

**“I Would Do Anything for Love, but I Won’t Do That”:  
Conceptual Metaphors of Love in Popular Music**

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Tämän Pro Gradu – tutkielman tarkoitus on selvittää, miten rakkaus käsitteellistetään ja millaisena se esitetään populaarimusiikissa. Aihetta lähestytään tutkimalla sanoituksissa esiintyviä käsitteellisiä metaforia, niiden yleisyyttä eri vuosikymmeninä sekä esittävän artistin sukupuolen vaikutusta käsitteellisten metaforien käyttöön. Tutkielma perustuu aineistoon, joka koostuu kaikkien amerikkalaisen *Billboard Hot 100* – listan kärkisijalle 1960-luvun alusta lähtien nousseiden kappaleiden sanoituksista.

Tutkielman teoreettisena pohjana toimii käsitteellisen metaforan teoria sekä kriittinen metafora-analyysi. Käsitteellisen metaforan teorian mukaan kielikuvalla on merkittävä rooli ihmisten ajattelussa, sillä sen avulla tehdään abstraktista käsitteestä helpommin ymmärrettävä rinnastamalla se johonkin konkreettisempaan käsitteeseen. Tietynlaisen kielikuvan käyttö siis ilmentää tietynlaista tapaa hahmottaa jokin käsite. Kriittinen metafora-analyysi puolestaan pohjautuu ajatukseen siitä, että kielikuvaa voidaan käyttää myös tehokkaana vaikutuskeinona, johon on vaikeaa kohdistaa rationaalista kritiikkiä. Tästä näkökulmasta tarkasteltuna myös populaarimusiikin sanoituksissa johdonmukaisesti esiintyvien kielikuvien nostaminen tarkastelun kohteeksi on tärkeää, sillä populaarimusiikki on läsnä miljoonien ihmisten jokapäiväisessä elämässä.

Tutkielmaa varten koottuun aineistoon kohdistetussa metafora-analyysissä nousi esiin kahdeksan vakiintunutta käsitteellistä metaforaa, joiden kautta rakkaus esitetään kappaleiden sanoituksissa hyödykkeenä, säiliönä, eläimenä, huumausaineena, liekkiä, fysikaalisena voimana, pelinä tai hulluutena. Näiden kahdeksan metaforan yleisyydessä suhteessa toisiinsa havaittiin merkittäviä eroja koko aineiston tasolla, hyödykemetäforan ollessa yleisin. Analyysissä havaittiin myös, että tietyt käsitteelliset metaforat, kuten säiliömetafora, ovat yleistyneet suhteessa toisiin viime vuosikymmeninä. Tämä viittaa rakkauden käsitteen asteittaiseen muutokseen populaarimusiikissa. Aikaan liittyvien trendien lisäksi tutkimus osoitti, että esittävän artistin sukupuolella on yhteys tiettyjen käsitteellisten metaforien, erityisesti pelimetäforan, yleisyyteen kappaleiden sanoituksissa.

Asiasanat: käsitteellinen metafora, metafora, kognitiivinen lingvistiikka, musiikki, lyriikka

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## 1. Introduction

Consider the following excerpts of lyrics from two worldwide hit songs published nearly 50 years apart:

“Yesterday  
Love was such an easy game to play  
Now I need a place to hide away  
Oh, I believe in yesterday”  
– The Beatles, “Yesterday”, 1965

“Never had much faith in love or miracles  
Never wanna put my heart on the line  
But swimming in your world is something spiritual  
I'm born again every time you spend the night”  
– Bruno Mars, “Locked Out of Heaven”, 2012

Though neither of these excerpts will seem particularly strange to anyone familiar with 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> century popular music, they nevertheless exemplify two very different ways of understanding what love is. The Beatles conceptualize it as a game in which it is possible to succeed or fail, while Bruno Mars paints a picture of something much more abstract, magical, even spiritual. It seems clear, then, that the popular music most of us are (willingly or unwillingly) subjected to on a daily basis can offer strikingly different views on love, a phenomenon that is undoubtedly one of the most prominent and inescapable features of the human condition.

In this thesis I will adopt the stance first introduced by Lakoff and Johnson in their 1980 classic *The Metaphors We Live By* in proposing that a major way by which we understand and give meaning to complicated, abstract concepts such as love is through metaphor. In other words, in our inability to produce a comprehensive account of what exactly love is, we resort to

explaining it by comparison to things we find easier to define, such as games (Lakoff 1980, 59-60). Adopting such a view entails understanding metaphors as much more than simply playful uses of language. Rather, metaphors reflect and the way we think, more specifically the way we understand and conceptualize the world we live in (ibid., 3-6). Once a person accepts the idea that love is, for example, a game, he or she will be profoundly affected in terms of his or her attitudes towards the phenomenon (Goatly 2007, 27), perhaps even the behavior he or she deems appropriate and acceptable in a relationship. This is why, considering the prevalence of popular music in our lives, the research questions I have outlined for this thesis are of importance even to those with no particular interest in music or its lyrical content per se. They are as follows:

1. What kinds of conceptual metaphors pertaining to love can be found in popular music?
2. What do these conceptual metaphors tell us about how love is understood in popular music?
3. Has there been a change in the popularity of different conceptual metaphors over the past 50+ years?
4. Does the gender of the performing artist affect the metaphors used?

In order to answer these questions, I will analyze metaphorical language use directly related to love in all songs that have reached the #1 spot on the Billboard Hot 100 chart from the beginning of the year 1960 to the end of the year 2016.

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. The aim of the following three chapters is to build a foundation for the ones that follow by providing background information relevant to the thesis (chapter 2), a theoretical overview of metaphor in general and conceptual metaphor in particular (chapter 3) and a brief look at the kind of work that has already been carried out in the field (chapter 4). In chapter five, the materials and methods used in this study will be discussed

in more detail. The results of the study will be presented in chapter six and further discussed in chapter seven. In the concluding chapter, the results of the study will be summarized and the research questions answered.

## 2. Background

### 2.1. Defining Popular Music

In order for one to understand the exact nature of the material studied in this thesis it is important to note the difference between two terms, *popular music* and *pop music*. While the latter refers to a specific genre of music born in the 1950's, the former simply refers to “music that is most in line with the tastes and interests of the urban middle class”, and therefore to a wide variety of different musical styles unified only through their commercial success at a given point in time (Lamb 2016). Though important, the difference between the two terms is not always appreciated even in dictionaries dedicated to the field of music, as evidenced by the terms' muddled treatment in *The Oxford Dictionary of Music (ODoM s.v. pop)*. Some scholars have also opted to define popular music as the product of an organized music industry rather than purely in terms of its popularity (Wall 2003, 2). In any case, in the context of this thesis, *popular music* should be understood not as a certain type of music, but as an umbrella term referring to all songs to have reached a certain level of popularity in the region studied, at any given time in the decades studied.

## 2.2. Billboard Hot 100

The Billboard Hot 100 is the industry standard record chart of the United States. As record charts in general, it is designed to reflect the popularity of individual songs within the country at a given point in time, and has been published on a weekly basis by *Billboard* magazine since August 1958 (Trust 2015). Until early in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the chart tracked the popularity of songs based solely on sales and radio play, but in the advent of digital music consumption this logic has undergone a major revision three times. Digital sales<sup>1</sup> have contributed to chart positions on the Hot 100 since February 2005, while online music streaming and music video streaming<sup>2</sup> were included in August 2007 and January 2013, respectively (ibid.).

Though every music chart has its limitations and none can be considered a perfect reflection of the popularity hierarchy of different songs at different points in time, the Billboard Hot 100 is an obvious choice for use in this thesis because of its unparalleled longevity and status as the music industry standard record chart in the United States as well as its comprehensive and readily accessible online archive.

## 2.3. The Effects of Mass Media on Its Consumers

The power that different types of mass media have in influencing the thought and action of their consumers has been the subject of an immense body of research conducted since the beginning

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<sup>1</sup> Unlike in traditional music sales, no physical transaction occurs in digital sales. Instead, the consumer pays for the right to download a certain song or songs from an online service onto a device of their choice.

<sup>2</sup> In contrast to digital sales, streaming services do not provide the consumer with a permanent digital copy of a product. Instead, the consumer subscribes to a streaming service which allows them to stream music or music videos from an online source on demand.

of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, one that will only be dealt with in a very broad manner here. Suffice to say that over the course of the past one hundred years, the major paradigms of mass media studies have alternated back and forth between the view that mass media has profound effects on its consumers on the one hand, and the view that the effects of mass media are rather minimal on the other (McQuail 2000, 455-60; Neuman and Guggenheim 2011, 171-2). Each shift from one end of the spectrum to the other has naturally been the result of a refinement in the understanding of the relationship between mass media and its consumers. One such refinement, first introduced in the 1970's yet still relevant to this day, is the negotiated or interpretive view of media effects (McQuail 2000, 458-60; Neuman and Guggenheim, 178). According to this view,

The media tend to offer a 'preferred' view of social reality (one that purports to be widely accepted and reliable). This includes both the information provided and the appropriate way of interpreting it, forming value judgements and opinions and reacting to it. These are the ready-made meanings that the media systematically offer to their audiences. It is up to the audience member to decide whether or not to adopt the views offered, although they are often the only material available for forming an opinion on distant matters. (ibid.)

The idea that mass media attempt to offer their consumers certain ways of conceptualizing the reality we live in at the expense of others is particularly relevant in the context of this thesis, because it implies that the conceptual metaphors we encounter when listening to popular music have, as posited in chapter 1, the potential to shape the conceptual systems of those who consume popular music.

## 2.4. The Effects of the Lyrical Content of Music on Its Listeners

Repeated exposure to violence, sexism and other antisocial themes in popular music lyrics has been linked to maladaptive behavior and attitudes in listeners in both correlational (Rubin, West and Mitchell 2001, 33-5) and experimental (Anderson, Carnagey and Eubanks 2003, 962-8) studies. Despite the major role that individual differences play in moderating these effects (Peterson, Safer and Jobes 2008, 166-7), such findings have been met with concern and have led to policy statements calling for increased intervention from parents and pediatricians in situations where at risk youth are exposed to antisocial lyrical themes (American Academy of Pediatrics 2009, 1491-2). Though the present study is not aimed towards antisocial lyrical content in particular and does not directly explore the effects of lyrical themes on listeners of popular music, it does aim to uncover certain consistent lyrical messages that have perhaps been overlooked thus far. Part of the general appeal of this thesis is indeed predicated on the notion that despite their less than overt nature, these messages may nevertheless influence the thoughts of people subjected to them.

## 3. Metaphor

### 3.1. Defining Metaphor

#### 3.1.1. A General Introduction

*Oxford English Living Dictionaries* defines metaphor as “a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable” (*OELD* s.v.

*metaphor*). *Merriam-Webster.com*, in turn, provides a slight elaboration (*M-W.com* s.v. *metaphor*), describing a metaphor as:

a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them (as in *drowning in money*)

In the example given above, the reader is not expected to believe someone is literally suffocating due to being enveloped in money, but that some sort of similarity between the amount of money an exceedingly wealthy person has and the amount of water that surrounds a drowning person can be seen. This special sort of meaning construction is highlighted by Montgomery et al (2007, 118):

Metaphor occurs when a word or phrase in one semantic field is transferred into another semantic field in order to talk about one thing as if it were another quite different thing... ..metaphors work on the basis that there is a some similarity between the two ideas that have been brought together

A metaphor is thus born when one concept is elaborated by highlighting its similarities to another: to say that one is drowning in money draws immediate attention to the fact that they have an abundance of it, perhaps to the point where money is causing them suffering. An entirely different picture of the effects of wealth could be conveyed using a different metaphor (e.g. “We are starved of funds”). In more linguistic terms, metaphors are always based on a *vehicle* (a part of a sentence that cannot be taken literally), a *tenor* (the meaning that is implied by the vehicle) and a *ground* (the similarity between the vehicle and tenor) (ibid., 123). In the example provided by *Merriam-Webster.com* above, the ground linking the vehicle (drowning) and the tenor (abundance, excess) is the idea that too much of something causes suffering or peril. In the second example, the ground connecting the vehicle (starvation) and the tenor (shortage) is quite

opposite to the first example: here attention is drawn to the potential that a lack of something has in causing suffering or peril.

### 3.1.2. Metaphor vs. Metonymy

As illustrated above, metaphors draw attention to similarities and create analogies between two words or phrases. Consequently, they should be distinguished from metonymies, in which one word or phrase actually stands for another (Kövecses 2002 143-6). Consider the following sentences, the first of which contains a metonymy and the latter a metaphor:

- 1) *Washington* has declared a war on terror.
- 2) The war on terror is a *crusade*.

One could, without altering the core meaning of these sentences in any way, rephrase them as follows:

- 1) *The US government* has declared a war on terror.
- 2) The war on terror is *like a crusade*.

As can be seen, the capital city of the U.S. directly stands for the country's government in example 1. Since cities themselves are not capable of declaring war on anything, one can only make sense of the sentence if one understands the substitution that has taken place. This is how metonymy works, hence the term's origin in the Greek expression "change of name" (Montgomery 2007, 117-8). No such substitution takes place in example 2, however. Here, the word *crusade* does not stand for any other word or phrase, but is used metaphorically in an attempt to paint the war on terror in a religious light. It is precisely this capability of metaphors

to weave and uphold covert meanings through analogy that makes it of interest for the present study.

### 3.1.3. Conventional vs. Original Metaphor

Metaphors are ubiquitous to such an extent in everyday language that we often pay no special attention to them. Indeed, the metaphors in sentences such as “The company is *growing* fast”, “We have to *construct* a new theory” and “I can’t *digest* all these facts”, are so conventionalized that one might have a hard time noticing their metaphorical nature (Kövecses 2002, 30). Yet companies are not living organisms, theories are not buildings, and facts are not food. All of these expressions have their origins in analogies between two different objects or ideas and are therefore metaphorical.

