, where the group have a well-defined idea of their own musical style and employ musical techniques often used by professional songwriters, such as the use of AABA and verse-chorus form, the use of well-known chord progressions such as the I-iv-ii-V movement, and a broadening of lyrical themes to include songs about love and loss. This phase includes the *Surfer Girl*, *Little Deuce Coupe*,

Shut Down and *All Summer Long* albums. After learning the “rules” of successful early 1960s craftsmen songwriters, Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys then move into their final phase as artists in 1965 and 1966, where they often break the rules they had spent so long learning. This phase includes the *Today*, *Summer Days* and *Pet Sounds* albums, and is defined by unexpected structures and chordal movements, dense vocal harmonies and a wide variety of orchestral textures not often heard in popular music at the time. Figure 1 shows an overview of the apprentice-craft-art movement, and the albums that defined each phase over the 1962-1966 period.

FIGURE 1 - THE APPRENTICE-CRAFT-ART (ACA) MODEL



Of course, these movements in the Beach Boys’ sound are trends rather than laws. Elements of the craft phase are heard in early 1963 on “Finders Keepers”, and elements of the craft phase often overlap with the artist phase, particularly on the *Summer Days* album. In some cases, elements of all three of these movements exist in one song: for example, “Lonely Sea” features a rudimentary instrumentation, a well-defined descending chord progression, but also complex song structures – some features of each of the three different movements (see Chapters 3, 5 and 6). In some cases, one musical element may develop more quickly than or independently of other musical elements. For example, changes to rhythmic feels (see Chapter 4) took a long time to develop compared to advances in vocal harmony complexity (see Chapter 8). The flexibility of the apprentice-craft-art model is that it is able to accommodate all of these kinds of changes, while still providing a framework by which to understand the progression of the Beach Boys’ sound. This apprentice-craft-art (or ACA) model will be

referred to throughout the rest of this study as a way to gauge the growth in the Beach Boys' sound over time, and by musical element.

Scope and Limitations

This study presents a broad, big-picture view of the Beach Boys music. Due to its scope, there are some musical elements that cannot be discussed in fine detail throughout the analysis chapters. For example, the chapter on chord progressions deals with the larger chordal structures that occur most commonly in the Beach Boys' music, but does not 'zoom in' to discuss the intricacies of cadences. The chapter on rhythm looks at the role of over-arching rhythmic 'feels' rather than a microanalysis of one beat to another. This is for three main reasons. Firstly studies (Curnutt, 2012; Harrison, 1997; Lambert, 2007) already address some of these elements in the Beach Boys' music in comprehensive detail. As such, it is the aim of this study to give a wider context for useful findings in these smaller studies.

Secondly, in approaching their music in this way, and in building from previous research, it has allowed this study to cover areas of their music often overlooked, such as the role of musical influence, over-arching rhythmic feels, production styles, musical equipment and the roles of lead vocalists. All of these elements are important to the construction of the Beach Boys' sound, though are rarely touched upon in literature about their music.

Thirdly, this large-scale analysis of their music is able observe the relationships between musical elements, cultural context and history that might otherwise have been overlooked with a smaller and more narrow analytical scope. A more comprehensive overview of the scope of this analysis is detailed in the methodology chapter (Chapter 2), along with some limitations relating to albums in this study, and the audio recordings used for the analysis.

Chapter Summary and Appendices

This study has been broken into two parts: the thesis itself (volume one) and the appendices (volume two).

Chapter 1 includes the first of two literature surveys, which situates this study within the context of Beach Boys literature, both academic and popular. Emerging from this discussion of literature, an overview of the Beach Boys' personal history, families and the construction of the California myth is included to give context to the later

analysis chapters. Chapter 2 begins with the second literature survey of methodological approaches in popular music studies, outlines the albums used in the study, and details the individual analytical methods used throughout the rest of this thesis.

Chapters 3 to 8 make up the analysis chapters. Each chapter analyses a different musical element and concludes with a short discussion of findings. These chapters are set out in an order reminiscent of how recordings are commonly constructed. Firstly, the underlying song structure gives a song its shape, secondly, rhythm, instrumentation and chord progressions make up the majority of the musical 'bed'. Thirdly, lyrics and melody are layered over those elements, and finally, the vocals, which sing the lyrics. Ordering the analysis in this way allows each chapter to build on the findings of the previous one, giving a clear picture of how the Beach Boys built their music in the studio.

Chapter 9 is a discussion and conclusion, and pulls together all of the findings from the analysis chapters using the apprentice-craft-art framework.

There is an A3 sized page located in the front of this volume that is designed to be folded out while reading the rest of this thesis. On this page is a list of the albums used in this study, the colours that will be used to represent them throughout the analysis chapters, the years they were released, and other important information that may need to be referred to at times. This has been included to make the analysis chapters as clear and easily understood as possible.

Appendices and Data Disc

The appendices have been provided in a separate document for ease of reference, as parts of this study (particularly the chapters on chord progressions and lyrics) may require this extra information. The appendices are ordered by chapter, with figures and tables captioned with an A in front of their number (e.g., Figure A1), to differentiate between volumes. Contained inside are tables of song structures, lists of tempos, detailed overviews of instrumentation, chord charts and lyrics for every song in this study, along with other charts and tables complementary to the analysis chapters.

Some forms of data that were collected and used in this analysis were unable to be included in the appendices due to their type and volume. Much of the raw data and statistics are divided into spreadsheets that are located on the disc at the back of this document, and these have been included to thoroughly present all of the information gathered for this analysis. The spreadsheet files are ordered by chapter and each sheet

is labelled according to data type. All tables and charts included in the spreadsheets are also labelled clearly.

The second folder on the included disc contains MP3s of the albums included in this study, should the reader require them. They are taken from the compact discs used for this analysis, and are arranged by album and year.

Conclusion

This introduction has given an overview of the study to follow and detailed important information about the concept of sound, the ACA model, the inclusion of appendices, the data disc at the back of this thesis, the limitations of this study, and an overview of each chapter.

The following chapter (Chapter 1) is a comprehensive overview of Beach Boys' literature, both academic and popular, and situates this study within the broader context of previous research. Following from this, a brief biographical section is included, and this personal and cultural context forms a background to the musical analyses in Chapters 3 to 8.

Chapter 1: Literature Survey

"Those things I say in my letters, you'll find them most sincere"

Coinciding with Brian Wilson's return to live performance in 1999, there has been a large increase in the amount of published Beach Boys literature along with a renewed enthusiasm for their music and a new critical appreciation of their 1960s repertoire. In addition to these texts, new Beach Boys material has also been released, including the 2012 album *That's Why God Made the Radio* the *Original US Singles Collection: the Capitol Years Singles (1962-65) Box Set* (2008), the recently released retrospective *Made in California Box Set* (2013), several DVD documentaries, re-released re-mastered versions of their albums, the *Smile Sessions Box Set* released in 2011, several Brian Wilson solo albums and, finally, a feature film currently in production about Brian Wilson's life story titled *Love and Mercy*, with John Cusack and Paul Danu both playing the lead role (Child, 2013).

Beach Boys Literature

Academic Literature

There are two main published large-scale studies of the Beach Boys' music: Phillip Lambert's (2007) *Inside the Music of Brian Wilson* and Kirk Curnutt's (2012) *Icons of Pop Music: Brian Wilson*. Both studies approach the music of the Beach Boys in different ways and have been an important resource for the following analysis chapters. Lambert's (2007) study is the most thorough, covering most of the Beach Boys' career, though the releases after *Smile/Smiley Smile* are only given two chapters, while their preceding work makes up the bulk of his study. The book touches on various musical elements, focusing on chords, structure and melody. It contextualises the musical analyses within the culture around the music, and in the Beach Boys' own musical canon, often making links between demos and early songs to show their development. Each chapter is prefaced with a discussion of events happening in the Beach Boys' lives, such as touring, recording, rehearsing or filming, in much the same way as Badman (2004) book does, though with more musical context. Lambert also discusses the group's influences in fine detail, narrowing in on one or two specific songs that influenced their music several years later.

Despite its detail, there are elements that Lambert's (2007) study does not cover. For the most part, the text is centred on the role of Brian Wilson as the group's creative leader. Although this is a valid way to approach the study of Wilson's music, the other members of the Beach Boys also contributed to the sound of the Beach Boys, from their vocal tone, to their instrumental parts.

Although most songs are discussed in some way, Lambert (2007) focuses on the musical elements that are most prominent in each song. In his discussion of "Fun Fun Fun", he discusses the lyric and structure in detail, however, for "Warmth of the Sun" he discusses only the unusual chord progression; for "Girls on the Beach" he compares the lyrics to "Surfer Girl", and discusses tonality, though for "When I Grow Up (To be a Man)" he discusses instrumentation, some lyrics and notes modulations. While this approach is certainly interesting, it does tend to leave many stones unturned. What of the rhythmic complexities of "When I Grow Up (To be a Man)"? What of the role of the 12-bar blues in "Fun Fun Fun"? The randomness in the way each song is treated makes it difficult to see any large-scale trends. Lambert's (2007) study also gives more weight to traditional elements of analysis, such as melody, harmony and structure, at the expense of other important musical contributions, such as rhythm, metre, timbre, production techniques and equipment. As Middleton (2000) notes, many studies of popular music face this problem of "skewed focus", and use a "hierarchy [that] is arguably not congruent with that obtaining to most pop music" (p. 4). This creates "overemphasis on features that can be notated easily (such as fixed pitches) at the expense of others which cannot (complex rhythmic detail, pitch nuance, sound qualities) (Middleton, 2000, p. 4). Despite this, Lambert (2007) does forgo the use of traditional notation in favour of more accessible chord charts, which are more suitable for his analysis and make his findings more accessible and appropriate for comparison.

Kirk Curnutt's 2012 study has also been an important resource. His study is broken into sections, describing the Beach Boys music from a variety of angles. His analysis of lyrical themes is wide reaching, dealing with broad issues like feminism, Americana, and the representation of youth culture. In chapter two, he looks in detail at the musical motifs that are most important in the Beach Boys music, as well as a discussion of instrumental roles, some rhythmic analysis and some harmonic analysis. The final chapter covers ground that few other Beach Boys writers explore (aside from Leaf, 1978), studying the "peculiar appeal" of Brian Wilson. The chapter contextualises the lyrical and musical analysis with a discussion of Brian Wilson's humour, personality and

mental frailty and connects these things to the continuing appeal of his music. Curnutt's (2012) study is grouped by theme, rather than by chronology. In this way, each section creates quite a broad overview of three important parts of the Beach Boys music (lyrics, music and the "myth" of Brian Wilson), covering the music during the period of this study, but also continuing into the 1970s, as Lambert (2007) does. Curnutt (2012) stresses that his analysis is not aimed at scholars, though his ideas are certainly scholarly. The strength of his study is his ability to have woven together "various strands that have long existed as loose debate threads" in other Beach Boys' writing" (p. xi).

Curnutt's (2012) study of musical elements breaks ideas up into small sections, with more obvious discussions of voice, instruments and bass lines alongside less-obvious elements, such as silence and brevity. As these short sections focus on themes rather than chronology, it is difficult to understand the musical growth from one year to the next in the Beach Boys music. The musical analysis chapter is also based around "sonic motifs," and tends to focus on a handful of small musical elements that make up some of the Beach Boys music, such as the sound of vocals, the particular use of walking/melodic bass lines and a discussion of the eighth-note keyboard figure. However, like Lambert (2007), each song is not treated equally, and analysis is more often used to fit into particular theoretical concerns (e.g., discussions of "whiteness", see p. 83). In this way, Curnutt (2012) is focused more on the sociological rather than the musicological. Finally, much like Lambert (2007), Curnutt's (2012) focus is entirely on Brian Wilson's input and output, to the almost complete exclusion of the other contributing members of the Beach Boys.

In addition to the important work of Lambert (2007) and Curnutt (2012), there are several other studies of the Beach Boys' music that warrant discussion. Firstly, Daniel Harrison's (1997) scholarly paper 'After Sundown: The Beach Boys' Experimental Music' discusses songs from *Pet Sounds* and *Smile/Smiley Smile*, focusing mainly on the band's harmonic development, over the 1966-67 period. Like Lambert (2007), Harrison's traditional musicological approach focuses only on musical attributes (melody, harmony and instrumentation), which can be easily notated on a score. His study excludes other musical attributes such as timbre, rhythmic feels and production techniques, which are important to popular music, but for which traditional musical notation is often unsuitable (Covach, 1999; Middleton, 1990; Tagg, 1987). Harrison (1997), in focusing on the 1966-1967 period, does not cover any previously released musical material, with the exception of "Warmth of the Sun", for which he gives an insightful overview of its unusual chord

progression, often cited as a precursor to more complicated harmonic experimentation. Harrison does also connect the development of the Beach Boys complex music to their personal history and cultural context, which gives further weight to his interesting musical findings. His work has been of particular use in the chapter on chord progressions.

Keightley's 1991 thesis on "All Summer Long" explores the song, its themes and its connection to wider socio-cultural contexts. However, what makes his study important to this analysis of the Beach Boys' music is that Keightley (1991) draws attention to the lack of scholarly attention that the Beach Boys' early work receives in academic literature. In the twenty-two years since the publication of his thesis, this issue has still not comprehensively addressed. As such, this study aims to contribute to the understanding of not only the artistic and critically acclaimed music *Pet Sounds*, but also an understanding of the preceding albums which are worthy of detailed analysis.

Fitzgerald's (2009) scholarly article 'Creating Those Good Vibrations: An Analysis of Brian Wilson's US Top 40 Hits 1963-66' has been an invaluable resource in this study, and is the most closely aligned with the results found in the following analysis chapters. In some ways, this study is complementary to his, as this thesis includes 1962 material (such as "Surfin'" and "Surfin' Safari"), while his includes "Good Vibrations", which this study does not. In his article, Fitzgerald (2009) looks at the charting singles of the Beach Boys during the 1963-1966 period, and discusses them in terms of structure, lyrics, melody, rhythm, harmony and production, the latter of which is rarely discussed. While this study is wider in scope, Fitzgerald's analysis of the Beach Boys' music contains both traditional musical analysis of harmony and melody, while also exploring areas of the music that are both more accessible to those without musical training (such as patterns in tempo, or emotional tone, also discussed in this study) and these elements are often overlooked, but important elements of their musical style. Although Fitzgerald (2009) does not make the point explicitly, his findings do follow the ACA model, and as such, they help support the findings in this study too. It is hoped that this study will give a much broader context to Fitzgerald's findings, with his study functioning as a "greatest hits" overview to this study, which instead charts the way those singles developed through their other recorded material.

The chapter on methodology (Chapter 2) will go into more detail about how this study, and the methods used in it, differs from the academic work of Lambert (2007, Curnutt (2012) and Harrison (1997).

Popular Literature

Abbott (2003), Williams (1997) and Cunningham & Bleiel (2000) are all collections of short articles written about the Beach Boys throughout the course of their career. Kingsley Abbott's (2003) work is an edited volume containing reviews, interviews and reflections, and many contributors are established writers on the Beach Boys' music, such as David Leaf, Dominic Priore, Andrew Doe, and Kingsley Abbott himself. Cunningham & Bleiel (2000) put together a collection of articles from the *Add Some Music* fan journal. Although the blurb promises "musical analysis of 17 Beach Boys classics", the analyses are more descriptions of the music and its influence, with some mention of instrumentation and occasional citing of chord movements. The "analyses" are more like short opinion pieces, that, while offering some insight, are not particularly thorough or in any way academic. Williams' (1997) book is a collection of interviews with the Beach Boys, mainly Brian Wilson, over Williams' long career as a rock journalist and founder of *Crawdaddy* magazine. These interviews were often helpful in sourcing particular quotes from Brian, which were unavailable elsewhere.

Other Beach Boys resources have a more specific purpose. Brad Elliott's (2003) book is a compendium of release dates for singles, albums, recording dates, demo recordings, album cover photographs, track lists, writer credits and descriptions of Beach Boys bootlegs and rarities. This book effectively groups all of the Beach Boys' discographical information and catalogues it, and has been a useful reference in checking the accuracy of information important to the chronology of this study. Jon Stebbins' (2011) book, with the rather presumptuous title of *The Beach Boys FAQ: All That's Left To Know About America's Band*, while not quite describing "everything that's left to know", has been of particular help, firstly in outlining some of the legal matters between members of the Beach Boys, and secondly, for his lists of musical equipment the group used throughout the early period. This is the only book that specifically cites equipment (such as the Beach Boys' Fender guitars, Bassman amps, particular drum kits, and so forth), and for this reason has been of particular use. Dillon's (2012) *Fifty Sides of the Beach Boys* is a compilation of short essays written by musicians and writers who have been inspired by or enjoy the Beach Boys' music. Each essay focuses on one particular song, and ranges from specific musical descriptions to more personal, historical pieces about the effect of the Beach Boys music on their lives growing up. This book has been a source of excellent quotes, particularly from some Wrecking Crew musicians and, unlike other publications, touches on much of their early music (like "Surfin' Safari" and "409") that falls inside the period of time covered in this study.

The work of Stephen J McParland (2000, 2003, 2005), which consists of numerous self-published texts, has been an important source of data, particularly the copies of AFM sheets detailing the session musicians present at the Beach Boys' recording sessions. His lengthy discussions about the development of 1960s Southern California surf culture (in *Surf Music USA*, 2005) have been extremely illuminating, especially his detailed argument of music "for" surfers and music "about" surfing which successfully highlights both the appeal of the Beach Boys internationally, and the anger they inspired from "actual" surfers. The books themselves are not scholarly, and while they often slide into opinionated writing, his opinions are at least well informed by years of research and engagement with the musical surfing community. Golden and Seldis' (1991) short book contains a well-argued essay that situates the Beach Boys, their music and their history into the concept of a "pastoral" life, connected with their environment, and based around the idealised representations of sun, surf, girls and youth culture. This is similar to Leaf's (1978) notion of the California Myth, though Golden & Seldis (1991) situate the Beach Boys through this framework, dealing less with the biography and more a discussion of the Beach Boys' lyrics and image, and how through their words they created their own "Southern Californian pastoral". Although this study is purely sociological, this short text has been of use in contextualising their music through the window of the pastoral or California myth.

Doe & Tobler's (2004) short book *The Complete Guide to Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys* gives a concise overview of each song the Beach Boys released, and a short preface for every album that discusses some historical information, as well as reflecting on each release within the context of their repertoire. While some of these short song overviews are based on opinion, others are able to express the most important contributions of each song in concise manner. This text covers also covers the 1962-66 period, and offers some insight into often overlooked songs, particularly the first two Beach Boys albums *Surfin Safari* and *Surfin USA*. Badman's (2004) book *The Beach Boys: The Definitive Diary of America's Greatest Band: On Stage and in the Studio* is a valuable resource, and documents the career of the Beach Boys in extreme detail, weaving together touring, rehearsal, filming and recording days into a day-to-day diary. The book gives details on session musicians that were present during particular recording sessions (often used in conjunction with McParland, 2000), which songs were recorded at particular sessions, and when songs were written and demoed. This book is arranged chronologically, and covers the period of time covered in this study in a detail that is not often found in other Beach Boys' texts. Information from this book, along with McParland

(2000), is collected into a table detailing the recording of each Beach Boys' track in this study, and is found in Appendix F, Table A13 (p. 208).

Kingsley Abbott's (2001) book *The Beach Boys' Pet Sounds: The Greatest Album of the Twentieth Century* and Granata's (2003) book *I Just Wasn't Made For These Times: Brian Wilson and the Making of Pet Sounds* both cover similar ground, documenting the recording process of *Pet Sounds*. Abbott's (2001) book has been of most use to this study, as he details studio equipment (such as microphones and reverb units), includes diagrams of studio set-up positions, and includes detailed quotes from players and engineers, which gives the most detailed overview of the recording process of any Beach Boys' publication. Although there is no discussion of earlier recording sessions, from the information amassed about *Pet Sounds*, some insight is shed on techniques that may have been used leading up to this recording (documented in Chapter 8 of this study on Vocals).

Leaf's (1978) *the Beach Boys and the California Myth*, Steven Gaines' (1986) book *Heroes and Villains: The True Story of the Beach Boys*, Peter Ames Carlin's (2006) book *Catch a Wave: The Rise, Fall and Redemption of the Beach Boys' Brian Wilson* and Byron Preiss' (1979) book *The Beach Boys: The Unauthorised Biography of America's Greatest Rock and Roll Band* are all detailed Beach Boys biographies that have provided historical context for much of the analysis in this study. Leaf's (1978) book is the most important of these biographies, as it is the first "official" recording of the Beach Boys' story, and his detailed research and thoughtful insight into their life and music has shaped many of the Beach Boys' texts published after this work. Leaf's conception of the 'California myth' is particularly important, and is used often in this study as a way to contextualise the musical and the social, and is discussed in more detail in the following biography section. Carlin's (2006) book offers the most clear and detailed update to Leaf's (1978) book, and covers much of the Beach Boys' career and Brian Wilson's return to touring in the late 1990s and into the 2000s. Brian Wilson's "autobiography" *Wouldn't it Be Nice: My Own Story*, written with Todd Gold, is not often referenced in this study, as it has often been described as unreliable, with sections of the book taken from both Leaf (1978) and Gaines (1986) without citation. The book appeared to be subject to Eugene Landy's meddling¹. As Carlin (2006) describes:

¹ Dr. Eugene Landy was brought in to help Brian Wilson during the 1970s and 1980s with his serious drug and alcohol problems, which had intensified his mental illnesses. Brian had ballooned to 340 pounds, and was effectively destroying his life. Landy had some success at first with Brian, helping him get back into shape with a healthy lifestyle, but later became meddling

When *Wouldn't it be Nice* was published in 1991, the words on its pages sounded nothing like the voice of its supposed author. In some places, this seemed to be because the stories being related had been lifted nearly word for word from earlier biographies, only with the pronouns changed to reflect Brian's first-person perspective. Some of the accusations about the Beach Boys were merely mean-spirited [and found to be false].... But the book became particularly fantastical whenever Landy entered the picture (Carlin, 2006, p. 273).

White's (1994) tome *The Nearest Faraway Place: Brian Wilson, the Beach Boys and the Southern California Experience* is a biography, but focuses on the extremely close link to the Beach Boys and their Californian home. The book even traces the Wilson family tree for several generations, detailing when the family headed west to start a new life in sunny California. The book connects closely to Leaf's (1978) discussion of the California myth and Golden & Seldis' (1991) concept of the Southern California "pastoral".

Literature Survey Conclusion

This study offers a contribution to this new interest in the Beach Boys' music that both builds on these studies and texts, and also offers new insight into the creation of their unique sound. The studies of Curnutt (2012), Fitzgerald (2009), Lambert (2007) and Harrison (1997) have covered important musicological ground, and this study aims to both extend on this research, and also cover other musical elements (such as lyrical themes, vocal roles, recording equipment, instrument types, and so forth) that are not discussed in detail these studies but are important to the Beach Boys' sound.

Each of these studies draws in socio-cultural information to contextualise musical findings, and this study will also draw from more historical and biographical literature (such as Abbott [2001], Badman [2004], Carlin [2006], Gaines [1986], Leaf [1978] and White [1994]) in order to assemble a clear picture of the musical and non-musical contributors to the Beach Boys' sound. The studies of Leaf (1978) and Golden & Seldis (1991) play a particularly important role in this study for their articulation of the "California myth", which will be discussed in detail in the following section.

and controlling, insisting on 25% of Brian's royalties from new songs, insisting they write together, and purposely isolating him from his friends and family. He later had his practising licence revoked. For a more detailed overview of Landy's influence in Brian Wilson's life, see Carlin (2004, pp. 242-273).

Biographical History

In his study of the Beatles' music, Walter Everett (2001) provides a detailed overview of the personal histories of each band member and how their life in Liverpool affected the music they grew to make. Similarly, the personal history of the Beach Boys, their family life, and the place in which they grew up all impact heavily on the music they made during the 1960s, and it is impossible to understand their music deeply without understanding how their personal histories and socio-cultural environment contributed to its development. The following section is a brief overview of the group's history, their family, the Wilson's troubled home life, their connection to broader surf culture, and the creation of the California myth – all elements which contribute to the Beach Boys' sound, and in some cases, are even expressed musically. The following analysis builds from an understanding of the group's beginnings in Southern California in the early 1960s based on material from Leaf (1978), Gaines (1986), White (1994), Carlin (2006) and Badman (2007).

The Wilson Family

The backbone of the Beach Boys line-up consisted of brothers Brian, Dennis and Carl, born to parents Audree and Murry Wilson. The Wilson brothers grew up in a modest two-bedroom house on 3701, West 119th street in Hawthorne, California, where Audree cared for the young boys and Murry Wilson ran his own aviation machinery company called ABLE. Prior to forming ABLE, Murry worked on the assembly line at Goodyear, before a work accident caused him to lose his right eye.

The Wilson home was a turbulent environment, as Murry was an incredibly strict and sometimes violent father, who punished the boys in cruel and unusual ways – from tying Brian to a tree for several hours, to scalding Dennis with boiling water. It is rumoured that Brian's deafness in his right ear was due to a blow Murry delivered with a piece of 2x4 when he was a child, however, this has often been disputed.

What tied the family together, however, was music. The Wilson home was almost always filled with music, whether records, the radio or from the family performing themselves. The house had an organ and a piano, and Audree would often play the organ while Murry accompanied on the piano. The boys would often join in too. Often, Murry would demand that the boys sing together, and during car trips, they would harmonise with each other in the back seat.

The three boys all had very different personalities – Brian, the oldest, was emotionally sensitive, athletic at school, and often considered the class clown. Dennis, the middle brother, was often referred to as the “trouble-maker”, and had a wild and spontaneous spirit. He often bore the brunt of Murry’s punishments more than the other two siblings. Carl, the youngest Wilson was shy, calm and good-natured, and often played the role of a peacemaker in family disputes.

Murry Wilson

Murry Wilson is a figure that loomed large in much of the Beach Boys’ early history. A frustrated musician, he both pushed hard to get the Beach Boys their first big breaks, but also discouraged them with constant personal and musical criticisms. During the making of their first records, Murry would often insist on sitting in the control room while the band recorded, offering suggestions (usually thinly-veiled criticisms); his most common was for the boys to “treble up!” and he often tried to speed up the tape so their voices would sound even higher and more youthful.

Murry has a minor hit with a song he wrote called “Two Step, Side Step” (1952) and spent the following years trying to capitalise on its minimal success. This experience, he felt, earned him the right to be the Beach Boys’ manager. Although Murry’s dedication and tenacity acquired the group their first contract at Capitol Records, he was soon out of his depth after the band became nationally successful in such a short period of time. Unrelenting, he continued in his role, driving them for hours to their gigs, accompanying them on their overseas tours, and obsessing over their behaviour. During a tour to Australia in 1964, Murry instigated a penalty system that docked their pay if they misbehaved, cursed, or did not live up to Murry’s high musical and personal standards. It was after this experience that the Wilson brothers started to realise that they needed to fire their own father as manager if they were ever to be able to grow up and expand musically.

When the group told Murry of their plans, he did not take the news well. He fell into a deep depression and did not get out of bed for several weeks (something his eldest son Brian would emulate in later years through his own mental health issues). Audree tried her best to console him, however, it was impossible for him to see how he had negatively affected their creative life. He felt betrayed and furious, and also slighted, as he believed he was more musically talented than his sons. When he finally recovered from his depressive episode, he decided to arrange his own group called The Sunrays. This new group of young teenagers was modelled closely on the Beach Boys, but they

would not have the power to fire him and he remained in creative control. The Sunrays had a moderate hit with “I Live for the Sun” (1965), however, the band did not have the longevity of the Beach Boys.

During the band’s early days, Murry started his own publishing company called Sea of Tunes. All of the bands’ material was registered through this company, and when Brian finally turned 21, all of the rights to the Beach Boys’ songs became the property of Murry Wilson. This was a calculated ploy to still have some sort of control musically over the group, and he sold the songs for a very small amount. Later, this decision was overturned, as Brian was a minor and his signatures on the document were later revealed to be invalid. Although Murry still desperately wanted to be part of the Beach Boys’ success again, his jealousy also caused him to sabotage them at any opportunity.

After the group installed a new manager, Brian would occasionally invite Murry down to Western Recorders to sit in on the recording sessions and listen to the new music they were creating. Murry always accepted these invitations, but his overbearing need to criticise meant that further invitations were rarely extended. A well-known incident in the studio had Brian and Murry arguing loudly (heard on the *Unsurpassed Masters* bootlegs), When Brian refused to take his advice, Murry comments sharply “Yeah, well, I’m a genius too, Brian. I’m a genius too”. Many of these in-studio arguments were recorded to tape, which other friends and visitors to the session would awkwardly have to listen to. The recording of “Help Me Rhonda” was delayed considerably due to a heated argument with Murry, in which Brian forced him to leave. Their relationship was never fully repaired after this incident. The strained, often-abusive relationship with the Beach Boys and their father Murry gives a broader context for their musical work, especially their most upbeat, carefree “summer” songs such as “All Summer Long”, which portrayed their version of the California myth, a life they themselves did not experience.

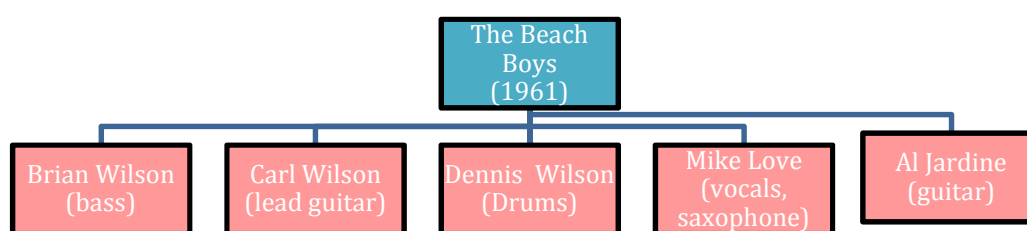
Forming the Band

In addition to the Wilson brothers, The Beach Boys line-up also included their cousin Mike Love (the son of Murry Wilson’s sister). Like life in the Wilson home, the relationship between the Wilsons and the Loves was turbulent; however, these differences were annually put aside for the family Christmas celebrations, where they would come together with music. Brian, Dennis, Carl and Mike Love would share music they had been listening to and often work out harmonies to sing during these family occasions. Mike Love vividly remembers learning Everly Brothers repertoire and adding

in other harmonies so that all four could sing together. It was this musical relationship that was the fundamental framework of the Beach Boys.

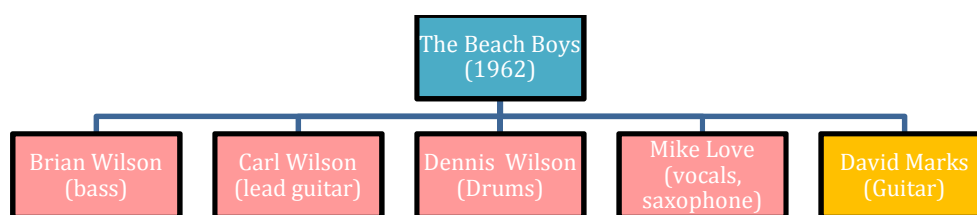
Alan Jardine was the fifth member of the Beach Boys line-up. Al, a high school friend of Brian's and a teammate on Brian's football team, was also into music, though his tastes tended to include more popular folk music, particularly the work of the Kingston Trio. However, they shared a love of rock and roll, and with his singing and playing ability, he fitted in with the rest of the group. Figure 2 shows the original line up of the Beach Boys.

FIGURE 2- THE BEACH BOYS BAND LINE-UP IN 1961.



After the group's first demo recordings, Al Jardine left the Beach Boys to pursue his studies in dentistry. During this time, neighbour David Marks (close friend of Carl Wilson) was added to the Beach Boys' line up. Marks appears on the first three Beach Boys albums and part of the *Little Deuce Coupe* album, however, he was fired from the group by Murry Wilson, who tried to insist the Beach Boys should keep the group as only "family". The group was signed to Capitol Records in 1962 after the release of their first single "Surfin" (mostly at Murry Wilson's insistence). The first two Beach Boys albums *Surfin' Safari* and *Surfin' USA* were recorded in the Capitol Records studio, with A & R representative Nik Venet listed as producer (although Brian Wilson actually did the job). After this, the Beach Boys convinced Capitol to allow Brian to record the Beach Boys albums himself at Western Recorders, and they became the first self-contained, self-produced group in rock to write all of their own material, own their own publishing company, and to decide which songs they would record and release (Golden & Seldis, 1991, p. 13; Leaf, 2003, p. 17).

FIGURE 3- THE BEACH BOYS BAND LINE-UP IN 1962.



As the group began to have some local and national success, Al Jardine returned to the group and for a brief period (until Marks was sacked), the Beach Boys touring band contained 6 members. At the end of 1964, Brian made a difficult decision to quit the Beach Boys' touring band and remain in the studio while the group continued to tour without him. This decision was for two main reasons; firstly, because of their touring responsibilities, Brian Wilson was finding it increasingly difficult to write and record new Beach Boys material to satisfy Capitol Records demand, while also being on tour around the world. Secondly, earlier in the year, Brian Wilson had a nervous breakdown on a flight during one leg of an American tour. The pressure of being the main creative force within the Beach Boys *and* performing and touring was too much for him to juggle, especially as an anxious performer who at times suffered crippling stage fright. Brian's mental illness got steadily worse, peaking in 1967 with the failure of the *Smile* record, and continuing well into the 1970s. Although the band were upset about Brian's departure from the road, they understood, and Glen Campbell replaced Brian on vocals and bass guitar during live performances. Brian was much more comfortable in the studio, and from this point, he was able to dedicate much more of his time and creative energy into Beach Boys music, which grew in complexity after his resignation from the touring band (see Figure 5).

While the Beach Boys were on tour, Brian used a group of studio musicians, collectively known as the Wrecking Crew, to perform many of the instruments on Beach Boys' albums (though Carl, Al and Dennis still contributed on their instruments at times). These musicians were also employed on Phil Spector recordings, and Brian used them both in tribute to Spector, whose productions he idolised, and for their wide range of abilities, which could broaden the Beach Boys arrangements considerably as the Wrecking Crew could play instruments that the original members could not play (such as various horns, percussion, strings, and so forth).

When the Beach Boys returned from tour, Brian would have the backing tracks on their way to completion, and he could begin to teach the group their harmony parts

for the new songs. This system seemed to work well for both Brian and the rest of the Beach Boys. Mike Love would also contribute to the writing of lyrics at this time.

FIGURE 4- THE BEACH BOYS BAND LINE-UP IN 1963.

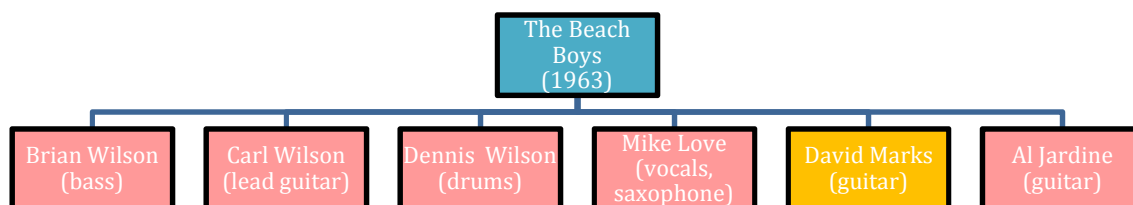
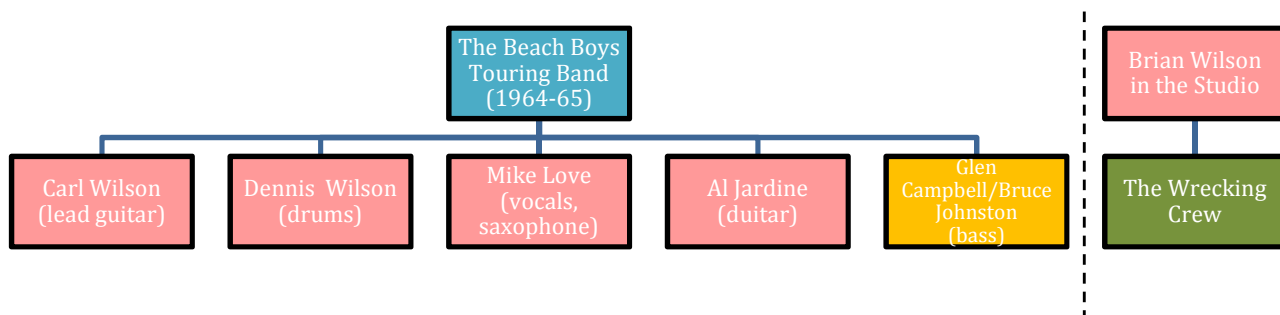
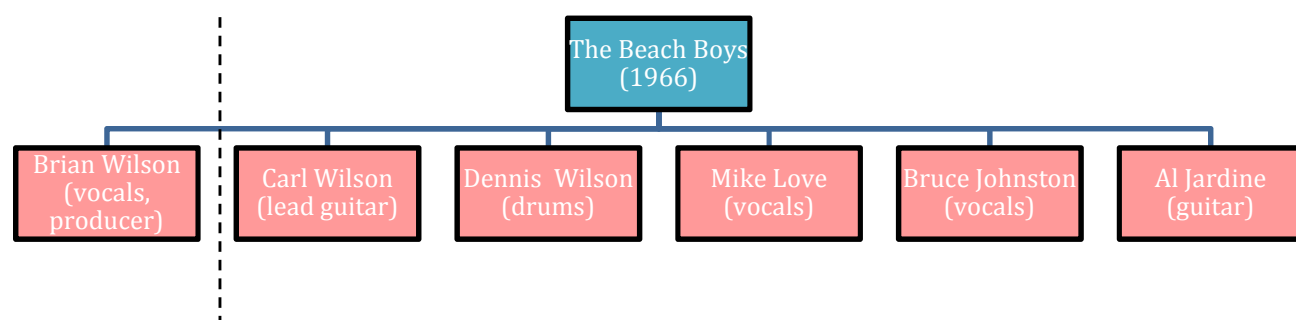


FIGURE 5 - THE BEACH BOYS DIVIDE FROM 1964 ONWARDS.



After the departure of Glen Campbell from the Beach Boys' touring band in 1965, Bruce Johnston joined to replace him (see Figure 6), and eventually remained as an "official" Beach Boy, contributing to vocals on *Pet Sounds* and contributing songs to later Beach Boys' records (such as "Tears in the Morning" [1970], "Deirdre" [1970] and "Disney Girls" [1971]).

FIGURE 6 - THE BEACH BOYS LIVE BAND LINE-UP IN 1966.



The Beach Boys continued to change members throughout the 1970s (such as the inclusion of Blondie Chaplin), though the personnel listed in Figure 6 were together the longest, and were considered the most enduring line-up of the group.

The Beach Boys as “Hodaddies”: Surf Music

Although they were referred to as “The Number One Surfing Group in the Country” on the cover of their 1963 album *Surfin’ USA*, the Beach Boys were not actively involved with surf culture in Southern California. In fact, the Beach Boys were essentially “hodads”, a slang term that meant a “pretender”: a guy more interested in the girls on the beach than surfing. The term often referred to hot-rodders who would show up at the beach to impress young girls, but who didn’t actively surf themselves.

In his book *Surf Music USA*, McParland (2006) discusses the difference between music *for* surfers and music *about* surfing. “Real” surf music that surfers actively listened to was often instrumental. Dick Dale was the most successful “real” surf musician, and his raucous, aggressive instrumental guitar style reflected the power and uncertainty of the waves he experienced when he was surfing (McParland, 2005, p. 6). Dale’s embrace of the latest guitar amplifier technology – he collaborated with friend Leo Fender to create the loudest guitar amp possible - combined with his desire to musically represent his experience of surfing, created the framework for the “surf rock” sound. He was often referred to as “king of the surf guitar”.

Despite surf rock’s contribution to popular music and culture (Rutsky, 1999), Dale never had a major national hit. There are two main reasons for this: firstly, Dale was often reluctant to leave his surfing lifestyle to tour and promote his music, as he was a *surfer* first and a *musician* second. Secondly, his music was made *for surfers* and to be understood *by surfers*, and Southern California was the only place on the United States mainland where people surfed in the early 1960s. For the rest of the country, this music was difficult to contextualise.

The Beach Boys, however, were not surfers. Although they grew up in Southern California, they were almost completely unaware of the existence of surfing until Dennis Wilson reported back to his siblings that they ought to be writing songs about surfing, and he began to write down a list of surfing terms and surfing spots along the coast (Carlin, 2006, p. 27). Although they took Dennis’ advice, he continued to be the only band member to head to the beach, and even then, it was more for the *surfer girls* and

less about the surfing itself. Brian Wilson, who at times was terrified of water, commented on his one and only surfing experience: “Nah I was scared, I tried one time and the board missed my head by that far, when it dropped out, and I never tried it again” (Boyd, 2000). Instead, Brian stayed in his room and “invented California” for the rest of the world to share in (Leaf, 1978, p. 7).

Unlike the music of Dick Dale, the Beach Boys’ surfing songs were not *for surfers* they were *about surfers*. Unlike Dale, Brian Wilson was a musician first and a surfing bystander second. His music did not strive to emulate the sound of the ocean the way that Dale’s did. Instead, the Beach Boys’ music was rooted in Tin Pan Alley song-writing styles and early rock and roll, particularly Chuck Berry and doo-wop vocal groups. Songs like “Surfin’ USA,” “Surfer Girl,” and “Surfin’ Safari” painted pictures of the surfing lifestyle looking in from the outside. As Beach Boys historian David Leaf comments “Brian Wilson’s California was his personal fantasy, a reflection off the back wall of his mind of what he wanted his homeland to be” (Leaf, 1978, p. 7).

While instrumental surf music continued to have local success in Southern California, The Beach Boys had international hits, often equal to the success of the Beatles. For teenagers in land-locked America whom had never seen the ocean, the Beach Boys seemed to be an authentic representation of a lifestyle they could only imagine. The key to their widespread success was that the idea of California as a teen utopia was a fantasy for *both* the Beach Boys and their fans. Where Dick Dale’s music was by nature for the small minority of people who actually surfed, the Beach Boys’ music was inclusive, constructing musical images that most teenagers could relate to: the desire for love, freedom, feelings of loss, confusion, the joy of summer and friends. The surfing lifestyle was merely a framework upon which to hang these themes.

Of course, actual surfers resented the Beach Boys’ success, finding their music to be inauthentic and embarrassing. Greg Noll, who operated his own surfing store in the early 1960s, says of the Beach Boys “We hated all the Hollywood crap. When I had my shop, those guys would send music to us and we’d say, “thank you very much” and the minute they’d leave they’d go in the trash” (Dewille, 1999). Bruce Johnston commented, “Here’s the deal, as a surfer, the Beach Boys’ music was the Hollywood version of what the beach should be” (Boyd, 2000).

The California Myth

A concept that is referred to often in this study is the concept of the “California myth” that the Beach Boys constructed in their music, and this “myth” often forms the backdrop for many of the Beach Boys’ “surf, cars and girls” songs.

David Leaf was the first to use the term in relation to the Beach Boys, and uses it to sum up the complicated relationship between the Beach Boys, their music and their home in California. For Leaf, (1978) the California myth “stood for freedom, the ocean, the sun, and the cruising fun that the Beach Boys supposedly enjoyed “out there” in coastal California” (p. 7). Leaf also sums up the widespread appeal of the California myth: “for kids whose oceans and beaches were made by intersecting asphalt and fire hydrants, whose winters were filled with long, cold, snowy nights, California had to be the end of the rainbow” (Leaf, 1978, p. 7). As Gracyk (2007) reinforces, the Beach Boys songs about Southern California life came “at a time when the United States was enamoured with that place as a “new west,” a land of continuing opportunity” (p. 15).

California has long been seen in popular culture as a mythical place for opportunity and the beginning of the Beach Boys myth stems back to the Wilson brothers’ grandfather Buddy, who moved to California from Kansas in search of a better life for the family. He was inspired by the advertisements for oranges, which were shipped out from California in beautifully painted crates depicting orchards under bright, beaming sunshine, mountains and blooming deserts. White (1994) reinforces this:

Monday’s gazette was full of escapist reportage from California as well as the usual lavish advertisements for Sunkist oranges...Without ever having to come out and say it, the pitch for the fruit was clearly intended as a simultaneous tout for the section of the state in which it was grown: clean, sunny, tree-filled Southern California. Here was a paradise untroubled by the cyclical droughts that beset a frontier plain, stuck in the epicentre of several opposing weather fronts, and it was unsullied by the dust storms that deposited Kansas grit between your teeth as you dozed off at night (White, 1994, pp. 14-15).

This was passed down to Brian Wilson, who “like his sunshine-bound forbears, [he] believed in the idea of California more than that fact of himself, feeling that the energy focused on the romantic concept could carry over to the substance of his existence” (White, 1994, p. 4). Van Dyke Parks and Brian Wilson paid tribute to this on their 1995 collaboration *Orange Crate Art*, which was an “affectionate exploration of Californian

history” (Carlin, 2006, p. 282). The title track describes the tantalising fantasy of imagining a life like those painted on the crates: “Orange crate art was a place to start/orange crate art was a world apart/home for two with view of Sonoma/where there’s aroma and heart”. The album art itself also resembled these orange crates, meaning that both Van Dyke Parks, a scholar of Americana, and Brian Wilson, were aware of this particular myth (seen in Figure 8). Brian Wilson’s 2009 album *That Lucky Old Sun* also featured an album cover very similar to the art found on orange crates, which suits the nostalgic tone of the record as Brian Wilson looks back on his Californian life. Although the Beach Boys’ “magnificent myth” was influential, it is important to note that it is just one in a long history of California myths’ though *their* myth, as David Leaf notes, was “a product of the 1960s, and it is important to remember that to teenagers in 1961, California was just a state, not yet a state of mind” (1978, p. 7, 40).

FIGURE 7 - COVER ART TO "ORANGE CRATE ART" (1995) AND "THAT LUCKY OLD SUN" (2008)



The Beach Boys’ songs often represent this idealised notion of California as a utopia for youth in songs like “Surfin’ Safari,” “All Summer Long,” “I Get Around,” “California Girls,” and many in the 1962-1966 period. Even their name ties into their myth: the connection to the *beach* as surfers and their connection to youth as *boys*. Golden & Seldis (1991) refer to the Beach Boys’ creation of a “Southern Californian pastoral” in their music, and comment:

To fans outside the state, the place names celebrated in songs like “Surfin’ USA” had the exotic ring of far-off Landau. No less exotic was the sport celebrated by inhabitants of the strange and lovely land. You could ride along in films or on TV, but without an ocean nearby, the best surfing trip available was in your own imagination. California was a gleaming wonderland of eternal sunshine, where

the beaches were warm all year round, the girls smiling and friendly and a little bit silly, and the wild waves just waiting for someone to master them (Golden & Seldis, 1991, p. 19).

The group has never been able to detach themselves from either of these things, despite writing many songs that do not mention “the beach” and despite no longer being young. Although they were young men growing up in Southern California, the Beach Boys did not often live the life that they sung about, considering their abusive home life, their quick rise to fame, to Brian Wilson’s mental illnesses. As Golden & Seldis (1991) note, even their most iconic surf anthem, “Surfin’ USA,” creates a scene that is entirely hypothetical, as it begins with the word “if”: “If everybody had an ocean...” (p. 21). These hypothetical lyrics are heard in other songs, too. For example, “Surfer Girl’s” bridge has the line, “We could ride the surf together” (“could”, not *can* or *will*) and California Girls has the line “I wish they all could be California Girls” (“wish” not *know*).

The Beach Boys’ California myth was as much a fantasy for them as it was for their fans in the rest of land-locked America. Ironically, this myth they created to mask their difficult emotional lives was also part of the secret of their success. As David Leaf (1978) explains, “Brian Wilson’s special magic in the early and mid-1960s was that he was at one with his audience” (p. 7). In the analysis chapters, I will often refer to the idea of the “California myth,” particularly in discussions of lyrics and vocals; the myth, and its function in the Beach Boys music, very often contextualises the musical findings uncovered throughout this study.

FIGURE 8 – EXAMPLES OF CALIFORNIAN ORANGE CRATE ART





Conclusion

A large body of literature has influenced and contributed to this study of the Beach Boys' music. There have been several published analyses of the Beach Boys music, most notably Harrison (1997), Lambert (2009), Fitzgerald (2009) and Curnutt (2012). Each of these studies approaches the music in different ways, from traditional musical analysis, to an investigation into the more socio-cultural aspects of their music and personal history. Although these studies all contribute greatly to the understanding of the Beach Boys music, no one study looks at their music as part of a continuum, tracing the changes to their sound over time. It is the aim of this study to build from these previous studies and offer a new contribution to the development of their unique musical style.

In order to give context to the detailed musical analysis to follow, it is necessary to have a basic understanding of the Beach Boys, their personalities, the place in which they lived, and their relationship (or lack of relationship) to Southern Californian surf culture. All of these elements contributed to the sound of their music, but perhaps most influential was the California myth. Through this myth, the Beach Boys' positive, joyful summer music takes on an undercurrent of melancholy, as they did not always live the happy lives they sung about. Both the Beach Boys, and their audience, participated in their special California myth.

This study of the Beach Boys' music uses a variety of methodological tools to collect, understand and display musical findings over time. The following chapter provides a detailed literature survey of analytical methods within popular music studies in general, and then focuses on the methodological approaches best suited to a large-scale study such as this.

Chapter 2: Methodology

"I got a fuel injected engine sitting under my hood!"

Popular music itself is variable by nature, so it stands to reason that attempts to analyse it require some flexibility. The Beach Boys' music between the years 1962 and 1966 is also very varied; it ranges from the primitive rock and roll of "Surfin'" to the orchestral arrangements of "Wouldn't it be Nice". Their music requires a flexible approach to musical analysis. This chapter is a discussion of some of these flexible approaches, and of how they have influenced the methodological approaches at work in the analysis chapters. From this, an outline of the albums in this study is presented, a discussion of limitations, and an in-depth overview of the empirical, visual, traditional and sociological methods used in the analysis chapters to follow, is presented.

Popular Music Literature and "New Musicology"

One of the most positive parts of engaging in the study of popular music at this point in time is that one is able to reflect on the hard work of other academics, who have considered both the theory and practice of discussing and analysing popular music, and the particular issues that arise from it. Many have debated the surrounding issues of popular music analysis for some time, from discussions of what popular music is and is not (McClary & Walser, 1990); its difference from the Western art music tradition (Middleton, 1990; Tagg, 2011), the call for various kinds of analytical tools best suited to the music (Covach, 1997; Keightley, 1991; Middleton, 1990; Middleton, 1993; Moore, 2012); and the need for music analysis to be more accessible to others who may contribute to popular music studies, but do not necessarily have musical training (Tagg, 1987; Tagg, 2011). This literature provides a solid foundation, theoretically, for the analysis of popular music, such that it is now time to focus on analysing popular music.

As such, I do not wish to echo the detailed discussions of many of these studies; suffice to say that the idea of using mixed analytical methods, and the aim of emphasising the accessibility of musical findings have been of particular influence in the following analysis of the Beach Boys' music. This follows a growing trend of literature that aims to cover popular music from many different angles, and though mixed methods of analysis. In any edited book of popular music analyses (see Covach & Boone, 1997; Everett, 2008; Middleton, 2000; Moore, 2007) one sees an astoundingly varied array of methodological approaches. Some include sociological aspects (DeNora, 2004),

some are based on traditional musical analysis (Bernard, 2008; Harrison, 1997), some introduce aspects of production styles (Moorefield, 2005), and some aim to display musical data in different ways (Brackett, 2000; Hughes, 2008; Machin, 2010; Middleton, 1993; Tatit, 2002). This diversity is intentional. Everett (2008) notes in his introduction to *Expression in Pop-Rock Music* that essays were included whether their “thrust be social, political, cultural, stylistic or personal” and that the intention was to “bring to the table a multiplicity of issues, a mix of various techniques and perspectives, and the representation of a great variety of styles from all periods of music history” (p. vii). This broadening of analytical approaches reflects the diversity of popular music styles, and the need for the methodological approach to fit both the musical style, and the analytical purpose.

Philip Tagg (2011) has long discussed the need for a more interdisciplinary approach to popular music (along with many others, see Borthwick & Roy, 2004; Middleton, 1990), which may include discussions of “music making, musicology, ethnomusicology, anthropology, psychology, sociology, acoustics and bio-acoustics, neurology, technology, electronics, economics, politics, etc.” (p. 2), while also acknowledging the impossibility for one person to be an expert in all of these approaches. As he notes, “I’ve often been criticised for driving disciplinary vehicles for which I have no valid license” (2011, p. 2), however despite this difficulty, many popular music scholars (including Tagg) still attempt this complex synthesis, with interesting and important results. Allan F. Moore’s *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Songs* (2012), for example, does an impressive job of both understanding the distinct parts of music that we listen to (style, shape, form, delivery), while also balancing the analytical with the personal in experience of listening. Although this analysis of the Beach Boys’ music does not tackle the entirety of Tagg’s (2011) desirable list of interdisciplinary topics, it does aim to weave together historical information, a broad range of analytical methods, data representations and statistics, technological and sociological elements, such as the concept of the California myth.

Large-scale analyses such as this one can create other kinds of problems, such as *how* to collect extensive musical data, *how* to interpret it, and most difficult of all, *how* to present it in a meaningful and accessible way. These three problems became primary concerns once data collection was underway, and finding solutions for these problems became an important part of this research. The specifics of how these problems were dealt with, including the ways in which musical data was collected and analysed are detailed in Chapter 2 on methodologies. This difficulty is explained well by McClary and

Walser (1990/1998), who argue, “Music relies on events and inflections occurring on many interdependent levels (melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre, texture, etc.) simultaneously...when all these levels are operating at the same time, whether reinforcing or contradicting one another or both, we are dealing with a tangle that pages and pages of words can only begin to unpack” (p.278). McClary and Walser’s “tangle” became evident early on in this research, which meant that it was not only important to analyse the Beach Boys’ music itself, a primary task was also how to best unpick this tangle in order to tie it back together neatly.

It became increasingly clear that in order to show these broad trends, I needed to look to other large-scale studies in order to tackle these particular problems. Walter Everett’s incredibly detailed analyses of the Beatles work (1999, 2001) were particularly useful, not only as the Beatles were contemporaneous (and often had a healthy musical competition with) the Beach Boys, but due to his ability to discuss many aspects of the Beatles music, history and production in a considered, chronological way. Everett’s (2001) study also includes helpful appendices that help to better understand his analysis, such as the inclusion of a historical timeline, an explanation of specific musical equipment used by the Beatles (and why) and a description of common chord types (with song examples). While it would be incorrect to state that someone without formal musical training could understand the entirety of Everett’s (2001) study, as many chapters do rely on notation and harmonic analysis, the inclusion of these helpful extraneous resources points to a desire for as many Beatles fans to read such an analysis in the most accessible way possible. This study of the Beach Boys includes a) a separate volume of appendices, which include resources such as lyrics, chord charts, detailed musical categories, track listings and studio personnel and b) statistics on spreadsheets on the included disc in an attempt to equip the reader with as much musical information as needed to engage with the following musical analysis.

Each chapter in this study builds on the results of the previous section. These chapters were ordered in a way that a song may be put together: starting with an underlying structure, then adding rhythm and instrumentation whose instruments play the chord progressions, then lyrics are written and finally, vocals sing these lyrics and are recorded to tape. In this way, the thesis itself functions as a progression, as does the music each chapter discusses. Rob Bowman’s (1995) study *The Stax Sound: A Musicological Analysis* aligns closely to this work on the Beach Boys, both in its discussion of “sound” and in its ability to compartmentalise parts of the Stax repertoire and then put the pieces back together in order to further understand the whole.

Similarly, Fitzgerald (2009) also follows a similar trajectory, pulling musical elements apart, seeing how they function, and then putting the picture back together in order to understand what these elements mean in relation to the Beach Boys' music.

Some studies of popular music can fall into the trap of being extremely descriptive, without contextualising these findings, leaving one with the feeling of no resolution. Studies which leave out this step of contextualisation often feel like the tension of waiting for a progression to resolve back to its "home", to bring us back to where we started with a new understanding. The studies of Everett (1999; 2001), Bowman (1995) and Fitzgerald (2009), which synthesize their findings and contextualise their musical analysis within time, place and musical history has been of important influence in this study on the music of the Beach Boys.

The following analysis chapters include some sections that are empirical in nature, though, as Clarke & Cook (2004) note, there is "no useful distinction between empirical and non-empirical musicology, because there can be no such thing as a truly non-empirical musicology" (p. 3). What Clarke & Cook (2004) mean here is that all musical analysis is in some way based on observation, whether a recording or a score, and that observation is the basis for empirical research. This empirical approach was helpful in presenting large amounts of quantitative and qualitative data in relation to the Beach Boys' musical development. Empirical musicology draws on methods of analysis more often used in the study of social sciences, though empirical techniques have been increasingly employed in studies of music in sociological (DeNora, 2004; Longhurst, 2007), psychological (Huron, 1999) and musicological disciplines (Clarke & Cook, 2004; Hamlen, 1991). The rise in empirical methods being used in the study of music over the last 25 years (Clarke & Cook, 2004, p. 11) closely coincides with the arrival of MIDI technology and affordable home computers, making the collection and analysis of musical data possible (Honing, 2006 p. 3). These advances, as well as the broadening of musicological methods in the study of popular music, have illuminated music studies as being significantly "data richer" than often given credit for (Clarke & Cooke, 2004, p. 4).

The most important part of empirical research is observation, but as Windsor (2004) suggests, the first "conceptual" step is in deciding *what* to observe, how to quantify it and analyse the resulting data (p. 197). The danger of skipping this step may result in the collection of data which may be inappropriate, nor provide evidence for arguments (p. 197). However, Windsor (2004) also notes that empirical research need not always follow this method in a "classical" sense, and notes that:

It is perfectly acceptable to collect data in a more exploratory manner as long as it is recognized that it may be hard to understand the relationship between different variables. The “real world” is a complex place, and laboratory research often pays a price for ensuring that their experimental results are easy to interpret. The price is a loss of “realism” or “ecological validity,” and can result in findings that only hold under extremely usual and constrained conditions (such as those within a laboratory). It may be convenient for analytical purposes to take into account only certain things, such as, for example, the duration and pitch-class of events in melodic sequences, but there is a danger in finding out too late that some other factor, such as melodic contour, was a relevant variable (Windsor 2004, pp. 197-198)

It is a combination of this “exploratory manner” and “classical” approach that is at work in the following analysis chapters. The over-arching concept of the apprentice-craft-art movement (referred to as ACA throughout the rest of this study) forms a flexible framework to guide the collection and analysis of data. Further, in the study of popular music, there are some elements that obviously needed to be observed: structure, chord progressions, melody, instrumentation, and so forth. These elements connect to the “classical” approach to empirical musicology. However, other musical elements, such as the emotional tone of lyrics, or production styles, arose purely through the collection and analysis of data for each chapter. For example, when discussing the sound of the Beach Boys’ vocals, I was forced to consider not just what was happening musically, but how technology (such as microphone choices and effects such as reverb) contributed too. This was not specifically *planned* in the beginning of my research, but instead rose out my own musical “explorations”.

In approaching the Beach Boys’ music this way – with both a flexible framework for analysis, and an eye (and ear) for exploratory observation - each chapter essentially dictated its own methodologies. These methodologies rose from the needs of the music itself, and not all of these methodologies were empirical in nature. For example, much of Chapter 4 on rhythm uses more traditional approaches to the study of music, with description and notation used most frequently, however, in Chapter 6 on chord progressions, the analysis of large amounts of data on chord types was needed to show the ACA progression in a tangible way. The kind of large-scale data collection of empirical musicology in this study of rhythm would have produced an overwhelming amount of data would have obscured the ACA progression. Empirical methods, however, were useful in an analysis of tempo, where data is simply quantitative in nature. In

short, empirical methods were suitable for some parts of this analysis, but not for others. Had the use of one rigid framework been used throughout each chapter, intricacies that contributed to the Beach Boys sound could have been missed.

It is becoming more common to see the combination of music analysis and empirical musicology used in conjunction with each other, and the uncomfortable struggle between the “old” and “new” musicology (or “critical musicology”) appears to be subsiding. For example, Everett’s (2009) book *The Foundation of Rock* integrates a variety of methods, from more traditional harmonic analysis, to empirical methods used to display tempo information (p. 318-321), or the success of doo-wop progression (p. 220) in tables and charts. Fitzgerald (2009) also makes use of a more traditional analysis of melody and harmony, alongside the use of tables and statistics to show more quantitative data as tables and percentages, to give a broader overview of musical trends, among many others (see Christenson & Roberts, 1998; Clarke, 2004; Cole, 1971; Murphey, 1989; Tagg, 2009). These empirical approaches form one step in the analysis process. Once the musical data is collected, it needs to be displayed in an accessible way, and, as such, these empirical methods often form the basis for new and creative visual representations of musical data.

Visual Musicology

This study makes use of tables, diagrams, graphs and colour coding to represent musical information. The inclusion of these diagrams follows a larger trend in the study of popular music that often incorporates different visual representations to explain musical findings in a clear way. These representations are often used because more traditional notational methods do not accurately represent the sound or experience of popular music, or in the case of large-scale musical analyses (such as this study), methods often require adaptation to effectively represent musical findings. As Middleton (2000) notes, this the issue of notation is “not necessarily as big a problem as used to be thought” as “new forms of notation (sensitive transcription, sonic graphs) have been developed” to tackle these representational problems (p. 5). As Cook (2004) comments, the adage of “a picture is worth a thousand words” is often true for the kinds of visual diagrams used to represent many songs, many musical elements or many comparisons in one concise space.

Cook (2004), when emphasising the positive aspects of using charts and graphs, notes that “they are objective in the sense that, once you have agreed how a graph is to be laid out, everyone should end up with the same result; the information is all there in

the score, so that the analysis becomes, in effect, a matter of reformatting” (p. 106). For this reason, these kinds of representations are useful for large-scale studies, which often require musical comparisons (however, this study draws its data from the recordings themselves, rather than a score). What is difficult, Cook (2004) points out, is that the “decisions about how to lay them out are not necessarily as self-evident” (Cook, 2004, p. 106). These formatting and layout decisions were an issue that raised itself quite often in the analysis work of this study, and the specific details of how these problems were dealt with is discussed later in this chapter.

The use of forms of musical representation that do not involve traditional notation, has influenced in this study, particularly the work of Moore (2012), Brackett (2000), Tagg (2009), Machin (2010) and Deal (2012). The following discussion aims to detail more specifically the kinds of musical representations that have acted as a reference in the analysis and layout of musical findings in this study of the Beach Boys’ music.

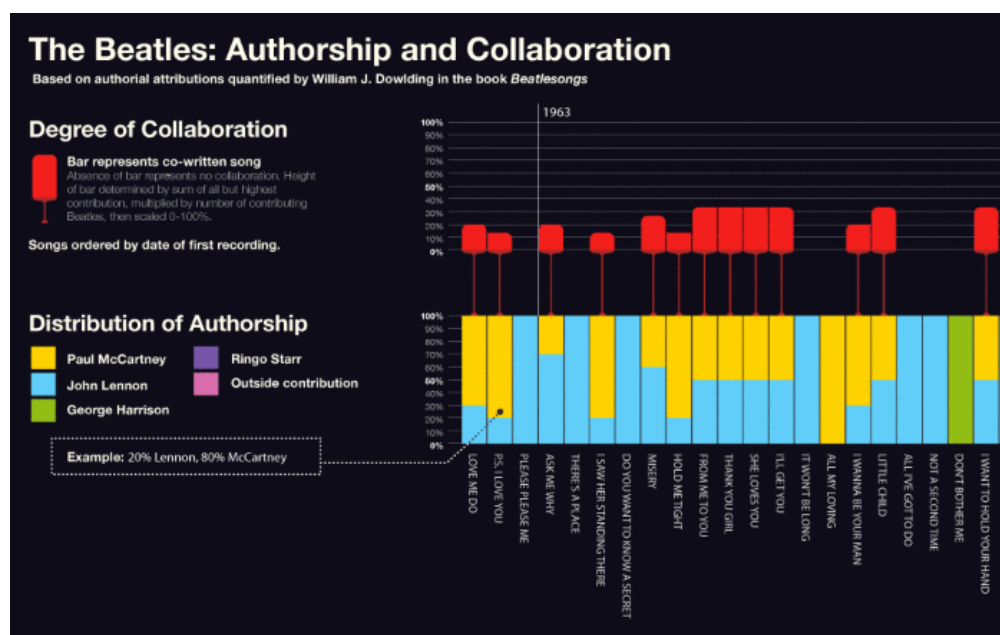
In his 2012 book *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song*, Moore makes use of sound box diagrams to better represent how particular songs sound. These diagrams are three-dimensional boxes with images of musical instruments placed in order of where they are mixed on a recording. In this way, he represents the differences between Donovan’s “Mellow Yellow” (p. 33), where instruments are mixed tightly and towards the centre of the box (and recording), and Sam and Dave’s “Soul Man” (p. 34), where instruments are split more traditionally to either side with the vocals in the centre. The way these diagrams allow one to “see” a whole song was an influence on some of the representations in this study: Chapter 8 on vocals features some diagrams on how the Beach Boys recorded their music and vocals, showing where in the studio instruments and microphones were placed. This is a kind of “sound box”, in that it is a representation of the sounds that make up a recording, though are different to Moore, who uses these diagrams to represent the finished product. Many Beach Boys recordings were released in mono, making them not as suitable for an exact replication of Moore’s box design (this was due to technology, but also Brian Wilson’s deafness in one ear made him essentially “hear in mono” for his entire life).

Tagg (2009) makes use many different visual representations of musical events in his book *Everyday Tonality*, with diagrams that represent the sound of an instrument (p. 28), the frequencies of notes on a piano (p. 33), and, of most use to this study, his representations of melodic contour (p. 61-63). These diagrams, often placed over traditional notation, show the overall shape of a melody with a single line, which allows

for easier comparison. These melodic contour lines then allow Tagg to better categorise different kinds of melodic lines, such as rising, falling, traces, V-shape, arched, and so forth. These melodic lines are also included above any traditional notation of melody in this study, both to highlight melodic shape and to represent musical sections in an accessible way. Similarly, Machin (2012) also uses alternate notation for his study of melody in 1990s Britpop music, displaying melodic contour on graph, rather than a traditional score.

Mike Deal's (2012) *Charting the Beatles* project visualises their music in inventive ways. Deal is a graphic designer, rather than a popular music scholar, and as such, his data is taken from other sources, however, the way he displays this data through well-designed info graphics highlights parts of their musical repertoire that may otherwise have been overlooked. Deal's (2012) use of colour to show song contributions is particularly effective, and notes, "Color patterns offer clues about the band's gradual fracturing as each member became more independent" (see Figure 9). The diagram gradually changes colour as time (viewed on the x axis) passes. Although the diagrams in this study are not as elegantly created as Deals, his use of colour to show changes over time has been a reference for this analysis.

FIGURE 9 - SECTION OF MIKE DEAL'S DIAGRAM OF BEATLES SONG CONTRIBUTIONS (2012)



Brackett (2000), among others (Danielsen, 2009; Hawkins, 2003; McAdams, 2004), have used music software in their analyses of popular music to show both the entirety of a song as a single waveform (as a spectrograph or spectrum photograph), but

also to highlight particular textural elements (such as the study of Elvis Costello's "Pills and Soap"). Although this study does not use spectrograph images specifically, the concept of showing the texture of a song in one diagram over time has formed an important part of the visualisations in this study, particularly in the chapter on instrumentation.

All of these alternative "notational" methods have had an influence on the way data is presented in the following analysis, and many have been adapted to better suit the kind of musical elements that create the Beach Boys sound. The combination of empirical musicological methods, along with visually representing data in meaningful ways help us uncover *what* their music is made up of, and *how* best to display it. And through the analysis itself, we can start to uncover the *why*.

An Overview of the Albums in this Study

The following section will give a brief overview of the albums referred to in this study, their year of release, and any other information helpful in understanding the rest of this paper. The musical analysis chapters that follow will often refer to these albums with an underlying understanding of their chronological order, and this short section will be useful as a reference. In the front cover of this thesis is a foldout page containing some of the basic information presented in this chapter, so that the reader can refer to these album titles and dates easily and accessibly if required. Singles are underlined, while B-sides are noted in italics. Chart positions are listed, noting the highest position on the US Billboard charts for each single and its B-side (if the latter was also released).

Surfin' Safari (1963)

The Beach Boys' first album features three songs previously recorded by the group before their signing to Capitol Records. "Surfin' Safari," "409" and "Surfin'" appeared on a demo tape recorded the previous year with local musicians and publishers Hite and Dorinda Morgan at their home studio in Los Angeles. Murry Wilson then used this tape to shop the group's music to various record labels. The version of "Surfin'" became the group's first single (which was released on local Los Angeles label Candix) and these three songs remained unchanged from their demo state on the Capitol Records LP (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 10). It was the success of the Candix "Surfin'" single, which reached number 3 on the Los Angeles charts, which started their musical career (Badman, 2004, p. 17). In 1961, the group dropped their original name as the Pendletones (through no choice of their own) when the label renamed them "The Beach

Boys” – a decision unknown to the group until the pressings of the single reached the band themselves.

The *Surfin' Safari* recordings took place at Capitol Records studios and were ostensibly produced by young A&R man Nik Venet, who was instrumental in the group signing to the Capitol label. However, although Venet received the credit on the album, it was Brian Wilson who produced the album, with the exception of the three songs recorded prior (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 8). The singles included “Surfin' Safari,” “Ten Little Indians,” and “Surfin’”.

Al Jardine had left the group after the recording of the demo tape to pursue his education, and David Marks, who also appears on the album's cover, plays on the rest of the album recorded at Capitol. The album cover is a particular iconic image of the group sitting atop a hot rod in typical surf attire. Doe and Tobler (2004) give a fair overview of the album's importance: “While *Surfin' Safari* is a far less auspicious debut LP than, say, *Please Please Me* or *The Doors*, it's not without interest (as the debut of a major group), and even charm (albeit rather dated); at worst, it provides a benchmark against which all later releases ...may be judged” (p. 8).

Surfin' USA (1963)

Surfin' USA was a divided recording, with half of the album taken up by covers of surf instrumental tracks beside new, original content. The record was a rushed effort to capitalise on both the success of *Surfin' Safari* and the growing surfing subculture in Southern California. The surf instrumental tracks took less time to record, while the original songs cemented them as a “national force” in establishing vocal surf music (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 12). The surf rock covers included Dick Dale's “Misirlou” and “Let's Go Trippin',” both attempts to show their awareness of and connection to music that surfers traditionally listened to – music that certainly did not include the Beach Boys (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p12; Lambert, 2007, p. 68).

Surfing authenticity aside, the record also marked another step towards Brian Wilson's inevitable creative control of the group after he managed to convince Capitol Records to record part of the LP at his preferred studio – Western Recorders – a revolutionary move for a young group on a major label in 1963 (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 12).

The one single from the album was the title track (and Chuck Berry pastiche) “Surfin' USA” backed with “Shut Down”. This marked the start of a clever marketing trick

when assembling their singles, with one side featuring a surfing song and the other featuring a car song, effectively making sure that DJs could play something their listeners could relate to. Mike Love notes “The surfing songs did great, “Surfin’ USA” was number 1 in New York and LA, but the car songs, the flip sides, “Shut Down”, “409” and “Little Deuce Coupe” those songs had wheels on them. We could figure, okay, the coasts – surfing, everybody else was landlocked so we figured – cars” (Bennet & Boyd, 2000). While the surf instrumentals on *Surfin’ USA* were mostly simple 12-bar blues jams, songs such as “Lonely Sea” pointed towards more complicated experimentation on the following *Surfer Girl* album.

Surfer Girl (1963)

Surfer Girl can be thought to be the first “real” Beach Boys’ album – it solidified the sound they became renowned for, it is filled with original compositions and Brian Wilson is officially credited as the producer. Brian Wilson, in the 1990s CD liner notes to *Surfer Girl*, stated that “[the album] was a good step in the right direction. I was tired from touring and this album helped me relax and be creative...to me, it represents the start of music when we first got movin'” (as cited in Leaf, 1990b, p. 3).

The album was also the first to include musicians who were not in the Beach Boys’ core line-up, with Hal Blaine on drums for “Our Car Club” and “Little Deuce Coupe” (Leaf, 1990, p. 9), string players on “The Surfer Moon,” and Mike Love’s sister Maureen on harp for “Catch a Wave”. These changes marked a widening of the Beach Boys’ sonic palette, as well as their musical style, with the almost half of the album taken up by emotional ballad songs, rather than the upbeat surf style featured on the previous two releases.

The cover of the album is a particularly iconic image of the group holding a surfboard together (similar to the *Surfin Safari* cover) however, *Surfer Girl* contains the last of the Beach Boys’ early surfing songs (with the exception of “Don’t Back Down” in 1964), a theme they didn’t return to again until the nostalgia of songs like “Do It Again” in 1968.

Little Deuce Coupe (1963)

Released only a month after *Surfer Girl*, *Little Deuce Coupe* was a showcase for the group’s other passion – hot rods. Essentially a concept record about cars, *Little Deuce Coupe* combined their car related songs on previous albums (“409,” “Shut Down” and “Our Car Club”) with eight new tracks.

Although the album had one subject, the Beach Boys approached it from different angles both lyrically and musically. *Little Deuce Coupe* features some experimental chordal patterns, different musical styles and complex vocal harmonies – heard best in the a capella rendition of “A Young Man is Gone” (a cover of Bobby Troup’s “Their Hearts Were Full of Spring” with new lyrics). It also juxtaposed their typical “bragging” songs like “Little Deuce Coupe,” and “Custom Machine,” alongside humorous ones (“No Go Showboat”), historical songs (“Spirit of America”) and even emotional songs, with the personification of “Betsy” the car in “Ballad of Ole Betsy”. The songs also feature many lyrics that Brian Wilson wrote with Los Angeles DJ Roger Christian, fellow hot rod enthusiast. Christian notes “Whether you were near the Pacific Ocean in L.A. or by Lake Ontario in upstate New York, your girl, your car and your football were the only things that mattered,” and the themes on *Little Deuce Coupe* reflect this teenage lifestyle perfectly (as cited in Leaf, 1990c, p. 5).

Shut Down Volume II (1964)

In some ways, *Shut Down* was similar to *Surfin’ USA* in that it was a rushed album for Capitol Records, designed to put out as much Beach Boys material before the craze of hot rod music ended. Before the album was released, Capitol Records put together a compilation of car-themed songs called *Shut Down Volume I* named after the Beach Boys’ song, without the band’s express permission. As a response to this, the Beach Boys released their own car-themed album *Little Deuce Coupe* along with *Shut Down Volume II*, though the latter had varying lyrical content.

Despite including some of the Beach Boys’ most emotional (“Don’t Worry Baby”) and complicated (“Warmth of the Sun”) songs to date, critical reflection often sees the album as a hurried jumble of songs, with Brian Wilson burned out from many continuous months on the road, and having already produced four Beach Boys albums in the space of a year and a half, along with other production projects with Jan and Dean and the Honeys (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 22; Leaf, 1990b, p. 10). Despite the success of the single “Fun Fun Fun” (reaching #4) and “Don’t Worry Baby” (reaching #24), it was the first Beach Boys album to not reach the top 10, and as Brian Wilson notes in the liner notes to the 1990 reissue of the album “I think, at this point, the Beach Boys were ready to jump bad” (as cited in Leaf, 1990b, p. 22) implying the group was on the edge of new musical and emotional growth, which is explored in the following *All Summer Long* album.

All Summer Long (1964)

All Summer Long was a more successful release in 1964, reaching number 4 on the Billboard charts and remaining in the charts for 49 weeks. The album contained well-received singles – “Wendy”, “Little Honda” and “I Get Around”, the latter being the Beach Boys’ first number one single in the United States. “All Summer Long” holds a special place in the Beach Boys’ musical canon – it still has ties to the ubiquitous “surf, cars and girls” themes, but also shows hints at a more complicated musicality. The combination of these two elements creates a record that is emotional and idealistic, carefree and complicated, and an interesting summary of the Beach Boys’ sound. David Leaf comments that *All Summer Long* was “really the first time the Beach Boys recorded a complete album about their own Southern California lifestyle” (1990, p. 9). It was also the last album Brian Wilson produced before he quit the Beach Boys touring band after suffering his first nervous breakdown, and the first Beach Boys’ album released in the wake of 1964’s Beatlemania.

All Summer Long is particularly interesting as it sits at the centre of these two musical periods – it is connected to the early musical influences of the Beach Boys, with the traditional Brill Building structures of “Hushabye” (a Brill Building song written by Pomus and Shuman) and “We’ll Run Away,” yet also contains unexpected instrumental arrangements in “I Get Around,” and the use of extended chords (more commonly found in jazz music) in the vocal harmonies of “Girls on the Beach”. The paradoxical nature of *All Summer Long* continues – it features the last example of their standardised “surf” songs with “Don’t Back Down,” as well as the first of their songs to feature orchestral instruments at the forefront of an arrangement in “All Summer Long”. It juxtaposes songs that hark back to nostalgic Americana with “Do You Remember?” and “Drive In” beside confident, adventurous present-tense narratives about longing and adventure heard in “I Get Around” and “Little Honda”. *All Summer Long* can be seen as an important link between the past and the present in the development of the Beach Boys’ sound, as it uses musical and thematic elements from each of their distinct musical period during the 1960s. For a detailed analysis of *All Summer Long*, see Keightley, 1999.

Today (1965)

By 1965, Brian Wilson had experienced a serious episode of a stress-related illness and quit the touring Beach Boys band. Describing the experience, Brian Wilson notes, “I felt I had no choice. I was run down mentally and emotionally... [It was] to the point where I had no peace of mind, no chance to actually sit down and think or even rest. I was so mixed-up and overworked...I knew I should have stopped going on tours

much earlier to do justice our recordings” (Leaf, 1990d, p. 3). *Today* was the first record Brian Wilson produced after he achieved his space to “sit down and think” and the result was thoughtful and considered album of songs that showed musical and emotional progression.

Today peaked at number 4 of the Billboard album charts and remained in the charts for fifty weeks, featuring the singles “Do You Wanna Dance?” (#12), “When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)” (#9) and “Dance Dance Dance” (#8). Beach Boys writers (Doe & Tobler, 2004 p. 36; Leaf, 1990, p. 4) have often pointed to side two of *Today* as the precursor to *Pet Sounds* with its “almost seamless collection of songs that have the classical feel [Brian Wilson] was striving for” (Leaf, 1990d, p. 4); the following analysis chapters will explore this musically. Brian Wilson wrote and produced the entire album alone (with the other Beach Boys singing their vocal parts) in the studio with the Wrecking Crew, and was obsessive about the use of new instruments, sounds and instrumental arranging (Leaf, 1990d, p. 4).

Summer Days (and Summer Nights!!) (1965)

Summer Days (and Summer Nights!!) was released only three months after *Today* and peaked at number 2 on the Billboard charts, helped by the success of the “California Girls” single (#3) and the reworked version of “Help Me Rhonda” (#1). It remained in the charts for the following eight months. This album also marked the first time Bruce Johnston appeared on a recording, making him an “official” Beach Boy from this point forward.

