

ACCEPTED VERSION

Katie Barclay

Love and violence in the music of late modernity

Popular Music and Society, 2018; 41(5):539-555

© 2017 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in Popular Music and Society on 21 Sep 2017 available online:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03007766.2017.1378526>

PERMISSIONS

<http://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/sharing-your-work/>

Accepted Manuscript (AM)

As a Taylor & Francis author, you can post your Accepted Manuscript (AM) on your personal website at any point after publication of your article (this includes posting to Facebook, Google groups, and LinkedIn, and linking from Twitter). To encourage citation of your work we recommend that you insert a link from your posted AM to the published article on [Taylor & Francis Online](#) with the following text:

“This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in [JOURNAL TITLE] on [date of publication], available online: [http://www.tandfonline.com/\[Article DOI\]](http://www.tandfonline.com/[Article DOI]).”

For example: *“This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis Group in Africa Review on 17/04/2014, available online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/12345678.1234.123456>.”*

N.B. Using a real DOI will form a link to the Version of Record on [Taylor & Francis Online](#).

The AM is defined by the [National Information Standards Organization](#) as:
“The version of a journal article that has been accepted for publication in a journal.”

This means the version that has been through peer review and been accepted by a journal editor. When you receive the acceptance email from the Editorial Office we recommend that you retain this article for future posting.

[Embargoes apply](#) if you are posting the AM to an institutional or subject repository, or to academic social networks such as Mendeley, ResearchGate, or Academia.edu.

18 June 2019

<http://hdl.handle.net/2440/114169>

Love and Violence in the Music of Late Modernity

Using evidence from popular music, this article highlights how contemporary definitions of love combine ideas about the modern self as autonomous and distinct with an emphasis on the importance of sacrifice and devotion to the achievement of successful relationships. The tension between these concepts is manifested in ambivalence to love, with pain, conflict, and violence reoccurring features within popular music. This article argues, that as love is not just a feeling but implicated in structuring intimate behaviors, this understanding of love leads to the naturalizing of conflict and violence in modern relationships.

Keywords: love, emotion, gender, intimate relationships, modernity

The starting piece for this article was three music videos released in 2012-13, which coupled love songs with videos where the lovers were subject to violence by a third party. In the first two, *You and I*, by the Crystal Fighters, and *Love Me Again*, by John Newman, love between the couples is interrupted by violence that results in their death – outcomes that are not predicted by the lyrics nor the melody. The lyrics of “You and I” tell the story of a couple so wrapped in their love that there is nothing external to them; the only hint of destruction is in the suggestion that such encompassing love was at the sacrifice of everything else: “even though there’s nothing left just/ You and I.” The video portrays a love story between a tree and a bird over the seasons. Eventually the tree is cut down and the bird follows it to the timber yard and watches it being mulched. Just as the last of the tree goes through the chopper (and dies), the bird flies in too.

John Newman’s *Love Me Again* gives voice to a lover asking his beloved for forgiveness. The video, likened to *Romeo & Juliet*, portrays two groups of young people dancing in a club. A young man and woman flirt, before running away together, chased by

their friends who are antagonistic to their relationship. When they escape and so appear free to love, they are hit by a large van, and the video ends.¹ The final award-winning video accompanies “Breezeblocks” by Alt-J.² This song is darker than the first two, telling the story of “liking someone who you want so much that you want to hurt yourself and them” (O’Neill). The video begins with a man sitting beside a bath containing a drowned woman held down by breezeblocks. It then runs backwards from this scene, depicting the fight between the couple that led to this end. Throughout the camera focuses on the man’s wedding ring, suggestive that this is a depiction of intimate partner violence. It is only two and half minutes into a three minute and forty-six second video that the man finds a second woman tied and gagged in a wardrobe, and is attacked from behind by the deceased, wielding a knife. The story is then transformed from a tale about intimate partner violence to one of male protection, although the lack of a backstory ensures that this reading is ambiguous.

In all three cases, the endings are designed to surprize – outcomes that were not predicted by the lyrics, the melody, or the narrative structure of the video. On first watching, as a scholar not of contemporary pop but love, this component of violence as surprize seemed significant – was the depiction of contemporary love so uninteresting to contemporary audiences that it required an injection of violence to keep viewers engaged? And if this was the case, what role does violence play in understandings of love today, and how does pop music contribute to that understanding?

That violence has and continues to play an important role in romantic relationships has been studied by feminist scholars in all disciplines. Similarly, that popular culture has depicted, sometimes glamorizing, sometimes critiquing, such violence has not gone unnoticed (e.g. Dukes; Thaller and Messing; Bretthauer *et al.*) Johnson and Cloonan, in particular, have explored the important role of popular music in exploring violent themes and in acting as a form of violence itself (2009). Yet, most of this literature has focused on the

significance of such depictions of violence for intimate relationships or popular culture, rather than reflecting on how violence is implicated within models for love. Feminist love scholars have gone further, highlighting the way that romantic love in particular has acted, either as a structure itself or to enforce structures, that ensure female subordination within heterosexual relationships (Barclay, *Love*; Burns; Lutz; De Beauvoir). Illouz has noted the suffering caused by modern love, particularly for women, due to the challenges with maintaining love and its association with female identity and selfhood. Yet, few scholars have considered the ways that violence has been incorporated into the definitions and practice of contemporary love or why that is the case. This article explores how popular contemporary music defines love and the role of conflict and violence within such constructions to continue this conversation on the ways that emotion, and particularly love, acts as a social structure that shapes human experience.

To make this argument, this article draws on a scholarship of the history of love that views love as not simply a biological evolutionary response, whose valence (is it a negative or positive attribute) is socially-constructed, but as a complex cultural product which has a felt dimension. In this, emotion is not preceded by biology and given meaning by culture, but a performance or practice that is created through and given meaning in relation to its *habitus* (Scheer). “Love” integrates feelings of love towards a beloved with cultural beliefs around love as an emotion, expectations of (gendered) loving and unloving behavior, love as a part of identity (“beloved”, “mother”), and practices of loving in the everyday. Reforming love therefore requires not only a re-evaluation of loving and unloving behaviors (such as violence in intimate relationships) but also a rethinking of what love is.

This paper does not offer a new model for love, but it wishes to contribute to a discussion of why contemporary models of love, that espouse growing equality amongst the sexes, fail when explored as social practice by feminist scholars. Its aim is to help us to

understand why, and despite growing acceptance of men and women as equal partners within sexual relationships, some inequalities are remarkably resistant to change, and why violence remains such a persistent problem. It does not seek, like bell hooks and H el ene Cixous (Renshaw), to present new feminist models for loving, but to enable those wishing to theorize new forms of love to avoid current pitfalls.

