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***I am a 'Humosexual' and I need to be loved: A Queer Reading of
Morrissey***

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Introduction: "I am a Humosexual"

Within hours of the publication of the Penguin Classic 'Autobiography' by Morrissey on October 17th 2013, the bulk of media commentary focused on the singer's account of his relationships with a man (Jake Walters) and a woman (Tina Dehghani). After years of tedious music press speculation and conjecture concerning Morrissey's sexual preferences, many commentators concluded that Morrissey had finally admitted to being gay. However, just two days later Morrissey wryly refuted this narrow interpretation of his book by stating: "Unfortunately, I am not homosexual. In technical fact, I am humosexual. I am attracted to humans. But, of course ... not many" (Morrissey, 2013). Over three decades, media discourse in the music press and elsewhere concerning Morrissey's sexuality have focused, in turn, on his self-declared celibacy; his sexual orientation and his references (coded and otherwise) to Gay experiences in particular. Such myopic commentary serves to ignore the totality of how Morrissey has treated the complex question of human sexuality. Rather than going down the 'is he?/isn't he?' cul-de-sac, this paper takes, as a starting point, the way in which Morrissey's creative output has consistently recognised the fluidity of

sexual and gender identities. Queering and queer discourses play a fundamental role in achieving this. In this paper we demonstrate how Morrissey has employed his music, performances and stage personae to challenge hegemonic assumptions about gender and sexuality in creative and provocative ways. Morrissey's work invites a deep textual reading that reveals a complex counter-hegemonic stance on the issue of gender and sexuality. We do this through a close critical reading of his 1997 song 'I Can Have Both'.¹

Our paper is organised as follows: We begin by introducing Morrissey and provide an overview of the growing body of scholarship focused on his work. We then examine how queer theory has been used to make sense of Morrissey and how queering in turn is in ample evidence in his overall creative output. The main part of our paper presents a detailed analysis of the song 'I Can Have Both'. Our analysis draws upon the standard methodological approaches used in Popular Music Studies.

Who is Morrissey and why does he matter?

As leader of The Smiths and since his emergence as a solo-artiste in 1988, Morrissey has attracted a devoted global fandom; an appeal which rests on his ability to combine a sense of 'authenticity' and ambiguity. He remains one of the most controversial, complex and iconic figures within popular culture; a man with a "measure of cultural power to circulate commodified representations of the national

audiovisual" (Zuberi 2001, p.24). "Many of his disciples will tell you that, by addressing the difficult subjects most artists avoid, he's somehow helped them handle life; through his open struggles to find a soul-mate, to cope with the deaths of friends, to make any sense of this fucked-up world" (Brown 2009). It is fair to say that Morrissey has remained an anti-establishment figure who continues to provoke argument and debate amongst critics and his many fans. But who exactly is he?

Morrissey emerged into the public eye in the early 1980s as the instantly recognisable quiff adorned lead singer of the highly influential band, 'The Smiths'. The band signed to 'Rough Trade Records', and released their first single in 1983. Despite a hugely productive period together the band split up in July 1987. Morrissey's first solo album, *Viva Hate* was released in 1988 and he has had a prolific career since that time. On 17th October 2013, Morrissey's '*Autobiography*', was published as a "contemporary classic" under the Penguin Classic label, entering the UK book charts at number one, selling approximately 35,000 copies in the first week of its release (Bury 2013). On 15th January 2014 Morrissey announced that he had signed a two-record deal with Capitol Music, and he has now begun recording the first of those albums.

As a solo recording artist and as leader of The Smiths, Morrissey has adopted a range of contradictory and over-lapping positions in relation to his own identity. Over the past 30 years he has maintained his reputation as a controversial artist, with his world-view being primarily Left wing and in some people's eyes (and on certain subjects) very radical. His republican views, "the vegetarianism and animal rights, the celebration of gay and lesbian artists", his "hostility to everyone from Thatcher to Bush" and his comments on "immigration and the protection of British culture from outside influences" continue to court controversy (Brown 2009). He has publicly defended the actions of the Animal Rights Militia, stating that he believes such violence is acceptable because it is perpetrated against those who farm fur or conduct animal experiments, people who have therefore "brought it on themselves" (Allardyce 2006). In a recent 'State of the Nation' address he lambasted the "lavish expense of the Royal wedding at a time when working-class England was told to cut-back, shut-up and get stuffed", questioned the unequal treatment of working class people by the media, and challenged the established understanding of the UK riots (Morrissey cited in Edmondson 2013, pp.66 -71).