Summer Days is often viewed as a creative stalling after the adventurous nature of the side two of *Today*, with Doe & Tobler (2004) noting that “it is often viewed as a sideways step in the musical evolution of Brian Wilson” (p. 39) and Leaf (1990d) noting that “After side two of *Today*, it didn’t seem possible that Brian could return to these simpler themes” (p. 9). However, while the lyrical themes may be more in line with early Beach Boys records, musically, the album contains increasing complexities, the specifics of these complexities; which will be explored in the following analysis chapters. Most notable are the introductory section to “California Girls” and the instrumental “Summer Means New Love,” which could have been at home on *Pet Sounds*.² The tension between Capitol Records’ constant pressure on the band to release new commercial material and

² “Summer Means New Love” was used as a B-side to the *Pet Sounds* single “Caroline No” (credited as a solo Brian Wilson single) - further evidence that the song could sit alongside the complex musicality of *Pet Sounds*.

Brian Wilson's growing creativity is often cited in relation to *Summer Days*, with Leaf (1990d) noting that "for one last album, he could a way to combine Capitol's commercial demands with his artistic calling" (p. 9). In essence, *Summer Days* bought Brian Wilson a little more time to work on his most adventurous musical work to date, *Pet Sounds*, which would be released in the following year. The album also contained a re-recording of "Help Me, Rhonda (now spelled to include the "h"), which originally appeared on the *Today* album as "Help Me Ronda". The first version is underdeveloped, and the song was captured best in the *Summer Days* version, which was released as the single. References to "Help Me Rhonda" in this study most often refer to the *Summer Days* version of the song.

Pet Sounds (1966)

Pet Sounds was released in May 1966, and although it only reached number 10 on the Billboard charts it remains the most influential and acclaimed of their albums. The record has been written about at length in recent years with books like *I Just Wasn't Made for These Times* by Charles L. Granata, *The Beach Boys: Pet Sounds: The Greatest Album of the Twentieth Century* by Kingsley Abbott and *Pet Sounds* by Jim Fusilli, and with the 1997 CD box set *The Pet Sounds Sessions* offered in-depth information on personnel, including alternate takes, tracks and vocal-only versions of *Pet Sounds* songs. Capitol Records was not pleased with the release, as it was not the teenage music they expected from the Beach Boys. In reaction to it, they released a "best of" album that effectively crushed the album in the charts (Abbott, 2001, p. 96; Badman, 2004, p. 106).

The Beatles' *Rubber Soul* album has long been cited as a specific influence on Brian Wilson when starting to create to create *Pet Sounds* (see Lambert, 2007, p. 224; Leaf, 1997, p. 9). Brian Wilson thought "every cut was very artistically interesting and stimulating" and realised "the recording industry was getting free and intelligent... string quartets, auto-harps and instruments from another culture" were being used in rock music (as cited in Badman, 2004 p. 104). He became determined to make an album that was "perfect from start to finish, and beat the Beatles at their own game" (Leaf, 1997, p. 9). As such, *Pet Sounds* marked a distinct change to the Beach Boys' sound – themes of surf, cars and girls were replaced by a concept album with themes of love lost, nostalgia, hope, longing and loss of innocence. Musically, the group was no longer a "guitar band" as orchestral instruments and sound effects replaced traditional rock and roll instrumentation, and saw Brian Wilson constantly striving towards a "new sound" (Leaf, 2007, p. 16). Brian Wilson wrote the songs for *Pet Sounds* with lyricist Tony Asher (a former advertising copywriter) whose skill with words helped Brian Wilson achieve

the emotional sentiments he needed to convey through his music. Most of the writing and recording of the album occurred while the rest of the Beach Boys were touring, and when they returned to Los Angeles their vocals were tracked with very specific guidance from Brian Wilson (Leaf, 2007. p. 16). After *Pet Sounds*, Brian Wilson began assembling the *Smile* album, which was another leap creatively, musically and thematically. However, for reasons both personal and to do with Capitol Record's pressure on the group, the record was never released in the 1960s, and only saw an official release when Wilson "finished" it and released it on *Brian Wilson Presents Smile* in 2004.

Limitations of this Study

There are two main limitations of this study. Firstly, the exclusion of three albums and two singles during the 1962-66 time frame, and secondly, the use of the particular audio recordings used to study the Beach Boys' music.

The Christmas Album, Concert Album and Beach Boys' Party! Album

There are three albums which are occasionally referred to in the following study, although are not included in any of the charts, diagrams or statistics in the analysis chapters. Using only the nine studio albums of original content allows for a clearer picture of musical progression, as the *Concert*, *Christmas* and *Party!* Albums are essentially novelties based on their previous work, whether they are live renditions (the original songs on *Concert*), re-workings (the "Little Deuce Coupe" / "I Get Around" medley on *Party!*) or pastiche ("Little Saint Nick's" close musical relationship to "Little Deuce Coupe").

After the success of the "Little Saint Nick" single (peaking at number 3 on the Billboard seasonal chart in 1964), the Beach Boys produced a full-length Christmas record with a mix of traditional and original Christmas songs. The album also featured a forty-piece orchestra (arranged by Dick Reynolds, arranger to the Four Freshmen), which could have encouraged Brian Wilson's incorporation of more orchestral instruments into 'regular' Beach Boys recordings (Badman, 2004, p. 57). There had been a history of Christmas albums in popular music by 1964, with *The Four Seasons Greetings* by the Four Seasons and *Christmas with the Everly Brothers* by the Everly Brothers released in 1962. Most important of all was the release of Phil Spector's *A Christmas Gift For You* in 1963, which was of particular influence to Brian Wilson and may have inspired his own Christmas recordings.

The *Concert* album was the first Beach Boys' release to reach number 1 on the Billboard album charts (in 1964), perhaps encouraged by their continuous touring schedule through 1964. The record was recorded live in Sacramento in Northern California, and for the most part was a true representation of the band's increased skill in live performance, with the some small additional tinkering to the vocals on "I Get Around" and "Fun Fun Fun" and also turning *down* the screaming of the audience (Badman, 2004, p. 62; Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 34).

The Beach Boys' *Party!* album was recorded and released in 1965 under strong pressure from Capitol Records to have a new Beach Boys album released before Christmas (Badman, 2004, p. 99; Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 43). As *Pet Sounds* was not finished, Brian Wilson needed to provide some suitable material to prevent Capitol from releasing a premature Greatest Hits record (Abbott, 2001, p. 39; Badman, 2004, p. 99). The idea for the album was to portray the feeling of a spontaneous 'party' in the studio, and featured 'unplugged' live covers of some of their favourite songs. The recording lasted four days, and overdubs of 'party' atmosphere were recorded at Mike Love's house afterwards (clapping, talking, clinking glasses and the eating of food), and when finally released gave the group another number 1 single with their cover of "Barbara Ann".³

While these three albums offer interesting insights into the Beach Boys music, creativity, live performances and, most importantly, their musical influences, they were not given the same time, thought and creativity as the nine studio albums and were often released by Capitol Records for purely commercial reasons (all were released at the end of the year – right before Christmas sales time), or were rushed out to allow Brian Wilson more time to record his more creative work. As such, they will be referred to in a discussion of musical influences, and noted for their addition to the Beach Boys' discography, but not included in the more detailed musical analyses that make up this thesis.

"The Little Girl I Once Knew" and "Good Vibrations"

"The Little Girl I Once Knew" was a single released in 1965 between the *Summer Days* album and *Pet Sounds*. The track is similar to the material found on both *Today* and

³ The irony of this number one single is that the lead vocal is sung by Dean Torrence of Jan and Dean, while the Beach Boys provide back up. Torrence was recording in studio next door at Western Recorders and, after storming out of the studio in frustration at his own session, visited the Beach Boys instead. He notes, "When I got there they were all drunk. They started scratching around for another track and, because I was there, somebody suggested they should do "Barbara Ann" and I should sing lead. When the album came out, there was my voice quite clearly singing on "Barbara Ann"" (as cited in Badman, 2004, p. 99).

Summer Days in that it utilises orchestral instrumentation, complex vocal harmonies and, perhaps its most identifying feature, two bars of complete silence in the middle of the song into the second chorus. This two-bar silence was a creative use of stop time, and certainly worked in building musical expectation, however, the silence was the reason many radio stations refused to play the single. DJs were conservative and did not know what to make of the 'avant-garde' record that included dead air, and they feared listeners may not understand and in the two bars of silence, switch to a rival station (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 42; Leaf, 1978, p. 69). Due to its musical similarity to songs on both *Today* and *Summer Days*, "The Little Girl I Once Knew" is not included in the data of this analysis. Much of the data collected for this study is arranged album-to-album, and the stray "Little Girl I Once Knew" single would complicate way this data is viewed. For simplicity and for clarity, only the nine studio albums have been considered in this study.

The "Good Vibrations" single was released in 1966 after *Pet Sounds* and before the eventual demise of the original *Smile* album. The song began to be recorded during the *Pet Sounds* sessions, however, the eventual production ended up taking over six months to complete, recorded in eight sessions of three different studios (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 54). The song marked another leap in Brian Wilson's musical complexity, from the instruments it employed (such as the Electro-Theremin), the psychedelic sounds of the lyrics, to the compartmentalised way in which it was recorded. As such, the song does not fit into the narrative of the Beach Boys early-to-mid 1960s music, and would be better considered separately, in a study within the context of other *Smile* songs. Although this track does fall within the confines of this study, for these reasons it has not been included in this analysis, though it is occasionally referred to as contextualisation.

Audio Limitations

The original vinyl records were not used in the collection analysis of the Beach Boys' music. This was for several reasons, firstly, the cost and availability of original, good-quality US versions of the albums, and the lack of portability of the recordings in that medium. Instead, the album versions used in this analysis are the 1990/2000 re-releases, commonly called the 'two-fer' CDs. These discs bundled two albums together and were the first set of Beach Boys' recordings to be remastered. The process of remastering was completed by Mark Linett, who wrote in the liner notes his intentions and methods in remastering these albums:

In the preparation of this compact disc, every effort has been made to make these historic recordings sound as they did when Brian, Carl Mike Dennis and Al first made them. Numerous tapes were auditioned in order to find the best sounding master. No remixing was attempted, as it was felt that this would not be faithful to the original productions. The original mono and stereo tapes were transferred using a specially modified Ampex tape machine and custom-made analogue-to-digital converters.

The disc has been mastered using the Pacific Microsonics HDCD system which encodes 24 bits onto a conventional 16 bit CD. The bonus tracks have been selected from a variety of sources and were mixed directly from the original three and four track sessions (Linett, 2000, p. 21).

These remasters remain in mono, however, the *Pet Sounds* release includes a second version of the album in stereo, and these versions were sometimes used as a different perspective in which to hear certain musical qualities, particularly instrumentation. As the original vinyl albums during the 1962-66 period were released in mono, I felt it important to use versions of their recordings that were also in mono throughout this analysis. In 2012, the Beach Boys' recordings were remastered a second time, however, as the analysis sections had been already close to completion at that time, these new, repackaged albums have not been included in this study.

Extra Audio and Textual Resources

The Sea of Tunes (Unsurpassed Masters) bootleg recordings and copies of the American Federation of Musician paperwork filed for Beach Boys' sessions are two extra resources that have contributed to the collection of data for this analysis.

Sea of Tunes/Unsurpassed Masters Bootlegs

In addition to the official studio album releases, a series of fan-assembled bootleg recordings called the *Unsurpassed Masters/Sea of Tunes Compilations* were also used in the gathering of musicological information for this study. The series features an extensive collection of studio outtakes, rehearsals and tracking audio. These bootlegs were taken as direct copies from the master tapes. Some songs, such as "Surfer Girl," only have a small amount of audio available, such as a vocal overdub or a backing track, however, other songs, such as "California Girls," have entire recording sessions available. The *Pet Sounds Sessions* box set was also useful, as several discs included outtakes and vocal-only "stack-o-tracks" versions of the songs. These extra recordings

allowed a much more detailed look inside the creation of the Beach Boys' music, and offered insight into how their songs were recorded, the instruments present (some of which are impossible to hear on the "official" releases), studio effects used, as well as conversations between the band and musicians. Selections from these bootlegs have been included for official release on the Beach Boys' *Made in California* (2013) box set. A full track listing of the *Unsurpassed Masters* bootlegs is reproduced in Appendix G (p. 208).

American Federation of Musicians Paperwork

Collecting information on instrumentation (Chapter 5) was one of the most difficult and time-consuming parts of this study, mostly due to an overall lack of information available about the Beach Boys' recording sessions, and about which musicians were present during each tracking date. While there are several books that outline these details for *Pet Sounds*⁴, *Smile*⁵ and later recordings, this information was not well documented during their early years. While the Beatles have many resources documenting their recording life⁶, there are very few records of the early recording sessions of the Beach Boys. The overarching reason for this is linked to the location each band recorded their material. EMI's Abbey Road Studio, where the Beatles recorded almost all of their material, kept meticulous records, much like a science laboratory would. In fact, as Geoff Emerick described, engineers at Abbey Road were required to wear lab-coats, and were scolded for encouraging distortion or any kind of activity that would push equipment "into the red" (Emerick, 2006, pp. 12-13). Due to this scientific culture, equipment was thoroughly documented and records of who was present at various recording sessions were well kept. In comparison, the Beach Boys moved around to different studios during the same period of time. Primarily, most of their music was created at Western Recorders in Hollywood, California, however, some

⁴ *The Beach Boys' Pet Sounds: The Greatest Album of the Twentieth Century* by Kingsley Abbott; *I Just Wasn't Made For These Times: Brian Wilson and the Making of Pet Sounds* by Charles L. Granata; *The Beach Boys' Pet Sounds (33 1/3)* by Jim Fusilli; The extensive liner-notes that accompany the *Pet Sounds* box set, the accompanying videos packaged with the 40th Anniversary edition of *Pet Sounds*.

⁵ *Smile: The Story of Brian Wilson's Lost Masterpiece* and *Look! Listen! Vibrate! Smile!* by Domenic Priore; the 2011 box set release of *The Complete Smile Sessions* contains lengthy liner-notes and musical material explaining the recording of the album. The 2004 documentary *Beautiful Dreamer* gives a detailed overview of the creation of the *Smile* record.

⁶ Mark Lewisohn's *The Beatles Recording Sessions: The Official Abbey Road Studio Notes (1962-1970)* and *'The Complete Beatles' Chronicle*; Barry Miles' *The Beatles: A Diary – An Intimate Day-By-Day History*, the lengthy *The Beatles Anthology* series on film and in print⁶, and the voluminous tome *Recording the Beatles* by Kevin Ryan and Brian Kehew, to name but few.

sessions were completed at the Capitol Records building, others at Gold Star (also in Los Angeles), and a few attempts were made to record at studios in New York and Nashville while the band was on tour.

The records that *are* available are in the form of American Musicians Union paperwork. These forms were to be filled out at the close of each recording session, noting the contractor, which musicians were in attendance, where the recording took place and what songs were tracked in a given session (see Figure 9). Unfortunately, these forms were often completed and dated incorrectly, or do not list all musicians in attendance. In addition, the original copies are no longer available, and the carbon copies that are available are often difficult to read and are often missing pages (McParland, 2000, p. 7). Despite these caveats, this paperwork has been helpful in getting a broad idea of who was included on Beach Boys' sessions at particular times, and the instruments that were played during recording dates.

A Note about Discographical References

Some slight changes have been made to APA 6 writing and referencing style (as explained in the Publication Manual) to accommodate the large amount of musical references in this paper. Beach Boys' songs that are part of the repertoire of this study will be referred to in inverted commas, with no in-text reference of year (as is dictated in APA style) e.g., "All Summer Long". The reason for this omission is to make the paper readable, without the distraction of year and date information. Instead, this information is listed on the fold out panel in the front of this thesis. For songs that are not part of the Beach Boys' repertoire (including Beach Boys songs released after 1966), a year will be cited to give the song a context in place and time, e.g., "Good Day Sunshine" (1966) by the Beatles. Due to the sheer volume of songs referenced, all song citations are listed in a separate discography, which is included after the reference list at the end of this paper.

FIGURE 10 - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS UNION SHEET FOR 1ST OF JANUARY 1964,
RECORDING "FUN FUN FUN" AND "WARMTH OF THE SUN" (BADMAN, 2004, P. 48).

CAPITOL RECORDS (Employer's name)

Phonograph Recording Contract Blank
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS
OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Local Union No. 47 000001
94187

THIS CONTRACT for the personal services of musicians, made this 1st day of January 1964 between the undersigned employer (hereinafter called the "employer") and NINE (9) musicians (hereinafter called "employees").

WITNESSETH, That the employer hires the employees as musicians severally on the terms and conditions below, and as further specified on reverse side. The employer represents that the employees already designated have agreed to be bound by said terms and conditions. Each employee yet to be chosen shall be so bound by said terms and conditions upon agreeing to accept his employment. Each employee may enforce this agreement. The employees severally agree to render collectively to the employer services as musicians in the orchestra under the leadership of Steven Douglas as follows:

Name and Address of Place of Engagement Western Studios
6000 Sunset Blvd, Hollywood, Calif.

Date(s) and Hours of Employment 1-1-64
12:30PM to 4:45PM

Type of Engagement: Recording for phonograph records only

WAGE AGREED UPON: Premium time SCALE (Terms and amount specified on reverse side hereof)

This wage includes expenses agreed to be reimbursed by the employer in accordance with the attached schedule, or a schedule to be furnished the employer on or before the date of engagement.

To be paid FIFTEEN DAYS (Specify when payments are to be made)

Upon request by the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (herein called the "Federation") or the local in whose jurisdiction the employees shall perform hereunder, the employer either shall make advance payment hereunder or shall post an appropriate bond.

<p>Employer's name and authorized signature: <u>Brian Wilson</u></p> <p>Street address: <u>1750 No. Vine St.</u> <u>Hollywood</u> <u>28</u> <u>Calif.</u> City State Phone</p>	<p>Leader's name: <u>Steve Douglas</u> Local No. <u>47</u></p> <p>Leader's signature: <u>Steve Douglas</u></p> <p>Street address: <u>5646 Lemona Ave</u> <u>Van Nuys</u> <u>Calif.</u> City State</p>
--	---

Master no.	No. of minutes	TITLES OF TUNES	Master no.	No. of minutes	TITLES OF TUNES
<u>2:45</u>		<u>"FUN FUN FUN" (TRACK)</u>			
<u>2:15</u>		<u>"THE WARMTH OF THE SUN (TRACK)</u>			

(2) Employee's name (As on Social Security card) Last First Initial	(3) Home address (Give street, city and state)	(4) Local Union no.	(5) Social Security number	(6) Scale wages	(7) Pension contribution
✓ DOUGLAS, Steve (Leader)	<u>5646 Lemona Ave</u> <u>Van Nuys, Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>556-46-1005</u>	<u>427.08</u>	<u>34.17</u>
✓ BLAINE, Hal	<u>2441 Castilian Dr.</u> <u>Hollywood 28, Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>047-20-5900</u>	<u>245.57</u>	<u>19.65</u>
✓ WILSON, Brian P.D.	<u>3701 W. 119th St.</u> <u>Hawthorne, Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>568-62-7150</u>	<u>213.54</u>	<u>17.08</u>
✓ LOVE, Michael E. P.D.	<u>3701 W. 119th St.</u> <u>Hawthorne, Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>546-56-6598</u>	<u>213.54</u>	<u>17.08</u>
✓ MIGLIORI, Jay P.D.	<u>328 So. Albany</u> <u>Los Angeles 8, Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>208-24-6118</u>	<u>213.54</u>	<u>17.08</u>
✓ WILSON, Dennis C. P.D.	<u>3701 W. 119th St.</u> <u>Hawthorne, Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>562-60-0767</u>	<u>213.54</u>	<u>17.08</u>
✓ FOHLMAN, M.R. P.D.	<u>2804 Westshire Dr.</u> <u>Hollywood 28, Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>558-34-6698</u>	<u>213.54</u>	<u>17.08</u>
✓ WILSON, Carl D. P.D.	<u>3701 W. 119th St.</u> <u>Hawthorne Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>568-62-8168</u>	<u>213.54</u>	<u>17.08</u>
✓ JARDINE, Alan C. P.D.	<u>3701 W. 119th St.</u> <u>Hawthorne A Calif.</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>566-54-3798</u>	<u>213.54</u>	<u>17.08</u>

NO ARRANGEMENTS
Steve Douglas

CONTRACT RECEIVED

JAN 2 - 1964

WARD ARCHER
ASST. TO PRESIDENT

(8) Total Pension Contributions (Sum of Column (7)) \$173.38
Make check payable in this amount to "AFM & EPW Fund"

FOR FUND USE ONLY:
Date pay't rec'd _____ Amt. paid _____ Date posted _____ By _____
Form B-4 Rev. 4-59

Methods Used in the Study

The following section outlines the different kinds of methods used in the following analysis of the Beach Boys. It is divided into three different categories: methods that use statistics (which include tables, spreadsheets), methods that use colour coding (diagrams, charts and graphs) diagrams, and finally, methods that use traditional musicological approaches (such as notation).

In some cases, chapters may use two or more of these broad methodological approaches, so under each methodological category, chapters will be discussed specifically in terms of data collection and analysis. For example, instrumentation diagrams use both tables (statistical) colour coded diagrams. These two methods are discussed separately.

Statistical and Empirical Methods

In his chapter in *Empirical Musicology*, Luke Windsor (2004) details methods of data collection, experimental design and statistics useful in music research. While he suggests that these methods can be applied to musical data “derived from a score” (p. 197), he instead focuses on the collection of data from music perception and performance. This study is based neither on a score, nor on perception of listeners or performance, but instead collects its data through listening to recordings (rather than a score) and historical research (rather than perception). In most cases, this data was quantitative in nature, usually collections of numerical data, often tallied, and made visible in different organisational ways. Keightley (1991) notes the use of “dreaded empiricism” (p. 4) in his study of “All Summer Long”, however, this study uses empirical methods only when appropriate, and always in conjunction with socio-cultural and historical context.

Windsor (2004) divides the collection of data into three main types: nominal, ordinal and continuous (p. 200). This study makes use of all three kinds (mostly continuous and ordinal), and keeping these data categories in mind while collecting musical information made the process more thorough through an understanding of both music and statistical categorisation. “Nominal” data is categorical, and differentiated by name, rather than magnitude. Every chapter utilises some form of nominal data, from the names of lyrical categories, types of chord progressions, to the categorisation of song structures. “Ordinal” data includes a “notion of rank order”, but are not numerically ordered (p. 201). For example, a section on tempo breaks up speeds into three main

categories: slow, mid-tempo and fast songs. There is a rank, in that each category is either faster or slower than another, but they are not numerically linked: fast songs are not twice as fast as mid-tempo songs, and slow songs are not half as slow as mid-tempo songs. They have an order or a hierarchy, but that order is not based on a strict mathematical formula. “Continuous” data refers to “continuous variables”, often numerical, such as “time, distance and speed” (p. 202). In this study, data on tempo (from 60BPM-180BPM) is a good example of continuous data. Figure 11 shows these three categories at work, with the album classification as nominal, the tempo data as continuous and the “group” category (which grouped tempos into “slow”, “mid” and “fast” tempos) as ordinal:

FIGURE 11 - TYPES OF DATA

Nominal Data				Continuous Data		Ordinal Data
SONG	YEAR	ALBUM	TIME	METRE	TEMPO	GROUP
Don't Worry Baby	64	Shut Down	2:50	4/4	121	120
This Car of Mine	64	Shut Down	1:37	4/4	131	130
Shut Down Part II	64	Shut Down	2:09	4/4	158	150
Fun Fun Fun	64	Shut Down	2:05	4/4	156	150
In The Parkin' Lot	64	Shut Down	2:03	4/4 (in/out 1/2 time)	154	150
Pom-Pom Play Girl	64	Shut Down	1:32	4/4	152	150
Why Do Fools Fall in Love?	64	Shut Down	2:09	4/4	166	160
Summer Means New Love	65	Summer Days	2:01	6/8	69	60
I'm Bugged at My Old Man	65	Summer Days	2:19	4/4	82	80
You're So Good to Me	65	Summer Days	2:16	4/4	118	110
Let Him Run Wild	65	Summer Days	2:22	4/4	116	110
California Girls	65	Summer Days	2:40	4/4	115	110
Girl Don't Tell Me	65	Summer Days	2:21	4/4	124	120

Before any tallying could take place, musical elements needed to be broken up into nominal categories. For some chapters, this was simple, such as the four broad themes of lyrical content, however, in others chapters, such as the extremely large table of harmony styles (see Vocals Spreadsheet on the included disc), this tallying needed to be meticulously checked and calculated. In some cases, data fit into more than one category: for example, in the tally of lead vocals, there were occasionally songs (such as “Sloop John B”) that used three lead vocalists. In these cases, the “1” that would ordinarily represent a single singer was broken into thirds and one of those thirds (e.g., 0.33) was placed into the three corresponding columns.

In many cases, this collection of data illuminated trends in the Beach Boys music that I, while a dedicated listener of their music for many years, would have easily overlooked. I found that my preconceived ideas about the Beach Boys and their music were often challenged by the data I collected, and was forced to concede that, for example, the Beach Boys rarely used a shuffle feel in their songs, that *Pet Sounds* showed an increase in the use of nonsense syllables, and *Today* showed a broad decline in the

use of different chord types. These findings, along with many others, changed my perspective on what I had assumed the Beach Boys music *sounded* like, and with the hard data to look at, I had to leave behind my previous ideas, accept these new findings and figure out what they meant. These empirical methods produced tangible evidence that I could then contextualise within broader historical, cultural and technological frameworks.

Tables and Spreadsheets

Almost all analysis chapters use tables and spreadsheets to help code and present different kinds of information. The following section gives an overview of the different ways in which they are used in this study.

Song Structures

Only one kind of data was required in the analysis of song structures. Each song in this study was divided by structural type, from 12-bar blues songs, AABA form, verse-chorus, and so on, and these divisions are seen in full in Appendix A (p. 6). This wasn't always a straightforward procedure, as many songs used parts of familiar structures, before moving into unexpected ones. Some songs *almost* used an AABA structure (such as "South Bay Surfer" or "You're So Good to Me"), but made small changes to it, such as adding or repeating extra sections. These songs are referred to as "variations", and are discussed separately in the discussion of each song structure.

From this categorisation, song structure information could be displayed in different ways. I began to experiment with ways of showing all of this structural data in one small chart that could be referred to quickly, rather than using a large spreadsheet that listed every single song and its structural type. Not only would this make the results of the structural analysis easier to understand, it would also give the reader a birds-eye view of the repertoire, showing larger trends over time. From this experimentation, Figure 21 was created, which represents each song as a small square, and its colours indicated which of the several song structures was used (noted in a colour key). These squares formed a grid where each album and its tracks are represented horizontally. Originally, this chart was organised in track-list order, although this did not illuminate any kind of trend or pattern. However, this changed when the squares were arranged by colour on each album. It became clear that neither the individual tracks themselves, nor their order, were needed to display overall trends in the use of song structure: what mattered were the groupings of colours. This experimentation in the presentation of analytical data reflected Windsor's (2004) ideas of observation, that to empirically

observe, we must decide “what to observe, how to quantify it and analyse the resulting data” (p. 197). For this study, there was one extra step in addition to Windsor’s: how to display the data from observation in a way that is accessible and clear.

Rhythm

There were two main kinds of data collected for the analysis of rhythmic feels: tempo data and rhythmic category data.

Tempo

Originally, tempo data was collected using a BPM analyser, which assigned a tempo based on a waveform of each track. This software is not dissimilar to that used by DJs to transition between songs of a similar tempo. However, after checking these tempos manually, it became clear that the BPM analyser was not accurate for ballad songs, nor songs that used 12/8 or shuffle feels. As a result, tempos were collected manually using an electronic metronome, calibrated to the closest appropriate tempo. This approach, while more labour-intensive, gave a more accurate result.

Tempo Inconsistencies

It is important to touch on the difficulties in calculating some of the Beach Boys’ tempos. Unlike most modern recordings, the Beach Boys did not use “click” tracks or metronomes during their sessions, and as such, their songs do not always have a consistent tempo. The tempo of each song was entirely guided by the drummer, usually Hal Blaine, who acted as a musical director for the rest of the Wrecking Crew along with Brian Wilson, who would also be in the studio directing each musician during tracking sessions. Most songs swing in and out of tempo by only a few BPM, but it is enough to offset the calculations of a strict metronome. These small shifts are usually noticeable in the changes between song sections, particularly on *Pet Sounds* when song sections naturally tend to slow and speed up in and out of contrasting musical material (Bowman, 2003, also notes these tempo inconsistencies in his study of “Try a Little Tenderness” for similar reasons). While these small inconsistencies in tempo are imperceptible when casually listening, trying to align a metronome to many of their songs was difficult, and the most accurate approximation has been noted in Appendix B, Table A1 (p. 10) next to each song. This is certainly not a criticism of Blaine, who is an extremely accomplished drummer; it is merely a reflection of the way the Beach Boys songs were recorded: live, in a large group playing at once, seeing and hearing each other in a small room as they played together.

Rhythmic Categories

The rhythmic analysis breaks the Beach Boys' songs into three main types of feels: the straight 4/4 eighth-note feel, songs that use shuffle feels, and songs in 12/8 time, as all of the Beach Boys' songs in this study fit into one of these feels (with the exception of "Finders Keepers"). This categorisation was achieved by creating a spreadsheet, whose data was turned into small, colour-coded tables that are included in the body of the analysis to show trends over time.

Instrumentation

The collection of instrumentation data was perhaps the most involved of the entire study, and both album recordings and the "Sea of Tunes" bootlegs were used in order to ensure the lists of instruments were as accurate as possible. From this, a spreadsheet was created to document the different kinds of instruments featured on each Beach Boys song. This spreadsheet featured three columns: the name of the song, a list of the instruments playing, and a description of the part each instrument plays (see Figure 12). These tables began purely as a personal tool for the efficient collection of listening data, however, when completed, allowed for the observation of not only instrumental line-ups, but also rhythmic and structural patterns. For example, ballads that feature an AABA structure are also likely to also feature a 12/8 time signature that revolves around repeated triplets, usually played by the piano and guitar, rather than the high hat of the drum kit (see "Keep an Eye on Summer"). The collection of this data helped to reveal these subtle musical relationships. These tables appear in full in Appendix C, Table A2 (p. 27).

Songs were then placed into three broad instrumental categories: basic, augmented and orchestral instrumentation. These three categories made the discussion of the Beach Boys' instrumentation more manageable, facilitated comparison to other musical elements, and also clearly showed the ACA model clearly over time.

FIGURE 12 -TABLE OF INSTRUMENTATION

SONG	INSTRUMENTATION	NOTES
ALL SUMMER LONG LP		
I Get Around	Drums Bass Guitar Lead Vox Bg Vox Handclaps Clicker Sax Piano Keyboards	Plays all through song. Minimalist kick pattern in the verse. Rhythmic change in the outro. Plays all through song except harmony breaks. Reverbed. Doubles guitar in verse. 1 guitar (Carl) heavily reverbed. Plays all through song, usually vamping. Shared by Mike (verse) and Brian (chorus). Feature in intro/chorus/break and outro. Double tracked (?). "Wah wah oohs" are overdubbed. 1/4 notes over the 2nd and 4th line of the verse 16th notes (mainly) through verse and chorus Plays during the "break", 2nd verse (and possibly in the "riff" in the first verse). Buried in the mix but plays through the whole song vamping chords. A harpsichord-esque sound is also vamping through the track (a clav?) on a couple of takes.
All Summer Long	Drums Bass Guitar Lead Vox Bg Vox Xylophone Sax Flute	Plays all through song only using kick and snare. Few fills, uncomplicated Mostly plays blues-type walking bass line. Very muted, buried in the track, almost sounds like a honky organ sound, but is clearly strummed Mike = lead, though the lead part is only alone for "We've been having fun all summer long". Double tracked. Sings parts behind almost all of the lead melody. The bg vox are almost "leads" here too. Overdubs - "Sitting in my car outside your house" and "oohs", double tracking on EVERYTHING! Skipping shuffle rhythm through whole song. Plays chords. Also starts the song in the intro. Overdub double tracks and adds harmony to intro. Enters halfway through 1st verse with flute playing 2-part countermelody. Plays C+R with flute in break (take16) Enters halfway through 1st verse with sax playing 2-part countermelody. Plays C+R with sax in break
Hushabye	Drums Bass Guitar Lead Vox Bg Vox Piano	Enters 1/2 thru "oohahh" party. Mostly tom fills, follows a vague "phil spector" rhythm. Hats only used in bridge when beat opens up to more standard rhythm. Simple, plays only the root note. 1/8 notes in verse. Difficult to hear, buried in the mix but assumed vamping the chords rhythmically with piano. Brian sings lead. Double tracked in overdub. Mike sings bridge "Lullabye and goodnight" Overdubbed after leads. BgVs in intro, back up "oohahh" part 1/2 through. Follows lead in verses, counterpoint in bridge. Broken chords in intro/outro, block chords rhythmically vamping through "oohahh" and verse.
Little Honda	Drums Bass Guitar 1 Guitar 2 Lead Vox Bg Vox	Plays only kick and snare Simple, plays only the root note 1/8 notes in verse/chorus. Muted sound, vamps along with the chords in verse/chorus. Second, higher, rhythmic part on top of vamping in verse. Sung by Mike. In chorus singing a counter melody with different words underneath the lead. Humming "mmmm" in verse.

Chord Progressions

Two main types of data were collected for the analysis of chord progressions: the creation of chord charts for each song in the repertoire, and data on the types of chords used in those charts. The decision to use chord charts, rather than a complete score, was based on two main reasons: firstly, the sheer amount of time; volume of pages and data would be too much to analyse in one chapter of this thesis (there is no Beach Boys equivalent to Hal Leonard's *The Complete Beatles Scores*), and secondly, the collection of that data would not, as Windsor (2004) advises, show the kinds of trends which may illuminate the ACA model.

Chord Charts

Chord charts were compiled manually by playing through each song at the piano, listening to the recordings and charting the progressions as accurately as possible (the compiled charts are presented in full in Appendix D, p. 49). Creating these charts was useful in many ways: I was able to grow familiar with the songs' progressions, how they were played or voiced, and the process also gave some insight into how these songs were written, which was at the piano. In this way, my experience as a musician and an

academic were closely aligned, giving me a deeper understanding of the chord progressions in the Beach Boys music. The aim for the compilation of these chord charts was that each song be represented clearly, using a minimal amount of space. As such, most charts fit on a single A4 page, with bar lines and song structure defined. Song lyrics are noted underneath the chord changes, and their inclusion makes the charts easier to follow, especially for those without musical training (see Figure 13).

These charts were created in Microsoft Excel, using a template for continuity. In the charts themselves, a lowercase “m” denotes a minor chord, “dim” a diminished chord, and “aug” an augmented chord. In this analysis, chords are sometimes referred to by Roman numerals to assist in chordal comparison, with I as the tonic, IV as the subdominant and V as the dominant, and so forth. Capitalised letters indicate a major chord, while lower case letters indicate a minor chord. For example, the ii-V-I turnaround in the key of C would present as: ii [D minor chord] – V [G major chord] – I [C major chord].

The charting of the repertoire for this analysis was some of the most difficult data collection in this study for many reasons. Firstly, the lack of published transcriptions of the Beach Boys music meant essentially starting “from scratch” for each charted song. Secondly, the publications that do include some transcription⁷ were often incorrect, substituting complex chords (like augmented and diminished chords) with more simple substitutes to make the transcriptions easier to play, as the purpose of these sorts of books are primarily for students learning their instruments. Thirdly, often chords could be ambiguous, with the instrumentation playing one chord, while vocal harmonies sung a variation. In the most complicated songs on *Pet Sounds*, chord progressions could only make sense when considered as relative to a song’s melody (such as “Don’t Talk (Put Your Head on My Shoulder)”).

One useful resource in this task has been fan-compiled chord charts, in particular, the charts of Francis Greene featured on the *Cabinessence.net* archive. These chord charts (charted for guitar) were a useful way to compare my own charts and to double-check for any inaccuracies, especially in the more complex songs from *Pet Sounds*. In addition, Probyn Gregory, Nelson Bragg and Darian Sahanaja (members of

⁷ Hal Leonard books *The Beach Boys Anthology* and *The Beach Boys - The Little Black Book* are good examples of this kind of chord simplification.

Brian Wilson's current touring band) have helped clarify some particularly difficult or unclear parts of songs – though in some cases, they admitted that they themselves just aim to be as accurate as possible, but are sometimes forced to guess. These charts may not be perfect, and there may be alternative voicings for particular chords, however effort has been put into making sure the chord charts are consistent and as close to what is heard on the original recording as possible.

All chord charts remain in the key of the recording – as the use of particular key signatures does contribute to the sound of the Beach Boys' music. Brian Wilson's penchant for using key signatures that often make clear sense on a piano, such as the key of Ab for "Little Deuce Coupe" or Bb for "Boogie Woodie" for example: key signatures that make sense on a piano, but not keys a guitarist would naturally choose for a basic blues song. These kinds of musical choices help give the Beach Boys' music a wide sonic palette to experiment with.

FIGURE 13 - EXAMPLE OF COLOURED CHORD CHART

SURFER GIRL							
INTRO							
D		F#m		Bm		F#m	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
G		Em		A			
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
VERSE							
D		Bm		G		A	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
1. Li	-tle	Sur	-fer	Li	-tle	one	
2. I	have	watched	you	from	the	shore	
Dmaj7		D7		G		Gm	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
Made	my	heart	come	all	un	-done	
Stand	-ding	by	the	o	-ceans	roar	
D		Bm		G		A	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
REFRAIN							
Do	you	love	me,	do	you	sur	-fer
Do	you	love	me,	do	you	sur	-fer
D (2nd to *)		Bm		G		A	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
Girl?	(Surfer	girl	my	little	sufer	girl)	
*D		G		D			
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
Girl?	(Surfer	girl	surfer	girl)			
BRIDGE							
G		A		Dmaj7		Bm	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
We	could	ride	the	surf		together	
G		A		D		D7	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
While	our	love	would	gro	-ow		
G		A		Dmaj7		Bm	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
In	my	wo	-odie	i	would	take	you
E		A		A		Bb	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
ev	-ry	where	i	go	-o	-o.	
VERSE							
Eb		Cm		Ab		Bb	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
3. So	I	say	from	me	to	you	
Ebmaj7		Eb7		Ab		Abm	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
I	will	make	your	dreams	come	true.	
Eb		Cm		Ab		Bb	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
Do	you	love	me	do	you	sur	-fer
		Eb		Cm		Ab	
:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /		:/ / / / / / / / / /	
		Girl	(surfer	girl	my	little	surfer
Bb							
:/ / / / / / / / / /							
girl	(little one)						
(repeat to fade)							

Chord Tallies

To understand the growing complexity of the chords Brian Wilson used in his

songs, a spreadsheet was created to analyse the use of different chord types. This task was completed by manually counting out the chords listed in the compiled chord charts, and then adding them to the corresponding categories (sixth chords, diminished chords, and so forth). The results of this manual counting formed the large tally of chord types (found in the Chord Progressions Spreadsheet on the included disc). In the interests of continuity, chords were only counted up until the end of the last chorus, unless there was any specific chordal change during a song's "outro" section. The reason for this is that almost all songs in this study feature a fade-out coda, which repeats the final chorus or outro section several times, and not always in even numbers of repetitions. As such, these fade-out sections were not included in the tally.

Lyrical Themes

Lyrical themes were one of the most easily categorised of the data in this study. Although the "surf, cars and girls" are often associated with the Beach Boys, I began by listing the overall themes of songs without a predefined framework. From this, the four main categories of lyrical themes began to be revealed quite easily, and while they did fall easily into the "surf, cars and girls" adage, the sub-themes they used showed the diverse range of lyrical angles the Beach Boys explored.

The data collection process began by coding the themes discussed in each song and then transferring this information into a long Excel table. At the top of the table were the various lyrical themes (surfing, cars, relationships, and so forth) and underneath a list of songs that featured these themes. Some songs conveyed more than one theme; for example, "Don't Worry Baby" is fundamentally a song about a hot rod race, though it is also about a relationship. In these cases, a song could be placed in more than one lyrical category. These tables are similar to those seen in Christenson (1998, p. 66, p. 121) in his study of lyrical themes in 1980s Top 40 hits, and in Murphey's (1989) song content analysis tables (p. 186).

Some of this data on lyrical themes was more illuminating when turned into charts or graphics to see trends over time. Creating these graphics required a blank chart with the song titles listed vertically down in a long list, and the horizontal labels noting the four lyrical theme groups. A "1" was placed in the box if a song fulfilled a lyrical category (for example, a "1" was placed under "Cars" for "Shut Down"). If a song crossed two or more themes (like the above example of "Don't Worry Baby") a "0.5" was added to both "Cars" and "Girls," which spread the song out evenly between its two themes. This process can be seen in detail in Figure 14 for *Shut Down* and *All Summer*

Long. Once this process had been completed, it allowed the data become quantitative, and could be moved around statistically. This meant that through combining what is essentially qualitative data (themes of lyrics) with a numeral figure, representations of any patterns or trends could be displayed as graphs. These bar graphs communicate a great deal of data: the lyrical themes, how often they are used, what percentage they are used, and how they compare album-to-album. Bar charts are also used very similarly in Christenson's (1998) study to compare and display references to sex (implicitly or explicitly) in the lyrics of 1980s chart songs over time (p. 124) and to show survey data based on the lyrics to Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA" (p. 160). Without this method of representing the raw data of lyrical themes, these kinds of trends over time were difficult to see in clear detail. The raw data for this is presented in the Lyrical Themes Spreadsheet on the included disc).

FIGURE 14- EXAMPLE OF LYRICAL THEME TALLIES FOR SHUT DOWN AND ALL SUMMER LONG

Song	Surf	Cars	Girls	Reflection	Other
Fun Fun Fun		0.5	0.5		
Don't Worry Baby		0.5	0.5		
In the Parking Lot		0.5	0.5		
Warmth of the Sun			0.5	0.5	
This Car of Mine		1			
Why Do Fools Fall in Love?			1		
Pom Pom Play Girl			1		
Keep an Eye on Summer			1		
Louie Louie					1
I Get Around		1			
All Summer Long			1		
Hushabye			1		
Little Honda		1			
We'll Run Away			1		
Wendy			1		
Do You Remember?					1
Girls on the Beach			1		
Drive In		1			
Don't Back Down	1				

FIGURE 15- EXAMPLE OF TABLE OF LYRICAL THEMES

Cars	Cars and Girls	Cars (Racing)	Car (Parts)
409	Car Crazy Cutie	409	409
Shut Down	Fun Fun Fun	Shut Down	Shut Down
Little Deuce Coupe		Little Deuce Coupe	Little Deuce Coupe
Our Car Club		Our Car Club	Our Car Club
Ballad of Ol' Betsy		Car Crazy Cutie	Car Crazy Cutie
Car Crazy Cutie		Spirit of America	Cherry Cherry Coupe
Cherry Cherry Coupe			No-Go Show boat
No-Go Show boat			Custom Machine
Custom Machine			
Fun Fun Fun			
Don't Worry Baby			
This Car of Mine			
I Get Around			
Drive-In			

Vocals

The chapter on vocals is unlike the other analysis chapters, in that it discusses three different elements that contribute to the sound of the Beach Boys vocals: musical influence, the use of technology and Brian Wilson and Mike Love's vocal roles. As such, the only empirical data collected for this section is the categorisation of different background harmony parts.

The collection of background harmony parts is assembled in the largest table of this study (found in the Vocals Spreadsheet on the included disc). These categories were a combination of pre-defined harmony styles (such as nonsense syllables from doo-wop music, and unison singing from the Four Freshmen) and harmony styles that were categorized through continuous listening. It was these latter categories that helped define what the Beach Boys do *differently* to their influences, and help define their unique harmony sound.

The large table was created in Microsoft Excel, with the vertical axis listing song titles, and the categories listed on the horizontal axis. If a harmony part was present, a "1" was placed in the corresponding column, which, much like the data collected for lyrical themes, made information quantitative, meaning it could be more easily displayed as trends over time.

Colour Coding, Charts and Diagrams

Throughout this study, colours are used in varying ways to denote songs, albums and different kinds of musical data. Some of these colours, such as those assigned to

each Beach Boys' album in this study, continue throughout the time period, while other colours (such as the "blue" to denote surfing lyrical themes) do not. These colours are always explained in detail within the context of each chapter to avoid any confusion. Using colours in this way allowed for a variety of different kinds of diagrams and charts (such as areas charts, doughnut charts, bar and line graphs), which showed the development of the Beach Boys music more clearly than using only literary description. These charts and graphs do not appear in every analysis chapter, however, the following section will detail the different kinds of colours and graphs used where necessary. These diagrams are based on the collection of quantitative and qualitative musical information.

Album Colour Codes

Specific colours assigned to each album will continue throughout the rest of this study as a way to compare different songs to each other, albums to other albums, and to arrange data into different groupings. These colours are used as a way to broadly view the progression of the Beach Boys music at a glance, without having to recall specific dates.

FIGURE 16 - EXAMPLES OF ALBUM COLOURS

Surfin' Safari	Surfin' Safari	Catch a Wave*	Surfer Girl
	Surfin' (Chorus)	Boogie Woodie	
	409	Little Deuce Coupe	Shut Down
	Summertime Blues +	Fun Fun Fun (Verse)	
	The Shift *	Shut Down Part 2	
Surfin' USA	Surfin' USA	Carl's Big Chance	All Summer Long
	Stoked	Little Honda (Verse)	
	Shut Down	Do You Remember? (Verse)	
	Honky Tonk +	Don't Back Down (Verse)*	Summer Days...
	Surf Jam	I'm Bugged at My Old Man	
	Let's Go Trippin' +		

For example, Figure 16 from Chapter 6 on chord progressions, shows songs that employ a 12-bar blues progression in a single table. The different colours denote which album they occur on, showing their relationship to the Beach Boys' discography over time. From this table, we can say that the green colour is the most prominent, meaning that many of the songs on *Surfin' USA* employ a 12-bar progression. The colours chosen for these albums are arbitrary, though in most cases tie in aesthetic to the colour scheme of an album's cover art; however, care has been taken to ensure colours are different enough

from each other to make each album's colour distinct enough to prevent any confusion⁸. The foldout panel in the front of this thesis shows the album colours (with *Surfin Safari* always listed in yellow, *Surfin' USA* always in green, and so on), along with track listings, and listed in chronological order of release.

Coloured tables like Figure 16 are used throughout the analysis chapters, and highlight the particular songs referred to in any given section. These tables are to assist the reader to focus on a particular group of songs without the need to constantly refer back-and-forth to track listings. With the flip-out colour panel, the reader should have all that is necessary to understand the use of colours in this study.

Instrumentation

Much like the representation of chord charts, each song's instrumentation needed to be represented in full, but concisely. To accomplish this, I needed to turn my descriptions of instrumentation (as seen in Figure 12) into charts that encompassed an entire song, its structure (to track when instruments came or left an arrangement), and could represent each instrument clearly. These charts could then be used to recognise particular patterns and trends over time.

After some initial experimentation, I found these elements could be gridded into a small chart (created in Microsoft Excel) in a visually accessible way, with song sections across the top of a chart (much like an x axis) and a list of instruments in order of their arrangement listed on the left hand side (much like a y axis). Each instrument was represented by a different colour, and these colours remained the same throughout each instrumental chart. The size of the boxes on these charts were divided in three ways – the largest box represented four bars, half that size represented two bars, and half that size, the smallest, represented a single bar. Breaking bars apart in this way made the chart more compact, but also highlighted where parts of an arrangement changed (such as the end of “Ballad of Ole’ Betsy” in Figure 17). Each instrument is assigned a single colour (related instruments are similar colours, all vocals are shades of yellow and orange, for example) so that there can be easy comparison between these charts. The end of songs sometimes features a gradient effect, which signifies a songs coda “fading out”.

⁸ Two shades of green (*Surfin' USA* and *Pet Sounds*) and two shades of blue (*Shut Down* and *Summer Days*) are used to refer to separate albums, however, similar colours do not imply similarities in those albums. It is hoped these colours are different enough to not cause any confusion for the reader.

FIGURE 17 - EXAMPLE OF INSTRUMENTAL CHART FOR “BALLAD OF OLE’ BETSY”

BALLAD OF OLE’ BETSY

	Intro	Verse 1		Verse 2		Bridge	Verse 3/Coda			
Drums										
Bass										
Electric Guitar										
Piano										
Lead Vox										
Bg Vox										

^ Rall to end

This layout is similar to the way digital recording software ProTools lays out its visual interface. My experience majoring in popular music production in my undergraduate degree at Griffith University, and my experience as a recording musician, may have subconsciously underpinned the representation of music in this way, though others have also represented music in a similar fashion. For example, in Cook’s (2004) study of computational and comparative musicology, a similar layout is employed in rectangular charts which list instrumentation, pitch or vocal entrances over time, represented by coloured-in squares (pp. 104-105). This technique allows Cook to compare different musical elements in the same piece of music. Tagg (2013) also uses a similar linear, block diagram to show the structure of “A Day in the Life” by the Beatles (p. 401), with different patterns and textures denoting song sections. Tagg (2013) also uses a large, gridded chart showing musematic occurrences in “Fernando” by ABBA in much the same fashion as Figure 17. Tagg’s diagrams show different musical events, however they are represented in a similar fashion.

When the Beach Boys entered the studio in 2012 to record *That’s Why God Made the Radio*, they too would have visualised their music in this way, as colour and shape over time, and Brian Wilson himself has noted that the making of music was a very visual experience for him: “Yeah, I used to see notes, I used to visualise...in my mind, and then after I visualised it, I’d write it down verbatim as I saw it in my mind.” (Leaf, 2004). While this visual approach suited the kind of analysis of instrumentation for this study, it also aligned itself with Brian Wilson’s own approach of arranging music visually in his mind. Loren Dario, friend of Brian Wilson, spoke of Brian’s ability to see colours and shapes in his mind “like Disney”, represented visually in the *Beautiful Dreamer* (Leaf, 2004) documentary (see Figure 18).

FIGURE 18 - REPRESENTATION OF BRIAN WILSON'S MUSIC VISUALISATIONS



These “mini charts”, like Cook’s (2004), facilitated comparison between apprentice, craft and art songs, between ballad songs and upbeat songs, and between instrumental groupings. These charts also shed light on other musical attributes, such as the connection between instrumentation defining song sections, and the use of particular background vocal styles. The concision of these charts, and their ability to be viewed comparatively on a single page, made these kinds of deeper musical connections possible.

Chord Progressions

The use of colour played an important role in defining the main kinds of chord progressions. To clearly highlight these progressions, and to make comparisons between them, each type of progression (doo-wop, ii-V-I progression, and so forth) was assigned a particular colour, and used to highlight each chord chart to indicate their occurrence. Each song was coloured this way where appropriate, and through doing this, certain patterns became clear. This facilitated a further understanding about the way different chord progressions were used, altered and ultimately formed part of the Beach Boys sound. This work was completed manually, scrolling through each chart carefully and highlighting these particular colours over the chord progressions used.

Table 1 shows the colours assigned to each kind of chord progression. While the colours are arbitrary, each tint or shade is related to a particular progression; for example, colours in the orange palette relate to Tin Pan Alley inspired chord progressions – ii-V-I, circle of fifths, and so forth. For other progressions, such as the 12

bar blues and doo-wop progression, the darkest tone of a colour indicates an exact example of a progression, while lighter colours indicate a variant. The purpose of grouping “tints” and “shades” of colours was to make chord progressions easy to observe, while also being to note the variations used at the same time. In essence, these colours helped to highlight how the Beach Boys learned the rules or chord progressions, and then learned how to bend and break them as they creativity developed. The colours used to highlight progressions in the chord charts are noted below and in more detail in Appendix D, Figure A32 (p. 151):

TABLE 1 - COLOUR CODES FOR CHORD PROGRESSIONS

Orange and yellow tones	Chord progressions related to Tin Pan Alley music, such as ii-V-I turnarounds, chromatic and stepwise movements, major-minor ‘falls’ and ‘rises’, and any variants on these progressions.
Purple tones	Doo-wop progressions and variants.
Maroon tones	12 bar blues progressions and variants
Blue tones	General I-IV-V progressions that are <i>not</i> 12-bar blues.
Red	Unexpected progressions that do not fit into the four other broad categories.

To see how these colours function, shows parts of “Hawaii” coloured peach (indicating a ii-V-I progression) and a light purple, indicating a variant on the basic doo-wop progression (“Hawaii” uses a I-iv-II-V instead, with the II played as a major chord, rather than minor as in a traditional doo-wop progression). Looking at this chart, we can see that the Beach Boys were using inspiration from simple musical material, such as doo-wop, while also incorporating more sophisticated Tin Pan Alley turnarounds (the ii-V-I), and the combination of these two musical approaches is seen clearly in the music of *Surfer Girl* (1963), which was the first album to integrate seamlessly integrate both of these musical influences. In cataloguing the Beach Boys chord progressions in this way, these kinds of connections can be made and seen more clearly.

FIGURE 19 - COLOURED CHORD CHART FOR HAWAII

HAWAII							
INTRO							
Bbm		Eb					
:	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Do you	wanna	go	straight to				
CHORUS:							
Ab							
/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Haw aii	(haw aii)	Haw ai	(haw aii)	straight to	ha-w a	-ii	oh
Bbm		Eb		Ab			
/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
do you (Honolulu, Waikiki)	wanna come	along with me	(do you wanna come along with me?)				
VERSE:							
Db				Ab			
/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1. I heard about all the	pretty girls	w with their	grass skirts down to their knees	all my			
2. Now I don't care what	town you're from but don't	tell me that they've got bigger waves.	cause every				
3. Pretty soon this	winter	they'll hold	the surfing championship of the year	surfer			
Fm		Bb		Eb			
/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
life I wanted to	see the islands of Ha	-w aii.					go to
-one that goes comes	back with nothing but	raves.					that's in
guys and girls will be	coming from far and	near.					go to

Lyrical Themes

The chapter on lyrical themes uses several different graphical representations to display findings and trends over time, such as the use of “Wordle” word-frequency diagrams, area, bar and pie charts.

Wordle diagrams

Wordle is a java-based web interface⁹ that creates “word clouds” from inputted data. These clouds are then customizable in terms of font, colour and text alignment. Lyrics were copied as long strings of text and pasted in to the web interface to be analysed by Wordle (see below for an example).

FIGURE 20 - EXAMPLE OF A WORDLE DIAGRAM WITH LYRICS TO THE SURFER GIRL LP

⁹ Accessible at: <http://www.wordle.net>

Wilson's writing partners, and pie charts to show the broadening of angles within a single lyrical category (songs about cars are a good example of this). The largest and most complicated diagram is the final "area" chart, which depicts all of the information about lyrical themes, changes over time, and the percentage to which they are used, in one single page through the use of colour and shape. The area chart (also used in the instrumentation chapter) is a way to show several levels of information simultaneously, and as one musical element is often inextricably linked to many others, it one of the most effective methods of showing many changes over time.

Vocals

The chapter on vocals uses the highest amount of differing types of representation, from pie charts, bar charts to coloured tables. The chapter itself approaches the Beach Boys' vocals from several angles, and as such, allowed for several kinds of methodological approaches to the analysis and depiction of musical information too.

Pie charts and line graphs are used in two different ways. Pie charts effectively "zoom in" on a large amount of musical data (such as the use of blow harmonies) while line graphs show changes over time, such as the use of nonsense syllables and falsetto vocals. The use of both of these kinds of representations mean that the Beach Boys' music can be viewed beyond just description, and can address vocals from a variety of angles in the hopes of offering a broad, but detailed look at their style. Windsor (2004) makes use of several line graphs as examples of best showing changes to music over time, as does Clarke (2004), and as such, are often suitable in a study such as this, which charts musical changes over time.

Much like line graphs, bar charts are also an effective methodological tool as "musical data often consists of successive measurements of some variable over time" and the "clearest way to display it is the form of a line or bar chart" (Windsor, 2004, p. 210). The vocals chapter makes use of two large bar charts. The first compares the Beach Boys' songs to contemporaneous artists on Gribbin & Schiff's (1992) "scale of doo-wopishness". The second is one of the most complicated charts in this study, and is a visual representation of the frequency of different background harmony styles. This latter chart was successful in displaying not only the kinds of harmonies the Beach Boys sung, but when they sung them, and how often. The collection of harmony data took many hours of dedicated listening, and the conversion of this data into numerical representations required an extremely methodical approach to ensure no mistakes

were made. Though this process of several steps, this bar chart was able to represent the Beach Boys' harmonies with a broad, birds-eye view that effectively displayed the ACA model over time.

Traditional and Sociological Methods

Although much of this study has steered away from the use of traditional notation, in some cases, it provided the best and clearest way of displaying musical information. As important as other, more creative methods of showing musical information are to this study, there is no reason to use "other" methods if they serve no clear purpose. If traditional musicological methods more clearly get at the workings of the Beach Boys' music, then they should be considered. As such, the chapters on rhythmic feels and vocals both make use of some simple notation of basic rhythms and melodic lines.

The chapter on rhythm uses traditional notation to highlight the ways in which the Beach Boys defined their three main rhythmic feels, but also how they augmented these basic rhythms to grow creatively. In the chapter on vocals, the melody lines of several songs have been notated so that the vocal styles of Mike Love and Brian Wilson can be contrasted in terms of their vocal roles. In every instance of traditional notation, lyrics are included (so that the reader may mentally "sing along" to understand what is being referred to), along with a track time code (so that a listener may hear the section discussed without the need for understanding notation). Tagg (2011) has advocated the use of a time code in musical analysis, which, as a result means "anyone can unequivocally designate any item of musical structuration that occurs on a digital recording" (p. 15). In the interests of accessibility, any traditional musicological methods used in this study are also accompanied by lyrics and time code information. In addition, Tagg's representations of melodic contour also accompany any traditional notation of melody in the interests of accessibility and clarity (see Tagg, 2009, pp. 61-63).

Social Considerations

In addition to considering the relationships between musical attributes, it is also important to contextualise those musical attributes within the time and place it exists. Numerous authors have argued in favour of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of popular music. For example, Everett (1999, p. xi) sees musicology, cultural, social and media studies, critical theory and reception history "as complementary and informative to the well-read, well-balanced listener". Similarly, Brackett (2000, p. x) argues that

“musical meaning is socially constructed – even the type of musical meaning that seems to derive from internal musical relationships.” He continues, “Nevertheless...I remain convinced that the *sounds* of music – the way they are produced, the way they differ from one another, the way they resemble each other, the relationship between specific gestures and their effects – are important.” Middleton also states that methods that apply to “diverse music’s a point of view deriving from one perspective, and methods which simply aggregate varying perspectives, are equally unsatisfactory. The musicologist has to recognise the existence and the interaction – within a society, within a history – of different musical problematics” (1990, p. 125). Finally, Covach (1999) reinforces this point by arguing “socially-grounded interpretations of popular music...are incomplete whenever they cannot account for the specifically musical aspects of the music. A musicological account of popular music can co-exist with a sociological account; the two approaches are complementary” (p. 466).

That these scholars all agree that an interdisciplinary approach is necessary for a cohesive understanding of popular music suggests that the study of the Beach Boys’ sound would benefit from the inclusion of socio-cultural aspects important to their history. The Beach Boys’ unique musical sound consists of specific musical elements, but is also inextricably linked to Californian life, ideals and youth culture in the 1960s. A study that does not include some reference to these elements would be inadequate for understanding the complex musical and social relationships that define Beach Boys’ sound.

The socio-cultural framework most referenced in this study is David Leaf’s (1978) concept of the California Myth (described in detail in the introduction chapter) and its ability to link music and place. The Beach Boys’ construction of their California myth permeates not just their history and lyrical content, but is also present in their musical make up too, from the use of particular recording techniques that add a particular “warmth” to their vocals, to their representation of positivity in the use of only major tonality throughout this 1962-66 period. This was much the same way for the Beatles, whose musical sound was shaped by their life in Liverpool (its history as a port city enabled the group to acquire American R & B records earlier than if they had been situated in London, for example), so much so that Everett (2001) includes an entire chapter on a “Historical Narrative” and includes maps of the city in his incredibly detailed study of their music. Later on, the 1960s “golden age” of British life shaped the sound of 1990s Britpop music both musically and lyrically (Bennett, 1997). The idea of place is so important to the understanding of surf music in general that McCarter’s

(2012) study of surf music is specifically shaped in terms of the music's geography, including maps of surfing locations mentioned in lyrics, along with popular surfing beaches.

Beyond their connection to surf music, the Beach Boys' music is a clear product of the place in which they lived, from their song titles, album covers, to the group's title as the *Beach* Boys. As such, care has been taken to contextualise musical findings, where appropriate, within a wider context of their history, family life, musical influences, surf culture, recording history, drug use and their strong connection to their home in Southern California.

Conclusion

With popular music studies' long history, many scholars have engaged with the complicated debate of how best to study pop music, and what methods and techniques are most appropriate to understand how this music works. These methods range from understanding the cultural context around the creation of music, the use of empirical methods to show musical data, and various forms of visual representation of musical findings. The work of Moore (2012), Tagg (2009), Brackett (2000), Machine (2010) and Deal (2012), all use varying types of musical visualisation, from spectrograms to tables, info graphics and charts to best represent musical findings, often with a view towards musical comparison.

This study draws from these social, visual, empirical and notational approaches, and combines them in a way that is best suited to a study of the Beach Boys' music. These approaches can be broken into three main categories: the use of statistic and tables (used throughout each chapter), colour coding and charts (used in the instrumentation, chord progressions and lyrics chapters) and the use of area, bar and pie charts (used in the lyrics and vocals chapters). The chapters on rhythm and vocals make use of some traditional notation, however, time codes and melodic contour diagrams have been included for ease of reference for these sections.

Finally, this study aims to contextualise this musical information within the time and place the Beach Boys' music was produced, with particular reference to their creation of Leaf's (1978) California myth. The sun is shining, the waves are curling, and it's time to jump in! Grab your board: surf's up!

Chapter 3: Song Structures

"I'll let you look, but don't touch my custom machine!"

Song structures (or musical form¹²) are, put simply, a "constructive or organizing element in music" (Whittall, n.d.). Everett (2009) takes this further by describing a song's structure as both a combination of grouped musical or vocal phrases and the way in which "phrases are constructed, how they are grouped together to form sections, and how sections relate to each other to form complete songs" (p. 141). Covach (2006) also shares Everett's definition, describing a study of musical form as "a study of the way sections are structured in a piece of music and the way these sections combine to produce larger structures" (p. 94). Moore (1993) is more specific, referring to a song's structure as "the conventional formal divisions found in rock: verse, refrain (or chorus), bridge, introduction, coda and solo (break)" (p. 47). These descriptions highlight the difficulty in talking about song structures in popular music, as there are many terms used to describe song sections, and these terms are not always widely agreed upon (a problem Philip Tagg has often wrestled with [see Tagg, 2011]). I have experienced this as a recording musician, and recall a confused conversation in the studio between myself and a friend. After several disappointing takes we eventually figured out that what *I* referred to as a "pre-chorus" *he* referred to as a "bridge"; perhaps we should have defined our terms more clearly before recording! Keeping this difficulty with terminology in mind, the following analysis will feature definitions in the footnotes, along with song examples and lyrics to better highlight sections clearly.

There are several kinds of song sections (verses, choruses, refrains, solos, bridges, instrumental breaks, and codas) and the Beach Boys make use of all of these in various combinations throughout the period of 1962-1966. This analysis of song structures looks at the types of musical sections employed, their place in larger structures (such as the AABA form), and, importantly, how these larger structures relate to each other. A song's structure forms the scaffolding that holds together the rest of the musical material, and by comparing what is common and uncommon in the structures of Beach Boys' songs, we can piece together the basic elements of the Beach Boys' musical sound upon which, in later chapters, we can layer other musical elements.

¹² "Structure" and "form" will be used interchangeably in the following analysis.

While previous studies of the Beach Boys' music do mention the role of song structure (Lambert, 2009; Curnutt, 2012), it is usually in conjunction with other musical elements, particularly chord progressions, as their roles are often connected. However, there have been several specific studies of structure in the music of the Beatles (Covach, 2006; Everett; 1999, 2001; Pedler, 2001) that are useful in understanding structural changes in the Beach Boys' music, as the two groups often mirror each other throughout the same period. Covach (2006) specifically describes the craft to art movement in the Beatles work, and this study will similarly look at the Beach Boys' song structures through the ACA model.

The Influence of Tin Pan Alley and Brill Building Songwriting Styles.

To understand the progression of song structures in the Beach Boys music, it is necessary to understand the development of popular song through the music of Tin Pan Alley and the Brill Building.

Tin Pan Alley constituted a large number of music publishers and businesses that opened and flourished in New York City during the late 19th and early-to-mid 20th centuries. The Brill Building was the most famous of these sites, and was a large high-rise building housing many offices where songwriters would come to write their hit songs. The birth of Tin Pan Alley is said to have begun in 1885 and finished around 1950, just before the birth of rock and roll (Wilder, 1972). During the Tin Pan Alley period, the craft of writing popular songs was honed to such a degree that song-writing teams were almost assured successful hit songs based on song writing formulas. These could be harmonic formulas (such as the II-V-I progression often used to start classic Tin Pan Alley songs), lyrical formulas (the use of word-play, in-line rhymes, metaphor, wit and humour), but most notably structural formulas, with the development of the AABA form. Often, these songs were what Furia & Lasser (2006) call "miniatures": songs neatly packed into just 32 bars. The most successful of the Tin Pan Alley songwriters were the partnerships of George and Ira Gershwin ("I Got Rhythm" [1930], "S'wonderful"[1927]), Richard Rogers and Lorenz Hart ("My Funny Valentine" [1937], "The Lady is a Tramp" [1937]), along with Jerome Kern ("All The Things You Are" [1939], "The Way You Look Tonight" [1936]), and Cole Porter ("Night and Day" [1932], "I've Got You Under My Skin" [1936]). These songs continue to be referred to as "standards", or part of the Great American Songbook: a repertoire of songs that jazz musicians frequently refer to (Furia & Lasser, 2006, p. xxvi). Although these songs were often based on structural formulas, Tin Pan Alley writers used them in many varied and creative ways. Furia & Lasser sum

this up well, noting that the popularity of Tin Pan Alley writers was because they “were not writing about themselves; they were writing about us. They were “democratic populists” who gave voice to the American people” (p. xxvi). Further, they note that:

Our songwriters have given us an emotional history of our times by encapsulating our attitudes, values and behaviour...[that] somehow these practical businessmen wrote songs of intricate artistry and urbane wit for Broadway musicals and Hollywood films: some debonair patter for Fred Astaire in a top hat, white tie and tails, on a penthouse balcony against the New York skyline, or a gritty, street-smart number that sees through the hip-hooray and ballyhoo of Hollywood (Furia & Lasser, 2006, p. xxvi).

Lyrically and musically, the Beach Boys tried to emulate this too, by giving voice to the culture of Southern California at the time, and to the idealistic dreams of youth in general. They could at once express the joy and freedom of summer in “All Summer Long”, but similarly could admit that youth “won’t last forever, it’s kinda sad” in “When I Grow Up (to be a man)”.

As the popularity of Tin Pan Alley songs and songwriters began to wane during the early 1950s, a new group of young songwriters started to populate both the offices of the Brill Building and the offices at 1659 Broadway. The bridge between the old styles of Tin Pan Alley and the new music of the Brill Building was the music of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. These two young songwriters were both obsessed with black R & B music *and* their Tin Pan Alley heroes¹³, most notably George Gershwin and Cole Porter. They admired Tin Pan Alley music so much that they were known to belittle their own compositions, Stoller explaining “[We] said that what we wrote were records and that these recordings were like newspapers or magazines in that they’d last a month and then they’d be gone...All the standards had been written *we thought*” (Emerson, 2006, p. 51). It was the combination of these two loves – the rhythms and youthful energy of R & B combined with the arrangements and song-writing structures of Tin Pan Alley - that formed a new hybrid in popular music. Leiber and Stoller’s most notable hits include “Hound Dog” (1953) and “Jailhouse Rock” (1957) for Elvis Presley, “Searchin’” (1957) and “Yakity Yak” (1958) by the Coasters and “There Goes My Baby” (1959) by the Drifters – however, these songs only scratch the surface of their chart success.

¹³ Ken Emerson (2006, p. 7) writes about the early partnership of Leiber and Stoller: “Leiber and Stoller spent the early 1950s writing mostly for local R & B performers...Under the gaze of a photograph inscribed by George Gershwin, Stoller pattered on an upright piano in his parents’ apartment.”

With the beginning of Aldon Music (a publishing company started by Don Kirshner and Al Nevins at the offices of 1650 Broadway), a host of new musical partnerships began to achieve chart success with a variety of different musical groups, most notably the many “girl groups” of the early 1960s. These writers were barely older than the audiences they wrote for, and this meant they were able to express the joys and anxieties of teenage life without condescension (Inglis, 2003). The partnerships of Carole King & Gerry Goffin, Barry Mann & Cynthia Weil, Burt Bacharach & Hal David, Neil Sedaka & Howard Greenfield, Jeff Barry & Ellie Greenwich form the basis of the Brill Building song writing style.

The Beatles were also inspired by the Brill Building songwriters and recorded several covers of Brill Building songs. They also included elements of the Brill Building style into their own early compositions. Inglis (2003) lists many musical comparisons between the early Beatles’ recordings and Brill Building era pop songs:

A lyrical concern with relationships, a preference for major or hexatonic scales, a typical tempo of 120-149 beats per minute, *a standard reliance on the AABA form, a melodic contrast between A and B sections*, an unusual complexity on chord progressions, and a routine modulation to a different key in the bridges of their songs [Emphasis added] (Inglis, 2003, p. 222).

The same can be said of the Beach Boys, as their songs also utilised some of these musical attributes during the same early-to-mid 1960s period, and in particular, the reliance on the AABA form. Brill Building songs like “Up on the Roof” (1962) by the Drifters (Goffin/King), “Baby It’s You” (1961) by the Shirelles (Hal/Bacharach), “Leader of the Pack” (1964) by the Shangri-Las (Barry/Greenwich), “Poison Ivy” (1959) by the Coasters (Leiber/Stoller) and “He’s Sure the Boy I Love” (1963) by the Crystals (Mann/Weil) were penned by different song writing partnerships, though they all employ the AABA form. These songs are only a small sample of AABA songs during the ‘golden era’ of the Brill Building and the influence of these songs is heard in the Beach Boys’ music in two ways: firstly through the recording and performing of Brill Building covers¹⁴ and, secondly, in Brian Wilson’s own penchant for AABA structures during the 1963-64 period.

¹⁴ “Hushabye” written by Doc Pomus and Mort Shuman (originally performed by the Mystics) and “Then I Kissed Her” written by Jeff Barry, Ellie Greenwich and Phil Spector (originally performed by The Crystals) were both recorded by the Beach Boys during the 1962-66 period. “There’s No Other Like My Baby” written by Phil Spector and Leroy Bates (originally performed

Using both the definition of structure outlined by Everett (2009) and Covach (2006) and an understanding of the role of Tin Pan Alley and Brill Building influences, the following discussion will outline song structures used by the Beach Boys, their variations, and how these relate to the development of the Beach Boys sound.

An Overview of Beach Boys' Song Structures

There are six main structural categories in the Beach Boys early repertoire: AABA, verse-chorus structures, 12-bar blues structures, unconventional structures, simple verse and surf rock structures. By exploring the progression of particular structures in the Beach Boys' music, we can better understand the impact of their musical influences, the development of their music style and how these relate to their unique sound. Figure 21 is a visualisation of the Beach Boys' song structures over the nine studio albums between 1962 and 1966. Each row represents a different album, while each coloured block represents the varying types of song structures. These colours are ordered from the most common structures to the least common structures rather than track order. Arranging the chart in this way gives a clearer overview of the types of structures used and their frequency over time.

by the Crystals) was included on the Beach Boys' *Party!* "One Kiss Lead To Another" written by Leiber and Stoller and "The Diary" written by Neil Sedaka were also recorded for *Party!* however, they were not included in the final release. Another cover - "I Can Hear Music" (1969) written by Barry/Greenwich/Spector (originally performed by the Ronettes) – was included on the *20/20* album.

FIGURE 21- DEPICTION OF SONG STRUCTURES OVER ALL NINE ALBUMS.

Surfin' Safari													
Surfin' USA													
Surfer Girl													
Little Deuce Coupe													
Shut Down													
All Summer Long													
Today!													
Summer Days...													
Pet Sounds													

Colour Key						
AABA	Verse - Chorus	12-Bar Blues	Complex	Simple Verse	Surf Rock	Spoken Word

The progression of Beach Boys structures is best understood in four parts that closely follow the ACA model. Part one (1962 to early 1963) is the “early period” and includes the *Surfin' Safari* and *Surfin' USA* albums. These two albums display the greatest variety of structures and represent the Beach Boys first experimentations in finding their songwriting style. Brian Wilson utilises all six types of song structure over this short period, learning which ones worked best for his musical ideas and which did not.

Part two (late 1963-64) is the “AABA” period and includes the *Surfer Girl*, *Little Deuce Coupe*, *Shut Down* and *All Summer Long* albums. These four albums see a shift from using many structures, to a focus on the AABA structure. This period covers the Beach Boys’ craftsmen period, where songs using the AABA structure were modelled on the professional song writing formulas of Tin Pan Alley and the Brill Building.

Part three (1965) is the “verse-chorus” (VC) period and includes the *Today* and

Summer Days albums. During this time, there is a move away from the AABA structure to a more frequent use of the verse-chorus structure. This period can be seen as the move from the *craft* of song writing, to the *art* of song writing through the use of more open structural frameworks suitable for longer, more complicated musical ideas.

Part four (1966), covering only the *Pet Sounds* album, can be considered as the Beach Boys' "experimental" period. In Figure 21, we can see a gradual movement away from verse-chorus to compound and unconventional structures. It is during this period (and up to the end of 1967) where Brian Wilson was at his most inventive both musically and structurally. Both *Pet Sounds* and the songs written for the aborted *Smile* album (which were instead released on 1967's *Smiley Smile*) show the increased use of unconventional structures, which reflected the psychedelic music the Beach Boys created during this time.

These four periods show the progression of song structures over time, and this chapter will discuss these six categories in the order in which they most commonly appear in the ACA model.

12-Bar Blues Structure

The twelve-bar blues structure is a well-established progression in rock music and consists of a repeated 12-bar section that passes through the I, IV and V chords of the given key. Early rock and roll songs such as "Roll Over Beethoven" (1956) by Chuck Berry, "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" (1957) by Jerry Lee Lewis and "Rave On" (1958) by Buddy Holly utilise this progression. While the 12-bar structure was used much earlier in Chicago and jump blues, it was through the music of the 1950s that the Beach Boys were made familiar with it. The Beatles also wrote and covered many 12-bar blues songs in the early 1960s period, including "Roll Over Beethoven" (1963). Similarly, the Four Seasons covered Fats Domino's "Ain't That A Shame" (1963), another variation on the 12 bar progression.

An example of the Beach Boys' connection to 1950s rock and roll is "Surfin' USA." The song was a deliberate homage to Chuck Berry, borrowing the melody from "Sweet Little Sixteen" and replacing the original lyrics with surfing themes. "Surfin' USA" was so close in nature to "Sweet Little Sixteen" that Berry sued the Beach Boys for song-writing credits (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 12). Berry now appears as a co-writer on "Surfin' USA". This song is an illuminating example of the close, influential relationship between the

music of Chuck Berry, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and other rock and roll performers and the early music of the Beach Boys.

TABLE 2- 12-BAR BLUES STRUCTURE AND VARIATIONS.

409 (1962)	Surf Jam (1963)
Summertime Blues (1962)*	Let's Go Trippin' (1963)
Surfin' USA (1963)	Catch a Wave (1963)*
Stoked (1963)	Boogie Woodie (1963)
Shut Down (1963)	Shut Down Part II (1964)
Honky Tonk (1963)	Carl's Big Chance (1964)

Grouping songs with 12-bar progressions proved difficult. The 12-bar is both a type of structure *and* a harmonic progression and, as such, songs can also fit into larger structures, such as the AABA form. To separate these accordingly, songs placed in the 12-bar blues structure feature a repeated 12-bar pattern that is unchanging throughout. For example, four songs (“South Bay Surfer”, “Little Deuce Coupe”, “Our Car Club” and “I’m Bugged at My Old Man”) are based on a 12-bar progression; however, they also include a “B” section that deviates from the typical 12-bar pattern. As such, these four songs are considered to use an AABA structure, rather than a 12-bar blues.

From the 12 songs in Table 2, eight are instrumental tracks consisting of a surf rock covers (“Let’s Go Trippin’” by Dick Dale [1961]), a 1950s R & B cover (“Honky Tonk” by Bill Doggett [1956]) and six other original songs, most in a surf rock style. Four songs, “409”, “Summertime Blues” (a cover of the 1958 Eddie Cochran song), “Shut Down” and “Catch a Wave” feature vocals. Of these four songs, two feature slight variations on the 12-bar progression without affecting the overall structure. “Summertime Blues” features a syncopated rhythm, while “Catch a Wave” substitutes the last 4 bars of the 12-bar cycle with an alternate turnaround under the hook (“Catch a wave and you’re sitting on top of the world”).

The 12-bar structure’s primary use in the Beach Boys’ music was to experiment with improvisation through instrumental “jams.” This was especially the case for Carl Wilson, who featured on lead guitar throughout the first three albums in particular. In other songs, such as “The Rocking Surfer” and “Boogie Woodie”, Brian Wilson improvised repeated phrases on the Hammond organ and piano respectively. After early 1964, the structure was abandoned in favour of more complicated harmonic

progressions and larger structural frameworks, such as AABA, verse-chorus and compound structures.

Simple Verse Structure

The simple verse structure consists of a single chord progression or “verse” that is repeated with different lyrics. Unlike verse-chorus or AABA songs, there is no bridge or “B” section. In his study of the Beatles, Covach (2006) categorises simple verse songs as a variation on the traditional verse-chorus structure, however, these two structures stem from different roots. While verse-chorus was relatively unused until the late 1950s to early 1960s, simple verse has a long tradition in early folk and country music, and as such, they have been separated into two distinct structural categories in this study.

Walter Everett (2009) notes that while many songs followed a more traditional verse-chorus structure a “surprisingly large amount of songs, however, violate this norm by containing only a single form of a section that is repeated for the song’s duration without contrasting material. Clearly, folk songs are the historical basis for this stanzic procedure” (p. 141). Everett names several folk-inspired songs as examples, however, with the exception of “Ten Little Indians,” the Beach Boys’ examples of simple verse structure do not musically stem from folk influences in the way that Everett’s Bob Dylan and Joan Baez examples do. The Beach Boys’ songs have more in common with early Motown hits like “Please Mister Postman” (1961) by the Marvellettes, “Baby Love” (1964) by the Supremes or “Yakety Yak” (1958) by the Coasters, in that they are not folk-inspired, nor utilise a repeated 12-bar blues progression.

TABLE 3 - SONGS USING SIMPLE VERSE STRUCTURE.

Ten Little Indians (1962)
Lana (1963)
Pom Pom Play Girl (1964)*
Warmth of the Sun (1964)
And Your Dream Comes True (1965)

Only five Beach Boys songs use the simple verse structure – “Ten Little Indians”, “Lana”, “Pom Pom Play Girl”, “Warmth of the Sun” and “And Your Dream Comes True”. Although there are so few examples of simple verse, a progression can still be observed over these songs. “Ten Little Indians” is a rock and roll version of a children’s song and, as such, suits the repetitive nature of simple-verse. Similarly, “Lana” has a repeated

chordal progression and melody throughout each verse. The playful toy piano solo also expresses a child-like quality. By 1964, songs in simple verse were offset by more complicated chordal progressions. “Pom Pom Play Girl”, while lyrically quite innocuous, uses unexpected chordal movements and varied harmony parts, such as the “chi-chi-nah” backing vocals during the verse sections.