Compare the examples provided above with an expression like “I am an *island*” and the difference between conventional and original metaphors will immediately be clear. Where conventional metaphors feel familiar and are deciphered quite automatically, original metaphors require active mental processing to understand their meaning because of their novelty (Goatly 2007, 22). For this reason, conventional and original metaphors are sometimes referred to as dead and vital metaphors, respectively (Montgomery et al. 2007, 126). Such nomenclature has been deliberately avoided in this thesis, however, since despite their seemingly static nature, conventional metaphors still play a major role in reflecting and affecting the way we think (Goatly 2007, 22), as will be further explored in the next section dedicated to conceptual metaphor.

## 3.2. Conceptual Metaphor

### 3.2.1 Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (henceforth CMT) treats the metaphors we use in language as a reflection of the conceptual system we use to make sense of the world we live in (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 3-6). It is part of a broader linguistic movement, cognitive linguistics, which is concerned with the way language reflects the way people think (Evans, Bergen and Zink 2007, 4-5). CMT has its foundation in the 1980 classic *The Metaphors We Live By* by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, and has since been enriched by an ever expanding body of scholarly work, only a small fraction of which can plausibly be dealt with here. The purpose of this subsection is simply to provide an overview the aspect of conceptual metaphors that are relevant in the context of this thesis. The following subsection will then comment on the use of CMT as a tool for the critical analysis of language use.

The basic tenet motivating the study of conceptual metaphors is that according to CMT, “our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 3). The underlying function of metaphor in thought is to facilitate the understanding of complex things through analogy with simpler ones, which enables abstract thought (Goatly 2007, 14-5). With this in mind, consider the following example of a conceptual metaphor provided by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 44-5):

#### LOVE IS A JOURNEY

Look *how far* we've come.  
We're *at a crossroads*.  
We'll just have to *go our separate ways*.  
We can't *turn back* now.

I don't think this relationship is *going anywhere*.  
*Where* are we?  
 We're *stuck*.  
 It's been a *long, bumpy road*.  
 This relationship is a *dead-end street*.  
 We're just *spinning our wheels*.  
 Our marriage is *on the rocks*.  
 We've *gotten off the track*.  
 This relationship is *foundering*.

The capitalized heading is a conceptual metaphor and listed below are sentences with some of the linguistic metaphors (italicized) that are its manifestations. The relationship between linguistic and conceptual metaphors is aptly summarized by Kövecses (2002, 39):

Metaphors can be conceptual and linguistic. Conceptual metaphors involve two concepts and have the form A is B, where concept A is understood in terms of concept B. Linguistic metaphors, or metaphorical linguistic expressions, are linguistic manifestations of conceptual metaphors.

In other words, conceptual metaphors reside in our heads and manifest themselves in systematic ways as linguistic metaphors in speech or on the page. In the example provided by Lakoff and Johnson, we can see how each of the linguistic metaphors draws from the underlying conceptual metaphor, i.e. how the highly complex concept of love is talked about in terms of the simpler concept of a journey to facilitate understanding. In traditional CMT terminology, this means we are using A JOURNEY as a source domain in order to understand LOVE, our target domain. To do so, we establish a set of systematic correspondences between the source and target domains, called conceptual mappings. Such mappings are the raw material which ultimately gives the conceptual metaphor its ability to facilitate understanding (Kövecses 2002, 6). The conceptual mappings involved in the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY, provided by Kövecses (ibid., 7), can be seen below:

<i>Source:</i> journey	<i>Target:</i> love
the travelers	⇒ the lovers
the vehicle	⇒ the love relationship itself
the journey	⇒ events in the relationship
the distance covered	⇒ the progress made
the obstacles encountered	⇒ the difficulties experienced
decisions about which way to go	⇒ choices about what to do
the destination of the journey	⇒ the goal(s) of the relationship

When using and interpreting conceptual metaphors through their manifestations in linguistic metaphors one does not need to be overtly aware of these mappings, but their subconscious presence is imperative, as is evident when they are considered side by side with the linguistic metaphors provided by Lakoff above. Imagine, for example, trying to decipher the expression “I don’t think this relationship is *going anywhere*” without realizing that you are supposed to see a correspondence between the destination of a journey and the goals of a relationship. You would probably assume the speaker is happy with the relationship, since it seems to be there to stay!

Another characteristic of conceptual metaphors that is important to note is their asymmetrical directionality (Grady 2007, 191). We can see that love can be understood in terms of a journey, but this does not mean that a journey can also be understood in terms of love. While we may take, for example, the expression “let’s go all the way” and use it to mean “let’s get married”, there is no way that the expression “let’s get married” will be understood by anyone as “let’s go all the way” in any circumstances that are even remotely normal. Conceptual metaphors do not work both ways.

Of course, the conceptualization of love that has been the focus of this chapter so far is not the only one possible. One can easily find linguistic metaphors which do not reflect the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY, but draw from a different source domain. This

means that there are several conceptual metaphors in which love is the target domain, and each of them presents love in a different light. An example of this is LOVE IS MADNESS (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 49):

LOVE IS MADNESS  
 I'm *crazy* about her.  
 She *drives me out of my mind*.  
 He constantly *raves* about her.  
 He's gone *mad* over her.  
 I'm just *wild* about Harry.  
 I'm *insane* about her.

The issue of competing conceptual metaphors will be discussed further in the next subchapter. For now, let us turn our attention to another critical question regarding the validity of CMT: if the function of conceptual metaphors truly is as fundamental to human thought as CMT posits, do not journeys and madness themselves then require mapping from other, even simpler source domains in order for them to be understood? And wherever that mapping does come from, do these domains not again need to be mapped by something still more basic? Is there an end to such a chain, a basic foundation on which all conceptual metaphors are built? Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 56-60) suggest that certain concepts, e.g. MORE IS UP, arise directly from spatial experience (when an increasing amount of something is piled in front of us, we see the pile rise ever higher). This notion is echoed by Goatly (2007, 15) in his description of how infants acquire basic concepts:

Even in the womb, and when we are released from it, we acquire a schema of space or lack of space, providing the source of, for example, FREEDOM IS SPACE TO MOVE. We soon acquire the schema of containers with insides and outsides from our experience of eating and excreting, from which we draw the source for MIND IS A CONTAINER, and the notion of proximity from being picked up and separated from our carers, so that RELATIONSHIP IS

PROXIMITY. We experience gravity and the sense of vertical orientation as well – MORE or POWER IS HIGH. The first most obvious changes that we notice are movements, thus CHANGE IS MOVEMENT. As we develop through the first two or three years we acquire the ability to handle objects with more and more control, initially grasping with all fingers in a palm grasp, and progressing until we can pick up small objects between our thumb and index finger; this not only provides the source for UNDERSTAND IS HOLD / GRASP, but also the motivation for CONTROL IS HANDLE. We learn to crawl towards objects that we want, and eventually to walk unaided, giving us PURPOSE IS DIRECTION and DEVELOPMENT / SUCCESS IS MOVEMENT FORWARDS.

According to CMT, it is such basic experience-based concepts, also known as primary metaphors, which provide the building blocks for more complex conceptual metaphors and indeed our entire mental experience of the world around us (Grady 2007, 192-3). One should not expect to find a direct and rigidly logical chain of metaphors leading from highly complex concepts to primary metaphors, however. In her corpus-based study of metaphor, Deignan (2005, 222) elaborates this quite eloquently, writing that “if our linguistic metaphor systems can be likened to street maps, then the corpus data suggest that they are not the logical grid networks of planned modern cities, but collections of different sized and merging villages, with interconnecting roads”. She then goes on to hypothesize that this is a reflection of the nature of our conceptual system, which does not form a monolithic whole, but is rather a collection of multiple loosely related conceptual networks (ibid.).

The idea of a physical basis for conceptual metaphors discussed above raises another question: are conceptual metaphors universal across different cultures? Since the most fundamental elements of the human condition (sensory input, etc.) can be seen as unaffected by culture, one could reasonably assume that the answer is yes. However, the reality of the situation is far from being that simple. Some scholars claim that primary metaphors are highly likely to

emerge regardless of culture due to their direct links to human physiology and perception (Kövecses 2002, 177; Grady 2007, 194), and that they are thus “arguably universal” (Evans, Bergen and Zink 2007, 16). Others, however, underline the power of culture in shaping even the most primal of conceptual metaphors and condemn such a notion as reductionist (Goatly 2007, 276). In any case, many conceptual metaphors are quite disconnected from any sort of direct physical basis, which logically results in multiple competing or complementary source-target mappings even within the same culture (see LOVE IS A JOURNEY vs. LOVE IS MADNESS above) (Kövecses 2005, 34). Thus, while similar conceptual metaphors can be found in different cultures, the likelihood of such similarity dissolves quickly as one examines abstract conceptual metaphors that do not have a direct physical basis. As Kövecses (ibid., 162) puts it, “conceptual metaphors are just as much cultural as they are cognitive entities.”

### 3.2.2. Critical Metaphor Analysis

The existence of competing conceptual metaphors, cultural variance in metaphorical language use and the emergence of novel, original metaphors entails that human beings are rarely restricted to adhering to a specific conceptual metaphor when discussing something abstract. How does one decide whether love is a journey or madness, then? That would depend on the point one is trying to make. Different source domains highlight and hide different elements of the target domain (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 10). To call love madness is to highlight its capacity to cloud one’s judgment and lead to rash decisions. To call it a journey is to draw attention to its longevity and the steady effort required to reach the desired outcome. This means conceptual metaphors have to be seen as more than a reflection of the conceptual system in our brains – they

can be used as a tool for persuasion as well. This observation has led to an approach called Critical Metaphor Analysis, henceforth CMA.

CMA was first put forward in 2004 by Jonathan Charteris-Black (Li 2016, 93). It builds on the traditional CMT of Lakoff and Johnson by focusing increased attention on “implicit speaker intentions and covert power relations” (ibid.), though it should be noted that metaphor use, especially the creation of new original metaphors, was never seen as wholly innocuous and void of ideology by Lakoff and Johnson either (1980, 145; ibid., 156). In introducing CMA, however, Charteris-Black established a new point of view in the study of metaphor, one that is grounded as much in pragmatics as it is in cognitive linguistics (2004, 7-10). A researcher following the tenets of CMA will not only work towards uncovering the conceptual metaphors present in a given text but will also endeavor to expose the motivation behind their use. This is necessary because metaphors are, by nature, an indirect way of communication capable of subverting the type of criticism leveled at more direct language use if accepted without assessment. As Cameron and Low (1999, 86) put it:

Not only does metaphor shield a proposition from direct discourse, as nothing literal has been said, but it has the inestimable advantage of combining the fact that the speaker cannot be held responsible for the message with the flagging of the fact that there is a message being conveyed which cannot be discussed openly.

The ultimate goal of CMA, then, is an emancipatory one: to diminish the covert persuasive power of conceptual metaphors by rendering the propositions at their core open to scrutiny (ibid., 251-3). This applies to both original and conventional metaphors, as the former “have the power

to create new reality” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 145), while according to some scholars, the latter are even more potent when it comes to persuasion (Goatly 2007, 22):

If we call original metaphors “live” or “active” this is really because they are new and demand that we are active in our interpretation of them. If we call conventional metaphors “dead” or “inactive”, this is because they are old and their interpretation does not demand as much conscious activity on our part. But this does not mean to say that they have less effect on our cognition. In fact, it is precisely because they are conventionalised that they may achieve the power to subconsciously affect our thinking, without our being aware of it.

#### 4. Previous Studies

Much research on conceptual metaphors, the source domains they typically draw from, their universality and their latent ideology has been conducted.

Charteris-Black conducted a corpus study of conceptual metaphors in political, press and religious discourse (2004, 2-3). He found religious discourse to be more varied in the set of source domains it draws from than the other two types of discourse, but that “domains such as conflict, nature, buildings, journeys, fire and light, the human body, the physical environment and the weather are common to all three types of discourse” (ibid., 246). In addition, he emphasized the role of ideology and culture in determining the source domain a speaker or writer chooses for use (ibid., 247-8). A recent example of this is provided by Musolff in his article *Truths, lies and figurative scenarios* (Musolff 2017), in which he argues that the source domain of physical disease has been used to advocate Brexit in British political discourse.

Goatly studied conceptual metaphors using his database *Metalude* (2007, 4) and claimed that conceptual metaphors are largely historically and culturally formed and therefore non-

universal (ibid., 402). He also pointed out how some prevailing conceptual metaphors seem to have direct links to concrete phenomena in contemporary life such as obesity and the commodification of nature (ibid., 401-2).

Kövecses has been looking at conceptual metaphors related to emotion since 1986 when he first looked at metaphors of anger, pride and love by analyzing “commonly used, well-worn” metaphors in an attempt to uncover the conceptual metaphors associated with them ( Kövecses 1986, 10). In his 2004 release *Metaphor and Emotion*, he also studied the universality of conceptual metaphors, arguing for an integrative model he calls body-based constructionism (2004, 183), through which he claims that at least some emotional concepts like anger have a universal basis while also acknowledging the major role cultural experience has in shaping our conceptual system.

Tissari studied the historical development of the concept of love and the metaphors associated with it using corpus methods (2001, 8). She claims that conceptual metaphors related to love typically draw on a spatial source (e.g. LOVE IS A CONTAINER), but that forces (e.g. LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE) and activities (e.g. LOVE IS A GAME) are also common (ibid., 428-9). In her more recent work involving a number of emotions and the metaphors used in conjunction with them, she adds that love is often reified as a concrete entity or substance located within the human body and that human characteristics are seldom ascribed to it (Tissari 2010, 313-7).

## 5. Material and Methods

### 5.1. Material Studied

Because our understanding of the world and therefore the conceptual metaphors we encounter, use and live by are in many cases culture-specific (Kövecses 2005, 292-4), I decided to forego a worldwide analysis of love metaphors in popular music in favor of one that focuses on the Western world<sup>3</sup> and its pop culture tradition. More specifically, I decided to direct my study towards the United States and the pop songs that have been the most commercially successful there over the course of recent decades. Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, it is necessary for the materials studied to amount to a large sample of music that has been undeniably *popular* in the US over the past several decades. The primary data studied in this thesis thus consists of the lyrics to every song to reach the top spot of the Billboard Hot 100 chart since the beginning of the year 1960.