In making this argument, this article draws on popular song and music videos to highlight the tensions within how love is imagined in contemporary Anglophone society. Popular culture is both an expression, and contributes to the making, of the beliefs, values and identities of individuals and groups. How it does this is a topic of discussion, not least because of the capacity of people to engage idiosyncratically with or to reinterpret particular cultural forms for their own purposes (Hunt; Frith "Music and Identity"). Measuring the cultural impacts of popular song has perhaps been particularly challenging for theorists. Much of music's capacity to engage and shape audiences – its ability to induce emotion; the need, at times, to experience it through movement and dance – has resisted not only scientific analysis but language (Cook & Dibben). Nor has an exploration of lyrics always provided a clear mode for interpretation. Lyrics operate inter-textually with music, voice, performance, and reception to produce the meaning of a specific musical event. Audiences cannot always make out the lyrics for songs, sometimes leading to popular alternative wordings; studies suggest that such lyrical ambiguity does not worry many listeners or reduce their listening pleasure (Frith "Why do Songs"). The recent proliferation of lyric sites, as well as the incorporation of lyric text into many music videos on sites like YouTube by fans, however may suggest that new technologies are available to reduce such ambiguity for contemporary audiences and that this is desirable for some groups.

Interpreting "mainstream" music (Frith *Performing Rites*) is also complicated by contemporary production practices, which can vary enormously. Many songs are now written

by multiple authors, and set to music by a different group of people again; both undergo further adaption when used by a particular artist and production team. Given this, lyrics are not always designed for ‘sense’, but for their capacity to further the impact of a song on its audience (Wall 2003). It is therefore difficult to suggest that particular lyrics or music are reflective of the beliefs or ideals of specific artists. This is not a novel problem in cultural studies, where collectively-produced products exist in multiple domains. Rather than seeking to interpret the meaning created through contemporary song with reference to the agendas of a particular author or audience then, this research seeks to read a diverse array of popular love songs against each other to develop a picture of broader cultural meaning. In the last section of this article, I then tie this discussion of cultural attitudes into some broader sociological trends that they help explain. In doing so, I take popular song seriously as a resource for accessing cultural understandings of love in contemporary society. Indeed, I would suggest that love songs provide a key site where people have the opportunity to reflect on the nature of love and its emotional impact, using a medium – music – that has particular affective power (Cochrane *et al*).

This study began in the author’s own engagement with popular music. When listening to music to accompany everyday activities (including research and writing, cleaning, and cooking), I access music in three key ways. The first is radio; the second and third are using searches for particular songs to automatically generate playlists in YouTube and iTunes. Because of a tendency to search for songs that were in general airplay, this often produces lists that revolve around charting music. As a regular user of YouTube, it also provides the opportunity to, usually incidentally, view music videos, when attracted to watch by a song or image. Perhaps previously alerted to this topic by the feminist commentary that surrounded Florence and the Machine’s “Kiss with a Fist” and having viewed the three videos that opened this paper in close succession one day in 2012, I was struck by the important role of

violence in these love songs. Over the next few years, I noted down other songs that had similar imagery as I came across them, until finally deciding to write something.

In order to apply some rigour to this admittedly haphazard process, I created some criteria for inclusion in my formal analysis. They had to be written between 2000 and 2015 and have charted in the top forty in the US, UK or Australia. In fact, my corpus all outperformed this, typically in charting well in all three nations and often elsewhere. I also wanted to gauge how representative they were of love songs in general during this period. To do this, I used several online lists of the top forty and fifty love songs of the decade, using this material to expand my selection and to assess the strength of the theme. Whilst there are other topics within contemporary love songs that can be discussed, this analysis did not suggest that this theme was a feature of a particular genre or an exceptional selection.

I am not suggesting that these songs are quantitatively representative. Rather they are a significant corpus that provides useful material to think through the issues under discussion and to highlight key themes and arguments. They emerge from different musical and cultural traditions that inflect upon their representations of love. They are, however, all “mainstream,” in that they are easily available on YouTube and similar sites; were targeted at international audiences and charted well; in the case of videos, have been viewed millions of times online, and have broad popular appeal. In being “mainstream” (Frith *Performing Rites*), these are sources that are enjoyed by men and women of different ethnicities, sexualities, and social classes, and are produced by artists from a similar diversity of backgrounds. They are all songs that broad audiences encounter when listening to popular radio stations, watching television shows, or when walking through public spaces, such as supermarkets. It is the music that acts as the background soundtrack to our everyday lives, and its diversity reflects the boundaries of comfortable modern multiculturalism – reflective of varied cultural influences but without significantly disrupting prevailing models of sexuality, intimacy or

gender that largely accept monogamy, heterosexuality and whiteness as the “default.” This is not to suggest that these examples cannot be given queer, racialized or classed readings, that these are not important or that the songwriters are inherently conservative, but this paper has not chosen to highlight these readings, focusing on the “dominant” cultural interventions being made (for a counterpoint see Fleetwood).

My analysis here is largely based on an analysis of lyrics, but, as suggested above, part of my interest in this topic was in the disjuncture between the often ambivalent and conflictual representations of love found in lyrics or the accompanying videos, and the music. Whilst there is some significant variation in the style and presentation of music discussed in this paper, it can generally be categorised as ‘anthemic’ – music that, at least for this listener, is designed to raise the spirits, to encourage movement and dance, and which can include riffs that encourage singing-along. Especially when placed in conjunction with the lyrics discussed below, this effect almost never arose from a straightforward celebration of love. Rather this music was an attempt to capture/reproduce the effect of catharsis after the pain of love. In its transformative emotional effects, such music reinforced the message given by the lyrics. Love is painful, it requires sacrifice; but the bittersweet emotional uplift that is love is worth it, if ephemeral. This article begins with a discussion of sociological and feminist readings of love and intimacy in historical and contemporary Western society and its limitations, before exploring how love is represented in contemporary popular music. It then analyzes the implications of such representations of love and the way such love is manifested in some contemporary relationships to demonstrate the need for a reimagining of love – a project that popular music has the capacity to contribute to.

