Musing on one of George Harrison’s best-known songs, fellow Beatle Paul McCartney praises Harrison’s writing. “I think Frank Sinatra used to introduce ‘Something’ as his favorite Lennon/McCartney song. Thanks Frank” (The Beatles 2000, 340). The punch line here depends on the idea that many casual fans of the Beatles assume that the songs they know and love were written by Lennon and McCartney. Even a seasoned show-business veteran like Sinatra, it seems, could make such a mistake.

But, of course, “Something” was indeed written by George Harrison, and though McCartney notes the confusion with some irony and amusement, what is perhaps most significant is that Harrison’s songwriting can be confused with Lennon and McCartney’s at all. It is a testament to how dramatically Harrison’s writing developed over his Beatle years that his songs from 1968 forward can compare with those of his bandmates. But as Harrison himself points out, this might not have happened had he not had the chance to observe Lennon and McCartney working at close range: “I knew a little bit about writing from the others, from the privileged point of sitting in the car when a song was written or coming into being” (The Beatles 2000, 97).

This chapter explores George Harrison’s songwriting with the Beatles. Comparing and contrasting Harrison’s writing with that of both Lennon and McCartney, it provides an overview of Harrison’s work while also focusing especially on his songs on the band’s 1968 double LP, *The Beatles*. I divide Harrison’s development with the band into three stages: the early songs, which show promise and a familiarity with the norms of songwriting structure; the first emergence, in which Harrison traces a
roughly parallel path with Lennon and McCartney from craftsperson to artist; and a second emergence, in which he forges the singer-songwriter style that characterizes the remainder of his mature songwriting career, extending well beyond the demise of the Beatles. The appendix to this chapter presents a comprehensive and chronological list of Harrison’s songs from his Beatle years, extending to the release of his first solo album, *All Things Must Pass* (1970). It is organized according to these three stages of development and includes both released and unreleased songs, placing each as accurately as possible within Harrison’s overall creative output. This list guides the discussion that follows.

**The Beatles as Songwriters**

While the teenaged Lennon and McCartney aspired to be songwriters, the musical attention of the young George Harrison was mostly focused on guitars and guitar playing. When he did begin to focus on writing, it is reasonable to expect that Lennon’s and McCartney’s songs had some influence on him. In the early days of the group, Lennon and McCartney often wrote together; but for much of the band’s career, these two Beatles composed mostly separately, one often helping the other but with songs very much being “John songs” or “Paul songs.” In comparing Harrison’s writing with that of Lennon and McCartney, then, I outline three developmental paths—one for each of these Beatle songwriters. In addition, the Beatles played hundreds of cover versions of 1950s and 1960s pop in their early days, and these songs might also have influenced the young Harrison.

Elsewhere (Covach 2006) I argue that Lennon’s and McCartney’s songwriting traces a developmental path “from craftsperson to artist.” This model designates the craftsperson approach as focusing on producing hit songs, with no special concern for innovation. The artist approach, by contrast, places a premium on innovation—on trying new things creatively and pushing the envelope musically and stylistically. Between 1962 and 1967, Lennon and McCartney chart distinct but parallel developmental paths on the way from “Love Me Do” and “Please Please Me” to “Penny Lane” and “Strawberry Fields Forever.” After the disappointing reception of the film *Magical Mystery Tour* in late 1967, their subsequent singles tend to return to a more craftsperson-like approach, while album tracks are often more ambitious and driven by the artist impulse. My previous discussion focuses on form in these songs, demonstrating that the craftsperson approach is dominated by the pres-
ence of AABA structures, while the artist model brings with it a wider variety of forms and formal innovation. My earlier study only briefly considers Harrison's songwriting; this chapter thus expands on those observations while maintaining the craftsperson-to-artist model to compare Harrison's songs with those of both Lennon and McCartney.

George's Early Songs

Harrison was not drawn to songwriting as early as Lennon and McCartney were. "They'd had a lot of practice, put it that way," he remarked. "They'd been writing since we were at school and so they'd written . . . most of their bad songs . . . before we got into the recording studio. . . . I had to come from nowhere and start writing and have something at least quality enough to be able to, you know, put it in the record with all their wondrous hits." Harrison's early songs are few. Two of the earliest are contained in the Anthology 1 recordings. He wrote "In Spite of All the Danger" with McCartney, and a 1958 recording features Lennon singing lead, McCartney singing harmony, with rhythm-and-blues-style vocal backup from Harrison. This track seems to be influenced by American doo-wop ballads, employing a medium tempo and the standard thirty-two-bar AABA form, though the harmony singing of Lennon and McCartney also suggests the influence of the Everly Brothers. It is perhaps noteworthy that Harrison solos on guitar over the standard twelve-bar blues progression (not the eight-bar verse), which is inserted into the song after once through the thirty-two-bar structure. The song concludes with a return of the eight-bar A section, including a tag on the second four bars of that verse. Another early recording, "Cry for a Shadow," clearly refers to the guitar-driven instrumentals of the Shadows, Cliff Richard's backup band and UK hitmakers in their own right. Written with Lennon, this 1961 instrumental track focuses on Harrison's lead-guitar playing. It opens with a four-measure introduction before launching into a thirty-two-bar AABA form, all of which features the melody on the electric guitar. After a return to the introduction, the band repeats the thirty-two-bar form with only slight variation. After once more through the introduction, the track concludes with the eight-bar A section.