As a multi-layered (and sometimes reluctant) icon, Morrissey has attracted the attention of scholars and become the focus of a growing body of academic writing (see for example Bracewell, 2009; Martino, 2007; Renyolds and Press, 1995; Stringer, 1992; Zuberi, 2001; Hawkins 2002; Hubbs 1996; Martino 2007, Power *et al* 2012, and

Devereux, 2009), which seeks to make sense of his hugely significant contribution to popular culture and to issues concerning the politics of identities. Of particular interest in this regard has been an edited collection from Coulter and Campbell (2009) which has focused exclusively on The Smiths (1982-1987), Gavan Hopps text (2009) which examined Morrissey from the perspective of literary criticism, and Simpson's *Saint Morrissey* (2004) which applied queer theory in attempting to understand the singer's cultural significance. Finally, Devereux *et al's* (2011) multifaceted collection investigates Morrissey's enduring career as a solo-artist in terms of debates about representations; fandom and post-modern identities (especially concerning ethnicity, social class and gender).

Speaking early in his career Morrissey argued that "The Smiths create their world and not many people do that" (The South Bank Show 1987). Since that time he has consistently given us "songs that were about the real world rather than a "fantasy island romance or techno crazed incoherence" (Rogan 1992, p.143). The Morrissey/Smiths canon has been predominantly concerned with White English working-class life from the perspective of those who never quite fit in. Side by side with this are combinations of discourses which are of a sexually ambiguous nature.

Accordingly, it has been argued that Morrissey is understood as a "raconteur of the marginalized" (Power, 2011), particularly of the working-class but also of those who

are cast as somehow different (Manco, 2011). In essence Morrissey represents “the outsider” (Girls and Boys: Sex and British Pop 2008), an identity that (at least in part) comes from his formative experiences. He was the younger child of an Irish immigrant family in Manchester, yet he was also the self-educated son of an assistant librarian, spending several of those formative years in a moderately well to do suburb. These autobiographical strains permeate his work in various ways (Coulter 2010, p.165) and one explanation for his conflicting identity mix of upper-class articulation, working-class absorption and Northern values is his inability to fit in anywhere (Kallioniemi 1999, p.308).

Morrissey’s ability to combine the ‘authentic’ (which is of course a construct) and the ambiguous have ensured that his local concerns (which are concerned with the universal themes of alienation and dislocation) have travelled far and wide. His work has the ability to realise people and places in a believable manner, creating innovative modalities to visualize them. Yet his representations of these ‘outsiders’ are by no means straightforward. Characters in Morrissey’s lyrics are often people that are trapped in a humanity that is imposed upon them (Woronzoff 2009). Even so, his work allows the possibility of a negotiated reading of such representations. Morrissey’s long-time friend Linder Sterling has argued that as a consequence of the ambiguous nature of much of his work “you are never quite sure who he is singing to or who he is singing about...so therefore whoever you are when you listen to the

songs you can interpret them to fit your life" (The South Bank Show 1987). Additionally, the British journalist, Zoe Williams, considers that his music facilitates a connection between the artist and the listener, which "makes you think there is a common understanding between you and Morrissey" (Salford Lad 2007).

The lexicon from which Morrissey draws is rich in reference and allegory. Eclectically pulling out the sounds and styles of cultural icons, musicians, poets, and writers. Morrissey emerges as an artist keen to praise his idols, and as a savvy bricoleur (see Brooks, 2011; Hazard, 2011). This strategy on occasion engages ventriloquism and dialogism (see Martino, 2011). The outcome is a construction; an elusiveness even, that makes it impossible to know the "real" Morrissey (including the gendered Morrissey – see Woronzoff, 2011), resulting in significant vagueness in his (re)presentations of his characters as him and him as his characters.

