This chapter investigates the music of gospel dancehall and hardcore soca artists in Trinidad. It discusses the issues that surround their performances, including the ethical and stylistic implications attendant to their active creation of new social spaces for worship. It examines the ethical discourse surrounding the performance and reception of regional music in general and dancehall music in particular within the Full Gospel community in Trinidad. It traces the cultural and political trajectory of dancehall from the marginalized spaces of lower-class, black Jamaica to Full Gospel Trinidad.

“Mek Some Noise”
Timothy Rommen

This ethnographic study of Trinidadian gospel music engages the multiple musical styles circulating in the nation’s Full Gospel community and illustrates the carefully negotiated and contested spaces that they occupy in relationship to questions of identity. By exploring gospelpso, jamoo (“Jehovah's music”), gospel dancehall, and North American gospel music, along with the discourses that surround performances in these styles, the book illustrates the extent to which value, meaning, and appropriateness are continually circumscribed and reinterpreted in the process of coming to terms with what it looks and sounds like to be a Full Gospel believer in Trinidad. The local, regional, and transnational implications of these musical styles, moreover, are read in relationship to their impact on belief (and vice versa), revealing the particularly nuanced
poetics of conviction that drive both apologists and detractors of these styles. The book sets the investigation against a historical narrative and introduces a theoretical approach that the book calls the “ethics of style”—a model that privileges the convictions embedded in this context and which emphasizes their role in shaping the terms upon which identity is continually being constructed in Trinidad. The result is an extended meditation on the convictions that lie behind the creation and reception of style in Full Gospel Trinidad.

Epilogue
Timothy Rommen

in “Mek Some Noise”: Gospel Music and the Ethics of Style in Trinidad

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This chapter sums up the key findings of this study about gospel music and the ethics of style in Trinidad. It highlights the nationalism of gospelypso artists, the determination of gospel dancehall artists, the studied ambivalence of jamoo performers, and the global vision of musicians pursuing North America gospel. It suggests that each style offers a very different approach to the evangelical concerns of Trinidadian believers, and each promotes a unique sense of what can or should constitute worship.