This increased complexity culminated in “Warmth of the Sun”, whose simple structure created space for unexpected chordal movements, layered vocals parts and complicated modulations. In many ways, “Warmth of the Sun” gives the illusion of an AABA song, from the ballad feel to the change in harmony during the refrain section. Instead, it uses a variation by repeating the A section in a modulated key, becoming an “A1” section.

The final song, “And Your Dream Comes True”, doesn’t fit the progression of the other four as it is a short, two-verse a capella song that is sung as a harmonised lullaby. The vocal style and harmonies, very similar to that of the Four Freshmen, is closely sung and overdubbed creating a large melodic range. This song functions as a dream-like close to the *Summer Days* album – a final farewell to the summer that the Beach Boys, in some ways, never returned to. After “And Your Dream Comes True”, the simple verse structure was not used again during the 1962-66 period.

Surf Rock (AB) Structures

In early surf music, there was no particular “surf structure”, rather, these songs were most commonly a mix of variations on the 12-bar blues. As these songs were often instrumental (particularly in the case of Dick Dale), the 12-bar blues structure gave surf guitarists room to explore melodies and solo throughout a song. Three songs from the 101 considered tracks are surf rock instrumentals, but employ a slight twist on a standard 12-bar structure. Two of these songs, “Moon Dawg” and “Misirlou,” are covers of popular surf hits (by The Gamblers and Dick Dale respectively), while “The Rocking Surfer” was a Beach Boys’ attempt to ape the surf style, substituting the guitar for an organ instead.

TABLE 4 - SONGS USING SURF ROCK (AB) STRUCTURES.

Moon Dawg (1962)
Misirlou (1963)
The Rocking Surfer (1963)

These three songs use an AB structure, where the first “theme” is stated in the A section and a second is used in the B section. These two sections repeat throughout the song. Dick Dale made a conscious effort to make his instrumental music imitate the movement of the ocean’s waves and reflect the experience of a “real surfer” (McParland, 2003). This is exemplified in “Misirlou” where the A theme is fast-paced and rhythmic, symbolising a turbulent ocean, while the B theme is more sparse, symbolising moments of calm. The AB structure was only used on surf instrumentals in the Beach Boys’ music and after 1963 it was abandoned entirely.

The 12-bar, simple verse and surf rock structures occur most frequently on the Beach Boys’ first two records *Surfin’ Safari* and *Surfin’ USA*. These simple frameworks were a way for the Beach Boys to find their own musical style by mimicking music that inspired them, from the 12-bar blues of 1950s rock and roll, to the surf music they tried to authentically emulate. After these two albums, Brian Wilson began to hone his song-writing craft, producing music for the group that was uniquely their own. The results of Brian Wilson’s development is expressed best in their AABA and verse-chorus (VC) songs.

AABA Structure and Variations

The two most common structures are the AABA and the VC form. From 101 songs, 38 feature an AABA structure (37.6%), very closely followed by verse-chorus structure with 36 songs. The two song forms are different in several ways, both in their history and their structural make up. The letters in the AABA form refer to the two sections that make up this particular structure: the “A” section refers to the verse section and the “B” section represents the bridge section, which is different lyrically and musically to the “A” section. Instead of a repeated chorus section like songs in VC, AABA songs feature the use of a refrain, which is a short (usually four bars) repeated phrase that begins or, more commonly, concludes the “A” section. An example outlining the AABA structure of “Surfer Girl” is outlined in Figure 22, where the green colour denotes the “A” section and the blue colour denotes the “B” section:

FIGURE 22 - "SURFER GIRL" AABA SONG STRUCTURE

Little surfer little one Made my heart come all undone	A Section
Do you love me, do you surfer girl?	Refrain
I have watched you on the shore Standing by the ocean's roar	A Section
Do you love me, do you surfer girl?	Refrain
We could ride the surf together While our love would grow In my woodie I would take you Everywhere I go	B Section
So I say from me to you I will make your dreams come true	A Section
Do you love me, do you surfer girl?	Refrain

There are several underlying reasons for the use of the AABA structure: the suitability of the structure for emotional ballads (which increase in frequency from 1963 onwards), the highly-structured nature of the form gave a tried and tested framework upon which to layer the Beach Boys' ideas, and, finally, the use of the structure by other pop contemporaries during this time.

TABLE 5- SONGS IN AABA STRUCTURE

The Shift (1962)	All Summer Long (1964)
County Fair (1962)*	Hushabye (1964)
Farmer's Daughter (1962)	We'll Run Away (1964)
Surfer Girl (1963)	Wendy (1964)**
The Surfer Moon (1963)	Do You Remember? (1964)
South Bay Surfer (1963)*	Girls on the Beach (1964)
Little Deuce Coupe (1963)	Drive-In (1964)
In My Room (1963)	When I Grow Up (To Be a Man) (1965)**
Surfers Rule (1963)**	I'm So Young (1965)*
Our Car Club (1963)	In the Back of My Mind (1965)
Your Summer Dream (1963)	Amusement Parks U.S.A (1965)**
Ballad of Ole Betsy (1963)	Salt Lake City (1965)**
No Go Showboat (1963)**	Then I Kissed Her (1965)

A Young Man is Gone (1963)	You're So Good To Me (1965)*
Fun Fun Fun (1964)	Summer Means New Love (1965)
In The Parkin' Lot (1964)	I'm Bugged at My Old Man (1965)
Why Do Fools Fall in Love (1964)	God Only Knows (1966)*
This Car of Mine (1964)*	Here Today (1966)*
Keep an Eye on Summer (1964)	Caroline, No (1966)*

There is a strong and clear connection between AABA and slow-tempo ballads: half of all AABA songs are ballads (a considerable number when compared to verse-chorus structure with only 6 ballad songs). This connection is for two main reasons: firstly, many doo-wop and Brill Building songs also used this structure in ballad songs, and secondly, using a structure popular in the 1940s and 1950s gives AABA songs a nostalgic quality that compliments the romantic or emotional themes in ballad song lyrics.

Doo-wop was a particular type of black, vocal music performed during the early to late 1950s. This type of vocal music has its roots in the streets of black neighbourhoods in Chicago and New York, where young men would gather on street corners in groups and sing (Pruter, 1996). Often from low socio-economic areas, the teenagers who sung doo-wop could rarely afford instruments and the distinct harmonised, rhythmic vocal style of doo-wop developed as a way for vocals to represent the drums, bass and guitars that would usually form an arrangement. Doo-wop of the 1950s has many examples of AABA songs, with "A Teenager in Love" (1959) by Dion and the Belmonts, "In the Still of the Night" (1956) by the Five Satins, "Book of Love" (1958) by the Monotones and "16 Candles" (1958) by the Crests, all using this structure.

These doo-wop songs were of particular influence to the Beach Boys, exemplified in their recorded covers of doo-wop hits, such as "Little Girl (You're My Miss America)" in 1962, "Why Do Fools Fall In Love" and "Hushabye" in 1964 and "I'm So Young" in 1965. In addition to these covers, many Beach Boys songs in the 1963-64 period were modelled on doo-wop structures. "The Surfer Moon", "In My Room", "Ballad of Ole' Betsy", "Keep an Eye on Summer", among others, followed closely to doo-wop ballad formulas in terms of lead vocals (the use of falsetto), background vocals (the use of nonsense syllable vocals), chord progressions (using the I vi ii V or I-vi-IV V chord sequence), lyrical themes (emotional, introspective lyrics) and structure (AABA).

Doo-wop music was of influence to the Wilson brothers, and the music was often sung at family gatherings, especially with their cousin Mike Love (see Carlin, 2006, p. 21). However, by the time of the Beach Boys' first official release, some of the doo-wop songs that inspired their music were almost 10 years old, and in this way, the Beach Boys' ballads based on doo-wop formulas evoked a dreamy American nostalgia of drive-in movies, root beer stands and summer romance (Lambert, 2009, p. 13).

During the formative song-writing period of the early 1960s, Brian Wilson's use of the AABA structure could be seen as not only harking back to older styles, but a simple, formalised structure to build his ideas upon. During this early period, the musical focus was not on complex, psychedelic music (as during the verse-chorus period), it was on the release of successful singles. As the 32-bar AABA structure is succinct, consisting of only two contrasting sections, many singles during this period utilised this structure, such as "Surfer Girl", "Little Deuce Coupe" and "Fun Fun Fun". The simple, short and repetitive nature of the AABA was suited to a period of time when the release of singles was more important than the development and creation of an album of 'listening' music. This trend can also be seen through the music of contemporary artists, with the Beatles using the AABA form in "I Saw Her Standing There" (1963), "I Should Have Known Better" (1964) and "I Feel Fine" (1964), and the Four Seasons using it in "Sherry" (1962) and "Marlena" (1963) before an overall trend towards the VC form.

Variations on AABA Structure

Although AABA is highly structured, slight variations appear in their repertoire. Brian Wilson's occasional toying with structural styles in the Beach Boys' early period points to the further experimentation with structure in 1965-1966. There are two main variations on the AABA structure employed by the Beach Boys' during this period – the "AABA extension" and "SDRC" structures.

AABA Extensions.

AABA extensions use the basic AABA structure with the addition of extra sections, usually at the end of a song. These sections can be repetitions of previously heard material (as in "God Only Knows"), altered versions (usually instrumental) of previously heard sections (the A1 section in "This Car of Mine"), the addition of new musical material (the C section in "I'm So Young") or a rearranging of the order of A and B sections ("County Fair").

TABLE 6- SONGS FEATURING AABA EXTENSIONS

Song	Structure Pattern
County Fair (1962)	ABABA1
South Bay Surfer (1963)	ABA1BA1
In The Parkin' Lot (1964)	Intro- AABA -Outro
This Car of Mine (1964)	AABA1C
I'm So Young (1965)	AABAC
You're So Good to Me (1965)	AABAABB
God Only Knows (1966)	AABAA-outro
Here Today (1966)	AAB 1/2A A-outro
Caroline No (1966)	AABAA1

Nine songs (23.7%) use extended AABA structures. "County Fair" "South Bay Surfer", "You're So Good To Me", "God Only Knows" and "Here Today" all make use of an additional A or B section within the traditional AABA structure. Four songs – "County Fair", "South Bay Surfer", "This Car of Mine" and "Caroline, No" - make use of altered sections, usually in the form of an instrumental section or a section that is half its regular length.

Three songs incorporate a new "C" section at the end of the song. "This Car of Mine" and "I'm So Young" feature a new (but harmonically related) musical section as an outro¹⁵, while "In the Parkin' Lot" uses a "C" section as an intro and outro. Finally, "County Fair", "South Bay Surfer" and "Here Today" use a rearranged order of the AABA structure. These songs use contrasting A and B sections, however, they alternate between A and B, rather than a repetition of the A section. Although only a small grouping of songs make use of extended structures, these nine songs are examples of Brian Wilson's experimentation with traditional musical frameworks.

¹⁵ A short passage, often using similar musical material as the introduction section, which is used to finish a song. In the case of the Beach Boys, this section is often features as a song fades out.

The SRDC Structure.

SRDC structure stands for “statement – restatement – departure – conclusion” and can be seen as a precursor to the later verse-chorus form (Everett, 2009, p. 140). In the case of the Beach Boys, they occasionally use structures that consist of a traditional “A” section (as in AABA) followed by what sounds like a pre-chorus¹⁶, however, there is no chorus section that follows. Instead, a one line refrain repeats at the end of each section, usually of four bars in length. As these songs in SRDC structure do not feature a chorus, it is more accurate to refer to song sections as “pre refrain.” This can be observed in Table 8 in “Wendy.” Only six (5.9%) out of 101 songs use the pre-refrain and there appear to be no particular patterns between them. Although 50% (3) of the songs are from 1965, they are not frequent enough overall to make any distinct patterns over time, through chord progressions or even through lyrical content.

TABLE 7- SONGS IN SRDC STRUCTURE.

Surfers Rule (1963)	When I Grow Up (To Be a Man) (1965)
No Go Showboat (1963)	Amusement Parks USA (1965)
Wendy (1964)	Salt Lake City (1965)

TABLE 8 - SRDC STRUCTURE IN "WENDY"

Song Section	Lyric
Intro	
Verse 1	Wendy, Wendy what went wrong...
Pre-Refrain	I never thought a guy could cry...
Refrain	Oh Wendy, Wendy left me alone.
	Wendy, Wendy don't lose your head...
Verse 2	
Pre-Refrain	I can't picture you with him...
Refrain	Oh Wendy, Wendy left me alone.
Solo	Hurt so bad.
	Wendy, I wouldn't hurt you like that...
Verse 3	
Pre-Refrain	The farthest thing from my mind...
Refrain	My Wendy, Wendy left me alone.
Reintro	Wendy, Wendy left me alone...
Outro	

¹⁶ A pre chorus section usually appears between the verse and chorus. It makes a definite change melodically and harmonically, and often increases tension that is finally released in the chorus section. For example, the lines “But she looks in my eyes/And makes me realise when she says...” in “Don’t Worry Baby” constitute a pre chorus section.

However, despite its rarity in the Beach Boys' repertoire, it is an interesting song structure as it is a clear combination of verse-chorus and AABA: it takes the verse and pre chorus section from verse-chorus structure and combines it with the repeated refrain of the AABA form. Whether this was a conscious decision or not is difficult to discern; more likely, it was a rare circumstance that arose naturally out of writing many songs in both of these structures. In looking at other songs from the 1962-1966 period, the verse-refrain structure was occasionally used by the Beatles ("Things we Said Today" [1964], "The Night Before" [1965]), suggesting that this was a structure not entirely of the Beach Boys' own invention, though they appear to have the earliest usage in 1962. Although SDRC form was used sparingly in the Beach Boys' repertoire, it serves as an example of Brian Wilsons' musical experimentation and the pushing of structural boundaries, particularly from 1964 onwards.

Verse-Chorus Structure and Variations

The VC structure is the second most common song structure in the Beach Boys' music. A "verse" section is a section of music, often between four and eight bars, and is repeated throughout a song, each repetition with different lyrics. The verse section often describes the narrative or setting of a song, for example, "Well East-Coast girls are hip I really dig those styles they wear, and the southern girls with the way they talk, they knock me out when I'm down there" from "California Girls" A "chorus" is a section of music, often of eight bars in length, that repeats in exactly the same fashion throughout the song. The chorus section will most often follow a verse section and comment on the narrative, for example "I wish they all could be California Girls".

TABLE 9 - SONGS IN VERSE-CHORUS STRUCTURE.

Surfin' Safari*	Don't Back Down (1964)
Little Girl (You're My Miss America) (1962)*	Do You Wanna Dance? (1965)
Chug-a-Lug (1962)	Good To My Baby (1965)**
Surfin' (1962)	Don't Hurt My Little Sister (1965)
Heads You Win, Tails I Lose (1962)	Help Me Ronda (1965)
Cuckoo Clock (1962)	Dance Dance Dance (1965)
Noble Surfer (1963)	Please Let Me Wonder (1965)#
Finders Keepers (1963)	Kiss Me Baby (1965)#

Hawaii (1963)@	She Knows Me Too Well (1965)**
Be True To Your School (1963)	The Girl From New York City (1965)
Car Crazy Cutie (1963)#	Girl Don't Tell Me (1965)
Cherry Cherry Coupe (1963)**	Help Me Rhonda (1965)
Spirit of America (1963)	California Girls (1965)
Custom Machine (1963)**	Let Him Run Wild (1965)
Don't Worry Baby (1964)#	Don't Talk (Put Your Head On My Shoulder (1966)
Louie Louie (1964)	Sloop John B (1966)
I Get Around (1964)@	I Know There's an Answer (1966)
Little Honda (1964)	I Just Wasn't Made for These Times (1966)

Key			
*	**	#	@
Chorus-Verse-Chorus	Starts with Vocal Tag	Harmony Intro	Chorus-Verse-Chorus AND Vocal Tag

From 101 considered songs, 36 (or 35.6%) feature the verse-chorus structure. Often, this included some of their most successful singles, such as “Surfin Safari”, “I Get Around”, “Help Me Rhonda” and “California Girls”. This structure is used on all nine albums between 1962 and 1966; however, it features most prominently on *Surfin' Safari*, *Today*, and *Summer Days*. On the *Today* album, all but three songs are in verse-chorus structure, and it was during the 1965 period that the VC structure was the most popular structure in the Beach Boys' music.

An interesting finding is the frequency of the verse-chorus structure on the Beach Boys' first album, *Surfin' Safari*. On it, half of the songs use verse-chorus structure, while the other six songs feature varied structures such as the 12-bar blues structure, AABA structure, simple verse and surf rock structures. This fixation with verse-chorus structure was short-lived; by the next record, *Surfin' USA*, 12-bar blues structures were the most frequent, while the other six songs on the album featured varying structures. Looking at Figure 21, the great variance in song structures can be observed: between them, the first two albums feature many colours, and therefore, many different structures.

This structural variance shows Brian Wilson's experimentation with structure and style. While patterns emerge during the mid-to late period, this early period is a jumble of different structures and different lyrical ideas: a 12-bar blues about a car, an AABA structure about a local fair, a VC song about the root beer, a simple-verse interpretation of a children's song, and so forth. It was through this early experimentation that the Beach Boys started to crystallise particular structural frameworks which underpinned the sound of their songs in the mid-to-late period.

Through Figure 21 we can observe the use of verse-chorus structure diminishing and replaced by the AABA structure before returning to favour in 1965 on *Today* and *Summer Days*. Covach (2006) also notices a similar change in the Beatles' music during the same timeframe, with a period of AABA song structures before a movement towards verse-chorus structures, with AABA songs like "Please Please Me" (1962) and "A Hard Day's Night" (1964) giving way to verse-chorus songs like "Good Day Sunshine" (1966).

There are several reasons why this movement may have occurred: firstly, as Covach (2006) notes, the movement from the craft of song-writing to the art of producing pop music; secondly, the influence of mind-altering drugs during this period; and thirdly, the longer structure of verse-chorus allowed more room to discuss increasingly complicated musical ideas and emotions in the lyrics.

In their early song-writing years, both Brian Wilson and the Beatles were intent on being recognised for their song writing abilities like the professional Tin Pan Alley composers and Brill Building song writers they admired. They saw song writing as a way to continue in the music business after the Beach Boys' and the Beatles had fallen out of favour with the public. In the Beatles Anthology series, John Lennon comments "You can be big-headed and say we're going to last ten years but as soon as you've said that, you think, I'll be lucky if we last three months." Paul McCartney then comments on their future aspirations: "I think what John and I will do, will be to write songs as we have been doing as sort of a sideline now, we'll probably develop that a bit more...we hope" (Godley, et al, 1995). John Lennon commented bluntly "Paul and I wanted to be the Goffin and King of England" (Turner, 1994, p. 19). Brian Wilson seemed to feel similarly; while his main musical focus was always the Beach Boys, once he succeeded in convincing Capitol Records to allow him to produce his own music (an unprecedented level of control at the time), his creativity flourished. As David Marks recalls "Brian was writing songs with people off the street in the front of his house, disc jockeys, anyone.

He had so much stuff flowing through him at once he could hardly handle it" (Carlin, 2006, p. 38).

The Beatles wrote many songs for other artists during their early years, such as "From a Window" (1964) performed by Billy J Kramer and the Dakotas, "World Without Love" (1964) performed by Peter and Gordon, "Love of the Loved" (1963) performed by Cilla Black, "Hello Little Girl" (1963) performed by Gerry and the Pacemakers and "Come and Get It" (1969) performed by Badfinger. Brian Wilson pursued outside musical projects during the Beach Boys' early days, producing and writing songs for other surf groups such as The Honeybees, and most notably writing Jan and Dean's number one hit, "Surf City" (1963). Brian was thrilled with his first number one hit, however, Murry Wilson was furious at his son for giving away a number one hit to the "competition," calling Jan and Dean "pirates" (Carlin 2006, p. 39; Gaines, 1986, p. 90).

It is also important to consider the role of drug use during the mid-1960s period. Of all of the Beach Boys, Brian Wilson was most curious about experimenting with mind-altering drugs during the early to mid-1960s, however, both Dennis Wilson and, to a lesser extent, Carl Wilson experimented also. Both Mike Love and Al Jardine remained hesitant to be involved with the drug culture of the 1960s and, for many years, tried to pull the rest of the group back to the more innocent days of the early 1960s, especially in terms of their musical style. Brian Wilson's drug use began with marijuana, but gradually progressed to hallucinogenic drugs such as Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD). "California Girls" (a song in VC structure) was the first Beach Boys song written under the influence of LSD. Brian reportedly explained to his wife Marilyn before his first experimentation "He [Loren Schwartz¹⁷] said I have a very bright mind and this LSD will really expand my mind and make me write better" (Gaines, 1986, p. 115). In *Beautiful Dreamer*, Brian recalls "During my first LSD trip, I went to the piano and I went... [plays bass part to California Girls on a piano] and I played that for a half hour, just "dum-be-do-be" and then finally all of a sudden I got [adds in right-hand chords] and then I got [sings lyrics] and I wrote it in a half hour, it only took me a half hour to write it." (Leaf, 2004) Although drug use may not seem to be directly related to the Beach Boys' use of structure, the mental change in Brian Wilson from competitively writing pop singles to creating more complicated artistic songs is reflected in all aspects of their music, including filtering down the basic framework of a song's structure.

¹⁷ A highly intelligent music-business agent and Hollywood 'hipster' who fast became a close friend to Brian and supplied him with drugs. Schwartz was part of a larger group of Hollywood intellectuals and drug-users that Brian migrated towards during the mid-1960s.

The verse-chorus structure is one of the most complicated structures the Beach Boys employed in their music, as it could include many different sections in addition to the repeated verses and chorus. Figure 12 shows four songs over the 1963-1965 period that feature a verse-chorus structure. In “Noble Surfer”, the structure is simple, adding only a solo section played on toy piano and the introduction and “outro” featuring repetitions of the chorus. In later songs from 1964 and 1965 such as “Car Crazy Cutie”, “Good to My Baby” or “Help Me Rhonda”, the structure grew to include other sections, such as a bridge¹⁸, pre-chorus¹⁹ or instrumental breaks²⁰. The inclusion of these extra sections made structures longer and left more room for musical experimentation in two ways. Firstly, longer songs meant more time to implement musical ideas, as each section could build on the one before it with the addition of more vocals, percussion, rhythmic instruments and so forth resulting in a climactic “final chorus” (see “California Girls”). Secondly, sections could be made to sound *different* to each other (see the differences between verse and chorus in “Let Him Run Wild”).

FIGURE 23- SOME EXAMPLES OF VERSE-CHORUS STRUCTURES BETWEEN 1963-65.

Noble Surfer	Car Crazy Cutie	Good To My Baby	Help Me Rhonda
Intro/Chorus	Vocal Hook	Intro	Verse 1
Verse 1	Verse 1	Verse 1	Prechorus
Chorus	Chorus	Prechorus	Chorus
Verse 2	Verse 2	Chorus	Verse 2
Chorus	Chorus	Verse 2	Prechorus
Solo	Bridge	Prechorus	Chorus
			Instrumental
Chorus	Verse 3	Chorus	Break
Verse 3	Chorus	Instrumental Break	Chorus
Chorus/Outro	Reintro	Reintro	Outro
	Outro	Chorus	

¹⁸ Also referred to as a “middle eight”, the bridge is a music structure that occurs most often after a second repetition of the chorus. It is different musically to all previous sections and often functions as a “climax” of a song, both musically and lyrically.

¹⁹ The prechorus is a musical section, often of four bars, that is musically different to the verse and acts to bridge the verse and chorus, e.g. the “Rhonda you look so fine, and I know it wouldn’t take much time for you to... help me Rhonda, help me get her out of my heart” section of “Help Me Rhonda”.

²⁰ An instrumental section four to eight bars in length, often based on the verse or chorus chordal progression. There is no solo instrument (as in “Don’t Worry Baby”).

Chorus

Longer and more flexible structures also allowed for lyrical experimentation. The clearest example of this is the *Today* album, which features the most verse-chorus songs and also some of the most introspective songs during this period. “When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)” poses some complex questions about life when one is no longer a teenager, ranging from “Will I dig the same things that turn me on a kid?” to “Will I love my wife for the rest of my life?”. “Please Let Me Wonder” explains the fear and self-consciousness in telling someone you love them - “Please forgive my shaking, can’t you tell my heart is breaking? Can’t make myself say what I plan to say”. “Kiss Me Baby” describes a fight between two lovers “Can’t remember what we fought about, late, late last night we said it was over, I remember when I got light we both had a broken heart”, while harmonies that underpin the chorus repeat “Kiss a little bit, fight a little bit”. These three examples show a maturing view of life and relationships that were best expressed through the verse-chorus structure.

A curious finding in the VC structure is its dominance during *Surfin’ Safari*. The songs on *Surfin’ Safari* are some of the most simple in the Beach Boys’ apprentice repertoire: simple chord progressions, arrangements focused around traditional rock band instruments (drums, bass, guitars), straightforward lyrics about surf, cars and girls. The VC structure appears again in 1965, and unlike *Surfin’ Safari*, *Today* and *Summer Days* are complex, with unexpected modulations, arrangements that often include orchestral instruments, complicated emotional sentiments expressed in the lyrics and accurate performances played by professional session musicians. Given the differences in these albums, why is the VC structure frequently used throughout all of them?

The verse-chorus structure provided Brian Wilson with increased flexibility. In AABA, the structure of the song is dictated by its name, and in order to be AABA, a song needs to conform very closely to this structure. Likewise, the 12-bar blues also dictates its structure in its title: a 12-bar progression over chords I, IV and V, which is repeated. In verse-chorus structure, the song need only contain a “verse” and “chorus” and these can be moved around in different ways: For example, “Please Let Me Wonder” features a more traditional verse-chorus structure while “I Get Around” places the solo section right after the first full chorus. Both of these structures are verse-chorus, but their orders can be moved around with greater flexibility. It is this flexibility that enabled the young Brian Wilson to piece together early songs like “Surfin’ Safari” without the more

rigid rules of other song structures, but which could also be liberating to Wilson during the 1965 period where he tended to move away from structured frameworks and embrace a more complex musicality.

Variations on Verse-Chorus Structure

While most of the 36 songs in this section fit into the general structure of verse-chorus structure, there are some that do not. There are three main variations on verse-chorus in the Beach Boys' music: the chorus-verse-chorus (CVC), the vocal tag introduction (VTI) and the harmony intro. Understanding the most common frameworks gives an overall picture of the Beach Boys' structural style, however, understanding songs that differ offers a chance to observe the Beach Boys experimenting and advancing their musical sound.

Chorus-Verse-Chorus (CVC) Structure

A variation of verse-chorus is what could be called a "chorus-verse-chorus" structure. This structure is similar to a normal verse-chorus, however, it substitutes the introduction section for a chorus. This technique is used in only two songs in verse-chorus - "Surfin' Safari" and "Little Girl (You're My Miss America)" - and only the former is an original composition. This type of variation is not often used by the Beach Boys, as they tended to favour a vocal tag introduction or a harmony introduction.

Vocal Tag Intro (VTI)

Covach (2006) suggests a further variation he calls "Beatles verse-chorus" structure where the song begins with an altered chorus section. Examples of the "Beatles verse-chorus" include "Can't Buy Me Love" (1964), "She Loves You" (1963) and "I'm A Loser" (1964) which use an altered version of the hook (usually the title) to begin the song. Although Covach was using the term in his Beatles study, referring to this variation as a "Beatles verse-chorus" implies that this structure was used both solely by the Beatles and commonly used in their music. In actuality, this structure was only used sparingly in the Beatles catalogue (5 songs) and used earlier and slightly more often in the Beach Boys' music: 7 songs in verse-chorus structure, but many more in AABA and 12 bar structures²¹. A better term in the Beach boys' music is to call this a Vocal Tag Intro (VTI), as it is the vocal harmonies that really define this variation. Lambert (2009) refers to these harmonised sections sometimes as "interrupting celestial choirs",

²¹ "409", "Shut Down", "Little Deuce Coupe" and "Surfers Rule" all use similar VTIs, however they use AABA and 12-bar structures, rather than verse-chorus.

particularly when they are sung a capella in the middle of a song (as in “Sloop John B”) (p. 215).

Six songs in verse-chorus use a VTI - “Cherry Cherry Coupe”, “Custom Machine”, “Good To My Baby”, “She Knows Me Too Well”, “Hawaii” and “I Get Around”. The Beach Boys’ tended not to use a direct section of the chorus in their VTI songs, instead they often used an altered version of the song’s hook sung a capella, with the full band coming in to begin the first verse. This type of introduction is used in all VTI songs with the exception of “Cherry Cherry Coupe.” The first three songs use an altered part of the chorus section to begin, while “She Knows Me Too Well” uses a vocal hook that punctuates the verse instead: a variation on a variation. “Hawaii” and “I Get Around” are both special cases, as they use *both* a VTI and a chorus-verse-chorus section to start both songs. In “Hawaii”, an a capella VTI sings “Do you wanna go straight to Hawaii?” before launching into the chorus section. “I Get Around” is similar as the VTI sings “Round round get-around, I get around...” a capella before starting the chorus section.

The use of a capella introduction sections works in three different ways. Firstly, it draws attention to the Beach Boys’ vocal harmonies, which are an integral part of their overall sound. This lack of instrumentation makes the vocal tag “pop” out as something different to songs that feature an instrumental introductory passage. Secondly, the VTI offers a small hint of the chorus section without revealing all of it – a little trick to keep the audience listening until the first full chorus. Thirdly, it serves as a memorable representation of the song’s title.

Harmony Intro.

A harmony introduction usually consists of a repetition of the verse or chorus chord progression with harmonised “ooh” or “ahh” blow harmonies overlayed. Often, a melodic falsetto part will be included (as typified in “Please Let Me Wonder”). In most cases, this harmony part will start out with unison vocals, gradually growing to include many vocal parts towards the end of the introductory section, which is a technique used in many Four Freshmen vocal arrangements. While this type of introduction is favoured in songs with an AABA structure, four verse-chorus songs feature a harmony intro: “Car Crazy Cutie”, “Don’t Worry Baby”, “Please Let Me Wonder” and “Kiss Me Baby”. Similar to the VTI, the harmony intro serves to highlight the Beach Boys’ layered vocal harmonies and introduce the harmonic progression of the song. This type of introduction was used most frequently in slow-tempo ballad songs, as the soft “oohs” and “ahhs” establish a quieter, more introspective tone.

These three kinds of variations to the start of VC songs highlight one of the Beach Boys' most defining features: their vocal harmonies. By using the structural frameworks they learned from professional songwriters, they were able to bend these forms to express their own unique musical style. The way vocal tags and harmony intros burst to life on some of their most successful singles sets up the joyful expectation often expressed in their early lyrics.

Unconventional Structures

Seven out of 101 songs feature structures that are unable to be classified in a specific way. In some cases, songs use atypical structures and contain many different contrasting sections, and in others, structures employ traditional "A" or "B" sections in unexpected arrangements. Unsurprisingly, six songs in this category are from *Pet Sounds*, the Beach Boys' most complex and musically experimental recording.

TABLE 10 - SONGS IN EXTENDED OR UNCONVENTIONAL STRUCTURES.

The Lonely Sea (1962)*	I'm Waiting For the Day (1966)
Wouldn't It Be Nice (1966)	Let's Go Away For A While (1966)
You Still Believe in Me (1966)	Pet Sounds (1966)
That's Not Me (1966)	

Extended and Atypical Structures.

Unlike AABA or verse-chorus structure, complex structures do not closely follow a particular structural framework. Instead, songs often have several different sections, either in place of, or in addition to, more traditional song sections. In the music of the Beach Boys, these additional sections appear at the end of a song, after the more traditional verse/refrain sections and are not repeated. After 1966, Brian Wilson experimented with songs for the *Smile* record, many of which could be classified as complex structures. However, before 1967, only "Wouldn't It Be Nice" and "Lonely Sea" classify as extended structures, as they are made up of four different and contrasting sections.

"Lonely Sea" comes from the Beach Boys' second album *Surfin' USA* (1963) and "Wouldn't It Be Nice" comes from *Pet Sounds* (1966), the last album in this study. Interestingly, extended structures were used in the early *and* late period, though the intent was different in each case. As discussed earlier, the Beach Boys used verse-chorus structure in their earliest recordings and their later records during the time period. At

first, Brian Wilson used it while finding his own songwriting style in his early compositions, however, later, verse-chorus structure was used as a more open, experimental structure for more complicated musical ideas. The same could be applied to the use of extended structures. In “Lonely Sea”, Brian Wilson (and collaborator Gary Usher) stumbled into extended frameworks as they figured out how songs worked, i.e., the *craft* of songwriting. In “Wouldn’t It Be Nice” the intention has shifted to creating more complicated music, i.e., the *art* of songwriting, foreshadowing the experimental, psychedelic music of *Smile* (released in 1967 as *Smiley Smile*).

The remaining five songs, all from the *Pet Sounds* album, feature unconventional structures. Unlike extended structures, these songs do not feature many different parts. Instead, they use traditional sections (verses, choruses, A and B sections) and use them in unexpected ways. Songs that utilise unconventional structures are “You Still Believe In Me”, “That’s Not Me”, “I’m Waiting For the Day”, “Let’s Go Away For A While” and “Pet Sounds”, with the last two songs being instrumentals. These songs are different to AABA extensions, which use a similar structure, as they don’t return to an A section to finish the song. There is nothing ‘extended’, and the traditional AABA form is augmented enough in these four songs to not have the same structural feel as regular AABA songs. What these songs lack is the closure that the final “A” section serves, as it returns to the familiar musical material that began the song. Instead, these songs are left hanging after the second B section, unresolved and without conclusion. In “Let’s Go Away for a While”, it gives the feeling of moving somewhere (to the final B section) and never returning; in “That’s Not Me”, a similar feeling is created, with the last lines “I once had a dream so I packed up and split for the city” echoing off into space. As a foundation, this structure does well to underpin the restlessness and struggles with oneself in the lyrics of *Pet Sounds* songs, where lyrical themes are rarely concluded or resolved satisfactorily.

Three of the five songs (“You Still Believe in Me”, “Let’s Go Away For A While” and “Pet Sounds”) use the same unconventional structure. In it, the song is broken into two sections and the rearrangement of the sections creates a binary AABB structure. In this way, all three songs end with completely different musical material to that at the start of the piece. In these three songs, most especially in the instrumental songs, each piece is made of two contrasting musical sections, the “A” suite and the “B” suite. These sections are not structured the same way as an A or B section in AABA, rather, they are referred to in the same way as one could describe Western art music as two repeated musical themes or ideas. The remaining two songs both have differing structures. “That’s Not Me” repeats contrasting A and B sections, with the addition of alternate B

sections (B1), while “I’m Waiting For the Day” repeats an A section three time before ending on an unrelated B section (AAAB).

It has been well documented (Abbott, 2001, p. 93; Carlin 2006, p85; Gaines, 1986, p. 128; Leaf, 1978, p. 84-86) that Capitol Records was particularly unhappy with the release of *Pet Sounds*, as it deliberately strayed from the surf-cars-girls formula that had been so financially successful for the label. Nik Venet’s²² opinion of *Pet Sounds* was negative, stating “I thought Brian was screwing up...he was no longer looking to make records, he was looking for attention from the business,” suggesting “...he was trying to torment his father with songs his father couldn’t relate to and melody structures his father couldn’t understand”(Gaines, 1986, p. 128). Even members of the Beach Boys, particularly Mike Love, were pessimistic about the complicated direction Brian was exploring, famously calling *Pet Sounds* “Brian’s ego music” (Carlin, 2006, p. 84; Leaf, 1978, p. 85).

The structure of the songs of *Pet Sounds* formed an unconventional framework upon which to hang unconventional music. The deliberate move away from the kind of music the Beach Boys were known for in the early sixties is easily heard in their lyrical themes, their harmonies, instruments, chords and arrangements, but it is also reflected in the structure of their songs. In the 1966-1967 period, Brian Wilson’s focus was less on the catchy repetition the Beach Boys had been known for and more on open, experimental musical structures.

Conclusion

There are six distinctive song structures in the Beach Boys’ music during the 196-66 period: ABBA, verse-chorus, 12 bar blues, extended structures, simple verse and surf rock structure. An analysis of these song structures shows a clear progression moving from a rudimentary period of mixed structures to a focus on AABA, then a verse-chorus period and finally, a movement to more complex and unconventional structures. This progression also underscores the creative progression of other musical elements that have a relationship to song structure, such as chord progressions, rhythm and melody.

The structural variance during 1962-early 1963 shows Brian Wilson’s experimentation with structure and style. While patterns emerge during the mid-to-late

²² Capitol Records Artist and Repertoire and producer of the first two Beach Boys’ albums – *Surfin’ Safari* and *Surfin’ U.S.A.*

period, this early period is a jumble of different structures and different lyrical ideas. It was through this early experimentation that the Beach Boys started to crystallise particular structural frameworks that underpinned the sound of their songs in the mid-to-late period.

The simple verse structure consists of a single chord progression or “verse” that is repeated with different lyrics. Unlike verse-chorus or AABA songs, there is no bridge or “B” section. In his study of the Beatles, Covach (2006) categorises simple verse songs as a variation on the traditional verse-chorus structure, however, these two structures stem from different roots. While verse-chorus was relatively unused until the late 1950s to early 1960s, simple verse has a long tradition in early folk and country music, and as such, they have been separated into two distinct structural categories in this study.

Three songs use an AB structure where the first “theme” is stated in the A section and a second is used in the B section. These two sections repeat throughout the song. Dick Dale often used this AB form in his music, and contributed to his effort to make his instrumental music imitate the movement of the ocean’s waves: this is exemplified in “Misirlou” (McParland, 2005, p. 6). The AB structure was only used on surf instrumentals in the Beach Boys’ music and after 1963 it was abandoned entirely.

The 12-bar blues structure’s primary use in the Beach Boys’ music was for improvisation on instrumental surf “jams.” After early 1964, the structure was abandoned in favour of more complicated harmonic progressions and larger structural frameworks, such as AABA, verse-chorus and extended structures. The simple verse, surf rock and 12-bar structures define the Beach Boys apprentice phase.

The use of the AABA structure in the Beach Boys music denotes a move towards more concrete frameworks influenced by the professional songwriters of Tin Pan Alley, the Brill Building, and doo-wop styles. This change, seen as their movement to the craft period, is for three main reasons: the development of the Beach Boys’ ballad style, the simple, repetitive nature of AABA gave Brian Wilson a solid foundation to record short songs for release as singles, and finally, the use of this structure is also present in the music of contemporary artists. It is during this period of time that Brian Wilson honed his song-writing and recording skills in preparation for more experimental music. During the AABA period he learned the formulas of popular songwriting and during the mid-1960s period, he began to push the boundaries of these structures in creative ways.

The verse-chorus denotes the move into the Beach Boys' art period, and this structure provided Brian Wilson with increased flexibility. In verse-chorus structure, the song need only contain a "verse" and "chorus" and these can be moved around in different ways. It is this flexibility that enabled the young Brian Wilson to piece together early songs like "Surfin' Safari" without the more rigid rules of other song structures, but could also be liberating to Wilson during the 1965 period where he tended to move away from structured frameworks and embrace a more complex musicality. The VC form is best thought of as a bridge between the craft to art periods, as the form itself has a defined framework, but also allows for structural experimentation.

The song structures used on *Pet Sounds* primarily are unconventional frameworks upon which to hang unconventional music. The deliberate move away from the kind of music the Beach Boys were known for in the early sixties is easily heard in their lyrical themes, their harmonies, instruments, chords and arrangements, but it is also reflected in the structure of their songs. Songs begin to include many different musical sections ("Wouldn't it be Nice") or use familiar sections (such as "A" and "B" themes) but arrange them in atypical ways, with the use of AABB form and even AAAB form on "I'm Waiting for the Day".

Song structures form the framework of the Beach Boys sound, and by understanding the patterns and progressions of their structures, we can begin to understand the music that will fill them over the course of this analysis. In the next chapter, we will analyse the kind of rhythmic feels that help to define these song sections.

Chapter 4: Rhythm

"I gotta dance right on the spot, the beat's really hot!"

While rhythm plays an important role in most rock and roll music, for the Beach Boys, it is of lesser importance than other musical qualities (such as vocals or chords). During the period of 1962-1966, rhythms in the Beach Boys' music were straightforward, using 4/4 and 12/8 metre most prominently, and the repeated use of shuffle and eighth-note feels. The Beach Boys' music during this time was influenced by 1950s rock and roll styles, but did not feature any specific 'grooves' like other contemporaries (say, the music of Motown), nor express particularly 'funky' rhythmic affectations. Curnutt (2012) notes Bruce Johnston's description of the Beach Boys' *Wild Honey* (1967) album as being their "funkiest" which Curnutt (somewhat humorously) says is a "fair summary if one can conceive of the group as being in any sense 'funky'" (p. 87). By "funky" he does not refer to the specifically to the genre of funk music per se, but rather just a "looser, less stringent attitude towards the marking of time that gives a beat a more limber feel" (Curnutt, 2012, p. 87). Everett (2009) notes that drums in rock music are often a "seat of power," citing the "fury" and "life-changing ecstasy" of the drums in Little Richard's "Tutti Frutti," (1955). While the Beach Boys were certainly influenced by early rock and roll music, in their own music, if anything, the Beach Boys' lack of rhythmic experimentation is what defines their sound in their early years. In surf music in general, drums often played a part that mimicked the uncontrollable movement of the waves; the opening fill to the Surfari's "Wipeout" (1963) is a particularly good example. However this kind of playing, heavy on the tom toms, is not a feature of the Beach Boys music, despite their connection to surf rock.

There are two main reasons for this rhythmic simplicity. Firstly, the Beach Boys' drummer, Dennis Wilson was essentially assigned his instrument because it was the only one left to play, and because the Wilson's mother Audree insisted he be a part of the group with his other brothers (Carlin, 2006, p. 29). As a result, his performances on their first album, *Surfin' Safari*, are quite rudimentary, even holding his drum sticks in an "unapproved" fashion. Dennis commented on his abilities as a drummer, noting "I'm not an artist; I'm a clubber" (Gaines, 1986, p. 63). In fact, almost every song on *Surfin' Safari* has the same simple beat on kick, snare and a similar tempo. Essentially, Dennis Wilson was just playing what he knew how to do at the time. Over the course of their career, Dennis developed into a very competent drummer, but his simple, repetitive beat defined the first two Beach Boys recordings. As Hal Blaine started to perform more and

more drum parts on Beach Boys recording sessions, the drums maintained a steadier tempo, though the parts themselves were not instantly more complicated when played by a professional drummer with many years of playing and recording experience. He played what suited the songs, and what suited was to continue to refine the simple beats of their earliest recordings with Dennis Wilson. Dennis did not seem to mind about Blaine contributing on the kit; as Blaine remembers, “Are you kidding? He’d rather be riding his motorbike or surfing!” (Carlin, 2006, p. 44).

Secondly, while rhythms remained simple and consistent, it left room in an arrangement for experimentation in other ways, particularly through instrumentation, chords and vocal harmonies. Much of the growing complexity over the 1962-1966 period appeared more obviously in these parts of their music, while rhythmic roles, especially of the drums, tended to recede over time (discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 on Instrumentation).

It is also important to note that a discussion of rhythm does not necessarily revolve around the drum kit, and that this chapter will incorporate discussions of guitar and piano parts, which played an important role in constructing the rhythmic framework for many Beach Boys songs. Three songs are not included in this discussion of rhythmic feels: “A Young Man is Gone” and “And Your Dream Comes True” are both sung in an a capella style, and “Denny’s Drums” which consists only of Dennis Wilson improvising freely on the drum kit.

This chapter covers some of the essential underlying rhythmic trends in the Beach Boys music, including a discussion of tempo, important rhythmic ‘feels’ (eighth-note feels, shuffles and 12/8 ballad feels), how and why they are used, and how those rhythmic attributes connect to other parts of their music, particularly lyrical meaning,

Tempo

A song’s tempo can have “a great impact on a song’s character and meaning” (Everett, 2009, p. 317), and the use of tempo in the Beach Boys’ music follows some interesting trends. Tempos can be broken up into three specific categories: ‘slow’ songs (usually ballads between 60-99 BPM), ‘mid-tempo’ songs (usually upbeat songs at a walking pace between 100-130 BPM) and ‘fast’ songs (usually early-period surf songs that are above 140 BPM).

Three Categories of Tempos

In his 2009 study of tempo, Everett (2009) compiled the tempos of 570 recordings and analysed the percentages from slowest to fastest. Table 11 adds these percentages together into the three tempo categories, and breaks songs into ‘simple’ time or ‘compound’ time. The most common tempo range is ‘mid-tempo’ for 4/4 songs (simple), and ‘slow’ for ‘compound’ 12/8 songs. The Beach Boys’ songs also follow these broad trends, with their ‘average’ tempo being 128 BPM – a speed in the ‘mid-tempo’ category.

TABLE 11 - PERCENTAGES FROM EVERETT'S (2009) STUDY OF TEMPO

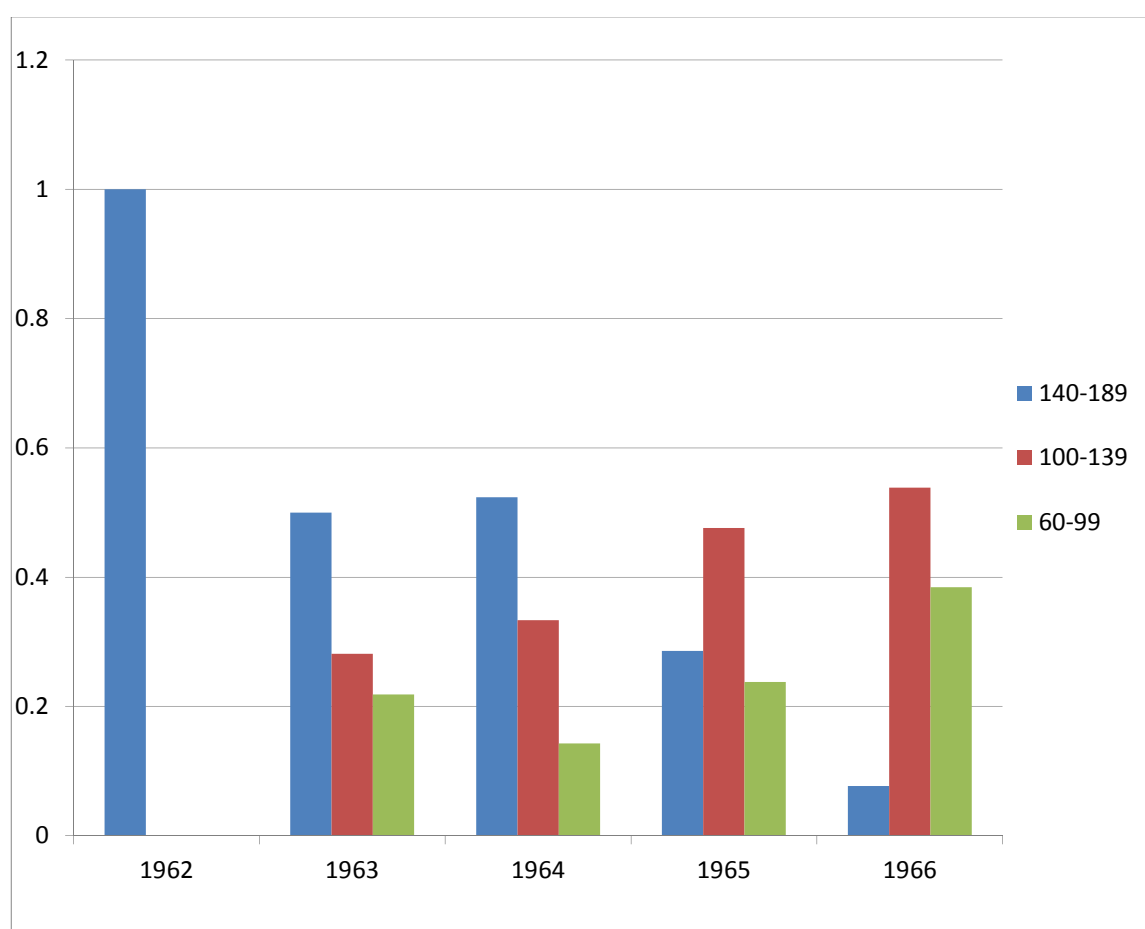
	FAST (140-189 BPM)	MID TEMPO (100-140 BPM)	SLOW (60-90 BPM)
SIMPLE	5.6%	32%	19.3%
COMPOUND	3.9 %	3.25%	18.1%

For the Beach Boys, tempos followed three very clear trends, and these are evident in Figure 24²³. Fast tempos were most commonly used in early recordings, particularly *Surfin Safari*, an album on which every song is over 140 BPM. This is due to two main reasons. Firstly, the record contains many tracks about surfing and cars with a positive emotional tone, and these fast-paced tempos underpin the youthful energy of their early songs. Secondly, Dennis Wilson’s rudimentary skills on the drum kit. Listening to the songs on *Surfin Safari*, one gets the impression that in 1962, Dennis was able to play one particular beat at one particular tempo, as most songs feature his incessant backbeat with little embellishment. Over time, the use of fast tempos decreased over time, with only “I’m Waiting For the Day” from *Pet Sounds* featuring a ‘fast’ tempo of 168 BPM. “I’m Waiting For the Day”, however, is not straightforward in its use of tempo, and instead falls in and out of time between the fast verse sections and the slower chorus sections, which subtly underpins the positivity and negativity combined in the lyrics. By 1964, use of fast tempos was halved, and as such, can be seen as one of the defining parts of their earliest songs, and an important part of their ‘apprentice’ phase.

²³ The data in Figure 24 does not separate songs in simple and compound time. All data is analysed together and appears in Rhythm and Tempo Spreadsheet on the included disc.

From 1963 - 1964, the Beach Boys started to broaden their use of tempos, including more slow and mid-tempo songs, though fast tempos still dominated this era. The increase in slow songs in 1963 is due mostly to the *Surfer Girl* album, which contained many romantic ballads in 12/8. Ballads were subsequently included on every album until 1966. During 1963, surfing songs started to decline, and car songs steadily increased, and these faster tempos also suited their hot-rod songs, with fast tempos representing racing cars at the drag strip.

FIGURE 24 - TEMPOS (BPM) OVER TIME



By 1965, fast songs halved again in frequency, and were replaced quite significantly by mid-tempo songs, with slow songs also increasing concurrently. By 1965, Brian Wilson's focus has shifted from songs about surf and cars, to songs about relationships and introspection, and their music changed to reflect these themes. A wider range of instrumental textures, an increase in complicated vocal parts and the use of unexpected chordal movements were all prominent in the Beach Boys music in 1965. In order to be able to accommodate these musical changes, the tempo of songs needed to slow down quite drastically so that these shifts in musical focus could be performed

and heard clearly. *Today* and *Summer Days* are both filled with musical subtlety, from the hazy arrangement of “Please Let Me Wonder” and the precise harpsichord parts on “When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)” to the psychedelic tinges in the opening to “California Girls”. These kinds of musical affectations would be impossible if played at the breakneck tempos of earlier songs. With the slowing of tempos, the focus shifted from energetic songs about summer, to more complex, emotional songs about relationships and growing up.

These three tempo categories align closely with the ACA model, with the fast tempos defining their early apprentice phase, the increase in mid-tempo songs signalling their ‘craft’ phase, and the increase in slow tempos defining their ‘art’ phase, which left more room in their songs for musical experimentation.

Metre

The Beach Boys only utilise two time signatures in their music: 4/4 time (simple quadruple metre), which is used most frequently (including some ‘shuffle’ songs), and 12/8 time (compound quadruple metre), which was predominantly used for ballad songs, as the swaying, lilting feel of 12/8 suited the lyrical and musical tone. The following section will detail the ways in which the Beach Boys employ these two time signatures and rhythmic feels in their music, and how these feels contribute to their sound.

Songs in 4/4 Metre

The Beach Boys “Eighth Note” feel

The most defining rhythmic feature of the Beach Boys’ music is their persistent use of an eighth-note drive in their music (79 of the 101 songs in the time period feature it). This ‘drive,’ is present in early songs like “Surfin Safari”, *Pet Sounds* songs, and all albums in-between. As Machin (2010) writes of rhythmic feels, “while it is possible to describe some of the kinds of rhythms created by drums and cymbals, instruments and vocals can play the same role” (p. 128). For the Beach Boys, the rhythmic thrust is not always articulated on the drum kit (though the high hat do sometimes participate), instead, the rhythmic drive of songs is most often dictated by the guitar and pianos, playing unchanging eighth notes throughout, holding the entire song together. This ‘drive’ could be influenced by Phil Spector, as in his productions he creates an “energy [that] is centrifugal, its force radiating outward. This is a product of amassing multiple musicians performing the same part – guitars and pianos playing

similar eighth notes – so there is little if any separation between instruments” (Curnutt, 2012, p. 94).

TABLE 12 - SONGS WITH EIGHTH-NOTE FEELS²⁴

Surfin' Safari (1962)	Catch a Wave (1963)	Don't Back Down (1964)
County Fair (1962)	The Rocking Surfer (1963)	Do You Wanna Dance (1965)
Ten Little Indians (1962)	Hawaii (1963)	Good To My Baby (1965)
Chug-a-Lug (1962)	Surfers Rule (1963)	Don't Hurt My Little Sister (1965)
Little Girl (You're My Miss America) (1962)	Our Car Club (1963)	When I Grow Up (to be a man) (1965)
409 (1962)	Boogie Woodie (1963)	Dance Dance Dance (1965)
Surfin' (1962)	Be True To Your School (1963)	Please Let Me Wonder (1965)
Heads You Win, Tails I Lose (1962)	Cherry Cherry Coupe (1963)	She Knows Me Too Well (1965)
Summertime Blues (1962)	No-Go Showboat (1963)	The Girl from New York City (1965)*
Cuckoo Clock (1962)	Custom Machine (1963)	Amusement Parks U.S.A (1965)
Moon Dawg (1962)	Fun Fun Fun (1964)	Then I Kissed Her (1965)
The Shift (1962)	Don't Worry Baby (1964)	Salt Lake City (1965)
Surfin' USA (1963)	In The Parkin' Lot (1964)	Girl Don't Tell Me (1965)
Farmer's Daughter (1963)	Pom Pom Play Girl (1964)	You're So Good To Me (1965) *
Misirlou (1963)	Shut Down Part II (1964)	You Still Believe In Me (1966)
Stoked (1963)	Louie Louie (1964)	That's Not Me (1966)
Shut Down (1963)	I Get Around (1964)	Sloop John B (1966)
Noble Surfer (1963)	Hushabye (1964)	I Know There's An Answer (1966)
Surf Jam (1963)	Little Honda (1964)	Here Today (1966)
Lana (1963)	Wendy (1964)	I Just Wasn't Made For These Times (1966)
Surf Jam (1963)	Do You Remember (1964)	Pet Sounds (1966)
Let's Go Trippin! (1963)	Drive In (1964)	Caroline No (1966)

As Curnutt (2012) observes in a chapter section dedicated to the role of keyboards in the articulation of eighth note patterns in the Beach Boys' music, "chances are if the keyboard isn't ringing once on each downbeat on a certified Brian production, it is plunking out eighth notes... [the eighth note pattern] appears on demos as diverse as "Surfin' USA" and "Don't Talk" suggesting how central it is to Brian's natural playing style" (p. 100). Van Dyke Parks, collaborator on the Beach Boys' *Smile* album, among

²⁴ Songs that feature eighth notes but are expressed in a shuffle feel are dealt with separately in the following section.

many other Brian Wilson projects, notes that “Brian Wilson’s pianistic persuasion, his influence, started to infiltrate pop musician’s approach to piano. That’s what you hear in Paul McCartney’s piano technique. Harry Nilsson did it a great deal, Randy Newman did it a great deal, but Brian Wilson was the first to do it, that I can remember” (Priore, 2007, p. 110).

The basic rock and roll drumbeat consists of a simple pattern on kick drum, snare and high hat, with an emphasis on beats two and four (referred to as the “backbeat”) (Everett, 2009, p. 10). This pattern is displayed below²⁵, with the numbers representing the pulses in a bar, and the letters corresponding to the parts of the drum kit played (H for high hat, S for snare and K for kick drum).

TABLE 13-ARTICULATION OF THE BACK BEAT

Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3	Beat 4
H H	H H	H H	H H
	S		S
K		K	

However, in most Beach Boys songs, the high hat are often omitted in favour of guitars, organs and other percussive elements (such as tambourine), and these are the instruments that express the eighth-note driving feel that defines their early surf and car songs, and also their later songs about girls and relationships. “Fun Fun Fun” is a good example of the Beach Boys employing all of these small rhythmic changes, with guitars (G) and pianos (P) picking out eighth notes, the high hat omitted, and tambourine (T) replacing for a different instrumental texture:

TABLE 14- THE BEACH BOYS' EIGHTH-NOTE DRIVE

Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3	Beat 4
G G	G G	G G	G G
P P	P P	P P	P P
T T	T T	T T	T T
	S		S
K		K	

²⁵ This diagram is based on figures that appear in David Machin’s (2010) *Analysing Popular Music: Image, Sound, Text* (p. 127) and is similar to Tagg’s (2013) representations of cross-rhythms (p. 464).

High hat was sometimes omitted in Beach Boys recordings due to the way in which the drums were recorded. In many Phil Spector productions and Motown productions (both contemporaneous with the Beach Boys), the musicians were recorded as a large ensemble in one room, playing together live. For Spector, this was part of his “wall of sound” recording technique (discussed in detail in the next chapter), and this was a technique that Brian Wilson borrowed from in his own productions. High hat, because of their volume and frequency, cut through an arrangement, and often obscured the sound of other instruments. The ‘bleeding’ from the drum kit into other instrumental microphones meant that it was much easier to omit the high hat almost entirely, and instead fill the space with percussion or piano, instruments that were easily controlled and mixed without the ‘spill’ produced by the high hat. This was not the case for the Beatles, as Ringo’s inclusion of hats and other cymbals actually defined his unique drumming style, and he used these elements of the kit to define song structures in many of the Beatles recordings (Everett, 2001, p. 120). Instead, Brian Wilson saw the drums as not so much a ‘drum set’ but as a ‘drum *kit*,’ using each drum and cymbal as individual pieces that he could place together to make rhythms in the way he wished, rather than using the instrument in the traditional way it is supposed to be played. For this reason, some later Beach Boys songs, like “When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)” (discussed in detail below) and many of the songs from *Pet Sounds*, do not use drums as a traditional time keeper, but rather, as rhythmic texture and colour.

In early surf and car songs, the fast tempos, combined with the furious thumping of piano chords and quick strumming of guitars on eighth notes added a sense of speeding through both the song and the streets and strips the vocals sung about. Car songs like “409” and “Shut Down” would sound drastically different if the driving eighth note feel were replaced by quarter notes, or other more syncopated rhythmic parts. The simplicity of the pattern and the speed in which it is played help reconstruct the feeling of whizzing past, as these fast-paced early songs race to the finish line.

In later, more complex songs, the continuous eighth notes create a stable thread around which other instruments and vocals can experiment more freely. An example of this is during “God Only Knows”:

At best the keyboard monad provides a taught metred tick that holds together the other instruments in the arrangement. The example *par excellence* is “God Only Knows”, on which the combination of piano and organ provides the constant against which accentuating elements create melodic and rhythmic

contrasts. The keyboards' constancy even frees the drums from its conventional duty as beat-keeper, allowing Hal Blaine to play a more orchestral role by stepping in only to add muscle to the staccato instrumental passage after the second verse and again on the coda (where the same trades triplets with a keyboard) (Curnutt, 2012, p. 99).

This 'freeing' of the drum kit from a traditional backbeat pattern is also obvious in "When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)", as while guitars and pianos pick out the eighth notes, the drum part (which never sounds on beat 3) effectively plays 'around' the vocals with interesting fills adding texture and drama to the passing of time in the lyrics. Each part of the drum kit works independently from each other, horizontally as four separate parts, rather than a whole set working together. The harpsichord pattern repeats over these instruments in a syncopated rhythm, while Mike Love's lead vocals mimic the eighth notes repeating in the background of the arrangement. Combined, the drums and harpsichord experiment, while the guitars and piano ground the arrangement [0:07-0:11].

Lead Vox:



Will I dig the same things that turn me on as a kid?

Harpsichord:



Guitars and
piano:



Hi Hats:



Snare:



Toms:



Some Beach Boys songs overlay the eighth note drive with other percussive and rhythmic elements. In “Hawaii” [0:04-0:16], the basic eighth-note rhythm is augmented by overdubbing the following pattern:



This adds a skipping energy to the song, but also adds a little something more exotic, with the syncopated rhythm reflecting desire for adventure to an unknown, often mythologised place. “I Get Around” amps up the excited energy of “getting around town” with friends by overdubbing a snare on brushes playing sixteenth notes between sections of the verse [0:27-0:30]:



“Drive In” combines two feels together [0:00-0:16], with the guitars and pianos articulating eighth notes while jingle bells (which would ordinarily follow a high hat-like pattern) punctuate on simple quarter notes. In addition, saxophones hold long notes, while the backing vocals skip above in a syncopated rhythm during the verse:

Background Vox:		o		♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	
		Ooh		wop – wop - wop –wop	
Guitars and pianos:		♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪		♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	
Jingle bells:		♪		♪	
Saxophones:		o		o	

The eighth note drive, whether played simply, used as a thread to hold a song together, or whether the feel is shuffled, is the most defining rhythmic element in the Beach Boys music. This starts to change after 1966, with a broadening of the main rhythmic drive, including a focus on more syncopated grooves (“Busy Doing Nothing” [1968]; “It’s About Time” [1970]), the use of quarter note feels (“Deirdre” [1970]; “Our Sweet Love” [1970]; “Long Promised Road” [1971]), and eighth-note feels that use

“broken” or “rocking” chords on the piano (see “Wild Honey” [1967]; “All I Wanna Do” [1970]). However, when the Beach Boys are nostalgic on “Do it Again” they return to the eighth-note feel.

Shuffle Feels

Some songs with an eighth note drive use a ‘shuffle’ feel, which is a small but important part of the Beach Boys’ rhythmic make-up: 13 songs feature it prominently (seen in Table 15). Everett (2009) describes the shuffle feel as a common way to establish a song’s groove. In a shuffle, each beat is broken into triplet where only the one and three of each beat sound, which creating a “swinging, uneven long-short” feel (p. 308). The use of shuffle rhythms is consistent throughout the 1963-1966 period, and does not seem to favour a particular kind or style of Beach Boys song. Every album (with the exception of *Surfin Safari* and *Surfin’ USA*) contains at least one shuffle song, and the feel is used in surf, cars, girls and reflective songs.²⁶ The lack of shuffle rhythms on *Surfin Safari* and *Surfin USA* could be attributed to Dennis Wilson’s inability to play the more complicated and relaxed triplet feel of a shuffle until he had more drumming experience. From *Surfer Girl* onwards, Hal Blaine also contributed to drum parts, and the shuffle feel would have been much easier for someone with his experience to play.

TABLE 15 - SONGS THAT USE SHUFFLE FEELS

Honky Tonk (125 BPM)	Carl's Big Chance (179 BPM)
South Bay Surfers (124 BPM)	Let Him Run Wild (116 BPM)
Little Deuce Coupe (136 BPM)	Help Me Rhonda (Single) (139 BPM)
Car Crazy Cutie (129 BPM)	California Girls (115 BPM)
This Car of Mine (131 BPM)	Wouldn't It Be Nice (126 BPM)
Why Do Fools Fall In Love (166 BPM)	God Only Knows (117 BPM)
All Summer Long (136 BPM)	

The use of shuffle feels is common in jazz, where the triplet articulation gives songs a ‘lighter’ feeling and also the means to “precisely avoid the consistency of binary rhythms” (often found in rock and pop music) (Machin, 2010, p. 129). However, the use of the shuffle feel in the Beach Boys’ music is most obviously traced back to the groups’ love of 1950s rock and roll. In particular, Chuck Berry utilised the shuffle feel in many of

²⁶ These lyrical categories will be explained in more detail in chapter 7.

his most famous songs, such as “Johnny B Goode” (1957), “Sweet Little Sixteen” (1957)²⁷ and “Roll Over Beethoven” (1956) (Curnutt, 2012, p. 88). The shuffle feel was a particular favourite of Lennon and McCartney (see “All My Loving” [1963], “Can’t Buy Me Love” [1964], “Another Girl” [1965]), who used it more often than the Brill Building writers they were inspired by, with 21 Beatles songs featuring it throughout, compared with the 11 Goffin/King songs in the charts during the 1963-1966 period (Fitzgerald, 1995a, p. 70). Curnutt (2012) also connects the use of shuffle rhythms to Brian Wilson’s “fixation on boogie-woogie, which he has been known to play incessantly on the piano since his youth” (p. 88).

The Beach Boys’ use of the shuffle has more in common with mid-tempo doo-wop songs than the breakneck speed used in Chuck Berry’s repertoire, as most of the Beach Boys’ shuffle feel songs feature a tempo between 115-139 BPM (what Fitzgerald (1995) calls the “danceable range” p. 70) whereas, for example, “Johnny B Goode” (1958) is at 171BPM and “Roll Over Beethoven” (1956) is at 180BPM. The meaning of the shuffle can vary depending on the song in which it is used and the tempo that underpins it. Lambert (2007) refers to the “jumpy, rhythmic energy” in “All Summer Long” (139BPM) and the “infectious spirit” of “Help Me Rhonda” (which Brian Wilson admits to coming up with while “fooling around on the piano imitating Bobby Darin’s “Mack the Knife” with its “cool, shuffle beat”) (p. 187). The shuffle rhythm works well in both of these songs to enhance the lyrical meaning; the ‘skipping’ feel of “All Summer Long” helps to emphasise the carefree nature of summer time fun, while in “Help Me Rhonda”, the uneven rhythm represents both the limping pain from the previous relationship, and the heart-skipping feeling of new love.

Conversely, the slightly slower tempo of “California Girls” creates a laidback “country and western shuffle” (Lambert, 2007, p. 204), and rather than the skipping of “All Summer Long” and “Help Me Rhonda”, the shuffle in “California Girls” is a confident, laidback ‘strut’, especially when combined with Mike Love’s conversational delivery of the lyrics. “God Only Knows” also features a slow shuffle feel (117 BPM), but instead of functioning as a ‘strut’, it instead functions as a link to the groups’ past, and to the singer’s own happiness, which may or may not continue.

²⁷ Interestingly on “Surfin USA”, which purposely borrows from Berry’s “Sweet Little Sixteen” (1957), the Beach Boys play a sped up feel that turns the shuffle of the original into a straight eighth-note feel instead.

In “Car Crazy Cutie”, “Little Deuce Coupe” and “This Car of Mine,” the shuffle gives a different feel to the more common eighth-note drive in most car songs. In “Car Crazy Cutie”, the shuffle feel creates a skipping, feminine quality to a space mostly dominated by men (in the car garage, essentially), while “This Car of Mine” is a song about the personal satisfaction of restoring an old car to its former glory, and the shuffle can represent the bouncing pride of the singer. In “Little Deuce Coupe,” the shuffle feel acts as a musical divider between the Beach Boys’ earliest car songs, like “Shut Down” or “409” and the newer, more complex hot rod songs to follow in its wake. The shuffle gives an exciting freshness to a lyrical theme that had been discussed in some detail previously.

One early song, “Finders Keepers” is an anomaly, as it is the only song that *switches* feels, from a lazy shuffle in the verse to a chugging, straight eighth-note feel in the chorus. Doe & Tobler (2004) note the song’s “unusual three part structure” (p. 14), by which they mean the odd connection of different rhythmic feels. This change in the song’s underlying rhythmic feel actually works to tell part of the narrative. In the verse, the singer talks about the loss of his surfboard:

I kicked out of the surf and stuck my board in the sand
 And then up in my Woodie to the hamburger stand
 And when I got back, my nine-five board was gone

The shuffle feel during this section may help to project a cool, laidback, conversational tone of a surfer. Suddenly, the chorus changes feel to even quavers with:

Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers
 Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers
 Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers

During the first two choruses, this dialogue is spoken by another character on the beach. Firstly by a girl who saw the board being stolen and secondly by the “Hodaddy” who stole it. This change in rhythmic feel may help articulate the shift to another character’s point of view. This is the only Beach Boys song from this period that encompassed both straight and shuffle feels in the same recording.

What is interesting about the Beach Boys’ use of shuffle feels is that they seem more prominent than they actually are. From the outside, it seems that the Beach Boys should use shuffle feels often, due to their ability to represent youthful, excitable energy

so often sung about in their music. The reason the shuffle seems more dominant than it actually appears is that many of the Beach Boys' most successful singles employ the use of the shuffle: "Little Deuce Coupe", "California Girls", number one single "Help me Rhonda", "Wouldn't it be Nice", "God Only Knows", and even "Good Vibrations", the first single released after the period of analysis for this study. Whether this was a conscious decision is difficult to prove, though the upbeat nature of many of these songs, and the happy, skipping feeling the shuffle feel often expresses may have contributed in part to the success of these singles.

Implied shuffles

Early shuffle songs like "Little Deuce Coupe" or "This Car of Mine" articulate the shuffle feel simply on kick, snare and hats, however, other Beach Boys' songs feature an *implied* shuffle, where no one instrument clearly articulates the shuffle throughout. Instead, drums are sometimes accented at the end of phrases to imply a shuffle (as in "Why Do Fools Fall in Love"), or, as in "Carl's Big Chance", the shuffle is implied by the solo guitar.

"God Only Knows" features the subtlest use of the implied shuffle feel. During the verses, the feel is faintly implied by the repetition of percussion (woodblock), however, during the chorus, more percussive elements enter which helps to strengthen the shuffle feel. During the bridging section, the song appears to switch back to even quavers before changing back again to a shuffle feel as the harmonies enter ("do-do-do-dodo-do/ba-ba-ba-babab"). This switch between implied/intended shuffle feels that occurs during the verse and chorus can be traced back to the previous album on "Let Him Run Wild," a song whose chordal and instrumental complexity is a precursor for *Pet Sounds* (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 41).

A Short Study of Rhythm in "California Girls"

The way the Beach Boys experimented with rhythms, especially shuffle rhythms, is heard clearly on "California Girls", which is the slowest of their shuffle songs at 115 BPM. It is the combination of a slow tempo and a shuffle feel that makes "California Girls" sound different from the other 12 shuffle songs. Perhaps this feel played a role in its commercial success – it *sounded* like the Beach Boys, but it also sounded *different*.

To understand the roles of rhythmic elements in "California Girls" it is important to note the progression of the song as a whole. Rather than a continuous bed that remains unchanged throughout the song, each song section is rhythmically unique. The introduction, verse and chorus sections slowly grow with the addition of more rhythmic parts (organs, percussion and so forth) until the final chorus, when the rhythmic

patterns of the verse and chorus section combine to produce the instrumental, melodic and rhythmic climax of the song.

The Introduction

The introduction section features only high hat playing a triplet rhythm at the beginning of every second bar. Over the top of this, saxophones hold long notes while guitars play a syncopated rhythm. This introductory passage sounds rhythmically and instrumentally hazy as it slowly resolves into the rhythm of the verse, and the rhythms played during this section are not heard again throughout the rest of the song.

The Verse

The drums in the verse section play a variation on the simple kick and snare pattern; the kick pattern remains the same, however, the snare part omits the last beat every second bar while the toms play a small, syncopated pattern over the last beat of the bar. The toms also play in conjunction with the snare, giving the drums a fuller sound and the high hat are omitted completely and replaced with a single cymbal hit on beat one every second bar. The emphasis during the verse section is on the eighth notes played by the organs, vibes, guitars and bass.

The Chorus

During the chorus, the rhythmic emphasis changes to quarter notes as kick, snare and toms all sound on each beat (see figure in previous section) of the bar before assuming the verse rhythm at the end of the last repetition of “Wish they all could be California girls”. This change is different to almost every other Beach Boys’ song, as the verse section sounds more “upbeat” with its eighth note emphasis, and the chorus sounds more laid-back with its quarter note emphasis. Typically, this would be the other way around, with the narrative of the verses over continuous quarter notes that grows into continuous eighth notes in the chorus, giving the section more energy and emphasis (“You’re So Good to Me” is good example of this).

The Outro

The rhythmic climax of “California Girls” is the final chorus where the quarter-note emphasis of the previous choruses is dropped in favour of the verse feel on continuous eighth notes. This noticeably changes the feel and sound of the final chorus and with the addition of other melodic and rhythmic parts (extra vocals, horn parts and so forth), it builds into the largest, most complicated part of the song. The combination

of verse and chorus feels makes the final chorus sound joyous and exciting, and it is both familiar and slightly different simultaneously.

“California Girls” is a good example of how the Beach Boys defined their rhythmic style, only to twist it into new and unexpected ways. The rhythmic differences that change throughout “California Girls” can appear subtle, but they contribute a great deal to the song’s character and energy, and the expression of its signature slow ‘strut’ shuffle feel.







Shuffle feels are not used often in the Beach Boys’ repertoire (certainly not as often as their contemporaries Lennon and McCartney, the Brill Building and the music of Motown (Fitzgerald, 1995a; 1995b), but when they are employed they are used to interesting and important affect. For songs like “All Summer Long”, the shuffle indicates the carefree nature of summer holidays, while in “Car Crazy Cutie” it helps to articulate the flutter of first love with a girl who loves cars as much as the boys do. “California Girls” and the use of implied shuffle feels in “God Only Knows” are examples that highlight the growing creativity of Brian Wilson into the 1965-66 period, which aligns with other rhythmic and instrumental aspects of the Beach Boys music.

Quarter Note Feels

A rhythmic feel used occasionally in the Beach Boys’ music is a drumbeat with an emphasis on quarter notes. Instead of playing the backbeat on beats 2 and 4, the snare instead plays on 1, 2, 3 and 4 (with the kick remaining on 1 and 3). An early incarnation of this rhythm is in The Honeycombs’ “Have I the Right?” (1964), and again only months later in Roy Orbison’s 1964 hit “Pretty Woman”. However, its use is connected mostly to the Motown label, whose session musicians employed the rhythm in many of their mid-1960s hits, such as “Uptight (Everything’s Alright)” (1965) by Stevie Wonder, “I Can’t Help Myself (Sugar Pie Honey Bunch)” (1965) by the Four Tops, “Stop in the Name of Love” (1965) by the Supremes and “Ain’t Too Proud to Beg” (1966) by the Temptations. David Laing (as cited in Curnutt, 2012) refers to this beat as the “rhythmic monad”, where drums “mark every beat of the metre without any differentiation in accent”, and what Curnutt (2012) refers to as the “antithesis of funky” (p. 88) (though, Stevie Wonder certainly made this “monad” sufficiently funky in “Uptight (Everything’s Alright)” (1966), so there are exceptions to this rule).

The quarter note feel is exemplified in “You’re So Good To Me,” where the snare beats incessantly with a tambourine throughout, while keyboards and guitars perform

eighth notes lightly in the background, rather than in the centre of the arrangement. Lambert (2007) cites this song as being a “trend towards directness and simplicity” (on *Summer Days*) as Brian Wilson gives himself a formidable challenge to “produce something dynamic and compelling out of resources that can just as easily appear mundane and lifeless” (p. 211). Likewise, Doe & Tobler (2004) describe the song as “unusually simple for the period” (p. 41). While “You’re So Good to Me” is a particularly simple song in terms of its chords, arrangement and vocal harmonies, the use of this quarter-note drum feel is a sign of Brian Wilson still experimenting rhythmically, rather than harmonically. The feel is also highlighted in “California Girls,” which dramatically changes from eighth notes to quarter notes in the chorus, a move which is emphasised by the vocals which mostly sing the melody on each beat: ‘wish/they/all/could’. The chorus to “California Girls” doesn’t completely abandon the shuffle already established, with a subtle tambourine part on triplets that reminds us of the relaxed swagger of the verse sections [1:00-1:04]:

Lead and Backing Vox:	
	wish they all could be Cal-i-forn-ia girls
Keyboards, Organs, Vibes, Saxophones, Bass:	
High hat	
Snare	
Kick	
Tambourine	

“The Girl From New York City” also uses this quarter note feel, hammered out on the snare, keyboards and percussion. This is soon overlaid with a syncopated piano part and acoustic guitar part. The simple quarter note feel marches the song forward, but the textual colour of the piano, saxophones and guitars show signs of Brian Wilson’s arrangement experimentation.

The rhythmic monad also makes an appearance in the chorus to “Help Me Rhonda”, where at the end of the chorus the relentless eighth note pattern and skipping

melody halts, changing to quarter notes for a bar to drive home the singers' desperation underneath the last repetition of "Help me Rhonda, yeah!" [0:49-0:52]:

Lead and
Backing Vocals:

Help help me Rhonda | help me Rhon-da | Yeah! Get her outta my heart

Guitars, pianos,
tambourine:

Saxophones:

Snare:

Kick:

ONE-trip-let-two-trip-let-**Three**-trip-let-four-trip-let (Everett, 2009, p. 304)

This feel has two ‘off’ beats for every beat, and has a swaying, waltz-like quality, though not technically a waltz (which are usually in 3/4 or 6/8 time). Ballad songs were more likely to include the use of a (closed) hi hat, as these songs commonly had more minimalist arrangements which did not face the same troubles of ‘spill’ into other microphones, as upbeat songs with larger arrangements did. As such it is usually the role of the high hat to articulate these triplets in 12/8 time. This feel is closely connected with doo-wop music, as most doo-wop ballads were sung in this metre, from “Earth Angel” (1954) by the Penguins to “In the Still of the Night” (1956) by the Five Satins, though it was also featured heavily in the music of Fats Domino, whose articulation of this triplet feel on the piano became the signature part of his rock and roll sound (e.g., “Ain’t That a Shame” [1955]). The lilting, nostalgic quality of the 12/8 feel underscored the chivalrous romance in Beach Boys’ songs like “Keep an Eye on Summer,” “Your Summer Dream” and “Surfer Girl”.

TABLE 16 - SONGS IN 12/8 METRE

Lonely Sea (1963)	We'll Run Away (1964)
Surfer Girl (1963)	Girls on the Beach (1964)
Surfer Moon (1963)	I'm So Young (1965)
In My Room (1963)	Kiss Me Baby (1965)*
Your Summer Dream (1963)	In The Back of My Mind (1965)*
Ballad of Ole' Betsy (1963)	Summer Means New Love (1965)
Spirit of America (1963)	I'm Bugged at My Old Man (1965)
Warmth of the Sun (1964)	Don't Talk (1966)*
Keep an Eye on Summer (1964)	


Articulation of Triplets on the Drums


Over half of the 12/8 songs in Table 16 feature a drum part on kick, snare and high hat, with the majority of these occurring between 1963 and 1964: “Lonely Sea”, “Surfer Girl”, “In My Room”, “Your Summer Dream”, “Ballad Of Ole’ Betsy”, “Spirit of America”, “The Warmth of the Sun” (with “I’m So Young” and “Summer Means New Love” from 1965). Each of these songs features an almost identical drum pattern that remains relatively unchanged for the duration of each track, however, small changes give each song a particular colour. For example, in “Surfer Girl,” the articulation of


triplets switches from hi hats to the snare drum in the build-up into the last verse and refrain. This underscores the drama in the lyrics and music, as the song modulates into the final section [1:30-1:36]:

Vocals: | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩- ♩- ♩ |

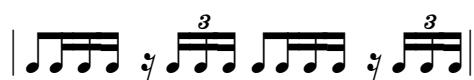
Ev -ry where I g o- o -oh

Hi hats |  |

Snare |  |

Kick |  |

This build up technique is also employed on “Surfer Moon” (during the last two bars of bridge) “Your Summer Dream” (during the last beat of the bridge) and “Girls On The Beach” (during the build-up into the bridge). “Lonely Sea” also makes slight changes to the articulation of the 12/8 feel, by changing the high hat pattern on beats 1 and 3 [0:44-0:51]:



These augmentations to the articulation of triplets give each song a unique texture, while still conforming to the standard Beach Boys ballad style.