Love and Intimacy in Late Modernity (2000-2015)

That love can be reimagined is no longer surprising. There is now a significant historiography that charts the ways that definitions and practices of love and intimacy have evolved over time. Theodore Zeldin, for example, argues that for early modern (c.1500-1700) people, intimacy meant domesticity and touch, but over time it was replaced with a romantic intimacy, marked by the joining of souls and achieved through sex, before coming into the modern, where love was about enabling individuals to be separate but engaged and stimulated by “the other.” Others like Lawrence Stone, Randolph Trumbach, and Edward Shorter thought that the key change in loving relationships was the separation of individuals from the family, so that love came to be about free choice of partner and the development of the couple as a distinct unit. They explicitly envisioned romantic love as gender equitable, with such love not being possible without a reimagining of gendered power relationships that they claimed happened in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (resulting in much feminist critique, Barclay, *Love*; Taylor). Yet others have presented a more sensitive rendering of shifts in love, with the chivalric love of the medieval, the dutiful love of the early modern and the romantic love of the eighteenth century replaced by the companionate love of the nineteenth and early twentieth, the passionate love of the mid-century, and the pure or confluent love of the present (Arni; Barclay, *Love*; Burns; Cancian; Jarzebowski; Langhamer; Luhmann; Reddy). Each model for loving was marked not only by different understandings of love and loving practices, but also different gendered expectations for loving behavior.

For scholars seeking to tease out the differences in these models, key issues have included: description of bodily feeling (did love overwhelm, fill you up like a container, did it burn or was it gentle, calm, and contained?); the role of love in shaping social order and placing lovers in their communities (was it a dangerous passion; an evolutionary trait, or a manifestation of God’s will? Was it the primary bond or secondary to love for children or parents? Was it necessary for marriage?); the couple-bond (was this a joining of souls with

the requisite loss of self, a partnership, or a Cixousian collapsing of difference?); gendered power within love; and loving behaviors (from housekeeping to Netflix and chill). Such models weighted various components of love differently across time, but, at least in the Western world, they did not require radically different questions to be asked for love to be understood. There was significant continuity over time and, of course, competing understandings of love were available in most periods.

Perhaps the most influential, if not uncontested, model for contemporary love is that provided by sociologists exploring love and modernity, often epitomized in the work of Anthony Giddens. They argue that modern “confluent love” (to use Giddens’ term) is distinct from older models of loving as it is based on personal satisfaction and fulfilment. Modern relationships require more autonomy for individuals and support towards self-actualization, but also greater intimacy, communication, and reflexivity. They are less stable, with the expectation that couples can move on to new relationships if their needs are not being met. Fidelity and monogamy are less central, negotiated by couples. It is a product of late modernity, with its associated individualism, consumerism, risk-averseness, anxieties, and disappointment (Bauman; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim; Cancian; Illouz). This model competes, but is not incompatible, with a significant scientific literature that posits a distinction between “passionate love” or “lust,” that is marked by the production of oxytocin, is significant to couple-bonding but is often short-lasting, and the “companionate love” of long-term relationships, that is thought to be less strongly “felt” and often correlated with memory and the history of the relationship in neural imaging (Numan; Hatfield; critique Johnson). Confusingly, scholars from quite different periods and disciplines often share a language of love – companionate, romantic, passionate – whilst meaning different things that can range from technical definitions to broad concepts (for twentieth-century terms see Jones and Harris).

Much of this work is being done by gender-sensitive and feminist academics (Langford; Jamieson; Illouz; Jónasdóttir & Ferguson; Gunnarson). They have critiqued an older scholarship on love for its lack of awareness of the gender-dimensions of loving practices, such as the expectation women show love through obedience, and that loving behavior expected people to conform to gendered ideals that reinforced structural inequalities (Barclay, *Love*). Such scholarship is particularly sensitive to the social practice of intimate relationships, with Giddens' work receiving particular criticism for failing to reflect the realities of contemporary heterosexual relationships where women continue to perform most childcare and household labor, where they often continue to give up key markers of autonomy such as surnames, and where their careers and passions are often placed behind that of male partners (Langford; Jamieson). Yet, whilst feminist love scholars have sought to nuance understandings of love in modernity, they have largely operated in the same schema. Illouz for example demonstrates how the key features of love noted by scholars of modernity produced an emotional economy that structured gendered power and the experience of love.

Theorists presenting models of love often draw on ideal types, whereas feminist critique has often emerged from social practice, with love and the practices of intimacy being collapsed. As a result, contemporary scholarship on love has only recently begun to recognize the ways that *models* for love construe the felt dimension and behaviors of loving in gendered ways (Barclay, *Love*; Langford; Illouz). Thus, love is not a single ungendered emotion, but a gendered practice. Given the centrality of love to heterosexual relationships, but especially marriage, resisting patriarchal inequalities has been extremely challenging for those who consider it important to be "in love." If "confluent love" is different, it has been witness to a radical imagining of not only the relationship between the sexes, but also of love itself. Yet, what the evidence of contemporary popular culture suggests is not just that couples have difficulty putting such a model for love into practice (as feminist sociologists have shown),

but that they have considerable difficulty imagining what it might look like. Despite this, how love is being imagined today has been given much less consideration (Johnson; Illouz; Jackson, “Love” & “Even Sociologists”).

Here I use “confluent love” to refer loosely to a love based on equality between partners that aims at personal fulfilment for the individual. I use “romantic love” to refer to an alternative model of love, marked by union and the sublimation of self for the good of the relationship. I am not suggesting that “romantic love” today conveys the specific attributes of eighteenth-century romantic love, but use this language in its contemporary usage as a particular form of passionate engagement between couples.

Representing Love in Contemporary Pop

It is my contention that the model of “confluent love” presented by scholars of modernity does have purchase in contemporary culture, but that it competes and at times interplays with a model of “romantic love” that is far more demanding, requiring that couples give their all to a relationship and a sacrifice that acts as a restriction on the self. This is at tension with models of the modern self that emphasize individuality, self-fulfilment and self-actualization, and is represented within popular culture through conflict and violence. To demonstrate this, this section will explore representations of love in contemporary music.

If there was a genre that might be expected to extol the virtues of love, it is the love song. Yet, in the last fifteen years, love between couples is rarely represented entirely positively. Many songs demonstrate a pragmatic scepticism around the possibilities of love. Taylor Swift’s account of falling in love locates the lovers in the role of a distressed damsel and her prince, including references to magic and the slowing of time when the couple are together (“Today Was a Fairytale”). Whilst a language of the fantastic and being located

beyond the everyday might be an appropriate metaphor for the emotional impact of love and its ability to dislocate the self from the mundane, Swift displays anxiety around the ability to maintain such feeling and its application to everyday loving practice. The temporal limits placed around the song, “Today,” and that they are a “fairytale” suggests the fragility and temporariness of love. This is reinforced by references to the everyday, “You told me I was pretty / When I looked like a mess,” that remind the listener of a “real world” beyond the couple’s love.