### 5.2. Methods Employed

The groundwork for this thesis was laid through the formation of a database of text files containing the lyrics of all number one hits on the Billboard Hot 100 since the beginning of the 1960s. A list containing all of these songs was created through consultation of the Billboard website, and the lyrics themselves were be obtained from two sites dedicated to the purpose of

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<sup>3</sup> Though this is by no means a straightforward concept to define, it is taken here to mean Northern America and Europe, or “Europe and North America seen in contrast to other civilizations” as defined by *Oxford Living Dictionaries* (OELD s.v. *west n. 2.1*).

providing free access to song lyrics: *songlyrics.com* and *azlyrics.com*. Once the lyrics to each song had been obtained and placed in separate text files, they were arranged into separate folders according to the decade of their publication and the gender of the lead singer. Such an arrangement made comparisons between the aforementioned variables possible. For the purpose of easy reference in the analysis section of this thesis, each file was also given a tag denoting these variables (60M for songs from the 1960s with a male lead singer, 80D for songs from the 1980s performed as a duet, 90F for songs from the 1990s with a female lead singer, etc.).

Two methodological decisions pertaining to the formation of the lyric databases should be mentioned: first, in the rare event that a song not performed in English reached the top of the Billboard Hot 100, it was omitted from the analysis. Second, if a song reached the top of the chart a second time after more than a year since its initial emergence had passed, it was entered into the database once for both occasions to reflect its status as a two-time hit. Such situations were again extremely rare. At this point, the material for the study consisted of the lyrics of more than a thousand individual songs.

The next phase of this study involved finding and analyzing each occurrence of the words *love*, *lover*, *loving*, *loves*, *loved* and the plural and genitive forms of the first three in the database created. The occurrences were found using a freeware corpus tool known as Antconc (Anthony 2017), which allows searching for words or strings of words in text files. One of Antconc's features also provides its user with the ability to see each occurrence of a certain word in its immediate context, which, for the purposes of this thesis, allowed for quick identification of potentially metaphorical occurrences of the words mentioned above. The exact search term was *lov\**, which, in addition to search results relevant to this thesis, also provided a few dozen

occurrences of the adjective *lovely*. These were not seen as a part of the study and were therefore ignored. The search term *lov\** yielded a total of 3913 hits in the data across 638 individual songs. Each of these hits was then analyzed in order to find any expressions that represent a metaphorical understanding of love. Close attention was also paid to the immediate surroundings of each occurrence of *lov\** in the data. In the event that metaphorical language use clearly dealing with love but not containing the actual word itself was discovered, it was included in the study. Several examples of such cases are present among the data extracts provided in the analysis section.

In order to differentiate metaphorical and non-metaphorical references to love from each other, *Merriam-Webster.com* and *Oxford English Living Dictionaries* were consulted for a literal meaning of the word. They define love as strong or intense affection (*M-W.com*, *OELD* s.v. *love*), which is in turn defined as “a feeling of liking and caring for someone or something” by *Merriam-Webster* (*M-W* s.v. *affection*) and as “a gentle feeling of fondness or liking” by *Oxford English Living Dictionaries* (*OELD* s.v. *affection*). Any treatment of love as something else than the kind of feeling described above was thus considered metaphorical in nature. Altogether 390 songs in the data addressed love in a metaphorical way.

Once all songs with content relevant to the study had been culled from the body of data studied, the metaphorical language related to love within them was subjected to the final two stages of a three-point method for analyzing metaphors outlined by Cameron and Low (1999, 88):

The methodology of metaphor analysis typically proceeds by (1) collecting examples of linguistic metaphors used to talk about the topic... (2) generalising from them to the conceptual metaphors they exemplify, and (3) using the results

to suggest understandings or thought patterns which construct or constrain people's beliefs and actions.

In practice, this meant arranging expressions reflecting similar ways of understanding and discussing love into groups, then refining these groups until a set of conceptual metaphors with robust sets of mappings which were concretely exemplified in the data was arrived at. The prevalence of these conceptual metaphors in different decades and among different genders could then be calculated, and their implications for people subjected to pop music could be discussed.

Thus, through the collection and analysis of metaphorical expressions used in Billboard Hot 100 #1 hit songs when dealing with the subject of love, the following research questions were answered:

1. What kind of conceptual metaphors pertaining to love can be found in popular music?
2. What do these conceptual metaphors tell us about how love is understood in popular music?
3. Has there been a change in the popularity of different conceptual metaphors over the past 50+ years?
4. Does the gender of the performing artist affect the metaphors used?

## 6. Results and Analysis

In this chapter the eight conceptual metaphors found in the material studied will be presented.

The first two subchapters will focus on numbers: the purpose of the first is to spell out the frequencies with which the conceptual metaphors manifest themselves in linguistic expressions

in the data as a whole; the following will then provide a look at how these frequencies have varied in different decades and according to the gender of the performer.

What follows the opening two subchapters is an in-depth look at all of the conceptual metaphors I have proposed to exist in the data. Presented in order of prevalence in the data from the most common to the least so, they are as follows:

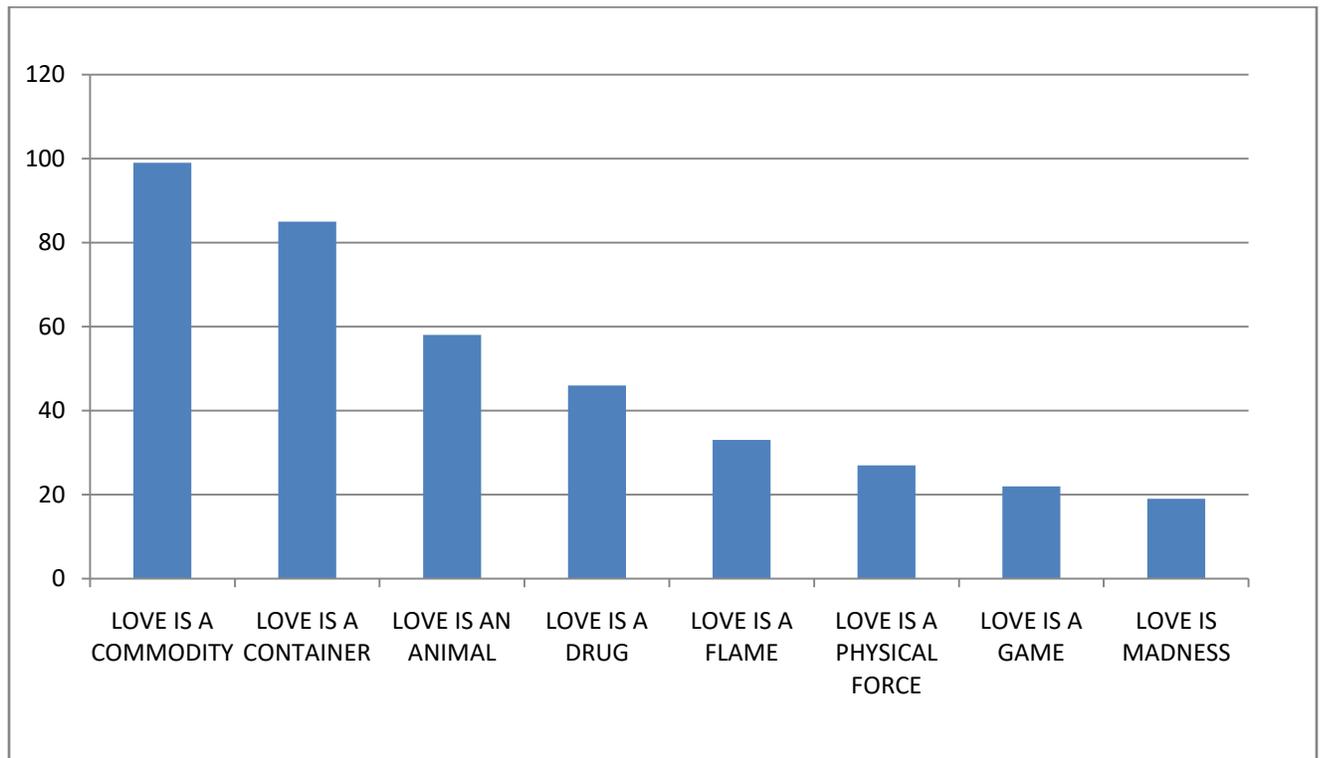
- |                        |                             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) LOVE IS A COMMODITY | 5) LOVE IS A FLAME          |
| 2) LOVE IS A CONTAINER | 6) LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE |
| 3) LOVE IS AN ANIMAL   | 7) LOVE IS A GAME           |
| 4) LOVE IS A DRUG      | 8) LOVE IS MADNESS          |

I will present a series of mappings for each conceptual metaphor and support these with examples from the data. This not only allows for my analysis to come under close scrutiny, but serves as a platform for stage three in Cameron and Low's metaphor analysis, as I reflect on the beliefs and actions each conceptual metaphor advocates or discourages.

### 6.1. General frequencies of the conceptual metaphors found

The overall number of linguistic expressions associated with each of the eight conceptual metaphors found in the data is presented in figure 1 below:

Figure 1: The conceptual metaphors found and the overall number of their manifestations in the material studied



The dominance of the two most common conceptual metaphors is immediately apparent, as the number of expressions associated with them in the data (184) is close to that of the six others put together (205). The prevalence of LOVE IS A COMMODITY is especially clear, since the amount of its manifestations in concrete expressions is roughly five times higher than that of each of the two least common conceptual metaphors (99 vs. 22 and 19).

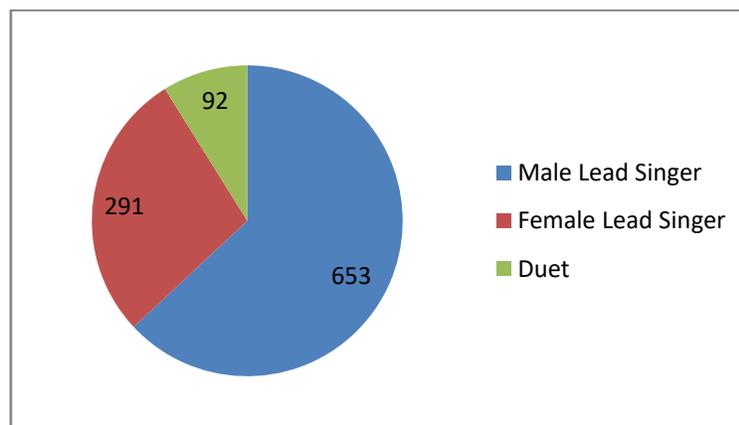
Regardless of the differences in the frequency of their use, however, all conceptual metaphors presented here form a coherent whole with several mappings from source to target domain apparent in concrete examples from the data studied, as will be shown in chapters 6.3. through 6.10. Some evidence toward other potential conceptual metaphors, such as LOVE IS A JOURNEY and LOVE IS A DIVINE BLESSING exists in the data, but these candidates do not

show the same breadth of mappings in the material studied as the eight proposed above and as such are not considered to be conclusively supported by the data.

## 6.2. General observations on the subcorpora arranged by time and gender

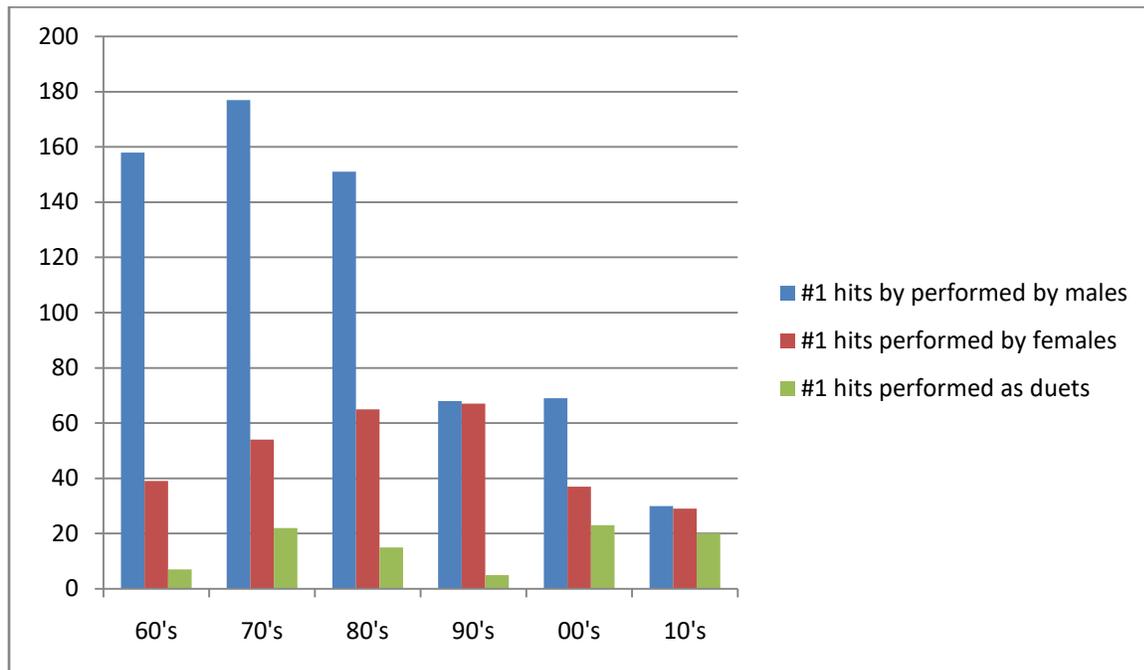
Before delving into the differences in the frequency of the conceptual metaphors according to decade and gender, a few general observations on the subcorpora arranged by time and gender are in order. First, as illustrated by the figure below, the distribution of #1 hit singles between genders is far from even:

Figure 2: The distribution of Billboard #1 hits among genders



As can be seen, well over half of the songs to reach #1 on the Billboard chart in the past six decades have been performed by male lead singers. Songs performed by females make up just over a quarter of the entire number of #1 hits, while songs that feature both male and female artists on lead vocals amount to roughly 9% of the total. Through the decades, however, there has been significant change regarding this distribution:

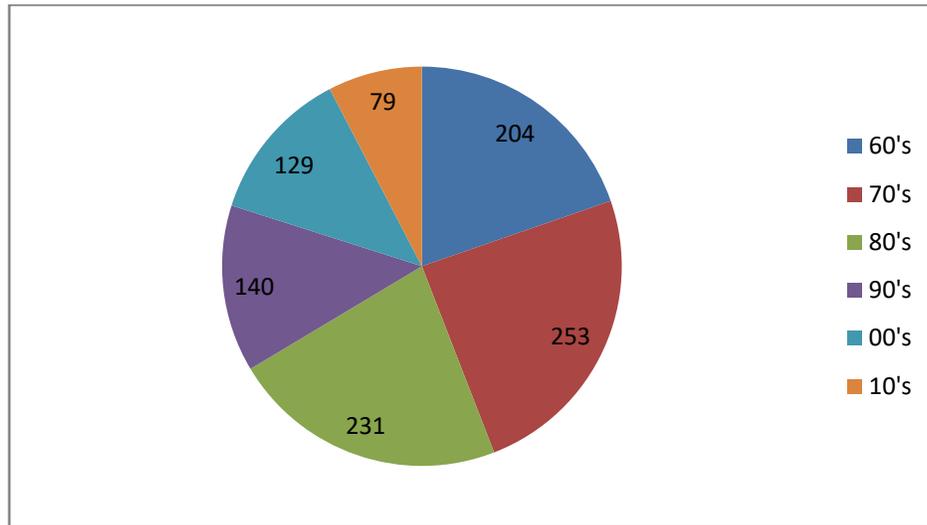
Figure 3: Diachronic changes in the distribution of #1 hits according to gender



The table above represents a significant shift towards equal prominence in pop music between genders, something that perhaps mirrors more general societal developments toward gender equality over the decades in question. Also apparent is the relative increase in the number of #1 hits containing both males and females on lead vocals, a development partly due to the popularity of collaborations between female singers and male rappers in recent years.

