

Selling Decency and Innocence: Names of Singing Groups in the *Malt Shop Memories* Collection

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This study examines the names of sixty-five male and female singing groups in the *Malt Shop Memories* collection and their economic, social, and cultural influences. Record companies' efforts to sell the emerging rock'n'roll to teenagers of mid-1950s to mid-1960s affluent America resulted in group names intended to reduce the negative attitudes toward the music. Non-threatening group names were designed to exude images of wholesomeness and purity to appease parents and the public who regarded rock'n'roll as chaotic, vulgar, and the cause of America's social ills. These names, reflecting such ordinary categories as *Birds and Animals*, *Place Names*, *Mystique and Wonder*, and more, combined with a mandated dress code to sell an image of decency and innocence in the face of a rebellious new style of music.

KEYWORDS Malt Shop group names, Rock'n'roll group names, Doo-wop group names, 1950s-60s singing groups, Rock music group names, Girl group names, Vocal group names

Introduction and background

Malt Shop Memories is a Time Life, 150-song, ten-CD collection of oldies classics by the original artists. Released in 2006, the collection encompasses the period, as described in its television advertisement, “between the birth of rock ‘n’ roll in the mid-50’s to the British Invasion of the mid-60’s [. . .] when American pop music took the world by storm.” This was one of the most innovative and dynamic periods in America’s music history. The collection is marketed to aging baby boomers with memories of “the feel-good songs, the break-up and make-up songs” of their youth, such hits as “A Lover’s Concerto” by The Toys, “Just Like Romeo and Juliet” by The Reflections, “Book of Love” by The Monotones, “Sixteen Candles” by The Crests, and “Big Girls Don’t Cry” by Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons. It was a

time of bobby socks, sock hops, and street-corner doo-wop, when teenagers hung out in malt shops and listened to the music of their favorite artists on juke boxes.

While some studies have examined the individual nicknames of blues and jazz artists (Skipper, 1986; Skipper and Leslie, 1988, 1989), none have closely explored the names of singing groups from a particular music collection or from a particular era and their social, cultural, and economic influences. The *Malt Shop Memories* collection provides a manageable corpus of interesting raw data for this type of onomastic research. For the purposes of this study, a group is defined as a unit consisting of three or more members rather than two-person groups (duos).¹

To better understand the group names and naming practices associated with this period in America's music history, it is necessary to examine briefly the social, cultural, and economic conditions which undergirded them. America of the 1950s was experiencing a wave of prosperity and growth following World War II with middle-class families purchasing new homes and cars, televisions, and other gadgets made possible by the technology of the war. This period marked the beginning of the Cold War and the spread of communism in Europe and Asia.

The American Civil Rights Movement was just beginning: in 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus to a white passenger. Also in 1955, Chuck Berry's hit "Maybelline" became number one on the Rhythm and Blues charts and number five on the pop charts. This was an unusual achievement for a black artist at the time, and Chuck Berry's music would shape the sound of the emerging rock'n'roll. The Women's Movement had not yet begun, and the possibility of a sexual revolution was unimaginable.

White parents of the 1950s, having grown up on the easy-listening love ballads of 1940s artists such as Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett, opposed the radically-different sound of rock'n'roll. This new music, with its roots in black culture, was described and marketed as "race music" prior to World War II. But the term "'Rhythm and Blues' replaced the term 'Race record'" (Oliver, 1984: 11) in the early 1950s as the music gained popularity among white teenagers. Rhythm and Blues (R&B) combined blues and jazz, was loud, with "jarring" beats, and had a sexual edge, marked by grunts and groans, "howling and screaming" of male singers (Leonie and Martinez, 1996: 11). Some of the perceived problematic social effects of this music are described by Steve Chappie and Reebee Garofalo:

Rock and roll in the 1950s attacked, often indirectly, many of the institutions that helped to control young people [...]. During the otherwise silent years of the Eisenhower administration's authoritarian attitudes, rock and roll's suggestive stage manner, guttural vocals, double entendre lyrics were seen as attackers of sexual decency and the stable family. Rock and roll fostered the separation of youth from parental control. (Friedlander, 2006: 26)

As a result, parents and clergy found this new music disturbing and vulgar, and blamed rock'n'roll for America's social ills, from promiscuity, to drug addiction, to homosexuality. White teenagers, however, were mesmerized by this music, regarding it, according to critics, as "unrestrained freedom" (Leonie and Martinez, 1986: 11). Defiant and exciting, this music was beginning to enjoy widespread popularity among white teenagers and was promoted by white disc jockeys on white radio stations.