Five 12/8 songs do not feature high hat: “The Surfer Moon”, “Keep an Eye on Summer”, “Girls on the Beach”, “We’ll Run Away” and “Kiss Me Baby”. Four out of five of these songs appear on albums from late 1964 onwards, coinciding with an overall trend to omit high hat from the drum parts in favour of guitars, pianos, organs and other percussive instruments, similarly discussed in eighth-note centric songs. Some songs, like “The Surfer Moon,” articulate the triplet feel on a triangle to change the texture in the bridge section (it makes a twinkling sound, and represents the starry sky behind the ‘surfer moon’) while “Keep an Eye on Summer” and “We’ll Run Away” add acoustic

guitars softly strumming to add to the romantic atmosphere of the lyric. “Kiss Me Baby” is one of the most complicated 12/8 ballads, and plays with the triplet feel in clever ways, switching from the woodblock to the snare during the prechorus as a lead into the chorus [0:40-0:46]:

Lead Vox:



Late late last night we said it was o-ver

Vibes:



Woodblock:



Snare:



The backing vocals in the chorus also overlay the 12/8 feel with a quick rhythm repeating “kiss a little bit, fight a little bit” [1:00-1:06]:

Backing Vox:



Kiss a little bit flight a little bit kiss a little bit fight a little bit

Guitars and pianos:



“Don’t Talk” is the most subtle of all 12/8 songs in its articulation of the triplets. There is no drum track, just a continuous tap on a cymbal with brushes, and a minimal arrangement centred on swirling strings. Instead, the 12/8 feel is implied entirely by the melody, which hints at the underlying feel (*italicised*):

I can hear so *much in your* sighs, and I can see so *much in your* eyes

There are **words we both** could say
 But don't talk, **put your head on my shoulder**
 Come close, **close your eyes and be still**
 Don't talk, **take my hand**, and let me hear your heart beat

The ACA progression is played out well in the articulation of triplets in 12/8 songs, starting with the augmented pattern heard in "Lonely Sea," progressing to experimentation with other instruments, such as the triangle in "Surfer Moon" and the switching of instruments in "Kiss Me Baby," and lastly to the 'art' period, where the articulation is created subtly by only the melody itself.

Articulation of Triplets on Guitars and Piano

Most 12/8 songs use pianos and guitars to tell the triplet feel together, in much the same way as the eighth-note feel in 4/4 songs. However, some songs change this role and instead have either instrument (or both) instead playing an arpeggiated part throughout. "Lonely Sea," uses a simple electric guitar picking out the chords in triplets behind Brian Wilson's mournful melody. "Warmth of the Sun" and "Surfer Moon" also use this pattern, and this technique works well for the Beach Boys' sad, surf-related songs, as the up and down motion of the arpeggios mimics the up and down motion of the uncontrollable waves, which is often used as a metaphor for love. "In My Room" uses an arpeggiated guitar part played softly throughout, with another guitar strumming gently underneath for support. "Kiss Me Baby" makes a feature of arpeggiated chords in the introduction (over Eb, Ab, Ebmaj7, Cm7, Ab/Bb) before moving to the back of the arrangement when the verse begins. "In the Back of my Mind" uses pizzicato strings to pluck out the triplets during the bridge, the sharp sound articulating well the deep anxiety expressed in Dennis Wilson's vocal, which sings "I try to run far away from thoughts I shouldn't try to keep away, but they just keep coming back to me".

The articulation of triplets on drums, percussion, guitars and pianos helps define the Beach Boys ballad style, which drew heavily from doo-wop ballads, as well as Spector-produced Brill Building songs. This is seen in the early articulation on high hat (in the 'apprentice' period), which then switches to other percussive instruments (such as triangles, woodblocks) in the 'craft' period. Later songs start to include pizzicato strings and doubled pianos to express the swaying, 12/8 feel which was constant on every Beach Boys album from 1963-1966.

Conclusion

The main rhythmic feels used by the Beach Boys in most of their music are simple, and include eighth note feels, quarter note feels and shuffle feels in 4/4 time, and ballad songs in 12/8 time. These metres form a basic and solid framework for more complex experimentation in chords, instrumentation and vocal harmonies.

Most songs (66 from 101) feature an eighth-note drive, which is articulated by guitars and pianos playing a repeated chordal part. In early surf and car songs, this chugging energy expressed the excitement and speed of both the waves and the drag strip. In later, more emotional and introspective songs, the eighth notes function as a thread that holds a song together, while other elements experiment melodically and rhythmically.

A small number of songs (13) feature a shuffle feel that, while still articulating the eighth-notes, has a more relaxed, skipping feel which changes the colour and tone of these songs. The shuffle feel appears on many of the Beach Boys' most successful singles, such as "Little Deuce Coupe," "California Girls," "Help Me Rhonda," "Wouldn't it be Nice" and "Good Vibrations" (which was the first single released after the time period of this study).

Many songs that feature on the *Summer Days* album substitute the eighth note feel in favour of quarter notes, and the stomping quality of the change in rhythm gives the album a particular rhythmic sound. "California Girls" is the most sophisticated example of the quarter note feel, which uses it only in the chorus as a contrasting feel to the laidback strut of the verse sections.

Finally, 17 songs use a 12/8 feel, which was a rhythmic affectation mostly reserved for ballad songs. This feel stems from doo-wop music of the 1950s, which often employed a 12/8 metre on ballads, and as such, gives the Beach Boys music a tinge of romantic nostalgia, which suits their lyrical style well. In some cases, the triplet feel is articulated by the high hat on the drums, but in later songs, Brian Wilson began to experiment with musical texture, and often switched and shared the triplets between different instruments, and not always at the same time (see "Kiss Me Baby"). This is taken to the extreme in "Don't Talk," which uses only the melody to imply the swaying feel of 12/8 metre, and is an example of how artful Brian Wilson had become, both melodically and rhythmically, in the 1966 'art' period.

The Beach Boys do not often use rhythm in complex ways: there are rarely 'grooves,' changes to time signature, or the employment of complex metres. However, the basic rhythmic traits that they did use helped form the framework for the more experimental growth in melody, instrumentation, chords, lyrics and vocal parts.

Chapter 5: Instrumentation

*"Nothing's really moving till the saxophone's ready to blow
And the beat's not jumping till the drummer says he's ready to go!"*

Instrumentation – the kinds of instruments and the way in which they are used – is an important contributor to the Beach Boys' sound. As engineer Larry Levine comments, "Brian basically knew every instrument he wanted to hear, and how he wanted to hear it" (Leaf, 1997, p. 51). There was deep consideration and purpose to the way Brian wrote and arranged his recordings. Beatles producer George Martin, when reflecting on Brian Wilson's unique style of arranging, described the sound in terms of 'colour': "I'm sure there is an affinity there, although Brian was able to use a more colourful palette than the great masters [referring to Mozart and Bach]. They had to think in terms of pure music, but Brian got into the colour of sounds" (Leaf, 1997, p. 122). This chapter will investigate how this 'colour' came together, and is quite an appropriate description given the use of colour and shape to depict the Beach Boys music throughout this study.

The difficulty in talking about instrumentation is that it is instantly related to many other musical elements. Can we talk about melody without first noting which instrument is providing it? Can we talk about rhythmic parts without an understanding of the drum kit and how it is played? There are few studies that deal solely with instrumentation, and perhaps this is a reason as to why this is so. However, Everett's (2006) analysis of the Beatles' musical texture, and the discussion of sound in Rob Bowman's (1995) analysis of the music of Stax are both useful examples. Despite this difficulty, it is important to look at instrumentation in detail, as it is crucial to the make-up of the Beach Boys music. In his book *The Foundations of Rock*, Walter Everett (2009) gives an overview of the types of instruments used in rock and pop music, detailing each and the roles they often play in an arrangement. This study of the Beach Boys' instrumentation draws from his work, and is structured in a similar way.

The instrumentation used in the Beach Boys' recordings is the musical element that changes most dramatically over the 1962-66 period, and most closely follows the apprentice-craft-art model. To think about these changes to instrumentation from 1962-66, I have found it helpful to divide the Beach Boys' songs into three main categories, which essentially follow the ACA model: 'basic instrumentation' (apprentices),

'augmented instrumentation' (craftsmen) and 'orchestral instrumentation' (artists). All songs in this study fit into one of these three categories, excluding four – "A Young Man is Gone" and "And Your Dream Comes True" which are a capella, "Denny's Drums," which is an improvised drum solo and "I'm Bugged at My Old Man" which contains just piano and vocals. Dividing songs in this way has proved helpful in identifying patterns and changes in the kinds of instrumentation during the developing years of the Beach Boys' musical sound.

This chapter has three parts: firstly, an overview of the influence of Phil Spector on the Beach Boys' instrumentation, and the participation of the Wrecking Crew as session musicians for both Spector and Brian Wilson; Secondly, a discussion of how the Beach Boys' Fender guitars and amplifiers influenced the texture of the Beach Boys music; and thirdly, an analysis of instrumental roles, and the way they contributed to the Beach Boys' sound in the basic, augmented and orchestral instrumental categories.

The Influence of Phil Spector and the Wall of Sound

The influence of Phil Spector on Brian Wilson has been well documented (Carlin, 2006; Lambert, 2007; Leaf, 1978), from his attempts to write songs for him to record ("Don't Worry Baby"), to his later delusions as his mental health began to suffer²⁸. The most important influence Brian Wilson took from Spector was the way in which he recorded instruments. In an interview in 1977, Brian recalled, "The man is my hero. He gave rock 'n' roll just what it needed at the time and obviously influenced us a lot. His productions, they're so large and emotional, powerful" (Kubernik, 2009). Brian Wilson often observed Spector during his sessions at Gold Star studio, and he actively employed some of the techniques he learned in his own compositions. These techniques included the use of specific equipment (such as echo chambers and plate reverb, discussed in Chapter 8), and also the inventive ways in which he combined particular instruments to create new sounds. Brian Wilson has stated, "What did I learn from him? Well, I saw how when you combined instruments, like a piano and a guitar, you got a new sound" (Buskin, 1999, p. xii; Kubernik, 2009).

²⁸ When Brian Wilson went to see the John Frankenheimer movie *Seconds* during the onset of his most severe period of mental illness, the story of the lead character (also called Mr Wilson) was so closely comparable to his own that he began to assume that Phil Spector was responsible, and had employed "mind gangsters" to scare him. "I've gone beyond Spector", Brian Wilson commented, "I'm doing the spiritual sounds....it's going to scare a lot of people" (Carlin, 2006, p. 117-118).

This method of recording became referred to as the “wall of sound”, a technique created by Phil Spector and used on almost all of his recordings. The wall of sound was built by several instruments playing the same parts at the same time. For example, a recording may feature 3 electric bass players performing the same part at the same time, several guitar players performing a rhythm guitar part concurrently, two pianos, and so forth. All of these sounds, performed together in the small recording space at Gold Star, made the cacophony of sound start to blend in together, particularly after reverb and echo were added (discussed in more detail in Chapter 8). It became harder to hear each individual instrument, and instead, it was like hearing one huge sound. The “wall of sound” was like experiencing a wave of water where you cannot see each individual drop. Larry Levine, engineer for Phil Spector at Gold Star (and also for the Beach Boys at Western Recorders) notes the way in which Spector achieved this sound through the musicians he used:

I used to have a theory, and I don't know if it's right or wrong, but part of the reason we took so long in actually recording the songs was that Phil needed to tire out the musicians, or they got to the point where they were tired enough so they weren't playing as individuals. But they would meld into the sound more that Phil had in his head (Ganka, 2011).

Spector had learned some of these techniques from his work as an apprentice with Leiber and Stoller, the successful songwriting team that had produced hits like “Hound Dog” (1953), “Jailhouse Rock” (1957) and “Stand By Me” (1960), among hundreds of others. From them, Spector learned methods of microphone positioning, mixing, and how to record instruments, as Leiber and Stoller often made use of multiple instrumentalists, especially percussionists (Hartman, 2012, p. 48).

Phil Spector's session musicians became known as the “Wrecking Crew”, a term invented by drummer Hal Blaine who was the ‘unofficial dean’ to the large group of talented session musicians who performed not only on all of Phil Spector's recordings, but on many other chart hits throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The group's name was inspired by the growing resentment the Wrecking Crew felt from older ‘coat-and-tie’ wearing session players, who were convinced that young, up-and-coming musicians like Blaine were going to somehow “wreck the business” with their rock and roll recordings (Hartman, 2012, p. 3). They quickly became the “coveted new set of hired guns in town” (Hartman, 2013, p. 3).

Comparisons between Spector and Brian Wilson are common, though Phil Spector is quick to dismiss this, stating cruelly, “I don’t feel sorry for Brian Wilson; I never thought he was that talented to begin with. I’m glad he idolises me... I’d be more impressed if someone with a brain idolised me” (Brown, 2007, p. 406). David Leaf balances this well, by stating that although Spector assembled a great team that he led with a strong musical vision, he was not a serious songwriter, arranger or singer. Brian on the other hand, “not only led the sessions but musically, he did it all, from composing to arranging to singing and producing. Also, at any point during a basic tracking session, Brian (with the exception of horns), was capable of picking up an instrument and demonstrate to the musician what he wanted” (Leaf, 1997, p. 50-51). Further, Leaf (1997) highlights the difference in approaches between Wilson and Spector:

Brian saw Phil’s studio methodology and adapted it to fit his own vision, so Spector’s impact wasn’t so much sonic as it was procedural. What Brian did was take that technique and use it in a completely different way, mixing his records in a manner that didn’t compromise clarity. It was, in part, what he learned from Spector that allowed him to make quantum leaps in his work, and musically, quickly outdistance Spector (Leaf, 1997, p. 50)

Inspired by Spector, Brian Wilson began using the instrumentalists of the Wrecking Crew from the recording of *Surfer Girl* onwards. There were a variety of reasons for this; firstly, he strongly desired to emulate the sound of Spector’s records. Secondly, Brian Wilson’s growing arrangements started to include instruments the Beach Boys themselves could not play, such as horn parts, more complicated percussion, strings, and so forth, and he needed to rely on other musicians to play these instruments. Thirdly, after Brian Wilson had quit the Beach Boys’ touring band, the Wrecking Crew allowed him to record the group’s next album so that when they returned from tour, they could sing their vocals over a finished instrumental track. The Beach Boys did still play on their own recordings sometimes, particularly Carl Wilson on guitar, but the most of the instrumental tracking, especially the 1964-66 period, was completed by the Wrecking Crew.

This brief overview gives some context to the discussion of instrumentation that follows in this chapter, as many of the instrumental techniques used by Brian Wilson have their history in the productions of Phil Spector. Over time, we can observe how Brian Wilson follows the apprentice-craft-art model, by first learning from his ‘teacher’, honing his craft, and eventually finding his own particular arranging style as a result.

Instrument Makes and Models

This section will focus on the types of instruments owned and used by the Beach Boys throughout their early recordings, and how the sonic qualities of these instruments contributed to their sound. Particular attention will be paid to their use of Fender guitars and amplifiers. There has been little research into the Beach Boys' instruments in the same way as the Beatles, who have several publications listing their equipment in exhaustive detail²⁹. The information for this discussion comes primarily from identifying equipment as accurately as possible based on live performances, studio photographs, interviews, and a section in Jon Stibbon's (2011) *The Beach Boys FAQ*, which helpfully lists some of the Beach Boys' equipment, which has helped back up some of my earlier research on instrument models. The Wrecking Crew had their own equipment, which in part contributed to the sound of the Beach Boys, and I have noted their equipment where available. However, in many cases, the Wrecking Crew's job was to fit as seamlessly into the Beach Boys' sound as possible, and as such, some of the equipment used is similar to that used by the band themselves.

This short overview is not intended to be an exhaustive overview of the history of these particular instruments, however, it is important to briefly touch on the idiosyncrasies of these instruments and how they may contribute to the Beach Boys' sound.

Types of Guitars used in the Beach Boys' line-up.

In their early days, the Beach Boys were fundamentally a 'guitar band,' and their instrument choices reflected to their desire to partake in the surf rock subculture growing out of Southern California in the early 1960s. The following section outlines some of the makes and models that most contributed to the Beach Boys' overall sound. Table 17 shows a detailed list of the guitars used by each member of the Beach Boys.

Fender Guitars

There has always been a strong relationship between the Beach Boys and Fender Guitars – they have used them throughout their entire career - however, their early days in the apprentice and craftsmen period in the 1960s are most shaped by the

²⁹ *Beatles Gear: All the Fab Four's Instruments from Stage to Studio* by Andy Babiuk (2009); *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions: The Official Story of the Abbey Road Years 1962-1970* by Mark Lewisohn and Paul McCartney (2006); *Recording the Beatles* by Kevin Ryan & Brian Kehew (2006).

Fender 'sound'. Carl Wilson, David Marks and Al Jardine – the three guitar players in the Beach Boys during their early period – all owned Fender Stratocasters. The Stratocaster was particularly important to the sound of rock and roll as it was the first solid-body electric guitar to be mass produced, and meant that the instrument was durable and affordable enough for young musicians to own one (Kiris, 2010, p. 76). The “muted twang” produced by the Stratocasters pick-up positions became its trademark sound, and its bright, trebly tone fit seamlessly into the youthfully bright, energetic tone of the Beach Boys’ music. There were two other reasons for this close relationship between Fender and the Beach Boys; firstly, Leo Fender lived in Southern California, and these were the models that were affordable and easily available to the Beach Boys at the time. Secondly, ‘king of the surf guitar’ Dick Dale had a close friendship with Leo Fender, which meant that he played Fenders exclusively, and the models of guitars he used were often tweaked specially by Fender himself to suit Dale’s needs.

Surf Rock and the Fender Jaguar

Carl Wilson and David Marks were close childhood friends who learned how to play their guitars together. In the early days of the Beach Boys, they owned matching Fender Stratocasters, before quickly moving on to Fender Jaguars (See Figure 26). The Fender Jaguar was released in 1962 and was only a slight variation on the previous Fender Jazzmaster. However, the Jaguar had a shorter neck (much like that on a Stratocaster), new pickups and tone circuit (Kelly et al, 2010, p. 165). In essence, the Jaguar was a ‘rock version’ of the Jazzmaster (Kiris, 2012); It combined some of the best features of the top-of-the-line Jazzmaster and the affordable Stratocaster to create a new instrument that appealed almost immediately to the surf rock scene for its thin, bright and trebly sound. The connection between surf rock – Dick Dale especially – and the Fender Jaguar is summed up perfectly in an iconic advertisement featuring Dale riding a wave and playing his Jaguar at the same time underneath the tag line “You won’t part with yours either” (see Figure 25).

FIGURE 25 - DICK DALE IN A FENDER GUITARS ADVERTISEMENT

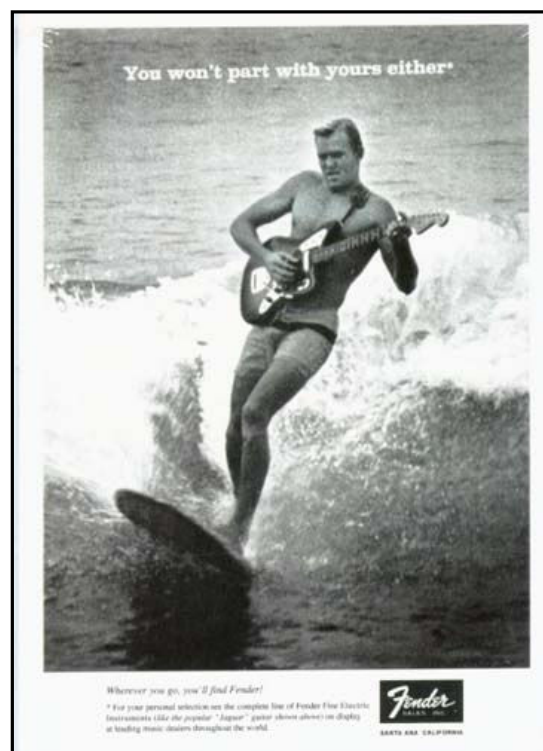


FIGURE 26 - EXAMPLE OF A 1962 FENDER JAGUAR GUITAR



The sound wasn't the only thing that seemed to appeal; in 1962, Fender started to manufacture its guitars in small batches of custom colours (these were previously only available upon request). The Jaguar was one of the first Fender guitars available in a wider colour palate, which coincided with the rise of custom paint jobs for hot-rods. The shape of the Fender Jaguar also played a part in its popularity for surf and hot rod enthusiasts. Kelly et al (2010) sum this up noting:

The new guitar quickly found favour with instrumental surf groups. Not only did it have the sound they were after, but its shape and style suited the genre perfectly. With its cresting-wave body shape and flashy, automobile style chrome parts, a custom colour Jaguar in Foam Green, Sonic Blue or Candy Apple Red would become the surf guitar – a genuine ‘babe magnet’ for young guitarists (Kelly et al, 2010, p. 168-9).

Kiris (2010) also connects the Fender to surf music and hot rod culture:

During the 1950s and 1960s, the automobile was a big craze in the United States. Fender brazenly borrowed the name of the ultimate British luxury car for its new creation. Tapered like a racing car, the Jaguar was designed to conquer the Californian surf music scene... One of the first fans was Carl Wilson... [and] Fender originally designed the Jaguar for musicians who use heavy-gauge strings to create typical instrumental surf tunes (p. 86).

The Fender Jaguar was so connected to surf music that it followed its fate in the later years of the 1960s. After surf music faded from the charts by 1965, so too did the Jaguar, whose chrome details began to look dated in only a few years when psychedelic guitar music became popular (Kelly et al, 2010, p. 171). Carl Wilson and Al Jardine also started to expand their guitar collection during this time, moving on from the Fender Jaguar and Fender Stratocaster to include other makes and models, such as the Rickenbacker 12-string, Epiphone 12-string, Epiphone Casino and the Gibson Les Paul (see Table 17).

Rickenbacker Guitars and the Influence of the Beatles

Rickenbacker guitars were so closely aligned with the early Beatles music that for a period of time in the 1960s they were referred to as “Beatle-backers” (Kiris, 2010, p95). Like the hairstyles and suits they wore, the Beatles also popularised the use of Rickenbacker guitars, which they purchased during while in Hamburg . Like the Beach Boys, they were playing what was available and affordable to them at the time. The Beatles, especially John Lennon, idolised Buddy Holly and his use of the Fender guitar, however they were very difficult to find in the UK in the early 1960s, and it wasn’t until their tour of America in 1964 – resulting in ‘Beatlemania’ – that they finally got their hands on the Fenders they had desired. Even more influential than Lennon’s use of the 300 series Rickenbacker, and Paul McCartney’s use of the 4001 S Rickenbacker bass, was George Harrison’s use of the Rickenbacker 360/12 – the 12-string electric guitar. It

was now Carl Wilson who desired the Beatles' Rickenbacker guitars in the same way the Beatles had desired their own Fender Stratocasters.

First used during the recording of *A Hard Days' Night*, the Rickenbacker 360/12 would be the inspiration for the Byrds' experiments in folk rock, and its 'jangle' sound formed part of first stirrings of psychedelic music (see "Mr Tambourine Man" [1965], "Turn! Turn! Turn! (to Everything There is a Season)" [1965] and "California Dreaming" [1965] by the Mamas and the Papas). Further, Roger McGuinn has stated that the Byrds' sound wouldn't have existed without the electric 12-string (Holmes, 2007, p. 343; Kiris, 2012 p. 99; Walsh, 1995). Carl Wilson, like McGuinn, was inspired by the sound of the 12-string guitar, exemplified in "Girl Don't Tell Me" from *Summer Days*, the Beach Boys homage to the Beatles "Ticket To Ride" (1965). Carl Wilson's relationship to the 12-string guitar was recognised by Rickenbacker, and in 2000 they released the 360/12CW – a limited edition Carl Wilson 12-string Rickenbacker model. Although it was used sparingly on Beach Boys' recordings, its presence helped establish the Beach Boys' as being connected to the 1960s counter-culture and signified their move away from the clean-cut image and sound of their youth to a more developed and complicated musicality.

TABLE 17 - TYPES OF GUITARS AND AMPLIFIERS USED BY THE BEACH BOYS

	Guitar Models	Amplifier Models
Carl Wilson	Kay single cutaway acoustic (with pick up added) [1957] Fender Stratocaster (Sunburst) [1962] Fender Jaguar (Olympic White) Rickenbacker 360/12 (Fireglo) [1965] Rickenbacker 360/DBV64 [1965] Fender Electric XII (Olympic White) Guild Starfire IV Fender Telecaster (Natural with Bigsby Tremolo) Fender Stratocaster (Olympic White) Epiphone 360 Riviera 12-string (Tobacco sunburst with Gibson neck)	Fender Dual Showman (Blonde with Outboard spring Reverb Unit) Fender Bandmaster Fender Twin Reverb Fender Dual Showman (Black)
Al Jardine	Fender Stratocaster (Olympic White) Fender Stratocaster (Red)	Fender Showman (Blonde with

	Gibson Les Paul (Black) Fender Electric XII (Sunburst) Epiphone Casino Gibson ES – 335 Gibson Les Paul Junior	Outboard Spring Reverb Unit) Fender Dual Showman
David Marks	Silvertone F-Hole Acoustic (Blue and White) [1957] Fender Stratocaster (Sunburst) [1962] Fender Jaguar (Red)	Fender Bandmaster Fender Showman (Blonde with Outboard Spring Reverb Unit)

Guitar Amplifiers

To match their Fender Jaguars, the Beach Boys primarily used Fender Showman amplifiers – also a staple among surf rock musicians. Dick Dale worked closely with Leo Fender to produce the 1960 100-Watt Dual Showman amplifier, which was made to withstand Dale’s aggressive playing style without exploding into flames like previous models (Crowley, 2011, p. 58; McCarter, 2010, p. 22). The most important feature of the Showman was that it allowed surf musicians to play at larger volumes without compromising on sound quality (McCarter, 2012, p. 1). It allowed Dick Dale’s extremely fast playing style to be heard with clarity, and it allowed the Beach Boys to project the bright, clean, ringing guitar sound exemplified in their early music. In a personal interview with McCarter (2012), Bob Berryhill of the Surfaris commented, “When you played in a large venue, the Fender instruments that we had, they were the only way people could hear what you were doing. The drums would echo in the room...the only way to tap through it was with a Fender Showman” (p. 2). The close connection between Dale as a musician, and Fender as a technician is unique in the history of popular music, as Willet (2010) notes:

The convenience of having the audience, performer, amp designer, and loudspeaker maker in the same community cannot be overstated in how it enabled rapid changes in newer equipment. Dale’s demands for better designed amplifiers prompted Fender to collaborate in designing and building more powerful equipment that allowed the electric guitar to continue its rise in popularity, changing popular American tastes (Willet, 2010 p. 51-2 as cited in McCarter, 2012).

If the Jaguar was designed as the perfect surf rock guitar with its curved wave body - the Fender Showman was its chopping undertow - a perfect, sonic match.

The Showman was the first of Fender's "Piggyback" amplifiers, in which the amplifier itself sat on top of the speaker cabinet in two separate units. The reasoning for this was so that the unit could be more portable and easily transported for touring, and also allowed the speaker cabinet to be placed remotely, while the player could still maintain the amplifier controls during performance (Kelly et al, 2010 p. 152). The Showman also featured other improvements for better sound quality – two chrome tilt-back legs that allowed the sound to travel to the farthest points of a room, and a closed-back speaker cabinet, which allowed a better flow of sound and more accurate frequency response. With these improvements put together, the Showman was the perfect amplifier to project the furious urgency of Californian surf music.

The Fender Precision Bass.

The Fender Precision Bass (or "P-Bass") was used primarily by the Beach Boys in their early recordings and live performances. The P-Bass was one of the only options available to young musicians eager to play bass guitar – after all, the instrument itself had only been invented in 1950 (Roberts, 2001, p. 51). After Leo Fender had created the first solid-body electric guitar, he set his mind to revolutionising the bass in the same way. Up until the 1940s, all bass guitar parts were played with an upright (sometimes called "doghouse") bass until Fender attempted to create an electrified version that could compete with the loudness of the rest of a band. Fender took trips to New York clubs to help promote his first version of the P-Bass in 1952, and Jim Roberts (2001) credits musician Lionel Hampton with helping to popularise the electric bass within jazz circles. Hampton took the new bass on the road and Fender received many calls from players interested in the new instrument (p. 57). Leonard Feather described the new electrified bass sound in *Downbeat* magazine in July 1953 as having a "deep booming quality...the bass turned up a little above normal, cut through the whole bottom of the band like a surging undertow" (Roberts, 2011, p. 57). The description of the P-Bass as a "surging undertow" connects well to the musical genre that took up the new electrified bass with the most enthusiasm – Californian surf music.

Kohman (1997) devotes an entire article in *Bass Player Magazine* to the connection between surf music and the Fender P-Bass, arguing that the 'sound' of surf rock would be impossible to create without the sound of an electric bass: it was the first

genre for which the electric bass sound was a necessity. He uses the music of Dick Dale as an example:

Dale's sound was always fast, aggressive and phenomenally loud for its time, and depended heavily on the electric bass. A former bassist of his once remarked Dick had three requirements for his bass player: play Fender P-Bass, with a pick, and use only downstrokes. The jazzy thump of the bass fiddle was useless in this context... the hyper-amplified power of those live shows must have been like nothing heard before, and the electric bass was a crucial component (Kohman, 1997).

The surfing lifestyle, and the music that made up its soundtrack, was primarily a teenage domain. These young surf musicians did not have a long history with the upright bass (like other, more established musicians) and, as such, took to the electric bass quickly, experimented with it, and made it their own. They did not approach the P-Bass as a "poor substitute for a 'real' bass" (as many bass players did at the time) – to them, a Fender was the 'real' sound they desired in their music (Kohman, 2002). Much like the Fender Jaguar, the P-Bass became the staple instrument for those in surfing culture to get the loud, booming, aggressive rock and roll sound they desired, and that best represented their experience "riding the wild surf." Like Carl Wilson and David Marks with the Fender Jaguar, Brian Wilson, bass player in the Beach Boys at this time, had to have a P-Bass for himself. With these instruments they were able to channel some of the sound of surf music, even if it was not as 'authentic' as the instrumental music they were inspired by. By 1964, the Beach Boys had a complete matching set of Fender Jaguar guitars and a P-Bass in custom 'Olympic White', to match their Fender Showman and Fender Bassman amplifiers. These instrumental choices – due to their proximity to Leo Fender in California, and to their desire to 'fit in' with other surf acts – helped underpin the bright, energetic early sound of the Beach Boys.

Bass Amplifiers

The Fender Bassman was the only amplifier used by the Beach Boys during the early to mid-1960s. Fender were one of the only manufacturers who made amplifiers specifically to handle the low-end of the Fender P-Bass, and certainly were the most accessible model available to the Beach Boys at the time. While there are many other parts of the recording process which impact on the sound of amplifier – the settings on the amplifier itself, the microphones used, the position of the microphones, the size of the room, any post-recording effects and so forth - a small acknowledgement of the Bassman's sonic features is worth noting.

The unit itself, while heavy, was small enough to be portable for touring musicians, and features 4x10" speakers and a 50-watt output – extremely powerful for its time. The upright bass was the first instrument to be drowned out by the rest of the band when playing live, but the Bassman now allowed the bass to be heard beneath a growing wall of rock and roll noise. Kelly et al (2010) describe the Bassman's sound as having a "thick, creamy overdrive" and also note its ability for distortion (p. 108). While the Beach Boys' recordings were always extremely 'clean' sounding, the loud, raw energy of the Bassman amplifier helped the bass become not just a necessity, but an important feature of the Beach Boys' music.

TABLE 18 - BASS GUITARS AND AMPLIFIERS USED BY THE BEACH BOYS

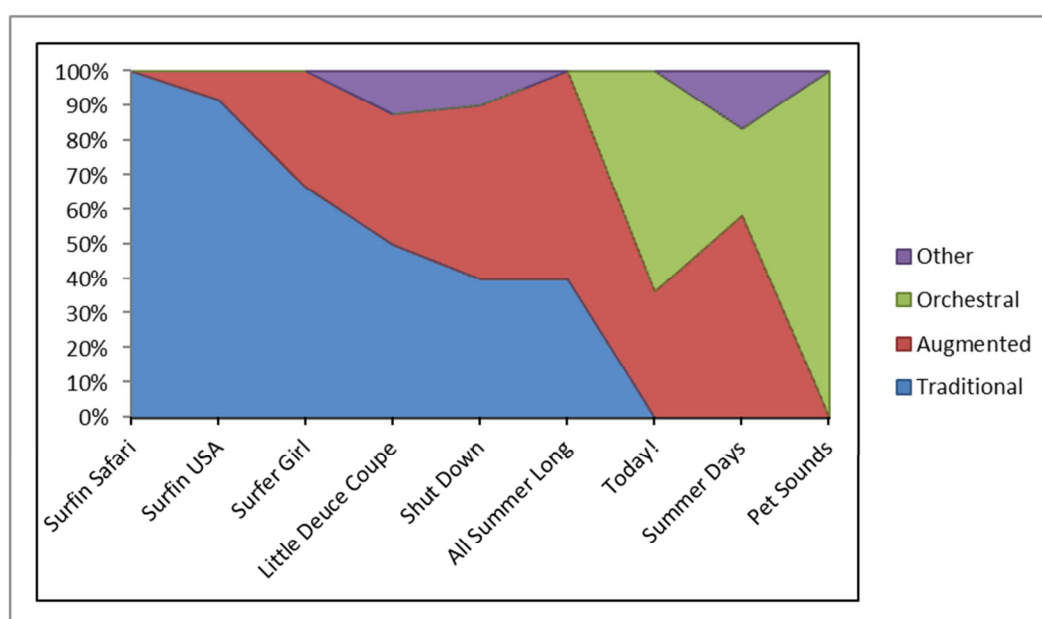
	Bass Guitar Model	Bass Amplifier Models
Brian Wilson	Fender Precision (Sunburst) [1962] Fender Precision (Olympic White)	Fender Bassman
Carl Wilson	Hofner Copy	Fender Bassman
Al Jardine	Upright Bass – model unknown Fender Precision (Sunburst) Fender Precision (Olympic White)	Fender Bassman
Bruce Johnston	Fender Precision (Olympic White) Fender Precision (Blue) Hofner Copy	

An Overview of the Beach Boys' Instrumentation

Figure 27 shows an overview of the kinds of instrumentation used in the Beach Boys' music and their frequency over time. The most common group are songs with basic instrumentation, which make up almost half of all songs during this time (44%). This is followed by augmented instrumentation (30%) and orchestral instrumentation (22%). Four percent of songs featured little to no musical backing ("A Young Man has

Gone”, “And Your Dream Comes True” and “I’m Bugged at My Old Man”). Basic instrumentation is used over the course of the first six albums (1962-64), and not used again from *Today* (1965) onwards. Augmented instrumentation starts to occur more frequently on *Shut Down*, *All Summer Long* and *Today* albums. Orchestral instrumentation is used solely from 1965 onwards. All of the songs on *Pet Sounds* feature orchestral instrumentation, and through this change in arrangement we can clearly see the movement away from traditional rock arrangement in favour of a more complex musical texture.

FIGURE 27 - AREA CHART SHOWING OVERVIEW OF BEACH BOYS' INSTRUMENTATION OVER TIME.



Basic and Augmented Instrumentation

In this section, basic and augmented instrumentation will be discussed together, as augmented songs often build directly onto the instrumental sound of basic songs. Basic instrumentation in rock music usually consists of guitars, bass, drums, keyboards and vocals. In describing the early recording sessions of the Wrecking Crew, Hartman (2012) notes that “on many, if not most, rock and roll recording dates [in the 1950s], only a few instruments were that commonly utilised – often just guitar, bass and drums. Sometimes a piano might be thrown into the mix too. But keeping a rock and roll arrangement clean and simple was part of the whole point” (p. 49).

In their early recordings, songs that employed basic instrumentation were their most simple songs, which were often upbeat, and expressed lyrics about surfing and hot-rod culture (“409”, “Surfin’ USA”, “Little Deuce Coupe”, and so forth). This simplicity

gave the music its “propulsive quality, its sense of in-your-face immediacy” (Hartman, 2012, p. 50). In their later songs that used basic instrumentation, the understated arrangement left room for, and was balanced by more complex vocal harmonies (see “Don’t Worry Baby”, “Hushabye” and “Girls on the Beach”). This ‘basic instrumentation’ used the instruments that the original members of the group could play themselves without any added session musicians, and formed the musical ‘core’ onto which augmented and orchestral instruments were layered. These instruments included:

- Drums
- Bass
- Electric Guitar (Rhythm and Lead)
- Electric Organ
- Piano
- Vocals

The Beach Boys played these instruments themselves up until the recording of *Surfer Girl* when the Wrecking Crew began to be included in the recording of some of the instrumental parts instead. The basic instrumentation on songs during this time worked well, as at the height of their commercial success, it was important that the Beach Boys’ songs could be translated easily to a live performance context by the group. On later albums, this became less important, as Brian stopped touring completely, and the music itself became more focused on studio sounds than on performance. This is in line with contemporaneous music, when, in the mid-1960s there was a creative shift away from basic live recording, to a desire to use the studio as an instrument for musical creation (see Moorefield, 2005, for a detailed overview of this process). From this, we see the kind of instrumentation change to suit this creative view.

TABLE 19- SONGS WITH BASIC INSTRUMENTATION

Surfin Safari	Lonely Sea	Car Crazy Cutie
County Fair	Noble Surfer	Cherry Cherry Coupe
Ten Little Indians	Honky Tonk	Custom Machine
Chug-a-Lug	Lana	Fun Fun Fun
Little Girl...	Surf Jam	Don't Worry Baby
409	Let's Go Trippin'	In the Parking Lot
Surfin'	Finders Keepers	Keep an Eye on Summer
Heads You Win	Surfer Girl	Hushabye
Summertime Blues	South Bay Surfer	Little Honda
Cuckoo Clock	Rocking Surfer	Girls on the Beach
Moon Dawg	Little Deuce Coupe	Don't Back Down
The Shift	Hawaii	Wendy

Surfin' USA	Surfers Rule	
Farmer's Daughter	Your Summer Dream	
Misirlou	Boogie Woodie	
Stoked	Ballad of Ole' Betsy	

Augmented instrumentation includes the instruments used in 'basic instrumentation' songs – drums, bass, piano, guitar, organ and vocals – and combines them with other kinds of instruments not used in a standard rock and roll line-up (Everett, 2009, p. 93). The Beach Boys 'augment' their basic line-up with new instruments that could no longer be played by the band themselves, such as xylophone, various horns, woodwind instruments as well as more densely structured vocal harmonies:³⁰

- Drums
- Bass
- Electric Guitar (Rhythm and Lead)
- Percussion
- Electric Organ
- Piano
- Miscellaneous sounds (Chimes, Xylophone)
- Horns (Saxophone, Trumpet)
- Vocals
- Added Vocal Parts

Augmented instrumentation was most commonly used in the craftsmen period on *Shut Down* and *All Summer Long*. These two middle-period albums started a shift from rock and roll songs about surf and cars, to more creative musical material with broader lyrical themes like as love³¹, heartbreak³² and vignettes about American teenage life³³ (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7 on lyrical themes. This expanded sonic palette allowed for more inventive musical experiments, and by the release of *Today* in 1965, all songs featured augmented or orchestral instrumentation.

The following section will look at each instrument individually, and examine the roles they each play in the Beach Boys' arrangement and in the development of their sound.

³⁰ Underlined songs denote additional instruments in augmented instrumentation.

³¹ "We'll Run Away," "Good to My Baby," "Help Me Rhonda," "You're So Good to Me."

³² "Warmth of the Sun," "Girl Don't Tell Me."

³³ "Pom Pom Play Girl," "All Summer Long," "Drive-In," "Amusement Parks USA," "California Girls."

TABLE 20- SONGS WITH AUGMENTED INSTRUMENTATION

Shut Down	We'll Run Away
Catch A Wave	Carl's Big Chance
Surfer Moon	Do You Remember?
In My Room	Drive In
Our Car Club	Do You Wanna Dance
Be True To Your School	Good To My Baby
Spirit of America	Don't Hurt My Little Sister
No Go Showboat	I'm So Young
Warmth of the Sun	The Girl from New York City
Why Do Fool Fall In Love?	Amusement Parks USA
Pom Pom Play Girl	Salt Lake City
Shut Down Part II	Girl Don't Tell Me
Louie Louie	Help Me Rhonda
I Get Around	California Girls
All Summer Long	You're So Good To Me

Drums and Bass Guitar

In this section, drums and bass parts will be considered together, as their roles are complementary to each other.

The Beach Boys' early songs in the apprentice period have simple rhythmic patterns, due in part to Dennis Wilson's rudimentary skills on the instrument, and also because the group's early songs were generally simple musically. The drums, as is typical in most rock and roll songs, feature throughout the arrangement, with small fills to mark the transition between song sections.

In apprentice and early craftsmen-era songs, bass guitar parts follow the drums with a steady walking pattern on quarter notes during verse sections before changing to single root notes during chorus sections (as in "Shut Down", "Little Deuce Coupe"). Other songs feature a continuous part on root notes ("Fun Fun Fun") or a continuous walking bass part ("409"). Despite this unchanging rhythmic relationship, the Beach Boys still used interesting arrangement techniques to delineate different song sections. They

worked creatively with the musical skills they had available at the time. The most commonly used technique is a 'stop-time' section, where drums, bass, or both, drop out of the arrangement for a short period of time.

The Use of 'Stop-Time' by Drums and Bass.

'Stop-time' sections on the bass and drums (usually only 1-2 bars in length) feature in many of the Beach Boys' early songs with basic arrangements, and were taken to the extreme in 1965 on the single "The Little Girl I Once Knew" (1965) which featured 2 entire bars of silence between sections.³⁴ These stop-time sections are created when the drums and bass cease playing, while other instruments in the arrangement continue. The technique aids to highlight other elements of the arrangement that may not have otherwise been given focus while the full rhythm section is playing (in this way, it is an instrumental technique, rather than a rhythmic technique). In most instances, these stop-time bars are used at the end of sections. For example, at the end of a verse (as in "Hawaii"), at the end of a bridge section (as in "Little Deuce Coupe") or at the end of the song before a coda, (as in "Your Summer Dream" and "Keep an Eye on Summer") or, less commonly, at the end of a chorus or solo (as in "409"). A variation on these examples is heard in "Surfin' USA" which uses stop-time for the bass on every second bar of the verse, while the drums alternate between a full backbeat pattern and a kick drum only on quarter notes.

In most cases, the stop-time bars are used to highlight an important vocal part, usually the hook, and aid in making it more memorable and prominent. In "Surfin' Safari" the stop time happens underneath "Let's go surfin' now, everybody's learning how" – the most memorable part of the hook. In "Little Deuce Coupe" the stop-time occurs at the end of the bridge underneath the line "There's one more thing, I got the pink slip, Daddy" – one of the most memorable lyrical lines of the song, emphasised by Mike Love's prominent bass vocal. Similarly, in "Hawaii" the stop-time leads into the chorus underneath "Go to" before the hook line "Hawaii, Hawaii" In each case, the dropping out of the bass and drums serves to highlight memorable vocal parts of each song.

³⁴ "The Little Girl I Once Knew" charted poorly compared to previous singles due to radio disc jockeys' reluctance to play the song on air for fear its' two bars of complete silence (which occurs twice) would confuse listeners and prompt them to switch stations (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p42; Leaf, 1978, p69)

In ballad songs, stop-time bars function in a unique way. They most frequently occur at the end of a song between the last chorus and the outro section. Often, the arrangement slows into the end of the final chorus and into the stop-time bar. After this, the arrangement bursts into the outro section, often with more instrumental and vocal parts than in the previous section. This technique is heard in “Your Summer Dream”, “Keep an Eye on Summer”, “Surfer Girl” and “Girls on the Beach”, and functions to build emotional tension before the release in the outro section.

From this, the Beach Boys move into the craftsmen period, with augmented songs changing the role of the drums. This is heard in the move away from a standard back beat on high hat, snare and kick, and more often omitting the high hat altogether in favour of other percussive instruments. In some cases, the kick drum pattern is also slightly changed; In “Warmth of the Sun,” the kick pattern includes a hit before beat 3, creating a heartbeat-like pattern that underscores the heartbreak of the lyric [0:14-0:17]:



Often referred to as the “baion” beat, it is a pattern heard in many Phil Spector productions, most famously featuring as the big, booming drum opening to the Ronettes “Be My Baby” (1963) (Warwick, 2005, p. 196) and in the Righteous Brothers’ “You’ve Lost that Lovin’ Feelin’” (1964). Earl Palmer, who played on the latter, described the drum session saying “I had hardly anything to do but play tom-toms and tune my snare drum real loose and they echoed in...played a big old heavy after beat on the snare and tom-tom” (Williams, 1972, p. 88).

From the 20 ‘augmented’ songs, 9 use only a kick and snare drum as the drum kit, while 11 use a more standardised rock and roll line up of kick drum, snare, and high hat on repeated eighth notes (see Table 21 for specific songs). Unlike other instrumental roles, which tended to grow more complicated over time, the drum kit part tends to simplify over time, adding less to the underlying drive of a song, and using other kinds of rhythmic effects instead. These effects include different kinds of snare drum fills (see intro to “Be True To Your School” and “Why Do Fools Fall in Love”); the use of different cymbals, as in the final verse of “Warmth of the Sun” where the ride cymbal helps ‘lift’ the song after harmonic modulation; the use of tom-tom fills (see “Salt Lake City”), the addition of bongos used in “Good To My Baby”; the doubling of a snare drum with a

tambourine in “You’re So Good to Me” and the dramatic wash of various cymbals during the introduction to “California Girls.”

The role of the high hat also changes, and is replaced by several different instruments (most often guitar and piano parts) but there are also variations that use organ, saxophone and other percussive instruments (such as the tambourine). The difference in arrangements, and the move away from the drums as the main rhythmic force, give this period of the Beach Boys’ music a different musical texture. This suggests the movement from more standard rock and roll instrumentations towards more complex arrangements from 1965 onwards.

TABLE 21 - USE OF HIGH HAT IN AUGMENTED SONGS

High hat	No High hat
Shut Down	Catch A Wave
Spirit of America	Surfer Moon
Warmth of the Sun	In My Room
Pom Pom Play Girl	Our Car Club
Shut Down Part II	Be True To Your School
Louie Louie	No Go Showboat
Carl’s Big Chance	Why Do Fools Fall In Love?
Do You Remember?	I Get Around
Do You Wanna Dance	All Summer Long
The Girl From New York City	We’ll Run Away
Girl Don’t Tell Me	Drive In
	Good To my Baby
	Don’t Hurt My Little Sister
	I’m So Young
	Amusement Parks USA
	Salt Lake City
	Help Me Rhonda
	California Girls
	You’re So Good To Me

Guitars and Piano

The following section will discuss the roles of guitars and pianos together in basic and augmented instrumentation, as the roles are often connected to each other.

The roles of guitars and pianos serve three purposes in the Beach Boys' arrangements. Firstly, as textural or harmonic foundation, secondly, as soloing instruments, and thirdly to replace the role of the high hat on the drum kit (discussed in Chapter 4 on rhythm). In essence, the guitar and piano parts serve to hold the arrangement together.

The Role of Guitars and Pianos in the Apprentice Period

The Beach Boys' use of electric rhythm guitar typically plays the chord progression on eighth notes, unchanging throughout an entire song. However, this was sometimes replaced with an arpeggiated chord pattern during ballad songs ("In My Room" for example). When Brian Wilson recorded guitars and piano, he used Spector's technique of doubling and tripling of parts at the same time. However, Brian's use of this technique was subtler than Spector's – the 'live' double or triple-tracking added an instrumental foundation, without the part being blurred beyond recognition. Record producer Terry Melcher described the difference between the two approaches: "Phil Spector was a very talented crazy, he had this layered sound thing, but Brian took that and used it in a delicate way, so it became beautiful, so it wasn't just angry, and Phil's thing was anger, and Brian's was love" (Boyd, 2000). The introductory section of "California Girls", with its woven melodic lines, is a clear example of Brian Wilson's more "delicate" use of Spector's recording techniques.

The piano was often at the forefront of early 1950s rock and roll, particularly in the music of Fats Domino, Little Richard and Jerry Lee Lewis – all artists the Wilson brothers were exposed while growing up. These influences, combined with the piano-based music of George Gershwin,³⁵ (particularly "Rhapsody in Blue" (1924), which was a favourite of Brian's), meant that for the Beach Boys, the piano was of particular importance (see Figure 28). This was not only in terms of musical influence, as the piano was also an important part of the Wilson household, with both Murry and Audrey Wilson proficient at playing the piano and organ. Often family sing-a-longs would occur around the piano or their Hammond organ, and for a time, the troubled home-life of the Wilson's would be set aside for a while as the music was playing (Carlin, 2006, p. 10, 19; Gaines, 1986, p. 44-55; Leaf, 1978, p. 12-17).

³⁵ In 2010, Brian Wilson released *Brian Wilson Reimagines Gershwin* – an album full of Gershwin compositions such as 'Summertime,' "They Can't Take That Away From Me" and "I Got Rhythm" rerecorded and 're-imagined' in the style of the Beach Boys, showing Gershwin's influence still remained strong in Wilson many decades later. On this record, he also completed two unfinished Gershwin compositions with Scott Bennett – "The Like in I Love You" and "Nothing But Love."

The Role of Guitars and Pianos in the Craftsmen Period

As in songs with basic instrumentation, guitars and pianos in augmented songs most often play a simple repeated rhythmic part, usually on eighth notes throughout a song, although the importance of these parts began to change during the 1964-65 period.

Within an augmented arrangement, the dominance of the guitar tends to recede. As Curnutt (2012) notes, "From late 1961 through early 1965, the Beach Boys were a guitar-driven band" (p. 97) and any early songs featured the instrument at the front of the arrangement. This tends to change for augmented songs, as the guitar is often buried further back in the mix and used as instrumental colour, rather than a focal instrument. For example, in "California Girls," the guitar part is almost imperceptible during the verses and choruses, even in the *Unsurpassed Masters* tracking sessions. All Beach Boys songs up until this point have featured an audible electric guitar, so it seems logical to assume that the guitar parts are present (and one would certainly hear the change if they were to be removed from the mix). This exemplifies the changing role of the electric guitar. Instead of an electric guitar, the overall *arrangement* itself became the focus. The increased dominance of the piano (and other keyboard instruments) also coincided with Brian Wilson's decision to quit the Beach Boys touring band to remain in the studio.

This change is also confirmed with a quote from Brian Wilson, who noted Phil Spector's influence on the grouping of guitar and piano parts: "Rather than just say 'That's a piano, that's a bass' now we have what you call a piano-guitar. Which you're going to call something else. It sounds like something else. Although it may be two or three instruments combined playing the same notes, it now sounds different" (Leaf, 1997, p. 50). This intangible 'something else', the 'piano-guitar', is featured prominently in augmented songs.

The doubling and tripling of guitar parts is seen in the AFM Union sheets, which show that there was more than one musician playing the guitar at a given session. For example, Badman (2004) in his comprehensive *The Beach Boys: The Definitive Diary of America's Greatest Band on Stage and in the Studio* lists both Bill Pitman and Tommy Tedesco are listed as present playing guitar for the recording of "Why Do Fools Fall in Love" (p49); Bill Pittman and Billy Strange were listed as present during "Kiss Me Baby"

(p. 75); Billy Strange, Howard Roberts and Jerry Cole are listed during “Salt Lake City,” (p. 87) and so forth.

In augmented songs, we also start to see the inclusion of acoustic guitar, which first appears on “Why Do Fools Fall in Love” in 1964, and then later on “Do You Remember,” “Kiss Me Baby,” “We’ll Run Away”. However, the acoustic guitar features most prominently on “Girl Don’t Tell Me”. The acoustic guitar echoes the role of the electric guitar, often playing repeated chords on eighth notes. This slight change in texture is reflected in the overall ‘colour’ of the Beach Boys’ music in the craft-period.

The role of the piano begins to change in augmented songs too. By the end of 1963, nearly every basic song featured a piano, however, only half (16/30) of augmented songs featured the piano (or, at least, an audible one). When the piano is used, it is used in two main ways – firstly, in a similar role to the guitars, padding out the main instrumental texture, and secondly, as a way to add melodic interest.

Listening for the piano tracks was one of the most difficult tasks when collecting the data for this analysis – often the piano was buried so far down in the mix that even when listening to each individual take, it was difficult to hear. In some cases, the only evidence of the piano was during the talkback between takes when Brian would comment on something specifically to do with the piano. For example, the piano on “Help Me Rhonda” is very low in the mix, however, it can be heard tinkling between takes which gives evidence to its part being there *somewhere*. The piano also features in the introduction section of “California Girls,” which is extremely difficult to hear, however Brian refers to it between takes, confirming that it is indeed playing. A part so difficult to hear may seem useless in an arrangement, however, if the piano part was taken out of the arrangement, the texture would certainly change.

When not used as instrumental padding, the piano started to be used in more creative ways. With other added instruments - acoustic guitars, horns and saxophones - now forming the framework for the arrangement, the piano became free to contribute to a song in different ways. In “Hushabye” it begins the song with a special introductory section, highlighting both the piano and the layered vocal harmonies. In “You’re So Good to Me” it plays the repeated riff along with the bass guitar, which draws attention to the memorable, syncopated melody. During “Girl Don’t Tell Me” the piano also doubles the main riff in a similar way. In “Kiss Me Baby,” the piano opens the introductory section with an arpeggiated chordal part, a piano motif not heard before this point in 1965. During “Then I Kissed Her” and “Kiss Me Baby,” there is clear evidence of two pianos

playing together – this may mean two actual pianos or two people playing in different octaves on the same piano. Given the small recording space, the latter seems more plausible.

In these piano parts towards the end of the craft period, we can observe a slow decline in arrangements rooted heavily in eighth note patterns, and start to see the piano used as decoration and ornamentation in the art period

FIGURE 28 - IMAGES OF THE BEACH BOYS AND BRIAN WILSON AT THE PIANO.



The combination of the incessant eighth notes played on guitars and pianos created a wide dynamic range that creates the solid core of the instrumental arrangement. This repetitive pattern is what gives the early Beach Boys' apprentice and craftsmen songs their energetic drive. This 'drive' is used to particularly good effect in the Beach Boys' hot-rod and car songs, like "409," "Little Deuce Coupe," and "Custom Machine" where this rhythmic feel creates a feeling of fast movement and excitement similar to a racing heart-beat.

Electric Organ

The Role of the Electric Organ in the Apprentice Period

The organ heard most in the Beach Boys' recordings is the Hammond B3 (see the solo to "Surfin' USA"), whose unique speaker cabinet featured a set of rotating speakers that could be sped up and slowed down, changing the sound dramatically. It is known for its 'percussive' effect, sharp attack, and the loudness of its key click (Everett, 2009, p. 72). The sound of the organ is used in a different way to that of the piano, and is most often utilised for colour and harmonic texture.

Firstly, it is often used as a solo instrument, either on its own or, most often, a solo of eight bars is shared by the organ and then guitar (as in "Surfin' USA" and "Fun Fun Fun"). Secondly, the organ is used as harmonic padding; when used in this way, the organ often holds long chords and is placed low in the mix to give the song an instrumental depth, as in "Boogie Woodie". Thirdly, it plays a more rhythmic padding part, similar to that of the piano, as in "Don't Back Down". In one instance ("County Fair") the organ is used in a more humorous context, trying to replicate the sound of a fairground. As the Beach Boys' instrumentation progressed into the craft period, the organ began to play a different role in the Beach Boys' music.

The Role of the Electric Organ in the Craftsmen Period

For augmented songs, the organ is still used in a similar way as in the apprentice phase – it solos in "California Girls," it is used as chordal padding in "In My Room," and it is used in a humorous fair-group context in "Amusement Parks USA" in much the same way as "County Fair". However, the organ takes on additional new roles. Firstly, the organ begins to be used as a counter-melodic instrument, playing different but complementary melodies underneath the lead vocal. This is heard in "We'll Run Away" – a song about running away to get married - where the organ plays a wandering counter-melody on a church-like organ. In "Amusement Parks USA" the counter-melody mimics the sound of fairground amusements. More commonly, the organ begins to be grouped with the piano and guitar parts as instrumental chordal padding. However, instead of the long held notes used in earlier songs, the organ now plays eighth note staccato rhythms underneath the melody as heard in "Salt Lake City," "Help Me Rhonda," "You're So Good To Me," and, most obviously, "California Girls" where the organ is a central musical feature.

The trend of grouping the organ with the eighth note repeated pattern of the guitars and pianos gives the mid-section frequencies added depth. In doing this, Brian Wilson was experimenting with his own unique representation of the "wall of sound" that he so admired. Where Spector had several of the same instrument (often acoustic

guitar) play the same part, in the same room, simultaneously, Brian Wilson used several *different* instruments recording together simultaneously, and the bleeding together of these strong, chordal, rhythmic parts added a sonic depth to these mid-period recordings. This small shift is a precursor to later orchestral compositions, where the sonic palette expanded even wider to include more exotic instruments. Brian Wilson was often quite creative with the use of the Hammond B3, as Hartman (2012) recounts “Another time, Wilson felt the bass pedals underneath the Hammond B-3 organ just weren’t providing the right sound. So he instructed the organ player, Larry Knechtel, to lie on the floor and instead play them with his hands during the song” (p.155). The combination of the serious (being concerned with specific sounds) and the humorous (the act of playing organ pedals with ones’ hands) is something that defined Brian Wilson’s production style from this point onwards, and through to the recording of *Pet Sounds* and *Smile*.

Miscellaneous Sounds

Sound effects

Sound effects are occasionally used in some Beach Boys recordings. In one instance, a sound effect is used within a context of a song. The revving engine at the beginning and in the middle of “409” was recorded late at night by Brian Wilson as Gary Usher, his writing partner, revved his 248 Chevy outside the Wilson home. Although the Beach Boys made many songs about cars, “409” was the only one to feature this sound effect, and was the first ‘car song’ Usher and Wilson had written together. While the Beach Boys were bystanders to the surfing lifestyle they sang about in their early years, the hot-rod lifestyle was something that the Beach Boys did partake in – Brian especially – when he was old enough to afford his own car (a 1957 Chevy and later, a red-and-cream 1960 Impala). The addition of this home-made sound effect was proof of Wilson’s engagement with the lyrical content he was writing about, and the revving of the engine that starts “409” creates a feeling of excitement before the description of the car itself and its prowess on the race track. This is not dissimilar to early 1960s girl-group songs, particularly songs like “Leader of the Pack” (1964), which used the revving of a motorcycle to tell part of the lyrical narrative. It is also connected with the musical output of the Beatles, who, with their producer George Martin (skilled in making comedy recordings), used different kinds of sound effects to create new musical textures (see the clanking, bubbling and honking in “Yellow Submarine” (1966), for example).

Spoken Word

The Beach Boys tended to have a penchant for including spoken word tracks on their early albums. These filler tracks usually consisted of the band “goofing off” in the studio, performing little interviews and talking about their touring. The use of spoken word also occurs in songs themselves, although rarely. However, these spoken word sections do aid in setting up a particular mood of a song, and give the performance a more personalised urgency. In “County Fair,” the spoken word is used to help set the scene at the fairground, and embellish the story of the lyrics. In it, Nik Venet takes the role of the carnival spruiker and a Wilson relative plays the role of the love interest, who inevitably leaves with a more masculine guy. This song functions as a little vignette foreshadowing some of the playful humour the Beach Boys, most particularly Brian, showed in later recordings. Another spoken word example includes the bridge section of “Lonely Sea” where Brian recites “This pain in my heart, these tears in my eyes, please tell the truth.” This technique was likely inspired by songs of the Four Freshmen, who often included this kind of spoken-word or unison sung bridge section to contrast the harmony-filled verse sections. Further, the spoken word section in “Lonely Sea” makes the lyrics an emotional plea, and helps create a kind of tension between the sweeping melody of the verse sections. Spoken word sections are used in two different ways: firstly, as novelty, for setting the scene of a song, and secondly, as a way to heighten the emotional content of the lyrics. These two different ways of using spoken word dialogue are also used in song with augmented instrumentation, as outlined in the following section.

Spoken word continues to be used into the craft period, with more audio tracks of band banter included on records during this mid-period, such as a fake argument between Mike and Brian (“Cassius Love vs. Sonny Wilson”) and studio chatter (“Our Favourite Recording Sessions”). Again, these little snippets of tracks, while sometimes scripted, offer a window into the personalities of each band member. Most commonly, however, spoken word sections are used in songs that aim to create a certain scene or space in their lyrics – for example, in “Pom Pom Play Girl,” during the outro, Mike speaks over the outro section, commenting on the girl described in the lyrics “Wow, wave those pom poms!” and so forth. Additionally, in the single edit of “Be True To Your School” the Beach Boys used the teenage voices of the Honeys³⁶ to replicate cheerleader cheers (“Hey! Hey! Take it away, get that ball and fight!”), which underscore the vocal melody.

³⁶ The Honeys were a girl-group surf band produced by Brian Wilson consisting of Diane, Marilyn and Barbara Rovell. Brian Wilson spent a great deal of time at the Rovell house during the early

Other Instruments used in Augmented Instrumentation

Saxophones

The inclusion of saxophone in the recordings of the Beach Boys began early in their musical history. During their early recordings and live performances, Mike Love would play parts on his tenor saxophone, however, as the lead singer, this would be sporadically through a song when he wasn't delivering a vocal. His parts during this time were usually extremely simple – take the inclusion of saxophone at the beginning of “Shut Down Part II” as an example – it plays just a single honking note.

When Mike Love ceased playing the saxophone on Beach Boys recordings, he was replaced by a group of interchanging session musicians on saxophones – most notably Steve Douglas and Jay Migliori, who were present for almost every single recording session featuring saxophones. Douglas and Migliori were sometimes joined by Jack Nimitz, Jim Horn, Robert Klein and Leonard Hartman. Usually, Beach Boys sessions would feature just two saxophones which were overdubbed again to form several parts. However, on later sessions with more complicated arrangements, sometimes three or four saxophones were used.

Twenty-two augmented songs feature saxophone parts, and their use can best be broken up into four main categories – chordal parts, counter-melodies, riffs and extended notes. In five cases, songs use a combination of these kinds of parts, with “California Girls” being the most complex – using three different saxophone parts throughout the song. Table 22 shows which songs use these four different parts, and underneath each entry references the best place within each song to hear the noted parts.

TABLE 22 -TYPES OF SAXOPHONE PARTS IN AUGMENTED SONGS

Chordal Parts	Counter Melodies	Saxophone Riffs	Extended Notes
Our Car Club (bridge)	Our Car Club (throughout)	Girl from New York City	Shut Down (break)
Be True To Your School (first verse)	Be True To Your School (chorus)	(introduction)	Surf Jam (2 nd cycle)
Spirit of America (throughout)	All Summer Long (bridge)	California Girls (verses)	Let's Go Trippin' (throughout)
No Go Showboat	Help Me Rhonda		Louie Louie

years of the Beach Boys to escape his troubled family life, and eventually married middle-sister Marilyn in December of 1964.

(throughout) Do You Remember? (3 rd verse) Why Do Fools Fall In Love (throughout) Pom Pom Play Girl (throughout) California Girls (introduction)	(2 nd verse-outro) Do You Wanna Dance (2 nd verse-outro) Salt Lake City (3 rd verse)		(chorus) I Get Around (break) Drive In (throughout) Girl From New York City (chorus) Amusement Parks USA (verse/pre-chorus) California Girls (verses) Salt Lake City (verses)
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*Highlighted songs feature more than one distinct saxophone part.

Chordal Parts.

Most often, chordal backing parts were recorded as an ‘instrumental insert’ during the tracking process, and feature two or more saxophones playing held chords. Sometimes, this part is then doubled with both saxophones playing different notes to eventually make up a full triad. Examples of songs that use saxophones in this way include “Our Car Club,” “Be True To Your School,” “Spirit of America,” “No Go Showboat,” “Do You Remember,” “Why Do Fools Fall in Love,” “Pom Pom Play Girl,” and “California Girls”.

There is no particular pattern as to where, structurally, these parts come in to play – in “California Girls” and “Be True To Your School” they appear in the introductory section as an essential feature, however, in other songs, such as “Spirit of America” and “No Go Showboat,” saxophones play throughout the song to merely thicken the arrangement texture. In “Do You Remember” the entrance of the saxophone follows the lyrics “Nothing’s really movin’ till the saxophone’s ready to blow” and, given the context of this song – a tribute to 1950s rock and roll – the saxophone’s entrance imitates the kind of part the instrument would have played in a rock and roll song, with a small flourish on the second vocal line.

Counter-melodies

In some cases, the saxophone was used for melodic interest, rather than instrumental colour and “Our Car Club,” “Be True To Your School,” “All Summer Long,” “Help Me Rhonda,” “Do You Wanna Dance,” and “Salt Lake City” all make use of this technique in varying ways. In “Be True Your School” the saxophone repeats a counter-melody that not only adds melodic interest, but helps evoke the spirit of a school marching band as heard at a football game. In “Help Me Rhonda,” the bright saxophone counter-melody helps to musically divide the chorus from the long pre-chorus section that precedes it. In “All Summer Long” the saxophone melody is used in a call-and-response part with a flute during the instrumental break section.

In each of these examples, the use of counter-melody is used to varying affect, however, what they do have in common is providing an example of the growing experimentation with melody that would increase throughout the Beach Boys’ more orchestral productions in the art period. The use of several melodies playing at the same time is an arrangemental technique that Brian Wilson refined during this augmented period.

Saxophone Riffs

Saxophone parts that provide a central, repeated riff are used sparingly, with only two songs – “The Girl From New York City” and “California Girls” – featuring such parts. In “The Girl From New York City,” the saxophone riff begins the song, repeats throughout the verses, and is heard in full again during the re-intro sections between choruses and verses. In “California Girls,” the effect is more subtle, with two parallel saxophone parts playing during the verse. One holds long notes, while the other shadows the riff on the bass guitar – the most important driving force throughout the verse sections. This repeated figure draws attention to the song’s strutting, shuffle feel and the doubling of basses and saxophones propels the song forward. In both of these songs, the saxophone is an important musical feature, not merely textural colour in an arrangement.

Extended notes

Extended or long-held notes are the most common types of saxophone used in augmented songs. The difference between these extended notes and chordal parts – which are also held for bars at a time – is that extended note parts use only a single held note. Usually this note is played by at least two saxophones, sometimes even overdubbed and doubled, but the part itself still centres on a single held note. Songs that use these extended note parts are “Shut Down,” “Surf Jam,” “Let’s Go Trippin,” “Louie

Louie.” “I Get Around,” “Drive In,” “The Girl from New York City,” “Amusement Parks USA,” “California Girls” and “Salt Lake City.”

There is no particular pattern to their use: these saxophone parts appear in verses, choruses and breaks, as they provide a general change in texture. Most often, these extended-note parts sound on the tonic, offering a simplified version of the bass guitar progression. Where the bass guitar may perform a walking bass-line on, as in “Shut Down”, the saxophone part will merely hold the root note in a long unchanging phrase. As well as providing instrumental texture, this also grounds the harmonic progression, while more complicated parts, usually background vocals, are free to be more experimental.

Flute

“All Summer Long” is the only song that makes use of the flute during this augmented period. This song is curious for its time, as its arrangement is focused on the xylophone, flute and saxophone – three unusual instruments for a rock song in 1964. The flute flutters throughout the verses and repeats a call-and-response melodic section during the instrumental break. This early instrumental experimentation, much like the use of counter-melodies within the saxophone parts, is an excellent example of Brian Wilson’s expanding musical palette. The flute in the context of this song is high and chirpy, and combined with the Caribbean-style xylophone part, is representative of the airy, care-free feeling that is expressed in the lyrics – “Every now and then we hear our song, we’ll be having fun all summer long.”

Percussion and Other Instruments

Other kinds of instruments – more specifically, certain kinds of tuned percussion - are used sparingly in augmented songs (mostly during the craftsmen period), and are developed further textually in orchestral arrangements. There are only three instances of tuned percussion (specifically chimes and xylophone) used in augmented songs. In the following section on orchestral arrangements, these kinds of percussion are used more commonly, with the addition of other hand percussion such as wood blocks, castanets, and so forth.

Percussion

The most common additional percussion used in augmented songs is the tambourine, handclaps or sticks, and timpani drums. The addition of these instruments creates more rhythmic interest, and introduces new sounds to the Beach Boys’ sonic

landscape. As Everett notes, the use of hand percussion is often used to strengthen a back beat (the claps in “Catch a Wave” or the tambourine “I’m So Young”), add contrast to a ride cymbal pattern, or provide an unusual accent (the claps in “No Go Showboat” and the timpani in “Do You Wanna Dance”) (Everett, 2009, p18).

The Beach Boys use of percussion plays an important part of their later (1965-66) sound, particularly on *Pet Sounds*, where Brian Wilson used percussion in inventive and unexpected ways. In augmented songs, however, the use of the percussion is generally straightforward, and more directly inspired by hand percussion rhythms in doo-wop and girl group songs.

Tambourine

Tambourine parts are used in two different ways in this mid-period. In “Fun Fun Fun,” the tambourine plays throughout the song repeating a fast eighth-note pattern identical to that of the guitars and piano. The high-pitched jangle of the tambourine adds a lighter quality to the mid-frequencies of the guitars and piano, and the eighth-note feel aids in pushing the song forward in an energetic way. In “Carl’s Big Chance” and “I’m So Young,” the tambourine follows the role of the snare drum on beats 2 and 4 adding a differing sonic quality, often taking the place where a high hat part would be ordinarily be played.

Handclaps

Handclaps are one of the simplest kinds of percussion in rock music and were used to a great extent during the 1960s. Girl group music frequently used this kind of percussion, as it mimicked the kinds of hand-clapping games young girls may play at school, and also gives the feeling of a group dynamic with all singers clapping along together (Warwick, 2007, p. 35). “My Boyfriend’s Back” (1963) by the Angels, “Da Doo Ron Ron” (1963) by the Crystals, “Please Mister Postman” (1961) by the Marvelettes and “Be My Baby” (1963) by the Ronettes are all good examples of the use of handclaps in girl group music, with each using different rhythmic patterns to underscore their harmonised vocals. Similarly, handclaps were used in early doo-wop music, as the singers used their voices and bodies to imitate the roles of other instruments (Gribin & Schiff, 1992, pp. 24-25). These handclap patterns are heard in “Run Around Sue” (1961) by Dion and the Belmonts, “Book of Love” (1958) by the Monotones and later, “Sherry” (1961) and “Walk Like a Man” (1963) by The Four Seasons. Both girl groups and doo-wop music formed part of the Beach Boys earliest influences, and they drew inspiration for this trend in their own recordings.

In live performance, handclaps are often a way to engage an audience and encourage them to dance (Everett, 2009, p. 19) – the handclap is a participatory element of popular music that anyone can feel part of – whether they play an instrument or not.

Handclaps are used in seven augmented songs, and the Beach Boys had very particular ways of using handclaps within a song's arrangement. Almost always, with the exception of "I Get Around" and "The Girl From New York City," handclaps are included during the solo or instrumental break, which works to add a rhythmic interest while the vocals and backup harmonies are not present. This also works well in a live situation where lead vocalist Mike Love, could encourage the audience to clap along while not concentrating on his own singing. "Catch a Wave", "No Go Showboat". "Pom Pom Play Girl", "Help Me Rhonda" and "You're So Good to Me" all use handclaps during a solo or b-section, often continuing through to the outro. "The Girl From New York City" uses handclaps only in the final chorus, to build it for a 'big finish'.

"I Get Around" features one of the most interesting couplings of instrumentation to formal function in the Beach Boys' early material, particularly the verse sections, which are structured into three different parts. In the first, the lead vocal sings over minimal instrumentation, the second which features quarter-note handclaps and the third where the organ plays a short two-bar riff. The handclaps enter on the second and fourth line of each verse, e.g., The first line sings "I'm getting bugged driving up and down the same old strip," – and the second, supported by handclaps, sings "I've got to find a new place where the kids are hip". The minimalist instrumentation highlights the role of the handclaps and their reflection of a group dynamic (there are many hands clapping) act like a response to the first line, an agreement (much like applause) that it's time to move on somewhere more 'hip'.

Although handclaps were used sparingly in augmented songs, their addition as another rhythmic element foreshadows more adventurous uses of percussion in later recordings.

Timpani

During the early-to-mid 1960s, timpani were usually the reserve of classical orchestras, however, the Beach Boys used them twice during their Augmented period. On "Pom Pom Play Girl" they are used in a comedic way as a sonic anaphone (see Tagg, 2013, p. 487) representing the protagonist – the head cheerleader – jumping up and down. The timpani, in this context, represent the bouncing movements of the

cheerleader, as the background vocals imitate a stereotypical chant - “Rah rah, pom pom play girl!”

“Do You Wanna Dance” was a recording of significance for the Beach Boys, as it was their first recording at Gold Star studios, rather than their usual home at Western Recorders. Gold Star was the recording space Phil Spector and the Wrecking Crew used often, and Brian had observed many sessions there as a teenager. Spector, in his wall-of-sound technique, often used different kinds of percussive sounds in his recordings (see “Be My Baby” [1964] and “Then He Kissed Me” [1963]), and perhaps the addition of the timpani on “Do You Wanna Dance” was inspired by the kinds of interesting percussive sounds made in the Gold Star studios. Within the context of the song, the timpani plays an accented rhythm during the chorus sections, which assists in lifting the chorus from the verse, and the energy and volume of the timpani places an emphasis on the rhythm – useful for a song about dancing. The timpani would return more often in the Beach Boys recordings in the art period, and will be discussed in further detail in the orchestral Instrumentation section.

Bell Tree Chimes

Bell tree chimes are used in two ballad songs – “Warmth of the Sun” where they are used to begin the chorus section, and “We’ll Run Away,” where they are used prominently to begin the bridge section. These two songs, both emotional ballads, use the chimes in a similar way. The twinkling, ethereal sound of the chimes fits well within the context of these two songs – one about lost love, and one about the desire to be married, but not having the freedom to do so. The bell tree chimes, which Everett describes as a “shimmering glow” (Everett, 2009, p26) reinforce the dream-like quality of some arrangements. In “Warmth of the Sun” the protagonist will “dream of her arms, although they’re not real, just like she’s still there, the way that I feel” – and in “We’ll Run Away” “our problems will be greater, we’ll worry about them later, we’ll run away and get married anyhow”. In both of these examples, the protagonist is suspending reality – whether dealing with the fact that a love had gone for good, or pushing away the inevitable problems of young love, these songs both express a kind of dream of a fantasy world, and the addition of these chimes serves to emphasises this. The Beach Boys even allude to this dreaminess of the sound of chimes on the song “Wind Chimes” (1967) from *Smiley Smile* with the lines “Close your eyes and lean back, Listen to wind chimes... It’s so peaceful, Close to a lullaby.”

Additionally, these two songs use bell tree chimes to divide song sections and to give the impression of moving to new musical material. The positioning of the chimes to begin either chorus or bridge sections emphasise the break between sections: in each of these songs, the surrounding arrangement mainly consists of an unchanging bass, drums, guitar and vocal line up, and the twinkling sound of the bell tree chimes cuts through this musical material to initiate the change of song sections.

Harp

Two augmented songs employ the use of a harp, with both parts played by Mike Love's sister, Maureen Love. The two songs appear on *Surfer Girl* and both "In My Room" and "Catch a Wave" use the harp in similar arrangemental ways. In "In My Room," the harp begins the start of each verse with an ascending glissando, and in "Catch a Wave" an identical ascending glissando occurs before the start of the chorus section. Everett (2009) provides examples of the way harp is used in pop songs, illustrating the meaning of its use as an "evocation of angels, hallucinations, transfigurative ecstasy, and retransition" (p. 114). The Beach Boys' use of the harp tends to fall into the latter two categories – "In My Room," one of the first personal and introspective Beach Boys' songs, uses the harp to suggest the moving from one world to another. This movement is from reality to the dream-world of a teenager's bedroom where they can be themselves and feel safe from the demands of the outside world: "In this world I lock out all my worries and my fears, in my room, in my room" sing the Wilsons in the verse and refrain.

Similarly, in "Catch a Wave", the harp is used to mark the transition from one musical section to another, which is more literally spelled out in the lyrics "Get away from the shady turf, go catch some waves on the sunny surf and when you catch a wave, you'll be sitting on top of the world". The harp almost literally represents the change from being on the ground, to the transcendental experience of surfing on a wave. This experience is in many ways an ascension, like the glissando, to ride on top of the moving waves. In both of these examples, the harp signifies the transition to a kind of fantasy world, whether real or imagined, and can be noted as the earliest example of the incorporation of orchestral instruments into the Beach Boys' music.

Xylophone

Like the flute, xylophone is only used on "All Summer Long." Instead of guitar or piano providing the instrumental bedding, the xylophone plays this role instead, and its "brittle, brilliant" sound (Everett, 2009, p. 106) adds to the jaunty, energetic feel of the song, and its lyrical themes of summer time fun. The use of the xylophone was later

replaced with more mellow variations, such as the marimba and vibraphone, in orchestral recordings. The exceptional case of “All Summer Long”, with its combination of orchestral and rock instruments, made the song stand out as a single in 1964. The song is perhaps most well-known for providing the soundtrack to the closing credits of the film *American Graffiti* (1973), whose themes of youth seemed well-suited to the Beach Boys’ lyrical style of this time.

Orchestral Instrumentation

When Phil Spector introduced orchestral instruments into his recordings, he did so in a deliberate reaction to the minimalism of rock and roll recordings; to him “less wasn’t more – *more* was more” (Hartman, 2012, p. 49-50). He used his recording of “He’s a Rebel” (1962) by the Crystals to test his orchestral approach. As Hartman explains, Spector “wanted to toss additional instrumental ingredients into his sonic stew, to make an even bigger sound. If more was more, why couldn’t a *lot* more be the most?” He started to refer to his recordings as “little symphonies for the kids” (Hartman, 2012, p, 51).

Similarly, orchestral instrumentation became an important part of the Beach Boys’ music from the *Today* album onwards, particularly on side two. Table 23 shows Beach Boys songs that use orchestral instrumentation and these songs build from the instruments used in augmented songs, adding less common sounds, such as French horns, strings, harmonicas, the Electro-Theremin, among many others.

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Drums | • Horns (Saxophone, Trumpet, <u>French Horn</u>) |
| • Bass | • Vocals |
| • Electric Guitar (Rhythm and Lead) | • Added Counter-melodic Vocal Parts |
| • Percussion | • <u>Strings</u> |
| • Electric Organ | • Timpani |
| • Piano | • <u>Accordion</u> |
| • Miscellaneous sounds (Chimes, Xylophone, <u>Vibraphone</u> , Harp) | • <u>Harmonica</u> |
| | • <u>Harpsichord</u> |

TABLE 23 - SONGS WITH ORCHESTRAL INSTRUMENTATION

When I Grow Up	You Still Believe in Me
Help Me Ronda	That's Not Me
Dance Dance Dance	Don't Talk (Put Your Head...)
Please Let Me Wonder	I'm Waiting For The Day
Kiss Me Baby	Let's Go Away For a While
She Knows Me Too Well	Sloop John B
In The Back of My Mind	Gold Only Knows
Then I Kissed Her	I Know There's an Answer
Let Him Run Wild	Here Today
Summer Means New Love	Pet Sounds
Wouldn't It Be Nice	Caroline No

In previous sections, I have discussed instruments and their roles separately, however, for orchestral songs, it is more useful to discuss the way these sounds blend together, as these songs are the apex of the Beach Boys' creativity and complexity during the 1962-66 period. As Harrison (1997) notes, *Pet Sounds* features a change in lyrical style and a "broadening of the musical palette" as Brian Wilson "explored all manner of unusual instrumental combination and percussion instruments." (p. 39). Engineer Bruce Botnik described the studio for the recordings on *Pet Sounds*: "the standard set up was grand piano, harpsichord, stand-up bass or electric bass, electric guitar, a couple of acoustic guitars, drums, and maybe two percussion instruments" (Buskin, 1999, p. 98). From this, we can see that the "wall of sound" combination of using multiple instruments had now become a standard set up for the Beach Boys, with the addition of more keyboard instruments, particularly harpsichord. *Pet Sounds* also saw the use of other kinds of sound effects and non-traditional percussion instruments, from the bicycle horns in "You Still Believe in Me", to "Caroline, No", which featured Hal Blaine hitting two empty orange juice containers to produce an eerie percussive sound (Hartman, 2012, p. 155).

