

Rap and Modern Love: The Expression of Intimate Masculinity in Mainstream Rap

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Abstract

To enliven inquiry into the intimate lives of black men I conducted a qualitative, thematic analysis of the non-hypermasculine expressions of black men toward women in mainstream rap songs. The hypermasculine black man, often construed as hypersexual, aggressive, violent and misogynistic, fuels the multibillion-dollar hip-hop industry (Boyd 2002, 2004; Jeffries 2011), leading some scholars to disparage hip-hop for demeaning black men and inciting youth deviance (Forman 2013; Malton 2010). Informed by a critical reading of Hip-Hop Studies, the Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities (CSMM) and Modern Love Studies, I argue that the association of black men with hypermasculinity has its roots in longstanding race and gender prejudices (hooks 1992, 2004; Wallace 1978). In addition, I argue that this prejudice is actively – albeit inadvertently - maintained in the CSMM, much of which employs Raewyn Connell’s (1987, 1995, 2005) hegemonic masculinity theory (HMT) and which represents black men as inherently marginalized as they strive to attain the social status of powerful white men. To broaden the scope of these representations, I conducted a thematic analysis of mainstream rap songs (N=22) by black male rappers to explore the question: How do black male rap artists use non-hypermasculine expressive strategies to articulate their relationships with women? The directed and derived analysis results show that 60% of the songs displayed non-hypermasculine expressions including, admiration, heartbreak, infatuation, love, suicidal ideations and vulnerabilities. Considering my findings, I coined the concept of Intimate Masculinity that I argue, can serve as a working framework to investigate and signify the emotional diversity of black men.

Keywords: rap music, black masculinity, hypermasculinity, intimate masculinity, heterosexual relationships

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Introduction

The intimate lives of black men are often overlooked by scholars in the social sciences, particularly their emotional expressions of vulnerability, fear, loneliness, and love (Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001). By probing the question of how black male rappers use non-hypermasculine expressive strategies to articulate their relationships with women, I seek to shed light on the emotional existences of an influential group of black men to counter the stereotype that they are hypermasculine beings bent on aggression, violence, domination and indifference towards women. Since the mainstreaming of gangsta rap, hip-hop has become an international, multibillion-dollar industry fueled by the representation of black hypermasculinity: the most globally recognizable image of black men (Belle 2014; Bryant 2003; Boyd 2002, 2004; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Collins 2004; Jeffries 2011; LaFrance et al. 2016; Neilson 2010; Pinn 1996; Powell 2011; Randolph 2006; Sajjani 2014; Saucier and Woods 2014; Westhoff 2011).

The international media coverage of black men as aggressive, violent, misogynistic and hypersexual has resulted in the genre being criticized for degrading black manhood and polluting the moral sensibilities of its fans (Asante 2008; hooks 1992, 2004; Forman 2013; Jamison 2015; Jordanna 2010; Malton 2010; Wallace 1978). Yet despite the hypermasculinity that often characterizes mainstream rap, I argue that hip-hop is a medium with unique potential to disseminate constructive representations of black male emotionality and expressivity. This potential has yet to be appreciated or, harnessed in a Western context because I argue, alongside Boyd (2002), Dagbovie (2005), hooks (1992, 2004), Kitwana (2004, 2005), Powell (2011), Price (2005), Wallace (1978) and White (2011) that the social fabric is riddled with racial prejudices and gender norms that idealize white men.

In an effort to contribute to the existing scholarly literature, this work seeks to problematize the essentialization of hypermasculinity associated with black men in hip-hop, as well as challenge the marginalization of black masculinity within the burgeoning field of what is now known as Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities (CSMM); paying particular attention to Raewyn Connell's hegemonic masculinity theory (HMT) and Schrock and Schwalbe's manhood acts theory (MAT). This study is grounded in CSMM for it conceptualizes masculinity as multiple within a socially constructed gender category defined by differing relationships to privilege (Carrigan and

Connell 1995; Connell 1987, 1995, 2005; Brannon 1976; Brod 1987; Kimmel and Messner 2013; Schrock and Schwalbe 2009; Vaccaro 2011). HMT offers a framework to unveil the inequalities inflicted on women and non-white and non-gender binary men by patriarchy, therefore conceiving of multiple masculinities in a hierarchical structure based on a man's access to power (Connell 1987, 1995, 2005).

Connell (1987, 1995, 2005) argues that every society has a hegemonic, or idealized, masculinity that subordinates and marginalizes less socially ascendant masculinities. In the West, she claims that the typical hegemonic man is white and displays hypermasculine characteristics that include sexual prowess, aggression, heterosexuality, emotional stoicism and socio-economic influence (7-9). Black men are considered members of the marginalized group striving, yet unable, to achieve hegemony because of their lack of racialized whiteness. To provide black men with more agency, in an updated conceptualization of HMT, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) argue that black men can adopt a "protest masculinity" to counter white hegemony. Insofar as they are "marginalized ethnic men," black men can -- in their words -- "embody claims to power" (848). The authors argue, moreover, that black men are met with a range of societal responses ranging from "oppression – to cultural celebration – and political representation" (848). However, they maintain that black men continue to "lack [...] the economic resources and institutional authority [of their white counterparts] (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 848)." Therefore, I assert that the application of the HMT results in racially insensitive conceptual tools that conceive of black men as inherently marginalized, whose life ambitions consist mainly of striving to attain, as Connell puts it, the revered social status of hegemonic white men.

Although Connell's notion of protest masculinity is intended to offer greater agency to "the marginalized," it locks black men as individuals into a category that consists of economic and social desperation. Schrock and Schwalbe's (2009) MAT can be seen to follow the same formula by presenting black men as occupying a subordinate position to their white counterparts because of a lower socioeconomic status (288-289). In MAT, all men are presented as performing behaviours and practices to elicit deference from others and, most notably, "asserting and resisting control, at the expense of women, to be considered men - the most privileged and dominant position within society" (278-280). Therefore, the working-class-poor, disproportionately populated by black men, have the most unlikely chance of performing successful manhood acts, thereby

compensating with exaggerated expressions of aggression and other problematic methods of crafting a powerful masculine persona (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009:288-289).

Both theories fail to probe the multiplicity of the black male existence and critically engage with the implications of their racialized identities. By employing an intersectionality framework, I highlight that these theories simplify the complex forms of oppression experienced by black men as they relate to race, class and gender (Berhanu et al., 2014; Choo and Ferree 2010; Collins 2015; Lafrance et al., 2019). As coined by black feminist and legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw (Berhanu et al., 2014; Choo and Ferree 2010; Collins 2015), the intersectional lens is essential to ensure that black male experiences are not simplified. Furthermore, I add that it prevents black men from being reduced to having nothing but hypermasculine aspirations and, most notably, an insatiable desire to emulate their white male counterparts. The formulation presented by HMT and MAT detrimentally, albeit inadvertently, perpetuates and legitimizes the hierarchy of white male superiority and black male subordination ingrained within the western social fabric by white colonizers (Collins 2006; hooks 1992, 2004 Kimmel and Messner 2013; Jacobson 2015; Nyawalo 2013; Jacobson 2015; Pinn 1999; Smedley 2007; Wallace 1978). This, I will show, is a dichotomy that has tended to be construed by scholars as a conflict between the white patriarch and the black brute (hooks 2004; Malton 2010; Powell 2011; Wallace 1978). Hence, I propose that moving away from HMT and similar frameworks in the field of CSMM in order to reveal the intimate experiences and existences of black men is essential.

So why, exactly, should we study the intimate lives of heterosexual men within hip-hop? And why study black male emotional expression as it relates to women? There are various reasons for this. First, rap lyrics are one of the few avenues afforded to black men to express themselves (Belle 2014; Nyawalo 2013). Hip-hop, as a musical movement, emerged in the 1970s South Bronx, New York, by black male street poets. The art of rapping is rooted in the experiences of black men, in first person prose (Belle 2014; Bryant 2003; Nyawalo 2013), as a means to contest the injustice of the American state that barred black peoples from political participation. In this way, rap emerged as a way of having black men's concerns acknowledged by the state in the hopes of acquiring economic stability (Belle 2014; Boyd 2002; Forman 2013; Jamison 2006; Jenkins 2006; Kitwana 2005; Pinn 1996; Price 2005; Randolph 2006; Rose 1994; Westhoff 2011).

Second, given the roots of hip-hop within the United States, created by African American men, the genre provides insight into the North American black male experience (Belle 2014; Boyd 2002; Bryant 2003; Collins 2004; Jeffries 2011; Nyawalo 2013; Powell 2011 Swedenburg 2004; Westhoff 2011; White 2011). It is informed by the racial prejudice of the American-nation state rooted in the transatlantic slave trade, white supremacy and patriarchy. It is, moreover, a response by black men -- to being seen as black brutes and treated as second-class citizens (Boyd 2002; Collins 2004; hooks 1994, 2004; Wallace 1978). Rap can thus be seen to shed light on the racial inequalities (Craig 2016; Chaney 2009; Herd 2015; Kistler and Lee 2001; Randolph, Swan and Rowe 2017) confronted by black communities.

Third, the genre is organized around expressions of the male-female relationship (Craig 2016; Chaney 2009; Herd 2015; Kistler and Lee 2001; Randolph, Swan and Rowe 2017). Indeed, although it is argued that demeaning women via misogyny and objectification is the most prevalent dynamic within mainstream rap (Avery et al. 2017; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Craig 2016; Graham 2016; Hamdi and Payne 2009; Heitzeg 2015; Herd 2015; Jacobson 2015; Jamison 2006; Kistler and Lee 2001; Lafrance et al. 2016; Neilson 2010; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Pinn 1999; Rose 2008; Yaphet 2008), it is also a hub for expressions of other nuances of heterosexual relationship dynamics, such as the exchange and production of love, sexuality, marriage and companionship (Craig 2016; Chaney 2009; Herd 2015; Kistler and Lee 2001; Randolph, Swan and Rowe 2017). As such, it is worthy of closer inspection.

Fourth, by examining hip-hop, this study is dissecting the representation of black hypermasculinity at one of its most perpetuated sources (Avery et al. 2017; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Craig 2016; Graham 2016; Hamdi and Payne 2009; Heitzeg 2015; Herd 2015; Jacobson 2015; Jamison 2006; Kistler and Lee 2001; Lafrance et al. 2016; Neilson 2010; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Pinn 1999; Rose 2008; Yaphet 2008). The hypermasculine black man is consumed internationally as “the gangsta” in the mass media, products, fashion and other commodities (hooks 1992; Powell 2011; Rose 2008). Rap music has become the most popular music genre in the world (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Lafrance et al., 2016, 2017). In this way, hip-hop is a socially significant medium and a culture (Belle 2014; Bryant 2003; Boyd 2002, 2004; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Collins 2004; Jeffries 2011; Lafrance et al. 2016; Neilson 2010; Pinn 1996; Powell 2011; Randolph 2006; Sajjani 2014; Saucier and Woods 2014; Westhoff

2011). Following Swidler's (2001) theory of culture, hip-hop propels "a distinct worldview, skills, habits and values that individuals use to construct their behaviours and ideologies (43, 81-83)."

Fifth, scholars of hip-hop have identified an emerging trend in the genre that diverges from hypermasculinity in mainstream rap through expressions by black men on their experiences with pain (Chaney and Mincey 2014; hooks 1992), crying (Chaney and Mincey 2014), vulnerabilities and insecurities (Lafrance et al., 2016; Tracey and Singh), fear (hooks 2004; Wallace 1978), brotherly love (Hamdi and Payne 2009; Lafrance et al., 2016; Wallace 1978), romantic love and passion (Craig 2016; Herd 2015; Tracey and Singh 2016). The current study explores this presumed shift to determine whether it is evidenced by my study sample on contemporary mainstream rap.

By unveiling the constructive and multi-dimensional representations of black men within hip-hop, so frequently charged with overrepresenting black hypermasculinity, this thesis will demonstrate that diverse representations of black men with emotionally engaged, non-domineering relationships with women exist even if they have yet to be fully uncovered and understood. To achieve this goal, my work proceeds as follows. In the first chapter, "Subverting the Intimate: The White Patriarch's Hypermasculinity and Modern Love," I historicize norms surrounding manhood and heterosexual relationship dynamics in the West by showing how hypermasculinity and the distancing of male emotional expressivity is in large part the product of a patriarchal order perpetuated by white men. I highlight that men repressing their emotions is a modern practise that shifted relationship dynamics from what the existing literature refers to as "passionate" to "romantic", with further shifts to "pure/prosaic" and "confluent" relationships with the advent of the feminist movements. Instead of seeing it as a trait associated with an essentialized black hypermasculinity, I locate hypermasculinity as a western value to highlight that the lyrical content of black male rap artists should be understood as a product of North American masculinity and relationship standards.

In the second chapter, "Black Feminists on the Black Brute and the White Patriarch" I present a black feminist account of the subject positions of black men within North America, particularly as historically subordinated by white men and patriarchal ideals. I compare the white patriarch with the historical regard of black men as black brutes, defined as animalistic, hypersexual and hypermasculine men, that emerged during the transatlantic slave trade by white colonizers. This juxtaposition shows the historical origins of hypermasculinity being attributed to black men,

riddled with racial prejudice yet, its attainment is positioned as the only path for black men to attain agency and social power, echoing the HMT.

In the third chapter, “Globalizing the Black Brute: Hip-Hop, Hypermasculinity and Modern Love,” I present hip-hop, namely the mainstreaming of gangsta rap, as an international force fuelled by the popularity of the black brute, thereby further reinforcing the presumed connection between hypermasculinity and black men. To demonstrate this fallacious presumption, I align the literature on hip-hop that presents black men as sexist, emotionally stoic and materialistic with the literature on modern love. In doing so, I map the qualities of black men in mainstream hip-hop and their treatment of women that align with white patriarchal ideals surrounding hypermasculinity and modern love, including passionate, romantic, pure/prosaic and confluent love.

In the fourth chapter, “Subverting the Black Brute: Alternatives to Hypermasculinity in Mainstream Rap,” I outline the underrepresented resistance in hip-hop against hypermasculinity in the 20th century, going beyond socially conscious rap, where black male and female rappers and like-minded scholars have been unearthing a contemporary and receptive trend towards male expressivity with respect to the male-female relationship. This trend is exemplified by underexplored representations of female dominance, male vulnerability, heartbreak and other nuances within the realm of the intimate.

After presenting a critical overview of the literature from hip-hop studies and modern love studies, I conduct a thematic analysis (N=22) of mainstream rap songs rooted in intersectional thinking. I show that black male expressions in rap cannot be reduced to the pursuit of hegemonic masculinity, white or otherwise. Ultimately, I show that black male emotional expressivity, compassion and admiration for women in rap music is more prevalent and commercially successful than the current scholarship suggests, thus leading me to posit the notion of *intimate masculinity* in order to complexify our understandings of black masculinity in hip hop and beyond.

Literature Review

Subverting the Intimate: The White Patriarch's Hypermasculinity and Modern Love

The Western Separation of *Manhood* from the Intimate – 18th century

The socio-economic structure, morals and ideologies within the West were reconfigured over the course of the Enlightenment period (Lasch 1984: 84). Some of the main changes in this shift from pre-modernity to modernity include, the state secularization from church authority, scientific rationality and individualism (Lasch 1984: 26-29), the gender segregation of labour and the rise of the capitalist-consumer economy (Carstenson and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Lasch 1984; Swidler 2001). These societal shifts altered the male-female relationship, relegating women towards and men away from the intimate (Carstenson and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Lasch 1984; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016). Although the scholarship in this section discusses masculinity and heterosexual relationships from the perspective and experiences of the white and middle-class (Weigel 2016), they provide insight into how devaluing the intimate and celebrating hypermasculinity became a western value. Prior to the 18th century, North America was structured around an agricultural political economy (Giddens 1992; Lasch 1984; Weigel 2016), where white men and women engaged in egalitarian relations, sharing tasks of childrearing, housework, hunting and toiling (Giddens 1992; Lasch 1984; Weigel 2016).

The industrial revolution in 1760 altered this dynamic through a process known as the *separation of spheres*. White men became relegated to the public sphere as *breadwinners*, earning an income as wage-labourers outside of the home. While women were relegated to the private sphere as *caregivers*, domestic-labourers inside of the home (Cartenson and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Ragenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016; Vaccaro 2011). In response, modern science justified this dichotomy by arguing that men and women were biologically different (Brod 1987; Carrigan and Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Schrock and Schwalbe 2009; Smedley 2007). As keepers of the home, women became associated with the management of intimacy including love, affection, and emotional expression coupled with child rearing and other household responsibilities that surround care-giving (Cartenson and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Ragenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016; Vaccaro 2011). The realm of the

“feminine” was created by modern scientists whom argued that emotions and caregiving was a natural product of the female’s reproductive organs and smaller, inferior brains to their male counterparts (Cartenson and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Ragenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016; Vaccaro 2011). Women were thus, too fragile to navigate the social world and thereby their sole purpose was to nurture and to satiate male sexual desires (Cartenson and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Ragenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016; Vaccaro 2011). While, as wage-earning factory workers men became theorized as innately oriented towards pursuing economic gain, being rational, assertive and physically strong, emotionally detached and dominants of their families and society (Cartenson and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Ragenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016; Vaccaro 2011); characteristics that we consider today, as hypermasculine.

The Rise of the White Patriarch & Romantic Love – 18th-19th century

With white men as the sole earners of capital, private property developed out of capitalism to maintain the circulation of wealth and land within a single family (Hill 2012; Illouz 2012; Weigel 2016); a more individualistic model than the agricultural-communal circulation of resources. To further ensure that wealth and land were being passed down to one’s biological children, marriage became institutionalized as a monogamous union between men and women, legalized and regulated by the state (Illouz 2012; Weigel 2016). The institutionalization of marriage instilled the heteronormativity of western relationships as well as making women dependent on men for subsistence and economic survival (Cartenson and Yalom 2004; Illouz 2012; Weigel 2016). The white hypermasculine patriarch became the ideal model of masculinity (Carrigan and Connell 1995; Connell 1987; Vaccaro 2011). In Connell’s (1995) words “masculinity did not exist except in contrast with femininity” (2) and therefore, manhood became legitimized through acts of deference from women (2). Thus, marriage and the separation of spheres established patriarchy, the systematic domination of women, black men and other non-white-gender binaries (Cartenson and Yalom 2004; Carrigan and Connell 1987; Connell 1987; Ferguson and Jonasdottir 2014; Hill 2012; Illouz 2012). Although this dynamic was inequitable, it became the staple model for selecting a heterosexual partner and further romanticized through literary mediums (Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016).

As depicted by 18th century Bourgeois novels, marriage was mythicized as the product of romantic love that involved an innate pursuit to find one “special” person to “complete themselves” (Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001). In these novels, men were separated from the intimate and defined their self-worth through the “reformatory love” of a woman. (Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001). Thus, a woman’s love was able to soften and enrich men’s restrained existences. This is in contrast to the pre-modern relationship, known as passionate love, where men were the facilitators of the intimate (Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001); demonstrating that hypermasculinity is a modern construction. As depicted in the famous tales of the heroic knight and noble lady, men were shown to embark on a passionate pursuit that Giddens (1992) called the *medieval quest* (45) and Swidler (2001) refers to as *courtly love* (111) to “win” women through exaggerated displays of emotions, loyalty, affection, chivalry, strength, commitment and nurturing (Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001). Giddens (1992) and Swidler (2001) contend that this dynamic normalized and essentialized men as the pursuers in the heterosexual relationships.

Pre-modernity was governed by Christian values and a feudal political economy that positioned the male-female relation around nobility, honour and virtue, predetermined by a deity (Swidler 2001:110-111). According to Swidler (2001), the poetry of the 11th century “defiantly” centralized intimacy around the pursuit of desire and attraction, condemned within Christianity as sinful temptations (Swidler 2001:111). The strong “erotic fervour” and deep “emotional urgency” were forbidden and thus the unions were shown to end in death (Swidler 2001:111), as exemplified by the romance and demise of Romeo and Juliet (Swidler 2001:113). In addition, this separation from a “divine” social order reframed nobility, honour and virtue as feminine qualities that were attainable to men through pursuing passionate relations (Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001). In modernity, the erotic tragedy of passionate love was not compatible with the practicality of marriage, resulting in virtue and honour being reframed as the attainment of a woman that is considered “marriageable and domestic” (Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001). As discussed by Giddens (1992) this gave the patriarchal man, the role of morally policing and separating women based on their perceived worth (42-43). Wives became viewed as virtuous, worthy of romantic love, while unmarried women were eroticized and demeaned as sexually promiscuous, receiving passionate love only (Giddens 1992:42-43).

Ferguson and Jonasdottir (2014) and Swidler (2001) charge modern literature on love for masking the true inequalities within the modern male-female relationship dynamic, referring to romantic love as “the “love myth”.” According to Weigel (2016), even the notion of dating is a “love myth”. In her book *Labour of Love: The Invention of Dating*, Weigel (2016) documents that dating, “the romantic courting practise where men take women out to begin a relationship,” is the glamorization of a transactional exchange (31). Whereby, men, as breadwinners, demonstrate their economic stability through paying for dates in exchange for sexual access and ownership over women’s bodies (Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017; Weigel 2016). Some scholars have gone as far as to suggest that this exchange is equivalent to prostitution in order to emphasize the male advantage in the modern patriarchal “romantic bond” (Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017; Weigel 2016).

This study stands beside the critiques of patriarchy and the disadvantages that it continues to pose for women, non-white and non-gender binary men. In the same vein, I find it troubling that the disadvantages for men from capitalism and the separation of spheres are scarcely discussed within the literature. The total impact of capitalism and patriarchy is evident when taking into consideration the works of Brannon (1976), Connell (1987; 1995; 2005) and Kimmel and Messner (2013), who argue that men experience constraints that limit their emotional expressions and dissociate them as nurturers and caregivers in the home. In addition, the automation and managerial control that plagued capitalist-industrial labour stifles male autonomy in the workplace and beyond (Lasch 1984; Vaccaro 2011; Weigel 2016). Thereby, emotional disconnection, power, domination and capital accumulation became the new means for men to attain self-worth (Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Vaccaro 2011; Weigel 2016).

The White Feminists on Patriarchy & Pure, Confluent Love – 19th century

The First and Second Wave – 19th-20th century

Since the early 19th century, women have been challenging inequalities such as patriarchy that devalue and exclude them from social life (Beaumont 2017; Carstensen and Yalom 2004; Fox 2015; Giddens 1992; Hewitt 2012; Helman and Wade 2010; Hewitt 2012; Illouz 2012; Kooyan et al. 2010; Regeneras 2017; Swidler 2001). The most documented feminist efforts are that of the first and second wave feminist movements led by white, middle-class women (Beaumont 2017; Carstensen and Yalom 2004; Fox 2015; Giddens 1992; Hewitt 2012; Helman and Wade 2010; Hewitt 2012; Illouz 2012; Kooyan et al. 2010; Regeneras 2017; Swidler 2001). First wave feminists

in the 19th century, such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Olympe de Gorge, fought for the right for women to vote, hold private property, equal rights within marriage and the right to divorce (Hewitt 2012; Kooyan et al. 2013); while maintaining the ideal of women as domestic nurturers and men as dominant breadwinners. In the 1960s, a second wave of feminism emerged as the state sought to relegate women back to domesticity after their labour participation in WWII (Beaumont 2017; Fox 2015). The second wave furthered the first wave by directly challenging the breadwinner-domestic dichotomy and pushed to integrate women in the public sphere by demanding labour force participation and access to education (Carstensen and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Hewitt 2012; Helman and Wade 2010; Hewitt 2012; Illouz 2012; Kooyan et al. 2010; Regeneras 2017; Swidler 2001). Furthermore, they challenged romance as a ““love myth””, veiling women’s role as chained to “marriage, housework, family, children and sex” (Ferguson and Jonasdottir 2014:2, 13-14, 33).

The Sexual Revolution, Pure and Confluent Love – 20th century

In replacement of the “love myth”, the second-wave of feminism propelled sexual freedoms for both men and women, initiating a sexual revolution in the 1960s, United States (Carstensen and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Hewitt 2012; Helman and Wade 2010; Hewitt 2012; Illouz 2012; Kooyan et al. 2010; Regeneras 2017; Swidler 2001). Through the sexual revolution, sexuality was reframed around the pursuit of pleasure, taking from the passionate love model, rather than reproductive chastity within a marital union (Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Regeneras 2017; Weigel 2015; Swidler 2001). In Giddens’s (1992) words sexuality became “plastic” (61). The creation of contraceptive pills in the same decade propelled this movement by popularizing pre-marital sex (Giddens 1992; Fox 2015; Weigel 2015). Due to feminist efforts, women began to enter the workforce and academia in the 20th century. This shift is in reference to the white middle-class, since low-income women were active members in the workforce since the early 1900s (Weigel 2015). Nonetheless, the image of the male breadwinner was challenged by images of female breadwinners, sexually liberated, and educated women (Vaccaro 2011:2). As a result, men were no longer required to prove their economic stability in order to access sex, love and affection (Eaton and Rose 2013; Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Kelly 2012; Regeneras 2017; Swidler 2001). With capitalism directing the notion and practise of love towards rationality, autonomy and eroticism,

(Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017; Weigel 2015; Swidler 2001) two new relationship styles emerged: pure-prosaic love and confluent love.

In the relation known as the “pure relationship” by Giddens (1992) or “prosaic realism” by Swidler (2001) love is defined as a monogamous coupling where both men and women are responsible for the equal exchange of sexual gratification, emotional and economic support (Giddens 1992: 58-190). Unlike the notion of a woman’s reforming love, the pure and prosaic union surrounds mutual elevation based on psychological compatibility (Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001). Also, in line with the feminist devaluation of marriage, the pure and prosaic relation lasted only to the extent that both parties remained satisfied (Baumann 2003; Giddens 1992; Regenerus 2017). According to Giddens (1992) a sex-centric relationship style emerged simultaneously that he named: confluent love. In the confluent relationship, love is defined as a non-monogamous union between two or more people based on both parties pursuing a sexually satisfying “special relationship” in place of romantically pursuing “one special person” (Giddens 1992:62), also informally known as serial sexuality, casual-sex or hookups.

Confluent Love: Egalitarian or the Nouveau Sexual Conquest? – Present Day

Today, in the 21st century, known by some as post-modernity or late modernity, scholars argue that the confluent love bond is the most popular contemporary relationship style (Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016). According to Weigel (2016) this resulted from the advent of online dating sites such as Tinder and OkCupid (32) that has enabled people to satiate their need for “sex, affection, and attention” instantly with an infinite number of potential partners (Weigel 2016:31). She positions online dating sites as a prime empirical example of confluent love in action (23, 24) where instead of a man “picking up” and “treating” a woman, confluent love follows that both parties “shop around” for a mate, sampling potential partners (Weigel 2016:23-35). Online dating apps are believed to have bolstered the transactional nature of dating, which raises the question of the impact of confluent love on the contemporary male role? According to Illouz (2002) and Regenerus (2017) the traditional role of male dominance, has not changed hypermasculinity is expressed via sexual conquest without the expectation of commitment or monogamy.