There is only one Harrison original on the Beatles' albums through Beatles for Sale (1964). "Don't Bother Me" appears on With the Beatles (1963) and constitutes George's debut as a songwriter for the band. The song is once again in AABA form, like most of the Lennon and McCartney songs of 1963–64 (see table 9.1). Each A section consists of
two four-bar phrases, followed by a four-bar refrain, creating a twelve-bar verse. The B section (bridge) features four four-bar phrases, making for a sixteen-bar section. The formal arrangement employs a partial reprise of the AABA form in which ABA return, with the first A devoted to a guitar solo for the first eight bars followed by a sung refrain. The song ends with a fade-out serving as coda. The lyrics center on a teenage romance gone sour.\textsuperscript{11} A demo of an unreleased Harrison song, “You Know What to Do,” reveals a structure similar to “Don’t Bother Me.”\textsuperscript{12} It is in AABA form; two four-bar phrases are followed by a six-bar refrain, creating a fourteen-bar verse that serves as the A section. The B section (bridge) is eight bars in length, and the overall structure of the song employs a partial reprise, this time bringing the B and A sections back with no guitar solo. The lyrics remain within the realm of teen romance, perhaps with a hint of the Everly Brothers’ rockabilly pop and naive courtship (as in “Wake Up Little Susie,” “Bye Bye Love”).

Although Harrison’s early songs show promise, they are clearly weaker than those of Lennon and McCartney in terms of craft and sophistication. Their use of harmony is mostly conventional, though there are already some early indications of Harrison’s tendency to explore new possibilities.\textsuperscript{13} These songs confirm, however, that Harrison was fully aware of the AABA form that was so common in Lennon’s and McCartney’s songs at the time. This form plays a significant role in Harrison’s writing, as the majority of his songs during his Beatles years depend on it to some extent.

**Pop Craftsman to Artist: The First Emergence**

The release of *Help!* in the summer of 1965 marks the first significant emergence of George Harrison as a songwriter and pop craftsman, as it includes both “I Need You” and “You Like Me Too Much.” “I Need

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**Table 9.1. “Don’t Bother Me”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Notation</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00-0:06</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>4 mm., E minor: ⅦⅦ-i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:06-0:22</td>
<td>A (verse with refrain)</td>
<td>12 mm., 4 + 4 + 4, E minor pentatonic + Dorian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:22-0:39</td>
<td>A (verse with refrain)</td>
<td>12 mm., as before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:39-1:02</td>
<td>B (bridge)</td>
<td>16 mm. 4 + 4 + 4 + 4, E Aeolian (pure minor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:02-1:16</td>
<td>A (verse with refrain)</td>
<td>12 mm., as before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:16-1:36</td>
<td>A (verse with refrain)</td>
<td>12 mm., (4 + 4) + 4, guitar solo w/ sung refrain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:36-1:58</td>
<td>B (bridge)</td>
<td>12 mm., as before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:58-2:23</td>
<td>A (verse with refrain)</td>
<td>16+ mm., 4 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 2 + (refrain tagged to fade)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: *Instrumental phrases are enclosed in parenthesis in all examples.
You” resembles “You Know What to Do” in employing an AABA form with two four-bar phrases and a six-bar refrain to create fourteen-bar A section verses. The bridge is noteworthy for its nine-bar structure (4 + 5), extending the second phrase from what might have been a four-bar phrase to five measures. The arrangement features a partial reprise, bringing back the B and A sections before tagging the final two bars of the refrain to create an ending. Like “Don’t Bother Me,” its lyrics deal with a romantic breakup, but here the situation is treated with more nuance and finesse, especially when the lyrics “you told me” are picked up from the end of the verse to initiate the bridge. The “volume-pedal effect” in the guitar part creates a sense that the guitar is pleading with the lost love, helping to create the first Harrison song to compare favorably with songs of Lennon and McCartney.14 “You Like Me Too Much” also employs AABA form, though the partial reprise (ABA) includes a modified A-section verse featuring an instrumental solo for guitar and piano. The previous harmonic structure of the first part of this instrumental verse is abandoned until the return of the refrain at the end, where the sung refrain concludes the verse and sets up the move to the B-section bridge. Although inserting new material for the solo verse was not an unusual practice for the time, in this case it is especially reminiscent of “In Spite of All the Danger.”15 The lyric “I really do” leads nicely into the bridge, and its continuation from the refrain lyrics at the end of the verse resembles the technique used in “I Need You” to make the transition between A and B sections.

Harrison’s songs on Rubber Soul and Revolver—with the important exception of “Love You To”—remain mostly within the crafts-person approach.16 This fact contrasts with the increased presence of the artist approach in some of the songs of both Lennon and McCartney, as their lyrics get increasingly ambitious, the instrumentation moves beyond the pop combo, and the reliance on AABA form is replaced with a greater variety of formal structures. Harrison’s “Think for Yourself” does indeed eschew the AABA form in favor of a contrasting verse-chorus structure, though “If I Needed Someone” and “I Want to Tell You” continue to employ this familiar form, while “Taxman” employs a modified version of AABA.17 The lyrics of both “Think for Yourself” and “Taxman” move beyond topics of innocent romance, the former expressing romantic anger, while the latter lampoons the British government’s taxation policies. At this stage, however, Harrison’s lyrics are not as ambitious or accomplished as those in McCartney’s “For No One” and Lennon’s “In My Life.” The humor of “Taxman” is expanded in future Harrison songs; the
critique found in “Think for Yourself” mostly migrates to the philosophical lyrics of Harrison’s Indian-influenced music. And while “Think for Yourself” features McCartney’s fuzz bass and “Taxman” includes Paul’s sitar-like lead guitar, Harrison’s songs through 1966 mostly do not feature the kind of adventurous arranging present in McCartney’s “Eleanor Rigby” and Lennon’s “Tomorrow Never Knows,” not to mention “Penny Lane” (McCartney) and “Strawberry Fields Forever” (Lennon), which followed in early 1967. The harmony in these songs is conventional for mid-1960s pop, though with a few interesting and idiosyncratic twists.