Over the duration of his career, the media in particular have held a morbid fascination with Morrissey's sexuality, which has been vague and open to explication (Brown 1991). Hubbs (1996, p.285) argues that Morrissey "chooses to explore queer themes, in the most knowledgeable 'inside' of queer-insider language", and while the message is delivered in an ambiguous manner it "is abundantly meaningful to other insiders: for queer listeners, Morrissey's work is about queer erotics and experience". Yet, it is important to note that Hubbs (1996, p.285) recognizes that a

multitude of “straight fans” haven’t the faintest idea that Morrissey’s oeuvre has anything to do with “queerness”. Such a viewpoint is easily accounted for given mainstream society’s “ignorance of queer codes” (Hubbs 1996, p.285). Accordingly, to classify Morrissey’s oeuvre as merely a form of “gay rock” is to entirely miss the point. Indeed, there are a multitude of positionalities and countless possible identifications with Morrissey, his music, his beliefs and his strategies of representation.

Skinheads in Nail Varnish: Queering Morrissey/Morrissey Queering

“I don’t recognise such terms as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual and I think it’s important that there’s someone in pop music who’s like that. These words do great damage, they confuse people and they make people feel unhappy so I want to do away with them” – Morrissey, *Star Hits* (1985).

“Obviously I’m interested in sex and every song is about sex. I’m very interested in GENDER. I feel I’m a kind of prophet for the fourth sex. The third sex, even that has been done and it’s failed.” – Morrissey, *Sounds* (1983) (original emphasis).

A significant amount of scholarship on Morrissey has been pre-occupied with questions concerning gender; sexuality and queerness (see Hopps, 2009; Whitely 2010; Stringer 2010; Worzonzof 2011; Baker, 2011). The media’s focus on his asexual celibacy, referred to earlier, has been variously understood as a radical gesture in a (pop) world obsessed with sex (Nylén, 2005) or as a result of the singer’s alleged erotophobia (Simpson, 2003; Smith, 1995) emanating from his Catholic upbringing (Devereux, 2010). A far stronger emphasis has been placed by several scholars on

how Morrissey's creative output both as leader of The Smiths and as a solo-artist has consistently provoked his listeners to question received notions about gender and sexuality and queerness in particular (Hawkins, 2009). In contrast to the short-lived 'gender-bending' which was a feature of the earlier incarnations of David Bowie and Mick Jagger as well as in the 1980s New Romantic Movement, Morrissey has, over a thirty one year career, consistently subverted hegemonic understandings of sexuality and gender. This has been achieved through a wide range of queering strategies.

In decreeing himself in 1983 as being a 'Prophet for the fourth gender' (see Hubbs, 1996), Morrissey ensured, that from the outset, The Smiths would challenge traditional rock and roll norms and transcend the usual narrow gendered roles ascribed by the genre. An early marker of this may be seen in his decision to include a cover version of The Cookie's song 'I Want A Boy For My Birthday' in the band's debut performance in 1982 (Whitely, 2010). An abundance of sexually ambiguous, camp and queer discourses were strongly in evidence in The Smiths song lyrics, stage-backdrops, album and singles cover art and other forms of band memorabilia e.g. t-shirts, badges. The band's image and more particularly Morrissey's early vocal delivery (with its use of falsetto and yodelling) all served as queering devices. The Smiths eponymous 1984 debut album featured a homoerotic cropped image of the actor Jose Dallesandro culled from Andy Warhol's 1968 film 'Flesh', the album's song lyrics are replete with ambiguous sexual references (e.g. 'Reel Around The Fountain');

'Hand In Glove'; 'Miserable Lie'; 'The Hand That Rocks The Cradle'). The queer, camp and sexually ambiguous were a continuous thread in The Smiths canon (e.g. 'The Queen is Dead'; 'William It Was Really Nothing') until the band's acrimonious break up in 1988.

While queer discourses were fore-grounded by The Smiths, they are even more apparent in Morrissey's solo creative output. These range from song lyrics explicitly about queer sexualities (e.g. 'All The Lazy Dykes'; 'Piccadilly Palare'); the singer's use of sexually ambiguous lyrics (e.g. 'I entered nothing/and nothing entered me' in 'You Have Killed Me') (see Hawkins, 2010) Morrissey's championing of queer icons (e.g. Jobriath, Wilde, Pasilini) and by shifting modes of address in song lyrics from male to female/female to male/male to male/female to female etc. As with The Smiths, queer icons have also been a notable feature of both his stage backdrops and pre-gig show-reels. In addition to James Dean and Jobriath, Oscar Wilde has been a recurring figure in the imagery employed in creating stage backdrops. Both Wilde and Morrissey share an ambiguity about their national and sexual identities as well as being witty (in both senses) writers. Morrissey has adopted Wilde's persona to sing about his (and Wilde's) martyrdom at the hands of the British establishment (Devereux and Dillane, 2010). Morrissey's own presentation of self on stage and in promotional videos has resorted to queering in the form of wearing make-up (eyeliner and nail varnish); appearing in various states of undress (e.g. promotional