Moreover, like the 18th century romantic love, Regenerus (2017) asserts that men in confluent bonds continue to categorize women; committing to “virtuous and worthy” women and

discarding “non-virtuous” women through casual hookups (63). Illouz (2012) and Regenerus (2017) believe that men flourish in non-monogamous and non-committal relations because they do not have biological clocks that lead to an eventual need to commit (Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017). They state that men value attractiveness over internal compatibility leading them to enjoy the “sexual market” for longer (Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017). The more compelling position offered by Regenerus (2017), as well as Illouz (2012) and Giddens (1992) is that the anti-committal behaviour observed by men may be a reactionary response to a lost sense of self-worth and agency within post-industrial society. Baumann (2003), Illouz (2012), Swidler (2001) and Regenerus (2017) further elude to a growing uncertainty and anxiety that has arose for both partners in this confluent relation due to its undefined gender roles.

The uneasiness of this relation is illustrated by Baumann (2003) as a *liquified bond*. His arguments are eloquently summarized by LaFrance and Burns (2017) as entrenched with the terms of “fragility and fluidity, friendship and togetherness, ambivalence and ambiguity, and insecurity and vulnerability” (10-12). As such, Baumann (2003) aligns with the positions of Illouz (2012) and Swidler (2001) who argue that confluent love is exemplary of a struggle for individual satisfaction within a culture that has conflicting values and relationship expectations. Illouz (2012), Swidler (2001) and Weigel (2016) highlight that the values and practises of passionate, pure-prosaic and confluent relationship styles co-exist. Therefore, unlike past eras men and women are free to choose whether they want to get married, have an erotic affair, have a long-term non-marital relationship, a one-night stand, consistent casual relations or other interests (Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016). In other words, this fluidity is experienced as a source of both liberation and instability in relationships. The unwavering emphasis on men as hypermasculine consumed by the pursuit of sexual and economic domination has set a model for studying racially white men as adversaries in the lives of women that will be shown to have counterproductive consequences when applied to their non-white counterparts.

The Rise of Masculinity Studies & The Hypermasculine Black Man – 20th century

Men’s Studies in the 1960s-70s

The critical lens to investigate gender, taken by the white-middle-class women in the second-wave feminist movement is theorized to have instigated the same critical investigation into masculinity, as it applies to the white *male role* and *manhood* (Carrigan and Connell 1995; Connell

1987, 1995, 2005; Brannon 1976; Brod 1987; Kimmel and Messner 2013; Schrock and Schwalbe 2009; Vaccaro 2011). The first formal political standpoint was from the gay liberation movement in the late-1960s (Carrigan and Connell 1995:2). Gay male rights activists advocated for an equivalent expansion of the notion of manhood, as seen in the feminist expansion of womanhood (Carrigan and Connell 1995:2). They challenged patriarchy and its heteronormative and emotive restrictions for also oppressing and excluding homosexual men (Carrigan and Connell 1995: 12-26). This inspired a heterosexual, men's liberation movement in the 1970s, that further challenged patriarchy by rallying against sexism while at the same time, propelling an anti-patriarchal depiction of heterosexual men as vulnerable and inflicted by oppression (Carrigan et al. 1985:15-16).

By the late 1970s, the CSMM was established as a field in the social sciences dedicated to the social, cultural, structural and power-related factors that contribute to men's experiences (Carrigan and Connell 1995; Connell 1987, 1995, 2005; Brannon 1976; Brod 1987; Kimmel and Messner 2013; Schrock and Schwalbe 2009; Vaccaro 2011). CSMM diverts from the more conventional scientific tradition of studying men as a biologically determined, homogenous group by sociologically investigating the inter and intra-group variations (Carrigan and Connell 1995; Connell 1987, 1995, 2005; Brannon 1976; Brod 1987; Kimmel and Messner 2013; Schrock and Schwalbe 2009; Vaccaro 2011). The spirit of men's studies is illustrated by Harry Brod (1987), where he states:

Like women's studies, men's studies aim at the emasculation of patriarchal ideology's masquerade as knowledge. Men's studies argue that while women's studies correct the exclusion of women – caused by androcentric scholarship that elevates men as man and men as generic human the implications of this fallacy for our understanding of men have gone largely unrecognized (2)

Brod (1987) articulates that men's studies do not undermine feminist efforts. Rather, by interrogating the negative ways patriarchal constraints impede in the lives of men, men's studies continue the feminist practice of challenging gender norms and striving for gender equality. Robert Brannon's (1976) elevation of the male role as fathers and caregivers is the most reputable contribution to the male sex role theories within the CSMM. Although Brannon's (1976) work is recognized and respected for reconceptualizing manhood, privileging their intimate lives, he is

criticized for underrepresenting the influence of class and race as power-dynamics between men that create gendered imperatives and ideals. Hegemonic masculinity theory (HMT) by Raewyn Connell (1987, 1995, 2005) and the manhood acts theory (MAT) by Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) are some of the many works that have emerged in the CSMM to fill this gap.

HMT and MAT: Class, Race and Masculinity

In 1987, Connell's HMT offered the first analysis of patriarchy that accounted for the power dynamic amongst men and between men and women in North America (1-9). By taking from Antonio Gramsci's ¹concept of cultural hegemony, the HMT states that in every society the hegemonic man embodies the idealized form of masculinity that has patriarchal power over women, and other men (Connell 1987, 1995, 2005). As a catalyst for multiple masculinities, Connell (1987) asserts that in a given society there is a hegemonic, complicit, subordinate and marginalized masculinities. Where the complicit men benefit from patriarchy without direct dominance and the subordinate and marginalized men (Connell 1987; 1995). The hegemonic man, in the West, is articulated as racially white with hypermasculine characteristics, including heterosexuality, instrumental rationality, competitiveness, skilled at sexual conquest, physically fit, fearless, emotionally stoic, and holding social, political and economic dominance (Connell 1987:186).

While white hypermasculine men are valorized, homosexual white men and black men are considered subordinate and marginalized, respectively, in Connell's work. This is echoed by like-minded scholars (Carrigan and Connell 1987; Connell 1987; Schrock and Schwalbe 2009; Vaccaro 2011). Connell (1987) asserts that most men strive to meet the hegemonic ideal and men that are unable to meet it – or, at the very least, approximate it in some way -- are often socially ostracized, have diminished resources, fall into a lower social and economic status and are often confined to ghettos that are permeated with street violence and economic disparities (186). Due to racial prejudice, black men are disproportionately impacted by these inequalities (185-187).

In Schrock and Schwalbe's (2009) Manhood Acts Theory (MAT), black men are associated with a subordinate masculine identity that is attributed to their low-socioeconomic status. In the

¹ As illustrated by Connell (1987) in her article "Hegemonic Masculinity and Emphasized Femininity" the concept of hegemonic masculinity derives from Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony. Whereby, Gramsci's conceptualization of hegemony is defined as: "a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond brute power into the organization of private life and cultural processes" (2)

MAT, all men are presented as performing behaviours and practices directed toward eliciting deference from others and, most notably, “asserting and resisting control, at the expense of women, to be considered men - the most privileged and dominant position within society” (277-281). Therefore, the working-class-poor, overpopulated by black men, have the most unlikely chance of performing successful manhood acts, thereby compensating with exaggerated expressions of aggression and illegitimate methods of creating an acceptable masculine persona (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009:186).

Historicizing Black Masculinity as Subordinate

I believe that it is important to note that the intentions of the CSMM to acknowledge the differential “marginalized” and “subordinate” position of black men based on limited social power and mobility is constructive. However, I stress that the CSMM’s sole focus on gender and uncritical investigation of race inadvertently essentializes the “marginal” position of black men, perpetuating historical racial prejudice. The practice of framing black masculinity as marginalized began in academia in the 18th century with sex and race science; however, its roots can be traced back to the 15th century transatlantic slave trade. During slavery, African peoples were transported as cargo to the West and became commodified chattel (Collins 2006:302); labeled as uncivilized, uneducated animals that required reform (Jacobson 2015; Pinn 1999; Smedley 2007). Black men, specifically, were demonized as hypersexual and violent brutes because they often possessed larger statures and greater physicality than their white male counterparts (hooks 1992, 2004; Smedley 2007; Wallace 1978). In the 18th century, Enlightenment thinkers prejudicially used scientific methods to continue this practice of labeling black men as subordinate to legitimize white male dominance (Collins 2006; Kimmel and Messner 2013; Jacobson 2015; Nyawalo 2013; Jacobson 2015; Pinn 1999; Smedley 2007). They propelled false assertions that black men are innately hypersexual, genetically inferior beings with smaller brain sizes and lacking in evolution (Smedley 2007). The depictions of black men through this lens included many characteristics of the hegemonic man in the HMT such as aggression, sexual prowess and emotional stoicism. As shown in the scholarship, these racial biases result in the celebration of these traits in white men and the perpetual practice of the subordinate labelling of black men. This demonstrates the need for a critical analysis of race within studies on black masculinity.

Rethinking HMT

The HMT has received ample criticism since its inception in 1987. Critics claim that: (1) it essentializes hypermasculinity as a trait that is desired by all men (2) it does not offer agency to non-white men (3) it overlooks non-hypermasculine male expressions and (4) lacks an acknowledgement of geographical variations (20-21). In response, the HMT was reformed by Connell and Messerschmidt in 2005. The reconfigured HMT preserves the multiple masculinities model and men strive for power and have different access to power (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 21). However, first, they discard the original claim that all men strive for and all women cannot attain hypermasculinity - those traits are not incompatible with women (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:20). They rearticulate that men with varying masculinities and women can adopt traits from one another; as seen in women who adopt hypermasculine traits to excel in the workplace. Second, they also provide agency to black men by asserting that as “marginalized ethnic men” they can contest hypermasculine ideals by adopting a “protest masculinity” (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:20), a masculine persona that exudes dominance without social and economic power (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:21).

They continue by globalizing the notion of hegemony, by stating that black men can be celebrated as hegemonic at the local level in their communities and the regional level as public figures such as athletes and actors. Masculinities and femininities are further argued to be shaped by global power such as the media and transnational politics (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:22-23). Third, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) specify that hegemonic masculinity is embodied by men engaging in practices that range from dining, to leisure and lifestyle with the purpose of amplifying their statuses (25). Fourth, men categorized as hegemonic “should be understood as having a greater quality of life they are often detached from their sense of self, and relations with others” (26). Therefore, they argue that men are not “unitarily” hypermasculine or non-hypermasculine, they have conflicting “emotions, desires and motivations” that can change overtime (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:25). The rise of CSMM and the active efforts by masculinity scholars to reform and revise their theories demonstrates that the CSMM is grounded in combatting the inequalities that plague men’s lives. Yet, I contend that it remains problematic that race is managed noncritically and with decontextualized language. I argue that this oversight, inadvertently maintains the colonial tradition of marginalizing black men through sociological rather than biological tools. By relying on the HMT and other equivalent theories that centralize manhood around the imposition of and compensatory actions to obtain power, masculinity studies

legitimize white dominance as an ideal. The white patriarch and black brute dichotomy cannot be destabilized unless the systemic racism that drives the “subordinate” social position of black men is unearthed.

Black Feminists on the Black Brute & White Patriarch

An Intersectional Standpoint on Black Masculinity – 19th century

A critical dissection of race, from a historical and constructivist perspective, has been generally excluded from the CSMM. Black feminists – some of the most popular being African-American scholars, have been dedicated to filling this gap through their critical dissections of race, classism, gender identity and sexism to elevate black manhood, black womanhood and the greater social fabric (Collins 2006; hooks 1992, 2004; Rose 1994, 2008; Wallace 1978). In 1989, black legal scholar, Kimberle Crenshaw coined *intersectionality*, a concept and a framework used to assess oppression as a system of interrelated factors, notably those of race, class and gender (Berhanu et al., 2014; Choo and Ferree 2010). Black feminists argue that these factors must be assessed simultaneously to fully understand the phenomenon in its entirety (hooks 1992, 2004; Rose 1994). It is often overlooked that the practice of intersectionality critically acclaimed and adopted by diverse disciplines was first employed by black feminists (Rose 1994). Although black women contested oppression through countless slave revolts alongside their male counterparts, from the 1960s to 80s, black feminist thought gained greater popularity as black women began to charge black male activists with downplaying their participation in the 1960s civil rights movement while charging white feminists for erasing their role in contributing to the second-wave feminist movement (hooks 1992; Wallace 1978).

Like Connell (1987, 1995, 2005), Carrigan and Connell (1995), Kimmel and Messner (2013), and Vaccaro (2011), some black feminists maintain the perspective that black men strive for, yet cannot attain white hypermasculinity and in response, inflict patriarchal violence on themselves, black women and society (hooks 1992, 2004; Wallace 1978). However, unlike CSMM, black feminists historicize the black condition, with socio-economic and structural analyses; their critiques are accompanied with progressive solutions. Although black feminists differ in their arguments, they agree that the construction of black male hypermasculinity, the black brute, is a consequence of racial genocide and prejudice instilled from African enslavement, low-wages in a capitalist-industrial system and unemployment in a capitalist-post-industrial economy; guided by

the western association of racial whiteness and patriarchy with power (Collins 2006; hooks 1992, 2004, Rose 1994, 2008; Wallace 1978).

Fearing the Black Brute Post-Emancipation – 18th – 19th century

In the 18th century, black peoples were slaves (hooks 1992; Rose 1994; Wallace 1978) to the nouveau white patriarchal, domestic family. According to Patricia H. Collins (2006), bell hooks (2004), Rose (2008) and Wallace (1978), during this era, the white supremacist system evolved into the white supremacist capitalist patriarchal system (Collins 2006: 301). According to hooks (2004) and Wallace (1978), some scholars believe that black masculinity became unstable in the 18th century because of the new “threat” of white-patriarchal masculinity, due to the slave man’s inability to achieve patriarchy as the domineering role of fathers and husbands. Presumably, leaving black men with an inadequate sense of their masculine identity (hooks 2004; Wallace 1978). This view is challenged by Wallace (1978) for privileging Eurocentric values and erasing the significance of the African culture that afforded agency to black peoples to forge their own meaning within an adverse environment (23, 78). According to Wallace (1978) during slavery, black men maintained a strong sense of masculinity, conjugal relationships and fatherhood. Wallace (1978) believes that the foundation of African-American culture was born through the practises of the “slave culture” (22).

In contemporary African-American culture, there are distinct values and practices that date back to slavery, including, shared labour between men and women, “trial marriages, sexual experimentation before settling down, pregnancy following marriage and disdain against adultery” (Wallace 1978: 78). Wallace (1978) stresses that it was after slavery, post-emancipation, that black masculinity and the relationship between black men and women destabilized (24). When slavery became abolished in the United States in 1863, hooks (2004) and Wallace (1978) indicate that alongside the new call for assimilation to patriarchy, black men became disabled by systemic social constraints such as, unjust criminalization and acts of violence guided by the ideology that they were unruly black brutes that posed a threat to society (Collin 2006; Chauncey and Tibbs 2014; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Pinn 2009). This irrational fear is argued to rest on the notion that the free-black slave would seek psychopathic revenge, sexually mutilating and impurifying white women (Davis 1981; hooks 2004; Wallace 1978). As outlined in Angela Davis’ (1981) *The Myth of the Black Rapist* white colonists-slave owners sexually defiled and impregnated black female

slaves for 400 years and therefore, the fascination with the black rapist is an internalized fear of black male retribution (100-102).

To protect white society from the “uncivil and sexually predatorial blacks”, Jim Crow laws were enacted in the southern states (Alexander 2010; Bryant 2003; Chauncey and Tibbs 2014; Collins 2004; Davis 1981; hooks 2004; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Pinn 2009; Saucier and Woods 2014; Wallace 1978; White 2011). From 1877 to the 1960s Jim Crow laws legally segregated blacks and whites from public facilities i.e., public transportation, education, restaurants, hospitals and political participation (Alexander 2010; Asante 2008; hooks 1992, 2004; Nyawalo 2013; Rose 2008; Wallace 1978), under the guise of “separate but equal” (hooks 2004; Pinn 1999; Wallace 1978). Locals also enforced the exclusion of blacks with violence and murder and organized white supremacist groups like the Ku Klux Klan “lynched,” sexually assaulted and severed the genitals of thousands of black men and women between 1860-1950s (Davis 1981; Wallace 1978; White 2011). Followed by the criminalization of African-Americans; disproportionately punished for minor infractions. Culminating into racial profiling and unfair prison sentencing (Alexander 2010; Bryant 2003; Chauncey and Tibbs 2014; Davis 1981; Jeffries 2011; White 2011). According to Angela Davis (1981) between 1930 and 1967, black men were charged with 87% of the rape charges in the United States (101).

Evidently, distinct typecasts of black masculinity were forged during slavery and post-emancipation; outlined in the literature as the “black brute”, “uncle tom” and “the coon.” (Wallace 1978:24). The black brute represents the black man typecast as uncivilized and immoral (Boyd 2002; hooks 2004; Jacobson 2015; Malton 2010; Pinn 1996; Powell 2011; Wallace 1978). The black man, as an uncle tom, is regarded as patient and compliant for his ability to accommodate the white societal constraints imposed on him (Wallace 1978:24). And the black man, as a coon, is the least threatening, cast into a role of an entertainer performing clown-like shows for white people, formally known as engaging in minstrelsy. This role was the best channel for the black man to elevate his social position (Belle 2014; Nyawalo 2013; Pinn 1999; Powell 2011; Wallace 1978). Each identity set the boundaries for the social position of black manhood, post-emancipation. Whereby, in the 19th century, the black man that presented as a submissive-feeble minded coon was favoured over the hardworking black brute that tried to permeate the white supremacist capitalist patriarch system as an equal paid wage labourer (hooks 1992; Nyawalo 2013;

Wallace 1978). Integration provided the black man access to taking employment opportunities, capital and women from the white patriarch (hooks 1992, 2004; Wallace 1978). hooks and Wallace argue that, in post-emancipation, the black brute became the a “system of beliefs” offered to black men to establish their belonging and sense of self within the white supremacist capitalist patriarchy system (hooks 1992, 2004; Wallace 1978). It follows, therefore, that this system neglected their human rights and hindered their access to resources, equal wages and opportunities to assume the “normative” identity of the white patriarch.

The Black Brute Post-Civil Rights and The Rise of the Gangster – late 20th century

The Black Brute and the 1960s Civil Rights Movement

The societal fixation on the black brute, associating black men with hypersexual machismo is argued by hooks (2004) and Wallace (1978) to have made black masculinity phallogentric. Self-worth and success were redirected to the black man’s phallic strength demonstrated through acts of physical and sexual dominance (hooks 2004; Wallace 1978). Black feminists typically discuss the civil right movement, spanning the 1950s-1960s, as responsible for fostering phallogentric black masculinity to a national audience (hooks 1992, 2004; Wallace 1978). The civil rights movement was a revolutionary, decade-long protest by African-Americans who unveiled systemic racism within the state; demanding equitable treatment in the political and social civil economy (Boyd 2002; Dagbovie 2005; Kitwana 2004, 2005; Powell 2011; Price 2005). They sought equity in areas of wage, employment and education as well as desegregation and protection from racial terrorism. (Boyd 2002; Dagbovie 2005; hooks 2004; Kitwana 2004, 2005; Powell 2011; Price 2005; Wallace 1978). Some of the many achievements of the civil rights movement were: the desegregation of all city buses in 1957, the legalization of black freedom of speech through protests in 1961, the March on Washington with over 200,000 multi-racial participants in 1963, the civil rights act of 1964 and the voting act of 1965 (hooks 1992, 2004; Wallace 1978).

hooks (2004), Wallace (1978) and other like-minded black feminists, highlight the civil rights movement as a site to review black masculinity because it was led by black male activists and visionaries motivated towards non-violent integration until the early 1960s, notably through the philosophy of Martin Luther King Jr., and then, evolving into a radical black separatist/militant agenda in the mid-1960s, through the philosophy of Malcolm X (Wallace 1978:10, 37). As depicted by hooks (2004) and Wallace (1978) the phallogentric nature of black masculinity was shown

within the black radical second half of the movement. As recalled by Wallace (1978) the protests and riots of the mid-1960s were nationally broadcast on the “7 o clock news”, circulating images and live footage of black radicals as large, muscular black men in black military attire carrying weapons (xxiv). According to Wallace (1978) this imagery was a black male stance of “owning” their label as black brutes (xxii, 62-63, 72-73). Through the solid persona, the black male activists present virile strength replacing the white patriarch as the rightful dominators of western society (Wallace 1978: xxii, 62-63, 72-73); arguably, efforts to advantageously reframe the black brute figure as a form of resistance (hooks 2004; Wallace 1978).

In the book *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwomen*, Wallace (1979) was one of the first to illustrate this transition in the 1960s that she theorized as the black brute becoming synonymous with black nationalism (Wallace 1978:64). Whereby, she argues that, black nationalism seemed to be a demonstration of black men resorting to violence to have dominance over white men (Wallace 1978: xxviii-xxx). Although she retracted this position in her reflections in 2005 (Wallace 1978: xxviii-xxx) her findings of 20th-century black male scholars aligning with the black brute as a political resistance is telling. In his autobiography, African-American scholar and poet, Amiri Bakara, discusses his transition from black conservative to nationalist to coincide with his choice in marital partner. He explains that during his first marriage to a white woman he conformed to the system but found himself advocating for violence and black resistance against the state in his second marriage to a black woman (Wallace 1978:62-63). Similarly, in the book *Soul on Ice*, American writer and black nationalist, Eldridge Cleaver details his past experiences as a sexual outlaw that considered debasing and defiling white and black women and entertained homosexual fantasies of penetrating white men in what he envisioned as a political act that propelled the dominance of black men over white men (Wallace 1978:67). As highlighted by Wallace (1978) it is interesting that these scholars equated adopting black-centricity with violence and dominance.

Post-Civil Rights, Post-Industrialism and the Rise of the Gangster - 1970s – 1990s

Scholars claim that the values around black masculinity shifted post-civil rights in the late 20th century in a shift known as advanced capitalism. Collins (2006) and hooks (2004) and by others state that post-industrialism, service sector jobs gained precedence over jobs in the industrial manufacturing sector; thus, industrial labourers, who were largely blacks and the poor, became

excluded from the political economy. This resulted in black men experiencing a mass unemployment epidemic (Bryant 2003; Collins 2006; hooks 2004; Jenkins 2006; Kitwana 2005). Mass unemployment was coupled with mass incarceration as new forms of systemic racism through the industrial prison system took shape (Alexander 2010; Bryant 2003; Chauncey and Tibbs 2014; Collins 2006; Nyawalo 2013; Randolph 2006). Under the reign of United States, President Nixon in 1971, a series of military interventions within disenfranchised neighbourhoods, known as *the war on drugs*, commenced (Chauncey and Tibbs 2014; Neilson 2010; Smith and Hattery 2010). This system disproportionately targeted African-American men, who were implicitly dubbed “public enemy number one” (Chauncey and Tibbs 2014:20). Black men began to be imprisoned disproportionately for drug possession and trafficking; receiving sentences that were harsh and severe for the nature of their crimes (Chauncey and Tibbs 2014; Neilson 2010). By the 1980s these events created the prison-industrial complex and established a socio-structural system that targeted black men at astronomical rates (Chauncey and Tibbs 2014; Nyawalo 2013; Randolph 2006). For Collins (2006), the “punishment system” was another means, in place of slavery, to commodify black peoples, such that the state ensured a “steady supply” of black bodies for unpaid labour to maintain the industry (Alexander 2010; Collins 2006).

In addition, the gains of the civil rights movement were met with significant losses, most notably the assassinations of the most reputable and respected black advocacy leaders, Malcolm X in 1965 and Martin Luther King Jr., in 1968 (Bryant 2003; Boyd 2002; Collins 2004; hooks 1992, 2004; Kitwana 2005; Wallace 1978). Their deaths coupled with the continued discrimination and disadvantages imposed on blacks as a result of post-industrialism is argued to have created a general malaise or loss of hope in black politics (Bryant 2003; Wallace 1978). In response, black men are argued to have become cynical about their ability to succeed and therefore, propelled to achieve capital through illegitimate channels as hypermasculine gangsters or by reconfiguring the less threatening coon identity into entertainers and athletes (Avery et al. 2017; Bell 2014; Collins 2006; hooks 1992; Lemelle 2009; Malton 2010; Randolph 2006; Rose 2008; Schrock and Schwalbe 2009). As typecast by Rose (2008) the gangster is a “street hustler” who achieves wealth through organized crime, typically selling drugs, prostitutes, pawning items and robbery (1-2). The gangster is known to be raised within and conduct his criminal activities within disenfranchised, non-white neighbourhoods (Malton 2010; Rose 2008). In the spirit of the black brute figure, the gangster mentality holds that they have a dominant masculine identity over the white patriarch because of

their ability to earn capital and therefore, demonstrate material wealth through quicker channels. Like the national display of the black brute from the civil rights media coverage, in 1989 the gangster image became internationally popularized through hip-hop. This will be shown to have significant effects on the construction of black masculinity as separate from the intimate and the degree of threat black men are believed to pose on the greater society today.

Globalizing the Black Brute: Hip-Hop, Hypermasculinity and Modern Love

The Gangster on a Global Stage – late 20th century

In 1989, the hypermasculine gangster was globally commercialized by the white-dominated music industry (Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; hooks 1994, 2004; Lafrance et al. 2017; Neilson 2015; Pinn 1999; Randolph 2006; Rose 1994, 2008). This development is important because it made the gangster persona received and consumed around the world as a representation of the true nature of black men (Belle 2014; Neilson 2012; Pinn 1999; Randolph 2006; Rose 1994, 2008). Gangsta rap, also known as mainstream rap followed the first rap form, political rap, also known as underground rap (Belle 2014; Jamison 2006; Jenkins 2006; Randolph 2006; Pinn 1999). These rap forms are separated by the notion of authenticity, where political rap is believed to be more authentic – created by and for African-Americans with a tightly knit following (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Jacobson 2015; Nielson 2010; Pinn 1999), and gangsta rap inauthentic – created by and for the white supremacist capitalist patriarch system with global popularity (Belle 2014; Neilson 1957; Jacobson 2015; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2014; Stratton 2015). The content of political rap is socially conscious, expounding the systemic injustices of the state (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Jacobson 2015; Nielson 2010; Pinn 1999; Rose 1994). Its development in the 1970s South Bronx, New York was in response to the political and economic upheaval experienced by disenfranchised black youth, who created hip-hop as a musical movement to give a voice to oppressed peoples (Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Lafrance et al. 2017; Neilson 2015; Pinn 1999; Randolph 2006; Rose 1994, 2004).

The post-1960s malaise inspired African American youth to create an artistic subculture that countered the oppressive American state (Wallace 1978). Amalgamating break-dancers, graffiti artists, DJs and rapping MCs, a hip-hop movement was created that crafted progressive identities and disseminated encrypted messages of resilience, black nationalism and hope (Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Graham 2016; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Stratton 2015:30). Hip-

hop scholars contend that gangsta rap first arose in the 1980s, as the unemployment, systemic racism and incarceration of black men made black liberation seem unattainable, referred to as the post-civil rights malaise (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; hooks 1992; Malton 2010; Pinn 1999, Randolph 2006; Rose 2008). By maintaining the socially conscious tradition, gangsta rappers used hip-hop to express their hardships on being relegated to illegal, illegitimate work and practices for survival by the white supremacist capitalist system (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Pinn 1999, Randolph 2006). Instead of spreading messages of hope and ways to change the system, gangsta rappers glorified their ability to meet the hypermasculine standards of the white patriarch, achieve material success and capital without adhering to societal norms and rules (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Malton 2010; Pinn 1999, Randolph 2006; Rose 2008). This, in turn, propelled the ideology that black men could achieve the same status as the white patriarch with less effort.

