From *Making Love* to *Sexing*:  
Historical Development of Sexual References in Popular Music 1960-2011  

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This study examines changes in sexual references in lyrics by focusing on the number of references and the language used in the sexual reference. The corpus was made up of 1168 sexual references. Each reference was classified into references to sex acts (e.g., oral, anal or vaginal sex, etc.; N= 610), to body parts (i.e., ass, pussy, etc.; N= 127), to terms of reference or address (i.e., baby momma, lover, etc.; N= 220) or to other sexual behaviors (i.e., rape, prostitution, etc.; N= 211).

Only one paper that looks directly at change in lyrics over time is Hall et al (2011). Their approach differs from mine in purpose and thus focus. They did not examine the change in type of sexual references over time.

My data sample for this paper is the lyrics from the top-ranked songs on the Billboard weekly listing, selecting the top song for the first week of each month from 1960 through 2011 (610 songs).

I found that there have been many changes since 1960, both quantitatively and qualitatively. There has been an increase in the number of sexual references since 1960. The vast majority of the sex act references (441 out of 610) were references to vaginal sex; the first non-vaginal reference was a reference to manual stimulation in 1972. Oral sex references first appeared in 1990, and the first anal sex reference was in 1993. There were no references to body parts until 1974, and it wasn’t common to see body part references until the 1990s. The language of sexual references has become more varied over time. The range and specificity of sex acts referred to in popular music has increased substantially from vaginal to anal, oral, and manual. The two other longitudinal studies (
treated the change as a simple linear increase, but what I found was that a linear trend line was not the best fit to my data, which suggests that there may be more to it.

Qualitatively there have been a number of changes as well. The way that in-group/out-group boundaries are created has changed. In the 1960s boundaries were often constructed using euphemism, now they are often constructed lexically. The references to sex partners have become less personal and less individualized. There was a trend away from using names to refer to sexual partners toward using plural terms of reference or address. This shift is indicative of a possible change in the way sexual partners are viewed by artists; it is also indicative of a possible change in the language being used in the United States.
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0.0 Introduction

It is commonly perceived that sexual references in music, overt and covert, have become more and more commonplace. USA Today recently published an article titled “Teens’ ‘unhealthy’ Sex Exposure Blamed on TV, Music, Web” (Gardner, 2010). The Huffington Post writes “pop music lyrics are more sexualized now than they were in 1959” (Means, 2011, para 1). Almost every month, there is an article in a popular magazine or newspaper about the increases in the sexuality of the media. Popular media often cites scholarly research; many scholars claim (Hall, West and Hill,) that there has been a recent increase in the number of sexual references in popular music. This claim is supported by sociologists’ (Garlick, Southerland, Kammeyer, etc.) argument that 1960 was the beginning of a sexual revolution in the United States leading to increased sexualization in the media. For years there has been discussion of this sexualization\(^1\) of music, but recently it has seemed like there has been a decrease in the number of sexual references in music. Recent hits like Pumped Up Kicks by Foster the People and Chasing Pavements by Adele do not have this “sexualization.” This paper tests the accuracy of the perception that popular music is hyper-sexualized and examines the exact nature of the manifestation of the changes in sexual references since 1960.

1.0 Why Lyrics?

Music can play an important role in communication across not only culture, age and gender, but across language, race and religion as well. Music is pervasive; you can not sit in a coffee shop, shop in a store, or even ride an elevator without hearing some

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\(^1\) Sexualization has a technical meaning (which will be discussed in Section 1.2), but for the purposes of this paper it means only that there has been an increase in the number, kind and explicitness of sexual references.
kind of music. Pettijohn and Sacco (2009) argue that “when accompanied with words, songs allow us to communicate emotions, tell stories, and even express our opinions and attitudes” (p. 297). Perhaps it is easiest to think of an example of a song sharing or attempting to evoke emotions, from songs about love to songs about sadness, emotion is often how we categorize songs; there are, however, many other uses of lyrics. For example, a song like Katy Perry’s “Last Friday Night” has the artist telling a story: “Last Friday night, Yeah we danced on tabletops, And we took too many shots, Think we kissed but I forgot” (Perry, Gottwald, Martin & Mckee, 2011). In the Dixie Chicks’ song “Not Ready to Make Nice,” they sing about how they will stand by their opinions “I'm not ready to make nice, I'm not ready to back down, I'm still mad as hell and I don't have time, To go round and round and round” (Maguire, Maines, Robinson & Wilson, 2006). In “Redneck Woman,” the artist, Gretchen Wilson, expresses her country girl attitude saying “Hey, I’m a redneck woman, I ain’t no high class broad, I’m just a product of my raising I say, ‘Hey y’all” and ‘Yee-haw’” (Rich & Wilson, 2004).

Lyrics are meant to be accessible to particular groups of people; they can be used to define in-group and out-group relationships. For example, adolescents often use music to define who they are (young, cool, etc.), but also to separate themselves from others (parents, teachers, adults in general, or other groups of adolescents). In this example, teens use music as a manifestation of self, creating an identity in which their musical preference plays a vital role, but they are doing something else as well; as Schafer and Seldmeier (2009) put it, “in this context, music is also used to establish a symbolic border

2 Throughout this paper, the songs are referred to as being the artists work, because that is how the music is perceived by its audience.
against other groups (or against parents in early adolescence) to define a (youth) culture of its own” (p. 280).

For decades, lyrics have been used as a lens through which to view social attitudes. As Dukes, Bisel, Borego, Lobato and Owens (2003) put it “popular music lyrics follow cultural trends, and lyrics chronicle new societal developments” (p. 643). In other words, lyrics mirror culture. When there is a cultural change, it will often be reflected in the lyrics of popular music, but lyrics can also drive this cultural change as discussed below. One documented example of lyrics as reflectors concerns drug use. Diamond, Bermudez and Schensul studied the correlation between music and public health, focusing specifically on the correlation between lyrical references to ecstasy in rap and the use of ecstasy in clubs. As they put it “beginning in 1996, rap songs began to inform their listeners that ecstasy was available in urban settings and was being used outside of the context of raves” (Diamond, Bermudez, Schensul, 2006, p. 291). They demonstrate that there has been an increase in lyrical references to ecstasy use “paralleling the general increase in ecstasy use,” by providing data showing a correlation (Diamond et al, 2006, p. 283).

This is congruent with the Super-Peer Theory, which theorizes that the media can have more impact on adolescents than their peer groups (Brow, Halpern, Ladin & L’Engle, 2005, p. 421). Potentially, there is a cycle where ecstasy becomes common enough to make it into song lyrics. Lyrics in turn validate and advertize the use of ecstasy so it is more widely used, with the artists stepping into the role of super-peer. This increased use makes it more commonly referred to and creates a cycle with cultural activity feeding the music and the music feeding the cultural activity. To summarize there
is a cycle in which lyrics reflect society and then by reinforcing popular attitudes, lyrics influence society to push the popular attitudes farther.

1.1 Why 1960?

America in 1960 was a very different place from America in 2011. In 1960, Americans were not sitting at Starbucks listening to their iPods, texting on their android phones, and checking their Facebook accounts. According to Hall, West, and Hill (2011), “the availability and popularity of MP3 players (ie, iPods) has facilitated the increase in music consumption among children and adolescents” (p.2). This explanation is not without problems; in the 60s, there were portable electronic devices (e.g., radios, later cassette players, and still later CD players). The advent of MP3s made it less expensive and less bulky to acquire and carry lots of music everywhere (as well as giving access to music that the local radio wouldn’t play or the local stores wouldn’t sell), but the perceived pattern of increased sexualization originated before the coming of the MP3 player, a device made available for popular use in 1999 (Bellis, 2010, para 6).

The changes were not only in technology, but in social and cultural attitudes as well. Cooper and Haney (1997) highlight many of the important changes in attitudes and connect them to a perceived upswing in sexual references in popular music saying:

During the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, it should be noted that songs describing sexual encounters increased dramatically… The reasons are obvious. Prior taboos about overt references to intimate relations between the sexes were challenged during the 1960s and overthrown by the Woodstock generation. Similarly, the success of women’s liberation contributed to greater social independence for females and generated more candid commentaries about working and playing interactions between men and women. Repeal of laws that prohibited contraception and the subsequent availability of birth control devices also liberalized sexual encounters by decreasing fears of unwanted pregnancies (p.288).
The sexual revolution, identified and explored by many sociologists (Southerland, Garlick, Kammeyer, etc.), was already under way in the 1960s. Southerland (2007) claims in his article “Love for Sale” that this sexual revolution began after World War II and says “the sexual landscape of America has been profoundly transformed” (p. 9). He argues that the source of this hyper-sexualization is unknown.

