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Let My Voice Be Heard

Barriers to Gender Diversity and Inclusion in Anglican Cathedral Music

A thesis presented for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Department of Music
Durham University
2020

Abstract

Since girl choristers were first included as permanent members of Salisbury Cathedral Choir in 1991, all-male choirs in Church of England cathedrals have undergone substantial transformation. Thirty-nine of the forty-two such cathedrals now offer musical provision in some form to girls, as well as continuing their commitment to boys. Women have also increasingly been selected for Choral and Organ Scholarships, Lay clerkships, and other leadership positions: to date five cathedrals have appointed a woman Director of Music. And yet, very few (if any) cathedrals can claim to foster a culture that seeks to eradicate the persisting interconnected barriers which create and sustain a double bind based on gender. As such, recognising and attending to these barriers is imperative.

Using qualitative data collected by the author in twenty interviews at ten cathedrals in 2017/2018 together with promotional literature from individual cathedrals, and official Church of England documents, this thesis identifies and scrutinises four systematically related barriers which cumulatively impede gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making today. These are that:

1. Opportunities for women and girls are shaped and restricted by institutional understandings of how to speak about gender, sex, and sexuality as a result of the Anglican *via media* ('middle ways');
2. Rhetorics of tradition 'other' women by (re-)asserting a gendered hierarchy in various aspects of cathedral music-making;
3. The bodies, spaces, and voices involved in cathedral worship are affected by the unequal approaches to gender built into the material and embodied practices of the Church of England;
4. Music leadership is constructed, assumed, and enacted within a deeply gendered framework thereby creating and reinforcing obstacles to participation for women and girls.

This thesis provides a foundation for practitioners and scholars alike to scrutinise the often subtle and underlying forms of exclusion which underpin cathedral practices, policies, and cultures.

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Finally, I'm willing to state that the errors which remain in this thesis are wholly my own.

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Prelude

Cages. Consider a birdcage. If you look very closely at just one wire in the cage, you cannot see the other wires. If your conception of what is before you is determined by this myopic focus, you could look at that one wire, up and down the length of it, and be unable to see why a bird would not just fly around the wire any time it wanted to go somewhere. Furthermore, even if, one day at a time, you myopically inspected each wire, you still could not see why a bird would have trouble going past the wires to get anywhere. There is no physical property of any one wire, nothing that the closest scrutiny could discover, that will reveal how a bird could be inhibited or harmed by it except in the most accidental way. It is only when you step back, stop looking at the wires one by one, microscopically, and take a macroscopic view of the whole cage, that you can see why the bird does not go anywhere; and then you will see it in a moment. It will require no great subtlety of mental powers. It is perfectly obvious that the bird is surrounded by a network of systematically related barriers, no one of which would be the least hindrance to its flight, but which, by their relations to each other, are as confining as the solid walls of a dungeon.

Excerpt from *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory* by Marilyn Frye (1983, pp. 4-5)

Most Church of England cathedrals today include women and girls to some degree in their regular music-making. The claim of this thesis, however, is that very few cathedrals foster a culture which seeks to eradicate the interconnected barriers that cumulatively obstruct progress in gender diversity and inclusion in music-making. Herein I analyse four such bars in this 'cage' and ask whether cathedrals and the wider church are either breaking down or reinforcing these barriers. Over four chapters, referred to throughout as 'barriers', I argue that:

- 1) Opportunities for improving gender diversity and inclusion in the Church of England are shaped and restricted by narrow and ambiguous institutional understandings of how to speak about gender, sex, and sexuality. Though these two terms 'narrow' and 'ambiguous' may appear to be opposed, I suggest that they capture the way in which the Church, at an institutional level, simultaneously limits the scope of what may be said officially and avoids overly definitive statements on these subjects. I suggest that this approach is a result of the *via media* ('middle ways') character of Anglicanism;

- 2) Rhetorics of 'tradition' continue to pervade many aspects of cathedral music-making. I show that these rhetorics are fundamental to asserting a gendered hierarchy in cathedrals and 'othering'¹ women as music-makers in this arena;
- 3) Unequal approaches to gender are built into the material and embodied practices of the Church of England, affecting understandings of the bodies, spaces, and voices involved in cathedral worship;
- 4) Music leadership is constructed, assumed, and enacted in ways that are deeply gendered, creating obstacles to women's participation in leadership.

As I undertook my survey of research on women and girls in cathedral music-making for this thesis,² it became increasingly clear to me that barriers to female inclusion were being looked at in isolation from one another. Often this approach has been followed in order to directly combat individual arguments against this inclusion. Yet, I argue that it is only when seen in combination that this cage of individual bars can be fully understood as restricting gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making like the 'solid walls of a dungeon' described by Frye (1983). While each barrier is thematised as an individual entity (for clarity and ease of understanding), they remain deeply intertwined, and connections will be drawn out in each barrier to illustrate their inter-relationship.³

English cathedrals have provided daily worship since as early as 660AD, when Canterbury Cathedral was founded. Cathedral choirs have been crucial to this provision, and for most of the history of the Church of England, they have been made up exclusively of boy choristers (usually aged between seven and thirteen) and adult male singers. Since the creation of a permanent girl chorister line at Salisbury Cathedral in 1991, the tradition of all-male choirs in English cathedrals seems to have undergone a substantial transformation.⁴ Thirty-nine of the forty-two Anglican cathedrals in England now offer musical provision in some

¹ The use of the word 'other' as a verb throughout this thesis is in line with the Merriam Webster definition: "to treat that culture as fundamentally different from another class of individuals, often by emphasizing its apartness." (*Can Other Be Used as a Verb?*, 2017).

² See Prelude Part III.

³ Later I explain how I retain the systematic framing of this cage whilst examining each barrier individually (see: Methods).

⁴ The ways in which this 'tradition' and its 'transformation' are perceived and presented in contemporary discussions of cathedral music-making will be interrogated in Barrier Two.

form to women and girls as well as men and boys, and, according to the most recent Church of England *Cathedral Statistics*, 740 of 1500 choristers and 80 of 540 Lay clerks are female (2019, p. 36).⁵ Since I embarked on this research in 2016, the Frideswide Voices became permanent fixtures at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford in 2019 under the Direction of Helen Smee. Currently only Chichester, Hereford, and St Paul's in London do not have girl choristers, whilst cathedrals such as St Edmundsbury and Portsmouth⁶ have limited provision.

The rate of change regarding gender inclusion in cathedral music-making has impacted this study in a variety of ways. For example, the appointments of women in posts throughout the study period affected decisions made about which cathedrals to focus on and also indicated a small change in structures and practices. At each cathedral there is a Director of Music and usually an Assistant Director of Music, although the nomenclature sometimes differs (as will be discussed in Barrier Four). When I began research for this project in 2016 there had been two cathedral Directors of Music who are women (Sarah Baldock at Chichester, 2008-2014, and Katherine Dienes-Williams at Guildford, 2008-present). In May 2018, it was announced that Dienes-Williams would no longer be alone at the top as Tansy Castledine was to begin as Director of Music at Peterborough from September 2018. In April 2019, Francesca Massey was appointed as the next Organist and Director of Music at Rochester Cathedral, and took up the role in September 2019. Before this, Massey was Sub-Organist at Durham Cathedral (2011-2019). Similar positions to Sub-Organist, such as Assistant Director of Music and Director of the Girls' Choir, have been held by a few women, including Sarah MacDonald at Ely (2010-present), Rachel Mahon⁷ at

⁵ These statistics are taken from the forty-two English cathedrals but also include Westminster Abbey and Peel Cathedral on the Isle of Man. Although in simple numerical terms the gender division of choristers appears to be basically equal, the picture is more complex – as I will discuss in much greater detail in the body of the thesis – because of mixed versus separate choirs and the ways in which the female-member only choirs are positioned (in the rhythms of cathedral worship) in relation to the male-only member choirs.

⁶ St Edmundsbury and Portsmouth Cathedral both have arrangements for girls to sing as part of one of their other choirs, but not their own line of the cathedral choir, separate from the boys. St Edmundsbury have the St Cecilia Juniors for girls aged 7-13 whilst Portsmouth offer 'Cantate' for girls aged 11-18 and teenage boys – singing Evensong once per week. St Edmundsbury have expressed an intention to change the state of the girl choristership in late-2020. Discussions about the nuanced presentation of nomenclature will be discussed in Barrier Two.

⁷ On 13/02/2020 it was announced that from September 2020 Rachel Mahon will take up the post of Director of Music at Coventry (where she currently holds the position of Assistant Director of Music).

Coventry (2018-present), as well as Hilary Punnett at Chelmsford, and Rosie Vinter at Leicester (both 2019-present).⁸

The final central position of authority in cathedral music-making is that of the Precentor (a member of the clergy responsible for overseeing the music from a liturgical standpoint and leading singing).⁹ Since the inclusion of women into the priesthood in 1994, this position can now be held by women as well as by men and there are, at the time of writing, more than ten women Precentors (out of a total of forty-two) in Church of England cathedrals including Nicola Stanley at Bristol (2014-present), Sal McDougal at Lincoln (2017-present), and Rowan Williams at Peterborough (2018-present). Six of the forty-six Deaneries in the Church of England are also occupied, at present, by women.

Before I turn to a detailed account of the terms, concepts, and contexts that are relevant to this thesis, I want to briefly note some wider developments that fed into my thinking as I worked on this research. The last few years have seen a resurgence in feminist activism in British society,¹⁰ and this spurred me to look at the systemic nature of the barriers to gender inclusion in cathedral music-making. I have been grateful to carry out this research in a culture of heightened awareness of discrimination, where ignorance is no longer a reasonable defence: my thesis was written alongside the rise of the #metoo and #timesup campaigns. During this time, women in Ireland and Northern Ireland have also been granted legal autonomy over their bodies as a result of changes in these countries' abortion laws. Hillary Clinton, although unsuccessful in her bid for the Presidency of the United States in 2016, was the first woman candidate to reach this stage. Theresa May was Prime Minister in the United Kingdom (the second woman to have ever held the position) for the majority of my PhD study, and a record-high 32% of MPs were women in March 2019. Young women including Malala Yousefzi and Greta Thunberg continue to lead grass-roots campaigns to change (and save) the world.

⁸ In Barrier Four, I discuss the scarcity of women in these positions as part of my analysis of how music leadership is constructed in ways that are deeply gendered and create obstacles to women's participation in leadership, as well as what this increased rate of change means.

⁹ 'Precentor' derives from a Latin term meaning 'first singer'. The role is discussed in more detail in Barrier Four.

¹⁰ See Nickie Charles and Khursheed Wadia, 2018.

Likewise, many books written for non-academic audiences about sex and gender have been published recently and have influenced my work in a broad sense. These include *We Should All Be Feminists* (2014) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Inferior* (2017) by Angela Saini, and Caroline Criado Perez's *Invisible Women* (2019). These events and books have relatedly provoked conversations both in and outside of the academy about intersectionality^{11,12} in gender studies, about how historical data on women is often skewed due to the lack of proper and effective study of that which is not male, and how we have inherited frameworks from science and western history which limit our understanding of women and of gender diversity (Evelyn Fox Keller, 2003; Gerda Lerner, 2005; Petra Hendry, 2011). Although research in all these areas has been happening for many decades, there is now a renewed sense of urgency around these questions both inside and outside of the academy as energetic public debate about diversity, inclusion, and equality increases.

During the period of my research, I have observed some key exceptions to the more general picture of slow-moving gender diversification in the classical and choral music industry in England. These include: The Royal Opera House's Jette Parker Young Artist's Scheme collaboration with RPS and the National Opera Studio which 'proactively seeks to support and increase the number of female répétiteurs and conductors' (*Jette Parker Young Artists Programme*, 2020); the 2017 National Concert Hall Female Conductor Programme; and Morley College's 'Women Conductors @ Morley' Programme since 2014. Women in positions of leadership in music who have been working to increase women's participation include: Alice Farnham at the Royal Philharmonic Society; Marin Alsop through her work with orchestras in the USA and her pioneering conducting performances at the Last Night of the Proms; Anna Lapwood¹³ in her creation of the Girls' Choir

¹¹ The World Health Organisation claims that 'Gender intersects with other factors that drive inequalities, discrimination and marginalization, such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, age, geographic location and sexual orientation, among others' (*Gender and health*, 2019).

¹² Intersectionality, Sara Ahmed writes, 'is a key contribution of Black feminist scholarship [...] [which] has now been taken up not only within Black feminism but also more widely within feminist theory, critical race studies, social theory, and cultural studies' having been devised by Kimberlé W. Crenshaw in 1989 (2012, n.18, p. 195). The concept of *intersectionality* and the role it plays in my work is discussed further in my Methods (pp. 43-45).

¹³ In 2016, Anna Lapwood was appointed Director of Music at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Her appointment made her the youngest person as well as the third woman to hold the position of Director of

at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and leadership of the ‘Play Like A Girl’ Organ days, and the 24-hour “Bach-a-thon” organised in June 2018 which included twenty-two women organists playing the complete organ works of J.S. Bach, and the Cambridge Organ Experience for Girls. Likewise, Louise Stewart has worked tirelessly on two *Anthologies of Sacred Music by Women Composers*, the first of which was launched in November 2019 (*Multitude of Voyces - Anthology of Sacred Music by Women Composers*, 2020). Dr Angela Slater also set up *Illuminate* in 2017 – a project which seeks ‘to promote the work of emerging women composers and performers’, ‘giv[ing] a platform for historical repertoire by women composers to sit alongside new works’ (*Illuminate Women's music project*, 2019). Opportunities for exposure to women’s choral work were given to the young people involved in The National Youth Choirs of Great Britain (NYCGB) during the organisation's year-long ‘Women in Song’ project in 2018 which featured the works of forty-four women composers including Janet Wheeler, Errollyn Wallen, Roxanna Panufnik, and Kerry Andrew. The youth music organisation also made a pledge in November 2018 to commit to balanced repertoire programming. In October 2019 NYCGB announced that two of its three new Principal Conductors were women, with Lucy Joy Morris becoming the first woman to hold the position of Principal Conductor of the National Youth Boys’ Choir of Great Britain. Finally, social media solidarity also resulted in the creation of a Facebook group named ‘Women in Choral Music’.¹⁴ Set up in November 2017, the group has since gained over 1,200 members. However, that all of these events are recent exceptions to an otherwise all-male showground, I attest, is indicative of the impact of these pervasive and persistent barriers which affect the classical music industry, broadly and cathedral music-making, specifically.

Up to this point I have been using the terminology of ‘diversity’, ‘gender equality’ and so on, as concepts that are broadly understood in contemporary public debate. However, there are nuances to each of these terms. Before I continue, it is crucial to establish a definition of the terms ‘sex’ and ‘gender’, as

Music at a Cambridge College. Sarah MacDonald has held the position at Selwyn since 1999 and Katherine Parton at Fitzwilliam College between 2014-2017. Whilst at Fitzwilliam, Parton set up the Young Women’s Conducting Workshops in collaboration with the RPS for girls aged twelve to fifteen.

¹⁴ The Facebook group is private and therefore hidden – only members can find it and invite others to join.

well as to provide a foundation for the concepts of gender ‘equality’, ‘equity’, ‘parity’, ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’, which will be used to varying extents throughout this thesis.¹⁵

I. Definitions and Foundations

(a) Sex and Gender

Hilary Lips writes that we cannot ‘cleanly and clearly’ separate ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ or see them as ‘nonoverlapping concepts’ (2017, p. 6). In Lips’ work the term *sex* ‘is reserved for discussions of anatomy and the classification of individuals based on their anatomical category’ (p. 6). Such anatomical or biological differences, which have often been reduced to the absence or presence of a Y chromosome,¹⁶ have led to deeply entrenched sex-based binarising of women and men in the western world. As Chris Shilling asserts: ‘the suggestion that embodied “sex differences” are natural and unalterable has been used historically to assign fixed identities to men and women, identities that condemn them to limited and unequal roles’ (2016, p. 25).

Although some of the scholarship and participant responses which I reference throughout this thesis use the term ‘sex’ – usually based on the understanding that there are ‘two sexes’ grounded on the aforementioned physical features or chromosomal differences – I will, like Lips, very rarely use this term myself, instead using the terms ‘gender’ or ‘gender diversity’ where possible. I will be using the term ‘gender’ rather than ‘sex’ throughout this thesis because of the underlying cultural and structural assumptions about what bodies and voices can do and how these are usually, but not always falsely reduced to mere biological ‘realities’ or ‘facts’. I turn now to discuss terminologies of gender.

¹⁵ My decision to use some definitions from outside the academy will be explained in my Methods section.

¹⁶ For evidence of the flawed nature of simplistic binary thinking on a chromosomal basis, see Susannah Cornwall’s discussion in *Sex and uncertainty in the body of Christ: Intersex conditions and Christian theology* (2016).

Gender

Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet state that *gender* is ‘the social elaboration of biological sex’ and ‘exaggerates biological difference’ (2013, p. 2). This definition suggests that gender is necessarily rooted in sexed difference, but I want to recognise that the situation is more complicated than this. I agree with those theorists who challenge any notion that one can simply ‘translate’ from sex to gender, so that the first determines the second. Yet, as G.G. Bolich attests: ‘perhaps the most amazing thing about this word “gender” is that it simultaneously appears so clear and yet under scrutiny proves either ambiguous or contentious’ (2007, p. 8). The World Health Organisation defines it as that which ‘refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, attributes and opportunities that any society considers appropriate for girls and boys, and women and men’ (*Gender and health*, 2019). Similarly, the LGBTQ+ charity, Stonewall, defines gender as a factor which is ‘[...] largely culturally determined and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth’ (*Glossary of Terms*, 2019). The idea that gender is a fixed binary, determined by biological sex, has been challenged by several decades of scholarship which argues that gender identity is constructed, performed, and can be described not as a binary but as a spectrum. Seeing gender as spectrum rather than binary *accords with*, rather than conflicts with, my thesis’s discussion of women in music.

Judith Butler’s argument that ‘gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts*’ (emphasis in original; 1990, p. 140) has been reiterated by scholars including Amy Wharton who said that ‘gender is as much a process as a fixed state [...] it is being continually produced and reproduced’ (2009, p. 7). The notion of gender as performed has a particular resonance for this thesis because of the performative nature of music-making and music-leading. Their work stands alongside research by Martine Rothblatt (1995) who advocated for a gender continuum theory which pushes back against the importance of sex-based binary segregation. More recently, Surya Monro (2005) has argued for a flexible model of gender to replace and deconstruct the limited notions of ‘male’ and ‘female’.

Gender is, in all of these senses, a result of the social structures attached to bodies in a certain cultural context in order to limit or promote beliefs about said bodies and their embodied acts. In this way, gender is a system of categorisation and power – it determines what people can and cannot do based on a set of cultural expectations that link biological sex to social role; gender is ‘a label for the system of expectations held by societies with respect to feminine and masculine roles’ (Lips, 2017, p. 6). The ‘system of expectations’ which Lips describes is perhaps no clearer seen than in contemporary debates on the issue of to what extent bodily sexed *experience* shapes or determines gender identity and is epitomised in disputes surrounding ‘transgender’¹⁷ and ‘non-binary’¹⁸ inclusion which centre around ‘gender-neutral’ bathrooms¹⁹ and beliefs that trans women are not women.²⁰ Much of the discussion which seeks to undermine transgender identities is about the primacy of biological sex, which indicates the complex crossover in common discourse between the two concepts. As a trans-inclusionary feminist, my thesis is intended to speak to the situations of all who identify as women in music-making roles in cathedrals, although experiences of trans and non-binary musicians are not focussed on.²¹

Claims about gender as a continuum disrupt clearly delineated, socially constructed notions of appropriate gender roles and functions, whilst nonetheless continuing to press for greater recognition of the ways in which existing perceptions of gender impose limitations on individuals and groups (especially women). As Wharton suggests, gender has an important role in ‘organizing relations of inequality’ (2009, p. 7), and expectations about performances of gender (which include understandings that men are more assertive and that women are more caring, for example) subconsciously reinforce binaries and the hierarchy of

¹⁷ According to Stonewall, *Transgender* or ‘Trans’ is: ‘An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth’. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, gender-queer (GQ), gender-fluid, non-binary, gender-variant, crossdresser, genderless, agender, nongender, third gender, bi-gender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois’ (*Glossary of Terms*, 2019).

¹⁸ Stonewall defines *Non-binary* as: ‘An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn’t sit comfortably with ‘man’ or ‘woman’. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely’ (*Glossary of Terms*, 2019).

¹⁹ See, for example: *Gender neutral toilets don’t work for women* (Woman’s Place UK, 2020).

²⁰ See also work by Germaine Greer, 1970; 1999; and Julie Bindle, 2004.

²¹ For more information on trans-inclusionary feminism, see Sally Hines, 2017.

male over female. As Janet Holmes writes: ‘we bring to every interaction our familiarity with societal gender stereotypes and the gendered norms to which women and men are expected to conform’ (2008, p. 209).

One reason for my decision to utilise ‘gender’ as a term is that it is less fixed than sex and therefore allows for the inclusion of a significantly greater number of identities than has been the case throughout the cis-male²² domination of cathedral music-making. This decision is in line with Judith Butler’s case that, ‘originally intended to dispute the biology-is-destiny formulation, the distinction between sex and gender serves the argument that whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence, gender is neither the causal result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex’ (1990, p. 6). This thesis is less about the gender identities of particular cathedral musicians and more about the stereotypes which are unconsciously, subconsciously, or even consciously, ascribed to particular genders. Nonetheless, I will, at various times throughout this thesis, point to the way that the cathedral choirs of England perpetuate binaries based on *sexual* difference, ignoring or denying the fluidity of gender. I will also examine how the participants in this study tacitly undermine this fluidity in their understanding of the structures which confine inclusive music-making. I will suggest that there is an implicit acceptance, still, in cathedrals of the male-as-norm and the status quo, and an ongoing androgynisation of female bodies in cathedral music-making. There has been very little open inclusion of transgender or non-binary musicians in cathedral music-making – at least not in the cathedrals or scholarship that I have examined. This thesis is written with such open inclusion of transgender, intersex, and non-binary persons in cathedral music-making in the future in mind.

(b) Gender Equality, Equity, and Parity

As already discussed, understandings of gender can instantiate and perpetuate unequal systems of power. How such imbalances are assumed to be addressed and

²² According to Stonewall, ‘Cisgender’ or ‘Cis’ refers to ‘someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people’ (*Glossary of Terms*, 2020).

remedied is broadly interpreted in three different ways. According to the United Nations, *gender equality* ‘refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female’ (*Concepts and definitions*, 2019). The concept of equality is key to this thesis and is regarded as a common aim of the participants in this study – whether central or secondary to their work. There are two sub-parts of this term: ‘equity’ and ‘parity’, which will also feature throughout this thesis. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines *equity* as the ‘provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men’ (*Gender: definitions*, 2019) – a goal which contains the idea of making extra provision in order to achieve a situation of equality. The EIGE further define *gender parity* as ‘relative equality in terms of numbers and proportions of women and men, girls and boys [...] often calculated as the ratio of female-to-male values for a given indicator’ (*Gender: definitions*, 2019). I will refer to these terms particularly when I analyse the opportunities afforded to the choristers (equity) and statistics, and arguments regarding ratios of male to female musicians (parity).

(c) Gender Diversity and Inclusion

‘Gender diversity’ can have multiple meanings and throughout this thesis, the term is used fluidly. It can be used to refer to those who do not identify as male or female, as was outlined in my definitions of gender and sex. Whilst *equality* is understood to mean access to resources and opportunities, I have chosen *diversity* to indicate not only the strength of having more than men alone involved in institutions such as cathedral choirs, but also to acknowledge that men’s hierarchical control throughout history can be corrected by diversifying the workplace and subverting the historic patriarchal control by means of de-patriarchalisation. Diversity does not only mean including *a range of people*, but also, more importantly, focusses on the diversity of their identities as well as how

these identities can belong in any given place. Gender diversity, in this sense, is about the inclusion of those who identify as female (and male) – irrespective of which they were assigned at birth – as well as non-binary persons, helping to move away from the binaries which, I attest, are so pervasive in cathedral music-making. Finally, I have opted to use *diversity* because of my increasing awareness throughout this project that the quest for *equality* (including ‘equity’ and ‘parity’) does not necessarily result in changed or transformed organisations or institutions, but instead often produces solely surface-level, one-off, adjustments or appointments.

II. Sex and Gender in Musicology

In the same year that girls were first admitted to Salisbury Cathedral Choir (1991), American composer and author, John Shepherd wrote:

the study of gender does not simply involve the study of women. Neither does it simply involve the addition of the study of women to the study of men. it involves a reconceptualization of the study of humanity so that the rectification of this particular silence (itself a consequence of a particular political agenda) results in a different understanding of the social world. To study the situation of women is, in other words, to challenge the political domination of men. (1991, p. 153)

In the 1990s gender musicology was largely led by feminist scholars and was perceived by some as a special interest subject. Much of the scholarship from that time sets out what role gender has played in understandings of music-making, laying the foundations for the beginning of a reconsideration of the all-male hegemony of classical music. Scholars such as Suzanne Cusick claimed that ‘gender is a system of power relationships that is designed to give men and women different experiences of life’ (1994, p. 10), and Susan Cook and Judy Tsou argued that ‘identifying the cultural construction of gender means identifying women’s oppression and acknowledging the many painful realities of patriarchal beliefs and practice’ (1994, p. 2). More recent musicological work, since the turn of the century, has sought to engage with the fluidity of gender, as discussed above. For example, Ellen Koskoff states that ‘notions of man, woman, gender, sex, and

culture as static, bounded categories, existing either alone or in binary constructs, are giving way to process-oriented paradigms favoring chaos, negotiation over time, shifting realities and identities' (2005, p. 98). Though there are some signs that considerations of gender have entered the 'mainstream' of musicological work,²³ Rachel Lewis nonetheless argues that some musicologists 'still sadly view matters of gender and sexuality as "special" or "minority" interests' (2009, p. 48).

Increasingly there is work being done within the academy surrounding gendered terminologies, particularly as they are used in relation to musical practice (discussed in detail in Barriers Two and Four), as well as the impact of sex and gender on classical music-making, not least in relation to the canon, conducting, and voices (all discussed throughout this thesis). Much of the work already being done on gender in musicology has been pioneered in subdisciplines such as ethnomusicology, where Ruth M. Stone acknowledged as late as 2016, in her *Theory for Ethnomusicology*, that: 'in the discipline of ethnomusicology, scholars are just beginning to ask fundamental questions about gender concepts and discovering that the issues are not as cut and dried as male versus female. Furthermore, the very definitions of maleness and femaleness are wide ranging from one world area to another' (2016, p. 152). So, although ethnomusicology is a subdiscipline which is at the cutting edge in terms of gender research, there remains a reticence to grasp the importance of gender in musicology more broadly, which does still impact the structures which ethnomusicological research is carried out within.

Stone's mention of the variety of cultural nuances which affect understandings of gender is also indicative of the increasingly intersectional nature of this work. Research being done on classical music from outside of the discipline of musicology, for example in sociology by scholars such as Christina Scharff (2018) and Anna Bull (2016; 2019), helps to open up methodological

²³ See: Anna Bull, 2019; Julie Dunbar, 2011; Robin James, 2010; Gavin Lee, 2018; Marion Leonard, 2015; Sally Macarthur, 2013; Fred E. Maus, 2011; Karin Pendle and Malinda Boyd, 2010; Christina Scharff, 2018; Desmond Sergeant & Evangelos Himonides, 2014.

frameworks for exploring gender in classical music-making, particularly in thinking about how it intersects with other social and political identities.²⁴

My work builds upon Anna Bull's and Lucy Green's intersectional framework in which class can perhaps be best described as the focal tenet. In this thesis, I focus on the structures which pervade a particular tenet of classical music-making primarily viewing the issues through the lens of gender but acknowledging that this issue operates and interconnects in manifold ways. Bull (2019) condemns the historical and persistent effect of gender and class inequality in the classical music industry. Her work on class, control and classical music underpins my evaluation of the gendered body in Barrier Three in terms of her use of ethnographic work to show that the aesthetic of classical music is centred around, the white, middle-class musician (2019, pp. 128-144). Similarly, Lucy Green's understanding of the intersecting impacts of class, religion, ethnicity and sub-culture on the issue of gender in music education (1997) remains relevant. In Green's work (1997; already mentioned above) she explores the responses of her twenty-one participants and shows the gendered perceptions which affect a teacher's treatment of boys and girls in the composition classroom. Her research is echoed by Patricia O'Toole who similarly concludes that girls can be treated badly in choral music due to biased teacher interactions and male-centric repertoire decisions, amongst other factors (1998, p. 25). I will draw on Green's concept of 'threatening femininity' which is the notion that women's bodily femininity is 'incommensurable and unacceptable' with creating an 'autonomous work of genius' (p. 113). Her research is particularly relevant in discussions of tradition (Barrier Two) and voices and bodies (Barrier Three). Given Green's focus on education, it is unsurprising that she notes the role of the music leader (in this case the teacher) in creating and reproducing these norms.

Recently, scholars including Bull, Hilary Apfelstadt, Liz Garnett, Loucia Lazarou, and Claudia Bryan have undertaken research which examines the role of women as conductors. Apfelstadt's 2009 study of women conductors as leaders

²⁴ The benefits of exploring classical music with influences from sociological frameworks, as demonstrated by Scharff and Bull, will be explored further in my Methods.

and mentors (in Joan Conlon's edited collection on women choral conductors) covers perceived disadvantages to being a woman conductor and how young woman conductors in particular pursue musical education without knowing the full picture of gender discrimination in the industry. Apfelstadt goes on to argue that mentoring is a key component of leadership, both in formal and informal settings (pp. 168-176). Bryan's thesis on woman choral conductors studied the career paths of successful women conductors in order to elucidate what helps them achieve, acknowledging that two of her participants 'felt more comfortable attributing some of their success to feminine traits', such as 'nurturing', 'empathetic' and 'intuitive', whilst the other two were reportedly 'a bit more reluctant' (pp. 58-61). Bryan also explores themes such as support systems (2017, pp. 50-57) which underpins my discussion of role models in Barrier Four. Whilst Bull's examination largely develops around her specific study of the youth orchestra and opera group which she observed, she also makes explicit reference to the particular type of authority commonly associated with cathedral conductors (2019, pp. 146-157). Her understanding of what she has called, in another work, the 'non-linguistic embodied musical experience' (2016, p. 869) stands in tandem with Apfelstadt's reflections on gender, the body, and authority in conducting.

This research on gender and conducting prompted me to explore the ways that women approach leading in cathedral music-making and the gendered connotations of leadership in much more detail; including the extra unnoticed labour that women in these positions often take on, and the sexism that they experience whilst in these roles. In *Gender, Subjectivity, and Cultural Work: The Classical Music Profession* (2018), Christina Scharff makes reference to an evaluation of the Women Make Music programme,²⁵ in which the PRS Foundation reported that '78% of interviewees said they had experienced sexism in the industry' (2016, p. 4). The report went on to say that:

Lack of recognition of what women contribute and achieve within the music industry and the pressure on women to conform to an image of being beautiful and sexy were recurring themes in the interviews and

²⁵ Women Make Music 'supports the development of outstanding women, trans and non binary songwriters and composers of all genres and backgrounds at different stages of their career. The fund can support projects by women, trans and non binary songwriters, composers, artists, bands and performers who are writing their own music' (PRS Foundation).

surveys for this study [...] Linked to this, the lack of strong female role models and recognition of what women do and have achieved in music in the past, is a real issue in terms of shaping the ambitions and confidence of young women entering the industry. (p. 10)

Scharff suggests some overarching solutions to the problems of the hierarchies of race, class, and gender, which pervade classical music as a whole. Scharff's proposals have influenced my arguments surrounding leadership in Barrier Four.

Studies of women conductors have also highlighted issues such as personal versus professional expectations, gesture, and clothing, as significant. Lazarou's analysis of the roles that both gesture and technique play in understanding the 'challenging environment' that women face (2017, p. 211) is foundational to my examination of how the women participants in my study viewed the impact of their gender on their own musical practice. Lazarou's participants were keen to emphasise that individuality, physical attributes, genre/repertoire of music and expressiveness are also fundamental factors to take into consideration before criticising people's gender on the podium. Likewise, my women participants sought to place other factors as of higher importance than their gender, as a means to forestall or pre-empt criticism (a position I will discuss in Barrier Four). Apfelstadt attests that posture and stance, eye contact, and dress all come into perceptions of good leadership (2009, p. 166). Similar arguments have been made by Garnett, who argues that the (bodily) boundaries of choral singers are policed by both conductors and the singers themselves in order to maintain a choral culture (2009, p. 91) and that the bond between the choir and their conductor has great importance in terms of interpreting culture, gesture, and style (p. 193). Garnett is clear in her understanding that gendered deductions of gesture and style exaggerate – for those who believe that women cannot conduct or are at least not as adept as men in this field – the supposed differences between men and women in this role. Garnett has noted that that which is unsaid (p. 54) can be significant in music-making contexts, allowing for the 'othering' of the female body in such spaces.

Susan McClary argued that there has been a denial of the body as such in classical music in a way that is not the case in other musical forms, including

popular music – as largely seen through her discussion of pop icon Madonna (1991, pp. 148-166). Here McClary notes how women's inclusion is 'located within the discourse in a position of both desire and dread – as that which must reveal that it is controlled by the male or which must be purged as intolerable' (p. 152). In Barrier Three, I use McClary's theories of women's embodiment in western classical music and pop from *Feminine Endings* to underpin discussions around stereotypes of gendered musical characteristics when I explore whether or not musical pieces in the cathedral repertoire can be considered to be gendered and how the bodies who perform this music are controlled.

I will turn to a full discussion of the scholarship on gender and choral singing in Part III below. For now, I want to focus on composers. Scholarship about women composers provides a case that women have been composing for a significantly longer period of time than is usually recognised in repertoire. In the second edition of their aptly named book, *Women Composers: The Lost Tradition Found* (1994), Diane Jezic and Elizabeth Wood argued that new terminology had to be added to musicological language if women were to be included fully in scholarship, specifically: 'hegemony, hierarchy, social context, vernacular, the private sphere, iconography; and the concepts of class and race, as well as gender' (1994, pp. 7-8). Over twenty-five years since their initial call for their incorporation, it is clear that these words and concepts are surely, if slowly, being integrated into scholarship.

In relation to women composers too, Marcia Citron called into question concepts of equality and parity which suggested that numerical equality of the sexes is synonymous with diversity and inclusion. Citron similarly claimed: 'we have to consider carefully whether the gender of the maker can make a difference in how music is composed' (1993, p. 123). How difference is focussed on or neutralised in this way provided a key framework for my arguments at the end of Barrier Two in terms of the underlying assumptions about gender diversity and tradition. Citron's work impacts on my questioning of whether and what equal representation and equal rates of professional progression look like in the cathedral context. Laura Hamer's *Female Composers, Conductors, Performers*

(2018) also provides frameworks for understanding the work of women who were producing music in the mid-twentieth century. Hamer's work adds to the musical scholarship which seeks to illuminate voices which have not been written into the historical record in the academic arena. Women being perceived as 'other' or being erased entirely from the history is a common argument in musical scholarship for example by Citron in her chapter in *Cecilia Reclaimed* (1994), 'Feminist approaches to musicology', where she explores how the 'women as Other' approach has been perpetuated in music scholarship as women's experiences have been brought to the table. Citron states that: 'much historical work on women composers [...] generally rest[s] on a model of oppression and implicitly situate[s] male culture as the norm and female culture as the Other in relation to that prevailing culture' (1994, p. 18). As Citron claims, one consequence of this 'othering' and erasure of women in music is that what is produced by and performed by men comes to be seen as identical to what is the standard, the 'traditional', to the precedent and that to that which can be handed down. In scholarship this has been interrogated with respect to the role of the music teacher, and other leaders including conductors, in either perpetuating or changing the narrative of male-as-norm.

Whether in music education scholarship, ethnomusicology and / or research which specifically and intentionally focusses on gender or women (in western classical or popular music), there is an increasing understanding of how the issues which affect inclusion, diversity and belonging are multi-dimensional and pervasive. Over time, specific arenas of musical practice have begun to be systematically investigated – opera, (orchestral) conducting, and composing as well as choral singing.

III. Research on Gender and Choral Singing in the English Cathedral Context

There has been much research on the cathedral choir and on boys and men as singers in particular, but comparatively little has taken women and girls into consideration. In her thesis on female voices in Anglican sacred music circa 1889, Elizabeth Blackmore contests that ‘narratives of female exclusion from church singing persist through academic histories of women in music’ (2016, p. 12). Those studies which *do* acknowledge their inclusion almost exclusively do so in order to compare girls to boys; to defend the former. Some of these works make brief reference to the inclusion of women and girls in cathedral music-making but not in any great detail.²⁶ Research on the inclusion of women in cathedral and collegiate chapel choirs has been heavily underscored by the sense of a disappearing tradition, for which these women and girls are readily scapegoated as the main factors for, and not a response to; this will be discussed in greater detail in Barrier Two. These works are tacitly concerned with the preservation and protection of the tradition and heritage which is understood to be hundreds of years old. Richard Shephard (2017), for example, has explored the problems of recruiting choristers on account of the shorter holidays they get, as well as a decline in boarding numbers more generally: at the same time, the reliance of cathedral choirs on private schooling has ramifications for the types of families that have access to a cathedral musical education. Shephard’s comparisons with twentieth century cathedral models raise questions about tradition and history more generally, particularly in terms of the sense of threat which comes as a result of changing views of children and indeed child labour laws.

Research on men and boys emphasises some key protective frameworks that perpetuate male-only music-making. Indeed, recognition of the sheer fact of the existence of girl choristers is not always in evidence in scholarly work on cathedrals. In 2012 Jenevora Williams stated, ‘it is a particular cultural artefact that the professional cathedral choirs in the UK, which require children to perform

²⁶ See Martin Ashley, 2013a, 2013b; Pamela Burnard and Ylva Trulsson, 2016; and Clare Hall, 2005.

at the highest levels of performance, mostly have only male singers’ (2012, p. 123), without acknowledging the significant changes over the previous two decades. Concerns that are evident, for example, in Williams’ arguments surrounding vocal health and the development of what she calls ‘intensively trained boy choristers’ (pp. 50-51) as well as the apprehensions about the visible and aural ‘observable signs of strain’ in the male voice during puberty (pp. 100-101), are indicative of the broader concern about the threat (boy) choristerships are under. This anxiety arises not solely as a response to the introduction of girls – and the underlying assumptions of threat (discussed in Barrier Two) that accompanies this inclusion – but is certainly not separate to it.

Considering the full spectrum of reasons why boys’ voices have been fetishised in musicology is important to my research as it contributes to dismantling arguments about what girls can and cannot do, based on their physiology, in the cathedral context. Elizabeth Blackmore argues that notions about the purity of boys’ voices have permeated understandings of the Anglican Quire²⁷ since the nineteenth century at least, noting that ‘descriptions like “pure” or “expressive” are laden with gender and age politics’ (2016, p. 80). It could perhaps be the case that the focus on the physiology of the boy chorister feeds the idea of their uniqueness and positive difference from other voice-types in the cathedral context. The beliefs which surround the protection from a sense of threat are implicit in Williams’ commentary above on the reduced singing responsibilities of the boy choristers when another (girl) chorister line is added, and this is vital for my arguments in Barrier Two.

Although I will not, on the whole, discuss physiology, this scholarship is a significant component amongst the wider theories which *surround* inclusion of women and girls and can help to promote change in the cathedral musical sphere, or conversely slow or stunt development. Daphne Pearce’s PhD thesis, *Aspects of vocal function in male adolescent choristers* (2007), is a thorough examination of the science of male choristers aged eight to thirteen. Pearce talks about the

²⁷ Quire is not an alternative spelling of the term ‘choir’; it is the term for the part of the cathedral in which the choir sings.

cultural effect that may cause boys to speak in a lower pitch than their physiological optimum (2007, p. 71); although speaking about the reasons behind this change, Pearce's recognition of the large physiological changes that boys are expected to go through is also reflected in 'Gendered voice in the cathedral choir' by Graham Welch and David Howard. They similarly state that 'it is only with the onset of puberty that the sexes diverge in their spoken pitch ranges' (2002, p. 106). Welch and Howard have pioneered research into gender in the cathedral choir which looks at the inclusion of women and girls with regard to the voice. In a chapter entitled 'The female choir voice: important considerations' (2017), Howard, Welch and Evangelos Himonides consider the vocal changes that are specific to girls in the cathedral choir context. They discuss pre- and post-pubertal changes (including the effect of the menstrual cycle), timbral control, differences in choral and solo singing, and how these are controlled in the cathedral context. In this way, their scholarship acknowledges that girls, as well as boys, can and do experience voice change.

Welch's and Howard's work has focused broadly on the physiology of choristers and they have committed to questioning the belief that girls sound substantially different from their male counterparts, particularly when they are trained in the same way by the same leader. This is especially visible in their article co-authored with John Szymanski on listeners' perception of English cathedral girl and boy choristers (2002). In this work, Howard *et al.* set out to investigate whether or not listeners (adults and children, male and female) could perceive the difference between a top line of girls versus a top line of boys when singing alongside adult singers. They found that adult listeners were better at correctly identifying the sex of the choristers, but reflected that, although the data indicated that people were able to detect the difference, this might be due to a 'familiarity' with all-male choirs 'through listening to broadcasts of large British state occasions such as the coronation, royal weddings, state funerals, choral evensong or carols from King's College, Cambridge' (p. 47). On the whole however, a key part of their research is that they discovered less recognition of difference than might be expected or that has been perpetuated by conservative campaigners against female inclusion.

Similarly, in the *Oxford Handbook of Choral Pedagogy* (2017), Matthew Owens and Graham Welch wrote a chapter entitled ‘Choral Pedagogy and the Construction of Identity: Girls’. This chapter discusses topics such as whether or not there are differences between the voices of girls and boys in terms of timbre, and production of vowels, and consonants. It also discusses other important considerations such as warming-up, pitch sense, ability to sight read and choristers’ identity outside of the musical context. Robert Harris has also written about the problems that choral conductors can bring about for young female singers by not allowing them the flexibility in their young voice and alludes to the problems surrounding the pigeon-holing of young girls into being sopranos or altos when their voices are not ready (1987, p. 21). Harris’ understanding is indicative of a denial of this experience for girls, mostly, I argue as a result of the stringent focus on boys’ voices.

My work predominantly builds upon the key arguments surrounding female choristers and their inclusion in the cathedral music-making tradition from Wendy Kerslake (1999) and Amanda Mackey (2015). Kerslake’s article, entitled ‘The introduction of girls in cathedral choirs: A new mode for the twentieth century’, uses interview material from adults and children at Wells Cathedral to explore prescribed roles and inherited traditions and how they differ for girls and boys in the cathedral choir context. Her work contends that ‘comments from both adults and children reveal that the general perception [...] is that the boy and girl choristers maintain their own unique qualities’ (1999, p. 140). Here, she provides a brief examination of the factors which affect female inclusion in cathedral choirs including the impact of the perspectives of tradition, age, and vocal characteristics (pp. 138-139). Kerslake’s research points towards the idea that the two separate cathedral chorister lines (in places where this is the model) are on similar but not identical journeys, although she does not seek to establish whether this is in fact positive or negative for either the girls or boys or anyone else involved in the daily worship at Wells or the Cathedral School. Kerslake’s study was conducted twenty years ago and concludes that the introduction of girls within the Cathedral Choir has created a new mode for the twentieth century; there is clearly more work to be done on the twenty-first century context.

Mackey's PhD thesis, *New Voice: The Patterns and Provisions for Girl Choristers in the English Cathedral Choirs*, is the only dedicated PhD study of girl choristers in cathedrals and also works within Kerslake's framework that the girls are a 'new mode'. Mackey's thesis covers eleven different cathedrals with research carried out between 2010 and 2012. It lays a foundation in terms of surveying the situation – with sections on 'whether and why [girl choristers should be introduced]', how Girls' Choirs at various cathedrals were set up including the age (of the choristers), aims, remuneration and who directs them, music teaching and learning, hierarchies, repertoire choices, treatment of choristers, and dress codes; this thesis will also discuss these practicalities. Mackey covers arguments from conservative campaigners regarding the quality of the sound commonly associated with cathedral music-making (2015, p. 175), and the precious nature of the boy treble's voice (p. 176) as well as the age range of the choristers (pp. 194-196). In this way, Mackey's work echoes Kerslake's discussion of girl choristers based on dissonance or conformity with group understandings, the notion of age and vocal characteristics (pp. 139-140). Mackey's work concludes in a brief excursus of some other considerations for the inclusion of girl choristers including attire (pp. 193-194), daily schedules (pp. 196-197), repertoire (pp. 197-200), nomenclature (pp. 200-201), and who directs the choir (pp. 207-208) amongst other more passing reflections. I also discuss the above practicalities but here consider them in the context of the four barriers to gender diversity and inclusion; examining how they pertain to socio-cultural frameworks, rhetoric of tradition, considerations of the body, voice and space, and understandings of leadership.

In this thesis I seek to tackle barriers to women's and girls' participation which are recognised in existing studies, but which have not yet been a central focus. I build upon existing work by exploring in greater depth the rhetoric and attitudes which affect and reassert gender differences in choral singing. I view as particularly significant the pioneering work that Howard and Welch *et. al.* have done on the physiology of girl choristers, which pushes back against these long-held misconceptions about clear-cut differences in sound rooted in gendered assumptions. Working with Mackey's and Kerslake's understandings of the situation, I interrogate the idea that the girl chorister line is a 'new' mode, asking

whether the girl choristers are in fact forging a new tradition or continuing the same one, or whether they are somewhere in between. In Barrier Two, I propose two additional ‘middle ground’ understandings of this inclusion: that women and girls are supplementary to the tradition, and that they transform it. Since Mackey’s thesis was completed, cathedrals including Canterbury have introduced a girls’ line, and Peterborough have hired a number of women, including, not least, their Director of Music. Five of the eleven cathedrals Mackey visited between 2009 and 2012 are central to this thesis but with updated information gathered in 2017 and 2018; my study thus revisits and reassesses the practices in these cathedrals whilst also including information collected from five cathedrals not included in Mackey’s study. My thesis looks more broadly than Mackey’s at the cathedrals of the Church of England –in order to ascertain the macroscopic barriers that continue to obstruct diversity and inclusion – by providing an updated assessment which explores different issues using different methods. Probing and taking Howard’s and Welch’s, Kerslake’s, and Mackey’s research into consideration in the ways described above, I am able to combine and go beyond their approaches in order to ensure that the voices of the people on the ‘front-line’ of cathedral music-making are heard.

Methods

At the beginning of this thesis, I outlined four barriers to gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making in England which will be the focus of this work. At that point I noted that these barriers are deeply interconnected. I have employed a variety of methods to ensure that the macroscopic picture of the ongoing issues is holistically investigated. Here I will explain the reasons behind my methodological choices, outlining the decisions surrounding the feminist and transdisciplinary methods that I have taken, as well as my approaches to identifying and employing case studies, semi-structured interviews, ethnographic research and other sources.

I. A Feminist and Transdisciplinary Approach

Serena Nanda contends that ‘because sex, gender, and sexuality are at the very core of individual identity in modern Western culture, it is difficult to dislodge our ideas, and more so, our feelings, about them’ (2014, p. 1). Yet is such ‘dislodging’ necessary for my study? I determined at an early stage to carry out and present my research in line with a feminist ethic of research. This ethic is described, for example, by Katherine Allen and Fred Piercy who claim: ‘no longer must we insist on being dispassionate or positioned outside the hermeneutic circle in order to make valued contributions to knowledge’ (2005, p. 156); Dána-Ain Davis and Christa Craven similarly state that feminist ethnographic enquiry ‘requires that researchers position themselves in terms of the research being conducted by identifying who they are and their relationship to the project or community’ (2016, p. 65).

As such, there are a number of parts of my background which are crucial to understanding the biases and experiences that I have brought to writing this thesis. Rather than seeking to ‘dislodge’ my ideas and feelings about gender, sex, and sexuality grounded in my past experience, my feminist methodological approach calls on me to notice and name these realities explicitly. They are fundamental to how I have navigated being an insider and outsider

simultaneously in this research and to the passions that have consciously and subconsciously affected my work. Amongst key aspects of my personal identity that have shaped my work are: 1) I am from an Irish Catholic background – I was baptised, received Communion, and was confirmed in the Roman Catholic Church all before the age of eleven; 2) I spent a significant amount of time singing in Anglican cathedrals – as a Choral Scholar at St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast, as a member of the Millennium Youth Choir, and during my time in university chapel and chamber choirs (with very little awareness of the lack of opportunities for girls in cathedral music-making in England); 3) since the age of seventeen, I have almost unwaveringly believed that God must not exist, and – as a result of the first two points noted – I have a complicated relationship with organised religion and with institutional worship; 4) I am a white, cis-gendered, straight woman who has lived a fairly privileged life and who identifies as a feminist; 5) I was born the same year that women were admitted to the priesthood in the Church of England; and 6) I have studied music and theology / religion in tandem, and shown an interest in how they relate, with one another since I was at school. Throughout my undergraduate study, I took two theology modules including *Music Theology*, and wrote my undergraduate dissertation on choral music written for Passiontide in England and Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century. I then went on to study a Masters by Research at the University of York on the impact of the First World War on English Cathedral music. During my masters I had my first real insight into doing case studies and archival work at three cathedrals – St Paul’s in London, York Minster, and Durham Cathedral – and came across instances of women’s inclusion (and responses to that inclusion) in the cathedral choir during the war years. Both of my degrees solidified my interest in music in the church and the relationship between music, theology, and society.

Not being ‘dispassionate’ and ‘positioned outside the hermeneutic circle’ in line with Allen’s and Piercy’s earlier argument has been key within this project, particularly in the writing process for this thesis, and as such my own use of language is worthy of discussion too. Suzanne Fleischman warns against the use of the passive voice to avoid what she recognises to be the ‘desired depersonalization’ particularly in scientific writing in academic study (1998, p.

979). As a woman researching the barriers that women face gaining access and succeeding in cathedral music, writing in a way which is more personalised, and which resists the patriarchal rhetoric that typifies academic culture has been challenging. As Fleischman states it is difficult ‘for those of us trained to write scholarly prose using the academic voice, to depart from that voice and still retain credibility’ (p. 980). Connecting to my own discussions of credibility throughout this thesis, Fleischman notes a quote from Jane Tompkins who remarked on the way that feminist academics have struggled with the academy’s own particular version of Audre Lorde’s well-known assertion that ‘the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house’ (1984). Tompkins states: ‘it is a tenet of feminist rhetoric that the personal is political, but who in the academy acts on this where language is concerned? We all speak the father tongue, which is impersonal, while decrying the fathers’ ideas’ (1989, p. 128). The voices which I have chosen to amplify – both from scholarship and throughout my interviews – are reflective of Davis’ and Craven’s understanding that ‘who you read and *how* you read [...] encourages you first to ask questions informed by a feminist sensibility and perspective [...]’ (emphasis in original; 2016, p. 65). Although concerned with how one reads as a feminist, I found Davis’ and Craven’s consideration underpinned my approach to writing and engaging with scholars and lay-people involved in this research process.

Throughout my thesis I refer to all authors by their full name at least once in order to move away from what Fleischman refers to as the scholarly ‘practice of using authors’ initials rather than first names’ which she explains was ‘adopted particularly by female authors to avoid having their research identified as “by a woman”’ (1998, p. 981). Over the twenty years since Fleischman’s research was published, I understand that there may be less desire amongst women scholars to anonymise but there nonetheless persists an unconscious bias which perceives all ‘credible’ scholarship to have been written by a man.²⁸ In this project I personally seek to amplify the work done by a diverse range of scholars and have on many

²⁸ See Liz Jackson *et al.*, 2018.

occasions specifically sought out research which is by women, particularly women of colour, where possible.

(a) Navigating My Position: Insider or Outsider?

Not unconnected to this positioning as a feminist researcher are the important questions that I asked myself about whether I am an insider or an outsider. I have asked myself these questions not just in terms of the academy, but also with regard to my relation to the participants in my study. Following Acker, I have reflected on questions including: ‘when is [being an insider or an outsider] a key to insightful analysis? When does it stand in the way of clear thinking? How do we even know when we are inside or outside or somewhere in between?’ (2000, p. 190). Rather than being a dichotomy, I am persuaded by scholarship which has found that our identities as insiders and outsiders exist on a spectrum, and as Acker notes the ‘somewhere in between’ is a place where most researchers find themselves. Likewise, instead of seeing insider and outsider as diametrically opposed, ethnomusicologists have considered that there are different degrees and ways of belonging, indeed, of being insider *and* outsider or, in fact, neither. Carol Robertson, in her chapter entitled ‘the Ethnomusicologist as Midwife’ (1993), recognised the insider/outsider status that ethnographers face. She examines the positionality of the ethnomusicologist and the importance of recognising the status that ethnographers hold as a result. Robertson concludes that it is necessary to ‘open discourse between the centre and the periphery’ and that this ‘synergy may rest in the hands of those who are willing to wear many masks, play many roles, and defy the stasis of the mainstream’ (p. 124). The seemingly uncomfortable assorted roles of the ethnomusicologist are almost necessary in order to truly get to the root of the issues under examination.

Navigating the implications of wearing multiple masks is explained by Timothy Rice, building on Marcia Herndon’s earlier articulation of this peculiar relationship with belonging (1993, p. 77). He describes his position as follows: ‘I am neither insider nor outsider; I speak as myself, a self formed, reconfigured and changed by my encounters with and understandings of [...] musical works and

performances' (2008, p. 57). As I outlined earlier, my approach to carrying out this research has been informed by my own background and experiences and as such, similar to Herndon and Rice and bearing Acker's question in mind, *I speak as myself but with a consciousness of moving between positions of insider and outsider and, at times, occupying the liminal status of both/neither*. My understandings have been 'reconfigured' and 'changed' throughout this project, and I have had to bear in mind the opportunities that my liminal position as both/neither insider (n)or outsider brings to understanding the barriers to gender inclusion in cathedral music-making.

These questions of insider/outsider status connect to establishing rapport, which is a key task for qualitative researchers (Margaret Jane Pitts and Michelle Miller-Day, 2007). All the interactions in this thesis were governed by the ethical approval for the study.²⁹ As in most qualitative projects, interactions with participants began before the formal interviews and these preliminary interactions were crucial to establishing rapport (Charles Fruehling Springwood and C. Richard King, 2001).³⁰ I was able in these conversations to set myself up as someone who had personal experience of cathedral choral singing, establishing trust and mutuality. Given the small world of cathedral music-making and my personal involvement in this world before this research commenced, it is unsurprising that I was already acquainted with, or had mutual friends with, participants from five of the case study cathedrals³¹ before embarking on field work which was understandably helpful in establishing rapport.³² I also visited two of the cathedrals twice in order to have preliminary conversations with the Directors of Music. Further to establishing in-person rapport with them, I communicated with participants via email and social media; these communications were excluded from formal consideration in my research but contributed, again, to establishing rapport. Pierre Bourdieu's notion of being a

²⁹ The project received ethical approval on 5 November 2017.

³⁰ Critical questions about the notion of 'rapport' in feminist research are raised by Georgia Philip and Linda Bell in their 2017 article: 'Thinking critically about rapport and collusion in feminist research: relationships, contexts and ethical practice'.

³¹ See section on identifying my case studies below in Part II.

³² On being a researcher in a context where one already has connections and is thus considered an 'insider' see: Acker, 2000; Sonya Corbin Dwyer and Jennifer L. Buckle, 2009.

‘Fish-in water’ (1992, p. 127) was reflected in this study by my being middle-class and highly musically adept, as well as having had a similar musical upbringing to many of my interviewees which involved countless expensive lessons and memberships of national orchestras and choirs as a young person. In many ways, I have been conditioned not to question the social structures and quirks of cathedral music or classical music having been so accustomed to its inner workings. My experiences were not dissimilar to most, if not all, of the adult participants in my study – as outlined to me throughout the interview process – which undoubtedly created a sense of ‘insider’ interaction with my participants.

Additionally, I contend that navigating my role as insider or outsider was affected in the interviews as a result of the gender of the participant in relation to my own gender. Given the findings of my research, it is unsurprising that I found myself to feel like more of an ‘outsider looking in’ when speaking to male participants, almost finding the need to reassure them of my experience of singing in cathedrals and knowledge of the repertoire. I personally felt much less need to justify my position and understanding of cathedral music-making to the woman participants. Although this may not be entirely attributable to gender, navigating the insularity of cathedral music (as will be discussed further in Barriers Two and Four) was certainly affected by my knowledge that not many women have found themselves on the inside of this institution.

Sexual harassment and violence in the cathedral world are not topics that were studied as part of this thesis, but that does not mean that they are not prevalent or pervasive. My own methodological choices were shaped by the need to keep myself safe, following warnings from informants in the classical music industry and academia more broadly as well as cathedral musicians. Knowledge that was acquired through the ‘whisper network’ in this way informed my hesitation to spend extended periods of time at cathedrals and impacted my decisions on how to carry out this research, especially in terms of not pursuing deep ethnographies as Mackey did as part of her doctoral research on girl choristers.

(b) Navigating Disciplines

One significant question which loomed over this project was how best to describe my navigation of disciplinary boundaries. As such, I now present two concepts, ‘interdisciplinarity’, and ‘transdisciplinarity’, in order to show the complex considerations behind my decision to call this work a ‘transdisciplinary’ study. Darlene Juschka has written that ‘since gender patterns are so all-pervasive in their potential implications [...] they break through traditional disciplinary boundaries by rearranging the entire shape of our lives and societies’ (2001, p. 5). This thesis will, at times, be heavily based in the disciplines of music or theology, but echoing Juschka’s claim above, the all-permeating implications of gender for this research project are deeply embedded in each barrier. ‘Interdisciplinarity’, as Moti Nissani notes, is commonly broken ‘into components such as multidisciplinary, pluridisciplinary, crossdisciplinarity, and transdisciplinarity’ (1997, p. 203). My work can be described as interdisciplinary to the extent that it does as Nissani claims: it draws on ‘distinctive components of two or more disciplines’ (p. 203).³³ Basarab Nicolescu writes that interdisciplinarity ‘concerns the transfer of methods from one discipline to another. [...] interdisciplinarity overflows the disciplines, but its goal still remains within the framework of disciplinary research’ (2014, p. 187). My thesis is primarily based within the discipline of musicology as, given my academic history, this is where I feel most comfortable; however, it also relies upon feminist theory, gender theory, theologies of gender and sexuality (particularly in Barrier One), sociological frameworks for understanding tradition and leadership (in Barriers Two and Four) and ethnographic work both within and outside of musicology (in Barrier Three). Similarly, my research can be seen to be in line with William Newell’s reasoning that interdisciplinarity is ‘much more than an ivory tower approach. [...] The skills and sensitivities and ways of thinking developed through interdisciplinary study have widespread applicability throughout human affairs’ (2000, p. 48). Studying the pervasive nature of gender within cathedral music has necessitated a broad-ranging approach which utilised understandings of gender

³³ The term “Interdisciplinary” is not to be confused with “intradisciplinary” research, the latter of which ‘involves problems that can be successfully tackled from within a single discipline’ (Azad Madni, 2007, p. 2).

issues as they have been examined in these various disciplines. Analysing and presenting this research in an accessible manner, with an eye to possibilities for practical impacts in cathedral music-making, has been of utmost importance to me.

Yet descriptions of interdisciplinary work do not completely capture my approach in this thesis, which could more accurately be described as *transdisciplinary*. Irene Dölling and Sabine Hark write that transdisciplinarity can be defined as a ‘critical evaluation of terms, concepts, and methods’ which ‘transgresses disciplinary boundaries’ in order to achieve a ‘higher level of reflexivity’ than is achievable in individual disciplines, acknowledging the particular pertinence of transdisciplinarity to women’s and gender studies (2000, p. 1195). Marilyn Stember reports that transdisciplinarity is ‘concerned with the unity of intellectual frameworks beyond the disciplinary perspectives’ (1991, p. 4) while Madni states that it ‘implies a dialogue between the different disciplines and theories with a view to advancing both methodological and theoretical developments’ (2007, p. 2).