As a craftsman, Harrison in late 1966 lags behind Lennon and McCartney by about a year: the fairest comparison of Harrison’s Rubber Soul and Revolver songs is with those of his bandmates on Help! or perhaps Rubber Soul. Standing against “I’ve Just Seen a Face” (McCartney) or “It’s Only Love” (Lennon), “Taxman” and “I Want to Tell You” hold their own.

Though they appeared in 1969 on the Yellow Submarine album, “Only a Northern Song” and “It’s All Too Much” both originate from 1967. Initially intended for Sgt. Pepper, “Only a Northern Song” employs a modified AABA form: AAB is followed by an instrumental interlude and then by BAB. Like those of “Taxman,” its lyrics are humorous, though in this case the target of the sarcasm is the band itself, or more precisely, the way in which they organized publishing royalties. Inspired by Harrison’s experiences with LSD (Harrison 1980, 106), “It’s All Too Much” is cast in contrasting verse-chorus form. What is striking about these songs is how much the band experimented with collage technique, though here it was mostly for their own amusement. The juxtapositions of musical material resemble the endings of “Strawberry Fields” and “All You Need Is Love.” A third song from 1967 that was likely unfinished at the time but was later released as a solo track, “See Yourself,” is also in AABA form and features lyrics that reflect on McCartney’s 1967 public revelation of the group’s drug use (Harrison 1980, 108).

Harrison’s most ambitious writing, and his clear step outside of the pop craftsperson model, appears in his Indian-influenced music. Indian music—and the sitar, in particular—first caught his interest during the filming of Help! in 1965. Securing his own inexpensive instrument, he famously added sitar to Lennon’s “Norwegian Wood” for Rubber Soul (Beatles 2000, 196). With “Love You To,” Harrison took a more committed step, making his first attempt at blending Western pop with Indian music. As table 9.2 shows, this song is cast in simple verse form, with the verses based on a fourteen-bar model. The verse consists of two phrases: a nine-bar phrase followed by a five-measure refrain. In addition,
there is a two-bar instrumental passage (shown in parenthesis) that recurs throughout and is presented first in the introduction. Note that while most of the song is in 4/4, both the nine-bar and five-bar phrase conclude with a bar of 3/4 (indicated by a superscript). The harmony is mostly static, with a drone on C and melodic material mostly in C Dorian. The song unfolds in two sung verses, an instrumental verse, and a final sung verse. While the lyrics seem focused on making love, the emphasis here is less on sexual abandon and more on the rising hippie nonconformity of the day. Much like Lennon’s “Nowhere Man,” the song takes aim at the status quo, like Lennon’s “The Word,” it posits love as the answer, and like “Taxman” and “Think for Yourself,” it is finger-wagging.

While Lennon’s and McCartney’s aspirations toward increased artistic expression were manifested in increasingly thoughtful and sometimes experimental lyrics and in the use of classical and avant-garde musical techniques drawn almost exclusively from Western culture, for Harrison Indian music and spirituality played this role. Sitar virtuoso Ravi Shankar was a central figure in Harrison’s engagement with Indian music and culture. Harrison first met Shankar in the summer of 1966, and Shankar relates part of that conversation:

George expressed his desire to learn the sitar from me. I told him that to play the sitar is like learning Western classical music on the violin or on the cello. It is not merely a matter of learning how to hold the instrument and play a few strokes and chords, after which (with sufficient talent) you can prosper on your own, as is common with the guitar in Western pop music. (Shankar 1999, 189)

Harrison took Shankar’s words to heart and used the band’s break in the autumn of 1966 to travel to India to study the sitar for several weeks,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9.2. “Love You To”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Form:</strong> simple verse (intro V V V V coda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:00–0:39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:39–1:08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:08–1:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:35–2:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:05–2:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:35–2:56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Superscripts above indicate that a measure in 3/4 occurs at the end of a phrase unit otherwise in 4/4.*
becoming a serious and disciplined student of the instrument, while also becoming more familiar with Eastern philosophy and religion. 

Harrison’s next two Indian-influenced songs, “Within You Without You” and “The Inner Light,” further extended the East-meets-West stylistic blend of “Love You To.” “Within You Without You” employs a modified AABA form, presenting two verses and a bridge, followed by two varied repetitions of the verse played instrumentally. After a reprise of the introduction, a sung verse and bridge return much as they were performed in the first part of the song. The resulting AAB A’A’ AB form is a creative reshaping of the AABA idea, representing both the craft and art approaches at work. The lyrics reflect Harrison’s new familiarity with Eastern ideas: as with “Love You To,” love is still the answer, but now the problem is our illusory separation from one another. Whatever one may think of Harrison’s spiritual ideas, his lyrics embrace a seriousness of purpose that rivals Lennon’s and McCartney’s more ambitious songs. His Eastern take on alienation also resonates with McCartney’s Western exploration of this idea in “Eleanor Rigby” and “She’s Leaving Home.” Lennon remarked that “Within You Without You” is “[o]ne of George’s best songs. One of my favorites of his, too. . . . His mind and his music are clear. There is his innate talent; he brought that sound together” (Golson 1981, 157).