videos for 'Suedehead' and 'November Spawned A Monster') to playing the role of hard, tough males e.g. wearing plasters and scars intimating tussles/fights with hard working class men. In addition to writing about other liminal groups such as prostitutes, 'slum-mums', skinheads, boy-racers, football hooligans, There has been a recurring focus on themes associated with Gay sub-culture. His 1989 single 'Piccadilly Palare' delves into the world of male prostitution in London by referencing the use of Polari a secret linguistic code used since the 19th century.

The promotional video for his 1989 single 'Interesting Drug' is a compelling example of how queer discourses are inscribed into a Morrissey text (see Power *et al* 2012). The high-school where most of the video's action takes place is named after Gay icon and *Carry-On* film-star Charles Hawtrey. Morrissey's own sexual ambiguity and his appeal to both men and women are highlighted in a music magazine headline being read by one of the students which states "Morrissey: I'm a total sex object. A lot of men and women find me unmistakably attractive." The four male pupils who feature in the video are gradually revealed to be wearing court shoes with high heels – alluding perhaps to Morrissey's own long-standing devotion to the androgynous New York Dolls. A mocked-up cover of the *NME* shows Diana Dors. Dors' image performs a double function in that she serves as both a Gay icon and an example of the many strong working-class women (e.g. Shelagh Delaney; Pat Phoenix) who predominate in the iconography associated with The Smiths and Morrissey.

Morrissey's solid refusal to be classified in terms of one specific sexuality and his ability to sing from a range of gender perspectives (male to male; male to female; female to male; female to female) serve to create an ambiguity and fluidity in which a wide range of fans can see themselves. The texts which he creates have strong polysemic qualities. In The Smith's 1987 song 'Sheila Take A Bow' for example, the singer shifts genders mid-way through the song: "Take my hand and off we stride/ Oh, la X 8/You're a girl and I'm a boy/ La X 8/ Take my hand and off we stride/Oh, la X8/I'm a girl and you're a boy/La X8", while in the 1997 song 'Maladjusted' he sings from the perspective of a female prostitute or working girl. Hawkins notes that the ambiguity in evidence in his songs and associated imagery means that both gay and non-gay fans are allowed to 'address the complexity of their own sexualities and desires' (2002, p.75).

Morrissey attracts a significant male audience, the mode of address of his songs speaks to an audience that can be male, female, gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, celibate or trans-gendered. While Morrissey's fans are predominantly male and aged 35 and older, his fan base is quite heterogeneous. This is confirmed by Viitamäki who suggests that Morrissey's American fans, for example, include: '...androgenic teenagers, Latino gangsters, skinheads, well-dressed 30 year olds, gays and some older fans.' (1997, p.40) As an artist, Morrissey's appeal seems to hinge on the

openness of the musical (and other) texts that he creates. Other Morrissey/Smiths related events such as tribute band nights or karaoke evenings are places where non-conformist sexual identities can find a space (Devereux, 2009, Jacobsen and Jeffrey, 2010).

Analysing a Pop song

'I Can Have Both is one of my favourite songs even though I'll admit it has no obvious intentions other than to tweak out the yelp of choice. We all live with frustrated will, and we are all enclosed in our own grief. In your luckiest moment, you can tease life in much the same way that life teases you. You can try, anyway.' (Morrissey, 2009)

'I Can Have Both' was composed by Morrissey and Boz Boorer. It was released as a 'B Side' to the 1997 single 'Alma Matters'. It was originally intended for inclusion on the album 'Maladjusted' but was replaced by the song 'Wide To Receive' by Morrissey and Spencer Cobrin. The song was re-instated in the re-issued extended version of 'Maladjusted' in 2009.