By 1965, Brian Wilson and the Wrecking Crew had established a close working relationship together; Brian Wilson "was their leader, the guru, the youthful genius whose artistic inclinations were golden. They were a team now and he was the undisputed captain" (Hartman, 2012, p. 154; Leaf, 1997, p. 50). The liner notes to the *Pet Sounds Box Set* explain the shift to orchestral instrumentation well, noting:

In general, Beach Boys recordings (circa 1965/1966) are filled with playing that was far beyond what most people were doing in rock. Brian was essentially composing classical music, putting it into a rock and roll framework and executing it with seasoned jazz musicians. He was doing it live, on the spot, in the studio (Leaf, 1997, p. 51).

This change in texture can be seen dramatically by comparing the instrumentation to “Girls on the Beach” with “Please Let Me Wonder” (see Figure 30 and Figure 31). These two songs were recorded less than a year apart, yet their difference in instrumental roles is quite pronounced. Where “Girls on the Beach” has a straight ‘filled in’ appearance, “Please Let Me Wonder” uses a wider array of sounds with lots of ‘pockets’ of white, where instruments come in and out to change the sound of the arrangement. Some little accents, like the use of vibraphone, only happen three times, and not always in a repetitive fashion. Similarly, a second electric guitar pops in and out during chorus sections to thicken the texture of the song, while horn parts surface in verse two, to delineate the sound of each song section. We can see the staggered entry of many instruments, which, when combined with the lush reverb from Western Recorders’ echo chamber, give “Please Let Me Wonder” a hazy quality, filled with instruments that aren’t always clearly perceivable.

Leaf (1997) describes this sensation well, noting “because Brian’s records are so layered and deep, complex orchestrations and wonderful parts often ended up unheard. Their subtle impact is still felt, but you’re not quite sure what it is you’re hearing” (Leaf, 1997, p. 51). It is this intangible quality, the feeling that you’re not quite hearing *everything*, but you would notice if the sound was removed, which defined much of the Beach Boys’ orchestral productions.

In their orchestral songs, the roles of instruments sometimes changes dramatically. While in basic and augmented songs, the drums play a simple, repeated beat throughout, in orchestral songs the role of the drum kit is not necessarily to hold an arrangement together rhythmically. On “When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)”, the verses include a drum part on snares and toms that effectively play ‘around’ the melody line. Similarly, in “Kiss Me Baby”, the verse sections use a very minimalist rhythmic pattern on snare and percussion, which changes in the pre-chorus to a combination of snare fills and woodblock patterns. “In the Back of My Mind” uses a similar configuration, based almost entirely on woodblock.

Other songs on *Pet Sounds* do not use drums or percussion in a traditional way. “You Still Believe Me” features only small additions on tambourine and timpani; “That’s Not Me”, has a rhythmic part that is entirely made up of oddly syncopated tambourine and tom-toms; “I’m Waiting for the Day” features bombastic timpani and snare hits, that rattle through the verses; “Don’t Talk” uses a single repeated brush lightly tapped on a cymbal as the entire rhythmic or percussive contribution. In these orchestral songs, there is no longer the intent to capture the excitement of youth, the turbulent ride of the surfer, or the urgency of a drag race, and as a result, the heavy reliance on eighth note rhythms in the piano and guitars is gone, and replaced with other instruments playing counter-melodies and other supportive chordal roles.

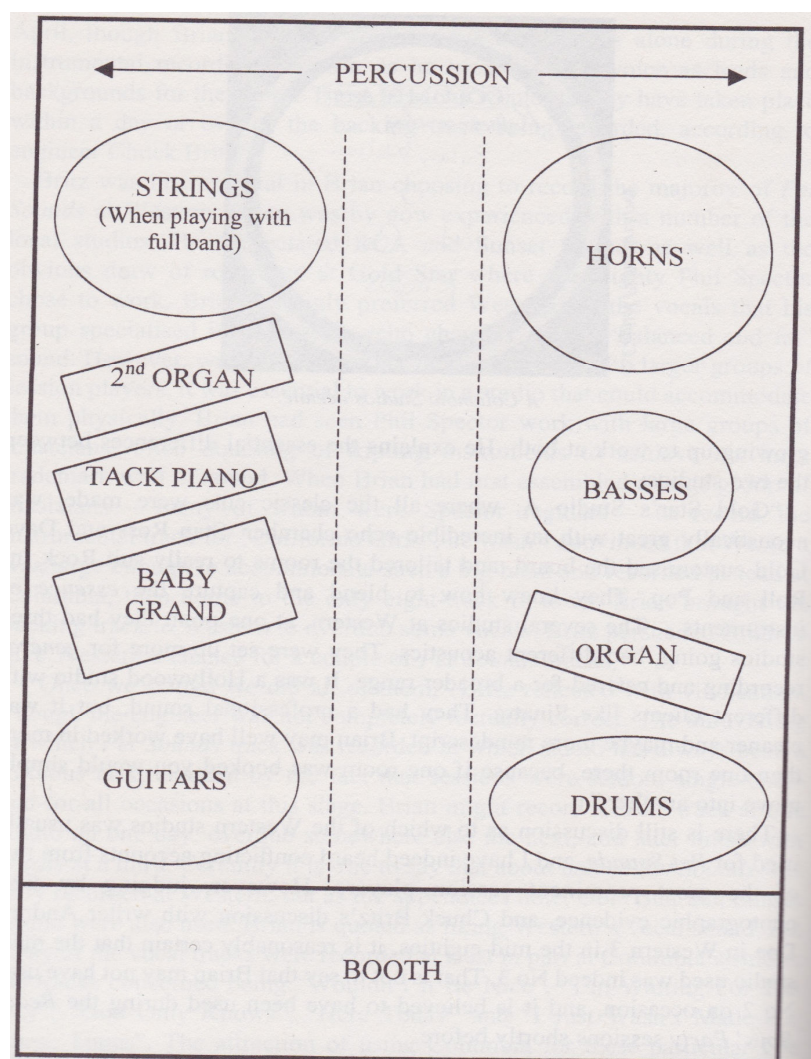
The role of the bass guitar also changes in orchestral songs, as instead of playing a repeated walking bass line (often on quarter notes) or parts that focus on the tonic (usually on eighth notes), the bass guitar starts to contribute melodically to the arrangements. Carol Kaye, who played a majority of the bass guitar parts, described her playing on “Good Vibrations” (1966) saying “a lot of things that people don’t know about that feel, that’s a jazz feel, and the fact that they sung on top of that jazz feel and it was very cohesively jazz” (Boyd, 2000). Paul McCartney, well renowned for his melodic bass playing, describes the role of the bass guitar on *Pet Sounds*:

The other thing that really made me sit up and take notice was the bass lines on *Pet Sounds*. If you were in the key of C, you would normally use—the root note would be like, a C on the bass. You’d always be on the C. I’d done a little bit of work, like on ‘Michelle’, where you don’t use the obvious bass line. And you just get a completely different effect if you play a G when the band is playing in C. There’s a kind of tension created... And I notice throughout that Brian would be using notes that weren’t the obvious notes to use. Also putting melodies in the bass line. That I think was probably the big influence that set me thinking when we recorded *Pepper*, it set me off on a period I had then for a couple of years nearly always writing quite melodic bass parts (Leaf, 1997, p. 124).

The use of ‘slash’ chords (what McCartney is referring to as ‘C over G’ or C/G) is discussed in detail in the following chapter (Chapter 6) on chord progressions, and is a feature of many orchestral arrangements. Most likely, McCartney is referring to “God Only Knows”, a known favourite of his (Leaf, 1997, p. 125), which opens with an ‘A/E’, which leads into the rest of the song where the key signature is effectively obscured by these kinds of ‘slash’ movements. The use of these techniques come both from Carol Kaye’s experience as a jazz musician, but also from Brian’s bass playing role in the Beach

Boys' touring band, and his experience as a piano player, an instrument that lends itself to these kinds of 'slash' chords. Listening to the bass line against the melody of "Don't Talk", you can hear the tension created in the verses, and the release when the bass line returns to tonic notes in the chorus section. The melodic quality of bass parts is highlighted particularly well in instrumental songs "Let's Go Away for a While" and "Pet Sounds". Figure 29 is a reproduction of a diagram created by Hal Blaine and Kingsley Abbott (2001, p. 54), and gives an overview of the way instruments were set up in Western Recorders for the tracking of *Pet Sounds*. We can see the different sections grouped because of their relationship to one another. All keyboard instruments are grouped on the left side, close to the guitars, who often share a similar role as chordal 'padding' in an arrangement. Drums and bass are now separated by the organ, as their parts are not as closely aligned as in basic or augmented songs, with the drums receding in the instrumental texture and the bass taking on a more melodic role.

FIGURE 29 - REPRODUCTION OF KINGSLEY ABBOTT'S (2001) DIAGRAM OF THE PET SOUNDS INSTRUMENTAL SET UP AT WESTERN RECORDERS (P. 54)



Brian Wilson continued to use the orchestra in his arrangements after *Pet Sounds*, and it features prominently on “Good Vibrations” (1966) and the songs for the *Smile* record, which built even more on the complex musicality of *Pet Sounds*. Although these full orchestral arrangements did not feature in the Beach Boys’ repertoire for an extended period, they do show Brian Wilson’s movement towards his ‘art’ phase, where the upbeat feel of many basic and augmented songs gave way to a broader range of sounds and textures, with songs built horizontally, rather than vertically. This is apparent in the difference between Figure 30 and Figure 31, where “Warmth of the Sun” conforms quite easily to larger blocks (representing two or four bars) on the grid, but “Please Let Me Wonder” is gridded by single bars at a time (more of these instrumentation charts appear in Appendix C, p. 14). The latter’s arrangement is so nuanced, that grouping bars in groups of two or four was insufficient to accurately

depict the arrangement. Orchestral songs complete the ACA movement, and represent the apex of musical complexity in the Beach Boys' repertoire.

FIGURE 30 - INSTRUMENTATION IN 'WARMTH OF THE SUN'

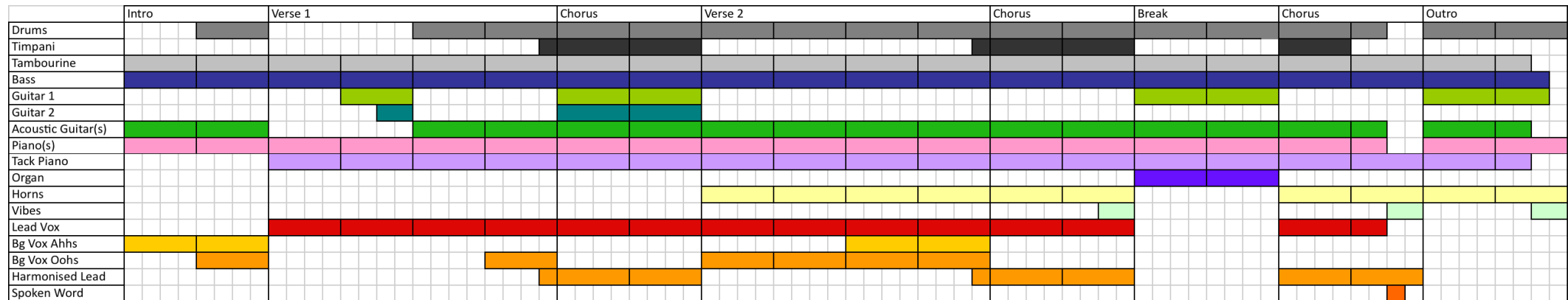
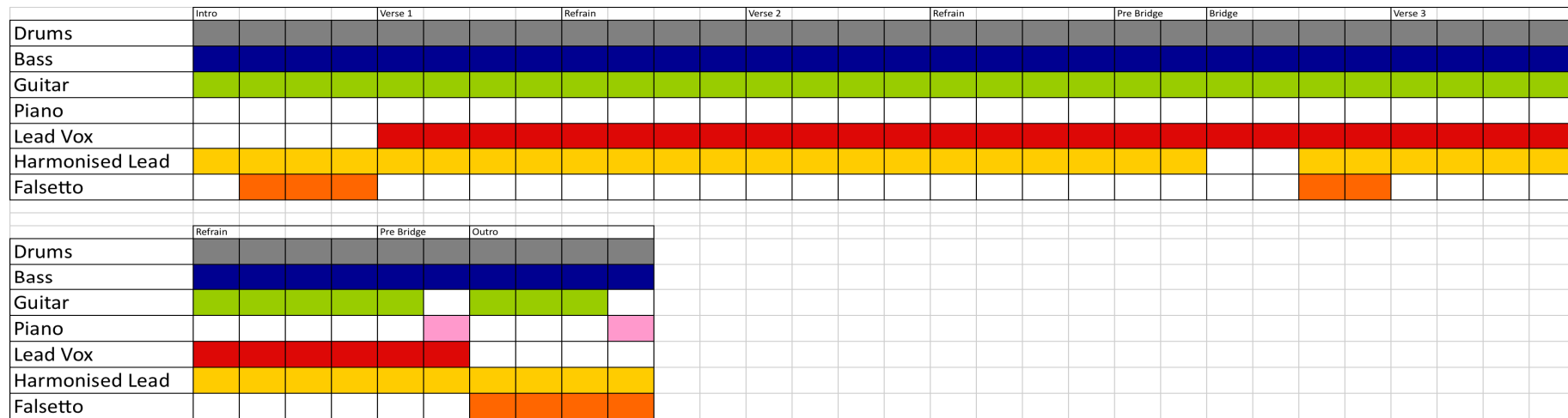


FIGURE 31 - INSTRUMENTATION IN "PLEASE LET ME WONDER"

Conclusion

The way the Beach Boys used instrumentation is an important contributor to their sound. Their simplest arrangements featured basic instrumentation, which was limited to drums, guitar, bass, piano and vocals, and although they continued to use this progression into the 'craft' period, the complexity of chords in songs like "Warmth of the Sun" distinguished it from the simplicity of "Surfin' Safari". This grouping of instruments was typical of bands in the early 1960s, who drew from 1950s rock and roll, many of which featured the piano quite heavily (Fats Domino, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard, and so forth). Brian Wilson also wrote his songs at the piano, and for this reason, it is a constant in all three instrumentation categories.

In 'basic' instrumentation, the drum kit provides a simple, repetitive pattern on kick, snare and hats, often unchanging throughout. This was due to the simplicity of early songs, and Dennis Wilson's novice drumming ability in their early music. Bass guitar closely followed the drum kit, alternating between parts focused on the tonic, and simple walking bass lines (also a feature of 1950s rock and roll music). Guitars and pianos had a connected role: both filled out the middle of an arrangement, often focused on repeated eighth notes in up-tempo songs.

Augmented instrumentation uses the instruments in 'basic' songs and adds others, such as saxophones, percussion, organs and other miscellaneous sounds like spoken word sections and sound effects. These 'augmented' songs have more complicated arrangements, with the roles of instruments changing to reflect this. Drums take on a decreased role in underpinning rhythmic feels, and are replaced by percussion (often tambourine) and the driving eighth-note parts on guitars and piano. Saxophones are used in specific ways, such as riffs, counter melodies, and most commonly, long held chordal parts that thicken the instrumental texture.

Orchestral arrangements appear only on *Today*, *Summer Days* and *Pet Sounds*, and signify the move to the 'art' period. The broader textural palette underpinned the introspective nature in the lyrics, and helped reinforce the emotion of the vocals, from the string swells in "Don't Talk", to the hollow percussion of "Caroline, No", which connects well to the emptiness and loss expressed in the lyrics. The arrangements now grew to incorporate strings, harpsichord, non-traditional percussion sounds, acoustic guitars, and a doubling of bass guitar parts with upright and electric bass ("tic tac" bass).

Instrumentation closely follows the ACA movement, with 'basic' apprentice period songs moving to 'augmented' craftsmen period songs, and finally entering the 'art' phase with the use of orchestral instrumentation. The following chapters on vocals, chord progressions and lyrics

will build on the instrumental texture to explore some of the other elements that have a strong connection to instrumental texture.

Chapter 6: Chord Progressions

"Every now and then we hear our song!"

The 'end' of the rock and roll era is often considered to be the close of the 1950s (Covach, 2006b, p. 90), however, many of the musical traits of that music found themselves continuing well into the 1960s. The influence of the unbridled and raucous energy of early rock and roll formed a primary influence for many bands and artists who achieved significant musical success during the 1960s. Chord progressions are one of the most obvious ways to track this influence, with progressions like the 12-bar blues and doo-wop changes appearing heavily in the repertoire of the Brill Building³⁷, early Motown recordings³⁸, artists of the British Invasion like the Beatles³⁹ and the Rolling Stones⁴⁰ and even Californian surf music⁴¹. The Beach Boys were no different, and the use of these progressions, and several others, are an important element of their early music.

This chapter is divided into two sections. Firstly, a discussion of the kinds of chords used in the Beach Boys' music, and secondly, an analysis of the most common chord progressions throughout the 1962-1966 period. By looking at both of these elements, we can understand the relationship between chord progressions and the types of chords that fill them, giving a detailed overview of an important part of the Beach Boys' sound.

The Growing Complexity of Chords

Many studies of popular music chords (or more traditionally 'harmony') tend to look at the changes from chord-to-chord – cadences, inversions, the roles of the specific notes in a chord – elements that are of particular interest to traditional musicology (see Everett, 1997; Harrison, 1997; Pedler, 2001). Few studies look at the kinds of chords that are used in a more general way, and due to the nature of a large-scale analysis such as this, the kind of data collected can allow us to look not just at the chords of one song under the analytical microscope, but to understand chord choices (and their development) as a musical component related to a whole repertoire of songs over time.

³⁷ "Stand By Me" by Ben E. King (1960); "Be My Baby" by the Ronettes (1963).

³⁸ "Please Mister Postman" (1961) by the Marvelettes.

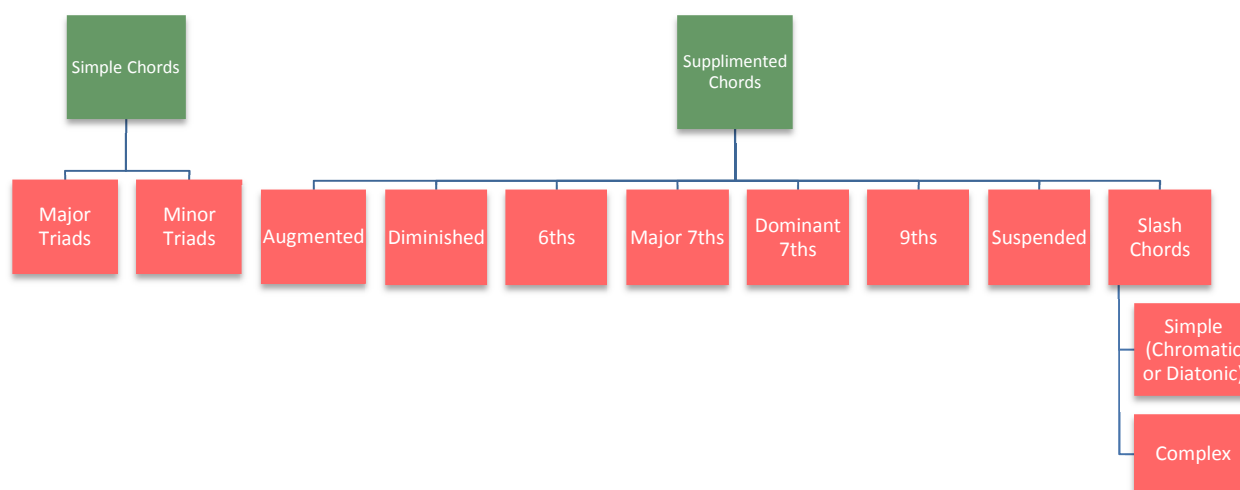
³⁹ "I Saw Her Standing There" (1963).

⁴⁰ Blues and rock and roll songs made up much of the Rolling Stones early repertoire: "Carol" (1964) and "Around and Around (1964) by Chuck Berry, for example.

⁴¹ "Let's Go Trippin'" by Dick Dale (1961).

To gain a deeper insight into the way the Beach Boys used chords, it is also worth noting the *types* of chords they used and chose and how they change over time. This short discussion divides the Beach Boys' chords by their type, and compares their usage by album over time. These types include what in this study are referred to as 'simple' chords – basic major and minor triads, augmented and diminished chords, added 6th chords, major and dominant 7th chords, 9th chords and suspended chords. An over-arching umbrella (seen in Figure 32) divides these chords into two sections – 'simple' chords, and 'supplemented'⁴² chords (all other chords that add to or alter the basic triads in some way). Being able to divide these chords up in various ways (both as individual chord types and in two 'umbrella' formations) makes this kind of quantitative data easier to arrange into different combinations to show changes to the Beach Boys' sound in terms of chord types. The charts in this section essentially show the increased use of supplementary chords (as opposed to simple chords), until *Pet Sounds* where the use of supplementary chords eventually exceeds the use of simple ones. This progression is similar to that discussed in the previous section on chord progressions, however, as Figure 34 shows the journey is much steeper, occurring mainly from *Today* to *Pet Sounds*. While the following section will look at the over-arching structures that the Beach Boys' chords used, this section will 'zoom in' and understand the kinds of chord types used inside these structures.

FIGURE 32 - DIVISION OF CHORD TYPES

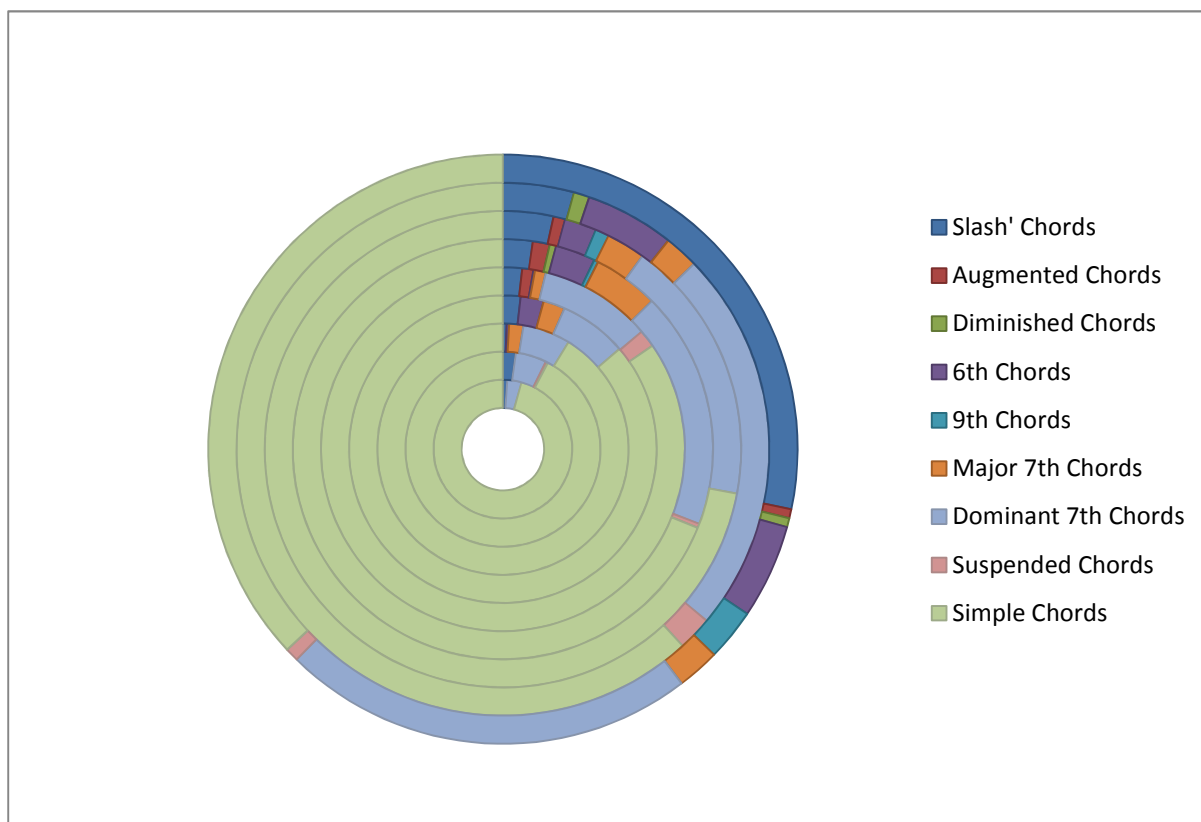


The 'doughnut' chart in Figure 33 is particularly useful to show how, when and in what quantity various chords are used in the Beach Boys' music. This chart was created using several

⁴² Allen Forte (2001) refers to these as either 'added note' or 'altered' chords in his study of Tin Pan Alley music, however, in this study, for simplicity, these will be grouped together and referred to with one term – 'supplementary chords' (p. 14).

percentage functions in the spreadsheet tally, working out what percentage of each song consisted of simple or supplemented chords, and then used together to create an overview over time. The raw data for this section appears on the included disc in the Chord Progressions Spreadsheet.

FIGURE 33 - PROPORTION OF DIFFERENT CHORD CATEGORIES

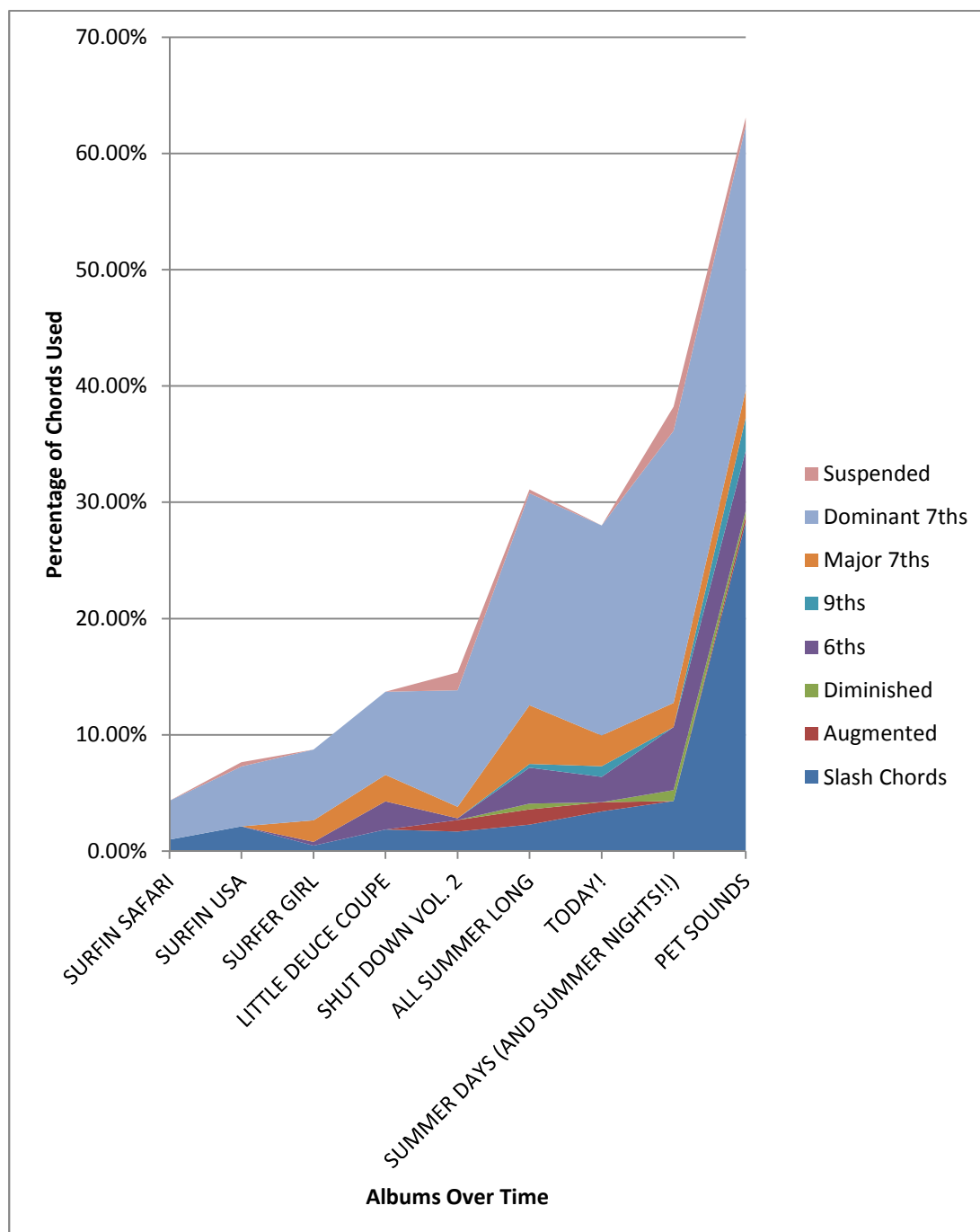


The other useful element of a doughnut chart (and in some ways quite relevant for this study) is that if we consider this chart like the face of a clock, it gives a feeling of observing music as time passes, with each concentric circle representing an album (the innermost circle is *Surfin' Safari*, while the outermost circle is *Pet Sounds*). The circles grow larger, along with chordal complexity. Tagg (1997) creates a similar comparison in his study of time and rhythm, comparing the hypothetical agenda of a work day with points of rhythm and structure over the course of a song, however his diagrams are “linear” and the figure above is what Tagg would term “cyclical” (p.17). The purple colour represents the use of simple chords, and, as would be expected, these take up most of the chart. If the chart is viewed like a clock face, one entire circuit represents the music of one album. At *Surfin' Safari*'s 12 o'clock, all use of supplementary chords is over before 1 o'clock. By *Summer Days* supplementary chords make their way to about 5 o'clock. However, *Pet Sounds* makes it over halfway around the dial to about 7 o'clock, finally overtaking the purple colour that takes up most of the diagram. If *Pet Sounds* were a day of musical experience, most of

it would be filled with supplementary chords. Figure 33 can also show where the largest ‘jumps’ appear in terms of chordal complexity. One of the largest leaps is from *Shut Down*, which ends as 2 o’clock, and the following album *All Summer Long*, which moves around until 4 o’clock. There is also a reasonable leap between *Today* and *Summer Days* (in our clock’s musical time, about an hour and a half), but most significant of all is the extremely large jump to *Pet Sounds*. Although this trend is noted throughout this study in many ways, this diagram is one of the clearest ways to observe just how the musicality changed compared to the record that preceded it. It also, clearly shows how the Beach Boys ‘worked up’ to this complexity slowly over time. Figure 34 shows the same data in a different way – taking out the information for simple chords makes the increase in supplementary chords easier to see in detail. We can now see that all kinds of supplementary chords increase in frequency – with the exception of augmented chords, which tend to tail off after *Today*. The steepest increase is the use of dominant seventh chords, which rises by 20% by *Pet Sounds*, but other notable changes is the 30% increase in slash chords from 1965-66, and the 30% increase in major 7ths from 1965-66. There is a distinct change in the Beach Boys’ sound from *Today* onwards, which has been noted in the previous chapters, and Figure 34 is able to show exactly what that change is, with reference to chords. It is not only the types of progressions that change, but the chords within them as well.

One of the trends in chord progressions incongruous with the apprentice-craft-art model was that the *Today* record seemed to show a regression – it featured 189 supplementary chords while *Summer Days* had 242. Figure 34 shows this clear decrease in the use of supplemented chords, with the ‘dip’ between *All Summer Long* and *Summer Days*. The second side of *Today* features some of Brian Wilson’s most complicated arrangements, and has often been cited as the precursor to *Pet Sounds*, while *Summer Days* is sometimes referred to as a stop-gap, a release to appease Capitol Records while ‘buying’ Brian Wilson more time to finish *Pet Sounds* (Doe & Tobler, 2004, p. 39; Leaf, 1990d, p. 9) This is not entirely accurate, as *Summer Days* clearly fits the progression of complexity towards *Pet Sounds* (Lambert, 2007, p 200). *Today*, on the other hand, did not seem to align with the overall trend of increasing complexity. However, through dividing the slash chords into ‘simple’ and ‘complex’ categories, we *can* see that there is a clear progression. Even though the use of chords like 6ths and simple slash chords decreased, the number of complex slash chords, the use of 9ths and augmented chords *did* increase. Although the overall sum of supplementary chords may be less on *Today* than on *Summer Days*, there is still a notable increase in complex slash chords, which shows that *Today* was not actually a regression in harmonic complexity, it merely used less common supplementary chords in favour of more complex ones.

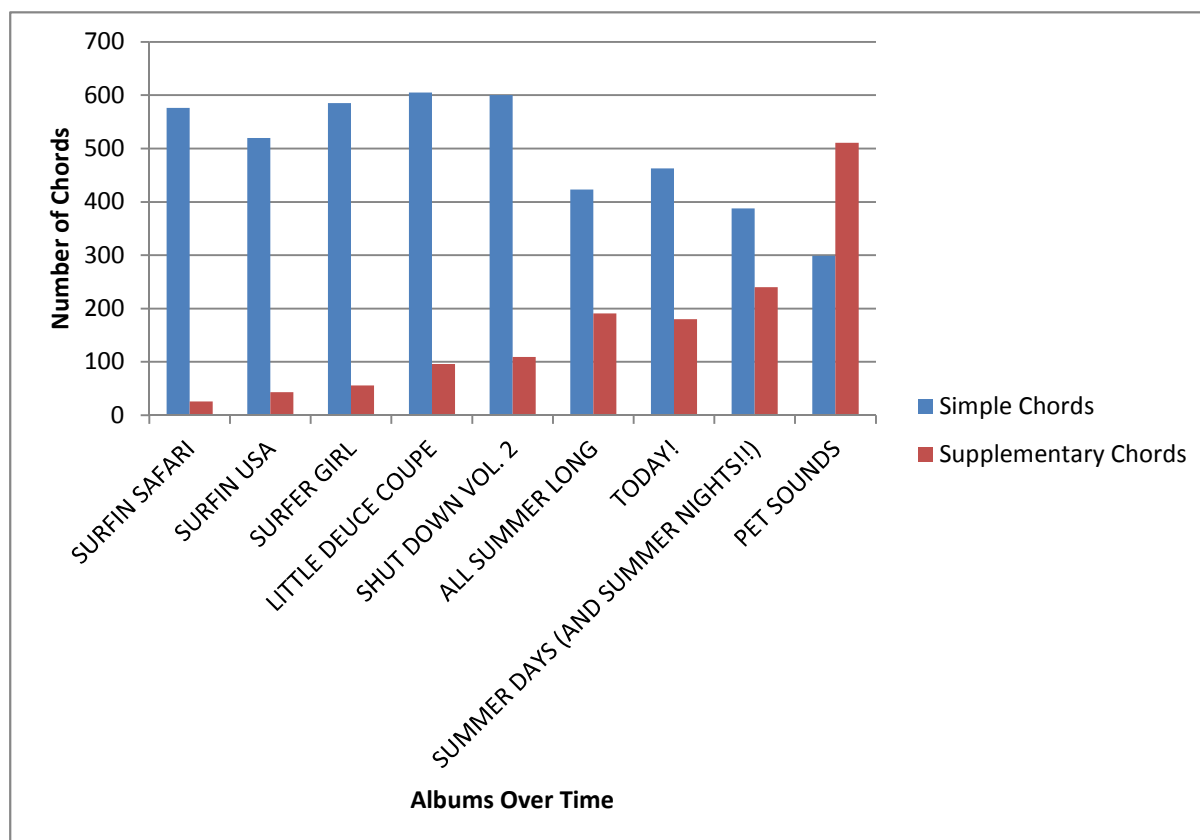
FIGURE 34 - PERCENTAGE OF SUPPLEMENTARY CHORDS



Finally, Figure 35 shows raw data rather than percentages – with the Y axis showing the entire amount of chords used overall, while the X axis, as with the previous charts, shows albums over time. Figure 35 represents the two ‘umbrella’ categories in a clear bar graph, with the blue blocks representing the declining use of simple chords and the red blocks representing the increased use of supplemented chords. The coloured blocks gradually move to meet each other, and by the end of 1965 into 1966, the colours cross each other showing more supplementary

chords used than simple ones. “Surfin’ Safari” – the first track on the Beach Boys’ first album - begins and ends using only simple chords, while “Caroline No,” the song that closes *Pet Sounds*, contains not a single simple chord throughout. These two songs, which bookend the albums used in this study are a clear way of seeing the extent of the Beach Boys’ experimentation with chord types.

FIGURE 35 - SIMPLE AND SUPPLEMENTARY CHORD USE



We have explored how the Beach Boys used specific kinds of chords in their music, and from this, we can begin to put these chords into context within the four key types of chord progressions. Often, the ‘jumps’ in chordal complexity align well with these four key chord progressions, giving a big-picture view of how the chords themselves, and the progressions in which they function, added to the Beach Boys’ sound. In effect, these ‘jumps’ or changes to chord progression use act like markers or flags, signalling musical (and often emotional) growth. The following section details the four most important areas of harmonic analysis in the Beach Boys’ early repertoire: the 12-bar blues, the doo-wop progression, Tin Pan Alley-influenced progressions, and ‘complex’ progressions that do not easily fit into the previous three.

Types of Chord Progressions in the Beach Boys' Music

Unlike other musical attributes (like structure or tempo), chord progressions do not always fit into neatly definable boxes: sometimes they feature difficult modulations, sometimes they can begin as formulaic but move off into unexpected territory, or sometimes what looks almost nonsensical on paper can sound perfectly rational upon listening. The study of chord progressions also amasses a large amount of data, as while one song may only use a repeated progression, others may use many types of progressions in various song sections to different effects. Although categorisation is sometimes difficult, it is not beyond analysis, and through a thorough investigation of their music, some commonalities in the Beach Boys' chord progressions (and variations on those commonalities) become clear.

From this preliminary analysis of chords, four important key areas of analysis were uncovered. These four types of chord progressions are the most frequently used in the Beach Boys' early repertoire, and an analysis of these progressions can offer important insights: the more common a musical trait is, the more likely it is to form an important part of their sound. Three of these key areas stem directly from the Beach Boys' musical influences – the 12-bar Blues from early rock and roll, the doo-wop progression from 1950s vocal music, and a number of chord progressions influenced by the music of Tin Pan Alley (such as the ii-V-I turnaround). These three groups of progressions will be discussed in terms of their musical influence on the Beach Boys, analysed with a view to understand how and where they are expressed in their music, and finally, what these chord progressions mean in the greater overview of the Beach Boys' repertoire. The fourth key area is a grouping of songs referred to as 'complex' progressions. These songs are grouped together not for the commonalities, but for their differences; in effect, it is their differences that are their commonalities. Songs in this group show experimentation that led to increased chordal complexity in the Beach Boys' music. Some songs that fit into this category are well-known for their experimental musical material: for example "Warmth of the Sun," an early (1964) song, is often noted for its highly sophisticated chord changes and modulations, which point forward to the emotional ballads on the B side of *Today* (Harrison, 1997, p. 35; Lambert, 2007, p. 131). However, often overlooked songs like "Ballad of Ole' Betsy" and "Pom Pom Playgirl" fit into this category of 'complex' progressions, as they also feature subtle but experimental chord changes, which are worthy of investigation.

One of the most common and basic progressions, not just in the Beach Boys' music, but also in popular music in general, is the I-IV-V progression. These three chords are the backbone of much of popular music, so common that Everett (2009) refers to them as, the "three core harmonic functions" (p. 222). Lambert (2007) suggests that the prevalence of the I-IV-V in the

Beach Boys' music may be due to their early use of the 12-bar blues, describing "Chug-A-Lug" from *Surfin' Safari* as using a "basic non-blues pattern," meaning the song uses the three chords that make up a traditional 12-bar blues, but are not used in the same order (p. 43). These three chords can be used to many different effects in varying combinations, and as such, are found in almost all kinds of popular music, from early blues, to folk, to rock and roll, Brill Building pop, punk, disco and so forth. Because of its prevalence as a standard pop music 'formula', it is not included in the four key areas for this analysis of chord progressions. In essence, the existence of the use of I, IV and V is a 'given' in this context, and as such, its inclusion as a specific chord progression does not help to illuminate any trends or traits unique to the Beach Boys' music. However, in the interest of thoroughness, the details of which songs use I-IV-V progressions and where in a song they are used are noted in Appendix D (p. 49) and highlighted in blue.

12 Bar Blues Progressions

The 12-bar blues is one of the most familiar and identifiable chord progressions in popular music. It is a 12-bar repeating form that revolves around the I, IV and V chords (see Figure 36). The customisable quality of the 12-bar blues has ensured its longevity; it forms the backbone of a song's progression, while also being flexible enough to incorporate new ideas, different turnarounds, and seemingly endless variation.

FIGURE 36 - THE 12-BAR BLUES

C											
/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
F								C			
/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
G						F		C			
/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

The 12-bar blues has a long history (see Covach, 2006b, p. 95; Stoia, 2013), however, for this specific study, it becomes important only when the progression is integrated into 1950s rock and roll. Rock and roll music was a major influence on the young Beach Boys, and it was from this music that the 12-bar progression ended up in their songs and eventually became one of the most frequently used progressions in their early repertoire. Perhaps the best place to start is with the music of Chuck Berry, whose chart success in the 1950s helped to define the rock and roll 'crossover' style (Covach, 2006, p68). Berry's early music was recorded at Chess Records – an independent label run by brothers Phil and Leonard Chess who, like Sam Phillips at Sun Records in Memphis, saw the potential of R&B music and sought to record it.

As rural Delta blues musicians began to migrate to larger urban centres in search of paid work as musicians, stylistic elements of the Delta blues began to change. As these musicians

formed four to six piece ‘combos,’ parts of the blues style needed to be cemented in order for these musicians to play as a cohesive group. This meant the music had a stable metre (usually 4/4 or 12/8) for people to dance to, and also meant the 12-bar blues form became standard, making it easy for players to join in and play together (although the 12-bar progression itself stems back much earlier to the 1920s) (Moore, 2012, p. 79). In addition to this, electrified instruments and P.A systems started to be included into blues music so that musicians could be heard over the din of talking, singing and dancing in the clubs they were playing in. Being based in Chicago, a main hub for electrified blues music, Chess Records had a history of signing seminal blues artists like B.B King and Howlin’ Wolf, whose electrified Chicago blues style heavily influenced early rock and roll – and especially Chuck Berry’s recordings. Although Chuck Berry’s embracing of rock and roll for ‘white people’ distanced him from the blues musicians he used for inspiration, his crossover appeal meant that young, white teenagers – like the young Wilson brothers - were able to hear R&B music for the first time on radios, and be inspired to create their own music. This is undoubtedly one of the principal influencing factors in the 12-bar blues progression forming part of the Beach Boys’ early musical make-up.

The Wilsons heard much music at home, between parents Murry and Audree playing singles music themselves on the organ and piano, to the singles of the Four Freshmen, Hi-Lo’s and the Kingston Trio. In addition, the brothers supplemented these records with rock and roll singles, especially the music of Chuck Berry (Leaf, 1978, p18). This influence is most obviously seen in Carl Wilson’s note-perfect recreation of Berry’s introduction to “Johnny B Goode” (1958) in “Fun Fun Fun”, and the melody of Berry’s “Sweet Little Sixteen” (1958) borrowed for “Surfin’ USA”. Lambert (2009) also notes that the Wilsons would often play Berry songs in jam sessions at home or with friends and as such, Berry’s music would “continue to play an important role in the evolving sound of the Beach Boys” (p. 11). The Beach Boys’ expressed their love of Berry’s music most clearly in “Do You Remember?” with the lines “Chuck Berry’s gotta be the greatest thing to come along, he made the guitar beats and wrote the all-time greatest song” (Lambert, 2007, p. 158).

The 12-Bar Blues in the Beach Boys’ music

In the Beach Boys’ early albums, the 12-bar blues features prominently, with half of the *Surfin’ USA* album made up of 12-bar songs. Table 24 is a list of songs featuring 12-bar blues⁴³ progressions, and from this we can break the songs up into three recurring themes. For the most part, the 12-bar blues was used for surf songs, car songs (and one motorbike in “Little

⁴³ “Surfin’ USA” features a 16-bar blues progression, as Chuck Berry does in “Sweet Little Sixteen” though due to its similarity in musical feel, texture, arrangement and lyrical themes, it is included in this discussion of 12-bar blues songs and discussed in detail later in this section.

Honda”) and novelty/instrumental songs. The Beach Boys’ first major hit, “Surfin’ Safari” heavily featured the 12-bar blues, and the singles that followed afterwards used it too, perhaps trying to capitalise on their first success and realising that their combination of rock and roll and vocal music was resonating with a wide audience. As such, the following singles “409” “Surfin’ USA” and “Little Deuce Coupe” follow a similar trend of up-beat songs that essentially list elements of teenage life – “409” lists car parts (“My four speed dual quad posi-traction 409”), as does “Little Deuce Coupe” (“She’s got a competition clutch with a four-on-the-floor”), while “Surfin’ USA” lists the most popular surfing destinations (“San Onofre and Sunset, Redondo Beach LA”). The 12-bar progression underpins these themes well; with its repetitive, chugging guitars, it gives the feeling of movement, especially when it reaches the highest point of the progression of V, to IV, to I – almost like a car changing gears around a corner until it reaches the ‘straight’ for four bars of I again. Similarly, the movement of I to IV, IV to I, I to V and back to I again can take the up-and down shape of a wave, giving surfing songs a sense of movement and excitement.

Of the 21 12-bar blues songs, seven are instrumental surf-rock inspired songs or covers. These recordings take up almost half of *Surfin’ USA* due to both the urgent need to release more Beach Boys’ music after the success of the first album, and in part to emulate other surf-bands, whose albums were often an even mix of originals and instrumental covers (Lambert, 2007, p. 68). These covers and ‘jams’ use the 12-bar blues for the most obvious of reasons – its familiar simplicity allowed the band to play along with little rehearsal and allowed easy soloing over the top of the arrangement. After *Surfin’ USA* the frequency of these 12-bar blues ‘jams’ lessened, though they were still included on the next three albums, with “Boogie Woodie,” “Shut Down Part 2” and “Carl’s Big Chance,” in which Carl Wilson gets to show his growing skill as a lead player (Dennis Wilson gets the same treatment in “Denny’s Drums”).

By 1964, the 12-bar blues is used as a novelty, such as on “Do You Remember?” – a tribute to the early acts that inspired the Beach Boys’ to make their own music in this style of 1950s rock and roll, singing “Little Richard sang it and Dick Clark brought it to life...Do you remember all the guys that gave us rock and roll?”. This song seems almost humorous when considering it was released in 1964, less than 10 years after rock and roll reached the Billboard charts, and was released while some of these rock and roll artists were still touring and making music. Again the 12-bar blues (and the 1950s-style 12/8 metre behind it) is used in the novelty song “I’m Bugged at My Old Man”, a thrown-together song trying to humorously tell the story of a teenager who is grounded, but which instead, given the context of the Wilson’s abusive home-life, sounds more like dark humour: “He gave me some breadcrumbs and a little glass of water, while they’re outside eating steak.”

The 12-bar blues also connects with song structures as discussed in Chapter 3 as it functions as both an underlying song structure *and* a chord progression. There are songs that may feature a 12-bar blues, but not use it as an underlying structure. Songs like “409” use the structure continuously throughout the song, whereas other songs, like “Little Honda” may only utilise the progression for one section – a chorus or a verse.

TABLE 24 - SONGS FEATURING 12 BAR BLUES PROGRESSIONS

Surfin' Safari	Catch a Wave*
Surfin' (Chorus)	Boogie Woodie
409	Little Deuce Coupe
Summertime Blues +	Fun Fun Fun (Verse)
The Shift *	Shut Down Part 2
Surfin' USA	Carl's Big Chance
Stoked	Little Honda (Verse)
Shut Down	Do You Remember? (Verse)
Honky Tonk +	Don't Back Down (Verse)*
Surf Jam	I'm Bugged at My Old Man
Let's Go Trippin' +	

+ Denotes a cover song | * Denotes a variation

Variations on the 12 Bar Blues

As in most simple structures in the Beach Boys' music, they did not remain simple for long. Looking at the slight variations Brian Wilson makes to the 12 bar blues can give some insight into the Beach Boys' musical progression and their growing creativity. The changes noted in their song structure and instrumentation are also found in their variations on basic chordal structures. There is one important caveat to variations on the twelve bar blues, as Citron (2008) notes:

It is possible to have many different harmonic sequences (sometimes beginning with minor, substituting the IV chord on the second bar), but what *makes* blues harmony is the presence of the IV dominant seventh in the fifth bar. *This must not be altered* or the blues sound will be lost (Citron, 2008, p. 226).

Moore (2012) reiterates this, noting that the move to IV in bar 5 of a 12 bar blues is “unmistakable”: “it is this feature, more than any other, that is essential to the 12-bar blues pattern. Provided there is a sense of chord I during the first four bars, and a move to IV in bar 5, the allusion will be secure.”(p. 80). The Beach Boys do tend to obey this rule in their variations on the 12-bar blues progression, keeping the essential “bluesy-ness” by including the change to

IV in bar 5 of the progression. It is usually at the end of the chord sequence that the Beach Boys experiment with variations.

One 12-bar blues variant the Beach Boys use is the employment of different “turnarounds” – a term referring to the last 1-2 bars of a section (usually the end of the chorus) that allow the progression to resolve back to the tonic. The Beach Boys use the ii-V-I “Tin Pan Alley” turnaround often – which will be discussed later in this chapter – however, they also made their own types of turnarounds in their surf and car songs that feature the 12-bar blues. “Catch a Wave” is an excellent example of this, where the altered turnaround is played underneath the refrain “Catch a wave and you’re sitting on top of the world”. The unique movement works to heighten the excitable emotion in the lyric; essentially, the progression in D major moves upward from D to A – a large leap, then F / G / A (down and then up – like a wave), where the melody also reaches its highest note on “sitting on top of the world.” This is an example of Brian Wilson’s use of chords to reinforce a lyrical theme – essentially ‘chord painting’: the song swells to its height (its “top” of the world) before moving back down to the D tonic again.

Similarly “Don’t Back Down” features a 12-bar variant during the verse – instead of returning to the I or V in bar 12, it moves from an Eb to an E – an unexpected movement for a song in Ab. “Don’t Back Down” is, lyrically, about the bravery of surfers who are not afraid of being wiped out on a wave – they “grit their teeth, they won’t back down” sings Brian Wilson in the verse. The unexpected upward movement from Eb to E underpins the strength of that statement, the chord does not “back down” to the tonic, it rises instead. These slight variations on the 12-bar progression cleverly play on expectations and are sometimes used to highlight particular lyrical themes.

Lambert (2007) discusses “The Shift” in a similar light:

The A sections present a unique blues variant. In other words, Brian plays on the song’s title by ‘shifting’ the first two bars of a blues progression down a whole step from A to G. This is all anticipated in the introduction, where a C chord similarly shifts up to a D chord. In fact, at the beginning of the song, when we hear the intro C and D chords and then the vocals enter above G and A chords, it’s hard to tell exactly what key the song is in; the key only becomes clear when the blues progression asserts itself. This is Brian in experimentation mode, placing his personal stamp on a time-worn convention. (Lambert, 2007, p. 46.)

These three variants are similar in that they use chord progressions to underpin a lyrical theme, but also show Brian Wilson tinkering with the formula over time – “The Shift” with its unstable key, “Catch A Wave” with its wave-like turnaround and “Don’t Back Down” with its unexpected chordal shift all show the growing sophistication of the Beach Boys’ music. Fittingly, “Don’t Back Down” was the last ‘proper’⁴⁴ Beach Boys song to use the 12-bar blues progression, and the last surf song (in their early style) they recorded.

16 Bar Blues

The regular blues need not only conform to the 12-bar pattern. Moore (2012) notes the use of 8-bar, 10-bar and 16-bar variations, using Chuck Berry’s “Sweet Little Sixteen” as an example of a variant – starting on the V, rather than the typical I (p. 80). This particular example pertains to the Beach Boys, as ‘Surfin’ USA’ was essentially a re-write of Berry’s ‘Sweet Little Sixteen’ (1958). Like Berry’s song, “Surfin’ USA” follows a 16-bar blues progression, also starting on the V with “If everybody had an...” before moving to the I in bar two over “ocean”. “Surfin’ USA” maintains the momentum of a blues progression with the move to IV in bar 10, which Moore (2012) notes as a common variation⁴⁵, and which both Moore (2012) and Citron (2008) insist is the chordal movement that defines the blues progression. Only “Surfin’ USA” uses the 16-bar pattern, as all other blues related songs follow more closely to the 12-bar blues progression. However, this single anomaly is worth noting, as it is an example of the Beach Boys copying their influences in order to find their own particular style – a clear example of their ‘apprentice’ phase.

The 12-bar blues formed an important part of the Beach Boys’ early sound. Some of their most successful early singles – “Surfin Safari,” “Surfin’ USA,” “Shut Down,” “Little Deuce Coupe,” and “Fun Fun Fun” - are all based on blues progressions, and they make up some of their most recognised material. Even though they progressed musically and left the 12-bar blues behind in 1964, there is still a large part of their early success that is owed to the simplicity and flexibility of this progression.

Doo-wop Progressions (I-vi-ii-V and I-vi-ii-V)

A brief overview of doo-wop music was covered in Chapter 3 on song structure, and the relationship between doo-wop and the AABA form; the following discussion will focus on the ‘doo-wop’ chord progression, and how it is used in the Beach Boys’ music.

⁴⁴ “I’m Bugged at My Old Man” from *Summer Days...* functions as a novelty song, performed spontaneously, and not connected to the rest of the album musically or thematically.

⁴⁵ Moore (2012) also notes that Little Richard’s “Long Tall Sally” is another example of the 16-bar blues, making the move to IV in bar 10, rather than in bar 5 as in a regular 12-bar blues. (p. 80).

Doo-wop refers to a form of 1950s black vocal music, retrospectively named in the 1970s after its distinctive vocal harmony patterns, whose purpose was to mimic and take the place of drums, bass and guitars (Curnutt, 2012, p. 67; Moore, 2012, p. 133) However, unlike other forms of early rock and roll, doo-wop is quite easily categorised. Gribbin & Schiff (1992) go into extensive detail describing the different kinds of doo-wop music, though insist that all categories of doo-wop exhibit five musical features – vocal group harmony, a wide range of voices (lead tenor, baritone, bass), the use of nonsense syllables, simple beat and instrumentation, and simple music and lyrics (p. 17).

Within doo-wop's "simple music and lyrics" is a four-chord progression that was used so often in doo-wop music that it has become synonymous with the genre itself" (Moore 2012, p. 77; Scheurer, 1996, p. 92), although it is sometimes called by different names. Lambert (2007) notes that the doo-wop progression is sometimes referred to as the "Stand By Me" progression after its prevalence in the Ben E. King single, a 1961 post-doo-wop hit) (p. 17). Similarly, Jimmy Webb refers to it as the "Heart and Soul" progression (1998, p191), while Donald Johns refers to the harmonic scheme as the "vamp pattern", (1993, p. 458) heard in standards like "The Way You Look Tonight" and "I Got Rhythm" (p. 211). However, the progression is best known for its important role in doo-wop music, and in this study will be referred to as such.

This progression follows a I-vi-ii-V movement, as heard in "In the Still of the Night" (1956) by the Five Satins and many other prominent doo-wop singles. Citron (2008) describes the progression and its emotional pull: "Starting with the I, it is easy to create interest by changing to the vi. The vi being minor feels like a darkened version of the I and pulls to the ii. The ii pulls to the V and the V urges us home to the I" (p. 210). There is a slight variation on this progression that substitutes the ii for a IV and moves through I-vi-IV-V as heard in "Book of Love" (1958) by the Monotones. However, both of these progressions tend to have a similar movement and chordal feel, and as such they have been grouped together for this section. Everett (2009) asserts that these two "descending thirds" doo-wop progressions are largely interchangeable due to the fact that vi and IV share two tones (scale degrees 4 and 6) though their sound is slightly different. This is due to one featuring a minor with the ii and the other a major VI, and changing between these two progressions added interest to what is a simple, repetitive motif. Everett (2009) also touches on the importance of these basic chord progressions, noting that they are:

...the single most constant element in early sixties pop music, appearing in countless examples of proto-soul music (Ben E King's "Stand By Me" and the Ronettes' "Be My Baby"), garage band hits...and numbers by vocal soloists (Neil Sedaka's "Breaking Up Is

Hard to Do,” Dion and the Belmonts” “Runaround Sue,” and Johnny Tillotsons ‘Poetry in Motion’) (Everett, 2009, p. 219).

Similarly, Citron (2008) notes “No sequence of chords in all popular music repertoire has been used more often than I-vi-ii-V... In that order, they are pop songs personified... the total sequence is extremely satisfying” (p. 210).

Although this progression was used for upbeat songs too, the doo-wop progression, along with the 12/8 metre that so often accompanies it, is most often connected to emotional ballads. Warwick (2007), in her book on the music of 1960s girl groups notes the way the doo-wop progression is used to help tell the story in the Chantels’ “Maybe” (1958), describing how the “looping, descending harmonic pattern... characterises fervent singing about love lost” and the continuous stepwise descent of the melody denies “[the singer] the closure she seeks through her lyrics.” (p. 19).

The following section details how the Beach Boys were influenced by doo-wop music, how it formed the basis of their ballad style, and how their variations of the progression showed their growing creativity.

Overview of Influence and the Doo-Wop Progression

The influence of doo-wop on the music of the Beach Boys is most obvious in their use of vocal harmony, but also in their continued use of the doo-wop chord progression. Not only did this appear in their earliest days, but they continued to use it on every album up to *Pet Sounds* (1966) and still featured it in their repertoire after that point (“That’s Why God Made the Radio,” a new song released in 2012 for the group’s 50th anniversary, features the doo-wop progression during the verses). Brian Wilson, in commenting on the Penguins’ “Earth Angel” (1954) – a record he remembers hearing on the radio as a teenager - stated “I felt a real strong affinity...I knew in my heart that one day I would make music like that” (Leaf, 2004). During 1962-66, the Beach Boys covered many doo-wop songs on their albums: “Little Girl (You’re My Miss America)⁴⁶”, “Why Do Fools Fall In Love⁴⁷”, “Hushabye⁴⁸”, “Do You Wanna Dance⁴⁹” and “I’m So Young”.⁵⁰ They also performed many doo-wop songs live: “There’s No Other Like My Baby” on *Beach Boys Party* (1965), and “Monster Mash” from *Beach Boys Concert* (1964).

⁴⁶ Original written by Vincent Catalano and Herb Alpert.

⁴⁷ Original written by Morris Levy and Frankie Lymon for Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers (1956).

⁴⁸ Original by the Mystics(1959)

⁴⁹ Written and performed by Bobby Freeman (1958).

⁵⁰ Original written by William Tyus Jr for the Students (1958).

Figure 37 reproduces Walter Everett's graph (2009, p. 220) charting the decline in popularity of the doo-wop progression after its 1962 peak, which was the height of girl groups and the Brill Building sound, and the beginnings of Motown. This graph also charts a curious life cycle of the doo-wop chord progression. In the early 1960s, the Beatles and the Four Seasons also regularly included doo-wop songs in their early repertoire. The Beatles covered "Baby It's You" on *Please Please Me* (1963); while the Four Seasons covered "Stay" on *The 4 Seasons Sing 'Ain't That a Shame' and 11 others* (1963). The three bands also wrote original songs using the progressions - the Beatles with "This Boy" (1963), "All My Loving" (1963), "I'm a Loser" (1963), "I'll Follow the Sun" (1964); The Four Seasons with "Sherry" (1962), "Big Girls Don't Cry" (1962), "Candy Girl" (1963). Both groups went on to explore different musical territory in the mid-1960s, though the Beatles tended to make a return to their musical roots at the end of the 1960s. During this time, the Beatles were a fractured group showing signs of wear under the enormous pressures of the early-to-mid 1960s, and this "return to roots" can be seen in two different ways - as a tongue-in cheek musical pastiche or as a nostalgic throwback to the times before international stardom had impacted their lives so heavily (McDonald, 1994, p273). The former is seen in songs like "Happiness is a Warm Gun", (1968) whose complicated verse section with changes in time signature bursts into a bright, doo-wop chorus with "Happiness is a warm gun" sung while the background harmonies reply in girl-group style "Bang bang, shoot shoot" - a humorous juxtaposition of the innocence of doo-wop music in a song that hints at Lennon's sexual relationship with Yoko Ono and his use of heroin at the time (McDonald, 1994, p. 254). The Beatles also used the doo-wop to great effect in "Octopus's Garden" (1969) - essentially a humorous children's song - juxtaposing it on side one of *Abbey Road* (1969) with "I Want You (She's So Heavy)" - another of Lennon's drug-tinged songs of sexual desire. Likewise, the Four Seasons returned to covers of "I've Got You Under My Skin" (1966) and "Will You Love Me Tomorrow?" (1968): Tin Pan Alley and Brill Building songs respectively. Some of these nostalgic tendencies may explain the brief upward 'spike' in Figure 37 before the doo-wop progression finally fades from the charts.

FIGURE 37 - REPRODUCTION OF EVERETT'S (2009) GRAPH OF DOO-WOP SONGS (1955-69) (P. 220).

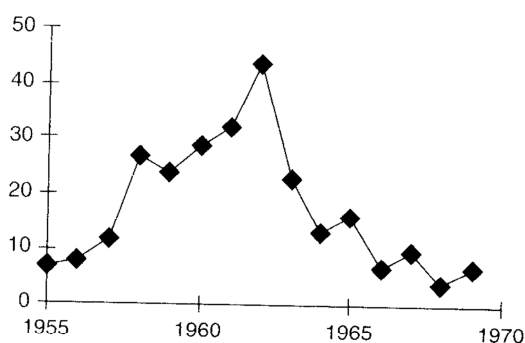


Figure 9.01. Numbers of *Billboard*'s weekly top-twenty songs including the unadorned I—vi—ii—V or I—vi—IV—V progression, 1955–69.

The progression ties all of the first seven albums together; all seven of them feature doo-wop progressions, or variations of it. In fact, the doo-wop progression formed such an important part of the Beach Boys music that into the 1970s, when the progression had long fallen out of favour, they were still recording covers of doo-wop and girl-group songs that feature the progression with “I Can Hear Music” (1968), “In the Still of the Night” (1976) and “Chapel of Love” (1976) along with other favourites from the 1950s, such as “Blueberry Hill” (1976), “Rock and Roll Music” (1976). The Beach Boys’ frequent use of this progression, along with their ‘trademark’ harmonies, guitar sounds and growing, complex arrangements makes their music both adventurous and nostalgic, both modern and old fashioned, and it is this intersection that gives their music a unique sound, and helps to explain why they held tight to this progression as part of their fundamental musical make up.

The Doo-Wop Progression in the Beach Boys’ Music

Of all Beach Boys songs from the 1962-66 period, 26 songs heavily feature the doo-wop progression, or variations on it. Where other musical attributes can be described in clear detail, such as song structure for example, chord progressions are often a challenge to describe, as one song may include several types of chord progressions, while, for example, a song can only have *one* song structure. In this way it is sometimes difficult to draw solid conclusions from these collections of data, however, some clear patterns can be seen, the strongest being the connection between the doo-wop ballad and the Beach Boys ballad style.

TABLE 25 - BEACH BOYS' SONGS FEATURING THE DOO-WOP PROGRESSION

County Fair (Verse)	Custom Machine (Refrain)
Little Girl (You're My Miss America) +	Why Do Fools Fall In Love (Verse) +
Cuckoo Clock	Keep an Eye on Summer #
Farmer's Daughter (Refrain)	I Get Around (Chorus) *
Surfer Girl #	Hushabye +
In My Room (Refrain)*	Girls on the Beach
Hawaii*	Drive In (Refrain)
Be True To Your School (Verse) *	Please Let Me Wonder (Verse Line)
Ballad of Ole Betsy (Verse)	I'm So Young
Car Crazy Cutie	Kiss Me Baby (Chorus Line) #
Cherry Cherry Coupe	She Knows Me Too Well (Chorus) #
Spirit of America	In The Back of My Mind *

* DENOTES A VARIATION | + DENOTES A COVER SONG

DENOTES THE USE OF THE DOO-WOP PROGRESSION AND A VARIATION

The Beach Boys' Doo-Wop Ballad Style.

16 of 26 doo-wop songs (62%) are in a ballad style (see

Table 25), and it is in these ballads that the doo-wop progression's wistful nostalgia functions most clearly. Moreover, the doo-wop progression seems to lend itself to songs about heartache, loss, teenage uncertainty, anxiety in relationships or admissions of guilt or blame. In fact the small number of 'love' songs that feature the doo-wop progression tell stories of love that does not actually exist yet – they are *fantasy* girls. "Surfer Girl" and "Girls on the Beach" describe girls that only exist in the mind of the singers, and in the former, there is even anxiety in the fantasy relationship, which questions "Do you love me, do you surfer girl?" The reality of anxiety and uncertainty even creeps into the Beach Boys' fantasy songs, much like it did in their own troubled lives.

Songs of heartache and loss feature with "Keep an Eye on Summer," "I'm So Young," and "County Fair"; even "Ballad of Ole' Betsy" personifies a car that is becoming too old to drive – "I just can't hold the tears back 'cause Betsy's growing old." Themes of anxiety feature strongly with "Surfer Moon," "In my Room," "Please Let Me Wonder," and "In the Back of My Mind," whose title alone refers to the feeling of worry that a relationship "going to change" from good to bad, but with no real evidence. Two of the most emotionally honest Beach Boys songs are

“Kiss Me Baby” and “She Knows Me Too Well.” “Kiss Me Baby” admits to serious relationship difficulties and trying to fix the damage (the background vocals even sing “Kiss a little bit, fight a little bit” over the doo-wop chorus). “She Knows Me Too Well” is an open admission of the double standards and jealousy the protagonist admits to in his relationship (“When I look at other girls it must kill her inside, but it’d be another story if she looked at the guys, but she knows me so well that she can tell I really love her.”)

The movement of the doo-wop progression fits this uncertainty or anxiety well – the I establishes the tonic confidently, though as the movement cycles through either a vi or ii, the overall feel of the arrangement changes to a minor triad. This helps paint the picture of uncertainty – things started off well, but now it is uncertain – before it moves through IV to settle at V, confidence slowly regaining as it reaches the I again at the top of the progression. This confidence-uncertainty-confidence loop cycles over and over again, representing the up-and-down experience of teenage relationships. Further, we can see how the doo-wop progression is a kind of ‘chord painting’ underneath a lyric in “Surfer Girl”:

I	vi	IV	V
Do you	Love me	Do you	Surfer...

In “Surfer Girl,” the weakest part of the progression falls on the word “love,” which can be heard to underscore the uncertainty of whether the “surfer girl” will return the singers’ feelings. In “She Knows Me So Well,” the progression appears over the hook line of the chorus too, however functions in a different way:

I	vi	IV	V
Knows me, knows me so	Well, that she can	Tell I really	Love her

The familiarity of the doo-wop progression gives the chorus of this song a confidence that is missing during the verses, which obscure the key of the song and underpin the restlessness of the lyric. In the chorus, the singer is sure of his relationship, and that despite his faults, he trusts the love of his partner.

In songs about American culture, like “County Fair,” “Drive-In” and car songs like “Cherry Cherry Coupe” and “Spirit of America,” the use of the doo-wop progression links to the nostalgia of an earlier time (even if that time was only a decade previous), as the vocal music it draws from is something distinctly American. By the 1970s, when the Beach Boys had returned

to favour as a 'greatest hits' live band, they were often referred to as "America's Band"⁵¹ – as their use of nostalgic American musical forms (like doo-wop) combined with portraits of drive-in movies, cheerleaders, root beer and hot rods summed up the idealised notion of American teenage life. During this time in the 1970s, their concerts had "become celebrations of a long-lost, imaginary past that...can only truly [be] experienced through the Beach Boys" (Leaf, 1978 p. 9). The songs that best represented these ideals were those that utilise the doo-wop progression.

Variations on the Doo-wop Progression

Allan Moore notes that common chord patterns (like the doo-wop progression) often undergo modification (2012, p. 77), and eight Beach Boys songs use a variation on the doo-wop progression – "In My Room", "Ballad of Ole Betsy", "Girls on the Beach", "Keep an Eye on Summer", "I Get Around", "Kiss Me Baby", "She Knows Me Too Well" and "In The Back of My Mind," with several of these featuring both a standard doo-wop progression *and* a variation (see

Table 25). These variants do not tend to change the overall sound of these 'doo-wop' songs; as Citron (2008) notes "a small alteration does not affect its presence and comfortable-as-an-old-shoe feeling" (p. 210), however, they do highlight the way the Beach Boys started to break the rules they had learned about chord progressions. Often, as in 12 bar or Tin Pan Alley progressions, the specific variations in chords line up to particularly relevant lyrics – essentially 'chord painting' – a way to further reinforce the lyric, especially in songs with a complicated emotional tone.

"In My Room" uses a variant under the refrain, with a I-iv-ii progression in the key of B before switching to an A major and finally closing the progression with a V on F#. This strange movement jolts the doo-wop feel, but does relate to the B-A-B progression in the verse under "tell my secrets to" – the A reappears in the doo-wop variant, subtly tying these two sections together. One of the most complex early songs, "Girls on the Beach", uses a particularly quirky movement under the verse lines "On the beach you'll find them there, in the sun and salty air." This begins with a standard I-iv-ii-V, but the second repeat moves from I-IV-ii-VI – making the 'six' a major has a similar unexpected feel as "In My Room," while the minor 'four' ends the phrase on a weak cadence, suited to the wistful nature of the songs themes.

⁵¹ The (often incorrect) telemovie based on the Beach Boys was titled *An American Band*; Byron Preiss' Beach Boys biography is titled *The Authorised Biography of America's Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band*.

“Ballad of Ole’ Betsy” has a progression that swaps the iv chord for a iii creating a I-iii-IV-V progression that ascends, rather than loops like a traditional doo-wop progression. This change tends to suit the flow of “Betsy” where the verses tell the story of Betsy the car’s previous journeys, just as the chord progression underneath creates a feeling of upward movement. Like “Betsy”, “Keep an Eye on Summer” also uses a I-ii-IV-V under the refrain of “keep an eye on summer this year.” “Keep an Eye on Summer” makes heavy use of a standard doo-wop progression throughout the verses, and this slight tweak in the refrain helps differentiate it from the musical material around it, and adds a ‘lift’ on the hopeful nature of the refrain lyrics.

Like “In My Room” and “Girls on the Beach”, “I Get Around” makes use of unexpected major chords in its doo-wop variation in the chorus, moving through I-VI-ii-VII-V. The change from a minor six (vi) to a major (VI) gives the chorus a lift that is capitalised on a second time with the move though a seven (F in the key of G) before arriving at the expected V to close the progression. “I Get Around” is perhaps the perfect example of the Beach Boys using the doo-wop progression to evoke a certain familiarity, while the changes to it keep the sound fresh and unexpected – as this was their first US #1 single, it could be part of its widespread success. “In the Back of My Mind” uses a similar trick, replacing the six with a major for a I-VI-ii-V progression, with the D9 (in the key of F major) adding a lushness to the progression, while the change to a major keeps the cycle of chords interesting.

Similarly, “She Knows Me Too Well” uses a variant that adds two chords, creating a I-iv-IV-ii-iv-V. This progression has the same emotional feel that the doo-wop progression provides, but again unexpectedly tinkers with major and minor chords, most notable is the change to a minor fourth (the Em6) before resolving to the regular V.

“Kiss Me Baby” makes use of what Everett calls an “offset doo-wop” progression, (Everett, p. 219) where “the I-vi-IV-V is divided into 2 pairs of chords that are rotated, resulting in a IV-V-I-vi progression, now ending in a weak cadence” (2009, p. 219). Like the previous examples, this variation functions as a kind of chord painting, underpinning musically what is expressed in the lyrics. The “weaker” cadence (the Cm(maj7) chord) appears at the end of the line “can’t remember what we *fought about*” which helps to express the uncertainty of the lovers’ relationship.

A few Beach Boys songs use a technique that hints at a standard doo-wop progression, making these songs feel “familiar” before moving to more unexpected territory. For example, “Heads You Win, Tails I Lose” uses a progression of I-vi-I-vi IV-V-IV-V during the verse, which ‘apes’ the feel of the doo-wop progression while the repeated “swinging” from chord to chord

suits the uncertain nature of the song's lyric about the repeated flipping of a coin. "Good To My Baby" takes a different turn and uses a I-iv-II-V in the verse under the line "And when I get her alone you know we're as happy as a couple could be" (moving to another variant of ii-iv-II-V under "and when I give her my love it's between her and me"). The use of the major (II) rather than the typical minor (ii) gives the progression a surprising lift under the positivity of the lyrics – it reaffirms the confidence the singer feels about his relationship, despite what others may think. These little 'tricks' help blur the line between familiarity and new musical material, making these kinds of changes important to note.

Tin Pan Alley Related Progressions

Tin Pan Alley consisted of several buildings around Union Square in New York City (one of which, 1619 Broadway, would become the home of the Brill building in the 1960s) and was the centre of the music publishing and sheet music trade from the beginning of the twentieth onwards (Gammond, 1991, p. 573). In the foreword to Alex Wilder's detailed study of Tin Pan Alley Music *American Popular Song*, James T. Maher estimates that 300 000 songs were copyrighted between 1900 and 1950, an insight into how large and how important Tin Pan Alley music had become (Maher, 1972, p. xxxviii)

Some of the most successful Tin Pan Alley composers and lyricists included Cole Porter, Richard Rodgers, Johnny Mercer, Irving Berlin, Harold Arlen, Jerome Kern and Ira and George Gershwin (among many others), the latter of whom was of considerable influence on the young Brian Wilson. The songs of Tin Pan Alley are often referred to as 'standards', a term created between the Swing era and the birth of rock and roll to refer to a "timeless, aesthetically transcendent, and culturally distinctive popular song" (Keightley, 2001, p. 9), often referred to as part of "Great American songbook" (Furia & Lasser, 2006, p. xxvi,). These songs were often (but not always) written for Broadway and film musicals, a style developed out of vaudeville and operetta traditions of the late 19th century (Moore, 2012, p. 128) with Porter's *Anything Goes* (1948) and *High Society* (1956) and Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935) as notable examples. Songs in this style were generally characterised by sophisticated melody and harmony influenced by contemporary European music, elegant and often witty lyrics, and the use of the 32-bar AABA structural form (discussed in Chapter 3 on structure) (Furia & Lasser, 2006, p. xxvi ; Maher, 1972 p. xxxvi; Pessen, 1985, p. 183).

In 2010, Brian Wilson released *Brian Wilson Reimagines Gershwin*, which contained covers of Gershwin songs such as "I Got Rhythm," "'s Wonderful" and "Summertime" alongside two 'new' songs – "The Like in I Love You" and "Nothing But Love" which were unfinished

Gershwin compositions that Wilson completed himself. Peter Ames Carlin (2006) notes the close relationship between Brian Wilson's childhood and the influence of Tin Pan Alley songs:

In Brian's memory, he's still a toddler, maybe two years old, sitting on the floor and staring up into the empty air above him. Only the air isn't really empty because it is full of music... the record player is pumping George Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue'... 'Oh, I *loved* it' he says in the spring of 2005. 'Looking back now I can see what I heard, even if I couldn't express it in words back then. Listening to it now brings back some bad memories, because I had such a bad childhood. But good memories too, because I loved that song' (Carlin, 2006, p. 10).

Brian Wilson's first exposure to the music of Tin Pan Alley music, other than the above anecdote about Gershwin, may have been through the recordings of the Four Freshmen, whose tuxedos, tight harmonies and smooth, crooning vocals were entirely suited to the sophisticated sound of these 'standards'. Some of their early singles and B-sides included songs like "My Heart Stood Still" (1927) written by Rodgers & Hart, "Summertime" (1935) and "Love is Here to Stay" (1938) written by George and Ira Gershwin, along with recordings of other well-known Tin Pan Alley Songs like "I Remember You" (1941) written by Victor Schertzinger & Johnny Mercer, "The Last Time I Saw Paris" (1940) written by Jerome Kern & Oscar Hammerstein II and "Come Rain or Come Shine" (1946) written by Harold Arlen & Johnny Mercer. Many of these songs were sung by (and in some cases written for) crooners like Frank Sinatra, Fred Astaire and Nat King Cole, some of the most notable singers of the time. The structures of Tin Pan Alley can be seen in the Beach Boys' use of the AABA form (see Chapter 3) and Tin Pan Alley's influence can also be seen in the types of chord progressions they used, particularly during the 'craft' period with the use of the 'ii-V-I' turnaround and chromatic descending or ascending progressions.

The ii-V-I Progression

The 'ii-V-I' chord progression is a staple of Tin Pan Alley music, perhaps even a 'cliché,' beginning with the ii, which has a strong pull towards the V, before returning home to I (Citron, 2008, p. 209). Due to the strength of the progression, it can be used in many ways to different effects. Firstly, as in Cole Porter's "I've Got You Under My Skin" where the progression underpins the title lyric with the opening of the first verse "I've [ii] got you [V] under my [Imaj7] skin." Likewise, Porter's "Night and Day" uses the same technique on "Night and [ii] day [V] you are the [Imaj7] one" – the last word literally acknowledging the return to the I. Secondly, it is used as a "turnaround", that is, a set of chords that appears at the end of a phrase to take the progression back to the tonic (I) again. And thirdly, it can also be used to springboard into a new key, with the V featuring as a kind of 'pivot' chord as heard in "Laura" (1945) (David

Raskin/Johnny Mercer) and “One Note Samba” (1960) (Antonio Carlos Jobim) (Citron, 2008, p. 209; Strunk, n.d.).

In pop music, the sequence is also used in similar ways. Everett (2009) cites “No, Not Much” by the Four Lads and the end of “I Will” by the Beatles as examples employing the ii-V-I turnaround (p. 241), while “Ferry Cross the Mersey” by Gerry and the Pacemakers and “Penny Lane” by the Beatles use the progression to then move on to more unexpected musical material (p. 217). In categorising common chord progressions in pop music, Allan Moore (1992) cites three Beach Boys songs as examples of the ii-V-I progression (“Don’t Worry Baby,” “I Can Hear Music” [1969] and “Heroes and Villains” [1967]), proof of their connection to this particular progression (p. 100).