Transdisciplinary work has been described by Nicolescu as ‘that which is at once *between* the disciplines, *across* the different disciplines, and *beyond* all discipline’ (emphasis in original; 2014, p. 187). Nicolescu’s understanding of research which is *beyond* the disciplinary boundaries is in line with my ethic of research: I am advocating for a radical rethinking of diversity in cathedral music-making by looking at the seemingly ‘musical’ problem through multiple lenses in order to show that it is not a one-dimensional issue and should not be discussed at such. Roderick Macdonald expands on the effect of transdisciplinary research as a methodology which, as he understands it, ‘[...] counsels us to relativize our own understandings, to rearrange our prejudices, to undermine the very knowledge that gives a presumptive leg-up of expertise on others, to seek to recombine one’s “can’t helps,” and to decentre oneself and seek the marginal’ (2000, p. 244). In this way, recognising that everything we know is known from a perspective; limited and embedded in a socio-historical particularity requires us to recognise that what we know depends on who we are. What Macdonald suggests

here is that we must move ourselves out of the presumptive centre to make room for other experiences and perspectives. As such, I concluded that transdisciplinary research is the best methodological framework for a project which seeks to highlight the network of systematically related barriers which limit and confine those who have been historically excluded from cathedral music-making.

Intersectionality

In terms of open, flexible, and self-reflexive structures, one of the most eye-opening frameworks for my research has been *intersectionality*. Patricia Collins and Sirma Bilge recognise intersectionality as:

A way of understanding and analysing the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences. [...] When it comes to social inequality, people's lives and the organization of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class, but by many axes that work together and influence each other. [...] Intersectionality as an analytical tool gives people access to the complexity of the world and of themselves. (2016, p. 2)

I have had an increasing awareness of this complexity when studying an institution which, for the most part, does not include people who inhabit intersections that make life more difficult for them: most of the participants in this study were white, Christian, middle-class, degree-educated, men (which coincided with the broader leadership); nonetheless, I have had a commitment, throughout this project, to understanding barriers to gender inclusion in the cathedral music-making context in terms of fostering inclusion for white, Christian, middle-class, degree-educated *women*. Instead, I argue that the four barriers in this thesis may apply to everyone who has an identity which has been given lower status in society. The detailed work of establishing precisely the mechanisms of exclusion on grounds of race, disability, sexuality and class as intersecting features of identity together with gender, is outside the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, close work in the area of gender can point to themes that may resonate with other marginalised demographics.

Keeping an intersectional framework in my mind has resulted in an almost constant re-evaluation of which frameworks and methods best helped analyse and

illuminate the voices of the people who I engaged with in my case studies in terms of how their views are presented, represented, and critiqued. There are places in my discussion where I touch on issues of class and sexuality in particular. Nonetheless, I acknowledge here that there are voices missing from cathedral music-making, and from studies about the subject, including my own. Although I was unable to deliver research on these missing voices, their absence became just as important to me – as a researcher – as the voices I could and did hear. Intersectionality has thus informed my methodological choices by constantly reminding me which voices are currently missing or underrepresented in scholarship and practice. As a framework, it has informed decisions that I have made about how to interrogate what the ‘norm’ is in cathedral music: who defines it, who controls it, and who can change it. Future research will hopefully cross-examine the way these structures further isolate and discourage women who are traversing obstacles which exist in tandem with those faced as a result of their gender.

(c) Mixing Methods

With inter- and trans-disciplinary, as well as intersectional frameworks in mind, each barrier in this thesis has employed different methods for research. Alan Bryman writes that mixed method research has become a methodology in its own right, not just a confusion of qualitative and quantitative methods (2008, p. 87). Julia Brannen speaks of the advantages of carrying out research in this way, noting that mixed-methods research ‘is an opportunity that deflects attention away from theoretical work that is often specific to particular disciplines’ and encourages thinking outside of the disciplinary box (2005, p. 5). Using a mixed-methods approach was appropriate for this topic because of the way the barriers outlined occupy and cross the space in-between theological, sociological, musicological, and gender studies. The lack of a straightforward disciplinary ‘home’ for this research means that the answers to the questions which are raised rely upon a wealth of answers from different disciplines. Complexities of mixed-methods and transdisciplinary research meant that, as the research evolved, I

developed a number of different plans regarding which methods would be best to use in fieldwork and in terms of the approaches to each barrier. They respectively begin by setting out the individual methodological approach used since each examines the barriers to gender inclusion in cathedral music-making in rather a different way.

II. Identifying Case Studies

From my review of studies on modern-day choristers and my own preliminary investigations of cathedrals, I determined that the multiple case study approach, as per Mackey (2015) would provide a more comprehensive view than the single case study as per work by Howard and Welch (2002), and Kerslake (1999). Although there are advantages to focussing in depth on one cathedral, the multiple case study approach allows for more comparison, which I deemed necessary when considering the holistic and all-pervading nature of the issues in question. Mackey explores the cathedrals as individual case studies in their own right, which provides a clear way of identifying each cathedral's individual intricacies; yet she does not to any great extent integrate her studies. In this thesis, I have reviewed a similar number of cathedrals to Mackey, but I have assimilated my case study findings and presented them thematically instead of dividing them by institution.

There were eight variables which were taken into consideration when choosing which cathedrals to focus on (summarised in Table 1, at the end of this part). The first was denominational and theological identity; I chose to focus on the Church of England and on a sub-set of its cathedrals. Although there are historic connections between the Church of England and churches in other constituent countries of the UK (and indeed across the Anglican Communion), there are also differences in beliefs. For example, the Scottish Episcopal Church has taken a strikingly different approach to questions of sexuality compared with the Church of England. My decision therefore was based on an interest in understanding whether, and to what extent, the specific theologies and beliefs of the Church of England affect gender inclusion in cathedral music-making. In

terms of denomination, the Church of England is a fascinating case study in and of itself; its theologies are complex, and the roles that gender, sex, and sexuality play in conversations in the Church of England are constantly changing and therefore exciting to research. This denominational focus means that this study does not cover all cathedrals in the United Kingdom, or even in England. There are nineteen Roman Catholic cathedrals in England which are not covered in this thesis, including Arundel Cathedral in West Sussex where Elizabeth Stratford has held the position of Organist and Master of the Choristers since 2002, some six years before the Church of England appointed its first female leader at the same level. Studies of cathedral musicians in future could include the rest of the UK, taking into account, for example, the choir of St Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh which has mixed its treble line since 1978 – making it the first choir in the United Kingdom to admit girls to the treble line. Welsh cathedrals similarly have been left out of this study but could be looked at in future; the front row of the choir of St Davids Cathedral in Wales is comprised exclusively of girl trebles, for example.

The second variable was geographical. Ensuring that the geographical spread of case studies covered the whole span of England allowed me to see a more holistic picture of the state of gender diversity and inclusion throughout the country. I split the country into a roughly conceived 'north' and 'south' which coincided with the provincial division of York (north) and Canterbury (south) within the Church of England. I chose four cathedrals in the north and six in the south. The logistical advantage of focusing on England was that I was living and studying in England and therefore had access to these cathedrals more readily than I would the cathedrals in Scotland, Wales, or Ireland. The four cathedrals in the north were easily accessible from my university city on the east-coast mainline train route, and the six cathedrals in the South were easily accessible from London.

The third variable was the date when girl choristers were introduced. I decided to split the cathedrals into an earlier set, where choristers were introduced pre-2000, and then later inclusions post-2000. I chose five cathedrals where girls were admitted in the 1990s (including Salisbury Cathedral which was the first in

England to permanently include girls in their choristership) and five where girls were introduced post-2000. There is a spread across these time frames, spanning from 1991 to 2014 (see Table 1, p. 50).

Variable four looked at the type of inclusion, split broadly into a model of parity or substantial difference between arrangements for girls/women and boys/men in day-to-day music-making practice. These considerations included how many rehearsals and services each set of choristers have, where they are educated, how much financial remuneration they get, who leads them, and the rhetoric which surrounds their involvement. Broadly conceived, seven of the cathedrals at least claim some form of parity whilst three take an explicitly different approach, with distinctive practices for the two groups.

The fifth variable was the age of the child choristers. Some cathedrals have chosen to employ girl choristers who are the same age as their male counterparts, several have girls who are consistently older than the boys, whilst others have girl choristers who are aged between seven and eighteen (i.e. both the same age and older). I chose six where the child choristers are the same age, two where they are different ages entirely (with the girls being older), and a further two where they are generally the same age, whilst some girl choristers are also older.

Variable six looked at which cathedrals had women in their musical leadership team, whether that be in an ordained position as the Precentor, or in a musical capacity as the Director of Music, Assistant Director or Director of the Girls' Choir, or another formally conceived leadership position such as Organ Laureate or Assistant Organist. As stated above, this has been the most dynamic variable throughout the study. In 2017, Sal McDougall was appointed Precentor at Lincoln. In 2018, Peterborough appointed a Precentor who is a woman and a woman as Director of Music (Rowan Williams and Tansy Castledine respectively). In 2019, Francesca Massey moved from her position as Sub-Organist at Durham Cathedral to Director of Music at Rochester and Hilary Punnett from her position at Lincoln to Assistant Organist and Director of the Girls' Choir at Chelmsford Cathedral (replaced by another woman, Alana Brook, at Lincoln). Six cathedrals

were chosen on the basis that they included women in their musical leadership team. Five of the cathedrals studied did not have a woman in such a position.

The seventh variable considered whether or not the cathedral had women Choral or Organ Scholars, or Lay clerks. This variable was difficult to measure and gather information on as the positions of Choral and Organ Scholar are usually held for between one and three years and are not usually publicised by the cathedrals. Accordingly, finding out this information was mostly achieved through networking and word of mouth. Five cathedrals were chosen as a result of this consideration: Durham, Lincoln, Newcastle, and Peterborough all either had a woman Choral or Organ Scholar or Lay clerk when I was choosing my case studies, and York Minster previously had employed a woman as a Choral Scholar.

The eighth, more minor, variable was the theological significance of Canterbury Cathedral and York Minster. Since 597 AD, Canterbury Cathedral has been a central site of Christian worship. Augustine is said to have brought Christianity to England at this time and became the first Bishop of England, based at Canterbury Cathedral. The current Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is 105th in the line of succession from Augustine. In this role, Welby is currently the most senior bishop in the Church of England and also leads the worldwide Anglican Communion. York Minster is the second highest ranked cathedral in England. The position that these cathedrals hold and the impact of their status within the Church of England, as well as the messages they send worldwide, make them worthy of consideration. The significance of these two cathedrals is also relevant to discussions surrounding the concept of tradition and its connection to a sense of authority based on the notion of appearing ancient (as discussed in Barrier Two).

The ten cathedrals eventually chosen for this study were: Canterbury, Durham, Ely, Guildford, Lincoln, Newcastle, Peterborough, Salisbury, St Albans, and York Minster.

| Identifying Case Studies | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Cathedral | Location | Inclusion (Time) | Inclusion (Type) | Chorister Age | Woman in Music Leadership team | Another adult woman musician | Other |
| Canterbury | South | Post-2000 (2014) | Other | Older | | | Theological significance |
| Durham | North | Post-2000 (2009) | Parity | Same | X (until 2019) | X | |
| Ely | South | Post-2000 (2006) | Other | Older | X | | |
| Guildford | South | Post-2000 (2002) | Parity | Same & Older | X | | |
| Lincoln | North | Pre-2000 (1995) | Parity | Same | X | X | |
| Newcastle | North | Post-2000 (2008) | Parity | Same & Older | | X | |
| Peterborough | South | Pre-2000 (1999) | Parity | Same | X | X | |
| Salisbury | South | Pre-2000 (1991) | Parity | Same | | X (in 2019) | First permanent line of girl choristers |
| St Albans | South | Pre-2000 (1996) | Other | Same | | | |
| York Minster | North | Pre-2000 (1997) | Parity | Same | X (from 2019) | X | Theological significance |

Table 1 – Case Studies

III. Sources

Throughout this thesis, I draw on information gathered from twenty interviews at ten cathedrals in England, ethnographic sketches of two Evensong services at one of the case study cathedrals, as well as non-scholarly literature collected from a variety of sources, including: official Church of England statements and guidance, cathedral websites, campaign group material, service schedules from four cathedrals, unpublished handbooks for choristers and their parents or carers, and newspaper articles. In this part, I explain the processes of gathering material from these sources in more depth.

(a) Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews were chosen as a method in line with Rosalind Edwards' and Janet Holland's contention that 'interviews with key informants can help illuminate situations, behaviours and attitudes that researchers otherwise could not access or understand' (2013, p. 31). Music leaders were chosen as the subjects for my interviews because their voices are not often heard in the research on girl choristers which is strongly skewed towards the physiologies of choristers. I opted to interview music leaders rather than choristers because I was particularly driven to find out how institutional and personal *leadership* differed. I wanted to build upon the interviews that Mackey had carried out with adult leaders and found that the nature and pace of change amongst the adult leadership was worthy of further study and I was quickly able to choose 'particularly exemplary cases' (Edwards and Holland, 2013, p. 6) on that basis. Additionally, I was wary of the specific ethical and safeguarding restrictions surrounding involving the voices of children in my research. I did not feel comfortable as a researcher to pursue this line of questioning with choristers. Importantly, I felt that the insights from music leaders would be more than sufficient to illuminate the issues which are central to my study. In future research, the voices of teenage girls in particular could be particularly enlightening.

My initial email to prospective participants outlined the topic of my research and what would be required of them if they chose to take part. Some

people showed initial interest but then were unresponsive to all other communication – these included members of the music team at Manchester Cathedral and St Paul’s in London. This then influenced the scope of my thesis, as the only places that I was doing interviews were cathedrals which had women and girls as separate treble lines. Manchester is, at present, the only Anglican cathedral in England which has a mixed treble line.³⁴ Despite there only being provision for boy trebles at St Paul’s Cathedral in London, in 2017 Carris Jones became the first woman to hold the position of Vicar Choral there. Exploring these two set-ups would have provided further avenues for analysis. However, as a result of the gaps that this absence of communication created, I was able to focus more closely on the differences in cathedrals which have separate treble lines.

Eventually twenty interviews were carried out. Each interviewee was emailed individually to arrange a time, which was then combined with times that suited other members of that cathedral’s leadership team. All interviewees were given a one-page information sheet (Appendix A) to read which outlined the purposes of the study, why they had been invited to participate, whether it was necessary to take part, what was expected of them, and where and how the information would be stored and used. Participants were also given a one-page consent form to sign before the interview began. On the consent form, participants were asked to indicate clearly whether or not they would like to be identified by name (also Appendix A). Four participants did not wish to be identified by name; the other sixteen participants indicated that they would like to be identified by name. Throughout this thesis, I will refer to the participants by their first name, bar the four participants who indicated that they did not wish to be identified by name, who will be referred to using an alias (see Table 2, p. 53).

³⁴ On 12/11/2019 it was announced that from September 2020 ‘a mixed treble line with equality for boys and girls will be introduced to the Cathedral Choir’ at Rochester Cathedral (*Rochester Cathedral announces introduction of mixed treble line*, 2019).

| Participant Names | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| Ben | Jeffrey | Owen* | Rosie |
| Daniel | Katherine | Peter | Sal |
| David | Matt | Rachel* | Sarah |
| Georgia | Max | Richard | Tom |
| Hilary | Nina* | Robert | Wendy* |
| *Alias created | | | |

Table 2 – Names

As well as explicitly asking participants about this, my thinking around the question of anonymity was informed by my awareness that a number of the female participants in my study have undertaken journeys to inclusion that have been well-documented in press releases and news articles, due to their being a small minority in cathedral music-making. All participants acknowledged that some of their responses could be linked to their beliefs available publicly in other interviews with magazines (including *The Church Times* and *Choir and Organ Magazine*) as well as in other secondary literature (such as Mackey's PhD thesis, in which participants were not anonymised). As scholarship on anonymity in qualitative research attests, whilst the researcher must make every effort to protect the anonymity of participants who have requested this, within small fields of study such as the world of cathedral music-making this process is 'complex, and far from water-tight' because anonymity itself exists on 'a continuum' (Benjamin Saunders, Jenny Kitzinger and Celia Kitzinger, 2015, p. 617).

The number of interviews was not evenly spread across the cathedrals (see Table 3). At half of the cathedrals, three interviews (one each with three separate participants) were carried out; at Guildford Cathedral I carried out two interviews; at three further cathedrals I carried out one interview only. At St Albans Abbey I observed a rehearsal and a service and had an informal conversation with the Director of the (Abbey) Girls' Choir,³⁵ but I did not conduct any formal interviews due to time and travel constraints. The information from that informal discussion

³⁵ In late 2019, the name of the Girls' Choir at St Albans was changed from the 'Abbey Girls' Choir' to the 'Girls' Choir'. This change, alongside other nomenclature is a point of further study in this thesis.

is not used directly in this thesis, but it did feed indirectly into my research, and shaped my background thinking.

| Number of Interviews per Cathedral | |
|---|--|
| No. of Interviews | Cathedral(s) |
| 0 | St Albans |
| 1 | Canterbury; Ely; Newcastle |
| 2 | Guildford |
| 3 | Durham; Lincoln; Salisbury; Peterborough; York Minster |

Table 3 – Interviews

I had intended to interview one more person from Canterbury Cathedral, but as is outlined later in this part, this was not possible for practical reasons. Whilst three interviews gave me the optimal spread of opinions at five institutions, my decision to interview one person at Ely and Newcastle respectively, as well as two people at Guildford, was based on their positions and experiences and the relevance of their voice to my project, in addition to the willingness and availability of these participants. At the time of my visits to these ten cathedrals (in 2017 and 2018), all interviewees were employed as either a Choral or Organ Scholar, in a senior musical leadership role, or as a member of the clergy (see Table 4).

| Participant Roles | |
|--|---------------|
| Role | Number |
| Choral Scholar or Lay clerk | 3 |
| Music Director | 4 |
| Member of Clergy | 5 |
| Other Senior Music Leader* | 8 |
| Total | 20 |
| *Including Director of the Girls' Choir, Assistant Director of Music, Assistant Organist | |

Table 4 – Roles

The gender ratio amongst my interviewees was twelve men to eight women. I decided to interview both men and women – not just women – partly because if I only interviewed women my pool would be quite small indeed (as discussed in Barrier Four). Further, the attitudes and reflections of men play influential roles in informing policy and practice as men hold the highest musical positions in thirty-eight of the forty-two Anglican cathedrals in England.

I have already introduced the concept of intersectionality earlier in this introduction. One closely related area to my own focus of gender is that of sexuality. Diane Richardson noted in her examination of how the two terms have been theorised, that ‘gender categories would not exist if social divisions did not exist. In this conceptual framework, the binary divide between heterosexuality and homosexuality is seen to derive from gender’ (2007, p. 461). I did not ask participants to talk about their own sexuality, but one of the aims of my research was to discover whether the official rhetoric and theological ideas of the Church of England — an institution in which church ministers are currently not allowed to be in non-celibate same-sex relationships — had an explicit or implicit impact on the musicians’ desire to get involved in cathedral music-making or their comfort with such a policy. Nearly all of the participants discussed with me their own understanding of the connectedness of sexuality and gender (discussed in Barrier One).

None of the participants who I interviewed identified themselves to me as transgender or non-binary, and as a result these experiences are missing from the narrative surrounding diversity in cathedral music-making in my thesis. At present there is no scholarship on transgender inclusion in cathedral music-making. That may be because there are no transgender musicians involved in music or musical leadership in cathedrals currently, which is perhaps indicative of the wider issue of inclusion. Or it could be that trans musicians in cathedrals have simply not been included in the discussion surrounding gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making. When I was considering who to interview and where, my focus was on women and girls and not trans or non-binary persons and so at that point I did not actively seek out trans voices. That my research

framework was not actively inclusionary of transgender voices is therefore a key limitation of this research.

Interviews ranged from forty minutes to one hour and twenty-two minutes, but most fell around the one-hour mark. Throughout the study, interviews were held in a variety of spaces mostly agreed upon before I arrived at the venue. Most of the interviews took place in quiet offices. Some, however, took place in louder, busier places. Whilst *prima facie* the latter environments provided minor problems in terms of transcription, it was also noticeable that the participants appeared significantly less guarded in this more casual environment, which in turn reflected in their responses.

The semi-structured interviews were recorded on my iPhone and then transcribed onto my laptop and stored securely within password protected documents. Interview data was analysed through thematic coding. This process involved, as William Gibson and Andrew Brown describe (2009, p. 127), looking for 'commonalities, relationships, and differences' amongst my participants' responses including where words and opinions came up more than once, or when participants held views that were unique or dissimilar to colleagues at their own institution or more generally. This coding went as planned. The four barriers came out of, or were solidified by, the interview coding process. The contents of Barriers One and Four were outlined as chapters since the beginning of this project; tradition grew out of the discussion of the church and whilst I always knew that bodies and voices were important, the way that my participants described the space as central *and* gendered. The structure of the interviews allowed for coding of the material in sections which were foundational to the presentation of four distinct but overlapping barriers and their sub-sections.

Questions were broadly split into those about 1) the participant; 2) their understanding of faith and Anglicanism; 3) music in their cathedral; and 4) the introduction of women and girls. No notes of any kind were taken during the interviews. Instead, brief notes about the interview were taken (usually on a train) soon after the interviews took place. Follow-up emails were also sent after each interview thanking the participant for their time and reminding them of the

previously stated ethics, access, and data security information (they also each retained a paper copy).

I found semi-structured interviews to be a great way to give the participants space and time – in their otherwise hectic schedules – to reflect on something which many of them admitted after the interview they had not taken much time to consider in a deep or nuanced way before our conversation; this proved its own challenge. By the time I carried out the interviews, I had already spent a year researching gender diversity and inclusion and, as outlined above, I bring my own biases to this research. I therefore found that I had to practice self-censorship throughout the interviews in order to ensure that the interviewees were, as far as possible, giving me the answers that they wanted to give and not the answers that they thought I wanted to hear. Where participants were uncertain or thinking through ideas as they talked, I had to hold back and avoid seeking to shape their responses for them. A further challenge, linked to the discussion of rapport and insider/outsider status above, was that I would sometimes begin an interview uncertain of whether the participant's attitude would be one of defensiveness, complete openness, or somewhere in-between. One revealing factor of the interview process that I had anticipated to a certain extent was the defensiveness and irritation of my participants regarding these discussions about diversity and inclusion. Some answers, on occasion, felt quasi-rehearsed and veered towards defending the Church of England or the Cathedrals in line with the official policies and documents whilst others appeared more spontaneous. The latter was definitely more enlightening, and participants were usually a lot more willing to expand upon their instinctive answers. This defensiveness was not entirely mitigated by my efforts to build rapport with my participants and here some sense of structure to the interviews did prove helpful. The semi-structured approach allowed me to adjust the framing and order of my questions as participants spoke. This was particularly important when it became clear that certain questions made some participants 'shut down' and produce very brief answers, damaging rapport.

Navigating the nuances in (and varied understandings of) discourse about gender required tweaks in the wording of some of the questions across the period

in which the interviews were conducted. It was evident early on that some of the participants' understandings of 'sex' and 'gender' as terms created confusion when presented with certain questions. One split question, which asked initially about sex and then about gender confused some participants as their own understanding of sex and gender made the terms interchangeable. Hence, they spoke about gender, using the word 'sex' and then, when probed about gender, would say something along the lines of "oh, that's what I was talking about just now", so changes had to be made to avoid confusion (See Appendix B for a skeleton copy of the questions). Questions were slightly altered for Scholars and Lay clerks to avoid asking questions about leadership and decision-making which they could not answer.

(b) Ethnographies

In May 2019, I carried out two ethnographic studies of contrasting services at Durham Cathedral. These services are studied primarily in Barrier Three as foundational to my study of bodies, spaces, and voices. The purposes of my ethnographies were in line with Beverley Skeggs' argument that ethnography 'provides an excellent methodology for feminists, with its emphasis on experience and the words, voices and lives of the participants' (2001, p. 430). Whilst my interviews focused on the words and voices of my participants, the ethnographic sketches highlighted the embodied lives of musicians in cathedrals, as well as attending to the voices heard in, and the vocabularies used in, liturgical services, especially in terms of tacit and explicit gendered nuances in the case of the latter. There were opportunities to observe singing (entirely by the choir in the Friday service and by choir, clergy, and congregation on the Saturday), and speaking by the clergy, choir, and congregation in both services.

During the weekend of the observations at Durham Cathedral, the girl choristers sang four services – including the two that I observed – as the boy choristers were on 'Exeat' (a weekend each term where one set of choristers are allowed to go home). The girl choristers at Durham usually sing on Tuesday and Friday, and weekend services are split between the boys and girls. The first service

was a ‘typical’, unaccompanied service, as the Friday services at Durham always are; attended by very few people as is consistent with the weekly norm. By comparison, the cathedral was filled with people for the second service as it was a special event in the cathedral’s calendar, marking the dedication of the cathedral’s new ‘Illumination Window’.

These ethnographic sketches – which can be read in full in Appendix C – allowed me to immerse myself in the context of one particular cathedral on these two occasions to study embodiment in the daily life of some of its cathedral musicians in their everyday context. Karen O'Reilly says that 'ethnographers conduct interviews as well as participating and observing. Interviews can take the shape of opportunistic chats, questions that arise on the spur of the moment, one-to-one in-depth interviews, group interviews and *all sorts of ways of asking questions and learning about people that fall in between.*' (emphasis mine; 2012, p. 4). Although the research presented in this thesis is largely dependent upon the one-to-one in-depth interviews and in Barrier Three my formal observations at Durham Cathedral, my ethnographic involvement can also be described as a wider process of engagement with the cathedrals in the study across a variety of everyday encounters in all the ways that 'fall in between'. I am grateful for the ongoing everyday interactions such as informal chats with choristers, observations of rehearsals and attending services at each of the cathedrals all contributed to my establishing rapport with cathedral sites and discussions with informants and all fed into the findings in the study, if indirectly. Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson suggest that the analysis of such ethnographic sketches ‘involves the interpretation of the meanings, functions, and consequences of human actions and institutional practices, and how these are implicated in local, and perhaps also wider, contexts’ (2007, p. 3). In this case, the actions of the cathedral musicians can be interpreted and analysed in the specific context of Durham Cathedral but also – to an extent – tell of the larger-scale institutional practices of cathedrals across the Church of England, and the consequences of those practices for gender diversity and inclusion.

(c) Other Materials

The websites of Church of England cathedrals provided key insights into the nomenclature and rhetoric surrounding their choristerships, as well as the role of music and worship in their institutional life. I downloaded *Service Schedules* from 18 November – 2 December 2018 from the websites of four of my case study cathedrals; Canterbury, Durham, Lincoln, and Salisbury cathedrals. I chose these as a representative cross-section of the eight variables which influenced the ten case study choices in this thesis discussed above. These documents each included the schedule and music lists of the services which took place over the course of two weeks at each cathedral. As part of my consideration of gender, tradition, and repertoire in cathedral music-making in Barrier Two, I examine the choice of music in terms of who it was written by, when the music was written, and the composers' respective connections to cathedrals (if any). I also gathered information from chorister application packs for parents of prospective choristers, as well as job applications which were advertised online via cathedral websites. I further looked at statements on websites of campaign groups in the area of cathedral music and used these to illustrate my arguments in various places. Whilst carrying out field work, I collected hard copies of the promotional materials which were readily available to visitors at each cathedral, focusing on materials about the choir, the music, or worship more broadly. Some participants also shared with me documents which were not available to the public, such as the *Probationer and Chorister Parents' Handbook* from Salisbury Cathedral (2017). The rhetoric which surrounds practices of music-making in cathedrals are also represented in newspaper articles, examples of which are referenced throughout this thesis. These raised, in turn, questions about how newspapers filter and re-present such rhetoric (see Barrier Two). Finally, particularly in Barrier One, I interrogate the official documents published by the Church of England as pertains gender, sex, and sexuality over the past thirty years, with a particular focus on the most recent official statements.

Barrier One



‘Mutual Flourishing’: Rhetoric and Gender in the Contemporary Church of England

The Christian Church has been speaking about and listening to a variety of discourses surrounding gender, sex, and sexuality since its inception. In this chapter, I will take on the challenge of analysing and understanding the institutional battle for and against reinvention that the Church of England has had to confront with regards gender, sex, and sexuality since the 1990s. I seek to uncover the major organisational and structural changes which have occurred in the Church as an institution and the rhetoric surrounding these changes. As Georgina Born asked of the BBC, I ask of the Church of England: ‘how [is] this old institution meeting the challenge of reinventing itself in uncertain and inauspicious new times?’ (2011, p. 11).

I will begin with a broader picture, looking first at the notion of the *via media* (the ‘middle ways’), a concept which has a long and influential history within the Church of England. I will then look at the pressures the Church is currently under because of its prominent place within the global Anglican Communion. In order to ascertain how the contemporary church’s pronouncements interact with the rhetoric of gender diversity in cathedral music-making, I will ask whether the Church of England actively seeks to perpetuate a middle-ground rhetoric as intrinsic to its Anglican identity (Part I(a)), and whether this articulation is self-conscious, particularly in relation to the wider Anglican Communion (Part I (b)). I will then analyse the ways in which the official rhetoric of ‘middle ways’ is conveyed as it pertains to women in the twenty-first-century Episcopate (Part I (c)) and likewise how it is expressed with regards to sexuality, marriage, and same-gender partnership in the Church of England (Part I (d)).

Part II examines three main socio-cultural influences on the views of gender diversity in evidence in the Church of England’s pronouncements. These are essentialism, complementarianism, and (more briefly) constructivism. Part III builds on Parts I and II by discussing the possible consequences, within cathedrals, of the theology and socio-cultural accounts of

gender which can be seen in the official pronouncements. It looks closely at how the cultures and traditions that the Church of England is navigating separate it from other institutions which are attempting to address similar issues. I then discuss how the structural set-up in Part I and the socio-cultural theories in Part II enable exclusion. It finally reflects on the participants' beliefs regarding the topics outlined in Parts I and II; asking who is influenced by the Church of England's official pronouncements on gender, sex, and sexuality? What impact are these pronouncements having on the ground? It also focuses on how musicians in the Church of England cathedrals respond to and affect the institutions in which they work with regard to the rhetoric of gender, sex, and sexuality.

I. Navigating the *Via Media*: Exploring the Contemporary Church of England's Pronouncements on Gender, Sex, and Sexuality

*Imagine yourself at a choir rehearsal — any choir really. Forty voices in harmonic disarray – agreeing to disagree about the merit of a piece. Bases at the back mutter that the piece is “an exhausting, very complex sing”; “And anyway, I think the audience would prefer if we stuck to what we know, what we’re good at!”, says the oldest member of the choir, threatening to quit for the n^{th} time this year. (In fairness the last bass who threatened to quit because the choir was not sticking to the ‘traditional’ repertoire did eventually join another choir, so *fingers crossed*). Sopranos have their own issues with the piece: “it’s half-baked”, “it doesn’t go high enough”, and that is not to mention the entrances at bar 13 which they say are representative of all that is wrong with modern music – “how am I supposed to pitch my note when half of the bases are singing a perfect fifth instead of a tritone anyway? It’s impossible!” The second sopranos agree to a certain extent – some feel very strongly about the piece and why it is not right for this choir at this point – although it’s not necessarily a bad piece, generally speaking. The altos would like it to be noted that they are bored of the same repeated consternations from the sops and bases – maybe if you look really closely, they agree, you could find problems with the music – but why bother? It’s good to broaden the repertoire, no? Similarly, the tenors are keen to get the rehearsal underway, suggesting that the counterpoint is clever and modern and befitting a choir which is not intent on singing only the ‘standard’ choral*

*repertoire which they have all sung a thousand times before. “Maybe this choir could set a precedent for other choirs to follow by branching out and singing music which hasn’t had any or much exposure”, one hopeful young tenor remarks. The newest tenor hides his befuddlement, internally asking himself what all the fuss is about... he thinks: “yes, it does look a bit challenging in places – there are quite a few time signature changes especially towards the end, but if the altos and basses concentrate on singing as one in bar 13 then we can probably have a real go at this.” Finally, the conductor stands up and raises her hands ready to move past the drama, for today at least. “Your objections are noted. Let’s go from the beginning.”*³⁶

The above imaginative reconstruction of a hypothetical rehearsal is based on a range of my own experiences in choral rehearsals of approaches to new repertoire. It is, I propose, indicative of the metaphoric wrestling which occurs daily, to varying degrees, in rehearsal spaces: the choir has long been used as a political metaphor for communal action or disagreement and reconciliation for centuries. Thus, it can also reflect the broader struggles within the Church of England in terms of its approach(es) to change regarding gender, sex, and sexuality and, in turn, the ways that these struggles impact on what choirs can do in their daily work within the Church of England, incorporating who is included – and what they look and sound like. Just as the choir members in the sketch above show contrasting attitudes towards change and conciliation, so too in the Church of England is there an institutional tug-of-war regarding compromise which involves many voices in disagreement with one another. In fact, the Church of England, more than other institutions (as I will show), is specifically structured around accommodating disagreement as much as consensus: more counterpoint than harmony.

³⁶ The decision to begin with a personal reflective approach is based upon research including what has been described by Alison L. Black, Gail Crimmins and Linda Henderson as ‘the exploration of blurred personal and professional identities’ in their recent article ‘Positioning ourselves in our academic lives: exploring personal/professional identities, voice and agency’ (2019, p. 537) as well as Mike Higton’s and Rachel Muers’ imaginative reconstruction in their book *The Text in Play* (2012).

(a) The *Via Media* and the Identity of the Church of England

According to Martyn Percy, '[t]he Church of England is a *via media*, part Catholic, part Reformed, part Episcopal, part Synodical' (2006, p. 105). This multifaceted identity is rooted in a long and complex history, as Rebecca Probert noted in her understanding of how the English 'oscillated' between Roman Catholicism and Puritanism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (2009, p. 135).³⁷ The terms *via media* and 'middle ground' will be used interchangeably throughout this thesis. The root of the term *via media* is thought to come from the Aristotelian expression 'in medio virtus': 'the equilibrium of the extremes' (Carlos Calvani 2005, p. 141). During the Oxford Movement – an effort in the nineteenth century to revive Roman Catholic practices in the Church of England – John Henry Newman praised the Church for its navigation of the 'middle way'; as George Herring notes, 'Newman interpreted the Anglican *via media* as a third way between Romanism and *all* forms of Protestantism, however extreme or moderate' (2016, p. 17). As a result of the above historical vacillation and aspiration to achieve balance, today the Church of England intentionally gives voice to people who hold multiple perspectives as legitimate stakeholders within the church and within what has become the Anglican Communion.

Although it is conversations about gender, sex, and sexuality that have dominated internal church debates in the twenty-first century, Martyn Percy states: 'there has not been a single century in which Anglicanism has not wrestled with its identity; it is by nature a polity that draws on a variety of competing theological traditions' (2017, p. 110). Here, Percy is highlighting that balancing extreme views by way of the *via media* has persistently complicated the ability of the Church to curate a coherent position on complex issues. Percy is suggesting, in other words, that the battle between multiple identities is itself a natural and steadfast part of the overall Anglican identity-making process – a process of *incoherent* equilibrium has come to define the Church.

³⁷ See also Anthony Milton's chapter on 'Attitudes towards the Protestant and Catholic Churches' (2017).

The particular socio-cultural atmosphere that these 'middle ground' discourses exist in is, as Percy argues elsewhere, the 'Englishness' which permeates Anglicanism. He says: '[...] Anglicanism is born of England, [and] just like its climate, the polity often struggles to cope with extremities. Anglicanism is mostly a temperate ecclesial polity: cloudy with occasional sunny spells and the odd shower – but no extremes, please.' (2016, p. 157). The Church has struggled to moderate the extremes as regards gender, sex, and sexuality and has therefore ineffectively sought to create a comfortable 'middle ground'. The stereotypically polite English manner, highlighted in Percy's own use of the word 'please', has meant that reasoning with extremes has not always been a success for the Church of England as it attempts to navigate 'middle ways'.³⁸ In fact, it is perhaps the *impression* of respectability that the Church of England carries with it as an established church that results in a concealment of these deep divisions.

To illustrate my argument that the Church of England has, at times, attempted to mitigate and minimise the extreme weather conditions of the debates on gender, sex, and sexuality, it is helpful to look briefly at a particular example amongst recent debates in the church: discussions surrounding the admission of women to the Episcopate. Whilst women have been able to become priests since 1994, there has continued to be vitriolic opposition to their existence in leadership, especially as the official, legal barriers are broken down in order to ensure that they are entitled to join (or apply to join) all levels of church leadership. I will now briefly touch on some of the more extreme responses to the Church's attempt to arrive at a 'middle way' on this issue. Note, for example, Colin Podmore's book, *Fathers in God?*, sponsored by the conservative campaign group Forward in Faith.³⁹ Podmore showcases one of the many conservative interpretations of the 'middle ways' of Anglicanism on gender, sex, and sexuality when he claims:

³⁸ Andrew Brown and Linda Woodhead also reference the idea that the Church of England is at its core 'too polite to disagree' (2016, p. 31).

³⁹ According to their website, 'Forward in Faith was founded in November 1992, following the General Synod's approval of the legislation permitting the ordination of women to the priesthood' (*About Forward in Faith*) Forward in Faith 'are unable in conscience to accept the ordination of women as priests and bishops' (*What We Believe*, 2018).

So, even in a Church which now legally consecrates women, the counter-argument is *declared to be fully accepted and must be enabled to flourish*. [...] This compromise gives high regard to notions of equality, meaningful accommodation and integration that people a few years previously had not thought possible. It seems that the Church of England had found a *via media* most appropriate to our post-feminist age. (my emphasis; 2015, p. 20)

Podmore's brief allusion in the first sentence above to the legal entitlement of women to join the Episcopate is worthy of focus. This seemingly insignificant statement is critical to the conservative belief: women are *legally* but not *theologically* accepted to the Episcopate in the conservative view. Moreover, Podmore's use of the word 'flourishing' is especially pertinent, in the context of the *via media*, as the compromise of 'mutual flourishing' is one which has provided a space in the Church of England whereby women are both permitted *and* illegitimated. 'Mutual flourishing' currently stands as an official description of the Church's commitment to include *both* women in the Episcopate *and* people who disagree with this inclusion in the church. Although Podmore claims the current position to be one of 'equality, meaningful accommodation and integration', there is certainly the potential for this understanding of the 'middle way' to (tacitly or explicitly) favour the conservative viewpoint.

The idea of 'mutual flourishing' was set out in a document called the *Five Guiding Principles* in 2014 by the Church's Ministry Division. This document, which is just one page long, outlines five principles that candidates for ordination in the Church of England have to assent to as part of their training. The statements are not mutually exclusive, and the document requires that they be held in tension with one another. The principles are that the Church of England 'is fully and unequivocally committed to all orders of ministry being open equally to all, without reference to gender' (Principle 1); 'has reached a clear decision on the matter' (Principle 2); and maintains its sharing of the historic episcopate with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches which continue to solely ordain men (Principle 3). The final two principles acknowledge the Church of England's continued commitment to the equal place of those who 'on the grounds of

theological conviction’ do not agree with women’s ordination at any level. It states that the Church ‘remains committed to enabling them to flourish within its life and structures’ (Principle 4); and that provision for this minority ‘will be made without specifying a limit of time and in a way that maintains the highest possible degree of communion’ (Principle 5) (2014, p. 1).

Gabrielle Thomas has argued that despite aiming for this high degree of communion, ‘mutual flourishing’ causes those with differing beliefs in the Church of England to disengage from each other, particularly as a result of the separate forms of practice available to those who hold differing views, including separate ordination services and the use of ‘alternative episcopal oversight’ (2019, p. 308).⁴⁰ I suggest that this confused situation comes about as a result of the vague and ambiguous rhetoric in the official documents.

For Podmore and his conservative peers, the Church has achieved gender ‘equality’ and ‘integration’ as a result of ‘meaningful accommodation’ through the *Five Guiding Principles*. Yet liberal – and indeed some other conservative – Anglicans do not believe this has been achieved and would use some of these same terms to claim the opposite of Podmore’s understanding. Thus, Women and the Church (WATCH) – ‘a national organisation working actively for gender justice, equality and inclusion in the Church of England’⁴¹ – can be seen to use the same words as Podmore and members of Forward in Faith. For example, Emma Percy outlines WATCH’s belief that: ‘women have equal rights and therefore the church has a duty to treat its women employees with respect not expecting them to compromise their integrity for the sake of one man’s theological convictions’ (*The Five Guiding Principles: Whose Flourishing do they serve?*, 2017b). Here Percy uses the words ‘equal’, ‘compromise’ and ‘integrity’ to reach an almost diametrically opposed conclusion to Podmore. For Percy, equality is evidenced by a parity of treatment of men and women, rather

⁴⁰ Alternative Episcopal Oversight ‘involves the transfer of a congregation or diocese in a historical geographical diocese or province to the oversight of another bishop in another diocese or province of the Anglican Communion. [...] [Since the late twentieth century] it has been undertaken due to fundamental disagreement over matters of doctrine or practice between the congregation and the bishop, or in rarer cases between the bishop and a substantial portion of the diocese with the province’ (Aidan Hargitt, 2015, pp. 8-9).

⁴¹ Founded in 1996. See: *About Watch* (2019).

than by the 'equal' 'flourishing' of two opposing viewpoints. Percy argues that the 'integrity' of women in leadership in the church is at least as much at stake as a result of the *Five Guiding Principles* as the convictions of those who hold a conservative view. This use of the same language in two opposing statements is a key example of how the *via media* produces confusion. As Archbishop Justin Welby noted in his sermon for the celebration of twenty years of women in the priesthood, the Church of England 'has a long way to go' (Sermon, St Paul's Cathedral, 2014); there is still a lot of work to be done before it can claim to have a coherent position on gender diversity in ministry

One of the key problems with the *via media*, I would argue, is that for conservative and liberal Anglicans alike, what constitutes the 'middle ground', and the terms that define it, are interpreted entirely differently. The ambiguous rhetoric used in official church documents has implications for gender, sex, and sexuality because it is difficult to understand what the Church is actively presenting as its main belief on these topics. The *via media* is supposed to hold all voices on the same level, with no voice taking precedence and no voice being bolder or more amplified than the other. Yet, as a result of the ambiguous rhetoric the reality is a lot more complex. Certain voices are ultimately amplified more than others, reasserting traditionalist theological and socio-cultural stances. In terms of gender diversity in cathedral music-making, as we will see, this has contributed to the ongoing exclusion and marginalisation of women and girls. This confused discourse results in an unstable and incomplete inclusivity for women and members of the LGBTQ+ community; as long as the *via media* permits the perpetuation of an incoherent rhetoric, the Church effectively favours the conservative perception that the ancestry of the Church is, and always has been, all-male. The progressive, inclusive viewpoint is presented as an extreme, as it is in opposition to the conservative viewpoint. Inclusivity then becomes a competing perspective rather than the predominant one. By extension, this, I argue, makes the inclusion of women and girls in cathedral music-making appear insidious.

(b) Gender, Sex, and Sexuality: Debates in the Anglican Communion

The confused message of the *via media* in the Church of England is complicated further by the ongoing debates in the wider Anglican Communion of which it is a critical part. The Anglican Communion is a 'family of churches in more than 165 countries' (Home, 2019) including America, Argentina, Botswana, Kenya, New Zealand, Pakistan, Thailand and Uganda.⁴² In *Reinventing Anglicanism* Bruce Kaye claims: 'the cultural differences between the churches and provinces which make up the Anglican Communion are greater now than they have ever been' (2004, p. 240). Certainly, the differences to which Kaye refers have had a grave impact on how the Church of England navigates its own position on gender, sex, and sexuality. It is important to recognise the vital part the Church of England plays in the Anglican Communion as its 'mother church' and the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury as the spiritual leader of the Communion.

Disunity in the Communion, over sexuality in particular, has been especially prevalent over the past three decades as a result of the struggle to reconcile the more progressive views (which endorse same-gender partnerships) with contrasting conservative views (which mandate heterosexuality or celibacy – for example, those espoused by the Church of Uganda and Church of Nigeria and indeed even in the Church of England itself). The Church of England's role as 'mother church' has been a point of contention: the increasing support for same-gender partnerships in the twenty-first century has resulted in constitutional changes from the Church of Nigeria who no longer profess to be in 'communion with the See of Canterbury', but maintain their place in the wider Anglican communion (Caroline J. Addington Hall, 2013, p. 190).

The Church of England's leadership role in the Anglican Communion is further problematised by its colonial past. Kevin Ward says that 'Anglicanism is commonly seen as incorrigibly English, a hangover of the British Empire, an anachronism' (2006, p. 2). In the modern, post-colonial context, the history of the

⁴² A list of all member countries and provinces can be seen at on the 'Member Churches' page on the Anglican Communion website (*Member Churches*, 2019).

Church of England's abuses of power, together with its continuing prominence in the Communion, is (appropriately) a source of deep discomfort. In *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism*, Kwok Pui-Lan notes that 'since the Anglican Communion was formed as a direct result of colonialization, it is imperative for Anglicans to face the challenges of postcolonial realities' (2001, p. 49). She goes on to observe that the nature of the Communion's foundation has led to 'much discussion on the identity, integrity, and authority of Anglicanism' (p. 55). In its capacity as 'head' of the Communion, the Church of England is feasibly able to set the precedent on issues such as gender, sex, and sexuality. At the same time, it is subject to significant scrutiny, not least because its history of asserting its beliefs and its authority over other nations.⁴³

Although some headway has been made regarding attitudes and beliefs surrounding non-ordained LGBTQ+ Christians, at least in certain provinces, the Anglican Communion has struggled to find a coherent 'middle way' in the LGBTQ+ clergy debate. One example of this is Jeffrey John's appointment as Bishop of Reading in 2003, which, as Abby Day reports, 'caused consternation among conservative Anglicans who believed homosexuality was illegitimate' (2017, p. 132). Tensions in the world-wide Anglican Communion over appointments like John's in England have threatened the very existence of the Communion. Most recently, this disquiet has resulted in the revocation of invitations for same-gender partners to attend the 2020* Lambeth Conference.⁴⁴ Due to a resolution from the 1998 Lambeth Conference, the Archbishop of Canterbury decided it would be inappropriate for same-gender spouses to be invited (Idowu-Fearon, 2019). As in this instance, the Church of England has frequently ultimately succumbed to views of the more conservative churches in the Anglican Communion at crucial moments; I return to this in more detail in (d) below. The continued confused and tense holding together of opposing viewpoints that secures the legitimacy of certain

⁴³ See, for example, Rahul Rao's account of how the colonial legacy affects the debate around sexuality in the Anglican church in Uganda (2014).

⁴⁴ The Lambeth Conference takes place approximately every ten years. Bishops from around the Anglican Communion are invited to attend by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The first was held in 1867. The latest Lambeth Conference was due to take place in July and August 2020 but has been rescheduled until 2022 due to the COVID-19 crisis.

positions on gender, sex, or sexuality in the wider Anglican Communion has a direct impact on other discourses of inclusivity in the church as they often stem from the same beliefs about the body and ‘appropriate’ relationships between men and women (again, this will be discussed further in (d) below).

The wider Communion, like the Church of England, has been divided over whether women have a theologically legitimate place in the Episcopate, or indeed in the Priesthood. Established in 2008, GAFCON, which stands for the **G**lobal **A**nglican **F**uture **C**onference, describes itself as ‘a global family of authentic Anglicans standing together to retain and restore the Bible to the heart of the Anglican Communion’ (*About GAFCON*, 2019). Peter Herriot summarises the ambition of GAFCON as an intention ‘to undermine the present Anglican Communion, and assume alternative or even replacement authority’ (2015, p. 79). The desire to build new structures is reflected in GAFCON’s prioritisation of the discussion of women’s inclusion in Anglican ministry. In April 2017, a GAFCON taskforce’s report to the Primates recommended the following: ‘the provinces of GAFCON should retain the historic practice of the consecration only of men as bishops until and unless a strong consensus to change emerges after prayer, consultation and continued study of Scripture among the GAFCON fellowship’ (*Task Force on Women in the Episcopate, Interim Report (2019)*). ‘Until and unless’ suggests they *are* willing to continue to discuss the role of women in ministry but remain committed to the historical precedence of male-only bishops. Yet, their dependence on historical and ‘traditional’ practices assumes a static and contained framework which will be discussed further when I turn to Barrier Two later. The statement that there needs to be a strong consensus amongst the GAFCON fellowship before they would change their position is relevant to note as it is dissonant with the Church of England’s decision to consecrate female bishops since 2014.

I argue that rhetoric about the inclusion of women in the worldwide Communion, particularly from groups such as GAFCON, contributes to convoluted narratives of (in)equality within the Church of England. Although

women hold positions of authority, this authority is undermined by the commitment to the world-wide (and indeed local) communion of ‘middle ways’ because of the way that all opposition to their consecration is held as a legitimate Anglican belief: ‘Balance, then, is something that enables unity, but does not confuse it with uniformity’ (Martyn Percy, 2017, p. 111). Here he highlights that a potential goal of the Anglican *via media* is not to achieve consistency across the Communion, but a coalition which acknowledges the differences. If the Church of England were able to balance the liberal and conservative extremes on gender, sex, and sexuality then it would enable ‘unity’ within the Anglican Communion, whilst still acknowledging the nuances of cultural and local differences mentioned above, which ultimately preclude it. And yet, this exact unity is not being enabled. So far, unity has not emerged from the disengagement described by Percy above. Instead, it is *threatened* by the debates surrounding gender, sex, and sexuality; particularly women in the Episcopate and same-gender partnerships.

In practice, the church’s desire to accommodate multiple voices has many ramifications. Having set the context in terms of the Church of England’s commitment to the *via media* and the pressures and tensions within the Anglican Communion, I return now to live issues within the church that are directly relevant to concerns of this thesis. I will explore three key areas in more detail below, where I suggest the effects of the church’s attempts to hold to the ‘middle way’ have had an impact on the place of women and girls in the church as a whole and, by extension, in cathedral music-making. I go deeper into debates already mentioned briefly above on women in the Episcopate and LGBTQ+ clergy, as well as same-gender partnerships. All three debates within the church are relevant to the study of gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making as they exemplify the ways in which women’s bodies and voices, and queer bodies and voices, are marginalised through the operations of incoherent and dissonant rhetoric.

(c) Women and the Twenty-First-Century Episcopate

At the time of writing there are six female bishops in the Church of England. This number includes Sarah Mullally who has been Bishop of London since early 2018; a historic appointment for the church. In June 2019, Rose Hudson-Wilkin became the first black female bishop in England. Each of these appointments is the result of a long period of debate within the church, many aspects of which remain unclear and unresolved. I will now uncover, in chronological order, the confused rhetoric in six of the official pronouncements which pertain to the inclusion of women in the Episcopate. The Rochester Report (*Women Bishops in the Church of England?*, 2004), Guildford Report (*Women in the Episcopate*, 2006) and Manchester Report (*Women Bishops*, 2008) are the first three documents to be discussed. The continued commitment to authenticating the ‘conscience’ or ‘conviction’ of the vocal minority permeates all these documents, which each show a certain sympathy towards the people within the church who do not support women’s ordination or place in the Episcopate.

In 2012, the Synod⁴⁵ narrowly failed to achieve the two-thirds majority required in all houses in order to remove the legal obstacles for women who wished to join the Episcopate. By the end of 2014, all legal obstacles were removed, and Libby Lane was announced as the next Bishop of Stockport in December of that year. Phillip North’s consecration as Bishop of Burnley two weeks after Lane’s consecration caused great controversy surrounding the theology of ‘taint’. North does not support the ordination of women. The bishops who ordained Lane, including Archbishop John Sentamu, did not participate in the ‘laying on of hands’ for North, an act interpreted by some as designed not to ‘taint’ the succession of male-only clergy and intended to mollify supporters of a male apostolic succession.⁴⁶ Sentamu is reported to

⁴⁵ According to the Church of England website, ‘The General Synod considers and approves legislation affecting the whole of the Church of England, formulates new forms of worship, debates matters of national and international importance, and approves the annual budget for the work of the Church at national level.’ It is made up of nearly five hundred members, including bishops, ordained clergy and lay members, and meets three times a year. As in the Houses of Parliament in Britain, members of Synod are able to speak on behalf of themselves and those whom they are representing (*The Work of General Synod*, 2019).

⁴⁶ See, for example, Barbara Bagilhole, 2003; Caroline Gatrell and Nigel Peyton, 2019.

have vehemently denied the role of the theology of taint with regard to this situation (Tim Wyatt, 2015). Yet, given Jane Shaw's understanding that the theology of taint 'carries with it the notion of women not only as utterly different to men, but also more insidiously [...] as 'untouchable' and indeed 'polluting' (1998, p. 21), Sentamu's actions and words would appear to oppose one another. Ideas of 'taint' are rooted in what I later expand on as 'essentialist' thinking, consequences of which include male headship being continuously (re-)asserted and the undermining of women in leadership.

The process of removing all legal obstacles for women to join the Episcopate began in Synod in 2005, following the publication of the *Rochester Report*. Authored by a House of Bishops'⁴⁷ working party, this report is nearly three-hundred pages long and covers the principles, timing, theological and practical issues, and legitimacy of women in the Episcopate. It was as a result of the *Rochester Report* that the *Guildford Report* then set out to discuss the three main options for proceeding with the removal of the legal obstacles: a 'single clause' Measure;⁴⁸ a Third Province;⁴⁹ or 'transferred episcopal arrangements' (TEA).⁵⁰ The progressive vote at Synod in 2006 agreed to proceed with the TEA option. The *Guildford Report* was not met with resounding positivity and so three years later, the *Manchester Report* was compiled with the aim of finding a way forward which:

(a) had ecclesiological integrity; (b) left space within the Church of England for those who in conscience could not accept the priestly or Episcopal ministry of women; and (c) avoided any flavour of discrimination or half-heartedness on the part of the Church of England towards women priests and bishops. (2008, §12)

The *Manchester Report* suggests a code of practice be created to ensure the vocal minority are cared for within a framework which has integrity within the

⁴⁷ The House of Bishops 'is one of three Houses that make up the General Synod, all members of the House of Bishops are members of the General Synod.' The House of Bishops 'has a special role with matters relating to doctrine, liturgy or Sacrament. Also, it has the right to amend legislation as it sees fit before the legislation is put before the General Synod for approval' (*About General Synod*, 2019).

⁴⁸ Widely regarded as the 'simplest' measure – the single clause would have required a vote for or against women as Bishops, and there would be provision made at a local level for those who could not agree.

⁴⁹ This proposal was to create another province in addition to York and Canterbury – which at present are the two provinces, which all dioceses in England are split between.

⁵⁰ TEA would mean that parishes which had female priests and bishops could request an alternative male bishop who would have jurisdiction over certain issues transferred to him.

Anglican communion, whilst avoiding a lukewarm approach to including women in ordained positions. The authors of the report show some self-awareness here in their understanding of the situation. Their description of space which has been ‘left’ for those who oppose women’s ordination is indicative of an awareness that the church is moving on, moving beyond this viewpoint – or at least attempting to, to some degree.

Legal barriers to women’s inclusion were dissolved by mid-2014 and the *Five Guiding Principles* discussed above were published later that same year. To return to the point I made above, the *Five Guiding Principles* is a clear example of the Church of England’s commitment to a *via media*. Because of a desire to reach a ‘middle ground’ in these documents, the Church of England makes an unclear claim disguised as a ‘clear decision’ on women in the Episcopate. As a result, Emma Percy notes ‘these principles have taken on differing meanings for different constituencies’ (2017, p. 97). The principles are imbued with conservative or liberal meanings depending on what the reader chooses to focus on. If one focuses on the claim that all orders of ministry are ‘open equally to all’, one might conclude that women’s place in the Episcopate is not under threat. If on the other hand, one focuses on the full and unequivocal commitment to the flourishing of opponents to women’s inclusion, one could conclude that the church is in no small way sympathetic to the continuation of all-male orders. To hold both positions without favouring either is almost impossible. Yet, this is precisely what the Church of England is trying to do.

Despite claiming to hold a well-defined position, the Church of England recognised that a one-page document was not enough to clarify their stance and in 2018, the Faith and Order Commission (FAOC)⁵¹ published a study guide to accompany the *Five Guiding Principles*. At sixty-two pages long, the study guide is significantly more detailed than the *Principles*. After exploring each principle in turn, the guide has a chapter called ‘Living it out’. In this

⁵¹ The purpose of FAOC is to advise the House of Bishops, the General Synod, the Council for Christian Unity and the Church of England as a whole on theology. Created in 2010, its role is to write theological resources and reports to support the church’s work.

chapter there is an explanation of ‘mutual flourishing’ that, in line with my argument, is highly ambiguous:

Nothing that diminishes [...] communion can promote our flourishing, but we also need to show respect and restraint in seeking one another’s flourishing in the context of the necessary limitations that follow from our commitment to being a ‘communion in dialogue’ where there is no foreseeable prospect of coming to a common mind. (2018, p. 36)

This quotation shows the complex nature of performing a certain prudence when probing such a contentious topic in the Church of England and the Anglican Communion at large. The notion of ‘mutual flourishing’ is effectively an admission that there is no feasible way to reach a compromise on this issue without at least one party feeling seriously undermined. The preferment of ‘respect and restraint’ suggests that the church feels unable to promote one position over the other. As such, the preservation of a fragile unity is prized above the resolution of contentious and divisive issues even when this comes with a personal cost for some female ministers (see Anne-Marie Greene and Mandy Robbins, 2015).⁵² Emma Percy, in her role as Chair of WATCH, wrote the following about the impact of the *Five Guiding Principles*, particularly with respect to Philip North’s appointment as Bishop of Sheffield:

women are still made to feel that they are not quite good enough and if they complain about this treatment they are criticised. In the world beyond the church women would not find themselves expected to work for a man who did not quite think they were the same as their male colleague. Yet, the women of Sheffield are told this is all about mutual flourishing. (*The Five Guiding Principles*, 2017b)

Here Percy suggests that the uncomfortable truth of ‘mutual flourishing’ is that it maintains a structure by which male authority is still prioritised; male members of clergy can legitimately undermine and oppose their female colleagues’ authority but the reverse is not true. The extremes of the *via media* are that on one end of the spectrum men are superior to women, whilst the

⁵² In March 2019, the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of women priests was held at Lambeth Palace. The celebration was acknowledged on Twitter with the hashtag #CofEWomen25. What is noticeable about this hashtag is the emotional labour that women priests had to endure to defend their positions. This resulted in the Twitter campaign #JustAPriest which was proposed by one user @redjules in order to ‘tell the world about all the normal, everyday stuff that we actually do when we’re being priests (real priests that is, not fake/deluded/unbiblical/special, nor "women priests")’ (28 Feb. 2019).

other end of the spectrum is that men and women are equal. Jane Shaw has reflected on what seems like a wilful ignorance at an institutional level in the Church of England of the impact of the church's approach to women's episcopacy. She claims that:

a precedent has been set in how the Church of England has gone about considering the ordination and consecration of women as bishops: it has started with the question of 'what do we do about the opponents?' as opposed to the more rational and obvious starting point, 'how do we [make it possible to] have women bishops?' (2014, p. 344)

It could be argued that as time passes and women continue to break through what Paul Sullins has called the 'stained glass ceilings' of the Church of England the opposition to and undermining of women's authority will subside (2000, p. 247) but that this inequality so far has not yet improved dramatically due to the persistence of 'embedded cultural values' (p. 259). His view is supported by Sarah Jane Page who suggests that any opposition to female clergy is to an increasing extent 'less likely to be overt and face-to-face' (2012, p. 3) than it was prior to their inclusion. However, the ways in which groups such as Forward in Faith are able to, overtly, on the grounds of theological conviction, undermine the authority of women in the Episcopate, tells of the confusion around the church's position on gender diversity twenty-five years since women were first admitted to the priesthood and five years since their admission to the Episcopate. This confusion in turn undermines the positive and inclusive rhetoric which can be read in parts of these recent documents. Ali Green writes about the ramifications of this confusion, saying:

to enable others fully to flourish in their Christian life, any priest needs to be fairly secure in his or her own sense of identity and calling, and to feel accepted as someone with a calling to ordained ministry within a given community. The rub here for female priests is that, in many provinces, dioceses and parishes, we are uncertain as to whether in fact we are welcome. (2011, p. 34)

The uncertainty for women, as they try to navigate their ordained role, which Green describes here, is in line with Emma Percy's description of 'an 'ambiguous welcome' for women (2017a). Although Green is writing explicitly about female *priests*, her understanding of the dubious nature of acceptance is,

I suggest, applicable to other levels of church leadership. The *via media* contributes to a culture in which women's security in their roles can be undermined, both tacitly and explicitly (this also extends to LGBTQ+ clergy, as is discussed further below). It would seem, at first glance, that the problem for women priests and bishops is distinctive relative to other leadership roles within the church, precisely because those roles are accompanied by specific theological accounts of ministry that do not extend to other roles.