And with America's growing prosperity, white teenagers became major consumers and supporters of the new popular music industry's "black music for white audiences" (Barnet and Burriss, 2001: 149). Consequently, as noted by Richard D. Barnet and Larry L. Burriss, "[g]radually, integration of the airwaves became the norm, much to the chagrin of segregationists and adults who objected to the lyrics, beat, or message of the new rock 'n' roll" (2001: 149).

To change parents' and the public's negative attitudes, the music industry tried to "clean up" the harsh and threatening image of this black music by promoting clean-cut, non-threatening white artists such as Pat Boone, Bobby Darin, and Paul Anka. Pat Boone's top-ten rerecording ("cover") of the 1956 hit "Tutti Frutti" by the loud and flamboyant Little Richard became one of the most obvious examples of this crusade. Moreover, black R&B artists, hoping to produce crossover hits by projecting a non-threatening image to parents of teens enamored by the excitement of black music, also assumed a clean-cut image by performing in suits and ties to dispel the sexual stereotypes of black males and females, i.e., to preserve "sexual decency" (Friedlander, 2006: 26). Some female singers even wore white gloves. In an account reflective of the crucial factor that the concept of innocence played in the music industry at the time, Jay Warner describes how the 1964 hit, "Chapel of Love," originally recorded by The Ronettes but never released, was later given to "the light-voiced, innocent-sounding Dixie Cups" (2006: 363).

This attempt at promoting decency and innocence was particularly significant to black artists in light of segregation, racism, and lynchings prevalent at the time, especially in the South. Some white groups, while embracing the same clean-cut image, in turn, tried to capitalize on the attractive sound of black music. The result was the formation of a number of white doo-wop groups, also known as blue-eyed soul (Dion and the Belmonts, The Diamonds, and The Casinos, for example). Nick Santo, lead singer of the white *Malt Shop Memories* group The Capris, recounts that the group sang the songs of black groups popular at the time, and that he "tried to write songs that sounded more black than white" (*The Doo-Wop Society*).

Local and national teen dance shows such as *American Bandstand* also attempted to appease parents and the public by mandating a dress code for its studio dancers: coats and ties for boys, and dresses and skirts for girls, in order to look like their teen music idols. As *Bandstand* host Dick Clark observed later, "The thinking behind it was that if we looked presentable, normal, the way they think we ought to look, they'll leave us alone" (in Leonie and Martinez, 1996: 11). And for 1950s television, as a new medium, "presentable" and "normal" was suits and ties for show hosts and sitcom fathers, and dresses and high heels for sitcom mothers. As such, dress was an important factor in the public image of popular music of this era.

It is against this social, cultural, and economic backdrop that the present study explores the names of the male and female singing groups in the *Malt Shop Memories* (MSM) collection. I argue that groups and record labels, in an effort to lessen parents' and the public's negative attitudes toward the music, selected names designed to exude images of wholesomeness and purity. Therefore, names, in conjunction with the prescribed meticulously coordinated stage dress, were non-threatening, wholesome and acceptable, "normal" and "presentable," providing an interesting contradiction and contrast to the dynamic character of the music that had now permeated American popular culture.

Tables of male, female, and female-male group names

This study examined a total of 65 group names, 45 (69 percent) of which are names of all-male groups, 11 (17 percent) all-female groups, and 9 (14 percent) female-male groups. Of the 45 male groups, 27 (60 percent) are all black. The first list of all-male group names consists of the group name alone, as shown in Table 1 below.

The remaining all-male group names in the collection consist of the first and surnames of the lead singer preceding the group name, as seen in Table 2 below.

The all-female group names are similarly divided into two lists, the first of which is the group name alone, as seen in Table 3 that follows.