TABLE 26 - SONGS FEATURING II-V-I TURNAROUND

Your Summer Dream	Girls on the Beach
In My Room	When I Grow Up (to be a man)
A Young Man is Gone +	Please Let Me Wonder
Don't Worry Baby	In The Back of my Mind
I Get Around	Girl From New York City
All Summer Long	Amusement Parks USA
Hushabye +	You're So Good To Me
We'll Run Away	Let Him Run Wild

+ Denotes a Cover Song

Of the sixteen songs that utilise the ii-V-I progression, nine are ballads – some romantic (as in “Your Summer Dream”), and some about longing or worry (“In the Back of my Mind”). Of the upbeat songs, “When I Grow Up (to be a man)” deals with the anxiety of growing older, while “Let Him Run Wild” speaks of the heartache of watching the person you love with someone who does not appreciate them. These kinds of emotional themes align well with the romantic ideals of Tin Pan Alley ballad songs which were almost entirely written about love: Tin Pan Alley songs expressed these feelings quite dramatically, especially in those songs written for inclusion in musicals and film. This collection of Beach Boys songs are some of the most chordally complex of their early recordings, with the use of major 7th chords in “Your Summer Dream”, “Girls on the Beach” and “Don’t Worry Baby” featuring subtle modulations, the unexpected chordal movements in “In the Back of my Mind” and the use of ninths in “Please Let Me Wonder.” These are some of the most sophisticated of the pre-1966 Beach Boys material, and it is in some ways unsurprising that these songs have a close

relationship to the composers of Tin Pan Alley, whose repertoire Brian Wilson was familiar with.

Two of the songs featured are covers – “Hushabye” and a remake of the Bobby Troup song “Their Hearts were Full of Spring” (remade as “A Young Man is Gone”). Both songs have a connection to Tin Pan Alley, with the latter from the repertoire of the Four Freshmen and the former a song from the Brill Building. In both cases, the Beach Boys augment the original versions with their own personal style, with new lyrics and/or new vocal harmony material, making these songs a good example of the way the Beach Boys positioned themselves in the centre of many musical influences.

Stepwise or Chromatic Ascending/Descending Progressions

Ascending or descending progressions can be thought of as ornamented versions of a I-IV or I-V movement, filled with passing chords until the IV or V is reached – whether achieved by moving upwards or moving downwards through the scale (Everett, 2009, p. 234). The stepwise or chromatic movement of the bass instrument often drives this movement, whether bass, piano or vocals, while the chords either move with it, or stay the same (making the bass function as a pedal note). This is of particular relevance to Brian Wilson, who featured as the band’s bass player during his live performance period with the Beach Boys. His experience as a piano player, combined with his bass-playing abilities, could come together here in creative ways (often in the same way as Paul McCartney, who played the piano, however, in their touring days was the band’s bass player).

There are 13 Beach Boys songs that feature either an ascending or descending progression; some of these are in stepwise motion, while others move more chromatically. “Keep an Eye on Summer” moves in a I-iii-IV-V movement under the hook line of the title, which helpfully underscores the hopefulness of the song’s lyrical theme. Similarly, in “Ballad of Ole’ Betsy,” the verse sections repeat a I-iii-IV-V progression as the story of “Betsy’s” life unfolds – the upward chordal motion pushes the momentum of the song forward much like the car the song describes.

Other songs use the chords in different ways. “When I Grow Up (to be a man)” uses the descending progression underneath the song’s refrain and title, and the movement acts like a type of regression, moving back to the thoughts of a teenager to start the verse again. In “Lonely Sea” the descending progression occurs in the verse, and the looping downward movement mimics the movement of the ocean itself, descending down into emotional despair before moving back to the I to start the loop again. Citron (2008) notes the ‘romantic’ feel of the

descending bass line progression, and for the Beach Boys this appears to be true – 10 of the 13 songs are romantic ballads. Citron (2008) suggests two main ways of creating chordal tension with descending bass lines, firstly songs where the melody rises in contrary motion, and secondly, melodies that stay at a single pitch while the progression descends (as in George and Ira Gershwin’s “The Man I Love”) (p. 219-220). The Beach Boys use both of these techniques, with “In the Back of My Mind” having parts of a descending melody over the ascending chords, while “All Summer Long,” and “Lonely Sea” anchor the melody while the chords descend underneath. In these songs, the movement of the bass line pulls like a “rubber band” against the melody, which creates emotional tension (Citron, 2008, p220). However, songs like “Fun Fun Fun” and “Keep an Eye on Summer” use neither technique, and instead have melodies that follow the upward or downward motion of the chords accordingly.

Whether ascending or descending, these kinds of stepwise or chromatic progressions create a sense of movement, but at the same time eventually return to the “I” to start the loop over again (not dissimilar to the doo-wop progression described previously). Another way of seeing this is their connection to Tin Pan Alley, where although Brian Wilson eventually did move on to other musical styles, the influence of Tin Pan Alley still remained in progressions like this all the way through to 1966.

TABLE 27 - SONGS FEATURING STEPWISE OR CHROMATIC ASCENDING/DESCENDING MOVEMENT

Lonely Sea	Keep an Eye on Summer
Surfer Girl	All Summer Long
Surfer Moon	We’ll Run Away
Your Summer Dream	When I Grow Up (to be a man)
Ballad of Ole Betsy	In the Back of my Mind
A Young Man is Gone +	The Girl from New York City
Fun Fun Fun	

+ Denotes a Cover Song

The Major-Minor Fall/Rise Progression

A small but important progression influenced by the music of Tin Pan Alley is the major-to-minor ‘fall’ or ‘rise (M-m), which often occurs on the IV as a kind of turnaround back to the I (though not always). Scheurer (1996) in his study of the influence of the Brill Building and Tin Pan Alley on the music of the Beatles notes the major-minor movement in “Norwegian Wood,” (1965) while also citing Cole Porter’s “In the Still of the Night” (1937) as a Tin Pan Alley example of the progression, though there are many others (p. 93). Although this movement was used often in ‘standards,’ it was innovative in the scope of rock and roll, and helped distinguish

the music of the Brill Building, the Beatles and also the Beach Boys from more harmonically simple music of the time (Scheurer, 1996, p. 93).

TABLE 28 - SONGS FEATURING A MAJOR-MINOR 'FALL'

Surfer Girl	In the Back of my Mind
Surfer Moon	Salt Lake City
Your Summer Dream	I'm Bugged at My Old Man
Ballad of Ole Betsy	And Your Dream Comes True
A Young Man Has Gone	I'm Waiting For the Day
The Warmth of the Sun	Here Today
I'm So Young	

This movement is often used to create emotional tension, and the Beach Boys are no exception to this, with 9 out of 13 songs being emotional ballads. While this progression is often held together by voice leading in the melody (a decoration of the I-IV movement), it is used in places where emotional tension is often at its highest. In "Surfer Girl", the change appears under the line "make my heart come all [IV] un- [iv] done," emotionally the most vulnerable part of the lyric. Similarly, in "In the Back of my Mind" it appears under the lines "[VI] Break down in [vi] tears" and "What will I do if I [IV] lose [vi] her?" both expressing how happy things are at present, but how soon they could change.

However, the 'fall' movement can be used to reverse effect, as in "Your Summer Dream," where the minor-to-major rise appears in the verse in three repeats over "all the while you build a scheme/reflect a beam/see a gleam" – all parts of the lyric that refer to the hope of some sort of physical relationship for the protagonist. While the 'fall' represents a sadness or worry (as in "Surfer Girl" or "In the Back of my Mind"), the 'rise' in "Your Summer Dream" reflects an upward motion of hope or happiness, and can be seen as another example of 'chord painting,' where the harmonic moment literally and musically supports the lyrical theme⁵².

In looking at the songs that draw from these Tin Pan Alley progressions, we can see some overlaps – with "Surfer Girl," "The Surfer Moon," and "Ballad of Ole' Betsy" featuring stepwise and major-minor progressions, "We'll Run Away," "When I Grow Up (to be a man)" and "The Girl from New York City" featuring both ii-V-I and stepwise progressions. "Your Summer

⁵² For contemporaneous comparison, the Beatles used the major-minor fall on "In My Life" (1965) on *Rubber Soul*, an album of particular inspiration to Brian Wilson.

Dream,” “A Young Man is Gone” and “In The Back of My Mind,” feature all three progressions. We can see through these overlaps that “Your Summer Dream” and “In the Back of My Mind” are the two original Beach Boys songs that most heavily draw from Tin Pan Alley harmony ideas, using all three of these progressions (chromatic, ii-V-I and major-minor fall) in a single song. “Your Summer Dream” appears at the start of the ‘craft’ period on *Surfer Girl* and aligns well with the idea of Brian Wilson honing his song-writing craft inspired by the professional songwriters of Tin Pan Alley, while “In the Back of my Mind” appears at the end of *Today*, and is a song whose dreamy sound ties to the nostalgic nature of Tin Pan Alley ballads. These two songs, fittingly, appear like bookends to the ‘craft’ period of the Beach Boys’ repertoire, before they move off into more unexplored musical territory.

Complex Progressions

Complex progressions in the Beach Boys’ music are often noted on the *Pet Sounds/Smile* era of the Beach Boys’ repertoire, but as Harrison (1997) notes, “most of the songs [on *Pet Sounds*] use unusual harmonic progressions and unexpected disruptions of hypermeter, both features that were met in “Warmth of the Sun” and “Don’t Back Down”” (p. 39). What Harrison (1997) recognises is that the chordal experimentation on *Pet Sounds* did not happen suddenly, but appears in many Beach Boys’ songs from the pre-1966 period. These chordal experiments could be used as a small, unexpected highlight, or be used throughout the entirety of a songs progression.

One of the first small experiments is in “Ballad of Ole’ Betsy”, which takes much of its influence from the Four Freshmen. It is in the short, a capella coda where this is most obvious. Lambert (2009) describes this section in detail: “After the last verse winds down, out of rhythm, and following a conspicuous edit, the final phrase “cause Betsy’s growing old” bursts forth with authentic Freshmen-style harmony and moving vocal lines” (p. 109). These last few bars (seen in Figure 38) are in stark contrast to the simple I-iii-VI-V repeated progression of the verse sections. Similarly, “Custom Machine” employs “key-abandoning chords” over the song’s refrain, influenced by the work Brian Wilson had written for Jan and Dean. This movement is not dissimilar to the shift found in “Surf City’s” (1963) famous refrain “Two girls for every boy” (Lambert, 2009, p. 117) and is similarly employed during the refrain of “Pom Pom Playgirl”. These small-scale chordal experiments quickly developed into longer, more complex experimentation from *Shut Down* onwards.

FIGURE 38 - CODA FOR “BALLAD OF OLE’ BETSY”

Cm		Fm	(RALL)	Db	Db/C	Bbm	Bbm/E
/// /// /// ///		/// /// /// ///		/// /// /// ///		/// /// /// ///	
just	can't hold	the tears	back cause	Bet	-sy's	grow	-ing
Db		Ab					
/// /// /// ///		/// /// /// ///					
ol	-	-d.					

In his very valuable and detailed study of the experimental nature of Beach Boys' chord use, Harrison (1997) points to "Warmth of the Sun" as a particularly important example of how the Beach Boys' used "harmonic and formal twist[s] not native to rock and roll" (p. 35). As Lambert (2009) explains, the song itself is not dissimilar to a doo-wop variant, with both the opening phrase "What good is the dawn" sung over a C to Am movement. Instead, the progression moves upward to Eb, which Harrison (1997) describes as a "self-consciously intrepid root motion by tritone from vi to bIII" (p. 35). This unexpected movement leaves the listener "musically disoriented, like the heart of a hopeless romantic, seeking comfort but facing an uncertain future" (p. 130). Later, another variation happens again in the link between chorus and verse, a movement of A-D-G-C, which is not dissimilar to a doo-wop progression if the A and D were minor chords instead (Lambert, 2009, p. 131). One of the most unexpected changes in "Warmth of the Sun" is the revisiting of VI, now as a major as it pivots to a new key, before "slipping into its natural version before progressing to G major as V of C", which displays "classically correct" voice-leading not often heard in popular music of that time (Harrison, 1997, p. 35).

This early experimentation, while often confined to ballads, was not always so. "Don't Back Down", the group's last surf-related track, makes use of some unexpected movements. The shifting of modulations is of particular interest, as the A-major verses shift up to Bb major for the refrain, and then back down again. Harrison (1997) refers to this as a "half-step key modulation". Although this is a common route to modulation, the way the Beach Boys employ it is complicated, using an "F-major chord as bVI of A major, which pivots to become V of Bb" (p. 36). This movement is heightened by how abrupt it is, lasting only one measure. What Harrison (1997) does not cover in his analysis of "Don't Back Down" is that this complex movement was not only for complexity's sake. This unexpected shifting represents the lyrical story of surfers who bravely tackle the dangerous and unpredictable surf. In essence, the lyrics and melody of "Don't Back Down" "surf" above the unpredictable nature of the arrangement, much like a real surfer would as he rides the waves.

Harrison (1997) cites other earlier Beach Boys' songs as examples of complex chordal movements, particularly "A Young Man is Gone"/"Their Hearts Were Full of Spring" (they did not write this, though it does show specific chordal influence), and "California Girls", though it is

from *Pet Sounds* onward which demands the most attention. I wish to touch on just a few of the songs from *Pet Sounds* in this section, as a deep discussion of the entire album is unfeasible for this project: Abbott (2001), Granata (2003) and Fusilli (2009) have all written excellent books that focus entirely on the *Pet Sounds* record, and none are able to cover every aspect in as much detail as it deserves.

“God Only Knows” is one of the most interesting and complicated songs on *Pet Sounds*, as its use of chords obscures the key of the song. Harrison (1997) describes the complex nature of “God Only Knows” well, but also acknowledges that his representations of the chords are “rough realisations” as the vocal harmonies, shifting nature of the key signature, and the dense instrumentation makes accuracy difficult. Admittedly, I too have had difficulties with these chords myself, and my own “rough realisations” are presented in Appendix D (p. 49). Despite this, Harrison (1997) notes the several “remarkable” features of “God Only Knows”: the weak versions of the tonic used, the highly chromatic nature of the progression, which works “in tandem with the avoidance of E-major”, and the way A major seems to fill the “vacuum at the tonal centre, since it’s the chord that begins the refrain” (p. 39). Earlier, Lambert (2009) describes the way the movements in “Warmth of the Sun” relate to the overall feeling of the lyrical themes. Similarly, “God Only Knows” uses the unease created by the lack of the tonal centre to underscore the emotional text of the songs’ lyrics. The verses, while about love, are equally about the sadness of potentially losing it: “If you should leave me, though life would still go on believe me, the world would show nothing to me, so what good would living do me?” When Carl Wilson sings “God only know what I’d be without you” we strongly feel the ‘A major’ tonal centre, when the song finally finds its refrain. As Harrison (1997) remarks, the song is “the apex of Brian Wilson’s first period of formal experimentation” (p. 39).

Part of what defines *Pet Sounds*’ experimentation with chords is the increased use of modulation. Not only do most songs modulate in some way, several modulate up to three (“Wouldn’t it be Nice”) to five (“That’s Not Me”) times in a single track. Lambert (2009) concurs, noting that “key changes...are nothing new to Brian’s music, but when songs change keys in *Pet Sounds*, they almost always do so via the same tonal dissonance” (p. 227). This “tonal dissonance”, often a movement of a third, is heard in modulations in “Wouldn’t it Be Nice” (F major to D major), “Let’s Go Away for a While” (from F major to D major) “That’s Not Me” (A major to F# major) and in “Pet Sounds” (Bb major to G major) (Lambert, 2009, p. 227).

The chordal experimentation on *Pet Sounds* leads to even further musical exploration in the writing and recording of “Good Vibrations” (1966) and the *Smile* record (discussed in exceptional detail by Harrison, 1997), and further into the late 1960s up until Brian Wilson’s

mental illnesses made it impossible for him to continue making music in the same way he had earlier on in the decade.

Conclusion

This chapter has given an overview of the how the Beach Boys used chords and chord progressions, and this large-scale analysis required the use of different analytical approaches to facilitate the identification of musical patterns and trends. These methods included the production of chord charts, using colours to denote particular progressions and the creation of various kinds of charts and graphs (area, donut and line graphs) to display this chord progression data in meaningful ways. Through this detailed exploration of chord progressions in the Beach Boys' music, some interesting findings can be understood about its development.

In an analysis of chord progressions, it is useful not only to look at the over-arching progressions, but at the kinds of chords that function inside them. The kinds of chords the Beach Boys used, and the way in which they are voiced, can uncover some important patterns and trends. Basic major and minor chords are most common, but the ways in which the Beach Boys used supplementary chords to colour their compositions helped to define their sound during the early to mid-1960s. For example, the distinctly different sound and highly emotional tone of *Today's* side B is in part due to the introduced use of major 7th and 9th chords, which soften the lively sound of the A side. The use of simple slash chords is present from their very first album, however, they are overtaken significantly by complex slash chords on *Pet Sounds*. Through this detailed exploration of musical data, we can now see when and how this change occurred.

From understanding the way Brian Wilson wrote his songs and the kinds of chords he used, we can contextualise this knowledge within the four most frequently used progressions in their repertoire (and their variations) – those stemming from early rock and roll, doo-wop music, Tin Pan Alley traditions, and those more complex progressions that point to further musical experimentation. The use of the 12-bar blues faded from favour by 1965, when the group tried its best to detach themselves from the upbeat, rock and roll inspired 'surf, cars and girls' persona they had created in the previous years. However, not all of these early progressions were set aside. The most long-lasting of these musical influences are those that stem from doo-wop and Tin Pan Alley, as they continue to be used throughout most of the Beach Boys' 1962-66 repertoire. There is good reason for this. The vocal harmony style and emotional tone of doo-wop is so crucial to the music of the Beach Boys; it is what is heard first on the surface whereas the subtle complexity and sophistication of Tin Pan Alley music is woven in underneath. These two influences make their music both accessible on the surface, but harmonically complex underneath.

We can also see the importance of chords in story-telling. Often, chords underpin lyrical themes in specific ways, essentially a type of ‘chord painting’ while heightening the emotional tone of a given song. For example, the ascending movements in “Keep an Eye on Summer” and “Catch a Wave” under the refrain mimic both the hopeful positivity in the former and the movement of a big wave in the latter.

Lastly, we can note the Beach Boys’ early experimentation with chords in songs like “Ballad of Ole’ Betsy” and “Custom Machine”, which paved the way for much more adventurous chord movements on *Pet Sounds*. “God Only Knows” is a particularly good example of the result of this constant experimentation, as its uncertain tonal centre is both complex, and also underscores the lyrical and emotional meaning in the song itself.

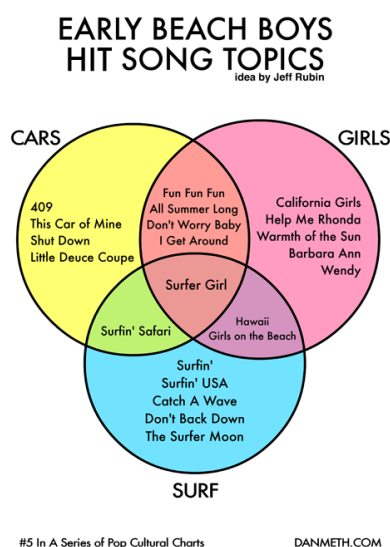
Chord progressions are an integral part of a song’s musical material, and as such, a study of the Beach Boys’ use of chords and progressions could quite feasibly contain enough information to constitute an entire study. Despite this, an overview of the four key types of chord progressions, and the specific types of chords used in their repertoire, does meaningfully contribute to a detailed overview of their sound.

Chapter 7: Lyrical Themes

"So I say from me to you, I will make your dreams come true"

The Beach Boys' lyrics are probably the most recognisable, and often most parodied part of their sound: "I Live for the Sun" (1965) by the Sunrays is the most obvious example, though "Cruisin' Music" (1975) by the Raspberries, "New York's a Lonely Town" (1965) by the Tradewinds, and, more recently, "Forever" (2008) by the Explorer's Club are among many others. The trio of 'surf, cars and girls' has often been connected to the group as a total description of their lyrical themes (Carter, 2004, p. 393; Crowley, 2011, p. 67; Dillon, 2012, p. xi), and although cliché, the description does ring true in their early repertoire: Meth (2009) illustrates this particularly well (and humorously) in his Venn diagram covering the Beach Boys' lyrical themes (seen in Figure 39). However, the ways in which these subjects are discussed are extremely broad. Curnutt (2012) notes that Brian Wilson is not renowned as wordsmith in the same way as are some of his contemporaries (Bob Dylan, John Lennon), and he often worked with lyricists to help him find a way to say the things he found difficult to write himself (p. 22). Often, the Beach Boys have been criticized for their lyrics; MacDonald (2003) describes their first two albums as a "procession of gauche twelve-bar boogies with dumb lyrics, underdone harmonies and wobbly pitching" (p. 68) going on to describe the lyrics of the Beach Boys and Jan and Dean as "sand scene-pillaging...full of quasi-Kahuna patois" (p. 69). Further, Curnutt (2012) quotes Klinkenburg (1995) with "[The Beach Boys] lyrics were often stupid...and they got stupider as the band aged" (p. 22). Music blog *One Week One Band* created a post of the fourteen 'worst' Beach Boys songs, and in reference to "Our Car Club's" lyrics, Nyffeler (2012) humorously notes ""We'll set a meet, get a sponsor, and collect some dues." Wow, guys! You gonna have by-laws too? What about designating somebody to be the secretary and take down the minutes of your meetings? *Sounds badass!*" Even the Beach Boys fans themselves can playfully criticise some of the groups' more unpolished material with the fan-released compilation *Endless Bummer: The Worst of the Beach Boys* (1977).

FIGURE 39 - DAN METH'S VENN DIAGRAM OF BEACH BOYS' LYRICAL THEMES



The Beach Boys' lyrics, while often easily classifiable on the surface, show a complex world of emotion underneath. The kind of playful criticism of the Beach Boys' lyrics by the likes of Nyffeler (2012) and the *Endless Summer* compilation only exist due to their context among a repertoire of recorded work that has been well-loved for fifty years, a fondness which often stems from the stories and dreamy portraits of California expressed in their lyrics. Of the few existing detailed studies on the Beach Boys' music, all focus attention on their lyrical themes (Curnutt, 2012; Harrison, 1997; Keightley, 1991; Lambert, 2007), and their contribution to their musical make-up, with the latter going into considerable detail.

This study of lyrics will not delve into the intricacies of rhyme schemes or syllabic analysis (as seen in Griffiths, 2003; Murphey, 1989; Salley, 2011); Instead, this chapter is made up of an analysis of lyrical *themes*, rather than the words themselves. These themes have been grouped into four 'umbrella' categories (seen in Figure 40): a) songs about surf and surf culture, b) songs about cars and car culture, c) songs about girls, and finally, d) songs about reflection, introspection and growing up. These four themes cover all of the songs in this study, with the exception of five songs shown in Table 29.

Omitted Songs

Five songs do not fit into the defined over-arching lyrical categories (seen in Table 29), a small number within the 87⁵³ in this particular study. Of these songs, four are covers, including a re-written take on a children's song ("Ten Little Indians"), garage pop ("Summertime Blues" and "Louie Louie") and a re-arranged traditional folk song ("Sloop John B"). The only original song that does not fit into the categories ("I'm Bugged at my Old Man") is Brian Wilson's attempt at a comedy recording making fun of his difficult childhood, and is tacked onto the end of the *Summer Days* album.

TABLE 29- FIVE SONGS THAT DO NOT FIT INTO LYRICAL CATEGORIES.

Ten Little Indians
Summertime Blues
Louie Louie
I'm Bugged at my Old Man
Sloop John B

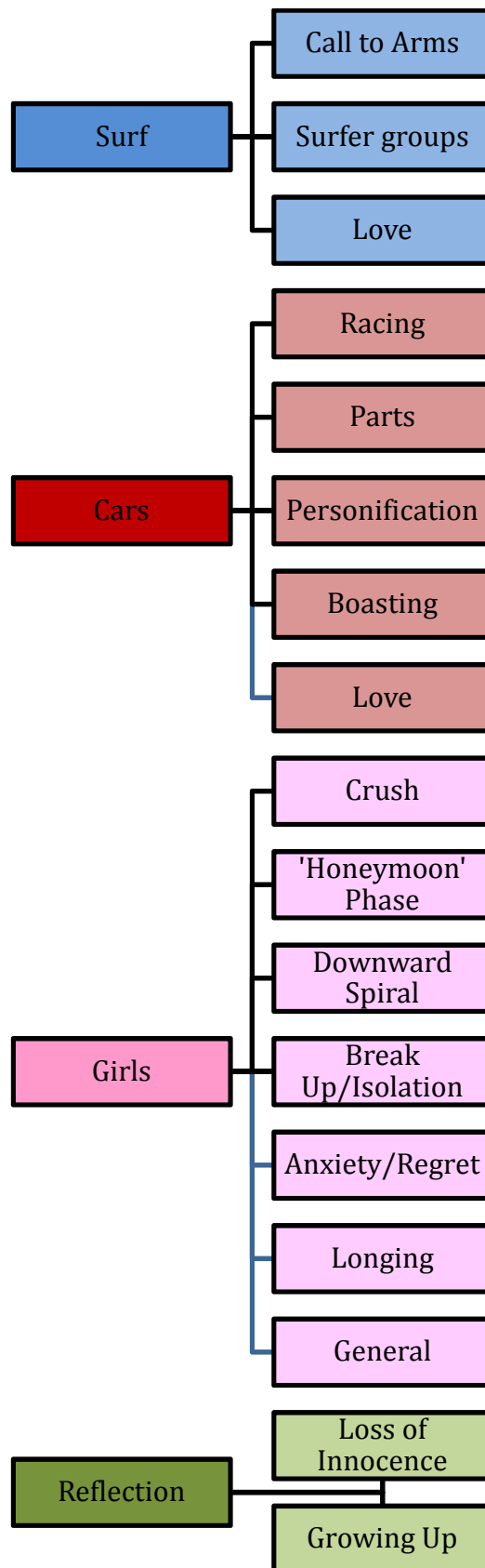
As most of these songs are covers, they do not offer particular insight into how the Beach Boys wrote their lyrics, and how they wove together their over-arching lyrical themes. For the most part, these cover songs are story-songs that use characters, though these characters were not related to the Beach Boys in any personal way, unlike the rest of their repertoire. For these reasons, these five songs will be omitted from the rest of this analysis of lyrical themes.

Chapter Overview

This chapter is divided into discrete sections, beginning with an overview of Brian Wilson's lyrical collaborators and song-writing process, leading into an analysis and discussion of the four lyrical categories (seen in Figure 40). In the following lyrical analysis, care has been taken to weave these lyrical themes together with the musical information gathered in previous chapters to create a detailed 'picture' of the Beach Boys' sound. For example, particular structures, chord progressions and instrumentation align themselves to songs about cars, while other themes often express different combinations of these same musical elements. This kind of correlation is only made possible due to the wide scope of this musicological analysis, which makes use of several kinds of methods to present this big picture overview.

⁵³ Instrumental songs are not included in this chapter.

FIGURE 40- OVERVIEW OF LYRICAL THEMES



Brian Wilson's Collaborators

One of the most important parts of Brian Wilson's song-writing process is the inclusion of various collaborators, and over the 1962-6 period, there were four particularly important collaborators: Mike Love, Gary Usher, Roger Christian and Tony Asher (a table of song credits appears in Appendix E, Table A6, p. 203). Of all the songs in this study, only eight⁵⁴ are credited to Brian Wilson alone; the rest were written in conjunction with one of these four collaborators⁵⁵ (Doe & Tobler, 2004). Most commonly, these collaborators contributed lyrics, while Brian Wilson created the music. In this way, these collaborators helped Brian communicate the kinds of ideas, stories or feelings he had trouble expressing alone, each in different ways. Through Mike Love, Brian Wilson could connect to youth culture, through Roger Christian, a love of cars and hot-rods, and through Gary Usher and Tony Asher, he could find a way to express some of his most fragile emotions. Figure 41 shows an overview of Brian Wilson's collaborators in order over time on the vertical axis (from bottom to top) along with the kinds of lyrical themes they wrote about together.

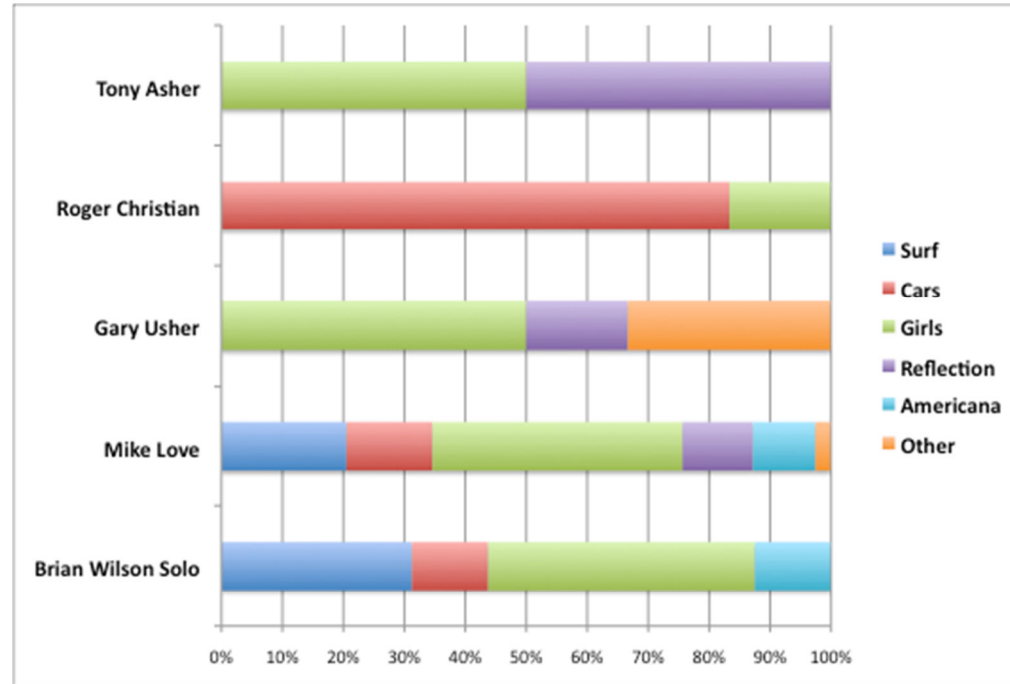
There are two main reasons why Brian Wilson might have preferred this method of writing lyrics. Firstly, as discussed in the last chapter, Brian Wilson had a strong musical connection to the music of professional songwriters in Tin Pan Alley and the Brill Building, many of whom worked in pairs. Many Tin Pan Alley composers swapped writing partners for particular projects, however, the Brill Building writers tended to grow long-standing partnerships: Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil, Carole King and Gerry Goffin, Doc Pomus and Mort Shuman, to name just a few (Emerson, 2006). The music Brian Wilson was most inspired by was often written with a clear division of labour – the music by a composer, and the lyrics by a dedicated lyricist. This framework may have helped shape his desire to seek out other collaborators, especially in relation to his lyrics, as perhaps it shaped this framework for other contemporaneous musicians – from Lennon and McCartney in the 1960s (though they did not use the traditional musician/lyricist relationship and performed both tasks themselves), to, say, Elton John

⁵⁴ "Surfin' USA" (also credited to Chuck Berry), "Lana," "The Surfer Moon," "Custom Machine," "Girls on the Beach," "Girl Don't Tell Me," "I'm Bugged at my Old Man." (Doe & Tobler, 2004).

⁵⁵ With the exception of "Your Summer Dream" and "Keep an Eye on Summer," which were co-written with Bob Norberg, these are the only credits in which Norberg appears during this period. Other songs credit several co-writers, like "Chug-a-Lug" (B. Wilson/G. Usher/M. Love), "South Bay Surfers" (Foster/B. Wilson/D. Wilson/A. Jardine), "Dance Dance Dance" (B. Wilson/C. Wilson/M. Love). "Wouldn't it Be Nice" and "I Know There's an Answer" both share credits between Brian Wilson, Tony Asher and Mike Love (Doe & Tobler, 2004).

and Bernie Taupin in the 1970s.

FIGURE 41- BAR CHART OF BRIAN WILSON'S COLLABORATORS AND LYRICAL THEMES



Secondly, Brian Wilson's delicate mental state meant that he suffered with a severe lack of self-confidence, despite his established success. Roger Christian, who Brian wrote nine songs with between 1963-4, details this inner conflict in detail:

As confident as he was, or as he should have been because he was a master, he still needed someone to encourage him and give him confidence...Brian was the most talented creator I'd ever worked with. Brian could do it all, he could write the words, write the music, teach the guys the harmony, produce the record...[but] sometime[s] somebody just needs a sounding board, almost like a competition thing... two creative people get together and they bring out the best in each other. But he did a lot of things by himself (Leaf, 1978 p.55-6).

Brian Wilson, in conversation with Earl Leaf in 1964, detailed his impetus to write music and lyrics, admitting that music, on some level, is a solitary pursuit. By 1965, Brian Wilson stopped touring after a serious emotional breakdown and the following quote signals this hidden lack of confidence and self-esteem:

I usually get down to writing songs late at night...I'm very inspired – mostly when I'm feeling inferior. Probably my greatest motive for writing songs is an inferiority feeling, or I'm lacking in something. I have to feel right on top. I just have that competition feeling. I hear something really good and all of a sudden, I

feel like an ant. I must create something to bring me up on top. (Leaf, 1978, p. 55-56)

Although Brian Wilson was capable of writing and producing music alone, he continued to prefer the company, advice, ideas and support of others. The following is an overview of Brian's four main collaborators during the 1962 to 1966 period, a brief overview of the lyrical themes they wrote about, and the way they worked together. Understanding these relationships, and how each collaborator augmented Brian Wilson's own creativity is an important to understand how the Beach Boys' music was created, and how the themes of summer, surf, hot rods, girls and self-reflection were integrated into their sound.

Mike Love

Mike Love is Brian Wilson's most frequent collaborator during the period of this study, with 44 songs featuring his credit as a co-writer. Their first written and recorded song, "Surfin'" was written in "very short order...and sounds like [it]" (Boyd, 2000), and their writing together extended into *Pet Sounds* on "I'm Waiting for the Day."

Mike Love's contribution to the Beach Boys' music was primarily lyrical ideas and bass harmony parts. As Brian Wilson notes on the writing of "Surfin'" "Mike started out with 'Bom bom dit dit dit dit-dit', he had an idea for it, and I went "Surfin', surfin'" [illustrates on piano] in the background and you know, the Beach Boys style was born" (Boyd, 2000). The combination of Brian Wilson's sensitivity and Mike Love's ability to write accessible lyrical stories made their partnership work, and the 'surf, cars and girls' formula was greatly influenced by Love, which made his well-known frustration even greater when Brian Wilson decided to leave those ideas behind for more complicated lyrical material, particularly his work with Van Dyke Parks on *Smile*.

Many of these writing credits were the result of two 1992 lawsuits by Mike Love against Brian Wilson, the second of which was settled out of court for a large but unknown sum of money. (Stebbins, 2011, p. 257) These crediting problems were due to Murry Wilson's meddling in Sea of Tunes, the Beach Boys' own publishing company.

Gary Usher

Gary Usher and Brian Wilson became fast friends when the two were teenagers in 1962. The relationship was so meaningful to Brian Wilson he has noted that Usher "showed me how to write songs; showed me the spirit of competition" (Leaf, 1978, p. 35). By the time he met Brian Wilson, Gary Usher was an established songwriter, having

already released his own record. Unlike Mike Love, Gary Usher was the first of Brian's collaborators not immediately attached to the Wilson family. This meant the two could talk about "deep, philosophical subjects" and write about problems or issues that were too difficult to discuss with members of the Wilson family, particularly about the difficult home-life Brian Wilson experienced⁵⁶ (Leaf, 1978, p. 47). "In My Room" was perhaps the most important of their collaborations, both for its extremely honest lyrical themes and its advanced musicality for its time (1963). Unfortunately, as Usher was not attached to the Wilson family, Murry Wilson became extremely suspicious of their friendship, and Usher's potential to take any Beach Boys' profits, and eventually he forced Usher away from Brian (Stebbins, 2011, p. 8).

Roger Christian

Introduced by Gary Usher, Brian and Roger Christian started to write songs together in 1963 until 1964. Christian worked as a radio DJ at KFWB in Hollywood, had an intimate knowledge of current pop music and a deep love of cars and hot rod culture. It was with Christian that Brian Wilson wrote many of the Beach Boys' most famous car-songs – "Shut Down," "Little Deuce Coupe," and "Don't Worry Baby" – some of which were based on Christian's car-related poetry. Although he had already written "Our Car Club" with Mike Love, Brian Wilson's collaborations with Roger Christian allowed him to further explore the lyrical themes of hot rod culture, which would become extremely important to the Beach Boys' style, with the release of the car themed *Little Deuce Coupe* album, and *Shut Down, Volume II*.

Tony Asher

Asher was one of the mostly unlikely of Brian Wilson's collaborators, a jingle-writer at an advertising agency and only a distant acquaintance. Brian Wilson contacted Asher 18 months after their first meeting and confessed "I've got this album that's way overdue at Capitol. We were supposed to have it out months ago, and I haven't even started it. I've only done one or two tunes on it, and I hate them, and it's really driving me crazy. How would you like to write some tunes for me?" (Leaf, 1978, p. 76).

The unfinished album would become *Pet Sounds*, to which Asher contributed lyrics to 9 of 13 tracks (two were instrumentals, and "Sloop John B" a cover). The two would meet in the morning at Brian Wilson's Beverly Hills home, however, due to

⁵⁶ Usher notes – "I seemed to hit it off with Brian right away; I seemed to have a soul affinity with him. We could touch each other on inner levels, even though neither of us knew anything about it at the time or how to do it" (Leaf, 1978, p. 35).

Brian's habit of sleeping in, eating, talking and wandering the house, it would reach 4pm in the afternoon before any writing would commence, a frustrating situation for Asher who was used to completing his work promptly. The two would work on each song for several hours each day, making up dummy lyrics for melodies that Brian had written, or that they wrote together, over recorded instrumental backings. The next day, Asher would return with lyrical ideas he had worked on and Brian would reject, edit or keep these, along with his own ideas. Unlike his other writing partners, Asher's writing relationship to Brian Wilson is well documented, like the recording of *Pet Sounds* itself.

The Four Categories of Lyrical Themes

The roles of Brian Wilson's songwriting collaborators form part of the Beach Boys' songwriting process, as each collaborator is often tied to specific lyrical themes, be they surf, cars, girls or more introspective material. These lyrical themes will be explored in the following lyrical analysis, along with socio-cultural ideas that help to support and contextualise these lyrical stories within the Beach Boys' songs.

The Surf

What is most surprising about the Beach Boys' surfing songs is how few of them there actually were (shown in Table 30). For example, although their first album was called "Surfin' Safari" it only included two songs about surfing. Similarly, "Surfin' USA" only contained three songs with surfing lyrics. Although it is a theme and an image that has stayed with the group (and their name) throughout their recording life, there are only twelve songs that feature surfing themes specifically. The Beach Boys had other songs that related to surfing, but were instrumental, and as such evoke the sound of 'surf music' but do not contribute lyrically. These surfing songs are set apart from more general themes of 'summer' and 'fun in the sun' as, although these songs take place at the beach, it is only as a setting, and they are not specifically about the sport and activity of surfing.

TABLE 30 – SONGS WITH SURFING THEMES

Surfin' Safari	Catch a Wave
Surfin'	Surfer Moon
Surfin' U.S.A	South Bay Surfer
Noble Surfer	Hawaii
Finders Keepers	Surfers Rule
Surfer Girl	Don't Back Down

Surfing Themes

Four loose themes emerge from the twelve songs about surfing (shown in Figure 42). The most common are songs that deal with specific surfing individuals or a group of surfers together. Often, these songs idolise the surfer, and list the traits of their personality or their surfing prowess to be admired. “Noble Surfer” is the most obvious of these: “The surfers call him ‘noble’ and that’s just what he is....He’s something you and I would like to be.” Other songs like “South Bay Surfer” group surfers together like a ‘club’ one should strive to enter. The surfers the Beach Boys sung about are perceived as young, masculine men who are brave, strong and unafraid of the power and uncertainty of the waves: “Oh the boys are rough and ready, to handle everything” The great irony of these songs was that Brian Wilson himself was terrified of the water, and even though he did not solely write the lyrics to these surfing songs, the kinds of men described in these surfing vignettes were perhaps what Brian Wilson himself wished to be, but was not. In their official biography, when asked how he felt about the ocean, Brian Wilson replied “I wouldn’t go out...I was scared, scared of the water. It really scared me” (Preiss, 1979, p. 9).

The second most common sub-theme in the Beach Boys surfing songs is an encouragement to join in the sport of surfing – a ‘call to arms’. Unlike the cliques described in “South Bay Surfer” and “Surfers Rule” and the unattainable ‘coolness’ of the protagonists described in “Noble Surfer” and “Don’t Back Down”, these ‘call to arms’ songs encourage listeners to join in the surfing lifestyle with lyrics such as:

“Surfin’ is the only life the only way for me now surf, surf with me” from
“Surfin’.”

“Let’s go surfing now, everybody’s learning how, come on a safari with me” from
“Surfin Safari.”

“We’ll all be gone for the summer, we’re on safari to stay, tell the teacher we’re
surfing, surfin’ USA” from “Surfin’ USA.”

Although the Beach Boys were essentially ‘locked out’ of the surfing culture themselves, the way they projected the culture to others was non-threatening and inclusive, making it seem like anyone could grab a surfboard and come along to the beach. Curnutt (2012) notes that the Beach Boys surfing lyrics are “invitations to belong to a subculture... the lyrics never address us as novices (‘gremmies’) or wannabes (‘hodaddies’) but as potential peers, promising that surf culture is accessible to anyone” (p. 33). This is primarily put forward by the use of the words “we,” “we’re,” “us,” which

usually refer to a group of people, while lines like “In my woodie I would take you everywhere I go” from “Surfer Girl” refer to one particular person. Curnutt (2012) suggests that this inclusiveness in the Beach Boys’ lyrics was particularly important, as this lyrical perspective helped separate them from other 1960s knock-off surf bands that followed in the Beach Boys’ wake (p. 33).

Surfing lyrics that reference places do not occur often, however, two of these ‘place’ songs ended up as Beach Boys’ singles (“Surfin’ USA” and “Hawaii”), and due to this, perhaps the inflated view of the use of place names is slightly skewed. However, the connection to these places does help to paint the ‘set’ behind the stage upon which the Beach Boys lyrical themes play out. The most obvious of these is “Surfin’ USA,” whose lists of various surfing destinations around the world is modelled on Chuck Berry’s penchant for weaving place names into his lyrical narratives (in this case, “Sweet Little Sixteen”). In this lyric, they name surfing sites around the world, though always come back to their homeland as the greatest place to surf. This kind of framework was later put to use in “California Girls”, where even after a lyrical trip around the world, they “can’t wait to get back in the States back to the cutest girls in the world.” “Hawaii” describes the fantasy of the islands they have only “heard about” and never visited. In this way, Hawaii is tangled up in the same kind of myth the Beach Boys perpetuated about their own California as a description of a place only gained from the experiences and stories of others.

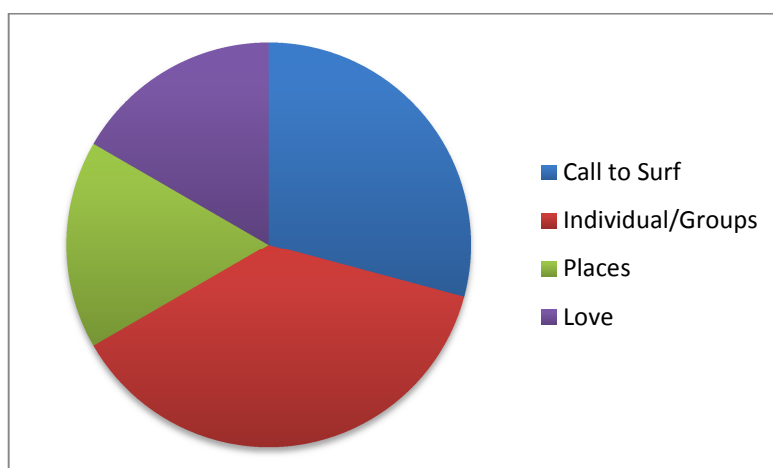
Finally, there are surfing themes that mention love, however these are the least common of the surfing themes. This angle is best heard in “Surfer Girl” which not only connects the ‘girl’ to the ‘surf’ but, as Curnutt asserts, the song sets up a “template for what Brian Wilson’s narrators crave from women: to know that they are loved” (2012, p. 49) (this ‘template’ will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter). “The Surfer Moon,” on the other hand, uses only vague allusions to love, more a gentle resignation of the fact that love, and the people one loves, are often unable to be controlled in the way that, say, the moon controls the seemingly uncontrollable (the ocean) with the swell of the tides. For a surfer, the moon’s pull on the tides is what sets up a ‘good day’ on the waves, or a ‘bad day’ stuck on the shore: “Brings the tide in, takes it all away, helps us ride in, brings us waves each day.” However, for someone in love, there is no “surfer moon” to blame when it “disappears with each new tune.”

These four different subcategories show that although the number of ‘surf songs’ are few, they approached these songs from different angles, making the most of what is

often limited lyrical material. This part of the Beach Boys repertoire is often the most imitated, with a rush of sound-alikes using similar lyrical themes, such as the Fantastic Baggys ("Tell 'Em I'm Surfin'" [1964]), The Rip Chords ("One Piece Topless Bathing Suit" [1964]), Murry Wilson's creation, the Sunrays ("I Live for the Sun"[1965]) to later Beach Boys pastiches like the Turtles' "Surfer Dan" (1968) and the Tradewinds' "New York's a Lonely Town" (1967).

The appeal of surf music, like that of surfing itself, has indeed been presented as a matter of fun. After all, The Beach Boys even had a hit song titled "Fun, Fun, Fun." Yet this fun was not nearly so clean or innocent as The Beach Boys' harmonies might at first make it appear. The pursuit of danger and thrills is one of the main themes of surf music and this is reflected not only in the lyrics of many of the songs but also in the frenetic beat of songs like "Wipeout," "Surfin' Bird," and "Surfin' Safari." The pursuit of thrills is equally prominent in the surfing films, where drag racing and sky diving are often featured in addition to the thrills of surfing. Nearly the entire plot of the surf film *Ride the Wild Surf* (1964) is built around the pursuit of danger, from braving the big waves on the North Shore to high diving into a shallow pool. (Rutsky, 1999. p. 18)

FIGURE 42 - SURFING SUB-THEMES



Surfer Slang

The 1960s surfing culture was not only a sport, but a 'way of life'. Like other kinds of subcultures, it grew a language of surfer phrases and surfer slang. So unique was this 'surfer slang,' it has spawned books and articles that specifically aim to describe

and analyse this surfer vocabulary (Cralle, 2001; Hill, 1994; Matthews, 2004). As a way of trying to appear to be in the surfer community, to outsiders, the Beach Boys littered their early surfing songs with surfer slang, despite the fact that they never truly engaged with the surfing community.

Hill (1994) traces the history of surfer slang, particularly the word ‘dude’ and notes the important role the Beach Boys played in making surfing slang part of the teenage lexicon: “The West Coast ‘surfin’ phenomenon soon became “Surfin’ USA,” and by 1963...use of surf slang terms like ‘bitchin’, ‘twitchin’”, ‘cowabunga’, and ‘dude’ were nearly universal among youth of the surf faction, many of whom had never seen a beach” (p. 324). Although the Beach Boys did not actually use the word ‘dude’ in any lyric, or the term ‘cowabunga’ as Hill (1994) suggests, they *did* include some specific surfer terminology in the lyrics of their early songs, and their national success meant that these words and terms became part of teenage vocabulary.

TABLE 31 – SURFING SLANG IN THE BEACH BOYS’ SONGS

Shooting the pier ⁵⁷	Honeys ⁵⁸
Walking the nose ⁵⁹	Hodad/Hodaddy
Baggies ⁶⁰	Meatball flag ⁶¹
Huarache sandals ⁶²	Raise ⁶³
Body wop	Wiped out ⁶⁴
Woodie ⁶⁵	Twenty-footer ⁶⁶

Table 31 lists the different kinds of ‘surfing’ slang the Beach Boys incorporated into their early songs, ranging from surfer fashion (Huarache sandals, baggies), surfer cars (woodie), surfing moves and waves (shooting the pier, walking the nose, body wop, raise, wiped out, twenty-footer) to special terms for surfer girls (honeys). The most

⁵⁷ Riding a surfboard in between the pilings of a beachside pier

⁵⁸ Female surfers/girlfriends of surfers. (However, McParland, 2006, notes that this term may not have been used on the “beach” at this time [p. 21]).

⁵⁹ Moving forward on the board towards the front or the “nose”.

⁶⁰ Loose-fitting trunks worn by surfers.

⁶¹ A yellow flag with a black circle indicating “no surfing today” at the beach.

⁶² Leather sandals worn by surfers (the soles were made from the treads of tires)

⁶³ To stand up on a surfboard.

⁶⁴ To fall off or be knocked off your board by a large wave.

⁶⁵ A station wagon with wooded panelling along the sides, favoured by surfers to fit their boards and gear inside.

⁶⁶ Short-hand for “a twenty foot wave”.

interesting of these surfing terms, in relation to the Beach Boys, is the term 'hodaddy'⁶⁷. In his book on surf and hot-rod music of the early 1960s, Stephen J. McParland describes the term 'hodaddy' as being:

Used in a derogatory manner to subsequently describe "an unwelcome surfer of any kind, usually either a beginner or poser, or a hot-rodder; sometimes used in reference to non-surfers in general" ...described by Paul Johnson as "a remnant of the early days of rock and roll" the hodad was to re-emerge as the antithesis of the surfer..."a brooding misfit with greased hair who generally hung out at a garage and listened to what was left of doo-wop and rockabilly music" (McParland, 2006, p. 4).

The paradox of the Beach Boys using these terms is that they themselves were the very definition of 'hodads.' Although Brian Wilson was known to have a strong sense of humour, these surfing songs are performed with such sincerity that it is hard to fully understand whether the use of the word 'hodaddy' was a kind of self-aware 'wink' to their inauthenticity, or was genuinely used to further their own myth. It was the use of these kinds of terms in their music that 'real' surfers recoiled at, feeling that the Beach Boys 'surf music' was making a gimmick out of their legitimate lifestyle (McParland, 2006, p. 23).

The Beach Boys never owned Huarache sandals, they never wore 'baggies,' nor drove a 'woodie': the closest they came to this was their checked Pendleton shirts shown in their early photo shoots, and even then, they were used as an affectation, rather than a representation of their actual wardrobe. Although their experience with surfing culture was mostly manufactured, it still had the ability to connect with American youth, whose limited experience with surf culture made the Beach Boys seem entirely legitimate. Part of the way they wove this picture together was through their use of surfer slang terms. In later songs, they make use of similar terms within the car and hot-rod community, discussed later in this chapter.

Wordle Diagrams

Figure 43 is a Wordle diagram created from the lyrics of each song with a theme about surfing, and from it some interesting findings arise. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the word "Surfin'" is most frequently used. However, it is the shortened version of the word

⁶⁷ The terms 'hodad' and 'hodaddy' are interchangeable.

The Beach Boys surfing songs overwhelmingly used basic instrumentation, an obvious connection given that in their early days, the Beach Boys were only able to utilise instruments they were able to play themselves. Also, this line-up was similar to that used in 1950s rock and roll, which formed some of the Beach Boys most important influences. Two songs, however, use an augmented instrumentation, with “Catch a Wave” adding a harp and organ, while “The Surfer Moon” adds detailed string countermelodies. These two songs feature more inventive lyrical themes, with “Catch a Wave” perfecting the ‘call to arms’ style surfing song, making the sport seem tantalizingly within reach, while “The Surfer Moon” describes a deep contemplation on the untameable nature of the ocean itself. Here we can see that as their lyrical themes were being closely perfected, or increasingly broadened, underneath those songs their musicality was edging in the same direction.

Some of the Beach Boys’ surfing songs are the most simple in their early repertoire, however, they do not always use the most simple structures. Although many have the general ‘feel’ of a 12-bar blues, only two (“Surfin USA” and “Catch a Wave”) actually utilise the 12-bar blues structure, with the former turning it into a 16-bar variation. Instead, the rest of the surfing songs are broken up into verse-chorus and AABA songs, with verse-chorus more common over the first two records and AABA slowly becoming more popular the later the songs were recorded. Although the Beach Boys lyrics, at this stage, told simple stories about surfing, they too follow the progression of development in the same way as the underlying structures, with early songs describing personal experiences, and later songs moving to describe other places (“Hawaii”) other people (“South Bay Surfer,” “Surfers Rule,” “Don’t Back Down”) and contemplation (“The Surfer Moon”).

The most common chord progressions used in the Beach Boys’ surfing songs is the 12 bar blues (as separate to the song structure). The 12 bar blues is connected to the 1950s rock and roll that was particularly influential to the Beach Boys in their earliest days, so it is perhaps unsurprising that this progression plays an important part of their early repertoire. Through the 12-bar blues, the Beach Boys could channel their influences; the simplicity of the progression made it easy for the young Beach Boys to master and play cohesively together. Many instrumental surf songs (such as Dick Dale and the Deltones’ “Let’s Go Trippin’” [1961] and “Surf Beat” [1962], “Wipe Out” by the Surfarais [1963], and “Let’s Go” by the Routers [1962], among many others) made use of the progression, and the Beach Boys use of it can be seen as a way to align themselves with the surfing culture, to show an understanding of the underlying musicality of surf

music. In this way, the 12 bar blues forms the musical backbone of their surfing repertoire.

By 1964, the Beach Boys had left themes of surfing behind them and embraced other topics such as cars, more general themes of American youth culture and an increasing number of songs about girls and love. Although some of these took place by the sea (such as “All Summer Long” and “Girls on the Beach”) or used the ocean as a theme metaphorically (“Warmth of the Sun”), songs that were specifically about surfing did not appear in their repertoire again⁶⁸. In “Catch a Wave,” one of their last surfing songs, Mike Love sings “Not just a fad ‘cause it’s been going on so long...They said it wouldn’t last too long” – however, by the time the *Surfer Girl* LP had been released, they had left the surfing fad behind. The Beach Boys lyrical themes began to now focus on hot-rod culture and cars, and these new songs “buoyed their careers and expanded their markets as America’s interest in surf waned” (Crowley, 2011, p.112).

The Cars

The connection between cars and popular music has a long history stretching back to 1946 with Jimmy Liggins’ “Cadillac Boogie”, however it was during the time of 1950s rock and roll that these car-themed songs found a wide audience (McParland, 2006, p. 127). In fact, Jackie Brenston’s “Rocket 88,” a song that many suggest is the first true rock and roll song, describes the prowess of a car: “A V8 motor baby; its modern design, black convertible top and the girls don't mind” (McParland, 2006, p. 127) Such a lyric is not too far away from the Beach Boys own car songs recorded twelve years later. In particular, Chuck Berry’s 1955 hit “Maybelline” (whose lyrics boast “Nothin' will outrun my v8 Ford!”) was of particular influence to the Beach Boys, The types of cars change, but the sentiment remains similar.

TABLE 32 – SONGS WITH CAR THEMES

409	A Young Man is Gone
Shut Down	Custom Machine
Little Deuce Coupe	Fun Fun Fun
Our Car Club	Don't Worry Baby
Ballad of Ole' Betsy	In the Parkin' Lot
Car Crazy Cutie	This Car of Mine

⁶⁸ At least until the 1980s and 1990s with “California Calling” (1985) and “Still Surfin” (1992).

Cherry Cherry Coupe	I Get Around
Spirit of America	Little Honda
No-Go Showboat	Drive In

The Beach Boys “409” was one of the first songs they wrote and recorded: a paean to the most powerful Chevy available. Usher, who co-wrote the song with Brian Wilson noted “Dennis [Wilson] loved the concept, and Carl [Wilson] thought it was very vogue. It was simple, honest, a bit corny, yet a topic every kid in the country could relate to...a first packaging of the ‘California Dream’” (McParland, 2006, p. 128). Crowley (2011) also notes the wider reach of songs about cars, as the Beach Boys “broke from the simple celebrations of waves, girls and freedom, reaching a far wider demographic and offering far more narrative possibilities than surfing” (p. 111). What is most surprising about the Beach Boys’ car songs, is that they could quite easily have become the ‘Hot-Rod Boys,’ as from their inception they were recording car-themed songs along with their surf hits. In all, the Beach Boys car songs outnumber their surfing songs eighteen to twelve⁶⁹. Surf culture and car culture in the early 1960s did mingle somewhat in Southern California (Crowley, 2011, p. 111), especially through the use of Leo Fender’s solid body guitar and electric bass in instrumental surf music; the Fender custom colours reflected those used on custom hot-rods, particularly the infamous ‘fiesta red’ (discussed in detail in Chapter 5 on instrumentation). Perhaps most importantly, the Beach Boys’ car songs held the group steady in the charts while the wave of British Invasion acts swept through the Top 40, as “songs about cars – not surfing – led the counterattack” (Crowley, 2011, p. 112).

1964’s *Little Deuce Coupe* marked the Beach Boys’ true movement from surf to car-related lyrical themes. The album was a concept record about cars and the album’s cover and music conveyed this clearly. The album contained four car songs previously released by the Beach Boys – “409,” “Shut Down,” “Little Deuce Coupe,” and “Our Car Club” – along with eight new tracks whose lyrics covered car types (“Cherry Cherry Coupe”), custom cars (“No Go Showboat,” “Custom Machine”), car racing (“Spirit of America”), the personification of cars (“Ballad of Ole’ Betsy”) and girls who love cars too (“Car Crazy Cutie”). The comping together of these old and new songs exemplified

⁶⁹ Although written about a motorcycle, “Little Honda” has been included in this section on car-related songs, as the themes themselves are very similar, despite the mode of transport being slightly different.

Capitol Records' plan to "squeeze every note of music out of...the Beach Boys," as Brian Wilson explains, "before what they perceived as the surf and car phenomenon disappeared. There was no rest. It was always more, more, more" (Wilson & Gold, 1991, p. 80). Following that release, *Shut Down* boasted four new car-themed songs, two of which were successful singles. Even the album's title (a car-related term for being beaten in a drag race) related to hot-rod culture.

While the Beach Boys' songs about surfing often inspired harsh criticism from the surfing community, their songs about cars and car racing did not receive the same negativity from those who actively participated in 1960s car culture, as the Beach Boys themselves were, like most teenagers, actually interested in cars for the freedom and independence they represented. For example, Brian Wilson recorded Garry Usher's car (a 348 Chevy Impala) dragging up and down his neighbourhood street late at night in an attempt to capture the sound of the hot-rod (the sound effect is heard at the beginning of "409") (Carlin, 2006, p33), while Dennis Wilson was often seen 'cruising' in his Sting Ray 85 (Preiss, 1979, p. 26). McParland (2006) explains that once the Beach Boys moved on from surfing songs to car songs, they were "much more readily accepted by the surfers" as the Beach Boys were "now communicating about their own world, a world they could convey with authority as their firsthand reality" (p. 24-25). However, like much of the Beach Boys' story, there may be elements of fantasy involved, as in an interview in 2009, Brian Wilson stated "No, we never did [go to local drag strips], never went to the races." When asked if his car songs were written about any specific cars, he responded "Not really, no. We just used the name. I didn't know that much about cars, anyway" (Vaughn, 2009). This wasn't entirely the truth; Brian Wilson is often contradictory in recent interviews and has learned much about cars in his writing and friendship with Usher and Christian. However, in hindsight, for Brian Wilson, their car songs were coloured by the same fantasy as their surfing songs – their California myth.

Car-Related Themes

As the Beach Boys shifted their focus from surf music and lyrics to car songs, a wider musical palette opened up to them. Unlike surf music, which came with some specific musical constraints such as the use of the solid-body Fender guitars, Showman amplifiers, and the use of heavy, flat-wound strings, hot-rod music had no such musical 'rules' (Crowley, 2011, p. 111-112). In this way, it was the lyrics that counted the most in the Beach Boys' car music.

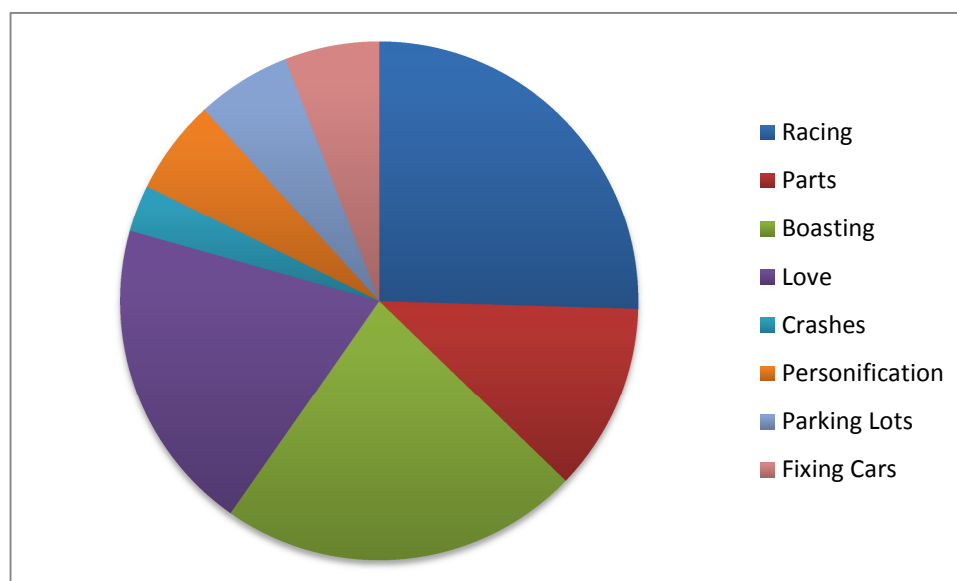
As their music progressed in complexity, the lyrical subjects in the Beach Boys' car songs also covered much larger ground, discussing a much greater range of topics than their surfing songs, as they approach these songs from multiple angles. As Crowley (2011) notes, "for vocal bands, car songs offered far wider opportunities for songwriters. There were the detailed inventories of preferred car parts in tunes like the Beach Boys' "Custom Machine"; the cinematic drama offered by the car race in "Dead Man's Curve" (1964); and the straightforward humour of "No Go Showboat"" (p. 111-112). Often, car songs covered multiple topics, for example, many songs about car racing included boastful lyrics about the driver's cool-headedness in the face of a race, and their car's superior skills ("Shut Down"). Other songs discuss places where teenagers gather in their cars to meet girls and be independent from their parents ("Drive In"). Unlike songs about surfing, which primarily described the lives of male surfers, themes of love enter more commonly in the Beach Boys' car songs, often showing the first signs of introspectiveness and self-reflection ("Don't Worry Baby"). Capitol Records also believed that the Beach Boys' car songs would outlast the surfing 'fad,' and tried hard to push "409" as the A-side of the first Beach Boys' single over "Surfin' Safari" (Dillon, 2012, p. 9).

Figure 43 shows the eight different sub-themes in the Beach Boys' car songs, and some interesting comparisons to their surf music can be made. Firstly, many car songs are more blatantly boastful, perhaps due to their own personal experience of driving their own cars, combined with the lyrical inspiration of Roger Christian, who was avidly connected with the hot-rod subculture. Dillon (2012) makes this trend most clear in a discussion of "I Get Around", a song in which "Brian, singing miles high with the braggadocio of a modern-day rapper, crows about being cool and making lots of money, while the group sings the title refrain...in one of the group's last automotive efforts for a while, he brags that his car is the fastest, and in the most common sense of 'getting around,' boasts that he and his buddies always score with the chicks. It's all pre-hippie teen attitude" (p. 36).

In addition, car songs are more likely to involve broader teenage themes of dating and love, and while some songs mention females and their likelihood to fawn over hotted-up cars, more actually place females in dominant roles in songs like "Car Crazy Cutie" and "Don't Worry Baby." In this way, we can perceive the first stirrings of real maturity in the Beach Boys lyrics, especially those that include relationships. Dillon (2012) writes of "Don't Worry Baby", "It's the world we know from "Shut Down" and

“Little Deuce Coupe,” but ... the emotional “Don’t Worry Baby” is about the driver’s dread of screwing up the Big Race. For Brian, that race was with Spector, his father and the rest of the world...In this number, Brian elevates suburban teen melodrama into the realm of art – a musical equivalent to “Rebel Without a Cause””(p. 29). The Beach Boys’ car songs not only allowed for more musical experimentation, they allowed the group to express broader themes from multiple different angles.

FIGURE 44 - CAR RELATED SUB-THEMES



Connection to Other Musical Elements

Like the Beach Boys’ surfing songs, some correlations can be made between lyrical themes about cars and other kinds of musical elements. Similarly, songs about cars most often feature a basic instrumentation of drums, bass, guitars, piano and vocals, however, 6 of the 16⁷⁰ car songs (37.5%) use an augmented instrumentation, adding harp, stings, horns and percussion. Augmented instrumentation appears in car songs much more often than in surf songs, which makes their car songs a ‘vehicle’ for further musical experimentation. This movement lines up with the over-arching movement of musical progression, and perhaps part of the reason why the Beach Boys’ car songs had more success and longevity in their repertoire than their surf songs.

The most common song structure underpinning songs about cars is the AABA form, which, as discussed in Chapter 3 has its roots in the romantic ballads of Tin Pan Alley and doo-wop music. The Beach Boys take this familiar song structure, and apply it

⁷⁰ “A Young Man is Gone” also features as a car-related song, however as it is sung a capella, it does not have instrumentation, as such.

to their car songs instead, and the combination of the current lyrics about the hottest cars and the nostalgic AABA structure helps to strike a kind of 'middle-ground' where many Beach Boys songs find a home between the present and the past. In "Ballad of Ole' Betsy" they use the AABA ballad form to imply that the lyrics are about a woman, when in the last verse it is revealed that the love song is dedicated to a well-loved car that is slowly decaying. In this way, the Beach Boys are aware of the conventions of certain structural frameworks, but can be seen to 'play' with them in different ways.

Although songs about cars do utilise the 12-bar blues progression like the earlier surf songs, the most common chord progression for the Beach Boys car songs is the doo-wop progression, which aligns itself well with the common AABA style. The 12-bar blues' chugging energy would seem perfectly suited to songs about cars: Jackie Brenston and the Delta Cats' "Rocket 88" (1951), Bo Diddley's "Cadillac," (1960) Chuck Berry's "You Can't Catch Me" (1956) all make use of the progression, among many others. However, the Beach Boys take this influence and develop it further in their own style, preferring the looping sound of the doo-wop progression, which, with its repetitive cycle, can hint at the feeling of driving a lap around the drag strip.

From this we can see a kind of 'pattern' or 'blueprint' for the Beach Boys car songs: they most likely feature a basic instrumentation, and AABA structure and a doo-wop chord progression. In combining these musical findings together with lyrical themes, we can start to see how the Beach Boys sound is sometimes wove together in thematic ways.

Like the Beach Boys' songs about surfing, they retired the lyrical theme of cars after "Drive In" on *All Summer Long* in 1964, and moved on to more complicated and emotional themes about love, the experiences of youth and growing up. Despite this, their songs about cars and car culture create a particular formula, both lyrically and musically, that define their hot-rod song-style.

The Girls

Although the Beach Boys had written songs about love from their very first album, it was 1964 before the Beach Boys let go of their surfing and car songs and moved on to songs predominantly about love and relationships. Mike Love explained, "We needed to grow. Up to this point we had milked every idea dry. We milked it fucking dry, we had done every possible angle about surfing and then we did the car routine. But we needed to grow artistically" (Badman, 2004, p. 54). The Beach Boys' songs about love

and relationships did serve as a vehicle for the group to grow both musically and emotionally.

TABLE 33 – SONGS WITH THEMES OF GIRLS AND LOVE

County Fair	Pom Pom Play Girl	Then I Kissed Her
Little Girl (You're My Miss America)	Keep an Eye on Summer	Girl Don't Tell Me
Heads You Win, Tails I Lose	All Summer Long	Help Me Rhonda
Cuckoo Clock	Hushabye	California Girls
The Shift	We'll Run Away	Let Him Run Wild
Farmer's Daughter	Wendy	You're So Good to Me
Lonely Sea	Girls on the Beach	And Your Dream Comes True
Lana	Do You Wanna Dance	Wouldn't it be Nice
Surfer Girl	Good to my Baby	You Still Believe in Me
Your Summer Dream	Don't Hurt my Little Sister	That's Not Me
Car Crazy Cutie	Please Let Me Wonder	Don't Talk (Put Your Head on my Shoulder)
Fun Fun Fun	I'm So Young	I'm Waiting for the Day
Don't Worry Baby	Kiss Me Baby	God Only Knows
In the Parkin' Lot	She Knows Me Too Well	Here Today
Warmth of the Sun	In the Back of My Mind	Caroline No
Why Do Fool Fall in Love?	The Girl From New York City	

There have been criticisms of the Beach Boys lyrics in relation to their discussion of relationships, often that their representations are one-dimensional or particularly naive at a time when the 'sexual revolution' was trying to shake free of the conservatism of the 1950s (Covach, 2012; MacDonald, 1997). Songs like "California Girls", in hindsight, may be heard as an objectification of the girls they sing about, as their only discerning features appear to be their ability to "really make you feel all right" or to "keep their boyfriends warm at night". However, Curnutt (2012) gives a thorough discussion of this issue in his chapter on the Beach Boys' lyrics, noting that it is often the women in the Beach Boys' songs that essentially have all of the emotional power.

Curnutt (2012) notes the “intense need for feminine approval” throughout the entirety of their recorded work, from “Don’t Worry Baby” and “You Still Believe in Me” included in this study, to much later Brian Wilson recordings like “Melt Away” (p. 49).

Many of Brian Wilson’s anxieties about himself and his abilities, discussed earlier in this chapter, appear lyrically in the Beach Boys’ songs about girls. In the surf and car songs, Mike Love’s macho bravado dominates, however, in the songs about girls and relationships, both a softness and a deep insecurity start to surface. In “Surfer Girl,” an early template for ballad songs, the chorus asks for reassurance - “Do you love me? Do you surfer girl?” In “Don’t Worry Baby,” a song entirely about the need for reassurance, the power of the relationship is placed in the hands of the unnamed girl, even down to the most telling of lines – “Oh what she does to me, when *she* makes love to me”. This kind of need for reassurance appears throughout the songs in this study, and forms part of their lyrical style.

A particularly useful framework for this section is Cole’s (1971) study of lyrical themes. In it, he took the top 10 songs⁷¹ from each year of the 1960s and ordered them in terms of their lyrical content. While many studies of lyrics of the time centred on songs of love and relationships (Carey, 1969) Cole’s study, while also covering similar ground, focused on broader themes of politics, religion and violence. In some ways, this study is similar, with the bulk of songs centred on love and relationships, while also touching on surf and car culture, rather than politics or religion (the Beach Boys never covered those topics in the 1962-66 time frame).

Not only does Cole’s (1971) study offer some contemporaneous comparison material for a study of the Beach Boys lyrics, Cole also lays out a basic framework for categorising songs with themes of love and relationships (what he refers to as “love-sex” themes) that is useful in understanding the lyrical themes of the Beach Boys ‘girl’ songs. Cole divides the 100 songs of his study into four stages of a teenage relationship over time – the “prologue⁷²” (the beginning of or hope of a new relationship), the “happy⁷³” stage (being in love), the “downward course⁷⁴” (the relationship falling apart) and

⁷¹ The Beach Boys were included in this study, however, they only received one entry for “I Get Around” in 1964 (Whitburn, 2001).

⁷² Cole (1971) uses “You Can’t Hurry Love” (1966) by the Supremes as an example of this

⁷³ Cole (1971) uses “My Guy” (1964) by Mary Wells as an example of this.

⁷⁴ Cole (1971) uses “I Can’t Stop Loving You” (1962) by Ray Charles as an example of this.

finally the “isolation⁷⁵” stage (post-break up) (p. 393). A full table of songs and their categories appears in Appendix E, Table A5 (p. 200).

Although many Beach Boys fall into one of these four loosely defined categories, there are songs that deal with more complicated emotions that Cole’s (1971) framework does not allow for. One extra category is for songs that deal with anxiety or regret: “Don’t Worry Baby” is a good example of this, as the relationship is clearly stable, but it deals with the protagonist’s feelings of insecurity and anxiety. Williams (1997) describes the sharing of “irrational” fears in “Don’t Worry Baby” as “extremely affecting... the singer is totally present with his fears, naked before us, and his honesty is liberating; it gives the listener permission to be in house with his (her) own anxieties, if my hero has them it’s okay if I have them too” (p. 113). Another is for songs about longing and overcoming adversity, such as “We’ll Run Away,” which deals with the struggle between what a teenager wants (in this case, to get married at a young age), and what their parents want. The final extra category is a ‘general’ grouping of songs about girls that aren’t defined specifically. “Girls on the Beach” is a good example of this, as while ‘girls’ are mentioned, there is no specific relationship defined, rather, it describes a vague potential of a relationship with someone the protagonist has not met yet. Using Cole’s (1971) lyrical framework with these three extra categories means that all of the Beach Boys ‘girl’ songs fit into one of these seven broad themes.

⁷⁵ Cole (1971) uses “I’ll Never Fall in Love Again” (1969) by Tom Jones as an example of this.

FIGURE 45 - CATEGORIES OF THE BEACH BOYS 'GIRL' SONGS

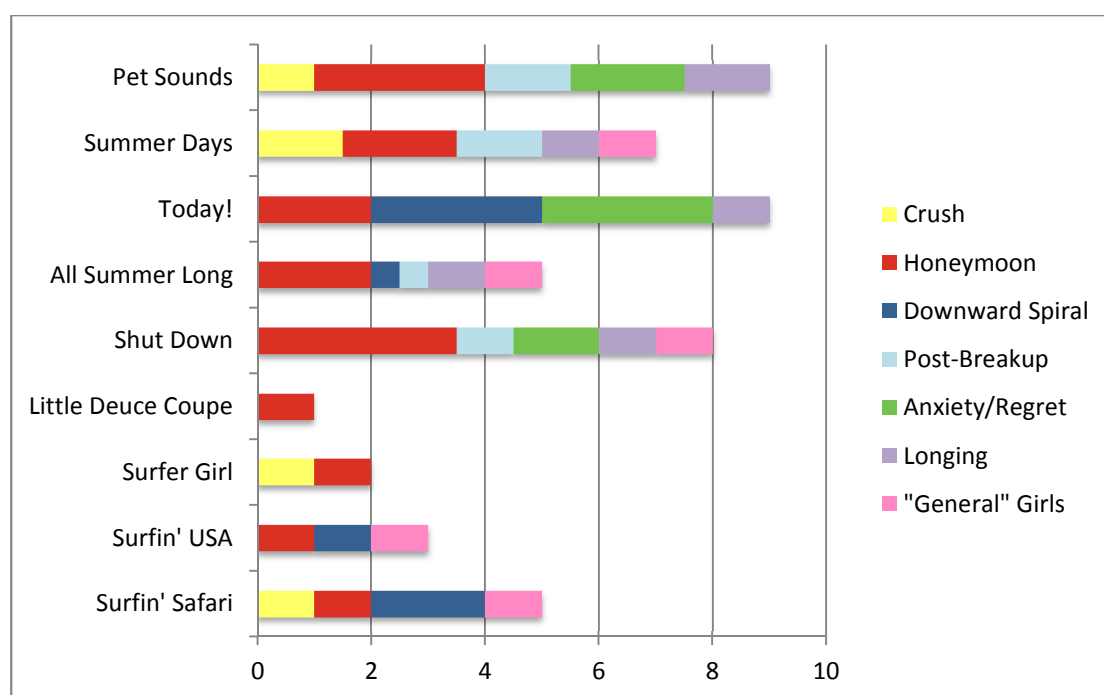


Figure 45 shows the overall spread of lyrical themes in the Beach Boys' songs about girls. The four parts of a relationship – the crush, the honeymoon period, the downward spiral and the post-break up are represented by loosely defined colours – with the yellows and reds representing the relationship 'warming up' and the blue colours showing where the relationship 'cools off'. As there are so many Beach Boys songs that discuss girls and relationships, there is enough data to get a clearer sense of the progression of lyrical themes. The first few albums tend to focus mainly on the 'crush' and 'honeymoon' stages of the teenage relationship (though *Surfin' Safari* with the inclusion of "County Fair" and "Heads You Win Tails I Lose" do discuss the 'downward spiral' of relationships too). *Little Deuce Coupe* is represented with only one song in this category, "Car Crazy Cutie," the only girl-related song on a conceptual record about cars. These early albums also discuss girls in a more 'general' context, with songs like "The Shift" or "Farmer's Daughter".

With *Shut Down*, we start to see the emergence of songs with lyrics that contain complex emotional tones, from the anxiety in "Don't Worry Baby" to the long-distance longing of "Keep an Eye on Summer". These songs start to look at relationships from different angles, with the former looking inward, and the latter looking towards a future that is out of reach. *All Summer Long* sees equilibrium between 'honeymoon' songs like the title track, and songs with more negative themes, such as "Wendy" and "We'll Run Away".

Today is the Beach Boys' record most concerned with girls and relationships, and it is with this 1965 album where there is a fundamental shift in lyrical themes. On this record, most of the songs discuss either the downward spiral of a relationship, as in "Don't Hurt My Little Sister" and "Kiss Me Baby," longing and frustration, as in "I'm So Young" and "Please Let Me Wonder" and deep anxiety, as in "She Knows Me Too Well" and "In The Back of My Mind".

By *Pet Sounds*, we see the most complete representation of lyrical themes, covering almost every angle of a relationship from the 'crush' in "I'm Waiting for the Day," the 'honeymoon' in "Don't Talk", and the isolation and sadness of the end of a relationship as in "Here Today" and "Caroline, No". Also represented are songs dealing with anxiety and regret, such as "You Still Believe in Me" and "That's Not Me," and longing in "Caroline, No". The songs on *Pet Sounds* are the most complex in their emotional tone. For example, "God Only Knows" is one of the Beach Boys' most romantic songs, but begins with the line "I may not always love you..." before reassuring with the line "but as long as there are stars above you, you'll never need to doubt it". Following on, the second verse juxtaposes great devotion with the potential of great sadness with the lines "If you should ever leave me, though life would still go on, believe me, the world would show nothing to me, so what good would living do me?" Early love songs like "Your Summer Dream" or "All Summer Long" discuss the fun and excitement of a perfect date (or a perfect summer) together, but "God Only Knows" is a song that comes from the perspective of someone who knows both the joy and the danger of falling in love. Nik Cohn (1969) sums up the lyrical themes on *Pet Sounds* as "sad songs about loneliness and heartbreak. Sad songs even about happiness" (p. 103).

In much the same way, the music on *Pet Sounds* is also a full representation of the Beach Boys musicality, with a nod to early influences on their cover of "Sloop John B", the AABA ballad style of "Don't Talk (Put Your Head on My Shoulder)", the trademark vocal falsetto on "You Still Believe in Me", the exploration of timbre in "Let's Go Away For a While" and the joy and youthful optimism of "Wouldn't it Be Nice".

Looking at this group of songs overall (in Figure 44), we can see a kind of paradox; songs about crushes and the happy part of relationships continue in some way throughout the whole period, but in addition to this, songs about the downward spiral of love, anxieties, regrets and longing also represent a significant portion of their lyrical material. These two themes of eternal optimism and anxiety and self-doubt co-exist together, making their music lyrically complex, creating a restless tension. This tension,

(as discussed throughout the musical analysis chapters) occurs in their musical make-up too.

Reflection

Some songs in the Beach Boys' repertoire are not just love songs, or songs about teenage experience, but show a degree of careful consideration and self-reflection.

These songs are in direct contrast to their early songs about surf and cars, most of which take place in the present tense. Often, these songs reflect back on early times, and show a degree of deep thought or even analysis about situations that may have caused heartache or regret. These reflective songs are not only about relationships; songs such as "In My Room", "When I Grow Up (to be a man)" and "That's Not Me" are more broad in scope and deal mainly with issues of the past and future, both positive and negative.