Keisza’s “Hideaway” similarly posits love as fantastic “You’re just a hideaway, you’re just a feeling / You let my heart escape, beyond the meaning” For Keisza, love is something that can only be sustained in private, in feeling, rather than in public and the everyday. Her relationship is an opportunity to dream, where dreaming is to love or to feel. Like Swift, she places temporal boundaries on this feeling, referencing uncertainty that the relationship will be sustained after the weekend. Love is construed positively as a wonderful experience, but one that lacks stability, that may fracture or have less hold when placed into the everyday. The time-boundedness that is noted as a feature of modern intimacy is evident, but is acknowledged with anxiety, even placing love into the realm of the fictive.

Conversely, a recognition of the everyday can render love rather passionless. Jason Derulo’s “Marry Me” places the marriage proposal in the future and makes it conditional on him getting “my money right.” He also suggests the possibility that other women could make him feel as he does but that he does not intend to explore this. Whilst this representation of love might come closest to “confluent love,” in acknowledging the possibilities of other loves and situating love as a “choice,” Derulo envisions marriage as resting on his financial capabilities. Whilst references to money as a symbol of male commitment perhaps holds a particular significance in black culture, both musically as part of the soul tradition and as rejection of stereotypes around the black family (Slatton and Spates), such references are not

distinctive to the music of black artists. Justin Bieber highlights that his key “Boyfriend” potential is “I got money in my hands that I’d really like to blow / Swag swag swag, on you.” As a result, marriage, money, and love is a gift offered to the female beloved, rather than marriage being understood as a relationship built on a working and mutually beneficial partnership. Moreover, that this pragmatism makes love conditional on the economic and that love is also time-bounded (although Derulo expects his love to last 105 years) flattens the emotional possibilities of such songs, leaving the listener wondering “where love is.” Love becomes marriage, the institution, rather than the emotion, and love is what is demonstrated through commitment in this institution.

The collapsing of love into marriage can be seen across a number of songs that explore issues around fidelity, almost always construed in gendered terms as a lack of commitment by men. Most famously, Beyoncé’s “Single Ladies” tells a lacklustre lover that “If you liked it, then you should have put a ring on it,” a lyric that caused controversy in the feminist blogosphere, who debated whether “it” was Beyoncé and whether the song implied a retrograde notion of marriage as possessing women. In a key verse however, Beyoncé rejects a model of love based on male provisioning for one that will “deliver” her to “a destiny, to infinity and beyond.” “Putting a ring on it” then demands a lot from the male lover, not financial resources (“things of the world”), but a love that enables her to be self-actualized. And marriage here becomes the embodiment of the commitment that enables a self-actualizing love. That marriage becomes the place where women are expected to find “self-actualization” is remarkably conservative but never identified as such, only disrupted by Beyoncé’s larger-than-wife persona and a music video where the focus on the female form is suggestive of the possibilities of autonomy for women beyond marriage. Indeed, we might read this contradiction as a productive tension within the work.

It is perhaps this conflation of love with marriage that helps explain the phenomenal success of Bruno Mars' "Marry You" as a "proposal song." The lyrics tell a story of a man who wants to make a drunken, impetuous marriage of the moment, even suggesting they can break up in the morning. However shortly after release, its meaning was transformed by a flurry of online videos, showing men using it as the "theme tune" to their marriage proposals (i.e. FlorianPurcarus; StanfordHotelSocial). As one of the song's writers, Philip Lawrence observed, this transformation was unanticipated: "we had this image of a slow-mo video in Vegas of a couple running, and she's in her gown and he's in his tux, the wedding party is behind them and everyone's raging. This sort of crazy, daring, wedding feeling. It was more of a racy kind of idea, as opposed to this classic marriage tune it has become" (Le Donne). Marriage's association with a higher, more perfect, love ensured that no proposal – even a drunken, bad decision in Las Vegas – was without its inspiring potential for the modern listener. That marriage – the institution – can be posited as love itself is perhaps not surprising in a culture where in both fairytales and romantic comedies alike, it continues to be situated as the "happy ending." Yet, in doing so, love remains remarkably amorphous and undefined, perhaps collapsed into the excitement and potential of the wedding, rather than the emotions of a long-term relationship.

Singers that seek to explore what love feels like in practice are similarly ambivalent. Taylor Swift's "Love Story" narrates a modern relationship using the tale of *Romeo & Juliet*. The sense of difficulty and parental antagonism in the lyrics, along with the foreboding created by the repeated allusions to *Romeo & Juliet*, is suggestive not of love as bringer of happiness or fulfilment, but of challenge and even pain. Swift gives the story a happy ending as the couple elopes, but notes "This love is difficult but it's real." Moreover, the music reinforces this complex interweaving of pain and pleasure in the making of love. The narrative of the lyrics is such that the verses tell the story of the couple's challenging

courtship, whilst the chorus (which is altered slightly in each rendition to progress the narrative) represents speech where Taylor pleads for her lover to come through for them. The final chorus repeats but is inverted with a declaration of marriage from Romeo. The chorus is a moment of musical intensity, where the pace picks up, drums kick in, and the melody harmonises with the vocals to maximise their impact. It is an effect that is identical on the choruses that give voice to longing and uncertainty, as that which includes the marriage proposal. The effect is to make both pain and joy equal in the making of love.

Pain is a reoccurring motif in even the most positive imaginings of love. Snow Patrol's "Just Say Yes," where a lover asks his sweetheart to commit, encourages her consent by observing that "It's not a test, nor a trick of the mind / Only love," and referencing their mutual "aching." Chet Faker's "Gold" describes how "A heart will swell before it's hardened / With the flick of the hair, it can make you old". Paloma Faith ("Only Love Can Hurt Like This") recognizes love through its pain: "It's like a knife that cuts right through my soul / ... Love is torture makes me more sure." Love is something that aches and leaves you breathless; that makes the heart swell and transform, that creates hole in your soul; it may feel like a test or a trick – only love can hurt like this. It is deeply connected with risk. Alt-J sings of a fear that grips the lover, causing the heart to sink ("Breezeblocks"). Ellie Goulding ("Love Me Like You Do") similarly observes of lover "You're the fear, I don't care / 'Cause I've never been so high."