Garlick (2011), in his article “A New Sexual Revolution? Critical Theory, Pornography and the Internet” discusses the sexualization of many forms of media (without discussing music specifically). He assigns a substantial amount of responsibility for the “new sexual revolution” to the internet, claiming that “today, sex is increasingly central to mainstream culture, in large part due to the Internet” (Garlick, 2011, Abstract). FM/AM transmitters made music only a radio wave away for most of the 20th century. The internet made the purchase of songs a button push away and the acquisition of particular songs cheap, simple and immediate. It also gave listeners more control over what they listen to in this “immediate framework.” Radio put the choice of music into the hands of DJs and radio stations—iTunes puts it in the hands of listeners at the microlevel.

As noted above, lyrics are “important signposts of cultural development” (Dukes et al, 2003, p. 643). Kammeyer (2008) touches on the sexualization of music briefly in his book *A Hypersexual Society: Sexual Discourse, Erotica, and Pornography in America Today* saying “contemporary recording artists… often compete for having the most sexually daring lyrics” (p. 6). This is a fairly common idea, as music has become more provocative, artists must push farther and get raunchier, to take advantage of shock value. To stay cutting edge/cool/exciting, artists have to push past where the group is. Think about how Elvis’s hips in the 1950s were thought to be so provocative, they
couldn’t be shown on television; he was pushing the boundaries of his time, and he has been immortalized for it.

This increased sexualization examined by sociologists has also been documented by the American Academy of Pediatrics; they claim that in film, television, and music, sexual messages are becoming more explicit in dialogue, lyrics, and behavior (Committee on Public Education, 2001). The AAP conducted a study examining where American teens get their sexual education, looking specifically at the effects of the media. For this study the media referred to movies, television, music, and the Internet. They assert that “teens rank the media second only to school sex education programs as a leading source of information about sex” (Committee on Public Education, 2001, Abstract). So as American media becomes more sexualized, teens are turning more toward the media as an indicator of “normal” sexual behavior.

The AAP claims that increases in sexual references in the media should be seen both as an indicator and cause of increased sexual activity in adolescents. According to the AAP, the increase in the number of teens engaging in sexual activities is a “major public health problem,” which is being fueled, in part, by the media (Committee on Public Education, 2001, para 1). Hall, West and Hill (2011) explain the correlation saying “consistent with several behavior change theories, the abundant modeling of sexualized behavior by the “super-peer,” places added pressure on adolescents to engage in risky sexual behavior” (para 23). Here again the artists are the super-peers, and this time as their lyrics become more sexualized they normalize risky sexual behavior for average American teens.
1.2 Different Approaches

Lyrics as cultural indicators have been studied for many reasons and from a range of academic perspectives. From a linguistic point of view, the speech acts of blues music (Kuhn, Watson) and Eminem’s use of slang in lyrics (Sujiati and Purwaningsih) have been examined. From a public health point of view, the use of drug references in rap have (Diamond, Bermudez and Schensul), and the effects of the sexualization of lyrics on the sexual health of adolescents (Committee on Public Education) have been examined. From a sociological perspective, lyrical content has been examined in correlation with the “conditions of social and economic threat” (Pettijohn and Sacco, 2009, 300). Most of the research has focused on specific genres of music (i.e. rap or blues), or even specific artists (i.e. Eminem).

There is, however, one paper, Sexualization in Lyrics of Popular Music from 1959 to 2009: Implications for Sexuality Educators, which looked directly at change in lyrics over time (Hall et al 2011). This paper used the Billboard website to compile a corpus of popular music in an effort to see changes in sexual references since 1959. They analyzed songs from the last year of every decade between 1959 and 2009 for sexualization. After compiling a corpus of songs, they coded their data as either sexualized or non-sexualized. Hall, West and Hill used the American Psychological Association’s definition of sexualization, which has four subcategories:

1. a person’s value comes only from his or her sexual appeal or behavior;
2. person is held to a standard of beauty equating physical attractiveness with being sexy;
3. a person is sexually objectified, or made into a thing for others sexual use;
4. sexuality is inappropriately imposed upon a person.
They included a fifth category for lyrics in which “one person has a large sexual appetite” (Hall et al, 2011, p. 7). In their conclusion, they claim that their definition of sexualization was not the best barometer of sexualization, because they did not think that it was as complete as it should have been. They compared sexualization across ethnicities, finding an increase in sexualization common across all ethnicities, but “non-White artists’ lyrics contained sexualization 20.7% of the time, while 7.5% of White artists’ lyrics included sexualization” (Hall, West and Hill, 2011, para 17). They also compared sexual references across genders. What they noticed overall was an increase (though slight) in the sexualization of lyrics; they made note of the 1985 law, which allowed recording artists to use vulgar and provocative language in their lyrics as long as a warning label was affixed to the CD.

In summary, research on lyrics has been done focusing on specific artists (Sujiati and Purwangingsih) or specific genres (Kuhn, Watson. Research has also been done focusing on the impact of sexual references on specific groups (e.g., adolescents). Research has been done for specific purposes (e.g., to help sexuality educators). All of this prior research forms the spring board for this paper, which is a diachronic linguistic examination of sexual references in popular music from both a quantitative and qualitative standpoint, taking what has been done by psychologists, sociologists, and linguists and combining the research approaches to find new patterns.

The focus of this paper, unlike any of the others, is on the language of sexual references. Previously, the research has focused on the changes in social behavior and attitudes, this paper focuses on the changes in linguistic usage. It seeks to answer the following questions: What language is used to refer to sex acts (including references to
body parts such as *ass, pussy*, etc.) and what sex acts are referred to in popular music?

How has the language and usage changed in the United States since 1960?

2.0 Methods

This methodology is a reworked version of the methodology used by Kuhn and Watson, which is a revised version of the methodology developed by Tyrmi\(^3\) in his thesis.

The *Billboard* website contains an archive of the “Hot 100” for the last 51 years. I picked the *Billboard* “Hot 100” in order to look at popular music of a wide range of genres over a specific period of time. This paper presents a longitudinal study, looking for change in sexual references over time.

Since the *Billboard* “Hot 100” lists are put out, the data is limited to the first week of each month. Also to restrict the data pool more, only the top song from that week was selected. This means that I examined the top song from the first week in each month starting in 1960, unless it was a repeat of the previous month in which case I selected the second song (or in some cases even the third). The final list (presented in Appendix 1) resulted in a data set of 610 songs (two songs were excluded because they had no lyrics).

Then I retrieved the lyrics for each of the songs. Creating a corpus of these lyrics represented a challenge, because for many songs official or accurate versions of the lyrics have not been published. For songs I owned, I retrieved the official lyrics from iTunes. For songs I did not own, I relied heavily on metrolyrics.com because they mostly obtained their lyrics from official sources. I retrieved 570 lyrics from metrolyrics.com; the rest I retrieved from a variety of online sources (lyrics007.com, elyrics.com, lyricsfreak.com, oldielyrics.com, lyricsbay.com, lyricsmode.com, and 6lyrics.com).

\(^3\) This is an unpublished masters thesis, which I was unable to retrieve.
With the data pool established, I identified all the references to sex acts, explicit or otherwise. I recorded all sexual references and their occurrences and the contexts in which they appear. This allowed me to narrow my corpus of data from whole song lyrics to individual sexual references. If the exact same line or reference was repeated (if it was part of the chorus, for example), I only counted it once. If part of the song was written in a foreign language (e.g. Spanish, French, etc.) I left it uncoded, due to lack of appropriate familiarity with languages other than English. There are dictionary definitions of words, but without near-native knowledge of a language and a dialect I would miss nuance and in-group readings.

After highlighting the references, I created a system for categorizing the kinds of references. I used *Urban Dictionary* to determine how self-selected members of the appropriate group define the terminology under examination for many of the more obscure, recent sexual terms so that I could correctly classify them. The sexual references are organized based on what the song was referring to: a sex act (e.g. oral, anal or vaginal sex etc.), a body part (e.g. *ass, pussy*, etc.), a term of reference or address for a sexual partner, (e.g. *baby momma, lover*, etc.) or other (e.g. rape, prostitution, sexual arousal or desire, multiple partners, etc.). Each reference was then put into the appropriate category. This categorization allowed me to examine how sex is treated in the lyrics of popular music over the last 51 years. By classifying the references in the ways that the data suggest, I was able to look at not only the specific language, but also how that specific language fits into a broader scheme. Once the expressions were sorted, I looked for trends.
3.0 Results

The overall results can be seen in Figure 1. Total there were 1168 sexual references. The total number of references hit their peak in 2002 (87 sexual references in twelve songs), and remained relatively high until 2006. There is an obvious upward trend in the number of sexual references. This supports the commonly held belief (which is also the first hypothesis being investigated in this paper) that music is becoming more sexually explicit. It is possible to fit a linear trend line to this data (with an R^2 of 0.5069), however to speculate slightly I believe a more elaborate cyclic analysis is appropriate.