TABLE 34- SONGS WITH REFLECTIVE THEMES

In My Room	You Still Believe in Me
Warmth of the Sun	That's Not Me
When I Grow Up (to be a man)	I'm Waiting for the Day
Please Let Me Wonder	God Only Knows
Kiss Me Baby	I Know There's an Answer
She Knows Me Too Well	Here Today
In The Back of my Mind	I Just Wasn't Made for These Times
Wouldn't it be Nice	Caroline No

These lyrical themes are seen most clearly in Figure 46, a Wordle diagram of word frequency. Unlike the more "active" words in Figure 43, the most common kinds of words in these reflective songs are more related to feelings: "love," "knows," "feel," "sad," "heart," "wonder," "gone," "without" and so forth. These kinds of themes began early in their repertoire with "In My Room" in 1963 and "Warmth of the Sun" in 1964, though it wasn't until the last half of *Today* and *Pet Sounds* that these kinds of themes took over from more general songs about girls and relationships.

FIGURE 46- WORDLE DIGRAM FOR THE BEACH BOYS' REFLECTIVE SONGS

Similarly “Warmth of the Sun,” through its title, could be mistaken for another paean to surf culture, but instead, it uses the metaphor of the sun to describe a love that will always go unrequited. “Warmth of the Sun” turns what is a positive experience in, say, “Catch a Wave” with the lines “catch some rays on the sunny surf,” into a metaphor for heartache. Or as Curnutt (2012) describes, the ‘sun’ in “Warmth of the Sun” symbolizes “relentless suffering.” “Warmth of the Sun” sets up the reflective tone that resurfaces on *Today* in 1965.

“When I Grow Up (to be a Man)” is one of the most interesting of these reflective songs, as it contemplates what life may be like as an adult. It starts with basic rhetorical questions: “Will I dig the same things that turn me on as a kid? Will I look back and say that I wish I hadn’t done what I did?” and is followed later by “Will my kids be proud, or think their old man’s really a square?” The line with the most emotional weight occurs in the last chorus with the line “Will I love my wife for the rest of my life?” Up until this point, Beach Boys songs discussed either being in love or being not in love, but never acknowledging the idea of falling out of love with someone. By this time, Brian Wilson was already married, and this line is essentially questioning his wedding vows, making

“When I Grow Up” one of the Beach Boys’ most adult songs. In the coda, backing vocals literally accent the passing of time, counting the ages “24, 25, 26, 27...” while the lead vocal wails “Won’t last forever, it’s kinda sad” with a resignation that the happy times of youth, despite what they sing about, must eventually come to an end. Richard Meltzer (1987) described “When I Grow Up” as the moment in time that the Beach Boys “abruptly ceased to be boys” (p. 58). For Brian Wilson, this transition had already started, as he had already suffered a nervous breakdown by 1965, and edged closer to more advanced mental illness after the recording of *Smile*.

It was on *Pet Sounds* that these reflective themes were most common, with most lyrics discussing past events with a growing sense of self-awareness. The lyrical themes on this record left Mike Love feeling increasingly alienated, and referred to *Pet Sounds* songs as “Brian’s ego music,” which was intended as a criticism, but for Brian Wilson it was exactly what he was working towards (Gaines, 1986, p. 126). Brian Wilson came into the studio with almost every part of the record pre-arranged in his mind, which, again, Mike Love found difficult to cope with, often responding to Brian Wilson’s continued vocal takes with “Who’s gonna hear this? The ears of a dog?” (p. 126). Curnutt (2012) describes the complicated nature of *Pet Sounds* well: that its songs address the move into adulthood, but do not “evade the responsibilities of growing up” (p. 42). If anything, Curnutt (2012) notes, some “advocate the benefits of maturity” explaining the story of “That’s Not Me”:

The young man in “That’s Not Me” strikes off for the city to prove his independence. Leaving behind both his girl and his parents, he quickly finds himself overwhelmed by loneliness. Realising the selfishness of his behaviour, he begs forgiveness for abandoning his lover “at the wrong time” and assures her that he now understands the importance of commitments (p. 42).

“That’s Not Me” also makes the point that both the young man’s girl and his parents have a sense of his ‘real’ self before the singer does - “My folks when I wrote and told them what I was up to said ‘that’s not me’”. In essence, a song like “That’s Not Me” is about a young man finding out who he really is, reflecting on his past and trying to change for the better: “I went through all kinds of changes, took a look at myself and said ‘that’s not me’”.

Songs like “I Know There’s an Answer” and “You Still Believe in Me” also touch on the positive aspects of entering adulthood, however, these are balanced by “I Just Wasn’t Meant For These Times” and “Caroline No,” which actively mourn the loss of

youth. “I Just Wasn’t Made For These Times” deeply questions the singer’s place in the world, and the loneliness and sorrow he faces as a result: “I keep looking for a place to fit in, where I can speak my mind, and I’ve been trying hard to look for people that I won’t leave behind, they say I’ve got brains, but they ain’t doing me no good, I wish they could”. The easy, carefree friendships of “Chug-a-Lug” or “I Get Around” are gone, and replaced by the desire for a connection that goes beyond ‘surfing’ and ‘dragging’ together: “Where can I turn when my fair-weather friends cop out? What’s it all about?” “Sometimes I feel very sad” repeats the the chorus lyric: a far cry from “Happy times together we’ll be spending” from the chorus of “Wouldn’t it be Nice”.

These songs are weighted at the end of *Pet Sounds*, giving the record itself a sense of journey: the hope that started out in “Wouldn’t it be Nice” is all but vanished by “Caroline No,” a song Lambert (2007) describes as a “lyric of impossible melancholy”. (p. 235). *Pet Sounds* is a perfect summing up glorious optimism and the “impossible melancholy” the group was capable of, and added to the broad emotional tone of their repertoire.

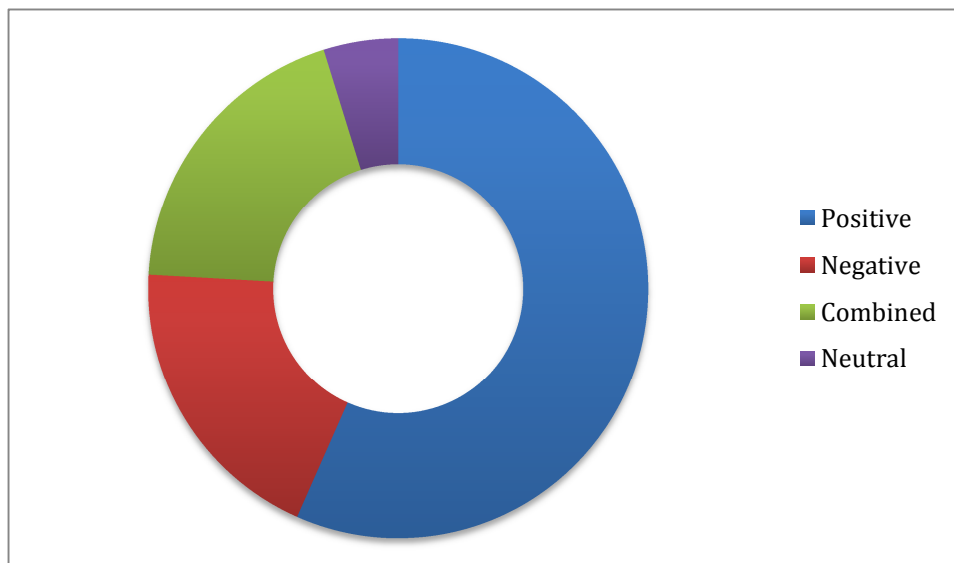
Emotional Tone

Cole’s (1971) study of 1960s pop songs gives an overview of the emotional tone of the 100 songs included in his study. He found that overall, more songs were “unhappy” (44%) than “happy” (39%), and “unhappy” and “balanced⁷⁶” songs combined together equalled 61%. He also notes that the trend of “unhappy” songs tended to become more pronounced towards the end of the decade, a reflection of the more turbulent social and cultural happenings during the mid-to-late part of the 1960s.

The overall emotional tone of the Beach Boys is interesting to compare. Instead of “happy” or “unhappy,” the Beach Boys songs in this study have been coded in terms of ‘positive’ or ‘negative,’ including a ‘combined’ category for songs that have elements of positivity and negativity (such as “Help Me Rhonda”) and ‘neutral’ songs (such as “Do You Remember?”) which display neither.

⁷⁶ Cole (1971) does not define the term “balanced” but in this instance it is taken to mean songs that exhibit both happiness and sadness, or neither.

FIGURE 47 - EMOTIONAL TONE OF BEACH BOYS' SONGS



Songs with an overall 'negative' tone make up 19% of the Beach Boys' songs, and neutral songs make up just 5% of their repertoire. More interesting, the Beach Boys songs that feature both positive and negative ('combined') tones together make up 19% – the same as their 'negative' songs. Although the Beach Boys did cover songs with negative themes, such as "Lonely Sea" or "Warmth of the Sun," they were just as likely to write songs that expressed both positive and negative feelings

These 'combined' songs are their most complicated expressions of emotions: Songs such as "Kiss Me Baby" describe a rocky relationship, spelled out best in Mike Love's backing vocals, with "kiss a little bit, fight a little bit" repeated throughout the chorus and outro sections. "Help Me Rhonda's" catchy chorus belies a complicated emotional state of admitting to still having feelings for an ex-lover, while simultaneously wanting someone else at the same time, begging this new girl to "help [him] get her out of [his] heart". "In My Room" describes the safety of a teenage bedroom, however, the flip side of this situation is why the singer needs this place of refuge in the first place (for the Wilson brothers, it was to escape their abusive father).

FIGURE 48 - EMOTIONAL TONE IN THE BEACH BOYS' SONGS OVER TIME

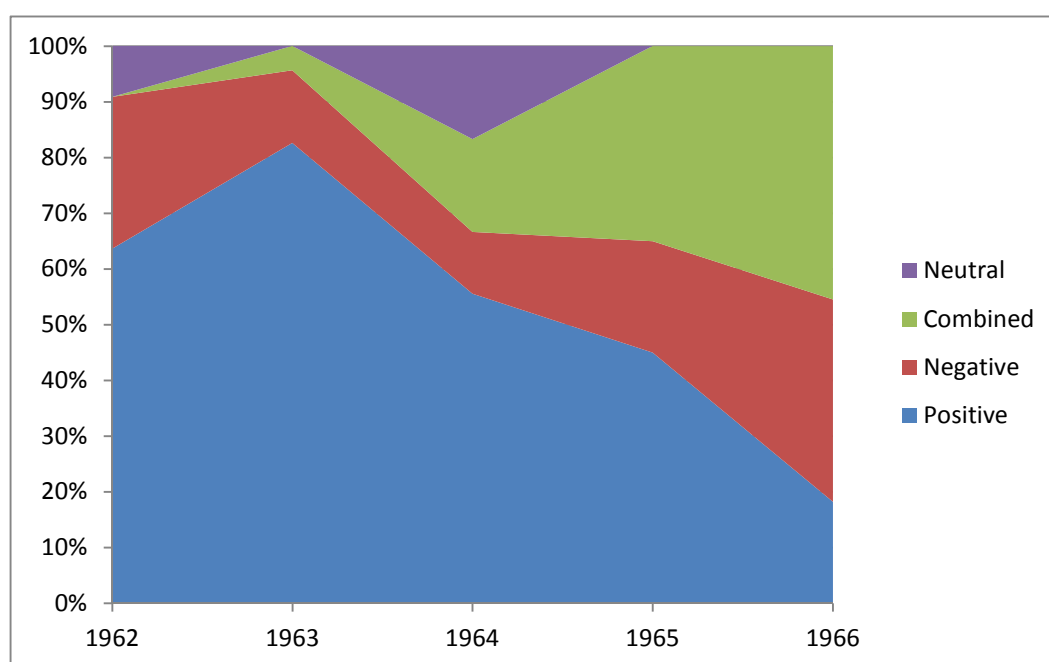


Figure 48 shows how the emotional tone in the Beach Boys' songs changes over time, with songs from 1962-64 predominantly expressing either positive or negative themes. However, this changes from 1965 onwards, where songs that are expressly positive or negative decrease (though still continue) and songs that combine these emotional tones increase sharply (seen in green). Cunningham & Bleiel (2000) articulate this positive and negative tension well in a discussion of "All Summer Long":

A critic might ask, where is the teenage angst? The answer is that the bummer nights and sunburnt days exist right there, below the surface of "All Summer Long." The song's total commitment to joy reflects an awareness of the negative aspects in the form on the human tendency to remain positive (Cunningham & Bleiel, 2000, p. 121).

Representing this data in an area chart can give a clear picture of when these changes started to take place, and like almost other musical changes discussed in this analysis, emotional tone started to change in 1964 into the craft period, and changed again in 1965 towards the art period.

For the Beach Boys, their overall emotional tone is overwhelmingly positive, with 57% of their songs touching on 'positive' themes, such as love, youth, summer, surfing, cars, and so forth. Fitzgerald (2009) also finds this in his short study of Beach Boys' early singles, noting that half of the 1962-1966 singles were "invariably positive in

tone” (p.8). Unlike some of their contemporaries in Cole’s 1971 study, the Beach Boys held fast to their positivity and optimism even in the face of the social and cultural upheaval of the 1960s.

The criticism of the Beach Boys and their lyrics came to a head when the band, who was confirmed to headline the Monterey Pop Festival in June of 1967, pulled out two weeks prior to the event. Brian Wilson was filled with anxiety after the relative failure of the “Heroes and Villains” single (compared to their earlier top 10 success), and his ‘masterpiece’ *Smile* was still in pieces. Brian Wilson felt the Beach Boys would be out of place “standing in front of a Bay Area audience drawn to hear younger, hipper bands like the Byrds, the Jefferson Airplane, and Moby Grape” and wondering “How would the Beach Boys – still clad in their striped shirts and still boasting a set-list full of surfing, cars and innocuous fun – go over with that crowd?” (Carlin, 2004, p. 122). Driving the point home, during his Monterey set, Jimi Hendrix yelled after he set his guitar on fire during “Third Stone From the Sun,” “...and you’ll never hear surf music again!” (Carlin, 2004, p. 123).⁷⁷ The bigger picture to this story is that musically, Brian Wilson had long since retired those lyrical themes: his *Smile* album was equally psychedelic to the music played at Monterey, however, the Beach Boys could never shake this association, and Brian Wilson was entering a phase of emotional instability that would take many years to recover from.

By the 1970s, the tides turned for the Beach Boys. As Carlin (2004) details, the Nixon presidential era was an ‘exhausting’ time for Americans and the cause of large-scale bitterness; the country seemed to yearn for a kind of positivity that the Beach Boys fortuitously provided with the release of their *Endless Summer* greatest hits compilation. After President Nixon resigned, the album went to number one on the Billboard chart, and stayed in the chart for 155 weeks, selling 3, 000, 000 copies (p. 195). In 1974, Rolling Stone named the Beach Boys ‘Band of the Year’ – suddenly, the kind of positivity the Beach Boys had long been known for, and occasionally criticised for in the 1960s, had found a new place and purpose. The teens in the early 1960s who had grown up listening to the Beach Boys were now adults, and as Leaf (1978) notes, “the Beach Boys’ sound was a symbol of romantic innocence...in [their] world, you could ride away from it all in a Little Deuce Coupe (and there was always enough gas)” (p. 124). Beach Boys

⁷⁷ This is complex story, but as Carlin (2004) explains, “it’s an unfair juxtaposition for Hendrix, since he bore no particular grudge against the Beach Boys, and was, in fact, a huge fan of surf music guitar king Dick Dale...But for the purposes of the Beach Boys’ narrative, the imagery is too perfect to ignore” (p. 123).

concerts in the 1970s now appealed to a younger generation of fans, and the shows were “nostalgic love affairs, friendly, infectious concerts characterized by the shared experience of the Beach Boys’ fun-loving songs”⁷⁸(Leaf, 1978, p. 124). As Curnutt (2012) concludes, “ultimately, as antiquated as Brian’s vision may seem, its optimism is so unswayable as to seem incorruptible” (p. 65).

Conclusion

The Beach Boys’ lyrics are one of the most recognisable parts of their music, and, although cliché, can be easily broken up into songs about ‘surf,’ ‘cars,’ and ‘girls.’ Brian Wilson and his lyrical collaborators explored these simple themes from a broad range of angles, from “Surfin’ USA” to their most complicated songs, such as “That’s Not Me” that explore self-reflection and the movement from youth to adulthood.

The Beach Boys’ surf songs are the least frequent and the simplest of the Beach Boys song lyrics. Surf songs discussed a narrow range of themes, the most common being ‘call to surf’ songs, which touted the fun and simplicity of surfing (“Come on a safari with me!”) to those who are not involved with the surfing lifestyle. Other themes included stories about individual or groups of young surfers and one song that combines surfing and love (“Surfer Girl”). Often these songs would include surfer ‘slang’ (such as ‘hodad’ or ‘woodie’) to add some authenticity to their surfing stories.

The Beach Boys’ car songs broadened their lyrical scope, and gave Brian Wilson and his collaborators (mainly Mike Love and Roger Christian at this point) more creativity than their previous surf songs. Cars were discussed from many angles, such as racing (“Shut Down”), the personification of cars (“Ballad of Ole’ Betsy”), details of car parts (“409”) to the sensitive “Don’t Worry Baby,” which, although about a drag race, is actually about a young man’s anxieties about himself.

The creativity inspired by the Beach Boys’ car songs was greatly expanded in their songs about girls and relationships. In these songs, the Beach Boys now had a wider emotional palette to draw from, and songs tended to be focused on parts of a teenage relationship, rather than the story songs of surf and car music. Cole’s (1971) study broke up 1960s pop songs into stages of a relationship, to see the kinds of love-related lyrical themes were most common for the time. For the Beach Boys, their lyrical emphasis changed over time in line with many of their musical changes. Early songs

⁷⁸ This “live” era is captured on the *Beach Boys In Concert* album (1973).

Another car driving fast, another song on the beach
 I take a trip through the past when summer's way out of reach
 Another walk in the park when I need something to do
 And when I feel all alone sometimes I think about you...

Another bucket of sand, another wave on the pier
 I miss the way that I used to call the shots around here
 You know it would have been nice, if I had something to do
 And when I feel all alone sometimes I think about
 You take my hand, smile and say you don't understand
 To look in your eye, and see what you feel and you realise that nothing's for real

'Cause you know it's just your imagination running wild
 Your imagination running wild

"Imagination" (1998) literally shows Brian Wilson reflecting on his own life, his own memories and his own California myth, suggesting that the "bucket of sand" was always just in his imagination.

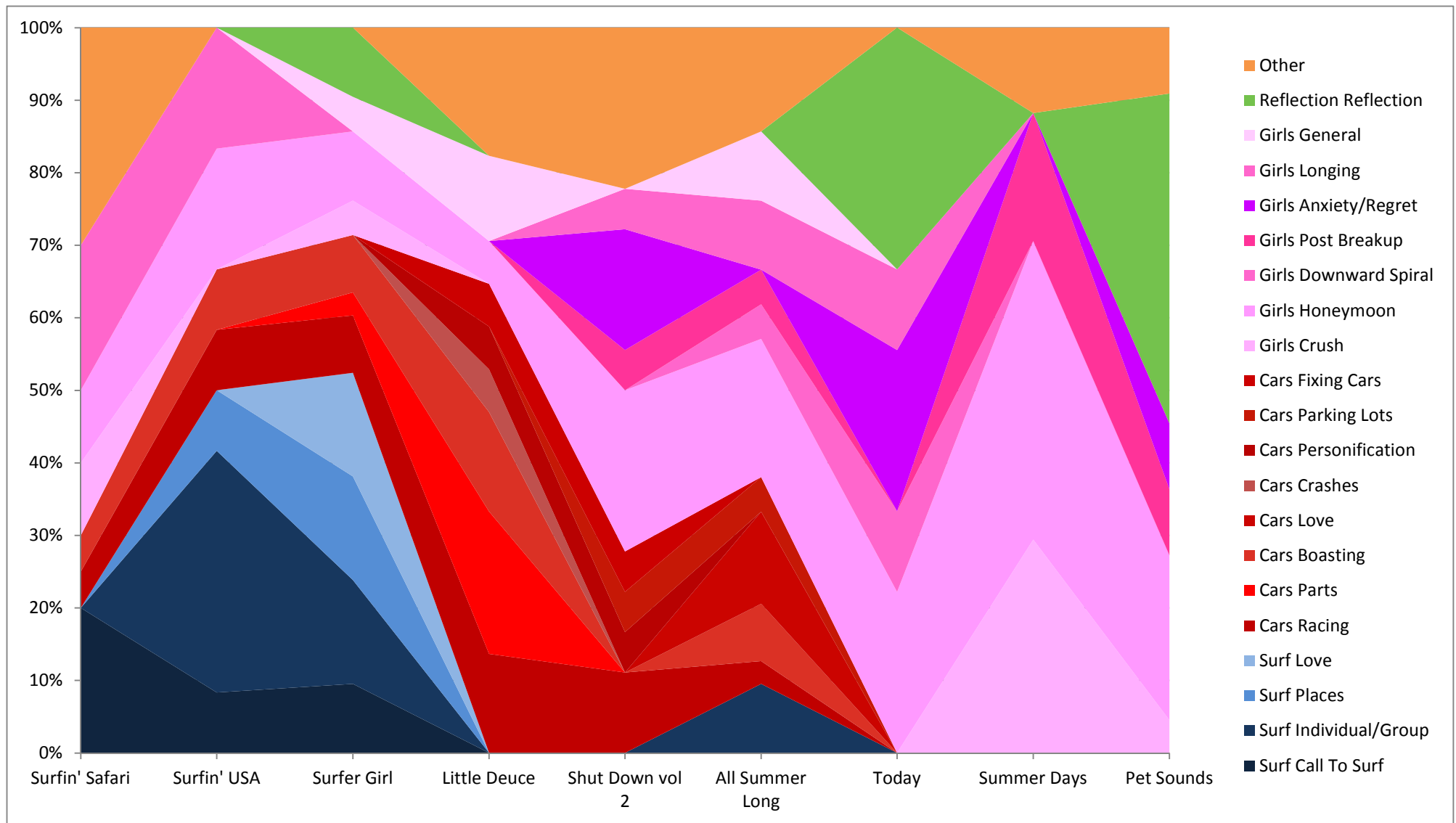
Figure 50 Figure 50 is an area chart of all the data collected about the Beach Boys' lyrics and shows how they changed over time. The blue colours represent songs about surfing, and the shape it takes during their early years looks not unlike a wave that washes away by 1964. Over a similar time period, we can see the red 'car songs' increase up to a peak time in 1963 before dying away by the end of 1964. 'Girl' songs existed throughout their entire repertoire, however the different approaches to describing relationships broadens significantly towards the end of the chart, as can be seen by the broadening shades of pink. The green 'reflection' songs start to poke through between 1963 and 1964, but really establish themselves by 1965 onwards with *Today And Pet Sounds*. This chart tracks the course of their lyrical themes, but also lines up with the kinds of data found in previous chapters, and with the 'apprentice' to 'craft' to 'art,' movement. Interestingly for the Beach Boys, the 'apprentice' to 'craft' to 'art' tends to match up quite well with their 'surf' to 'cars' to 'girls' movement of their lyrics.

Figure 51 is a Wordle diagram containing all of the Beach Boys' lyrics in this study, and one particular part stands out the most: 'now' is the most frequently used word. 'Now' isn't particularly tied to the 'surf, cars and girls' the Beach Boys so often

sung about, but it does suggest something about the way these themes were discussed. So many of the Beach Boys' songs were sung about what was happening in the present, which gave their songs immediacy and energy that was matched in their upbeat music. The 'now' makes their lyrics feel that the Californian paradise they sung about was happening *now* and there was no time to lose to get involved. The word 'now' was often used as a kind of placeholder in short phrases, as in "Well she got her Daddy's car and she cruised through the hamburger stand *now*" ("Fun Fun Fun") or "Let's go surfin' *now*, everybody's learning how" ("Surfin' Safari") or "Shut it off, shut it off, buddy *now* I'll shut you down" ("Shut Down"). This 'now,' combined with the laid-back delivery of Mike Love's vocals gave many of the Beach Boys' songs a conversational tone, as if the audience was being addressed by a friend.

FIGURE 50 - AREA CHART OF ALL BEACH BOYS' LYRICAL THEMES

(see next page)



Chapter 8: Vocals

"We're heading out singing our song!"

The Beach Boys' unique vocal harmonies are often the most identifiable part of their sound: almost every song in the 1962-1966 period, with only four exceptions⁸⁰, prominently uses their trademark dense four and five-part harmony. They are so connected with the group's music that music critics often cite their influence on any band that happens to use vocal harmonies, whatever their vocal style or formation (Fusilli, 2008; Fricke, 2011). Modern groups like the Fleet Foxes, Animal Collective, Grizzly Bear, Best Coast, Bon Iver (among others reviewed on Pitchfork⁸¹) do use vocal harmonies, but musically they often have more in common with the block-harmony styles of Crosby, Stills and Nash (whose harmonies focus on the root, third and fifth), rather than the tightly woven harmonies of the Beach Boys' music. Their sound is so innately tied to their vocal harmonies that for many, they are the touchstone for any popular music that uses dense vocal harmony. Brian Wilson explained that "the harmonies that we are able to produce give us a uniqueness...which is really the only important thing you can put into records – some quality that no-one else has got. I love peaks in a song – and enhancing them on the control panel. Most of all, I love the human voice for its own sake" (Abbott, 2001, p. 73). As Curnutt (2012) states, "no element of the Brian Wilson style evokes the paradox of the Beach Boys' story as much as their harmonies that are the single, most recognisable feature of his (and their) sound" (p. 75). Further, Harrison (1997) refers to their vocal harmonies as "the Beach Boys' most expressive vehicle" (p. 39).

The importance of vocal harmonies is clearest in the way Brian Wilson recorded them. Most of the songs in this study were recorded at either Western Recorders or Gold Star in Los Angeles. The control rooms of these studios only had a three-track recorder (though, later a four-track), and it was through this that almost all of the Beach Boys' recordings were put to tape. Brian would record all of the instrumental backings onto one single track and then use the other three entirely for recording vocals and vocal overdubs (Abbott, 2001, p. 72). By *Pet Sounds*, Brian Wilson, along with studio engineers Chuck Britz and Larry Levine, would connect two four-track recorders together, in order to transfer all instrumental backings to one track, leaving *seven* free for vocals and vocal overdubs (Abbott, 2001, p. 72). Essentially, 75% (or more) of the recording space available was given to the layering of the Beach Boys' vocal

⁸⁰ "Your Summer Dream," "Girl Don't Tell Me," "Don't Talk (Put Your Head on My Shoulder)" and "Caroline No."

⁸¹ Pitchfork (www.pitchfork.com) is an influential website that reviews indie and alternative music.

harmonies. This shows both the importance of the vocals to their sounds and the seriousness in which Brian Wilson approached the process of vocal recording.

Personally, vocal harmonies were important to the Beach Boys and their families, particularly the Wilson brothers. At a very young age, Brian would teach his younger brothers to sing in three-part harmony with him in their childhood bedroom. Often, their singing was the only thing that would soothe their father's explosive anger, so vocal harmonies were not only a way the young boys could experience closeness, they could also provide the brothers with a kind of safety. Carl Wilson noted, "Recording [harmonies] had become a church to us" (Abbott, 2001, p, 173-175). The Wilson house was often full of harmonies, as Brian Wilson remembers:

[Murry] would sing to me. And my mother would play the organ, and my Dad would sing. They'd do duets, organ and piano. So as far back as I can remember, there's been music in my life...the three brothers used to harmonise in bed. We'd all sleep in the same room. We used to sing this song, "Come Down, Come Down from the Ivory Tower"; that was our special one we'd sing. We developed a little blend, which aided us when we started to get into the Beach Boys' stuff (Leaf, 1978, p. 17).

Singing together was also a way that the Wilsons connected with their cousin Mike Love. At family occasions, the Wilson brothers and Mike Love would re-arrange the two-part harmonies of the Everly Brothers, and other rock and roll hits, into four-part harmonies they could all sing together. The Beach Boys' love of vocal harmonies, the recording space they were afforded and the deep connection to personal experience meant that they formed the most distinctive part of their sound throughout their entire career.

Of the few detailed studies of the Beach Boys' music, Lambert (2007), Harrison (1997) and Fitzgerald (2009) have all employed a traditional analysis of melody and harmony, touching on types of voice leading, the role of cadences and the structuring of their four and five-part harmonies. In this chapter, I wish to take a step back from this valuable discussion and instead look at the Beach Boys' *vocals* rather than a traditional study of melody and harmony. This is for two main reasons: firstly, an analysis of that depth for all of the songs in this study would constitute a thesis in itself, and create an unwieldy amount of musical data. Secondly, by focusing on musical changes at a micro level, more overarching trends important to the Beach Boys' musical style can be missed. Thirdly, with a focus on *vocals* rather than just *melody*, we can explore many other factors that have an important impact on the Beach Boys' sound, such as their musical influences, vocal ranges, recording techniques, the specific roles of the lead and background vocals, and the way they interact with each other. This broad focus is perhaps best

suited to a study of vocals, as this approach aims to put the useful musicological studies of Lambert (2007), Harrison (1997) and Fitzgerald (2009) into a wider context.

This chapter will explore several different influences and factors that contributed to the Beach Boys' unique vocal sound, such as musical influence from the Four Freshmen and doo-wop vocals styles (Fitzgerald, 2009, p. 5), the use of specific studio technology, and the role of Mike Love and Brian Wilson's vocals in delivering the lyrical narrative.

Two Important Influences on the Beach Boys' Vocal Harmonies

The Four Freshmen

The Four Freshmen were one of the most innovative and emulated jazz vocal quartets of the 1950s, and proved an important influence on other similar vocal groups like the Hi-Los and The Lettermen, as well as on 1960s groups like the Mamas and the Papas, and of course, the Beach Boys. Their material was primarily Tin Pan Alley standards (such as "I'll Be Seeing You" [1954], "Mood Indigo" [1954], "Angel Eyes" [1956], and "Summertime" [1963]), rearranged for four voices, often with sparse musical accompaniment. The Four Freshmen's "Graduation Day" and "Their Hearts Were Full of Spring"⁸² were replicated very closely by the Beach Boys on *Concert* (1964) and on the *Good Vibrations Box Set* (1993) respectively⁸³ and were often performed at concerts to showcase their impressive vocal ability.

Brian Wilson's love of the Four Freshmen began early in his adolescence. He would spend hours after school in his music room at home intricately picking out each vocal part and studying how they fit together. Carl Wilson recalls "There were many years of his life when he did nothing but play piano...months at a time. Days on end. He'd listen to Four Freshmen records" (Gaines, 1986, p. 44). Audree Wilson tells of a highlight of Brian Wilson's youth:

Brian was fourteen years old and the Four Freshmen were at the Crescendo. Murry found out they were there and he knew Brian loved them so much. We couldn't afford...for more than two of us to go at that time, so Murry took Brian and it was really a thrill... somehow, Murry bluffed his way backstage' and got into the dressing room and introduced Brian to them... [actually], introduced *them* to Brian (Leaf, 1978, p. 19).

⁸² "Their Hearts Were Full of Spring" was more commonly heard as "A Young Man Has Gone" on *Little Deuce Coupe*, the same vocal arrangement with different lyrics.

⁸³ These tracks also appeared on the 1990s remastered "twofer" albums: "Graduation Day" on the *Today/Summer Days* release and "Their Hearts Were Full of Spring" on the *Smiley Smile/Wild Honey* release.

The importance of the Four Freshmen's influence on the young Brian Wilson has been well-documented: Lambert (2007) calls the Four Freshmen "the most profound influence on Brian Wilson's early development" (p. 4), and this view is echoed by many (Carlin, 2006, p. 22; Curnutt, 2012, p. 5; Gaines, 1986, p. 44-46; Leaf, 1978, p. 19-20; Warner, 1992, p. 328;). Carlin (2006) notes that "the record [*The Four Freshmen and the Five Trombones*] mesmerised [Brian], and talking about it later, he speaks in near-religious terms, describing his soul opening up, the music entering him and carrying him to another sphere of consciousness"(p. 22). Brian Wilson explained "It brings a feeling of love inside of me...it does. It really does. That feeling of harmony" (Carlin, 2006, p. 22). When Bill Wagner, manager of the Four Freshmen, invited the sixteen-year-old Brian Wilson to visit his office, Brian excitedly demonstrated his dedicated study of the Four Freshmen's music by "singing each part in turn along with a recording of "The Day Isn't Long Enough"" (Lambert, 2007, p. 6). In many ways, the Four Freshmen were Brian Wilson's first real introduction into vocal harmony, an influence that would impact almost every recording he made.

Connections Between the Four Freshmen and the Beach Boys

There are several important parallels between the Four Freshmen and the Beach Boys, and not only their vocal harmony style. The Four Freshmen began as a barbershop group, who soon grew tired of the confining nature of that particular singing style. In much the same way, Brian Wilson soon tired of the confining nature of surf and car songs, and moved on to more adventurous musical pursuits.

The Four Freshmen's line-up also contained two brothers, Don and Ross Barbour, whose family connection contributed to the seamless blend of their harmony vocals. Similarly, the close family connection between the Wilson brothers and their cousin Mike Love meant that their voices were similar both physically and aesthetically, and is part of the reason they fit together so seamlessly on record. Many successful pop vocal groups include family members, as this closeness both emotionally, and in their likeness in terms of how they physically sing, enables a close blend of vocal harmonies. Contemporaneous groups such as the Bee Gees, the Carpenters, the Jackson Five and the Everly Brothers have all benefited from this family link, to name but a few.

In 1948, singer Marvin Pruitt resigned from singing with the Four Freshmen due to his severe case of stage fright (Warner, 1992, p. 205). Sixteen years later, Brian Wilson would also resign from the touring Beach Boys band for the same reason, after a nervous breakdown he suffered on a plane en route to a tour of the Southwest in 1964. Roger Christian noted: "Brian was a private person; he wanted to be left alone so he could create" (Leaf, 1978, p. 54)

Finally, the names of the two groups have much in common. The Four Freshmen, no matter their age, are always tied to that stage of young adult life: the first year of tertiary study. With 'Freshmen' come connotations of youth, new beginnings and potential. Similarly the Beach Boys' name ties the group to adolescence too, and as the group celebrated 50 years together with a world tour in 2012, five men in their seventies were still introduced as 'The Beach Boys'.

The Four Freshmen's Vocal Style

The Four Freshmen's influence and popularity had much to do with their unique style of vocal arrangements. Although on the surface they may sound like a barbershop quartet, the intricacies of the harmonies were very far removed from that highly structured singing style. In some ways, it is easiest to notice the inventiveness of their vocal harmonies by the ways in which they deviate from more traditional barbershop. In outlining the most important aspects of barbershop singing, Averill (2011) notes:

Another characteristic of the style the revivalists sought to preserve was the "closeness" or "tightness" of harmony, in contrast to spread, open position, or "divorced" harmony. Close harmony emphasizes close intervallic relationships; usually adjacent notes of the chord, and the resultant chords seldom occupy a range of more than an octave and a half (Averill, 2011, p. 8).

Although the Four Freshmen did use close-harmony arrangements, Warner (1992) explains that part of their unique style was their innovations in singing "open harmony, moving the third and fifth notes of a chord an octave higher or lower, or using ninths, and elevenths while dropping root notes of a chord" (p. 205). The use of these 'spread out' vocal harmonies meant that their music had a wide range of dynamic changes, and their movements between sections of 'open' harmony and 'close' harmony was a defining part of their sound. A good example of this technique is heard in the vocal tag ending of "It Happened Once Before" (1953) over the word 'before', with the first part of the 'fore' syllable ('fo') sung in a stretched out 'open' harmony before quickly falling into a tight 'closed' harmony over the last part of the syllable ('re'). The marked change in volume also makes this movement even more obvious and expressively dynamic – another of their often-used vocal tricks.

Averill (2011) cites another of the most important aspects of barbershop singing, the genre's shunning of "the solo verses that were a staple of golden- era quartet performance in favour of continuous four-part harmony" (p. 9). Again, the Four Freshmen used solo singing in sections of their songs quite regularly; a most prominent example is the entire bridge section of "Speak Low" (1956), which is sung solo (not in unison). This combination of using solo and group vocals creates broad dynamics, with the intimate solo tenor voice balanced by the

brightness of four-part harmonised melody. The Beach Boys used this technique too, often beginning with a solo verse that is joined by harmonised vocals in the first chorus section (as heard in “Warmth of the Sun”).

Unison Singing

A barbershop technique that the Four Freshmen do make use of is ‘unison singing,’ where all four members share a single melody. In their music, this most often happens in a B-section or bridge (as in “The Day Isn’t Long Enough” [1952]), and the change of singing style helps to define each song section, and give the harmonised melody a dramatic entrance when it returns for a repeat of the A section. Although less common, there are other examples where unison singing is used to begin a song (as in “It Happened Once Before” [1953]) or to lead into a chorus (“It Never Occurred to Me” [1955]). These unison vocals are usually softly sung, which helps in the delivery of the intimate lyrics of a B-section. The Beach Boys use this technique too, heard especially in their nostalgic ballads, such as “In My Room,” “Keep an Eye on Summer” and “Kiss Me Baby”, and this stems directly from the influence of the Four Freshmen.

The use of ‘open’ harmonies, solo singing and unison vocals are three important parts of the Four Freshmen’s unique sound, and the three most important musical attributes that the Beach Boys put to use in their music during the 1962-66 period.

Doo-Wop

Doo-wop, and its influence on the Beach Boys song structures and chord progressions has been studied in detail in Chapters 3 and 6, but doo-wop has also had an important influence on the Beach Boys’ vocal style too. In their extremely detailed study of doo-wop music, Gribbin & Schiff (1992) loosely define the style as “a sub-category of vocal group harmony (see Table 36), one that contains certain musical qualities, namely group harmony, a wide range of voice parts, nonsense syllables, simple beat, light instrumentation, and simple music and lyrics” (p.16). For the Beach Boys, their most obvious doo-wop inspiration is their use of vocables or “nonsense syllables.”

Gribbin & Schiff (1992) compiled a list of vocal attributes that most often occur in doo-wop music, which they refer to as a “scale of doo-wop-ishness,” that aims to help “discriminate best between doo-wop and other styles” (p. 22). This table is reproduced in Table 35, and contains twenty different vocalisations. While this list is quite comprehensive, Gribbin & Schiff do not define any parts of their ‘scale’ in any concrete way. For example, the difference between

a ‘falsetto lead’ and a ‘castrato lead’⁸⁴, the difference between ‘blow harmonies’ and ‘group harmony running under the lead’ are not well explained and these elements could sound extremely similar depending on interpretation. Despite this, it does touch on many of the important vocal elements of doo-wop music, and is a useful tool to compare the similarities and differences between the Beach Boys’ vocals and doo-wop music in general.

TABLE 35 - REPRODUCTION OF GRIBBIN & SCHIFF’S (1992) SCALE OF DOO-WOP-ISHNESS (P. 22)

Scale of Doo-wop-ishness	
Bass introduction to the song	Castrato lead
Bass contributes between choruses	Nonsense syllables in name of song
Bass running with harmony part	Nonsense syllables frequently used
Bass running under the lead but separate from harmony part	Blow harmonies present
Bass lead	Nonsense syllables used throughout the song by bass or harmonies
Melismas used by lead	Group harmony running under the lead
Falsetto trail off at end of song	Group harmony echoing the lead
Falsetto running with harmony part	Group harmony leading at times
Falsetto running over the lead but separate from harmony part	Progressive entrances technique employed
Falsetto lead	Back beat simple and heavy

There are some vocal elements that appear in the Beach Boys’ music that do not fit into Gribbin & Schiff’s scale, mostly to do with the style of introductions to songs: a falsetto introduction, a vocal tag introduction, a group harmony introduction, a delayed entry of vocal harmonies (usually until the second verse), and vocal melodies that, while mostly in a tenor range, do incorporate some falsetto parts. These are elements that the Beach Boys often employed, making them an indicator of how the group drew from doo-wop but aimed to develop their own particular vocal style. This section will detail some of the vocal techniques the Beach Boys learned from doo-wop music, and how they elaborated on them to create their own particular vocal style.

⁸⁴ For this reason, the category of “castrato lead” has been removed from the charts and diagrams to follow.

TABLE 36 - REPRODUCTION OF GRIBBIN & SCHIFF'S (1992) TABLE OF DOO-WOP ELEMENTS (P. 17)

DOO-WOP MUSIC IS COMPOSED OF:				
VOCAL GROUP HARMONY	WIDE RANGE OF VOICES	NONSENSE SYLLABLES	SIMPLE BEAT & LIGHT INSTRU- MENTATION	SIMPLE MUSIC & LYRICS
	LEAD			
	FIRST TENOR (FALSETTO)			
	SECOND TENOR			
	BARITONE			
	BASS			

Figure 52 turns Gribbin & Schiff's (1992) "scale of doo-wop-ishness" into a column chart to assess which songs are more "doo-woppy" than others. In this chart, the first five doo-wop songs are those covered by the Beach Boys during the 1962-66 period, or doo-wop songs that Lambert (2009) specifically cites as vocal influences on the group (pp. 383-388). After this, nine representative Beach Boys songs from each album appear alongside the doo-wop songs. For a broader comparison, following this are two of the most successful Four Freshmen singles, two Motown singles by the Four Tops and the Temptations (male singing groups), three successful early Four Season singles, and a representative collection of Beatles songs which specifically feature vocal harmonies. This very basic and broad chart aims to show the differences between the Four Freshmen and the Beatles, whose vocal harmonies rarely fitted into the 'doo-wop' style of singing. This highlights the strong connection between the Beach Boys (and their closest American contemporaries the Four Seasons) and doo-wop vocal styles. Even when the Beatles were specifically trying to make music influenced by the Beach Boys (such as "Here There and Everywhere"), they did not tend to use the kind of doo-wop tropes that the Beach Boys often employed in their vocal harmonies. Figure 52 shows that although there were many contemporaneous artists using prominent vocal harmonies in pop music, the way in which the Beach Boys drew heavily from doo-wop vocals was different. From the Four Freshmen, the Beach Boys took both the complex phrasing of chords and contrasting sections of unison singing, and from doo-wop, they took nonsense syllables, blow harmonies and sweeping falsetto melodies.

Blow Harmonies

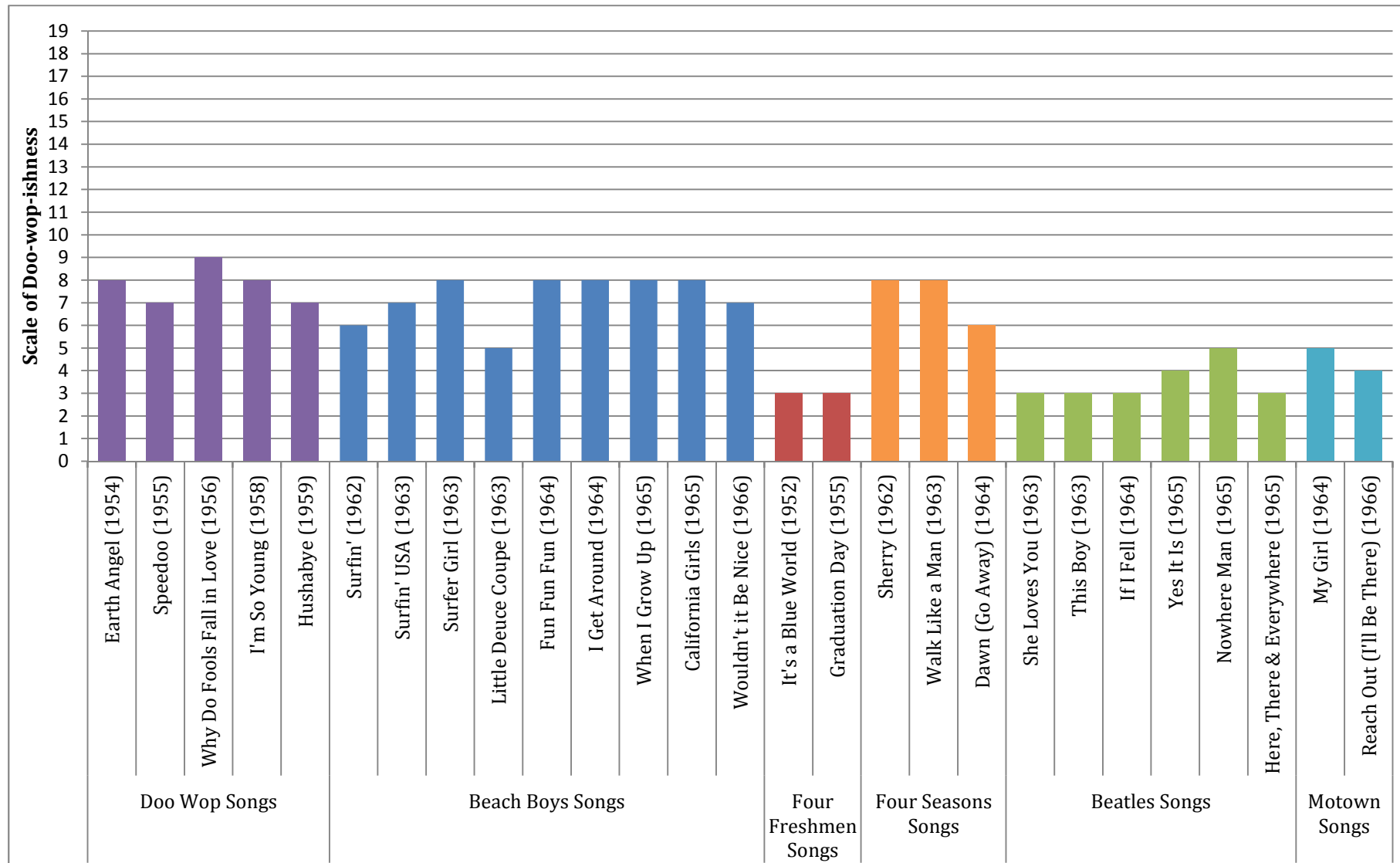
The use of blow harmonies is one of the defining musical attributes of both the Beach Boys and of 1950s doo-wop music; Gribbin & Schiff (1992) note that group harmonies are the

most necessary condition for “a given sample of music to be classified as doo-wop” (p. 17). The term ‘blow harmonies’ describes a particular kind of vocal group voicing, sung usually in “long ‘oohs’ and ‘ahhs’ underneath the lead melodic line” (Averill, 2003, p. 9;), and “essentially represented the chordal parts that guitars or pianos would have played in an arrangement⁸⁵” (Pruter, 1996, p. 34). Gribbin & Schiff (1992) place the early use of blow harmonies in the 1950s, when “harmonies turned the corner from rhythm and blues” and “replaced humming as the predominant background support” (p. 17). These blow harmonies were solely connected with doo-wop music, as barbershop and traditional vocals groups like the Four Freshmen looked at the technique with ‘disfavour’ for being too simple. However, blow harmonies are more complicated than the call-and-response technique found in gospel music (Averill, 2003; Gribbin & Schiff, 1992).

While Gribbin & Schiff (1992) specifically note that doo-wop music does not “offer the musical complexity that is found in music of the later works of the Beach Boys [in the early to mid-1960s]” the group still used the basic framework of blow harmonies throughout their entire career (p. 17). Figure 60 gives an overview of the Beach Boys’ albums and their use of different kinds of harmony parts. The two purple tones colours represent the two main kinds of blow harmonies – ‘oohs’ and ‘ahhs’ – and their frequency of use over time. The use of ‘oohs’ underneath a vocal line is the most constant of all of the harmony parts, and appears quite prominently across all of the nine albums, though the ‘middle period’ of 1964 is the time when blow harmonies were at their most consistent.

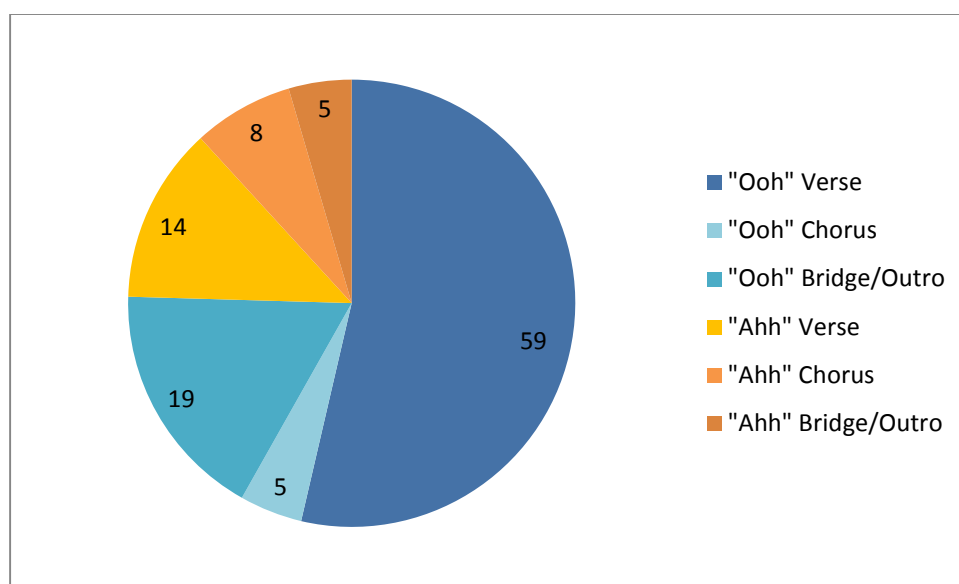
⁸⁵ For example, underneath the lead vocal in the verse of “Little Deuce Coupe” the background vocals sing long “oohs”: these are illustrative of “blow harmonies”.

FIGURE 52 - SONGS ON THE 'SCALE OF DOO-WOP-ISHNESS'



The Beach Boys most often used blow harmonies in their verse sections, and used the ‘ooh’ sound most commonly. Figure 53 shows an overview of the use of blow harmonies in the Beach Boys’ repertoire: the blue colours represent ‘ooh’ parts and the orange represents ‘ahh’ parts. 59% of all blow harmonies use the ‘ooh’ sound and are used to underpin verse sections, followed by blow harmonies in bridge or outro sections (19%). The most common vocalisation of ‘ahh’ blow harmonies are also in verse sections (14%), and from this data we can see that the verse sections were often defined by the use of these particular blow harmonies. This changes dramatically during chorus or refrain sections, which rarely feature ‘ooh’ and ‘ahh’ blow harmonies (5% and 8% respectively), but rather leave room for the entrance of different vocal parts, changing the texture of each song section.

FIGURE 53 - PIE CHART OF BLOW HARMONIES



Figures 54 and 55 show the changing role of the vocal parts from the verse to the refrain of “Little Deuce Coupe”. Mike Love sits at the top of the vocal arrangement with lead vocals, while the group as a whole (sometimes with and sometimes without Dennis Wilson) support his melody with long ‘ooh’ blow harmonies. This is broken briefly during the short ‘breath’ between phrases, where the group sing an alternative phrase (in this case, part of the title). During the chorus, the blow harmonies are replaced by a harmonised lead with a separately moving bass part, as Mike Love switches to the bottom of the vocal arrangement. The different colours indicate different kinds of vocal techniques, and what is evident in the small slice of “Little Deuce Coupe” is the amount of variety in vocal types. The Beach Boys rarely stuck to only blow harmonies (like doo-wop) or harmonised leads (like the Four Freshmen) and instead changed the parts regularly. The example below shows lead vocals, blow harmonies, alternative phrases,

harmonised leads, repeated leads and separate bass parts – all within just eight bars. It is the combined use of these vocal parts that defines their unique vocal harmony style.

FIGURE 54- VOCALS IN “LITTLE DEUCE COUPE” VERSE

Mike Love (lead)	Well I'm not bragging babe so	don't put me down	cause I got the fastest set of	wheels in town
Brian Wilson	- ooh -	- ooh -	deuce cou-	- ooh -
Carl Wilson	- ooh -	- ooh -	deuce cou-	- ooh -
Dennis Wilson	- ooh -	- ooh -	deuce cou-	- ooh -
Al Jardine	- ooh -	- ooh -	deuce cou-	- ooh -

FIGURE 55 - VOCALS IN “LITTLE DEUCE COUPE” REFRAIN

Brian Wilson (lead)	she's my	little deuce coupe	you don't know what i	got	
Carl Wilson		little deuce coupe	you don't know what i	little deuce coupe you don't	know what I got
Dennis Wilson		little deuce coupe	you don't know what i	little deuce coupe you don't	know what I got
Al Jardine		little deuce coupe	you don't know what i	little deuce coupe you don't	know what I got
Mike Love (bass)		little deuce coupe	you don't know what i	got	

Aum Dot-Didit, Run Run Weeoo and ‘Nonsense Syllables’

One of the most recognisable parts of doo-wop music is the vocal technique from which it derives its name: the repetition of ‘nonsense syllables’. These nonsense syllables are the ‘doo doo,’ ‘bup bup’ and ‘dit dit’ that make up the backing and bass vocals of much doo-wop music. Gribbin & Schiff (1992) suggest that these distinctive vocals developed from “a capella street corner singing to replace the [electric] bass (just as finger snapping and hand-clapping replaced drums)” (p. 19).

This technique was not used in other forms of vocal group singing, particularly barbershop and the vocal styles of the Four Freshmen, who actively “looked with disfavour on harmonizing a melody part with humming or untexted syllables, an approach that was in widespread use among African American jubilee quartets” (Averill, 2003, p. 9). However, sometimes this ‘nonsense’ could serve a purpose: Samuels (2006) notes the interesting way in which doo-wop “breaches the boundaries between ‘meaningful’ and ‘meaningless’.” While some songs used unrelated nonsense syllables, others, such as ‘Sh-Boom’, ‘Buzz-Buzz-Buzz’, ‘Mope-Itty-Mope’, ‘Shimmy, Shimmy, Ko-Ko-Bop’, ‘RamaLama Ding Dong’, ‘Ling, Ting, Tong’, ‘Chop Chop Boom’, ‘Ka-Ding Dong’, ‘Rang Tang Ding Dong’ and so forth, make use of the onomatopoeic quality of doo-wop syllables” (p. 312).

For the Beach Boys, these nonsense syllables would play a small but important role in their musical style. Even more importantly, as Lambert (2007) notes, Brian Wilson’s ability to absorb “the sounds of this music” meant he “found ingenious ways to craft a personal style that both reflects and re-conceives it” (p. 20). This “reconception” of doo-wop vocal styles became one of the most essential parts of their vocal style – more important than the ‘nonsense

syllables' themselves.

In their earliest incarnation in the Beach Boys' music, nonsense syllables played a similar role as they did in doo-wop, often featuring heavily in the bass vocal part sung by Mike Love (Gribbin & Schiff, 1992, p. 19). An early example is the chorus of "Surfin'" (see Figure 56) where, as Lambert (2007) describes, "the upper voices repeat the song's title against an extremely active and distinctive bass line on neutral syllables, "bom bom, dit-di-dit-di-dit" and so forth (p. 26).

FIGURE 56 - VOCALS FOR "SURFIN'"

Background Vocals:	Surfin'	Surfin'	Surfin'	Surfin'
Bass Vocal:	Bom bom dit di dit di dit	Bom bom dit di dit di dit	Bom bom dit di dit di dit	Bom bom dit di dit di dit

Over time, the use of nonsense syllables becomes more seamlessly integrated into the Beach Boys' music, with the bass vocals not singled out for doo-wop tropes, as so obvious in "Surfin'". Instead, they started to use doo-wop vocal syllables as rhythmic punctuation, adding to the lyrical narrative. This is exemplified in two of their 'school themed' songs, "Be True To Your School" and "Pom Pom Playgirl," where the backing vocals mimic the kinds of cheerleader chants heard on the sidelines of a high-school football game. In "Be True To Your School" the nonsense syllables are repeated by all of the backing vocals, rather than solely by the bass vocal part (see Figure 57), which gives the song the excited energy of being part of the 'cheer squad'⁸⁶. The vocals are simple but effective.

FIGURE 57 - VOCALS FOR "BE TRUE TO YOUR SCHOOL"

Lead Vocal (Mike):	Be true to your	school now	just like you would to your	girl or guy	be true to your
Backing Vocals:		rah rah rah rah	sis boom bah	rah rah rah rah	sis boom bah
Lead Vocal (Mike):	school now	let your colours	fly	be true to your	school
Backing Vocals:	rah rah rah rah	sis boom bah	rah rah rah rah - sis boom	bah	-ahhhh-

Compare this to the similarly-themed "Pom Pom Play Girl" recorded only a year later and the changes to the vocal parts are quite pronounced. There are now six types of vocal styles (not including the lead) in the space of only 11 bars: blow harmonies of 'oohs' and 'ahhs,' nonsense syllables, separate bass part, harmonised lead vocals and repeated phrases. The mimicking of the cheerleaders is the same ("chi chi nah"), however, the execution is much more intricate with parts changing and weaving together, from the movements of 'oohs' to 'ahhs,' to the switching of the lead vocals to the bass vocal part. The comparison of these two songs

⁸⁶ In the single version of "Be True to Your School", Brian Wilson actually included recorded takes of the Honeys performing cheer leader chants with female vocals, which lead into the song's chorus.

highlights Brian Wilson's growing ability to more seamlessly integrate his influences into the Beach Boys' vocal style. "Be True To Your School", on its surface, is a doo-wop song (the verse even uses the standard I-vi-ii-V progression). However, though despite its use of blow harmonies and nonsense syllables (two elements Gribbin & Schiff (1992), deem as indicative of doo-wop) "Pom Pom Play Girl" is not a doo-wop song. By this stage, the Beach Boys were neither a Four Freshmen-styled vocal group, nor a doo-wop group; they had merged both into their particular vocal style.

FIGURE 58- VOCALS FOR "POM POM PLAY GIRL"

Lead (Mike)	See her in a short skirt	down on the grass	she's wondering if the team's gonna	run, kick or pass
Backing vocals:	-ooh-	-ooh-	-ooh-	-ooh-
Lead (Mike)	She doesn't really know	waving her hands, she's been		
Backing vocals:	Chi-chi-nahhh	-ahh-	-ahh-	-ahh-
Bass Vocal (Mike):			thinking bout the boys sitting	up in the stands
Lead/Harmonised Hook:	Rah rah pom pom	play girl		
Repeated Phrase:		Pom pom	play girl	

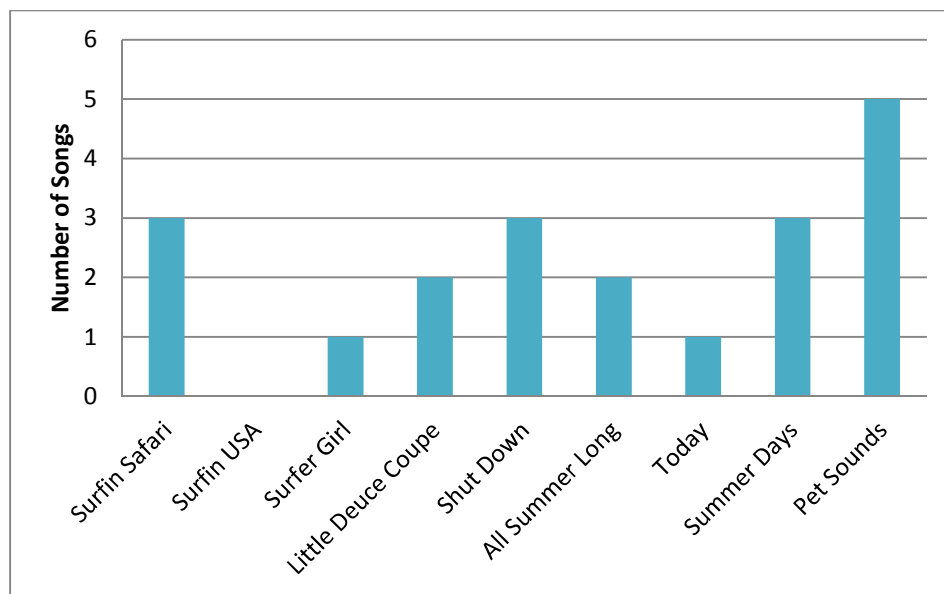
It is surprising to notice trends in the frequency of songs that use nonsense syllables: Figure 58 shows their initial popularity, which trails off by *Surfin' USA*⁸⁷, before rising again for *Shut Down* and trailing off again by *Today*. The most curious part of the chart is the significant jump in frequency on *Pet Sounds*. If the vocals followed the trends of other musical elements, the use of nonsense syllables – one of the earliest and most basic parts of their vocals style – their use would decline over time and be replaced by more complex vocals. While *Pet Sounds* does contain some of their most complicated vocal work, hints of nonsense syllables sneak into five tracks: the outro of "Wouldn't it Be Nice", a short two-bar section in "Sloop John B," the bass vocal in the verses to "I'm Waiting for the Day," the bridge section of "God Only Knows" and a very short two-beat entrance of a bass vocal towards the end of "I Know There's an Answer".

One way to account for this is to note the over-arching nostalgia of *Pet Sounds*, the themes of the record discuss youth through the eyes of someone who is no longer young, and the struggle to understand oneself as an adult. The nonsense syllables on *Pet Sounds* do not play a central role in these five songs as they do in early songs like "Surfin'" or "Be True to Your School", for most, they are small fragments of only a few bars, but their inclusion helps to connect Brian Wilson's more complicated music with the group's past. After all, doo-wop was created by young people, for young audiences, much like the early music of the Beach Boys. These small snippets of nonsense syllables remind us of the group's vocal history, and still appeared in the groups later material in songs like "Heroes and Villains" (1967) (whose complex backing vocals are almost entirely nonsense syllables), "Do it Again" (1969) and "This

⁸⁷ *Surfin' USA* contains 5 instrumental tracks, which could affect the representation of data for this section.

Whole World” (1970) – all songs that touch on nostalgia and the romanticisation of both youth and Americana.

FIGURE 59 - FREQUENCY OF SONGS WITH NONSENSE SYLLABLES



Falsetto Vocals

The use of falsetto has a long history in Western art music, though its popularity in popular music began in the music of doo-wop, and, less commonly, in the in high vocal parts of vocal group singing styles, such as barbershop (Everett, 2009, p. 125; Goosman, 2005, p. 9). Goosman (2005) cites the recordings of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons from 1962 onwards as when falsetto singing among white, male groups came to fruition noting that few white groups were able to skilfully sing falsetto melodies other than Valli, with the exception of Brian Wilson in the Beach Boys (Goosman, 2005, p.272). Falsetto vocals, usually sung by a tenor vocalist, are a particular style of high-pitched singing produced when vocal cords vibrate at a shorter length than usual, a process sometimes known as the “second mode of phonation” (Negus n.d.). Everett (2009) describes the falsetto vocal sounds as “somewhat like a flute because it’s almost a pure tone with few harmonics” (p. 124).

Brian Wilson’s distinctive falsetto, which is often considered the most prominent expressive feature of the Beach Boys’ vocals (Curnutt, 2012, p. 68), has been described as soaring (Boyd, 2000; Carlin, 2006; Schinder, & Schwartz, 2007) and celestial (Lambert, 2009, p. 215). Through its sound, not only is the meaning of the lyrics is presented, but also a deeper connection to the fantasy of youth the Beach Boys so often portrayed. While Mike Love’s nasal, conversational tone represents the confident, boyish bravado of youth, Brian Wilson’s vocals often represent the fragility, and innocence of young teenage life. As Curnutt (2012) explains,

Brian Wilson's falsetto is prominent "not simply because of his presence as chief songwriter or because his place at the top of the harmony stack dominates the ensemble singing. It is because of his audience's attachment to what his upper register represents" (p.68).

In his excellent study of Brian Wilson's music, Curnutt (2012), gives an impressive and detailed overview of the importance of the falsetto not only in its contribution to the Beach Boys' sound, but its connections to wider themes, particularly the feminine sound of the falsetto singing style. Although this became a highlight of the Beach Boys' vocal style, it did not always attract positive attention from Brian Wilson's peers at school. Dennis Wilson recalled "seeing his big brother run home in tears after some schoolmates laughed about his girl-ish falsetto" (Carlin, 2006, p. 19). Many have cited the connection between male falsetto singing and femininity (Curnutt, 2012, p. 68; Dibben, 1999, p. 337), and later, when he was an adult, Brian Wilson himself has cited its connection, and explained his deliberate usage of this particular vocal style. On the recording of "You Still Believe in Me", he explains:

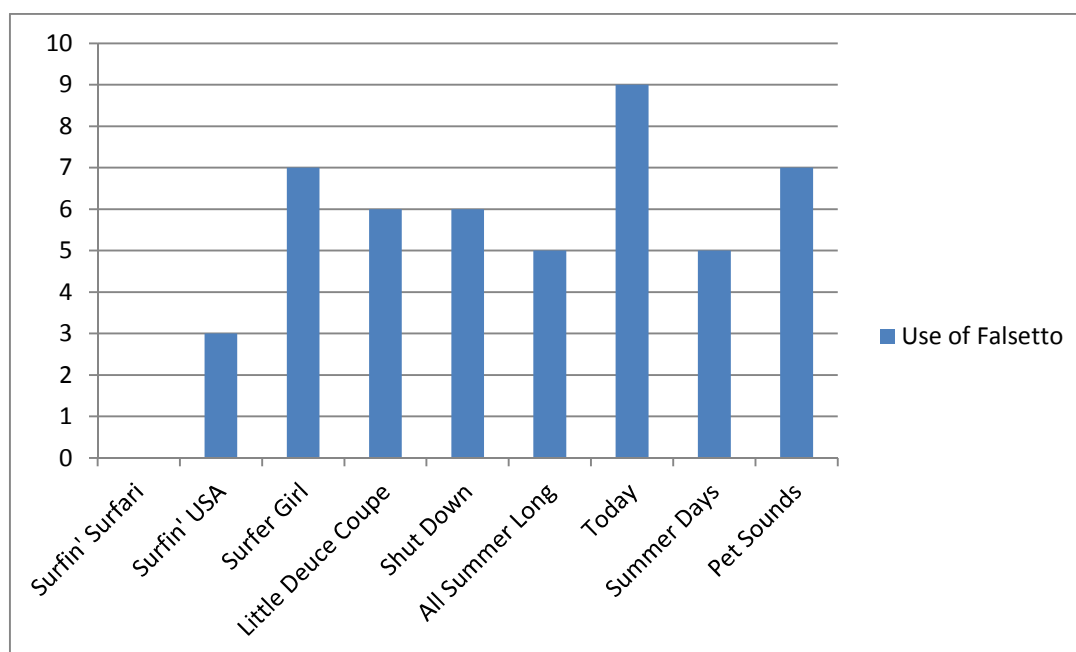
"You Still Believe in Me" was more of what I would call a man who would not be afraid to take all of his clothes off and sing like a girl because he had feelings for people from that perspective. I was able to close my eyes and go into a world and sing a little more effeminately and more sweet – which allows a lot more love to come down through me, you know what I mean?...It's like Kenny Rogers. There's an example of a guy who has a fairly masculine sounding voice. "You Still Believe in Me" was quite the opposite (Leaf, 1997, p. 8).

Although this quote refers to a song at the end of this study's repertoire, Brian Wilson employs this 'effeminate' vocal tone on many songs before this, particularly the ballads such as "Surfer Girl", "Warmth of the Sun", "Don't Worry Baby", among others, as its emotional and melodic sound gives the lyrical meanings of these songs further weight. As Curnutt (2012) observes, "Brian's core audience cherishes that 'sensitivity, vulnerability, even prettiness' precisely because it expresses "unmanly" emotions (p. 68). This is often a distinct contrast from other contemporaries, particularly the blues-revival groups of the British Invasion like the Rolling Stones, who exuded a more aggressive, "manly" representation of teenage love and lust (see "[I Can't Get No] Satisfaction" [1965] or "Let's Spend the Night Together"[1967]).

The use of falsetto in the Beach Boys music is one of its most defining features because it is so consistently used throughout their repertoire, with the exception of their first record *Surfin' Safari*. This use of falsetto is often considered one of the defining elements of early vocal surf music (see Jan and Dean's "Surf City" [1963] or "The Little Old Lady from Pasadena" [1964]), so its absence on their earliest record is surprising. The reason for this is that Mike

Love performs solo lead vocals on many of the songs on *Surfin' Safari*, as Brian Wilson still seemed unsure of his vocal abilities, and was often embarrassed of his high falsetto voice. However, after *Surfin' USA* in 1963, the use of falsetto becomes very prominent. Figure 60 shows the use of falsetto over time, with two main 'peaks' at *Surfer Girl* and *Today* show that these two records that feature the highest proportion of ballads, which were almost always sung by Brian Wilson, and which almost always featured his soaring, emotional falsetto singing. Falsetto was most often used in one of four ways: 1) wailing outro sections, as heard in "Surfers Rule" and "Fun Fun Fun", 2) reinforcing of a hook as in "Little Deuce Coupe" or "When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)", 3) worked into the melody itself, as in "Don't Talk" or "She Knows Me Too Well" or 4) used subtly in the background as a counter melody, as heard in the chorus of "Here Today". Some songs employed more than one of these techniques at the same time, such as in the choruses of "Fun Fun Fun" and "I Get Around", though most picked one falsetto technique as a specific feature.

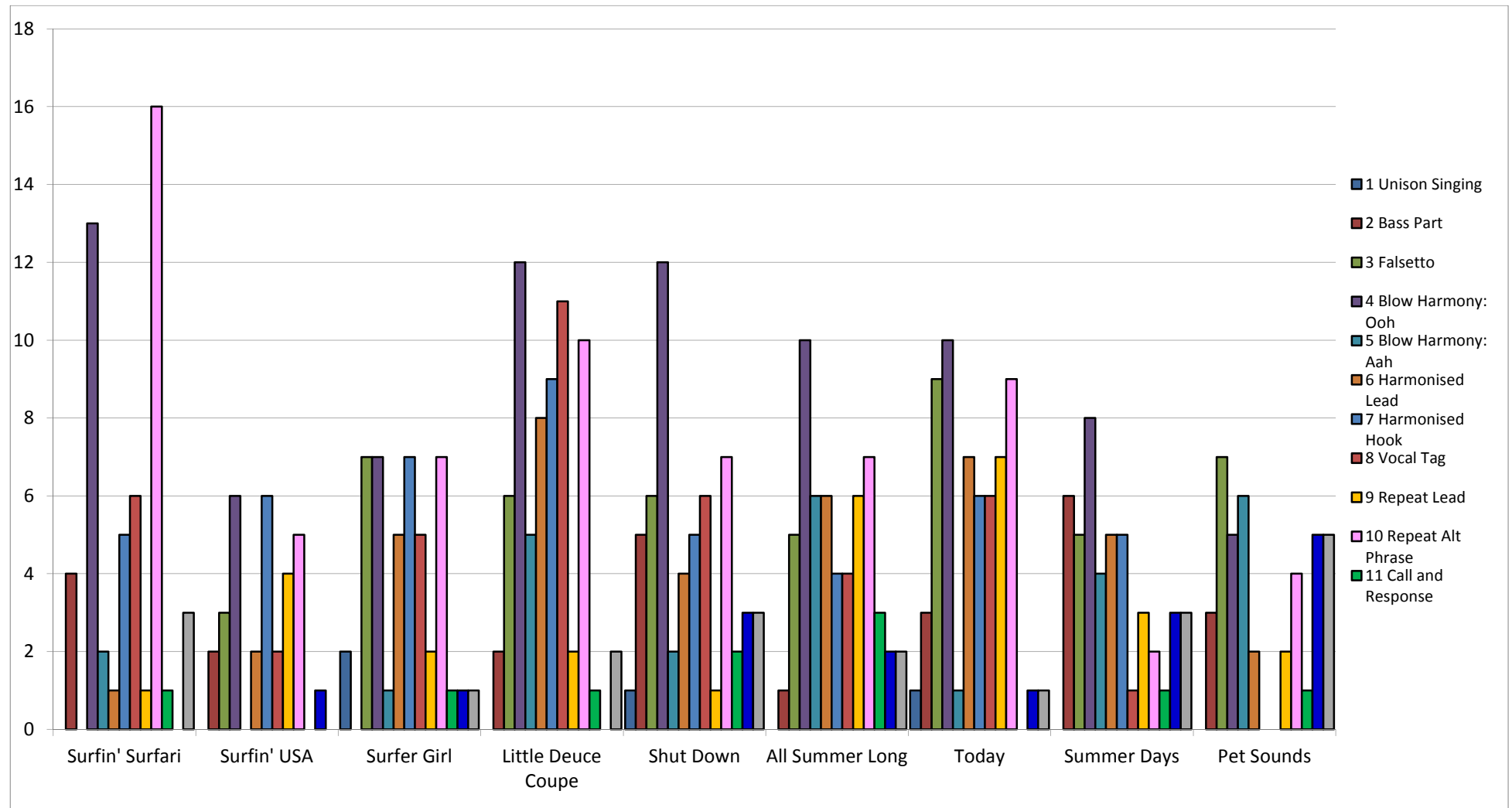
FIGURE 60 - USE OF FALSETTO OVER TIME



In tracing the influence of several of the Beach Boys' vocal techniques (unison singing, blow harmonies, nonsense syllables, falsetto singing, and so forth), we can understand not only how these techniques ended up in their music, but also how they used them over time and often reworked these techniques to make them uniquely their own. Figure 61 gives an entire overview of the use of vocal harmony parts, and while they tend to decrease over time, they still remain a constant and important contribution to their musical style. While harmonies decrease over time, the degree of complexity increases. By *Pet Sounds* we see a distinct decrease in harmonies overall (that record features "Don't Talk" and "Caroline, No", both songs without

backing vocals, along with two instrumental tracks), though the *kind* of harmonies become different. Simple, harmonised ‘vocal tags’ which appear often in early songs are instead replaced with songs featuring multiple vocal lines, often singing several counter melodies at once (see the “B” section in “God Only Knows”). As Harrison (1997) explains well, the “close vocal harmonies on *Pet Sounds* ‘are still prominent... [but] they now find more congenial and expressive surroundings among the ambitious lyrical and accompanimental styles” (p. 39). Although the overall curve over time in Figure 61 is different to those featured in other chapters, the rising complexity of harmony parts does match up to the changing complexity discussed in each of the previous analysis chapters: what harmonies *are* employed are more complicated, even if they are used less on *Pet Sounds*.

FIGURE 61 - OVERALL CHART OF BACKGROUND HARMONY PARTS



Roles of Vocal Parts in the Beach Boys' Music

The Beach Boys were fortunate to have a wide range of vocalists to sing varying vocal parts, from leads, background harmonies and bass parts to unison singing. As Brian Wilson explained, "The Beach Boys are lucky...we have a great range of voices; Mike can go from bass to the E above middle C; Dennis Carl and Al progress upwards through D, A, and B and I can take the second D in the treble clef" (Abbott, 2001, p. 70). From this quote we can place the Beach Boys' vocals almost exactly into standard male vocal ranges, with Mike Love as a bass singer, Dennis Wilson as a baritone, and Carl Wilson, Al Jardine and Brian Wilson (and later, Bruce Johnston) as tenors (though Brian Wilson could sing one note higher than a typical male tenor). The tenor voice is the most prevalent in not only the Beach Boys' music, but in rock music in general (Everett, 2009, p. 119). These vocal ranges only refer to the vocalists' natural voice, not including falsetto, which would increase these ranges greatly. The range of the Beach Boys' vocals was something that Brian Wilson specifically kept in mind when composing his melodies, and he took great care in writing suitable parts and choosing the most appropriate vocalist to perform lead duties: "When you're also writing the songs and singing on your productions, there are major advantages. I could write to our strengths as a group, arrange the tracks to best showcase our voices; choose the lead vocalist that was right for each cut" (Buskin, 1999, p. xiii). Table 37 gives a basic overview of the ranges of each vocalist, though it is not only the range of the vocalist, but the way in which that range is used that contributes most to the Beach Boys' sound.

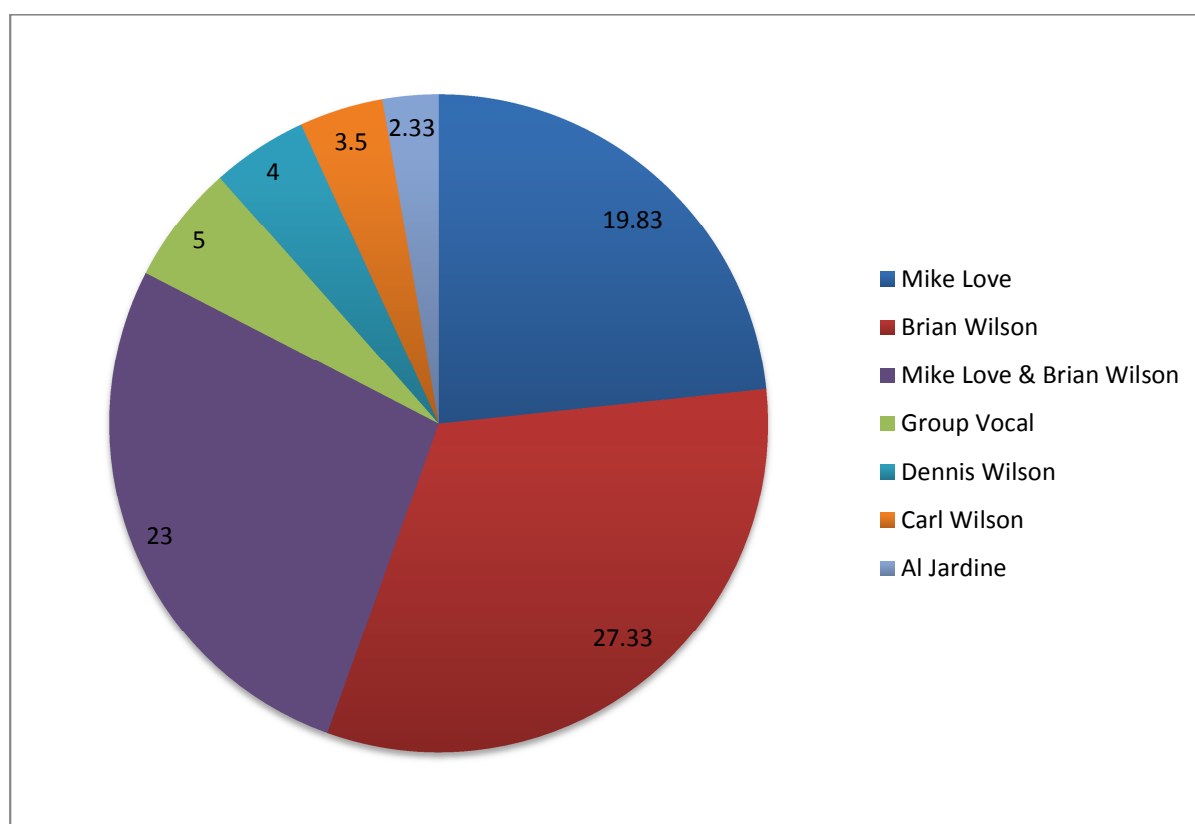
TABLE 37 - STRUCTURE OF THE BEACH BOYS VOCALS ORDERED BY PITCH

Brian Wilson
Al Jardine
Carl Wilson
Dennis Wilson
Mike Love

Figure 62 gives an overview of the lead vocalists on all of the Beach Boys' songs in this study (the data is also presented in full in Appendix F, Table A12, p. 206). Brian Wilson features on lead vocals for the most number of songs, closely followed by songs that use both Mike Love and Brian Wilson as lead vocalists, followed by Mike Love alone, who also takes up a sizeable portion of the chart. The green slice indicates songs that are sung throughout as a whole group, and as such, do not have one specific lead vocalists, and the other small 'slices' of the chart show other lead vocalists in order of frequency with Dennis Wilson followed by Carl Wilson and,

lastly, Al Jardine⁸⁸. An equivalent of this pie chart for the 1967-1972 period would look distinctly different, with many of the other Beach Boys featuring more often as lead vocalists (Carl Wilson's lead on "Darlin'" [1967], Dennis Wilson's lead on "Forever" [1970], Al Jardine's lead vocal on "Cotton Fields" [1969], and so forth). However, in this early period, many of their most successful songs (with the exception of "Help Me Rhonda") were primarily sung by Mike Love, Brian Wilson, or a combination of the two. The sounds of these two vocalists defined part of the Beach Boys' vocal style during this early period, and were used in different ways to different effects.