Although gangster rappers position themselves as dominant within their music, hip-hop scholars argue that the music industry – which is dominated by white patriarchs – saw gangsta rap as a sign of weakness for black men but an advantageous project to make a profit for themselves (Bradley 2014; Belle 2014; Bryant 2003; Collins 2004; Jeffries 2011; Rose 1994). In 1989, for the first time, rap artist—and especially gangsta rappers—were signed to major white-dominated record labels (Bradley 2014; Belle 2014; Bryant 2003; Collins 2004; hooks 1992; Jeffries 2011; Rose 1994). According to hooks (1992) and Rose (2008) through gangsta rap, white consumers and owners of the music industry could indulge their phallogentric black brute fetish of adopting a rebel or outlaw persona without negative repercussions while at the same time constructing black men as uncivilized, threatening brutes who required continued containment and systemic domination (hooks 1992; Rose 2008). The white industry amplified the hypermasculine characteristics of gangsta rap by minimizing its political context, rooted in racial oppression and resistance (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Graham 2016; Rose 1994). Consequentially, through mainstream gangsta rap, fans, who are 70-75% white (Jacobson 2015; Rose 2008) are being fed the image that black men are artistic black brutes using their innate psychopathic tendencies and sexual prowess to earn capital (hooks 1992, 2004). Their hip-hop persona is received as societal deviance instead of as protest against the black conditions created by systemic racial genocide (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; hooks 2004; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Rose 1994, 2008).

Hip-hop and the Commodification of Blackness – late 20th century

Black Masculinity Commodified as a Hip-Hop Masculinity

To satisfy the late-20th century unemployment epidemic that plagued black men, Malton (2010) presents hip-hop as offering a consumer-based masculine identity to black men that she refers to as the *hip-hop masculinity* (4). Through hip-hop masculinity, black men desiring to meet hegemonic masculine standards are granted inclusion into the capitalist political economy through consumption (Malton 2010:4-6). In the industrial era—that is, the pre-1960s—black men were exploited as wage workers and responded by demanding equal pay as seen in the civil rights movement. In the post-industrial era post-1960s, however, Malton (2010) argues that black men responded to mass unemployment by seeking solace in the consumer identity offered in popular media (2-3). In line with Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), she positions the media as globally circulating and regulating gender norms and values (4). Therefore, the international popularity and material consumption of hip-hop, as a culture, have made embodying a hip-hop masculinity a reputable status of “coolness” as noted by Jeffries (2011) that designates success (Jhally et al., 2007; Kitwana 2004; Malton 2010; Rose 1994). Malton (2010) highlights that hip-hop masculinity seems to enable black men to obtain self-worth by presenting themselves as successful yet agential outlaws, involving less work than American standards (8). However, Malton (2010) asserts that this is a *public fiction*, in other words hip-hop masculinity is a ploy that makes black men complacent to the American system rather than active participants. In addition to reducing black manhood to an external image and “style” (4-5). Black masculinity as a “trend” is exemplified through the fungible use of black men by branding corporations. As noted by Collins (2006), Malton (2010) and Rose (1994) world renowned corporations such as Nike, Pepsi, Coke and Reebok leverage off the “blackness as coolness” nexus by advertising black rappers and athletes with their products. Moreover, Fast food chains such as McDonald's and Burger King, magazines, the film industry and other music genres also incorporate rap music and imagery to increase their ratings (Rose 1994, ch2).

African-Americanism: Gangsta Rap and the Minstrel Show

Like Malton, Bradley (2016), Collins (2006), Rose (2008) and Saucier and Woods (2014) frame hip-hop as one of the most “commodified forms of blackness since chattel slavery.” This framing resonates with Morrison’s landmark work *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary*

Imagination, in which she illustrates how the commodification of blackness can be seen as an American tradition. Morrison argues that to maintain the white supremacy of the American nation state (7), white Americans constructed a fabricated notion of Africans slaves as lower class, dark and savage (48) in order to legitimize whiteness as pure, good and dominant (7). As an example, she samples from the writings of Edgar Allen Poe where “the perfect whiteness of the snow” is mentioned after referencing “darkness” (32). Without direct acknowledgement of the subject, she argues that the presence of “African-ness” permeates literary works to consistently affirm white American-ness (32).

The practise of whites re-purposing blackness for their own interests is stated by Alexander (2010), Powell (2011), Sajnani (2014) and White (2011) as exemplified in minstrel shows. Minstrel shows also known as minstrelsy arose in the 1840s, when working-class white men performed skits in black face to emulate and degrade black men (Alexander 2010; Powell 2011; Sajnani 2014; White 2011). In lines with Morrison (1992), by using the term *eating the other*, bell hooks (1994), argues that the white embodiment of blackness—particularly through practices of consumption—is another tactic to control the representation of black bodies as inferior (15).

Many black men participated in the 1880s minstrelsy due to a lack of employment post-emancipation (Boyd 2002; Sajnani 2014; Rose 1994; Westhoff 2011; White 2011). Gangsta rappers are charged by hip-hop scholars with being contemporary black minstrels (Boyd 2002, 2003; Powell 2011; Rose 1994; Sajnani 2014; Saucier and Woods 2014, Whesthoff 2011; White 2011). Like the black minstrel, it is argued that gangsta rappers are profiting from presenting a racist, dehumanizing representation of black men for white entertainment (Powell 2011; Sajnani 2014; Rose 1994; Whesthoff 2011; White 2011). When they are not viewed as puppets of white record labels, gangsta rappers are denigrated for poisoning black communities and are said to create the impression that “certain blacks are the problem” (Sajnani 2014:8). Sajnani (2014) is against this position, that he refers to as the *civil war thesis*, arguing that it erodes black solidarity. Instead, by using Morrison’s (1992) concept of African-Americanism, Sajnani (2014) theorizes that the white-record labels are the culprit, using mainstream rap as another conduit to present white deference (20). On a similar note, Westhoff (2011) also rejects the civil war thesis by challenging the claim that southern rappers are making rap a minstrel show (Sajnani 2014; Westhoff 2011) from its simplistic rhythms and flaunting of material wealth. According to Westhoff (2011),

southern rappers became popular in the 2000s, introducing excessive flaunting of material goods and simplified lyricism that instructed people to dance i.e., Young Dos *Shoulder Lean* (10-12, 15). Westhoff (2011) complexifies southern rappers as strategic entrepreneurs who craft simplistic rap content to meet the black and white consumer demands for fun, danceable music (Westhoff 2011:16, 25, 100, 196). It is overlooked that southern rappers currently own or have contributed to more grassroots, African-American run record labels than their northern counterparts (25); affording them greater agency over their image and sound (24-25) and employing some of the most chart-topping rappers such as Lil Wayne, 2 Live Crew, Rick Ross and Three 6 Mafia (Westhoff 2011: 25, 125, 126).

Rap and Modern Love: The Celebration of Hypermasculinity– late 20th century

Hypermasculinity in Mainstream Rap as a Western Tradition

The hypermasculinity within gangsta rap is seen by hip-hop scholars to encompass heteronormativity, hypersexuality, misogyny, the objectification of women and other expressions of male-dominated relationship styles (Avery et al. 2017; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Craig 2016; Graham 2016; Hamdi and Payne 2009; Heitzeg 2015; Herd 2015; Jacobson 2015; Jamison 2006; Kistler and Lee 2001; Lafrance et al. 2016; Neilson 2010; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Pinn 1999; Rose 2008; Yaphet 2008) often captured through visual and auditory analyses of rap songs and music videos (Avery et al. 2017; Craig 2016; Herd 2015; Kistler and Lee 2001; Rebollo-Gill and Moras 2012:13; Yaphet 2008). Some of the most notorious gangsta rappers include east coast rappers Ice Cube, Eazy E and Dr. Dre from the rap group, Niggas with Attitude (N.W.A) along with Snoop Dog, the Notorious B.I.G, Ice-T and west coast rapper Tupac Shakur (Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Neilson 2015; Randolph 2006). The most common critic of mainstream rap is that it is riddled with sexism (Asante 2008; Alexander 2011; Berhanu et al., 2014; Bryant 2003; Collins 2004; Graham 2016; hooks 2004; Jeffries 2011; Kitwana 2004, 2006; Powell 2011; Price 2005; Rose 1994, 2008; Saucier and Woods 2014; Swedenburg 2004; Wallace 1978; White 2011) and homophobia (Boyd 2002; Graham 2016; Jeffries 2011; Rose 2008). The phrase ‘no homo’ popularly used to qualify the heterosexuality of the rapper (Graham 2016).

Sexist content is most commonly identified as the sexually explicit lyrical and music video content that present women’s bodies as objects for male pleasure and demeans non-hypermasculine performances (Asante 2008; Berhanu et al., 2014; Boyd 2002; Bryant 2003; Collins 2004; Graham

2016; hooks 2004; Jeffries 2011; Kitwana 2004; Powell 2011; Price 2005; Rose 1994, 2008; Saucier and Woods 2014; Swedenburg 2004; Wallace 1978; White 2011). Scholars identify this representation as acts to differentiate from the feminine (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Graham 2016; Randolph 2006) asserted by using that which is associated with the feminine to demean others and that which is associated with the masculine to empower. Primary examples see gangsta rappers calling their enemies “pussies” and “bitches” (Graham 2016; Rose 2008) while referring to the male genitals as a gun or machine (9-11). Mainstream rap is also notorious for demeaning women with a host of terms: “bitches”, “whores”, “hoes” and “gold diggers or wanton female jezebels” (Collins 2004; Jeffries 2011; Powell 2011; Rose 1994, 2008).

Scholars argue that sexism within gangsta rap is a technique used to assert male dominance (Collins 2004; hooks 2004, Price 2005; Rose 1994, 2008; Wallace 1978). Urban slang defines a “bitch” as a woman with “attitude”, “whores and hoes” are defined as women who are sexually promiscuous with the sole purpose of sexually pleasing men, while “gold-diggers” are regarded as women who use men for their money (Collins 2006; hooks 1992, 2004; Rose 1994, 2008; Wallace 1978). In the celebrated documentary *Dreamworld 3*, Sut Jally argues that the sexual objectification of women in hip-hop aligns with the advertising tradition of using a “fantasy-female character” to increase profits (Jhally et al., 2007) though he also argues that this sexist tradition is not confined to gangsta rap (Jhally et al., 2007).

In the intersectional analyses of many black feminists, these derogatory expressions are the result of the black male’s misdirected anger toward black women because of his inability to meet white patriarchal standards (hooks 1992, 2004; Rose 1994, 2008; Wallace 1978). Thus, in the book *Black Noise*, Rose (1994) emphasizes that the terms “bitch” and “gold digger” developed alongside the birth of the gangster who scrutinized black women for using them for their material success (ch5). Additionally, in line with the values of the white patriarch, rappers are depicted as establishing dominance by differentiating women based on virtue, which determines their worthiness for a romantic relationship or solely for a sexual liaison (Rose 2008:118).

Moreover, the fixation on “booty” within gangsta rap is argued to derive from fetishizing black women’s bodies in chattel slavery (Collins 2004; Price 2005) yet, seizing the booty via a “booty call” demonstrates black masculine ownership and superiority over a woman’s body (Connell 2004; Powell 2011:151). Through the mass media -- particularly through sensationalistic

talk shows such as Maury Povich and Jerry Springer (Collins 2004:40) -- these references position black people as spreading hypermasculine and misogynistic values to the “pure America” (Collins 2004; Rose 1994, 2008). To “protect youth” *The Parents Music Resource Centre* was founded in 1985 instilling censorship laws that removed vulgar content for radio play and resulted in rap artists being banned from certain concert venues (Jeffries 2011; Swedenburg 2004). Scholars such as Avery et al., (2017), Craig (2016) and Johnson-Baker et al. (2015) and Yaphet (2008) also promoted censorship, blaming “black character”, “black youth culture” and “black parenting” for the explicit content within hip-hop.

Alternatively, many scholars locate the roots of sexism within American values (Boyd 2002, 2004; Bryant 2003; Collins 2004; Connell 1987; Graham 2016; hooks 2004; Jeffries 2011; Rose 2008). They argue that values in hip-hop derive from the North American culture, albeit expressed with greater profanity and vulgarity. As an unpopular yet refreshing perspective, Boyd (2002) views rap’s vulgar content as an irrevocable element of truth telling and believes that rappers should be commended for speaking the *ugly* truth of their existences (50-54). In a similar vein, Jeffries (2011) sympathizes with rappers, arguing that they are also inflicted by sexism because they are stigmatized for conducting non-hypermasculine behaviours (161-162). Nonetheless, the sexism and other hypermasculine references in mainstream rap tradition amplifies the association between hypermasculinity and black men. And provides support for the arguments that black rappers are brutes pathologizing the social and psychological development of their supporters (Craig 2016; Herd 2015; Kistler and Moon 200; Johnson-Baker et al. 2015; Munoz-Laboy et al. 2007; Yaphet 2008).

*Gangsta Rap and Modern Love: Sex and Family*²- 1989 to 1997

The hip-hop scholarship on masculinity in relation to love is scarce. For instance, according to Herd (2015), the gangsta rapper has an antagonist relationship with women (7). His exploitation of women for his pleasure is argued to make him a “parasitic boyfriend” (Herd 2015:7). As a thug, he engages in illegal activities to earn a living known as hustling - i.e. drug dealing, theft, and illicit imports (Craig 2016:8). Herd (2015) asserts that a thug’s lifestyle is so dangerous and erratic that

² In the article “Brotherly Love: Homosociality and Black Masculinity in Gangsta Rap Music” Mathew Oware highlights homosociality that he defines as the “non-sexual positive bonds” within gangsta rap (2). His research topic deviates from the focus of this paper but it is important to note the active efforts scholars have been making the negative association of black men within hip-hop.

he compensates by being suspicious and reactionary within his interpersonal relationships. As such, he distrusts women, subjecting them to shame and violence at the whim of his discontent (7).

Similarly, in Craig's (2016) work on "the thug" – which consists of a thematic analysis of 20 rap songs – he identified two competing forms of masculine persona in gangsta rap: 1) a hypermasculine thug who demeans women and 2) a loving thug who hustles to take care of his family and the women he loves (14-15). Like Herd, Craig (2016) illustrates the hypermasculine man as a thug who consciously demeans, distrusts and sexually objectifies women whom they do not love (10). While, as a loving man, the thug is characterized as valuing long-term commitment, sexual satisfaction, honesty and fidelity with his partner (10-11). The thug also values his role as a financial provider by hustling (Craig 2016:10-13). Craig's findings resemble the breadwinner-domestic and passion versus romantic dichotomy that was established at the onset of modernity. He shows that like a breadwinner, the thug hustles to take care of his family, would "ride or die" for a loyal woman and, in turn, like the hypermasculine patriarch, the thug/gangster has the power to alter his treatment of women (loving versus sexual – romantic versus passionate) based on their possession of "virtuous" qualities, which is loyalty in this case. Craig (2016) and Herd (2015) demonstrate that it is commonplace for legendary mainstream rappers to discuss their roles in intimacy through hypermasculine terms. However, Craig (2016) also elucidates a family oriented and nurturing masculinity that coexists with these hypermasculine characteristics. This finding debunks the proposition that hypermasculinity is the only dimension of gangsta rappers. The works of Craig (2016) and Herd (2015) show the gangsta as decentered from the black brute by having diverse hypermasculine and non-hypermasculine aspirations.

Although scholarship that represents black men alternatively than as hypermasculine are scarce within Hip-Hop Studies, Craig's (2016) research highlights that rap should not be homogenized for its black hypermasculine tradition. Instead, in keeping with critical hip-hop scholars, the sexism within the genre should be understood as a representation of western values (Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Jamison 2015; Randolph 2006; Rose 2008), which should not be surprising given the origins of hip-hop within the United States. Sexism can be further debunked as a black male practice when considering the ingrained misogyny within white, male-dominated music and entertainment industry (Rose 1994: ch5). Through the 2017 #MeToo movement, female celebrities and everyday women have been exposing their experiences with assault and coercion

by their male managers and other professionals who have taken women's participation in the entertainment industry as synonymous with being a sexually available object for male manipulation and pleasure. The sexist tendencies within hip-hop are, therefore, more accurately viewed as one component of many within the intricate meaning-making system of the genre rather than as a unique and unitary phenomenon created by black men. Acknowledging this enables research that captures other dimensions of the black male existence (Belle 2014; Graham 2016; Hamdi and Payne 2009; Heitzeg 2015; Herd 2015; Jacobson 2015; Jamison 2006; Lafrance et al. 2016; Randolph 2006). In this light, the explanatory value of hip-hop, drawing on the intimate lives of black men, needs to and can be addressed (Jacobson 2015; Jacobson 2015; Jamison 2006; Stratton 2015; Randolph 2006).

Subverting the Black Brute: Alternatives to Hypermasculinity in Mainstream Rap

Towards a Non-Hypermasculine Future

Since the mainstreaming of gangsta rap, hip-hop has been a site for celebrating hypermasculinity. Simultaneously, it fosters the practise of essentializing black men's so-called nature as black brutes. Following Morrison (1992), it can be argued that hip-hop has been used as an example of black deviance to further the white supremacist's agenda. In contrast, however, the mid 2000s saw hip-hop scholars begin to develop alternative, non-hypermasculine accounts of black men in hip-hop. Beyond political rap, alternatives to hypermasculine rappers have been made manifest through the popularization of female rappers in the genre, the rise of playa rap, and the emergence of rappers and scholars that explore the emotional expressivity of black men in rap. In what follows, I will show how scholars have gone about trying to disrupt the black brute figure within mainstream rap.

The Feminist Deconstruction of Hip-Hop – late 20th century

In the 1980s, female rappers emerged as a form of black feminism in response to an era of women's liberation movements centred around white, middle-class women (Goodall 1994; Moody 2011). Their participation in hip-hop was unconventional, largely stigmatized and often criticized for being inauthentic and "soft" (Goodall 1994; Moody 2011). Today, female rappers are more prevalent, earning international notoriety and receptivity not unlike that of their male-counterparts

(Herd 2015; Moody 2011). This is significant because, like their middle-class, white female counterparts in the second-wave, female rappers challenged sexist stereotypes, revealed the inequalities within the traditional family, called for female independence and promoted discourses relating to women exploring their sexual pleasures without institutional constraints within the genre (Herd 2015:3-5). Although many female rappers sexualize themselves to advance in the industry (Herd 2015:3-5), their contributions destabilize hypermasculine tradition in hip-hop.

Playa Rap as the New Mainstream – late - 20th century

In 1997, gangsta rap became overshadowed by a rap form called playa rap (Randolph 2006:10). Instead of hustling (being a breadwinner by whatever means necessary), playa rappers were framed as spending money, flaunting a glamorous lifestyle over violence and hardships and emphasizing the pleasure of women over their domination (Randolph 2006:13-14). This shift is theorized to have been the result of efforts by East and West coast rappers to decrease gang violence, in response to the unresolved deaths of west coast rapper 2Pac in 1995 and east coast rapper B.I.G in 1997 (Randolph 2006: 10-12). Traditional gangsta rappers, Jay-Z and Snoop Dogg, are some of the many rap artists who have switched over to playa rap (Randolph 2006:14). Some scholars have also argued that the popularity of the hip-hop genre increased rap artists' financial stability which, in turn, provided them with the agency to construct different self-representations (Lafrance et al., 2016: 289). Playa rap remains hypermasculine, but it is, undoubtedly, a “softer” version. It suggests, at the very least, a movement towards egalitarian heterosexual relations and male expressivity. Thus, the gangsta rapper who was once consumed by his aggression, violence and sexual dominance was replaced with the playa rapper, too obsessed with his wealth and satisfying his desires to be violent (Randolph 2006:15).

Moreover, according to Graham (2016), the act of pleasing women became adopted as a new affirmation of masculinity (10). This differed from the gangsta rap tradition of being an “expert at sexual conquest.” Indeed, playa rappers glorified the importance of the female sexual experience. Regarding heterosexual relationship styles, playa rappers are anti-breadwinners, non-hustlers that are not domineering who glamorize overspending to impress women (Randolph 2006:13-14). Looking through the lens of Hip-Hop Studies and studies on modern love, the playa genre seems to promote qualities of confluent love over the passionate, romantic, and pure/prosaic relationship types. It is important to note that gangsta rap still exists within the genre; however, playa rap gained

greater popularity at the turn of the 20th century offering a “softer” performance of hypermasculinity that set the stage for conceiving of black masculinity as more diverse and variable over time (Randolph 2006:15).

The Sensitive Thug: Gangsta Rappers on Crying

In a ground-breaking study, Chaney and Mincey (2014) destabilize the association between black rappers and the black brute figure by: (1) amalgamating the expressions by black male Hip-Hop and R&B artists on crying; and (2) analyzing the lyrics of 79 Hip-Hop and R&B songs. In doing so, they uncovered four themes surrounding how black artists expressed their experiences with and stigmatization around crying in (1) private, (2) with partners, (3) perceptually and (4) in public (Chaney and Mincey 2014:2). R&B, known as Rhythm and Blues, is a music genre dominated by black men yet recognized as a site of diverse “feelings about the world” and other personal experiences expressed with melodic vocals (Chaney and Mincey 2014:2-3). The existence of R&B filled with black men who express non-hypermasculine characteristics points to the arbitrary and contingent nature of the association of hypermasculinity with black men. That said, for the purpose of this study I will focus on Chaney and Mincey’s (2014) discussion of the vulnerable expressions of gangsta rappers.

Chaney and Mincey (2014) maintain that white patriarchal masculinity restricts black men from crying and displaying other expressions of sadness in public. In response, they argue that black artists narrate their experiences through expressing themselves in private. For instance, in the track *Song Cry* by gangster rapper Jay Z, the rapper discusses the solitary release of his emotions via “crying on his pillow” at night. The artists in this thematic category also expressed crying in isolation as the result of failed romantic relationships (Chaney and Mincey 2014:13). Secondly, crying was represented by rappers as important for bonding with romantic partners, friends and their communities (Chaney and Mincey 2014: 2). In *I Cry* by Ja Rule, *Cry* by LL Cool J, *Down the Aisle* by LL Cool J and 112, and *Me & My Bitch* by gangsta rapper Notorious B.I.G, the rappers narrate different experiences of using crying to bond with others. In some cases, they promote the healing qualities of crying to grieve and unload with friends, and others discussed the normalcy of crying to celebrate the good news with loved ones, for example at a wedding (Chaney and Mincey 2014:14-15).

The authors argue that it was commonplace for some rappers to state “I am a man” before they rapped about crying, signifying that their masculinity and emotions can coexist (Chaney and Mincey 2014:14). Indeed, rappers who expressed “perceptual sensitivities” openly acknowledged the stigma against black male vulnerabilities while they are vulnerable (Chaney and Mincey 2014: 2, 15). As depicted in Lil Wayne’s song *Don’t Want You to See Me Cry*, he expresses the constraints around manhood that have limited him from publicly crying, which he battled with after being devastated by Hurricane Katrina (Chaney and Mincey 2014: 15). Finally, rappers reflect on crying with respect to their confidence doing so in public despite the stigma (Chaney and Mincey 2014: 2, 16). In the songs *So Many Tears* in 1995 and *When Thugs Cry* in 2001, gangsta rapper Tupac Shakur highlights the emotional vulnerabilities that exist amongst black men depicted as fearless, violent brutes by claiming that many gangsters cry in public and are not ashamed (Chaney and Mincey 2014:16). Similarly, in Lil Wayne’s *Cry Out*, he provides a detailed list of the tragedies he has experienced, i.e., the murder of friends, being neglected by his father, being incarcerated, and police brutality, which he continued to overcome by openly crying out through tears as well as through crying out as a way of sharing his emotions with others (Chaney and Mincey 2014:17). To increase progressive performances of this nature, Chaney and Mincey (2014) urge members within the lives of black men to nurture their expressions and galvanize the community around safe spaces for black men to grieve (16).

In sum, Chaney and Mincey (2014) demonstrate that by focusing studies on the Intimate expressions of rappers it becomes evident that black male rappers – regardless of the rap genre, have used hip-hop as a medium to propel alternative, non-hypermasculine representations of themselves. My research seeks to contribute to this important but still neglected area of enquiry.

The Emotionally Expressive Man: Kanye, Drake and the Sensitive Thug – Today

Popularizing Emotionality: Kanye – 2003 – present

The American rapper Kanye West emerged in the 2000s and is theorized by Lafrance et al., (2016) as one of the first rappers to incorporate a broader range of emotional expression into the art form (289). Moving away from the gangster’s expression of hardships and the playa’s expression of pleasure-seeking, Kanye’s songs have focused on themes relating to the male experience ranging from “emotional frailty, loneliness and fear” to “the pains, vulnerabilities and alienation of heterosexual relationships” (Lafrance et al., 2016: 289-290). This is significant

because Kanye West is known to as one of the most popular rappers in the 21st century and one of the most influential and best-selling artists of all time (Daws 2007). By using his platform, Kanye is argued to have been one of the first rappers to popularize singing on his tracks, traditionally regarded as a feminine role in the genre (Lafrance et al. 2016 :290). Through these acts of artistic creativity, he is seen as complexifying what counts as a “masculine style” (Lafrance et al., 2016: 290).

Hybrid Masculinity: Drake – 2010 - present

According to Lafrance et al., (2016) and Tracy and Singh (2015) the Canadian rapper Drake has followed in Kanye’s footsteps by centering his music around the emotional turbulence within his intimate relationships with women, furthering a multidimensional, expressive representation of black masculinity. Today, Drake, with the birth name Aubrey Drake Graham, is one of the most popular figures in mainstream rap music holding an intriguing yet controversial position given his first start in the industry as a teen actor in the hit series *Degrassi* (Tracey and Singh 2015:1-2). His positionality as an actor coupled with his identity as a half white – half black, Jewish man, raised in an upper-middle-class neighbourhood separated him from the brutish black stereotype presenting an alternative black male identity, though not without threatening his perceived authenticity as a rapper (Tracey and Singh 2015: 1-2). Despite critiques, Tracey and Singh (2015) state that Drake self-identifies as a “model for his generation” (1). In an interview with CBC’s program *The National* Drake claims that his mentor Lil Wayne told him “[not] to stop smiling [or] get mean or aggressive” (4). In addition, he claims that unlike Lil Wayne he cannot rap about being a gangsta through the quote “I can’t do that – I can only rap about my Jewish mom or, you know, the girls I take on dates and stuff” (4). According to Tracey and Singh (2015) Drake expresses his support for the claim that he does not have a thug persona, instead his true identity is that of a nice guy (4). Thus, they argue that Drake’s image is that of a rapper who consciously creates music that destabilizes the one-dimensional brute, most notably with the lack of violence and minimal aggression within his lyrics (Tracey and Singh 2015:5). He openly separates his “true identity” from the aspect of his music that celebrates the gangsta tradition of material wealth and using derogatory words to describe women (Tracey and Singh 2015:10).