In addition to the general upward trend, the raw data show an obvious up and down apparently cyclic pattern. The raw data has apparent peaks in 1964-1965, 1971, 1978-1979, 1993, and 2002-2006. One analysis would be to interpret an approximate 15 year cycle, accepting peaks at 1964-1965, 1978-1979, 1993 and 2002-2006. This cycle appears to be flawed because the peak at 1993 is anomalous as a result of unrepresentative sampling due to methods. Another analysis would be to interpret an approximate 30 year cycle accepting peaks at 1978-1979 and 2002-2006. This analysis requires the rejection of three apparent peaks in the data: 1964-1965, 1971, 1993. I propose to reject the peak at 1971, because it does not fit either apparent cycle nor the surrounding data. The peak at 1993 was already rejected by the 15 year cycle. The number of sexual references from the early 1960s is so small that any one sexualized song has a relatively large impact, creating a peak where there is none. Having thrown out the apparently anomalous data, a clear wave form appears. For example, between...
1969 and 1979 the number of sexual references were trending upward, from 1979 to 1986 they were trending downward before starting to trend upward again the next year.

![Total Number of Sexual References](image)

**Figure 1: Total Number of Sexual References**

In the graph on the next page (Figure 2), the same data is shown in a line graph with a trend line. While there is a general trend upward, it is by no means linear. The trend line below is a fifth degree polynomial function⁴.

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⁴ A fifth degree polynomial function was employed because it was the closest fit trend line to the data. Polynomial functions are used when the data fluctuates and thus has natural peaks and troughs. In this case, a fifth degree polynomial function was chosen because it had the $R^2$ value closest to one of any of the lower order polynomial (2nd degree: 0.6114, 3rd degree: 0.6133, 4th degree: 0.6349, 5th degree: 0.6639), linear ($R^2=0.5069$), or logarithmic ($R^2=0.3017$) trend lines. Note, if I had gone an higher order
There are a couple of trends to notice in this graph. As discussed earlier, I have graphed a polynomial trend line, which shows a thirty year cycle.

At the far left of the graph, the tail is going up indicating that the wave pattern continues to the left. At the far right of the graph, the tail is going down indicating that the wave pattern continues to the right. The wave is continuing, but the period is getting smaller and the amplitude (distance from peak to trough) is getting larger. The shape of polynomial (a much higher order polynomial), I could have gotten arbitrarily close to an $R^2$ value of one.

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5 This particular polynomial function ($y = -9E-06x^5 + 0.0011x^4 - 0.0439x^3 + 0.7539x^2 - 4.6181x + 13.239$) fits this part of my data, but if you forecast beyond this part the function no longer is appropriate (the right end of the function goes to negative infinity while the left end goes to positive infinity).
the graph indicates that there may be a cycle (wave shape), but it also indicates that the range of the excursion is growing over time (decrease in period and increase in amplitude).

3.1 References to Sex Acts

This category was broken down into five subcategories: oral, vaginal, manual, anal, and other. There were 610 sex act references total, of those 447 were vaginal sex references, 65 other references, 37 manual references, 36 oral references, and 25 anal references. The first overt oral sex reference was in 1993 where Silk sings “let me lick you up and down” (Sweat & Murray, 1993). There were various other oral sex references including: “getting and giving head” (Carter et al, 2008), and “E.A.T” (Haynes, Harper, Smith & Basement Beats, 2003), which according to Urban Dictionary means “Eat a Twat,” (E.A.T., n.d.). Notorious B.I.G. was the first to make reference to anal sex singing “poppa freakin’, not speakin’, leave that ass leakin’” (Armer, Wallace, Combs, Alpert, Angelettie & Lawrence, 1996). There were very few references to anal sex, only four clear references in my entire corpus. The references to vaginal sex varied the most. There were references to making love. There were also references like “banging on the bathroom floor… she caught me on the counter, I even had her in the shower” (Burrell, 2000). In Silk’s 1993 song Freak Me, he sings “I wanna get freaky with you” (Sweat & Murray, 1993). Freaky⁶ can be defined as being the “kinky, wild in bed, sexually promiscuous, etc.” (Freaky, n.d.); so getting freaky would be the act of engaging in sexual intercourse in a variety of ways. Exile sings Kiss You All Over in 1978, where

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⁶ Freaky could also be put in the other category, depending on the definition chosen. I put it in the vaginal sex category, because the meaning that I associate with it as well one of two possible meanings put it in this group.
he refers to sex saying “stay with me, lay with me, holding me, loving me” (Chinn & Chapman, 1978). There were also references to manual stimulation like: Anything for Love, “will you make me some magic, with your own two hands” (Chinn & Chapman, 1978). Finally there were also references to one sex partner ejaculating onto the other like “supersoak that hoe⁷” (Way, 2007).

As can be seen, in Figure 3 (on the next page), again there is a general trend upward in the number of sex acts referenced since 1960, ranging from the low, zero, in 1967 and 1986 to the high, 42, in 2002 and 2005. There were increases in all categories of sex act references.

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⁷ This is discussed again in Section 5.2. It is defined as “to ejaculate continually on a female prostitute (or a woman in general) in a manner similar to that of a high-powered water projectile, causing her to drip with semen” (Supersoak, n.d.).
Figure 3: Sex Acts

The most commonly referred to type of sex is vaginal (N= 447). References to anal sex started appearing in 1993 and held pretty steady at under five references a year. Manual stimulation was the first non-vaginal type of sexual intercourse to be referred to, in 1972. The “other” category includes references to things like ejaculating on a partner, having multiple sex partners, or other references which didn’t fall clearly into the other categories.

3.2 Body Parts

Body parts most commonly referred to in an overtly sexual manner were the buttocks (N= 55), male sex organ (N= 29), female sex organ (N= 17), and breasts (N= 14), using a variety of terminology. Overall there were 127 references to different body parts in this corpus. There were many different references to buttocks including booty (Dillard & Najm 2007), and rump (Riley, Davidson & Williams, 1993). There were a number of references to money maker and shakin’ it for some papa; these are references to dancing/stripping for the purpose of arousing the singer. The most common way of referring to the female sex organ was pussy; for example, “and that pussy in my mouth had me at a loss for words” (Carter, Garrett, Harrison, Jonsin, & Zamor, 2008). There were a wide variety of metaphors for the male sex organ, from the thang (Harris, Scheffer & Siegel, 2008) to anaconda (Sir Mix-A-Lot, 1992), to bone (Kartle, 2004), to long sharp sword (Riley et al, 1993). Breasts were mostly referred to as tits or boobs, but there were a couple of cases where artists referred to breasts as breasts, like in the Black Eyed Peas song My Humps where they sing “whatcha gonna do with all that breast all that breast inside that shirt” (Payton & Will.i.am, 2005). This is the singers’ attempt to entice the hypothetical sex partner into engaging in sexual activities. There were a number of
references to parts of the mouth (lips, tongue, etc.), but instances of these references were not considered sexual unless tied to something else (like a reference to oral sex). For example: “you’ve got me sprung with your tongue ring” (Shellshock, Mazur & Red Hot Chili Peppers, 1999).

The language used to refer to body parts was often related to food. For example, *fruit basket, birthday cake* and *buns*, were all used to describe physically attractive features of sexual partners immediately prior to, during, or immediately following intercourse (oral, anal, vaginal, manual, etc.). *Fruit basket* refers to the the male sex organs (penis and testicles) when the man is bent over (*Fruit Basket*, n.d.). *Birthday cake* and *buns* both refer to a woman’s rear (*Birthday cake*, n.d.).

Figure 4 shows the number of body part references over time. The total number of references is broken down into five categories: buttocks, female sex organ, male sex organ, breasts, and other. This graph has a slightly different shape than the others; there appears to have been an explosion of references to body parts in sexual references since 1991\(^8\). The tapering off which has been mentioned in relation to the other graphs is visible here as well, but to a smaller degree. The above figure also shows that there has been a change in the composition of the body part references; since 1991 there has been a substantial increase in the number of references to female sex organs, breasts and buttocks.

\(^8\) It is possible that the sudden increase in the 1990s could be related to the law which was passed in 1985 allowing explicit material to be used as long as there was a warning label affixed to the CD.
Figure 4: Body Part References
3.3 Terms of Address and Reference

This category has two components: 1. terms of address 2. terms of reference. Terms of address and reference within the context of this paper mean the lexical items used to address or reference a sexual partner or partners in the context of a sexual act or invitation. For example, in the 1979 song Do Ya Think I’m Sexy, Rod Stewart sings “come on honey, let’s spend the night together” (Stewart & Appice, 1978). Here honey is a term of address for the female sexual partner. In contrast, Stewart sings “come on honey, tell me so;” here within the same song, the same term of address was used and it was not counted, because it is not in a sexual context (Stewart & Appice, 1978). In another example, in 1993 Silk sings Freak Me saying “freak me baby” (Sweat & Murray, 1993). Similar terms are used to refer to sexual partners. For example, in 2004 Usher sang “I want a lady in the street, but a freak in the bed” (Lil Jon, Garrett, Usher, Smith, Ludacris, McDowell, Phillips & Jefferson, 2004). Here he is using both lady and freak to refer to a hypothetical sexual partner.