TABLE 1
MALE GROUPS: n = 32 (49 percent)

The Beach Boys	The Earls	The Penguins
The Capris	The Elegants	The Rays
The Casinos	The Fiestas	The Reflections
The Coasters	The Five Satins	The Rip Chords
The Crests	The Flamingos	The Sheppards
The Danleers	The Impalas	The Silhouettes
The Dell-Vikings	The Jarmels	The Spaniels
The Diamonds	The Marcells	The Temptations
The Dovells	The Marvelows	The Tokens
The Drifters	The Miracles	The Tymes
The Duprees	The Monotones	

TABLE 2
FIRST & SURNAMES OF LEAD SINGER W/GROUP — MALE: n = 13 (20 percent)

Dion and The Belmonts	Little Anthony and The Imperials
Frankie Lymon and The Teenagers	Maurice Williams and The Zodiacs
Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons	Phil Phillips and The Twilight
Harvey and The Moonglows	Randy and The Rainbows
Jay and The Americans	Ronny and The Daytonas
Jerry Butler and The Impressions	Shep and The Limelites
Lee Andrews and The Hearts	

TABLE 3
FEMALE GROUPS: n = 10 (15 percent)

The Angels	The Marvelettes
The Chiffons	The Shangri-Las
The Cookies	The Shirelles
The Dixie Cups	The Supremes
The Jaynetts	The Toys

The second list of female group names includes the first name of the lead singer preceding the group name, as shown in Table 4 below.²

The names of groups consisting of both female and male members in this collection are found in Table 5 below. Most of these 9 groups (14 percent) feature a female as either lead singer, or as a single female member of an otherwise all-male group.

The lists of all-female group names (Tables 3 and 4) are noticeably shorter than those of the male group names, with all-female groups (popularly known as “girl groups”) being only 11 (17 percent) of the total of 65 groups included in this study. According to Leonie and Martinez (1996), this scarcity of female groups accounts for the fact that record companies were hesitant to take a chance with female groups unless they were replicas of the Andrews Sisters or the McGuire Sisters, two of the most popular white female singing groups at the time. And, of course, the Women’s Movement was some fifteen years into the future. Interestingly, the female group names, though few, are spelled with traditional feminine name endings such as *-ett(e)*, *-elle*, and *-ella* (Jaynetts, Marvelettes, Shirelles, Vandellas) as shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Of the 11 all-female groups in this collection, 8 (73 percent) are all black. A similarly-short list is that of the five racially-integrated groups (all male) in the collection as shown in Table 6 that follows.

The few integrated singing groups during this period came from northern states where race relations were generally better than in the South. The Impalas (from

TABLE 4
FIRST NAME OF LEAD SINGER W/GROUP — FEMALE: n = 1 (2 percent)

Martha and The Vandellas

TABLE 5
FEMALE-MALE GROUPS: n=9 (14 percent)

The Ad Libs (1 female, 4 males)	Rosie and The Originals (1 female, 4 males)
The Fleetwoods (2 females, 1 male)	Ruby and The Romantics (1 female, 4 males)
Kathy Young and The Innocents (1 female, 3 males)	The Sensations (1 female, 3 males)
The Orlons (3 females, 1 male)	The Skyliners (1 female, 4 males)
The Platters (1 female, 4 males)	

TABLE 6
RACIALLY-INTEGRATED GROUPS: n=5 (7 percent)

The Crests (2 blacks, 1 white, 1 Puerto Rican)
 The Dell-Vikings (4 blacks, 1 white)
 The Impalas (1 black, 3 whites)
 The Marcells (orig. 3 blacks, 2 whites)
 Frankie Lymon and The Teenagers (3 blacks, 2 Puerto Ricans)

Brooklyn, New York) was one of the few integrated rock'n'roll groups of the period with a black lead singer (Warner, 2006). Interestingly, the original Crests (from Brooklyn and Staten Island, New York) might have been one of the few groups of the period to exemplify both racial and gender diversity, with two black males, one white male (Italian), one Puerto Rican male, and one black female (*Doo-Wop Groups*). These groups, however, seemed to adhere to the same established naming patterns as the non-integrated groups.³ Notice that all of the group names incorporate the determiner *The* followed by a plural noun.⁴