However, there is more than a mere background sense of possible bias against women priests in some quarters. The dialogue around priestly ministry is centred around women's bodies, qualities, innate capacities. Take for example these two passages from the *Rochester Report* on Women Bishops in the Church of England: 'It is to some extent problematic to see a female bishop as an icon of the Father. Symbolically she would tend to convey maternal rather than paternal associations' (2004, §5.2.40); and '[...] although men and women are equal as human beings, there is a proper order of human relations ('headship') in which women are to submit to the authority of men' (2004, §5.2.32). The questions about women as priests use terms and concepts that very directly speak to women's capacity to perform other leadership roles – namely those which support the church's ministry more indirectly. As a result, the *via media* for many women becomes an almost uninhabitable, hostile space. This matters for all women.

As noted above, Sullins argues that the ongoing resistance to women's ministry has come about 'as a result of embedded cultural values that are particularly resident in congregations [as opposed to the church hierarchy or other clergy] and that show no indication of changing' (2000, p. 261). His understanding that the congregations hold the key to any change in the core principles further complicates matters in the context of the cathedral, as on the whole the cathedral congregation is unstable and depends heavily on tourists, as is discussed in Barrier Three.⁵³ However, Sullins's point does stand

⁵³ David Lankshear, Leslie Francis, and Michael Ipgrave conclude that a cathedral congregation is made up of a greater percentage of men, white, and single, people than parish churches; they are 'more likely to be cradle Christians and nurtured Anglicans' but at the same time acknowledge that cathedral congregations contain 'more visitors [and] a higher proportion of newcomers' and that cathedral congregations are 'more attracted to the ritual and ceremony' (2015, p. 108).

when considering the small number of congregants who regularly attend cathedral services and who have a strong understanding of which exact social ideologies are rooted in the Church of England regarding gender, sex, and sexuality. This can impact heavily on any appeal for change, such as the introduction of girl choristers. Although there are not currently any quantitative surveys of congregations' attitudes towards women in the secondary literature,⁵⁴ in Barrier Two I use work by Howard and Welch (2002) which has examined whether or not people can tell the difference between girls' and boys' voices if the choir is unseen. Tacitly, then, they discuss congregations' attitudes to gender diversity in the choir. There has similarly not been any systematic study, to date, of attitudes to women clergy amongst cathedral congregations.⁵⁵

(d) Sexuality and Same-gender Partnerships

The confused rhetoric observed in the Church of England's discussions of women in ministry is also present in official statements on sexuality, marriage, and same-gender partnership. These conversations are important to consider in the context of women's inclusion because they are indicative of the narratives of inclusivity and how the church responds to contentious debate in order to pursue a 'middle way' on issues to do with the body and gender. Although the church in theory allows same-gender partnerships under certain circumstances, the practice is more divisive. These inconsistencies for LGBTQ+ clergy in the Church of England are instantiated by the flawed logic which can be viewed in the official pronouncements. I am now going to outline the recent history of the church's position in this area in brief as it is relevant, though not central, to the purposes of this thesis.

⁵⁴ David Walker's 2015 article 'Religious Orientation and Attitudes towards Gay Marriage and Homosexual Bishops' sampled 381 congregants at a Worcester Cathedral carol service and found that men and older people held more negative attitudes towards gay marriage and homosexual clergy than female and younger congregants.

⁵⁵ Work has been done on Church of England congregations' attitudes towards women priests, more broadly, though. See, for example: Ian Jones, 2003; and Carol Roberts, Mandy Robbins, Leslie J. Francis, and Peter Hills, 2006.

Recent discussions within the church in this area have been shaped by two foundational documents. The first was *Issues in Human Sexuality* (1991),⁵⁶ which concluded that the narrative around homosexuality in the church ‘has too often been one of prejudice, ignorance and oppression’ and advocated that the church ‘rethink its existing perception of the truth’ (1991, p. 48). *Issues* nonetheless stuck to a traditional position on homosexuality.⁵⁷ The follow-up document, *Some Issues in Human Sexuality* (2003), again sought to perform the ‘middle way’ approach as can be seen through use of statements invoking the ‘middle path’ (p. 49) and the outlining of arguments from all sides, noting that ‘there is no room for compromise’ (p. 279) from traditionalists in the Church of England but that feminist Christians have ‘explored the biblical text anew in the light of the questions raised by the feminist movement’ (p. 106). The lack of conciliation (predominantly by traditionalists) within the Church of England highlights the problematic nature of the *via media* and how there can be no satisfactory or successful ‘middle way’, as it currently involves women, LGBTQ+ people, and other minorities in church leadership conceding significantly more than their conservative opposition. The *via media* in this sense does not prioritise compromise so much as the *impression* of inclusion. In pursuing a kind of relativism, the Church of England constantly undermines the inclusivity which they claim to practise.

One such way that this plays out has been acknowledged by Adrian Thatcher who is adamant that a major failing of the 2003 guide is it refuses to properly acknowledge homophobia. Thatcher states: ‘Since homophobia and its exposure are almost unmentionable in the Guide, the sad question of the contribution of Christian teaching to its manifestation is also hidden from view’ (2005, p. 13). I suggest that Thatcher’s claim that the Christian Church has been guilty of an institutional silence on homophobia, and likewise that it promotes a continued conservative standpoint on homosexuality in the 2003

⁵⁶ Split into five sections across forty-eight pages, this statement by the House of Bishops in December 1991, is the first of the contemporary reflections on sexuality.

⁵⁷ This is exemplified, for example, in their advice to bisexual Christians (§5.8) that ‘they should follow the way of holiness in either celibacy or abstinence or heterosexual marriage’ and also suggest they seek counselling to ‘discover the truth’ and ‘achieve a degree of inner healing’ (1991, p. 42).

guide, are consequences of the Anglican Church's commitment to the *via media*. Once more, in trying to balance the extremes, the *via media* approach serves the traditionalist viewpoint above all else. In the early years of the twenty-first century, it was made clear that ingrained homophobia in the church was ignored on an official, institutional level, in order to protect the notion of a 'middle way' that allegedly works for everyone. Women could expect this same ignorance with regards to entrenched sexism.

Two years after *Some Issues*, the House of Bishops published a *Statement on Civil Partnerships*. The document acknowledges that although civil partnerships are now legal in England, 'the House of Bishops would advise clergy to weigh carefully the perceptions and assumptions which would inevitably accompany a decision to register such a relationship' (2005, p. 5). Hailed as 'a blessing for gay people but not for conservatives' (Andrew Brown, 2013), the *Pilling Report* was commissioned by the House of Bishops in 2012 and published the following year. The report included data collected from discussions with gay and lesbian members of the church. After the church's silence on homophobia in previous reports, the report's first recommendation is to 'warmly welcome and affirm the presence and ministry within the Church of gay and lesbian people, both lay and ordained' (2013, p. 149). Even this is not a dismissal of homophobia, though. What is more, before the 'findings and recommendations' section, the report features a thirty-page dissenting statement from the Bishop of Birkenhead who disagreed with its recommendations. He instead calls upon churches, 'not to be conformed to the prevailing sexual culture, but to seek to resist and transform it so that both the church and wider society will flourish by more closely reflecting God's standards [sic.] in their beliefs about sexuality and their sexual behaviour' (p. 145). Throughout the report it is clear that the Church of England has avoided having *conclusive* conversations about its position on sexuality as evidenced in the repeated claim that it is 'too soon' to tell whether the societal shifts in attitudes are representative of 'God's will' and subsequently 'we cannot be sure what the outcome will be when it is possible to make a confident judgement' (p. 100).

In 2014, the House of Bishops released a document entitled *Pastoral Guidance on Same Sex Marriage*. Since then, as Charles Ledbetter states, Church of England policies have allowed clergy to have same-gender partners so long as there is a commitment to celibacy, and they do not marry. Ledbetter goes on to say of the participants in his study on the topic: 'Though the church has barred clergy from entering same-gender marriages, several informants have married. Additionally, one informant who identifies as heterosexual officiated at a same-gender wedding' (2017, p. 118). In 2002, Chris Hastings, Fiona Govan, and Susan Bissett wrote an article in *The Telegraph* reporting that 'vicars bless hundreds of gay couples a year', quoting one vicar as saying, 'on average, I tend to perform about four same-sex blessings a year' (Hastings *et. al.*, 2002). Long before 2014, the disparity between policy and practice, which Ledbetter described, was rife.⁵⁸ That being said, it is very important to note that *blessing* same-sex civil partnerships is not at all the same as performing a same-sex wedding. There is much more openness in the Church of England to the possibility of the former than the latter. As such, I argue that this inconsistency is not only indicative of the contentious views that the Church of England has towards LGBTQ+ more generally but is also representative of the church's inability to reconcile the reality of opening the door to clergy by placing limitations on the expression of their identity once they choose to become ordained.

In the 2014 document, the House of Bishops also affirmed that 'the Church [of England] needs to embark on a process of "facilitated conversation" about sexuality. [...] we cannot reach any conclusions at the moment but holding facilitated conversations may help us to do so in the future (§452, p. 132). The eventual 'Shared Conversations' process involved the participation of more than 1300 members of the church (*Statement following conclusion of Shared Conversations Process*, 2016). The stated aim of this process was 'that the diversity of views within the church would be expressed honestly and heard respectfully, with the hope that, in so doing, individuals might come to discern

⁵⁸ See Rémy Bethmont, 2019.

that which is of Christ in those with whom they profoundly disagree’ (*About*, 2019). This process was not without controversy, however, due in part to Reform (an evangelical pressure group)⁵⁹ not participating, as well as dismay from Christians (scholars and others) who were concerned about whether or not the church was truly intent on listening. Gerard Loughlin stated: ‘Gay Christians have been telling their stories for years, for as long as it was possible for them to think themselves gay Christians [...] If their talking, writing and publishing has seemed like silence, it is not for want of speaking’ (2014, p. 621). Loughlin’s views were mirrored in blogs such as that from Rachel Mann (a trans woman and Anglican priest), who wrote in August 2014 that she was ‘suspicious’ of the process of shared conversations because conversations about inclusion had been happening in the church since the 1970s, ‘and yet it’s not clear that the C of E institution *qua* institution has shifted that much’. Mann expressed trepidation that for people like her ‘who have been traditionally excluded from welcome in the church [it is difficult] to trust that those with power, privilege and authority will genuinely place their privilege at risk of conversion, of conversation’ (Mann, 2014). In an article for the *Church Times*, Madeleine Davies wrote that people who had participated in the shared conversations process had ‘expressed disappointment’ with the report on this process as it unsuccessfully reproduced the ‘broader dialogue’ which it set out to achieve (Davies, 2017).

The church’s approach to discussing sexuality, marriage, and same-gender partnerships has led to the (quasi-)legitimisation of same-gender partnerships, but not marriages, and the (ambiguous) recognition of the reality of diverse sexualities. This has left many both outside and within the church confused. In a ‘personal reflection’ Erika Baker, who participated in Shared Conversations, wrote: ‘It was inevitable that the process left us with more questions than it had answered. Come to think of it, I’m not even sure that it answered anything specific at all’. Susannah Cornwall concluded that:

⁵⁹ ‘Reform’ is an evangelical pressure group within the Church of England which was set up in 1993 to oppose women’s ordination. Today they mainly oppose homosexual partnerships within the Church. Reform have their own website (www.reform.org.uk) on which no information is given about the purposes or aims of the group, except for members.

In short, it might seem that the Church of England is simultaneously endowing same sex sexual activity with a lot of significance, and no significance at all. It is significant in the sense that doing it is deemed to transgress the biblical ideal, but it is insignificant in the sense that it is not considered able to mediate grace in the same way that heterosexual married sex does. (2013, p. 97)

Cornwall's observation of the double bind regarding the significance of homosexuality is indicative of a larger issue surrounding how the church seeks the 'middle ground' on such topics. As Cornwall says, the Church of England is giving out mixed messages about what is important when talking about sexuality, and also what it is important to reach a common ground on. The narrative which suggests that gender, sex, and sexuality are simultaneously irrelevant (in the case of sexuality – so long as you are celibate, not married or have no intention of joining the clergy) as well as worthy of heated discussion is a direct result of continuous failed attempts to reach a 'middle ground' on these issues and indeed part of the problem is trying to reach one on these central concerns at all.

In the first part of this chapter, I have shown that the pursuit of the *via media* both in the Church of England and more broadly in the Anglican Communion has affected conversations and decisions about women in the Episcopate and LGBTQ+ issues. The way in which the Church of England has navigated conversations about gender, sex, and sexuality is reflected in the local conversations that continue to persist in cathedrals about diversity in music-making, as is shown below (Part III). When considered alongside Shaw's understanding, outlined above, of the voices which have been prioritised in the continuing conversations on these topics, it is unsurprising that the Church of England has not reached a 'middle ground' or stable conclusion in these areas.

II. Socio-cultural Influences on Accounts of Gender in the Church of England's Public Rhetoric

Having begun to explore how the contemporary Church of England speaks on an institutional level, in this part, I will suggest that the church documents analysed in Part I are replete with rhetoric that perpetuates a gender hierarchy based on essentialist beliefs. This argument is supported by Adrian Thatcher, who states: 'there can be little doubt that modern theological views of gender are essentialist, in that they assert the fixity of two sexes... [and] the dominant-subordinate relations between them' (2011, p. 19). The church's public texts are communicating messages *about* gender (from a purportedly neutral standpoint) and are themselves symbolically *gendered* – that is they are performances of gender produced in textual form.

Essentialism, Elizabeth Grosz explains, 'refers to the existence of fixed characteristics, given attributes, and ahistorical functions for men and women which limit the possibilities of change and thus of social reorganization' (1990, p. 334); Janis Bohan describes an essentialist position as one which:

construe[s] gender as resident within the individual, a quality or trait describing one's personality, cognitive process, moral judgement, etc. [...] Essentialist models, thus, portray gender in terms of fundamental attributes that are conceived as internal, persistent, and generally separate from the on-going experience of interaction with the daily socio-political contexts of one's life. (1993, pp. 6-7)

The admission of women to leadership roles in the Church of England has, I suggest, prompted *something* of a shift away from the language of gender fixity in the church's rhetoric. However, even in those documents which advocate for female inclusion, one can note a reticence to claim that women have the same qualities and traits as male leaders in the church. Binary imagery and the value the church places on inherited (gendered) structures – the privileging of the status quo – persist as obstacles to firm moves away from essentialism.

The Church of England's official rhetoric on gender, sex, and sexuality has asserted a hierarchy both inside and outside of the church and in its ministry between men and women. The dominant-subordinate relations between the

two sexes that Thatcher mentions can be seen in nearly all of the documents on gender, sex, and sexuality discussed in this chapter (even after legislation has been passed which, in theory, positions men and women as equals). On the role of women in the Episcopate the essentialist notions of hierarchy can be seen in both early and later documents.

Essentialist views in the debates about women in the Episcopate (and indeed the priesthood) are discussed in documents such as the *Rochester* and *Manchester* reports. For example, as part of the *Rochester Report* – which occasioned the first positive vote towards women’s entry to the Episcopate – the authors summarise the counterarguments that have been made against admitting women to the Episcopate, including that ‘human sexual differentiation and the patriarchal ordering of society are part of the givenness of the human situation as created by God’ (2004, p. 140). Similarly, the *Manchester Report* identifies the Catholic and Evangelical opposition to women’s ordination as rooted in ‘a particular view of [male] headship’ (2008, p. xxii). These theories are disproportionately prominent in both reports, given this admission that it is a minority who hold extreme views on male headship.⁶⁰ In the *Manchester Report*, they write that the issue of sacramental headship is a ‘separate’ issue to whether or not it is legal for women to be priests or bishops (§143). Again, the legitimisation of the vocal minority undoubtedly impacts on how comfortable women are to work within a church which promotes ‘mutual flourishing’, not solely of women and other marginalised people but of the men (and women) who do not believe women are legitimately ordained, as outlined earlier. Working to ensure that those who oppose and undermine women’s authority is given as much space in this discussion is a pervasive and persistent priority in the Anglican ‘middle way’.

Philosopher and gender theorist, Judith Butler, has argued that an essentialist account of gender invariably generates an ‘epistemic regime of presumptive heterosexuality’ (1990, p. viii). Although Butler is not discussing the church in particular, what she describes is evident in the church documents

⁶⁰ Male headship is mentioned forty-three and six times in each report respectively.

discussed thus far. The *Pilling Report* states that: ‘sexuality is something fundamental to our being, whatever our orientation and whether or not it is expressed in a physical relationship’ (2013, p. 39). There is a quiet admission that sexuality is a fundamental part of how humans understand and relate to one another, whether this be homosexual or otherwise. Essentialism reinforces heterosexuality as the status quo within the church because it emphasises (physical, in particular) complementarity within these relationships. Here sexual relationships, as a result of narrow views on gender, are essentialised as an internal, persistent, and fundamental attribute, quality, or trait. The statement on civil partnerships, for example, asserts that the church’s heteronormative position has never changed,⁶¹ saying:

It has always been the position of the Church of England that marriage is a creation ordinance, a gift of God in creation and a means of his grace. Marriage, defined as a faithful, committed, permanent and legally sanctioned relationship between a man and a woman, is central to the stability and health of human society. It continues to provide the best context for the raising of children. (*Civil Partnerships*, 2005, p. 1)⁶²

The influence of essentialist rhetoric can be seen in the implication that women and men bring something significantly different to marriage, which results in the ‘best’ framework for raising children. A partnership between two people who identify as the same gender can be understood in essentialist logic then to threaten the church’s model of marriage – one which is founded upon a supposition of internal and persistent, fundamental gendered attributes. Resultantly, the way that homosexual partnerships cast doubt over the essentialist framework has, I argue, manifested in a defensiveness from leaders regarding what is ‘right’ and what is (supposedly conversely) sinful, particularly visible in Church of England documents.

I will further show that the theological rhetoric of the church is underpinned by a complementarian logic – a sub-type of essentialist thinking. This is especially relevant for this thesis since, as I will demonstrate, a complementarian rhetoric also underpins much theory and practice in

⁶¹ Employing terms such as ‘unchanging’ in this context are discussed further in Barrier Two.

⁶² It is worth noting that this claim has been challenged, e.g. by Jonathan Clatworthy and Linda Woodhead in relation to divorce (2014) and by Charlotte Methuen in relation to marriage itself (2014).

contemporary cathedral music-making. Complementarianism 'is premised on the reciprocation and completion of female by male and male by female' (Elaine Storkey, 2001, p. 117) and has assumed a significant status in Anglican and Evangelical churches across the world. Within the Australian Anglican context, particularly in the Diocese of Sydney, for instance, Anglican communities hold to the view that 'a properly construed complementarianism invites men and women to receive and realize their given differentiation [...] it is also a refusal to make certain culturally-bound patterns of gender normative (sic.) when there is no scriptural warrant for doing so' (Michael P. Jensen, 2002, p. 141). In the US, John Piper and Wayne Grudem state: 'We are persuaded that the Bible teaches that only men should be pastors and elders. That is, men should bear primary responsibility for Christlike leadership and teaching in the church. So it is unbiblical, we believe, and therefore detrimental, for women to assume this role' (1991, pp. 60-61). Although Piper and Grudem are not Anglicans, Piper's complementarian theology has been described by Kevin Giles (2018, p. 210), as 'hugely influential' and their arguments have been referenced extensively in books on gender diversity in the Christian Church (see: Nancy Hedberg 2010; Sarah Sumner 2003; Neil Williams 2011). Grudem founded the Council on Biblical Manhood And Womanhood in 1987; 'established primarily to help the church defend against the accommodation of secular feminism', it exists to this day to 'set forth the teachings of the Bible about the complementary differences between men and women' (*Mission & Vision*, 2019). Stanley Grenz and Denise Kjesbo note that for conservative scholars such as Piper and Grudem, complementarianism is a result of the idea that 'God created male and female equal but also designed the woman to complement the man by subordinating herself to his leadership' (1995, p. 18).

Complementarianism, in all its forms, claims to accept and uphold the worth of the 'gifts' of the female sex. However, complementarianism also maintains that women and girls are differently gifted to men. In stronger forms of this view, leadership is not one of women's gifts and 'women should not have spiritual authority over men in the church on an ongoing basis' (Terri Stovall 2009, p. 22). In 'softer' forms of complementarianism, Emma Percy has argued

that women can lead but are perceived to do so *in a distinctive way* (2017, p. 99). Complementarians would therefore say women are equal in worth and dignity to men because all are made in the image of God, but women have different (yet complementary) gifts or callings to those God gives to men.

In *Some Issues in Human Sexuality*, the House of Bishops argued:

that the book of Genesis does in fact teach the complementarity (the ‘equality in difference’) of men and women and that, on the basis of its teaching, a belief in complementarity has always been a part of orthodox Christian theology, even though this belief has frequently been distorted by a hierarchical view of the male-female relationship. (2003, p. 182)

Here, the House of Bishops has taken an actively complementarian approach – somewhere in between soft and hard complementarity – drawing on biblical interpretation and historical precedent (see Barrier Two). *Some Issues* acknowledges complementarianism has often become synonymous with a gendered order (see Barrier Four). Though the document denies that this is the Church of England’s view, I argue that even though hierarchies may not be explicit they can (as I will show) operate implicitly.

More recently, in the Church of England’s official response to the UK government’s consultation on same-sex marriage, the term *complement* is used no fewer than five times across its thirteen pages. The document offers the view that ‘the uniqueness of marriage [...] is that it embodies the underlying, objective, distinctiveness of men and women’ (*A Response to the Government Equalities Office Consultation – “Equal Civil Marriage”*, 2012, p. 3). The idea that men and women are distinctive in an innate way is used to promote a heteronormative vision of partnership and to reassert the Church of England’s commitment to heterosexual marriage.

Arguments about marriage equality and claims about gender are often raised in conjunction with one another, particularly with respect to the idea of distinctiveness. The *Men and Women in Marriage* report exemplifies the church’s continued commitment to essentialist and complementarian rhetoric by casting the binary of male and female as biological facts which determine the way that humans live; for example: ‘We, too, are “fragile earth”, of the

material world. Not everything in the way we live, then, is open to renegotiation. We cannot turn our back upon the natural, and especially the biological, terms of human existence' (2013, p. 4).⁶³ Based in a biologically essentialist justification for heterosexuality, the Church of England imply here that they are willing to compromise or 'renegotiate' but not on the biological binaries which have underpinned marriage in the Church for hundreds of years.

There are two further points to make in this part. Firstly, as feminist theologians have argued, essentialism and complementarity – and particularly the privileging of maleness – are not necessarily core to Christian belief and practice, even though they are a persistent feature in the beliefs of the more conservative facets of the Christian community. Linn Marie Tonstad sums this up when she writes that:

Dominant strands of the Christian tradition have always already claimed that God is beyond gender and that male and female are created in the image of God, yet that same Christian tradition has also gendered God and valued men over women – not everywhere, not always, not in every way, but consistently. (2015, p. 5)

The persistence of the gendering of God has been interrogated by Cornwall, for example. She argued 'that maleness cannot be part of that [nature] of God imaged in Jesus (since sex is a human characteristic and not a divine one), so it also need not be part of that of Jesus which priests "represent"' (2014, p. 39). Lynn Japinga similarly claims that 'feminist theology begins with the assumption that women are fully human, made in God's image, and loved and valued by God' (1999, p. 20).

Secondly, there *is* evidence of growing commitment in the church to a non-complementarian account of gender equality, not least as a result of the multitude of voices that are present in internal debates now that the Church of England has admitted women to the priesthood and the Episcopacy. *The Five Guiding Principles* – albeit with all the caveats already discussed – state that:

⁶³ At the beginning of this thesis, I outlined the move away from thinking about humanity in a binary, biological sense in my decision to use terms such as 'gender' and 'gender diversity', which is indicative of the negotiation that *has been* ongoing in this regard.

‘the Church of England is fully and unequivocally committed to all orders of ministry being open equally to all, *without reference to gender*’ (my emphasis; 2014, p. 1) and in the church’s *Pastoral Guidance for use in conjunction with the Affirmation of Baptismal Faith in the context of gender transition*, there is an insistence that the image of God is something which ‘transcends gender, race, and any other characteristic’ (2018, p. 1). *Prima facie*, these documents are indicative of a slowly changing rhetoric. The characteristics, skills, and qualities which have been associated with ‘maleness’ historically are more to do with socio-cultural factors than they are to do with who we are in essence, and so the church’s approach to gender and gender diversity is open to challenge from constructivist accounts of gender, to which we now briefly turn.

With regard to the place of constructivism in the Church, or in theological discourse, Jason Wyman has argued that:

constructive theology tacitly recognizes the idea behind the often casually overused phrase “socially constructed” (though it predates this term and its popular acceptance): it is a quiet admission in the midst of Christianity’s historical complicity with injustices and exclusive normatization that it is not the way things inherently have to be, indeed, that things could be otherwise. It is, as well, an ongoing search for that otherwise, relating the historical discipline to new emergences in a contiguous, open way. (2017, p. xi)

For Wyman, Christianity’s reluctance to move away from the way things have always been is a key facet of its identity. Through the introduction of constructivist theologies, the Church is able to take responsibility for the past and take this forward in order to adapt to change which is appropriate for the time. If the Church of England, in its documents, therefore, shows signs of moving towards discussions of gender and not sex, then the beginnings of a constructivist rhetoric whereby binaries of fixity are no longer predominant is starting to show in the language that is being used in the cathedral sphere. Tina Beattie talks about this as a ‘linguistic turn’ which ‘leads to the realization that we inhabit a world that is interpreted through and through, and whatever material realities exist beyond that process of interpretation remain incomprehensible to us in and of themselves’ (2014, p. 35). For Beattie,

the language that constructivism offers to the Church allows people to maintain that human corporality is not of utmost importance.

Yet, there is limited evidence of deeper engagement in official documents with notions of gender as constructed, ‘performed’ (in Butler’s terms), or culturally situated. The statement from the *Five Guiding Principles* above (that all orders of ministry are open equally to all) could be an iteration of the ‘equal but different’ model, with slightly more emphasis on the ‘equal’ and less on the ‘different’. Instead of the notion that ‘men and women have different ministries and callings that are (in theory but rarely in practice) equal in value’ (i.e. ‘hard’ complementarianism), the Church may be saying: ‘men and women have the same ministries and callings but (tacitly) we still expect them to be exercised slightly differently’. The muted understanding of distinctiveness in the *Five Guiding Principles* is in line with Emma Percy’s soft complementarianism already covered in this chapter. There is little evidence of engagement with constructivist, contextual accounts of gender such as that outlined by Janis Bohan, who says that ‘[b]ecause [...] gender [is seen] as residing in context rather than in the individual, the focus shifts from the person to the situation. Thus, the issue of power, the reality underlying women’s oppression, is revealed in full light’ (1993, p. 15). The Church of England, I assert, still shows a tendency towards essentialist and complementarian rhetoric. Although hints of constructivist ideas about gender in context would be expected to accompany the inclusion of women into the priesthood and Episcopate, the official documents still do not reflect this.

III. The Impact of Gender(ed) Rhetoric in Cathedrals: A First Look

So far in this chapter, I have argued that the Church of England has unsuccessfully delineated a ‘middle ground’ in relation to issues of gender, sex, and sexuality and contended that complementarianism has remained pervasive in church documents surrounding these debates. The final part of this chapter begins

to open up the question of the effects that the approaches outlined above have on music-making in contemporary Church of England cathedrals specifically. Having considered how the contemporary Church of England speaks through its official pronouncements, this part focuses on how these pronouncements impact on, and intersect with, the views of the participants in this study and thus how they are understood to impact practice. This includes how far the participants understand or are aware of these debates; what they think about the Church of England's role with respect to gender diversity; and finally, how the church's views connect with, or are separate from, their own personal beliefs.

Eight participants in this study made reference to the *via media* or 'middle way' as a way to discuss the compound identity of the Church of England. Many of the participants look to this ambiguity and complexity as a potential source of hope for a more affirming and inclusive Church. One of the ordained participants in this study, Max, for example, understood the Church of England to hold many positions in tandem with one other, saying: "in a sense the Church speaks with one voice, but that voice is a harmony of many different strands and as we tease out the different strands here, we can enrich what we do here in all sorts of ways." His use of musical metaphor suggests an opportunity for individuals within the Church to work to bring the incoherence of this counterpoint — which I identified at the beginning of the chapter — into harmony. The phrase 'middle ways' was used by another ordained participant, Sal, who took the view that the cathedral's capacity to offer an accessible and all-embracing welcome to all was a result of this framework: "Anglicanism is about 'middle ways' – what we're trying to do at [our] cathedral is to be open and inclusive – all are welcome." The *via media* is understood here to be intrinsic to the way in which the cathedral presents itself as accessible for everyone – regardless of their beliefs, which shows how deeply it is rooted in the identity of the Church of England. There is individual freedom as a result of this 'middle ways'; not just in terms of the participants and church leaders themselves, but also for each cathedral as an individual, autonomous institution as pertains to how they choose to present this 'middle way'. This freedom within the *via media* – which allows Sal to view her cathedral as one welcoming for all – is occasioned by the public face that the cathedrals present (as

will be discussed further in Barrier Three), even if the picture of inclusivity behind the scenes is, as I argued above, less than inviting.

Due to their representative function as the seat of the Bishop, ‘tourist attractions, heritage centres and meeting places’ (Arran Calvert 2017, p. 15), the participants also understood cathedrals to have no choice but to position themselves as the middle of the ‘middle ways’. Peter, another Precentor who I interviewed, reflected on this, stating: “as a cathedral you sit very much in the middle and you have to try and be all things to all people; you have to be welcoming and accommodating without necessarily losing your own distinctiveness”. The ordained participants in my study show that the understanding of the Church of England’s identity as a ‘middle way’ extends beyond the official pronouncements in church documents and is embedded in the attitudes of at least some of those who work in the institution. Yet, despite how the *via media* is presented in official documents — as a (perhaps lukewarm) attempt at compromise — the participants on the whole seem to understand this ‘middle ground’ as a site for opportunity and appear able to capitalise on the sense of freedom which arises from the ambiguity.

The influence of the complex relationship between the global Anglican communion and the more local debates on gender, sex, and sexuality was not reflected in participants’ responses. Only one of the participants mentioned the debates on gender, sex, and sexuality in the wider Anglican Communion, saying that although he did not know much about “the African Church”, he knew that the inclusion of women and girls was not unanimously accepted; rhetorically positing: “It’s not universal, is it?”. That only one considered how gender, sex, and sexuality are being grappled with in the broader Communion is not necessarily surprising as none of the questions in the interviews pointed towards global understandings of the debates. It is worth stating that this was not specific to the participants from the UK; participants who hail from other countries did not mention their understanding of the bearing of the debates in their respective native countries or worldwide debates either.

Only four interviewees commented explicitly on the way they are affected at the local level by the Anglican Communion’s reticence to provide a concrete

position on these matters. For example, Max explained his understanding as follows: “I don’t think the Anglican Church has views on very much beyond as it were the bare minimum credal orthodoxy requirements that might be expected of anybody.” Max’s understanding that the holding of certain views on gender, sex, and sexuality is not essential to identifying as Anglican is a pertinent result of the ambiguous rhetoric on gender, sex, and sexuality in the broader Communion and shows the individual freedom that arises in the vacuum of a central, core position which comes down on either side of the debate instead of ‘in the middle’. His consideration suggests that all Anglicans can feel comfortable within the *via media* and that their views on these matters can fit into an Anglican belief structure. This view is, I attest, indicative of the complexity of the *via media*. The underlying assumption that this supposed inclusivity works for everyone to some extent covers up the beliefs that fundamentally disrespect women’s authority in the Church, whilst simultaneously creating opportunities for progressively minded local leadership to create bubbles of inclusivity not reflective of the wider communion.

Rachel (a senior music leader) compared the Anglican views on women in the Episcopate with the Catholic Church, reporting: “I’m more happy [sic.] with where women are in the Anglican Church than say in the Catholic Church.” The progress that Rachel perceives the Church of England to have made in comparison to the more conservative Catholic Church is indicative of the language of accommodation in the church documents where the official rhetoric designates a slow movement away from the conservative viewpoint being the main or only acceptable standpoint. At the same time, her happiness is not presented as unequivocal, because the Church of England has not yet achieved a status regarding gender, sex, or sexuality which would mean that employees like Rachel felt ‘happy’ as opposed to “happier” than she would if she were working in the Catholic Church where the views are more conservative. Whilst she is not endorsing the *via media* here, her comparison between the two denominations is indicative of the ease that participants had with a gradually more inclusive Anglican Church.

Participants were explicitly asked to reflect on their understanding of the effect that the introduction of female priests, bishops and deans has had on the increasing inclusion of women and girls in cathedral music. Their responses included the overwhelming conviction that it “definitely impacted” in this area (six participants), as well as the contrary – that there was no correlation (fourteen participants). Some of these fourteen participants then later contradicted their initial reactions. However, their downplaying of the correlation is linked to the arguments I discuss regarding leadership in Barrier Four in terms of how the denial of gender *creates* or *gives* women and girls opportunities (positive discrimination). Peter, another Precentor whom I interviewed, suggested that the introduction of female clergy gave the girl choristers role models and impacted their understanding of the type of institution that they were a part of, saying: “now girl choristers have role models – they don’t come away from their time thinking it’s a misogynist institution”. Again, this connection between role models and institutional culture change will be discussed in detail in Barrier Four.⁶⁴

It is possible that the link between female bishops and female choral directors is more palpable to those that have followed the Church of England’s engagement with the latter e.g., those invested in the institution for reasons other than music or employment. The only non-Christian participant in my study thought that the link between women’s inclusion in the Episcopate would have a greater impact on them if they were Christian, stating:

the nature of Lay clerk-ing is that you do just turn up and people aren’t really around and then you leave again, so if you’re not involved in the church community itself you might not note the female clergy. [...] I think it would make more of a difference if I were a Christian because I’d interact with them in that way.

The idea that the introduction of women in the Episcopate, and women and girls in cathedral music-making affects the institutional character; that it is becoming one which is no longer perceived to be misogynist is also shown in other participant responses. Rachel described the “huge impact” that the move away from women only providing “tea and flowers” has had, in her understanding. Her argument

⁶⁴ It is important to remember that the introduction of the girls at Salisbury (1991), for example, pre-dated the introduction of women to the priesthood (1994).

suggests that appointing women bishops is a structural move away from tacit complementarian or essentialist hierarchies in that women's gifts are no longer restricted to these supporting roles within the Church – their identities need not be supplementary to the main leadership.

The continued resistance to same-gender marriage in the Anglican Communion led some participants to acknowledge that their personal beliefs on sexuality, marriage, and same-gender partnerships were dissonant from the views espoused in the official pronouncements. Six participants indicated that the connections between gender, sex, and music-making were influenced by their understanding of the church's debates about same-gender partnerships. Ben (one of the senior music leaders), for example, said, "I think I also am impacted by cultural things which go beyond religion"; and Sarah (a senior music leader) posited: "There are aspects of the Church that think that everything about how I live my life is horrifying", noting, "I am as happy when a tenor and a bass get married as I am when a soprano and a tenor do". An ordained participant, Tom, shared the same view, but noted that for him, there is an institutional requirement to toe the party line. He claimed:

If I was in a position of needing to preach on that [homosexuality], I'd say the church's position is "this". When we're having coffee, I'd give you some other thoughts. Everything I read about Christ in the Gospel tells me that his love is wider than we can handle, and I don't understand why we're wasting so much time talking about something which seems irrelevant to the cause of salvation.

For Tom there is a clear discrepancy between what he understands the Gospel to say about the issues of gender, sex, and sexuality which, for him, are comfortably different from the Church of England's main narrative; they are not core doctrinal beliefs for him. In this case, he is uneasy but willing to preach on sexuality in line with the church's views but would share their own differing personal views with members of the congregation. The shared understandings amongst these participants that their views on sexuality, marriage, and same-gender partnerships are more in line with external, more progressive socio-cultural realities suggests that this ambiguous, incoherent, and undeveloped rhetoric puts

them in a difficult position even though they, on the whole, were positive about the impact of the *via media* on these issues.

These discourses which arise from the ambiguity of the *via media* are particularly prevalent in the rhetoric of some ordained participants. The ways in which complementarian rhetoric influences them is most stark in observations about the supposedly harmonising nature of boy and girl treble lines. For example, Max reflected on the ideas behind the choice to create a girl chorister line at their cathedral where the girl choristers are older than the boy choristers. He said that by doing so the cathedral were: “[...] trying to create two overlapping but *complementary* identities which are different, and it happens to be that one has landed with the boys and one of them has landed with the girls. Although they’re not particularly gendered, they are perhaps age dependent” (emphasis mine). By avoiding direct comparison between the girls and boys as a result of the difference in age, the participant’s understanding here (and that of the institution at which he works) relies indirectly upon the rhetoric of complementarity by not comparing the boys and girls directly. The way the participant tries to distance these ‘complementary identities’ from their gender and suggests that the allocation of duties ‘happens’ to prioritise boys over girls; it ‘happens’ to, assert a status quo in which the male is ‘norm’. For this participant, the understanding of complementary relationships is reflective of the subordinate role that women have played in the church, and the uncomfortable acknowledgement that this subservience is as a result of their gender and not because of skill, character trait, or other inherent quality (as will be discussed in Barrier Four). Justifying that the girls play a ‘different’ role at their cathedral but attesting that it is not solely as a result of their gender, perhaps unintentionally, undermines the uphill battle that women and girls do face within the cathedral as a result of their gender, and is deeply connected with understandings of both rhetorics of tradition (Barrier Two) and the complex erasure of femaleness and femininity (Barrier Three).

The move away from essentialist rhetoric is noticeable in the language of the participants in this study. This is particularly true of the female participants. For example, when I asked Hilary (a senior music leader) whether she thought

there were theological reasons which informed the introduction of women and girls at her cathedral, she reflected:

I like to think that I have my job because I'm the right person to have my job and I'm fairly certain that the reason that [they] appointed me was because of that reason – that they wanted me to do the job, not because there's a theological reason why my gender was important.

For this participant the push-back against there being a theological reason why they would have to be appointed or not appointed instead of it being based on their talent as an organist or choral leader is pervasive in the rhetoric of the musicians in the Church of England. The wider conversation about talent versus tokenism within which this push-back falls will be explored further in Barrier Four.

Almost half of my participants reflected on the socio-cultural move away from how and whether maleness or femaleness are inherently linked with skills, characteristics and attributes. Gender was not perceived to be relevant for the cathedral choir by Georgia (a Lay clerk), who for example, stated that in her opinion the cathedral choir has a genderless identity:

I almost think of the choir as being a stand in of angels singing which is sort of a genderless feeling... lots of the stuff that we're singing is almost a genderless narrator – it doesn't matter what gender you are so there's no reason why there should be different opportunities... I don't see the reasons.

This understanding is reflective of the impact of gender constructivism on participants and the ways in which the essence of male qualities and attributes of the cathedral choir have started to be diminished or dismantled by discourses outside of the church. Nevertheless, there is stronger evidence – as I will argue in Barrier Three – that anonymity (of which *genderlessness* seems to be a clear form) tends to equate to *androgyny*. The acknowledgement that the (mostly) former androcentric situation is not the way it inherently has to be – which results from the introduction of constructivist rhetoric therefore will allow women to cement their part of the tradition.

Participants were explicitly asked to explore their understanding of the ways in which the official rhetoric of the Church of England shapes their work. Answers to this question were diverse and included denials of the church having any impact at all (five people), compartmentalisation of personal viewpoints and professional

statements of understanding (three), as well as reflections upon the ways in which the Church is a unique (four), or not so unique (three) institution in terms of addressing gender imbalances. Ben reflected on the ramifications of support for women and girls from the Church as an entity, stating:

I think the support of it is critical so that any cathedral which decides to have female clergy or introduce musical provision for girls knows that they are not standing alone but that there is support for them in other similar and equivalent establishments, but also from the Church as a whole body.

All forty-two Anglican cathedrals in England are able to make their own decisions about gender diversity – their own hires for clergy and musical leadership, as well as for provision for girl choristers. Therefore, I argue, the institutional support for gender diversity in the official pronouncements contributes to a culture where individual cathedrals are not pioneering diversity but are instead able to follow cathedrals which have already taken steps in that direction (although some did have to be pioneers in the first instance). Yet, in every case, no individual cathedral is mandated by the Church of England to include women and girls in their cathedral music-making, or to foster a culture of diversity – these decisions are made by a set of individuals, based on their personal, but collective assurances surrounding gender, sex, and sexuality.

Tom understood that the institutional support from the Church of England is complicated by the role of the *via media*, however. He told me that “the cathedral looks like the established church and if the established church goes against our understanding of the Gospel then we have to try and explain the church which is problematical.” His response is an example of when the institutional church and individual theologies and socio-cultural theories are in direct conflict and the impact this has on the people, like him, working in the Church of England. The understanding that Tom has of his role to explain the views of the Church which he believes are ‘problematical’ is also representative of the ramifications, on an individual level, of an incoherent and ambiguous rhetoric when the individual (or group) has a clear belief on the issue at hand. I understand his use of “our” in this context to refer to anyone who is on the inside of the cathedral – staff, congregant, musician – anyone who feels a responsibility to align themselves with the views of

the Church, who therefore might also wish to distance themselves from institutional rhetoric which does not fit with their personal understanding.

This complexity which arises from the uniqueness of the Church of England, and of cathedrals – as a *positive* identity for the most part – is reflected, for example, in phrases such as “I don’t think it’s perfect, but I feel comfortable” (Owen, senior music leader) and “I don’t feel undermined or threatened in a way that I might have done once” (Wendy, Precentor). The words used by these two participants together recognise the current state of the church’s rhetoric on gender, sex, and sexuality. Acknowledging that whilst there is still room for progress, these participants report feeling at ease with the progress that has already been made, which I suggest is indicative of their liminal positions in this ‘middle way’. Whilst these two responses show an understanding of how the institutional culture of the Church of England has changed throughout the twenty-first century, they also exemplify – perhaps unintentionally – a subtle tactic of institutional silencing by which liberal views are allowed *only* when accompanied by concession or acknowledgement of how ‘far’ the church has come. I reason, therefore, that the participants understand the church’s enabling of exclusion as being in conflict with their daily work.

In this chapter, and in the ones that follow, all participants acknowledged that they could pick and choose which rhetoric to support and which they can wilfully overlook on a day-to-day basis. Sal was affected by constructivist rhetoric in her understanding that, “the human journey is one of self-discovery and discovery, we are understanding things about the God who is always ahead of us.” The institutional rhetoric does not inform her decisions so much as her understanding of God and the permeability of views on issues to do with gender, sex, and sexuality as a result. A disconnect exists here between the reality of cathedrals – and the people who are involved in their running – and the Church of England’s official rhetoric and style of compromise. I argue that this is as a result of the ambiguous nature of the *via media*. Even when my participants are not referring directly to the concept of ‘middle ways’, they are careful to suggest that being open to all does not only mean that voices which have been excluded in

the past are now being included, but that any voice can be included in these discussions, even if their beliefs undermine the identity of others within the Communion.

Some participants also acknowledged how the *via media* does enable, or has in the past enabled, exclusion. For example, a few participants explained that they have considered the Church to be enabling exclusion through the language used to describe humanity and God. One ordained participant noted that at their cathedral they use hymn books which use heavily androcentric language but that due to financial restrictions, they were unable to avoid this language being perpetuated. Tom also reflected on the nature of exclusivity, saying: “We have both helped and hindered it [increasing gender inclusivity] – the failed vote for women in the Episcopate was awful – that was a catastrophic thing for the Church to have done publicly.” Although he does not give any examples of how gender inclusivity has been aided, the emphasis that Tom has placed on the public nature of the Church of England’s decision-making is important in terms of the ways in which the changing rhetoric is presented to the outside world, to Christians who identify as LGBTQ+, and to women.

This thesis highlights the utmost importance of patterns in who gets to speak or have a voice; in what they get to vocalise in terms of their own personal beliefs; and when they are allowed to speak up when their beliefs are in opposition with the institutional rhetoric. How the participants in this study have navigated their own ‘middle way’ in their presentation of their personal and professional views has shone a light on the ambiguity which results from this rhetoric and from the avoidance of conclusive answers. I argue that it forces them into a tentative, peculiar place whereby they (particularly the women) are able to say they are happy with how far the Church has come but their approach to the *via media* is significantly more ambivalent than that of the documents, on the whole. While some feel that the toleration of conservatism is not something they can individually condone, there is a certain ambivalence in their responses which I suggest results from the institutional promotion and preservation of the *via media*. Although constructivist rhetoric gives a language to the changing

practices, and indeed can influence and change practice, this has not been seen in the Church so far. The *via media* clearly does enable some people to feel included, but it similarly confines everyone in the Church to the 'middle way' even if they personally hold more progressive (or to a lesser extent, conservative) views than the institutional credence. This disconnect results in an even more ambiguous and uncertain rhetoric and practice – especially in the problems it creates structurally – which has particularly grave consequences for gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making. It is possible (if not probable) that the historic, public, facilitation of exclusion within the Church of England will require an equally long and public enabling of inclusion to counteract it.

Barrier Two



‘An unbroken chain’: Discourses of Tradition in Cathedral Music

In the mid-twentieth century, Sydney Nicholson (founder of the Royal School of Church Music) described the role of choirboys in English music as follows:

Stretching back to the dim ages, before the time of the Norman Conquest, and extending right to the present day, he [‘the choirboy’] has behind him a practically continuous history: save for the brief period of the Commonwealth choirboys have been able to hand on the tradition of choral singing to one another in an unbroken chain extending over a thousand years; and this is no imaginary link, for it is well known by all who have to do with them that choirboys learn more of their craft from one another than they do from their choirmasters. (1943, p. 53)

Nicholson’s description of the history of the English chorister encapsulates the focus of this chapter, in which I analyse the way that notions of tradition have been deployed in the context of cathedral music-making — ultimately as a barrier to the integration of women and girls. Nicholson’s account of a ‘continuous history’ and an ‘unbroken’ chain which ‘stretch[es] back to the dim ages’ is representative of the languages of time and history which emerge when people evoke notions of tradition. A pattern or practice (i.e. the handing down of the craft from one chorister to the next) is legitimated and is given weight, by the passage of time. Nicholson’s insistence that there is ‘no imaginary link’ raises questions about the ‘claim’ of tradition versus the reality. As I will show, many who care for cathedral worship fervently hope for the protection and preservation of this ‘tradition’ and wish to ensure that the choristership has a future equal in length to its supposed past. This evocation of the past and the resultant synonymisation of ‘history’ and ‘tradition’ are vital to exposing the gender biases that are deeply encoded in the discourses surrounding choral singing.

Anthropologist Franz Boas asks: ‘How do we recognize the shackles that tradition has placed upon us? For if we can recognize them, we are also able to break them’ (1938, p. 202). Responding to Boas, Norman Fairclough advocates an ‘increas[ing] consciousness of language and power, and particularly of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others’ (2013, p. 3). Critical Discourse Analysis is one approach to the task of examining the rhetoric of a specific group with implicit and explicit power patterns in mind. In this

chapter, Fairclough's frameworks for analysing language and social structures underpin my exploration of the extent to which the discourse of tradition has kept women and girls out of cathedral music-making. Looking at the adjectives, verbs and syntax, and at who (re-)produces this rhetoric, and for whom, as well as how these discourses fit into the broader social context – following Fairclough's approach – is in line with my overall aims of this project. Fairclough argues that this approach has 'had much success in changing discourse and the power patterns in institutions' (Fairclough *et al.*, 2011, p. 373). I therefore use it as a method for unravelling the denial of opportunities for women and girls, on the grounds that this is necessary to preserve the 'traditional' sound and sight of communities of men and boys. By examining the discourse in this way, I shed light on how it acts as a barrier and promotes the perception that gender diversity is a threat to the continuity of a tradition which has a supposed heritage of over a thousand years.

My examination of how the language of tradition has created and sustained power relations (which are discussed in more detail in Barrier Four) is split broadly into four parts. The chapter principally focusses on singers but also draws on experiences and discourses with regards to organists, composers, and other leaders involved in cathedral music. Part I explores the confusion surrounding the multifaceted use of the term 'tradition' in theory. I look at the main characteristics of the rhetorics which underpin these discussions – surveying how tradition is (inaccurately) synonymised with history as perceived 'fact'; how it has been 'invented' (Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 1983); and study the concepts and languages of time that emerge when people discuss it. I also introduce some of the key reasons why people evoke tradition, including: authenticity, precedence and legitimation, authority, and threat and crisis. These evocations set up a compound case against gender diversity in cathedral music-making which will be explored later in this chapter (in Part IV). Before that, in Parts II and III, these concepts will be applied to understandings of tradition in the Christian Church and choral music-making respectively. Part IV then inspects how gender intersects and is indeed foundational to understandings of the cathedral 'tradition'. In this final part, I propose four paradigms which, I contend, best explain how women and girls have been

perceived to impact upon and integrate with the continuous history of choral music-making in England.

I refer to these paradigms as ‘creating a new tradition’, ‘supplementing the tradition’, ‘transforming the tradition’ and ‘sustaining the tradition’. These paradigms are indicative of the multi-layered influence that the discourse of tradition has had on the inclusion of women and girls. Inspecting it in this way will, I hope, encourage a reconsideration of the perception and place of women and girls in cathedral music-making. The role of perception is a key part of my discourse analysis because the assumptions made by key stakeholders (including members of the music team, clergy, congregations, and the choristers) directly impact the *reality* of the girl choristers’ existence in cathedral music-making. As Fairclough and Ruth Wodak claim: ‘every instance of language use makes it [sic] own small contribution to reproducing and/or transforming society and culture, including power relations’ (1997, p. 273). Therefore, acknowledging and understanding the way language is used to create and sustain imbalanced power relations in cathedral music-making can help practitioners and scholars alike to move away from overly narrow discursive representations of what is core to the identity of the English cathedral music-making ‘tradition’.

I. *Argumentum ad Antiquitatem*: Theories of Tradition

James Lewis and Olav Hammer assert:

In the dictionary sense of the word, tradition constitutes a set of inherited patterns of beliefs and practices that have been transmitted from generation to generation. In another sense, tradition can rest simply on the claim that certain cultural elements are rooted in the past. Claim and documented historical reality need not overlap. (2007, p. 1)

Lewis and Hammer note that tradition can often rest upon unfounded assertions, rather than facts; these contentions then influence what is passed down, and what is considered to be vital for preservation. The passage of time (in terms of beliefs surrounding what constitutes a ‘historical reality’) is embedded in arguments about tradition and thus problematises cases for renewal or transformation, as

these can be seen to clash with claims of the ‘historical’ constancy of the ‘tradition’. They can be viewed as divergent instead of parallel or indeed integral. Claims of tradition have been strongly associated with notions of historical constancy, or continuity, to justify the often-slow pace of change. The speed at which traditions change is reliant upon who passes on the core elements, and what they consider to be its fundamental cornerstones.

One facet of the discourses of tradition in many contexts is, as Lewis and Hammer contend, that it is treated as synonymous with words such as ‘historic’ or ‘ancient’ without regard to the strength or accuracy of the connection.⁶⁵ Edward Shils contends that ‘traditions are beliefs with a particular social structure; they are *consensus through time*’ (emphasis mine; 1971, p. 126). Shils understands that two things – consensus and the passage of time – are necessary to give a pattern of belief or practice the status of ‘tradition’ or ‘traditional’. It is because assertions involving tradition *do* contain historical claims that they are often confused with history itself. Shils’s addition of a further caveat – that the beliefs come with a social structure – indicates how deeply embedded the notion of tradition is in discourses which surround authentic belonging and community.

Ideas about authenticity are often core to arguments about tradition (as discussed by Huib Schippers, 2006; Elizabeth Outka, 2009; Caroline Lloyd and Friedmann Schaber, 2019). They are central, not just in terms of ensuring that the traditions themselves are authentic to their historical identity, but also that the continuity of the tradition should be authentically carried out (Outka, 2009). The focus on ‘unchanging’ and ‘invariant’ facets of an institutional past or the practices of a group has sometimes resulted in a reluctance to innovate (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983). Sherry Johnson, making a similar point to Shils’s claim about consensus, connects notions of authenticity with essentialism. She says: ‘the effect of equating authenticity with an uncritical presentation of “essential qualities” and “original context and purpose” is to make authenticity a

⁶⁵ Later in this chapter, I explore understandings of the cathedral music ‘tradition’ as one which is ‘timeless’, ‘ancient’, ‘dying’ (or ‘living’), ‘unbroken’, and ‘continuous’.

bounded concept, with no room for the flexibility or dynamic processes that constitute culture, and musical practice in particular’ (2000, p. 281). Whereas Shils’s account of consensus points us towards the possibility of a living tradition – with consensus being constantly negotiated as part of the life of a group – Johnson shows how the same notion is used to affect a silencing, fixed consensus, an inability to be open to change. As Johnson notes, the overarching use of the word ‘authenticity’ as a construction does not allow for room for movement away from a fixed, limited essence of something, or its original conception; and why and how words such as ‘authority’ and ‘tradition’ can give weight to a narrow understanding of a social structure, event, or practice.

The fetishisation of authenticity conceals a lack of dynamism which has real ramifications in diversity work. It stands against any supplementation or transformation of traditions, which can be presented as moving away from a tradition’s essential and original nature. Yet, there is a perception amongst those who wish to hold fast to a static understanding of a given tradition: if something is old then it is ‘traditional’; therefore, the new cannot be ‘traditional’ (Nicolas Michaud, 2018). Shils’s earlier notion of ‘consensus’ is pertinent here because it requires enough people to agree that there is some element of veracity to the claim – an agreement that the patterns of beliefs and practices are worthy of continuity *as they are*. Keith Negus and Michael Pickering argue, in the context of a discussion of the ‘inventedness’ of folk music (a concept I will return to below) that:

a critical understanding [...] requires understanding how music is bound up in complex relations between tradition and modernity, and micro- and macro-cultural worlds. If the rhetoric of “invention” conceals a more subtle process of institutionalisation and ritualisation and responds to it, we must recognise both the diverse interpretations possible within any tradition, and the phenomenon of cultural tradition in its pluralised manifestations [...]. (2004, p. 110)

For Negus and Pickering, the multi-faceted nature of tradition has deep roots in institutions. Some of these may be quite new in actuality, and indeed some of the core traditions associated with institutions can be traced back to people who are still alive today. As Lewis and Hammer indicate above, history and

tradition are not necessarily the same. However, the reliance upon the historical weight that certain traditions are perceived to hold has been used to give more ‘authenticity’ to certain parts of traditions. Exclusion from participation in a tradition can then be framed as a matter of the historicity of a practice with this being elided with language of ‘excellence’, ‘truth’ (‘being true to’), and ‘purity’. Thus, characteristics of a tradition (especially as pertain to their ‘quality’ or ‘excellence’), or how one preserves the ‘original’ (especially in terms of arguing for the persistence an ‘identical’ artefact or a timeless consensus), intertwine with concepts of what can be considered *authentically* traditional. Instead of allowing for a continuity, there is a need to maintain a status quo based on an understanding of how things used to be, which subsequently limits change (in any guise). These traditions can either be transformed by having new life breathed into them or be perceived to come under attack by any form of change, or indeed any addition, to the tradition. The more time that passes, the harder it is to argue that the patterns or beliefs are unfounded or to contest how long the beliefs or practices have existed for. Consensus does not have to involve everyone agreeing, but it does, by definition, require a general agreement (Kevin Vallier, 2011). If the common understanding is that ‘things have always been done this way’, then this version of events or beliefs gets passed on as a matter of procedure.

A core problem which I identify with the deployment of tradition in discourse, particularly in the way it is positioned as ‘fact’ (per Carl Friedrich, 1972), is the fixedness and stasis which result from a combination of the evocations above. In the introduction to *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric Hobsbawm claims that ‘all invented traditions, so far as possible use history as a legitimator of action and [to] cement group cohesion’ (1983, p. 12). What he intimates here is that concepts of tradition (as a synonym for historical truths) are utilised to mask the fact that each one had a starting point; every tradition was created, designed, and developed into its current form. The actions come first, and the language of tradition asserts the validity of the action thereafter. Every tradition undergoes reformation and its core aspects, ancient or modern, will over time have altered, to a greater or lesser extent (Richard Handler, Jocelyn Linnekin,

1984; Heather Morgan and Ruth Morris, 2011). What one hangs on to about a tradition, be it to do with gender / sex (Barbara Bagilhole, 2002; Vicki Howard, 2003), age and time (Henry Glassie, 1995; John Gillis, 2013), or location (Sigfried Giedion, 1967), for example, is, to a large extent *chosen* by the group engaged in the 'tradition' and can become more malleable over time.

Separate, new traditions, or supplementations of traditions often necessitate being part of or being attached to something which is much older. In this regard, I acknowledge that people use tradition as a way to evoke nostalgia about the former way of things or their own memories of being involved in the organisation or institution. Susan Stewart, for example, notes that 'nostalgia wears a distinctly utopian face, a face that turns toward a future-past, a past which has only ideological reality' (1993, p. 23). Tradition and nostalgia are closely linked. Nostalgia in this way functions to idealise the past, to cement it in the present, and thereby ensuring that the idealistic version of the beliefs and practices are passed down as unchangeable epitomisations of the institution in question. Jesse Freedman acknowledges this with regards to English history, saying: 'nostalgia functions not as a desire to reclaim the past – but rather, as a desire to reclaim those elements which contributed, slowly and deliberately, in both positive and negative ways, to what is now known as “the past”' (2005, p. 114). Central to scrutinising the variety of ingredients which are involved in inventing and preserving traditions, Freedman understands that as well as the positive customs which contribute to a tradition's formation, negative elements of said traditions are often just accepted as part of the process – no matter how problematic. Svetlana Boym similarly has argued the role of nostalgia, stating that 'the past is not made in the image of the present or seen as foreboding some present disaster; rather, the past opens up a multitude of potentialities, non-teleological possibilities of development' (2001, p. 16). This opening of potentialities suggests an explanation for why these discourses often emerge at a moment of self-consciousness (which could be either a societal crisis, or a specific threat to an institution). This might be due to political shifts or to alterations in laws or necessary changes which aid the preservation of the tradition by offering opportunities to people who would have 'traditionally' not been

considered authentic members of it; or it might be because of a defensiveness about why the tradition is exclusive and elusive. The threat which the Church of England faces as a result of increasing secularisation, and its often delayed or opposing positions to societal norms, especially regarding gender, sex, and sexuality have been covered in the previous chapter. Freedman's and Boym's claims signify how fundamental apposite and thorough understandings of the legacies of what Lewis and Hammer called 'historical reality' are in cementing fluid notions of tradition and for raising questions; and how nostalgia warps both institutional and personal memories of historic practices, events, and organisations. Understandings of the past need not limit considerations for the future.