Another observation is the general decline in the number of #1 hits per decade, a finding better illustrated by figure 4 below:

Figure 4: Number of #1 Billboard hits by decade



As illustrated by the figure, recent decades have seen a notable decrease in the total amount of songs to reach #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart (note that the cutoff point for the 2010's is the end of the year 2016; by this time the decade was on course to produce a total of 113 #1 hits). On one hand, this means the biggest hits have become even bigger, allowing them to occupy the #1 spot for longer and longer periods of time. On the other, it means a smaller number of artists ever make the #1 position, which can be seen as detrimental to the ability of different sounds and styles to gain the ultimate amount of exposure. While this development could be due to a number of factors, some music journalists in the United Kingdom (Savage 2016, Scott 2017) have pinned a similar phenomenon in the UK charts down to the inclusion of online streaming figures as a factor in determining chart positions, claiming these skew the charts in favor of the very biggest hits.

Two more observations arise from a general comparison of the contents of the different subcorpora. These have to do with the subject matter of the lyrics of the songs in each subcorpus;

more precisely, the prevalence of love as a topic among different genders and in different decades. Figures 5 and 6 shed light on these matters:

Figure 5: Amount of songs with direct references to love relative to the total amount of songs in the category - gender

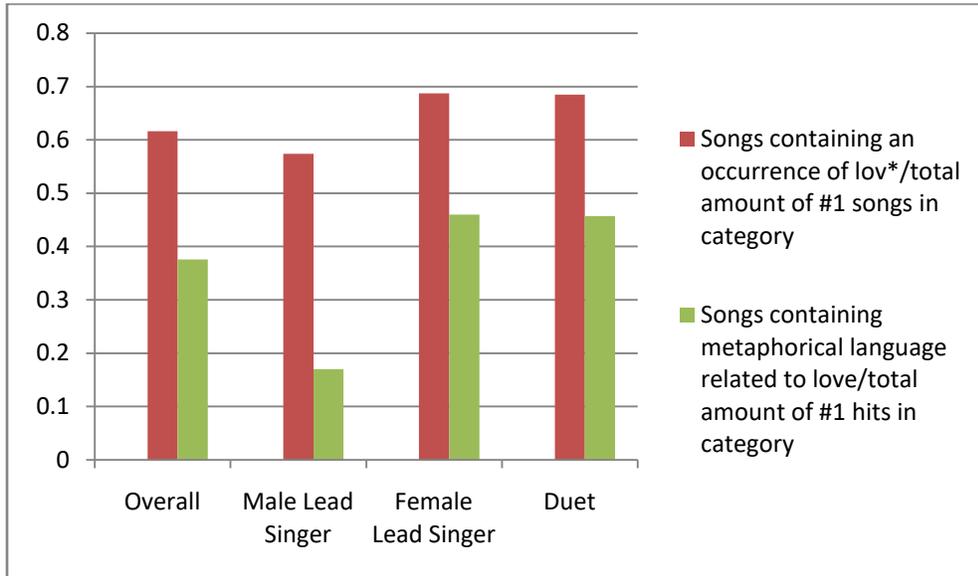


Figure 6: Amount of songs with direct references to love relative to the total amount of songs in the category - time

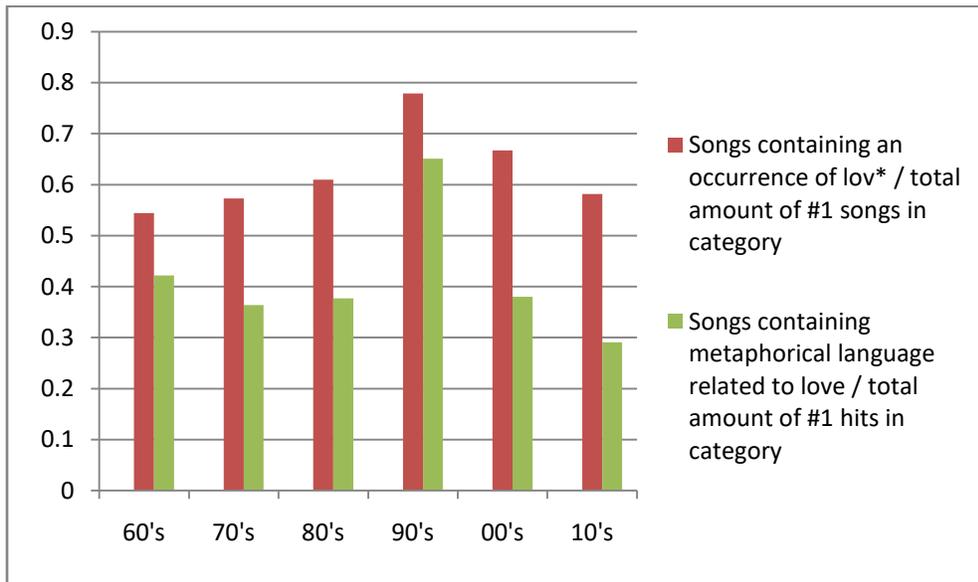


Figure 5 shows that while love is a very common topic in songs performed by both genders, it is slightly less common among males. More striking, however, is how much rarer it is for male singers to refer to love metaphorically when compared to female singers and singers in duets. The seemingly literal treatment of love by male singers is a curious phenomenon partly explained by the age old tradition of pop songs in which male singers straightforwardly profess their love for someone without discussing the topic in more nuanced ways, as illustrated by the following examples:

- (Ex1) Hello, I love you  
 Won't you tell me your name?  
 The Doors – Hello, I Love You (60M)
- (Ex 2) I'm gonna say it like a man and make you understand Amanda  
 I love you  
 Boston – Amanda (80M)

Figure 6 again shows the overwhelming popularity of love as subject matter for pop songs throughout the decades, highlighting the 90's as a point in time when love was a more popular topic than ever. It also indicates that relative to non-metaphorical use, metaphorical language use related to love has become slightly less common in the two most recent decades. This can perhaps be explained by the proliferation of overt references to sex using love vocabulary, a phenomenon that has been more limited among decades past.

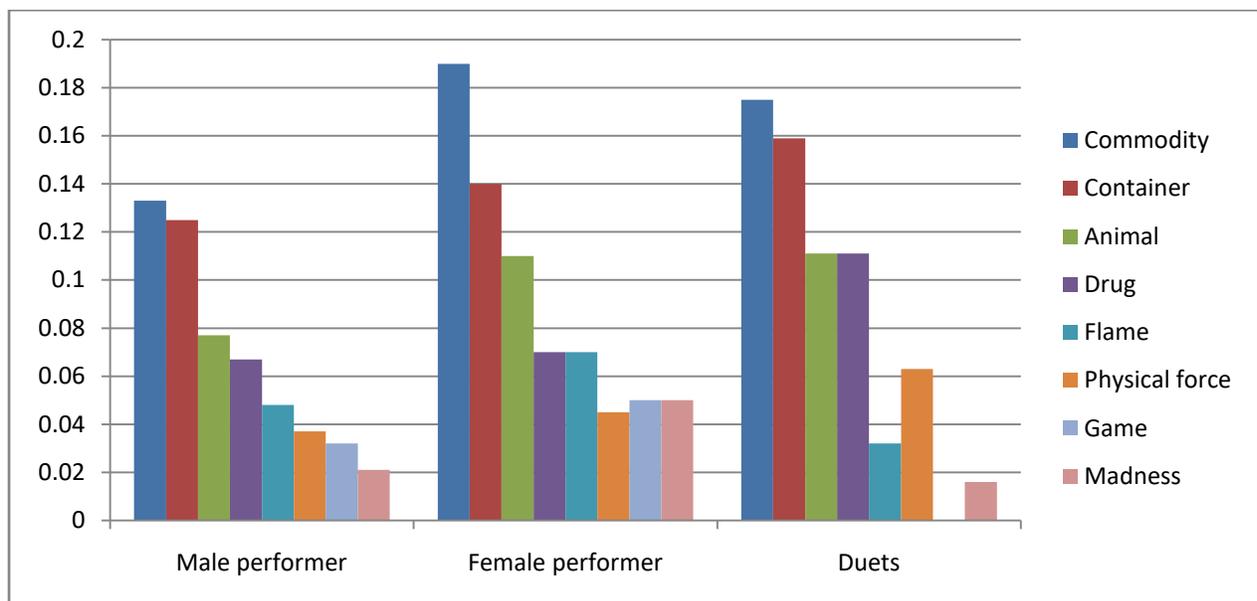
As is evident from the varied size and content of the subcorpora arranged by decades and genders, direct comparisons of the frequency of specific conceptual metaphors in different subcorpora would be less than informative. Therefore, the following two subchapters will present the time- and gender-related differences in the prevalence of the eight conceptual metaphors found by dividing the raw amount of their occurrences in each subcorpus by the amount of songs

that contain the word love in said subcorpus. This way, the differing sizes of the subcorpora will not skew the analysis and attention will be focused where it is intended: to discovering which conceptual metaphors are most commonly drawn from when language use related to love occurs.

### 6.2.1 Differences in the frequency of the conceptual metaphors (gender)

The relative number of manifestations of each of the eight conceptual metaphors introduced above found in the subcorpora arranged by gender is detailed in figure 7 below:

Figure 7: Manifestations of the conceptual metaphors divided by the number of songs referencing love in each subcorpus - gender



As can be seen, the power relations between the conceptual metaphors proposed to exist in the data are largely similar among songs performed by males, females, and as duets. However, some interesting observations do arise. As already mentioned alongside figure 6 in the previous chapter, songs with male lead singers use less metaphorical language when it comes to dealing

with love. Songs with female lead singers and songs performed as duets are roughly even in this regard. The conceptual metaphor LOVE IS MADNESS, while not very common in any of the categories, is more than twice as common in the female category than in the others. Two other conceptual metaphors, LOVE IS A FLAME and LOVE IS A GAME, are also somewhat more common in the female category. Incidentally, LOVE IS A GAME is nonexistent in the duet category, where LOVE IS A DRUG and LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE are more common than elsewhere.

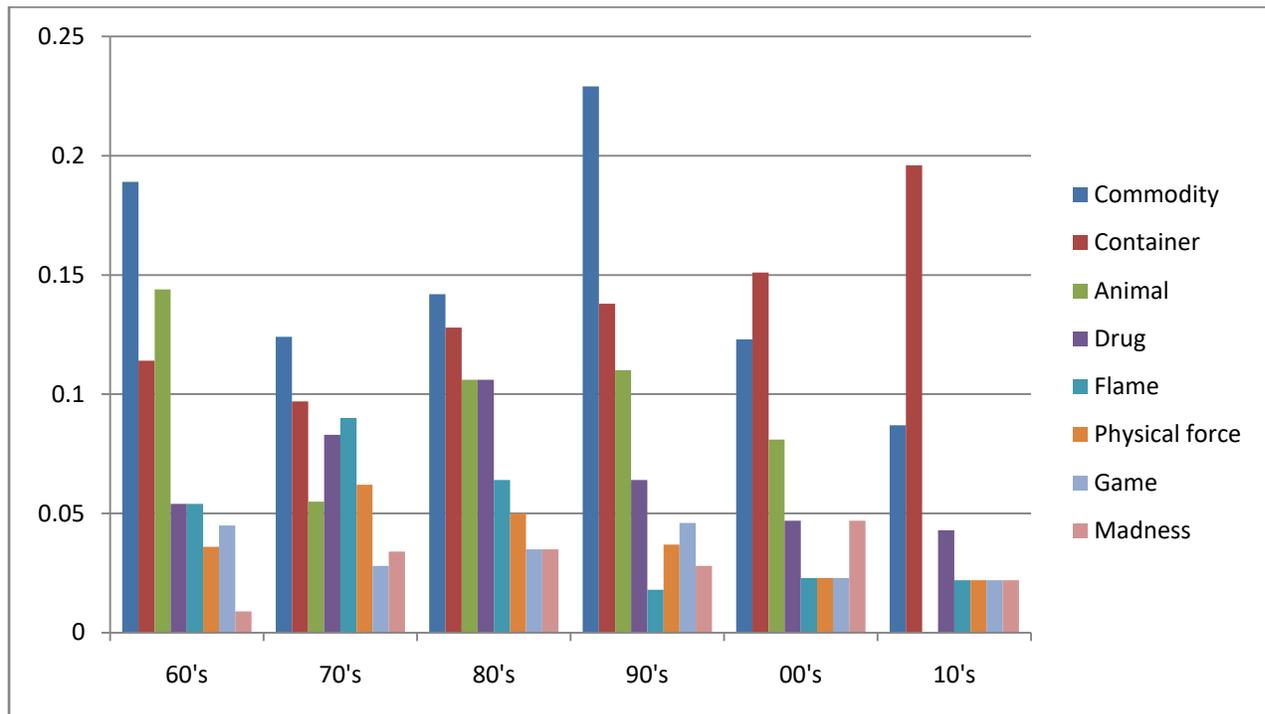
All of this means that while the use of conceptual metaphors when discussing love is broadly similar in all three categories, each of them has a recognizable profile. These profiles have also remained relatively stable over time, with three notable exceptions: LOVE IS A CONTAINER was much more common among males than in the other categories in the beginning of the Billboard Hot 100 era but has since become equally popular among all categories, while only in recent decades have LOVE IS A GAME and LOVE IS MADNESS become associated with female-fronted songs in particular; before that, their use was equally common across genders.