Structures of Feeling

Leaning into a discourse generated initially in gender and queer musicology scholarship (Brett *et al* 1994; McClary 1991; Solie 1995) which in particular deals with deviating from normative rules in musical structures as a means of expressing sexual identity, the following musical and lyrical reading of 'I Can Have Both' also draws upon literal, technical, and contextual pop music analytical techniques based on the

seminal work of Middleton (1990) , Cook (1998) , Schuker (2001), Brackett (2000) and Frith (1998).

At the outset it might be tempting to argue that that it is really only the lyrics that should be analysed in any textual interpretation of a song, particularly where it is being posited that the song is a vehicle for exploring specific ideas in relation to bisexuality. However, it would be remiss to bypass the song's musical structure for two key reasons. First, as a long-time Morrissey collaborator, Boz Boorer's musical output has, and continues to be, shaped by those for whom he produces music. While it is important from the outset to note that the music of 'I Can Have Both' was generated by Boorer, with lyrics added after the fact by Morrissey, we would argue that it is important not to artificially separate these creative acts, but rather to see the duo as mutually creating Morrissey's sound, or as pop scholar David Brackett posits, when it come to a song, there really is 'no single author' (2000:2). This is the case not only because Morrissey is so involved in reshaping the sound when he adds lyrics, but more pertinently because Boorer himself has helped hone that very recognisable Morrissey sound based on Morrissey's vocal range, stylistic preferences, and by now iconic gestures (which is why key musical markers have become associated with Morrissey, such as particular melodic intervals and ambivalent chord structures). In other words, Boorer is reflexively producing, co-producing, and reproducing a Morrissey 'gestalt' in each song he creates. Morrissey himself, therefore, is ever-

present in such music constructions, which is why it is important to take the structure of the music into account in any full analysis of a song's potential meaning and, of course, efficacy.

Secondly, one of the ways in which this song in particular is so successful in its concept and execution is in the manner in which Morrissey's rather risqué lyrics are hidden within its quite jaunty rhythms and textures. Rather than seeking to put lyrics exploring the complex and potentially explosive issue of bi-sexuality - something which in 1997 may have still not been well received as an overt topic for a pop song - with more probing and darker textures or tortured harmonic colourings, this song acts as both the perfect foil and the perfect disguise for its subject matter. Goddard's 'Mozpedia' refers to the song as a 'Smiths-esque, sun-drenched jingle' as one can envisage people dancing and singing along with its bouncing melody and rhythm and not necessarily fully grasping the depth of the message couched within its bright harmonic garb (though arguable, to truly rejoice in one's sexuality, one should use a celebratory tune structure?). The choice of the word 'Jingle' is significant as it suggests attracting attention and the selling of something through the sheer infectiousness of the music. Contrasting serious subject matter with an apparently lighter harmonic palette or sunny melody, is something that Morrissey is no stranger to (e.g. consider the happy melody of 'There is a Light...' while ruminating on being killed by a ten ton truck or a double-decker bus). Such an

almost tongue in cheek strategy seems to be an important part of Morrissey's creative arsenal and as alluded to earlier there is ample evidence of him using contrasting sounds and ideas throughout his oeuvre.

There is, of course, a third way in which the structure of 'I Can Have Both' works particularly well in relation to the lyrics, this is in its almost naive, youthful, even tentatively optimistic feel. It is a song that is, in many ways, nostalgic and wistful in its harmonic and melodic orientation. It sounds of a time past, of youthful promise, and recalls that general feeling of possibility experienced at the cusp of adulthood (something which also relates directly to explorations in love and in one's sexuality).

Lyrical Interpretations

Any lyrical analysis involves interpretation of potentially multiple meanings. With hindsight, of course, it is possible to impute meaning even beyond what was intentional at the time, for meaning is always supplemental and in excess, something, it would seem, which Morrissey is keenly aware as a careful and deliberate song crafter. In this respect, Morrissey's lyrics prove doubly and immediately accessible to a queer reading. From the explicitness of the title, 'I Can Have Both', to the narrative that details the desire of the protagonist to be able to indulge his choices and fantasies and be permitted to 'have both' and not to limit him to the expectations of others, the song invites, even embraces, a queer interpretation.

The key metaphor deployed by Morrissey is a telling one - the sweet shop. It is a place of desire and absolute indulgence and the protagonist looks through its window in a state of longing. It becomes obvious that this is really the storefront for beautiful bodies and desirable things.