The risk, and so the pain for these singers, is because love is understood to be all encompassing, demanding complete devotion and emotional vulnerability. It requires a sacrifice of self. Hozier ("Take Me to Church") describes his lover as a Church, where "I'll worship like a dog at the shrine of your lies / I'll tell you my sins and you can sharpen your knife." Florence and the Machine ("What Kind of Man") locates her love as "a fire of devotion," despite her lover's unwillingness to commit. Moreover, it was a love born "with

one kiss,” a radical transformation of feeling that was unreciprocated. Beyoncé (“Crazy in Love”) describes the disequilibrium of love where “I’m not myself, lately I’m foolish, I don’t do this, / I’ve been playing myself.” Love’s transformation makes her “not myself,” like an actor “playing” at being herself. Love is not a process of self-actualization, but of pain and disruption, a radical challenge to self.

The significance of this transformation is that when love is unrequited, a lover is unfaithful, or leaves, then the repercussions are emotionally significant. John Newman acknowledged that his bad behavior was “unforgivable, / I stole and burnt your soul.” Florence and the Machine (“Sweet Nothing”) laments that when she learned her lover’s words were “sweet nothings” she was “Emptied out by a single word / There is a hollow in me now.” While painful, this risk, pain and transformation is viewed as crucial to love, even to the point that lovers overlook bad behavior in a beloved. “She’ll lie and steal, and cheat, and beg you from her knees / ... But I still love her, I don’t really care,” sings The Lumineers (“Stubborn Love”). They continue that pain is better than nothing, contrasting love with “indifference”. “So you think people who suffer together would be more connected than people who are content?” muses Florence in a dialogue prelude to her video, *What Kind of Man*. “Yes,” replies her companion.

Acknowledging the pain of love is not novel to the modern, but, historically at least, such pain was a product of unfulfilled love, broken relationships, infidelity or similar (Barclay, “Courtship”; Jarzebowski). Finding love or overcoming objects to win a beloved might be painful, but love was the pleasurable reward (Regis). Here pain is a feature of love itself, part of what love feels like and desirable to love, an evidence of the sacrifice of the individual that marks its value. I would argue that this pain is a reflection of competing demands on the lover, from the expectations of the modern individual to be independent, autonomous, whole, and the demand for devotion that requires the individual to be

transformed by love and to sacrifice his or her independent self to experience love. The result is conflict.

Love and Violence in Music

Beside the fact that love is imagined as a painful experience, increasingly love songs depict modern relationships, and love itself, as conflictual, even violent. The man in “Stubborn Love” who stands screaming on his beloved’s porch and refuses to leave could be viewed equally as disturbed as romantic (The Lumineers). Alt-J’s “Breezeblocks” begins “She may contain the urge to run away / But hold her down with soggy clothes and breezeblocks,” as it describes a love that incorporates a desire to “hurt yourself and them.” The absolute possession demanded by this love is encapsulated in the line referencing the children’s book *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak, “I’ll eat you up I love you so”). In that allusion is the suggestion that like the Wild Thing’s mother in the children’s book, the beloved in the song should love unconditionally, even when the lover behaves violently, naturalizing the conflictual nature of love.

More explicitly, Florence and the Machine’s “Kiss with a Fist,” gives an account of love as a reciprocal physical violence, including hitting, kicking, slapping and destroying furniture. It concludes “A kiss with a fist is better than none.” The accompanying music is upbeat and cheerful, but with an aggressive edge, produced through her staccato delivery of the lyrics and heavy strumming on the accompanying guitar. On being criticized for its lauding of intimate partner violence, Florence rejected that interpretation, arguing “The song is not about one person being attacked, or any actual physical violence, there are no victims in this song. Sometimes the love two people have for each other is a destructive force. But they can’t have it any other way, because it’s what holds them together.”³ It is notable that it

is not the relationship but “love” that is a “destructive force.” Here conflict is acclaimed as what makes this love dynamic, an attractive energy that holds the couple together.

The video similarly depicts some of the ambivalence that the lyrics and music create. A colourfully-dressed Florence, holding a heart-shaped wreath of bright flowers, dances before a white backdrop, becoming increasingly frantic, before hitting yellow plates against a pleasant and unthreatening-looking man. This is not a dark image of violence, but it is suggestive of chaos and instability, an evidencing of the destabilizing effects of love on the self, that become manifested in images of violence.

Similar violent imagery appears in Jack White’s remarkable “Love Interruption.”

White sings of a love that acts as a form of physical and emotional violence – it is a knife that stabs and twists; fingers slammed in a door; a face crushed in the ground. This love involves the murder of wider relatives and the isolation of the lover from their friends. It is an account of love that deliberately engages with well-worn imagery of abusive relationships. Yet, this is the “love” that Jack White “wants.” The chorus “I won’t let love disrupt, corrupt or interrupt me” could be understood as a rejection of this violent love (which we might assume would “disrupt, corrupt or interrupt me”), but equally it could be an affirmation of it.

It may be the violent love that enables the lover to become their full self, even as it brings pain and absolute commitment to the relationship, to the detriment of other bonds.

The tension between a love that will not corrupt you, yet acts as a violent restriction on self is mirrored in the track’s musical construction. The piece uses a layering effect, where different instruments and voices build on each other but retain distinct melodies, leading to a crescendo that nonetheless resists the collapsing of any single part into any of the others – an effect that is particularly evident in the relationship between the voices of Jack White and Ruby Amanfu, the guitar and clarinets. The result is a song, that like love, is always

threatening of disharmony; the music, and love, is exhilarating because of the tension between its different parts and the possibility that it could fracture at any time.

It is not only in songs exploring challenging relationships that conflict appears; increasingly violence floats alongside love in unexpected places. A quirky piece of Danish house/pop crossover Major Lazer's "Lean On", has a "bouncy" rhythm and chirpy style that reinforces its discussion of an "innocent" time where the couple are wrapped in caring for each other. The riff however ties together love and violence, "Blow a kiss, fire a gun." The linking of "blow a kiss" with "fire a gun" gives violence to a loving act; the kiss becomes a bullet. The source of the violence is suggested in a line "We would only hold on to let go," where loving, "holding on," becomes a loss of self.

The loss of self required by this imagining of love becomes violent for the modern individual, because of the significance of autonomy and independence to it. The death envisioned in the videos discussed at the outset becomes a symbolic rendering of the loss of self required by love, of the sacrifice required to be in the modern relationship. That this draws on a longer association between love and death in popular culture is not accidental (Bauman). The importance of romantic love to contemporary models of love ensures that confluent love cannot be realized, but equally, because that is the case, love is rendered conflictual – the aspiration of an equalizing self-actualization in love is rejected when tested against the practice and feeling of love that dominates in popular culture.