In an interview with Ghomeshi on the once-prominent Canadian radio show *Q*, Drake states that to remain credible in the hip-hop industry he inserts traditional gangsta rap themes of

materiality and sexual conquest. This is evident when he explains that in his song *So Far Gone* he discusses “a naïve young man’s definition of starry-eyed success – that is the rap definition of success” (8). Tracey and Singh (2015) are skeptical of Drake, arguing that emphasizing his “nice guy” image is a ploy to excuse his celebration of hypermasculinity (8-14). For example, they introduce and challenge a few lyrics from Drake’s track *Hold on We’re Going Home*, where he states: “I got my eyes on you/ cause’ you’re a good girl, and you know it/ I know exactly who you could be” (Tracey and Singh 2015:14). Fans have interpreted these lyrics as Drake’s non-hypermasculine recognition of the depth of women beyond objectification and sexualization. Tracey and Singh (2015) on the other hand, connect the lyrics with a perpetuation of the hypermasculine male gaze whereby he positions himself in a place of dominance to categorize women and morally regulate their conduct (14-15). Tracey and Singh (2015) highlight Drake’s practise of the male gaze that may incorporate moral judgement yet, they excluded significant lyrics within their example that position Drake as a progressive figure in popularizing intimate black masculinity. Here is the full bar:

I got my eyes on you/ you’re everything that I see/ I want your hot love and emotions endlessly/
 I can’t get over you/ you left your mark on me/ I want your hot love and emotions endlessly/
 cause’ you’re a good girl, and you know it/ you act so different around me/ cause’ you’re a
 good girl, and you know it/ I know exactly who you could be/ just hold on we’re going home
 – Drake, *Hold on We’re Going Home*, 2013.

In this complete account of Drake’s lyrics, the intentions behind his male gaze lean towards a symbol of admiration and adoration of his female love interest rather than a moral critique or a controlling mindset. In this passage, I interpret his lyrics as an intimate expression of pure/prosaic love. Being “everything that he sees” connotes an all-encompassing expression of the romantic love ideal, and Drake’s desire for her “hot love” constitutes the passionate ideal towards erotic physical satisfaction while his desire for her “emotions” demonstrates that his intentions exceed sexual satisfaction. It seems, at the very least, reductive to claim that Drake’s “nice guy image” plays on the love-myth merely to maintain male-dominance. This claim discounts the significance of black men being presented as “nice guys” on an international podium. Whether Drake is or is not “a nice guy”, he depicts black men as encompassing an array of feelings, thoughts and considerations about women that deviate from the tradition of the dominating brute.

Reviewing Modern Love and Hip-Hop Studies

This review has demonstrated how black masculinity in the current scholarship tends to be synonymous with the black brute, and that the black male relationship with women as depicted in mainstream gangsta rap is congruent with western values. As I have shown, the black male rapper is often depicted as a heterosexual man who asserts his masculinity through violence and misogyny. He has been seen to place himself in the position of determining a women's worth: separating women based on being worthy to love or unworthy and, a result, used only for sexual pleasure). Here we can make a connection to the conduct of the white patriarch and how he determines a woman's worth: that is, romance is for virtuous wives and passion is for unworthy, promiscuous unmarried women. With greater profanities the black male rappers express the same values as the white patriarch: worthy women can be wives and lovers and unworthy women are merely "bitches" and "hoes."

Both the representation of the white patriarch and the black brute have been challenged by feminist figures; female rappers challenged sexism within gangsta rap and black and white second-wave feminists challenged sexism within society. Feminists in the music industry and within academia advocated for egalitarian gender dynamics, greater sexual freedom, respectful societal treatment and the integration of women in a broader range of social activities. As women began entering the western labour market and the hip-hop industry the realities changed for both men in rap and within the greater society. Hip-hop and the greater society began to represent men in a post-breadwinner perspective whereby relationships based on mutual sexual satisfaction, commitment and love in the context of both pure/prosaic bonds and non-committal confluent bonds. Despite the trend towards egalitarian, non-patriarchal dynamics, the scholarship on white patriarchy and modern love adheres to the assumption that men use increased sexual fluidity and decreased romantic expectations to their advantage through emotional detachment, serial partners and continuing the moral judgement which women were worthy of dating and which women were worthy of sex.

My literature review demonstrated that mainstream rap has the potential to offer greater explanatory insight into the black male experience—what I will call "*intimate masculinity*"—than much of the extant scholarship suggests. To avoid studying black men from a white gaze, a framework is needed that studies men as men in ways that move beyond their relationship to power

and conquest. As well as a framework that challenge pre-existing gender norms rather than mobilizing black men around “coolness”. In addition to a framework that accounts for a multiplicity of different kinds of black men—and especially black male rappers—with vast intimate realities is required and is what I will present in the following chapters.

Theoretical Framework

This work challenges the concept of hypermasculinity as it relates to black men, through the lens of The Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities (CSMM) and the Black Feminist practise of Intersectionality. Amongst CSMM, I critique and sample from Raewyn Connell's (1987) Hegemonic Masculinity Theory (HMT) and Schrock and Schwalbe's (2009) Manhood Acts Theory (MAT).

The Hegemonic Masculinity Theory (HMT)

Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities (CSMM)

Since its conception in the 1980s, the HMT has been the most popular theory used to study men and masculinities (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Lafrance et al., 2016; Lafrance, et al., 2019). The notion of multiple masculinities that have differential access to social power has, in the words of Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) “founded uses in [sociology], education and antiviolence work to health and counselling” (3). The reformulation of the HMT in 2005 affords more agency to black men. That is, as “marginalized ethnic men,” black men are not passively oppressed by or merely strive for white hypermasculine ideals. Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) revised argument that gender can be influenced by the global media and that some black men actively protest gender norms and, in doing so, can acquire local and regional levels of social ascendance is a more wide-ranging account of their place in and relationship to American historical processes (18-20), which is evidenced by the fact that many African American male leaders have been and continue to be celebrated such as Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (Bryant 2003; Boyd 2002; Collins 2004; hooks 1992, 2004; Kitwana 2005; Wallace 1978), Muhammed Ali, the first black president of the United States, Barrack Obama (Jeffries 2011; Kitwana 2005; White 2011), and the millions of fans who praise and admire black male rap artists (Boyd 2002; Collins 2004; Rose 2008). That said, HMT remains almost exclusively oriented around analyses of power, which directs scholars to represent and, in some cases, essentialize black men as always already marginalized. As a result, scholars who use this framework are directed towards thinking about black men in one-dimensional power-oriented terms. By maintaining a focus on “marginalized ethnic men,” HMT fails to directly address the implications of the racialized positionality of black men in more well-rounded terms. Even newer iterations of the HMT (Connell & Messerschmidt,

2005) position black men as protestors at the margins rather than active agents who play a role in society at large and, in doing so, failing to account for their inner-lives while maintaining their position as non-normative and reactive outliers.

Hip-Hop Studies

The HMT is the most popular framework used and sometimes challenged within Hip-Hop Studies. All these scholars take from Connell (1987, 1995) that white men are idealized and impose constraints on black men. The HMT is used in the works of Avery et al., (2017), Lemelle (2009), Neilson (2010), Jamison (2015), George (1957), Moras and Rebello-Gill (2012) and challenged by Belle (2014), Bradley (2014), Bryant (2003), Chaney and Mincey (2013), Collins (2004), Graham (2016), Jacobson (2015), Jeffries (2011), Lafrance et al., (2016), Pinn (1999) and Randolph (2014). Some scholars who challenge the HMT lens point out that it overlooks how the sexist content in mainstream rap derives from the sexism found within the music and greater entertainment industry (Bradley 2014; Bryant 2003; Collins 2004; Jeffries 2011). Others points out that a heavy reliance on HMT overlooks the emotional diversity and non-hypermasculine performances in rap (Chaney and Mincey, 2013; Graham, 2016; and Lafrance et al., 2016). They also urge scholars to study men's rap performances and personas as diverse in nature -- that is, both hypermasculine and non-hypermasculine – and to examine them in more complex terms that can account for more than structural relations of domination and marginalization.

The Manhood Acts Theory (MAT)

Schrock and Schwalbe's (2009) discount the existence of multiple masculinities and challenge the rigid hierarchies that arise from the hegemonic-subordinate dichotomy in the HMT. Through the Manhood Acts Theory (MAT) Schrock and Schwalbe's (2009) take from Erving Goffman's theory of *Dramaturgy* by conceiving of masculinity as a performance that is constructed and legitimized through acceptable acts and practices (4). They conceive of masculinity as a universal gender group that involves a set of practises undertaken to gain membership. Unlike the HMT, the MAT posits that all men are connected as members of the dominant gender group in society and all men despite "race, ethnicity and sexuality" can earn status and power if they conduct idealized masculine behaviours (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009:1-4, 5). These behaviours include asserting power associated with financial security and dominating women; possessing male-specific phenotypes, such larger statures and genitalia affords membership (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009: 1-4). The caveat is that low-income men have difficulty meeting some of the socially

approved and idealized benchmarks and are therefore argued to compensate by resorting to exaggerated expressions of aggression and illegitimate means (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009:14).

The notion of compensatory masculinity is relevant to black men due to the fact that they comprise a high percentage of the working-class poor population in North America (Belle 2014; Connell 1995; Jacobson 2015). Like HMT, MAT presents domination and conquest as central motivators for men. They claim that while there are variations according to race, ethnicity and sexuality, all men nevertheless orient their behaviour around manhood acts. MAT thus has a homogenising effect on how masculinity is conceptualised and stands at a considerable distance from the intersectional critique that I present below. As a result, Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) ignore the racist systems and ideologies that contribute to black masculinity while overlooking the inner-lives of black men in much the same way as HMT. Ultimately, through Schrock and Schwalbe's application of MAT, the behaviours of low-income and often black men are associated with a desperate quest for social domination (6-9).

My argument is evidenced by the application of the MAT in Jamison's (2015) work on black masculinity as reactionary in hip-hop. For Jamison (2015) the violence and misogyny in gangsta rap are "compensatory actions" or in his other words, "anti-social behaviours" that black men engage in to meet European ideals. He presents African-American men as having a "tendency" to displace anger on their [intimate] partners whom they "treat like property" and violence against other black men. To provide more detail into reactionary masculinity, Jamison (2015) takes an excerpt from the work of Wilson (1991) who states that the African-American man:

Lacks a deep and abiding African identity and consciousness; [thus] exhibits an impoverished empathy for others, (2) Tends to be opinionated and to view every social encounter as a test to his masculinity, as a struggle for power. (3) Mistakenly identifies physicality and crudeness with masculinity (...) (4) Perceives cooperation with other males, submitting to the rightful authority of other males, conceding 'points' to other males, and relating to them as humiliating insults to their masculinity. (5) If their vanity is offended, they react with cold disdain, marked ill humor, or downright aggression (...) (Wilson, 1991)

Here black men are essentialized as unstable, insecure, and in constant pursuit of social acceptance. They are presented as having a "mistaken" masculinity that involves being "adverse to authority," "displaying physicality," obsessing over "power" and being "threatening to other men." Both

Jamison (2015) and Wilson (1991) argue that to overcome this challenge, African-American men need be educated on African consciousness to develop non-European ideals in order to emulate and develop “pro-social coping skills” (3). Once again, this kind of work homogenizes African-American men as synonymous with representations in hip-hop that have been shown to be produced through a predominantly white industry’s manipulation and marketing techniques (Sut Jhally, *Dreamworld* 2017). It neglects socio-structural and ideological factors that impact the black male experience and, above all, how these are experienced by him.

The Intersectionality Framework

To avoid the centring of the white, middle-class male experience that often characterizes HMT and MAT, I move away from both frameworks by using an intersectional analysis or in other words a “race-class-gender approach” to study black men (Choo and Ferree 2010:1). Berhanu et al., (2014) and Choo and Ferree (2010) show how “intersectionality” was coined by black feminist and legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw, as a term to acknowledge the different “standpoints” of an individual that influences their access to and attainment of power. (Choo and Ferree 2010:4). In other formulations, intersectionality is referred to as the “matrix of domination” (Collins 1990) or the “complex inequalities (McCall 2001) that influence one’s experiences (Choo and Ferree 2010:1). As discussed by Choo and Ferree (2010), Collins (2015) and Lafrance et al. (2019), intersectionality is challenging to define and fluctuates depending on the project and the field of study. Collins (2015) states that the definition is either too specific to one field of study or its “breadth dilutes its” meaning (3). As a starting point to unraveling the concept, Collins (2015) presents the general definition of intersectionality as the “the complex social inequalities – that are shaped by the reciprocal [relation between] race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation ability and age” (3). However, she argues intersectionality is beyond a static definition that “could be retrieved from a dictionary” (4). It is a “broad-based knowledge project” that evolves and is actively defined through everyday practices and scholarly applications (4).

To resolve the definitional dilemma of intersectionality, Collins (2015) likens the nature of intersectionality to the conceptualization of race situated within the “separate yet interconnected” relationship between “social structures and cultural representation” (5). According to Choo and Ferree (2010) intersectionality is an “open-ended concept” that is given meaning when put into practise; the nature of this concept aligns with the fluid theoretical orientation of feminism (Choo

and Ferree 2010:2). Choo and Ferree (2010) assert that “inclusion,” “analytical interactions” and “institutional primacy” are the three components of intersectionality (3). The group-centred approach focused on inclusion—that is, “giving voice to the oppressed” – is directed at marginalized peoples (3). The process-centred approach organized around analytical interactions considers the intersectional practise of conceiving race, gender and class as interacting factors rather than added levels of subordination (Choo and Ferree 2010:3). And the system-centred approach that privileges institutional processes addresses how they inherently create multi-level inequalities (Choo and Ferree 2010:3).

To enhance the application of intersectionality, Choo and Ferree (2010) urge scholars to: (1) integrate marginalized “perspectives” rather than solely marginalized persons (2) be critical of power-relations for “unmarked categories” such as whiteness and masculinity and (3) conceive inequalities as being determined from multiple sources rather than, solely, an “institutional framework” (3). They challenge the notion of giving marginalized peoples a “voice” by regarding power and privilege as static, separate categories rather than overlapping – the marginalized deserve recognition even if they attain “privilege” (5). Informed by Choo and Ferree’s three prong approach I will now conduct an intersectional analysis of black men in rap music.

Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative thematic analysis was conducted in order to examine the black rapper's emotional expressions with respect to women; the representation of black men; and the heterosexual relationship styles featured in mainstream rap. This method was chosen because it enables a "systemic examination and interpretation of a body of material" (Berg and Lune 2012:349) and, as illustrated by Craig (2016), "lyrics of rap music are the medium that transmits information about love, marriage and interpersonal relationship dynamics to [a receptive] audience" (2).

The sample for this project consists of 22 rap songs that were sourced from the Billboard Hot 100 chart, widely considered the most credible system for ranking popular music in North America (Lafrance et al., 2011:3). The Billboard Hot 100 is a music industry-based chart where music of all genres with the greatest popularity within the United States are recorded. This is updated weekly by the Broadcast Data System. According to Lafrance et al. (2011) each week this system compiles songs with the most airplay on radio stations (3). In addition, the Billboard uses a device called the Neilson Soundscan to incorporate songs with the highest sales. The Neilson Sound Scan tracks sales by registering and counting the units of a product that is purchased and submitting the data to Soundscan stores (Lafrance et al., 2011; Sernoe 2005).

The sample is comprised of song charts from two weeks, July 7th to July 13th and July 14th to July 21st. resulting in an original sample of 200 songs. After identifying the songs that correspond to the rap genre from the list of 200, I ended up with 44 rap songs from the week of July 7th and 51 rap songs from the week of July 14th, totalling a sample of 95 rap songs. I validated that the chosen songs belonged to the hip-hop genre in a two-step process. First, I verified that the selected rap songs on the Billboard Hot 100 were present on the Billboard Hot Rap songs chart. Second, I used the website www.hotnewhip-hop.com/artists that lists all the commercial rap artists in North America to re-verify if the rap artists chosen were formally recognized within the genre. To ensure that this project was manageable in a manner that privileged quality over quantity, 22 out of the 95 songs were chosen as the final sample. The 22 songs were chosen according to whether they contained the following criteria:

1. Masculinity and Blackness
 - a. Songs led by men
 - b. Songs with men who self-identify as black and are socially regarded as black
2. Ranked in the top 100 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart
3. Heterosexual relationship
 - a. Expressions of romantic interest in women
 - b. Expressions of expressing emotions, sex or affection with a woman
 - c. References to love, sex and/or emotions
4. Manhood acts
 - a. Practises and actions intended to illicit deference from other in order to make claim to the category of masculinity
5. Hypermasculinity
 - a. Representations of emotional stoicism and detachment
6. Intimacy
 - a. Representations of emotional expression and attachment

A preliminary review of the lyrics was conducted to ensure that each song selected met the criteria, both visually through www.azlyrics.com and auditorily through www.youtube.com. This detailed selection process is outlined in Appendices A through C.

The weeks for this study were intentionally selected to coincide with the date of Drake's album release *Scorpion*, on June 29th. This is important because Drake is the leading artist in the rap genre and is, as I have already discussed, recognized for his non-hypermasculine depictions of men. In keeping with the themes of this project, many Drake songs are organized around his experiences of relationship vulnerabilities (Tracy and Singh 2015:3-5). It is, moreover, important to note that the weeks of July 7th and 14th show a disproportional representation of the artist XXXTENTACION, whose songs emphasize mental instability, depression and hopelessness in relation to love. XXXTENTACION's overrepresentation was a result of his death on June 18, 2018, which led to larger sales and airplay. Thus, the dataset ensured that at least two of the most influential artists were represented in the study sample.

Data Analysis Procedures and Contribution

To analyze my sample, I conducted a series of open coding. The coding consisted of a preliminary step whereby I assessed the songs (N=22) individually and documented their adherence to the manifest themes of 1) hypermasculinity; 2) non-hypermasculine emotional expressions; 3) HMT and MAT; and 4) the presence or absence of the romantic, passionate, confluent and pure/prosaic relationship styles. These themes were developed from the literature review outlined above.

A focused coding analysis followed, where I reassessed the sample for latent themes within the manifest themes. In this process, I conducted an in-depth investigation of the songs individually and then searched for congruent and divergent themes within the sample as a whole which, in turn, allowed me to group consistent themes between songs with each other.

Finally, I compiled the latent themes, developed conclusions about the state of the sample in relation to black masculinity and heterosexual relationships and compared these findings with the Hip-Hop Studies, CSMM and Modern Love Studies. Ultimately, the study adheres to directed thematic analytic method which, according to Berg and Lune (2012), involves the process of investigating a research topic by “using pre-set themes [that derive from] existing theories” (Berg and Lune 2012: 52).

The Significance of Rap Lyrics

Most hip-hop scholars collect their data by analyzing music videos (Avery et al. 2017; Craig 2016; Herd 2015; Kistler and Lee 2001; Rebollo-Gill and Moras 2012:13; Yaphet 2008). Much of the data acquired on black masculinity in hip-hop are thus derived from examining visual imagery rather than dissecting prose and semantics (Avery et al. 2017; Craig 2016; Herd 2015; Kistler and Lee 2001; Rebollo-Gill and Moras 2012:13; Yaphet 2008). Visual representations provide important information on stereotypes of gender and sexuality (Yaphet 2008:4). That said, there are important historical reasons to focus primarily on rap lyrics. Indeed, hip-hop originated from *the toast*, the technical term for rapping, involving the verbal expression of experiences and emotions delivered in first-person prose (Belle 2014; Bryant 2003; Nyawalo 2013). As an expressive medium, it is entrenched within an intricate history of the oppression and empowerment of African peoples and their descendants (Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Graham 2016; Moras and Rebollo-Gill

2012; Stratton 2015). Although upon the advent of commercialization the white industry controlled all aspects of the music, scholars have identified subtle lyrical techniques that rappers use to disseminate complex emotions and messages to their communities (Belle 2014; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Graham 2016; Neilson 2010; Jhally et al., 2017). Some techniques include slang, re-spelling of words, the use of ‘vernacular English’ and semantic inversions (Neilson 2010:9). This is both a stylistic and intentional process to make their artistry “unintelligible to the oppressor” (Neilson 2010:9). Some scholars claim that this practise is more pronounced in mainstream rap because of the consistent white gaze (Avery et al. 2017; Belle 2014). For example, in an analysis of Jay Z’s song ‘99 Problems’ where the hook of his song is, “if you got girl problems, I feel bad for you son, I have 99 problems, but a bitch aint one” (Belle 2014:9). From an analysis of the entire song, Belle (2014) identified that the misogynistic hook was hypnotically repeated to overshadow the main topic of the song, racial profiling (9-10). Rappers are routinely persecuted because scholars miss the stylistic nuances of their lyrics where the superficial references to wealth and women co-exist with emotional expressions on fears, social injustices and political strife (Chauncey and Tibbs 2016). For these reasons, analyzing the lyrics of rap songs is relevant in both historical and contemporary contexts.

Interpreting the Lyrics: The Real versus the Hyperreal

Taking from Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) black masculinity in mainstream rap is conceived as a performance (9); an intentional act to project a specific masculine persona. As such, I interpret lyrical expressions by black male artist about men and women, masculinity and femininity as deriving from the artist’s imagination -- an imagination about black masculinity and heterosexual relationships that may be fictitious in part or in whole and are known to be informed by cultural and institutional values, namely North American values and the values associated with the hip-hop industry (Boyd 2002, 2004; Bryant 2003; Collins 2004; Connell 1987; Graham 2016; hooks 2004; Jeffries 2011; Rose 2008). Therefore, when the artist refers to “I” in his song, I do not assume that he is talking about his black masculine self. Instead, I acknowledge the artist by name and use phrasing that detaches the artist’s personal identity from his masculine representation. An example of this phraseology is as follows: “(Drake) positions a man who is...” or “(Drake) depicts a man who...”. Like Forman (2013), Powell (2011), Westhoff (2011) and Collins (2004),

representations of rap encompass a fabricated commercialized identity that is intertwined with the rappers “true” sense of self and these are, ultimately, impossible to parse out from one another.

Directed-Analysis Themes

Hypermasculine Expressions (HMT)

The hypermasculinity of the black male rap artists has been used to investigate their lyrics for traits as outlined by HMT. This includes, sexual prowess, aggression, competitiveness, violence, emotional stoicism and representations of social and economic power (Connell 1987:1-9).

Manhood Acts Theory

The MAT has been used to investigate the practices and actions expressed by black male rappers to be powerful men and to elicit deference from other men (Schrock and Schwalbe) (2009).

Racialized and Gendered: Black Men

To operationalize *racialized blackness*, and following Lafrance et al., (2017), my sample of black men includes “men considered to be black” (3). It is important to note that this categorization is not “fixed”, as cautioned by Lafrance et al., (2017) the racialized performance within the songs may differ from the artist’s self-identification (4). Second, hip-hop is known as a black genre (Stratton 2015:16). It was created by black youth and is therefore overrepresented by black men. Third, the racialized blackness of the rapper was also discerned by the expressions of the N-word within the songs, which is a term that in hip-hop is only culturally permissible for racially black people (Boyd 2002; Collins 2004). All the artists except Juice World use the N-word. Self-identification was another indicator of black identification, though Tyga in ‘Taste’ was the only artists to indicate that a black man was the protagonist in his song. The *masculine identity* of the rappers has been determined by assessing the acts and practises that the rappers express to signify a masculine stance and membership, which I did by drawing on Schrock and Schwalbe’s (2009) and Lafrance et al., (2017).

Intimate Expressions (Non-Hypermasculine)

Intimate expressions, also known in this study as non-hypermasculine expressions, have been assessed by investigating the rapper's emotional expressions that arose from both the findings of the study and the hip-hop scholarship. This study has searched for expressions of "emotional frailty, loneliness and fear" as well as "the pains, vulnerabilities and alienation of heterosexual relationships" outlined by LaFrance et al., (2016: 289-290). In addition, I have explored the expressions of "emotional turbulence, admiration and insecurities" outlined by Tracey and Singh and the range of sensitive expressions including crying, fear and trauma discussed by Chaney and Mincey (2014).

Passionate Love

To identify passionate love ideals, the lyrics have been assessed for expressions of erotic desire for women, the desire to commit to a woman with great intensity and the tendency for the dissolution of the relationship to result in death of one or both parties (Swidler 2001).

Romantic Love

To discern romantic love ideals, the lyrics have been assessed for expressions of love, the desire to be in a monogamous relationship with "one special person" in order to "complete themselves" (Giddens 1992; Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001), "reform" their self-worth and/or elevate their emotional state (Illouz 2012; Swidler 2001).

Pure/Prosaic Love

To uncover pure/prosaic relationship ideals, the lyrics have been assessed for expressions of a monogamous relationship that has a mutual exchange of sexual pleasure and emotion (Giddens 1992; Swidler 2001). The relationship that is sought after is represented as stable (i.e., it has a degree of longevity) though the union can dissolve if the parties are not satisfied (Baumann 2003; Giddens 1992; Regenerus 2017).

Confluent Love

To unearth confluent relationship ideals, the lyrics have been assessed for expressions of a non-monogamous or non-committal relationship where the exchange of sex is emphasized (Giddens 1992:62). References may be made to a "special relationship", casual-sex or hookups

(Giddens 1992:62). This union consists of two independent parties that may also be influenced by technological mediums such as online dating (Weigel 2016:32).

The Heterosexual Relationship

I have defined a heterosexual relationship or in other formulations, the male-female relationship as an expressed dynamic of a relation between men and women where there is an exchange of emotions, sex, sensuality and affection (Craig 2016; Chaney 2009; Herd 2015; Kistler and Lee 2001; Randolph, Swan and Rowe 2017).

Derived-Analysis Themes

Intimate Expressions v. Material Expressions

While probing the sample for hypermasculine and non-hypermasculine representations of black men, my ability to interpret the expressions was hindered by the value-laden implications of these two categories. I acknowledge that they have been relevant for this study yet, in my findings I propose that they should be replaced with the concepts of intimate expressions and material expressions when the research topic relates to the inner lives of black male rappers. From my findings I have defined intimate expressions as the emotional expressions of internal states like vulnerabilities, sadness, insecurities. While material expressions are the expressions relating to external factors aligned with his identity like material wealth and sexual desirability.

Intimate Expressions (Non-Hypermasculinity)

In this theme, references to male vulnerabilities, suicidal ideations, insecurities, emotional manipulation, heartbreak, loneliness, jealousy, mental disturbances and other related themes were prevalent. I also included sexually pleasing and admiring women in this theme because they are dichotomous with the hypermasculine traits of privileging male pleasure over female pleasure, and demeaning women.

Material Expressions (Hypermasculinity)

In this theme I included references to material wealth, drug-use, buying designer brand clothes and accessories, as well as the objectification of women. The objectification of women is

expressed by references to women as objects to bolster male desirability, for male sexual pleasure and whose bodies are sexually acted upon as a means to affirm male sexual prowess and in turn, their social esteem. With material wealth being a focal indicator of hip-hop authenticity and violence being threatened but not enacted.

Women-Specific Expressions

In this theme, expressions about are both hypermasculine and non-hypermasculine. The rappers reference an ideal woman as being “real”, “bad”, and “good” as well as being physically attractive, young and pretty. There is a favouring of women who are sexually adventurous and fluid yet, there are also explicit expressions that suggest these women are not “relationship material.” The “ass” of women is glorified. Women are expressed as emotionally detached, independent and self-interested and, at times, they are associated with ill-intent and being users. Women are also construed as desiring a monogamous relation with a man despite the fact that the only references to a woman being emotionally expressive were found in the bridges of Drake’s ‘Nice for What’ and XXXTentacion’s “Remedy for a Broken Heart”.