Overall there were 220 terms of reference and address in this corpus. The most commonly used term of both address and reference throughout the corpus was lover. This was also one of the most polite terms. In the last twenty years the most commonly used term of both address and reference was baby, another polite term. Diminutives are often used as endearments; in my corpus, they were very commonly used as part or all of a term of reference or address. For example baby is used often as a stand alone reference to a sexual partner, while lil/little often preceded another word (like momma or girl) to form a term of reference or address. In songs from the 1990s, words like bitch, hoe, and slut

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9 Including proper names
began to appear in the data set. For example, in 1997, Puff Daddy sang that he “just want me a one bad bitch” (Combs, Jordan, Broady, Myrick, Betha, Prestopino, Wilder, Robinson, Glover, Chase & Fletcher, 1997). None of these later terms are polite.

The majority of terms of reference and address used were by male artists describing female sexual partners (e.g. baby, lil mama, mami, sexy girl, etc.). In a couple of cases, male artists used terms of reference or address to describe themselves or other men (e.g. playa, pimp, etc.). Rihanna, in her song _Rude Boy_\(^{10}\), used terms of reference and address to refer and address to a male sexual partner (e.g. rude boy).

![Figure 5: Terms of Reference/Address](chart.png)

**Figure 5: Terms of Reference/Address**

Figure 5 does not have as clear a pattern as the other charts do, and at the right hand side there is not the decrease in number, which can be seen in the other graphs. It appears that there is more of a leveling off of these terms.

\(^{10}\) Eriksen, Hermansen, Dean, Riddick, Swire & Fenty, 2010
3.4 Other

Other is a miscellaneous category containing 211 references. There are references to a variety of things, including direct references to prostitution (i.e. “turnin’ tricks for the dudes in the big city” (John & Taupin, 1975)), to sexual arousal (i.e. “you make my motor run” (Fieger & Averre, 1979), “everywhere you turn I'll be making you wet” (Williams & Bridges, 2006), etc.), to cheating (i.e. “you'll be screwing around” (Steinman, 1993)) and to all other sexual behavior or material (e.g. “the sweat of your body covers me” (Prince, 1984)). It followed basically the same pattern as the total sexual references. There is an upward trend, but it is not completely linear. Importantly, the figure below does follow the trend of the total number of references; there has been a recent tapering off of the number of “other” references.

![Other References Chart]

**Figure 6: Other References**

The most “other” references are those referring to sexual arousal; Figure 7 presents the subset of “other” references that refer to sexual arousal.
Figure 7: References to Arousal

4.0 Discussion

Aside from the quantitative changes illustrated in the data above there have also been qualitative changes, both semantic and social. In some examples, the meaning of terms has narrowed. There have been a number of interesting changes in the methods of constructing in-group boundary markers. There has been a shift toward more violent sexual references. Finally there has been a depersonalization/deindividuation of references to sexual partners.

4.1 Semantic Narrowing

I found two examples of unambiguous semantic narrowing in my data. Semantic narrowing is the process by which lexemes go from having many available meanings (or a broader meaning) to having fewer available meanings (or a narrower meaning). A common example of semantic narrowing is liquor, which originally referred to any liquid and now only refers to alcoholic beverages.
In 2003, 50 Cent, in the song *In Da Club*, is very clear that he is “into havin’ sex” not “makin’ love” (50 Cent, Dr. Dre & Elizondo, 2003). This could represent a semantic narrowing of the term *makin’ love* to no longer refer simply to engaging in sexual intercourse, but to engaging in sexual intercourse with a partner with whom the artist could claim an emotional connection. Before 2003, uses of *makin’ love* were more varied; a person could meet someone at a bar or club and make love with them. In the more recent songs, making love to someone requires some level of feeling. Typically, *making love* now refers to engaging in intercourse within the bounds of a monogamous relationship. This semantic narrowing may be why the number of references to *making love* have decreased dramatically over time.

*Little girl* has undergone semantic narrowing; in the 1960s, it had a number of available meanings: 1. Small female child, 2. Female sexual partner, 3. Insult to a man. In my corpus, male artists in the 60s would often refer to their female sexual partners (or love interests) as *little girl*. For example, Tommy Roe in his song Sheila says “this little girl is fine” (Roe, 1962); he is describing how the *little girl* is attractive/sexually arousing. This sexual meaning of *little girl* is no longer available. *Little girl* is never used to refer to a (female) sexual partner in the more recent lyrics in this corpus.

4.2 *In-Group/Out-Group Boundaries*

As was discussed earlier, lyrics can be used to create boundaries between groups and solidarity within groups. This creation of group boundaries using language is a method of building “social identity” (Thomas, Wareing, Sing, Peccei, Thornborrow & Jones, 1999, p. 165). Thomas et al (1999) explain in-group/out-group barriers, writing “as with other kinds of social codes which people use to display membership of a social
group, like dress codes, certain kinds of linguistic behaviour also signal your identity in relation to a group, as well as your position within it” (p. 165). These boundaries can be created syntactically, lexically, phonetically, or using any other linguistic markers.

It would seem that there has been a change in the type of in-group/out-group boundary markers. In the 1960s most of the language used to describe sex seemed\textsuperscript{11} to be generally clear, but vague, saying things like “but when I get home to you, I find the things that you do, will make me feel all right” (Lennon & McCartney, 1964). While it is hard to find an explicit sexual reference, there is an available sexual reading. This could be a method of creating an in-group/out-group boundary. By making the listener retrieve the sexual meaning, the artist is creating a boundary between those who do and those who do not retrieve that reading.

It was common in the 1960s and 1970s to create these in-group/out-group boundaries in this euphemistic manner. Artists would use language which could be perceived as sexual if the listener both had the knowledge to retrieve and chose to retrieve that meaning from the euphemism, but the listeners who either did not want to retrieve the sexual meaning or lacked the knowledge to retrieve it might still enjoy the music, but would not belong to the in-group.

More recently artists have used lexical choices to create these in-group/out-group boundaries. In Brown and Levinson’s book (1978), \textit{Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage}, they describe slang as “in-group terminology” which is “related to the use of an in-group language or dialect” (p. 111). For example, Soldja Boy uses language such as \textit{roosevelt}, \textit{robocop}, \textit{supersoak}, and \textit{superman} to refer to various sex acts in his

\textsuperscript{11} See Section 6.0
song Crank That (Way, 2007). *Urban Dictionary* has only a sexual meaning for each of these words. For example to *roosevelt* a hoe means “to make a hoe, or bitch, unable to walk, because of a crazy wild night” (Roosevelt that hoe, n.d.). To *robocop* a hoe means to “ejaculate semen into a bucket and invert it on to your lady friend's head” (Robocop, n.d.). *Supersoaking* a bitch means “to ejaculate continually on a female prostitute (or a woman in general) in a manner similar to that of a high-powered water projectile, causing her to drip with semen” (Supersoak that hoe, n.d.). *Supermanning* a hoe means “When you're doing a girl doggy style, pull out, and cum on her back/ass. When she tells you to wipe it off, you pretend to, and when she wakes up, she has the bed sheets stuck to her back like supermans cape” (Superman that hoe, n.d.).

None of these things as defined by a dictionary of standard usage has any sexual reading; in fact, dictionary definitions of these words are rare. For example, dictionary.com doesn’t have a definition for *robocop*. For most people (the out-group) these words do not have a sexual definition, but for some (the in-group) they do. Soldja Boy is creating a lexical in-group boundary.

In the early parts of my corpus, the in-group/out-group boundaries consisted of euphemisms. In the latter parts of my corpus, they were constructed the use of explicit lexical items with a restricted set of users. The method of constructing in-group/out-group boundaries has changed over time, but their use has remained constant throughout this corpus.

### 4.3 From Teaching to Cutting

In the 1960s and 1970s, it was common for the language used to refer to sexual acts to be very veiled. There were a number of sexual references in teaching or learning
metaphors. For example, in Cher’s 1971 hit *Gypsies, Tramps & Thieves*, she sings “I never had schooling but he taught me well” (Stone, 1971). The rest of the verse goes on to describe how after having been taught well, the girl in question is now a “gal in trouble” (Stone, 1971). In other words, the man’s “teaching” had gotten the girl pregnant. Another example of this is in 1974, when Terry Jacks sang of how they “learned of love” (Jacks, 1974). There were also many references to things like *making love, loving, and having*; these are all fairly polite references to sex.

By the 1980s, the teaching rhetoric had mostly died out with a notable exception, *Father Figure* by George Michael12. In *Father Figure* (1988), he sings “I will be your preacher teacher” (Michael). George Michael was the last artist to use sexual references masked in a teaching metaphor in my corpus. In the 1980s, the polite references to sex mentioned above were still available and were the most commonly used references to sex. There wasn’t very much variety in the 1980s, though they often used language about *staying the night*.