II. Tradition and the Church

Many of the key facets of Christianity, including Biblical stories, and liturgical practices – in terms of their intersection with gender, sex, and sexuality⁶⁶ – become historical 'facts' handed down between Christians. This happens by means of the interpretation that practices and beliefs have supposedly been done in the same way for hundreds of years and therefore should continue to be done this way. These acts, rituals, or beliefs then are considered core because they are thought to have always been so. Jaroslav Pelikan has studied the way that Christianity has handed down its beliefs and practices in multiple works on the Christian tradition (1986; 2014). He argues that:

Repeatedly in Christian history, the defenders of a newly formulated orthodoxy have taken it upon themselves to require that their theological ancestors pass in review so that the changes brought on by the passage of time might be evaluated in the light of what was now being set forth as timeless truth. (2014, p. 24)

Pelikan provides a convincing argument that the appearance of being ancient and enduring is central to the presentation of both Christian faith and of God's authority. The evocation of a timeless precedent for theological 'truths' is

⁶⁶ As previously discussed in Barrier One.

important where one encounters innovations within, or debates about, tradition across Christian history. As suggested in Barrier One, the same-gender marriage debate in the Church of England is just one contemporary example of how this evocation functions. Frances Clemson has claimed that in recent Church documents about marriage there has been an association between the language of ‘tradition’ and what she calls ‘a pattern of sameness across time’. Clemson goes on to argue that this vocabulary ‘is not an accurate representation of the history of marriage’ within the Church (2016, p. 69). Likewise, in response to the contemporary Church’s presentation of marriage as fixed and static, which Clemson is contesting, Charlotte Methuen argues that Christians ‘always read scripture in a cultural context, and that context has caused Christian views on marriage to shift and change throughout the church’s history’ (2014, p. 151). In particular, Methuen argues that the current views on marriage are rooted in the nineteenth century, and therefore are not as deeply seated in the two-thousand-year-old religion as is often argued. The presentation of a timelessness of the views about marriage that still pervades the Church of England has also been explored by historians Helen King and Judith Maltby in a blog post about the most recent statement on marriage from the House of Bishops (published in 2020). They wrote:

We noted that the Statement presents the Church’s past as static, rather than dynamic, and uses phrases like ‘It has always been the position of the Church of England’. Yet, as historians, we are well aware of many significant changes in that position, from accepting, reluctantly, clerical heterosexual marriage to accepting contraception, to allowing the marriage in church of couples where one is divorced with a former partner still living. Some of these changes happened within our lifetimes: others go back to the Reformation. (King and Maltby, 2020)

King and Maltby conclude: ‘History never precisely “repeats itself” but we regretfully conclude that our bishops have shown a collective inability to learn from it’ (2020). It is clear that the Church has struggled with language around tradition in contemporary conversations about gender, sex, and sexuality, and has relied upon a vocabulary of immaculate historical precedents, whilst simultaneously denying the reality of the exceptions to those precedents. I argue that the rhetoric which is evident in the marriage debate is echoed in many of the

discussions surrounding gender in cathedral music, as Methuen has already suggested when she wrote: ‘Christian understandings both of marriage and of the role of women have frequently been – and continue to be – intertwined’ (2014, p. 153). As Methuen insinuates, Christianity has suffered from the dominance of patriarchal modes of thought and practice across much of its history. In the Christian Church, one ramification of this is that for centuries women have been involved but overlooked and underrepresented in historical and theological accounts of the Christian story. They have been written out of history. Rebecca Moore wrote extensively about this in *Women in Christian Traditions*, arguing that ‘this major world religion owes an enormous debt to its female followers. From the earliest disciples to the latest theologians, from the missionaries to the martyrs, women have kept the faith alive’, yet their contributions are often ‘forgotten or obscured’ (2015, p. 17 and 13). The acknowledgement of women’s roles in often androcentric Christian structures and practices paves the way for further understandings of how women can be recognised and supported in their work in the Church.

In the context of negotiating Biblical understandings in order to help recognise women’s roles in Christian life and history, Janet Soskice discusses Biblical authority in Christianity in terms of how it is passed down through generations. She claims: ‘tradition [...] is a given but it is not static – scriptures are always open to being reread or reperformed’ (2013, p. 28). Her understanding that Biblical traditions are not immobile, and that members of the Christian Church have throughout history been reassessing what is core – considering ‘what legitimately can be embraced and what must be rejected from surrounding culture’ – is a key framework for examining the Christian Church’s relationship with tradition in this study. Connected to Soskice’s understanding is Edward Shils’s argument that there are three (potentially overlapping) ways in which the term ‘traditional’ is commonly used:

to designate whole societies which change relatively slowly, or in which there is a widespread tendency to legitimate action by reference to their having occurred in the past or in which the social structure is a function of the fact that legitimations of authority tend to be traditional. (1971, p. 123)

Shils's acknowledgment that the term 'traditional' often refers to how societies (or as may be extrapolated, institutions) change slowly is pertinent to the discussions of the correlation between the social structure of institutions such as the Church and consensus about gender, sex, and sexuality. Applied to this context, the social structure highlights the complicated relationship that the Church has with the outside world, which is crucial to understanding the Church's relationship with tradition. The Church has both evoked constancy and consistency as itself a reason for resisting changes to its practice and has used vocabularies of tradition to justify the glacial pace of any change. In part, the Church moves at a slow rate because it has a complicated relationship with the outside world.

At the same time as cathedrals face a *unique* tension related to their religious character, they also face a *common* problem, shared with other big institutions. Georgina Born's studies of IRCAM (1995) and the BBC (2011) can be used to highlight the ways in which the problems faced by cathedrals in the contemporary Church of England are similar to those confronting other large-scale institutions. Born suggests a kind of paradox when she talks of a 'reproductive momentum of dominant cultural systems, but also their susceptibility to internal change and to transformation conditioned by external circumstances' (1995, p. 34). The 'reproductive momentum of dominant cultural systems' to which Born is referring can be seen in the continuation of essentialist and complementarian discourses within the contemporary Church of England. These discourses ensue from an internal culture still significantly shaped by patriarchy. Although it has been resistant to outside influences, the Church of England is susceptible – in the same way as institutions such as IRCAM, the BBC, and universities are – to being 'conditioned by external circumstances'. As the external rhetoric on gender, sex, and sexuality becomes more liberal outside of the church, the Church of England, like every institution around it, can listen to and be transformed by these new discourses.

Many institutions today have trouble with the ethics surrounding the practice of ‘no-platforming’,⁶⁷ freedom of speech and the ‘right to offend’. However, because of the way the Church of England’s legitimates particular principles as a result of the *via media*, all attitudes and beliefs are held in tension with one another as a vital part of the identity of the institution; all are platformed. The Church of England has a clear position on who has a voice i.e. on the right of conservative and Evangelical Anglicans to object to women’s ordination and to speak freely about their objections. And so, every voice is theoretically ‘platformed’, but some are allowed to speak louder than others. Mutual flourishing for instance (as discussed in Barrier One) does not allow someone to say that ‘x’ should not be appointed to a particular post because they disagree with the ordination of women.

Tradition has been invoked in the church because it has become a justifying framework for sustaining these institutions. Despite the Church’s desire to connect the supposed ancient and timeless history, traditions such as marriage, and indeed – as I will discuss in Part IV – the Church’s choral tradition are ever-changing. Increasingly, scholars who study theology and the Church as an institution have shown a movement towards seeing them as living and (positively) changeable. Yet the practice as regards the uptake for change is incredibly slow. One part of this is how the Church (and scholars) are beginning to address the fact that women have been erased from, or rather not written into, the history of the Church. The relevance of the Church in British society is ultimately based on how it chooses to interact with the supposedly external factors (which the Church will eventually have to contend with) because it, and the people who *are* the church, do(es) not exist in a microcosm. The church thereby struggles with its own complex identities which can be seen to be opposed to seemingly fixed, core orthodoxies.

⁶⁷ No-platforming is defined by Theresa O’Keefe as: ‘a decision to not provide a platform, that is, a stage or audience, to a particular set of ideas deemed to be harmful. It is most often used to refer to the rescinding of an invitation to speak at an organised event, typically within universities. No-platform is a form of protest, a tactic similar to boycotts, pickets, counter demonstrations and disruptions’ (2016, p. 86).

III. Tradition and Choral Music

David Coplan has argued that tradition pervades rhetoric in music-making, stating that it is ‘a core concept common to ethnology, folklore, and ethnomusicology, and its use has remained current and indispensable despite its inherent contradictions, doubtful empirical status, and ideological entanglements’ (1993, p. 36). Coplan’s analysis is borne out in the ways that western classical music-making invokes the terms ‘traditional’ and ‘historical’ to give the performance, style, instruments or voices a *gravitas* that they do not necessarily have in reality.

Whilst it remains a core concept for interrogation, attitudes towards the weight of tradition in musicology have been changing slowly too. Musicology has moved away from descriptions like the one offered by Richard Taruskin, for example in the early 1990s. He argued for allowing tradition to ‘have its way’ in the context of the cult of genius associated with Romantic era composers (1992, p. 324). Similarly, Gerald Abraham wrote about *The Tradition of Western Music*, stating that ‘in the normal course a healthy tradition simply draws into itself the foreign musician or the foreign elements, [...] and flows on enriched by them’ (1974, p. 17). Abraham’s understanding exemplifies how the idea of tradition has been used in music history, especially in terms of colonialisation and the British struggle with its great musical history.⁶⁸ More recently, though, theorists have noted that tradition has its own agenda in and of itself and should be readily questioned. This view is argued, for example, in Robert Walker’s *Music Education: Cultural Values, Social Change and Innovation* (2007) and by Catherine Strong and Sarah Raine in their 2019 book *Towards Gender Equality in the Music Industry*.

Although scholars working today, by and large, deal with tradition more sceptically, these residual attitudes still hold a lot of power outside the academy – where decisions about cathedral music are largely made. In this part I show how scholarship has moved away from the notion that tradition ‘simply’ ‘flows’; it is

⁶⁸ See for example, Nicholas Temperley (2019) and the contemporary conversations surrounding the ‘Last Night of the Proms’ in 2020 in the context of the #BlackLivesMatter movement (Caroline Davies, 2020).

instead a concept which is controlled by humans – an invented⁶⁹ set of beliefs with a social structure which has gained momentum and consensus through time and requires an active handing on of these beliefs. The credence that notions of an impersonal and unquestioned ‘tradition’ have given to ideas such as the Romantic genius of the composer, or to opinions on the way musicologists and performers conceive of instruments (and who should play them), has had a grave impact on the diversification of access to music-making.

In the context of theories of tradition in musicology and music-making in England, the understanding of choral music-making as *the* choral music tradition, is particularly intriguing. Salisbury Cathedral School (est. 1091) states on its website that it was founded to educate the cathedral choristers at Old Sarum and is thus ‘one of the oldest educational establishments in the world’ (*History of the School*, 2020). Despite the education of cathedral choristers since at least this time, the present day choristership (even if one only considers boy choristers) is, in fact, in many ways divergent from its earliest forms. Trevor Beeson has for example noted changes since the 1700s regarding the living conditions of choristers.

To begin, I will draw on Beeson’s work, amongst other studies, to trace briefly the dramatic changes within cathedral choirs in England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, showing how the ‘tradition’ of cathedral music-making has changed. Martin Thomas (2015, p. 5) states in his study of cathedral choirs that during the nineteenth century, they were ‘ill-disciplined and musically unreliable’, continuing: ‘Lay clerks, who were paid less than the domestic servants of the clergy, were often absent from weekday services and some were aged and incompetent possessors of freehold.’ Similarly, Beeson writes in *In Tuneful Accord* that: ‘[...] choristers were among the victims of the general malaise’ which affected cathedral life in its entirety during the early decades of the nineteenth century because they were unable to participate in services due to illness (2009, p. 103). However, the poor treatment of, and lack of

⁶⁹ I note again here the research by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) which suggests that invented does not necessarily mean ‘inauthentic’ or ‘insincere’ – it means that traditions are constructed by people rather than simply happening without an agent.

commitment from, Lay clerks was only the tip of the iceberg of the cathedral choirs' problems. In her 1938 exposé on the life of the choristers at Sarum Close (Salisbury Cathedral), Dora Robertson described the dire state of affairs, living conditions, education, and financing of the cathedral choir at Salisbury as they unfolded over a period of seven hundred years. Robertson's account is verified and supported by Philip Barrett who claimed that 'the art of English Cathedral Music was rescued from extinction and re-established' due to the professionalisation of the choirs, better chorister welfare and a 'great development of music and standards' (1974, p. 37). Barrett's understanding of the attempted re-establishment of the tradition during the Victorian period is a key example of the way that cathedral music-making is understood to be unbroken but enlivened. The nineteenth century was a period of rebirth for the cathedral tradition, which may be why there is such an attachment to music written during this time. The romanticisation of this period is indeed indicative of the ways that the nostalgia of tradition results in a perception that it has always been this way – and worked perfectly.

Whether the rescue which Barrett refers to equates to a break in tradition or a near break is unclear, yet the re-establishment has indubitably left it changed. The cathedral music-making tradition, however, need not be perfect in order to be preserved. As Barrett contends, 'no doubt to modern ears a cathedral choir of 75 years ago would seem very mediocre' (p. 37). Beeson also discusses how, through the efforts of advocates such as Maria Hackett, known affectionately as "the choristers' friend", the maltreatment of choristers lessened and changes in their care were arranged. Beeson remarked that by the second half of the twentieth century 'cathedral choristers flourished in ways that Maria Hackett could never have dreamt of' (2009, p. 110). He goes on to point out other changes which began to happen in the life of choristers by the mid twentieth century – not least radio broadcasts and recordings – which are now perceived to be a core part of the experience of being in a cathedral choir as well as key means by which the tradition is publicised and cemented as a national heritage. What is clear here is that the importance and status of the cathedral choir was not as evident in the nineteenth century in the same way it is now.

There have been considerable, necessary changes to the tradition which have ensured its longevity including the movement away from poor living and educational conditions for the choristers. In secondary literature, scholars such as Timothy Day show that since the 1970s the quality of the musical output of cathedral choirs has changed dramatically. He asserts that the commonplace decision in cathedrals now for the Director of Music to conduct most services, whilst the Assistant Director plays the organ 'in order to achieve the greatest possible accuracy and precision'. This has its origins in developments post-World War Two before which time the choir were not conducted by anyone (2000, p. 130). Similarly, the Dean of Truro (1982-1997), David Shearlock, raised his concern about the threat to the cathedral musical tradition which he believed included 'a gradual widening of congregational participation' in the singing of services, contributing to:

the danger that a cathedral could become indistinguishable from any other church if it fails to exploit properly one of the few things that makes it essentially different, namely its capacity for musical excellence, which to my mind is one of the fundamentals of that tradition which we are considering. (1996, pp. 19-20)

There is a clear spectrum on which cathedral music-making exists on which it can be seen as something in 'constant flux', as well as of a static practice unchanging for generations. Huib Schippers contends that 'a continuum from static tradition to tradition in "constant flux" would serve best to represent the diversity and nuances of contemporary musical realities' (2006, p. 336). Schippers rightly claims that it would not necessarily be possible to recreate a historically correct version of an entity like the cathedral choir, asserting: 'it is difficult to maintain that any art form exists merely to be reproduced in a historically correct manner, or in original context' (p. 337). His contention is supported by John Butt who, when talking about the 'inventedness' of performance culture, understands:

it is difficult to distinguish qualitatively between a tradition that is newly invented and one that appears to be continuous, without making claims for some mystical thread that validates the latter. It takes barely a single cycle of a generation to render any form of delivery seem [sic.] unmediated, unreflective or even 'natural'. (2002, p. 12)

It is notable how Shearlock positions excellence as ‘fundamental’ when others have shown this was not the case as recently as 150 years ago. Indeed, even a brief examination of this history indicates that the strong correlation between excellence and tradition does not extend back as far as key advocates of a static, narrow (all-male) tradition would claim – as I will discuss below. For Shearlock, the ‘tradition’ of cathedral music-making is inextricably tied to Butt’s ‘mystical quality’. This connects with the second part of Butt’s statement – regarding how long something takes to become part of a tradition; ‘a single cycle of a generation’. Just as broadcasting and recording has become a key part of the choristership in a way which was unprecedented, it is not unreasonable that other modifications to the tradition have taken hold in at least some places – not least changes to gendered understandings of the tradition, which will be explored in more detail later. The idea that cathedral worship is set apart from the rest of the Church of England in terms of the music-making that it offers is of utmost importance. Retaining Shearlock’s understanding of the ‘capacity for musical excellence’ and the question of whether and how cathedral music-making is *perceived* (by those who work within cathedral music and those who fiercely advocate for a somewhat static understanding of it) to be distinctively excellent will be imperative to my discussion of what the essence of the cathedral choir is in Part IV.

One key indicator which is commonly bound up with this capacity is the wealth of repertoire for choir (and organ) which has been written over time primarily for singers within the cathedral music-making ‘tradition’. As Hugh Sanders claims, it was at the beginning of the twentieth century that ‘English choral composers seemed to establish a tradition of grandeur and *excellence* that has been given prominence and constant attention throughout the continuing English choral tradition’ (emphasis mine; 1977, p. 24). Martin Thomas agrees, noting that ‘a stylistic norm’ in English cathedral repertoire during the twentieth century was established and ‘led to its becoming not simply archaic in style but a recognisable and separate stylistic genre’ and goes on to claim that ‘this genre was sustained in some music written for cathedrals through to the end of the [twentieth] century and beyond’ (2015, p. 21). John

Butt discusses the way that composers wrote music to fit with the context of the choral tradition: ‘originality was neither sanctioned nor proscribed and composers could mix elements from a number of ages or styles or sometimes follow in the footsteps of a particular composer [...]’ (2002, p. 224). Butt here mentions the influence of Mozart on Thomas Attwood and the impact that Mendelssohn’s works had on S. S. Wesley.

Cathedral music leaders, by and large, choose new compositions especially designed for the specific needs of a cathedral choir, much of which is stylistically beholden to ‘older’ voices like Mozart and Mendelssohn. The choice of whose music gets performed is not then down to how *old* it is, but to how closely it is woven into the tradition. As I will show, they are not drawing on works of whoever just happens to be an excellent composer, but generally of their ‘own people’. The continuity of the cathedral style, established by English composers from the early twentieth century onwards, is evident in my examination of two weeks of service schedules ⁷⁰ (from 18 November – 2 December 2018) at four cathedrals.⁷¹ The canon of music which dominates cathedral music lists was written by composers who often had a close affiliation with cathedrals – many of them held (or currently hold) positions of musical authority in the cathedrals themselves. Of the one hundred and four composers who feature across this period, a number of them have a significant presence in the repertoire. Forty names feature at least twice (38%) including thirty-seven who have their works performed in at least two cathedrals (36%). A fifth of the one hundred and four composers (twenty-one in total) had their works performed three times or more. Five of the composers have at least one of their works performed at each of the cathedrals and a further six have had at least one work performed in three of the cathedrals during this period. Nine have their works performed six times or more and two of the composers (William Byrd and Charles Villiers

⁷⁰ *Service Schedules* are available on the websites of each cathedral. These documents include the days, dates, times and locations of services, the music that will feature, and other notable information including who will be preaching, if there is a visiting choir (or if lower voices, boys or girls are singing in some cathedrals).

⁷¹ Canterbury, Durham, Lincoln, and Salisbury Cathedrals were chosen as a representative cross-section of the eight variables which influenced the ten case study choices in this thesis (as introduced in Part II of my Methods.

Stanford) have their works performed in excess of ten times each across the four cathedrals in this two-week period.

Twenty-six of the forty composers (65%) had or have affiliations with a British cathedral and / or were an Oxford or Cambridge College Organist; a further three were affiliated with a cathedral outside of Britain in some way. Most of them held the Director of Music position at some point throughout history including three separate former Directors of Music at York Minster: Edward Bairstow (featured five times), Richard Shephard (four times), and Philip Moore (seven times). William Byrd (featured twelve times) and John Reading (six times) both held the position of Master of Choristers at Lincoln Cathedral.

Just under three-quarters of the forty composers are English, or Welsh (twenty-nine in total), and one was Irish. Nine of the forty composers who have had their work featured at least twice during this period of analysis are still living, accounting for nearly a quarter of the composers. This number includes David Halls (current Director of Music at Salisbury) whose own work featured twice during this period. Indeed, some of the musical leaders who I interviewed highlighted that they perform their own works and write works for their own needs at their cathedral. The insularity of the music-making in cathedrals (both historic and in terms of living composers) is indicative of the lack of prestige that writing cathedral music has outside of this community. Further to that, because of the nature of the insularity, these composers are writing specifically for their own cathedrals – they know exactly what is needed and what their choir and organist(s) are capable of. Another contributing factor might be that the specificity of the liturgy requires insider knowledge.

Finally, William Byrd (whose repertoire featured twelve times in my two-week analysis) is an excellent example of the interweaving of tradition and music-making with regards to historically informed practice. Staying ‘true’ to the approach, manner, and style of the period in which the music was written is a common discussion had amongst music leaders and is reflected in the views of the participants in this study. Jeffrey (a senior music leader) commented on

William Byrd's role at Lincoln Cathedral and claimed that the repertoire of both the boys and girls reflected this historical fact. He also claimed that "music which works well in this building [Lincoln Cathedral] is often fairly epic music"; quoting the use of three stops on the organ for Byrd's *Second Service* implies that the 'epic' nature of the music relates more to its perceived quality or excellence. Likewise, Robert (a music director) acknowledged that the role of some of his predecessors as "recognised, published composers" whose repertoire is "clearly part of the Anglican tradition" affected how he thought of his own role, and the music that is right for the building and choir he is working with. His predecessors also happened to write music that was appropriate for the choir *in that space* because of their intimate knowledge of cathedral music in that location – the organ, the acoustics and the ability and aptitude of the choristers.

| Breakdown of 104 composers | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Fact | # of composers |
| Work performed two or more times | 40 |
| Are British or Irish | 30 |
| Work performed three or more times | 21 |
| Work performed at least once at three of the four cathedrals | 11 |
| Work performed six times or more | 9 |
| Are still alive | 9 |
| Work performed at least once at each of the four cathedrals | 5 |
| Do not have an affiliation with a cathedral | 5 |
| Work performed more than ten times | 2 |

Table 5 – Composers

This repertoire and the stronghold that (mostly) nineteenth-century British, white, male composers continue to have in cathedral music-making is indicative of the tension inherent in the movement towards sustaining a tradition which is perceived to stretch back hundreds of years but also is malleable to change, whether that be in terms of including women and non-binary, non-British, (or) contemporary composers with the same regularity and enthusiasm as William Byrd or C.V. Stanford. Furthermore, there are manifold examples of how the language used by the participants in this study, and in the promotional material associated with cathedral music is focused on tradition. Much of this language helps to mitigate any changes in attitudes towards the supremacy of the above repertoire choices. I will use this material

now to argue that individual cathedrals struggle with asserting the influence of music-making without relying on Butt’s earlier attestation of a ‘mystical thread’. In Figure 1 and Table 6,⁷² I include information gathered from the websites of the Anglican cathedrals in England in September 2019 to show how influential the word ‘tradition’ and its other connotations (established in Part I) are for each cathedral choir.

As you can see, almost half of the cathedrals (twenty out of forty-two) claim on their respective websites that their musical life has been happening ‘for hundreds of years’; twelve cathedrals use the word ‘tradition’ explicitly; and a further five use the terms ‘historic’ or ‘ancient’ to describe their music-making. York Minster makes reference to the English Choral Tradition, while Winchester write about the uniqueness of the musical tradition; Exeter, Truro and Norwich claim their tradition to be ‘unbroken’; and St Albans, St Edmundsbury and Worcester claim that it is part of a ‘continuing’ or ‘living’ tradition.

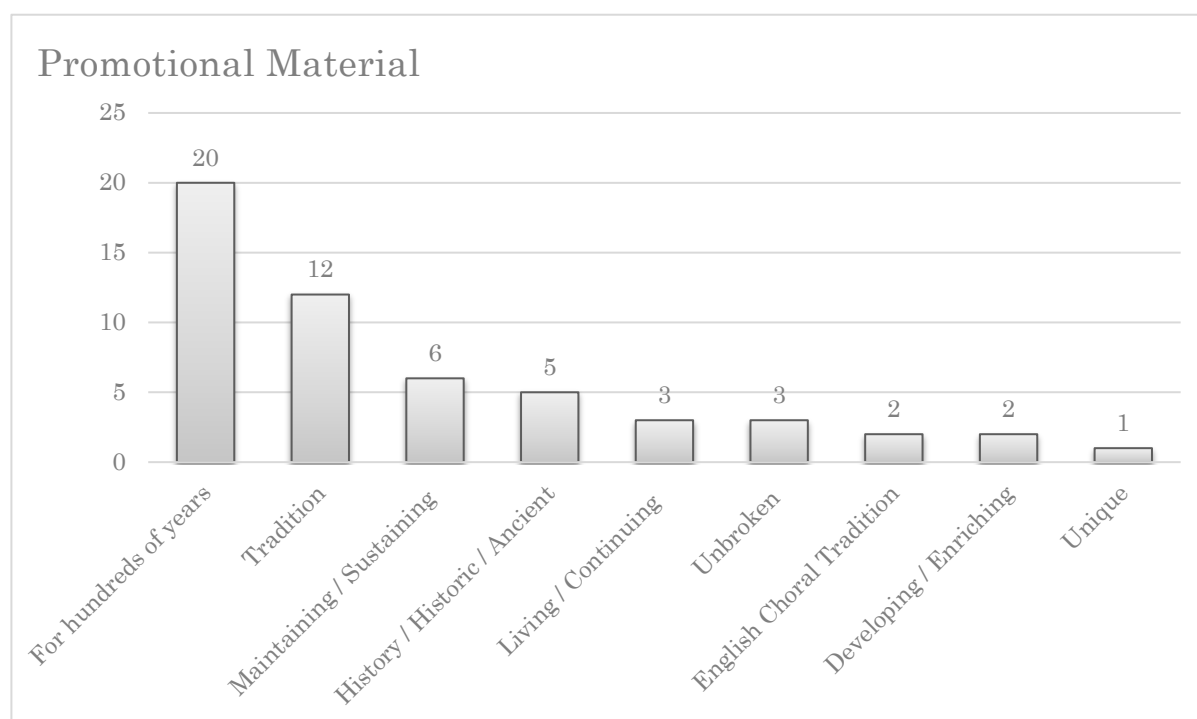


Figure 1 – Promotional Material

⁷² Data for this Figure can be found in Appendix D.

As you can see from Table 6 (with case study cathedrals in italics), each of the forty-two Anglican cathedrals in England readily employ discourses of tradition. It is worth considering the link between the official rhetoric above and the espousing of notions of tradition as central facets of the cathedral choir's identity reflected in the participants' responses (see Figure 2). The official rhetoric at twelve cathedrals including Durham, Ely, and Guildford mentions tradition as a generic term, treating it as synonymous with history.

| Cathedral Usage of Terms | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|----|
| For Hundreds of Years | Bristol; <i>Canterbury</i> ; Chester; Coventry; <i>Durham</i> ; Gloucester; Hereford; Leicester; <i>Lincoln</i> ; Norwich; Oxford, Christ Church; <i>Peterborough</i> ; Ripon; <i>St Albans</i> ; St Edmundsbury; Southwell; Wells; Winchester; Worcester; <i>York</i> | 20 |
| Tradition | Birmingham; Chelmsford; Chester; <i>Durham</i> ; <i>Ely</i> ; <i>Guildford</i> ; Oxford, Christ Church; London, St Paul's; Southwark; Truro; Wakefield; Winchester | 12 |
| Maintaining / Sustaining | Chelmsford; Exeter; Hereford; Lichfield; Ripon; Worcester | 6 |
| History / Historic / Ancient | Exeter; Portsmouth; Rochester; <i>St Albans</i> ; Winchester | 5 |
| Living / Continuing | <i>St Albans</i> , St Edmundsbury; <i>York</i> | 3 |
| Unbroken | Exeter; Norwich; Truro | 3 |
| Unique | Wells | 1 |

Table 6 – Cathedral Terminologies of Tradition

All of my interview participants make reference to tradition in some way and five used it as a synonym for history. For example, referring to it as a “long tradition” (three participants) or one of the ordained participants' reflection that “there are still only half a dozen female Precentors because it hasn't *traditionally* been a field that we're encouraged to look at” (Wendy; emphasis mine). Canterbury, Durham, Peterborough, St Albans, and York (half of my case study cathedrals) use ‘for hundreds of years’ to describe their choral practice on their websites. Similarly, seven participants, including one each from three of the above cathedrals made reference to the longevity of the practice. Specific mention of the ‘English Choral Tradition’ is only apparent in

the discourse of York Minster’s promotional material, as well as by one of the participants from York Minster, Robert. The term was also used in my interviews by Tom (one of the ordained participants). Although the relationship between official and participant rhetoric is complex, it is perhaps unsurprising that none of the participants used the notion of an ‘unbroken’ tradition when only three cathedrals (none of which were included in my case study) use it in their official pronouncements. Although there is some crossover between the institutional and personal rhetoric used to describe tradition, this repetition could be incidental.

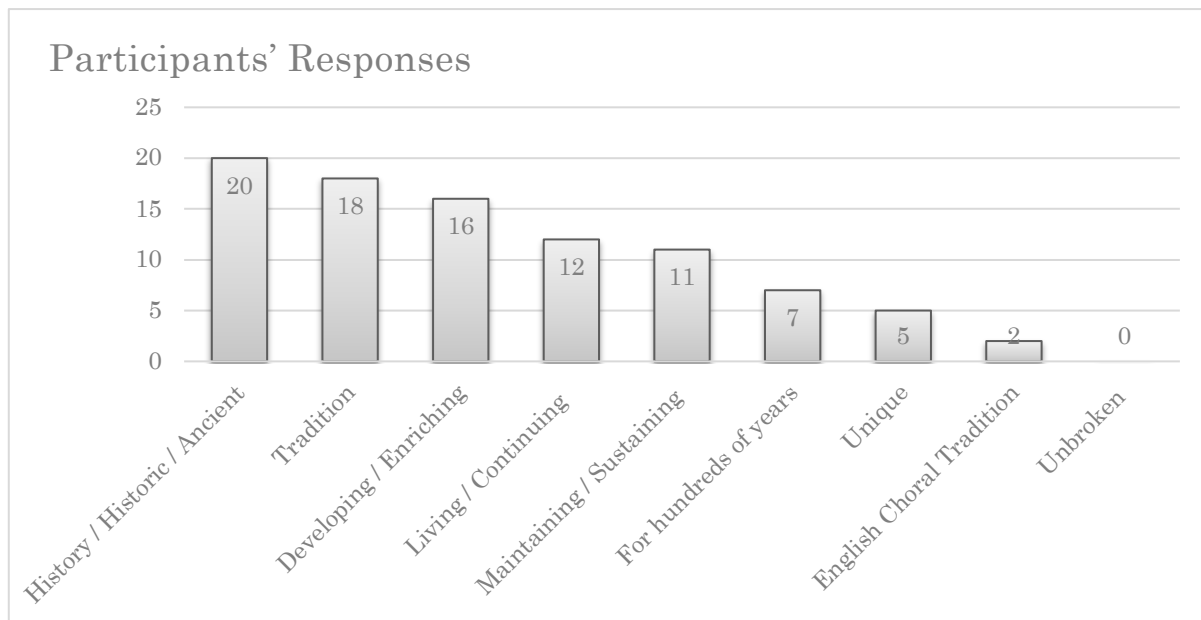


Figure 2 – Participants Terminologies of Tradition

Nonetheless, I suggest that this language is self-consciously allowing for change, and therefore both defending cathedral music against both those who say it is dead or irrelevant, and those who merely seek to preserve it in its past form. The fixity of the tradition from which this authenticity question arises also links to another common understanding amongst the participants: that the tradition is ‘alive’. One of the clearest ways in which aspects of tradition (such as the supposed connection with ‘quality’) have been maintained in both the official and personal discourses surrounding cathedral musical traditions is in descriptions

of the tradition being ‘alive’ or ‘living’, and conversely ‘dying’ (evoking once more a sense of threat). Twelve participants use the idea of a living or continuing tradition even though only St Albans and York use it in their official, institutional rhetoric. In my interviews, the concept of a tradition as being alive appeared to be deliberately evoked in order to show their understanding of cathedral music-making as something which is not static or frozen in time, but instead changing and evolving. This could be a positive account of tradition which cathedrals could build on in terms of thinking about greater inclusion and strengthening the participation of women and girls. However, the notion of a ‘living’ tradition has been deployed differently in the rhetoric surrounding cathedral music-making. For example, the current purposes of Friends of Cathedral Music (FCM, 2019) include ‘to sustain our priceless heritage of cathedral music and support a living tradition’. FCM’s desire to ‘sustain’ cathedral music connects to how Jaroslav Pelikan distinguishes the notion of a living tradition by its ‘capacity to develop while still maintaining its identity and continuity’ (1986, p. 58). By asserting that the cathedral tradition is ‘living’, the Friends of Cathedral Music are therefore asserting that the tradition can hold progress and development in balance with continuity and the maintenance of the choir’s historic identity.

Yet, as I will show in the final part of this chapter, there is still resistance to change, which manifests as stasis, particularly as is related to the maleness of the tradition. The CTCC or Campaign for the Traditional Cathedral Choir was formed in 1996 in response to their understanding that there was a decline in all-male cathedral choirs. They have argued for the continuity of an all-male tradition of music-making in cathedrals and suggest that the inclusion of girls and women negatively impacts on boys and men in this arena. They laid out their purposes on their website⁷³ as follows: ‘to champion the ancient tradition of the all-male choirs in Cathedrals, Chapels Royal, Collegiate Churches, University Chapels and similar ecclesiastical

⁷³ Their website has since been archived.

foundations. It is also the policy of CTCC to encourage parish churches which maintain, or seek to establish, all-male choirs' (CTCC, 2019).

Nearly every participant spoke of the cathedral music-making tradition as being 'alive' or 'not dead', which in turn gives cathedral music-making an identity which is narrow and purportedly immovable because of the way that emphasis is placed *more* on the risk of dying than on the possibility of living.⁷⁴ Wendy said: "it's not a dead tradition and it is not owned by any one section of the community. All of which will help with its survival." Since it is unclear what is meant precisely by the tradition being 'alive', consideration should be given to the question: in what state might the tradition be considered 'dead'? The communication of what is important with regards to the cathedral music-making tradition and the connection between the clergy who have general oversight of the liturgy and the Organist / Director of Music would be vital in her understanding. Any attachment to this idea of a living tradition feeds into a fear summarised by Rachel (senior music leader) who said: "once you've lost this tradition [of music in churches], it's going to be really hard to get it back". Rachel's understanding is indicative of the general, but not unsurprising, consensus amongst the participants in my study regarding how imperative the continuity of music-making in cathedrals is. Rachel's statement could also be interpreted as an expression of an apprehension that the niche role that cathedral choirs play in the broader classical music-making domain could mean that it would not be re-established in a fully secularised society if the current 'tradition' were to cease to exist. It therefore appears that the concept of a 'living' tradition is a response to the fear of death, and not merely an attack on the idea that cathedral music-making is static and dull. The defensiveness of the rhetoric of a 'living tradition' runs in tandem with the changing role of the cathedral within the community, as well as changing priorities within the country as a whole as regards funding cuts to the arts.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ The personification of the tradition is discussed further in Barrier Three in terms of bodily attributions such as 'heartbeat' to the choir and worship.

⁷⁵ See, for example, the Report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education, the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the University of Sussex (2019) as well as news reports on the impact of Brexit on the arts such as 'Arts in England to lose £40m funding per year from Brexit' by Georgia Snow (2018).

The participants showed great concern for the cathedral music tradition dying out. One of the music directors, Nina, for example, told me: “I think it will be challenged more and more and I think it will need to fight for its survival more and more.” Since at least the second decade of the twenty-first century, concerns such as Nina’s have centred around the same issues presented as brand-new problems: the financial costs of maintaining the cathedral choir and the not unrelated decline of choir schools, the move away from chorister schools educating all choristers, or the availability of chorister boarding opportunities. These concerns have been covered by conductor and musicologist, Peter Phillips, who commented on the changing size and duties of cathedral choirs and the rise of cathedrals without choir schools since at least the 1970s. His concerns are in tandem with the threat of evangelicals challenging worship style, as well as its cost and the financial problems of cathedrals more broadly mentioned already in Part II. I have already mentioned the quality of the cathedral music-making tradition and the changes that it underwent due to the efforts of advocates for better working and learning conditions for the cathedral musicians, and this quality is now bound up in terminologies of tradition to hold it as core to cathedral music-making. It is worth noting Day’s understanding that any connection to the cathedral choir’s supposed ‘eternal changelessness’ with regards the style of cathedral music which is ‘part of a constellation of values’ ‘illustrate[s] only the fleetingness and impermanence of all things earthly’ (2000, p. 132). Day’s comment stands in slight resistance to FCM’s focus on ‘heritage’ and ‘tradition’, as his argument that the cathedral choir in any iteration has a sense of fleetingness and impermanence is a detail which those who seek to preserve the tradition are uncomfortable admitting. These elements do not mean that the cathedral tradition is ‘dying’ or might die (as participants including Wendy, Rachel, and Katherine show concern for), it means that it is not fixed to one specific understanding – if Lay clerks stop turning up, and the numbers of boys dwindle, the result would be a new iteration of the tradition.

Katherine, who is a music director at a relatively new cathedral (built in the twentieth century), reflected on the living tradition that is new and varying

but is also part of a tradition extending further back than the creation of the cathedral. She said:

All five cathedral organists are alive and many of the original choir members are alive; so, *its history is fresh and young and it's a changing history* but it's a remarkable success story... and the building and the choir really grew together hand in hand in terms of offering worship in the *timeless monastic tradition*, if you like, and that continues to this day in the sense that the choir is enormously valued and appreciated and much loved and cherished. (emphasis mine)

Here Katherine interestingly combines two converse discourses of tradition – that it is founded upon a timeless monasticism, but is also ‘fresh’, ‘young’ and ‘changing’. These seemingly disjointed understandings are indicative of the complex narrative which surrounds tradition in cathedral music-making. For her, the preservation of a tradition, which is alive but subject to change, reflects the idea that the individual cathedrals have their own understanding of where they fit into the tradition and therefore where the cathedral choir (whether that be of girls and boys or just boys) fits into the puzzle of this supposedly timeless tradition.

The final consideration in the context of timelessness or evocations of eternal precedent is the notion of invented traditions which Hobsbawm and Ranger have written about persuasively. In their work on the topic, they even make reference to the role of radio in promoting a timelessness of events such as the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in King's College, Cambridge (1983, p. 1). Despite having only been transmitted via radio since 1928, ten years after the first service was held in the chapel, I argue that events such as the *Nine Lessons* at King's are legitimated by an understanding that the tradition stems back hundreds of years even though this is not at all the case. Traditions such as *Carols from King's*, are given authority and legitimacy by their equation with the perception from the average viewer or listener that it is an ‘old’ and ‘ancient’ tradition due to the (false) consensus through time that the choir at King's College, Cambridge has sung in the iconic building since the chapel was finished in the fifteenth century.

The ‘incidental’ implications of certain functions or acts become core and therefore intrinsic to its longevity and perpetuation. On their website, it is stated that having been ‘founded in the fifteenth century, The Choir of King’s College, Cambridge is undoubtedly one of the world’s best known choral groups’ (*The Choir*, 2020). The historical fact that the choir has sang in the chapel for approximately five hundred years can then be equated, by the average person, with the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, despite there being around four hundred years of the King’s Chapel Choir for whom this tradition of singing *Nine Lessons* in the chapel did not exist. Nevertheless, this rhetoric which attributes a centuries-old precedent is often employed by the cathedrals themselves and by groups such as FCM, CTCC and on the website of Association of English Cathedrals in an attempt to steep the music-making in a pattern of a great history in order to augment its significance; for example, when the Association of English Cathedrals described ‘a tradition that can transform young people’s lives’ as ‘Britain’s 1,000 year old choral tradition’ (*The Choir of Choirs*, 2019).

In addition, and running parallel, to this rhetoric of ‘eternal changelessness’ are the many other patterns of time involved in the running of a cathedral choir. These patterns include: the swathe of Christian history, through the experience of change and continuity over the years (as above), the yearly liturgical rhythm including the introduction and departure of choristers as well as Choral and Organ Scholars right down to the daily rhythm of the service pattern and indeed the single beats involved in the music-making itself. All of these variations of time playing out in the cathedral intersect in a way that, in practice, affects the nature of the tradition and how it is simultaneously a tradition which is playing out beat by beat as well as in the extremely broad historical context. The collective forgetting the multitude of ways that the tradition plays out, as above, has contributed to what I describe throughout this thesis as a fixed understanding of the cathedral music-making tradition. One of the music directors, Daniel, commented on his understanding that the tradition is: “Based around the routine, the operation renews each academic year” and the “choir reinvents itself every single year – history plays out in front of me in real time very, very fast”,

highlighting the fact that although the tradition of music-making in cathedrals is part of a continuous tradition, it is subject to renewal each year. This position undermines the reluctance to admit women and girls to the tradition because of an unfounded (and indeed, rebutted) claim that the tradition has been unchanged since the medieval times. This rebuttal will be discussed in the context of gender in the next part.

So far in my examination of the choral ‘tradition’, I have shown how there is a slow movement away from the rhetoric that ‘things have always been this way’ in terms of what is essential to the identity of choral music-making. Notions of excellence and quality, as well as a strict attachment to the long historic precedent for doing choral music, are essential to discussions about the tradition and how to maintain it. Nowadays these perceptions are being pushed back against and scholarship has begun to shed light on how the choral music-making tradition has been continually re-established during its long history as well as how necessary changes were considered and implemented in order to ensure its survival. The strong reorientation toward excellence and quality underlie much of the conversation surrounding tradition and choral music-making and this can be seen in both institutional and personal rhetoric on the subject. What we also begin to see, however, are the places in which these institutional and personal rhetorics begin to fracture and push back against one another. I have shown in this part that there is continuity across hundreds of years, but not as much as is claimed; there is some response to external changes, but not as much as there might be. So, what impact do all of these understandings have on the navigation of gender diversity and inclusion in the cathedral ‘tradition’?

IV. The Cathedral Tradition and Gender: Four Paradigms

There are four major paradigms which I argue best characterise the current discussions within cathedral music-making about the place of women and girls in relation to ‘the tradition’. These paradigms are an extension of two understandings outlined by Wendy Kerslake in her 1999 article on the

introduction of girls into cathedral choirs. Here Kerslake considered that the introduction of girl choristers could be understood as either a 'new' mode or as having a 'transformational' impact. I take Kerslake's two understandings forward, but in addition argue that there are two other ways in which the introduction of girls (and women) has been viewed. Overall, I suggest that girls and women are perceived and can be understood to: (1) create a *new* tradition; (2) *supplement* the all-male tradition; (3) *transform* the tradition; and/or (4) *sustain* the tradition. To a certain extent the paradigms are ambivalent in their nature in terms of their often-contradictory results in practice. The paradigms are also overlapping and coexist in almost every institution studied in this project. Depending on the practice of, and/or reasons given by, specific individuals and groups for holding to a certain understanding, the paradigms can be indicative of the tension between institutional and personal beliefs. Across the four paradigms, these assumptions affect not only the child choristers but also adult singers, composers and other adult musicians; although, for the most part the examples I refer to will concentrate on the children.

The first three paradigms are characterised by a kind of antagonism (either overt or covert). Within the operation of these paradigms there is either an 'othering' of girls and women or an emphasis on the 'sameness' of the two sets of choristers. Whilst the latter would appear unproblematic, I will show in actuality that this is not the case. Fundamental to these three paradigms is the assumption that the tradition (because of the way maleness is positioned as so vital to its integrity) undergoes a negative change or is threatened by girls' inclusion. These paradigms draw on a (usually) narrow notion of quality or excellence, particularly as pertains to the sound of the choir, and a nostalgic attachment to the 'ancient' or 'historic' nature of the Cathedral Choir. The fourth paradigm is the only one which seeks to decentre the gender of the musicians from the integrity of the tradition (although this decentring, as we will see, could be more passive than active).

Throughout this part, I will investigate the extent to which the gender of the musicians is considered by those in leadership as well as in the congregation

when it comes to tradition, and how this awareness of gender is crucial to the implication that the *essence* of the tradition is an all-male identity. I argue that whether the focus is on what the boys lose, or what the girls bring, significantly affects the narrative. If the focus is on the protection of the boys, then the girls are perceived to be in some sense a threat to them. Whilst the pre-occupation with cathedral music being under threat is not something which exclusively falls at the feet of girl choristers, the concept is central to the entire discussion surrounding their inclusion. In the statistics produced by the Church of England, it was reported that ‘there were similar numbers of boy and girl choristers (740) in 2018 whereas in 2008 there were 100 more boy choristers than girl choristers’ (2019, p. 22). It is worth noting here, that since 2008 no fewer than seven new girl chorister lines, with opportunities for around eighteen girls each, have been created. The gap therefore has not necessarily been bridged by one hundred boys leaving choral music, but by around one hundred and twenty-five girls being given the opportunity to transform the tradition. That is to say, boys are *not* leaving, whilst girls *are* joining; the girls do not directly replace the boys.⁷⁶

I will make reference not only to how the participants in my interviews and various campaign groups within Church music view girls’ inclusion, but also to the varying organisational structures at my ten case study cathedrals. These structures paint a picture of each cathedral’s ethos with regards to diversifying cathedral music. It is important to remember at this juncture that each cathedral in my study now has both girl and boy choristers involved to some extent, although I will on occasion refer to literature and interviews which mention cathedrals which do not offer provision for girl choristers.

In practice, the four paradigms are underpinned by decisions surrounding the nomenclature assigned to the singers, their age, who the choristers are led by, repertoire choices and opportunities for leadership (including solos), and how the choristers are financed and educated. It is worth addressing the question of nomenclature briefly here in advance of my analysis of the four paradigms.

⁷⁶ There are limitations to this evidence as each cathedral will have a different experience with their chorister uptake – which will have factors beyond the gender of the choristers.

Since the introduction of girl choristers at English cathedrals from 1991, there have been a variety of subtle differences in the nomenclature used to indicate what role the choristers are playing in cathedral music-making (see Figure 3). At twenty-five cathedrals the choristers are referred to as either the boy or girl choristers; at four cathedrals there is no differentiation based on gender in the promotional literature.⁷⁷ The supposition in most cathedrals is that the easiest way to split the choirs when they are together is to base it on gender (e.g., boy choristers to the left and girl choristers to the right). The majority of cathedrals use non-gendered titles to describe their back row (as is evident from individual websites). Twelve cathedrals refer explicitly to the ‘gentlemen’ or ‘men’ of the cathedral choir (even when there are women singing in the cathedral). In addition, Leicester and York Minster use the title of ‘Songmen’. Only one cathedral, Chelmsford, calls their back row ‘the women and men’, while a further three chose to use the term ‘adults’. See Figure 3 for a graphical representation of the back-row nomenclature of the choirs at the forty-two cathedrals in England.⁷⁸

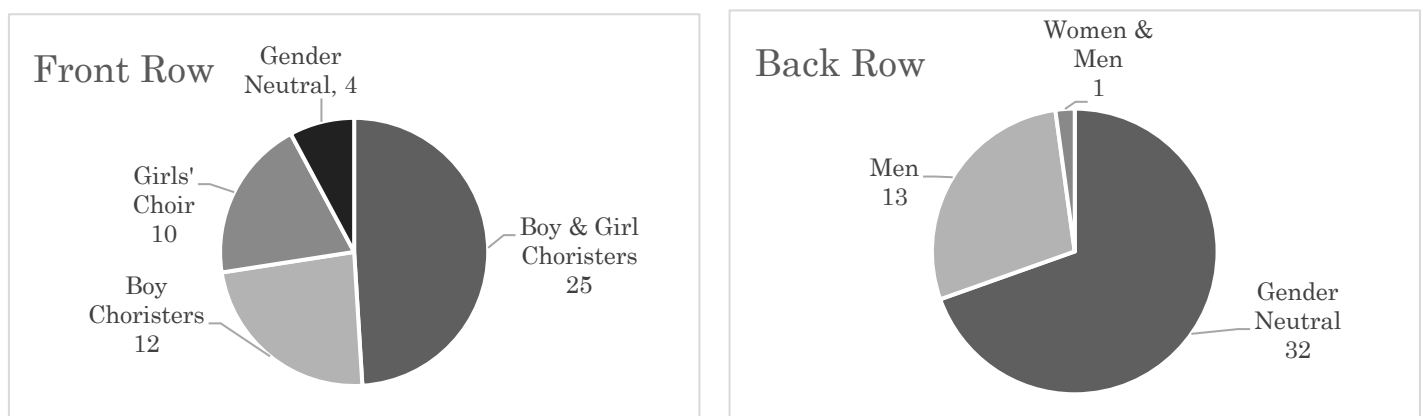


Figure 3 – Nomenclature

There exists a cyclical relationship between the assumptions underlying and reasons given for understanding women and girls as new, supplementary, transforming or sustaining the tradition and the practices which exist at each

⁷⁷ Although, at Chichester (like Hereford, St Paul's and St Edmundsbury), there are no girl choristers, there is a clear lack of gendered emphasis in their promotion of the choristers, i.e. they are not referred to as 'boy trebles' but merely as 'trebles'.

⁷⁸ See Appendix E for full data.

cathedral. The practices and assumptions are mutually influential in terms of perpetuating a commitment to static or slow changing norms and ideas about what a cathedral choir is and who belongs there.

Paradigm 1: Girls and Women Create a New Tradition

(a) Maleness, 'authenticity' and 'quality'

In line with Kerslake's (1999) contention, this first paradigm focuses on how women and girls are portrayed and perceived as being part of a new, separate tradition and the implications of understanding their inclusion to be part of a distinctive and different tradition to the one which the boys and men sustain. The ideologies which underpin this paradigm are focussed on the idea of protecting and preserving the all-male tradition and the men and boys who are part of it. The linguistics of power operating in accounts of the women and girls' 'new' tradition ensures the hierarchy of male-as-norm, and women and girls are othered. Sandra Bem has written on this idea, stating:

Like the prototypical member of any category, the male is taken to be the cognitive reference point, the standard, for the category of human being; and like the non-prototypical members of any category, the female is taken to be a variation on that prototype, a less representative example of the human species. (2003, p. 200)

Understandings of the male singer as prototypical in cathedral singing are exemplified in the presentation of cathedral musicians through language that cements the male as 'reference point'. In many cases the language is so subtle it appears to hardly warrant attention, whilst in others it is blatant. Peter Giles, for example, wrote an article for the CTCC, *An Increasingly Fragile Musical Miracle* (n.d., p. 7), in which he states that, 'Keeping the integrity of an art form is not normally a matter of gender, although this case is different. That which is intrinsic and that which is calculatedly mutational must be kept strictly separate.' The antagonism here is quite overt. Given that mutations are random and usually unplanned, except for in scientific experiments, Giles's biological, organic metaphor – that girls are 'mutational' in the context of the cathedral music-making tradition – seems rather nonsensical. Indeed, the use of the adverb 'calculatedly' actually suggests that there is some form of malice at work in the

inclusion of girls because their inclusion is *not* a natural evolution of the all-male tradition. The ‘calculated’ change here is the gender of the choristers. In a scientific context, a mutation refers to a change in DNA that can be ‘harmful, beneficial, or neutral in their effect’ (Cancer.gov, 2019). This use of ‘mutation’ by Giles and his counterparts at the CTCC, implies a negative impact. ‘Mutation’ here has similar connotations of deformity, as can be seen in Thomas Laqueur’s claim in *Making Sex* (1990), namely that understandings of gender in the past were rooted in the ‘one sex model’, wherein women were understood to be, effectively, deformed (and therefore inferior) men.

In places where the rhetoric of ‘newness’ is present, such as in Giles’ statement above, the focus is on keeping the two identities and structures separate so as to not cause harm. The assumption that gender diversity threatens the maleness of the tradition underlies this rhetoric of separation, present in the qualifier often used in descriptions of girls’ choirs that they are either ‘new’ parts of the same tradition or forging their own new tradition. Even when presented positively, there is an assumed otherness of that which is not male, as I will discuss shortly. Although this rhetoric acknowledges the inclusion of women and girls in cathedral music-making to some degree, in many ways it perpetuates the assumption that women and girls do not belong to the ancient historic tradition.

The CTCC operate, I suggest, within a narrow understanding of continuing historic precedent. Further to their use of the word ‘ancient’,⁷⁹ the second part of the CTCC’s objectives that encourages the creation of all-male choirs where they do not already exist exposes their perception that there is a difference in the quality of the sound that boys and girls make. The restricted interpretation of continuity is clear in the desire to establish new all-male choirs. I argue that their pledge for new choirs firstly undermines their initial point as regards sustaining ancient choirs as it reasserts the centrality of maleness and music-making in this context – new male choirs are perceived as more authentic

⁷⁹ Again, the purposes of the CTCC as laid out on their website (before it was archived) was as follows: ‘to champion the ancient tradition of the all-male choirs in Cathedrals, Chapels Royal, Collegiate Churches, University Chapels and similar ecclesiastical foundations. It is also the policy of CTCC to encourage parish churches which maintain, or seek to establish, all-male choirs.’ (CTCC, 2019).

than new female choirs. The all-male choirs, even when new, are able to seamlessly join this ancient heritage because they possess the one so-called authentic factor: maleness. This is in spite of the supposedly unchanging male choir actually being subject to significant change over the centuries.

In a *Huffington Post* article on the introduction of the Girls' Choir at Canterbury Cathedral, the CTCC were quoted as saying: '[...] cathedrals [that] use girls should take the opportunity of creating their own style; their own tradition separate from the historic all-male' (2014). Here, the male tradition is invested with authenticity and authority by virtue of being 'historic'. Amanda Mackey stated that the 'the biggest concern' for Mark Lee, Director of Music at Bristol Cathedral (1998-present), when he was interviewed in 2011 'was to uphold the tradition of the boy choristership' (2015, p. 115). Mackey contended that 'the imperative to bring in the girls in the right way that wouldn't inadvertently end the history of boy choristers at Bristol Cathedral was a priority' (p. 115). Mackey also considered that being 'wary of upending the centuries-long tradition of men-and-boys' choirs' was a concern for Paul Trepte, Director of Music at Ely Cathedral, 1990-present [2019] (2015, p. 121). Trepte is using the concept of the ancient historical precedent of boys singing in the cathedral to differentiate between a core tradition (of men and boys) and the 'new' tradition, or at the very least a new role in the tradition that girls might play.

Acknowledging the introduction of girl choristers at Salisbury Cathedral, the authors of *In Tune With Heaven* claimed: 'the boys-only choir will ensure the continuity of a "traditional" male choir at a time when the authenticity of musical performance still receives widespread emphasis' (*The Archbishops' Commission on Church Music*, 1992, p. 90). The stress that the authors of this report for the Church of England put on the authenticity of a male (only) tradition, affects the way that girls are understood in cathedral music-making as: (1) necessarily being separate by nature of a passive exclusion; and (2) a threat resulting from their active exclusion. As a consequence of the focus on the protection and preservation of the boy choristers, girls are left to forge their own path, their own tradition in the cathedral or risk (being accused of) damaging the authenticity of the cathedral

music tradition. It highlights the way women and girls are perceived as an addition to the authentic, 'traditional' choir and not part of its ongoing ever-changing identity.

Authenticity is associated with gender, as opposed to other elements of this tradition because of the way their boyhood is wrapped up in credible and authentic music-making. Martin Ashley contends that 'boys can't just sing anything at all and sound credible and authentic. It just so happens that they are at their most credible and authentic when they sing the sacred choral repertoire' (2013, p. 18). Their authenticity in this arena is fraught with its own set of problems surrounding sounding effeminate and the loss of the treble sound too – Ashley later contends that some 'wish to keep boys small and cute, others wish to push them as quickly as possible through childhood' (p. 154). Further to this, both Lee's and Trepte's resistance to introducing girls was based on the perceived connection between tradition and gender. Lee's worry that the introduction of girls would in some implicit way affect the 'history' of the boy choristers is acknowledged by one of the senior music leaders, Hilary, who said that having an *all-male* choir "is part of some people's tradition, I suppose, so for them that would be important [to not introduce girls] but it's not really for me."

Notions of newness and how it impacts gender diversity in cathedral music-making were reflected on by Ben (senior music leader), who stated that because cathedrals are "battling with 400 or 500 years of history [which is all male] it will be 500 years before you're moving towards equality there". Max (Precentor) also said:

[the inclusion of women and girls in cathedral music-making has] probably been complicated by the fact that being a boy chorister was the traditional way into this world. And because we haven't had any equivalent of that for girls until actually relatively recent history, the top end of that world is still very male dominated. It'll be interesting to me to see how that develops.

The rhetoric of newness which focuses on separation is also perpetuated by limited understandings of the idea that the sound which epitomises the tradition is exclusively produced by men and boys. The connection between quality and the boys' voice has been well-documented by scholars such as Martin Ashley (2013, p.

5) who stated: ‘the sound produced in England is regularly described as “angelic” on account of its pure, ethereal quality (Libera, 2007, *BBC*, 2012)’. When considering assumptions which underscore the discrimination – tacit or otherwise – that women and girls face in cathedral music, this notion of newness propagates the assumption that women and girls negatively affect the excellence / quality of cathedral music-making because they are unable to produce this ‘angelic ethereal’ quality (irrespective of whether the person in charge of the girl choristers has decided what sound they should be seeking to achieve). The participants in my study acknowledged that there exists a desire amongst conservatives to keep the ‘angelic’ sound – understood to be produced by boys only – in the cathedral as it is the status quo. One of the Precentors, for example, acknowledged the essentialist understanding that women and girls affect the sound associated with the tradition (narrowly conceived as an all-male tradition), stating: “There are people that would think that musically we are diluting the tradition and that only boys can produce the pure sound which is associated with cathedral music”. This participant’s use of the word ‘dilute’ is interesting because it implies that the boys inherently lose out by including other genders in cathedral music-making, or that which they collectively produce is somewhat weakened as a result of this inclusion (I will return to how this also plays out in keeping the girls supplementary to the boys in the next paradigm). By distancing themselves from the notion of ‘diluting’ the tradition here, the participant is able to avoid giving their own understanding of whether or not girls diminish the tradition, whilst telling me that this mindset still pervades the rhetoric.

As I have already set out, there is a connection between gendered understandings of authenticity and notions of ‘quality’ and ‘excellence’. By calling upon girls to create ‘their own style’ campaigners from the CTCC are perhaps intimating a ‘need’ to ensure that the repertoire that the girls sing is distinctive from the ‘traditional’ repertoire. Former President of the CTCC, Bernarr Rainbow, asked: ‘who among our practical music scholars and composers will be bold enough to help the nascent girls’ choirs to attain a respectable and respected individual role, by producing for them a distinctive repertory, to be called, with justification, their own?’ (*Doing Their Own Thing*, n.d., p. 2). The language of ‘respectable’ and

‘respected’ is further evidence of a tacit connection between maleness, tradition and ‘excellence’ or ‘quality’. This connection is also visible in the rhetoric of the *In Tune With Heaven* report which claims that:

[it is] important to maintain all that is best in a cathedral’s worship and to preserve its distinctive heritage of music. Its musical base might be broadened in order to meet more people on their journey, but there must be no diminution in the quality of its offering. (1992, p. 226)

On the one hand, this document does not suggest explicitly that the introduction of girl choristers *has* diminished the quality of what cathedral choirs can offer. Rather, it states that cathedrals must show care in protecting and preserving the characteristic of excellence so closely associated with cathedral music-making when broadening the access to an education in this tradition. Yet, although the quote does not specifically mention gender, in the context in which it was written (in the early 90s) discussions of the diminution of quality *were* gendered in other forums. So, by using the vocabulary of diminution, the document is tapping into that discourse without being explicit about it. The fear of diminution of quality in this report is indicative of the broader concern about what will be lost as a result of the inclusion of those who have not been historically included in cathedral music-making. Again, the report highlights how important the notion of quality is to cathedral music-making and once more implies that girls and women may somehow bring this quality into question. The arguments which are applicable to the trebles are also emblematic of the fragility of the preservation of the male countertenor voice in the cathedral choir. There is an understanding that including women altos means taking away opportunities for countertenors; a concern which is often raised in response to equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives.⁸⁰

As I will show, this hierarchy is occasionally blatant; but more often than not it is tacit, inadvertent, and implemented without malice or awareness of the stark implications. One (paradoxical) result of the vocabulary of ‘newness’ is that it limits the capacity of the ‘new’ to impact upon the ‘old’. Girls and women being

⁸⁰ See, for example: criticism of Athena SWAN (an equality initiative in Higher Education) by Suzanne Madgwick, 2005; and of corporate equality and diversity initiatives, for example by Linda Dickens, 2005.

perceived as 'new' are restricted in the impact their musical practice can have on the all-male cathedral music-making tradition because of their separation (at places like Canterbury and Ely) in terms of finances, schooling, leadership and so on.