“The Inner Light” marks both a point of arrival and a point of ending for Harrison’s engagement with Indian music. This track employs a modified simple verse form in which a lyrical verse with refrain alternates with a double-time instrumental passage. The lyrics derive from the ancient Taoist text, the Tao Te Ching, and the backing tracks were recorded in Bombay using Indian musicians—the last of Harrison’s Beatles tracks to employ Indian instruments. In subsequent songs Eastern ideas return in the lyrics, but the Eastern timbres, melodies, harmonies, and rhythms are replaced by those of Western pop and rock. A move in this direction had already occurred with “Blue Jay Way,” which features the drone of Indian-influenced music, but without the Indian instruments and with more harmonic activity than in “Love You To” and “Within You Without You.”

In late 1967 and early 1968, Harrison composed the music for Wonderwall, a psychedelic film directed by Joe Massot. The soundtrack shows Harrison exploring a wide range of styles, including avant-garde music that goes further into the world of contemporary art music than any Beatle had yet ventured. It also features Indian music and musicians, thus serving as a compendium of Harrison’s artist-approach creative in-
terests. Although Ringo Starr and Eric Clapton make guest appearances, the music was largely created outside of the influence and participation of the other Beatles. In fact, the trio of Indian-influenced Beatles tracks, “Love You To,” “Within You Without You,” and “The Inner Light,” were also produced with minimal involvement of the other group members. They were essentially solo tracks, produced with the help of George Martin and using outside musicians, similarly to McCartney’s “Yesterday.” Along with “The Inner Light,” *Wonderwall Music* signifies an endpoint for Harrison’s first emergence. According to Harrison:

I’d played sitar for three years. And I’d just listened to classical Indian music and practiced sitar—except for when we played dates, studio dates—and then I’d get the guitar out and . . . learn a part for the record. But I’d really lost a lot of interest in the guitar. I remember I came from California and I shot this piece . . . for the film on Ravi Shankar’s life called *Raga* and I was carrying a sitar. And we stopped in New York and checked in a hotel, and Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton were both at the same hotel. And that was the last time I really played the sitar like that.\(^{29}\)

Although his exploration of the Moog synthesizer on *Electronic Sound* extends his experimentation with new timbres and styles, his songwriting in 1968 takes a noticeable turn toward a singer-songwriter style that blends elements of the craftsperson and artist model into a style that remains securely within Western pop and rock. *The Beatles* marks Harrison’s second emergence.

**The Singer-Songwriter: The Second Emergence**

As we consider the songs Harrison contributed to *The Beatles*, it is useful to consider not only the four songs included in that release, but also three others that were not. The Beatles rehearsed “Sour Milk Sea” and “Not Guilty”; “Sour Milk Sea” was given to Jackie Lomax to record, and the Beatles’ recording of “Not Guilty” proceeded almost to completion before the song was shelved.\(^{30}\) “Circles” appears only in the earliest rehearsal tape, performed solo by Harrison. I consider each of these tracks in discussing the four tracks that did appear on the album.

As shown in table 9.3, “Savoy Truffle” employs AABA form with a partial reprise.\(^ {31}\) The structure of the first two verses is complicated by the meter in the introduction, where the prevailing 4/4 is disrupted by
a measure of 7/8, and the first measure of the verse, where only the first measure is in 6/8. If we look to the third and fourth statements of the verse, however, it is clear that the verse sections are built on a sixteen-bar model made up of four four-bar phrases; in those appearances, the 6/8 bar is replaced by a bar of 4/4, while the return of the two-bar introduction containing a bar of 7/8 is missing entirely. On the first two verses, this metric complication creates a rubato feeling at the beginning of the first phrase. "Savoy Truffle" also provides a clue to Harrison’s exploration of harmony during this period: the movement of I–II–IV–I–III–V in E in the verses is followed by a turn to E minor before a cadence of IV–I in G. The bridge begins with a i–IV progression, suggesting a Dorian-inflected E minor, before proceeding to III and V, recalling the verse. Although somewhat more adventurous harmonically than most previous Harrison songs, it is conservative compared with "Sour Milk Sea" and "Circles," which employ traditional chord movements that nonetheless suggest remote modulation or tonal ambiguity. "Not Guilty," by contrast, remains relatively securely in E minor, though it contains some remote harmonies.

Harrison has recounted how the lyrics for "Savoy Truffle" were inspired by Eric Clapton’s passion for candy in spite of dental problems that made sweets painful to eat (1980, 128). The lyrics are taken from a chocolate box, with a certain poetic license. The playfulness and humor here resonate strongly with Lennon’s "The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill" and McCartney’s "Rocky Raccoon." The literal reference to a chocolate box also seems influenced by Lennon’s use of found texts to create or prompt lyrics: "Tomorrow Never Knows" (Timothy Leary), "Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!" (circus poster), "Good Morning Good Morning" (television commercial) and "A Day in the Life" (newspaper) on previous albums, and "Happiness Is a Warm Gun" (magazine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9.3. “Savoy Truffle”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Form:</strong> AAAB with partial reprise (AAAB BA tag)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0:00–0:05</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0:05–0:36</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0:36–1:11</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1:11–1:27</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1:27–1:56</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1:58–2:14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2:14–2:53</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Superscripts before a measure count indicate that a measure in 6/8 occurs at the beginning of a phrase unit otherwise in 4/4. Superscripts after indicate a measure of 7/8.
story), “Julia” (Kahlil Gibran poem), and “Cry Baby Cry” (advertisement) on the White Album. The use of horns on this track suggests a nod to southern soul, and perhaps to Stax in particular (“truffle” rhymes with “shuffle,” after all), but the horns also recall McCartney’s “Got To Get You Into My Life.”