The 1990s ushered in a time of violence in sexual reference. The relatively mild language of 1960s, 1970s and 1980s was gone. Expressions like *banging* and *screwing* to refer to engaging in sexual intercourse became common. In 1997, the Notorious B.I.G. sang “girls walk to us, wanna do us, screw us” (Armer et al, 1996). Taking the violent terminology one step farther, the Notorious B.I.G. sang “come up to your job, *hit* you while you workin’” (Armer et al, 1996). He goes on to make it clear that in this example, *hit* to refer to sexual intercourse. *Hit* has a dictionary definition of “to deal a blow or

12 There is some debate about whether or not this song sexual. Every time I read it, I could only glean a sexual meaning, but there is debate which can be found; for example, see http://www.lyricinterpretations.com/George-Michael/Father-Figure.
stroke to” (hit, n.d.). While this violence was common in sexual terminology throughout the 1990s, the use of the “loving” language was still there; for example, SWV sang “never to be mistaken, long as it’s love that we’re making” (Morgan & Johnson, 1992).

In the last decade (2000-2011), there was a slight tapering off of this violent trend. For example, there has been a resurgence of making love as a common sexual reference. Many of the references to sex in the latter half of the decade were more covert, requiring more space to accomplish the goal. For example, “tonight I’mma give it to you harder, tonight I’mma turn your body out, relax, let me do it how I wanna, if you got it, I need it and I’mma put it down” (Eriksen et al, 2010). The 2000s were, however, the time of introduction of the most violent expression used to describe consensual intercourse in this corpus: cuttin’, which is defined as engaging in casual sex with no intention of forming any meaningful or lasting relationship (Cuttin’, n.d.). For example, in 2004 Ludacris sang, “if they ain’t cutting then I put ‘em on foot patrol” (Lil Jon et al, 2004); this means that if the women are not interested in engaging in completely casual sexual intercourse then he will force them to walk home. Beyond the return to the references of the 1960s and 1970s and the turn toward violence, there were also a number of unclassifiable sexual references like in Katy Perry’s E.T. where she sings “infect me with your love and fill me with your poison, take me, ta-ta-take me, wanna be a victim ready for abduction” (Perry, Gotwald, Martin & Coleman, 2011).

Over the course of the last five decades the language used to describe sexual intercourse has changed in a number of ways. Other than the shift toward more violent rhetoric, there was also a massive increase since 1980s in the variety of sexual references used. The increased usage of sexual references has inevitably led to more variety in this
semantic area. Modern artists still have the basic metaphors and polite “loving” rhetoric of the 60s, 70s and early 80s available, but they also have the new varied slang terms (violent and non-violent). Think back to the discussion of Soldja Boy’s *Crank That* (p. 28), there were a very wide range of sex acts referred to using a variety of terminology. The polite “loving” language maintained its presence throughout the corpus.

4.4 Depersonalization and Deindividuation

According to Fasold (1990), “address forms are really part of complete semantic systems having to do with social relationships” (p. 3). He explains that the use of different address forms can represent different power dynamics. In other words, not all address forms are equal; you can use different address forms to portray different attitudes toward your interlocater. Throughout my corpus there was a shift from using names (like Sheila and Rhonda) to refer to sex partners to using singular titles (like lover, baby, and little girl) to using plural titles (like hoes, lovers, and girls).

Names of sexual partners were used a number of times throughout my data, especially in my earlier data. For example, Rhonda (Wilson & Love, 1965), Sheila (Roe, 1963), and Cathy (Everly & Everly, 1960). These names refer to specific people, and from context, a specific sex partner. In general, when a name is used as a term of reference or address it is considered polite.

The first step of depersonalization was to take away the specificity of a name. Names are personal; they refer to someone the singer at least cared enough about to remember. In some songs an endearment or a term of address or reference other than a name replaced the name. Instead of using names, artists often referred to their love interest by baby. For example, “baby, when we’re grindin’, I get so excited” (Gee,
Brown, Huggar & Brown, 1998). This depersonalizes the sexual reference; instead of talking to a specific person, the artist could be talking to anyone.

The next step moved from referring to a specific person by a general descriptor or endearment to using plural terms. In this step, instead of terms which directly addressed one person like *baby, lover, or girl*, terms like *bitches, hoes, girls*, etc., which refer to more than one person became popular. For example, this deindividuates the sexual reference; instead of talking to one person, the artist is talking to or about as many as possible\(^{13}\).

Another way to look at this is when someone is referred to by name, the name is uniquely referring; when a definite singular term of reference or address is used it refers specifically to a single person within a group; when a plural term of reference or address is used, it refers to some or all members of a group or generically to any member of the group.

Weakening of the sexual partner can also be seen in preposition choice. For example, you make love *with* someone, but you are putting it *to* someone. In the song, *Lovin’ You* by Minnie Riperton she sings about “making love with you” (Riperton & Rudolph, 1975). *With* is a comitative preposition; it is used to introduce someone, which participates in the event, together with another participant. When a comitative preposition is used, the object of the preposition is doing something together with some other participant in the event; all of the actors have agency. So when Minnie Riperton sang about “making love *with* you,” both of the people involved had agency, both decided to

\(^{13}\) This does have marketing implications, because the sexual references could now refer to anyone buying, listening, or intending to use the music for commercial purposes. These implications were not explored in this paper.
engage in this activity and both participated (Riperton & Rudolph, 1975). While in the song Bump ‘N’ Grind from 1994, the artist wants “to make love to you baby” (Kelly, 1994). To is a non-comitative preposition. When something is done to someone, the person who is receiving the action has no agency, no control. The change from the comitative preposition (with) to the non-comitative preposition (to) indicates a change in the agency of one of the sexual partners.

The prepositions paired with the verbs used to refer to sex acts paint an interesting portrait, which is supported by the change in terms of reference and address. There has been a drastic depersonalization, deindividuation and weakening of sexual partners in lyrics of popular music. The language has changed from being about a specific named person who is engaging in sexual activities with their partner to an unknown mass of sexual partners having sex acts done to them.

4.5 Summary

This paper set out to examine the following questions: What language is used to refer to sex acts (including terms of reference and address as well as references to body parts such as ass, pussy, etc.) and what sex acts are referred to in popular music? How have they changed since 1960? I found that there have been many changes since 1960. The language of sexual references is varied. The range and specificity of sex acts referred to in popular music has increased substantially from vaginal to anal, oral, and manual (and perhaps beyond when one includes sex with aliens as in Katy Perry’s E.T.). There have been at least two cases of semantic narrowing. The language used to describe sex in music has changed, and the references to sex partners have become less personal and less individualized.
5.0 Future Research

This research could be strengthened by having an independent reader around to corroborate the sexual reference counts and classifications; a system of checking inter-coder reliability guarantees better results. To create even stronger research, more readers could be employed to find these sexual references. In section 3.0, I posited the hypothesis that there is the possibility of a self-supporting cycle. To test (or possible strengthen) that hypothesis the data would require at more data and overt statistical analysis.

I used sources like Urban Dictionary to find slang meanings of phrases in newer songs, but my slang sources did not go back to the 1960s so it is probable that some slang sexual references were missed in my categorization of the earlier songs. Further research should be done in pursuit of understanding the sexual references from 1960.

Something that has interested me, but would require many more resources than were available to me, would be to conduct this study cross-culturally. Most European nations boast a much more sexually open culture; it would be fascinating to see if there has been the same dramatic increase in sexual references over the same time period.

6.0 Conclusions

This study supports the perception that there has been an increase in the number and variety of sexual references in the lyrics of popular music, but it also finds that recently (in the last five years) there has been a moderate decrease. It also suggests the idea that there has been a continuous linear upward in the total number of sexual references is too simple, given the low r-squared value. In the results section, I discussed the possibility of there being a cycle of increases and decreases, following a polynomial pattern, with an overall upward trend. There are a couple of possible explanations for
why this pattern would have emerged. For example, the need to be cutting edge is driving artists to push boundaries. When the use of sexual references is rare it means using sexual references, and when sexual references have saturated the music world it means not using sexual references. There was a legal change in 1985, which allowed artists to use explicit language in their lyrics (as long as a label is affixed to the song); this opened up a whole new world of sexual references to be used, possibly driving the much larger increase in the early 2000s. Prior to this law, artists had to work with much narrower bounds to create sexual references; this law gave artists access to a hugely greater number of sexual references, which permitted them to use a wider variety of references more often. The possible downward trend in the data after 2006 could thus be explained by the music world’s need to remain cutting edge after they’ve oversaturated themselves with sex.