Next, attention will be turned to whether the subcorpora arranged according to time yield specific profiles for different eras in a similar manner.

### 6.2.2 Differences in the frequency of the conceptual metaphors (time)

The relative number of manifestations of each of the eight conceptual metaphors found in the subcorpora arranged by decade is detailed in figure 8 below:

Figure 8: Manifestations of the conceptual metaphors / the number of songs referencing love in each subcorpus – time

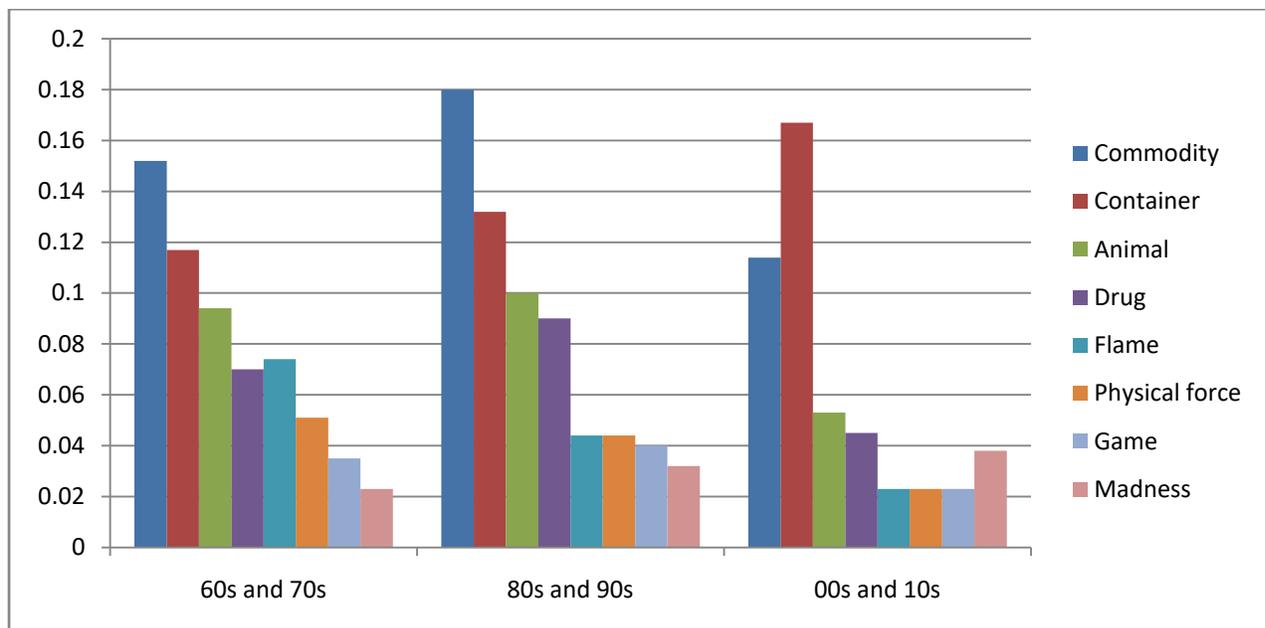


Like the gender-specific sections discussed in the previous chapter, the sections compiled according to decade show little deviance from the main pattern of power relations among the conceptual metaphors studied. However, some observations can again be made. Notably, the overall frequency of use of the conceptual metaphors dealt with in this paper seems to be in decline, as the last two decades show lower relative frequencies of their manifestations than the decades before. A part of this decline is due to the fact that metaphor use in pop music during these last two decades has been slightly more diverse than before: linguistic metaphors not assignable to any of the eight conceptual metaphors presented in this paper are marginally more common in the last two decades than in the decades preceding them. Such linguistic metaphors have not, however, become common enough to explain the decline in the relative number of the manifestations of the conceptual metaphors studied, and as such, it seems that a nominal trend of

demetaphorization has been taking place in pop music lyrics in recent times. An interesting counterpoint to this trend is the increasing popularity of the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A CONTAINER. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that its manifestations are largely related to occurrences of the highly conventional expression “in love”. It is conceivable that the conventionality of this expression has given it a certain resilience that the other conceptual metaphors lack; despite its unquestionably metaphorical nature, it is hard to replace with a thoroughly literal expression without resorting to cumbersome constructions. In addition to the rising popularity of LOVE IS A CONTAINER, the two peaks of the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A COMMODITY in the 60’s and 90’s as well as the total absence of LOVE IS AN ANIMAL from the 2010’s section are interesting observations.

Other general trends over the time period studied are perhaps more clearly illustrated by figure 9, which groups the data into three two-decade sections:

Figure 9: Manifestations of the conceptual metaphors / the number of songs referencing love in each subcorpus – time (grouped)



As well as showing a slight general decline in the overall frequency of use of these conceptual metaphors in the data studied, figure 9 highlights some changes in the power relations of the conceptual metaphors over time. In contrast to the ever-rising popularity of LOVE IS A CONTAINER, the conceptual metaphors LOVE IS A FLAME, LOVE IS A FORCE and LOVE IS AN ANIMAL appear to have been slowly going out of fashion during the Hot 100 era, while LOVE IS A COMMODITY and LOVE IS A DRUG had their peak around the 80's and 90's and have somewhat fallen out of favor since. Though never a very popular conceptual metaphor, LOVE IS MADNESS has also gained ground steadily during the time studied. All in all, the subcorpora arranged according to time paint a picture similar to that found in the subcorpora arranged by gender in that each segment of time in the data studied has its own distinct features, but few dramatic shifts in the power relations between the conceptual metaphors have occurred.

The next chapters of this thesis will provide a more in-depth look at the eight conceptual metaphors found in the data studied. A series of mappings from each source domain to the target domain of love will be presented, and these mappings will be supported by examples from the data. The analysis of each conceptual metaphor will conclude on a critical note as suggestions regarding the beliefs and actions they either advocate or discourage are offered.

### 6.3. LOVE IS A COMMODITY

The conceptual metaphor most commonly encountered in #1 hit songs on the Billboard Hot 100 chart from the beginning of the year 1960 to the end of the year 2016 is LOVE IS A

COMMODITY. The set of mappings describing how the target domain *love* is understood in terms of the source domain *commodity* is detailed in figure 10 below:

Figure 10: LOVE IS A COMMODITY - mappings

SOURCE : COMMODITY	→	TARGET: LOVE
The commodity	→	The love
Giving/receiving/sharing the commodity	→	Giving/ receiving/sharing affection
Trading	→	The reciprocal nature of a love relationships
The value of the commodity	→	The amount of love felt
The rarity of the commodity	→	The difficulty of finding a lover

Commodities are objects or substances of value, usually because they are not readily available to everyone. They are often owned, but in many cases can also be found in an unclaimed form (raw oil, minerals) despite their inherent rarity. Ownership implies the possibility of giving, losing and sharing, while value of course leads to trading. Commodities can be hoarded, and possessing a large amount or volume of a commodity is considered desirable. Note that many of these qualities are also true for drugs, and that drugs are ultimately but another form of commodity. However, the system of mappings between *drugs* and *love* is unique enough to warrant treatment as a separate conceptual metaphor, as will be shown in chapter 6.6.

The data extracts that follow provide examples of love being discussed in terms of trading, value, rarity, giving, receiving, sharing; in other words, as if it was a commodity.

Inherently present in most of the extracts is the notion of ownership, which will at times become overtly visible in the form of possessive pronouns. The first three extracts illustrate trading:

(ex3) Here's my story and the story goes  
 You give love, you get love  
 And more than heaven knows

Paula Abdul - Rush Rush 90F

- (ex4) Anything for love, oh I would do anything for love  
I would do anything for love, but I won't do that, no I won't do that

Meat Loaf - I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That) 90M

- (ex5) Gina works the diner all day, working for her man  
She brings home her pay for love, for love

Bon Jovi - Livin' On a Prayer 80M

The first extract describes love being traded for love, the second for actions of an unspecified kind, and the third for money. This corresponds with commodities being traded for other commodities, for labor, and for money.

If love can be traded like a commodity, it must also be possible to discuss it in terms of value. The second set of extracts exemplifies this:

- (ex6) You ripped me off, your love was cheap

Katy Perry - Part of Me 10F

- (ex7) When a man loves a woman  
I give you everything I got (yeah)  
Trying to hold on  
To your precious love

Michael Bolton - When a Man Loves a Woman 90M

- (ex8) Your love is worth all the gold on earth

Elvis Presley – Good Luck Charm 60M

Value is closely related to rarity; goods and services that are common and readily available are not often highly valued. The third set of extracts focuses on the rarity of love:

- (ex9) 'Cause true love takes a miracle to find  
I guess that I've been blessed, 'cause I've got you by my side

Tommy Page - I'll Be Your Everything 90M

(ex10) A love like ours is love that's hard to find  
How could we let it slip away

Chicago - If You Leave Me Now 70M

(ex11) If you would only love me like you used to do, yeah.  
We had a love...a love...a love you don't find every day.

The Righteous Brothers – You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin' 60M

As can be seen from the previous two extracts, when the love emotion felt is intense, it is thought of as valuable and rare. Correspondingly, if it is less intense, it is seen as cheap and common.

Commodities, even rare and valuable ones, do not always have to be traded or sold, however. They can also be freely given, received and shared. So too with love, as seen below:

(ex12) He's a rebel and he'll never ever be any good  
He's a rebel 'cause he never ever does what he should  
But just because he doesn't do what everybody else does  
That's no reason why I can't give him all my love

The Crystals – He's a Rebel 60F

(ex13) Oh I think that I found myself a cheerleader  
She is always right there when I need her  
She gives me love and affection

OMI – Cheerleader 10M

(ex14) Can't we make this dream last forever  
And I'll cherish all the love we share

Kelly Clarkson - A Moment Like This 00F

The above extracts have exemplified how love is conceptualized as a commodity in the data studied. The ramifications of such a conceptualization are profound: seeing love as a

commodity obscures the fact that as an emotion, love is both experienced and produced within human beings themselves and is therefore self-generating, renewable, and non-transferable. Through reducing love to a form of tradable goods, the commodity metaphor reflects an imposition of capitalist logic on love by emphasizing gains, losses and the pursuit of personal benefit. The possibility of sharing exists, but a shrewd individual ensures they stand to gain at least as much as they stand to lose from such an arrangement. The conceptual metaphor contains a grim underlying idea: feeling love is a form of loss that entitles one to compensation. This discourages unconditional love and selfless behavior by lovers and encourages leveraging love for self-centered purposes.

#### 6.4. LOVE IS A CONTAINER

The second most common conceptual metaphor found in the data and the only one to come even close to rivaling the popularity of the commodity metaphor is LOVE IS A CONTAINER. Its mappings are presented in figure 11:

Figure 11: LOVE IS A CONTAINER- mappings

SOURCE: CONTAINER	→	TARGET: LOVE
The container	→	The love
The contents of the container	→	The lover(s)
Entry into the container	→	The emergence of the love emotion
Exit from the container	→	The waning of the love emotion
The depth of the container and the position of the lover(s) therein	→	The intensity of the love felt

Containers, by definition, contain. They are objects that form an enclosed space and separate their content(s) from the rest of the world. They can be used to create units which did not exist

without them, e.g. glasses of water or bags of sand. Many containers are not intended for permanent storage. Instead, objects are placed into and removed from such containers as time passes. The time that a specific object spends in a container varies, and it may share the container with a variety of other objects during its time there. Objects that end up at the bottom or at the back of containers are likely to stay in the container longer than objects that are near the openings of containers. A container may also house only a single object instead of many.

The data extracts below provide examples of love being treated not as a feeling, but as if it was a container that people feeling the love emotion enter, stay in, share with others and perhaps one day exit. Extracts 15 through 17 illustrate entry into love:

(ex15) Oh Maria, Maria.  
She Fell In Love In East L.A.  
To The Sounds of The Guitar Yeah, Yeah.

Santana featuring The Product G&B - Maria Maria 00M

(ex16) Wise men say, only fools rush in  
But I can't help falling in love with you

UB40 - Can't Help Falling in Love 90M

(ex17) You're my baby, you're my pet  
We fell in love on the night we met  
You touched my hand, my heart went pop  
Ooh, when we kissed I could not stop

Ringo Starr - You're Sixteen 70M

Like objects dropped into a bucket, the protagonists of the songs above fall in love without having autonomous control over the situation. In ex15, a person falls in love alone, while in ex16 and ex17 a couple falls in together. Entry by falling is omnipresent when it comes to the container metaphor – no other method of entry exists in the data studied. This implies that the

kind of container used as a source domain for love is one that is loaded from above, like the aforementioned bucket. However, one also exits love by falling:

(ex18) I keep on fallin' in and out of love with you  
Sometimes I love ya, sometimes you make me blue

Alicia Keys – Fallin' 00F

(ex19) Our friends think we're opposites  
Falling in and out of love  
They all said we'd never last  
Still we manage to stay together

Janet Jackson - Love Will Never Do (Without You) 90F

This peculiar feature of the container metaphor can perhaps be explained by movement of the container itself: if one drops a rock into a bucket and then flips the bucket, the rock will have fallen both in and out. It is conceivable that the turbulent motions of the container represent the volatile nature of powerful emotions like love.