Harrison began work on “Piggies” in 1966, returning to and completing it in 1968 (Harry 2003, 296). It employs a modified AABA form (see table 9.4) in which an extra verse is added to create an AABA + A arrangement. Loosely influenced by George Orwell’s novel Animal Farm, the lyrics are primarily satirical: the upper classes are piggies who take themselves far too seriously while also eating their own. The straightforward harmonic language never strays far from a secure A major: the verse sections modulate to the dominant, and the end of the second verse suggests a shift to F minor that never materializes. Like McCartney’s “Blackbird” and Lennon’s “Revolution,” “Piggies” engages in social commentary. But unlike his bandmates—whose lyrics reflect a certain earnestness and, in Lennon’s case, earnest ambiguity—Harrison’s stance is entirely ironic. That irony also extends to the use of classical instrumentation: the harpsichord and chamber strings are used to poke fun at the pomposity of the wealthy. Here again, Harrison’s use of classical instruments—and the general reference to classical music and the high culture that comes with it—contrasts with that of Lennon and McCartney. It is especially Paul’s aspirational and earnest use of classical instrumentation—from “Yesterday” through “For No One,” “Eleanor Rigby,” and “Penny Lane,” to “She’s Leaving Home”—that is potentially ripe for parody. Consider, for instance, the elegant horns on “Mother Nature’s Son,” which add majesty and sophistication to the track. Harrison is having none of that here. In “Piggies,” classical music is a sign of corruption and decadence. Interestingly, the acoustic demo of this song features no classical references, and as a result it sounds much more like McCartney’s “Blackbird”

Table 9.4. “Piggies”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form: modified AABA (intro AABA A codetta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00–0:05 Introduction, 2 mm., (2), intro melody introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:05–0:26 A (verse), 8 mm., 2 + 2 + 2 + (2), intro returns, A → E, (A♭)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:26–0:47 A (verse), 8 mm., 2 + 2 + 2 + (2), intro modified, to F minor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:47–1:06 B (bridge), 7 mm., 4 + 3, A♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:06–1:26 A (verse), 8 mm., (2 + 2 + 2) + (2), harpsichord solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:26–1:53 A (verse), 10 mm., 2 + 2 + 2 + (2 + 2), intro extended, ends in E♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:53–2:03 Codetta, 2 mm., (2), IV–I cadence in E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
than any of the songs employing classical instrumentation considered above.35

The struggles Harrison endured getting the band to record "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" were—at least in his opinion—symptomatic of the problems that ultimately caused him to become dissatisfied with the group. After many attempts, the others did not seem motivated or energized by the song. Harrison hit upon the idea of bringing Clapton into the studio to guest on lead guitar.36 Though Clapton was hesitant, his presence rallied the band to deliver a much more committed performance. As table 9.5 shows, the song is cast in a modified AABA form, consisting of a single A section, a B section, and an A section, all of which is repeated in full before a coda ends the track. The verse here is labeled a "double verse," since the refrain occurs twice, though the overall harmonic design reinforces a sixteen-bar section. The harmony of the verses remains mostly in A minor, with a harmonic gesture toward C major (6Ⅲ) in the second refrain that quickly retreats to A. The bridge provides a modal shift to the parallel major. Like "Savoy Truffle," but much more earnestly, "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" employs the found text idea. In this case, Harrison opened the I Ching and used the first phrase he saw there: "gently weeps" (Harrison 1980, 120). The resulting lyrics describe a situation that seems to capture Harrison’s sense of the band at the time: the love between the members is sleeping, he looks at the floor to avoid eye contact, but there is hope that these mistakes will lead to learning. In the bridge, it is not clear who is being addressed: is Harrison addressing the others in the group or reflecting on his own behavior?

With "Long Long Long," Harrison translates some of the most central aspects of his Indian-influenced music into a markedly Western pop context.37 Table 9.6 shows the AABA form of the piece.38 The only significant modification consists of an extended final A section, created by

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00-0:16</td>
<td>Intro</td>
<td>8 mm., (4 + 4) piano melody, A minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:16-0:50</td>
<td>A (double verse w/ refrain)</td>
<td>16 mm., 4 + 4, 4 + 4, emphasis on Ⅲ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:50-1:24</td>
<td>B (bridge)</td>
<td>16 mm., 8 + 8, A major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:24-1:57</td>
<td>A (double verse w/ refrain)</td>
<td>16 mm., as before</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1:57-2:31</td>
<td>A (double verse w/ refrain)</td>
<td>16 mm., (4 + 4 + 4 + 4). Clapton solo</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:31-3:03</td>
<td>B (bridge)</td>
<td>16 mm., as before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:03-3:37</td>
<td>A (double verse w/ refrain)</td>
<td>16 mm., 4 + 4, 4 + 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3:37-4:39</td>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>24 mm. and fade, based on double verse, Clapton solo</td>
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repeating the refrain. The harmony is based on Bob Dylan’s “Sad-Eyed Lady of the Lowlands,” though the similarity is very general. This quiet and intimate song is, as Harrison has remarked, a prayer—an account of searching for and eventually finding God. The lyrics embody all the seriousness of purpose of his previous Indian-influenced music, but there are no Indian instruments or textures employing drones; the music remains in a stable and diatonic F major. This song compares favorably with Lennon’s “Julia” and “Across the Universe” and with McCartney’s “Blackbird” and “I Will” and secures the emergence of George Harrison as a singer-songwriter. In fact, all seven songs that were in the mix for inclusion on The Beatles establish what would become Harrison’s style as a solo artist.