There have been a series of qualitative trends over the last 51 years. First, there has been a shift toward more violence in sexual references. In the 1990s, the number of terms referring to violent acts which acquired sexual meaning sky-rocketed. Second, there has been a significant depersonalization of sexual references (i.e. the trend away from the naming of the sex partner being referred to toward plural impersonal terms of reference). These qualitative results are indicative of a change in the view of sexual partners. As was discussed earlier, lyrics reflect and affect society in a cyclical manner. As music deindividuates and depersonalizes sex, so does society. This could indicate that

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14 This also fits with the Super-Peer Theory (Section 1.1), which claims that music is mimicking culture, which is in turn mimicking music, which leads to music mimicking the altered culture.
we are devaluing sexual partner and upwardly valuing sexual intercourse; we are talking more about the sex acts and less about the partner.

There is still a lot of research left to do, but what this does show is that the change in the language and evolution of sexual references in music is much more complex and varied than what has been claimed in the sociological and psychological literature (as well as that in the popular media) and interwoven with cultural change, like all linguistic change.
Works Cited


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http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=fruit+basket


Atlanta: Mr. Collipark, Santa Monica: Interscope Records. (2007).
Appendix 1: Corpus

1960
1. El Paso: Marty Robbins
2. Running Bear: Johnny Preston
3. The Theme from a Summer Place: Percy Faith
4. Puppy Love: Paul Anka (2)
5. Stuck on You: Elvis Presley
6. Cathy’s Clown: The Everly Brothers
7. Everybody’s Somebody’s Fool: Connie Francis
8. I’m Sorry: Brenda Lee
9. It’s Now or Never: Elvis Presley
10. My Heart Has a Mind of Its Own: Connie Francis
11. Save the Last Dance for Me: The Drifters
12. Are You Lonesome Tonight?: Elvis Presley

1961
1. Wonderland by Night: Bert Kaempfert (2)
2. Will You Love Me Tomorrow: The Shirells
3. Pony Time: Chubby Checker
4. Blue Moon: The Marcels
5. Runaway: Del Shannon
6. Running Scarde: Roy Orbison
7. Quarter to Three: Gary U.S. Bonds
8. Tossin’ and Turnin’: Bobby Lewis
9. Michael: The Highwaymen
10. Take Good Care of My Baby: Bobby Vee
11. Big Bad John: Jimmy Dean
12. Please Mr. Postman: The Marvelettes (2)

1962
1. The Lion Sleeps Tonight: The Tokens
2. Peppermint Twist – Part 1: Joey Dee
3. Duke of Earl: Gene Chandler
4. Don’t Break the Heart That Loves You: Connie Francis
5. Soldier Boy: The Shirelles
6. I Can’t Stop Loving You: Ray Charles
7. The Stripper: David Rose
8. Roses Are Red (My Love): Bobby Vinton
9. Sheila: Tommy Roe
10. Sherry: The 4 Seasons
11. He’s a Rebel: The Crystals
12. Big Girls Don’t Cry: The 4 Seasons

1963
1. Telstar: The Tornadoes
2. Walk Right In: The Rooftop Singers
3. Walk Like a Man: The 4 Seasons
4. He’s So Fine: The Chiffons
5. I Will Follow Him: Little Peggy March
6. It’s My Party: Lesley Gore
7. Easier Said Than Done: The Essex
8. So Much in Love: The Tymes
10. Blue Velvet: Bobby Vinton
11. Sugar Shack: The Fireballs
12. I’m Leaving It Up to You: Dale & Grace

1964

1. There! I’ve Said it Again: Bobby Vinton
2. I Want to Hold Your Hand: The Beatles
3. She Loves You: The Beatles (2)
4. Can’t Buy Me Love: The Beatles
5. Hello, Dolly!: Louis Armstrong (2)
6. Chapel of Love: The Dixie Cups
7. I Get Around: The Beach Boys
8. A Hard Day’s Night: The Beatles
9. The House of the rising Sun: The Animals
10. Oh, Pretty Woman: Roy Orbison
11. Baby Love: The Supremes
12. Ringo: Lorna Greene

1965

1. I Feel Fine: The Beatles
2. You’ve Lost That Lovin’ Feeling: The Righteous Brothers
3. My Girl: The Temptations
4. Stop! In the Name of Love: The Supremes
5. Mrs. Brown You’ve Got a Lovely Daughter: Herman’s Hermits
6. Help Me, Rhonda: The Beach Boys
7. I Can’t Help Myself: Four Tops
8. I’m Henry VIII, I Am: Herman’s Hermits
9. Help!: The Beatles
10. Hang On Sloopy: The McCoys
12. Turn! Turn! Turn!: The Byrds

1966

1. The Sounds of Silence: Simon & Garfunkel
2. My Love: Petula Clark
3. The Ballad of the Green Beret: SSgt Barry Sadler
4. 19th Nervous Breakdown (2): The Rolling Stones
5. Monday, Monday: Mamas & The Papas
6. When a Man Loves a Woman: Percy Sledge
7. Strangers in the Night: Frank Sinatra
8. Wild Thing: The Troggs
9. Sunshine Superman: Donovan
10. Cherish: The Association
11. Lost Train to Clarksville: The Monkees
12. Winchester Cathedral: The New Vaudeville Band

1967
1. I’m a Believer: The Monkees
2. Georgy Girl (2): The Seekers
3. Ruby Tuesday: The Rolling Stones
4. Happy Together: The Turtles
5. Somethin’ Stupid: Nancy Sinatra, Frank Sinatra
6. Respect: Aretha Franklin
7. Windy: The Association
8. Light My Fire: The Doors
9. Ode to Billie Joe: Bobbie Gentry
10. The Letter: The Box Tops
11. To Sir with Love: Lulu
12. The Daydream Believer: The Monkees

1968
1. Hello Goodbye: The Beatles
2. Green Tambourine: The Lemon Pipers
3. Love is Blue: Paul Mauriat
4. (Sittin’ On) The Dock of the Bay: Otis Redding
5. Honey: Bobby Goldsboro
6. Mrs. Robinson: Simon & Garfunkel
7. This Guy’s In Love With You: Herb Alpert
8. Hello, I Love You: The Doors
9. The People Got To Be Free: The Rascals
10. Hey Jude: The Beatles
11. Those Were the Days (2): Mary Hopkin
12. Love Child: The Supremes

1969
1. I Heard it Through the Grapevine: Marvin Gaye
2. Crimson and Clover: Tommy James
3. Everyday People: Sly & The Family Stone
4. Dizzy: Tommy Roe
5. Aquarius/Let the Sunshine In: The 5th Dimension
7. Love Theme from Romeo & Juliet: Henry Mancini
8. In the Year 2525: Zager & Evans
9. Honky Tonk Women: The Rolling Stones
10. Sugar, Sugar: The Archies
11. Suspicious Minds: Elvis Presley
12. Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye: Steam

1970
1. Raindrops Keep Fallin’ on My Head: B.J. Thomas
2. Venus: The Shocking Blue
3. Bridge over Troubled Water: Simon & Garfunkel
4. Let It Be (2): The Beatles
5. ABC: The Jacksons
6. Everything is Beautiful: Ray Stevens
7. The Love You Save: The Jacksons
8. (They Long to Be) Close to You: Carpenters
9. War: Edwin Starr
10. Ain’t No Mountain High Enough: Diano Ross
11. I’ll Be There: The Jacksons
12. I Think I Love You: The Partridge Family

1971
1. Isn’t It a Pity: George Harrison
2. Knock Three Times: Tony Orlando
3. One Bad Apple: The Osmonds
4. Just My Imagination: The Temptations
5. Joy to the World: Three Dog Night
6. Brown Sugar: The Rolling Stones
7. I Feel the Earth Move: Carole King
8. How Can You Mend a Broken Heart: Bee Gees
9. Uncle Albert/Admiral Halsey: Paul McCartney
10. Maggie May: Rod Stewart
11. Gypsys, Tramps & Thieves: Cher
12. Family Affair: Sly & The Family Stone

1972
1. Brand New Key: Melanie
2. American Pie – Parts I & II: Don McLean
3. Without You: Nilsson
4. A Horse With No Name: America
5. The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face: Roberta Flack
6. I’ll Take You There: The Staple Singers
7. Song Sung Blue: Neil Diamond
8. Alone Again (Naturally): Gilbert O’Sullivan
9. Long Cool Woman (2): The Hollies
10. Baby Don’t Get Hooked On Me: Mac Davis
11. I Can See Clearly Now: Johnny Nash
12. Papa Was a Rollin’ Stone: The Temptations