The sweet shop, of course, looms large in childhood fantasies as somewhere packed with delicious, sugary items for consumption. But such a place of indulgence and place to have a treat also looms large as a place of unnecessary temptation with so much on display. There is so much there that is bad for you, but oh so good, too. This ambivalence around the sweetshop works perfectly as a metaphor for sexual choices and predilections. The sweet shop is about both abundance and restriction, for there is something deviant and excessive and even sinful in operation here.

Biddle points to how the sounds of the voice can become 'stable carriers of human character, and of sexual and gender pathologies...in the internal visible world of the psyche' and that the 'externalized sounds become mobile, powerfully characterized markers both of healthy communicative norms and pathological deviance (Biddle in Clayton *et al* 2003:220). The protagonist speaks of a voice inside his head telling him he can have both. This voice clearly represents some institutional process he has undergone as a child, telling him, no, he can't have it both ways (see Devereux, 2010). Clearly this indoctrination is still influential, and suggests a formative experience

through an adult educator, or a priest even. And yet the protagonist recognizes that 'there's nobody around to say no, who's brainwashed the small shy boy inside – he doesn't know, he can have both'. We don't know how old this person is now but given the continued influence of this childhood experience, we might imagine he is no more than a young adult.

What is interesting about the sweetshop metaphor is that in a sense it foretells Morrissey's humasexual statement for, of course, there is not 'both' in the sweet shop. A sweet shop is full of all kinds of sweets but in the end with all the variation they are still all sweets. This song then, speaks to the very early stages of exploring one's sexual identity and contemplating behaviours outside what is deemed permissible by society. It is a protean version of a more fully fledged sexual identity politics as expressed by Morrissey in 2013. In that sense, while the song therefore is not a radical humasexual message promoting sexual engagement across a spectrum of experiences, in the manner in which it reinforces the initial binary children or young adults face – straight or gay – there is no doubt that the listener is left wondering if one can indeed be both and, 'have' both and be bi-sexual. Though clearly young, the song's protagonist is no stranger to indulging and experimenting sexually. The camp line 'I've not been feeling myself tonight' is polyvalent and suggestive. Perhaps he no longer can achieve satisfaction through self-gratification, or maybe already, there has been some experimentation with another male and now

he wants more, which is why finds himself in front of the sweet shop. Is it time to try re-experience, or to try something new, something different, and will he be able to follow through? The difficulties faced result in the wish that he be forcibly pulled into the space of the sweetshop, thereby abdicating responsibility for having to make the choice – ‘should I wait to be dragged inside?’ He wants to be ravaged, but doesn’t want to have to wholly assert this part of his identity, yet.

The sweet shop as a desirous site with sumptuous delectables on display and as a place of fulsome consumption, of having what you want and the thrill that brings, is manifest in much of the lyrical content in the rest of the song, and particularly in how these ideas are structured and framed. Questions such as ‘shall I, oh shall I?’ speak to the excitement of being confronted with a choice and the nervous, joyous energy that goes with contemplating that choice. The chorus further underscores this sense of vacillating between options. It can be read two ways – ‘I Can Have Both, there is no need to choose’ which is a justification for taking what you want, or ‘there is no need to choose, I Can Have Both’, which is a realization that there is no limitation. Both meanings are present because the song is structured in such a repetitive way that one could begin or end with either clause ‘I Can Have Both’ or ‘there is no need to choose’. It is clear that the protagonist is trying to convince himself, arguing with the voice inside his head, that he has permission, that the shop can be open to him (the first verse tells us it is ‘never open’). The constant repetition

of these two clauses suggests that to say it enough means you'll truly start to believe it, to dare to believe it, that I Can Have Both.

(Bi)music – Queering the Pitch

The music operates in the same manner as the lyrical content, suggesting a vacillation inherent in trying to choose between something or convince oneself that it is ok to want and desire 'both'. Outside of the overall sound and feel of the song, the actual musical materials present work in a particular way, for music too, has its own narrative structure, its own conventions, working under and deviating from hierarchies of sound and structure. In his discussion of 'primary signification', Richard Middleton speaks to the links between 'verbal signifiers and the musical signifying process' (Middleton 1990: 232). Musically, then, there is an argument to be made for a certain queering going on at the harmonic and melodic level. Such analysis, while drawing predominantly from a discourse developed in the study of Western Art music, most notably McClary (1997) and Solie (1995) finds resonance in this pop structure, which is unsurprising, given the obvious links between the musical languages of both genres.