The following three extracts focus on people feeling the love emotion as contents residing in a container:

(ex20) I get lost in your eyes  
And I feel my spirits rise  
And soar like the wind...  
Is it love that I am in?

Debbie Gibson - Lost in Your Eyes 80F

(ex21) As we stroll along together  
Holding hands, walking all alone  
So in love are we two  
No one else but me and you

So in love  
(So in love)  
In a world of our own

(So in love)

The Tymes - So Much in Love 60M

(ex22) Lost in love is what I feel  
When I'm with you

Sheriff - When I'm with You 80M

In addition to placing lovers inside love, these extracts highlight the vastness of the love container – one can walk around and even get lost in it. The extracts also emphasize separation from the rest of the world: the loss of direction in ex22 implies inability to make ones way back to where one came from, while ex21 describes the lovers as all alone in a world of their own. As discussed earlier, this element of separation is another central theme in the container metaphor.

A final set of extracts for the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A CONTAINER illustrates the depth of the container and the position of the person(s) feeling the love emotion therein as a signifier of the intensity of the love emotion felt:

(ex23) And I know she'll be the death of me, at least we'll both be numb  
And she'll always get the best of me, the worst is yet to come  
All the misery was necessary when we're deep in love  
Yes, I know (yes, I know), girl, I know

The Weeknd - Can't Feel My Face 10M

(ex24) And you come to me on a summer breeze  
Keep me warm in your love, then you softly leave  
And it's me you need to show  
How deep is your love

Bee Gees - How Deep Is Your Love 70M

(ex25) Why you do me like you do  
After I've been true to you  
So deep in love with you

The Supremes – Baby Love 60F

The extracts presented in this chapter provide examples of love being discussed as if it was a container. As human emotions are inherently irrational and often uncontrollable, portraying lovers as objects helplessly falling in or out of containers is somewhat in line with the literal meaning of love. However, the idea of separation included in the container metaphor comes with a notable implication. If a person believes that to be in love is to become detached of everything except themselves and the object of their love, they will be prone to relationships based on unhealthy mutual dependence and neglect of friends and family. The container metaphor encourages this further through its celebration of depth – the larger the gap between the lovers and the outside world, the better. The literal meaning of love does not include the notion of isolation from someone or something in favor of someone or something else, and therefore it should not be accepted as something intrinsic to love without conscious criticism.

## 6.5. LOVE IS AN ANIMAL

The set of mappings for the third most common conceptual metaphor encountered in the data, LOVE IS AN ANIMAL, are provided in figure 12:

Figure 12: LOVE IS AN ANIMAL - mappings

SOURCE: ANIMAL	→	TARGET: LOVE
The animal	→	Love
Sharing custody of the animal as a pet	→	Being in a love relationship
Autonomous movement to and fro	→	The waxing and waning of the love emotion
Growth	→	Increasing ability of lovers to feel and share love
Traits of the animal	→	Characteristics of a specific love relationship
Actions of the animal	→	The effects of love on the lover(s)
Mortality and need for nurture	→	The vulnerability of a love relationship and the effort required to maintain it

Animals are living, autonomous beings. They are born, they grow and ultimately they die. The majority of them live untamed in the wild, but a large number have been domesticated and rely on humans to take care of them. This caretaker role is often shared, as in the common case of a family dog. Animals belonging to the most intelligent species display behavioral traits which separate them from others, making them unique individuals. Animals have the capacity to bring humans much joy, but they can also be destructive and even dangerous.

The following data extracts provide examples of love being discussed as it was an animal - something that lives and dies, takes autonomous actions, has personality traits of its own and can be taken into custody, cared for and nurtured by people. The first two extracts do this in a very direct manner:

(ex26) Heavenly bound, 'cause heaven's got a number  
When she's spinning me around, kissing is a color  
Her loving is a wild dog, she's got the look

Roxette - The Look 80F

(ex27) This (This Thing) called love  
(Called Love)  
It cries (Like a baby)  
In a cradle all night  
It swings (Woo Woo)  
It jives (Woo Woo)  
It shakes all over like a jelly fish,  
I kinda like it  
Crazy little thing called love

Queen - Crazy Little Thing Called Love 80M

Extract 26 refers to love as a wild dog, while extract 27 likens it to a human infant and then to a jellyfish. These extracts (and those forthcoming) show the variety of animals used in manifestations of LOVE IS AN ANIMAL: the conceptual metaphor does not draw exclusively

from specific species as a source domain but utilizes a multitude of different kinds of animals. The specific choice of animal in a certain manifestation may well carry interesting communicative functions, but drawing any informed conclusions on such matters is beyond the scope of the present study.

Extracts 28 through 30 contain expressions in which love is seen as having autonomous movement:

(ex28) I've been waitin' for so long  
For somethin' to arrive  
For love to come along

Bryan Adams – Heaven 80M

(ex29) I need someone to hold on to  
(Ooh, baby)  
The kind of love that won't fly away

Mariah Carey – Dreamlover 90F

(ex30) We are undercover passion on the run  
Chasing love up against the sun

Stevie Wonder - Part-Time Lover 80M

The protagonists of all three extracts want love in their lives. They want it to arrive and to not fly away, and are even willing to chase it. Love, however, comes and goes as it will. This problem may be alleviated by taming love, but once tamed, love needs to be nurtured or it will suffer, even die:

(ex31) Why do you flirt, and constantly hurt me?  
Why do you treat our love so carelessly?

Connie Francis – Don't Break the Heart That Loves You 60F

(ex32) Oh let our love survive

Dry the tears from your eyes  
Let's don't let a good thing die

Elvis Presley – Suspicious Minds 60M

(ex33) Let me watch you go with the sun in my eyes  
We've seen how love can grow, now we'll see how it dies

Diana Ross – Touch Me in the Morning 70F

When properly nurtured, however, love can flourish and grow, as indeed the protagonist of extract 33 remembers. This is further exemplified by the two examples that follow:

(ex34) And we both know  
That our love will grow  
And forever, it will be  
You and me hey

Atlantic Starr – Always 80F

(ex35) Me and your daughter gots this special thang goin' on  
You say it's puppy love  
(Arf, arf, arf)  
We say it's full grown  
(Arf, arf, woof)

OutKast - Ms. Jackson 00M

Not all loves grow to be the same. As extracts 36 and 37 show, some may become noble and reliable while others develop less agreeable dispositions:

(ex36) I'll be there to protect you  
With an unselfish love that respects you  
Just call my name and I'll be there

Mariah Carey - I'll Be There 90F

(ex37) I'm sorry, so sorry  
That I was such a fool  
I didn't know  
Love could be so cruel

Brenda Lee – I'm Sorry 60F

With differing traits comes differing behavior. Indeed, not all loves act in the same way. Some are benign towards people, some malevolent, while others still develop complex and ambivalent relationships with them:

(ex38) Love will lead you back, someday I just know that  
Love will lead you back to my arms where you belong

Taylor Dayne - Love Will Lead You Back 90F

(ex39) Love's so strange  
Playin' hide and seek, with hearts  
And always hurtin'  
And we're the fools

Barry Manilow - Looks Like We Made It 70M

(ex40) (Love bites, love bleeds)  
It's bringin' me to my knees  
(Love lives, love dies)  
It's no surprise  
(Love begs, love pleads)  
It's what I need

Def Leppard - Love Bites 80M

The extracts above have exemplified how the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS AN ANIMAL manifests itself in pop music lyrics. Some key differences between a literal view of love as an emotion and conceptualizing it as an animal will now be discussed.

When seen as an entity wholly separate from the lovers themselves, love becomes uncontrollable and unpredictable. It becomes an agent in and of itself, one with the capability to bring people happiness, sorrow and anything in between as it sees fit. The conceptual metaphor also changes the origin on love: it is no longer generated within human beings, but must be

sought out and found somewhere in the external world. All of this highlights a disconnection with the love emotion: the way one feels love is no longer a part of one's personality and character; the objects of one's love are no longer dictated by personal preference or appreciation. The love emotion takes total independence of the lover.

Perhaps paradoxically, LOVE IS AN ANIMAL also highlights a lover's responsibility towards this separate love entity: it must be nurtured for both its own and the lover's benefit. An affectionate relationship is thus established not only with the object of one's love, but with a specific manifestation of the love emotion itself. If this emotion wanes, it is mourned as if an actual living thing had died. Ultimately, then, while LOVE IS AN ANIMAL does promote a healthy responsibility for the welfare of a relationship, it also encourages one to cling to relationships that are no longer fulfilling, perhaps even toxic.

## 6.6. LOVE IS A DRUG

The fourth most common conceptual metaphor found in the data is LOVE IS A DRUG. Its mappings are presented in figure 13 below:

**Figure 13: LOVE IS A DRUG - mappings**

Source: A DRUG	→	Target: LOVE
The drug	→	The love
Feeling the chemical high	→	Feeling the love emotion
The dealer and user	→	The lovers
Need for the drug (addiction)	→	The desire to be together
Withdrawal symptoms	→	The emotional pain of being separated

Drugs are natural or artificially made substances that are consumed for the pleasant changes they impose on the consciousness of the user. As these changes may lead to unpredictable, even

dangerous behavior, most countries have opted to decree the use of many drugs illegal. Drug use also renders the user susceptible to addiction and other serious health risks. People suffering from drug addiction feel compelled to continue consuming drugs even if the overall effect of the drug on their lives is negative. If addicted, users must ensure they have the means of acquiring a steady flow of the substance to avoid unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. In the case of illegal drugs, this often means finding a go-to drug dealer. Drug use is generally frowned upon by society, and addicts are encouraged to seek help and end the habit, difficult as that may be.

The extracts that follow show how the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A DRUG manifests itself in popular music lyrics, i.e. how those lyrics have dealt with love in terms of altered mental states, addiction, withdrawal symptoms and the dealer-user-dynamic. Extracts 41-43 consist of cases where feeling the love emotion is equated with the chemical high brought forth by drugs:

(ex41) High off of love, drunk from my hate  
It's like I'm huffin' paint and I love it

Eminem featuring Rihanna - Love the Way You Lie 10D

(ex42) And I ain't gonna lie 'cause your loving gets me high  
So to keep you by my side there's nothing that I won't try

Crazy Town – Butterfly 00M

(ex43) I feel good, I feel nice  
I've never been so satisfied  
I'm in love, I'm alive  
Intoxicated, flying high

Mariah Carey – Emotions 90F

As can be seen, these lyrics draw a direct analogy between the chemical high of drugs and the love emotion with the expressions “high off of love” and “your loving gets me high”. Similarly, the third extract equates the state of being in love with intoxication.

The next three extracts illustrate a dealer-user-relationship between lovers:

(ex44) So come on, satisfy the need in me  
 'Cos only your good loving can set me free  
 Set me free, set me free  
 Need your loving, baby, need, need

Thelma Houston – Don’t Leave Me This Way 70F

(ex45) Oh, girl, I'd be in trouble if you left me now  
 'Cause I don't know where to look for love  
 I just don't know how

...

Oh, girl, how I depend on you  
 To give me love when I need it  
 Right on time you would always be

The Chi-Lites - Oh Girl 70M

(ex46) I want you  
 Don't hide your feelings from inside  
 I need you  
 I've got to have your love now, baby

Expose - Seasons Change 80F

As the dealer-user-relationship entails that acts of trading are taking place, there is an overlap here with the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A COMMODITY. However, as the urgency of the users’ need and their dependency on the dealers in these extracts shows, these are clearly not cases of trading between equal individuals but relationships based largely on dependency and limited supply, and therefore they are best classified as a part of LOVE IS A DRUG.

Dependency itself is linked to love in extracts 47-49:

(ex47) I'm hooked on a feeling  
 I'm high on believing  
 That you're in love with me  
 ...  
 I got it bad for you girl but I don't need a cure  
 I'll just stay addicted, if I can endure

Blue Swede - Hooked on a Feeling 70M

(ex48) And its just like honey  
 (Yea)  
 When your love comes over me  
 (When your love, comes over me)  
 (That's right)  
 Oh baby, I've got a dependency  
 (I've got)  
 Always strung out for another taste of your honey

Mariah Carey – Honey 90F

(ex49) My darling, I  
 Can't get enough of your love, babe  
 Girl, I don't know, I don't know why  
 I can't get enough of your love, babe  
 ...  
 Oh, some things I can't get used to  
 No matter how I try  
 It's like the more you give, the more I want  
 And baby, that's no lie, oh, no, babe

Barry White - Can't Get Enough of Your Love, Babe 70M

The protagonists of the songs above describe themselves as being “hooked on” love, being “strung out” for love and not being able to get enough of it – the analogy to drug addiction is clear.

The final set of extracts for this conceptual metaphor exemplifies how withdrawal symptoms are associated with love in the data:

(ex50) Please let me love again

Cause I need your love to comfort me and ease my pain

Boyz II Men - 4 Seasons of Loneliness 90M

(ex51) I need that sweet sensation of living in your love  
I can't breathe when you're away, it pulls me down

Andy Gibb- Shadow Dancing 70M

(ex52) It's easy for friends to say let him go  
But I'm the one who needs him so  
It's his love that makes me strong  
Without him I can't go on

The Supremes – Back in My Arms Again 60F

The above extracts consist of lamentations of the pain that deprivation of love brings and pleas for more of the love emotion. Clearly, they are the words of someone experiencing withdrawal symptoms. The last extract also illustrates social encouragement towards discontinuing the addictive habit, though the protagonist recognizes that their withdrawal symptoms are too strong for them to heed such advice.