1973
1. You’re So Vain: Carly Simon
2. Crocodile Rock: Elton John
3. Killing Me Softly with His Song: Roberta Flack
4. The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia: Vicki Lawrence
5. Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree: Tony Orlando
6. My Love: Paul McCartney
7. Will it Go Round in Circles: Billy Preston
8. The Morning After: Maureen McGovern
9. Brother Louie: Stories
10. Half-Breed: Cher
11. Midnight Train to Georgia: Gladys Knight & The Pips
12. Tops of the World: Carpenters
1974
1. Time in a Bottle: Jim Croce
2. The Way We Were: Barbra Streisand
3. Seasons in the Sun: Terry Jacks
4. Hooked on a Feeling: Blue Swede
5. The Loco-Motion: Grand Funk Railroad
6. The Streak: Ray Stevens
7. Rock the Boat: The Hues Corporation
8. Annie’s Song: John Denver
9. (You’re) Having My Baby: Paul Anka
10. I Honestly Love You: Olivia Newton-John
11. You Haven’t Done Nothin: Stevie Wonder
12. Kung Fu Fighting: Carl Douglas

1975
1. Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds: Elton John
2. Laughter in the Rain: Neil Sedaka
3. Have You Never Been Mellow: Olivia Newton-John
4. Lovin’ You: Minnie Riperton
5. He Don’t Love You (Like I Love You): Tony Orlando
6. Thank God I’m a Country Boy: John Denver
7. Love Will Keep Us Together: Captain & Tennille
8. One of These Nights: Eagles
9. Rhinestone Cowboy: Glen Campbell
10. Fame: David Bowie
11. Island Girl: Elton John

1976
1. Saturday Night: Bay City Rollers
2. 50 Ways to Leave Your Lover: Paul Simon
4. Disco Lady: Johnnie Taylor
5. Let Your Love Flow: Bellamy Brothers
6. Love Hangover: Diana Ross
7. Silly Love Songs: Paul McCartney
8. Don’t Go Breaking My Heart: Elton John, Kiki Dee
9. You Should Be Dancing: Bee Gees
10. Play That Funky Music: Wild Cherry
11. Rock’n Me: Steve Miller Band
12. Tonight’s the Night: Rod Stewart

1977
1. You Don’t Have to Be a Star (To Be in My Heart) (2): Marilyn McCoo
2. Torn Between Two Lovers: Mary MacGregor
3. Love Theme from a Start Is Born: Barbra Streisand
5. Hotel California: Eagles
6. Sir Duke: Stevie Wonder
7. Gonna Fly Now: Bill Conti
8. I Just Want to Be Your Everything: Andy Gibb
9. Best of My Love: The Emotions
10. Star Wars Theme/Cantina Band: Meco
11. You Light up My Life: Debby Boone
12. Don’t It Make My Brown Eyes Blue (2): Crystal Gayle

1978
1. How Deep Is Your Love: Bee Gees
2. Stayin’ Alive: Bee Gees
3. (Love Is) Thicker Than Water: Andy Gibb
4. Night Fever: Bee Gees
5. If I Can’t Have You (2): Yvonne Elliman
6. Too Much, Too Little, Too Late: Johnny Mathis, Deniece Williams
7. Shadow Dancing: Andy Gibb
8. Miss You: The Rolling Stones
9. Grease: Frankie Valli
10. Kiss You All Over: Exile
11. You Needed Me: Anne Murray
12. You Don’t Bring Me Flowers: Barbra Streisand, Neil Diamond

1979
1. Too Much Heaven: Bee Gees
2. Le Freak: Chic
3. Do Ya Think I’m Sexy: Rod Stewart
4. I Will Survive: Gloria Gaynor
5. Reunited: Peaches & Herb
6. Hot Stuff: Donna Summer
7. Ring My Bell: Anita Ward
8. Bad Girls: Donna Summer
9. My Sharona: The Knack
10. Sad Eyes: Robert John
11. Pop Muzik: M
12. No More Tears (Enough is Enough): Barbra Streisand, Donna Summer

1980
1. Please Don’t Go: KC & The Sunshine Band
2. Rock With You: Michael Jackson
3. Crazy Little Thing Called Love: Queen
4. Another Brick in the Wall: Pink Floyd
5. Call Me: Blondie
6. Funkytown: Lipps, Inc.
7. Coming Up (Live At Glasgow): Paul McCartney
9. Upside Down: Diana Ross
10. Another One Bites the Dust: Queen
11. Woman in Love: Barbra Streisand
12. Lady: Kenny Rogers

1981
1. (Just Like) Starting Over: John Lennon
2. Celebration: Kool & The Gang
3. I Love A Rainy Night: Eddie Rabbitt
4. Rapture: Blondie
5. Morning Train (Nine to Five): Sheena Easton
6. Bette Davis Eyes: Kim Carnes
7. All Those Years Ago (2): George Harrison
8. Jessie’s Girl: Rick Springfield
9. Endless Love: Diana Ross, Lionel Richie
10. Arthur’s Theme (2): Christopher Cross
11. Private Eyes: Daryl Hall & John Oates
12. Physical: Olivia Newton-John

**1982**

1. Waiting for a Girl Like You (2): Foreigner
2. Centerfold: The J. Geils Band
3. Open Arms (2): Journey
4. I Love Rock ‘N Roll: Joan Jett & The Blackhearts
5. Chariots of Fire – Titles (2): Vangelis
6. Ebony and Ivory: Paul McCartney, Stevie Wonder
7. Don’t You Want Me: The Human League
8. Eye Of The Tiger: Survivor
9. Abacadabra: Steve Miller Band
10. Jack & Diane: John Cougar Mellencamp
11. Up Where We Belong: Joe Cocker, Jennifer Warnes
12. Truly: Lionel Richie

**1983**

1. Maneater: Daryl Hall & John Oates
2. Africa: Toto
3. Billie Jean: Michael Jackson
4. Do You Really Want to Hurt Me (2): Culture Club
5. Beat It: Michael Jackson
6. Flashdance… What a Feeling: Irene Cara
7. Electric Avenue (2): Eddy Grant
8. Every Breath You Take: The Police
9. Sweet Dreams: Eurythmics
10. Total Eclipse of the Heart
11. Islands in the Stream: Kenny Rogers

**1984**

1. Say Say Say: Paul McCartney and Michael Jackson
2. Karma Chameleon: Culture Club
3. Jump: Van Halen
4. Footloose: Kenny Loggins
5. Against All Odds (2): Phil Collins
6. Let’s Hear it for the Boy: Deniece Williams
7. When Doves Cry: Prince and the Revolution
9. What’s Love Got to Do With It: Tina Turner
10. Let’s Go Crazy: Prince and the Revolution
11. Caribbean Queen: Billy Ocean
12. Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go: Wham!

1985
1. Like a Virgin: Madonna
2. I Want to Know What Love Is: Foreigner
3. Careless Whisper: Wham!
4. One More Night: Phil Collins
5. We Are the World: USA For Africa
6. Everything She Wants: Wham!
7. Sussudio: Phil Collins
8. Shout: Tears for Fears
9. St Elmo’s Fire (Man in Motion): John Parr
10. Money for Nothing: Dire Straits
11. Part-Time Lover: Stevie Wonder
12. Broken Wings: Mr. Mister

1986
1. Say You, Say Me: Lionel Richie
2. That’s What Friends Are For: Dionne
3. Kyrie: Mr. Mister
4. Rock Me Amadeus: Falco
5. Addicted to Love: Robert Palmer
6. Live to Tell: Madonna
7. There’ll Be Sad Songs: Billy Ocean
8. Glory of Love: Peter Cetera
9. Venus: Bananarama
10. Stuck With You: Huey Lewis
11. True Colors: Cyndi Lauper
12. The Next Time I Fall: Peter Cetera with Amy Grant

1987
1. Walk Like An Egyptian: Bangles
2. Open Your Heart: Madonna
3. Livin On A Prayer: Bon Jovi
4. Nothing’s Gonna Stop Us Now: Starship
5. (I Just) Died In Your Arms: Cutting Crew
6. You Keep Me Hangin On: Kim Wilde
7. I Wanna Dance With Somebody: Whitney Houston
8. Shakedown: Bob Seger
9. La Bamba: Los Lobos
10. Didn’t We Almost Have It All: Whitney Houston
11. I Think We’re Alone Now: Tiffany
12. Heaven Is A Place On Earth: Belinda Carlisle