(b) Nomenclature

I now consider the nomenclature used to refer to the cathedral choir(s). Out of all forty-two cathedrals, ten categorise their girl choristers as being part of a “Girls’ Choir” but do not employ the term “Boys’ Choir” for the boy treble line, calling the boys instead the choristers or trebles.

| Cathedral | Cathedral Founded | Girl Choristers Introduced | Nomenclature |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Canterbury | 600 | 2014 | Girls' Choir |
| Durham | 1093 | 2009 | Girl Choristers |
| Ely | 1083 | 2006 | Girls' Choir |
| Guildford | 1927 | 2002 | Girl Choristers |
| Lincoln | 1092 | 1995 | Girl Choristers |
| Newcastle | 1091 | 2008 | Girl Choristers |
| Peterborough | 655 | 1999 | Girl Choristers |
| Salisbury | 1220 | 1991 | Girl Choristers |
| St Albans | 1077 | 1996 | Girls' Choir |
| York Minster | 1230 | 1997 | Girl Choristers |

Table 7 – Nomenclature and Time

In the ten cathedrals included in my case studies there is no clear correlation between the age of the cathedral itself (and therefore the longevity it may claim for its choral ‘tradition’), or how recently the Girls’ Choir or girl chorister line has been formed, and the cathedral’s choice of gender-based terms of demarcation. Three of the ten case study institutions refer to their girls as the ‘Girls’ Choir’: Canterbury, Ely and St Albans, who established their choirs in 2014, 2006 and 1996 respectively. Interestingly, the girls at the oldest cathedral (Canterbury;

founded in 600AD) are referred to as the Girls' Choir. Other 'ancient' cathedrals including Salisbury and Durham refer to the girls as 'girl choristers'. Similarly, at Guildford (the only one of my case study cathedrals to have been built even in the last five hundred years (in 1927) the girls there are also referred to as girl choristers.⁸¹ None of the cathedrals in my case studies referred to the boys as being the Boys' Choir.

Criado Perez discusses the idea that 'natural gender' languages where the antecedents 'female' or 'girl' impact the idea of othering women because of the insinuation that they are not assumed in the generic, universal term (2019, p. 14). Here she is referring to the way that those words – relevant in this case *female* conductor, *girl* chorister – when men who occupy the same position are known as conductor or chorister and their gender is not referenced. In line with Criado Perez's contention, I argue that the entire gender-based delineation affects the inclusion of women and girls. For example, let us consider the subtle difference in nomenclature between the 'Girls' Choir' and use of the label 'girl choristers' discussed above. The term chorister carries with it more kudos because of the implication of the rigorous training and belonging. I argue that the assessment that boys are the choristers of the cathedral choir whilst the girls are part of the 'Girls' Choir' others the girls at these cathedrals because it cements the notion that they are not part of the main '*traditional* cathedral choir', which comes with the respect and gravitas of hundreds of years of service but are instead part of a new group which may have only existed for a few years.

Further, Graham Welch reported that 'within the cathedral choir, performance skills level is signalled by singer nomenclature (such as "head chorister", "corner boy", "probationer") and variations in the dress code...' (2015, p. 450). Usually given to a singer in their final year of the choristership, the Head Chorister position is much coveted as children given this role are often exemplars for their younger peers, are given a medal and have tasks which might include organising music or officially helping probationers settle into the choir. In addition

⁸¹ The hierarchy that this nomenclature asserts is discussed further in Barrier Four.

to the general hierarchy of head choristers, there is a further hierarchy in the subtle nomenclature of the titles. At Salisbury Cathedral, for example, the head boy chorister is called the 'Bishop's Chorister' whilst the head girl chorister is the 'Dean's Chorister' which is indicative of a small and subtle hierarchy which reasserts that the boy choristers are at the top. In the *Probationer and Chorister Parents' Handbook* it is stated that 'the head girl the "Dean's Chorister" and her deputy "Precentor's Chorister"; [...] mirror those of the two senior boys' (2017, p. 15). Separation also affects how the girls are given new, distinctive opportunities for leadership. These traditions often mimic the boys' but are kept separate by means of the nature of separate choristerships. If there was a radical decision to disband the Girls' Choir and wipe institutional memory of their somewhat separate traditions, then there would be no 'contamination' (or *taint*) of the specifically all-male tradition because the all-male tradition has been kept separate from these models for the girls.

(c) Funding and finances

The next way in which the difference between boy and girl singers plays out in cathedrals is in terms of finances. Not all cathedral musical endowment funds pay for the girl and boy choristers alike or aim to pay the full costs of the chorister education. At cathedrals including Canterbury, Ely, Norwich, and Salisbury, there exist endowment funds which are exclusively for boy choristers (whilst others have more integrated financial programmes). That the girl choristers are not provided for from the same funds as the boy choristers raises questions about what role they are perceived to play in the cathedral choir and why they do not qualify for funding from this pot of money. It could be that the benefactors have stipulated that the money is specifically for 'boy choristers' and therefore not for girls, or that the cathedrals have decided to keep the boys and girls separate in terms of their financing in order to avoid campaigners such as the CTCC arguing that the inclusion of girls financially threatens the boys. Mackey also sees this as a barrier to equality: 'in those cathedrals with exact equality at heart, it is difficult to defend the

position that the girls should be paid less for equal work' (2015, p. 205). The way that the girl choristers are funded, and the lack of forethought in planning, for example at Wells (see Mackey, p. 205),⁸² cements the idea that the girls were forging a 'new' tradition – and that their funding, too, had to come from somewhere new. By saying that the girls are forging a new tradition, those in positions of power in cathedral music-making can (again, explicitly or tacitly) protect the almost sacred male-only tradition whilst also advocating for gender diversity to some degree.

The issue of finances came up in interviews with my participants wherein it was clear that money is a key reason that girls are not only kept separate but are often kept from participating either fully or at all. Tom, for example, recalled anecdotal conversations about "people [offering funding] saying that they won't leave [their] money if you have these girls [choristers]". Similarly, one of the music directors, David, shared his understanding of why Chichester, for example, do not have girl choristers, stating: "I don't think it's a gender issue, I think it's money. Why jeopardise what they've got? I think that's quite a powerful reason to keep things as they are. [If you] spread the finances a bit thinner, then the whole thing will go down the pan."

(d) Initiation

Another vein of the rhetoric and practice of newness / separation has to do with the rituals of initiation for singers in certain cathedral contexts. 'Traditions' such as 'bumping' result in further distinguishing the girls from the boys. According to the Salisbury Cathedral *Probationer and Chorister Parents' Handbook* (2017), each year the boy choristers 'gather in the south choir aisle where two senior boys welcome the newcomers and "bump" their heads (gently) on an ancient stone which has been well worn over the centuries intoning: "I bump you a Chorister of

⁸² Mackey wrote: 'When the girl choristers were brought in [at Wells Cathedral], the planning had not extended to budgetary concerns. There was a question as to whether the girl choristers could continue at all with insufficient funding (for robes, music, the work of the staff, etc, let alone the remunerations).' (2015, p. 205).

Salisbury Cathedral according to *ancient* tradition ... bump” (emphasis mine; 2017, p. 15). It is later stated in the *Handbook* that: ‘Girls are not “bumped” in the same place as boys – they are taken to the Trinity Chapel...’ (p. 16). Their tradition is ‘new’, their initiation ceremonies are distinctive as a result. Therefore, whilst it appears on the surface that the girls have an equal experience through having their own initiation, the symbolism of the stone which is ‘well-worn over the centuries’ only being touched by the boys, and not the girls, connects to my earlier point about the girls being perceived to contaminate the tradition. There is a connection here too to views of girls as ‘supplementary’, which I will discuss in paradigm 2.

(e) Age

Moreover, separation can be seen in understandings and practices which distinguish girls and boys based on their age, though this is less pronounced than some of the other factors discussed here. Of the thirty-nine cathedrals that have girl choristers (in some form), eighteen have girls who are the same age group as the boy choristers. In addition to that number, at six cathedrals the girls begin at the same age and are members of the cathedral choir beyond the age of thirteen at which point boys no longer participate due to the expected voice change around this age. At thirteen cathedrals the girls are older than the boys (usually starting between the ages of ten and fourteen), including three cathedrals where the girls finish at the same age as the boys. Only two of the cathedrals where the girls are referred to as the “Girls’ Choir” had girl choristers who were the same age as the boy choristers (see Figure 4) which is a significant marker in the

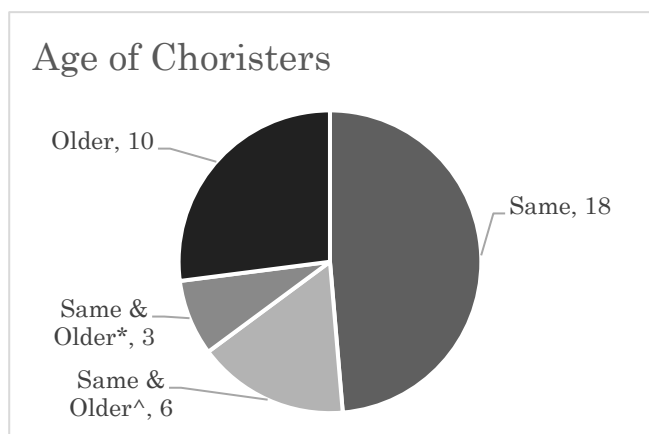


Figure 4 – Age of Choristers

majority of places which have girls the same age and choose to reflect this sameness in the nomenclature.⁸³

As one participant in my interviews acknowledged, there is no reason to deny girls – who can sing the treble line the entire way through their childhood – the opportunity to sing in cathedrals after the age of thirteen just because that is the age where most boys have their voice break. However, there is a long association between the purity of boys’ voices and their being pre-pubescent (See Graham Welch and David Howard, 2002; Fraser Riddell, 2019). In Barrier Three, I will discuss in more detail the impact of the idea that the girls are ‘lacking’ the transition out of vocal purity which defines the boys’ voice especially in the context of the objectification of teenage (girl) choristers. I discuss there some of the consequences of the visibility of the teenage (girl) body in cathedral music in terms of vestments, posture and gesture too.

Age also feeds into perceptions that girls bring a new sound to cathedral music. Since the female singers are older in some contexts, and therefore have a more mature sound, this can be taken to mean they cannot produce the ‘ideal’ sound exemplified by the boy choristers. There are also consequences in terms of opportunities and parity due to the pressures that teenagers face in school in comparison to their younger peers. One participant told me about the other pressures that the girls faced in their context: “we rehearse less often, but the commitment is significant and so actually it would not be appropriate for them to sing the same number of services as the boys as we would seriously jeopardise their academic future.” Age can therefore be used to justify a smaller role in the music-making life of the cathedral.

(f) Opportunities for leadership

Discussion specifically about the detail of female experiences of music leadership can be found in Barrier Four. Nevertheless, I want to touch on this theme briefly at this point. At six of my case study cathedrals, the boys and girls are both under

⁸³ See Appendix F for data.

the leadership of the Director of Music, whilst at four they are either led by the Assistant Director of Music or the Director of the Girls' Choir. In these four cathedrals, the girls and boys are kept separate by means of this difference in leadership, with the individual leading the girls being placed underneath the Director of Music in the leadership structure. This cements the idea that the girls are forging a new (and indeed inferior) tradition.

These assumptions perpetuate the idea that the essence of the cathedral choir is its maleness. They lead to a rhetoric that women and girls are forging a new or separate tradition to their male counterparts, which is visible in practice: namely with regards the nomenclature used, the age of the choristers, in terms of who leads, and opportunities for the choristers including decisions about repertoire. In each of these ways, girls are potentially placed at a disadvantage as a direct result of their gender. That is to say that there are also theoretically positive aspects of being given the freedom to forge a genuinely 'new' tradition. The vocabulary is undoubtedly complicated, but it is important that it is not *always* a barrier for the girls to be viewed as 'new'.

Paradigm 2: Girls and Women Supplement the Tradition

A permutation of the variation that the girls and women are 'new' is that they are 'supplementary' to the all-male tradition. Women and girls, in this understanding, are perceived to supplement the tradition because they offer something different as a result of their gender. Implicit in this understanding is a sense that their offering is not core to the tradition. It is still the same tradition, but the contribution of the girls and women is neither integrated nor transformative (as will be considered in paradigm 3). In many ways this paradigm rests on the same arguments which have already been explored in the discourse above because of the sense of preservation that is likewise present in this paradigm. Yet where vocabularies of 'newness' largely focus on the differences in the traditions, rhetoric which suggests that the girls perform a supplementary role combine separation with an acknowledgement of a certain sameness between the genders. Unlike the 'new' tradition discourse, there is not much of this which is positive; but again, the

antagonism here is usually covert and only occasionally overt. The girls and boys are not required to be as clearly separated as they are under paradigm 1, but in practice, this discourse results in them not being seen as equal in a way that ‘new’ allows for; it is based around the contention that women and girls are supplementary through being *complementary* to men and boys. Although it is a less overtly negative rhetoric, it still seeks to preserve a ‘main’ or primary line which is all male. Girls and women are consequently othered.

Seeing the girls as supplementary to the boys keeps the boys as the norm and supports the idea that the girls are merely able to mimic the boys’ traditions. The girls and their traditions can be perceived as a supplement to the traditions that the boys and men have passed down from generation to generation. The tradition of ‘bumping’ at Salisbury, for example, which I have discussed in paradigm 1, is indicative of the desire to include girls in the same tradition as boys as it is in actuality just a small modification of the boys’ tradition rather than an entirely ‘new’ way of celebrating the inclusion of new girls in the choir. It is therefore not completely new; but at the same time the differentiation suggests that the girls are not part of the exact same tradition – they forge new, supplementary traditions within the same framework as their male counterparts. They are not the same as the boys, however. Instead, it is about subordination within the hierarchy; equal but importantly and necessarily different. The girl choristers’ traditions are therefore supplementary – if they were taken away, the traditions associated with the choristership at Salisbury would not otherwise be affected because the girls were given a modified version of the boys’ traditions.

In terms of the nature and substance of the duties required of girl choristers, the supplementary viewpoint can be seen in places like Canterbury and Ely where the girl choristers sing services when the boys are on break. Similarly, the decisions of how to split service designations (both in terms of the weekly service schedule and big events such as Easter and Christmas), and the number of services the choristers sing with the back row, or conversely sing treble only, affects the inclusion of girls. For example, the Girls’ Choir at Canterbury Cathedral (set up in 2014) has enjoyed a much-acclaimed recording

schedule (including their Christmas CD released in 2017) but does not participate in the core service singing of the cathedral. The girls, according to the website, rehearse two times a week (plus one music theory lesson weekly) and sing a cathedral service every weekend and on Christmas and Easter Days. This differs from what the boys do because the girl choristers' role is not central to the daily worship – they perform a role which is an addendum to what has been described as “the heart of cathedral life”. The girls in this way are supplementary parts of the choral tradition because they are not participating in the same way as their male counterparts. When they join for ‘double-forces’ services at Christmas and Easter they are bolstering the sound of the cathedral choir, literally supplementing a choir which is for all intents and purposes the ‘main’ choir for the majority of the year.

Further to this supplementation, choices about what to include in the services themselves show us another way in which the girls are seen as supplementary. I contend that through the repertoire choices when considered in comparison to the boys instead of being given the ‘standard’ repertoire which is expected of a cathedral chorister they are given other works – what is left over. David commented on the fact that the girl choristers at Salisbury have sung the Wednesday Evensong since 1991, which he says has ‘traditionally’ been the day that the Lay Vicars do not sing, so the girl choristers have twelve pieces of upper-voice repertoire whilst the boys only have two. He went on to comment: “It’s a pretty weak repertoire, I have to say.” This viewpoint is used to keep both the girls who sing six times more upper voice repertoire, and the repertoire written by women supplementary to the male singers and pieces by male composers.

David’s acknowledgement here that their current system leaves the girls with a “weak” repertoire *tacitly* speaks to the question of whether the girls are positioned as supplementary to the boys without *explicitly* addressing that question. In many ways, this is how the girls are kept subordinate to the boys – in the reluctance to address the tacit ways that they are secondary. Whether or not girls are viewed to be supplementary in the future of cathedral music-making

will have ramifications for the role of upper-voice repertoire in cathedrals. If they continue to sing upper-voice services, then the “pretty weak” repertoire which David refers to will need to be increased. His comment intimates the commonly held notion that, in addition to being lesser known and less part of the tradition because, as Ben notes, “history is not favourable there” in terms of the number of pieces written by women in comparison to the sheer amount written by men for cathedral choirs. Matt (a Choral Scholar) echoes this sentiment in his comment that the amount of music written by women at his cathedral “reflects the amount of music out there written by women, whether that’s enough is a slightly different question”. Participants also reflected a general reticence to include music written by women because it is, on the whole, not the right standard – three participants discussed the need for quality in their repertoire lists in the context of including works by women composers; for example Peter stated “we would always want to go for quality there” and Katherine, who said “I will not, for example, choose a piece because it’s by a woman, I will choose a piece because it has *musical merit and authenticity* and I like it and think we ought to be doing it” (emphasis mine). Additional repertoire for girls, as signified by the need for upper-voice music (for girls, predominantly) and the fact that the girls sing upper-voice only services is indicative of their supplementary role. Due to the nature of the perception that music written by women is not commonplace or that what has been written is not quite right for their cathedral’s repertoire list, works by women composers supplement the male canon, accounting for “annual” performances (Robert) and “2% of the repertoire” (Jeffrey).

The nature of the duties as supplementary is most clearly seen, I argue, in understandings of gender diversity in the back row of the cathedral choir. In most cases the women involved in singing in cathedrals are ‘deps’ (deputy singers) or Choral Scholars and not permanent Lay clerks. The exact segregation is not known, but since the Church of England started publishing the gender aggregated data in 2013, women have reportedly accounted for between 8.5% and just under 15% of adult choir members; between forty and eighty women in comparison to between 430 and 470 men (2019, p. 36). In this way, they can be seen to supplement the standard ‘tradition’ of men and boys singing because

they are only called upon for a short period of time, or when there are no men available. The short amount of time that women spend in the cathedral choir in comparison to the turnover of Lay clerks, who usually stay for generations, suggests that women's places in the back row are not yet considered fully enshrined in the main tradition. It is reasonable to assert that they have not become permanent features in the same way that their male colleagues are considered to be. These attitudes towards the female alto and male countertenor voice will be explored further in Barriers Three and Four.

In terms of the children's choirs, the subordination of girls is clearly apparent when they are led by less prestigious directors. Whilst in the case of perceiving the girls to be 'new', the creation of a new position, or a new title, cements that. In two of my case study cathedrals, the Assistant Director of Music (not specifically a Director of the Girls' Choir) takes responsibility for the girl choristers. That the Director of Music does not take any leadership over the girl choristers at these cathedrals is indicative of the way in which they are viewed as supplementary. Their needs are viewed as supplementary and therefore as not worthy of the attention of the main Director of Music. Similar to arguments surrounding threatening the tradition already discussed in the 'new' rhetoric, ensuring that the girls' education does not take away time or expertise from the Director of Music – guarantees that the girls do not become fully integrated into the heart of the worshipping community – they remain towards the perimeter of the 'tradition'; they remain supplementary.

I suggest that the way that boys' voices are favoured over girls' voices in cathedrals such as Canterbury, Ely, and St Albans, contributes to an othering of the girls within a tradition of which they are viewed to be uncomfortable interlopers. Max said: "for us, the Girls' Choir has worked very well, and it seems to have added a whole other lung of energy and air to what we do here." In the next paradigm, this understanding is explored in its *prima facie* positive connotations. Here, however, I contend that through keeping the girls from threatening the tradition without necessarily separating them too much from the main tradition, this discourse sees the girl as a tacit threat to the boys but

acknowledges the pressure that cathedral leaders feel to both include the girls and preserve the tradition in its original / historic state. It is very similar to the institutional positions of the Church of England on inclusivity more generally explored in Barrier One. The tolerance of the inclusion of girls and women so long as they do not negatively impact upon the opportunities for the thriving and success of the boys is an utmost priority, which more often than not leaves the girls and women in a position of subordination.

Paradigm 3: Girls and Women Transform the Tradition

Women and girls are perceived to transform or augment the tradition by bringing their supposed unique experiences and attitudes with them to cathedral music-making and changing its overall character. When the gender of women and girls is emphasised in the context of the cathedral music-making tradition, it can also be indicative of a basic assumption of a positive adaptation of the tradition. At the outset it is critical to recognise that there are problems with such an emphasis on gender as something which is core to the tradition by saying that the introduction of girls and women affects change *because* of their gender. However, evidence suggests that women and girls alter the notions of a tradition which *de facto* is male without affecting the integrity, quality, or sound of the tradition *in a negative way*. The focus of the rhetoric of transformation usually involves a great deal of tension between whether the sameness or difference of women and girls is accentuated.

The causal question behind the notion of girls and women transforming the cathedral music-making tradition is whether they transform it and therefore should be kept separate (ergo cycling back to paradigms 1 and 2) or whether they transform the *living* tradition and, thus, anyone who exists within the tradition as a whole can learn from the results of including women and girls. Motivating this rhetoric of transformation is the tacit acknowledgement that cathedral music “needed” to be “saved” not because boys and men could not sustain it on their own but for reasons outside of the gendered foundations of the tradition, e.g. increasing educational pressures for school children in the United Kingdom, and increasing

secularism in society. Rachel, for example, reflected that “the inclusion of girls probably saved a lot of cathedral choirs” and correlated this directly to the increased pressures on the boys in terms of academic and other extra-curricular achievement. Indeed, in an article for *The Guardian*, Harriet Sherwood asked whether the UK had hit ‘peak secular’ as she reported that nearly fifty percent of its population identified as non-religious, stating that ‘between 1983 and 2015, the proportion of Britons who identify as Christian fell from 55% to 43%’ (Sherwood, 2017). Perhaps unrelated to this decline are the significant financial issues which the Church of England appear to face. For example, in the *Cathedrals and their Communities* report, published by a Church of England working group, it is stated that: ‘while our cathedrals are guardians of Britain’s architectural and religious tradition, maintaining these beautiful buildings does not come cheap and the running costs of many cathedrals run into the thousands of pounds a day’ (2017, p. 9). The report goes on to say that: ‘Between 2014 and 2016, £40 million was allocated for urgent repairs at 57 Anglican and Catholic cathedrals in England’ (p. 15). Given Sherwood’s report, in a different article (a year later), that ‘Guildford Cathedral costs £3,500 per day to run, while Durham Cathedral’s operational costs were £10,000 per day’ (Sherwood, 2018), the money that has been bestowed on cathedrals by the government, in special funds, and through entrance fees scarcely covers the high cost required to maintain the building without considering how to (literally) account for reaching the reportedly lost 12% of Christians since 1983. It is, however, unsurprising that financial costs and how to reduce them are a core part of the protection of the cathedral institution and its choral music.

The inclusion of women and girls as transformers of the tradition is part of the vocabulary of keeping the tradition alive in the same way that changes to chorister welfare and education in the nineteenth century, and the increasing radio and TV broadcasts in the twentieth century, changed the nature of cathedral music-making. By nature of the transformational rhetoric, the single, limited identity of what it means to be, look like or sound like a cathedral choir and what it means to belong in that place is being challenged. So, when the integrity of the cathedral music-making tradition is bound in concepts not only of maleness but also of class and race, the focus of what is integral to the tradition is scrutinised.

As such, the perception that girls and women are “transformational” is underpinned by a sea change in understanding maleness to no longer be the *de facto* identifying feature of cathedral music-making, nor crucial to its integrity or survival. The girls and women transform the cathedral tradition because of their gender, but their gender is not understood to threaten the integrity of the tradition.

Graham Welch contended that ‘although the data analyses are ongoing, a picture is beginning to emerge in which the female choristers may be seen both as part of an established tradition, but also as having a ‘*transformational*’ impact on it’ (my emphasis; 2011, p. 244). Welch’s understanding is exemplary of a rhetoric in which girls and women are understood to offer something different from the boys within the broader context of the same cathedral music-making tradition. One of my participants, Rosie (a Lay clerk), claimed that, for her: “the sea-change of the ‘old guard’ Lay clerks either retiring, dying or leaving because we’re arriving is setting off a nice epoch to be in.” Yet, because this transformation calls the historic gender norms of cathedral music-making into question, it is uncomfortable for those who are – by nature of their gender – unable to contribute to this transformation directly; they can only either support it or oppose it. Transformation, in this sense, comes from outside of the ‘original’ (all-male) tradition, so gender is still focal because it is the foundation of the transformation. The rhetoric of transformation then, as with the first two paradigms, boils down to a focus on a sense of existential threat, even though, in this case, girls and women are not the reason for that threat. The girls can be perceived to be part of the tradition; however, when they *are* included, they are often scapegoated for the larger, more generic decline associated with cathedrals and secularisation. The existential threats to the choral tradition are very real and present, however the way that girls are perceived to be the catalyst or tipping point for this decline is particularly problematic for their increasing and continued inclusion. Indeed, although they are the source of preservation in many places in this instance, they are connected implicitly to the sense of threat whereby their difference is the problem and not the solution.

The participants generally understood the girls, as Rachel claimed, to be “slightly more homogenous as a group”. Georgia (Lay clerk) described it as “the girls tend[ing] to keep more of an eye on each other”. Rosie commented on the maturity that the girls she had worked with showed, noting that they “calm each other down” and are “less energetic” than the boy choristers who, in her experience, “have a lesser attention span”. Daniel also characterised the girls at Durham by their “emotional maturity” and the boys by their “fearless risk-taking”, noting that he is “always looking to be proved wrong” and has worked with “fearless girls and timid boys”. Jeffrey similarly understood a certain hesitancy amongst the girls, noting that they “are very keen on preparation and dotting all the Is”.

Although it sounds – and indeed is – much more positive than the second paradigm, there are still aspects of the supplementary rhetoric inherent here. Like in the previous paradigms, there is something distinctively complementarian about the way this transformation is presented. The girls transform the tradition because they give the same tradition a new angle – they transform it by bringing something to the very same tradition. Boys and girls in this understanding are complementary, but in a way that is not entirely focussed on preserving the boys as ‘norm’. This is representative of the tension in feminism by which space for the particularity of women’s experience and women’s voices (as distinctive from men’s experience and voices) must exist, yet, as soon as that distinctiveness is overstressed and essentialised (such that all women are positioned as ‘naturally’ or ‘necessarily’ ‘x’, rather than as socialised to be ‘x’) the distinction becomes oppressive rather than liberating. Yet, it can be liberating and can open up possibilities for embodying the tradition. Where women *have* been employed as choral scholars or Lay clerks, whether and which solos they are given indicates approaches to their suitability for leading musically. Georgia, for example, commented on the possibility of her singing the solo in the *Magnificat* and her male counterpart singing the solo in the *Nunc Dimittis* to aptly represent the voices of Mary and Simeon respectively. Although this essentialising may prove problematic, it can be perceived as a positive modification to the tradition – that Mary’s voice can be embodied by women.

Analogous to the transformation of a caterpillar into butterfly, the tradition takes on a new form, a new identity or even a new, complex set of identities which are grown out of its former state. This arises from an idea that the cathedral choir in Britain can be one which has multiple identities – that not all cathedrals are seeking to achieve the angelic sound so commonly synonymised with the tradition. As I will further discuss in the next paradigm, the ‘angelic sound’ itself is an ‘invented tradition’ which can then be reinvented. Indeed, now not all cathedral choirs are made up of white men and middle-class boys who create (or seek to create) “world-leading” music in its most narrow conception. The transformation does not only come with the inclusion of teenage girls. It can be seen in the expansion of the range of activities which are associated with the choristership as well as the reduction of duties of boy choristers (which is seen as a positive thing). It does not perpetuate the assumption that women and girls negatively affect the excellence or quality of cathedral music-making. In the final paradigm, I discuss how this ‘saving’ makes up the rhetoric of sustaining, but here it is suggestive of the notion that the inclusion of girls has prompted a rethinking of the extreme conditions of the choristership in terms of its compatibility with the other pressures on children’s education.

Underlying the idea that teenage girls transform the tradition is the notion that their voices are significantly different from their seven- to thirteen-year-old counterparts. Because of the limitations of the boy treble voice (usually ending around aged thirteen), the tradition of cathedral music-making has been in many places confined to children of the same age, as is the case at eighteen cathedrals where the girls and boys are exactly the same age. In this sense, the teenage girls (involved in cathedral music alongside seven- to thirteen-year-olds) are understood to transform the tradition in a way that no other child of any age or gender could do. This is a positive. This will be relevant to my discussion of the voice in Barrier Three.

So, by assuming the girls and women transform the all-male tradition, this rhetoric helps illuminate the areas in which the male as status quo limits the tradition – whether this be nomenclature, age of the choristers, how cathedrals

consider the individual traditions or the financial provision and education of the children. In some places, the cathedral has chosen to transform the tradition to include women and girls in the same way; in other places, they have opened up opportunities for girls up until the age of eighteen. Although this paradigm is not *necessarily* antagonistic, the nature of complementarity in the Church of England runs parallel to, and often intersects with, these opportunities and attitudes. Having mixed gender groups importantly alters the social, community aspect of cathedral life – not solely in terms of the sound of the voices, but also other aspects of having female voices in the cathedral community. Sal (member of clergy) mentioned Carol Gilligan’s work *In A Different Voice* in her interview to explain her thoughts on the ways that introducing women into cathedrals brought with it a different identity because of the way women supposedly communicate. Gilligan claims that ‘sensitivity to the needs of others and the assumption of responsibility for taking care lead women to attend to voices other than their own and to include in their judgement other points of view’ (1993, p. 16). Similarly, Rosie recalled going to a housewarming and suggesting that the Lay clerks might want to bring a card, she called this “a kind of softening”. In this sense, it is imperative to comprehend the role that voices play in the context of women’s inclusion, how women give way to the voices and bodies of men in the cathedral space (discussed in Barrier Three) and the attitudes and non-musical experiences that women bring to being part of the community.

Paradigm 4: Girls and Women Sustain the Tradition

When understanding women and girls to sustain the tradition of cathedral music-making, the antagonism which underpins the first two paradigms fades into the background – it does not completely disappear, but the rhetoric is not defined by enmity. By seeing women and girls in this light, the focus is neither on their sameness nor their difference in so far as these preserve the perception of their otherness or separateness because their gender is not the focal feature of their belonging. This is in stark contrast to the previous three paradigms which all to some extent prioritise the otherness or necessity of separateness in order to

prevail. The focus here shifts away from what has ‘always been’, and from the synonymous identities of being male and being a cathedral chorister, to how best to sustain the tradition; the sense of a tradition which needs to be kept alive becomes the uniting factor. The language which characterises this paradigm does not seek to encourage the assumption that women and girls do not belong to the ancient and historic tradition, but that the very same tradition now has girls and women.

In a different tone from paradigm 1 which suggests that they are new and separate, this rhetoric emphasises the togetherness of the sustained tradition as a result of their inclusion. The assumption that women and girls negatively affect the excellence or quality of cathedral music-making is also absent in this language because the focus has shifted away from the need for women and girls to continually be on trial, proving their worth in the tradition. As such, this paradigm indicates that the ‘pure, ethereal’ sound (Ashley, 2013, p. 5) associated with cathedral music-making is not under threat due to gender diversity. As Mackey describes it, there ‘exists an uncontrollable hierarchy in a group of sixteen to twenty children between the ages of eight and thirteen, or eight and sixteen.’ The ‘uncontrollable’ hierarchy to which Mackey refers is based on ‘the skill and musical acumen of the choristers [which they] build as they gain more experience in the choral setting’ (2015, p. 188). The solo opportunities, and how solos are chosen, tell us about the unofficial hierarchies that exist and are, on occasion, broken through – especially in the cathedrals where there is no head chorister position and therefore all the choir hierarchies are unofficial. As Anna Bull noted, the pressure of ‘getting it right’ is ‘a way of performing the thousands of hours of disciplined labour, [...] the accumulated investment that becomes audible in a few bars of solo’ (2014, p. 138). The much coveted *Once in Royal David’s City* solo at Nine Lessons and Carols is a particularly good case study as the choirs at most, if not all cathedrals, combine for this occasion – is it more likely to be given to a boy or a girl? David told me that avoids the issue of solos at Salisbury by choosing a semi-chorus of year eight choristers to perform solo lines and at Guildford Cathedral there are two carol services, in which one service has

a girl chorister singing the solo and one a boy. The tradition in this way is sustained but the gender of the girls is not put on trial as a test of their proficiency.

Research which suggests that girls and boys are the same includes Howard's and Welch's understanding that the congregation will not necessarily be able to tell the difference between boys and girls. If they are perceived to provide the same acoustic experience, they are therefore part of the same tradition. Participants who advocated for girls as sustaining the tradition understood that they did not affect the capacity for musical excellence in cathedral music-making; what results from this is the foundation for assertions that the difference between boys and girls is minimal – even unrecognisable. Yet, minimising differences between boys and girls should not mean that equality has simply been achieved or is an easy goal. Again, this is a feminist issue. If there is no distinction, then the *distinctive barriers* that women and girls face, and their distinctive experience can go unrecognised.

Understanding girls and boys to be the same means that girls are not perceived to threaten the specificity of the sound. For example, in their 2002 study, Welch and Howard concluded that the congregation 'may not perceive any auditory differences between boys or girls singing the top line of the predominant four-part harmony which often has organ accompaniment' (p. 118). They go on to say that:

these differences are certainly evident in older, untrained child voices and may also be present in the oldest choristers. But the effect of specialist education and training seems to allow such acoustic differences to be relative, appearing in certain pieces of music but not others, related to the particular group of individuals that make up the choir, and perceived by some listeners, but not necessarily all. (2002, p. 118)

The binary split of choristers at nearly all cathedrals is avoided, and the sameness is not brought into question in these cases because there is an implication by their singing together – and from hearing them sing together – that they are the same (they sound the same, they achieve the same quality of sound and therefore do not impact the integrity of the tradition negatively). Whilst the significant majority of cathedrals have two treble lines, some of them do, on occasion, combine the two lines: at Christmas and Easter and for

end of year services. On these occasions, the sameness of the two sets is underlined. The relative differences to which they refer include differences in tone in the transfer between chest and head voice and will be discussed further in tandem with my participants' responses surrounding gendered differences in terms of the attitudes and achievements of the choristers later in this thesis (in Barrier Three).

Recent research has tended to suggest that their gender is irrelevant, and that pedagogy and leadership are more important indicators of excellence or potential for excellence than gender. As Matthew Owens and Graham Welch contend, being led by the same musician (the Director of Music) may result in a more uniform sound, especially in terms of excellence and quality. They claim that 'as a result [of the differences in direction], there may be (or not) challenges in terms of the consistency in choral pedagogy practices between individuals and, possibly, in terms of vocal and musical output' (2017, p. 172). At cathedrals such as Durham and York Minster the continuity of the tradition that involves boys and girls in the same way is ensured as a result of both sets of choristers receiving the same direction – usually a daily split where the Director of Music rehearses one set of choristers whilst their Assistant rehearses the other and then vice versa.

One of the major focuses that the participants shared with regards to sustaining the living tradition is ensuring that neither the boys nor the girls have the upper or lower hand at any given point. Ensuring that the boys are still valued, as per the concerns of many when girls were first introduced and which remains a major concern, but also that the girls are not treated like they are 'new' or 'others'.⁸⁴ Amanda Mackey uses the example of York Minster to assert that the inclusion of girls is understood to sustain the tradition. She wrote:

all of the choristers serve to uphold a tradition of choral music found in York Minster, as in most cathedrals, for centuries. More importantly, they are incorporated into the future vision of the choir; goals and plans for improvement and a raised profile do not separate the girls from the boys, the choir moves forward as an inseparable unit. (2015, pp. 91-92)

⁸⁴ See Camilla Swift, 2015; and Peter Stanford, 2015.

Mackey's understanding of the united nature of the choristership at York Minster is an example of how gender diversity is perceived to be crucial to the stability and permanency of the tradition. Instead, notions of excellence and quality (so far as they can be separated from gendered perceptions) and the production of the specific sound (again separated from gender) are core. Yet, as I have shown so far, it is difficult for these theories to not be undergirded by implicit bias. So, how do excellence or quality, and the specificity of the sound play out in understandings that girls sustain the tradition? Advocates for an almost gender-neutral preservation of the tradition acknowledge that the specificity of sound is worth preserving but attest that girls do not impact negatively on this sound.

If it is a living tradition, then the identity of the cathedral choir has to be somehow disentangled from the understanding that its integrity is bound up in being *exclusively* male. The authenticity of the tradition is not under threat in this paradigm because the boys and girls (and men and women) are understood to be the same. Its integrity is not compromised because the goal is still the same: to use children and adults together to provide worship on a daily basis. Amongst the participants in my study, all suggest that two treble lines should be sustained for as long as possible in order to give as many opportunities to the children as possible. Having two lines of choristers provides opportunities to twice as many children. In this way the integrity and authenticity of the cathedral music-making tradition is not reliant upon it being all-male. Its one-gender history need not be an indicator of whether the tradition, as it continues, is authentic. The integrity of the tradition is not compromised by gender diversity because gender is not core to the identity of the tradition, in this understanding. One way that this sameness is further emphasised is in places such as Manchester (and from 2021 onwards, Rochester) where the chorister line is mixed. When Rochester announced this 'exciting new phase' in late 2019, their report said: 'As custodians of this tradition, the Cathedral community does not *merely ensure its survival*, but look to *encourage its development*, so that it is re-imagined afresh for each generation' (emphasis mine; *Rochester Cathedral announces the introduction of mixed treble line*, 2019). Here,

the leadership at Rochester understand that ‘the blend of voices offers considerable musical advantages and flexibility. But ultimately, we are committed to treating boys and girls equally and therefore believe this is the right thing to do’ (*Rochester Cathedral announces the introduction of mixed treble line*, 2019).

The authenticity of the tradition is maintained by directly replicating the tradition which boys have been the sole beneficiaries of in a way that does not emphasise a static and reproducible sameness but instead a living continuity of ‘the’ tradition. The nomenclature when girls and boys are perceived to be sustaining the same tradition results in boy choristers and girl choristers (as is the case in five cathedrals as shown in Figure 3 on p. 136). Worcester’s promotional material says: ‘the cathedral choir of lower voices & boys and girl choristers sings the daily services, maintaining [...] the tradition of choral music at Worcester Cathedral’. Referring to the adult singers as ‘lower voices’ is an example of how the terms can be ungendered, instead of calling the singers the ‘men of the cathedral choir’. Parity also plays out in the age of the choristers. As has been shown already in the previous three paradigms, the opportunities for both sets of choristers in terms of the way they are robed, the repertoire that they sing and leadership opportunities that they are given as well as the financial and educational opportunities (afforded either by the cathedral or a cathedral school) are indicative of the impact of the theories. When girls and boys are perceived to be the same, often but not always this results in a direct replication of the opportunities that the boys are afforded.

There is a particular part of the rhetoric of sustaining the tradition which panders slightly to the necessity of sustaining boys within this tradition. It is perhaps the only way that notions of threat interlock with this discourse. Two of my participants, Wendy and Rachel, discuss this in the context of introducing the girls “correctly”. Wendy, for example, attested that her opinion was “if you’re going to have two [both girl and boy choristers] then they should be a joint line – because of recruitment or an active decision – or you have two parallel lines”. Meanwhile Rachel told me that she thought it was important that the cathedrals which do not

yet have girl choristers are able to introduce them “properly” and not in a way that other cathedrals have done where the girls are “out of the way where no one can see them”.

Building on my initial discussions of the core understandings of the role of tradition in classical music and the Church of England, I have shown in this chapter how notions of ‘authenticity’ and ‘quality’, ‘ancient’ timelessness, and of static, immovable practices affect the perception of whether and to what extent women and girls belong in the cathedral music-making tradition. This is reflected and influenced by nomenclature, funding and finances, initiation practices, the age of the choristers as well as opportunities for leadership. The terminology could prioritise the girls or the boys and the outcome for the discourse could mean that the girls are othered as a result of either covert or overt antagonism (as per paradigms 1 and 2). Conversely, it could mean that the opportunities for girls and boys going forward are based on a lack of distinction, which the participants viewed to be a positive change (because notions of distinctiveness always place girls beneath boys in the hierarchy). On the whole, participants owed their concerns about the future of cathedral music to the increasing inclusion of girls only in the sense of the greater financial concerns that cathedrals face and where budgets might be cut.

The narrative to include and acknowledge the inclusion of women and girls is working against the grain, as boys are the leading ‘traditional’ group and girls are seen as somehow secondary to that. Similarly, if women altos are the only adult woman involved in music-making in any given cathedral then their position as ‘other’ will be hard to ignore. The hierarchy which is created in many cathedrals through official leadership positions in the choirs affirms the varying approaches to gendered leadership which will be discussed in Barrier Four. The (unofficial) hierarchies created in many cathedrals, as shown through the rhetoric particularly of the first two paradigms, reinforce gendered norms. Both the discourse of transformation (paradigm 3) and of sustaining (paradigm 4) arise from a sense of threat to the survival of cathedral music but transforming involves girls bringing change and a sense of viewing the tradition as renewable, whilst the

sustaining paradigm involves preserving the tradition as it is, because the girls do not radically change the identity of choral music-making. As the dominant rhetorics of tradition persist, boys and men are almost always at the top of the hierarchy due to their being perceived as the base line or standard.

Barrier Three



The Quire as Liberation Zone? Understanding Bodies, Spaces, and Voices in Cathedral Music

It is my contention here that the Church of England's rhetoric on gender, sex, and sexuality, which has been explored in dialogue with socio-cultural theories within and outside of the church (in Barrier One), shapes how bodies, voices, and spaces are used and understood in cathedral music-making. Whereas Barrier Two focussed on discourses of tradition and the way they reflected and impacted the theoretical space created for women in church music, I now turn to physical spaces, bodies, and voices involved in (or, as the case may be, excluded from) cathedral services. I will analyse the way that this affects what the cathedral choir, clergy, and congregation say and sing (as well as how they observe silence) in the cathedral space – particularly during services of worship. In addition to interrogating the responses of my interview participants – which I have already drawn upon in Barriers One and Two – I will also use information gathered during my ethnographic study of two services of Evensong at Durham Cathedral in May 2019.⁸⁵

This chapter is broadly split into three parts. First, I will analyse bodies in cathedral music-making. After introducing the way that bodies have been understood in musicology, my analysis of bodies in cathedral music is split into two. In Part I (a) I examine the purpose of the vestments that are worn in cathedral services; in I (b), I explore how gesture, posture, and presence are utilised and understood alongside modesty, shame, and propriety rhetoric to problematise women's relationships with their own bodies. In each instance, I explore how these factors contribute to the invisibility/visibility of women and girls in cathedral music-making, considering the way that singers (both children and adults), conductors, organists, and the congregation are perceived as 'anonymous' or 'androgynous' throughout the services. I use Brydie-Leigh Bartleet's concept of 'surrogate masculinity' (2002, p. 52) to explore the presumption of maleness and erasure of femaleness that can occur. I will argue in this chapter that anonymity in music-making is not always beneficial, since anonymity can in fact mask

⁸⁵ The ethnographic sketches can be found, in full in Appendix C and an explanation of my choice and methods can be found earlier in this thesis in my Methods Part III (b).

identification of the male body in cathedral music-making as the norm. At this juncture, I insert the caveat that this chapter is focussed almost exclusively on the cathedral service. Many of the issues which are raised as part of that discussion (including the notion of blind auditions, which are discussed again in Part III), are not isolated to the services themselves – these issues are apparent in the audition process and the daily life of cathedral musicians, especially rehearsals and services.

Part II is concerned with the purpose and use of space(s). It begins by looking at how the cathedral space is described from the outside, including how the cathedral as an inanimate object is gendered. Part II (b) then looks at the uses and purposes of space(s) in the cathedral services, connected closely with notions of invisibility and androgyny from Part I. Finally, in Part III, I look in closer detail at the voices involved in cathedral music-making. Part III (a) traverses the rhetoric involved in the cathedral service as it pertains to speaking and singing, including the gendered implications of some of the core parts of Evensong services (such as liturgy, including the canticles). Part III (b) looks in closer detail at how the female voice has been problematised in the context of cathedral music-making, as well as attempts in research to destigmatise it, looking in turn at the voices of pre-pubescent, teenage, and adult singers.

I. 'Surrogate Masculinity', Androgyny, and Invisibility: Bodies in Cathedral Music-Making

The intimate relationship between the body and music-making is crucial in understanding how women's bodies have been ostracised from cathedral practice. Despite the slowly increasing discussion by musicologists about the complex place that bodies occupy in performance,⁸⁶ the relationship has historically been avoided in scholarship or minimised to a mere symbol. Commenting on the almost other-worldly treatment of bodies in musicology, Martin Clayton and Laura Leante have observed that:

⁸⁶ See Suzanne Cusick, 1994; Susan Cook and Sherill Dodds, 2016; Youn Kim and Sander L. Gilman, 2019.

Musicology has frequently striven to keep the body out of view or at most to allow bodily movement a place in its discourses only as (apparently disembodied) metaphor; at other times, it has broken through these constraints to temporarily assume a central importance, before fading from view once again. (2013, p. 206)

Here Clayton and Leante's consideration of the complicated relationship that musicology has had with the body – keeping it out of sight and at times giving it utmost prominence – points towards a struggle to encompass the nuances of the relationship between music and corporeality. As Stefan Sunandan Honisch asserts in the *Oxford Handbook of Music and the Body*, musicological projects which are 'concern[ed] with how music [has] embodied gender, race, and disability through composition, performance, and reception' come up against the assumption that 'the existence of a normal body against which bodies that depart from purportedly normal characteristics become the objects of normalizing interventions, both metaphorical and actual' (2019, p. 267). The avoidance of focussing on the body has influenced what is viewed and heard as 'normal' in western classical music-making. By keeping the body out of academic view, the impact of gendered bodies (in terms of their posture, gesture, presence as well as how they are clothed) in practice has been under-studied and their influence in solidifying or questioning norms in classical music has gone unchallenged in the academy.

In my ethnographic sketches (available in full in Appendix C), I identify six bodies or sets of bodies in the cathedral service: the congregation, the choir, the conductor, the clergy, supplementary cathedral staff, and (out of sight, but still present) the organist. In both services we can see the congregation to a greater or lesser degree. My sketches capture particular perspectives of the services including where the congregants sit, how many there are and how much space they take up in the building, the movements (standing, sitting, kneeling, bowing), and by comparison the relative (requisite) stillness of the choir whilst singing. All tell part of the narrative of cathedral worship and all play into a broader understanding of the way that bodies are treated and understood in cathedral services. In the first service everyone is sat in the Quire in close proximity to one another. In the second service, from my position in the Nave, I could observe a multitude of people who were sat in the Quire. The choir and conductor are in view

for the duration of the first service and for the vast majority of the second. Congregants can also see members of the clergy and other cathedral staff before and during the service. There are also some bodies which are noticeably absent. In both services there are no boy choristers. The girl choristers at Durham usually sing on Tuesday and Friday (the latter is usually unaccompanied) and as such there is no organist involved in the first sketch which was an observation of a ‘standard’ Friday service. Weekend services are commonly split between the boys and girls at Durham. However, during the weekend of the observations at Durham Cathedral, the girl choristers sang four services, including the two that I observed, as the boy choristers were on Exeat (a weekend each term where either the girl or boy choristers are allowed to go home). I will firstly explore the impact of vestments and robing in cathedral music-making in terms of the gendered norms they assert and how they affect the visibility of bodies which have been left out of cathedral music-making for most of the Church’s history.

(a) Representation and Robing: The (In)Visibility of Women and Girls in Cathedral Services

Service 1:

[the choir] process into the choir stalls in pairs dressed in purple cassocks. Everyone except the three probationers also have white surplices on top of their cassocks. Some of the choristers are wearing medals around their necks, tucked under their cassock.

Service 2:

All [three] of the stewards are older women dressed in red Durham Cathedral gowns on which the cross of St Cuthbert is emblazoned.

Three of the cathedral servers dressed in white [...]

The members of the procession are in clerical robes and some have graduation hoods affixed to their robes. The choir members are dressed in purple cassocks with white surplices. Some of the adult choir members, and the Director of Music, also have graduation hoods.

In both of the services I observed, all members of the choir are dressed in purple cassocks. The sight of a cassock – described by Barbara Baumgarten as a ‘floor-length, long-sleeved, close-fitting robe’ (2002, p. 20), usually red or purple – and

surplice – which is a ‘white’, ‘knee-length, ungirded garment with a gathered yoke and large, full sleeves [...]’ (p. 21) – is commonplace at nearly every cathedral in England. Linking with the ‘traditional’ expectations of what a cathedral choir looks, and sounds like from Barrier Two, this part explores the ways that bodies are clothed and presented in the cathedral service to reveal or conceal the diversification of cathedral music-making. The way that vestments are used in services is complex and the implications of their use are multi-layered and sometimes contradictory. For example, in the same way that Anna Bull understands the uniformity or ‘camouflaging’ of orchestra members when dressed in typical all-black concert dress, I argue that these vestments are used to make choristers (as individuals) ‘as unobtrusive and unnoticed as possible’ (2019, p. 99). Robing, I will suggest, can lead to a minimisation of a somewhat gendered difference between the choristers – in line with Bull’s understanding of corporate dress as camouflage – as this uniformity of dress anonymises individual bodies. Even though the dress is, on occasion, ostentatious as a result of the bright colours, medals and ruff collars, for example, the bodies themselves become camouflaged by this pomp and circumstance.

It is clear from my ethnography that vestments are used to make the choir prominent *as a corporate body*. Not all choirs are robed in uniform ways, however, and in this way, robing is used to highlight the otherness of certain bodies. I made note, for example, that the three probationers were the only members of the choir who did not wear white surplices. Probationers do not wear surplices as a physical demarcation of their training; once they have finished this year of training and become full choristers they will cease to be set apart from their fellow choristers. Additionally, for special services, such as the service that was the focus of my second ethnography, it is routine for members of the choir and clergy to wear graduation hoods.⁸⁷ Vestments, in this way, are a clear indication of hierarchy as there is a type of differentiation signalled, based on musical experience and academic achievement. Some bodies are intentionally set apart from the rest which conflicts with the production of anonymity by means of the wearing of

⁸⁷ In service two, I also observed the dress of the clergy – servers dressed in white, the verger in black as well as the vestments that were worn by the cathedral stewards.

identical cassocks and surplices. This is, I argue, indicative of the broader scale struggle with uniformity and hierarchy in cathedral music-making which affects gender diversity and inclusion.

The impact of any differentiation should be considered when thinking about how the choristers are presented. The vestments which the choristers wear cover most of their bodies. Yet, as evidenced in studies of school uniforms by Michael Firmin *et al.* (2009) and sports such as boxing (Cathy Van Ingen and Nicole Kovacs, 2012) and volleyball (Jesse Steinfeldt *et al.*, 2013), the clothing that girls wear is subject to significant scrutiny in ways that boys' clothing is not; this is especially pertinent in terms of the common desire to decrease the distraction that the female bodies are perceived to cause. In these environments and many others besides, women are made to feel uncomfortable about how their bodies look in an activity (learning, fighting, or playing) which does not in any way rely on their bodies "looking" a certain way. Contributing to this is the rhetoric of modesty, shame, and propriety which makes it objectionable for women's skin to look like skin. In the interviews which I carried out, the effect of this rhetoric is exemplified in a comment from Georgia (Lay clerk), who recalled that during her time as a chorister, some members of the congregation took issue with the flesh-coloured stockings that the girls were wearing – because the skin of girls is objectionable – and it was resolved they would wear black tights instead. The way that girls' bodies (in this case the objection to the ankles and shins of girl choristers) are scrutinised in the cathedral context, I suggest, strengthens the sense that their bodies do not belong.

As such, I now want to explore the extent to which this uniformity is combined with difference according to gender. Building upon the struggle between promoting difference and fitting women and girls into the existing – male – tradition, I argue that the presumption of maleness and the corresponding erasure of femaleness, can be seen in the way vestments are used in the cathedral service. In Table 8, I compare the vestments worn by the girls and boys at each of the ten case study cathedrals. In four (of the seven) cathedrals where the girls are treated

equally to their male counterparts, their clothing is part of this ethos of equality.⁸⁸ Whereas, in each of the cathedrals where the girls are seen to any extent as supplementary to the ‘tradition’ of boys and men, or indeed forging their own tradition (as explored more thoroughly in Barrier Two), provisions and choices about vesting do not map cleanly onto the underlying assumptions about whether and where girls sit within the tradition. At three of the English cathedrals where the girls are in every other way treated as equal to their boy counterparts, the girls wear different vestments, for example. The rhetoric and practice do not always cleanly correlate.

| Vestment Comparison | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Cathedral | Girls | Boys |
| Canterbury ^ | Purple Cassock; White Surplice | Same |
| Durham | Purple Cassock; White Surplice | Same |
| Ely ^ | Red Cassock; White Surplice | Same |
| Guildford ^ | Red Cassock; White Surplice | Same |
| Lincoln | White Alb; Blue Tabard | Blue Cassock; White Surplice |
| Newcastle ^ | White Alb; Red Tabard with Blue Trimming | Red Cassock; White Surplice |
| Peterborough | Red Cassock; White Surplice | Same |
| Salisbury | White Alb; Green Tabard with Blue Trimming | Green Cassock; White Surplice |
| St Albans * | Red Cassock; White Surplice | Same |
| York Minster | Red Cassock; White Surplice | Same |
| ^ Denotes cathedrals which have teenage girls | | |
| *In 2019, The St Albans Cathedral Girls' Choir's vestments were changed from White Albs with Red Tabards to Red Cassocks and White Surplices. | | |

Table 8 – Vestments

When girl choristers were introduced at cathedrals including Durham and York Minster, more of the same cassocks and surplices worn by the boys were bought for the new girl choristers. At Salisbury, although in every other way the girls are treated exactly the same as their male chorister counterparts, the girls wear

⁸⁸ As was central to my discussion of tradition in cathedral music-making in Barrier Two, this ethos is typified by decisions surrounding the nomenclature assigned to the singers, their age, who the choristers are led by, repertoire choices, opportunities for leadership (including solos), and how the choristers are financed and educated.

tabards⁸⁹ and albs,⁹⁰ unlike the boys who wear a cassock and surplice. The confusion surrounding the Salisbury vestments was commented on by Wendy, a Precentor at another cathedral, who remarked: “you go somewhere like Salisbury where they insist [that] they’re equal but dress the girls differently” which links clearly to the rhetoric of complementarity from Barrier One. The colour inversion of ‘cathedral green’ cassocks with white surplices for the boys and white albs with ‘cathedral green’ tabards for the girls makes the gendered performance of the bodies abundantly clear to everyone in the congregation at Easter, Christmas, and end-of-year services when the two sets of choristers sing together. In this sense, a physical signal of the gender-based delineation is indisputable. Another of the Precentors, Tom, reflected on the symbolism of the bodies in cathedral music: “We are symbolic creatures and seeing girls singing the services as well as boys, and particularly on occasions when our choir sings together – that is a symbol of an equal and diverse society in which we are living.” Tom’s understanding of services such as at Christmas and Easter, where the cathedral choir sing together, as being symbolic can also be extended to the cathedral services where boy choristers are not present, or where unexpected bodies – the bodies of women and girls – *are* present alongside the boys and men.

If inclusion is symbolic, exclusion is too. It is perhaps the way that women’s otherness is underplayed as a result of their androgynisation through vestments in many places that leads to an acknowledgement (tacit or otherwise, by the women themselves) that stereotypical femaleness in this context is without status or authority (a consequence of the male-as-norm which is at once reductive and enforces the binary). As a result, women may come to identify with the maleness of their profession, occasioning in a quasi-denial of their femaleness, per Bartleet’s ‘surrogate masculinity’ (2002, p. 52). The type of invisibility which robes bring about certainly conceals the male singers too. However, it does not strip them of their gender in the same way it does for women; any androgynisation of the maleness of the choristers is still based in a culture of sophisticated male

⁸⁹ Tabards are ‘a sleeveless garment consisting of only front and back pieces with a hole for the head’ (Mackey, 2015, p. 16).

⁹⁰ Albs are ‘a white vestment, worn by clergy, which reaches the feet. Some choirs wear them, topped with a tabard (Mackey, 2015, p. 15).

dominance in which male bodies are still the status quo. The suppression is not equal because for the male body it is about corporate anonymity, whereas for the women it can result in a gendered erasure (intentionally or otherwise). It weakens the idea that femaleness could be a strength in this environment.

Although Bartleet is discussing (adult) women conductors, I propose that her argument regarding the navigation of complex social and musical factors sheds light on how vestments are used to obscure the femininity of the girl choristers, but paradoxically also to mark them out as ‘different’ from their male counterparts. This is most clearly seen when the robes are different colours, but as I will discuss, is not entirely absent when the robes are the same for all. Bartleet suggests that a woman conductor’s presence on a podium ‘presents a paradox’ because the social and musical discourses clash – ‘dominant social discourses encourage them to pursue femininity through their bodies’, but at the same time they are told to ‘renounce their femininity’ which she connects strongly to how ‘prescriptive dress and body stipulations’ help to ‘de-emphasize her female sexuality and suppress it in a masculine gendered appearance [...]’ (p. 52). This renunciation problematises that which is different about being female, not just in the role of conductor as it is indicative of how the bodies of women have been discriminated against in this specific arena of cathedral music-making: any sense of femininity is discarded in favour of a certain idea of historic maleness because they have always been associated with male bodies. By identifying with a male body, and not contesting the discrimination or male-as-norm as assumption, women are, I argue, forced to carry another weight (the loss of a female identity) whilst trying to navigate the labyrinth of leadership as discussed later, in Barrier Four). With regards to the barriers surrounding tradition, having girls wear different vestments from their male counterparts can make it seem as though they are supplementary to the tradition or forging a new tradition, the latter of which is not necessarily a negative (as was discussed in Barrier Two).

Aside from the physical presentation of boys and girls dressed differently, the age of choristers in terms of their physical development also emphasises a clear distinction between the seven to thirteen-year-old boys and the thirteen to

eighteen-year-old girls, as is the case at Canterbury, Ely, and to a certain extent Guildford and Newcastle. Sexualisation of *teenage* girls specifically has been widely covered by scholars including Emma Renold and Jessica Ringrose (2011) and Mary Jane Kehily (2012). Renold and Ringrose, for example, are keen to comment that ‘public and private anxieties’ about the sexualisation of teenage girls ‘have a long and contested history, steeped in gendered, classed and raced developmental discourse [...]’ (2011, p. 390). The direct discrimination against teenage girls is perhaps the most under-discussed facet to the ongoing conversation around girls and women in Anglican cathedral music. The decision to deny teenage girls the opportunity to be a chorister, or to continue as a chorister after age thirteen, seems unsubstantiated and unfounded except for the significantly greater ease of achieving androgynisation resulting from having girls and boys who are exactly the same age. The desire to achieve parity by imposing on girls the physical limitations that apply to boys (in terms of the loss of treble voice by age fourteen) is yet another example of how the girls are made to conform to a male norm. It contributes to the (negative) othering of the teenage girls.

As explored in Barrier Two, the presentation of the teenage girls as distinctive from their male counterparts by the nature of the combined age and gender differences accentuates the girls as other in the cathedral context. Whilst there are affirmative reasons for this difference, one ramification of the considerable contrast between the pre-pubescent (boy) treble and the teenage pubescent body is the way that these bodies become sexualised, not least through their garments. The girls and boys at Canterbury, for example, wear the same garments but the distinction in age between the boys and girls means that there is no reasonable way that upon seeing the choristers together, the observer will not distinguish the pre-pubescent boys and teenage girls. This distinction in and of itself is not necessarily problematic. Nonetheless, by accentuating any existing bodily differences between the two (mostly as a result of puberty but also by means of vestments), the girls are unwittingly placed in a hierarchy beneath the boys.

Given the ongoing (although diminishing) opposition to girl choristers, this accentuation is not necessarily, or always, positive.⁹¹

The bodies of the teenage girl choristers across the country are different from the bodies of their male counterparts of the same age and indeed of the boy choristers who are on the whole much younger. In their interview with me, one senior musical leader claimed, regarding their decision to change the vestments of the Girls' Choir at their cathedral from tabards to cassocks: "I don't object to tabards as a concept, but I do object to tabards on women with breasts. They look like milkmaids." Although this participant did not necessarily intend to sexualise the girl choristers, I suggest that their well-intentioned rhetoric is informed by a wider cultural tendency to do so. In this participant's understanding it is demeaning to accentuate teenage girls' breasts because it would result in them being unduly sexualised. Robin Ganey (2007) and Georgia Bulis-Gray (2019) have commented on the sexual connotations of milkmaids in both contemporary and historical contexts. In the context of the teenage girls' body in cathedral music-making how the vestments can lead to objectification of the pubescent singers, as well as how their modesty is scrutinised, epitomises the way that the female body is subject to so much speculation and attention in cathedral music-making in a way that male bodies are not.