Methods and categorical analysis of names

The names of the male and female groups are further divided into the 14 sub-categories that follow. Given the general simplicity of the names of the groups, these categories emerged quite easily and naturally. Most of the names are semantically categorized, and some of them are listed in more than one category to further illustrate their semantic, connotative, etymological, or other linguistic variations. The group names represent a broad spectrum of interesting choices, meeting the period's mandate to be acceptable and non-threatening, while reflecting uniqueness, coolness, and hipness, with the sound and implied meanings of the names seemingly being significant factors in the selection of many of them.⁵ Consequently, the group names are more or less self-explanatory based on their categorization. Therefore, only brief discussions of the linguistic characteristics of these names are given. However, more extensive analyses and discussion regarding especially interesting name origins, meanings, and related information are given where necessary.⁶

The *Malt Shop Memories* group names analyzed below are written in **bold** type and are categorized according to their meanings and/or origins, from largest to smallest number of names in each category. Where necessary, to better illustrate whether or not the group name reflects gender as it relates to the specific category, the abbreviations **f** (for female group name), **m** (for male group name) or **mix** (for female-male group name) are placed after the name.

Top rank/distinction: n = 12 (18 percent)

The names in this category reflect superiority and top quality or great value, something that stands out or is distinguished in some way:

The Crests (m)	(Shep and) The Limelites (m)
The Diamonds (m)	(Rosie and) The Originals (mix)
The Earls (m)	The Skyliners (mix)
The Elegants (m)	The Supremes (f)
The Five Satins (m)	The Tokens (m)
(Little Anthony and) The Imperials (m)	
The Impressions (m)	

The concept of superiority is especially significant for black artists who traditionally have embraced the idea that blacks historically have had to work harder and to be more capable than their mainstream counterparts to achieve success and recognition (Lee, 2005). Note the alternate spelling of "limelight" in (Shep and) **The Limelites**.

This name is placed in the Top Rank/Distinction category because of its meaning as a prominent or notable public position. *Limelight* is a brilliant light created by the heating of lime and formerly used in theaters to cast an intense beam of light on a particular actor or portion of the stage.

Invented names: n = 10 (15 percent)

The original names in this category were constructed using various word-formation techniques.

The Danleers (m)	The Marvelettes (f)
The Dell-Vikings (m)	The Marvelows (m)
The Dovells (m)	The Shirelles (f)
The Jarmels (m)	The Tymes (m)
The Jaynetts (f)	(Martha and) The Vandellas (f)

The Danleers were named for their composer and manager, Danny Webb (*The Danleers*). The epenthetic [l] in the name seems to further masculinize the suffix *-eer*, meaning one who works with or is concerned with (for example, auctioneer, engineer), the feminine form of which is *-ette*. Similarly, as observed by Al “Caesar” Berry, an original member of The Tymes, who started as The Latineers, “Back in those days everybody had ‘neers’ at the end of the name, so we called ourselves The Latineers” (*The Tymes Story*). The Rivileers is a similar group name of the period.

The Dell-Vikings (Del-Vikings/Del Vikings/Dell Vikings): The spelling of the name varied due to the group’s personnel and record label changes, and copyright problems. Some accounts tell of one of the members reading about Vikings in an encyclopedia, while others state that the name came from that of a basketball team (*The Del Vikings*). The origin of *Del* is not as clear, though The Del-Knights, The Del Satins, and The Dells were the names of other groups of this period.

The Dovells were originally called The Deauvilles, from the Deauville Hotel in Miami (*The Dovells*). Deauville is a resort town in the Lower Normandy region of France.

The Jarmels were named for a street in Harlem (*14 Golden Classics*); therefore, the name can also be categorized as a place name with an invented spelling.

The Jaynetts originally were studio singers whose name was formed from the letter *J* (of J & S Records) and the middle name (Anetta) of The Hearts’ singer Lezli Valentine (*Girl Group Chronicles*).

The Shirelles started as The Poquellos (Spanish for “little birds”). Perhaps this name was an initial attempt to follow the group bird-naming trend of the time (see the bird-naming discussion on the following page). **Shirelles** is a combination of the first name of lead singer Shirley Owens, and The Chantels, a popular black female singing group at the time (*The Shirelles*).

The Tymes’ name is an alternate spelling of *time*. This group started as The Latineers. Thinking that this name might be “holding them back,” the President of Cameo-Parkway records, Bernie Lowe, changed it to The Tymes (*The Tymes Story*). Interestingly, an alternate spelling of *thyme*, the herb, was the Middle English *tyme* (from Old French).

The Vandellas' name is a combination of Van Dyke Street in their hometown of Detroit, and Della Reese, one of the favorite singers of lead singer Martha Reeves (*Martha and the Vandellas*).