1988
1. Faith: George Michael
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>1. Black or White</td>
<td>Michael Jackson</td>
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<td>2. Don’t Let the Sun Go Down on Me</td>
<td>George Michael</td>
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<td>3. To Be With You</td>
<td>Mr. Big</td>
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<td>4. Save the Best for Last</td>
<td>Vanessa Williams</td>
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<td>5. Jump</td>
<td>Kris Kross</td>
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<td>6. Under the Bridge</td>
<td>Red Hot Chili Peppers</td>
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<td>8. This Used to Be My Playground</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
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<td>Boyz II Men</td>
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<td>10. Sometimes Love Just Ain’t Enough</td>
<td>Patty Smyth</td>
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<td>The Heights</td>
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<td>12. I Will Always Love You</td>
<td>Whitney Houston</td>
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<td>1. Rump Shaker</td>
<td>Wreckx-N-Effect</td>
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<td>2. If I Ever Fall in Love</td>
<td>Shai</td>
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<td>3. A Whole New World</td>
<td>Peabo Bryson</td>
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<td>5. Freak Me</td>
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<td>Janet Jackson</td>
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<td>9. Dreamlover</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
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<td>10. Right Here (Human Nature)</td>
<td>SWV</td>
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<td>Meat Loaf</td>
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<td>12. Again</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>1. Hero</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
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<td>2. All For Love</td>
<td>Bryan Adams/Rod Stewart/Sting</td>
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<td>3. The Power of Love</td>
<td>Celine Dion</td>
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<td>5. Bumb N Grind</td>
<td>R. Kelly</td>
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<td>Warren G</td>
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<td>8. Stay (I Missed You)</td>
<td>Lisa Loeb</td>
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<td>9. I’ll Make Love to You</td>
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<td>10. Endless Love</td>
<td>Luther Vandross</td>
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<td>11. All I Wanna Do</td>
<td>Sheryl Crow</td>
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<td>2. Another Night</td>
<td>Real McCoy</td>
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10. The First Night: Monica
11. One Week (2): Barenaked Ladies
12. I’m Your Angel: R. Kelly

1999
1. Nobody’s Supposed to Be Here: Deborah Cox
2. … Baby One More Time: Britney Spears
3. Angel of Mine: Monica
4. Believe: Cher
5. No Scrubs: TLC
6. Livin La Vida Loca: Ricky Martin
7. If You Had My Love: Jennifer Lopez
8. Genie In A Bottle: Christina Aguilera
9. Bailamos: Enrique Iglesias
10. Unpretty: TLC
11. Smooth: Santana Featuring Rob Thomas
12. Back At One (2): Brian McKnight

2000
1. I Wanna Love You Forever (3): Jessica Simpson
2. I Knew I Loved You: Savage Garden
3. Amazed: Lonestar
4. Say My Name: Destiny’s Child
5. Maria Maria: Santana Featuring The Product G
6. You Sang to Me (2): Marc Anthony
7. Be With You: Enrique Iglesias
8. It’s Gonna Be Me: N Sync
9. Doesn’t Really Matter: Janet
10. Music: Madonna
11. Come On Over Baby: Christina Aguilera
12. Independent Women Part I: Destiny’s Child

2001
1. He Loves U Not (2): Dream
2. It Wasn’t Me: Shaggy Featuring Ricardo RikRok Ducent
3. Stutter: Joe Featuring Mystikal
4. Butterfly: Crazy Town
5. All For You: Janet
6. Lady Marmalade: Christina Aguilera, Lil’ Kim, Mya & Pink
7. U Remind Me: Usher
8. Bootylicious: Destiny’s Child
9. Fallin’: Alicia Keys
10. I’m Real (2): Jennifer Lopez
11. Family Affair: Mary J. Blige
12. U Got It Bad (2): Usher

2002
1. How You Remind Me: Nickelback
2. Always On Time (3): Ja Rule featuring Ashanti
3. Ain’t It Funny: Jennifer Lopez featuring Ja Rule
4. What’s Luv? Fat Joe featuring Ashanti
5. Foolish: Ashanti
6. I Need a Girl (Part One) (2): P. Diddy featuring Usher & Loon
7. Hot In Herre: Nelly
8. Complicated (2): Avril Lavigne
9. Dilemma: Nelly featuring Kelly Rowland
10. A Moment Like This: Kelly Clarkson
11. Lose Yourself (2): Eminem
12. Work It (2): Missy Misdemeanor Elliott

2003

3. All I Have: Jennifer Lopez featuring LL Cool J
4. In Da Club: 50 Cent
5. Get Busy (2): Sean Paul
6. 21 Questions: 50 Cent featuring Nate Dogg
7. This Is the Night: Clay Aiken
8. Crazy in Love: Beyonce featuring Jay-Z
9. Shake Ya Tailfeather: Nelly, P. Diddy & Murphy Lee
10. Baby Boy: Beyonce featuring Sean Paul
11. Stand Up (2): Ludacris featuring Shawnna
12. Hey Ya! (2): OutKast

2004

2. Slow Jamz (3): Twista featuring Kanye West & Jamie Foxx
3. Yeah!: Usher featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris
4. One Call Away (2): Chingy featuring J. Weav
5. I Don’t Wanna Know (2): Mario Winans featuring Enya & P. Diddy
6. Burn: Usher
7. Confessions Part II (2): Usher
8. Slow Motion: Juvenile featuring Soulja Slim
9. Lean Back: Terror Squad
10. Goodies: Ciara featuring Petey Pablo
11. My Boo: Usher and Alicia Keys
12. Drop It Like It’s Hot (2): Snoop Dogg featuring Pharrell

2005

1. Let Me Love You: Mario
2. 1, 2 Step (2): Ciara featuring Missy Elliott
3. Candy Shop: 50 Cent featuring Olivia
4. Boulevard of Broken Dreams (2): Green Day
5. Hollaback Girl: Gwen Stefani
6. We Belong Together: Mariah Carey
7. Inside Your Heaven: Carrie Underwood
8. Pon de Replay (2): Rihanna
9. Don’t Cha (2): The Pussycat Dolls featuring Busta Rhymes
10. Gold Digger: Kanye West featuring Jamie Foxx
2006

1. Don’t Forget About Us: Mariah Carey
2. Check On It: Beyonce featuring Slim Thug
3. You’re Beautiful (2): James Blunt
4. Temperature: Sean Paul
5. Bad Day: Daniel Powter
6. Ridin’: Chamillionare featuring Krayzie Bone
7. Do I Make You Proud: Taylor Hicks
8. Promiscuous: Nelly Furtado featuring Timbaland
9. London Bridge: Fergie
10. SexyBack: Justin Timberlake
11. Money Maker: Ludacris featuring Pharrell
12. I Wanna Love You: Akon featuring Snoop Dogg

2007

1. Irreplaceable: Beyonce
2. This Ain’t A Scene, It’s An Arms Race (2): Fall Out Boy
3. What Goes Around... Comes Around: Justin Timberlake
4. Don’t Matter: Akon
5. Girlfriend: Avril Lavigne
6. Makes Me Wonder: Maroon5
7. Umbrella: Rihanna featuring Jay-Z
8. Hey There Delilah: Plain White Tees
9. Beautiful Girls: Sean Kingston
10. Crank That (Soulja Boy): Soulja Boy Tell’em
11. Kiss Kiss (2): Chris Brown featuring T-Pain
12. No One: Alicia Keys

2008

1. Low: Flo Rida featuring T-Pain
2. Apologize (3): Timbaland featuring One Republic
3. With You (2): Chris Brown
4. Bleeding Love: Leona Lewis
5. Lollipop: Lil Wayne featuring Static Major
6. The Time of My Life (3): David Cook
7. I Kissed a Girl: Katy Perry
8. Take a Bow (2): Rihanna
10. So What (2): Pink
12. Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It) (2): Beyonce

2009

2. My Life Would Suck Without You: Kelly Clarkson
3. Right Round: Flo Rida featuring Ke$ha
4. Poker Face: Lady GaGa
5. Boom Boom Pow: The Black Eyed Peas  
6. Blame It (3): Jamie Foxx featuring T-Pain  
7. I Gotta Feeling (2): The Black Eyed Peas  
8. Best I Ever Had (2): Drake  
10. Run This Town (2): Jay-Z, Rihanna & Kanye West  
11. Fireflies: Owl City  
12. Empire State of Mind: Jay-Z + Alicia Keys  

2010  
1. Tik Tok: Ke$ha  
2. Today Was a Fairytale (2): Taylor Swift  
3. Imma Be: The Black Eyed Peas  
4. Rude Boy: Rihanna  
5. Nothin’ On You: B.o.B. featuring Bruno Mars  
6. OMG: Usher featuring will.i.am  
7. California Gurls: Katy Perry featuring Snoop Dogg  
8. Love the Way You Lie: Eminem featuring Rihanna  
9. Dynamite (2): Taio Cruz  
10. Just the Way You Are: Bruno Mars  
11. Like a G6: Far*East Movement featuring Cataracs & Dev  
12. Only Girl (In the World): Rihanna  

2011  
1. Firework: Katy Perry  
2. Grenade: Bruno Mars  
3. Born This Way: Lady GaGa  
5. Rolling in the Deep (2): Adele  
7. Party Rock Anthem (3): LMFAO featuring Lauren Bennett& GoonRock  
8. Last Fridy Night (T.G.I.G) (2): Katy Perry  
9. She Will (3): Lil Wayne featuring Drake  
10. Moves Like Jagger: Maroon5 featuring Christina Aguilera  
11. Someone Like You: Adele  
12. We Found Love: Rihanna featuring Calvin Harris
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Approved and attached!

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