There is no immediate evidence that this imagining of romantic love is expected to be gendered. Devotion is demanded, and given, by both men and women; the level of passion and commitment desired by couples is expected to be mutual. Yet, songs about infidelity are predominantly about cheating men, whether they are sung by men or women; one of the more significant interventions of Beyoncé's "Single Ladies" was to articulate this explicitly as a gendered problem. Conversely, female devotion is usually anticipated and coupled with

accounts of men who must be rendered “committed.” Positive representations of men are not passive, but depict them as enabling the female lover through his love: “You should let me love you / ... Give you everything you want and need” (Mario, “Let Me Love You”).

Songs of commitment by men are rendered more powerful due to their rejection of male independence and their decision to devote themselves to the beloved. That this is a form of vulnerability is explicitly acknowledged by Justin Bieber (“Love Yourself”), in a rare complaint against an unfaithful woman: “Was I a fool to let you break down my walls?” Love is described using a very traditional dynamic of man as active, protector, provider, and as giving up his autonomy through commitment. Women are depicted as the passive recipients of male love; they are made fuller through love. There is no particular celebration of female commitment, although there are plenty of ambivalences about the consequences.

The sacrifice that men make for love is to give up their independence, to be devoted. As female devotion is assumed, the sacrifice that is demanded of women becomes everything else. That this might not just require a loss of self and the act of love, but be found in the practices of the everyday is perhaps most beautifully encapsulated in the Foals’ cover (BBC Radio 1) of Florence and the Machine’s “What Kind of Man,” which combines the lyrics from the original with that from Foals’ “What Went Down.” The song moves from a declaration of the singer’s “fire of devotion” for apathetic lover to the Foal’s lyric “Give up my money, give up my name, take it away / I’ll give it away, I’ll give it away.” The sacrifice that women traditionally made in marriage is beautifully articulated (by a man).

Love Today

Contemporary representations of love in mainstream pop view it as fantasy or as something that is painful and inevitably tied up with conflict, even violence. They demonstrate an

adoption of the self-actualized modern self that is significant in models of “confluent love,” but also the continuance of an older model of “romantic love,” which views love as a loss of selfhood and which is inscribed with a particular form of gendered power dynamics (Illouz). The incompatibility of these two models is a source of tension that results in conflict and requires sacrifice from both parties in the relationship. When this sacrifice is articulated, it draws on a conservative understanding of romantic relationships, where marriage requires men to lose their independence and autonomy in becoming husbands and providers, whilst women give up their careers and identities in the service of marital success.⁴ Recognizing this dynamic in contemporary understandings of love helps explain some larger societal trends that have continued to vex feminist scholars. This is not to say that popular culture straightforwardly represents social practice, but it is to acknowledge its important role in shaping how people imagine the possibilities for their lives (Lippman). Engaging with popular music helps explain the limits of confluent love that have been consistently identified by feminist scholars exploring love’s social practice.

In this section, I provide a few examples of where this understanding of modern love can be seen in wider culture and social practice. Perhaps the most obvious example is the persistence of intimate violence and relationships of conflict. Whilst domestic violence has been typically associated with the continuance of particular models of masculinity that encourage men and women to view relationships as sources of male power and which affirm certain forms of physical violence as a component of “manliness” (e.g. Anderson), recognizing that modern love enforces a belief that conflict is a natural, and meaningful part, of what it means to be in love and that love involves feeling pain is highly suggestive of why both men and women continue to tolerate and expect violence within their intimate relationships. This can also be seen in attitudes amongst teenagers and adults about what is acceptable, including not only physical violence and conflict, but also jealousy, stalking, and

controlling behaviors (Gracia and Herrero). Through tying conflict to love, conflict and physical violence become naturalized as part of love and so restrict the imaginative possibilities of what love can look like.

This model helps explain why, for some couples, conflict ignites sexual desire, as well as ongoing popular representations of arguing and sparring leading to romantic intimacies in other forms of popular culture, such as romantic comedies and television shows (Lippman). It may contribute to the ongoing eroticization of violence in many art forms (Alvik). It might explain the phenomenal success of E.L. James's *Fifty Shades of Grey*, as well as the *Twilight* series, despite the ongoing controversy that both promote abusive relationships (Chu). The authors of both series deny that these relationships are abusive, but rather locate female autonomy in consenting to the relationship and their lack of power in the structural foundations of the relationship, whether that is the BDSM of *Fifty Shades*, or the inequity that results when a teenager dates a vampire. A model for love that requires a sacrifice of self for the success of the relationship, and which understands this to be painful but necessary, helps explain why these stories captured the popular imagination. In an age of gender equity, this requires female consent but not female self-actualization.

It is not self-evident that the sacrifices required of love should be made by women, but the persistence of this dynamic is telling. This is at least partly explained by the continuing of traditional gender roles in popular culture, that locate male sacrifice as a reduction of autonomy and the fulfilment of their role as breadwinners, whilst female sacrifice is considered to be more encompassing. This model not only continues expectations around whose career should be primary, who should change their name, and so forth, but also ties these expectations into love, so that to be female and in love requires these sacrifices. As an advert, featuring a close up of a woman's face, for the jeweller Michael Hill noted in a February 2015 issue of *Marie Claire*, "I'd give up my name for love."

The perpetuation of these gendered dynamics has been widely recognized by sociologists. One notable example was in Jenny Van Hooff's recent study of young (24-31 years) degree-educated, middle-class cohabiting couples in the UK. Van Hooff demonstrates the investment of this group in a traditional gendered model of intimate relationships. Both male and female participants saw commitment as something that women wanted more than men, and as a loss of male autonomy (41-43) and, despite both partners working in professional occupations, never questioned that the male partner's career should come first (58-63). Female participants had often started "leaning out" in their twenties, in preparation for expected child-rearing and marriage (59). A number noted feeling very grateful to have a partner and they felt sorry for single friends (despite only being in their mid to late twenties, 51-2). They complained about doing more than their share of the housework, but justified this as allowing male partners to work longer hours (69-75). They noted that these inequities were areas of conflict in their relationships, but none of them – at least from that data – provided any evidence that they had considered alternative ways of living. Conflict, sacrifice, and gendered imbalances seemed to be one of the inevitable consequences of love. It was better to have it than not.

Not all studies of contemporary relationships demonstrate such a stark picture of intimate practices (see for example Gabb and Fink). There are heterosexual, as well as queer, couples who actively seek to reform the gendered dynamics of love (for survey of this literature see: Morrison et al.). Yet for couples who are less reflective of their intimate practices broader models of loving behavior shape how love is constructed and practiced by individuals. My argument is not simply that inequitable and even abusive practices can be found within contemporary loving relationships, but that the emotion of love and gendered loving behaviors are reciprocally bound together, so that the understanding, practice, and *feeling* of love produces gender inequity and domestic conflict. Close attention to how people

describe and articulate concepts of love in popular culture enables scholars to better understand why gender inequity, domestic violence, and conflict continues. Reimagining contemporary personal relationships requires not only combatting inequitable or confining models of gender, but also the experience of love itself.