Cars/birds & animals: n = 6 (9 percent)

Names of cars, birds, and animals were popular sources of group names during this period. The six male group names in this category are the following: **The Capris**, **The Flamingos**, **The Impalas**, **The Penguins**, **The Spaniels**, and (Maurice Williams and) **The Zodiacs**. **The Capris** were named for the 1957 Chevrolet Capri rather than the Italian Isle of Capri (*The Capris*). Capris is also a style of calf-length pants.

The Flamingos were formerly **The Swallows**, and then **The Five Flamingos** (*The Flamingos Biography*).

Other bird-name groups of the period, but not in the MSM collection, underscore the pervasiveness of the bird-naming trend: (The) Ravens, Orioles, Crows, Cardinals, Robins, Larks, Pelicans, Swans, Wrens, and Sparrows (Friedlander, 2006). Perhaps this trend reflects the simple fact that birds are said to “sing,” and the melodious sounds of “songbirds” have always been striking to the ears of humans. Bird names also extended to gospel groups of the period, such as **The Dixie Hummingbirds**.

Some of the car, bird, and animal names overlap in this category. For example, **The Impalas**' name was chosen from that of the new car of one of their member's father, a Chevrolet Impala (Warner, 2006). The car's name is derived from that of the African antelope, the impala.

The Zodiacs were formerly **The Royal Charms**, then the **Gladiolas**. After their car broke down while touring in West Virginia, their manager saw a picture in a newspaper of a new foreign car, the Zodiac (Warner, 2006: 316). Interestingly, the zodiac is the astrological diagram and comes from the Greek, meaning “circle of animals.”

Another car-name group of the period was **The Cadillacs**. It is also important to note that this group and the three car-name groups in the MSM collection (**The Capris**, **The Impalas**, and **The Zodiacs**) are all male, perhaps reflecting the masculinity that has traditionally been associated with cars, driving, and car maintenance.

Nature and light: n = 6 (9 percent)

These male group names refer to light in some of its natural forms: (Frankie Valli and) **The Four Seasons**, (Harvey and) **The Moonglows**, (Randy and) **The Rainbows**, **The Rays**, **The Reflections**, and (Phil Phillips and) **The Twilights**.

Place-names: n = 6 (9 percent)

These names represent geographic locations, both real and fictional: (Jay and) **The Americans** (m), **The Beach Boys** (m), (Dion and) **The Belmonts** (m), **The Coasters** (m), **The Dixie Cups** (f), and **The Shangri-Las** (f).

The Belmonts were named for Belmont Avenue, a street in their neighborhood in the Bronx, New York City (*Dion and the Belmonts*).

The Coasters' name derived from the fact that their members came from the West Coast (*The Coasters Members*').

Ronny and The Daytonas' name was formed when, urged by Sun Records to come up with a name for his group, songwriter John "Bucky" Wilkin changed his name to Ronny Dayton and named the group The Daytonas (*Ronny and The Daytonas*). This name is perhaps also associated with Daytona Beach, Florida, because of the group's beach music.

The Dixie Cups' name reflects the fact that their members came from New Orleans (*The Very Best*). The name is perhaps also a play on the paper drinking cups of the same name. Interestingly, given the need to reflect an image of innocence and decency, **The Dixie Cups** would not have chosen to call themselves *The Dixie Chicks*, as did the female country music group more than four decades later, though "chick" was a popular slang term for *girl* during the *Malt Shop Memories* era.

The Shangri-Las' name means a utopia or paradise, the setting in James Hilton's 1933 novel, *Lost Horizon*. As a female group name, **The Shangri-Las** reflects feminine perfection and purity.

Eponyms/personal names: n = 5 (8 percent)

These names were formed from the names of people or things: (**Ronny and The Daytonas** (m), **The Duprees** (m), **The Fleetwoods** (mix), **The Marcels** (m), and **The Sheppards** (m).

The Duprees, originally **The Parisians**, liked the sound of the French name Dupree (*Biography*).

The Fleetwoods took their name from a telephone book (*The Fleetwoods*). Fleetwood is also the name of a Cadillac model.