Relationship Styles

Romantic, passionate, confluent and pure/prosaic relationship styles were expressed in this theme of the sample. The most prevalent and nuanced is the confluent relationship. The confluent relationship comprised the sub-themes of the emotionally attached man and detached women, emotionally attached women and detached man, and mutual levels of attachment and exchange. There was one instance a woman being presented as not interested in a relationship, in ‘Nice for What’ by Drake. Relationships were also found to be graded, having different levels of intimacy.

Social Media

The pervasive expressions about social media and technology was not expected. Instagram and other social media sites are involved with the identity construct of men and women. And the act of calling is expressed as a meaningful form of communication versus texting.

Companion-Based Relationships with Men

The sample included expressions of companionate, friendly relationships with men. Although this finding is beyond the scope of the study, it is a non-hypermasculine expression that is worthy of further exploration.

Findings

Directed Analysis

Mainstream Rap Songs (2018)

Drake – Nice for What

In ‘Nice for What,’ Drake uses positive connotations in referring to women who are “independent” and “hardworking.” The song begins with a sample from the R&B track “X-Factor” by Lauryn Hill:

Intro: I keep lettin’ you back in/ How can I explain myself/ **Chorus/Hook:** Care for me, care for me, you said you’d care for me/There for me, there for me, said you’d be there for me/ Cry for me, cry for me, you said you’d die for me/ Give to me, give to me why won’t you live for me?

These lyrics are sung by a female R&B singer, who is present in the introduction and the chorus of the song, repeated four times. The hook, presented by the melodic voice of Lauryn Hill, exudes the traditional depiction of a woman as emotionally expressive and needy for male attention, affection and support. On the other hand, the verses, led by Drake, represent women as independent. The qualities of independent women and their relationships with men are shown in the following lyrics:

Verse 1: Everybody get your motherfuckin’ roll on/ I Know shorty and she doesn’t want no slow song/ Had a man last year life goes on/ Haven’t let that thing loose girl in so long/ You’ve been inside, know you like to lay low/ I’ve been peepin’ what you bringing to the table/Workin’ hard girl, everything paid for. First, last phone bill, car note, cable/With your phone out gotta hit them angles/ With your phone out snappin’ like you fabo/And you showin’ off, but its alright/ it’s a short life/ **Chorus:** That’s a real one in your reflection/ Without a follow, without a mention/ You really pipin up on these niggas/ You gotta be nice for what to these niggas/ I understand/ **Verse 2:** You got a hunnid bands/ You got a Baby Benz/ You got some bad friends/ High school pics, you was even bad then/You aint’ stressin’ off no lover in the past tense/ Work at 8AM finish round 5 five/ Hoes talk down, you don’t see them outside/ Yeah, they don’t really be the same offline/ You know dark days, you know hard times/ doin’ overtime for the last month/ Saturday, call the girls, get ‘em gassed up/ Gotta hit the club, gotta make that ass jump/ Gotta hit the club, like you hit them mothafuckin’ angles/ **Bridge:** Gotta hit the club, gotta make that ass jump. Gotta hit the club like you hit them motha fuckin angles

In these lyrics a man expresses his admiration for a woman to whom he refers as “real” and “bad.” She has had prior relationships experiences with men (“had a man last year”); however, unlike the traditional depiction of women as emotional and catering to the needs of men, she privileges her own needs and progress. She is without a man but her life “goes on.” She is independent and hardworking maintaining a stable “8 to 5pm” job and working “overtime” and is financially stable (“everything paid for – last phone bill, car note, cable”). She flaunts material wealth with rolls of hundred-dollar bills (“hunnid bands”) and a luxury car (“Baby Benz”). She has female friends referred to as “hoes” when they are unreliable, while her friends are referred to as “girls” that are “bad” when they are considered reliable.

She is self-assured and flaunts it by dancing suggestively at the club (“gotta hit the club, gotta make that ass jump) and posting pictures on social media such as, Snapchat and Facebook (“gotta hit them angles”, “with your phone out snappin’ like you fabo”). It is stressed that “real women” take pictures and dance for themselves rather than for external attention and admiration. This is depicted by the reference that the woman is “real” without a “follow” or a “mention.” The independence and self-interest of the woman aligns with confluent relationship style ideals, yet “real women” are portrayed by Drake as uninterested in intimate relationships, illustrated through their distaste for the romantic “slow song.” Considering the male speaker of this song, the representation of women coincides with the male gaze. By “peepin what [she’s] bringing to the table” Drake overtly depicts a man who is voyeuristically examining the qualities of a woman, perhaps as a potential mate. In line with hip-hop masculinity, “real women” are associated with material wealth and money (i.e., her “baby benz”) and their independence is equated with being emotionally detached from the opposite sex. The male protagonist expresses that her behaviours and qualities are acceptable, assessing that she is a “real” and “bad” woman rather than not real and a good woman; being labelled as ‘bad’ in the hip-hop context is complimentary. Although this practise aligns with the hypermasculine tradition of men acting as women’s “judge and jury”, it also demonstrates admiration and romantic interest in an independent and self-sufficient woman.

Drake, Lil Baby – Yes Indeed

In ‘Yes Indeed,’ Drake and Lil Baby pride themselves in their success in the hip-hop industry, their excitement for their current track and their material wealth. Lil Baby aligns with traditional

gangsta rap on street credibility and contesting “the feminine.” While Drake depicts the feminine and hip-hop authenticity non-conventionally. Drake’s lyrics are shown below:

Verse 1: My shorty a goodie/ life is amazin’ it is what is should be/ I tell her look up cause’ its snowin’ in tootsies/ booked for three years man you can’t even book me/ it’s me and Lil Baby this shit goin’ crazy/ Wheezy produced it and Wheezy F made me/ And she held it down, so she got a Mercedes/ Young Money Records (...) / They ran me ten thousand I threw it like Brady/ The foreign is yellow like Tracey and K.D/ I trusted my niggas they never betrayed me/ Met all these niggas they sweeter than Sadie/ When I started out, I just took what they gave me/ It worked in my favor cause’ nobody saved me

Here Drake positions himself as the male speaker. Women are seen to validate his “amazing” life and industry success, made possible by the support of Lil Wayne (“Wheezy”) and his record company (“Young Money Records”). The feminine is represented in three different ways. First, the line “my shorty a goodie” is a categorization of women that in mainstream rap is a woman who can be introduced to friends and family. Drake constructs a successful man as a man who has a “respectable” woman. Second, the lines “I tell her look up cause’ it snowin’ in tootsies” is a sexual reference to him ejaculating tootsie rolls—a racialized reference to the chocolate caramel candy—while a woman is giving him fellatio. By metaphorically transforming his ejaculation into candy he associates his sexuality with prowess, success and the satisfaction of appetite. Third, the line “she held it down, so she got a Mercedes” draws on the romantic love ideal – that is, breadwinner/domestic dichotomy -- that women should be materially rewarded for satisfying a man’s needs. Alternatively, when expressing the line “Wheezy F. made me” the bar “she held it down...” can be interpreted as an intentional use of the pronoun “she” to describe a man that earned, and was rewarded, a Mercedes for meeting the needs of his boss, Wheezy. In this sense, the feminine is used to embellish the masculine rather than as an act of deference. In addition, Drake emphasizes throwing money (“ten thousand dollars”), like the football player Tom Brady, in celebration of becoming successful through the support of Wheezy and other companions (“trusted niggas”). Thus, weight is placed on the communal nature and solidarity between men within the rap industry to elevate each other rather than a sole focus on materiality. On the other hand, Lil Baby’s lyrics divert from the multiple uses of the feminine and solidarity-oriented male relationships in the following lyrics:

Chorus: Soon as I nut you can go leave/ Got Ms in the bank like ‘Yes Indeed’/ **After chorus:** Cartier glasses I can’t even peek at you/ Yellow Ferrari like Pikachu/ I got em’ waitin’ and watchin’ what he gon’ do/ Tryna peep what I do, tryna steal my moves/ \$2500 on a new pair of tennis shoes/ The same price, I could make them youngins come and finish you/ (...) Me and Drake bout to drop man, this shit gon’ go crazy/ They know I’m the truth, comin straight from the basement/ I’m straight from the streets, man I come from the pavement/ A million, all hundreds, it make em go crazy/ wah-wah-wah bitch I’m Lil baby/**After chorus:** When you livin’ like this they supposed to hate

Unlike Drake, Lil Baby only expresses the feminine in one way – as a disposable, unnamed object that is discarded when male pleasure is satiated. This relation is sex-centric aligning with confluent relationship ideals. While Drake focuses on the “niggas” that supported his success, Lil Baby describes that his contentious relationships with other men are due to their jealousy of his lifestyle and material wealth like “a million dollars in all hundreds”, a Yellow Ferrari and Cartier glasses. He promotes being violent by claiming that he “could” pay young men \$2500 to hurt his enemies on his behalf. The stress on the “could” and paying others highlights a trend towards threatening violence over committing violence for credibility; aligning greater with playa rap than gangsta rap. However, the gangsta rap tradition presents itself in the lyrics “comin straight from the basement – straight as the street – I came from the pavement.” Lil Baby conveys greater distrust of others and the glorification associated with obtaining wealth in “millions” while Drake boasts about throwing “thousands of monies away.”

Drake – In My Feelings

The track ‘In My Feelings’ is presented as an expression of the rappers’ emotions right from the outset: “TrapMoneyBenny/This shit got me in my feelings, gotta be real with it.” Drake plays on the rap tradition of valuing authenticity by aligning “being real” with men showing their emotions rather than just focusing on their street credibility. These emotive expressions about the ideal woman and the most sought-after relationship style are present in the lyrics below:

Chorus: Kiki do you love me? Are you riding? / Say you’ll never ever leave from beside me/ Cause’ I want ya, and I need ya/ And I’m down for you always/ KB, do you love me are you riding? Say you’ll never ever leave from beside me cause’ I want ya, and I need ya and I’m down for you always/ **Verse 1:** Look the new me is really still

the real me/ I swear you gotta feel me before they try and kill me/ And when you get to toppin', I see that you've been learnin'/ And when I take you shoppin' you spend it like you earned it/ And when you popped off on your ex he deserved it/ I thought you were the one from the jump that confirmed it/ TrapMoneyBenny/ I buy you champagne but you love some Henny/ From the block like you Jenny/ I know you special girl cause' I know too many

In these lyrics Drake draws on romantic, passionate and confluent ideals to present an idealized woman and heterosexual relationship dynamic. The phrase “down for you always” and references to “the one” depict a man who privileges the romantic love ideals tied to the marital notion of meeting “the one” who can complete the self in a union that lasts forever. The lines “are you riding” derives from the passionate love ideal of a ride or die relationship (i.e., passionate fervour that leads to tragic death). And the lines “I want ya, and I need ya” derive from the passionate love tradition of men being emotionally expressive to capture the attention of a potential mate. The confluent love ideals present themselves by the expressions of love for multiple women, suggesting non-monogamy. Drake repeats the phrase “(...) do you love me? Are you riding? Say you'll never ever leave from beside me cause' I want ya, and I need ya and I'm down for you always” to four different women. The first is named Kiki, who is followed by K.B., Resha and then J.T. When followed by the line “I know you special girl cause' I know too many.” He appears to either profess love to multiple (“many”) women or he is presenting his general relationship requirements to the women he is interested in.

In addition, Drake expresses a male dominant role of being the teacher and rewarder of women. “When you get to toppin” refers to the sexual position where women are on top and in control but by adding “I see that you've been learnin,” Drake suggests that the female control is replaced with the traditional stereotype that women need to be guided. By “taking her shopping” and her spending like “she earned it” Drake expresses the traditional breadwinner role, where the man is responsible for monetarily rewarding women for satisfying his needs. Thus, the male protagonist within ‘In My Feelings’ is idealizing a relation with a woman who is seeking love and commitment while possessing a street attitude mirrored by Jennifer Lopez’s hot track “*Jenny from the Block*.” She prefers the supposedly more masculine drink Hennessey over champagne and is confident, independent and outspoken, which is demonstrated by “poppin off” at her ex.

Ultimately, Drake represents this woman as embodying the confluent love ideals of sexual liberation and, by extension, pursuing her self-interest. The confluent ideal of the women is further demonstrated by female rapper Big Frieda's lyrical statements at the end of the song and the bridge:

Before chorus: Two bad bitches and we kissin in the Wraith/ I need a black card and the code to the safe/ I show him how the neck work/Fuck that Netflix and chill, what's your net-net-net worth? **Bridge:** Bring that ass (...)/ Bring that ass back/ Shawty say the nigga that she with can't hit/ But shawty I'ma hit it like I can't miss

By depicting women as “kissin” other women in a luxury car (“Wraith”) and showing “him how the neck work” to get “a black card, the code to the safe – and [his] networth”, Frieda presents women as sexually fluid and sexually pleasing men for monetary gain which, in turn, matches the traditional depiction in hip-hop of women as “promiscuous gold-diggers.” Frieda's anti-Netflix and chill stance is contesting the contemporary trend of sexual encounters under the pretense of watching a Netflix movie together with no monetary or courting exchange involved. The bridge encompasses the mainstream rap fetishization of the women's buttocks (“ass”). In addition, the male speaker is expressed to have high sexual prowess and performance; with the capacity to “hit it” better than other men, meaning to have intercourse in a manner that meets the sexual needs of the woman. Therefore, this line maintains the hypermasculine ideal of male dominance over other men and the non-hypermasculine ideals of privileging women's sexual pleasure.

Drake – Summer Games

In ‘Summer Games’ Drake presents a rap-pop song that incorporates melodic singing, rapping and techno elements. In this song, Drake recounts a man who is heart broken by a woman after she ended their relationship earlier than he expected, for another guy. Drake presents the male perspective and contemporary scenario of this relationship dynamic in the following lyrics:

Chorus: You said I love you to fast/ So much for that, girl, summer just started, and we're already done/ **Verse 1:** Yeah you said I led you on, but you followed me/ I followed one of your friends, you unfollow me/ Then you block them so they can't see you likin someone just like me/ I expected more from you honestly/ Said you want a simple life and that's not me. How you go from that to endin up with someone just like me/ How can you be angry on a night in July/ And be warm with me when it's freezing outside/ You're confusin' me, don't have me wastin' my time/ **Verse 2:** I kept it decent, I kept you sane. I kept it peaceful, don't lie. I kept

it decent even the secrets/ Kept it between you and I/ **Bridge:** Breaking my heart, tearin me a part/ Breakin me down when I'm already down

In this excerpt, the man is presented as valuing the romantic love ideal that attaches the words “I love you” with a promise for relationship longevity. In the next lines, contemporary relationship challenges are shown to involve social media. The male protagonist feels like the women pursued him, which is a non-traditional form of courtship. Yet, her words, actions and intentions are incompatible. Whereby, following each other, becoming friends or having access to one another’s social media site is presented as synonymous with demonstrating romantic interest. And following each other’s friends is synonymous with betrayal. It is unclear if this betrayal suggests infidelity or merely a transgression of acceptable contemporary norms. Social media coupled with wanting “different things in life” and finding a partner who is “just like him” renders the relationship less meaningful than expected and indicates to him that she said, “I love you too fast.”

Overall, the male protagonist’s state is summed up in the lyrics “you’re confusin me, don’t have me wastin my time” and “breakin’ my heart, tearin me apart” repeated within the bridge. Here he acknowledges that he invested emotional energy in the female protagonist, thus aligning himself with another romantic ideal that a partner completes the self. When that partner is gone, it leaves him feeling incomplete and “torn”.

Drake – Jaded

In ‘Jaded’ Drake raps about a man that is emotionally invested and a woman that is emotionally detached, noncommittal and using him for his fame. The relationship dynamic is non-traditional with the man taking a non-hypermasculine role as the giver and the woman as the taker. Male vulnerabilities are present in the following lyrics:

Intro: Dogs on this side, dogs over on this side/ **Verse 1:** Leavin’ me/ Dippin’ out on me/ Already got what you needed I guess/ Quickly, learned yourself through me/ That’s why I’m not with nobody cause’ I don’t wanna hurt nobody/ Did it over text didn’t call me/ Still got love for you Mami/ I know you wanna be somebody/ Even if you gotta leave somebody/ **Chorus:** Yes I’m hurtin, Yes I’m Jaded/ Most of these things I don’t wanna say/I wanna be around while you chasin’/ you wanna hit me up when you made it/ You’ll try and come back when your famous/ I always want the truth but its’ dangerous/ **Bridge:** We coulda waited/ I wasn’t rushing

By starting the song with “dogs on this side, dogs over on this side” Drake sets the tone that the woman of interest is juggling an abundance of men; insinuating that she receives a lot of male attention and/or engages in non-monogamous relationships. In response, Drake presents a man that is expressive about being hurt and displeased by the treatment he received from this woman, keeping with “masculine norms” by acknowledging his ambivalence to be emotive in the lines “most of these things I don’t wanna say.” In the phrases “leavin’ me/ dippin’ out on me/ already got what you needed I guess” the woman is non-traditionally presented as controlling the fate of the relationship. While she broke up with him, the male protagonist expected a relationship with greater longevity and by the woman ending the union prematurely, he began to suspect that her intentions were opportunistic.

His impression that he was being used derived from his belief that he helped her “find herself quickly” giving her the tools to make be famous, one of the two instances of the traditional hypermasculine positionality as a teacher of woman. It is expressed that his “teachings” fed her needs, resulting in her ending their relationship via “text” rather than over the “phone”; a communication method known for being more impersonal than phone calls. While he would have preferred staying by the women’s side patiently (“not rushing”) while she built (“chased”) success (“fame”), the woman of interest is depicted to fancy prioritizing “fame” over their relationship. By expressing the woman’s intentions as a “dangerous truth”, the male protagonist is professed to have become “jaded”, described as the state of believing that “being with somebody” will inevitably result in someone getting “hurt.” Drake provides further details unto the woman’s qualities and the meaning that the male protagonist attaches to her behaviour in the lyrics:

Chorus: You got something real not basic/You wanna get with me stop playin’/ **Verse 2:** Told me about all your insecurities for what?/ Dragged me like two hours to your family’s house for what?/ Said you need some time but I should stick around for what?/Pretty little young thing/ had a nigga convinced, got me too excited/ **Bridge:** Yeah you played me, / Low down dirty, shameful, crazy/ How you even managing to keep a straight face/ In all the pictures that I’ve seen lately/Lord knows you still look amazing/ That’s besides the point I’m making/ You’re way to opinionated have to force it have to fake it/ You had potential I could have shaped it/Difference in ages, your old enough but your still a baby/ You shared stories where you did amazing things to be loyal, things to be patient that was before me

In this excerpt certain qualities about women are idealized such as “being real not basic”, being “pretty”, “young” and “looking amazing in pictures.” Differentiating real and basic women resembles the modern practise of men determining a woman’s worth and “acceptable” behaviour. However, the male protagonist detracts from the hypermasculine tradition of solely valuing youth and physical attractiveness. He overtly emphasizes that he is unattracted to the woman’s character, “low down dirty, shameful, overly opinionated, fake and crazy player”, is more significant than her good looks which he states as “the point.” He values a deeper connection evident by his excitement that he became the woman’s confidant and met her family and bewilderment when these presumed acts of connectivity were followed by a breakup. It is a non-traditional twist that the male protagonist is further bewildered by the woman’s emotional stoicism apparent by her “blank face” in pictures. Ultimately this song depicts a gender role reversal, where the woman is presented as a self-interested, hypermasculine player that aligns with confluent love ideals. While the male protagonist values a relationship without references to searching for “the one, forever” yet, with longevity, physical attractiveness and benevolent intent aligns with pure/prosaic love ideals.

Drake - Is There More

In ‘Is There More’ Drake presents hypermasculine expressions of materiality, wealth and serial sexuality while being non-hypermasculine through expressions that introspectively question the hypermasculine lifestyle; evident in the lyrics “is there more to life.” The male state and depiction of women that ascribes to hypermasculinity is present in the following lyrics:

Verse 1: Only holdin up I do is my end of the bargain/ Only beggin that I do is me beggin your pardon/ only cryin that I do is crying from laughing bout’ it/ **Verse 2:** Love certain ones but never get attached to ‘em/ Give ‘em nice things, but what’s that to ‘em/ Especially when another girl I flew in is flickin up in my bathroom/ And they recognize the bathroom/ All hell breaks loose in my text/ Houston women I wine and dine and take to the house/ My moral compass is janky it breaks in the South/ Yachts on the 4th of July/ And all of these asses that never come in proportionate size

The first three lyrics illustrate a “hypermasculine demeanor” of being individualistic (not “holdin others up”), self-assured (not “beggin”) and emotional stoic (not “cryin”). As well as, glorifying material wealth by mentioning a “yacht.” He continues by presenting relationship dynamics as an “emotionally detached love” with an exchange of material gifts (“nice things”). Through the lines

“what’s that to em” he positions material gifts as lacking meaning. This compliments the depiction of women in this song to “want more” in their relationship then seeing the male protagonist with other women (“in the bathroom”) in pictures; where “they” demonstrate their anger via text messages. In lines with the hypermasculine tradition the male protagonist has the role of judging women’s bodies, labeling women’s buttocks “proportionate” and not proportionate. Furthermore, the female desire for “more” in this song involves wanting a monogamous union.

The references to women in the plural tense “another woman”, “they recognize” and “these assess” in addition to the sexual innuendo that he “immorally” takes Houston women “back to his house,” aligns with confluent love ideals of sexual fluidity, sex-centric and non-monogamous unions. The acknowledging of these behaviours (“janky morality”) demonstrates Drake’s awareness of the North American values surrounding monogamy and sex, within marriage. On the other hand, Drake expresses that he contemplates life beyond the hypermasculine in the following lyrics:

I only tell lies to who I gotta protect/ I would rather you remember how we met/ I would rather
 loose my leg than lose their respect/ Too many lyrics ‘bout houses and loot/ I got a fear of
 havin’ things on my mind when I die/ Is there more to life than goin’ on trips to Dubai/ Am I
 missin’ somethin’ that’s more important to find?/ Like healin’ my soul, like family time/ Is
 there more to life than just when I’m feelin’ alive

In these lines Drake highlights an awareness that the music industry is saturated with (“has too many”) songs that glorify materiality (“houses and loot”). He presents a diverse depiction of male expression by presenting alternative masculine thoughts surrounding existential questions and divulging vulnerabilities. This includes “fears” of not being transparent about his thoughts before death, which may derive from the socialized restrictions of male expression. Further including thoughts on the meaning of life and the more constructive lifestyle, where he leans towards “healin’ the soul” and “family time” over lavish vacations to “Dubai.”

Drake – After Dark

In ‘After Dark’ a man sexually satisfies a woman in his car (“low whip”) after dark, which can be interpreted as the late evening. By depicting a woman with “trust issues” and an emotionally attached yet, non-committal man, the male expressions in this song are as followed:

In a whip so low, no ones gotta know/ you cant get enough/ Girl I set it up for after dark/
 Assuming the worst 'cause I haven't heard from you all weekend/ Your silence is driving me
 up the wall/ I cannot tell if you're ducking calls or missing calls/ I drink on the job and smoke
 on the job/ So, I don't know how seriously you take it/ Can't offer you much more, you've
 heard it before/ That narrative for me isn't changing/ I wanna make you a priority/ I wanna let
 you now there's more to me/ I wanna have your faith restored in me/ ill be on the way

The demonstration of feeling ignored or abandoned via the woman “ducking or missing [his] calls”, desiring to prioritize the woman, build personal repour and gain her trust is a non-hypermasculine quality of emotionally connecting within relationships. There is also an implication that meeting the woman “after dark” is an attempt to restore that trust. On another note, the line “no ones gotta know” aligns with the tradition to subvert a women’s conduct to protect a her “reputation.” The line “you can’t get enough” aligns with the hypermasculine glorification of male desirability and sexual prowess, and the claim to have “set up” the encounter aligns with the hypermasculine quality that the man plans and executes dates.

Further, referring to their relation as a “job” where he is intoxicated (“smoke and drink”) and expressing that he is following a similar narrative of other men by informing the women that he cannot increase the “seriousness” of their relation, is a hypermasculine stance. It reduces intimacy to a masculine performance (“job”) and aligns with the contemporary confluent ideal that women desire “serious” commitment while men are ambivalent to connect. Greater detail into the happenings “after dark,” the woman’s trust issues and the nature of the male-female relation are present below:

Late night, me and you, got you wet like the pool/ Then dive in, put some time in/ It's gonna
 be a long night/ Put your feet in this water, don't wanna get your hair wet/ We've hooked up a
 couple times, we aint took it there yet/ You broke up with your man and aint been with nobody
 else/ You like “fuck these niggas” rather keep it to yourself/ Now you can't trust nobody/ You
 said “do anything but just don't lie to me”/ I said I ride for you, girl, you said you ride for me

The state of the male-female relation is interpreted as “hooking up” – a confluent relation where friends or strangers meet once or occasionally to engage in sexual activity. By stating that they have not gotten to the place of seeing her “hair wet,” Drake presents the different stages of intimacy within contemporary relations. While the man in the relationship values trust and the woman values honesty both place emphasis on relational transparency. The weight on trust for the woman derives

from previously dishonest boyfriends that left her feeling hurt. Taking from the passionate love ideal “ride or die” Drake expresses that trustworthiness and dependability is acquired by professing that each party would “ride” meaning stand by the other’s side. Moreover, it is also evident in these lyrics that Drake challenges the notion of confluent relations as solely centered around male-pleasure and male emotional detachment. Without any indication of monogamy or relationship longevity, there are male expressions of emotional attachment and gaining pleasure by sexually satisfying women i.e., getting her “wet like the pool” and putting “time in.” Therefore, this song presents a hybrid of the passionate ideal of being unfailing love with the non-committal yet mutual exchange of emotions and the sexual nature of confluent love.

Drake – Finesse

‘Finesse’ has a number of disjointed thoughts surrounding a common theme of a man fantasizing about a woman. It is unknown whether he has ever had a real relationship with the women yet, thoughts of this woman are prevalent in the man’s thinking process. This is depicted in the lyrics below:

I want my baby to have your eyes/ Should I do New York I can’t decide/ Fashion week is more your thing than mine/ I can’t do suit and tie/ Cant be in a room with you and stand on different sides/One thing at a time/ Emotions running high/ I wish you felt alright/ Just hitting my line/ All the time/ You stay on my mind/ It takes some finesse/ I see you finesse/ He can’t know finesse/ You stay on my mind/ You and your sister too hot to handle/ Things would get cancelled/ I would make time for you/ Commitment/ Going the distance/ I’m new to all of this

These lyrics depict a man that became infatuated by a woman that he saw with another man, notable by the lines “I see you finesse” and “he can’t know finesse”; feeding the hypermasculine value that male dominance is acquired by “stealing” another mans woman like property. He characterises this woman as finesse, a compliment to describe something or someone that is delicately refined. I characterize the male-female relation as superficial infatuation from the male because it is the woman’s physical attributes that is used to connote finesse. Rather than wanting to have a baby with the woman, the male protagonists glorifies the woman’s eyes as the most valuable. The woman’s physical “finesse” is further illuminated by her interest in “fashion week”, needing to be accompanied by a partner with a “suit and tie”, an appearance that attracts others in the “room” and being a part of a “hot family.” In allegiance with the confluent love ideals, the male protagonist is

depicted as “new” to “commitment” and “making time” yet it is ultimately a pure/prosaic relation; desiring to commit without a lifelong commitment. However, the “finesse” of the woman has made him willing to engage in a committed relation with her. This song keeps in lines with the contemporary noncommittal male prototype while providing the ideal scenario for this type of man to commit.