It is not only young people's bodies that are problematised, however. Rosie (Lay clerk and former Choral Scholar at a different cathedral) compared her experience at the two cathedrals regarding the vestments that she wore in both institutions. At the first, she claimed that there was "much more fuss by the matrons"⁹² because she was so much shorter than the male singers. Rosie recalled how she ended up wearing a chorister cassock because of her height, and she reflected that the matrons (who oversee care for choristers including helping them

⁹¹ This hierarchy was introduced in Barrier Two.

⁹² At many cathedrals, matrons are hired to take care of the choristers – they look after them in terms of their general wellbeing but also in terms of their clothing and during my observations at the cathedrals also made food for the choristers before rehearsals. Matrons are usually, but not always, women. As a result, there are social structures and assumptions about the position which are indicative of wider gender roles associated with the ministry of caring in the Church. Matrons can be seen to model good practice and behaviour for choristers, often accompanying probationers to services, and, as is the case in this context: helping them to wear their vestments properly.

with robing) found her need for a chorister cassock “fascinating”. The way that female singers are made to feel as though they require special treatment or that their bodies are “fascinating” in that context, I argue, contributes to the notion that they should not be there and that, in relation to tradition, their bodies are new in this place or space. It is particularly pertinent that this comment was made to Rosie by one of the only other women involved in the broader process of cathedral music-making as it is indicative of the role that women play in maintaining the male as status quo.⁹³ This fascination with women’s bodies as ‘other’ can be positively intended (as an almost excitement, on occasion) but for this participant there was a sense of annoyance that their body was put front and centre as being some kind of deviation from the norm.

There is, as was the case with tradition in Barrier Two, a spectrum on which androgyny and invisibility aid cathedrals in their trajectory towards equality in their practices. The way robes are used (in terms of their corporate hierarchies, colour inversion and use of tabards and albs instead of cassocks and surplices) can contribute to a cathedral tradition imbued with a sense of objectionability to the bodies of women and girls, and a denial of their femaleness in favour of not just the presumption of maleness, but its eminence. On balance, affirmative othering proves more helpful in this context, although it does have positive and negative implications in terms of gender diversity and inclusion not least because of the potential damage of consistently reasserting the male status quo. I contend that productive othering and normalising leads to a more general acceptance of the place of women and girls in these environments, especially in comparison to their erasure or invisibility which results in the impression that they do not belong. Whilst making the distinction is problematic in so far as othering asserts the male-as-norm, it is not as problematic as making no distinction at all. It is important to reassert that the beliefs of the music team or indeed the musicians in the choir do not necessarily map onto the practices in their cathedrals as pertains to how the choir are physically presented. I advocate that meticulous care needs to be given

⁹³ Women are not necessarily supporters of change to patriarchal structure. This is evidenced, for example, in women’s opposition to the introduction of women bishops: see Riazat Butt, 2012.

to decisions about robing, particularly with teenage and adult women singers as they are perceived and viewed through the presumptive male gaze.

(b) Gesture, Posture and Presence in Cathedral Services

Service 1:

The congregants stand as the choir enter, as instructed in the order of service.

The majority of the choir and congregation kneel for the prayers. The choristers model kneeling and praying for the rest of the congregation whilst some members of the back row respectfully decline to kneel and are seated instead. This is mirrored in the congregation.

Service 2:

Before [the clergy member] sings the words 'let us pray', members of the congregation begin to kneel. Once the collects are over, the kneeling congregants return to a seated position.

Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel contends that:

apart from the ups and downs of sitting, standing and kneeling, all that is left as an initiative of the body is singing. With music and singing above all, Protestant Christianity has for centuries preserved some emotion, pleasure and bodily action in its church. The throat is the organ of breath and the expression of all feelings and senses, and it is becoming clear today that music could to some degree conceal the lack of bodily involvement. (1994, p. 51)

Throughout the services I attended, the congregation are instructed (by means of the order of service) to stand no fewer than four times, to sit twice, and kneel twice. The choir and conductor spend most of the service standing but, as shown in the above excerpt, are similarly expected to sit for the readings and kneel for the prayers. Breathing in the cathedral choir is often accompanied with a slight bending of the knee from both the conductor and singers alike. Cathedral singers – in comparison to say worshippers in Pentecostal and Evangelical churches⁹⁴ – are significantly more still; the bodily movement in cathedral choirs is objectively minimal and the liturgical movements and gestures are not, on the whole, expressive apart from the kneeling, sitting, and genuflecting. Iris Marion Young

⁹⁴ See Monique Ingalls, 2018.

claims that ‘even in the most simple body orientations of men and women as they sit, stand, and walk, we can observe a typical difference in body style and extension’ (1980, p. 142).

At the end of this part, I will discuss the role of bodies who are placed *out of sight* in the cathedral services, particularly the organist. But I shall begin by discussing the extent to which women are being *seen* but rendered ‘anonymous’ or ‘androgynous’ by way of gestures and postures in cathedral services, as they are in some instances by choices about vestments; by attending to – following Linda McDowell and Jo Sharpe – ‘the body, its size, shape, gestures, the very space it takes up, those masculine and feminine norms which mean that men sprawl and women don’t; and the differences in physicality that construct and reflect gender norms create ways of being in space’ (1997, p. 203). Here I attest that the general culture of authority which is associated with maleness (both in and outside of the Church) has in no small way contributed to tacit vocabularies which assert the hierarchy of men and boys over women and girls in cathedral music-making, even in the ones where equality is championed.

Nowhere more clearly can gendering and androgynisation be seen in the cathedral than through how the gendered body is presented through the musicians’ gesture and posture during the service of Evensong. Bull makes a poetic and bold claim that ‘[...] a still body doesn’t riot. It watches, thinks, and feels – but emotion is always under cognitive control’ (2019, p. 110). The stillness of the choristers is a key part of the way that control is exercised in cathedral music-making. The way that Bull describes the still body as seemingly refusing to display emotion is particularly gendered, especially in the cathedral, and particularly in the context of women being *perceived* as more emotional than their male counterparts (discussed further in Barrier Four). I contend that the virtual stillness of the cathedral choir is potently gendered because it ensures that women are controlled by what Bull calls ‘performing a fantasy of social order’ (p. 110). Clare Hall argues that:

listening to the boy voice we perceive a *male* body, and because of the inimitability of his voice in the context of the church, his song is a symbolic vehicle for the soul’s elevation to higher realms. By virtue of his age and

gender, the emotionless and sexless choir-boy possesses a spiritual potentiality unobtainable by ordinary men and women, much like the eunuch or the angel, a superhuman creature able to traverse heavenly spaces as the “perfect servant” of others. (emphasis in original; 2018, p. 39)

As Hall notes, this specific embodiment is one which is perceived to be solely obtainable by the boy treble. The evocation of an emotionless vessel can be linked to Bull’s understanding about the non-riotous, still and ‘critically obedient’ body (2019, p. 110). Furthermore, the transcendental nature of the boy treble’s virtue is only exacerbated by the rituals of stillness when they sing, particularly in terms of how the choristers stand – still, except to turn the pages of their scores or to kneel, sit or bow East. This is in line with Suzanne Cusick’s consideration that, ‘if gender is constituted by bodily performances, and metaphors of gender are constantly circulating through discourse, might not elements of all bodily performances be read as metaphors of gender even when they seem to be performances of other things?’ (1994, p. 15). The composure and discipline of the child chorister is in this context what Lisa McCormick has described as a one of the ‘typical signs of credibility’ in this performance (2015, p. 151). Discussing the stillness of a pianist, McCormick claims that:

this sort of high controlled physical presentation [of keeping a still body whilst performing] is often described as an abstention from the visual element of performance. But it is more accurately understood as a tremendously expressive signifier of the modern, severe and puritan style that this performer wishes to represent. [...] it serves to demonstrate how automatically its meaning is grasped. (2015, p. 151)

Although the choristers are ingrained with this discipline, the stillness they perform as part of their highly disciplined practice is one way that their bodies are controlled. In the context of gender diversity and the cathedral choristership, this stillness and how it is ingrained in what it means to be a ‘good’ chorister is a bodily performance of other things too; as Cusick claims, when girls are still, it can mean and be interpreted in a different way to the stillness of their male counterparts.

I argue that when the bodies are in sight the separation of boys and girls continues or reasserts the notion of difference – their voices are transplanted in the minds of the congregation (who otherwise are not aware of the gender of the

choristers) onto the androgynous chorister body often associated with maleness. They become *de facto* male because they are stripped of that which is negatively associated with femaleness. This is alluded to in Howard and Welch's 2002 study which explored the accuracy of blind gender identification of the treble line of Wells Cathedral Choir in which they found that 'gender confusability decreases with ascending age, indicating that untrained boys' singing voices become perceived as more "masculine" as they get older' (*Gendered Voice in the Cathedral Choir*, 2002, p. 171). Their findings in the same work — that when the choir are unseen, the gender of the choristers is not successfully identified, as discussed in relation to tradition and age in Barrier Two — are indicative of the ways that the promotion of sameness within the cathedral choir, particularly as pertains to age, impact on the sense of belonging that girls have in cathedral music-making. They are allowed to belong because their femaleness is indistinguishable from the male norm.

One way I have interpreted this obscuring of femaleness is that it renders women invisible. The ideologies which arise when women are physically invisible in cathedral music-making highlight core issues surrounding androgynous bodies and Bartleet's 'surrogate masculinity' (2002, p. 52). On occasion, the choir sing out of sight — as was the case with the singing of the anthem in the second service that I observed and occasionally in other services where the choir would sing an introit beforehand. Furthermore, as a result of the way that choristers are by and large kept separate in services (as discussed in Barrier Two), there are days in every week where one could reasonably assume that girl choristers do not sing at any given cathedral. Nowadays, more commonly than not, there is no indication whether or not the girl or boy choristers are singing (i.e., on the Service Sheet or on the cathedral website). Exceptions to this include occasions when the girl (or boy) choristers or Lay clerks are singing a service without the rest of the choir and service promotional material at cathedrals where the girls do not sing frequently, such as Canterbury.⁹⁵ However, the routine of the cathedral choir at cathedrals where the girl and boy choristers sing the same number of services (or at least

⁹⁵ This is evidenced in both the *Service Sheets* available online and in the interviews that I carried out as part of this research.

with a certain frequency) does also allow for a certain level of predictability for when the girls will be singing. For example, at Durham the girls sing Tuesday and Friday and at Lincoln they sing on Mondays and Thursdays, so some regular visitors may know in advance which chorister line will sing on a particular day. In these cases, the girls are not ‘unseen’, even when they are out of sight because of this prior knowledge, so therefore the assumption of maleness dissipates. For those who are not aware of the cathedral routine, the presumption of maleness makes their gender even more crucial because of its very invisibility and presumed absence from the space completely.

If choristers’ movements are characterised by an emphasis on their stillness, the conductor stands out for their relative mobility, and here too, like stillness, mobility is gendered. Comparisons of the fluidity of the gestures women and men use in conducting, and the subsequent interpretations of those gestures by the choir and members of the congregation, have been key factors in understanding assumptions about women’s bodies in music-making. Marin Alsop, a leading conductor and educator, discusses a comparative double standard to which women are held in conducting. She is quoted in an article in *The Independent* as saying:

Conducting is about gesture, and gesture in our world is interpreted differently depending on your gender. If a woman makes a gesture, it is interpreted in a totally different way from a man making the same gesture. Since conducting is all about body language, I think it really is advantageous to be able to speak with women about the reality of how their gestures are interpreted [...]. (Jessica Duchen, 2016)

The tacit interpretation of gesture as gendered has serious ramifications for gender diversity and inclusion in music-making, including in cathedral music-making. Notions of authority and authenticity have already been introduced in Barrier Two and are deeply connected with gesture and posture. Liz Garnett, writing on the choral conductor and gesture, asserts: ‘the gesture [of conducting] as a whole places conductors in the centre of the sound; it aligns them with the ensemble, and invites a sense producing a sound that fills a space extending further beyond them’ (2009, p. 146). Irrespective of the gender of the Director of Music, there is, as Bull describes it, a ‘non-linguistic, affective, embodied power’

(2016, p. 867) which comes from gesture amongst other factors including breathing and stance. Bull also comments on the intimacy of how the choir breathe with the conductor, noting how the choir in her ethnography were ‘almost allowing the conductor to inhabit our bodies and draw the sound out of us. Our expression and our sound became his’ (2016, p. 864). The level of tacit control that Bull describes the conductor as having will be discussed more in Barrier Four. Nonetheless, it is imperative here to make reference to the uniformity of breath and the way that this being led by the conductor creates a relationship between the conductor and the choir member. The complete uniformity of the sound which is marked by a seamless presentation of the music and discipline controlled by the conductor, particularly through the efforts of breathing as instructed in rehearsals, means that there is not much that is unique about the members of the cathedral choirs in this regard (as will be discussed in Part III). Authority is gendered because the embodied power of the conductor could be understood to be ‘authoritative’ and ‘commanding’ for men, but the exact same actions understood as ‘harsh’ and ‘forceful’ from a woman.⁹⁶ Similarly, the same conducting style of ‘soft and light’ could be understood as a positive for a man, and ‘unclear and delicate’ when motioned by a woman.

Service 1:

The Director of Music takes his place in front of a music stand which is equidistant between the two sets of singers.

In the services I observed, it was clear to me the high level of tacit control the Director of Music had – not just in terms of controlling the music but also, as shown above, in controlling silence as well as more indirect supervision of the choristers (particularly in this case the probationer). So, if, as Alsop understands it, women’s gestures on the podium (or in this case at the music stand) are open to being interpreted differently from their male counterparts, then the embodied power which is associated with the conductor will also be open to an alternative interpretation. In both of the observed services at Durham the (male) Director of

⁹⁶ See, for example: Deborah Prentice and Erica Carranza, 2002; Jeanine Prime, Nancy Carter, and Theresa Welbourne, 2009; Karima Merchant, 2012.

Music has full control over how long the silences after the readings last – in these services between thirty-one and thirty-three seconds. After this pause, the Director of Music returns to the centre of the Quire and indicates subtly but surely to the choir to stand. He has full control.

Sande Zeig's understanding that gestures are 'concrete means of producing meaning, both the gestures that have been assigned to us and those that have not been assigned to us' (1985, p. 13) is critical to navigating the interpretation of the gestures of the leader, but especially in terms of women conductors and the reasons why women are perceived to have less authority in this role (c.f. Anna Bull, 2016). Carrie Paechter has argued that 'there are different power relations inherent in how individuals relate to hegemonic masculinities' (2006, p. 256) and that 'the dualistic relation between masculinity and femininity, whether claimed by males or females, positions both extreme and normative femininity as without power [...]' (p. 257). Paechter's understanding of the almost diametric opposition of femininity and clout is critical to understandings of the place of femaleness in cathedral music, especially in terms of how the social hierarchies are presented. This is most clearly seen with regards to the conductor. The Director of Music throughout my ethnographic sketches moves through the space in a way that at all times asserts him as the leader of the choir. When processing in, he is at the front of the procession and throughout the musical worship he stands in the centre of the aisle, equidistant to each side of the choir. In the cathedral service, the conductor takes a place apart from everyone else in the service – the choir, congregation, and clergy each stay in one place for the duration of a 'normal' service even when moving through kneeling, sitting, and standing. The conductor spends their time in the middle of the Quire, on their own, apart from everyone else. They command the space, only moving out of focus for the readings and silences between sung and spoken rhetoric throughout the service. The role requires a performance of absolute authority which is presumed to have a less authoritative association when performed by a woman.

In the cathedrals of England, a set of bodies which are heard but not often seen are its organists. The organist is never seen by congregants.⁹⁷ If you have been to a service in an Anglican cathedral in England and assumed that the out of sight organist is male, you would almost certainly be correct. Over the course of the past forty or so years since women began to play the organ on a more regular basis in cathedrals, the person playing the organ has more than probably been male.⁹⁸ This is because women have only ever been appointed to a musical leadership position at only twenty-one of the forty-two cathedrals in their entire musical history. If you were to attend Evensong today, it would only be reasonable to expect the organist to be a woman at seven of the forty-two. The chance of the organist being female then drops to around zero if the conductor of the service is a woman as no cathedrals currently have more than one woman on their musical leadership team.⁹⁹

Service 2:

Ten minutes before the service begins, ‘Abide with me’ by Noel Rawsthorne is played [...]

Many of the participants in this study remarked on the way that women organists were being ignored or othered by means of the presumption of maleness. One senior music leader, Rachel, shared with me her understanding of the ways that she and her other female colleagues were labelled ‘female organists’, instead of simply ‘organists’, commenting: “it’s a sad state of affairs that you still have to be labelled as such in a role where actually you being a female has no difference; you still have hands and feet, so your actual output is identical to a man’s”. Rachel’s emphasis on the similarities between men and women, with regard to instrument playing, highlights the underlying biases which exist. Gillian Rose writes that the ‘process of representation is central to everyday space and to the engendering of subjects in that space’ (1995, p. 348). Her understanding directly applies to the

⁹⁷ Save for services where a smaller organ positioned in the Quire might be played. When I visited Lincoln Cathedral for interviews, I attended an Evensong service where this was the case.

⁹⁸ This shadow of doubt accounts for visiting organists and occasional deputising.

⁹⁹ These figures are discussed in further detail in Barrier Four.

assumption of the maleness of organists if and when they are out of sight. Rachel again reflected that: “people will assume you’re a man if you’re out of sight”. This observation is supported by Monica Casper and Lisa Jean Moore who similarly wrote that ‘the visualized body is powerfully symbolic’ (2009, p. 2). I argue that at the same time the visualisation in our mind’s eye of that which we cannot see – in this case who is in the organ loft – relies upon the symbolism of what we can see. As a result, the wealth of male bodies in cathedral music-making has the power to shape our assumptions about the bodies we cannot see. Our assumption that the organist is male is perpetuated until and unless there is proof that they are not.

The ‘blind audition’ process is one way that musical establishments have tried to combat the biases implicit in viewing musicians’ bodies. Caroline Criado Perez’s recent work relates to the rise of purportedly meritocratic practices – by which musicians who are *not* white, male, orchestral musicians are increasingly being hired – with the introduction of blind auditions (2019, p. 59). The concept of blind auditioning has reportedly been a practice in orchestral settings in America since at least the 1950s (Jonathan Marshall, 1997; Claudia Goldin and Cecilia Rouse, 2000). Criado Perez’s research echoes Goldin’s and Rouse’s earlier study on the impact of blind auditions on female musicians. In this work, Goldin and Rouse conclude that the adoption of blind auditions helped female uptake by between 7.5% and 25% (2000, p. 736). Here, they assert that anonymity is a positive, but this is not always the case. Criado Perez uses blind auditioning, amongst other non-musical examples, to illustrate her argument that even the best-intentioned meritocracies ultimately benefit no-one except the white man. This leads her to argue for greater transparency and accountability in the hiring and promoting process more generally because even blind auditioning is not infallible (2019, pp. 59-68); bodies actively enter into the process at some point and the performer’s gender becomes implicit *and* central. As Edward Chang and Katherine Milkman have noted ‘if women have not had the same opportunities as men to build up their qualifications (perhaps because women received less support along pathways into organizations), the decision-making may still result in many more men being selected than women’ (2020, p. 4). Yet, the perceived advantage of not writing off women’s achievements or talents based on their gender – which is central to the

aforementioned concept of blind auditioning – was alluded to in a comment from Hilary (senior music leader) who asked the following rhetorical question: “Like if you put a screen up in front of the choir – do they sound exactly like you want them to? That’s gotta be the top priority. It can’t be what they look like or who they identify as, or who they go home to or anything like that.” I suggest here that the blind auditions process for orchestral auditions could easily be introduced, especially into the Organist and Organ Scholar audition process as will be discussed in Barrier Four.

The lack of female representation in the organ loft in English cathedrals (discussed in Barrier Four) is, I argue, as a result of notions of tradition (discussed in Barrier Two), and the assumption about their identity – not least what they look like, who they learned the organ with (and where), and their nationality.¹⁰⁰ The discourse which leads to a presumptive maleness in the cathedral when the organist is out of sight reasserts as a historical ‘fact’ (per Barrier Two) that the organist is probably male, white, English, and middle-class. This attitude persists even in cathedrals such as Durham, where, between 2017 and 2019 (during which time Imogen Morgan was Organ Scholar and Francesca Massey held the position of Sub-Organist), nearly every service (with exceptions of guest organists and visiting choirs) was played by an organist who was female. However, this situation is anomalous in English cathedrals today. It is worth considering – given the ways that women have to ‘fit in’ to male arenas in order to avoid too much attention or to avoid criticism¹⁰¹ – the possibility of a sense of safety in the anonymous nature of the bodies in the organ loft out of sight. Anonymity in this sense serves as an indirect positive for gender diversity throughout services, as it means women can exist in these spaces without the congregation necessarily knowing, and therefore objecting to, the fact that a woman is in the organ loft. In this way, anonymity preserves women in a safe space by removing them from sexualised curiosity as a result of their gender. Although, in terms of gender diversity, the objection would ideally not exist at all – the fact that women can thrive as organists once

¹⁰⁰ As was shown in my breakdown of the repertoire lists at four cathedrals in Barrier Two (Table 5, p. 124).

¹⁰¹ See Jessica Bertini and Alison Weir, 1997; Judith Oakley, 2002; and Carole Pateman, 2018.

appointed, due in part to their unseen position at the organ, is reflected in scholarship on women's occupation of other spaces.

II. "Gargantuan, vast, welcoming, enriching, glorious, thrilling"; Discovering the Cathedral Space

In *Queer Phenomenology*, Sara Ahmed asserts that:

What makes bodies different is how they inhabit space: space is not a container for the body; it does not contain the body as if the body were "in it". Rather bodies are submerged, such that they become the space they inhabit; in taking up space, bodies move through space and are affected by the "where" of that movement. It is through this movement that the surface of spaces as well as bodies takes shape. (2006, p. 53)

Noting the way that Ahmed articulates how bodies are submerged in space, it seems apposite to examine the cathedral as a space for the bodies (and voices) involved in speaking, singing and silences in the service of Evensong. If the bodies of the cathedral choir are affected by the 'where' of that movement as Ahmed suggests, then the role of the cathedral as a space – as a place of worship, and not simply a 'container' – is of vital importance for understanding how space becomes a barrier to gender diversity in cathedral music-making. This part will focus on the 'where' of cathedral music by looking at how the buildings are presented and understood, and how the environment for bodies which speak, sing, and are silent is created, communicated, and represented. Specifically, this part explores how the cathedral as a space for worship often consolidates (and sometimes overturns) these barriers. This analysis is in line with Roberta Gilchrist's argument that 'space provides more than just a map of social relations, it is primary to the construction of gender identity. Studies of gender and space must ask how space reinforces or transforms one's knowledge of how to proceed as a man or woman in one's society' (1994, p. 151). I therefore look at how cathedrals are perceived to affect the bodies that enter into the building; how they have been gendered; what the space provides in its various roles; and how these spaces are understood to provide people with a certain level of anonymity and what impact this has on inclusivity and belonging.

(a) From the Outside, Looking In

Descriptions of approaching any cathedral in England usually involve some aspect of awe. Scholars such as Andrew Anderson have remarked on how the ‘overwhelming physicality’ of cathedrals is comparable to the vastness of football stadiums (1998, p. 97). It is worth highlighting that this overwhelming grandiosity is not the case for all cathedrals: there are some key outliers to this including, for example, Bradford and St Albans which are less imposing.¹⁰² As Judith Muskett notes in her 2019 book entitled *Shop Window, Flagship, Common Ground: Metaphor in Cathedral and Congregation Studies*, grand metaphors are persistently given to cathedrals, such as ‘Flagships of the Spirit’ and ‘Ships of Heaven’ (used in the respective titles of works by Stephen Platten and Christopher Lewis, 1998; and Platten, 2006). Similarly, in an article by Simon Jenkins for *The Guardian* entitled ‘Stairways to Heaven’, Jenkins calls York Minster ‘a thumping Perpendicular palace’, whilst describing Norwich as having an ‘in-your-face tower and nave so grandly Romanesque [...]’, and Ely as ‘the ship of the Fens, its towers best seen floating on a morning mist across the fields’ (Jenkins, 2019). Muskett suggests that, ‘in cathedral life, such figurative language is a potent device enabling an interlocutor to access “the story beyond the story” of cathedrals by seizing and representing their essential character’ (2016, p. 277). I suggest that ascribing such majesty and immensity to these buildings is indicative of the inclination to exalt the cathedral as a building – as a space – and give them an almost other-worldly identity. As a result, even before considering the movement around the spaces, or potential of a religious or transcendent experience, the cathedral space in itself strikes the viewer as a marvel and the reverence is perpetuated by such descriptions.

Taking further that sense of enticement and awe in accounts of cathedrals, there is also clearly an intentionality in most places now about how the average tourist might enter this vast space. The role that visitors, especially tourists, play in decision making in cathedrals can be viewed in tandem with the arguments

¹⁰² Although there are, of course, comparatively small cathedrals such as Ripon and large parish churches including Holy Trinity Church in Hull, I consider each cathedral to be gargantuan landmarks in their own right.

about accessibility and insularity made in Barrier Two. Who belongs and who is welcome in the cathedral space, and the ways that this expressed focus is changing, more broadly, in a cathedral's activities of self-promotion is, I contend, a sign of a cathedral's mutable identity. Graham James argues that:

the encouraging vibrancy of cathedrals in relation to their surrounding communities should prompt us to ask whether this is particularly facilitated in England by the looseness of our hold upon our religious identity, enabling us to give the cathedral a mask, a personality in a bewildering variety of images. (2006, p. 15)

James' understanding indicates the ways that people can project a mask of their choosing onto a cathedral, and that each one can be assumed to have its own personality due to the vastness of the images – and therefore opportunities for learning – that can be found within (and indeed on) the cathedral walls. In Barrier One, I focussed on the ideas which underpin the delicate balancing of extreme views which play out in cathedrals on a daily basis as a result of the pursuit of a *via media*. Although the *via media* largely plays out in ideological ways, James' above understanding about the individual personalities of the cathedrals which enables them to wear a mask of sorts is certainly interconnected with the ramifications of a vague 'middle ground'. In many ways, cathedrals – as one of my participants, Peter, acknowledged – “have to be welcoming and accommodating without necessarily losing [their] own distinctiveness”. Cathedrals can provide a space which offers different things to different people depending on whether they have a loose religious identity, as James describes, or whether they are Anglicans navigating the *via media*.

The question of how one moves around the cathedral space and why people are attracted to these immense buildings can be developed in dialogue with work by scholars such as Geoffrey Crossick and Serge Jaumain (2019) who even entitled their book on European shopping centres, *Cathedrals of Consumption*, and by Meaghan Morris (2001). In her ethnography of shopping centres, Morris writes:

on the one hand, they seem so monolithically present – solid, monumental, rigidly and indisputably on the landscape, and in our lives. On the other hand, when you try to dispute with them, they dissolve at any one point into a fluidity and indeterminacy that might suit any philosopher's delirium of an abstract femininity – partly because the shopping centre 'experience' at

any one point includes the experience of crowds of people (or of their relative absence), and so of all the varied responses and uses that the centre provokes and contains. (2001, p. 446)

Morris's understanding of shopping centres can also be extended to the cathedral; like shopping centres, they have a presence in the daily lives of city-dwellers. The vocabulary that Morris uses here can be mapped onto the solidity of the space and the *flux* of the crowds of visitors, which makes the modern cathedral seem curiously similar to a shopping centre or other secular attraction. Opportunities for outreach, learning and for each one of the wide-ranging reactions and feelings that visitors (whether regular or one-off, local or otherwise) have in response to the cathedral building may be crucial to its endurance and indeed in sustaining the music 'tradition' (financially and otherwise). Morris's understanding of the 'abstract femininity' of the shopping centre — including the way the 'strategies of appeal' Morris describes as 'seductive' has similarities to the experiences of visitors to the cathedral — and the wide-ranging 'sensations, perceptions and emotional states aroused' (2001, p. 446) especially in terms of how the buildings are renovated, upkeep, and decorated to appeal.

In addition to the intangible ways that cathedrals (and shopping centres) are gendered, the gendering of inanimate objects is also common, based on the atmosphere of the cathedral space. I will now turn to the idea of buildings themselves being 'feminine' or 'masculine'. In *Gender, Space and Architecture*, Jane Rendell commented on the ways that words have cultural connotations, namely in the context of architecture how: 'soft, curvaceous interiors are connected with women and phallic towers with men' (2002, p. 103). It need not take much imagination to apply Rendell's architectural descriptions to cathedrals as they can often be home to both. Additionally, published work specifically on cathedrals also uses gendered descriptions of the buildings. Andrew Anderson, for example, writes that 'some have a homely, almost feminine, character' (1998, p. 90), whilst in Christopher Somerville's recent book on the 'private life' of England's cathedrals, one of the former guides at Ely Cathedral, Michael White, is quoted as saying (with a representative confusion of vocabulary): 'the fact is that cathedrals do have either a masculine or feminine feel to them, and in the case of Ely it's very much

a female one' (2019, n.p.). These gender-based views are shared by one of the participants in my study who told me about his gendered characterisation of the cathedrals, stating: "Durham is masculine; Lincoln is feminine". These inanimate objects also become gendered through gender-inflected language (e.g., Spanish and French), as discussed by Criado Perez (2019, p. 14). A direct linguistic feminisation is not apparent in the English language, but it is clear in other European languages, for example: in Spanish 'la Catedral', French: 'la Cathédrale' and indeed 'Notre Dame', in Italian: 'la Cattedrale', in German: 'die Kathedrale', and so on. In all of these instances the cathedral is given the feminine article.

Whether cathedrals are compared to shopping centres, football stadiums, ships, or palaces, there are innumerable gendered possibilities for what these spaces can contain and represent. How these gendered inflections affect movement and the way that musicians and visitors inhabit the spaces – large or small(er) – the feminine language and imagery ascribed to cathedrals is indicative of the ways that more ominous gendered implications begin to take shape in the cathedral space. The visibility of the bodies and voices of the girls and adult women (as discussed earlier in this chapter), which are still not the norm in cathedral music, makes them vulnerable in spaces described by one participant, Nina (music director), as "gargantuan" and "vast" amongst other adjectives.

(b) What's Inside: Uses and Purposes of Space in Cathedral Services

Even the smallest of the English cathedrals are massive; as such tourists and worshippers (although not necessarily two separate groups) are able to move through without talking to anyone if desired. Which bodies are welcome and, beyond that, which bodies are prominent in the cathedral space will be the focus of this part. On the one hand, I have observed that these spaces are so big one can feel overwhelmed or lost; whilst, on the other hand, there is a solace in the grandeur and its ensuing anonymity. Christopher Lewis identified this too when he stated that:

It is often said that the members are unusual in that cathedral congregations prefer quiet anonymity in contrast to the convivial

collectiveness of some parishes, or that they are music lovers who have little interest in other aspects of the Christian faith. (1998, p. 149)

Whilst there appears to be less of a community within the cathedral congregation than there is in a parish church, Lewis' identification that there is a preference for quiet anonymity for music lovers (who are not necessarily Christian) in cathedral congregations need not contradict the number of cathedral worshippers who would be identified as 'cradle Christians', as signalled in research by Leslie Francis, for example, and explored in Barrier One. I now want to return to the role of the cathedral space in terms of how it enables a kind of anonymity, whilst acknowledging, as Anderson argues, the size of the cathedrals of England differs enormously (1998, p. 91). In this sense then, the cathedrals can be understood to embody a type of intentional privacy for visitors and congregants – even the smallest cathedrals, such as Christ Church in Oxford, can be perceived to be simultaneously small enough and large enough to embody a type of sanctuary supported by this anonymity. Linked to the discussions surrounding anonymity and invisibility in the choir from earlier in this chapter, another purpose associated with the cathedral space is that it provides people with the opportunity to escape. Again, comparing cathedrals to shopping centres, Richard Vosko states:

The main entrances to churches are designed as places of hospitality rather than corridors only leading to the nave. *Large-scale Christian churches have atrium-like concourses similar to shopping malls.* When visiting these complexes one can find coffee shops, bookstores, and lounge areas in addition to restrooms and places set aside for child care. (emphasis mine; 2016, p. 46)

Given the fact that cathedrals are predominantly focussed towards receiving a great influx of tourists (in most cities) nowadays, there is less of a sense that the cathedral belongs to a particular set of people – whether that be Christian worshippers or non-believers; men or women and other gender identities; heterosexuals or LGBTQ+ people.¹⁰³ A participant in my study, Owen (senior music leader), described cathedrals, at their best, to me as: “spaces in which to feel

¹⁰³ Understanding the Church in this way has been reflected in statements by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Justin Welby) in his book *Reimagining Britain: Foundations for Hope* (2018) and the Archbishop of York (John Sentamu) in *On Rock or Sand? Firm Foundations for Britain's Future* (2015). Claims about the Church of England's type of inclusivity have been interrogated in this thesis as part of Barrier One.

inspired; spaces in which to feel safe”. The idea that cathedrals have the capacity to act as different things to different people, instead of imposing specific responses upon them, resonates with Susan White’s contention that Durham Cathedral ‘is a sacred space because it has aligned itself to the powerless by giving sanctuary to those in trouble’ (1995, p. 42). This concept of safe space is questioned in a recent article for the *Church Times* from 2019 in which Katy Hounsell-Robert reported that one of the artists involved in Chichester Cathedral’s “safe spaces” exhibition, Kate Simms, claimed that ‘nowhere is utterly safe, not even a cathedral’. Simms’ claim is reflective of the way that the cathedral as a space does in fact impose certain structures on people – as it plays out the ramifications of the Anglican *via media*. Hounsell-Robert went on to state that, nonetheless, ‘the cathedral itself is seen as a calm refuge for many’ (Hounsell-Robert, 2019). On the website of St Paul’s Cathedral, Evensong is described as:

an opportunity for people to take a moment to pause from their busy lives and reconnect with their spiritual lives whatever they believe. The rhythm of speech and music works together with the awe-inspiring space under our Dome to create a slowing of heart rate and breathing, and a quietening of the mind. For many it is a calming and deeply personal experience. (*Choral Evensong at St Paul’s*, 2020)

Similarly, Wendy’s understanding in her interview with me that “the building speaks to them [visitors] – we have no influence over that” in some senses can be held as true.

However, throughout the service, the space of the cathedral is used in a way which draws attention to certain parts of the building – indeed, the space as a whole – and to those leading the service, to portray the Christian narrative. Representative of all those who push back at the idea the cathedral is a) a tourist destination or b) a non-descript spiritual site, Vosko attests that ‘churches are not intended to be museums. Their primary purpose is to house the worship rituals of a community as they develop from age to age’ (2016, p. 43) and Judith Muskett claims that ‘[...] when popular, large-scale events render cathedrals more conspicuous common ground, they help to familiarize the community with the prosaic sacred space’ (2016, p. 283). Cathedrals in England have recently tried to draw people in, as was Muskett’s understanding, with many activities and events

which are not necessarily part of the core role of the cathedral – introducing people to the space in a supposedly less intimidating way. Examples include golf courses at Rochester,¹⁰⁴ Durham Cathedral’s hosting of the *North East England Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinners* in the main body of the cathedral¹⁰⁵ and its involvement in the *Lumiere Festival*,¹⁰⁶ as well as the helter-skelter at Norwich Cathedral.¹⁰⁷ In October 2019, Douglas Leatherdale asked ‘[w]hy are cathedrals hosting helter-skelters and golf courses?’ quoting Norwich Cathedral’s Reverend Canon Andy Bryant: ‘[A helter-skelter is] not something we expect to see in a cathedral, and it was all about seeing things differently and provoking conversations’. Bryant goes on to say: ‘if you see a space differently, might you see yourself differently – and even God?’ (Bryant, 2019). Bryant’s argument about having the public engage with the cathedral, when they might not otherwise do so, is relevant to understanding who it is for. The reimagination of the cathedral space in this way can serve to open up the cathedral to people who may have previously found it inaccessible or uninviting.

This inclusivity is connected closely with women’s role(s) in music-making in cathedrals as it provides broader context to the changing attitudes surrounding what it does and who can participate in this offering. One of the music directors I interviewed as part of this study, Robert, discussed the fact that many tourists who visit the cathedral he works at may not have intended to visit or attend Evensong when initially planning to visit the city. He describes the importance for him that the spirit of the worship is not just for the few regular attendees but also accessible for tourists who may be visiting the cathedral for the first (and perhaps last) time. Robert said:

[Evensong at my cathedral is often populated with] many tourists who probably earlier in the day didn’t know they were going to come to Choral Evensong that evening. But when they finish attending at six o’clock, they go away somewhat changed by the experience. They don’t necessarily have a religious experience, but many do have a feeling of something different, something transcendent and I definitely think that comes from a

¹⁰⁴ *Adventure golf at the cathedral* (2019).

¹⁰⁵ *£154k raised for Durham Cathedral restoration at Chamber Dinner* (2019).

¹⁰⁶ *Get ready for a resurgence of Lumiere favourites at Durham Cathedral this November* (2019).

¹⁰⁷ *Seeing it differently* (2019).

combination of the liturgy and the music. Neither would do the thing that's happened without the other.

This participant's understanding that the tourists, who may or may not believe in God or be Christian, leave 'somewhat changed by the experience' is in direct correlation with the way that the bodies, voices, and spaces create an atmosphere which allows access to the core purposes of cathedrals. There are multiple bodies which – perhaps even tacitly as a result of the *via media* – have not centrally occupied the cathedral space. There is an ethos of Christianity designed for white, male and middle-class men which is embedded in the very foundation of the cathedral space, and controls how it is navigated. As Ahmed indicates, there has been intentional and conscientious work to change the notion of which bodies are welcome and beyond that which bodies are prominent in (the cathedral) space, particularly over the past few years. Ahmed has also written that 'bodies inhabit space by how they reach for objects, just as objects in turn extend what we can reach [...]' (2006, p. 110). Their prominence in the cathedral service has manifold theological connotations regarding the place of music in worship, but perhaps most importantly in this context: it draws attention to the extent to which the bodies and voices of women and girls belong. The choir are effectively paraded around the cathedral, particularly visible (as a corporate unit) in the second service I observed. In terms of what this navigation of space means for gender diversity and inclusion, Ahmed argued that:

When bodies take up spaces they were not intended to inhabit, something other than the reproduction of the facts of the matter happens. [...] Indeed, for bodies to arrive in spaces where they are not already at home, where they are not "in place," involves hard work; it involves painstaking labor for bodies to inhabit spaces that do not extend their shape. (2006, p. 62)

During the cathedral services, members of the choir and clergy can be seen to bow their heads to the East upon entering their pews at the beginning of the service, and most members of the congregation face East (as instructed to do so) during the Apostles' Creed, bowing their heads on the words 'Jesus Christ'. At the end of the services I attended, members of the clergy and some members of the congregation genuflected and bowed their head to the East, from the end of their row, before leaving. I argue that in terms of the cathedral service, the way that

the choir (and conductor), congregation, and clergy navigate the space is specifically managed too. The location of the choir in the cathedral is significant. In addition to the rituals mentioned earlier in this chapter we can also observe how the choir inhabits the space by moving from the Chapter House through the body of the Nave, to the choir stalls in two precise lines, arriving in position, genuflecting East, before facing each other (and the Director of Music) and singing. The choir is sat in perhaps the closest position to the altar, in the head of the cross, which is undoubtedly representative of the position that music occupies in the worship life of the cathedral. There were also some key differences in how the space was used in the second service in my ethnography as a result of the service's special purpose including the choir singing out of sight (which I discuss in my analysis of voices in cathedral services below).

In this part, I have shown how the cathedral space – whether that be from the outside looking in or the inner sanctum – can be construed and interpreted in multifarious ways by those who engage with it. This engagement results in a plethora of gendered metaphors and descriptions which impact directly and indirectly on who belongs or feels a sense of belonging in these spaces. Concepts of sanctuary, anonymity, and invisibility impact on women, LGBTQ+ people, and non-Christians who enter and engage with this space; and importantly the various invocations of the space as 'safe' or unsafe for these people is tied up in how the building is used to draw attention to or away from specific voices.

Service 1:

The congregants [...] gather in the Quire of Durham Cathedral.

From the South Transept of the cathedral ... [the choir, conductor and clergy] process into the choir stalls. [...] They [...] bow to the East Window before entering their respective rows on the north and south side of the Quire – children at the front and adults behind. The conductor takes his place in front of a music stand which is equidistant between the two sets of singers.

[the choir] and the congregants turn to face East to recite the Apostle's Creed.

[At the end of the service] The two ordained women leave first, followed by the Director of Music, the back row of the choir and finally the choristers. They process out in the same manner as they did at the beginning of the service.

Service 2:

Today [...] Evensong features the dedication of the new Illumination Window at Durham Cathedral. [...] the window is found in the North Quire Aisle.

The Quire is completely filled and many more occupy the Nave. [...] I take my seat in the Nave as the Quire is filled [...]

Abide with me by Noel Rawsthorne is played [...] (out of sight).

Three of the cathedral servers dressed in white appear from the South Transept at the front of the procession. [...]

The procession makes their way from the south transept down the south aisle across and up the central aisle and into the Quire. They bow to the East before taking their places.

The Dean of the Cathedral is brought [...] to a small stand situated behind the Director of Music, closer to the altar.

Mel Howse, the artist who designed the Illumination Window is brought to the stand [...]

Some members of the congregation (family, friends and delegates of the university move to the North Quire Aisle via the side-exit in the Quire with the choir members and Director of Music).

The choir (still in the North Quire Aisle) sing

III. 'To Hear a Body': Voices in Cathedral Services

The symbolic importance of music and how it is embodied by the choir members is solidified by decisions made by the Director of Music about how their voices occupy these spaces. Combined these bodies, voices, and spaces become implicit indicators of the ethos of diversity. In this final part, I will explore how approaches to the voice throughout the cathedral service, evidenced throughout the services which I observed in May 2019, contribute to the erasure of female identity as explored previously in this chapter in line with Youn Kim's and Sander L. Gilman's statement that 'the body produces and experiences music in a given time and space. Therefore, the environment must be considered in approaching the relationship between music and the body' (2019, p. 6). I will demonstrate how voices are used and understood, like vestments and gesture, to strip away any trace of individualism or distinctiveness in the voices of women and girls in cathedral music. I will continue to analyse the structures which androgynise and render the (female) body almost invisible through a 'surrogate masculinity' as pertains the voices in cathedral services.

(a) Words and Voice in the Cathedral Service: Speaking and Singing

Ann Wetherilt claims that 'both proponents and opponents of empowering the marginalized [...] have recognized the importance of language as an instrument that can be used for liberation or for repression' (1994, p. 13). Her understanding of the importance of language as a double-edged instrument underpins my arguments regarding sung and spoken rhetoric. I wish to draw attention to how *choices* around language used in cathedral services contribute to the embodied performance of gender in these spaces. There are, I argue, grave implications of these choices for gender diversity and inclusion. Before looking in closer detail at the voices of the cathedral choir, I want to briefly explore the opportunities for the presentation of beliefs and religious accounts through spoken voice in the services I observed at Durham Cathedral. These opportunities included Old and New Testament readings, as well as congregational or corporate speaking in the form of creeds, and prayers.

There has been much discussion in feminist theological work of the use of gendered language to refer to God. In terms of Biblical narratives in the services I observed, the settings of the Psalms sung (55 and 27) were taken from the Psalter in *Common Worship: Daily Prayer*¹⁰⁸ which has been authorised for use in the Church of England since it was published in 2005. Both the Old and New Testament readings (from Exodus 28 and Luke 1; and Genesis 1 and 1 John 1, respectively) were taken from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (1989). The use of the NRSV here is a positive indication of how far the Church has come in terms of its language. It is ‘widely used in academic circles as well as churches’ and reportedly ‘employs gender-inclusive language in reference to human beings throughout’ (Cambridge University Press, 2019). The inclusive language of the NRSV outlined above also stands in opposition with the language of the hymnody. The hymnody used in the services I observed was taken from the New English Hymnal (NEH). Some participants in my study, including Wendy, acknowledged that there were reasons, mostly financial, which meant that at the cathedral she worked at they were still using the NEH (1986), which includes language that feminist scholars would not consider inclusive. This conflict can destabilise any progress and reminds us of the deeply exclusionary history of the Church to which it still, often tacitly, coheres.

The NRSV is still using the male pronouns for God and Jesus; and so, it is in line with the choices in these hymn titles, not out of step with them. The Church of England as an institution has not, for example, made changes such as those made by the United Methodists who in 2018 changed “God the Father Almighty” to “God the Creator Almighty” and “Jesus Christ, His only Son” to “Jesus Christ, *God’s* only Son” (emphasis mine). The question of whether it is necessary or appropriate to refer to God as male (see work by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1895; Mary Daly, 1973; Rosemary Radford Ruether, 1974; and Linn Marie Tonstad, 2015) has been foundational to the extensive debates over inclusive language in Christian liturgy. Maggi Dawn understands that liturgical language ‘has a particular power to reinforce ideas, images and beliefs; it is a performative

¹⁰⁸ For more information see *Common Worship* (Church of England, 2019).

utterance, enhanced and reinforced by rhythm, poetry, and music, and it sounds the depths within us because it is employed consciously and deliberately in relationship to God and to the worshipping community' (Dawn, 2015). Inclusive language in spoken rhetoric (including in communal prayer) is proof of a move away from an exclusive institutional culture. Nevertheless, it is a change which sits in the 'middle way' (per my discussion in Barrier One).

To be sure, certain fixed elements of the liturgy limit the agency of music leaders in this regard. Whilst the music leaders can choose to actively include minority voices, some of the structures that they are working within mean that they do not have infinite freedom. It is clear that the Magnificat¹⁰⁹ and Nunc Dimittis promote a binary opposition of female and male voices,¹¹⁰ The gendered connotations of the Canticles were reflected on by one of my participants: Georgia recalled singing a Magnificat alto solo whilst her countertenor colleague sang the Nunc Dimittis (the 'Song of Simeon', based on Luke 2: 29-32) solo in line with the stories from Mary and Simeon's perspectives based on gender. Although they can be set to be sung by mixed voices, even in these settings, often the upper voices end up with the 'humble and meek' line in the Magnificat, for instance. In the language of musical settings, these can be additional barriers to progress.

The way gendered voices are incorporated in cathedral music-making is perhaps mostly clearly seen in choices of repertoire (already discussed in Barrier Two) and how they are understood by music leaders in cathedrals. Nearly all participants in my interviews were able to show an active awareness of the link between gender and music, whether that was their own personal understanding, or an awareness of how other people understood it. Their views are in line with scholarship by feminist musicologists, outlined earlier in this thesis, who have written extensively about the connection between gender and music, particularly

¹⁰⁹ Regarding the language used in the standard features of the sung service (taken from scripture) such as the *Magnificat* which is the 'Song of Mary' based on Luke 1: 46-55, I cannot possibly discuss the very wide range of issues raised from feminist theological hermeneutics as pertains to the possibilities for a feminist Mariology. For more on feminist and queer approaches to the Magnificat see Amy-Jill Levine and Maria Mayo Robbins, eds., 2005; Edwin Greenlee, 2016.

¹¹⁰ The musical settings of these gendered texts often refer explicitly to Mary's feminine and Simeon's masculine qualities through gendered musical vocabularies.

in terms of opera and salon music (see work by Susan McClary, 1991; Marcia Citron, 1993). Jill Halstead has suggested that:

Music seems to be perceived as gendered through the way in which the whole range of elements, which together constitute music (intensity, pitch, structure, form, tonality, duration, instrumentation, timbre, style, and so on) are processed by the individual into a network of gender equivalents. (1997, p. 246)

Interestingly, all participants denied that such gendering of musical pieces was relevant to the core of their work at the cathedral. As can be seen in Table 9, nearly half of my participants showed an awareness of certain pieces being gendered and of gendered terms in music (even if only as used by others). The table consists of the pieces that five participants in my study considered to have either gendered connotations as pertains to the music itself, or as to whether it was a piece that they would give to the boys rather than girls (or vice versa). Their responses were, for the most part, telling of the preconceived notions and biases that they bring to programming and the way that their own experiences influence whether or not they would give the piece to the girl or boy choristers. Sometimes the participants gave these pieces as examples without providing any explanation and often there were inconsistencies in their responses. In any case, each of them found it easy to see how a piece of music could be thought of in gendered terms. Rachel, for example, spoke about her knowledge of feminine cadences and weak endings, stating: “but I’ve never really seen it in those terms”. Even if music embodies gender “only in a naïve way”, as one participant intimated, it still suggests something about the pieces that can be described by association with the socio-cultural gender stereotypes. Here Rachel could be actively resisting notions of gendered pieces in order to refute the extra barriers she faces as a woman in cathedral music-making (discussed in more detail in Barrier Four). However, nearly all of the case study participants identified that they thought of certain pieces of music as being gendered or being a piece that they would give to girls or boys depending on how the work ‘spoke to them’.

Even though these participants were, on the whole, adamant that gender was “irrelevant” to cathedral music, none struggled to imagine how music could be gendered or about gender-based differences in repertoire for the two sets of

choristers. I suggest that they were resisting gendered inferences whilst actually going along with many conventions. In this case, the unwillingness to follow through the implications of their knowledge of gendered conventions could be the rejection of them (and the repertoire that they love, and are familiar with), or an acknowledgement of how deeply embedded gender is.

| Participants' Gendering of Pieces | | | | |
|--|------------------|------|--------|--|
| Piece Title | Composer | Male | Female | Notes / Explanation |
| Unnamed | Jonathan Dove | | X | The piece is spiky, rhythmic, pretty high for most of it |
| Canticles in F | George Dyson | | X X | Solo for girl chorister |
| Canticles in B minor | Herbert Howells | | X | |
| Canticles in A | Herbert Sumison | X | X | Salisbury boy choristers; Ely girls' choir |
| <i>Ave Maris Stella</i> | Edvard Grieg | | X | |
| / | Cecilia McDowall | | X | |
| <i>Der Geist hilft</i> | J.S. Bach | X | | The boys learn slow drip, but it tends to go in |
| / | Judith Bingham | X | | |
| Canticles in G | Herbert Howells | X | | |
| Canticles in G | C.V. Stanford | X | | Solo for boy chorister |
| <i>For Lo I Raise Up</i> | C.V. Stanford | X | | |
| Magnificat in D minor | T.A. Walmisley | X | | Hob-nailed boots clattering in |
| XX indicates that two participants made the same observation | | | | |

Table 9 – Gendering of Pieces

One of the consequences of assigning repertoire to the boy *or* girl choristers is that neither set of choristers gets the chance to sing some pieces of music which are

considered ‘bread and butter’ cathedral repertoire. One participant told me about how their Director of Music “initially thought that boys and girls should have separate repertoire” and how she successfully advocated for the girl choristers to sing Herbert Howells’ *Collegium Regale* (1945) and a variety of Byrd’s masses. She claimed that otherwise “[there would be] a whole group of choristers who don’t know what a Byrd four-part Mass is”, and so the girls would leave their choristership disadvantaged by not having learnt pieces which would be considered core repertoire for a (boy) chorister. Similarly, Herbert Sumsion’s Canticles in A appearing in both categories is indicative of the navigation of this holistic chorister experience in each cathedral in my study. Ensuring that the choristers (irrespective of their gender) leave their time at the cathedral with what David has called the “core repertoire” was of utmost importance for all of the participants in my study. Sarah, for example, told me, that, “the boys do Byrd 5 and we [the Girls’ Choir] do Byrd 4; the boys do Sumsion in G (SATB) and we do Sumsion in A (SATB)”. Meanwhile David said: “the girls sing a certain set of pieces for no particular reasons” at his cathedral – the pieces are chosen “randomly” in order to ensure that both sets of choristers leave with a holistic musical education. His comparison included his decision that “the girls do Dyson in F; the boys sing Sumsion in A and the girls don’t”.

Yet, I argue, in many ways these decisions are tacitly gendered. For these same participants, the reasons that the girls are given certain pieces and not others are not necessarily negative – as seen in one participant’s description of an unnamed piece by Jonathan Dove which they described as “spiky, rhythmic, pretty high for most of it” and therefore would be given to the girls because “they read better, they’re quicker”.¹¹¹ There are certain decisions that are made based on generalisations about the two gendered groups. The music that each chorister line sings at any given cathedral is influenced by instinctive responses to any given piece of music and attitudes about the extent to any distinctiveness in the attitudes and capabilities of the separate chorister lines. The same participant reflected: “If I want to give a piece of music, from experience, which is a little more

¹¹¹ This is in line with stereotyping which suggests that girls are ‘smarter’ than their male peers at this age. See Anke Heyder and Ursula Kessels, 2015; and Steve Bartlett and Diana Burton, 2010.

of a full-blooded, solid, roast beef piece, instinctively I'll give that to the boys – they'll sing with a kind of abandon which the girls don't." Katherine's claim too that "there are some pieces which are more testosterone-fuelled perhaps than others or indeed they feel that way. I wouldn't be able to give you an example" is supported by Sal who described the beginning of Walmisley in D minor as "hob-nailed boots clattering in", while also being described as "masculine, bizarrely" by another one of the participants. Daniel (a music director) also viewed Dyson in F as being a "girl solo" based on the "vocal quality" of the group.

Tendencies to see girls as studious, careful but also ethereal and weak, and boys as reckless ("clattering in") but strong ("roast beef") reveal the embeddedness of gender stereotyping that is encountered in the cathedral music-making context. There is further evidence of this in the secondary literature on choral singing and music education. Lucy Green suggests that in the composition classroom teachers have tended to attribute qualities such as imagination, inventiveness and ability to improvise to boys but, on the whole, not to girls. Green's analysis of these views acknowledges the common barriers to the success of girls which are heavily influenced by the biases and views of their teachers (1997, pp. 82-115).¹¹² This understanding of gendered differences as pertains to composing also extends to the music classroom (1997, pp. 193-229).¹¹³ Moreover, in their study of gendered perceptions of underachievement, Susan Jones and Debra Myhill recognised that the teachers interviewed as part of their study often held views which were 'contradictory' (2004, p. 556) and that 'stereotypical gender identities persist, in spite of individuals who clearly do not conform to gender expectations' (2004, pp. 559-560). Jones's and Myhill's comprehension of the inconsistent gender beliefs is visible throughout my participants' discussions of how these decisions are made. Participants denied the influence of gendered expectations as a factor, yet some nonetheless revealed this influence through their music choices and the explanation for these choices. Katherine told me that "introducing congregations to pieces which are being written currently is quite important to me both to

¹¹² Green's understanding is also echoed in studies by Sandra Acker, 2006; Kenneth Cramer *et al.*, 2002; and Susan Hallam *et al.*, 2008.

¹¹³ Further discussion about the perceived differences between the boys and girls, including their attitudes and achievements, is discussed in the context of leadership in Barrier Four.

support our living composers but also to speak to society as it is” yet also reflected that around 10% of the repertoire sung by both sets of choristers combined was written by women or non-binary composers.

The lack even of contemporary women’s work in the standard or commonplace cathedral repertoire is evident in my examination of two weeks of service schedules which has already been discussed in Barrier Two. Not one of the one hundred and four composers who were featured at least once across four cathedrals in the two weeks I explored was a woman, trans, or non-binary. A comparable overview was carried out on the chapels of Oxford University in early 2019 to highlight the dearth of work by women and non-binary composers in the music lists of eighteen chapel choirs. One tweet read: ‘Over the course of term these 18 choirs sang 424 choral services. Of these, 18 (4.38%) included repertoire by women or non-binary composers. This is down from 22 (5.45% of 403) last term’ (@OneEqualMusic, 20 Jun. 2019) whilst another noted that half of the choirs ‘sang only music by men this term’ (@OneEqualMusic, 8 Mar. 2019). Unsurprisingly, on most days of every week of this survey, it was reported that not one chapel sang any works written by women or non-binary composers. The responsible Twitter account regularly posted comments including ‘none of today’s Oxford chapel services feature choral music composed by women’¹¹⁴ and far less regularly were able to write that chapel choirs were singing pieces by women or non-binary composers.

In this part, I have shown that choices regarding language – spoken or sung – in cathedral services can poignantly indicate the extent to the embeddedness of diversity within the institution. The Church of England has shown a movement towards using more inclusive language where possible, but there are pragmatic reasons, such as the fixedness of the liturgy, which account for why this is sometimes not the case. Beyond the institutional decisions (at the macro level by the Church of England), or even decisions made more locally by Dean and Chapter, or more autonomously by the music team can also have serious ramifications (positive and negative) for gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-

¹¹⁴ See, for example, tweets from @OneEqualMusic on 5-8, 14-16, 28 February 2019.

making. These are informed – often tacitly and sometimes unbeknownst to the decision-makers – by socio-cultural expectations of how boys and girls approach learning and singing music, as well as understandings of the pieces and composers that are being chosen or not chosen.

(b) 'Voice of an Angel': (De-)Problematizing the Female Voice

In *The Grain of the Voice* Roland Barthes, describing a Russian cantor in a church, writes 'the voice is not personal: it expresses nothing of the cantor, of his soul; it is not original (all Russian cantors have roughly the same voice) and at the same time it is individual: it has us hear a body which has no civil identity, no 'personality', but which is nevertheless a separate body' (1977, p. 182). The purpose of the voices involved in providing worship in the cathedral is in line with Barthes' understanding of the Russian cantor: their bodies are vehicles of the Christian message, de-personalised and stripped of identity in order to do so. The navigation of this in the context of gender diversity is complex. Not least because, as Leslie Dunn and Nancy Jones write, 'the acoustic and expressive qualities of the voice are as much shaped by an individual's cultural formation as is her or his use of language' (1994, p. 3). The erasure of (adult) female identity in cathedral music is all too easy, but there are no straightforward solutions to how to display femaleness as it pertains to the body or the voice. If women sound different from men, they can be perceived to be making an inferior sound (as explored by Howard and Welch 2002). If they sound the same then there is no sense of the distinctiveness of the female voice; indeed, as I have already suggested in this chapter, rather than becoming an 'ungendered voice', their voice may be equated with the male one. This erasure, I argue, comes as a result of having girl choristers and women altos sound exactly the same as the boys and men in order to avoid any doubt that the girls and women belong (as recognised by four participants). The argument would follow that if they sound the same then they *are* the same (as has been explored in relation to rhetoric of tradition in Barrier Two). Wendy commented on the differences between the (male) countertenors and (female) altos

she had worked with, stating: “gender’s not the only factor but it’s certainly a factor, I’m sure it is.”

As explained in the introduction to this thesis, there are perceived differences between girls and boys with regard to the acoustic and expressive qualities of their voices. One such understanding is that girls have a ‘more breathy’ sound. Whilst I do not seek to repeat the vast amounts of work done on the scientific differences between boys’ and girls’ voices, Martin Ashley’s understanding that ‘for some audiences girls will not do even if they, like boys, sing with the “voice of an angel”’ (2013, p. 73) is of utmost importance in terms of the implicit bias that affects the extent to which girls are understood to authentically belong. It is as a result of this “angelic” voice, Clare Hall has suggested, that ‘the boy chorister is a culture asset’ (2018, p. 43). I argue that the way voices are perceived to be an expression of identity causes problems for gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making as its prominence can often lead to a subsequent erasure of the female identity associated with the voice. In much the same way as the bodies have been androgynised, women’s voices are subject to the same fate.

These understandings of the extent of the differences – and subsequent hierarchy as a result of these often-unsubstantiated biases – are called into question by Richard Shephard who wrote: ‘one cannot imagine the Almighty turning off the celestial transistor radio merely because the choir was female rather than male’ (1997, p. 82). Yet, for tourists and irregular attendees at cathedrals – as recognised in interview responses from Rachel who claimed that, in her understanding, cathedrals such as St Paul’s would suffer from “American tourists getting upset” if the boy trebles were not there – the general (and usually negative) rhetoric around the young female voice in comparison to the young male voice can influence and perpetuate the biases that girls cannot make the same sound of the same quality that is expected, for example, when one attends Evensong in a new city. Peter reflected on the fact that fewer people care about whether there is an adult woman in the choir, and instead reported a frequent

question from prospective congregants: “if I come back tomorrow is it the girls or boys [singing]?”

The quality of the voice, the type of sound, the voice break and perceived lack of voice break for girls does affect how girls are included as it impacts how the age-range of the choristers is decided. Each cathedral Director of Music (and/or their assistants) will have an understanding of the expectations of the qualities of the voices they wish to work with and produce. As Clare Hall contends, ‘[it is] the gender delineations embodied in the chorister’s specific boy voice that give it its musical meaning, rather than some absolute musical quality’ (2018, p. 43). There is contention as to whether or not the girl choristers should be striving to sound the same as their male counterparts, or whether Directors of Music (or Directors of Girls’ Choirs) should be striving to elicit a different sound quality from the girl choristers – as is shown in the participants’ responses below.