LOVE IS A DRUG highlights the extremes of the love emotion and love relationships. It brings into focus the rapture that an intense feeling of love can bring, while also inviting the listener to wallow in the misery of broken relationships. The conceptual metaphor leaves no room for a view of love as a stable, benign state of happiness built on thriving relationships. Indeed, it portrays love relationships as either markedly unequal or at least unhealthy since in this conceptualization of love, at least one of the participants of a relationship is seen as addicted to the other. In creating a connection between love and drugs, the conceptual metaphor also carries the implication that love has negative effects on people in the long run and that feeling it should, if possible, be avoided entirely or at least restricted to an occasional indulgence. Thus,

LOVE IS A DRUG offers an ambiguous and conflicting view of love that promises prospective lovers a great deal of joy and happiness while at the same time warning them of the pain and sorrow they may end up with.

### 6.7. LOVE IS A FLAME

The mappings for the fifth most common conceptual metaphor in the data, LOVE IS A FLAME, are provided in figure 14:

Figure14: LOVE IS A FLAME - mappings

SOURCE: FLAME	→	TARGET: LOVE
The flame	→	Love
Finding or enkindling the flame	→	The emergence of the love emotion
The heat and brightness of the flame	→	The intensity of the love felt
Straying from the flame or extinguishing it	→	The waning of the love emotion

Flames are bodies of ignited gas generated by something that is on fire. They are sources of heat and light and as such can protect one against the cold and the dark. Their light can be seen from a distance, and as such they may be used to relay messages across distances or as navigational aids, especially in the case of flames burning on the surface of stars.

The extracts below provide examples of love being associated with heat, brightness, protection against the elements and navigation, i.e. as if it was a flame. The first three extracts exemplify attributions of heat and light to love:

(ex53) Through the clouds I see love shine  
It keeps me warm as life grows colder

Foreigner - I Want to Know What Love Is 80M

(ex54) You're so fine and you're mine  
 Make me strong, yeah, you make me bold  
 Oh, your love thawed out  
 Yeah, your love thawed out  
 What was getting cold

Madonna - Like a Virgin 80F

(ex55) The time to hesitate is through  
 No time to wallow in the mire  
 Try now we can only lose  
 And our love become a funeral pyre

The Doors – Light My Fire 60M

The extracts refer to love as something that shines, keeps one warm, thaws things out and can even serve as a funeral pyre in certain circumstances. Extracts 56-58, in turn, liken the emergence of the love emotion and the forming of a love relationship to the discovery or enkindling of a flame:

(ex56) There's a fire starting in my heart  
 Reaching a fever pitch  
 And it's bring me out the dark

Adele - Rolling in the Deep 10F

(ex57) Coming out of the dark, I finally see the light now  
 And it's shining on me  
 Coming out of the dark, I know the love that saved me  
 Sharing with me  
 ...  
 Cannot be in the dark, make it into the light, yea  
 Your love is shining on me, shining on me, shining on me

Gloria Estefan - Coming Out of the Dark 90F

(ex58) You came into my heart  
 So tenderly  
 With a burning love

That stings like a bee

The Supremes – Where Did Our Love Go 60F

Extracts 59 and 60 exemplify the opposite and show how losing the flame or extinguishing it signifies the waning of the love emotion and the end of love relationships:

(ex59) Once upon a time I was falling in love  
Now I'm only falling apart  
There's nothing I can do  
A total eclipse of the heart

Bonnie Tyler - Total Eclipse of the Heart 80F

(ex60) Ours a love I held tightly  
Feeling the rapture grow  
Like a flame burning brightly  
But when she left, gone was the glow

Bobby Vinton – Blue Velvet 60M

As the previous five extracts have shown, within the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A FLAME the presence or absence of a flame signifies whether love is being felt or not. When fires start and love burns and shines, the emotion is felt. When the glow is gone and one is faced with an eclipse, the emotion has faded.

All flames are not equally hot and bright, and neither is love always felt with the same intensity. The last three extracts show a connection between the heat and brightness of the flame and the intensity of the love emotion felt:

(ex61) I could light the night up with my soul on fire  
I could make the sun shine from pure desire  
Let me feel that love come over me  
Let me feel how strong it could be

Steve Winwood - Higher Love 80M

(ex62) I need a man who'll take that chance,  
On a love that burns hot enough to last  
So when the night falls,  
My lonely heart calls

Whitney Houston - I Wanna Dance with Somebody (Who Loves Me) 80F

(ex63) Spirits rise and their dance is unrehearsed  
They warm and excite us  
'Cause we have the brightest love

Barbra Streisand – Evergreen (Love Theme From A Star Is Born) 70F

As these extracts show, it is the most intense love emotions that are associated with hottest and brightest flames.

Of all the conceptual metaphors found in the data studied for this thesis, LOVE IS A FLAME is the one most tied to physical experience. As Goatly (2007, 15) points out, there is a basic experiential connection between relationships and proximity. Since the proximity of two human beings results in a physical feeling of warmth, so too must there be a connection between proximity and heat. If heat and proximity have a basic conceptual link based on physical experience, and in turn proximity and relationships have a similar link, it is logical that intense relationships would then be conceptually associated with intense heat. This is undoubtedly the reasoning behind the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A FLAME, and as such, it seems largely void of ideology as a representation of love. An intense feeling of affection does not necessarily require constant proximity, however: it is possible for human beings to feel love for each other even if they are engaged in a long-distance relationship. This is obscured by the conceptual metaphor, which insists that as one must remain near a flame to feel and see its heat and light, lovers must remain in close proximity if intense love is to be felt. Thus, LOVE IS A FLAME

offers a view of love that is built upon shared moments in close physical proximity, and which serves to devalue the affection people feeling the love emotion may maintain for the objects of their love even through prolonged periods of time spent separated by long distances.

## 6.8. LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE

Figure 15 showcases the mappings for the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE:

Figure 15: LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE - mappings

SOURCE: PHYSICAL FORCE	→	TARGET: LOVE
The physical force	→	Love
Strength of the force	→	The intensity of the love felt
The unrelenting power of the force	→	The perseverance gained from feeling love
The volatility of the force	→	The extreme emotionality associated with love

Physical forces such as gravity, magnetism, tension or basic applied force have physical effects on objects. Such effects include pushing, pulling, crushing, lifting, binding together and tearing asunder the things they are directed at. In some circumstances these forces are immensely powerful, in others more modest. Their power may vary depending on different variables such as distance. Some forces, such as gravity, are stable and predictable, while others, like applied force, may be volatile.

In the extracts that follow, love is discussed as if it was a force acting upon the people feeling the love emotion. Extracts 64-66 associate love with power and strength:

(ex64) Sometimes I am frightened  
 But I'm ready to learn  
 Of the power of love

Celine Dion - The Power of Love 90F

(ex65) As we lay at midnight's hour and feel love's hidden power  
So strong and bold as life unfolds its mystery to me

Hamilton, Joe Frank & Reynolds - Fallin' in Love 70M

(ex66) )When the moon is in the Seventh House  
And Jupiter aligns with Mars  
Then peace will guide the planets  
And love will steer the stars

The 5<sup>th</sup> Dimension – Aquarius 60F

In extract 64, love is a phenomenon that can be studied, though the extent of its power may be a frightening discovery for the learner. Extract 65 also discusses love in terms of power and strength, while the last extract of the three posits that love is such a fundamental force in the universe that it is responsible for the movement of celestial bodies.

The second set of extracts deals with love as a stable force:

(ex67) There are mountains in our way  
But we climb a step every day.  
Love lift us up where we belong  
Where the eagles cry on a mountain high.  
Love lift us up where we belong

Joe Cocker and Jennifer Warnes - Up Where We Belong 80D

(ex68) Love, love will keep us together  
Think of me, babe, whenever  
Some sweet talkin' girl comes along  
Singin' his song, don't mess around  
You just got to be strong

Just stop, 'cause I really love you  
Stop, I'll be thinking of you  
Look in my heart  
And let love keep us together

Captain & Tennile – Love Will Keep Us Together 70D

(ex69) My love is strong and it pushes me onward

...

But my love for Felina is strong and I rise where I've fallen

Marty Robbins – El Paso 60M

When love is seen as a stable force, it is seen as something that aids people with everyday struggles (ex67), keeps relationships going (ex68) and provides the strength needed to go on in times of hardship (ex69). In other words, the perseverance gained from feeling the love emotion is signified by a stable force. Volatile forces, in turn, signify something different:

(ex70) My love for you  
 Would break my heart in two  
 If you should fall  
 Into my arms  
 Tremble like a flower

David Bowie - Let's Dance 80M

(ex71) You put the boom-boom into my heart  
 You send my soul sky high when your lovin' starts

Wham! - Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go 80M

(ex72) With a little love, we can set it off  
 We can send it rocketing skywards  
 With a little luck, we could shake it up  
 Oh yeah

Wings - With a Little Luck 70M

As these examples show, when love is seen as a volatile force it breaks hearts in two, makes them explode and sends things rocketing skywards. While the last two effects are no doubt meant as positive in these circumstances, a breaking heart is anything but. Thus, as a counterpoint to

stable forces, volatile forces thus represent the extreme emotionality (both positive and negative) associated with love relationships.

LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE shares many of the implications mentioned above in conjunction with LOVE IS AN ANIMAL, as both conceptualize love as an outside agent that has certain effects on people feeling the love emotion. Unlike LOVE IS AN ANIMAL, however, here the outside agent is not seen as a sentient being with its own motivations but an inanimate force of nature not altogether different from other physical phenomena such as gravity or electricity. Thus, while the effects of love may not be controllable, they are at least somewhat predictable – at least in the case of stable forces. The distinction between stable and volatile states of the force is indeed central to the conceptual metaphor. Within this metaphor, the stability or volatility of a physical force represents the different types of effects love can have on people – depending on the circumstances, love can be a reliable font of strength and perseverance or an unpredictable perturber of emotions. This duality is something that LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE brings to the forefront – it is almost as if love was a faulty term consisting of two distinct and somewhat incompatible elements. Conceptualizing love as an immutable natural phenomenon also strips lovers of agency, denying their status as autonomous beings responsible for their feelings and the relationships they form and turning them into helpless objects reacting to forces that are beyond them.

#### 6.9. LOVE IS A GAME

The set of mappings underlying the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A GAME is provided in figure 16:

Figure 16: LOVE IS A GAME- mappings

SOURCE : GAME	→	TARGET: LOVE
The game	→	Love
The players	→	The lovers
Losing and winning	→	Success in love relationships
The rules	→	Things considered acceptable in a love relationship

Games are activities that people engage in for amusement. They involve a clear set of goals and rules that create a framework for how those goals are to be met. Games are usually competitive and typically involve two or more players.

The extracts that follow are made up of examples of love being portrayed as if it involved players, rules and competition, i.e. as if it was a game. The first three extracts exemplify instances where love is directly labeled as a game:

(ex73) I listen to our favorite song playing on the radio  
Hear the DJ say, "Love's a game of easy come, and easy go"

Poison - Every Rose Has Its Thorn 80M

(ex74) Watchin' every motion in my foolish lover's game  
On this endless ocean, finally lovers know no shame

Berlin - Take My Breath Away 80F

(ex75) But mama said  
"You can't hurry love  
No, you just have to wait"  
She said, "Love don't come easy  
It's a game of give and take"

The Supremes – You Can't Hurry Love 60F

In addition to labeling love as a game, these extracts also portray such a game as being foolish (ex74), reciprocal in nature (ex75) and one where wins and losses can occur in rapid succession (ex73).

Extracts 76-78 not only label love as a game but also label lovers as players:

(ex76) Oh my God, look at that face  
You look like my next mistake  
Love's a game, wanna play?

Got a long list of ex-lovers  
They'll tell you I'm insane  
'Cause you know I love the players  
And you love the game

Taylor Swift - Blank Space 10F

(ex77) So come on baby, let's start today, come on baby, let's play  
The game of love, love, la la la la la love  
(Love, love)

Wayne Montana and the Mindbenders – Game of Love 60M

(ex78) Yesterday, love was such an easy game to play  
Now I need a place to hide away  
Oh, I believe in yesterday

The Beatles – Yesterday 60M

According to these extracts, the love game may include mistakes or even bouts of insane behavior (ex76) and its level of difficulty may vary (ex78).

Games involve rules. Extracts 79 and 80 provide examples of rules being discussed in conjunction with love:

(ex79) We're no strangers to love  
You know the rules and so do I  
A full commitment's what I'm thinking of  
You wouldn't get this from any other guy

Rick Astley - Never Gonna Give You Up 80M

(ex80) Torn between two lovers, feelin' like a fool  
Lovin' both of you is breakin' all the rules

## Mary McGregor – Torn Between Two Lovers 70F

Implicit in both extracts is the idea that the rules of love are familiar to those that participate, especially if the participants are experienced players. Extract 79, however, also implies that these rules can be customized and that not all players will want to play by the same rules. It would seem, then, that some rules (such as not having multiple lovers at once) are quite set in stone, while others (such as the prospected length of the playing session) are subject to negotiation among players.

As mentioned above, games are generally competitive and therefore involve winners and losers. The final data extract of this chapter exemplifies the idea of winning and losing being applied to love:

(ex81) Everyone falls, in love sometimes  
 Sometimes it's wrong, and sometimes it's right  
 For every win, someone must fail

Whitney Houston - Exhale (Shoop Shoop) 90F

This final extract brings into focus the fact that not everyone can be a winner in a game. The existence of winners implies that others have had to lose.

Rules, competition, winners and losers are central elements in games, and applying these things to love is naturally what characterizes the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A GAME. Seen in this light, love ceases to be a natural human feeling which may, if reciprocated, result in the forming of a love relationship. Instead, it becomes a series of maneuvers performed in an effort to outdo others. As such, the metaphor pushes aside the notion that ideal relationships are based on mutual preference, not skill or guile. Where a literal view of love would imply that not ending

up with the person one thought one would end up with is the result of a mismatch in feelings, LOVE IS A GAME implies that one simply did not play well enough and must endeavor to put on a better performance when the opportunity once again presents itself. Such a view glorifies the successful establishment of any love relationship at the expense of establishing the right one. It discourages lovers from being themselves and looking for a partner that appreciates them for what they are as well as accepting the fact that they cannot force others to have feelings for them. What this view encourages, in turn, is deliberately acting in a manner that others might find appealing, regardless of whether such behavior is sincere or not.