Conclusion

Love, the emotion, is not passive. The experience of love is culturally and historically specific; how it is understood to be felt, practiced, and the significance attached to it is implicated in intimate practices. When love can only be imagined in terms of inequitable gender relationships, love reproduces inequality. Modern love theorists have construed contemporary models for love positively, seeing “confluent” or “pure” love as a reflection of modern desires for gender equity, for self-actualization for men and women, and for intimacies that contribute to the making of the individual. Feminist sociologists have critiqued the accuracy of this model given its failure to explain social practice. Contemporary pop music provides a key cultural resource for explaining why “confluent love” fails in practice. Rather than dismissing “confluent love” as inaccurate however, it highlights how these ideas compete with a “romantic love” that demands the sublimation of the self for the good of the couple, the need for personal sacrifice to ensure the success of love, and ways that such sacrifice is gendered. The tension between these models is registered in music through representations of love as pain, conflict, and even violence. This leads to considerable ambivalence around the desirability and possibilities of love, but ensures that when love is practiced that this conflict is naturalized and expected. “This love is difficult but it’s real.”

¹ A later Newman video, *Cheating*, contains a newspaper headline that tells us they survive.

² This won the UK Music Video Award for ‘Best Alternative Video’ on November 8, 2012.

³ This quote was originally made on Florence Welsh’s My Space page but is no longer available. It was widely cited, for example kperfecto.

⁴ This occurrence of metaphors of pain and sacrifice has been noted by cultural studies scholars, but they have tended to emphasize instead love’s positive dimensions (or as in Munck and Kronenfeld construing sacrifice as gain), Baxter; Johnson.

Works Cited

Alvik, Jon M. B. *Modalities of Desire: Representations of Sadomasochism in Popular Music*.

Masters thesis University of Oslo, 2008. Print.

Anderson, Kristin. “Gendering Violence: Masculinity and Power in Men’s Accounts of Domestic Violence.” *Gender & Society* 15 (2001): 358-80. Print.

Arni, Caroline. “Simultaneous Love: an Argument on Love, Modernity and the Feminist Subject at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century.” *European Review of History* 11 (2004): 185-205. Print.

Barclay, Katie. “Love and Courtship in Eighteenth-Century Scotland.” *Women in Eighteenth-Century Scotland: Public, Intellectual and Private Lives*. Ed. K. Barclay and D. Simonton. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. 37-54. Print.

Barclay, Katie. *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850*. Manchester: Manchester UP. 2011. Print.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Love: On the Frailty of Human Bonds*. Cambridge: Polity, 2003. Print.

Baxter, Leslie. “Root Metaphors in Accounts of Developing Romantic Relationships.”

-
- Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 9 (1992): 253-75. Print.
- BBC Radio 1. "Foals Cover Florence ATM's What Kind of Man in the Live Lounge." *YouTube*, 2015. Web. 13 Feb. 2017. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frBoMj0SsXw>>.
- Beck, Ulrich. and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. *The Normal Chaos of Love*. Cambridge: Polity, 1995. Print.
- Bretthauer, Brook, Toni S. Zimmerman, and James Banning. "A Feminist Analysis of Popular Music: Power Over, Objectification of, and Violence Against Women." *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy* 18 (2006): 29-51. Print.
- Burns, Angie. "Looking for Love in Intimate Heterosexual Relationships." *Feminism and Psychology* 10 (2000): 481-85. Print.
- Burns, E. Jane. "Courtly Love: Who Needs It? Recent Feminist Work in the Medieval Tradition." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 27 (2001): 23-57. Print.
- Cancian, Francesca M. *Love in America*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987. Print.
- Chu, A. "Fifty Shades of Gilded Cages: the Luxury Branding of Domestic Abuse." *The Daily Beast*, 16 Feb. 2015. Web 13 Feb. 2017. <<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/02/16/fifty-shades-of-gilded-cages-the-luxury-branding-of-domestic-abuse.html>>.
- Cochrane, Tom, Bernardino Fantini, and Klaus R. Scherer, eds. *The Emotional Power of Music: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Musical Arousal, Expression and Social Control*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2013. Print.
- Cook, Nicholas and Nicola Dibben. "Emotion in Culture and History. Perspectives from Musicology." *Handbook of Music and Emotion: Theory, Research Applications*. Ed. Patrick J. Juslin. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010. 45-69. Print.
- De Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage, 1970. Print.
- Dukes, Richard L., Tara M. Bisel, Karoline N. Borega, Eligio A. Lobato, and Matthew D.

-
- Owens. "Expressions of Love, Sex, and Hurt in Popular Songs: a Content Analysis of All-time Greatest Hits." *Social Science Journal* 40 (2003): 643-50. Print.
- Fleetwood, Nicole R. "The Case of Rihanna: Erotic Violence and Black Female Desire." *African American Review* 45 (2012): 419-36.
- Florence and the Machine. "What Kind of Man (The Odyssey- Chapter 1)." *YouTube*, 2015. Web 20 Aug. 2017. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XgeKHTcufLY>>.
- FlorianPurcarus. "Isaac proposal, wedding proposal, Bruno Mars marry you." *YouTube*, 2012. Web 13 Feb. 2017. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYh9DCN8ads>>.
- Frith, Simon. "Why do Songs have Words? (1987)". *Taking Popular Music Seriously: Selected Essays*. Ed. Simon Frith. Farnham: Ashgate, 2007. 209-238. Print.
- Frith, Simon. *Performing Rites. Evaluating Popular Music*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. Print.
- Frith, Simon. "Music and Identity." *Questions of Cultural Identity*. Ed. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay. London: Sage, 1996. 108-27. Print.
- Gabb, Jacquie, and Janet Fink. *Couple Relationships in the 21st century*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Print.
- Giddens, Anthony. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love & Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992. Print.
- Gracia, Enrique, and Juan Herrero. "Acceptability of Violence against Women in the European Union: a Multilevel Analysis." *Journal of Epidemiology in Community Health* 60 (2006): 123-29. Print.
- Gunnarson, Lena. *The Contradictions of Love: Towards a Feminist-Realist Ontology of Sociosexuality*. London: Routledge, 2014. Print.
- Hatfield, Elaine, and Richard Rapson. "Passionate Love in Intimate Relationships". *Affect and Social Behaviour*. Ed. Bert Moore and Alice Isen. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. 126-51. Print.