A crucial structural, harmonic relationship explored right from the outset of the song is that between C major, chord one of the key of C (thereby, the anchor chord), and its relative minor, A minor. While closely related, sharing two out of three of the notes

that go to make up their structure, these two chords represent very different sounds and feels. They have their own shape and characteristics and can be easily mapped onto a male/female, straight/gay binary. It is precisely because of their close harmonic relation and the manner in which they are used interchangeably from the outset, that allows for them to be viewed as musically rendering this either/or and 'both' idea. The opening riff, in fact, sets up this kind of harmonic function that suggests a kind of 'bi-ness' to the overall song structure. In a four square pop song, these eight opening chords can be understood as follows:

2 x 4 chord phrases:

Phrase1. C – Amin – E – F7

Phrase 2. Amin – C – Dmin - E

Phrase two acts as a kind of mirror to phrase one, once broken down into two smaller units of two chords each. The song starts (harmonic phrase 1) with the major chord of C, moving to its relative minor, A minor. Harmonic phrase 2 does the opposite, starting with A minor and moving to C major. They are the same but different, different yet the same. The second half of both harmonic phrases works in much the same way. In phrase one, the chords move from an E to an F7, while in phrase two, it moves from a D minor (which is built on practically the same notes as the F major chord) back to the E major, in a movement that reflects what happen

with the C and A minor chords preceding this. This vacillating structure is found throughout the song – including in the opening four lines of each verse - and echoes musically what is happening lyrically with the idea of ‘having both’.

There are other musical elements that also suggest a kind of queerness or deviancy, in particular the guitar riff during the non-lyrical middle section where the guitar performs a syncopated short melodic fragment that includes, significantly, a Bb in its contour which, when put against the first note of that riff, a E, creates a tritone, an interval (a space between two pitches) that is perceived as deviant or outside in conventional harmonic structures. In this instant it operates as a kind of clarion call of difference and otherness (and in the context of the key of the song more generally – C major - this same note of Bb operates as a flattened seventh or a ‘blue’ note, which can also be read as a quite significant and important note in this context).

In sum the deceptively jaunty nature of the jingle-like melody and ambivalent harmonic structure and the anxious, careful questioning and rhetorical justification throughout, all work to suggest a young person in the early stages of exploring bisexuality and coming to terms with this. This in turn points to the clever creation of an ostensibly simple, even conservative song structure on behalf of the authors, featuring occasional moments of obvious deviancy but filled with more understated

metaphorical ones, that play with binaries and opposites in all kinds of subtle and creative ways.

Conclusions:

This paper adds to the emerging body of scholarly literature on Morrissey. It also contributes to our understanding of how queering processes occur within a popular culture setting. Moreover, it underscores the malleability of popular songs to engage with otherwise hidden concerns. We would like to emphasise that it is not always the case that the subject position in a song directly relates to the life of the singer performing it. While Brackett argues, it is ultimately 'easiest to conflate the song's 'persona' with at least the voice, and possibly the body, media image, and biography of the lead singer', given 'words and sound' are generally associated with 'the most prominent voice' (Brackett 2000:2), our detailed analysis demonstrates how 'I Can Have Both' can be read as a song about Bisexuality or as Morrissey himself has recently put it – 'Humasexuality'. We concede however that Morrissey's craft as a songwriter/performer allows for a multitude of positions to be adopted by listeners whether they be male, female, gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, celibate or transgendered. Indeed, as an artist, Morrissey's appeal seems to hinge on the openness of the musical (and other) texts that he creates.

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i 'I Can Have Both' was composed by Morrissey and Boz Boorer. It was released as a 'B Side' to the 1997 single 'Alma Matters'. It was originally intended for inclusion on the album 'Maladjusted' but was replaced by the song 'Wide To Receive' written by Morrissey and Spencer Cobrin. The song was re-instated in the re-issued extended version of Maladjusted in 2009. It is interesting to note that in the accompanying essay to the re-issued album, Morrissey states that "I Can Have Both is one of my favourite songs even though I'll admit it has no obvious intentions other than to tweak out the yelp of choice. We all live with frustrated will, and we are all enclosed in our own grief. In your luckiest moment, you can tease life in much the same way that life teases you. You can try, anyway."