Lil Baby, Lil Uzi Vert & Gunna – Life Goes On

In ‘Life Goes On’ the artist references easy and seemingly endless access to women and money to connote the fast pace life of being a rap celebrity. The male-female relationship, the idealized qualities of women and male vulnerabilities are shown in the following lyrics:

Verse 1: Bad lil bitch got no breasts/ Upgrade now she got D-cups/ They be takin’ shots I ignore them/ Need to go get your ho cause’ shes whorin’/ If her ball come my way I’ma score it/ Lamborgini, I don’t want no Porsches/ One more year, I’ma make it to Forbes list/ Aint’ no strings attached, keepin’ it cordless/ She keep callin’ I keep ignoring it/ **Chorus:** My main bitch tryna leave me ‘lone cause I fucked another ho/ Im like, “Baby, I know I’m wrong but this just how life goes/ And I know these niggas’d be happy if I let you go/ Got me walkin’ on a thin line, on my tippy toes/ Man this shit crazy, different city with some different hoes/ **Verse 2:** Tryna spend an M on some clothes/ Yellow AP on all my hoes/ I like when that white on her toes/I aint got no time to lay up with these hoes/ All of these drugs in my body, I gotta pay somebody keep checkin my pulse/ They swing on the pole/ I can switch up my girls the same way that I change my clothes/ They would love me in a casket, I can’t have it

In these lyrics, male dominance and prestige in the rap game are established by boasting of having easy and endless access to women and money. With the disposability of money and women being synonymous in the lines “spend an M on some clothes” and “switch up my girls the same way I switch my clothes.” The male-female relation aligns with confluent ideals. It is sex-centric, noncommittal, seen in the lines “no strings attached” and “ain’t got no time to lay up with these hoes” and non-monogamous (“main bitch tryna leave me lone’ cause’ I fucked another ho”). In addition to emotional detachment evident from the male expression that he is “ignorin” calls from women. As depicted in Drake’s Jaded, there is a theme that “phone calls” as a meaningful-intimate practise.

There are two categories of women in this song “main bitches” have a consistent sexual relation with the men and “ho’s” have sporadic sexual encounters with the men and are commonly strippers (“they swing on the pole”). Men in this song are shown to desire women that have double-D breast sizes and white pedicures, for sexual pleasure. They also like branding women as property via material gifts. In this case the men put “yellow AP [Audemars Piguet watches] on all [their] ho’s.” The hypermasculine tradition of degrading women is present by calling women “ho’s”, which yields a double standard where women are vilified for their sexual expression (“she whorin”) and mens’ are glorified (“I’m a score it”). There is greater commitment and value placed on monetary wealth in this song, with “Forbes list” mentioned to insinuate that accumulating wealth as something that they want to attain rather than discard (comme les femmes).

On another note, while glorifying the fast-paced life of being a rap celebrity there are male expressions of the fears and challenges of this lifestyle. Most notably, the relation with other men is shown to be contentious. The man that is presented is actively “ignoring shots” by others, meaning negative comments and attacks. As well as, actively trying to avoid death, a fate that is wished upon him by others. The expression that “main bitch tryna leave me ‘lone” is a potential expression of male isolation. It is a contradiction that should not be ignored, that despite bragging about easy access to women he becomes “lonely” when a woman (“main bitch”) leaves his life. In such, lives his life to avoid trouble “walking on a thin line” this could be in reference to both woman and his relationship with the contentious “others.” Furthermore, the lifestyle is expressed to encompass a dangerous level of drug-use, requiring constant surveillance to ensure the man’s safety. These references could be a glamorization of the drugs, woman and “haters” a part of the rap lifestyle, yet it could also be interpreted as a presentation that the rap lifestyle provides an excess of woman and money that overwhelmingly leads to overindulgence and meaninglessness, as well as jealousy from others, fearing that one’s life is in danger and drug-use as a coping mechanism.

XXXTentacion – Moonlight

In ‘Moonlight’ XXXTentacion expresses male isolation, vulnerability and condemnation with a woman being presented as his remedy. This is depicted in the lyrics below:

Chorus: Spotlight, uh, moonlight uh/ Nigga why you trippin’? Get your mood right, uh/
Shawty look good in the moonlight/ All these pussy niggas so bad mind/ **Verse 1:** Feel like

I'm destined/ I don't need no Smith & Wesson, no/ Girl, who you testin? Fuck a Scantron
 here's your lesson, oh/ Knife in intestine/ Feel like I'm damaged/ Feelin' like you fuckin'
 planned it/ **Pre-Chorus:** All alone, call my phone make me feel right/ Girl you know when
 you call make me feel right

In these lyrics there is a representation of male distress that may derive from the “spotlight”, another word for the attention and pressures that ensue from fame. His reference to “niggas” trippin’ and being “bad mind” are slang for antagonistic and negative male rivals in the rap industry. When he expresses that external forces have “destined” and “damaged” him this may be in reference to these male rivals. However, he also portrays a man who is “bad mind” through the morbidity of not needing a gun for protection (“Smith and Wesson”) because he feels destined for demise. He follows by referencing a “knife in intestine”, which implies a graphic harm towards the woman of interest, himself or others. Thus, his plea to “niggas” to stop “trippin” and “get [their] mood right” could be a self-reflection and self-mantra to settle his tremulous mental state.

Amid the despair a woman that he refers to as “shawty” and “girl” is expressed as a place of nurture to “make [him] feel right” aligning with the romantic ideals that the purpose of woman to reform the emotional state of men. The reference to talking on “the phone” as an idealized communication between the man and woman coincides with the trend in rap music to privilege “talking on the phone” as a form of exchanging emotional intimacy. Interestingly, there is traditional hypermasculine aggression that arises in the lines “girl who you testin’ fuck a scantron here’s your lesson, oh” that positions an antagonistic or perceived woman as unacceptable; potentially facing the consequences of teaching her a lesson. The lesson is unknown, and it is unknown whether there is a connection between this aggression and the threat to stab someone or become stabbed in the “intestine.” This creates the air that the woman’s sole purpose in this dynamic is to elevate the male emotion.

XXXTentacion – Changes

In ‘Changes,’ XXXTentacion uses singing rather than rapping to portray the expressions of a man that is heartbroken because his female love interest is “changing.” The entire song consists of the lyrics, “Baby I don’t understand this/ You’re changing I can’t stand it/ My heart can’t take this damage/ And the way I feel can’t stand it”, being repeated for four verses. With the lines “Girl your making it hard for me” repeated seven times after the first verse. The details of why and how

his female love interest is changing are not evident but the structure of a woman causing a man pain contradicts hypermasculinity by giving a woman power in the relationship dynamic. Further, the repetition of these verses is a display of an overt, unrestrained expression of male despair. A man who is confused, emotionally invested and transparent about his emotions versus the traditional hypermasculine man who is a self-assured, emotionally detached and characterized by an elusive, distant persona.

XXXTentacion – Sad

Male fears surrounding abandonment and suicidal ideations surface in ‘Sad’. This is nuanced in the following lyrics:

Chorus: Who am I? Someone that’s afraid to let go/ you decide, if you’re ever gonna let me know/ Suicide if you ever try to let go/ I’m sad and low, yeah, I’m sad I know, yeah/ **Verse:** I gave her everything/ She took my heart and left me lonely/ I’ve been broken, hearts contentious/ I wont fix, I’d rather weep/ I’m lost then I’m found/ But its torture bein’ in love/ I love when you’re around/ But I fuckin hate when you leave

These lyrics present a man who is emotionally transparent and introspective. He is dependent on the love of a woman to feel complete, aligning with romantic love ideals. Without a woman’s love and attention, he is “lost.” By giving the woman he loves “everything” he becomes deeply intertwined to the point where he loses his sense of self and reason for existence when the relationship ends. The reference to suicide as a response to a failed relationship demonstrates the male experience of mental disturbances that the man is consumed in, without hope for resolve (“I wont fix, I’d rather weep”). This emphasizes the lack of coping mechanisms impacting his ability navigate the ups and downs of relationship dynamics and other adverse situations. This directly contradicts the hypermasculine tradition of a man who seeks and is unphased by adversity. This song complexifies male emotion as it is typically represented in rap and hip hop, transgressing the binary between negative hypermasculine expressions versus positive non-hypermasculine expressions.

XXXTentacion – Fuck Love

In ‘Fuck Love’ the male-female dynamic consists of a heartbroken man who is incomplete without the love of his female love interest. This is shown in the following lyrics:

Chorus: Baby I need you in my life/Please bae, don’t go switching sides/ I swear this is where you reside/ Please don’t throw your love away, huh/ **Verse:** I’m nauseous, I’m dyin’/ She ripped my heart right out/ Can’t find her, someone to/ My eyes are all cried out/ Lost it, riots/ Gunfire inside my head

XXXTentacion elevates the mental and physiological experiences that men can have with pain. This is present with the emphasis on the male expression of crying, physiologically feeling “nauseous” and the mental disturbances of feeling like “dying”, “loosing it” and “gunfire and riots in [his] head.” These disturbances are expressed to derive from a man being unhappy with his relationship that the woman appears to have ended, referencing his heartbreak (“she ripped my heart out”) and that she is no longer in his life and giving him love (“need you in my life” and “don’t throw your love away”). He presents himself as a physical place that his female interest is meant to be housed (“reside”) this coupled with the expressed “need” for the woman in [his] life aligns with the all-encompassing relationship style from romantic love ideals.

As a common non-hypermasculine theme within XXXTentacion’s songs, he expresses woman as having the power to dictate the state of the relationship. This aligns with romantic ideals, where the woman’s presence in the man’s life elevates his emotional state and makes him a complete person, evident in the “need” for her in his life. While these qualities follow the formula of the marital ideals (romantic love) of finding the one person to complete the self, the expressions of feeling like “dying” encompass the passionate ideal of “ride or die.” This is interestingly complemented by the lines “don’t go switching sides,” implying that if a woman is not giving him love and, in his life, she is against him “on another side.”

XXXTentacion – The Remedy for a Broken Heart (Why am I so In Love)

In ‘Remedy for a Broken Heart’ a man is heartbroken after a break up with his female partner, referred to as “shawty” and “girl.” The expressions of how the man copes with heartbreak are presented in the lyrics below:

Chorus: Why am I so in love? I don't know why/ **Verse:** Steady tryna maintain/ Same things that a blood bitch may frame/ My brain can't fathom what the hate say/ He say, she say, how bout' me say? Get the Visa headed to the island ASAP/ What's that on my shawty wrist? That's a AP/ Fucking on shawty, she baddie/ Casual convo then at it/ I mean I'm better than better, maybe I'm lying/ I'm sadder than most of y'all with the money and the freedom, nigga/ What is money really worth if it ain't love/ I heard shawty still in love through the grape vine/ Mix a little bit of weed with a little bit of cash with a little bit of this and a little bit of that/ / we gon be all, we gon' be alright/ why am I so in love? I don't know why/She said I, oh I am falling for you, falling for you/Why am I so in love? I don't know why

In these lyrics the remedy for a broken heart is depicted as going on vacation (“headed to the island ASAP”), casual sex (“fucking on shawty, she baddie”), marijuana (“weed”) and cash. As well as, boasting about buying his woman (“shawty”) an expensive Audemars Piquet watch (an “AP”), an idealization of the masculine quality of material wealth in hip-hop. A woman who is “bad” and branded with an AP is a common ideal within the sample. These are components of hip-hop hypermasculinity, further suggested by his attempts to “maintain [the] same things that a blood bitch may frame.” A “blood bitch” is a member of the notorious gang Bloods who are known as thugs who glorify drugs, monetary wealth and sexual prowess. However, there are several non-hypermasculine vulnerabilities in these lyrics. The main theme is a confession about a man’s broken heart, demonstrating emotional attachment and transparency. These lyrics show a man who is negatively affected by others disliking him (“the hate”) and who values “love” over money and fame. This is shown through the lines “I’m sadder than most – with the money and the freedom” and “what is money really worth if it ain’t love.” It is evident that he privileges love because after discussing other topics he is brought back to the expression of questioning “why he is so in love” and then continues for four lyrics melodically singing “she said, I, oh I am falling for you, falling for you.” These expressions present a man that is sensitive and caring, aligning with both the passionate and romantic love ideals. The apparent display of emotional expressions towards a woman is a passionate ideal, while portraying the woman’s love as an antidote to the man’s sad, broken state is a romantic ideal.

Kanye West – All Mine

In ‘All Mine,’ “super model thick” and “basic” women are positioned as the ideal type of women for the male protagonist of the song. The male expressions and male-female relationship that emerged from this ideal is shown in the lyrics below:

Chorus: Yea, you supermodel thick/Damn that ass bustin’ out the bottom/ I’ma lose my mind in it, crazy that medulla oblongata/ Get to rubbin’ on my lap/ Get that genie out the bottle/
After chorus: Fuck it up/ Pussy good, go and back it up/Pipe her up, I’ma pipe her up/ Make her mine I done fell in love/ Juicy thing/ Make that pussy say “one more time, baby do it big, make it cry come, go hold this shit”/ **Verse 1:** Find yourself up in the food court/ You might have to enjoy a sample/ All these thots on Christian mingle/ If you don’t ball like - Kobe/ Guarantee that bitch gonna leave you/ Time is extremely valuable/ And I prefer to waste it/ On girls that’s basic/ **Verse 2:** That’s some Ye shit/ Right now let’s do what we want/ Let’s have a threesome you, me and a blunt/ I love your titties cause’ they prove I can focus on two things at once/ Let me hit it raw like fuck the outcome/**Bridge:** Ay, if it aint about the income/ Ay, lets see you gon’ ahead and spend some/ Ay, if you driving round in some Dri-Fit/ Ay, I’ma think that you the type to dry snitch/ If I see you pull up with the three stripes/ Ay, ay I’ma fuck around and make you my bitch

Kanye details the physical attributes, fashion and physiological response of a woman’s genitals as the most significant factors determining his commitment to a relationship. The idealized woman wears adidas shoes (“three stripes”) rather than Nike shoes (“Dri-Fit”), and she is “super model thick” with a large-buttocks (“bustin out the bottom”). The physiological response of a women’s genitals from sexual encounters acts as an indication of male sexual prowess. Therefore, the ideal woman is presented as having a “good pussy” typified as responding to the man’s sexual performance, its’ lubrication (“juicy thing” that “cries”) is used as evidence that the male performance was well received, and the woman wants to continue (“make the pussy say/ One more time”). The male sexual performance is also affirmed by the woman’s verbal response of sexual satisfaction (“pipe her up”). The use of the word “pussy” to discuss women is traditionally vilified as a demeaning characteristic. However, it is non-hypermasculine for masculine identity to be legitimized and valorized via sexually pleasing woman. Mutual sexual pleasure is evident throughout the song with reference to (“let’s do what we want”), male genital pleasure (“rubbin on my lap”) and the female sexual pleasure mentioned above, line up with confluent love ideals. The

level of commitment involves male ownership of the woman (“make her mine” and “make you my bitch”) and an expression of love (“I done fell in love”). This expression of love aligns with the passionate ideal of love rooted in an intense, erotic, fervour attraction. There are two references that depict a woman as interested in a man for monetary gain in the lines “if you don’t ball like Kobe- [she] gon leave you” and “if it aint about the income – go ahead and spend some”.

There seems to be two expressions of love in mainstream rap, one centered around emotions and the other, sexual attraction. In mainstream rap, this passionate union with male ownership commonly typifies a man and woman engaged a consistent sexual relationship, either monogamously or non-monogamously. Hypermasculinity is present with expressions of men having control in the relationship. Women are only discussed in this song as physical body parts in a manner that is regarded as objectifying and sexually explicit. In tandem they are labelled as “thots,” slang for promiscuous, “bitch” and differentiated based on being “basic” that contrasts with being “real.” Sex and intimacy are expressed as happening too a woman (“let me hit it raw”, “pipe her up”, “make her mine”). Furthermore, women are presented as “samples” that can be “enjoyed” like food in “the food court;” another alignment with the confluent love ideals of serial sexuality.

Juice Wrld – Lucid Dreams

In ‘Lucid Dreams’ the male subject is expressed to be heartbroken and in response, experiences distress, depression and suicidal fantasies. The characteristics of his former female lover, a portrayal of the man’s emotional contribution to the relationship and his coping mechanisms post-breakup are depicted in the lyrics below:

Chorus: I still see your shadows in my room/ Can’t take back the love that I gave you/ It’s to the point where I love and I hate you/ And I cannot change you so I must replace you/ Easier said than done/ I thought you were the one/ Listening to my heart instead of my head/ You found another one/ But I am the better one/ I wont let you forget me/ **Verse 1:** You left me falling and landing inside my grave/ I know that you want me dead/ I take prescriptions to make me feel a-okay/ I know it’s all in my head/ I have these lucid dreams where I can’t move a thing/ Thinking of you in my bed/ You were my everything/ Thoughts of a wedding ring/ Now I’m just better off dead/ I’ll do it over again/ I didn’t want it to end/ I should’ve listened to my friends/ Did this shit in the past. But I want it to last/ You were made outta plastic (fake)/

I was tangled up in your drastic ways/ Who knew evil girls have the prettiest face? / You gave me a heart that was full of mistakes/ I gave you a heart and you made my heartbreak/ You made my heart ache

These lyrics present a man that is emotionally expressive and vulnerable, with a history of engaging in unhealthy relationships with women. The contention in this relationship is shown to be differential commitments to the union. The man in the union aligned with romantic ideals of desiring marriage (“thought of a wedding ring”) and thinking that his ex-lover was “the one.” While the woman is depicted as unphased by the breakup, quickly moving on to a new love interest (“another one”), physically attractive (“pretty face”) yet, has an antagonistic personality (“drastic ways”), is disingenuous (“plastic (fake)”) and mean spirited (“evil”). The unhealthy impact of these woman on the male protagonist is evident by the expressions of needing “prescription medication”, desiring death (“I’m better off dead”) and believing his ex-lover wishes he were dead (“I know that you want me dead”) to cope with the breakup. The suicidal ideations connect with the passionate love ideal of tragic death following the condemnation of a relationship. Male insecurities present throughout the piece, most particularly with the expression “you found another one, I won’t let you forget me.” His desire to remain a relevant and meaningful part of his ex-lover’s life; coupled with claims that he would “do it over again” shows a strong emotional attachment and a focus on his ex-lover rather than his mental wellness.

Moreover, the most prominent space that he remembers his ex-lover is within his bedroom (“see your shadows in my room” and “thinking of you in my bed”). These references are not the same as the traditional association of men with sexual prowess, instead it is a reflection on an emotional connection and recounting a meaningful experience with an ex-lover, in a bedroom, one of the most intimate spaces. This expression adds to the vivid presentation of male suffering and mental turmoil that has required medication, exemplary to the nuances of the mental health issues experienced by men. In addition, there is a non-hypermasculine depiction of the male relationship with his friends, where they offered him relationship advice that he did not accept (“I should’ve listened to my friends”); contradicting the traditional, contentious, emotionally stoic relationship with others associated with hypermasculinity.

Juice Wrld – All Girls Are the Same

In ‘All Girls Are the Same’ Juice Wrld raps about a man that is resentful of women after being heartbroken. The characteristics of the female love interest and an expression of male coping mechanisms post-breakup are shown in the following lyrics:

Intro: They’re rotting my brain love/ **Verse 1:** All girls all the same/ I admit it another hoe got me finished/ Broke my heart, oh no you didn’t/ Fuck sippin’, I’m down a whole bottle/ Hard liquor, hard truth, can’t swallow/ Need a bartender, put me out my sorrow/ Wake up the next day in the Monte Carlo/ With a new woman, tell me she from Colorado/ And she love women, she’ll be gone by tomorrow/ Who am I kiddin’/? **Verse 2:** All this jealousy and agony that I sit in/ I’m a jealous boy/ I just want real love, guess it’s been a minute/ Pissed off from the way that I don’t fit in/ Tell me what’s the secret to love, I don’t get it/ Feel like I be runnin’ a race I’m not winnin’/ These girls are insane/ **Chorus:** All girls are the same/ They’re rotting my brain, love/ I think I need a change/ **Verse 3:** Ten minutes, she tell me it would take ten minutes/ To break my heart, oh no she didn’t/ Fuck livin’, I’m down a whole bottle/ Fuck givin’, I’m take not borrow/ And I’m still sinnin’, still losing my mind/ I know I been trippin’, I’m still wasting my time/ It’s fuck feelings, my sorrow go up to the ceilin’/ **Chorus:** Now I am insane/ Demons in my brain, love/ Peace I can’t obtain/ Cause’ all these girls the same, love

These lyrics present a man that is divulging his emotional state about his love life to a female listener, evident in the consistent endings of his sentences with “love.” The main theme is that he is in a perpetual cycle of emotionally connecting to women that do not offer him “real love” and instead cause him emotional distress. By “admitting” that “another hoe got [him] finished” Juice Wrld phrases this emotional expression as a non-traditional confession that he tried to conceal. By referring to the woman that broke his heart as a “hoe” (slang for promiscuous) he maintains a hypermasculine tone on a non-hypermasculine expression. As details of the relationship unfold the women are presented as the dominant holders of the love that men seek. Instead of giving their love, through the lines “All girls are the same,” all girls are presented as emotionally stoic and dismissive (“she tell me it would take ten minutes to break my heart”), emotionally unstable (“these girls are insane”), sexually fluid and non-monogamous (“she love woman, she’ll be gone by tomorrow”).

On the other hand, the man in this relation is characterized as jealous (“I’m a jealous boy”), exemplary to an emotional attachment or as a hypermasculine expression of possessiveness. He is

heartbroken (“broke my heart”), yearnin’ for an intimate connection with women (“I just want real love”) and feeling like an outsider (“pissed off that I don’t fit in”). It is unclear whether he feels like he does not fit in because of his lack of “real love,” which would assume that the majority of people have “real love” or if his general character is that of an outlier. The lines “fuck giving” and “fuck feelings” is indicative that he also has an emotionally expressive nature that he is trying to subvert as a self-defence mechanism; presenting a desire to shift from a non-hypermasculine state to the hypermasculine persona of emotional stoicism and conquest.

From these characteristics “real love” can be implied to be a mutual exchange of giving, feelings and monogamy (to curb jealousy). This aspect of “real love” aligns with the pure/prosaic ideals of a mutual relation that is not bound to marriage. The overt emotional expression aligns with passionate love ideal, while the pursuit of a woman’s “real love” to elevate his emotional state aligns with romantic love ideals. His other responses to heartbreak are to display suicidal tendencies, aligning with passionate love ideals. In addition to an overconsumption of alcohol shown in the lines “fuck sippin’/ fuck livin, I’m down a whole bottle”, “hard liquour, hard truth, can’t swallow” and “need a bartender to put me out my sorrow.” Despite the “agony” and mental “insanity” that has given him depressive symptoms (“demons [rotting] in my brain”) the male protagonist continues to chase incompatible women, seen in the lines “I’m still sinnin’”, “I know I’m trippin’ – still wasting my time.”

Rich the Kid – Plug Walk

In ‘Plug Walk’ Rich the Kid raps about a man that glorifies the lifestyle of a drug dealer, known in street (rap) culture as a “plug.” The lyrics below demonstrate the idealized masculine and feminine qualities, as well as the male-female dynamic that arise from adopting the mannerisms of a “plug”:

Chorus: Plug Walk/ I don’t even understand how the fuck my plug talk/ New freak had to cut my other lil’ bitch off/ 50k you could come and book a nigga for a plug walk/ **Verse 1:** Pussy nigga callin’ for his boo back/ Plug walk, Gucci on my shoe racks/ Walk up in the house with a rat-a-tat/ I done ran into some racks, I done ran into your girl/ Why the plug show me love/ **Verse 2:** Big ol’ Bentley/ Call me on the phone, I don’t say shit/ I make money when I talk/ She gon’ let me fuck ass up/ I stuck my keys in the Louis V/ Wrist overseas

These lyrics present a sex-centric male-female relation. Monogamy is not defined but there is a lack of emotional attachment based on the sole discussion of women in physical terms; aligning

with confluent love ideals. Women are shown to be objects that can be “cut”, “taken” and “given to others” based on sexual criteria. For example, the male protagonist is narrated to “cut” his “lil bitch” for a “new freak” a term that is slang for a sexually adventurous person. However, sexual acts are presented as “done” to a woman with her permission, seen in the lines “she gon’ let me fuck ass up.” This demonstrates greater mutuality transgressing the notion that hypermasculine content equates a loss of a woman’s agency. The hypermasculine tradition continues in the expressions intended to belittle other men by calling them “pussy nigga[s]” and “taking” their woman. The reference to other men’s women as their “boos” and as “girls” is indicative to the different categorizations of women and the ensuing labels depending on their relation. Following the expectations for hip-hop hypermasculinity, a materially wealthy man is idealized in this song. This is evident by the references to owning a “Bentley”, Gucci shoes”, endless “racks”, only talking on the phone for practical, owning a “Louis V” and international “wrist watch.” References to women are not the focal point of this song, instead they are inserted to embolden the male dominance and “plug persona” of the speaker.

Migos ft Drake – Walk it Talk it

In ‘Walk it Talk it’ the rap group Migos and Drake displays a man that “authentically” lives the wealthy lifestyle that he glorifies within his raps. By privileging the practise of living up to one’s words (“walk it, talk it”) they diss other men that rap about lavish lives that they do not have. This is shown in Drakes verse “heard you living in a mansion in your raps, though/But your shit look like the trap on this google maps, though.” The following lyrics present the masculine qualities and male-female relationship that is idealized the “Walk it, talk it” lifestyle:

Migos: Walk it, like I talk it/Take my shoes and walk a mile/ Something that you can’t do/Big talks of the town, big boy gang moves/ I like to walk around with my chain loose/ She just bought a new ass but got the same boobs/Whipping up dope, scientist/ that’s my sauce where you find it/Adding up checks no minus/ Get your respect in diamonds/ I bought a Plane Jane rollie/ These niggas bought they fame/I want that thot, this that ménage/ I bought a franchise to double up the profits/ What’s that in my vault? Load of cash and assaults / Private life, private jet round the globe/ Hit a bitch, hit a lick with the ‘Cho/ fucking a bih, and that’s not a problem/ I get a rebound aint’ talking about Spalding

Drake: First night she gon' let me fuck cause' we grown/ I hit her, gave her back to the city/
 She home/ So I can't be beefing with no wack nigga, got no backbone/ Heard you living in a
 mansion in your raps, though/ But your shit look like the trap on this google maps, though/ We
 live like Sopranos

In these lyrics the ideal man is presented as having an authentic identity where his words match his actions (“big talks of the town, big boy gang moves”), a quality that cannot be matched by others (“take my shoes and walk a mile/something that you can't do”). He values drugs (whipping up dope) and accumulating and growing his wealth rather than spending it. This is expressed through references to “adding up checks” and buying a “franchise to double profits”, which are active entrepreneurial efforts in contrast to other men (“niggas”) who “bought [their] fame.” In addition, money and “assaults” are depicted as stored in a “vault” rather than spent and used. The collection of, rather than, the violent use of the weapons is divergent from the hypermasculine tradition of violence in rap music.