-
- hooks, bell. *All About Love: New Visions*. New York: William Morrow, 2000. Print.
- Hunt, Lynn. "Introduction: History, Culture, Text." *The New Cultural History*. Ed. Aletta Biersack and Lynn Hunt. Berkeley: U of California P, 1989. 1-24. Print.
- Illouz, Eva. *Why Love Hurts: A Sociological Explanation*. Cambridge: Polity, 2013. Print.
- Jackson, Stevi. "Love, Social Change and Everyday Heterosexuality." *Love: A Question for Feminism in the Twenty-First Century*. Ed. Anna G. Jónasdóttir and Ann Ferguson. London: Routledge, 2014. 33-47. Print.
- Jackson, Stevi. "Even Sociologists Fall in Love. An Exploration in the Sociology of Emotions." *Sociology* 27 (1993): 201-20. Print.
- James, E. L. *Fifty Shades of Grey*. New York: Vintage Books, 2011. Print.
- Jamieson, Lynn. *Intimacy: Personal Relationships in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998. Print.
- Jarzebowski, Claudia. "The Meaning of Love: Emotion and Kinship in Sixteenth-Century Incest Discourses." *Mixed Marriages: Transgressive Unions in Germany from the Reformation to the Enlightenment*. Ed. In David Luebke and Mary Lindemann. Oxford: Bergahn Books, 2014. 166-83. Print.
- Johnson, Bruce and Martin Cloonan. *Dark Side of the Tune: Popular Music and Violence*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. Print.
- Johnson, Paul. *Love, Heterosexuality and Society*. London: Routledge, 2005. Print.
- Jónasdóttir, Anna G. and Ann Ferguson (Eds). *Love: A Question for Feminism in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Routledge, 2014. Print.
- Jones, Timothy W. and Alanna Harris. "Introduction: Historicizing 'Modern Love' and Romance." *Love and Romance in Britain, 1918-1970*. Ed. Alanna Harris and Timothy W. Jones. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Print.
- kperfetto. "Kiss with a Fist: Violence in Pop Music." *Blogher*, 11 December 2009. Web 13

-
- Feb. 2017. <<http://www.blogger.com/violence-misogyny-and-pop-music>>.
- Langford, Wendy. *Revolutions of the Heart: Gender, Power and the Delusions of Love*. London: Routledge, 1999. Print.
- Langhamer, Clare. "Love, Selfhood and Authenticity in Post-war Britain." *Cultural and Social History* 9 (2012): 277-97. Print.
- Le Donne, R. "Philip Lawrence: Bruno Mars' Right Hand Man Goes Solo." *American Songwriter*, 4 Sep. 2013. Web 13 Feb. 2017.
<<http://americansongwriter.com/2013/09/songwriter-u-philip-lawrence-bruno-mars-right-hand-man-goes-solo/>>.
- Lippman, Julia R. "I did it because I Never Stopped Loving You: the Effects of Media Portrayals of Persistent Pursuit on Beliefs about Stalking." *Communication Research* Published online before print 16 February 2015, doi: 10.1177/0093650215570653.
Web.
- Luhmann, Niklas. *Love as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy*. Cambridge: Polity, 1986. Print.
- Lutz, Catherine. "Engendered Emotion: Gender, Power, and the Rhetoric of Emotional Control in American Discourse." *The Emotions: Social, Cultural and Biological Dimensions*. Ed. In Rom Harré and W. Gerrod Parrott. London: Sage, 1997. Print.
- Meyer, Stephanie. *The Twilight Saga*, 4 volumes. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2005-2008. Print.
- Morrison, Carey-Ann, Lynda Johnston, and Robin Longhurst. "Critical Geographies of Love as Spatial, Relational, and Political." *Progress in Human Geography* 37 (2012): 505-21. Print.
- Munck, Victor C. de and David B. Kronenfeld. "Romantic Love in the United States:

-
- Applying Cultural Models Theory and Methods.” *Sage Open* (Jan-Mar 2016): 1-17. Print.
- Numan, Michael. “Brain Circuits for Parental Behaviour and Love, with Implications for other Social Bonds.” *Emotion Researcher*, ISRE’s Sourcebook for Research on Emotion and Affect. Ed. Andreas Scarantino, 2016. Web. 13 February 2017
<<http://emotionresearcher.com/brain-circuits-for-parental-behavior-and-love-with-implications-for-other-social-bonds/>>.
- O’Neill, Aimee. “Discovery: Alt-J.” *Interview*, 6 Jan. 2012. Web 13 Feb. 2017.
<<http://www.interviewmagazine.com/music/discovery-alt-j/>>.
- Reddy, William. *The Making of Romantic Love: Longing and Sexuality in Europe, South Asia, and Japan, 900-1200CE*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2012. Print.
- Regis, Pamela. *The Natural History of the Romance Novel*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2003. Print.
- Renshaw, Sal. *The Subject of Love: Hélène Cixous and the Feminine Divine*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2009. Print.
- Scheer, Monique. “Are Emotions a kind of Practice (and is that what makes them have a History?) A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion.” *History and Theory* 51 (2012): 193-220. Print.
- Sendak, Maurice. *Where the Wild Things Are*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963. Print.
- Shorter, Edward. *The Making of the Modern Family*. London: Collins, 1976. Print.
- Slatton, Brittany, and Kamesha Spates. (Eds). *Hyper Sexual, Hyper Masculine? Gender, Race and Sexuality in the Identities of Contemporary Black Men*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014. Print.
- StanfordHotelSocial. “Surprise Flashmob Proposal at Hilton Waikiki Beach – ‘Marry Me’

Bruno Mars.” *Youtube*, 2014. Web 13 Feb. 2017.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRLK2PLZxnI>.

Stone, Lawrence *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977. Print.

Taylor, Barbara. “Feminists versus Gallants: Manners and Morals in Enlightenment Britain.” *Women, Gender and Enlightenment*. Ed. Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor. Houndmills: Palgrave, 2005. 30-52. Print.

Thaller, Jonel and Jill T. Messing. “(Mis)perceptions around Intimate Partner Violence in the Music Video and Lyrics for ‘Love the Way You Lie’.” *Feminist Media Studies* 14 (2014): 623-39. Print.

Trumbach, Randolph. *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family*. Oxford: Academic Press, 1978. Print.

Van Hooff, Jenny. *Modern Couples? Continuity and Change in Heterosexual Relationships*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. Print.

Wall, Tim. *Studying Popular Music*. London: Sage, 2003. Print.

Zeldin, Theodore. *An Intimate History of Humanity*. London: Vintage, 1998. Print.