The Marcels took their name from a popular hairstyle at the time, the Marcel, worn by group member Cornelius Harp (Warner, "The Marcels"). It is named for nineteenth-century French hairstylist Marcel Gateau and is characterized by a series of even waves. The "French connection" among the names **The Dovells**, **The Duprees**, and **The Marcels** seems to reflect America's fascination with the French language at the time, as it was the primary foreign language, outside of Latin, taught in American schools and colleges during the 1950s and 1960s.

The Sheppards' name came from Bill "Bunky" Sheppard, the owner of Apex Records (*The Sheppards*).

Love and attraction: n = 4 (6 percent)

These names connote feelings associated with love and romance. They reflect the "boy meets girl" love songs of the period, designed to appeal to the emotions associated with the happiness and heartbreak of young love: (**Lee Andrews and The Hearts** (m), (**Ruby and The Romantics** (mix), **The Sensations** (mix), and **The Temptations** (m).

Music and presentation: n = 4 (6 percent)

The names in this category are **The Ad-Libs** (mix), **The Monotones** (m), **The Platters** (mix), and **The Rip Chords** (m). Ad-libs and monotones are associated with how

language or music is presented; platter is a slang word for phonograph record, and chord (a harmonizing tone) plays on rip cord, used for opening parachutes.

Mystique and wonder: n = 4 (6 percent)

These names imply mystery and astonishment: **The Marvelettes** (f), **The Marvelows** (m) (formerly **The Mystics**), **The Miracles** (m), and **The Silhouettes** (m).

Fabrics: n = 3 (5 percent)

These names reflect the strength, smoothness and softness of fine fabrics: **The Chiffons** (f), **The Orlons** (mix), and **The Five Satins** (m). Interestingly, chiffon is one of the softest fabrics, a sheer silk; it is also a light and fluffy dessert, thus a suitable female name. **The Five Satins** and **The Orlons** (a female-male group) connote smoothness and blended fabrics, respectively.

Femininity & sweetness: n = 3 (5 percent)

These female group names reflect the feminine characteristics of softness, sweetness, and goodness: **The Angels**, **The Chiffons**, and **The Cookies**.

Fun & games: n = 3 (5 percent)

All of these names reflect the gaiety and joy associated with play and celebration: **The Casinos** (m), **The Fiestas** (m), and **The Toys** (f).

Youth and innocence: n = 3 (5 percent)

These names reflect the goodness and purity of youth: **The Angels** (f), **Kathy Young and The Innocents** (mix), and (**Frankie Lymon and**) **The Teenagers** (m). **Kathy Young and The Innocents** seems to be the perfect name for a singing group of this period, capturing the essence of selling decency and innocence. Ironically, critics found nothing decent or innocent about the music.

Another group from this period with a name similar to **Frankie Lymon and The Teenagers** is **Danny and The Juniors**.

Non-category name: n = 1 (1 percent)

As is the case in many names studies, some names seem to defy categorization or explanation. The name from the *Malt Shop Memories* collection that does not fit the present scheme of categorization is the male group, **The Drifters**. A drifter is one who moves aimlessly from place to place or job to job. Though they have undergone many personnel and other changes during their career of more than five decades, **The Drifters** have retained their name, often declaring that their group consists of members who “simply drifted in from other groups” (*Artist Biography*).

Conclusion and implications

This study provides a glimpse into the significant role that group names and naming played in defining the music of this period in America’s music history, and their social, cultural, and economic influences. The names of the vocal groups in the *Malt Shop Memories* collection seem to fit the expected group-naming practices of the

time: non-threatening and innocent, gender-appropriate, simple and obvious rather than complex and abstract; yet cool and hip with a common attractive rhythm and sound. Perhaps the most dominant structural characteristic of the group names of this period is the occurrence of the determiner *The* as an introductory marker of the name, followed by a plural noun. These names were intended to soften the rebellious excitement and gain acceptance of this generation's newfound music. They reinforce the artists' and the music industry's dual objectives at the time: first, to make the emerging rock'n'roll and its singers more acceptable to parents and the general public, and, in turn, to profit from the successful sound and feel of the music. Therefore, group names reflected a general conformity to the naming characteristics of already-successful groups. The combination of the sound and feel of the music, the stage appearance of the singers (suits, ties, dresses), and the names of the groups were designed to create a total marketing package. The groups' names were an integral part of the groups' public image that the record industry attempted to promote.