One musical director described this disparity as follows: “the boys get two voices. Girls also have two voices but it’s not as overtly the same.” This idea is echoed in most conversations surrounding the choristers – especially in the context of the embodiment of youth, and of fragility, which is often associated only with the dramatic voice change for young boys. This loss of treble voice is not an understanding that is given to the girls. Even though Jenevora Williams reports that ‘the end of singing as a treble was not generally perceived by the boys [in her study] as any sort of loss, musically or psychologically’ (2010, p. 39), there is an attachment amongst musical leaders to preserving the opportunities for pre-pubescent boys; to hold on to this treble sound and to promote it as an idyllic sound for as long as possible (Williams, 2012; Ashley, 2015; Fraser Riddell, 2019). The idea that girls do actually sound different to boys has been challenged in scholarship by Matthew Owens and Graham Welch who claim that:

trained female choristers from the age of eight through their early teens have often systematically been mistaken as male in empirical research studies, particularly if the girls have been inducted into a choral repertoire by a male director with a significant depth of experience of working with boys. (2017, p. 9)

As Owens and Welch highlight, there is not much to substantiate the notion that girls and boys necessarily sound different, particularly to the untrained ear. This argument against girl choristers based on the ‘purity of their sound’ is particularly unfair in cathedrals where the Director of the choir has decided that they do not want the girl choristers to sound the same as the boys, as is the case at the cathedral where Nina (music director) works. Participants’ perspectives on this can be seen below:

Owen: [...] there’s probably an ideal chorister line to fit the building.

Ben:¹¹⁵ [...] it is the quality of the music and the experience given to both the performers and the listeners which is of the most importance.

Nina: [...] I think everybody brings their own individual quality to it. I am not seeking even in our front rows here to make that unified, blended sound that’s kind of whiter than white. I’m not particularly interested in that. I want a good, healthy, slightly European sound, so if you have a balance of women and men that works really well.

Whilst the first two of these comments might appear – on the face of it – to not be explicitly gendered, unconscious biases about what is ‘ideal’ in the cathedral context is informed by norms and structures which are at least tacitly gendered. The way that notions of quality and excellence have been deeply embedded with gendered assumptions about ideal sounds has already been examined in the context of tradition in Barrier Two. Nina’s ambiguous rejection of the standard ‘English’ sound, which she acknowledged to be commonly associated with cathedral music, is indicative of the compromise in the sound that has been especially associated with the introduction of adult women to the cathedral choir.

The many reflections of the participants about the perceived differences between the boys and girls, men and women that they work with is compounded by opinions of congregants (whether regular or tourists). Indeed, four participants discuss the somewhat passive nature of the congregation during the service itself. I argue that the sound that boys and girls are perceived to make has often been solidified in the minds of regular congregants outside of the service and

¹¹⁵ Other Music Leader.

communicated between these worshippers and cathedral leadership, thus informing decisions about policing gender and how this is communicated to and by the Dean and Chapter in terms of what is ‘acceptable’. This reticence was acknowledged by Georgia, for example, who said that as a result of the “feedback loop” the congregants were able to communicate their “upset” with how the girl choristers looked. In terms of sound, if one attends Evensong or Eucharist regularly at a cathedral which has girl choristers, then one might have an opinion about whether the girls and boys sound different from each other or whether one line is ‘better’ than the other for a variety of reasons, per the question of whether the boys would be singing tomorrow that Peter reflected was frequently asked at his cathedral. Moreover, there are biases about the voices and the types of sounds that girl choristers have portrayed in the media, usually around Christmas and Easter or when a new girls line is established at a cathedral which suggests that girls are entirely incapable of producing the sound that is commonly associated with cathedral music-making.¹¹⁶

When discussing the quality of the ‘performance’ as a whole, Wendy commented that, for her, it was not about “providing the best possible performance though you want to do that; it’s about why and who it’s for.” She continued: “What makes the difference between Evensong and a concert? And why do I get annoyed when people are treating it like a concert? Because I think they’re missing something which perhaps means that we’re not communicating it well enough.” Wendy is clear that she does not equate the communication of the message with the gender of the choristers. The age parallel (where the girls are exactly the same age as their male counterparts) makes sense if the girls and boys are attending the same school (as is the case, for example, at York Minster and Salisbury). However, in places where the only overlap between the education of the boys and girls is in the cathedral itself, the reason may be clear for why boys should stop singing the treble line at thirteen years old; yet, the much-feared voice break need not affect the girls. As already discussed in Barrier Two, most cathedrals have opted for a chorister line which has girls and boys who are the same age. As well

¹¹⁶ See, for example, Tobi Thomas, 2018.

as the bodily differences discussed in Part I, I argue that the intentionally more mature sound of the thirteen to eighteen-year-olds contributes to the assertion that the male voice is the norm, and the girls are supplementary (in line with the paradigms in Barrier Two). The boys' voices are generally understood to make the desired 'cathedral' sound, and as a result the (seven-to-thirteen-year-old) girls have their sound adapted and controlled to be exactly the same as the boys.

For girls, stopping at aged thirteen seems counter-intuitive – especially for those who are capable of continuing to sing soprano. Cathedrals have employed two main methods of avoiding the arbitrary age cut-off for girls. The first is to begin their choristership at an older age, as is the case at cathedrals such as Canterbury and Ely, and the second is to keep the girls on beyond aged thirteen (as is the case at nine out of the forty-two cathedrals including Newcastle and Guildford). In the latter, some introduce girls at seven and have them stay on longer or introduce them later (at aged nine or ten) and have them stay for six years (per the timeframe that the boys are educated). At cathedrals including Ely and Canterbury, girls aged seven to thirteen cannot join the choristership. In these places the girls are allowed or perhaps even intended to sound different to the boys as their sound is more mature. In exactly the same way that boys will never be trebles again, neither will the girls (see work by Lynne Gackle 1991, 2014; and Graham Welch, 2006). The gendered difference is that a girl's changing voice is not renowned as catastrophic as it is not nearly as pronounced. As a result of this more understated change, however, there is a discernible – if sometimes subtle – change in the number and type of duties that teenage (female) choristers perform in comparison to their seven to thirteen-year-old (male) counterparts.

This problematic connection between voice and female identity in the cathedral choir is not just experienced in relation to the choristership; it is also exemplified in discussions about countertenors and contraltos. In fact, fifteen participants in this study mentioned the perceived importance of acknowledging differences between the male countertenor and female contralto. One such contralto commented: "I think the sounds together are really cool and I don't want to replace countertenors altogether at all. It just has the potential to improve the

overall sound if you mix it up a bit, I think... and that's the case socially as well." Her reticence to be seen to be a replacement for the male countertenor is something of a common response amongst the women interviewed. It is not that these women are taking the jobs of their male counterparts, but instead are keen to not be doing so. Again, there is a perceived sense of opportunities being taken away from the men and boys; lost to women because of a need to diversify the cathedral choir and not because of an inherent talent. However, as the above participant recognised, there is something to be gained from "mix[ing] it up a bit". This is reflected in many other responses where the ideal acoustic model of the back row is perceived by many to be something which would benefit from having half contraltos and half countertenors instead of a 'token' woman.

G.M. Ardran and David Wulstan write about the perceived difference between the alto and counter-tenor voices as the terms were at that time prescribed to men. At the same time, Ardran and Wulstan noted that '[...] refinements in tone-colour as distinguish one singer from another must be a question of natural ability and / or training the "placing" of the voice, that is, the control of resonance' (1967, p. 19). Indeed, Trevor Beeson attributes the coining of the term 'counter-tenor' to Michael Tippett who wished to distinguish it from the alto sound (2009, p. 213). The prioritisation of the countertenor (and their sound) in cathedral music-making also reflects how these sounds are distinguished.

No fewer than three participants reflected on the advantages of the countertenor voice over the female alto in the cathedral space. Robert, for example, equates maleness with the quality of voice and musicianship which he strives to maintain at his cathedral, saying: 'We are more likely to find a countertenor with the range and quality and sound we need and reading ability and experience.' Although for Robert it is only one of the factors which he considers when choosing a member of the back row, it is indicative of the common understanding that the countertenor voice has a certain authority and strength which the female alto voice does not reportedly have. Female bodies and voices have in no small part been scrutinised in the context of their inclusion and they have been subject to an othering which the bodies of their male counterparts have rarely assumed; they

are perceived to be the weaker version (both literally and metaphorically) of the trademark cathedral sound made by men and boys.

Connected to the discussions of the “vast”, “gargantuan” space from Part II of this chapter, perceptions of the countertenor voice as having more authority because it is able to fill the cathedral space can be seen in participants’ responses. Hilary told me: “so, the useful thing about the male countertenor voice is that [...] it carries well in a big building [...] [the adult female voice] is a beautiful sound but it doesn’t carry as well in the big building”. Meanwhile Sarah (a senior music leader) acknowledged that the male countertenors might even have license to be unnecessarily loud, stating: “The amount of noise that needs to be made at [our] Cathedral, [means that the back row] don’t always sing responsibly either because they have to fill that massive space”. Simon Frith’s claim that ‘the voice *is* the sound of the body in a direct sense’ (emphasis in original; 1996, p. 192) is relevant when considering the navigation of barriers to gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making. Women altos are reported as being discriminated against in this context because they are perceived to have weaker voices which cannot carry in the cathedral, at least not comparatively to their male countertenor colleagues.

Particularly as was the case in my ethnographic sketches where there are only one or two women (one on each side) enclosed by seven men, the physical presence and the dominance of the male countertenor voice contributes to the hierarchy of voices, and the defence against hiring female altos. Two participants commented that they knew altos who “sounded like” countertenors and vice-versa. Georgia was keen to point out that, whilst some women sound similar to countertenors, “most of us don’t”. These gendered understandings contribute to the hierarchies of the male over the female which have been promoted in cathedral music and explored in both Barriers Two and Three. In the chapter that follows, I take these barriers forward as they affect how leadership is deeply gendered, and impact how the bodies and voices which have been historically othered in the cathedral space attempt to break through the glass ceiling.

Barrier Four



Three Times a Lady: Gender Diversity and Inclusion in Cathedral Music Leadership

In this final chapter, I will explore how understandings, rhetoric, and presentations of leadership, authority, and credibility act as a barrier to gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making. Although leadership has been a topic of increasing interest in mainstream book publishing over the past decade,¹¹⁷ two overarching theories – the ‘great man’ and ‘trait’ theories – have dominated academic discourse since at least the nineteenth century. Part I introduces these approaches to leadership more generally before discussing how it has, broadly conceived, been connected to so-called ‘critical gender differences’ between women and men (George Goethals and Crystal Hoyt, 2017, p. xii). I will explore how leadership is customarily linked to ‘masculine’ features, how this is problematic for diversity in itself, and further to that, how ‘femininity’ is problematised in understandings of what marks a great leader.

Parts II and III look at how these theories apply in more specific circumstances: first in the church, and second in classical music-making. Part II focuses specifically on how concepts of biblical leadership and understandings of vocation affect who can and ‘should’ lead in the Church of England. Part III introduces the interplay of leadership, gender, and music, showing how the current climate is rooted in historical presentations of the conductor. It will also explore the masculine connotations accompanying this position, including concepts of genius and sexual imagery. Connecting the theories which are interwoven through Parts I to III, the final part explores official and unofficial hierarchies and understandings of leadership in cathedral music-making for adults; and looks at how these hierarchies are influenced by the models which pervade the church and classical music more widely. This discussion will include analysis of the decision-making which informs hierarchies of voices, solos, and the

¹¹⁷ This has increasingly reflected the resurgence of feminism (the fourth wave), and the increased awareness of toxic masculinity. Even just in 2019, *Why Do So Many Incompetent Men Become Leaders? (And How to Fix It)* by Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, *Brave, not Perfect* by Reshma Saujani, and Julie Zhou’s *The Making of a Manager* have all been widely acclaimed.

spacing of the choir, as well as the gendered associations of positions in cathedral leadership held by adults, from Organ Scholar up to Director of Music.

I. Theories of Leadership

As Brien Smith *et al.* state, ‘there is still no comprehensive understanding of what leadership is, nor is there an agreement among different theorists on what good or effective leadership should be’ (2004, p. 80). There are, however, two persisting attitudes which have left a legacy on leadership, broadly conceived. Theories surrounding *who* has a predisposition for leading were developed by a variety of scholars in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1837), Thomas Carlyle (1841), and Søren Kierkegaard (1843) all understood that history can be attributed to the impact that heroes, or ‘great men’ have had on events and ideas. Hegel wrote: ‘such are great historical men – whose own particular aims involve those large issues which are the will of the World-Spirit.’ (1837, p. 30), whilst in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, Carlyle contended ‘the history of the world is but the biography of great men’ (1841, p. 34). Kierkegaard similarly understood that there are ‘Knights of Faith’ who are able to express both ‘the sublime and the pedestrian’ in his work *Fear and Trembling* (1843). Although studies pre-date the nineteenth century, the ‘great man theory’ underpins the ‘traditional’ approaches which tacitly pervade leadership to this day; understandings which are based on the legacy of conflating heroism and intellect with the notion that *men* were born to lead. Bernard Bass and Ruth Bass summarise the ethos of this theory, stating: ‘Without Moses, according to these theorists, the Jews would have remained in Egypt; without Winston Churchill, the British would have given up in 1940; without Bill Gates, there would have been no firm like Microsoft’ (2009, n.p.). Carlyle’s theories in particular gave rise to the notions that there are specific traits associated with great leadership.

The trait theory of leadership arises from the defining traits associated with the ‘great man’ theory, specifically that there are certain qualities bestowed upon a small number of people, who are believed to be naturally gifted, great leaders.

Scholars including Francis Galton as early as 1869, as well as Simon Moss and Simon Ngu (2006), and Robert Hogan and Timothy Judge (2013) have published work which acknowledges the connection between certain personality traits typically associated with ‘great men’ in leadership. In fact, Judge alongside Joyce Bono claimed in their meta-analysis of three types of leadership that ‘1,738 of the 15,000 articles (12%) published [on PsycINFO] since 1990 on the topic of leadership included the keywords *personality* and *leadership*.’ (2004, p. 901). Although understandings of leadership, by means of trait theory, focussed less on the idea that only few ‘great *men*’ were destined for leadership, the article instead contended that there were certain characteristics or traits which one had to have in order to be an effective leader. Don Hellriegel and John W. Slocum claimed that four traits ‘are shared by most (but not all) successful leaders’, namely: 1) intelligence; 2) maturity and breadth; 3) achievement drive; and 4) integrity (2009, p. 270). This theory that leaders all share the same traits began to be undermined as a result of research by Ralph Stogdill in the mid-twentieth century when he suggested that there is no such set of pre-defined characteristics associated with all great leaders. Stogdill claimed ‘a person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits [...] the pattern of personal characteristics [and behaviour] of the leader must bear some relevant relationship to the characteristics, activities, and goals of the followers’ (1948, p. 64). Yet, to this day, the remnants of these theories remain associated with leadership essentials.

The legacy of the ‘great man’ theory and the *traits* which have historically been associated with great leadership have resulted in a lack of diversity in the understandings of what makes a ‘great’ leader. These traits comprise drive, ambition, tenacity, and self-confidence including emotional stability (Shelley Kirkpatrick and Edwin Locke, 1991, p. 49). One such consequence of the prominence of these characteristics is, as John Johanson has found, that ‘perceptions of leadership were positively correlated with masculinity and negatively correlated with femininity’ (2008, p. 788). Roya Ayman and Karen Korabik claim that what has resulted from this is that ‘a masculine leadership prototype has prevailed’ (2010, p. 166). In this part I will seek to establish where

women ‘fit’ (and I shall return to the idea of women ‘fitting’ later) into these models of leadership, if at all.

Nonetheless, a shifting narrative has emerged in recent scholarship which builds on Stodgill’s opposition to the trait theory. For example, Edwin Locke notes, in his book on the essence of leadership, that ‘traits constitute only part of the picture’ as the individual leader is required to ‘use their traits to develop skills, formulate a vision, and implement this vision in reality’ (1999, p. 10). James Kouzes and Barry Posner similarly understood that ‘there is no hard evidence to support the assertion that leadership is imprinted in the DNA of only some individuals [...]’ (2017, p. 301). Kouzes’ and Posner’s, and Locke’s assertions that it is not what you have, but how you use it, is particularly pertinent in understanding leadership more broadly but, importantly for this thesis, in terms of understanding diversity and how (positive) associations of femininity as pertains to leadership are making their way into leadership manuals and guides.

Whilst definitions of what makes a great leader are changing, many of the characteristics – which have led to conversations about the nature of leadership – continue to undermine the credibility of women in positions of authority. Bernard Bass and Ronald Riggio note there are perceptible differences based on sex which indicates the enduring influence of gender norms on leadership style. They note a common understanding that women are more ‘effective’ and ‘satisfying’ leaders than their male counterparts (2006, p. 114). Cheryl de la Rey says that there is a ‘distinctive leadership style associated with women’ which includes:

being more participatory, democratic, more sensitive, nurturing and caring’ as well as good conflict management and interpersonal skills, being excellent listeners and showing tolerance and empathy. Women are also described as more likely to lead from behind, compared to men who lead from the front, and to be encouraging of participation, sharing power and information. (2005, p. 5)

Similarly, Johanson’s aforementioned study argued that some characteristics commonly associated with femininity, such as ‘showing concern for subordinates’ feelings, participation, satisfaction, and friendship [...] have been acknowledged for some time [...]’ but had not been considered to be ‘feminine aspect[s] of

leadership’ until recently (p. 785). These examples of ‘feminine’ characteristics are recognised as positive qualities in a leader. Yet, in order for these ‘feminine’ leadership traits to become associated with female leadership, an acceptance of the idea of women as leaders *at all* is required.

Regardless of whether women are too old or too young, their age is almost always brought up in the conversations that undermine their credibility.¹¹⁸ The way that this undermining has happened results in women’s place in leadership being assigned terms such as ‘breaking through the glass ceiling’ – the metaphoric level of attainment that women are unable to break through – (coined by Marilyn Loden in 1978) and subsequently the ‘leadership labyrinth’, which George Goethals and Crystal Hoyt attest has replaced the glass ceiling, noting ‘women navigate a more complicated maze of challenges than men do along their leadership journeys’ (2017, p. xii). They go on to say that ‘within this leadership labyrinth women encounter multifaceted barriers that not only result in a lack of numerical parity between women and men, but also critical gender differences in the nature of leadership positions’ (p. xii). One of the core issues with a diversification that focuses on numerical gender parity but does not at the same time consider the nature of leadership positions is that numerical parity does not necessarily equate to a changed culture. I attest that there are two broad consequences which arise out of the limited understanding of who can lead (based on the ‘great man’ theory) and the association of femininity with certain leadership qualities. The first is that masculinity has been synonymised with credibility and authority in leadership, and the second is that femininity (in its various stereotypes) has been problematised at best, and demonised, or completely disregarded at worst.

In their edited volume entitled *Women and Leadership: Transforming Visions and Diverse Voices* (2007), Chin *et al.* cover the role of collaboration and intersectionality in various models of leadership. ‘The challenge women and feminist leaders grapple with’, according to Chin is: ‘how to conform to what is

¹¹⁸ Kathleen Hall noted that ‘while women’s real or presumed sexual activity elicits commentary that men would never expect to be directed at them, failure to produce the *progeny* of sexual union also draws comment.’ (emphasis in original; 1995, p. 71).

“expected” whilst still retaining their credibility and effectiveness as leaders’ (2007, p. 14). One such multifaceted criticism of women in leadership regards their femininity. This research comes over a decade after Amanda Sinclair claimed that femininity was a ‘pejorative term’ which ‘conveys the opposite of leadership’ for managers, stating that it is often perceived to be synonymous with ‘frivolous ineffectiveness’ (1995, p. 28). Credibility is more readily given to white, heterosexual cis-gendered men than it is to any other demographic. As such, Linda Carli and Alice Eagly, in their chapter in *The Nature of Leadership*, note: ‘gender equality remains a distant goal, with men currently possessing considerably more power and authority than women in organizations and governments’, positing that ‘patriarchy, although weakened, still prevails’ (2017, p. 245). The connection between authority and masculine character traits (discussed in Barrier Two) has problematised women’s leadership – the double bind of being called ‘bossy’ instead of ‘authoritative’ and being accused of being ‘too soft’ if one chooses to employ tactics of leadership which are considered to be feminine such as those outlined by de la Rey above. These are all underpinned by the idea that women are ‘too emotional’ to be good leaders (as noted by Victoria Brescoll, 2016). One of the most striking examples of women in leadership is their role in crisis management. Known as the ‘glass cliff’, Michelle Ryan and S. Alexander Haslam found that women are more likely to be employed ‘in problematic organizational circumstances’ and therefore their appointments ‘are more precarious’ (2005, p. 87). Credibility for women in leadership becomes even harder to achieve because the journey to achieving this credibility is unequal. Not only are women traversing a male-dominated landscape, therefore, but they are also often employed in failing or demanding organisations which are in need of being saved. This in turn results in the appearance that women themselves are failing.

Karen Stein wrote about the double bind Hillary Clinton faced previously during her campaign for Senator, saying: ‘the woman with ambition to become a leader must find a workable balance between the traits that mark her as feminine or masculine’ (2009, p. 179). This links again to Locke’s consideration that it is not what you have but how you *use* it. Women are prejudiced against for employing both feminine or masculine traits; neither is preferable because one is perceived

to be weak (feminine) and the other perceived to be unbefitting a woman (masculine). Simply put: a woman's use of leadership traits is undesirable.

Sam Friedman and Daniel Laurison have used Karen Ashcraft's theory of the 'glass slipper' (2017) to argue that feeling like you 'fit' in a particular job or institution has a tangible impact on the level of success you will have either getting the job or rising through the hierarchy thereafter (2019, pp. 125-127). In the context of English bourgeois society (of which the English cathedral is a part), Louise Ashley (2010) has argued the concept of the 'glass slipper' is ironically affected by how you dress, as well as by elements of cultural competency which Friedman and Laurison state 'are rooted in middle-class socialisation and inculcated disproportionately via a privileged, white, family milieu' (2019, p. 126). Donna Ladkin and Chellie Spiller acknowledge that, amongst other factors, 'women recognize the dominant masculine path to leadership in most organizations, and they know that conforming to this path often involves a high level of physical and emotional censoring and suppression' (2013, p. 248). Ladkin's and Spiller's description of women navigating dominant masculine cultures is vital to understanding the barriers that women have to overcome in order to achieve the same positions as their male counterparts.

Despite Bass's description – in the 1980s – of leadership styles that arose as a consequence of 'the need to promote change and deal with resistance to it has, in turn, put an emphasis on democratic, participative, relations-oriented, and considerate leadership' (1985, p. 27), these traits are commonly associated with ineffective leadership by women but conversely effective leadership by men. This exact understanding had also been studied by Nanette Fondas who wrote: 'to recognize and name feminization is a complete reversal of the subordination of femininity to masculinity in management discourse. [...] the culture is deeply ambivalent about elevating the status of the female and feminine' (1997, p. 273). Fondas' and Johanson's studies of how key characteristics of a great leader – such as strength, 'dominance, toughness, and aggression' (Fondas, 1997, p. 266) – are attributed to masculinity combine with practical disadvantages such as maternity

leave, and expectations of raising children as pressures which were (and still to some degree are) laid broadly at the feet of women.

The characteristics associated with women's leadership are not the only place where double binds exist. Expectations of how women should dress is a key factor in their perceived credibility too. For men, the standard uniform has been well-asserted. However, the same for women is problematic. Elisabeth Kelan cites key research into dress and the gender divide, noting that as a result of 'enforced', gendered styles of dress, 'professional women therefore have to be careful to appear feminine [...] This often means wearing the feminine version of the masculine suit, while avoiding appearing too sexual (e.g. skirt length) or too feminine [...]' (2013, p. 48). Clinton again is an excellent example of the multiple double-binds women face in leadership; when she ran for President, her 'pantsuits' were discussed by every major news outlet worldwide and even resulted in an official #pantsuitnation social media trend.¹¹⁹ As Ann McGinley wrote, 'Clinton showed her masculine toughness by wearing pants, while distinguishing herself as feminine by choosing pant suits of many brilliant colors' (2009, p. 719). Similarly, when Clinton showed cleavage on the Senate floor in 2007 (see articles on 'Cleavage Commotion'),¹²⁰ this would be used to discredit her for being too feminine. As Roseann Mandziuk claims, 'on the continuum from pantsuits to cleavage, she either fails to conform to the disciplinary rules of femininity or succeeds too well.' (2008, p. 315).

What can be classified as authentic, valid, or effective leadership is intrinsically linked to masculinity, and so gaining credibility as a woman is difficult and even more so for disabled women, women of colour, or queer women. Credibility is a key facet of leadership more broadly conceived; minorities in leadership roles (including women, but not exclusively women) particularly fight an uphill battle in trying to convince others that they have the authority associated with their roles. Again, one of the main intersections of authority in addition to class and gender is that of age. The connection between authority and

¹¹⁹ See Vanessa Friedman, 2016; Alyson Walsh, 2015.

¹²⁰ See Karen Stein, 2009; Ryan Shepard, 2009.

experience means that people are assumed to have more knowledge just by the nature of being older. Natural authority of elders and the connection between youth and naivety combine to suppress the advancement of younger leaders.¹²¹

The legacy of the ‘great man’ theory and the traits which have historically been associated with great leadership have resulted in a lack of diversity in the understandings of what makes a ‘great’ leader. As a result of this prototype and the criticism of femininity above, I argue that there are numerous double binds which women face in becoming credible, authentic, and authoritative leaders. These approaches have cemented norms of leadership which are biased towards men. As such, women in leadership face a plethora of systematic barriers arising from these ideas. In the next two parts of this chapter, I explore how these ideologies are embedded into the structures of both the Church of England (Part II) and classical music (Part III) to investigate how men are understood to possess considerably more power and credibility than women. This will then enable me to determine the extent to which the weakened, but prevailing, connection between masculinity and leadership impacts upon music-making in Church of England cathedrals today.

II. Stained Glass Ceilings: Leadership in the Church

In Barrier One, I explored the ways that the ‘middle ground’ ethos of the Church of England affects its views on gender, sex, and sexuality. I have already discussed the institutional leadership of the Church of England and the changes which resulted in women’s admission to all levels of Church leadership. In this part, I will explore the concepts of biblical leadership and vocation more generally and then specifically in terms of their intersection with gender diversity and inclusion in order to set up a discussion about musical leadership in cathedrals in Part IV. The persistence of the ‘stained-glass ceiling’ in ordination and leadership (alluded to in the context of the theology of taint mentioned in Barrier One) is evident in

¹²¹ John Barbuto, Susan Fritz *et al.* note the dearth of literature which exists in terms of the link between age and leadership: ‘most studies on age and leadership are limited to either retirement [...] or adolescence [...]’ (2007, p. 73).

the persistent resistance to women's entrance into the Episcopate. The relative newness of the admission of women to this branch of Church leadership (within the past five years) is key to understanding the wider picture of the history of leadership in the church. The lack of women in the Episcopate, I argue, has impacted on how leadership has looked, sounded and acted for almost the entirety of the Church's history. In January 2020, The Revd Canon Dr Vicky Johnson joined the nine other women who currently hold the position of Precentor in a Church of England cathedral. Alongside the twenty-four women bishops in the Church of England, these women Precentors,¹²² representing a quarter of Anglican cathedrals in England, will – by nature of the politics of representation (Criado Perez 2019; Sanjukta Ghosh, 2016; Karin L. Tamerius, 2010) – have impacted increasing gender diversity and inclusion, not least due to their representation on decision-making panels. However, there are key attitudes which continue to pervade the Church's understanding of leadership – including essentialism and complementarianism – which affect the nature of diversity.

Piper and Grudem's understanding that God designed the woman to complement the man by subordinating herself to his leadership (1991), from Barrier One, accepts the theological worth of the gifts of women and girls in *certain forms of leadership* but not over and against ultimate male headship. What this conservative understanding implies is that women and girls are differently gifted to men – and that full leadership, including leadership of men, is not one of their gifts. This leads to a general understanding amongst complementarians, as Teri Stovall claims, that 'women should not have spiritual authority over men in the church on an ongoing basis.' (2009, p. 22). Women are allowed to have gifts as long as they are not threatening to men or to the gender hierarchy.

In Part I of this chapter, I discussed more broadly the 'feminine' and 'masculine' traits of leadership. As pertains to church leadership, women and men are similarly perceived by conservatives within the Church of England to have inherently different qualities which result in different, gendered ways of leading

¹²² At the end of 2019, the position of Precentor was held by a woman at nine cathedrals in England: Bristol, Lincoln, Manchester, Newcastle, Peterborough, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Southwark and Wakefield.

in the church. In terms of historical considerations, leadership in the Church (particularly ordained roles) has been a way that women have been kept subservient to men in the Church. Stanley Porter argued passionately that:

for two thousand years, the dominant agenda in Christianity has been keeping women submissive to men (and out of priesthood), arguing that homosexuality is a sin, supporting the physical discipline of children, accepting the death penalty, legitimizing warfare and Christian participation in it and anticipating a violent end of the world. (1997, p. 267)

Although Porter's conclusions here may seem somewhat hyperbolic, the connections that he makes in terms of the history and chronology of Christian perspectives on issues of subjugation are indicative of the broader accusations which have fallen at the feet of the Church's leaders. I do not have the scope here to explore all of these multifaceted and complex indictments, but at this juncture I do want to claim that the complementarian rhetoric is in many ways merely the insipid version of the broader, and historic understanding of leadership as fundamentally a masculine task, requiring masculine traits. This concept has currency in the church (where it doesn't so explicitly in much of the secular western world) both because it is backed up by certain approaches to biblical interpretation, and because of the *via media*. The way that Porter assimilates women's subordination to men particularly is especially visible today in the Church of England in terms of their admittance to the clergy. Similar evaluations in modern scholarship on religion routinely relate gender, sex, and sexuality to discussions of power, authority and credibility within the Church (see Clare Walsh, 2016; Elaine Graham, 2016).

The Church of England, as described previously in this thesis, has come under scrutiny both from within and without regarding the way it has treated women, and in particular women in leadership. As Penny Jamieson attests, there are three particular functions of authority within the Church: 'to shape the future, to deal with conflict, and to maintain boundaries' (1997, p. 140). One primary way the Church has been subject to criticism is with regards to how it has used (and continues to use) the Bible to do this; those in favour of a more conservative and at best complementarian approach argue that these positions are only

appropriately or legitimately held by men If, for Christians, as Dwight Zscheile states, ‘the Bible is the ultimate leadership book’ (2013, p. 153), then how exactly can Christian leadership be navigated with regards to women's inclusion? Writing from a very particular Evangelical, American perspective, W. Robert Godfrey has shown in great detail how ‘male leadership is pervasive in the Old and New Testaments’ (2004, p. 86), and claims:

in the Bible the leadership of the man in family and church is not just a matter of convenience or pragmatic arrangement but rests on a critical theological foundation. Man has a representative function in the Bible, which [...] promotes a culture in which leaders represent and are responsible for the communities they lead. Such a vision of reality is reflected pervasively in the Bible. (p. 88)

Although Godfrey is not from the Church of England, his perspective is nonetheless represented there. One key argument in favour of male-only leadership in all denominations within the Christian Church is that Jesus and his disciples were all male.¹²³ As Rosie Ward claimed, ‘what has always made Christian leadership different has been that we [Christians] model our leadership on Jesus, the one who came not to be served but to serve’ (2008, p. 78). The roles of women leaders in the Bible were, conversely, minimal. However, as Sarah Sumner argued, ‘nowhere does the Bible say that God designed men to be the leaders, providers and protectors of women’, not explicitly, at least – it is a cultural holdover (2009, p. 85). Sumner’s position is supported in a multitude of feminist scholarship. In fact, critically studying the role of women in the Bible reveals that women were authentic voices for worship and leadership in both the Old and New Testaments. Women such as Huldah, Deborah and Miriam in the Old Testament are all crucial examples of women’s authoritative voices. A chapter in Don Howell’s *Servants of the Servant* focuses on women in leadership, particularly Deborah from the Book of Judges. Howell concludes: ‘Though it would be unwise to adopt an entire theology of women in leadership from the singular case of Deborah, the record of this remarkable woman should cause one to pause before constructing strict parameters which limit an individual from exercising God-given gifts based on gender’ (2003, p. 52). When so much of the Christian decision-making process

¹²³ See Jonathan Inkpin, 2017.

is based on Biblical ‘truth’, the fact that women like Deborah wielded such power and grace in the face of extreme hardship certainly supports the argument for women in theological leadership. Deborah is a clear example of the significant role that women have played in Christian history, especially the call for women to lead crisis management as outlined at the beginning of this chapter. Although this is problematic (as explained in Part I), it is nonetheless exemplary of women’s leadership roles, as crisis managers, in the Bible.

For Rhodes, Stuart, and many other feminist Christian scholars besides, the essence of leadership in the Church is no longer tied to the maleness of Jesus or his disciples, but instead to other traits of leadership. This changing narrative, focussing on other skills which a more diverse range of people can bring to the Church is not dissimilar to the changing narrative in classical music-making, to which I will return in the next part. Mairi Levitt has, on this topic, contended that ‘while the church leadership remains male dominated, those clergy and lay readers in contact with children and young people at parish level will increasingly be female.’ Levitt goes on to acknowledge that the Church of England ‘does not seem to notice it [the gender gap] in official publications’ (2003, p. 62). Although organisations such as WATCH publish these in their annual reports, the official Church of England statistics department still do not publish such figures. So, whilst there is some change in attitudes among (some) biblical scholars and individuals in the Church of England, I argue that there is a ‘lag’ in the impact on the ground on an institutional level.

Given that biblical interpretations are usually the result of the views of the interpreter in the first place, the interaction between individual theological positions and broader socio-cultural ideas as discussed in Barrier One impacts how these theological perspectives are both received and critiqued. Context, tradition, methods, the individual’s community and (if you believe in God) the Holy Spirit all contribute to these interpretations and so they are subject to human limitation. Elizabeth Stuart, writing about the limitation of liturgical leadership to men, argues that it is ‘a sign of contradiction and demonstrates a lack of understanding as to what is taking place in Eucharist or what took place in the incarnation’ (2004,

p. 235). She is intimating here that the Christian feminist doctrine puts Jesus at the centre of redemption of all human beings, not just males. The way that ordained leadership has been confined to 'one gender' is a theological misunderstanding which has been perpetuated throughout history due to reasons that align with the previous barriers in this thesis, particularly the notions of the body.

Feminist scholars have advocated for a renewed understanding of female leadership in response to the implicit and explicit obstacles instituted by those who propose to (continue to) exclude women from these roles. Often these scholars find themselves navigating these barriers with great difficulty to get to even a neutral ground. Lynn Rhodes writes:

in feminist understanding, Christian leadership does not come out of recruiting the best and the brightest, nor out of a set of competencies and skills, but emerges out of the examination of the concrete needs of particular communities as they struggle to embody a vision of Christian community and become witnesses in the world to that vision (1993, p. 16).

Like Stuart, Rhodes attests that leadership in the Church or at least in Christian contexts is something which need not be confined to gender stereotypes, expectations and historical boundaries. Rhodes' phrase 'to embody a vision of Christian community' relates to my discussion in Barrier Three and to how the particular community of cathedral music-making in this instance does not simply rely upon competencies and skills. The Church of England itself has linked musical leadership to effective church leadership in the 2015 Faith and Order Commission's *Senior Church Leadership* Report. In the section headed 'Improvising within a tradition', the authors of the report allude to the characteristics of successful musical improvisation, training and knowledge, and attest that church leadership is similar in that:

Successful musical improvisation depends on a deep training in the musical tradition – an intimate knowledge of the possibilities of scales and harmonies, of rhythms and melodies. In the same way, *faithful improvisation in leadership requires communities and individuals deeply grounded in the Christian faith*, knowing it well enough and richly enough to be able to see new ways of living it out appropriate to the new contexts in which they find themselves. (emphasis mine; 2015, p. 82)

Building a successful reputation as an improvisatory musician requires an ability to produce new forms that are intelligible as belonging to a specific musical 'tradition', at once ushering in new ground within a framework which allows for innovation. When the authors of the above report attach the condition that church leaders can only improvise if they know the tradition well enough, there is a serious implication that these improvisors are, in many ways, gatekeepers of the static, unchanging tradition which was explored in Barrier Two. In this quotation there is an accidental admission that 'successful' new directions can only be ventured by those approved of as knowing the custom well enough and richly enough to be able to feel empowered to enliven new ways of 'living it out'. So then, in addition to biblical models of leadership already described the idea that Christian leaders are 'called'¹²⁴ or have a vocation to lead is fundamental to the Church's navigation of leadership.

John Stackhouse Jr. claims that: 'vocation is the divine calling to be a Christian in every mode of life, whether public as well as private, religious as well as secular, adult as well as juvenile, corporate as well as individual, female as well as male' (2014, p. 68). His claims here about the ways that vocation intersects with nearly every identity will be important to understanding how the nature of vocation has changed in the contemporary church and is reflected in the understandings of the participants in this study. L. Gregory Jones and Kevin Armstrong contend that 'within the vocation of Christian life there is a particular vocation, the vocation of pastoral leadership, which is indispensable for helping to shape and sustain the vocation of all Christians' (2006, p. 78). Gary Badcock recognises, in the specific context of Christian leadership that 'although a sense of vocation is intrinsically related to the objective facts of one's human capabilities – one's "gifts and graces" – the explanation for the real power of a vocation to rule the course of a life lies in the fact that it comes from God' (1998, p. 71).¹²⁵ In the *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, Kathleen Cahalan writes: 'vocation is generally understood as a call from God in relation to the whole of one's

¹²⁴ Vocation comes from the Latin *vocare*, which means 'to call'.

¹²⁵ I acknowledge that the notion of vocation has been employed in secular contexts too, but for the purposes of this thesis discuss its use solely as it is understood in the Christian Church.

life, and is no longer reserved to a select group of people (the ordained), a particular lifestyle, or forms of work' (2012, p. 388). The changing nature of leadership in the Church has had an impact on who can receive a 'calling' to lead in the Church of England. Now women who are called to serve in cathedrals are permitted to apply for these jobs; this is a large step for the institutional church in terms of bridging the divide between institutional theologies and personal faith. Vocation has been gendered in the sense that women could not be called for hundreds of years in the Anglican Church – even if they thought they heard a calling – because of the institutional barriers to inclusion. As Peter Selby writes: 'to root a person's vocation in her biology is in itself an act of oppression [...]' (1991, p. 126). Linking back to the ideas about 'great men' and the traits required, women have struggled to be perceived to have an authentic calling or vocation in church leadership. Gordon Kuhrt says that there are five main biblical sticking points which have been used to undermine women's biblically credible leadership: 1) submission; 2) headship; 3) head covering 4) silence; and 5) teaching and authority (2004, pp. 73-76). The concept of credibility has particular valences within the Church of England, especially in terms of its relation to the Bible. Although, on the whole, leadership in the Church of England is a very complex picture as in many parishes (though less at senior levels) women *are* leading in the Church of England, and this is now relatively uncontroversial overall. This is not to say that women priests do not encounter challenges, but their credibility is not constantly in question either. As discussed in detail in Barrier One, there are many characteristic compromises which the Church of England (institutionally) has made to appease different viewpoints; a result of 'official stances', theologies and (frankly) political decisions intersecting with one another.

III. 'A cute girl on a podium': Gender and Musical Leadership

If I were to ask you to imagine a conductor – what they look, sound, and dress like, to think about how they act and interact with the musicians and with the audience – what would you picture? Like me, you may be drawn automatically to the image of a white male conductor who is middle-aged and aloof, he may even be wearing

a tuxedo. It may be that because of your own experience, the conductor you imagine interacts only with the ensemble to scold or does not speak to the musicians, yet nevertheless expects his every gesture to be discerned and followed precisely.

In western classical music, Rachel Lumsden attests, ‘women have been active participants in the musical world since antiquity, but discussions of their efforts have “traditionally” been neglected in favor of those of male musicians’ (2010, p. 917). The oversight to which Lumsden refers has been prevalent in every aspect of western classical music – composition, performance, and leadership as well as the documentation of women’s involvement in music-making throughout history. In order to understand the current position of women in cathedral music-making, it is important to establish the historic models of the conductor as leader upon which the inherited understandings still prevalent in music-making today are based. Not all conductors are male, but the perception and often the reality is that most of the positions are occupied by men. Therefore, any attempt to judge how good someone is at any given leadership position is based on a historically male precedent. In actuality, as Norman Lebrecht asserted, there is ‘no occupation concerned with the management of social affairs that belongs to women or to men, as such, wrote Plato two millennia ago; yet the idea of a woman managing the performance of music remains anathema even in societies where women have achieved the highest office’ (1991, p. 263). Nearly thirty years later, gendered characteristics and interpersonal relationship styles still permeate understandings of effective and credible classical music leadership. In this part, I will explore what is it exactly that is understood to dissuade women still.

‘Traditional’ views of the musical leader have centred around the musical genius (see Edward Lowinski, 1964; Robert Kapsis, 1994; Tia DeNora, 1995);¹²⁶ including the Wagnerian model of the conductor which has been central to the western musical culture for decades (see John Mauceri, 2017). The notion of the musical conductor as a quasi-superhuman figure is a pervasive masculine understanding of the role, and one which is intrinsically bound up in the great

¹²⁶ Indeed, the concept of genius itself is also gendered – see Christine Battersby, 1989.

man theory mentioned in Part I of this chapter. In his 1968 book, *The Great Conductors*, Harold Schonberg writes of the qualities of the quasi-superhuman conductor using male-centric language:

Above all, he is a leader of men. His subjects look to him for guidance. He is at once a father figure, the great provider, the fount of inspiration, the Teacher who knows all. To call him a great moral force might not be an overstatement. Perhaps he is half divine; certainly he works under the shadow of divinity. He has to be a strong man; and the stronger he is, the more dictatorial he is called by those he governs. He has to but stretch out his hand and he is obeyed. He tolerates no opposition. His will, his word, his very glance, are law. (1968, p. 16)

Schonberg's gendered understanding has ramifications for women in musical leadership, particularly in conducting. Notions of the 'father figure'; someone who provides for his family, and an all-knowing Deity-like moral force sets the conductor on a pedestal based on his [sic.] strength, dictating with an unquestioned and unquestionable authority. Harold Farberman has more recently described the impact of this legacy, claiming: 'the divinely delivered conductor has become a persistent and annoying yardstick for measuring the quality of conductors [...]' (2003, p. 255). Fiona Palmer similarly says:

Today we seek interleaved attributes including charisma, superior interpretative skills, perfectionist aims, authority and control. Power and mystery surround the role of conductor as we conceive it now, serving to further exaggerate the enigmatic, godlike qualities wrapped up in the profiles of "great" conductors. (2017, p. 5)

The presentation of the conductor which is based on stereotypically 'masculine' features of divine strength and intolerance of opposition has ensured that conductors of any gender identity have felt compelled to conform to this one-size-fits-all conductor. Paul Roe argues that this is because conductors are required to 'possess the somewhat intangible quality of leadership, the ability to inspire and control [...]' (1983, p. x). I concur that it is this very nature of intangibility which has cemented the one-size-fits-all authoritarian conductor described by Schonberg. It has both led to and resulted from descriptions, for example, prolific conductor Hector Berlioz, described by Inge van Rij as conducting an 'orchestral army' (2015, p. 91) whilst Raymond Holden talks about Richard Strauss as an 'outstanding conductor who *commanded* the respect of musicians, audiences and

critics alike' (emphasis mine, 2005, p. 119). Similarly, Theodore Ziolkowski discusses the well-known and well-publicised 'ostentatious contortions' of conductors, including Louis Spohr, noting too that Arturo Toscanini's 'temper tantrums and shattered batons in rehearsals were legendary' as well as 'the imperious' Herbert von Karajan's 'dictatorial authoritarianism' (2018, p. 456). In addition to the generic correlation between masculinity, control, and military authority, the act of conducting has long since held sexual connotations in scholarship. One such example is outlined by William Osbourne who stated that 'power and public subjugation, threats, *the whipping and slashing of the phallic baton and the orgiastic build to the climax* under the watchful and absolute authority of the conductor are part of what patrons expect from orchestras, and these expectations seem to contain vicarious satisfactions of sadism' (emphasis mine; 1996, p. 14). The regularity with which these phallogentric metaphors of male domination are repeated makes it unsurprising then that the masculine conducting personality has been solidified in a field which has, for hundreds of years, ostracised women.

As with other leadership fields dominated by men, these historic associations pose problems for female leaders entering the arena. In recent years, there has been an evolution away from this 'omniscient leader' ideal toward something closer to a group facilitator. It is clear from descriptions of the conductor from scholars such as Roe that the conductor must be able to influence the group; that this influence makes the leader at once credible and authoritative. Gail Allen and Hilary Apfelstadt suggest that in order to do this successfully, conductors are responsible for 'transmitting our enthusiasm not only for the music but also for the people who produce it with us' (1990, p. 31). Allen's and Apfelstadt's commentary on the two-fold nature is indicative and in line with the general movement away from the 'great man' theory to a transformative leadership style. Allen's and Apfelstadt's revitalised understanding of what makes a great conductor suggests that:

If musical skill alone does not guarantee success in choral conducting, then perhaps we need to look beyond our traditional concept of conducting as a field defined by emphasis on vocal knowledge, gestural skill, score analysis, and rehearsal technique. Those components are essential to be sure [...] But

think again of those conductors we know whose musical skills are adequate and yet whose rehearsals fail to inspire or consider those merely average musicians whose ensembles are musically exciting. (1990, p. 25)

Both Guise, as well as Allen and Apfelstadt identify a desire to move away from dictatorial constructs of leadership which are based on the ‘great man theory’ and to focus more on getting the best results from the group by supporting and empowering them. Similarly, Guise proposed that choral conductors should seek to understand the needs of individuals in the choir, which will ensure an evolution away from the choral conductor as ‘group leader’ to ‘group facilitator’ (1999, p. 109). For Guise, the group facilitator model in classical music is indicative of the other qualities which make one an effective leader. Whilst musical prowess will always be a central concern in considerations of what makes an excellent leader, the changing narrative away from the overlord model of conducting to a more welcoming group facilitator has arguably opened a window for alternatives, and that includes women who do not wish to conform to historically masculine models of authority in conducting. However, as noted earlier, the women who have built a career in classical music have been criticised for both employing masculine concepts of leadership and for taking a perceived feminine approach. Mira Crouch and Jenny Lovric have suggested that women are put at a ‘natural’ disadvantage (1990, p. 18) due to the fact that most principals and conductors are men. New models enable women to be themselves: to pursue models of ‘femininity’ as well as ‘masculinity’.

I suggest that there are two factors which are most prominent in the musical leadership labyrinth and contribute enormously to the disadvantage which Crouch and Lovric name above. These are: firstly, the focus on women’s appearance – and ensuing sexualisation ¹²⁷ – instead of their ability when conducting, and second, the constant reference to the ‘female’ or ‘woman’ leader. This is especially pertinent in relation to the phallogentricity described above.

Although wider focus on appearance plagues women in prominent positions (as I have shown already in this chapter), it is also particularly specific in

¹²⁷ Again, arguments surrounding both of these factors in the context of leadership are founded upon my analysis of androgynous bodies in Barrier Three.

conducting – your tool is your body, and it draws attention to that, and in particular to women’s breasts due to the height of the gestures in line with a woman’s anatomy. In her research into gender, class and classical music Anna Bull describes what she calls a ‘distinctive mode of embodied authority’ (2019, p. 113) in choral conducting that she notes is acutely prevalent in British cathedral music-making. Young women in particular are impacted by expectations that they cannot embody expertise and authority as a result of their gender and age, so who can legitimately embody this authority and why (or indeed why *not*) is of utmost importance. The focus on what women wear and how they present themselves on stage as leaders is linked intrinsically to the discussions in Barrier Three regarding understandings of the body in music-making. Therefore, I would like to reiterate the conversations surrounding gesture and gender as they pertain to leadership. In this part, I want to take forward these understandings in order to ascertain the role that the body plays in communicating authority and power.

In an interview regarding her experiences of teaching conducting to young women, renowned conductor Marin Alsop told *The Independent’s* Jessica Duchen about her perceived understandings of the differences between men and women with regard to gesture and conducting. She is quoted to say:

When I have a class of all men, it's very rarely about power, but more usually about problems with connection. That's a gross generalisation, of course. But I'd bet, from my experience, that the biggest challenge for women would be about how to deliver a gesture that elicits a powerful sound without any kind of apology, and without any kind of associated negative reaction from the musicians. (Duchen, *How Marin Alsop's classes for young women conductors are changing the face of the profession*, 2016)

After Alsop conducted the Last Night of the Proms in 2013, discussion centred around the fact that she was a woman, whereas gender was not discussed for the many men who have had the privilege of conducting the Last Night of the Proms before her or indeed the other men who conducted throughout the season. Conversations rightly drew attention to the fact that she was the first woman to do so, but also extended to how good she was, how qualified she was and what she was wearing. Around the same time, Vasily Petrenko, a young Russian conductor made comments that ‘a cute girl on a podium means that musicians think about

other things' (Jessica Duchen, *It's time to pass the baton*, 2013). The assumption that Petrenko makes here is one that is pervasive in discourses around women in leadership; that men and boys get distracted by women in authority, which implies either that women have been distracted by their male conductors for as long as they have been allowed to play or sing in groups, or that women have more self-control and therefore have not been distracted by their male leaders. Petrenko's comments also show a disregard for the ability of homosexual men involved in music-making to act professionally in rehearsals and during performances when the conductor is male.

The so-called critical gender differences between women and men as pertains musical leadership (especially around self-control) centre on how power is invoked and communicated. Throughout her career, Alsop has received many comments indicating that men under her baton have found her less of a distraction than they otherwise would have, due to their awareness that she is gay. Bartleet has noted the paradoxical nature of the female conductor's body, whereby: 'dominant social discourses encourage them to pursue femininity through their bodies, while dominant conducting discourses state that they need to renounce their femininity and adopt a surrogate masculinity' (2002, p. 52). Pursuing femininity is against the status-quo – more generally and in musical leadership more specifically – and in many studies of female conductors (see work by Claudia Bryan, 2016; Liz Garnett, 2017) the way that they dress themselves for the podium is a matter of great concern both for the women themselves but also for onlookers. Loucia Lazarou talks about this amongst other barriers in her qualitative PhD study of gender, family, 'the body' and discrimination for female conductors. Lazarou asserts, 'it is evident that women conductors put a lot of effort in what to wear, as well as taking into consideration how comfortable they would feel on the podium' (2017, p. 170).

As Bull has stated, women have to attempt to 'mirror the perfect humanity of the white male body of most conductors' which leads to 'correct[ing] the female body into trying not to be female' (2016, p. 865). Moira Gatens has written about

the biases which affect women in music too, and states that this natural disadvantage centres around a problem of perception, noting:

For the very same behaviour which makes a man appear well adjusted, 'attractive' and (socially) appropriate may well make a woman appear maladjusted, 'unattractive' and (socially) inappropriate. Although we may be dealing with the same type of behaviour, in the one case it is rewarded, commended, in the other punished, condemned. (1996, p. 30)

The perceived bias where a woman can be criticised for doing the same job as a man can be applied to woman conductors, shown in the example of Marin Alsop but there are many lesser-known cases too. The tacit and intangible reasons why women's roles in the workplace are still called into question is recognised by Christina Scharff in her report on equality and diversity in the classical music profession in which she states that 'in 2014 women only made up 1.4% of conductors and 2.9% of artistic/musical directors' (2015, p. 14). Women who seek to pursue careers in conducting are thus faced with a double bind: assert authority and risk being tarnished with the reputation of being a difficult woman or employ a leadership style which is perceived as feminine and be accused of being weak and lacking in authority.

The correlation between 'feminine', 'female', 'womanly' and leadership is in addition exacerbated by the persistent use of the antecedent 'woman' or 'female' before the respective job title, e.g., female conductor. By using the antecedent 'female' (or other labels which highlight race, class, disability or sexuality), there is an implication that these conductors are not the norm. Beyond an initial announcement, the persistence of the 'female x' title has ramifications for the authority, credibility, and authenticity of women's existence in these spaces. More often than not when a conductor who happens to be a woman is appointed to lead an orchestra or choir for the first time, they will be hailed the 'first female conductor'. The historic precedent which is being pointed out here is not necessarily problematic, although it draws attention to the patriarchal history of that choir or orchestra that it has taken until now to appoint a woman leader. There is an argument for pointing out the historic moment (as was the case when Alsop conducted the Last Night of the Proms), but beyond this use of the antecedent, I argue, its use is othering for anyone in this environment who is not

male. In Barrier Two, I explored the use of the antecedent ‘female’ or ‘girl’ with regards to drawing attention to the perceived difference. In the context of leadership, Janet Brenneman noted the reluctance of her participants (in a study on female conductors) to self-identify as a *woman conductor*. For example: she notes about Karen, one of the participants in her study: ‘While Karen never offered a characterizing definition of a woman choral conductor, she had a tacit understanding that the definition is negative, and resisted the gender label. She recognized with some perceived reluctance that others label her according to her gender’ (2012, p. 126). Brenneman’s observation of the reticence to be identified as a ‘female-’ or ‘woman-’ is telling of the ways that the antecedent is indicative of an implicit hierarchy in conducting.

In 2020, it is still true that women conductors are perceived to be a deviation from the norm, and this is despite (and indeed exemplified by the need for) 50/50 quotas and the effort, mentioned above, from pioneering role models. Being interpreted as either ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’ on the podium is a lose-lose situation for women as the adoption of a surrogate masculinity is interpreted as a rejection of womanhood. Add the focus on what they are wearing, instead of what they are doing, and it is unsurprising that women are apologetic about taking up space and do not wish to subject themselves to such harsh scrutiny, particularly in regard to the extra labour that is required in order to get to the podium. If these ideas persist, the field is also subject to more progressive forces, including new models that emphasise qualities seen in recent scholarship about leadership more broadly discussed in Part I.

IV. "No glass ceiling now": Gender and Leadership in Cathedral Music

In this final part, I will look more closely at which ideas of leadership are prevalent in the cathedrals of the Church of England. The top-down hierarchy of the conductor in the cathedral choir is most visible with regard to the nomenclature (which has been introduced and discussed already in Barrier Two). Historically

the head of the music department is known as the Master of the Choristers & Organist or Master of Music. Since the turn of the twenty-first century there have been changes in that title at many cathedrals to the less gendered title ‘Director of Music’ (see Table 10):

| Nomenclature | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| Title | No. of Cathedrals | Name of Cathedrals |
| Director of Music | 25 | Blackburn; Bradford; Carlisle; Chester; Coventry; Derby; Ely; Exeter; Gloucester; Leicester; Lichfield; Liverpool; Lincoln; Peterborough; Ripon; Rochester; St Edmundsbury; St Paul's, London; Salisbury; Sheffield; Truro; Wakefield; Winchester; Worcester; York Minster. |
| Organist & Master of the Choristers | 9 | Bristol; Canterbury; Chelmsford; Chichester; Durham; Guildford; Manchester; Portsmouth; Wells. |
| Other | 8 | Birmingham; Christ Church, Oxford; Hereford; Newcastle; Norwich, Southwark; Southwell; St Albans. |

Table 10 – Nomenclature

As you can see, the majority of cathedrals (twenty-five) have opted for the title of ‘Director of Music’, with ‘Organist and Master of the Choristers’ being used in nine. The remaining eight use Organist & Director of Music (Hereford, Newcastle & Southwark), Master of Music (Norwich & St Albans), Rector Chori (Southwell), Organist (Christ Church, Oxford), or Head of Music (Birmingham). It is significant to note this raises an important point about labelling – many of the women who I interviewed were the ‘first’ female to hold that job description. The women interviewed as part of my study seemed to mostly be in agreement that it is important to acknowledge that they were the first female in their post, to highlight the absurdity of how long it has taken. Yet, somewhat unsurprisingly, most interviewees were not flattered by the constant reminder of their being a ‘female’ Organist or ‘female’ Director of Music outside of this context.

According to Robin Lakoff: '[...] *master* now generally refers to a man who has acquired consummate ability in some field, normally non-sexual [...]' (1973, p. 63). Lakoff goes on to discuss the difference between the terms master and mistress but her suggestion that the word master connotates great skill or flair is born out in my participants' responses. Considering whether the term has gendered connotations, Matt (Choral Scholar) reflected on the female 'Master' who taught him at school and told me that he did not think the term held the male-only connotation "in an institutional sense" and Richard (a senior music leader) said he had not really thought about the name, claiming: "[...] it's music, you just get on with it." Robert said that it was "helpful that it's genderless" regarding the title of his role, 'Director of Music', and noted how it brought his position into line with the other senior roles at the cathedral he works at because they each also have the title of 'Director'.

Beyond the potentially gendered title of 'Master', on which there is no clear consensus amongst participants, the use of the 'female' antecedent to a job title in the cathedral context is particularly pointed. Cathedral musicians, like many other professionals, suffer from the tendency to add a gendered prefix to their job title of composer, conductor, or singer if they are not male. This language reasserts the norms of who belongs and who is othered in cathedral leadership. This kind of terminology may well contribute to the systemic 'othering' of women in cathedral music highlighted elsewhere in this thesis, which likely discourages their participation. Both Katherine (music director) and Hilary (senior music leader) asserted that the gender of the applicant does not and should not affect their hiring decisions. Katherine said her decision was "based on who is the best person for the job" Hilary's opinion was that we should have the same level of "excitement" whether or not the job is given to a man or a woman instead of there being a "huge news story about how they're the first female, as if it's a bigger thing for them to get that job despite their genitalia than it is somebody else who might be called Ben who got the same job" and stated that she thought "it makes it seem like we're different and I don't feel different".

Danielle Gaucher *et al.* have studied gendered wording in job advertisements and claim that ‘research documents the existence of a structural mechanism that reflects and reaffirms gender inequality, manifesting subtly through the language employed in job advertisements’ (2011, p. 119). In this way, the gendered implications of terms such as ‘Master’ (of Music), often used to describe the Musical Director at no fewer than nine cathedrals, is important. One of the senior music leaders, Rachel, told me that she did “bring up the discussion” of instituting a change in the name from ‘Master’ to ‘Director’ when an opening for a new position came up at her workplace. Further to this, she said: “the applications stated that both genders [could apply] [...] so that wasn’t a barrier and there were applications from female candidates [...]”. For Rachel the exclusive stipulation that the position was open to “both genders” resulted in female candidates applying. However, amongst the participants there was a reluctance to change the title, running in tandem with notions of tradition and history, already discussed in this thesis. For example, Katherine, who has retained the title of Organist and Master of the Choristers, reflected: “for me personally working as a woman in the profession that is the role to which I was appointed, and I feel very strongly that I should retain that title because it speaks to the role to which I was appointed.”

Certainly, the othering of women when they are in this position can undermine their achievements. Nina (a music director) reflected on the way that her being female is constantly referred to, stating: “I’m a musician. I’m not a female conductor, I’m not a female Director of Music, I’m just a musician. I do what I do. I don’t really think about it. I think a lot more people have thought about me getting this job than I did.” One of the senior music leaders, Owen, also talked about the “ignorant comments” from what he called “older generations” who called the female Organ Scholar at his cathedral the “lady scholar”. The term ‘lady’ is doing particular work here because of the ‘prototypically middle-class (and white) femininity’ that it conjures (Debuk, *Call Me Woman*, 2015). The term lady is so often used, as Lakoff noted as early as 1973, ‘to trivialize the subject matter under discussion, often subtly ridiculing the woman involved’ (p. 60). In these ways, the language that is ascribed to women as they grapple with their still steep

climb to the top effectively undermines their position and their confidence in said position.