To be considered wealthy, it is expressed that the man must be able to physically and visually display status and success, earning “respect in diamonds”, while, having the financial security to be wealthy without exhibiting flashy materiality; shown from the purchase of a simple designed Rolex watch (“Plain Jaine Rollie”) rather than a bejeweled out one. In the sparse reference to women, they are presented as superficial, having plastic surgery on their buttocks (“got a new ass but got the same boobs”). The male-female relationship is sex-centric, with men framed as “dominant” in the interaction. In Migos’ lines sexual prowess and desirability is expressed in the lines “fucking on a bih and its not a problem/I get a rebound aint’ talking about Spalding (basketball).”

In Drake’s lines, the interaction with women is expressed as a one-night stand in a dynamic that “mature women” consent to (“first night she gon’ let me fuck cause’ we grown”). Women have agency in this relation, sex is not just happening to her. She is an active participant albeit, discussed in male-centric terms. The expression that after sex the “city” became the woman’s “home” resembles the tradition of bolstering male sexual skills and the impurity of the sexually expressive woman. Overall, the serial sexuality, sex-centric and non-monogamous (one-night stand) references in the male-female dynamic aligns with confluent love ideals.

Tyga – Taste

In ‘Taste’ Tyga presents a man that is materially wealthy, sexually desirable to women and envied by men. The lifestyle and relationship that this man has with women is presented in the lyrics below:

Verse 1: Slide on a pimp game with my pinky ring/ Lotta gang, lotta bitches and an icy chain/Why you claiming that you rich? That’s a false claim/ You ain’t even got no style, see you on my Instagram/ Walk, talk it like a boss, I just lift the hand/ Three million cash, call me Rain Man/ Say the wrong word, you be hangman/ Watch me stick to you bitch like a spray tan/

Chorus: Taste, taste, she can get a taste/ Taste, taste, fuck what a nigga say/ It’s all the same like Mary-Kate/ Taste, taste, let you get a taste/ Taste, taste, do you love the taste?/ Yeah that’s cool but he ain’t like me/ **Verse 2:** Lotta girls like me niggas wanna fight me/ And she gon’ suck me like a fuckin Hi-C/ And my bitch want the Fenty not the Maybelline/ I’m the black JB the way these bitches scream/ Make these bitches scream/ Pretty little thing/ Slow pace in the Wraith, got this shit from bae/ Make her get on top of me and ride me like a Harley/ She wanna keep me company and never want depart me/ Fishtail in the parking lot (illegal move of driving away and leaving dust)/ Like the way she suck it, suck it like a Jolly/ And she got the Patek (Swiss watch, competitor of Rolex) on water moccasin (comparing his penis to the water snake). I’m rich in real life, I get that profit, copy/ **Chorus:** Taste, taste [LA, Miami, Oakland, New York, Chi-Town, Houston, Portland] overseas let them bitches taste/Taste, taste worldwide they gon’ get a taste

As the first artist to note blackness directly in the lines (“I’m the black JB”), Tyga depicts a black man that has characteristics that align with the “pimp game.” This consists of a tight circle of male friends (“lotta gang”), easy and abundant access to women (“lotta bitches”) and lavish material goods and wealth. The main theme of the song is validating the credibility and masculine legitimacy of the man, shown in the lines “walk, talk it like a boss” where the man is shown to have actions that match his words (a marker of hip-hop authenticity). The song aligns with playa rap over gangsta rap because credibility is proven through wealth and women over street credibility. This is shown in the lines “lotta girls like me, niggas wanna fight me”, “watch me stick to your bitch like a spray tan” and “he aint like me.”

In this excerpt, photos on social media are used to disprove claims by other men of their wealth and desirability. On the other hand, the man in this song believes that his wealth and desirability

demonstrated by his ability to make it “rain money” and with international fanbase. Both his popularity and sexual prowess are highlighted in the expression that he “makes girls scream” likening himself to the hysteric reaction that pop star Justin Beiber experiences from women. To satisfy the yearning, the male is expressed to give women in LA, Miami, Oakland, New York, Chi-Town, Houston, Portland, overseas and all over the world a piece of him (“a taste”). In such, a confluent, sex-centric, and non-committal relationship is idealized. Women are presented as desiring the man’s attention and commitment (“she wanna keep me company and never want depart me”), as well as engaged in a relation based on satiating male pleasure, expressed in the lines “she suck it like a jolly”, “she suck it in Hi-C”, “Make her ride me like a Harley” and “she put the Patek on water moccasin.” The last line idealizes women with brand name watches, with Patek being a leading competitor to Rolex and emphasizes male dominance and sexual prowess by comparing the man’s penis to a sweet, Jolly Rancher candy (“jolly”) and water snake (“water moccasin”) that is strong, deadly and long.

Lil Skies – I Know You

In ‘I Know You’ Lil-Skies raps about women that use men for their fame and money. The characteristics of “these types of women” and a male perspective on the scenario is depicted in the lyrics below:

Chorus: Girl I know you, you just wanna fuck me for the fame/ Wanna fuck me ‘cause them diamonds on my chain/ Girl, don’t you? Don’t you?/ Girl, I know you, you be out here playin’ all these games/ Out here fuckin’ with all of them lames/ **Verse 1:** Big body she gon’ swerve it/ Shorty lookin’ picture perfect/ Say she ready, never nervous/ Giver her good pipe when in person/ You want the cars and the purses/ Baby girl, tell me is it worth it/ Can’t fuck with lil’shorty I know that she basic/ She makin’ my dick soft/ These niggas hatin’ said I wouldn’t make it/ I shine with new floss/ I got his girl in a room gettin’ naked/ She fuck with a real boss/ When my gang walk in it’s lit/ Give her D then she dismiss/ No kiss/ You test me then you gettin’ hit, Lil bitch/ **Chorus:** And girl that’s funny cause I know you/ You just wanna come around and make a name/ Girl I know you, gon’ tell me that you different and you changed/ But I know, you are everything you say you aint/ You tried to take me down, I left you in the rain/ **Verse 2:** Look, she want the money and the fame/ Told her you gotta go/ I ain’t gonna give your ass a thing, she want a pot of gold/ Look, back when I was young I had a lot of hoes/ back before I got this dough now I see how they rockin’/ I know how you roll now ain’t no

need for talkin’/ That shit gettin’ old now left me with no option/ But to keep knockin’ these hoes down/ **Verse 3:** Pull up to the party, shawty all up on me, now she wanna date me/ Said she wanna have my baby/ I ain’t know that was your lady, oh no/ I’ve been workin’ off the clock for this shit/ Did a lot for this shit, please don’t expect me just to give it up/ Shorty wanna rock with the kid/ Gave her cock then I dipped told lil’ mama go ahead and live it up/ She wanna fuck cause there diamonds on my chain.

In this track a man is presented displeased with his experiences of being seduced by women that have disingenuous intentions, seeking money, fame, material gifts and to “make a name.” Women are presented as gold-digging vixens that are physically attractive (“picture perfect” with a “big body”), sexually expressive and confident (desiring to “fuck him for fame” and “she – never nervous”). They aim to gain financial security from the men via the gifts, purses, cars and diamonds and use manipulative techniques like getting pregnant (“she wanna have my baby”). The frame of women as gold diggers and “hoes” aligns with the traditional hypermasculine depiction of women in mainstream gangsta rap. Hypermasculinity in this song is shown as an attitude adopted by the male protagonist in response to being poorly treated by women. Where his abundant experiences with gold diggers from a “young” age has made him distrustful of women before speaking to them (“no need for talking”) and in turn, gives them emotionally detached treatment (“left me with no option but to keep knocking these hoes down”).

Thus, the male-female interaction is expressed as emotionally detached and sex-centric. A complex confluent union, where the male protagonist assumes power by using women sexually before they can use him. The disposability of women and male sexual prowess is emphasized in the lines “giv[ing] her D then dismiss, no kiss”, “I got his girl in a room getting’ naked/ She fuck with a real boss.” He further mentions spitefully impregnating “disingenuous women” leaving without providing financial support (“shorty wanna rock with the kid/ gave her cock then I dipped told lil’ mama go ahead and live it up”). In these lyrics, the man’s penis is expressed as a dominant object that is in demand by and inflicted on women rather than a mutual exchange; with sex considered on a lower grade of intimacy than kissing. All in all, gold diggers legitimize the man’s desirability, sexual prowess and authenticity in his claims to wealth over other men. Taking other men’s women and female attention are characteristics of authentic mainstream rap masculinity that is indicative of “makin’ it.”

However, there are male vulnerabilities and emotional transparency in the expressions of being displeased by his treatment by women. This displeasure implies a preference for a woman with genuine intentions. The displeasure is presented in the reference to “these” women as “basic”, which connotes a lack of substance that makes his penis flaccid (“She makin’ my dick soft”). In addition to the overt expressions he typecasts these women as having an ill, unchangeable character (“I know you are everything you say you aint”) and actively rejects them. “you tried to take me down I left you in the rain” and “I ain’t giving your ass a thing.” Furthermore, the man in this song is expressed to have self-worth and passion for his work ethic viewing himself as deserving more than being objectified and drained of his hard earned cash that he has been “working off the clock for” and thus, is adverse to engaging in relations with a undeserving woman (“tell me is it worth it”). This shows that physical and emotional intimacy is graded, offered and retracted based on the perceived ingenuity of the partner and equal efforts in the relationship.

Swae Lee, Rae Srumurd – Powerglide

In ‘Powerglide’ the male-female relationship is presented as a relation between female strippers and materially wealthy, drug-using male customers that hold the dominant role. The interactions and the idealized qualities for each gender is depicted in the lyrics below:

Chorus: Kush all in my lap because these hoes don’t want to roll it/ I was slidin in the Lamb with a powerglide/ She wanna fuck, speak up/ Comin’ out her clothes/ I’m in wonderland when she comin’ down the pole/ And I don’t even care if she take all of mine/ Like it ain’t nothing but a dollar sign/ **Verse 1:** Diamonds unthawed, comin’ in froze/ Got too many girls to let one of them go/ If she bad, I put a pinky ring on, snow globe/ I’m a have that pussy on lock like popo/ She was going up and down like a yo-yo/ You can say I’m greedy cause I always want more/ Give these niggas with some money, some room/ She don’t stop batteries not included/ Can you believe every night we do this?/ **Verse 2:** Hold up, I’m a go and spend those hundred though/ I don’t care if she had a man, so?/ Pedicure gang, get your fingernails did/ With no shame, flip that ass like it’s heads or tails/ And she finer than a motherlover/ Can I hit that ass like a bullseye?/ She gon’ suck like a blood sucker/ My fee higher than a motherfucker/ I hear you like fast cash/ Baby you know I got the hots for you/ I’ve been workin’ so I cash in/ She said “I only wanna dance for you”/ We have no mercy for you/

Verse 3: Rollie on my chain/ Kush residue on my jeans, I blow hella dope/ And them classic Reeboks, white than the snow/ Shake that ass wit ya bestie/ Tryna send a girl to college, I ain’t

coppin' a free show/ Might just leave with me tonight, but that don't mean she a freak hoe/
 fuck with dancers and models, shout out girls who get dollars/ Shawty came from the bottom,
 yeah shout out Keisha Bottoms/ Couple cases of Rose – pour up for all the girls but I'ma drink
 from the bottles/ **Verse 4:** She got that million dollar pussy but I get it for the free/ She like to
 do a lot of snow I tell that bitch come and Ski/ Shawty bad, she can get it, she can swallow, she
 can spit it/ In the bed or in the Lamb/ Got your bitch sucking dick on the Gram'/ R.I.P Lil Peep,
 I gotta slow down on them Xans/ Just had a menage, back seat of my Benz/ Put that shit on
 camera, she squirted on the lens/ Bitch run me the check first, I don't wanna fuck/ They say its
 cuffin' season, baby, you aint good enough/ She want a real nigga, dog, you ain't hood enough

These lyrics present male expressions about having and fantasizing about explicit sexual encounters with female strippers. This is a specific male-female relationship dynamic that takes place in strip clubs, in cars (“Lamb”, “Benz”) and potentially the man’s dwelling (“might just leave with me tonight”). Female strippers are conveyed as glorified and eroticized objects that “ain’t good or hood enough” for a relationship with emotional commitment (“being cuffed”). Instead, their purpose is to entertain the male spectators (“comin’ down the pole”) and perform acts like oral sex (“like a blood sucker”). The stripper – client dynamic makes its representation transactional with women being paid to consistently meet the sexual needs of men (“she don’t stop batteries not included”). In turn, female sexuality is expressed through the male gaze as amplified and exhibited. This is depicted in the multiple references to “ass shaking,” the explicit details of the women’s management of male ejaculation and references to recording their sexual interactions via a camera and over the social media platform Instagram (“the Gram”). In addition to the expression of having “no mercy” for the women’s needs. The man in this dynamic is thus, represented as having disposable wealth to spend on strippers “every night” shown in the lines, “I don’t care if she take all of mine”, “my fee higher than a motherfucker”, and “tryna send a girl to college”

The image conveyed is of a man that consumes alcohol (“Rose”) marijuana (“kush”) and Xanax (“Xan”), wears white Reeboks and has “Kush stained jeans.” He is interested in casual relations with strippers and models, yet they are not his ideal type of woman for a commitment. His level of commitment to these women is related to their genitalia only. (“I’ma have that pussy on lock”) aligning with confluent, sex-centric relationship ideals. While women are presented as strippers based on their careers of “dancing” for money (“dollars”). The ideal women for male

sexual pleasure are expressed as having pedicures (“get your finger nails did”), having a “good/million-dollar pussy” It is the male desire for her to be “bad” analogous with a “freak hoe” being sexually adventurous, allowing the men to exhibit and amplify her sexuality. These strippers are an object for sexual consumption but also a prize to demonstrate the man’s wealth and sexual prowess. It serves to mention, that the “shoutout” to the black female mayor of Atlanta, Keisha Bottoms, is evidence that the hip-hop black male expression can involve the traditional hypermasculine objectification of women as well as respect toward women and an awareness of politics.

Derived Analysis

The directed analysis explored the following themes for black male rapper's (N=22): (1) Non-hypermasculine expressions (2) Hypermasculine expressions and (3) The heterosexual relationship styles passionate, confluent, romantic and pure/prosaic love. This derived analysis is organized by these themes and the sub-themes that were uncovered. First, in the non-hypermasculine theme the sub-themes that arose are, heartbreak and relationship incongruence, death suicidal ideations and mental disturbances, sexually pleasing women, companionate male relationships. Second, in the hypermasculine theme the sub-themes that arose are, the thug/gangsta, the playa, authenticity, material wealth, drug-use, male desirability and contentious relations. An unexpected third theme arose dedicated to the representation of women that include the subthemes: expressions of women, including the themes, ideal women, male as teacher and rewarder, male pleasure, the hoe and gold digger, emotionally attached women. Last, theme heterosexual relationship styles presented the following subthemes: the influence of social media, confluent relation, romantic, pure/prosaic and passionate relationship.

The Non-Hypermasculine

The lyrical content that I have themed, non-hypermasculine, include, black male expressions of heartbreak, emotional attachment and admiring women. The most common themes are expressions of pain, frustration, insecurities, paranoia, distrust and jealousy, as well as mental disturbances from depression to suicidal ideations. The relationship dynamics consist of an emotionally detached woman that dissolves the relationship – an arrangement that challenges the male dominant and female submissive tradition, as well as the notion that emotional detachment is idealized in mainstream rap and that men are indifferent and fearless when faced with adversity.

Heartbreak and Relationship Incongruence

The expressions of men being heartbroken after their relationships ended is prevalent in 'Summer Games' and 'Jaded' by Drake, 'Changes', 'Sad', 'Fuck Love' and 'The Remedy for a Broken Heart' by XXXTentacion and 'Lucid' and 'All Girls Are the Same' by Juice Wrld. As the first example of an emotionally attached man, these songs express men and women as having incompatible relationship expectations. A dynamic recognized in the literature as non-traditional, where a woman is emotionally detached, while men are more emotionally invested, desiring greater

relationship longevity. In ‘Summer Games’ a man is presented to have expected greater relationship longevity. The man expresses shock that his relationship ended prematurely after his female interest said, “I love you.” A similar trend was found in ‘Lucid Dreams’ and ‘All Girls Are the Same’ where a man has a bad habit of selecting women that have different relationship desires. In ‘Lucid Dreams’ he was thinking about “a wedding ring” and in ‘All Girls Are the Same’ his female love interest bragged that she could “break his heart in ten minutes.” Both ‘Summer Games’ and ‘Lucid Dreams’ present the female love interest to have broken up with the male protagonist for another man. This reference demonstrates its importance as a factor that affects male emotionality. Last, XXXTentacion and his female interest have different relationship expectations since he expresses being heartbroken because she is “changing”.

Another relationship incongruence is the expression that women have an ill-intent within the relationship. By moving away from the submissive-nurturing female archetype ‘Lucid Dreams’, ‘Jaded’ and ‘I Know You’ by Lil Skies present women as users. In such, women are referred to as evil demons in ‘Lucid Wrld’. Moreover, both the man in ‘Jaded’ and ‘I Know You’ are displeased for being used for fame by their female partners. In response the man in ‘Jaded’ became (“jaded”) distrusting of women, after a disclaimer that he is ambivalent at emotionally expressing in the lines, “most of these things I don’t wanna say”. While the man in ‘I Know You’ adopts the hypermasculine persona of emotionally detaching and sexually objectifying women, as a defense mechanism. This is evident in the line “left [me] with no other option but to knock these hoes down”. The man in ‘All Girls Are the Same’ Juice Wrld raps “fuck giving, fuck feelings” as to suggest that he will adopt more of a hypermasculine stance with women as a result of his bad experience in being emotive and giving.

Death, Suicidal Ideations and Mental Disturbances

The expression of death and fears of dying has been a prominent theme in hip-hop since the inception of gangsta rap. Famous artists such as Tupac, 50 cent and Jay Z have self-reflected on their lifestyles – seemingly the dangers of the “thug life” or “thug life persona” that is plagued with unexpected violence inflicted by external factors by their enemies, the police, by overconsuming drugs and other factors that affect the rap celebrity (Jeffries 2011; Whesthoff 2011). Interestingly, in this sample, death is conveyed differently – in many cases, it is a desire to die that is rooted in men’s psychology rather than their environment. The expression of death and desiring

to die are consistent themes in the songs, 'Is There More' by Drake, 'Moonlight', 'Sad' and 'Fuck Love' by XXXTentacion and 'Lucid Dreams' by Juice Wrld. In 'Is There More' Drake presents a man that is questioning the meaning of life and along the way expresses desires to authentically express himself before death, evident in the lines "I have a fear of having thing on my mind when I die". This reference to death as a self-reflection or a reflection on life provides the closest resemblance to the gangsta rap tradition.

In 'Moonlight' death is referenced in XXXTentacion's expressions of a man that feels like his life is "destined" in early death, he continues by morbidly referencing an "intestinal stabbing". I interpreted the stabbing as the male protagonists prophesized death since it was not contextualized and followed the expression that his life was destined. In 'Fuck Love', 'Sad', 'Lucid Dreams' and 'All Girls Are the Same' the expressions of dying are presented as the male response to heartbreak. 'Fuck Love' presents a range of emotive, physiological and psychological responses that can afflict a man that is heartbroken. XXXTentacion presents a man that feels like dying, crying, is nauseous and is experiencing mental disturbances, such as "gunfire and riots in his brain". In 'Sad' a man is expressed to fear abandonment and in response threatens to kill himself as a method to maintain a relationship with his female love interest. The depiction of emotional manipulation in 'Sad' emphasizes that there are more complex dynamics than hypermasculine and non-hypermasculine. The theme of sadness persists in XXXTentacion's 'The Remedy for a Broken Heart' as he expresses a man that is unfulfilled when lacking love. Material wealth does not suffice in his lines "I'm sadder than most people with money and freedom." The suicidal expressions continue in 'All Girls All the Same' in the lines "fuck livin/ I'ma drown in my sorrow" as an expression of the depth of his sadness, he further mentions using alcohol as a remedy in the lines "fuck sippin'/ I'ma down a whole bottle".

'Lucid Dreams' echoes these themes, where a man is expressed to desire to death and believes his female interest wants him to die since she broke his heart; evident in the lines "I know you want me dead" and "I am better off dead". The male protagonist constantly reminisces about his relationship with his ex-female partner – when he mentions that he "sees [her] shadows in [his] room he refers to the exchange of intimacy rather than physical sex. In such, he also experiences mental disturbances, referenced as "demons in his head" that he remedies with "prescription drugs"; Juice Wrld is the only artists, in the sample, the referenced drug-use as a remedy for

heartbreak. Also, as mentioned above, the man in ‘Lucid Dreams’ is aware that he selects the “wrong” women he expects to continue to make the same mistakes, in his words “I’m still sinnin’”. I position XXXTentacion and Juice Wrld as presenting an unacknowledged component of mainstream rap, the realm of the intimate where men are depicted as struggling with mental health challenges, having an emotional and existential dependence on women, and the potential to be driven by their emotions rather than instrumental rationality.

Aligning with the Feminine

I have also interpreted ‘Yes Indeed’ as constructively applying the pronoun “she” to a man. In ‘Yes Indeed’ Drake uses the pronoun “she” in the lines “Wheezy produced it and Wheezy f made me/ she held it down, so she got a Mercedes.” The reference to “she held it down” is a domestic/romantic ideal that women ground men. Drake, the artist, was mentored by Wheezy (Lil Wayne) in real life. Therefore, it can be implied that these lyrics represent Drake referring to himself as “she” to mean his ability to meet the expectations of Wheezy and in turn, was rewarded with a Mercedes or another feature of success. In this sense, the use of the feminine is to compare and describe the masculine rather than as an act of disregard. In addition, Atlanta rappers Rae Sremmurd and Swae Lee express admiration for the black female mayor of Atlanta, Keisha Bottoms through mention in ‘Powerglide’.

Sexually Pleasing Women

After Dark’, ‘In My Feelings’, and ‘All Mine’ follow the playa rap ideals of exuding sexual prowess by means of sexually satisfying women rather than their ability to accumulate the most women. In ‘In My Feelings’ this is shown in the reference of a man pleasing a woman better than other men. The central theme of ‘After Dark’ is about a man sexually pleasing a woman in his car “after dark”. Female pleasure is expressed as the male protagonist “putting time in” and “making her wet like the pool.” In ‘All Mine’ Kanye also constructs a male protagonist that feels empowered by sexually pleasing a woman, her sexual satisfaction equates his sexual abilities.

Companionate Relationships with Men

In ‘Yes Indeed’ Drake raps on the companionate, a supportive relationship he has had in the rap industry. He demonstrates appreciation for Lil Wayne (Weezy) and other “trusted niggas” that supported him to success. This relation differs from thug love because their relation is not

associated with street-culture. In ‘Lucid Dreams’ a companionate relationship was expressed with the male protagonist expressing disappointment for not listening to his friend’s relationship advice.

The Hypermasculine Tradition

The Gangsta

In the hypermasculine tradition of mainstream rap, from gangsta rap, it is expected that expressions about a thug lifestyle with authenticity about one’s street credibility will arise. The thug lifestyle includes references on material wealth, drug-dealing, male desirability, violence, objectifying women and contentious relationships with other men. However, many songs in the sample aligned with playa ideals. There were only two references to street-credibility. The first was by XXXTentacion when he presented a man that desired to align with “the bloods”, a notorious gang in America. The second is in ‘Yes Indeed’ when Lil Baby presents himself as “coming from the basement, and straight as the streets” a traditional claim to street-authenticity.

The Playa

Instead of drug dealing, for profit the men engage in recreational drug-use, most prominently marijuana with the selected few mentioning Xanax. The contentious relationship with men is expressed as a product of “hatin” and “jealousy” resolved by the rapper boasting on the many ways that they have a more dominant masculinity and success, rather than inflicting violence. In ‘Yes Indeed’ Lil Baby states that he had the ability to [could] hire other people to [take out] his haters. The stress on *could* demonstrates an unfulfilled threat - Lil Baby in ‘Yes Indeed’ was the first to threaten violence against other men. In addition, the playa gained authenticity and masculine esteem from stealing women from other men, presenting himself as sexually desirable and authentically wealthy.

Material Wealth

In ‘Nice for what’ Drake references the rolex watch in the lines “everybody get your mothafuckin’ roll on” in reference to the expensive Rolex watches. In ‘Yes Indeed’ Drake and Lil Baby mention a Mercedes, Yellow foreign cars, Yellow Ferrari, Cartier glasses, clothes without starch and a new car with no keys. ‘Is There More’ presents a man that is individualistic, against crying, self-assured and that has material wealth, with mentions of yachts. In ‘Life Goes on’ the car Lamborghini is valued over Porsches and accumulating wealth is valued with the goal to end up

on Forbes List, list of global billionaires. In ‘The Remedy for a Broken Heart’ having wealth and an ability to go on vacation was glorified. In ‘Plug Walk’ The Bentley car, Gucci shoes, and endless money “racks”, wearing an international wrist watch and having Louis Vutton are highlighted. In ‘Walk it Talk it’ the male protagonist is driven to accumulate rather than spend his money to build a franchise and diamonds are viewed as validation for their wealth. However, less flash is idealized via the reference to a Plain Jane Rolex, this implies that people who are authentically wealthy do not need flashy jewelry. In Powerglide Mercedes Benz, Lamborghini are the cars mentioned.

Drug-Use

In ‘Life Goes On’ there are also expressions about drug-use, where the male protagonist is presented as overconsuming drugs, needing his pulse to be monitored. In ‘Powerglide’ the male protagonist’s wealth is presented by their excessive purchasing of strippers. In ‘The Remedy for a Broken Heart’ marijuana and money are referenced as remedies for heartbreak. However, money is expressed to be meaningless without love. In ‘All Girls are the Same’ drug use is presented as an over-consumption of alcohol. Kanye references a “blunt”. In ‘Walk it Talk it’ marijuana is expressed to be made and smoked. In ‘Powerglide’ marijuana is expressed to be rolled and smoked. Alcohol and Xanax are consumed as well yet the male protagonists express needing to cut down on Xanax for its track record of killin rap artists.

Male Desirability: “Stealing Women”

In ‘In My Feelings’ Drake represents a man that can “hit it” better than other men in regard to satisfying a woman – this highlights the man’s sexual prowess and dominance over other men. In ‘After Dark’ the male desirability is referenced by the lyrics “she can’t get enough.” In ‘Finesse’ a man is presented to be interested in a woman that already has a male partner and this is a glorified act of finesse (“he can’t know, finesse”). In ‘Life Goes’ a man expresses his endless access to women. In ‘Taste’ the male protagonist boasts about being more desirable to women than other men and in turn, taking women from other men. In Taste the male protagonist’s desirability is international and is likened to the attention that mega pop-star Justin Beiber receives from women (“the black JB”). In ‘I Know You’ the male penis is expressed as a dominant and desirable object given to women, where gold digging increased male protagonist’s and credibility. In such, the male protagonist brags about taking women from other men as a feature of “makin it.” In Powerglide

the disposable money that the male protagonist spend on strippers is glorified especially the sexual acts with other men's women.