Conclusions

Harrison’s tracks with the Beatles after the White Album continue along the same stylistic lines established on that record. While “For You Blue” is a traditional twelve-bar blues in simple verse form, “Old Brown Shoe,” “Something,” and “Here Comes the Sun” are all cast in AABA form. Only “I Me Mine” stands apart as a contrasting verse-chorus song. None of these tracks employs Eastern instruments, nor is any of them particularly philosophical or experimental. Though Harrison offered some of the more philosophical songs to the band, he ended up using these for his debut solo album, All Things Must Pass.

Having surveyed Harrison’s songwriting during his Beatles years, we can discern an early period in which the songs are few but nevertheless display familiarity with the norms of pop harmony, melody, form, and lyric writing. This is followed by Harrison’s emergence as a songwriter, paralleling Lennon and McCartney during the 1965–67 period in developing his skills but lagging behind them by about a year. His movement toward the artist model is shaped by his interest in Indian music and

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<tr>
<td>0:00-0:10</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>6 mm. (6), F major</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:10-0:41</td>
<td>A (verse w/ refrain)</td>
<td>19 mm., 6 + 6 + 4 + (3), F major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:41-1:14</td>
<td>A (verse w/ refrain)</td>
<td>19 mm., as before</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1:40-1:40</td>
<td>B (bridge)</td>
<td>15 mm., 6 + 6 + (3), F major</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1:40-2:32</td>
<td>A' (verse w/ refrain)</td>
<td>30 mm., 6 + 6 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:32-3:03</td>
<td>Codetta, unmetered</td>
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philosophy, and the songs that are most influenced by Indian music display the greatest ambition and willingness to break with standard pop models. In early 1968, Harrison turns away from Indian musical styles, though he mostly retains the dedication to spiritually committed lyrics. This second emergence defines what becomes Harrison's mature singer-songwriter style, which serves as the foundation of his music well after the breakup of the band, beginning with the release of *All Things Must Pass* in 1970.

Years into his solo career, Harrison continued to resist the role of songwriter, at least as that role is traditionally defined. He remarked, "I have never really thought of myself as someone who writes songs as a craft. Many songwriters do. I suppose I have seen it that way without being conscious of it, but not often. Mainly the object has been to get something out of my system, as opposed to 'being a songwriter'" (Harrison 1980, 58–59). In spite of such reservations and his discomfort with the role, George Harrison's songwriting constitutes a significant and important portion of the Beatles legacy.

Appendix

George Harrison's Songs, 1958–1970

Early Songs, 1958–1964

"In Spite of All the Danger" (w/ Paul), demo, 1958

"Cry for a Shadow" (w/ John), recorded June 1961, various releases in 1962–1964

"Don't Bother Me" With the Beatles Sept 1963 / Nov 1963

"You Know What to Do" demo June 1964

First Emergence, 1965–Early 1968

"I Need You" Help! Feb 1965 / Aug 1965 (volume pedal)

"You Like Me Too Much" Help! Feb 1965 / Aug 1965

"Think for Yourself" Rubber Soul Nov 1965 / Dec 1965 (finger-wagging)

"If I Needed Someone" Rubber Soul Oct 1965 / Dec 1965 (12 string)

"Love You To" Revolver April 1966 / Aug 1966 (Indian influence)

"Art of Dying" incomplete autumn 1966, All Things Must Pass Nov 1970

"Taxman" Revolver Apr–May 1966 / Aug 1966 (finger-wagging)
"I Want to Tell You" *Revolver* June 1966 / Aug 1966


"Only a Northern Song"* Yellow Submarine Feb, April 1967, Oct 1968 / Jan 1969


"It's All Too Much"* Yellow Submarine May–June 1967, Oct 1968 / Jan 1969

"See Yourself" incomplete summer 1967, completed for Thirty Three & 1/3 Nov 1976

"Blue Jay Way" Magical Mystery Tour Sept–Nov 1967 / Dec 1967 (Indian influence w/o the instruments)


"The Inner Light" B-side to "Lady Madonna" Jan–Feb 1968 / Mar 1968 (Indian influence)

Second Emergence, 1968–1970

"Dehradun" (Feb–Apr 1968)

["Sour Milk Sea" (Feb–Apr, May 1968) Jackie Lomax June 1968 / Aug 1968]


"Not Guilty" (May 1968) Aug 1968 / unreleased (Anthology 3)

[reworked for George Harrison, Feb 1979]

"Circles" (May 1968) reworked for Gone Troppo Nov 1982


["Badge" (w/ Eric Clapton), Oct 1968 / Mar 1969 Cream, Goodbye]