Conversely, the baby boomers to whom the *Malt Shop Memories* collection is marketed, no doubt, regard the names of rock groups of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s (their children's and grandchildren's music eras) as both threatening and confusing. In sharp contrast to the generally ordinary group names that defined the music of the malt shop era, both abstract and highly-descriptive names such as The Sex Pistols, Black Sabbath, Three Dog Night, Twisted Sister, Body Count, Nine-Inch Nails, The Fine Young Cannibals, Cheap Trick, and Kiss, seem to have been selected without regard to parents' and the public's attitude toward them. The "sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll" mantra that framed this period seemingly was applied to many of these groups' names as a sort of rebellion against the perceived decency, innocence and purity of the 1950s and 1960s.

Malt Shop Memories, however, defines the innovative and dynamic music of a special time in American history. Given the widespread popularity of this music during the 1950s and 1960s, it is not surprising that the field was inundated with vocal groups trying to break into the industry. By some estimates, there were as many as 15,000 doo-wop groups that recorded at least one record (*The Doo-Wop Groups*). The accuracy of this number is difficult to determine. Nonetheless, research reveals many lesser-known groups of the period, with names such as The Cascades, The Dimensions, The Dubs, The Genies, The Harptones, The Knockouts, The Lamplighters, The Rivileers, The Stereos, The Velours, and The Velvelettes. These names exemplify the group-naming trends and linguistic characteristics of the names in the present study, and surely suggest a need for further study in this area of onomastic research.

Notes

¹ Most of the two-member groups in this collection, such as Jan and Dean, Mickey and Sylvia, and Paul and Paula, for example, used their personal names as their stage names. Two of the few exceptions were The Everly Brothers and The Righteous Brothers.

² Though Diana Ross was a member of the other major female group of the period, The Supremes, the group's name was not changed to Diana Ross

and The Supremes until 1967. Their songs included in the *Malt Shop Memories* collection were released prior to that year under the name The Supremes. Therefore, The Supremes are included in Table 3: Female Groups, rather than in Table 4: First Name of Lead Singer w/Group — Female.

³ When comparing the lexical and phonological features of the names of white and black groups, it can be noted that the names of the black groups The

Jarmels, The Marcells, and The Shirelles compare to the name of the white group The Dovells in that these names reflect the stress on the second syllable common in African American names, such as Chantel/Denzel/Latrelle/Montel/Terrell. In terms of rhyming and rhythmic characteristics, the name of the black group Frankie Lymon and The Teenagers parallels that of the white group Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons, while the name of the black group Harvey and The Moonglows parallels that of the white group Randy and The Rainbows. Moreover, the name of the black group Ruby and The Romantics compares similarly to that of the white group Rosie and The Originals. Other similarities are The Five Satins (black), The Four Seasons (white); and The Impressions (black) and The Reflections (white). Given the strong influence of black music at the time, it is no coincidence that these names, as well as those in the entire study, are linguistically similar with no significant differences between the names of black and white groups.

⁴ This naming structure seems to have shifted significantly with the group names of 1970s and 1980s vocal artists, many of whose names consisted of unit or concept names and did not use this marker, for example, Strawberry Alarm Clock, Three Dog Night, Jefferson Airplane, and War.

⁵ Given this naming criteria, it was not uncommon for vocal groups of this period to undergo multiple

name changes often associated with personnel, management, and record label changes; creative differences, internal and personality conflicts, personal preferences, and contract and other legal issues. For example, the female group The Dixie Cups started as The Meltones, later changing their name to Little Miss and The Muffets before settling on The Dixie Cups (*The Very Best*).

⁶ Most of the information regarding origins and meanings of the group names in this study was found on the groups' official websites, on music history websites, or in music history books. In some instances, this information tended to overlap from one source to another, no doubt, the result of sources freely gathering and/or borrowing information from official sites, resulting in information that has essentially become common knowledge. Some accounts differ in how names originated, reflecting conflicts among sources, though not to the extent that questions their basic accuracy. Some of these contrasts may relate to the fact that, given the ages of some surviving members (or former members) of groups whose names are examined in this study, recollection of details and events of more than fifty years ago may not be as clear or precise as it once was. Moreover, details are often seen or remembered from different perspectives by different persons. Nonetheless, I am confident in the overall reliability of the sources and the accuracy of the data in this study.

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