FIGURE 62 - LEAD VOCALISTS (BY NUMBER OF SONGS)⁸⁹



Mike Love and Brian Wilson as Lead Vocalists

The most common division of labour of lead vocals was for Mike Love to sing the verse sections, while Brian Wilson sung the chorus, refrain or important 'hook' melody (heard in

⁸⁸ "Summertime Blues" from *Surfin' Safari* is not included in the data for this section, as there is some contention as to who the lead vocalist is. Lambert (2007) notes "Leaf indicates that Brian and Mike sing the duet, but Doe & Tobler argue, "It's entirely possible that this is David Mark's sole recorded vocal" (p. 51).

⁸⁹ Percentage numbers are due to multiple vocalists sharing a lead. In "I Know There's An Answer," Mike Love, Brian Wilson and Al Jardine share lead vocals, so their contribution is 0.33 (roughly) each.

songs like “Surfin’ USA”, “Catch a Wave” and “Little Deuce Coupe”, for example); 15 of the 23 songs featuring both vocalists follow this formula. It is worth noting that there are other examples where Brian Wilson instead sings a verse section (“No Go Showboat”, “All Summer Long,” “Our Car Club”) or features in another part of the lead vocal (“That’s Not Me”, “Sloop John B”), however, it is most common for the singers to perform this verse-chorus split between them.

In songs where Brian and Mike shared lead vocals, verses often described a particular scene and choruses reflected on this from a different perspective. Mike Love’s verse sections (which he contributed to lyrically, and as such, was conscious of the words he sung) often used a small melodic range – sometimes only between 3-5 steps - and were more rhythmic in nature. The combination of the story-telling lyrics and rhythmicity of the vocal in the verse sections tended to give his vocal parts a conversational tone, a sound reinforced by his use of conversational place-sitter words like ‘well’ or ‘now’ (e.g., “Well, East Coast girls are hip” from “California Girls”). Mike Love’s verses have an intimate quality when combined with the nasal, laid-back tone of his lead vocal parts. This characteristic of Mike Love’s lead vocals is also noted by Everett (2009), who describes his vocals on “Surfin’” and “Surfin’ Safari” as expressing an “earnestness that brings us along” (p. 121).

In contrast, Brian Wilson’s chorus, refrain, or hook lead vocal sections are in many ways the opposite of Mike Love’s, making large melodic leaps in a wider melodic range. His melodies are often based around long, held notes, rather than being conversational and rhythmically punctuated like Love’s. As Everett (2009) notes, the “exposure” of a bass vocal often “seems to be reserved for contrast against an ultra-high voice”, citing the Four Seasons’ “Walk Like a Man” (1963) and “Big Girls Don’t Cry” (1962) as examples (p. 118). This was equally as prominent in the interplay between Mike Love’s bass and Brian Wilson’s tenor (and falsetto) vocals.

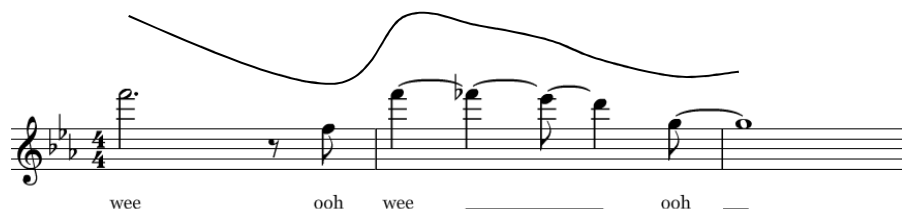
The combination of these two approaches is exemplified in “Fun Fun Fun”. In Figure 63, we can observe the rhythmic nature of Mike Love’s lead vocal, particularly the first part of the melody, which begins slightly before the start of the second bar. “Well she” begins before the first beat of bar two, which reinforces his conversational singing style, as if he just began a dialogue with a friend (a technique employed in many of his lead vocals). The rest of the vocal line is represented by eighth notes and quarter notes, as he fits in many words to describe the story of the girl “borrowing” her father’s car (heard at 0:18-0:22).

FIGURE 63 - VERSE SECTION TO “FUN FUN FUN”



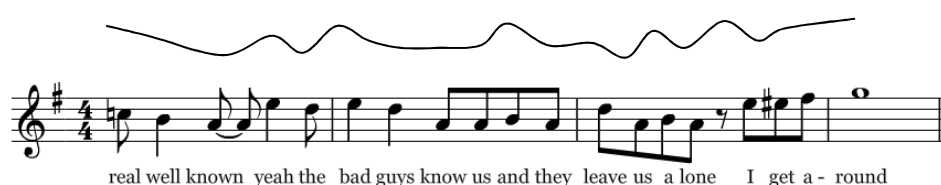
Figure 64 shows a section from the end of “Fun Fun Fun”, one of Brian Wilson’s most iconic falsetto vocal lines (at 1:51-1:56). Here we can see the large octave leap from a high F to an even *higher* F, and in contrast, the notes are long, held notes – none of the rhythmic urgency of the verse. These long, held notes are highlighted not only by the pitch, but also by their contrast to the relentless eighth-note drive of the arrangement.

FIGURE 64 - OUTRO SECTION TO “FUN FUN FUN”



These typical Brian and Mike duet vocal roles appear similarly in “I Get Around”, which, as Wadham (2001) describes, combines a “twangy, nasal tone...topped by stratospheric falsetto lines of stunning beauty” (p. 85). Figure 65 shows Mike Love’s lead vocal, which, again, is filled with syncopation and eighth notes, as he sets the scene in the town where the protagonist lives. The rhythmic nature of the lead vocal mimics the flow of speech, and the use of rhythm in this way moves both the story and the song forward with a sense of energy and urgency. It is similar to what Tagg (2009) would call a “wavy” melodic contour (p. 61).

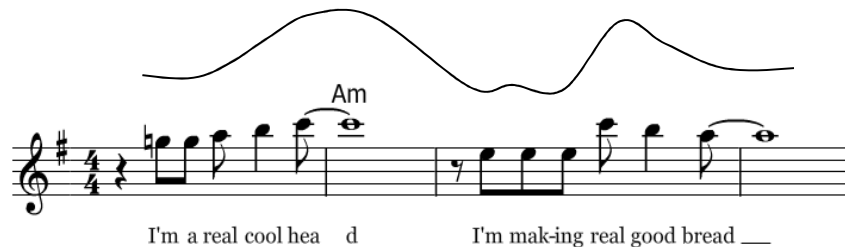
FIGURE 65 - VERSE SECTION TO “I GET AROUND”



Conversely, Figure 66 shows the long held notes of Brian Wilson’s falsetto lead vocal, which ascends higher in pitch over the course of the chorus and uses wider melodic leaps. In “I

Get Around”, Mike Love’s verses set the scene and describe his friends (“My buddies and me are getting real well known” [0:30-0:36]), while Brian Wilson’s chorus expresses the feelings of the protagonist in a more personal way (“I get around”/”I’m making real good bread” [0:42-0:47]).

FIGURE 66 - CHORUS SECTION TO “I GET AROUND”



These ‘split’ lead vocals were used throughout the 1963-66 period, beginning with “Surfin’ USA” and ending with “Sloop John B”. The contrast between Mike Love and Brian Wilson’s lead vocals added textural interest, but also functioned to tell part of the lyrical narrative, or portray particular or conflicting emotions. Everett (2009) reinforces this idea, noting that often, vocalists performing together on a single song each strive for an “independent texture”, and may “oppose each other as if representing different parts of a singer’s persona” (p. 128). This is certainly the case in the contrast of Mike Love and Brian Wilson’s vocal duets, though not just the *singer’s* persona, but the experience of teenage life in general: paradoxically full of confidence and bravado, vulnerability and emotion at the same time.

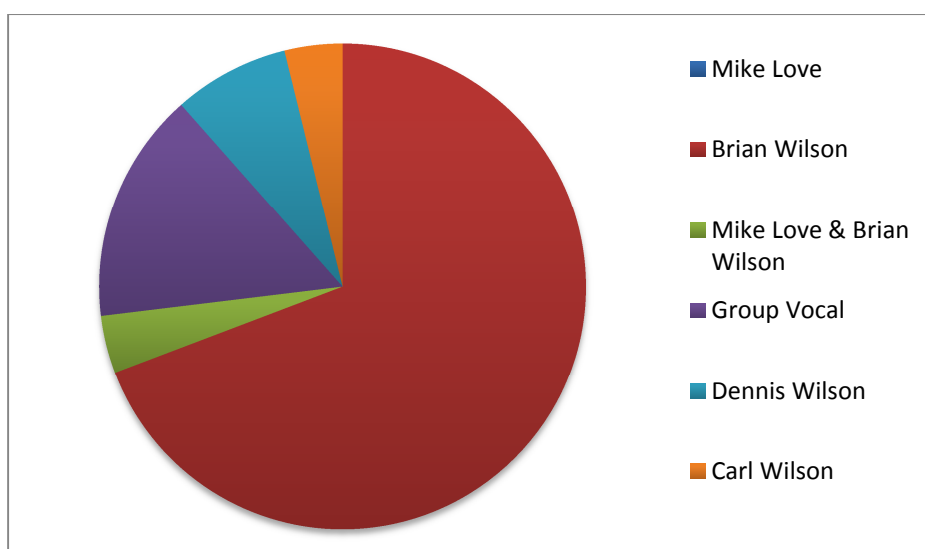
The differences between Brian and Mike’s vocal roles can be illuminated using Moore’s (2012) ideas of musical persona. Moore (2012) notes that as listeners we focus particularly on the identity of the lead singer, and it is through their voice that a track “makes[s] itself known to us” (p. 179). Further, he states that in listening we aim to better understand the ‘personality’ of the lead singer, whether it is projected or not. Moore (2012) poses some important questions in reference to a lead singer’s persona, asking firstly whether a persona is “realistic” or “fictional”, and secondly, whether the narrative or situation described in the lyrics is “realistic” and likely to be encountered by “members of the imagined community addressed by the singer” or whether it is “fictional” with an imagined historical or mythological quality (p. 182). And finally, Moore (2012) asks whether it appears the lead singer (or their persona) is personally “involved” in the situation described, or “is acting as an observer of the situation, external to it, and simply reporting on it”. These questions are very difficult to answer for the Beach Boys, as their vocal roles and persona seem to fall into the middle of both reality and fantasy. Brian and Mike’s vocal roles were realistic, in that they were a cartoonish extension of their real-life personalities (Mike Love famously quotes in *Endless Harmony* that “Brian was melancholy, I was Mr Positive Thinker. That was me!” [Boyd, 2000]), however, the narrative was both real and fictional. The

life the Beach Boys sang about did exist, in some ways, if you were in Southern California and able to partake in the beach lifestyle, though the life was a fantasy for the Beach Boys themselves. Similarly, the Beach Boys certainly *sounded* like they were participants in their own narrative: they had the slang, the surfing spots and, in their early days, even the clothing correct, though they were primarily bystanders who sang as if they were not. The Beach Boys' ability to express reality and fantasy is one of their most enduring qualities, and this paradox is played out best in the vocal duets between Brian and Mike in their early repertoire.

Brian Wilson's Ballad Style

Brian Wilson's soaring vocal tone was best suited to the group's emotional ballads. Of the 26 ballads included in this study, Brian Wilson sings the lead solo on 18 of them (69%), Four songs feature a completely harmonised group vocal ("In My Room", "A Young Man is Gone", "Girls on the Beach", "And Your Dream Comes True"), while Dennis Wilson has the lead vocal on "Little Girl..." and "In The Back of My Mind" and Carl Wilson has the lead on "God Only Knows", perhaps the most emotional of all the Beach Boys' ballads. Mike Love does not feature as a solo vocalist on any of the ballads during the 1962-63 period. This statistic highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the Beach Boys' vocalists – Mike Love's vocal style was used entirely for upbeat songs ("Surfin' Safari", "Shut Down," etc.) while Brian Wilson, and the two other Wilson brothers, possessed a singing tone more suited to the soft, emotional quality of Beach Boys' ballads.

FIGURE 67 - LEAD VOCALISTS ON BALLAD SONGS



Love's lyrics, vocal tone and concise melodies often portray the details of living the California myth, while Brian Wilson's vocal tone, and melodies portray an outsider wishing to be included in the fantasy. For example, in "California Girls," Mike Love runs through lists of things he loves about girls of the world, while Brian Wilson replies by singing "I wish they all could be California Girls": "*I wish*", rather than "*They are*". The combination of Mike Love's and Brian Wilson's vocals is a seductive portrayal of the California myth; for a listener, Love expressing the 'real details' of the scene, and Brian Wilson expressing the 'fantasy' means that California lifestyle comes across both as a superficially plausible lifestyle and as a Utopia where a listener's own problems might vanish.

Vocals and Recording

The way the Beach Boys recorded their vocals also had an impact on the way their music sounds. For Brian Wilson, it was the most important part of the recording process, as Abbott (2001) notes, "the voices were the key instruments in achieving his new musical vision" and that "...Brian [drilled] his singers like a military commander" (p. 70-71). This is evident on *Sea of Tunes Unsurpassed Masters* tracking sessions; Brian is heard trying desperately to quiet the other group members, who are often goofing around and laughing together, take after take (heard clearly in the tracking of "Girls on the Beach" and "When I Grow Up [To Be a Man]"). As *Pet Sounds* lyricist Tony Asher remembers, "He was very single-minded. He knew what he wanted...He was a slavedriver with the guys, but they needed it. Their tendency was to fuck around and he'd say 'Guys, goddamn it, let's do it again!' He'd scream and yell, and they'd go 'Ah,' but they'd do it, and it ended up great" (Leaf, 1978, p. 85). The following section will detail the influence on recording techniques (such as double-tracking) and equipment (such as microphones, echo chambers and reverb units) on the sound of the Beach Boys' vocals.

Recording the Beach Boys' Vocals

In order to fully understand the way the Beach Boys' vocals sound, it is helpful to touch on some of the technical equipment that helped to contribute to the recording process. This element was particularly important to the Beach Boys, as it was Brian Wilson who recorded the parts himself as producer (along with engineers Larry Levine and Chuck Britz), and therefore, his technological choices were conscious decisions that contributed to the vocal sound in some way.

This technical information is sometimes difficult to discern, as there are so few photographs of the Beach Boys in the studio recording. With the exclusion of some very early sessions during the recording of *Surfin' Safari*, and a number of photographs from the *Pet Sounds* sessions, there is little-to-no photographic record of the intervening years that make up

the majority of this study. As such, the information for this section has been collected from the audio of tracking sessions, the minimal references to recording in other Beach Boys literature, and the handful of photographs available of the group recording in either Western Recorders or Gold Star studios.

Two Important Microphones in Beach Boys Recordings

The Neumann u47 Microphone.

The microphone that features most heavily in photographs of the Beach Boys in the studio is the Neumann u47. The u47 was the world's first switchable-pattern condenser microphone, meaning the pick-up pattern could be changed between two settings: cardioid⁹⁰ and omni-directional⁹¹ (Ryan & Kehew, 2006, p. 166). These two patterns were of most use to the Beach Boys in their vocal recording, as it would pick up all of the vocalists in a semi-circle shape around the front of the microphone. It can be seen in pictures 2 and 4 of Figure 69, with its distinctive smooth, round tube shape. Eargle (1996) notes that the u47 was a popular choice for recording vocals due to the brightness it gave recordings, as compared to the "relatively rolled-off response" of the ribbon microphones that had previously been studio staples of the 1940s (p. 117).

Like the Beach Boys, the Beatles also often used this microphone for their vocals, Ryan and Kehew (2006) refer to it as the "engineer's first choice" for their sessions. However, the u48 was preferred due to its figure-eight pattern⁹², which suited the way Paul McCartney and John Lennon sung – on either side of a single microphone. (p. 168). The "brightness" of the u47 fit well with the vocal styles of Brian, Carl and Al (and later Bruce), giving their lead and background vocals a smooth, cohesive sound, especially when combined with reverb from an echo chamber.

The RCA-77 Microphone

Another microphone that appears often in the studio sessions of the Beach Boys is the RCA-77 ribbon microphone. This microphone has a long history in radio, as its sensitivity as a ribbon microphone captured the sound of a voice clearly and with great detail (Rayburn, 2008, p. 238). It also featured on many iconic vocal recordings of the 1950s, particularly those of

⁹⁰ Cardioid polar pattern picks up sound at the front of the microphone in a large semicircle, but does not pick up sound from the back of the microphone.

⁹¹ Omni-directional microphones pick up sound from around the microphone (360 degrees).

⁹² The figure-eight polar pattern picks up sound from the front and back of the microphone, but not the sides.

Frank Sinatra. The RCA-77 and its predecessor the RCA-44, was specifically chosen for recordings with Sinatra during his Columbia years, as its “smooth, warm sound and superior reproduction of frequencies in the vocal range” made it the most suitable microphone for his distinctive voice (Granata, 2004, p. 37). This “warmth” or “smoothness” is a result of its frequency response and transducer nonlinearities (Schlessinger, 2010, p. 1). Not only is the sound of RCA 44/77 particularly iconic, but its round shape is well known as the typical “old-fashioned” looking microphone so closely associated with Sinatra’s crooner image of his Columbia years (Granata, 2004, p. 37). The RCA-77 is seen in front of Mike Love in picture one of Figure 69.

In recordings with the Beach Boys, this microphone was most often used for recording Mike Love’s lead and bass parts, as it offered a perfect counterpoint to the “brightness” of the u47 used with the other group vocalists. The RCA 77 worked well with Mike Love’s deep baritone, as it enhanced the ‘proximity effect’: “in other words, the closer you got to the microphone, the more bass you would hear” (Granata, 2004, p. 37; Ryan & Kehew, 2006, p. 189). Bing Crosby was also known to use the microphone to similar effect in his recordings, as the RCA44/77 “heightened the fullness of his voice” when he moved in very close to the microphone (Granata, 2004, p. 37). In some group vocal recordings, particularly those for *Pet Sounds*, a second microphone – an RCA 77 – is placed closest to Dennis Wilson (seen in photograph 2 of Figure 69). A possible reason for this is that Dennis Wilson’s voice was a baritone, and, like Mike Love, this microphone might have been more suited to his particular voice. This meant that his vocals, as well as Mike Love’s, could be easily blended in with the higher harmonies sung by Carl Wilson, Al Jardine, Brian Wilson and (on *Pet Sounds*) Bruce Johnston.

Tracking the Beach Boys’ Vocals

Through the audio on the Sea of Tunes bootlegs, the shape of a basic Beach Boys’ vocal session can be heard to take shape. A useful example is the recording of “Girls on the Beach”. Table 38 details each of the takes from the Sea of Tunes sessions after the instrumental backings were recorded. Vocal overdubs with ‘a’ and ‘b’ in their title are almost like rehearsals, and often do not complete the whole songs. However, over time, the backing parts are built up slowly. The lead vocal is recorded first, sometimes solo or sometimes in the same room as the backing vocals, but on a separate microphone. This lead is then double-tracked, as are any group vocal harmonies throughout.

Other kinds of harmonies, such as specific bass parts or falsetto melodies, are added over the top and double tracked (as seen in the ‘first’ and ‘second’ vocal overdub in Table 38). Sometimes, the background harmonies, as in the case of “Girls on the Beach”, are triple-tracked.

In the two lines of the refrain, the group harmonies of ‘oohs,’ sung by Brian, Al, Dennis and Carl are doubled. In a later take, the group harmonise the lead melody of the refrain twice on top of the ‘oohs’. The section, by the end of vocal tracking, has six harmony parts of up to four voices at once: three different parts double-tracked. It is this double tracking and triple-tracking that gave the harmonies their rich, full sound.

TABLE 38 -TAKES FROM THE VOCAL RECORDING OF “GIRLS ON THE BEACH”

Take Number	Parts recorded
Vocal Overdubs 1a-8a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike sings lower lead • Backup vocals do ‘oohs’ under refrain
Vocal Overdub 9a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike sings lower lead • Backup vocals do ‘oohs’ under refrain • Attempt at the coda with falsetto
Vocal Overdub 10a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike’s lower lead is doubled • Doubled ‘oohs’ under refrain • Attempt at coda with falsetto
Vocal Overdub 1b-6b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much laughing, messing around, joke singing • Glockenspiel added during refrain while singing
Vocal Overdub 7b-8b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubling of “oohs” in refrain
Vocal Overdub 9b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonies over the line “on a summers day” • More joking around, silly voices
First Vocal Overdub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian’s higher lead in the verses and choruses • Harmonised vocals into the bridge • Dennis on lead for the bridge • Harmonised vocals out of the bridge • Block harmonies throughout the last chorus • Falsetto during the outro section
Second Vocal Overdub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian’s higher lead is double-tracked • Block harmony id now throughout all verses and refrains. Doubled • Line “on a summers day” is doubled with group vocals • Falsetto doubled with group vocals beneath

In modern recording, it is common practice to record vocals separately, as this gives the maximum amount of control over the way a voice sounds. Any mistakes can be easily edited, or overdubbed and parts can be blended in during the mixing process. For Brian Wilson, this was not possible; not only due to the lack of tracks available (most songs in this study were recorded with a four-track tape machine), but due to the way the Beach Boys were used to singing, which was *in the room together*, listening to each other. The reason for Brian Wilson’s unrelenting

vocal sessions was not only due to his love of vocal harmony, but because any mistakes in pitch could not be fixed later in the recording process. The parts needed to be as perfect as possible “on the way in” to the tape machine. As Bruce Johnston remembers, “the sound was what we made on the floor, not in the booth. Brian had to make decisions early on as there were so few tracks to play with” (Abbott, 2001, p. 21).

Figure 68 below is a hypothetical set up of the Beach Boys’ vocal tracking, pieced together from photographs and audio from tracking sessions. The core harmony group always included Carl Wilson and Al Jardine (who stood on a small crate to make him as tall as the other group members), and sometimes included Dennis Wilson. Often, Brian Wilson would join the group in their harmony singing on the highest melodic line. In sessions from 1966 onwards, Bruce Johnston was also added around this microphone set-up. Brian Wilson would often experiment with distances from the microphone to ‘balance’ the vocal sound, in essence ‘mixing’ the vocals by moving the vocalists in the room.

Anywhere from 3 to 5 singers were positioned around one or sometimes (as on *Pet Sounds*) two microphones. Abbott (2001, p. 71-72) notes these two microphones as Neumann u47s, though in the second photograph in Figure 69, the second microphone is clearly an RCA 77, the same microphone Mike Love often used for his vocals. Mike Love was positioned near the main group, but offset to the left hand side. This was for two reasons; firstly, due to Mike’s low, weaker singing voice, which was hard to record, and secondly, so he could have space to sing his own complicated bass vocal parts without distraction from other vocalists (Abbott, 2001, p. 71-72). In the first image of Figure 69, Brian Wilson is seen coaching Mike Love with his vocal parts in front of his individual microphone. Although there is little photographic evidence of this, Brian Wilson may have had his own separate microphone, much like Mike Love did, though this was more likely to be a u47 or u48, much more suited to his vocal style (seen in picture 4 in Figure 69. In session out-takes such as “Girls on the Beach,” he can be heard singing solo falsetto lines, but also appears in the group harmony vocals, possibly switching between the two microphones during a single take.

FIGURE 68 - DIAGRAM OF HYPOTHETICAL BEACH BOYS VOCAL SESSION

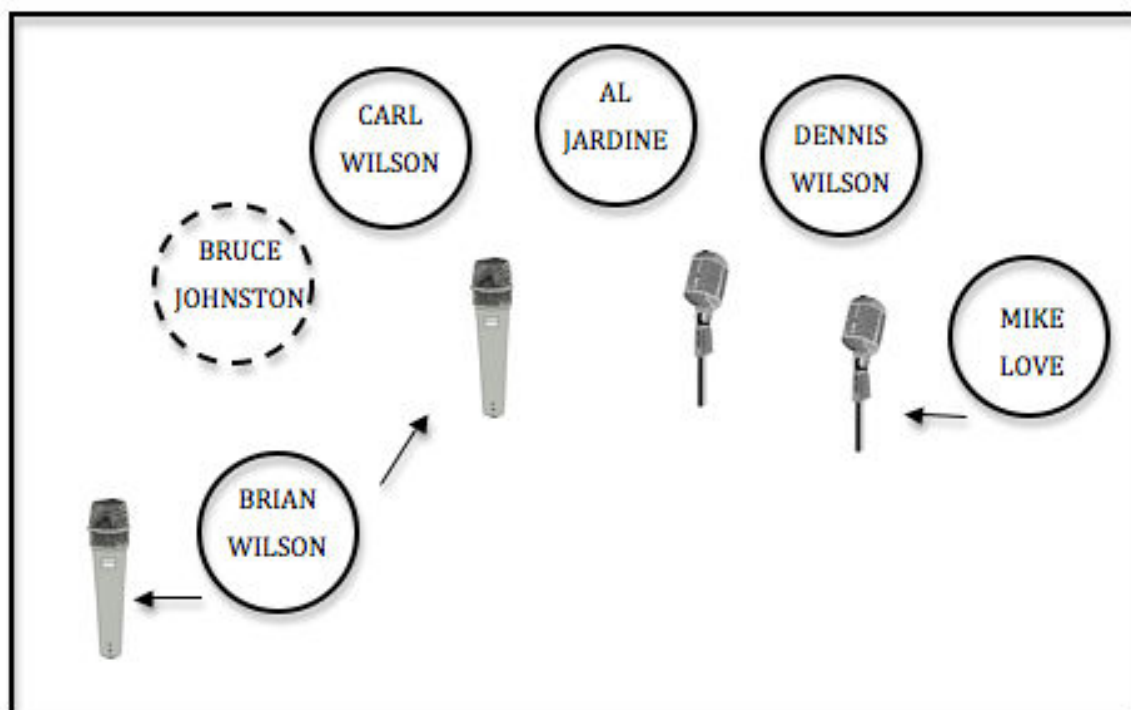


FIGURE 69 - PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE BEACH BOYS IN THE STUDIO RECORDING VOCALS



Echo Chambers and Plate Reverb

Doyle (2005) explains that while the effect of echo and reverb are similar, they are created by different means: echo is the result of a sound reflected so the source is distinctly reproduced, and can be repeated once, twice or multiple times, depending on the amount of reflective 'bounces'. Reverberation, however, occurs when the sound is "reflected either so many times that no single, discontinuous repeat of the source sound is heard, or when the reflective surfaces are too near the listener to allow subjective aural separation" (p. 38).

Most major studios made use of an echo chamber or plate reverb unit; one of the most famous echo chambers was the one built at Gold Star in Los Angeles, where Phil Spector recorded and produced much of his output. Stan Ross, half of the two-man team that built the studio, describes the importance of the echo chamber at Gold Star:

[The studio was] a cramped room where elbow room amongst musicians was a legitimate concern, the reverb chamber was the saving grace... Larry Lavine [engineer] testifies to the speaker in the chamber being a cheap 8-inch speaker being picked up by an equally cheap ribbon microphone (bidirectional). The chambers were a mere 2×3 feet, but the cement lining did wonders to enlarge that (Kubernik, 2009).

The Beach Boys use of reverb largely stems from Brian Wilson's idolisation of Phil Spector's recording methods. As he notes, "Phil also used echo, and since then I've always loved echo, to make the sounds "swim" (Buskin, 1999, p. xii). The use of reverb through the use of either a plate reverb unit or an echo chamber was one of the defining parts of Spector's "wall of sound" recording technique (Granka 2009; Kubernik, 2009), though for the Beach Boys, it is most prominent in the sound of their harmonised vocals. The use of reverb effectively 'smoothed out' the Beach Boys vocal parts, helping them to blend together seamlessly. Doyle (2005) suggests that an important aspect of reverb is its ability to evoke both space and place, shaping our receptions of how and where sounds are located, and whether they are near or far. Without the natural reverb that occurs in everyday life, our experience would be a "wholly disorienting, dead, almost spaceless and depthless world" (p. 38). This concept of reverb does not only apply to depth and distance, it can apply to reverb's ability to construct pictures and landscapes, in the music of the Beach Boys, the hazy sound of the reverb helped to evoke place and time, specifically the sunny climes of Southern California.

Western Recorders, where the Beach Boys recorded most of the songs included in this study, had access to at least four different echo chambers, and often Brian Wilson would use them in conjunction with each other (Desper, 2006). The chambers themselves weren't

particularly large, though they still produced effective results. EMT Plate reverb units were also used together with the echo chambers. While echo chambers were essentially a 'space', plate reverb was a steel plate 1 x 2 metres in size, suspended tightly by springs in a metal frame. The plate is then "energised into traverse vibrational modes with multiple reflections taking place at the boundaries of the plate" (Eargle, 1976, p. 257). The EMT plate reverb also had the ability to shorten reverberation times, which could be used to add "density and richness to musical textures" without a blurring of sounds (Eargle, 1976, p. 259). However, Brian used the plate reverb with longer reverberation times, as it was his goal to blend and blur sounds together, in particular those of the background vocals.

Double-Tracking

Double-tracking is a studio recording technique used often in the Beach Boys' repertoire, and is created by recording a single vocal line, then singing a second version 'over the top' of the original. As it is impossible for even experienced singers to sing the same part identically, the overdubbed vocal is slightly out of phase with the original part, "resulting in a thickening of the sound" (Moore, 2012, p.47). Fitzgerald (2009) describes the Beach Boys' complex vocals and double tracking as a "hallmark of Wilson's studio productions" and argues that the use of the technique helped to "thicken the sound" and "texture" of the vocals (p. 19).

While Brian Wilson used double tracking when recording instruments (a main component of the "wall of sound" technique), he notes the importance of double tracking to the sound of vocals:

How we recorded the vocals was also a big part of our sound, and if I had to choose one thing that really made the difference, it was when we started using double tracking. It gave the leads real punch and made our backgrounds sound like a choir (Buskin, 199, p. xii).

As seen in Table 38, double tracking was gradually built up on all vocal parts slowly over the course of a recording session, and layered over lead and backing vocals. As the Beach Boys had access to a 3-track tape machine in their early recording days, they employed the use of double-tracking quite early on in their career, from "Surfin' USA" onwards. The use of double tracking is part of why "Surfin' USA" sounds so much more 'full' and developed when compared to "Surfin' Safari," recorded the previous year in 1962 (Julien, 1999, p.361; Warner, 2004, p.179). Further, Doe & Tobler (2004) comment on the importance of the technique on "Surfin' USA", noting that the "double-tracking on Love's lead vocal—a practice used extensively hereafter—helped remove a nasal edge, and also fills out the backing vocals to great effect on what is, essentially, the first 'real' Beach Boys song" (p. 12). After several years of studio practice, the Beach Boys

honed the ability to sing and blend together with “utter precision”, with attention paid not just to melody, but to the “attack, phrasing and expression” which define so much of their vocal style (Moorefield, 2005, p. 17-18). This ability is heard best in the *Stack-o-Tracks* versions of *Pet Sounds* songs on *The Pet Sounds Sessions Box Set*, where the vocal parts are separated from their instrumental backing.

While double tracking made the Beach Boys vocals sound more ‘full’ and ‘thick’, it also had another advantage, which was that most of the Beach Boys were also family. As Ross Barbour of the Four Freshmen notes, “there haven’t been many great vocal groups that didn’t have some family in them” (Warner, 2004, p. 179), and the Beach Boys, who consisted of three brothers and a cousin, were no exception. Further, the double tracking of these family voices created a “vocal sound that was the result of both heredity and technology” as the “closer the various voices that appear on a recording are to each other in terms of timbre, the more likely the listener is to believe the multiple vocal tracks are quite literally ‘singing with one voice’” (Warner, 2004, p. 179). The combination of the Beach Boys’ access to a 3-track recording machine early in their career, and the close family connection with most of the Beach Boys’ vocalists, made double-tracking a unique and important part of their unique sound.

Conclusion

The Beach Boys’ vocal sound is one of the most defining, and perhaps the most emulated feature of their music. The construction of this sound goes beyond just the notes themselves, and instead relies on several individual elements which, when combined, give their vocals their unique quality. The combination of influence, vocal roles and recording technology provides a framework for the construction of their vocal sound.

Firstly, their backing vocals are heavily influenced by two particular influences: the harmonies of the Four Freshmen and doo-wop music. While the Beach Boys had a broad palette of musical influence (from Gershwin to Chuck Berry), it was these two particular vocal styles that Brian Wilson used most in the construction of the Beach Boys’ backing vocals. However, part of his gift as a vocal arranger was his ability to take these influences and twist them into something that was his own. From the music of the Four Freshmen, he learned to construct the complex, harmonised vocals on songs like “Girls on the Beach”, and the use of unison group vocals to add dynamic texture, as heard in the bridge of “In My Room”. From the music of doo-wop, Brian Wilson learned to use blow harmonies, nonsense syllables and the dynamic use of sweeping falsetto sections.

Secondly, the roles of the Beach Boys' lead vocals played an important part in both the vocal texture of their music and the expression of the lyrical themes themselves. While Mike Love's conversational, nasal singing style was most suited to the upbeat and positive Beach Boys recordings, Brian Wilson's emotional tenor was more suited to the Beach Boys' ballads. When they sung lead vocals together, Mike Love's laid-back delivery (often used in verses) evoked the confidence and bravado of youth, while Brian Wilson's complex melodic lines (often used in a chorus) balanced the song with a dynamic range of emotion.

Thirdly, Brian Wilson, heavily influenced by the "wall of sound" recording technique pioneered by Phil Spector, made special use of both the echo chamber and plate reverb units present at Western Recorders. Brian Wilson built up the layers of vocals and reverb over time, a technique not dissimilar to Spector's "wall of sound" instrumentation: it was difficult to pull the individual vocals apart, and they ended up sounding like a "wall of vocals". The use of these recording effects was enhanced through the Beach Boys' positioning in the studio of particular microphones that enhanced the vocal qualities of each vocalist. Mike Love and Dennis Wilson were most often positioned around an RCA 77, which suited their bass and baritone vocals (often through the proximity effect), and Al Jardine, Carl Wilson, and Brian Wilson were most often positioned around Neumann u47s, whose brightness was complementary to their tenor ranges.

There are other elements that could contribute well to a study of the Beach Boys' vocals, such as a deeper analysis of their interaction with chord progressions, and of melodic contour, which in itself could constitute its own separate study (though Harrison's 1997 study offers particular insight into this area). Instead, this chapter has aimed to cover several areas related to vocals that are often overlooked in other studies, but which have an important impact on the sound of vocals – musical influence, vocal roles and recording techniques. Brian Wilson as a song-writer, vocal arranger and producer was intimately involved in all three of these vocal elements, and through him, and the rest of the Beach Boys' vocalists, their particular vocal sound was created.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

“Won’t last forever, it’s kinda sad”

In August of 2012, I was sitting in my seat at the Allphones Arena in Sydney, Australia, waiting for the Beach Boys 50th anniversary show to start. As the lights faded to black, the group were announced - “Here they are, the Beach Boys!” – and five men (mostly) in their seventies shuffled out to play an enormous fifty-song, career-spanning set. There was something quite interesting about a group of retirement-aged men still being referred to as ‘boys’, and this was made most obvious when a 71 year old Mike Love sang the opening of “When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)”, questioning what life might be like when he officially ‘grows up’. Listening to their songs that night, I reflected on my research into their music and how the Beach Boys’ sound really did ‘grow up’ during their early-to-mid 1960s period in many ways.

The following section presents all of the findings from the preceding chapters, and orders them chronologically to define the apprentice, craftsmen and artist periods in detail. This will show specifically how the Beach Boys’ sound grew, changed and developed over the five years between 1962 and 1966, while weaving together important socio-cultural, biographical and paramusical elements that also contributed to this ACA progression.

The Beach Boys’ Apprentice Period

In 1961, a group of teens got together to record their first demo, a song called “Surfin”, which was released as a single on a local Los Angeles label called Candix. The group had only been together for a short while before they entered the recording studio with music publishers Hite and Dorinda Morgan. It was after this first recording the group dropped their name as the Pendletones and officially became the Beach Boys. When Murry and Audree Wilson took a trip to Mexico with friends in 1961, they left their sons money for food, which they instead used to buy their first musical instruments. Carl Wilson explained:

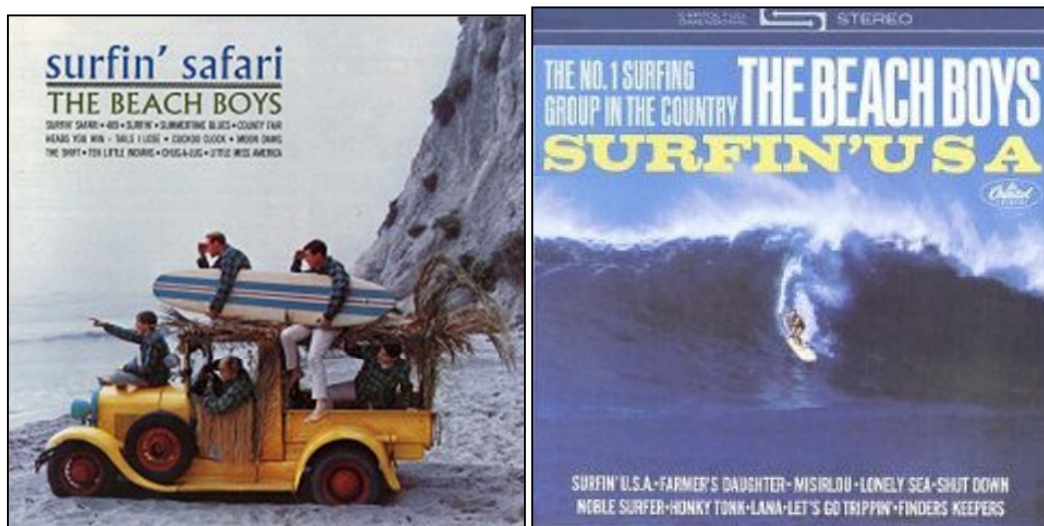
We all went down to a music store and got instruments with our food money... I was gonna play guitar, Alan could play stand-up bass, Brian could play keyboards already ... Dennis just chose the drums. And then Brian said “I’m gonna play bass, and you play guitar and then it’ll be a rock sound, be rock and roll... The group really learned to play after we made records (Leaf, 1978, p. 28).

The Beach Boys did not start in the same way as many other groups of the time. While as young teens they loved music, they did not have a formative period of time where they rehearsed and played shows as professional musicians (like the Beatles did during their time in

Hamburg). In many ways, they did things backwards, as Carl Wilson noted, they learned to play *after* they had made their first recording. When “Surfin” became a local hit, the group was forced to turn themselves into a proper, fully-functioning band much quicker than would usually be expected, and it was this rushed effort to keep up with their single’s success that created the Beach Boys’ apprentice phase. In these early days, the Beach Boys had the determination to create their own music, but had not yet learned the song-writing and performance skills to perfect what would become their unique sound.

The apprentice phase covers much of the Beach Boys’ “surf” period, when most songs discussed the beach and the practice of surfing. *Surfin’ Safari* and *Surfin’ USA*, the records that encompass the apprentice phase, were made and released quickly to capitalise on the growing trend of surf music and culture. On the covers of the albums (see Figure 70) we see the Beach Boys trying to connect themselves with the surfing subculture, despite the fact that they were themselves only bystanders. On *Surfin’ Safari*, we see the group dressed in Pendleton shirts and white jeans (the uniform of Southern Californian surfers) holding a long board between them atop a hot-rod on the beach. On *Surfin’ USA*, we see an image of a surfer tackling a large wave (not something the Beach Boys would ever attempt themselves!). These images are highly stylised, and represent a group of young teens that were still trying to define themselves both aesthetically and musically.

FIGURE 70 - ALBUM ARTWORK FOR THE BEACH BOYS' APPRENTICE PERIOD



The apprentice phase is clearly defined, with many musical elements used during this early time abandoned soon after. Song structures are the most varied feature of the apprentice period, using verse-chorus forms, simple verse and surf rock forms. This jumble of structures represents well the way Brian Wilson wrote his early compositions, trying out different

structures to see how they framed different kinds of songs. The most common song structure during this period is the 12-bar blues, whose appearance in the Beach Boys' music stems from their love of 1950s rock and roll, which often used this progression. This connection to 1950s rock and roll is exemplified in the group's 1963 single "Surfin' USA" which uses the structure and chords of Chuck Berry's "Sweet Little Sixteen" (1958).

The use of the 12 bar blues served another purpose: its simplicity meant that the group was able to improvise and experiment with each other. This is seen clearly in the number of surf instrumental tracks on *Surfin' USA*, many of which use a 12-bar progression. These songs were recorded quickly to fill the album, and the simplicity of the 12-bar progression meant that these songs could be put to tape quicker than other structures, which may have taken more time to learn and memorise.

While the apprentice period songs often have differing song structures, they have a common thread when it comes to some rhythmic elements. Firstly, the songs of this period all feature a "fast" tempo (between 140BPM and the breakneck speed of 189BPM). There are two main reasons for this: firstly, these fast songs represented the excitable energy of the surfing lifestyle that the group wanted to portray, and many songs narrated stories that took place out on the ocean. The energetic pace of these songs worked to express the excitement and, sometimes, the danger of a life on the waves. Secondly, on these first two albums, Dennis Wilson performed the drum parts. As he was relatively young and new to the instrument, he often used the same fast, 4/4 backbeat for most of the recordings. Many of these songs have a similar tempo and beat as it was what Dennis Wilson could play confidently in his role the band's timekeeper. Eventually, Dennis became very proficient on the drum kit when the group played live, though this would take a few more years to develop.

The rhythmic feels used in the apprentice phase are exclusively played as straight, unrelenting eighth notes (with the exception of "Finder Keepers" which features a shuffle feel in the verse sections). No songs use shuffle feels for their entirety, or a 12/8-triplet feel, which would become very common in their craftsmen period. This lack of rhythmic experimentation can be attributed to the group still learning their instruments, and Brian Wilson still trying to refine his song writing skills.

The instrumentation during the apprentice phase was exclusively "basic", in that it used only the instruments the Beach Boys could play themselves: drums, guitars, bass, saxophone and vocals. This line-up of instruments mirrored the groups of the 1950s and also other surf groups in Southern California at the time. In these early years, the Beach Boys were fundamentally a "guitar band", and as such, the guitars, and guitar solos, were featured

prominently in their arrangements. This also meant that the music they recorded could be performed easily, and without the addition of other musicians, when the group began to tour extensively.

In line with other musical elements, these early apprentice songs use almost exclusively simple chords (major or minor triads) with little other experimentation (with the exception of some dominant 7th chords in 12-bar blues songs). Brian Wilson was clearly aware of more complicated harmony in both his obsessive study of the Four Freshmen's vocals and his high school music classes. However, these elements did not enter into the Beach Boys' music until 1963 onwards. This may relate back to the group primarily being a guitar-based group, and these simple chords worked better for Carl Wilson, Al Jardine and David Marks to play and record quickly.

As you would expect from the earlier discussion of song structures, the 12-bar blues progression was the most commonly used chord progression during the apprentice phase, though there was some brief experimentation with the doo-wop progression (see "Farmers Daughter"), which would become an important element in the craftsmen period. There is no usage of any Tin Pan Alley related progressions, despite the fact that Brian Wilson was well aware of this music at the time of *Surfin' Safari* and *Surfin' USA*. The exception is "Lonely Sea," the most musically complicated song of the apprentice period, which makes use of a descending progression which points to the ballad style defined from late 1963 onwards.

Lyrical themes are one of the most defining features of the apprentice period, as this period is when the Beach Boys recorded most of their surf-related songs (e.g., "Surfin'," "Surfin' USA", 'Surfin' Safari", "Noble Surfer", "Finders Keepers"). This was also the start of the creation of their "California myth", as these early songs of sand, sun and surf depicted Southern California as a utopian teenage fantasy, where the weather was warm, the girls were beautiful and the freedom to explore the beach never ended. So memorable were these surf songs, that the group later found it difficult to disassociate themselves from surf culture (and their myth). Nonetheless, the connection prevailed between the Beach Boys and surf culture, even though by 1963, only a year and a half after their first release, the Beach Boys had moved on to other themes. The overall emotional tone of these songs was mostly positive, and expressed the carefree nature of beach life, and the bravery of Californian surfers who tried to tame the unpredictable swell of the waves.

In songs that discussed themes of love (such as "Heads You Win, Tails I Lose", "Lonely Sea" or "Lana"), the lyrics dealt with the most easily definable parts of a relationship: the crush and honeymoon period and the downward spiral towards an inevitable break up. In the

craftsmen and artist stages, these themes would decrease in favour of the more complicated and difficult to define feelings in love relationships, such as regret or longing, were more common. These simple emotional themes suited the perspective of teenage boys, who were soon to discover fame, love and marriages, but had not yet experienced the complexities of adult relationships.

One of the most recognisable parts of the Beach Boys music is their distinctive vocal sound, which began developing in the apprentice period. Mike Love was most often the lead singer, with Brian Wilson only attempting three solo lead vocals on “Farmers Daughter”, “Cuckoo Clock” and “Lana”. Leads were most often sung by either Mike or Brian, as duet vocals did not yet form part of their sound (though it is hinted at with Brian’s falsetto over the refrain of “Surfin’ USA”).

Mike Love’s bass vocal became a defining feature of their sound in the apprentice period, modelled closely on doo-wop vocal arrangements of the 1950s. Also drawing from doo-wop music was the Beach Boys’ prominent use of nonsense syllables (which were mostly basic sounds (e.g., “bop bop” or “dit dit”) and blow harmonies (which used basic triads behind the lead vocals). Perhaps surprisingly, as it is often a feature of other vocal surf music (like Jan and Dean), falsetto vocals do not feature much at all during the apprentice phase, perhaps due to Brian Wilson’s embarrassment about his high vocal range, and his reluctance to use it when the group performed live in their early concerts. By mid-1963, Brian Wilson had gained more confidence in his singing, performing and producing skills, and he began to use his soaring vocal more often during the craftsmen period.

In defining all of the musical elements that appear in the apprentice period, an archetype of the Beach Boys’ sound can be revealed. The apprentice period is expressed most clearly in “Surfin’ USA”, which uses many of the defining features of their early sound, from the use of the 12-bar blues structure and progression (though augmented to a 16-bar blues through the influence of Chuck Berry), the fast-paced tempo, the eighth-note rhythmic drive, basic instrumentation, surfing themes and Mike Love’s lead vocal supported by held, chordal blow harmonies. “Surfin’ USA” was the most successful of the Beach Boys’ apprentice-period singles, and perhaps the reason for this is how best it captures the group at this time: just starting to define their musical style, while also showcasing the professional production style that Brian Wilson improved with each recording session.

The Beach Boys as Craftsmen

On Wednesday the 12th of June 1963, the Beach Boys entered Western Recorders studio in Hollywood to begin tracking their third album, *Surfer Girl*. Many things had changed for the group since 1961: they now had a contract with Capitol Records (in part due to Murry Wilson's constant harassment of A&R representative Nick Venet). Brian Wilson also won a hard-fought battle to make Capitol agree to allow the group to record at Western Recorders, rather than Capitol's own studios, as it was where Brian felt more comfortable, and where many of the session players that would contribute to later Beach Boys' recordings often worked. Brian could also finally be credited officially as the group's producer, a title that does not appear on the first two albums, despite the fact that he took on the main roles of a producer for those sessions.

In mid-1963, Brian Wilson also began to explore writing and recording with other groups, most notably with Jan and Dean, for whom Brian co-wrote "Surf City" (1963) and "She's My Summer Girl" (1963), the former becoming the group's first number one hit.

By 1963, Brian Wilson had also met Marilyn Rovell, who would soon become his wife. The Rovell family embraced Brian as a son, and the stability and love he found in their home was an emotional escape from the turmoil of the Wilson household, and the unpredictable anger of his father. He had also begun his writing relationship with Roger Christian, an older man who became a contributing lyricist to Brian's melodies, and Christian's more adult perspective on life and lyrics was an important influence at this time, too (Carlin, 2006, p. 40).

The Beach Boys spent much of 1963 and 1964 on tour, both in the United States and further abroad. Concert promoter and friend to the group, Fred Vail, described the band during this time, citing their shows as "triumphs for the increasingly confident band":

This was the greatest era. Before alcohol and drugs, before divorces and paternity suits... They were all healthy, all full of youthful optimism. Every show was an event, and they loved the way they went over with the kids (Carlin, 2006, p. 42)

It is during this time that the Beach Boys begin to enter their "craftsmen" period, filled with newfound confidence in their recording and performing skills, and with the peak of their chart success beginning to take shape. With the changes to their lives, the Beach Boys also changed the way they dressed, forgoing the flannel Pendleton shirts in favour of matching, candy-striped blue button up shirts. This look became the band's uniform during the craftsmen period, and was modelled (at Murry Wilson's insistence) on the Kingston Trio, who often wore similar attire (see Figures 71 and 72).

FIGURE 71- COVER OF THE KINGSTON TRIO'S ALBUM *CLOSE UP* (1961)



FIGURE 72 - THE BEACH BOYS PLAY "SURFER GIRL" ON THE TAMI SHOW (FROM BADMAN, 2004, P. 68)



In line with these aesthetic changes, the Beach Boys' album covers also began to show the group in different ways (see Figure 73). While *Surfer Girl* used photographs from the *Surfin' Safari* photo shoot, from *Little Deuce Coupe* onwards, album covers changed to suit the broadening of their music and their lyrical themes. *Little Deuce Coupe* and *Shut Down* feature hot rods prominently, the latter featuring the band themselves around the cars, connecting the group to the hot-rod lifestyle that also existed in Southern California. Unlike surfing, the group

were more connected to these car themes: they were able to purchase their own cars after the early success of the Beach Boys and actively experience the freedom and independence that comes from having one's own car and a driving licence.

On *All Summer Long*, we can see the group moving further towards their artist phase, with an album cover of scrapbook photographs showing the band having fun in the sun with girls. In the album covers of the craftsmen period, we can see the Beach Boys' main lyrical themes clearly: the surf, cars and girls are all here. The craftsmen period builds on what was successful during the apprentice period, and points forward to more complex musicality and lyrical themes in the artist period, and it is this period's ability to occupy a space between two distinct creative progressions that makes 1964 a particularly interesting and important year for the group.

FIGURE 73- ALBUM ARTWORK FOR BEACH BOYS' THE CRAFTSMEN PERIOD



By late 1963, Brian Wilson had all but stopped using the 12-bar blues as an underlying structure in Beach Boys songs. Instead, he started to favour the AABA form, and by 1964, it had become almost standard in the Beach Boys' repertoire. The AABA form was used in Tin Pan Alley song writing as a 32-bar form consisting of 2 verses (with a refrain), a differing B or

“bridge” section, and then a repeat of the verse section. This form also features often in early 1960s Brill Building songs, such as “Will You Love Me Tomorrow” (1960) and “Then He Kissed Me” (1963). These Brill Building and Tin Pan Alley songwriters were professionals who had honed their skills into a successful craft that could (hopefully) be replicated single after single, measured by chart success. Brian Wilson’s move to primarily using the AABA form shows that he was beginning to think of himself as a professional songwriter, who had carefully studied the music of those he admired and was determined to apply some of these formulas in his own work. A similar movement can be seen in the music of the Beatles, whose influences often aligned with the Beach Boys, particularly their love of girl group music (Covach, 2006). Brian Wilson was able to hone his skills to such a degree that hit singles like “Little Deuce Coupe” and “I Get Around” from 1963-1964 packed in a broad variety of instrumental and rhythmic experimentation on top of the AABA form in less than two minutes.

Fast tempos still dominated in the craftsmen period. However, the inclusion of more ballad songs, from “Surfer Girl” to “Warmth of the Sun” to “Keep an Eye on Summer”, meant that slow and mid-paced songs began to be featured in their repertoire. Another rhythmic element that defines the craftsmen period is the increased use of the shuffle feel, which is heard on “Little Deuce Coupe”, “This Car of Mine” and “All Summer Long”, among others. Often these shuffle songs were successful singles, as with “California Girls” and “Help Me Rhonda”. The use of shuffle feels increases on *Surfer Girl*, which was the first Beach Boys album to include members of the Wrecking Crew as session musicians. With Hal Blaine on drums, Brian may have been more confident in using the shuffle feel in Beach Boys songs, compared to sessions using Dennis Wilson, as Dennis was learning the nuances of his instrument in 1963-1964. Ballad songs that employ a 12/8 triplet metre also peak during the 1963-1964 period, showing the group broadening their musical and lyrical horizons by including slow-paced, romantic songs. These ballads often harked back to doo-wop hits of the 1950s, as they employed blow harmony vocal parts and the AABA form: two musical traits common in that music.

With the Wrecking Crew now permanently part of the Beach Boys’ recording process, the instrumentation used in their songs started to change, as Brian Wilson could now use sounds in his arrangements that included instruments that the group themselves could not play. These new sounds augmented the basic line-up that had been used during the apprentice period, and included extra percussion, horns and keyboard instruments. Some of these new sounds became features of craftsmen-era songs, like the xylophone and piccolo flute in “All Summer Long”, the timpani drums in “Pom Pom Play Girl” and the saxophone riffs in “Be True to Your School”; their use pointed forward to the more orchestral textures in the Beach Boys’ artist period. The inclusion of these new sounds, along with the doubling and tripling of bass,

keyboards and guitar parts show Brian Wilson actively employing production and instrumental techniques he had learned from observing Phil Spector in his sessions at Gold Star studios (see “Why Do Fools Fall in Love”). In the craft period, the Beach Boys music began to sound more full and more musically complex in its instrumental arrangements. Additionally reverb and echo chambers begin to be used to give Beach Boys vocals a hazy quality; the use of these effects continued in their recordings for much of their career.

The Beach Boys’ use of chords starts to change during the craft period too. While simple chords were used most often, there is an increase in the use of other kinds of supplemented chords, particularly major and dominant 7ths as well as 6th chords. Instead of the 12-bar blues progression, the craftsmen period sees the peak usage of the doo-wop I-vi-ii-V (or I-vi-IV-V) progression, which aligns with the increased use of the AABA form. In addition to the increase in the use of the doo-wop progression, other more complex chordal movements derived from Tin Pan Alley begin to enter into the Beach Boys’ repertoire during 1964, such as the ii-V-I progression (see “I Get Around”), ascending and descending progressions (see “All Summer Long”) and major-minor movements (see “Warmth of the Sun”). Some songs during this period, such as “Ballad of Ole’ Betsy”, “Warmth of the Sun” and “Pom Pom Play Girl”, use unexpected chordal movement, and these songs are markers to Brian Wilson’s later chordal experimentation on *Pet Sounds*.

After *Surfer Girl*, the Beach Boys made an important lyrical shift, moving away from songs about surfing and focusing more on hot rods, racing and girls. The 1963-1964 period is interesting in that it captures the tail-end of the surf period, the entirety of the car period and the beginning of the period in which their lyrics focus on girls, relationships and introspection. After all, the Beach Boys had begun their own romantic relationships; for example, Brian Wilson married Marilyn Rovell in December of 1964. Unsurprisingly, their lyrical themes started to reflect these personal changes. The California myth was still woven into the lyrics of craft-era songs: the endless summer still remained in songs like “All Summer Long”. However, the myth was expanded to include the excitement and freedom of hot rods and car racing, one of the first freedoms young people experience in their journey to adulthood.

Along with an increase in songs with lyrics about love, songs in the craftsmen era began to discuss other parts of relationships. Rather than the crushes and honeymoon stages discussed in apprentice-era songs, songs about breakups (“Wendy”) and relationship anxiety (“Don’t Worry Baby”) begin to increase, and a more adult understanding of love and relationships is shown. While the overall emotional tone is still positive during the craft period,

there is an increase in songs with negative emotional tone, showing that the utopian fantasy depicted in many apprentice era songs was starting to fracture.

In 1964, the Beach Boys commonly employ a vocal technique that would become an important part of their vocal sound: Brian Wilson's falsetto vocals. Heard best in the outro to "Fun Fun Fun", or the chorus of "I Get Around", the falsetto vocal broadened the Beach Boys' vocal range greatly when anchored against Mike Love's deep bass vocal parts. The youthful joy and mournful sorrow that Brian Wilson could express with his high falsetto vocals sharpened considerably tension between fantasy and reality, between youth and adulthood in their music in the craftsmen period.

Vocal roles begin to change in the craft period too. Lead vocals were most often shared by both Brian Wilson and Mike Love. The contrast between their two voices helped to tell more of the lyrical narrative, with Mike's confident, conversational tone giving way to Brian's emotional and wide dynamic vocal range. Background harmonies sung by the rest of the group changed to suit this new lead vocal arrangement, with an overall decline in simple blow harmonies replaced by more complex countermelodies.

"I Get Around", the group's first number 1 single on the Billboard charts, is a clear expression of their craft period, as it employs many of the musical features which became part of the Beach Boys' sound in 1964. It uses both Mike and Brian on lead vocals, singing two different perspectives on the lyrical narrative. It uses falsetto prominently, along with multiple background vocal lines. It makes use of organs and percussion as important parts of the instrumental arrangement and, finally, its verse employs stop time to highlight new sounds. At the same time, its structure, a verse-chorus form, points forward towards 1965, when it would be frequently employed on *Today*.

In 1964, the Beach Boys were growing in confidence and this is reflected in the sound of their music during this time. They had mastered their instruments, and had completed several national and international tours. Brian Wilson was mastering the art of record production, and now had a room full of experienced session musicians at his disposal. However, once Wilson had mastered the craft of pop music in 1964, he became more inclined to experiment and so the Beach Boys were about to enter a new phase of their musical history. In the liner notes of *Shut Down*, Brian Wilson writes that the Beach Boys were "ready to jump bad" (as cited in Leaf, 1990b). This musical, lyrical and personal "jump" took them into 1965 and their movement to the artist period.

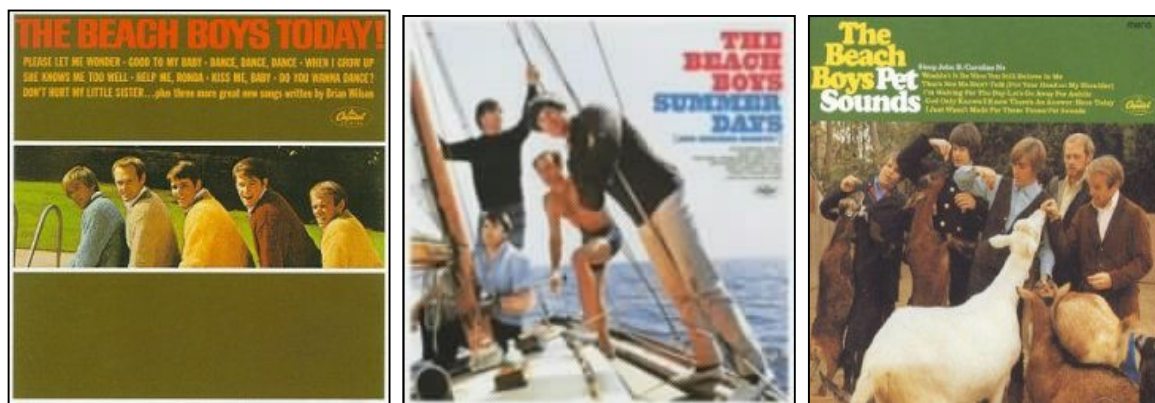
The Beach Boys as Artists

By 1965, Brian Wilson had made the difficult decision to no longer tour with the Beach Boys. This decision came after Brian suffered a kind of nervous breakdown during a flight, where he openly sobbed to his brothers and band mates that he could no longer handle the pressure of touring. The relentless schedule meant that Brian did not get enough rest, but also, more importantly, he had no time or space to be creative and write the songs for the next Beach Boys albums. The news hit the group hard, but eventually they began to see the positives of Brian's move, as while they group were out on the road, Brian could be in the studio devoting himself fully to writing their next big hits. The Beatles made a similar decision in 1966, as they too grew tired of the touring, the screaming, and the lack of time to fully devote themselves to their creative work.

With the responsibility of touring out of the way, Brian Wilson immersed himself in both the studio and in the burgeoning drug culture of Los Angeles. Brian's newfound time and freedom for musical experimentation also aligned with his first engagement with marijuana, and eventually LSD ("California Girls" is often referred to as the first Beach Boys' song written under the influence of LSD, and the hazy, orchestral introductory section does well to express this). However, these drug experiences were not always positive for Brian Wilson, as Loren Schwartz remembers: "So one night Brian took it. One hundred and twenty five mics of pure Owsley. He had the full-on ego death. It was a beautiful thing". Schwartz further describes Brian being terrified of the hallucinations, and claims that he "ran into the apartment's bedroom, slammed the door, and collapsed trembling in bed, tucking his head beneath the pillows" (Carlin, 2006, p. 65). Despite this harrowing first experience with LSD, Brian continued to use the drug, and the combination of drug use and Brian's departure from touring changed the Beach Boys music in many ways, and took their work into the artist period.

Along with the changes to their music, the Beach Boys also made some aesthetic changes. They moved on from their uniform of matching blue candy striped shirts and instead embraced a look that was more in line with 1960s counter-cultural fashion, particularly on the cover of *Pet Sounds* (see Figure 74), where Brian Wilson adopted a Beatles-like hairstyle and a double-breasted pea coat similar to the image of the Beatles (the cover of *Rubber Soul* is a good comparison). There is also a change to their album art, with the group now pictured prominently without the addition of surf, cars or girl-related tropes. Their music was now more an expression of themselves as young adults, and this is expressed both lyrically and musically during the artist period.

FIGURE 74 - ALBUM ARTWORK FOR THE BEACH BOYS' ARTIST PERIOD



This new musical shift can be seen in their use of song structure, particularly with the AABA form quickly replaced by the verse-chorus (VC) form. The VC form suited this new, more complex music, as it was a flexible song framework that extended beyond the 32-bar AABA form. More flexible song forms and longer songs meant more time for musical experimentation, and this is seen best on the B-side of *Today*, which features many musically and lyrically complex ballads. By *Pet Sounds*, the VC form had given way to unconventional structures that were not often used in popular music of the time (such as the AABB binary structure of “You Still Believe in Me,” or the AAAB structure of “I’m Waiting for the Day”). These experimental structures suited the experimental music expressed on that album.

Some clear rhythmic changes begin to take place in the art period, particularly in terms of tempo and metre. In this period, songs with fast tempos disappear almost completely and are replaced by songs with slow to mid-paced tempos. The slower tempos are due to an increase in ballad songs, and these slower tempos meant that intricacies of arrangements could be heard in detail. For example, such musical subtleties as the delicate triplet piano motif of “Kiss Me Baby”, and the mournful melody of “Don’t Talk” would be lost at a fast-paced tempo. The use of the shuffle feel common in the craftsmen period also declines over the art period, and when it is employed, it is only done so in an implied fashion (heard best on “God Only Knows”). These kinds of rhythmic subtleties define much of the art period, particularly on *Pet Sounds*, where the drum kit is no longer a time keeper that grounds a song, but merely a series of sounds that interact with harmony and melody in the same way as any other instrument (the tambourine hits in “That’s Not Me” are a good example of this). Songs with 12/8 metre also sharply decrease, and are replaced by a quarter note feel heard often on *Summer Days* in songs like “California Girls” and “You’re so Good to Me”. Again, this move, like change in tempo, opens up a song’s arrangement for more intricate harmonic and rhythmic parts.

The instrumentation of songs in the art period is almost exclusively orchestral (particularly on most of *Today* and the entirety of *Pet Sounds*) and includes many new sounds and textures, such as woodwinds, extra percussion, strings, French horns and the use of the Electro-Theremin (on “I Just Wasn’t Made for These Times”), the latter of which would become a defining feature of “Good Vibrations” at the end of 1966. Beach Boys’ recording sessions were now crowded with Wrecking Crew musicians, many playing the same parts on the same instrument (inspired by Spector’s “wall of sound”), or the same parts on different instruments (such as the use of tic tac bass parts on *Pet Sounds*). Particular microphones were used during the recording of vocals during this time, and these microphones best suited the vocals of each Beach Boy. Separating some of these vocals (mainly Mike Love and Brian Wilson’s vocals) in the recording process meant that the vocals could be mixed with more care and attention to detail. An expansion of recording technology by 1965 meant Brian Wilson had more tracks to record onto tape (a four track machine, rather than the two and three track machines of the apprentice and craftsmen period), and he devoted this extra track to the recording and arranging of vocal parts.

By this stage, the Beach Boys were no longer just a guitar band: no one instrument was at the centre of every arrangement, and parts were laid out horizontally, with instruments weaving in and out to define song sections. Experimentation with sounds was also a feature of this period; for example, the use of an empty orange juice container to create the hollow rattle of percussion on “Caroline No,” the otherworldly melodies of Electro-Theremin on “I Just Wasn’t Made for These Times”, or the buzzy bass harmonicas that feature on “I Know There’s an Answer”. George Martin describes these relationships between instruments as like:

“Brilliant colours you hadn’t seen before. Brian was mixing his palette beautifully, he put instruments together that were unlikely. Unusual sounds were another thing. The way he handled the voices. He wouldn’t just do decoration; he would start new themes with the counterpoint... a kind of interweaving, a little thread that started life as a decoration and suddenly you find it turning into song. Terribly clever like that (Leaf, 1997, p. 120).

The use of orchestral instruments was something many psychedelic groups were experimenting with by the late 1960s. The Beatles are the most obvious example of this, and the orchestral arrangements on “A Day in the Life” and other *Sgt Pepper*-era songs was in part influenced by Brian Wilson’s experimentation on *Pet Sounds*. As George Martin comments: “Without *Pet Sounds*, *Sgt. Pepper* wouldn’t have happened. *Revolver* was the beginning of the whole thing. But *Pepper* was an attempt to equal *Pet Sounds*. It was a spur” (Leaf, 1997, p. 120).

Brian Wilson's experimentation with orchestral textures continued into 1967 with the recording and arranging of *Smile*, and he took these methods of interweaving instrumental parts, use of different sounds and textures and developed them even further (see "Heroes and Villains" [1967]).

The Beach Boys' use of chords also changed dramatically in the art period. By *Pet Sounds*, simple triad chords were eclipsed by an overwhelming use of supplementary chords, particularly major 7ths, 6ths, suspended chords, and 'slash chords' which forgo the traditional root note in the bass and are anchored instead by other notes, creating tension and dissonance. Use of chord progressions starts to change too, with the 12-bar blues no longer employed, and the doo-wop progression being phased out (only heard on "Please Let Me Wonder", "I'm So Young", "Kiss me Baby", "She Knows Me too Well" and "In the Back of my Mind", the emotional ballads on the *Today* album). Other Tin Pan Alley progressions, such as the ii-V-I, also decline, used lastly on "Let Him Run Wild" on *Summer Days*. Ascending and descending progressions also decline, only appearing on "When I Grow Up (to be a Man)", "In the Back of my Mind" and "The Girl from New York City". Major-minor movements decline too, but are still in use on *Pet Sounds* on "I'm Waiting for the Day" and "Here Today". What replaces these progressions are chordal movements that are often unexpected, and do not naturally fall into pre-defined models, from the key-obscuring movements in "God Only Knows", to the unexpected and constant modulating of "That's Not Me". By this stage, Brian Wilson had learned all the 'rules' of song writing, and was now ready to break them: he had moved past the craft of song writing, and was now using that knowledge to assemble his musical harmony in new, expressive ways.

In 1964, the last of the Beach Boys' surf and car songs were recorded ("Don't Back Down" and "Little Honda" [though it was a motorbike] respectively). From 1965 onwards, Beach Boys lyrics became more thoughtful and introspective, and often reflected on youth from the perspective of someone who is no longer a teenager. Themes of love and relationships were most common, and there was a sizable shift in the kinds of feelings expressed: more songs began to engage with difficult or uncomfortable feelings, such as longing ("Wouldn't it be Nice"), regret ("She Knows me Too Well", "Kiss Me Baby") and anxiety ("In the Back of my Mind"). Further to this, songs on *Pet Sounds* started to reflect thoughtfully on oneself ("That's Not Me", "You Still Believe in Me"), of wider society in general ("I Know There's an Answer", "I Just Wasn't Made for These Times") and also the loss of innocence ("Caroline, No"). These themes are clearly at extreme odds with the simple surf and car songs the group was previously renowned for; as the Beach Boys grew up, so too did their lyrical themes, helped in part by Tony Asher's contribution to the lyrics on *Pet Sounds*. During the art period, and particularly on *Pet Sounds*, we can hear the Beach Boys trying to disassemble the California myth they had spent the

previous few years constructing. The last breath of the myth is heard on “California Girls”; however, by *Pet Sounds*, those fantasies had all but disappeared and were replaced by an underlying loss of innocence and resignation.

These introspective and reflective themes are reflected in large changes in emotional tone. During this time, there is a steep decrease in songs that are purely “positive” or “negative” and an increase in “combined” songs, which feature a mixture of emotions. The bitter sweetness of emotional tone is evidenced in songs like “Please Let Me Wonder”, where the singer is openly declaring his love, but comments “please forgive my shaking, can’t you tell me heart is breaking, can’t make myself say what I planned to say”. Similarly, “In the Back of My Mind” tells a story of a happy relationship, although the singer is plagued with worry and insecurity, wondering: “What will I do if I lose her? It will always be way in the back of my mind”. “Wouldn’t it be Nice” describes the joy of a loving relationship, but the lovers are unable to progress: “Wouldn’t it be nice if we were older? Then we wouldn’t have to wait so long”. All they can do is “talk about it”. The broadening of emotions in the Beach Boys’ lyrical themes, and the rise in songs with bittersweet emotional tone are a defining feature in art-period songs.

The sound of the Beach Boys’ vocals also starts to change in 1965. Most notably, Brian Wilson appears most often as lead vocalist, as his high, soaring vocals were better suited to the lyrical direction the group was taking during the 1965-66 period than confident, nasal Mike Love. Some songs, such as “Kiss Me Baby” or “California Girls” still use Mike Love and Brian as lead vocalists together, but overall, there is a steep decline in Mike Love’s role as a solo lead vocalist. During this time, some of the other Beach Boys shared more of the lead vocal duties, with Al Jardine on “Help Me Rhonda”, Dennis Wilson on “In the Back of my Mind” and perhaps most recognisably, Carl Wilson’s emotional vocal on “God Only Knows”, which Brian had reserved specially for his younger brother to sing.

Background vocal roles also start to shift, with a steep decline in simple blow harmonies, which are replaced by counter-melodic parts and multiple separate vocal lines (see the outro to “God Only Knows”). During this time, we see the peak use of Brian Wilson’s falsetto, whose sound was suited to the wide melodic range of many *Pet Sounds* songs, and also suited the emotional, often romantic themes of art-period songs. Somewhat curiously, early doo-wop influences start to reappear on *Pet Sounds*, with an increase of nonsense syllables; however, the way they are articulated is much more sophisticated. Far from the simplicity of “bom bom dit dit” in “Surfin’”, on *Pet Sounds*, nonsense syllables are subtle, often appearing in only one part of a song, quickly poking through an arrangement before vanishing again (see Mike Love’s “Um be-doo-be” in “I Know There’s an Answer” [2:28] or the “ahh-bee-doo-be-do” backing vocal in “I’m

Waiting for the Day” [0:47]). The subtle inclusion of nonsense syllables harks back to the band’s earliest influences, and the parts work well to connect with the nostalgia of *Pet Sounds* in general, an album that looks back at one’s youth from the perspective of a young adult.

“God Only Knows” is a particularly good example of the Beach Boys’ art period, and is a song often critically (Leaf, 1978) and academically (Harrison, 1997; Lambert, 2007) discussed as an important recording for the group. It uses many of the important musical attributes common to the art period: the implied shuffle feel, the slow-paced tempo, the use of orchestral instrumentation, and the use of complex, supplementary chords (which often obscure the key of the song) and sophisticated modulation. The lyrics perfectly express the bittersweet, complex emotional tone of many art-period songs, as the second verse sings: “If you should ever leave me, though life would still go on believe me, the world would show nothing to me, so what good would living do me?”; this lyric was perhaps one of the saddest and complicated expressions of love the Beach Boys produced. Nik Cohn aptly described the complex emotional mood of *Pet Sounds* as “sad songs about loneliness and heartbreak. Sad songs even about happiness” (Cohn, 1969, p. 103). The use of vocals on “God Only Knows” is also a clear musical indicator of the art period; it uses multiple vocal lines instead of straightforward blow harmonies, heard best in the instrumental interlude between the second and third verse. This section features a cascade of different voices and vocal lines which harmonise together tightly before sliding into the final verse. Musically, lyrically and emotionally, “God Only Knows” contains all of the main musical features of art-period songs. The sophistication in portraying complex emotions that the Beach Boys used in the arrangement, writing and recording of “God Only Knows” is perhaps why it is one of the group’s most loved recordings almost half a century later.

At the close of 1966, the Beach Boys released “Good Vibrations”, a song that extended even further the complex musicality on *Pet Sounds*, and a song that became another number 1 single for the group. The song, which was recorded over six months in several studios, showcased a *new* Beach Boys sound: one that showcased Brian Wilson’s increasingly segregated song writing process and Van Dyke Parks’ esoteric, literary lyrics. The Beach Boys story changes dramatically after this point. However, the years leading up to the recording of *Smile* were a continuous progression, and this can be heard in the musical, lyrical and personal changes during the 1962-1966 period.

Pulling the Beach Boys’ Sound Together

Figure 75 takes all of the findings of this analysis of the Beach Boys’ music and places them in a large, fold-out table, showing the progression of each musical element over time. The change in colour from light to dark shows the progression from apprentice (light blue) to

craftsmen (middle blue) and artists (dark blue) and is ordered by year. In doing this, we can see that their music did not progress evenly over time, but rather, their musical progression happened in short, uneven bursts. For example, song structures move quickly into the craft period by 1963, however, rhythmic feels (such as the quarter note feel), took much longer (1965). The peak usage of the doo-wop progression occurred in 1964, though other kinds of Tin Pan Alley progressions were starting to appear in the craft period. The flexibility of the ACA model means that we can see (and hear) the changes to the Beach Boys' music in the order in which they happened: not evenly divided into strict boxes or categories over time, but rather, as many separate musical elements that develop in parallel with each other.

In this study, the concept of a 'sound' has been used to draw together musical and non-musical elements that contribute to the creation of the Beach Boys' music. While much of this thesis has dealt with specific musical elements (such as structure, chords, and so forth), care has been taken to connect these things to a wider cultural context in order to give a broad view of the analysis findings. While these musical elements are important - after all, they're what we *hear* - the non-musical things related to the Beach Boys such as group's past, how they formed as a band, their location in Southern California, Brian Wilson's experimentation with drugs, and so on, all contribute to what we hear on their records. For example, when Brian Wilson decided to no longer tour with the group, this allowed him more time to experiment in the studio, which had an enormous impact on the way their music sounded: this decision was the bridge between their craft and art periods. Acknowledging the group's history, biography and personalities helps provide important puzzle pieces that contribute to the bigger picture of how their sound was created and developed.

A group's 'sound' is not merely a single frame or musical snapshot: it is a moving, changing, and developing entity dependent on many musical and non-musical contributors. This study has aimed to observe, analyse and understand these elements through the ACA model, which provided a flexible framework for this process. The ACA model, influenced by Covach's (2006) study of the Beatles' music, meant that the Beach Boys' music could be considered as not just a collection of chords and melodies, but a process, which reflects the way music itself is written, recorded and performed.

To highlight the changes to the Beach Boys' sound, and the different stages of the ACA model, methods using colours, shapes, tables, charts and other kinds of visual musicology were necessary to clearly represent these musical changes. The use of visual methods in this study is a contribution to a wider trend in popular music research, which has accepted the role of traditional musical analysis, but also sought ways to augment it with visual and empirical

methods that best represent the way popular music sounds. Figure 75 is one example of this, however, the entirety of this study has benefitted from the representation of musical data in different ways.

Firstly, the use of colours, shapes and tables to represent musical data have allowed for large-scale trends to be observed and uncovered, and as such, these methods are best suited to large-scale data collection and analysis. In arranging information in these charts and tables, trends and comparisons were able to be made in the Beach Boys' music that would not have otherwise been made. As a result, these visual and empirical methods have enabled this study to have a broad, wide-ranging view of the Beach Boys' music and history of time.

Secondly, the process of turning quantitative data (such as lyrics, for example) into qualitative data has meant that information can be arranged in different ways, and approached from different angles. For example, once the raw data (found in the appendices and the included disc) was collected, these numbers could be ordered in terms of year, album, song type, songwriter, and so forth, meaning that a great deal of information could be gained from one section of data.

Thirdly, the visual representation of musical information means that the findings of this analysis may be more accessible to those engaged in the study of popular music, but who do not have previous musical training. Popular music analysis has long seen a divide between the musical and the cultural, and these methods are a contribution to making interesting and important musical findings understood by a wider range of readers.

Fourthly, it is hoped that the methods used in this study of the Beach Boys music may be suitable as a framework for other large-scale analyses, whether the music is similar to the Beach Boys, or vastly different. Many popular music artists have created a unique and particular *sound*, and these methods of collecting and displaying musical information in tables and charts may contribute to a deeper understanding of how other musics work and change over time.

These methods, however, are not suitable for all kinds of analysis. These broad findings suit large-scale analyses of popular music, though they do not always allow for a detailed, macro analysis of musical elements. For example, an argument could be made that an entire thesis could be devoted to a study of "God Only Knows" – its complex arrangement, unexpected chord movements and tonal trickery would provide a decent area for detailed analysis, and large-scale methods may not be best to effectively explore these subtle musical elements. This study has often used songs as small case studies (such as the rhythmic feels in "California Girls"), however, a further study focusing on the intricacies of some of the Beach Boys more complex songs

during this period may connect well to this broad analysis, and bring the “big picture” view of the Beach Boys music into an even clearer focus.

Pet Sounds is the most critically and academically acclaimed of the Beach Boys’ albums (see Appen & Doebling, 2006), however, the music on that album did not appear miraculously; the record was slowly built by years of experimentation, which can be seen clearly through the ACA model. When Ian McDonald (2003) described the Beach Boys’ first two albums as a “procession of gauche twelve-bar boogies with dumb lyrics, underdone harmonies and wobbly pitching” (p. 68), what he missed was that the Beach Boys’ later works he described positively would not have existed if not for those first two records, and the progression from apprentices, to craftsmen, to artists (Keightley, 1991, also acknowledges this). The chords and structure of “Lonely Sea”, the more developed vocal harmonies of “Farmer’s Daughter”, Carl Wilson’s growing ability to tackle rock and roll guitar solos all contributed to the later sound of the Beach Boys, making them important recordings. Further, the success of early singles like “Surfin’ USA” and “I Get Around” was part of what gave Brian Wilson the time and creative freedom to create *Pet Sounds*. When Mike Love sings, “Will I dig the same things that turned me on as a kid? Will I look back and say that I wish I hadn’t done what I did?” in “When I Grow Up (To Be a Man)”, we hear the tension between being a Beach Boy, while longing to grow up to be a *man*. When we listen to the early albums of the Beach Boys in order, we don’t just hear a string of successful pop hits; we hear the group *growing up* musically and emotionally. Though, one hopes that Brian Wilson really does “still dig those sounds” after all these years.

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