#### 6.10. LOVE IS MADNESS

The final and least common conceptual metaphor to have been found in the data is LOVE IS MADNESS. The mappings between the source domain of madness and target domain of love are detailed below:

Figure 17: LOVE IS MADNESS- mappings

SOURCE: MADNESS	→ TARGET: LOVE
Madness	→ Love
Unhealthy obsession associated with madness	→ Obsession with the object of love
Disorientation due to madness	→ Disorientation due to being in love
The questionable actions taken while mad	→ The questionable actions taken while in love

Madness causes thinking and/or behavior that is considered out of the norm. It may take different forms and does not form a monolithic whole - there is great variation in the causes and symptoms of different mental afflictions. The symptoms ascribed to love by this conceptual metaphor are unhealthy obsession, severe mental disorientation, impairments to decision-making

and a decreased ability to behave rationally. The data extracts that follow will illustrate how love is conceptualized as a mental affliction with the aforementioned symptoms.

The first two extracts showcase a direct association between madness and love:

(ex82) From the moment I saw you I went outta my mind  
Though I never believed in love at first sight

Whitney Houston - I'm Your Baby Tonight 90F

(ex83) For the sake of all those times  
Love made us lose our minds

Barry Manilow - Looks Like We Made It 70M

Both extracts describe love as something that makes those that feel it lose their minds. One of the possible results of such a loss is the emergence of an unhealthy obsession, as shown in extract 84:

(ex84) I said boy I'm feeling you, you got me open  
I don't know what to do its true  
I'm going crazy over you I'm begging  
...  
SOS please someone help me it's not healthy  
For me to feel this way

Rihanna – SOS 00F

In this extract, the protagonist bemoans going crazy over the object of her love and not knowing what to do, while also proclaiming their emotional state as unhealthy. According to LOVE IS MADNESS, another possible result of feeling love is disorientation:

(ex85) You're out of touch, I'm out of time  
But I'm out of my head when you're not around

Daryl Hall and John Oates - Out of Touch 80M

(ex86) See I remember the way that we touch  
I wish I didn't like it so much

No no no, I get so emotional baby  
Every time I think of you  
I get so emotional baby  
Ain't it shocking what love can do

Whitney Houston - So Emotional 80F

The first of these extracts attributes disorientation to separation from the object of one's love while the second is a lamentation of the shocking effects of love on one's emotional balance. A third and final type of symptom encountered in the data studied is irrational behavior, illustrated in extracts 87-89:

(ex87) Got me looking, so crazy my baby  
I'm not myself lately I'm foolish, I don't do this  
I've been playing myself, baby I don't care  
Cause your love's got the best of me  
And baby you're making a fool of me  
You got me sprung and I don't care who sees  
Cause baby you got me, you got me, so crazy baby  
HEY!

Beyonce featuring Jay-Z - Crazy In Love 00D

(ex88) Ohh, I trusted you, I trusted you  
So sad, so sad what love will make you do  
All the things that we accept, be the things that we regret  
To all of my ladies, who feel me come on sing with me

See, when I get the strength to leave you  
You always tell me that you need me  
And I'm weak 'cause I believe you  
And I'm mad because I love you

Ashanti – Foolish 00F

(ex89) I don't know what it is that you've done to me  
But it's caused me to act in such a crazy way

Whatever it is that you do when you do what you're doing  
It's a feeling that I don't understand

SWV – Weak 90F

In these final extracts, the protagonists all feel that they are doing things against their own better judgment, things they would not do under normal circumstances.

Conceptualizing love as madness means viewing it as a negative state, something to be avoided through both prevention and treatment. It focuses attention on the negative effects that a strong emotion can have on human beings, highlighting the capacity of the love emotion to produce obsession, disorientation and irrational behavior. The underlying idea is that instead of embracing love as a source of happiness and letting one's emotions inform the decisions one makes, one should seek to resist any impulses brought forth by the love emotion and, over time, endeavor to make the feeling go away. It is a profoundly bleak view on love, one that perhaps serves as a counterbalance to the exaltations the emotion is often given in popular music lyrics.

## 7. Discussion

This chapter of the thesis is dedicated to discussing the results of the analysis section. Towards the end of the chapter, the limitations of this study and possible avenues for further research will also be reflected upon.

Altogether eight main conceptual metaphors were discovered in the data. In this chapter, they will be presented in order of general prevalence along with a summary of the elements of

the concept of love that they highlight. After this, the effects of time and gender of the performing artist on the prevalence of these conceptual metaphors will be discussed.

Figure 18 lists the conceptual metaphors found in the data alongside the elements of the love concept they highlight (and consequently de-emphasize):

Figure 18: A summary of the conceptual metaphors found in the data and their implications

Conceptual Metaphor	Highlights
LOVE IS A COMMODITY	The sensibility of leveraging love for self-centered purposes (favors, money, the love of others) at the expense of unconditional love
LOVE IS A CONTAINER	Lovers' separation from those outside the love dyad
LOVE IS AN ANIMAL	The uncontrollability and unpredictability of love as well as the need to take care of a love relationship (both through a personification of love as a separate entity)
LOVE IS A DRUG	The "highs" and "lows" of love - the rapture of an intense, reciprocated love feeling and the pain of longing and broken relationships  Inequality in love relationships, the dependency of one lover on the other (by way of the dealer-user dynamic)
LOVE IS A FLAME	The importance of physical proximity in a love relationship
LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE	The uncontrollability of love and the capacity of love to act as a source of strength and perseverance
LOVE IS A GAME	The need to compete for the favor of potential lovers, acting in a calculated manner at the expense of sincerity
LOVE IS MADNESS	The negative effects of love on the lover (disorientation, obsession, irrational behavior)

As can be seen from the figure above, each of the conceptual metaphors found in the data focuses attention on a different, specific part of the experience of feeling love. As such, they are complementary, and taken together form a more complete picture of what love means according to popular music lyrics than any of them can hope to do alone. This picture is far from all-encompassing, however, and as mentioned before, the prevalence of these conceptual metaphors is not equal. On the one hand, a manifestation of LOVE IS A COMMODITY appears roughly five times as often in the data as a manifestation of LOVE IS MADNESS., which means that when it comes to metaphorical language use, the sensibility of leveraging love for self-centered purposes is highlighted much more strongly in popular music lyrics than the negative effects of love. On the other hand, the negative effects of love are at least highlighted to some degree, a statement which cannot be made for e.g. the idea that a love relationship should have a clear direction and progress towards specific goals. This would have been highlighted by a conceptual metaphor such as LOVE IS A JOURNEY, which, despite its prevalence in the literature of conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 44-5; Kövecses 2002, 7; Harder 2007, 1259), was not definitively present in the data. Contrastingly, the three conceptual metaphors deemed most central to love by Tissari (2001, 428-9), namely LOVE IS A CONTAINER, LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE and LOVE IS A GAME, were all definitively present in the data. Based on the fact that some conceptual metaphors extensively discussed in the literature of the field were found to be present in the data studied and others were not, it can be argued that writers of popular music lyrics from the 1960's onward have not utilized all conceptual metaphors available to them but have instead been somewhat selective in the elements of love they highlight through metaphor, and that some elements have been highlighted more forcefully than others.

The prevalence of the conceptual metaphors listed above varies according to the gender of the performing artist and the decade under scrutiny. The effect is not drastic, but some notable observations arise. First, in terms of the gender of the performing artist, the prevalence of LOVE IS A FLAME, LOVE IS MADNESS and LOVE IS A GAME is pronounced in lyrics from songs with female performers, which suggests that the negative effects of love, the importance of physical proximity and the need to compete with others for the favor of potential lovers at the expense of sincerity were somewhat more pertinent to female lead performers than male ones in the data studied. For LOVE IS A FLAME this has been the case since the 60's, while the latter two conceptual metaphors were equally common among both genders early in the sample but became more female-specific as time went on.

Secondly, LOVE IS A GAME is nonexistent in the duet category, while the prevalence of LOVE IS A DRUG and LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE is pronounced. This points toward an appreciation of sincerity, an extra focus on the highs and lows of being in love, the unpredictability of love and its capacity to act as a source of strength and perseverance as well as frequent examinations of the power balance of relationships. Taken together, this suggests an added interest in the dynamics of a relationship, an observation that makes intuitive sense since duets often feature two performers discussing an imagined love relationship between themselves.

One more gender-related observation is the fact that LOVE IS A CONTAINER has moved from male-specific to being common in all gender categories during the time studied, which suggests that the notion of lovers becoming somehow separate from the rest of the world has become more and more universal in popular music lyrics during recent decades. This claim is

also supported by the finding that this particular conceptual metaphor constantly gains in popularity from one decade to the next.

In addition to the rising prevalence of LOVE IS A CONTAINER, there are another three noticeable time-related phenomena in the data. LOVE IS A MADNESS also grows in popularity throughout the sample, while the prevalence of LOVE IS A COMMODITY and LOVE IS A DRUG peak in the middle section of the data (80's and 90's), while LOVE IS A FLAME, LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE and LOVE IS AN ANIMAL have slowly been going out of fashion since the 60's and 70's. This suggests that the conceptualization of lovers as separate from those around them and the negative effects of feeling the love emotion are two elements of love that might be highlighted ever more forcefully in the future, while the importance of physical proximity and consciously taking care of love relationships, the capacity of love to act as a source of strength and the unpredictability of love seem to be fading from the spotlight when it comes to popular music lyrics.

The methods and materials employed in this thesis are not without their limitations. While these limitations do not preclude making the kinds of assertions presented above, they are nevertheless worth noting. Firstly, searching for references of love using the search string lov\* with a corpus tool does not necessarily bring forth all relevant references in the data. It is entirely conceivable that some songs included the material studied deal with love without once using the actual word. Any such songs have regrettably been left out of the study due to this methodological restriction. Another point to consider is the fact that when it comes to music lyrics, the performers are not always the writers. Thus, the lyrics to a song performed by a female artist may have been written by a male writer and vice versa. This is problematic when

classifying lyrics in female and male categories. In this thesis, such categorization was based solely on the performer, with no consideration given to who actually wrote the lyrics. The rationale here was that it is the performer and not the writer that ultimately communicates the lyrics to the public and is therefore more visibly associated with them. Another researcher might have placed more emphasis on the origin of the lyrics and based his or her categories on the writer instead of the performer, or perhaps created an extra category for songs written by a member of one gender and performed by a member of the other. A third limitation comes from the fact that only #1 hits were included in the data. Though restricting the amount of data to be studied was obviously necessary and this was a logical cutoff-point, it can be argued that studying #1 hits only does not give a very comprehensive picture of all the music that was popular during a certain decade. Ideally, a larger sample of songs from every year included in the study would be gathered. The data is also limited to a single chart which tracks the popularity of music in the US only. For a more universal view, hits from charts from other parts of the world would have to be included. Finally, analyzing metaphors and abstracting from them a set of underlying conceptual metaphors is, to a certain extent, a subjective process. That is, another researcher might have arrived at slightly different conclusions even when faced with the same data. I believe, however, that the classifications I have made in this thesis are logical and repeated studies carried out by other researchers would result in minor discrepancies at best.

In terms of future research, it might be illuminating to add further variables to a study such as the one carried out here. Such variables might include, for example, the age of the performing artist and the musical genre that each song represents (though the latter would certainly be a challenging variable to study as genre borders in music are notoriously fuzzy). Studying additional variables such as these would undoubtedly bring about a more detailed

understanding of when and why particular conceptual metaphors are chosen for use. Cultural comparisons utilizing hits from charts from other countries side by side with Billboard might also bear interesting result. Perhaps the most fascinating avenue for further research, however, would be a combination of the findings made here with a survey of societal change from the 60's onwards. Such a combination could produce a wealth of additional insight as to why particular conceptual metaphors have been preferred at particular points in time and would certainly be of interest to both linguists and sociologists.

## 8. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to study the conceptual metaphors most commonly used in popular music lyrics since the beginning of the 1960's. To this end, a database containing the lyrics to all #1 hits on the American Billboard Hot 100 chart was compiled and the data therein subjected to analysis. Four research questions were raised. They were as follows:

1. What kinds of conceptual metaphors pertaining to love can be found in popular music?
2. What do these conceptual metaphors tell us about how love is understood in popular music?
3. Has there been a change in the popularity of different conceptual metaphors over the past 50+ years?
4. Does the gender of the performing artist affect the metaphors used?

Eight robust conceptual metaphors were discovered in the study. Presented in order of prevalence from the most commonly encountered to the least commonly encountered, they were as follows:

- |                        |                             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) LOVE IS A COMMODITY | 5) LOVE IS A FLAME          |
| 2) LOVE IS A CONTAINER | 6) LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE |
| 3) LOVE IS AN ANIMAL   | 7) LOVE IS A GAME           |
| 4) LOVE IS A DRUG      | 8) LOVE IS MADNESS          |

Each of these conceptual metaphors was deemed to highlight some elements of the love concept, consequently de-emphasizing others (see figure 18 in the previous section for further details). It was argued that scrutiny of these conceptual metaphors provides new insight into how love is understood and portrayed in popular music.

The popularity of different conceptual metaphors was indeed found to change over the period of time studied. Each decade included in the study was observed to be unique in terms of how prevalent each conceptual metaphor was during that time. A few overarching trends, such as the steady proliferation of LOVE IS A CONTAINER and the waning popularity of LOVE IS A FLAME and LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE, were also evident in the data.

In terms of the effects of gender on the metaphors used, several interesting findings were made. The prevalence of the conceptual metaphors LOVE IS MADNESS, LOVE IS A FLAME and LOVE IS A GAME was pronounced among songs with female lead singers, while LOVE IS A GAME was entirely absent from songs performed as duets. Among duets, LOVE IS A DRUG and LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE were markedly popular. Temporal shifts among gender-related trends were also observed: LOVE IS MADNESS and LOVE IS A GAME shifted from

being equally prevalent among both genders to being more and more female-specific during the time studied, while an opposite phenomenon was seen with LOVE IS A CONTAINER, the use of which is currently universal but used to be more restricted to songs with male lead singers.

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Additional Online Resources:

[www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com)

[www.songlyrics.com](http://www.songlyrics.com)

[www.azlyrics.com](http://www.azlyrics.com)