In Christina Scharff's 2017 book based on interviews with women classical musicians, she records that the participants 'did not draw on sexism as an explanation for some of the gender imbalances they observed' thereby 'render[ing] sexism and gender inequalities unspeakable' (2017, p. 107). This is replicated in my participants' understandings of whether gender is central to or impacts upon access to or inclusion in cathedral music-making. I understood the musicians involved in my study to be pushing back against the extent to which their gender is important when they clearly don't want it to be. For some, they maintained this dissociation throughout the entire interview, but most of the woman participants eventually relaxed and shared their perspectives of the difficulties they faced, sometimes unnoticed at the time. One such example was Rosie's (Lay clerk) reflection that she had most likely spent a lot of time "fighting" for equality but did not recognise it at the time. She said:

I've probably fought and not noticed that I've been fighting for things – pointing out obvious lacks of [sic.] equality becomes quite normal if you're a female. So, I've probably just done a lot of that and not realised, which I think is going to be the case for a lot of these people.

Her understanding, I argue, is emblematic of the nature of gender diversity and inclusion in leadership, broadly speaking, as well as in cathedral music-making more specifically. Rosie's understanding that "lacks of equality" are "obvious" and pointing them out is "normal" is telling of the current state of gender inclusion in music-making. Her response is indicative of the leadership that is required of women in particular to point out the "obvious lacks of equality". The extra pressures that are put on women to justify their place in the arena and also to advocate for the next generation of women is not expected of their male colleagues (although, as I will show, some men have taken up the mantle of ally). Interestingly, too, in a more recent work, Scharff deciphers a change in how inequalities are being discussed in the wake of the #MeToo movement and advocates for 'ongoing scholarly analysis of the complexities and contradictions that characterise the current moment' and I concur with her conclusion that

‘[k]eeping a close eye on these complexities will allow for a nuanced analysis’ of this change (2020, p. 25). Future research on cathedral music-making will, I expect, reflect this shift.

(a) Leadership Styles

In Part III of this chapter, I referred to Palmer’s work which suggests that charisma is one of the key attributes that people look for in a conductor. The way attributes are correlated positively with male leadership by the musicians under their instruction connects to Bull’s argument that leadership in British cathedral music is based on the authority of masculine charisma (2019, p. 113). This is especially the case, as she noted, for participants in her study who had been choristers themselves. Richard (a professional conductor in his forties), for example, had been a chorister from aged eight, and is described as an exemplar of this kind of leadership. Bull also quotes Jeanette, a vocal coach associated with one of the groups in her study, who described the ‘strongly hierarchical "pecking order" with the conductor at the top; the conductor’s technique of "getting moody" to get the choir to do what he wants and to keep the group in a state of fear; and a sexualized (in this case heterosexual) culture of innuendo and humour’ (2019, p.117). One of the key ramifications of this here is my perception that many of the women in my study had adopted specific personas in the cathedral context – expectations of what they had to be. As such, they therefore moulded themselves to fit the leadership model that would be expected from them.

Each of the women interviewed sought to deny the impact of gender on the leadership opportunities that they had which led them to their positions. Adapting to the style expected in British cathedral music from Bull’s study is reflected implicitly in the participants responses when they talk about ‘being right for the job’. Hilary, for example, reflected:

[I] like to think that I have my job because I’m the right person to have my job and I’m fairly certain that the reason that [they] appointed me was because of that reason – that they wanted me to do the job, not because there’s a theological reason why my gender was important.

This perspective has already been raised in terms of the theologies of gendered importance (in Barrier One). For Hilary, her deduction may well have been related to the theologies of leadership discussed earlier in this chapter. What is also interesting about their response is the notion of being the ‘right person’. The gendered connotations of being ‘right’ for a job in a field which has been dominated by men for hundreds of years (and continues to be so) is an uphill battle for many well-qualified women as well as those who are trying to break into the elite programme of cathedral music-making; they do not necessarily internalise the hierarchies so staunchly.

For example, Hilary’s emphasis on the lack of difference in skills and abilities between herself as a woman and her male counterparts, based on their gender, is also reflected in the way that the participants in this study described their leadership styles. Words such as ‘trust’ and ‘integrity’, ‘understanding’ and ‘collaborative’ were descriptions offered by multiple women in the study. In fact, each of the women described their own leadership style as “collaborative” or “co-operative” and as “part of a team”. The desire to work as part of a team was also reflected in the responses by the male participants. This, I argue, has important ramifications for the cultural shift which accompanies the expansion of who can and does belong in cathedral musical-leadership and how gender inclusivity is fostered as is in line with the broader shifts described in Part I of this chapter. Nonetheless, the self-appraisals of participants such as Ben (a senior music leader) – who described himself as a “relatively gentle leader” – stood in contrast to one of the music directors, David’s, understanding that he himself was “firm, fair, and decisive” which for him would be the description of a “typical man”. By doing so, David admits to both perpetuating those historically masculine traits and acknowledges the specific association with masculinity. However, one of the senior music leaders who is a woman, Sarah, described her leadership style as being “pretty upfront” and claimed, “I am rarely, if ever, satisfied”. Nina, too, used words including “persuasive” and “driven” to describe her style. These participants describe a process of conforming to traditional models, which they are potentially uncomfortable about. Then witnessing their leadership in practice, I observed that the harshness that they

perceived about their styles of leading when attempting to not over-sell themselves in their interviews with me was fundamentally untrue.

I will argue that, even where not explicitly recognised by participants, both women and men in this study have understood their leadership styles in a way which can be linked to both masculine and feminine attributes to leadership. It is not necessarily the case for all cathedral leaders, and it is based on their own understandings of themselves and their understandings of how their colleagues would describe them. Nevertheless, what this shows is that the use of the female antecedent, or indeed the hiring of women in order (to bring something which is supposedly feminine in leadership), is not necessarily bound to the women leaders and thus not the male leaders in cathedral music. Othering women as a broad group when they do not identify with feminine characteristics in addition to pigeonholing men into characteristics which are associated with masculinity (and the reversal of these two statements) contributes to the barriers in leadership for all, but especially for young women. *Male* (feminist) role models will always be of vital importance, but they are particularly necessary given the statistics in lay and ordained musical leadership.

I will briefly explore the implications of concepts of faith and vocation in terms of how these leaders specifically invoke meaning from their faith in terms of how they can lead, linking back to Part II of this chapter and my discussions surrounding biblical leadership models and women's authentic leadership in the Christian Church. One of the other key factors in considering vocation in the Church of England pertains to whether non-Christians can lead as was explored in Barrier One. The general culture of inclusivity – or indeed exclusivity – which arises from the special institutional ethos of legitimate discrimination on the grounds of religious beliefs, even and especially as regards gender, sex, and sexuality affects leadership in clear ways.

Some of the participants discussed the impact that their Anglican belief had on their ability to do the job (well). David, for example, said: "I don't think I'd be able to do my job if I didn't have some sort of faith... you sing psalms everyday –

how can you sing that stuff and not be moved by it?” Although a proportion of my participants who are Christian suggest that there is a strong correlation between being Christian and taking a position in cathedral leadership: Ben said that there is a clear need for “understanding and being sympathetic to the liturgy”. Wendy also discussed this in the context of hiring a new Organ Scholar, saying: “We weren’t expecting that all of them would be practical Christians, but we do expect them to have a sympathetic understanding of what it is we’re trying to do here and to realise how the music enhances worship and communicates worship. Even if they don’t share that perspective, they have to enable it for those who do.” Additionally, one of the Lay clerks in my study, Georgia, reflected on her colleagues who are agnostic or atheist, and what impact this has on what it means to participate in and lead worship. She said:

I suppose it depends on what you think is important in your faith. It’s just that’s the sort of church experience that I think a lot of people want to have. Hopefully the singers, if to a lesser extent, still know what’s going on and are still doing, ... hopefully when they sing there’s something behind that, or they give that impression.

So, whilst, for Georgia, her faith is an important reason why she feels compelled to lead music and worship in cathedrals, she is similarly acknowledging that there is a shared understanding between her Christian and non-Christian peers about the purpose of providing this type of worship. Georgia’s allusion to the sort of church worship which allows you to be whoever you want and allows you to engage with the worship in whatever way you want is similar to Rosie’s perspective that for her, “not being Christian, my biggest feeling is if we’re enabling the community to get together then that’s a brilliant thing.” Richard reflected that, in the context of the institutional church, “the church is central to the idea of women leading worship because ... unless it ordains [them] that cannot happen and, of course, that [women's ordination] comes out of conversations about vocation.” This discussion of who God does or does not call, and more importantly which callings the church is willing to recognise as being legitimate ordinations from, or by, God, shows the tension that exists in the debates surrounding gender, sex, and sexuality from Barrier One as they apply to leadership. Specifically, here, Richard

acknowledges the institutional role in supporting women in terms of legitimating their authority.

The Precentors in this study unsurprisingly discerned a clear theological purpose for participating in and leading worship. Max, for example, shared his perspective that it is “to stand very close to the heart of God and very close to the heart of God’s people which leads to a profound connection with the divine and with people. It’s a key role in facilitating that which is different from being a performer enabling something else to take place.” What Max appreciates as a facilitator’s role in leading worship is important in terms of whether and who can do this facilitation and who can feel called to do so. When considering the impact that inclusion of women in the Episcopate and the priesthood has had on gender diversity and inclusion, he also clearly stated his understanding that “the theological stance that people have taken has certainly had an impact on the life of women in cathedrals”. Vocation and leadership are seen as intertwined in this view; not just for the clergy, but also for anyone, regardless of their lifestyle (particularly notable in terms of sexuality) and forms of work. This view is an important indication of a movement towards inclusivity in the Church of England, at least in terms of how it can be legitimately pursued on an individual level.

(b) Intersecting Authority, Age, and Class

Earlier in this chapter, I introduced the link between authority and age. The top leadership positions in cathedral music are held for multiple decades, which I argue is a significantly long period of time to exert their control and to gain authority and credibility in a small sub-section of the classical music world. It also contributes to a slowness of change. Women have by comparison held the position for a significantly shorter period of time; even combined, they have only held the role for eighteen years in total, which is matched or bettered by at least twenty-six men since the mid-1980s including James Lancelot (Durham 1985-2017), Stephen Darlington (Christ Church, Oxford 1985-2018) and Paul Trepte (Ely 1990-2019). Eighteen women have held leadership positions (from Organ Scholar through to Director of Music) across twenty cathedrals since Rosemary Field first held the position of Sub-Organist at Birmingham Cathedral from 1986-1995. On

the fifteen occasions that women have held senior positions in cathedral music-making (excluding Organ Scholars and current position holders), their immediate successor was a man with but two exceptions: Sarah MacDonald's replacement of Louise Reid as Director of the Girls' Choir at Ely in 2010/11, and the three women that have held the position of Assistant Organist at Lincoln consecutively since 2011 (Hilary Punnett replaced Claire Innes-Hopkins in 2014; Punnett was then replaced by Alana Brooks in 2019). This is indeed the only consecutive run of women in leadership in any cathedral, ever, which is telling of the rate of progress and the number of women that have held these kinds of positions.

On the ten occasions where women have held the position of Organ Scholar (again excluding current position holders), none of the women were immediately succeeded by another woman. I argue that the culture of leadership at each individual cathedral has a direct impact on whether women are or may be appointed there. This is in line with George Goethals' and Crystal Hoyt's consideration of the 'lack of numerical parity between women and men in leadership' as a result of the leadership labyrinth (2017, p. xii). The data in Table 11 (p. 253) shows that exactly half of the Anglican cathedrals in England have so far not appointed a woman to any position from Organ Scholar through to Director of Music, whilst twelve cathedrals (out of forty-two) have appointed more than one woman over the past thirty or so years, and only three (Lincoln, Truro, & Chichester) have appointed more than two women to their musical leadership. Chichester's appointments of Sarah Baldock as Organist and Master of the Choristers between 2008 and 2014 and Laura Erel & Kyoko Canaway as Organ Scholars in 2015-2016 and 2017-2018 respectively stand in dissonance with the lack of provision for girl choristers at the cathedral (one of only three). It is striking that twenty women have held these thirty-six leadership positions amongst themselves, with ten of them having held at least two positions in English cathedrals and only six having held three. Compared with their male counterparts, very few women begin the journey of musical leadership, but that only six women in have held three posts indicates the hostility of the environment and the difficulties that women face in succeeding and indeed staying in this world.

Women's leadership in cathedral music has nearly exclusively been at regional, smaller or newer institutions. There is a lack of women in positions of authority in bigger cathedrals – the barriers to inclusion all combine to make it possible for women to break through in those places which are not under a lot of scrutiny from the press or from tourists (whose opinions are discussed in Barriers Two and Three) nor where there is significant responsibility, for huge public engagements, for example. David Shearlock understands that 'there is an unofficial ladder of promotion' which goes from Choral Scholar through the Assistant or Sub- Organist then takes over what he calls a "starter" cathedral before progressing to what he terms a "major" cathedral 'and finally lands up at the console of Canterbury or Westminster, St Paul's or York Minster' (1996, p. 16). It is worth noting that of the three Anglican cathedrals he mentions here, Rachel Mahon's Organ scholarship at St Paul's, London is the only example of women in musical leadership at a "major" cathedral, and for all intents and purposes was at the bottom of that hierarchy there, whilst the rest of the women are considered to still be at so-called "starter" cathedrals. Even the women who have 'reached the top' of the hierarchy at their own cathedrals (at Peterborough, Rochester and Guildford) would, by Shearlock's estimations still be considered as being at 'starter' positions. Connecting musical and ordained leadership, and the standing of the girl choristers, it is probable that Canterbury will be the last of the major cathedrals to employ a woman in a senior musical leadership position. Despite this, there was a perception amongst the female participants in my study that "there's no glass ceiling now" (Rachel).

| Leadership roles held by women in Anglican Cathedrals in England since the mid 1980s | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Name: | Position(s) held: | | |
| Rosemary Field | SO Birmingham 1986-95 | SO Portsmouth 1999-2005 | |
| Claire Hobbs | AO Bristol 1989-91 | | |
| Katherine Dienes-Williams | OS Winchester 1991-93 | AO Norwich 1997-2001 | OMotC Guildford 2008- |
| Louise Reid | AO Wakefield 1996-2002 | SO Guildford 2002-03 | DoGC Ely 2006-2007 & 2009-10 |
| Sarah Baldock | AO Winchester 2002-08 | OMoM Chichester 2008-14 | |
| Claire Cousens | OS Truro 2004-05 | | |
| Dr Emma Gibbins | OS Southwell 2004-05 | | |
| Cathy Lamb | AO Lichfield 2007 | | |
| Francesca Massey | AMoM Peterborough 2007-11 | SO Durham 2011-19 | DoM Rochester 2019- |
| Sarah MacDonald | DoGC Ely 2008*, Sep 2010- | | |
| Kate Macpherson | OS Portsmouth 2010-11 | | |
| Claire Innes-Hopkins | AO Lincoln 2011-14 | AO Rochester 2014-18 | |
| Hilary Punnett | OS Southwell 2011-13 | AO Lincoln 2014-19 | AO&DoGC Chelmsford 2019- |
| Rachel Mahon | OS Truro 2013-14 | OS St Paul's 2014-16 | AO Coventry 2018- |
| Rosie Vinter | OS Chelmsford 2015-2016 | OS Lichfield 2018-2019 | ADoM Leicester 2019- |
| Laura Erel | OS Chichester 2015-16 | | |
| Käthe Wright Kaufman | OS Truro 2016-17 | | |
| Alana Brook | OS Ripon 2017-19 | AO Lincoln 2019- | |
| Kyoko Canaway | OS Chichester 2017-18 | | |
| Imogen Morgan | OS Durham 2017- | | |
| *Maternity Cover | | | |

| Key | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| AMoM | Assistant Master of Music |
| AO | Assistant Organist |
| DoGC | Director of the Girls' Choir |
| DoM | Director of Music |
| OMoM | Organist & Master of Music |
| OMotC | Organist & Master of the Choristers |
| OS | Organ Scholar |
| SO | Sub-Organist |

Table 11 – Women in Leadership

Some of the (women) participants reflected on the fact that they were not raised in the United Kingdom as a potential reason for why they have not found what Sam Friedman & Daniel Laurison call ‘*The Class Ceiling*’ to be particularly pervasive in their experiences. Of the women in Table 11, Käthe Wright Kaufman is from America, Katherine Dienes-Williams is from New Zealand, Rachel Mahon, Sarah MacDonald, and Hilary Punnett are from Canada, and Alana Brook is from Australia. The success of women from outside of England in leadership in English cathedral music-making, I argue, has tangible links to the nature of the intersection between gender and class in England in comparison to their countries of origin. Both Sarah and Hilary commented on this in their interviews. Sarah reflected that “there’s a familiarity [with the choristers] because I’m not British... I’m a little bit more relaxed with them...”. I argue that the cultural, national discrepancies in expectations of church music quality and excellence is compounded in the UK by the entrenched nature of the middle-class culture of cathedral music-making and its still strong association with private education and boarding schools (despite the decline in these as noted in Barrier Two). The intersectional nature of the barriers to gender diversity and inclusion in the English cathedral is perhaps most clearly visible in the context of leadership as we explore how women gain access to these positions and what they have to learn or already know in order to be considered an ‘insider’. This is especially pertinent when considering their approach to leading in the way that is *de facto* expected in cathedral music-making. Indeed, the participants in my study understood women to be less inclined to take this supposedly characteristic totalitarian approach. And so, being positioned as an outsider need not always be a negative.

For Hilary, the centrality that her gender has taken in discourses about her capabilities in cathedral music is a specifically British experience, and one which she was not aware of in Canada. She told me about how different she perceived the attitudes towards gender in the UK to be, compared with Canada, and the effect this has had on her during her time working in English cathedrals. She said:

[...] it’s hard to explain, being from Canada, the complete culture shock of coming to the UK in terms of gender roles – it’s so vastly different in the UK than it is in Canada... it was never something that even occurred to me in Canada... [...] Apart from a whole host of tiny experiences that I’ve had

that have made me feel like it's so important that I'm female when it never was before. I don't know what else to say to explain it.

Although it can make it easier for these women because they are not inculcated in the culture, it also makes it harder to bypass class or challenge gender-norms because they have not been brought up in this system and have to first get acquainted with this way of life. The way these participants understood the difference in their leadership style to be as a result of them not being British is relevant to consider in the context of Anna Bull's understanding of the type of 'embodied authority' (2019, p. 117) associated with the 'fear or humiliation tactics' (p. 124) common in leadership in British cathedrals. For both Hilary and Sarah, their 'outsider' perspective on gender, class, and music-making is vital to the understanding of how barriers combine to keep women out of the organ loft or the quire. British women such as Francesca Massey have managed to climb the ladder to the position of Director of Music, but the perspectives of women such as Hilary and Sarah are indicative of some of the ways other barriers intersect almost unbeknownst to musicians who are born and raised in the U.K. As was discussed in terms of accessing 'the tradition' at all, the incidental factor of accessing cathedral leadership via a kind of internship (organ scholarship) at the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, or having been a chorister at an English cathedral, applies more restraints upon women trying to access the tradition who have, for various reasons, not been able to use these entry points to cathedral music-making and work their way up through the 'usual' trajectory. There is a system in which you have to serve your time – a hierarchy in which you have your place. As well as othering *anyone* who was not trained musically through the cathedral (and collegiate chapels of Oxford and Cambridge) choral or organ system, accessibility and a sense of belonging are minimised especially for women who already face a double-bind in leadership in classical music-making, in the Church, and indeed in every walk of life as have been discussed already in this chapter.

(c) Pack Leaders and Role Models

The impact that leaders can have on the choristers that they work with is almost undeniable, especially as the next generation of senior musicians. Nearly all participants acknowledged their place as role models for the choristers and young scholars who are involved in cathedral music-making. Katherine's understanding that "it's beholden on people such as myself to educate all children in this great cultural gift [...]" is being done through the provision of organ and conducting lessons (informal and otherwise) for the choristers. Her emphasis here is on the extension of these opportunities to 'all children' and not those who have always been given the opportunities – not just the boy choristers. The older girl choristers at Peterborough, for example, were given the opportunity to conduct an anthem in a service about which Tansy Castledine, Director of Music, said "this is a way of offering a wider understanding of choral and church music as part of the choristers' training, so that they can see possibilities beyond their role as a member of the Choir [...]" (Peterborough Cathedral, 2019). The training of the choristers in the musical possibilities available to them is also connected to the inclusion of women in the priesthood and Episcopate discussed earlier, because, as Ben understood it, "it can act as an impetus or inspiration to women and particularly younger girls who are either choristers, or not, who see that that is something which the church is committed to and therefore is something that they are more likely keen and happy to be involved in". Peter told me that the choristers of today will be "the clergy of the next generation" and that the introduction of women priests, bishops and deans has meant that "the girl choristers have role models – they don't come away from their time thinking it's a misogynist institution." This positive presentation of women as role models by a male colleague is representative not only of his understanding of the advantages of women's leadership in cathedral music-making, but also of the role that men can play in amplifying women's voices.

Benjamin Drury and Cheryl Kaiser write about the role of men in confronting sexism, arguing that 'compared to women, it is difficult for men to detect sexism; however, when they do detect and confront sexism, men experience more positive reactions from others and their actions are taken more seriously as

appropriate condemnations of sexism’ (2014, p. 645). Building on this argument, then the role that the thirty-nine male Directors of Music can play in creating a non-hostile work environment for the women who do work there or the women who will work there in the future has an imperative for gender diversity and inclusion. Yet, one of the reasons why a unified approach or indeed allyship from the (male) Director and Assistant Director is not achieved in certain cathedrals is exemplified in Sharon Welch’s understanding that ‘for some sharing power seems like death, a loss of self rather than the invitation to explore an alternative construction of selfhood’ (1991, p. 97). In the case of the male-dominated leadership of cathedral music-making the sharing of power, particularly with women, and with other minorities, will be essential in ensuring that the future is not dominated by one kind of person, based on or in any way connected to their gender identity.

Pushing back against the idea that boys and men are the norm includes providing opportunities for both sets of choristers e.g., in tacit leadership opportunities like at Peterborough with the girl choristers conducting and giving both sets of choristers the opportunity to learn the organ so that the girls have the same introduction to these skills. In this sense, the part that women play as role models not just in terms of the characteristics and kind of leadership that they present to the choristers but also in terms of the opportunities that they create is of utmost importance.

When the (usually) male Director of Music splits their time with both sets of choristers with the Assistant Director, the Assistant (regardless of their gender) is placed in a hierarchy with the choristers where they perform better for the perceived pack leader (the Director). Matthew Owens and Graham Welch write:

It is also our experience that constant reiteration and modelling of good vocal and musical practice is more likely when the director (pack leader) sees the girls for longer and more sustained periods, thus developing a strong relationship with the group as a whole, as well as a greater understanding of individuals and their vocal strengths and developmental needs within the group (2017, p. 7)

Owens and Welch's assertion provides a foundation for the argument that one leader should take responsibility for the boy choristers and one for the Girls' Choir / girl choristers. The conundrum is that the Director of Music in all cases has taken responsibility for the boy choristers, whilst the Assistant or Director of the Girls' Choir takes full responsibility for the girls. In no known circumstance has the Director of Music taken responsibility for the girl choristers and no responsibility for the boys. Trying to manage the gendered imbalance that is addressed when the split of responsibilities between both sets of choristers with the musical advantages to having one pack leader is a question that all Directors will face.

One key ramification of this pack leader mentality is how it impacts and influences the division of labour between the leadership team and how this is interpreted and responded to by the choristers. One of the participants in this study, Georgia, reflected on her time as a girl chorister at a cathedral where the Girls' Choir is directed by a woman. She told me: "When I was small, I always thought that Girls' Choirs were taken by women and boys' choirs were taken by men. I don't know if that's normal...". Although none of the other participants expressed this view, the repetition of this pattern, and the strong identification via gender sameness, reflects the expectations of which roles women are able and expected to perform in cathedral music-making. The separation of the choristers has been covered in this thesis elsewhere but taking the angle of headship and the impact that it has on the choristers there are multiple arguments which surround the division of leadership amongst the two groups. In addition to their above arguments surrounding the pack leader, Owens and Welch have stated that:

[...] if there are multiple directors, the boy choristers will generally perform best for their own assigned director, or pack leader, whereas girls are more accepting of others, even though they too will normally work at full capacity for *their* perceived pack leader, rather than for a deputy or deputies' (2017, p. 7).

This is supported by Philip Moore, then Organist and Master of Music at York Minster. He is reported to believe that 'children unconsciously adopt a sort of sound from the person in front of them' (1991, p.13) when interviewed about the

choristers making a different sound if someone else conducted them than him. Connected to Owens and Welch's argument, Moore continued: 'If, for instance, I got someone else to conduct Evensong on Sunday, the choir would make a slightly different sound' (1991, p. 13). In places where the boys are led by a man and the girls by a woman, having the girls and boys singing together under a leader who is commonly in charge of one set of choristers means that the other set will usually perform poorly. If the 'pack leader' of the girl choristers is a woman, the poor performance of either the girls (under the male 'pack leader' of the boys) or the boys (under the woman 'pack leader' of the girls) will reflect on the girls or woman as they are perceived as deviations from the norm and therefore shoulder the responsibility for any deviation in standard.

In this chapter, I have illustrated that the different personae adopted by leaders reflect the many ways of being female in the cathedral, but also the expectations that women have put on themselves not to be trailblazers (although that may be true for some), but to be the same as their male colleagues – to not be 'female' directors of music, but simply directors of music. These women feel that they do not want to make their gender an issue which suggests that the cathedral is not an environment in which they can make their gender a focal point without it being pushed back against as something which is solely negative. I have discussed how the ways women and men live out these positions contributes to changing the norms and stereotypes of women in musical leadership which prevail; in particular how they encourage the next generation of girls and boys to think about the 'tradition' of which they are a part and to return to in future. The tension that exists between providing the next generation of *female* musicians in a male-dominated environment and placing too much (or indeed any) emphasis on the gender of the current leaders is an important dichotomy for all who are concerned with gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral leadership.

Christina Rees wrote that: 'It will not be enough to slot the women into the system and assume the result will be a renewed and transformed church' (2002, p.28). I have argued here that women have been slotted into cathedral music and

the results, thus far at least, have not been a renewed and transformed Church. From the interviews, it is visible that to some degree the increasing diversity has meant that the perpetuation of leading in the style of the old guard is slowly changing and leaders – of all genders – who inspire in that way are no longer the norm. The eradication of barriers to diverse leadership in cathedral music-making will be a long and arduous process, particularly for the women who are navigating the double-bind of fitting in and speaking out.

Coda

Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time
– Ruth Bader Ginsburg



Like Silence, But Not Really Silent

At the beginning of this thesis, I set off on a journey using Marilyn Frye's image of a 'network of systematically related barriers' (1983, pp. 4-5) as a way to analyse both the exclusion and inclusion of women and girls in Anglican cathedral music-making. These barriers include institutional rhetorics of the 'middle way', concepts of tradition, gendered understandings of spaces, voices, and bodies, and gendered cultures of leadership. These barriers, I have argued, continue in many respects to be 'as confining as the solid walls of a dungeon' for gender diversity and inclusion in contemporary cathedral music-making. These barriers have been recognised in existing studies but have not yet been a central focus as they are in this thesis. This research is timely as it comes five years after Mackey's thesis was published (the first of its kind) and nearly thirty years since the picture began to change: a constantly evolving situation demands renewed scrutiny. I have built upon existing work to examine in greater depth the rhetoric and attitudes which affect and reassert gender differences in choral music-making.

The rate of change in gender diversity in cathedral music-making has impacted this study in a variety of ways. Whilst the information in this thesis was being finalised, Rochester Cathedral ¹²⁸ and Gloucester Cathedral ¹²⁹ made announcements of significant changes to their choristership from 2021. Similarly, Rachel Mahon's promotion to Director of Music at Coventry Cathedral from September 2020¹³⁰ is welcome news. Such is the nature of contemporary research into a 'tradition', but (unfortunately) this change does not affect my arguments; her appointment brings the current total number of women in this position to four out of forty-two. Whilst it is important to recognise how far cathedrals have come, this thesis has also shown what has been cemented over the years. As more women are appointed to leadership roles, it is likely that the rhetoric and perceptions of who can and does belong in cathedral music will change. At present, however, there are still too few women included to change the ethos on a larger, institutional scale. To move away from exclusionary rhetoric which has been publicly espoused

¹²⁸ Rochester Cathedral, 2019.

¹²⁹ Gloucester Cathedral, 2019.

¹³⁰ Coventry Cathedral, 2020.

for generations will require, I argue, a clearer inclusive rhetoric where the voices that have so far been excluded are given as much (or indeed more) prominence as the voices which have excluded them. Cathedral practices, policies, and cultures will have to change if inclusion is to become more than an institutional buzzword or tick box exercise. As Sara Ahmed noted, ‘diversity would be institutionalized when it becomes part of what an institution is already doing, when it ceases to cause trouble’ (2012, p. 27).

Each of the barriers presented in my thesis provide unique opportunities for growth and learning for cathedral practitioners and scholars alike. I return to each of these barriers now to summarise what I have demonstrated across this thesis:

- 1) Opportunities for improving gender diversity in the Church of England are shaped and restricted by institutional understandings of how to speak about gender, sex, and sexuality

I have shown that the Church’s official rhetoric around sex and gender is both narrow and ambiguous. Though these two terms may appear to be opposed, I have shown that they capture the way in which the Church, at an institutional level, simultaneously limits the scope of what may be said officially and avoids overly definitive statements on these subjects. I have asserted that this approach is a result of the *via media* ('middle ways') character of Anglicanism. The *via media* clearly does enable some people to feel included, but it similarly confines everyone in the Church to the middle way even if they personally hold more progressive (or to a lesser extent, conservative) views than the institutional line. I revealed how this disconnect results in ambiguous and uncertain rhetoric and practice – especially in the problems it creates structurally – which has particularly grave consequences for gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making. I argued that it is possible (if not probable) that the historic, public facilitation of exclusion within the Church will require an equally long and public facilitation, and even prioritisation, of inclusion to counteract it. The *via media* is precisely what is preventing a confrontation of these issues: it allows for ‘gentle’ inclusion and a gradualist approach within an ambiguous rhetoric that ultimately enables exclusion to continue. Finally, I described how the cultures and traditions in the

Church of England make it, in some ways, not dissimilar to other institutions (such as IRCAM and the BBC), but identified that in other, perhaps more significant ways, the Church of England has their own particular challenges to face. The Church of England's approach to inclusion – or rather, to the inclusion of those who wish to exclude – sets it apart from other (non-religious) institutions that are attempting to address gender diversity.

2) Rhetorics of tradition continue to 'other' women by (re-)asserting a gendered hierarchy in various aspects of cathedral music-making

I have shown in this chapter how notions of 'authenticity', 'quality', the 'ancient', the 'timeless', and of static, immovable practices, affect the perception of whether and to what extent women and girls belong in the cathedral music-making 'tradition'. Such views of tradition are both reflected in and influenced by nomenclature, funding and finances, initiation practices, the age of the choristers, and opportunities for leadership. The language of tradition is central to the identity of cathedral music-making and often reflects a 'fixed', stagnant understanding of who belongs, even though ongoing practices increasingly emphasise the living, evolving nature of the 'tradition'. The way cathedral music is understood by the participants in this study to stay true to ancient customs (in theory if not in practice) has contributed to mixed views about the sustainability of cathedral music in future generations. On the whole, participants expressed hope there would be a "bright future" for cathedral music-making and that women and girls would be part of this continued tradition in some way. I have highlighted some critical caveats to this inclusion. Most uses of the language of tradition serve to 'other' girls within cathedral music, *even when* this is part of an attempt to give them equal opportunities. Working with Mackey's and Kerslake's foundational understandings, I have interrogated here the idea that the girl chorister line is a 'new' mode, asking whether they are in fact a new mode or a continuity of the same mode, or somewhere in-between. By categorising the language and practice of tradition into four paradigms I have demonstrated how tradition has been deployed to create and sustain power relations.

I strongly attested in this chapter that the assumptions made by key stakeholders (including members of the music team, clergy, congregations, and the choristers) directly impact the *reality* of the girl choristers' existence and their experience in cathedral music-making. I observed here a key tension in the rhetoric and practices surrounding inclusion – between the desire to honour a distinctive contribution or identity of women and men and possible ways to minimise or conceal gender difference (e.g., 'blind' auditions). This tension is one which persists within feminist discourse too. As such, it is hard to propose one approach as superior, but my analysis here suggests that two helpful first steps would be *acknowledging* the way that tradition is used rhetorically to sustain power structures and *addressing* the way it is used to 'other' girls and women within the cathedral. The four paradigms which I provide at the end of Barrier Two are a significant contribution to scholarship on gender inclusion in music-making as they identify and question the way language is used to create and sustain imbalanced power relations. They can help practitioners and scholars alike to move away from overly narrow discursive representations of what is core to the identity of the English cathedral music 'tradition'. Why, after all, should the central, most identifying element of the tradition be the gender of the singers?

- 3) Unequal approaches to gender are built into the material and embodied practices of the church and affect understandings of the bodies, spaces, and voices involved in cathedral worship

I interrogated the purpose of the vestments that are worn in cathedral services as well as how gesture, posture, and presence are utilised and understood, alongside the rhetoric of modesty, shame, and propriety; together, they problematise women's relationships with their own bodies and approaches to women's bodies in the church and indeed society more broadly. I argued that anonymity in music-making is not always beneficial. The tension explored in the previous chapter recurs here: is the solution to minimise or celebrate difference? Once again, the key to responding to this question is to understand *how* women and girls are positioned as 'different' in the current context. I suggested once more that female bodies and voices have been scrutinised and have been subject to an othering,

which the bodies of their male counterparts have rarely undergone; girls and women are still ultimately perceived to be the weaker version (both literally and metaphorically) of the trademark cathedral choir of boys and men.

Understanding the cathedral space as a place of worship, and not simply a ‘container’ for bodies, I have explored how the space for worship often consolidates (and occasionally overturns) barriers to gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music. How people are encouraged to view and move around the cathedral is tied to a plethora of gendered metaphors and descriptions which impact, directly and indirectly, who feels a sense of belonging in these spaces. I argued that concepts of sanctuary, anonymity, and invisibility impact on women, LGBTQ+ people, and non-Christians who enter and engage with this space. Significantly, the various invocations of space as ‘safe’ or ‘unsafe’ for these people is tied up in how it is used to draw attention towards, or away from, specific voices. Upon thorough consideration of the ways in which these places exclude marginalised bodies and voices, and the gendered ramifications for how all bodies inhabit and move through these spaces, church practitioners will be more fully equipped to liberate the cathedral space. My thesis calls on practitioners to take heed of the nuance of the space and how the cathedral, although sanctuary for many, can uphold and physically embody the sometimes-uninhabitable environment that the *via media* (Barrier One) creates and sustains for women and other marginalised groups. Until the Church of England actively gives prominence to historically excluded groups, these marginalised bodies and voices are merely being allowed admission to the cathedral space; they do not exist on equal terms with the historically privileged groups.

- 4) Music leadership is constructed, assumed, and enacted in ways that are deeply gendered, creating obstacles to women’s participation in leadership.

The final chapter in this thesis explored the interplay between leadership, gender, music, and the church in order to identify and examine official and unofficial leadership hierarchies and models. I demonstrated that notable attempts to

minimise the significance of gender on the part of female directors of music concealed considerable sensitivity to the fact that their leadership styles might be interpreted in gendered ways. Leaders who are marked as 'other' by their nationality as well as gender may find that their intersectional position either compounds the experience of othering or, in some cases, gives leaders opportunities to leverage their 'otherness' to insulate themselves from more purposive othering on the basis of their gender. It seems to be a central tenet of feminist scholarship that women and girls must juggle the double bind of simultaneously 'fitting in' and 'standing out' as a result of their gender. At various times throughout my thesis, it may appear that I am advocating for one or the other; this is not the case. At this still early stage – in the grand scheme of the history of cathedral music-making – women and girls are navigating their position which requires that they at times appear to irreconcilably occupy both roles.

By looking at these four broader issues in conjunction with one another, this thesis has revisited and reassessed the practices in cathedrals already studied by other scholars, as well as bringing in voices from five other cathedrals, not previously studied. I have also contributed to the small, but growing, body of scholarship on cathedral music-making, which on balance has tended to focus more on boys' voices. My study has gone below the surface of the current situation at cathedrals to ensure that the voices of the people on the 'front-line' of cathedral music-making are heard. By doing so, I have shown that the state of progress and the nature of diversity work in cathedral music-making requires constant re-evaluation from both scholars and practitioners alike. Different phases of change require different strategies. This principle could be a way of tackling those two – almost contradictory – approaches of celebrating and minimising difference. For example, drawing attention to women and girls as a new tradition may be suitable in some phases of change, whilst other phases call for greater stress on their belonging as part of the same tradition. Similarly, strategies for inclusion within cathedral music will need to respond to changes inside and outside of the church.

There is a renewed sense of urgency around these questions both inside and outside of the academy as energetic public debate about diversity, inclusion, and

equality increases. As a necessary intermediate stage on the way towards a non-othering acceptance and inclusion of women and girls, the Church needs to explicitly acknowledge and engage with their history of exclusion and lukewarm forms of inclusion. It will need to explicitly advocate for cultural changes, both in their communication with their own membership and in their responses to the changing wider world. As one of the music directors in my study, Katherine, said:

I think as society begins to question more the boundaries of gender and encourages girls' education in its broadest possible context, that all professions and careers should be open to all genders. Then I think that energy from society at large rubs off into the church and into everything we do and encourages everybody.

Each of my participants have understandably countenanced a culture of inaction which has allowed for and endorsed an ambivalence towards change. The complacency which exists at an individual level requires a great deal of effort, time, and courage to counteract and call out as the internalised structures run deep in the practices, policies, and cultures. Yet there is an unjustifiable cost to not speaking up. That is because when this ambivalence and passivity is enacted at an institutional level it serves only to entrench the conservative viewpoints. It results in a culture whereby acknowledgement of the Church's exclusionary practices need not be accompanied by tangible change. Instead, a culture of mostly superficial, tokenistic inclusion persists instead. Representation is not enough, and the Church is pretending that it is. Especially when the representation of women is so marginal, what is required is a serious, thought-through acknowledgement of these barriers which marginalised groups face *and* an equally serious and considered action which enables these marginalised groups to both fit in and speak out.

Indeed, the problems which affect inclusion, diversity, and belonging are multi-dimensional and pervasive. In line with Bull's work on class and classical music, more intersectional work needs to be done on cathedral music-making. As she has claimed the aesthetic, which is centred around the white, middle-class musician, must be confronted and addressed if there is any hope of diversifying classical music (2019, pp. 111, 128-144). Research which sets out to examine the

interrelationship between class and race with the findings here on gender diversity, as well as a specific interrogation of the way these barriers obstruct the path of inclusion for trans voices, will be imperative next steps. As a feminist scholar and ally to my Black and other colleagues of colour, there is much more to be done in terms of decolonising scholarship – particularly, in this case, as it pertains to the English national church. Other identifiable areas for future research would include a broader comparative study of churches in other constituent countries of the UK (and indeed across the Anglican Communion), or through a comparison with the Roman Catholic Church in England. Outside of the remit of this study, an interesting point for future research would be the gendered split of head choristers in mixed choirs and the views of young choristers on leadership. Would girls shy away from leadership positions due to internalisation of the supposed fundamental differences between girls and boys? How aware are they of these perceived differences, and of the consequences of their *assumed* inferiority?

My research builds on and adds to the current state of knowledge in the field by taking an innovative, holistic approach to interrogating the barriers to gender inclusion; calling them into question and providing academic opposition to the prevailing theories which limit and restrict inclusive access. I have advocated here a radical rethinking of diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making and have shown that the issues at play are not one-dimensional and cannot solely be understood in isolation from one another. I have argued that these four formidable barriers are still in place thirty years after girls were first admitted, and with the growing power of more conservative views in the Anglican Communion and the religious right in the US, it is not necessarily the case that the church's position will inevitably become more 'liberal'. Indeed, I have shown how systemic these subtle practices of exclusion are. The presentation of the barriers I have identified, as such strong and pervasive obstacles to inclusion, will help to embolden those who wish to advocate for change in this environment. As Emi Koyama suggests 'the sum of our small rebellions combined will destabilize the normative gender system as we know it' (2003, p. 252).

Throughout this thesis I refer to the sense of decline or threat which exists within cathedral music-making more generally – and which has done for generations. The impact of COVID-19 on cathedrals in terms of their financial structures and being able to provide opportunities for worship will inevitably leave a mark on these cathedral choirs. Future research will hopefully examine which voices are currently missing or underrepresented in scholarship and practice by exploring further the way the four barriers identified in this thesis isolate and discourage women, including trans women, and non-binary musicians.

Clearly this study has not been exhaustive: there are more participants, more cathedrals, and more denominations just in the UK. My choice of ten specific cathedrals meant that my research did not include voices from musicians at more rural or smaller cathedrals not easily accessible by public transport such as Ripon. While my findings are applicable to cathedrals which have mixed chorister lines and are relevant for cathedrals that do not have girl choristers, these cathedrals were not specifically included in my research. And while my thesis serves to address inequality in cathedral music, this has been through the lens of gender, and has not attended to the task of decolonising cathedral music and the scholarship particularly. Despite these limitations, I have offered some clear reflections on how to make these environments more inclusive for women and girls, and many of these points could be extended to consideration of strategies of inclusion more broadly.

None of this research should sing into the void – the correlation and impact of this research must be seen in practice, and the academic communities which research these issues must extend the findings to the practitioners on the ground. My thesis has clear implications for practitioners in cathedral music-making. Strategies to increase inclusion such as blind auditioning, changes in nomenclature for leaders and singers, and separate girls' choirs are all worthy of re-examination; cathedral leaders should not assume that these are always equalising moves. The four paradigms for the use of the language of tradition that I have provided offer a tool for cathedrals to scrutinise both their language and their practices. Cathedrals must also review the requirements of dress which they

apply to girls and women. They must evaluate their repertoire and seek to make active links with those groups promoting women and non-binary composers. Those who are concerned about the future of cathedral music-making must consider the extent to which opportunities for change are not a source of threat, but a possible route to new life for their institution.

At the beginning of this thesis, I used a quote from John Shepherd who advocated nearly thirty years ago for a 'rectification of th[e] particular silence' with regards to how women have been left out of history and indeed the history books as part of 'challeng[ing] the political domination of men' (1991, p. 153). In this thesis I have maintained that the barriers to gender diversity and inclusion in cathedral music-making are often covert; they are silent insofar as they are habitually overlooked, especially as a result of the reticence to question the progress which undoubtedly *has* been made. Yet, the barriers that are silently passed over in cathedral culture can simultaneously be loud enough to drown out the voices of women and girls. These issues have had a lasting impact on the practices, policies, and cultures which encompass cathedral music-making today, even as women and girls are increasingly included.

Until all cathedrals foster a culture which seeks to eradicate and eventually destroy these deeply interconnected barriers, scholars and practitioners alike must take on the responsibility of raising our voices and amplifying the unheard voices of others. We must not be complacent;

let each of our voices be heard.

Appendices

Appendix A – Consent form & Information Sheet



Women and girls in English Cathedral music 1991 – present

Consent form

Please read the information sheet, and then read the points below.

If you understand the following points and agree to take part, please sign at the bottom of this page.

- I have had the purposes of the research project explained to me.
- I have been informed that I may refuse to participate at any point by simply saying so.
- I have been assured that my confidentiality will be protected, and my name will not be published unless I have specified below that I wish it to be published.
- I agree that the information that I provide can be used for educational or research purposes.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.
- I understand that if I have any concerns or difficulties I can contact the Head of Department, Music Department, Durham University, Palace Green, Durham, DH1 3RL, United Kingdom – www.durham.ac.uk/music
- I understand that if I wish to complain about any aspect of my participation in this project, I can contact Enya Doyle or the Head of Department both at the address above.

Please indicate clearly whether or not you wish to be identified by name in any publication of this research by deleting one of the following options:

| | |
|--|---|
| I would like to be identified by name | I do not wish to be identified by name |
|--|---|

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Information Sheet

You are invited to take part in a research study carried out by Enya Doyle, PhD researcher in Music and Theology at Durham University. Before you decide whether or not to take part, you need to understand why the research is being done and what your involvement includes. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Feel free to ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study will inform a PhD thesis which aims to gather information about the day-to-day life of the music departments of the cathedrals in England. It is specifically interested in the increasing inclusion of women and girls therein. The information gathered will be comprised of research taken from 1) a questionnaire sent to the 42 English Cathedrals; 2) in-depth interviews and participant observation of members of the musical team at carefully selected Cathedrals; and 3) research on the recent history of the cathedral choirs and music in English Cathedrals and how this relates to the academic study theology and music. Additionally, and most importantly for you, it is hoped that this study will provide you with the opportunity to reflect on past and current practices of your Cathedral music department. The information gathered in this study may also be used in other publications, which you will be informed of.

Why have I been invited to be a part of this study?

You currently are or have previously been a member of the music department of an English Cathedral since 1991 e.g. Precentor, Master of choristers, Director of the Girls' choir, Lay clerk, Organist, Organ scholar, or Choral scholar.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide. I will describe the study and go through the information sheet, which you will be able to keep afterwards. You will be asked to sign a consent form to show that you agreed to take part. If you choose to take part you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

What will I have to do?

Taking part in this study will involve at least one face-to-face interview with potential for follow-up. Interviews will be recorded in both audio and note form. Each interview should last no longer than one hour and will be in a place where you feel comfortable. You are under no obligation to answer every question and at any point you are entitled to stop the interview without giving a reason and without judgement.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

Information gathered in these interviews will be stored securely by the researcher. If requested, the information will be anonymised. This information may then be used as part of the PhD thesis and any resultant publications.

This study has been reviewed and approved by Durham University Department of Music Ethics Committee.

Many thanks for taking time to read this information sheet. Please keep this copy.

Appendix B – Skeleton Interview Questions

INITIAL QUESTIONS

Tell me about yourself

How would you describe your role in the cathedral?

How would you describe your personal leadership style?

How do you think the people around you would describe your personal leadership style?

QUESTIONS ABOUT FAITH

Are you a Christian? Are you an Anglican?

What do you consider to be the most important aspects of your faith?

Would you say that your faith (or lack thereof) impacts on your understanding of Cathedral music? Of your role? Of the role of the choir?

I'd like to talk to you about the impact on your work, if any, of thinking within the Anglican church about who God is and what God does.

To what extent do you think the church's understanding of who God is and of what God does shapes your work?

To what extent do you think this understanding affects the decisions you and others make about how music is used and what music is used in worship here?

Do your views on sex and gender differences form an important part of your faith?

How much of an impact do you think this understanding has on the day-to-day running of the music department?

QUESTIONS ABOUT MUSIC

Why did you become a music leader/musician?

What is your opinion on the relationship between music and worship?

What is the relationship between the practice of music and biological sex in your view?

What is the relationship between the practice of music and gender in your view?

Are certain pieces of music 'gendered' in your view?

What does worship mean to you?

What does it mean to you to participate in or lead worship?

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CHOIR / MUSIC IN THE CATHEDRAL

How would you describe the role of the choir at your cathedral?

How much of an impact do you think the introduction of female priests, bishops, and Deans has had on the increasing inclusion of women and girls in musical worship?

What role do you think the Church, as an institution, has played in this increasing inclusion?

Do you think that the gender of choristers and/or those leading music makes a difference to the musical life of a cathedral?

Tell me about the music you sing here.

In terms of musical choices is there a difference between what the girls and boys sing, why is that?

Do you sing music written by women? Approximately how much of your regular canon would you say is written by women? And how often do you sing it?
How do you see the cathedral's educational role play out in your daily life?
What would you say the differences are, if any, between the girls and boys you work with in the musical context? Bodily differences? Attitudes? Achievements?

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INTRODUCTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

You said at the start your role is Master of Music / Assistant Master of the Music / Director of Music and I wonder have you ever reflected on the gendered aspect of that name? Did you institute a change in the name?

Have you ever thought about your role in its place in the history of the Cathedral? In terms of the tradition that you are a part of?

What do you think is the Anglican church's view of sex and gender differences?

Do you think this view has affected how, when and in what ways women are included in the musical life of cathedrals?

How much of an impact do you think social pressures from outside the church have on the decisions of the cathedrals to include women and girls in the life of the cathedral?

Do you think there were theological reasons – i.e., reasons to do with the church's understanding of who God is and what God does - underpinning the introduction of girl choristers?

What other factors do you believe are intrinsic to the story of the increasing inclusion of women and girls in the music departments of English Cathedrals?

How would you describe the inclusion of women of in Cathedral music? As composers? As singers? As organists as leaders?

FINAL QUESTIONS

What are your thoughts about the future of Cathedral music? And of the place of women and girls in this?

Do you have any final thoughts on the increasing inclusion of women and girls in English Cathedrals?

Appendix C – Ethnographic Sketches

A bright, sunny Friday evening in May. 13 congregants gathered in the Quire of Durham Cathedral. At 5.15 begins a service of unaccompanied Evensong. The congregants stand as the choir enter. From the South Transept of the cathedral, 11 girl choristers, including 3 probationary members of the choir, and 11 adult members including 2 female altos process into the choir stalls in pairs dressed in purple cassocks. Everyone except the 3 probationers also have white surplices on top of their cassocks. Some of the choristers are wearing medals around their necks, tucked under their cassock.

The choir members, alongside the Director of Music and two canons of the cathedral (both female) bow to the East Window before entering their respective rows - children at the front and adults behind. The Director of Music takes his place in front of a music stand which is equidistant between the two sets of singers. The choir and congregation remain standing to begin the sung part of the service. A young man, an undergraduate from the university, who is a choral scholar at the cathedral sings the preces and the choir respond. Afterwards, the congregation is seated. The choir remain standing and sing Psalms 53-55. The congregants take similar, solemn approaches to the psalm singing, most have closed their eyes. At the end of Psalm 55, the congregation stands once more for the 'Glory be'. The choir and congregation are then seated. Then the canon placed directly behind the choir on the north side stands to read the Old Testament first reading from Exodus 28. The choir are at this point seated, modelling behaviour of solemnity for the congregation. After the reading there is a period of silence which lasts 36 seconds. The Director of Music, who had taken a seat alongside the choir during the reading ends the period of silence by standing up. The congregation and choir stand. The choir begin to sing the Magnificat from Gibbons' *The Short Service*. The same is repeated for the New Testament second reading from Luke 1 and the Nunc Dimittis from the same setting. The silence in between is 34 seconds this time. When the choir have finished singing, they and the congregants turn to face East to recite the Apostle's Creed. Some members of the congregation bow their heads on the words 'Jesus Christ'. Everyone returns to face forward. The same gentleman as before begins to sing the remaining of the preces and responses. At this point, members of the congregation are kneeling. These people return to a seated position for the anthem, *Timor et Tremor* by Francis Poulenc, which we are told by the canon is based on Psalm 55. The congregation and choir kneel for the prayers. The choristers model perfect kneeling, prayerful behaviour, whilst some members of the back row respectfully decline to kneel and are seated instead. The canon then reads three prayers which include praying for the visitors to the cathedral, a reflection on caring for creation as all creatures are a sign of the Lord's love, and prayers for those who weep, who are sick, weary, dying, suffering, afflicted as well as joyous. The prayers end with the congregation and choir joining

together in 'The Grace'. After which, everyone stands. The two ordained women leave first, followed by the Director of Music, the back row and then the choristers. They process out in the same manner as they did on the way in. Once they are out of sight, the congregation sit. The service is now over. The service lasted 38 minutes.

Evensong with the dedication of The Illumination Window took place on a bright afternoon in May. Created for a former student of Durham University, Sara Pilkington, the window is placed in the North Quire Aisle. There are hundreds of people gathered in the cathedral for this service of Evensong. The Quire is completely filled and many more occupy the Nave. Upon entry, I am handed an order of service by one of the stewards. All three of the stewards are older women dressed in red Durham Cathedral gowns on which the cross of St Cuthbert is emblazoned. The order of service fifteen pages long.

I take my seat in the Nave. 10 minutes before the service begins, cathedral organ scholar, Imogen Morgan (out of sight) begins playing *Abide with me* by Noel Rawsthorne on the organ. There are many clergy bustling through the cathedral in anticipation of the service beginning. Then at 5.15 the congregation stand for the hymn *Thou whose almighty word* (NEH 466). At this point 3 of the cathedral servers dressed in white appear from the South Transept at the front of the procession. The two white women are holding Acolyte candles whilst the black, male server in the middle holds the crucifer. They are following by the Director of Music, the choir who process in pairs, and then several other members of clergy, including one woman, behind the choir who walk in single file. The choir today is made up of 11 girl choristers, including 3 probationary members of the choir, and 11 adult members including one female alto. The procession has made their way down the South aisle, under the clock down the south transept and then up the central aisle into the Quire. They bow to the East before taking their places. The members of the procession are in clerical robes and some have graduation hoods affixed to their robes. The choir members are dressed in purple cassocks with white surplices. Some of the adult choir members, and the Director of Music also have graduation hoods.

When the processional hymn is finished, all remain standing. The Dean of the Cathedral is brought by the vergers to a small stand situated behind the Director of Music, closer to the altar. From here the Dean gives his Bidding Prayer. Throughout this service, all speakers are escorted to this stand by the vergers dressed in black robes who bears a Virge carried like a staff. The Dean finishes the bidding prayer by ushering the congregation to join him in 'The Lord's Prayer'. Afterwards, the choir begin the *Preces* by Richard Ayleward and the congregation are sat (as is instructed in their order of service). The choir remain standing to sing Psalm 27. 1-11. At 'the Gloria Patri', the congregation stand. When it is

finished, the congregation and choir are seated once more. During this time, Mel Howse, the artist who designed the Illumination Window is brought to the stand by the vergers. Here she reads the First Lesson from Genesis 1. A pause for reflection lasting 33 seconds follows, after which all are stood. She is returned to her seat by the vergers. The choir then begin singing the 'Magnificat' from Herbert Howells' *The Gloucester Service*. All are seated for the Second Lesson, 1 John 1 1-7 which is read by the Dean. Another pause for reflection is held, and the Dean stands in place until this is over. The silence is 31 seconds long. The 'Nunc Dimittis' from Howells' *Gloucester Service* is then sung. After which, all turn to face East in order to recite 'The Apostles' Creed'. Some members bow their heads at the words 'Jesus Christ' and other members make a sign of the cross on the words 'resurrection of the body'. Everyone turns back and the Ayleward *Reponses* are sung. A member of the clergy acts as cantor. Before he sings the words 'let us pray', members of the congregation begin to kneel. Once the collects are over, congregants return to a seated position. There is then an Address by the Reverend Jonathan Lawson. He discusses grief, the Celtic knot and the ideas of God's love and light which are reflected in the windows. He proffers to the congregation that our lives are all woven together in our shared history. He finishes his address with the words "Alleluia. Amen." The Dedication of the Window comes next. At this point the congregation are invited to stand. Some members of the congregation (family, friends and delegates of the university move to the North Quire Aisle with the choir members and Director of Music). The choir process to the hymn *Splendour of God, life-giving Lord*. The congregation are then seated. A friend of Sara then reads a poem by Lord Byron 'She walks in beauty'. After which, the choir (still in the North Quire Aisle) sing Stanford's *The Blue Bird*. The Dean then dedicates the window, and the congregation are informed through the order of service that 'we observe a time of silence, during which those standing at the Illumination Window light candles at the pricket stands.' The silence is 2 minutes long. The Dean then leads a prayer. All are then stood for the final hymn, Christ be our light during which the choir, clergy and guests return to the Quire in the same formation that they had entered at the beginning. Subtly, the Director of Music indicates to the probationer leading the choir procession on the north side when to enter her row. The choir are stood in place by the final verse of the hymn. The Dean then leads the blessing and there is an invitation to all members of the congregation to view the Illumination Window and light candles. At this point, most congregation members stand and proceed to the Illumination Window whilst the voluntary, *Fluorescence* by Paul Patterson, is played. The service lasted 54 minutes.

Appendix D – Full Table for Figure 1 (Promotional Material) / Table 6 (Cathedral Terminologies of Tradition)

| Cathedral usage of terms associated with tradition | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------------------|----------|
| Cathedral | Tradition | For hundreds of years | history / historic / ancient | English Choral Tradition | Maintaining / Sustaining / Preserving | Developing / Enriching | Unique | Living/ Continuing | Unbroken |
| <u>Birmingham</u> | X | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Blackburn</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Bradford</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Bristol</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Canterbury</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Carlisle</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Chelmsford</u> | X | | | | X | | | | |
| <u>Chester</u> | X | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Chichester</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Coventry</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Derby</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Durham</u> | X | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Ely</u> | X | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Exeter</u> | | | X | | X | | | | X |
| <u>Gloucester</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Guildford</u> | X | | | | X | | | | |
| <u>Hereford</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Lichfield</u> | | | | X | X | | | | |
| <u>Leicester</u> | | x | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <u>Lincoln</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Liverpool</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Manchester</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Newcastle up on Tyne</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Norwich</u> | | X | | | | | | | X |
| <u>Oxford, Christ Church</u> | X | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Peterborough</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Portsmouth</u> | | | X | | | | | | |
| <u>Ripon</u> | | X | | | X | | | | |
| <u>Rochester</u> | | | X | | | | | | |
| <u>St. Alban's</u> | | X | X | | | | | X | |
| <u>St. Edmundsb ury</u> | | X | | | | | | X | |
| <u>London, St Paul's</u> | X | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Salisbury</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Sheffield</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Southwark</u> | X | | | | | X | | | |
| <u>Southwell</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Truro</u> | X | | | | | | | | X |
| <u>Wakefield</u> | X | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Bath & Wells</u> | | X | | | | | | | |
| <u>Winchester</u> | X | X | X | | | | X | | |
| <u>Worcester</u> | | X | | | X | X | | | |
| <u>York</u> | | X | | X | | | | X | |

Appendix E – Full Table for Figure 3 (Nomenclature)

| Nomenclature of Child Singers in England Cathedrals | | |
|---|--|---------|
| Boy & girl choristers | Birmingham; Bradford; Carlisle; Coventry ; Derby; Durham; Ely; Exeter; Gloucester [^] ; Guildford; Lincoln; Liverpool; Newcastle; Peterborough; Ripon; Rochester; Salisbury; Sheffield; Southwell; Truro; Wakefield; Wells; Winchester ; Worcester*; York Minster. | 25 (23) |
| Boy choristers | Blackburn ; Canterbury ; Chelmsford ; Hereford; Lichfield; Norwich; Oxford (Christ Church); Portsmouth; St Alban's ; St Edmundsbury; St Paul's; Winchester. | 12 (8) |
| Trebles / choristers | Bristol; Chichester; Lichfield; Manchester. | 4 |
| Girls' choir | Blackburn ; Canterbury ; Chelmsford ; Coventry ; Leicester**; Lichfield; Oxford (Christ Church) St Alban's ; Southwark; Winchester . | 10 (4) |
| Nomenclature of Adult Singers in England Cathedrals | | |
| Lay vicars / Lay clerks / Vicars choral / Choral clerks | Bradford; Bristol; Canterbury; Carlisle; Chester; Chichester; Coventry; Derby; Durham; Ely; Exeter; Guildford; Hereford ; Lichfield; Lincoln; Manchester; Newcastle; Norwich; Peterborough; Ripon; Rochester; Southwell; St Alban's; St Pauls; Salisbury; Southwell; Truro; Wakefield; Wells . | 29 (27) |
| Gentlemen / men / adult male | Blackburn; Hereford ; Liverpool; Oxford (Christ Church); Sheffield; Southwark; Portsmouth; St Edmundsbury; Wells ; Winchester; Worcester. | 11 (9) |
| Adults | Birmingham; Gloucester; Leicester . | 3 (2) |
| Women and men | Chelmsford. | 1 |
| Songmen | Leicester ; York Minster. | 2 (1) |
| *The cathedral choir of men and boys & the girl choristers | | |
| [^] boys and adults and girl choristers | | |
| ** boys' and junior and senior Girls' choirs, young Songmen | | |

Appendix F – Full Table for Figure 4 (Age of Choristers)

| Chorister Ages | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----------|
| Same | Bradford; Bristol; Carlisle; Derby; Durham; Exeter; Gloucester; Leicester; Lincoln; Liverpool; Manchester; Peterborough; Ripon; Rochester; St Albans; Salisbury; Wells; and York | 18 |
| Same & Older^ | Blackburn; Chester; Coventry; Christ Church (Oxford); Newcastle; and Wakefield | 6 |
| Same & Older* | Birmingham; Lichfield; and Sheffield | 3 |
| Older | Canterbury; Chelmsford; Ely; Guildford; Norwich; Southwark; Southwell; Truro; Winchester; Worcester | 10 |
| | Total | 37 |

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