Electronic Sound (solo), Nov 1968, Feb 1969 / May 1969

"I'd Have You Anytime" (w/ Bob Dylan) Nov 1968, All Things Must Pass Nov 1970

"All Things Must Pass" All Things Must Pass Jan, Feb 1969 / Nov 1970

"Hear Me Lord" Jan 1969, All Things Must Pass Nov 1970

"Isn't It a Pity" Jan 1969, All Things Must Pass demo, Nov 1970

"Let It Down" Jan 1969, All Things Must Pass Nov 1970

"Wah Wah" Jan 1969, All Things Must Pass Nov 1970
"For You Blue"* Let It Be Jan, Mar–April 1969 / May 1970
"Old Brown Shoe" B-side of “Ballad of John and Yoko” Jan–Feb 1969 / Mar 1969
"I Me Mine"* Let It Be Jan 1969, Jan, Mar–Apr 1970
  "Maureen" Jan 1969 [suggested for Ringo, written by Dylan?]
  "Ramblin' Woman" [Dylan-esque]
  "Get Off" [blues jam]
  "Hey Hey Georgie" [for Ringo]
  "How Do You Tell Someone?"
  "It Is Discovered"
  "Window, Window" [also demo for All Things Must Pass]
"Run of the Mill" mid-1969, All Things Must Pass Nov 1970
"Here Comes the Sun" Abbey Road July–Aug 1969 / Sept 1969
  "Beautiful Girl," incomplete autumn 1969, completed for Thirty Three & 1/3 Nov 1976
  "Behind That Locked Door," autumn 1969, All Things Must Pass Nov 1970
  "Woman Don’t You Cry for Me" Dec 1969, Thirty Three & 1/3 Nov 1976

All Things Must Pass (solo), May–Oct 1970 / Nov 1970
  "Beware of Darkness"
  "Ballad of Sir Frankie Crisp"
  "Awaiting on You All"
  "I Dig Love"
  "I Live for You"
  "Out of the Blue"
  "It's Johnny's Birthday"
  "Plug Me In"
  "I Remember Jeep"
  "Thanks for the Pepperoni"

Note: Songs released by the Beatles are leftmost. Those indented once are songs that were released by Harrison, but not as a Beatle. Titles in square brackets are songs released by other artists. Songs indented twice have never been officially released. Asterisks indicate songs that were released significantly later than they were recorded.
Notes

1. See also Ian Inglis’s survey of Harrison’s songs with the Beatles (2010, 1–21), as well as Matthew Bannister’s (2003) study of Harrison’s songs for Revolver, which traces his development as a songwriter through 1966.

2. This list relies principally on Harrison 1980; Sulpy and Schweighardt 1997; and Lewisohn 1998, though many other sources were consulted as well.

3. Harrison remarked: “I’ve still got some of my books from when I was about thirteen, and there’s drawings of guitars and different scratch plates. Always trying to draw Fender Stratocasters” (Harrison 2011, 50–51).


5. See Everett 2001 for an extensive listing of cover versions performed by the Beatles during the band’s early years.

6. “Craftsperson refers to an approach that privileges repeatable structures; 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 to a loose way to the craftsperson approach is the artist approach. Here, the emphasis is on the non-repeatability of innovations; the worst criticism that can be leveled against a creative individual according to this approach is that he or she is ‘rewriting the same song over and over’” (Covach 2006, 39).

7. For a fuller discussion of formal structures in pop and rock, see Covach 2005. The AABA form is significant because of its traditional use by professional songwriters in the first half of the twentieth century. Lennon and McCartney’s awareness and consistent use of this form demonstrate a familiarity with the craft of Tin Pan Alley songwriting. As Lennon and McCartney move toward the artist model, they significantly modify AABA forms and other formal types—such as contrasting verse-chorus and simple verse forms—emerge with greater frequency.


9. McCartney has remarked that he wrote the song and shared credit with Harrison because of the solo section. McCartney recalls that he modeled it on an Elvis Presley song—likely “Trying to Get to You,” which had indeed been released in the United Kingdom in 1956. See Lewisohn 1988 (6), Lewisohn 2013 (171), and Sounes 2010 (25). A guitar solo over the twelve-bar blues that acts as new material also occurs in Buddy Holly’s “That’ll Be the Day,” which the band also recorded at the same session.

10. Harrison traces the origin of this song in Forte 1987, 95–96. He and Lennon seem to have viewed the track as a sendup of the Shadows, not as a tribute. Lewisohn 2013 (981) provides a slightly different angle, suggesting that the joke was on Rory Storm. This song was also known as “Beatle Bop.”

11. Harrison (1980, 84) discusses this song as his first attempt at songwriting, though his account is somewhat at odds with that of Bill Harry (2003, 155–56).

12. Thomson (2013, 93) reports that “You Know What to Do” was rejected for Beatles for Sale, replaced by Harrison singing a cover of Carl Perkins’s “Everybody’s Trying to Be My Baby.”
13. “You Know What to Do” employs conventional pop harmonic language throughout, but in Harrison’s demo it begins on IV, walking down to the I chord to begin the verse. “Don’t Bother Me” also begins with an off-tonic introduction (drawn from the beginning of the bridge), in this case starting on vVII before moving to i in E minor. The verse is built mostly on the minor pentatonic scale in both the melody and the harmony, except at the end where the Dorian IV is employed in exchange with the i. The bridge then moves to pure minor (Aeolian), employing v, iv, and vVII. See also the analysis in Everett 2001, 193–94.

14. Clayson (2003, 180) reports that Lennon assisted Harrison in composing the two songs on Help!, or at least with preparing them for recording. What is often considered the volume pedal effect in this song, as with the one in “Yes It Is,” was likely created using the volume control on Harrison’s guitar. He describes how Lennon would swell the volume control on the guitar as Harrison played to get this effect, since Harrison admits he could never quite get the hang of using the volume pedal. See Forte 1987, 93. Babiuk 2001 (194) writes that this technique was first used during the recording of “Baby’s in Black,” though if so, it is much less pronounced than on the two later songs.

15. Another well-known instance of inserted material in Beatles music from this period occurs during Harrison’s Chet Atkins-and-Scotty Moore-influenced solo on McCartney’s “All My Loving.”


17. “If I Needed Someone” employs AABA with a full reprise, “I Want to Tell You” uses AABA with a partial reprise (AABA BA), and “Taxman” employs AABA with two additional A sections (AABA AA)—an unconventional partial reprise. “Art of Dying” likely begun in the second half of 1966, also employs a slightly modified AABA form, at least in its finished form from 1970. An instrumental interlude drawn from the intro is placed after the B section, creating a structure that unfolds AAB interlude A.

18. Ryan and Kehew (2006, 421) provide detailed information on the recording of “Taxman.”

19. The use of figuration around the guitar’s open D chord voicing (capoed at the seventh fret to create an A-major chord) in “If I Needed Someone” displays a tendency toward the kinds of drone bass that would be featured in Harrison’s India-inspired pieces, as well as in Lennon songs such as “Rain” and “Tomorrow Never Knows.” The chord succession in the bridge of “I Want to Tell You” is particularly interesting. The movement ii–ii9–I–II–ii–ii9–I employs the diminished chord (here used as a substitute for V7) that Harrison referred to (along with the augmented chord) as one of the “naughty chords” and that would become a trademark of his later music. See the remarks of Dhani Harrison, Jeff Lynne, and Tom Petty on Harrison’s passion for the naughty chords at 2:20–2:57 of the extra feature entitled “Interviews” contained on the DVD Concert for George (2003).

20. George Martin recounts how “Only a Northern Song” was rejected from the album (Martin considered it “boring”), causing Harrison to return with “Within You Without You” (which he considered “very interesting”). See Living in the Material World (Scorsese 2011), Part 1, 1:08:21–1:10:11.
21. At the time, Harrison was signed to Northern Songs, a company owned by Lennon, McCartney, Brian Epstein, and publisher Dick James. When his contract expired in 1968, he did not renew it and published his music through his own company, Harrisongs Ltd. See Harrison 1980, 100.

22. “I wrote ‘Love You To’ on the sitar, because the sitar sounded so nice and my interest was getting deeper all the time. I wanted to write a tune that was specifically for the sitar” (Beatles 2000, 209).

23. An alternate analysis might cast this as a nine-bar verse followed by a five-bar chorus, and thus as a contrasting verse-chorus form. By considering this a fourteen-measure verse section that contains a five-bar refrain, the analysis in example 2 posits that the two phrases are part of a single section, privileging the continuity from one into the other over the contrast.

24. This two-bar instrumental passage is grouped after the first verse section, resulting in a sixteen-bar unit, while its absence from the end of the second verse section produces a fourteen-bar unit.

25. Shankar was not much impressed with the sitar playing on “Norwegian Wood”: “was supposed to be causing so much brouhaha. but when I eventually heard the song I thought it was a strange sound that had been produced on the sitar!” (Shankar 1999, 189).

26. For Harrison’s account of this visit, see Beatles 2000, 233. According to Kevin Howlett (2014), members of the Byrds recommended Shankar’s album Portrait of Genius to Harrison when the Beatles were in Los Angeles during the 1965 American tour.


29. Glazer 1977, 35. Harrison here is referring to his New York visit during the winter of 1968, after the completion of “The Inner Light” and Won-derful One. See also Harrison 1980, 57–58.

30. Harrison was producing Jackie Lomax’s Is This What You Want? at the time of the White Album sessions. Lomax’s version of “Sour Milk Sea” features Harrison, McCartney, and Starr, as well as Clapton and Nicky Hopkins. The fact that Lennon is missing from this lineup has led Everett (1990, 200–201) to conclude that it was he who rejected the song for the Beatles. For a firsthand account of the Lomax session, see Emerick and Massey 2006, 222. See Brown (1979, 75) for Harrison’s remarks on the history of “Not Guilty.”

31. For analyses of the arrangements of “Savoy Truffle” and “Long Long Long,” see chapter 7 in the present volume.


33. “Not Guilty” is a simple verse form in which the verses are constructed much like verses in Harrison’s other AABA forms, including the use of a refrain to conclude each verse. These verses seem to begin in A minor, though the lis-
tener quickly learns that the key is actually E minor. The use of vii (D minor) and iii (G minor) suggest modulations that never materialize.

34. Everett (1999, 203) has suggested that the primary influence on “Savoy Truffle” is the Byrds’ “Artificial Energy.”

35. Other uses of classical references in Harrison’s songs would include the “bad trumpet” in “Only a Northern Song,” and the quotation from Jeremiah Clarke’s Prince of Denmark March in “It’s All Too Much.” Both could be taken to lampoon the trumpet in “Penny Lane” or the French horn on “For No One,” though if so the parodies didn’t seem to bother McCartney, who participated in both sessions—even playing the trumpet on “Only a Northern Song.”

36. For more on the recording of this track, see Ryan and Kehew 2006, 495.

37. See Ryan and Kehew (2003, 502) for more regarding the recording of “Long Long Long.”


40. As the appendix shows, several of the songs that appeared on All Things Must Pass were brought into Beatles rehearsals, especially in January and February 1969.