Contentious Relations with other Men

In 'Yes Indeed' Lil Baby presents his relationship with other men as contentious, they are jealous and mimic him. In Life Goes On the man is mentioned to be ignoring the verbal attacks ("shots) from other men. There is also an active effort to avoid death, a fate wished on him by his enemies. In Life Goes On there is an aspect of fear that is connected to these contentious relationships, whereby the male protagonist is expressed to be cautious of his behaviours ("walking on a thin line"). In Moonlight XXXTentacion presents the relationships with men as antagonist, labelling them as trippin' and bad mind, qualities that he could be using to also describe himself and his mental instability. In 'The Remedy for a Broken Heart' the male protagonist expresses experiencing "hate" from other men and people in general. In Plug Walk other men are put down, referring to them as pussy niggas. In 'Walk it Talk it' and 'Taste' the male protagonists present other men as faking their wealth and success as inauthentic. In 'Plug Walk' there is "boos" and "girls" to connote women that have been given a commitment, and "freaks", "hoes" and "bitches" are for sex.

Expressions of Women: Traditional and Non-Traditional

The Idealized Woman

In Drake's 'Nice for What' a man is expressed to have interest in a woman with traits that are traditionally aligned with men, such as being individualistic, economically successful, emotionally detached and confident. In lines with the modern tradition of men categorizing women as worth and unworthy, acceptable and unacceptable. The rappers expressed an array of categories to define an ideal woman. The most common include, real versus basic women, bad versus good women, also referred to as "bad bitches", "baddies" and "goodies". Real was discerned from basic in 'Jaded' where real women are characterized as having relationship "potential". In 'Nice for What' "real woman" have traits that align with hip-hop masculinity, material wealth, independence and emotional detachment.

Basic women are expressed in 'All Mine' and 'I Know You' as for the sole purpose of sex – with the added confidence and sexual expressiveness, as stated in 'Life Goes On'. In 'I Know

You' women are also depicted as gold diggers. 'Yes Indeed' a woman is presented as "a goodie", a category of women that can be introduced to friends and family. This is echoed in 'Powerglide' where strippers are categorized as "bad" to reference their sexual desirability, while labelled as not "good" enough to commit to. Furthermore, a "main bitch" is referenced in the sample as a consistent sexual partner. In My Feelings' where women as "bad bitches" are idealized with having street credibility ("from the block like you Jenny"), being sexually fluid, self-interested, outspoken when disrespected by men, and "drinks the Hennessey over champagne," a drink viewed as masculine. In 'The Remedy for a Broken Heart' "baddies" are also presented as women that are sexually fluid.

The sample showed expressions that aligned women with materiality, the same qualities as hip-hop masculinity. Brand name watches on a woman was a prevalent theme. In 'Life Goes On' and 'The Remedy for a Broken Heart' a man is expressed to have purchased an Audmars Piquet (AP) watch for their female partners. In 'Taste' women are idealized for wearing the Patek watch, a competitor to Rolex. In "Nice for what" Drake associates women with owning a "Baby Benz." In My Feelings women are mentioned to be in a Wraith and desire a man's "black card." In 'Is There More' Drake discusses gifting women material items as a norm within relationships although he comments that it may not be meaningful.

In 'Life Goes On' superficial expression of women continues with women getting breast implants. In 'Walk it Talk it' women are associated with women are receiving cosmetic buttocks enlargements. In 'I Know You' women are portrayed as desiring material gifts from men such purses, cars and diamonds and even are trying to get pregnant for financial gain. The strippers in 'Powerglide' are glorified for making a lot of money and they privilege women that pamper themselves with manicures and pedicures. The physical attractiveness of a woman is idealized in the sample, with specific trends in 'Jaded' and 'Taste' who referred to a woman as "pretty little thing" there is an expressed preference for youthfulness and voluptuous body types expressed as "a big body" in 'I Know You' and within 'All Mine' as "super model thick" are idealized.

Man, as Teacher and Rewarder

The track 'In My Feelings' depicts a man that is the teacher and rewarder of woman by guiding their sexual encounter ("when you get to toppin', I see that you've been learning"). Also, the male expressions support the breadwinner/domestic dichotomy of a woman's economic

dependence with excerpts of the male protagonist “taking” the female shopping. In ‘Jaded’ the man is represented as responsible for the woman’s sense of self; for “making” her who she is. In this sense, the romantic ideal is flipped towards the man having the qualities to reform his partner. In ‘After Dark’ the men are presented as responsible for organizing and executing the sexual encounter to have “set it up after dark.” In ‘All Mine’ the male protagonist has control over the relationship, deciding when to make or not make the woman “his.”

Eroticizing the Female Body and Male Pleasurers

In ‘Yes Indeed’ Drake insinuates that a woman is giving him oral sex in the lines “I tell her look up cause’ it’s snowin’ in tootsies” an association of the man’s ejaculation with candy. While Lil-Baby depicts a woman’s body as a disposable object that can “go leave” after sex. Oral sex is referenced in Drake’s ‘In My Feelings’ in the lyrics “I’ll show him how the neck.” There are more references to oral sex in Taste where women suck the male protagonists’ genitals like a “Jolly Rancher candy.” Then the remainder of sexual activities in this relation are dictated by the man. The reference to the male protagonist’s penis as a water moccasin, glorifies his penises strength and desirability rather than its function. In ‘Taste’ the male protagonist continues to express instructing women to ride him, comparing his penis to a water moccasin. In ‘After Dark’ women are expressed to have an abundance of experiences with men that are only interested in a sexual relation that does not increase in seriousness.

In ‘All Mine’ women are only discussed as physical body parts equated to food that can be “sampled” at a store, which is sexually explicit and objectifying. In addition, in ‘All Mine’ sex is presented as something that is happening to a woman. In ‘Plug Walk’ women are expressed as objects that can be cut, taken and given to others. In ‘Walk it Talk’ it women are referenced to enhance the sexual prowess of the male protagonists, mentioned as easy access that are discard after the sex. In ‘Powerglide’ female strippers are discussed, who have the sole purpose of entertaining men and pleasuring men. This expressed by the female strippers giving their male customers oral sex, dancing on the pole, having sexual intercourse and engaging in other forms of exhibitionism.

Most of the sample, glorifies the buttocks of a women, calling it the “ass.” This is shown in ‘Nice for What’ in the bar “gotta make that ass jump.” In Drake’s ‘In My Feelings’ this is referenced in the bar “bring that ass back.” In ‘Is There More’ the “ass” is referenced in the bar

“asses that never come in proportionate size.” In ‘All Mine’ the having a large-buttocks “bustin’ from the bottom” is an idealized feature on a women’s body; specifically idealizing a woman that is supermodel thick. Women are further idealized by their genitals. They are desired to have a lubricated vagina termed “good pussies.” In ‘Plug Walk’ the “ass” is glorified as an ideal sexual position; the male protagonist demonstrates excitement about having sex with his female partner “ass up.” Although in ‘I Know You’ the women are presented as gold diggers, they are physically attractive, characterized as “picture perfect” with a big body. In ‘Powerglide’ the “ass shaking” of female strippers and their friends are a central topic.

“Hoes and Gold Diggers”

In Drake’s ‘Nice for What’ hoes are woman that are unreliable friends, caught in the lines “hoes talk down, you don’t see ‘em outside/ they don’t really be the same offline” moving away from its traditional link to promiscuity. In Life goes on women are presented as “whorin” meaning to be sexually promiscuous, a double standard when male promiscuity is called “scorin.” In ‘All Mine’ Kanye depicts women as disinterested in a man without money and ambivalent to spend their own money. The term “thot” was used in ‘All Mine’ and ‘Walk it Talk’ it as a contemporary reference to women deemed promiscuous. Women a referred to as “hoes” in Juice Wrld’s song ‘All Girls are the Same’ to reference the women that have been breaking his heart. The term “freak hoe” arose in ‘Powerglide’, to typify a woman that is sexually promiscuous and adventurous. Even the protagonist may not truly believe all girls are “hoes” because he directs his song to a woman that he terms “love.” Lastly, women are gold diggers in ‘I Know You’, ‘Jaded’ and ‘In My Feelings’. In female rapper Big Frieda’s excerpt in Drake’s ‘In My Feelings’ she expresses women to manipulatively use their sexual prowess, sex-appeal to acquire material wealth.

Emotionally Attached Women

In Drake’s ‘Nice for what’ the sample of Lauryn Hills X-Factor depicts a woman that is emotionally dependent on a man’s attention; desiring greater support and emotional expression from him – contradicting the main verses of the song on female independence and singledom; highlighting the marketability aspect of the music to produce a message that sells and hooks the attention of the target audience. This is non-hypermasculine because it is a non-traditional practise for a male rapper to structure a rap song to appease women. Drake glorifies female emotionality and independence with the merge of the polarized hook and verses.

Contemporary Relationship Styles

The sample presents heterosexual relationships that align with affluent, pure/prosaic, passionate and romantic love ideals. With affluent love and its undefined gender roles being the most prominent relationship practice expressed by the male artists. Also, in compliment to Weigel's (2016) claim that technologies like online dating impact the nature of relationships, the sample presented contemporary relationships as influenced by technologies such as social media and the telephone. In addition to some exploring America and the ideals This section will explore the expressions of black male artists on intimacy as it relates to the hip-hop and greater North American culture.

Technology: The Influence of Social Media

In Drake's 'Summer Games' social media plays a contentious role in the relationship where the act of partners "following" and "unfollowing" each other on social media implies the beginning and end of their relationship. In addition, the male protagonist was showed to potentially insult his partner by "following" one of her friends. These findings present the non-verbal connotations and forms of communication that permeate the contemporary dynamic. The non-verbal connotations exuded from social media is furthered in Drake's 'Nice for What' where he associates woman that lack "followers" and "mentions" on social media with being confident, independent and self-assured. Also, in 'Nice for What' the unreliability of a women's friends is implied by the reference to her friends not being "the same offline". On a similar note, the advent of Instagram, a social media centered around pictures, was mentioned in 'Taste' and 'Powerglide'. For Tyga Instagram is used as a platform for validating another mans authenticity, material wealth, success and access to women. In lines with this use, Rae Sremmurd and Swae Lee bolster their male dominance posting pictures of being pleased by strippers on Instagram.

On another note, the telephone is expressed in the sample as having different connotations on the masculine self and in the male-female relationship in relation to calling versus texting. In 'Jaded' a man is expressed to be displeased by his female partner breaking up with him over text rather than over the phone. Although this could be a personal preference, it suggests that texting is conceived as a less meaningful method of ending a relationship. This interpretation is justified by calling being represented as having meaning in 'After Dark', 'Life Goes On', 'Moonlight' and 'Plug Walk'. Whereby, in 'After Dark' and 'Life Goes On' the process of ignoring calls is

presented as a sign of disinterest. In ‘After Dark’ a man is expressed to be concerned that his female love interest is ignoring his calls, while in ‘Life Goes On’ a man is expressed as intentionally ignoring women’s calls. In ‘Moonlight’ calling was given meaning by the expressions that emotional state of the male protagonist is uplifted by his partners calls. And in ‘Plug Walk’ a man is expressed to only spends time talking on the phone if it is a business transaction. Each track constructs calling as a method of communicating where there is an exchange of energy and time that men are expressed to not invest with everybody.

The Confluent Relationship

The confluent love relationship style is the most prevalent within the sample. The ambiguity of gender roles, centrality of sex, non-monogamy, and the debate between its roots in mutual sexual pleasure or male conquest, mentioned in the scholarship, are nuanced within the sample. The relation is always expressed as being desirable to one party and undesirable to the other. The expressions range from a relation where male pleasure is centralized, and women are objectified to women discarding men for their sexual pleasure.

The Satisfaction of Both Parties

The confluent bonds in ‘After Dark’, ‘All Mine’ and ‘The Remedy for a Broken Heart’ are presented as involving a mutual exchange of sexual pleasure and freedoms. In ‘After Dark’ the man and woman are discussed to have engaged in hookups, series of casual sex encounters. In ‘After Dark’ the notion that casual sex relationships are male-centric and involve emotional detachment are challenged by the presentation of a man interested in developing emotional intimacy with a woman, sexually satisfy her yet not commit to anything “serious.” In ‘After Dark’ relationships are presented as graded with seeing each other imperfect (wet hair) is higher than having hookups. Remedy for Broken Heart’ a man recounts a sexual encounter but desires to be in a committed relationship with his ex partner. This is expressed as potentially mutual and reciprocal because of the lines “she said, I am falling for you”.

Men and the Women who Want More

In ‘Yes Indeed’ a man is expressed to dismiss women after sex when he has received his pleasure, depicted in the lines “after I nut you can go leave”. This displays a sex-centric, casual relationship. Drake depicts a man that is non-monogamous in “In My Feelings” from the repletion

of “I want ya and I need ya...” too four different women. In ‘Is There More’, ‘Life Goes On’ the women in the relationship desire a greater commitment and monogamy while the men enjoy being “no strings attached”. In ‘Life Goes On’ a man is expressed to have an abundance of sexual partners yet, also has a “main bitch” who as mentioned is the sexual partner that he sleeps with regularly. The emotional detachment in this track is presented in the differentiation between laying down and laying up with a woman, implying that laying up denotes relationship investment. The male-female relationship in ‘Is There More’ is presented as emotionally detached with the exchange of gifts (this is challenged for its meaningfulness), the male is engaged in non-monogamous relation for women are referenced in the plural tense. There is also an aspect of casual sex, in the line “taking Houston women back to the house” and *Christian ideals of morality* highlighted through the expression that “his morality is janky in the south.”

In ‘Walk it Talk’ it the male-female relationship is sex-centric expressed in Drake’s lyrics on a one-night stand that occurred because the man and women are mature (grown). Both ‘Walk it like I Talk it’ and ‘Powerglide mention the male protagonist engaging in a threesome (“menage”). In Taste the male-female relationship is sex-centric and non-monogamous where the analogy of the taste is that women can have the male protagonist for a sex-centric, short-period of time as a taste yet cannot have all of him. This is a male-lead relationship style, where women desire more and are restricted by the male protagonists “Taste” rule. In Plug Walk the male-female dynamic is sex-centric, emotionally detached, women are discussed in objectifying terms yet, there is an aspect of mutuality.

In ‘I Know You’ the male-female relationship is sex-centric and emotionally detached, where they male-protagonist has assumed power to use women before they use him. In ‘Powerglide’ there is a specific male-female dynamic that applies to female strippers and their male customers. It is a sex-centric relation based purely on pleasure, non-monogamy or commitment. Male pleasure is centralized for the female strippers are paid to entertain and satiated male desires. I believe that discussing this relation in the dichotomy of hypermasculine and non-hypermasculine is limited because the stripper-client relationship is a consented contractual agreement where power dynamics are relatively equal if you weigh economic surplus of women and sexual gratification of men.

Women and the Men who Want More

In 'Jaded', 'Lucid Dreams' and 'All Girls are the Same' the women are shown to favour a confluent relationship surrounding self-gratification and interest. While as shown in 'Jaded' a man presented as valuing "meeting parent and disclosing insecurities" the depiction of his female interest as using him frames her as practising confluent. After the union dissolves women were presented as unphased and swiftly found other men in 'Jaded' and 'Lucid Dreams'. In 'Sad' and 'Fuck Love' a man expresses yearning to be with his female interest.

Levels of Relationships

Relationships are expressed as graded, hierarchical where in 'I Know You' a man is expressed to withhold "kissing" to certain women. In 'After Dark' a man is expressed to have hooked up with a woman but not seen her hair wet. There is an acknowledgement of a hierarchy within intimate relationships, where being "cuffed" means to enter a committed relationship; strippers are not good enough there is only a desire to have ownership over the women's genitals and ownership means access.

The Romantic Relationship Style

The main references to romantic ideals are the male expression of seeking one special woman in a forever-bond, and whose love elevates his emotional state and sense of self. 'Yes Indeed' referenced the romantic, domestic/breadwinner ideal of "a woman holding a man down." In Drake's 'In My Feelings' he takes from romantic ideals by referencing being "down for the [girl] always" and her being "the one." In 'Summer Games' the words "I love you" were attached to perceived relationship longevity by the male protagonist – surprised that the relation ended earlier. In response the male protagonist feels "torn" and "broken" presenting the women's love as reformative. In 'Moonlight', 'Sad', 'Fuck Love' and 'Remedy for a Broken Heart' women are expressed to have reformative love to elevate the emotional state of men and make him a complete person. With the woman's love the men feel "lost" and "bad mind." In 'Lucid Dreams' the male protagonists desired to marry his female love interest, he thought she was "the one." In 'All Girls are the Same' women are the holders of love that men seek.

The Passionate Relationship Style

The track 'In My Feelings' Drake aligns with passionate love ideals with its references to the ride or die tradition in the bar "are you riding." This is a theme prevalent within many songs in the sample. Prevalent in the lyrics "I said I ride for you, you said you ride for me" in 'After Dark'. The expression of desiring to die without the women's love is expressed in 'Sad' and 'Fuck Love'. In 'The Remedy for a Broken Heart' the passionate ideals involve the overt expressions of male desire for a woman. The track All Mine also expresses passionate ideals because the male protagonist desires ownership over his female love interest based on the feeling of love that derives from erotic attraction.

The Pure/Prosaic Relationship Style

In 'Finesse' a pure/prosaic relation is presented from the expressions of a male desiring to commit to a woman emotionally and physically without a commitment to "forever" – there is a qualification that the usual relationship style for the man has been confluent. The track 'All Girls are the Same' presents a general pure/prosaic relation with mutual emotional and sexual exchange that is not bound to marriage.

Discussion

The State of Black Masculinity in Mainstream Rap

My analysis has been guided by the questions: how do black male rappers use non-hypermasculine expressions to articulate their relationships with women? How is black masculinity represented in mainstream rap? How are contemporary heterosexual relations represented within mainstream rap? And what is the state of mainstream rap? With the purpose of ascertaining whether diverse representations of black manhood exist that have been overlooked, and insights into the current representations of men and their treatment of women within mainstream rap. In this section I discuss the findings from my directed and derived analysis with the scholarship surrounding black masculinity and relationship dynamics in Modern Love Studies (MLS), The Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities (CSMM) and Hip-Hop Studies (HS). This analysis presents mainstream rap as more complex than a medium that perpetuates the “hypermasculine black man”. The sample (N=22) indicates that despite the hypermasculine themes that are maintained in the music, the genre is shifting towards incorporating black male emotional expressivity and gender role fluidity.

Non-Hypermasculinity Tradition

To answer the first question, the non-hypermasculine expressions by rappers presented an emotionally attached man and an emotionally detached woman. These expressions portray the contemporary relationship as incompatible – with each party having different expectations. The expressions by Drake, XXXTentacion and Juice Wrld deviated from the hypermasculine standard because they depicted men as emotionally detached and longing for relationship longevity, and depicted women as emotionally detached and at times had ill-intent. These artists adhered to passionate and romantic ideas. The overt expressions that came from passionate love tended to result in expression/s of death and suicidal ideations. While the expressions of romantic love included the search for finding a special person and lasted forever. They also challenged the notion that sex-centric relationship styles are incongruent with the exchange of emotions. All the relationship styles were referenced, which coincide with the works of Illouz (2012), Swidler (2001), Weigel (2016) that state there is a co-existence of these relationship ideals in the social fabric.

The black rappers Drake, XXXTentacion and Juice Wrld, depicted a man who is emotionally transparent about being heartbroken, being emotionally attached, insecure and jealous. Alongside more intricate psychological and physiological disturbances from heartbreak by Juice Wrld and XXXTentacion such as suicidal ideations, mental disturbances prescription and recreational drug-use as coping methods. Male dominance also wavers in these expressions where women control the nature of the relationship and are presented as emotionally detached with ill-intent. As mean spirited in Juice Wrld's account and the account of women being users and gold-diggers that create discomfort in the male protagonists expressed by Drake and Lil Skies. These rappers use contemporary language to enliven the unacknowledged component of mainstream rap, the realm of the intimate where men are depicted as struggling with mental health challenges, having an emotional and existential dependence on women, and the potentially by their emotions rather than instrumental rationality.

Hypermasculine Tradition

The sample presents black male expressions that align with the materialistic ideals within hip-hop and the greater North American culture. The black rappers, Lil Baby ft Lil Uzi Vert and Gunna, Kanye West, Rich the Kid, Tyga, Lil Skies and Rae Sremmurd ft Swae Lee, depict men that celebrate their sexual prowess, material wealth, sexual access to women and assumed a dominant role in heterosexual relationships (Avery et al. 2017; Chauncey and Tibbs 2016; Craig 2016; Graham 2016; Hamdi and Payne 2009; Heitzeg 2015; Herd 2015; Jacobson 2015; Jamison 2006; Kistler and Lee 2001; Lafrance et al. 2016; Neilson 2010; Moras and Rebello-Gill 2012; Pinn 1999; Rose 2008; Yaphet 2008). As well as a man who differentiates himself from women, with some calling women them hoes and whores, bitches and gold diggers (Collins 2004; Jeffries 2011; Powell 2011; Rose 1994, 2008). Most the songs in this sample including Drake yet excluding XXXTentacion and Juice Wrld referenced a women's buttocks ("ass") another tradition in hip-hop (Collins 2004; Price 2005).

In lines with the scholarship, most of the material expressions within the sample ascribe to playa rap ideals. With the exception of Rich the Kid's 'Plug Walk' and two references by Lil Baby and XXXTentacion. Randolph (2016) asserted that playa rap has been more dominant than gangsta rap since the turn of the 21st century (13). In lines with this rap form, the sample presented a "soft hypermasculinity" where authenticity is determined by glorifying wealth rather than street

credibility and violence (Randolph 2016:10). Violence is threatened instead of enacted and weapons are collected rather than used. Status and dominance are affirmed through being desirable and pleasuring women (Graham 2016; Randolph 2016). Recreational drugs were mentioned rather than drug-dealing. When material wealth was flaunted similar themes were expressed, such as brand name watches such as the Rolex and Patek, luxury and foreign cars and excessive clothes. Like Jeffries (2016) I assert that the repetitive allusions to these material goods within the songs say more about industry and cultural standards than they do about the so-called features of black manhood. The most common relationship style is confluent love where sexual pleasure is male-centric.

The Idealized Contemporary Relationship

Like the findings in Modern Love Studies (Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016) the most common relationship style within the entire sample was confluent love relation. I side with Baumann (2003), Lafrance and Burns (2017), Illouz (2012), Swidler (2001) that the confluent relation is entrenched with undefined gender norms and roles and undefined gender expectations that some men purport to enjoy while others appear to be negatively impacted. The sample showed that most often one party valued confluence more than the other, sometimes women were self-interested, and sex focused at the expense of their emotionally detached male partners. It was a common theme that the men desired a woman with contradictory characteristics. In the intimate expressions, men sought that desired love and commitment while at the same time as independent, had a self-assured and sometimes street-attitude and favoured sexual confluence. Interestingly, within the material expressions, men sought easy sexual access and confluence with women yet desired a woman with a genuine character that did not use, manipulate or discard him. Both men and women have superficial tendencies. In addition, both groupings of men expressed that there are different degrees of intimacy in a relationship: some that are separated from kissing and other involve hooking up without seeing each others' imperfections.

The complexity and contradictions riddled in these expressions has led me to propose that the primacy of confluent love is not necessarily – or merely -- an indication that relationships in hip-hop are male-centric or male-dominated. I argue that it is a simplification to conceive of this relation as a site only for male sexual conquest and female objectification. In line with the scholarship on modern love, I argue that relationship confluence has become an idealized value in

contemporary times (Illouz 2012; Regenerus 2017; Swidler 2001; Weigel 2016). As I have already explained, feminist movements increased the desirability for sexual fluidity (Carstensen and Yalom 2004; Giddens 1992; Hewitt 2012; Helman and Wade 2010; Hewitt 2012; Illouz 2012; Kooyan et al. 2010; Regeneras 2017; Swidler 2001), and the advent of social media technologies, echoing Weigel (2016), has made relations more transactional (23). Technology is shown to play a key role in the black male experience with relationships, such that calling is framed as a more meaningful form of communication than texting. The engagement with social media impacts how one is perceived, women are watched and categorized, for representation themselves as “real”, “bad”, “good” or “basic” and on sites such as Instagram the social status and sexual prowess of men are discerned.

The Verdict

In the process of answering the second question, it is important to acknowledge that my study compliments Craig’s (2006) advice where he warns scholars that there is no singular representation of black masculinity in rap. In my sample, there is fluidity in the rappers’ expressions for example as shown in the shift of Kanye West’s representation in my study versus the study by Lafrance et al., (2016). In this sample a hypermasculine persona with remnants of passionate love replaced the “emotional frailty, pains and vulnerabilities” retrieved by Lafrance et al., in their study of the work he was doing a decade ago (2016:289-290). Lil Skies joins the non-hypermasculine group of rappers as him and Drake reframe the ‘gold digger’ to define a woman whose opportunistic character hurt’s a man’s feelings rather than the term being used solely to demean. At times, Drake joins the hypermasculine group with some of his references to material wealth and asserting male dominance and expertise.

I argue that this does not discount Kanye or Drake for their instrumental role in creating an artistic space for an emotive black masculinity. I position the vast scope of black male emotionality from the constructive, regressive to the contradictory as the cause of being human. To provide a clear account of the nuanced male expressions that are within my sample, without cultural restrictions, I will continue to present my conclusions without the categories of the “hypermasculine” and “non-hypermasculine”. For they are value-laden and attribute power, a hierarchy and produces inequality that I argue skews the interpretation of black male expressions. Thus, I have restructured my sample into two categories: men that have *intimate expressions* and

others with *material expressions* – where the intimate are expressions of a man’s internal emotional state and the material are expressions of external attributes that the men associate with themselves.

To answer the second question of how black masculinity is represented in mainstream rap, the sample showed two different black male figures. First there is the portrayal of a black man that is emotionally open, romantically loves, sexually desires, admires and at times is mistreated by women. He desires relationship longevity, as a sexual being he desires to satiate his sexual urges in addition to pleasing women, as a partner he admires independent women and women that deviate from the cultural standards that restrict women’s sexual expression. In addition, another man is shown to enjoy his wealth and demonstrating success, in many cases sexual acts with women and practises that show his sexual desirability for women demonstrates success. He promotes sexual confluence and self-interest; however, expects the women to have good intentions. Both men practise the modern tradition of observing a women’s behaviour to determine their degree of relationship commitment. These men are also situated in a contemporary context that is influenced by technological systems, social media specifically acts as a medium to carve male esteem, categorize women and amplify insecurities.

Ultimately, the verdict is that mainstream rap aligns with the North American values – all the hypermasculine traits derived from the sample such as, aggression, sexual prowess, demonstrations of wealth have been in the norms surrounding masculinity in the greater social fabric. Alongside the congruency of the sample with the North American relationship styles of romantic, passionate, pure/prosaic and confluent love. On another note, the intimate expression derived from the sample was its sole component that deviated from western culture and traditions. The emotionally transparent accounts of men are a quality of men that I believe has been enlivened by hip-hop. The songs by Drake, XXXTentacion and Juice Wrld, grounded with the most male expressivity, comprise 60% of the sample (see Figure 1). Given the situatedness of these songs in the Billboard Hot 100, this statistic highlights the popularity and receptivity for emotional transparency by black men in mainstream rap and by its fans.

Hip-hop has offered a hub for the emotionally expressive black man that is malleable, sometimes contradictory and extremely complex. The sample aligns with the hip-hop scholars of rap who theorize that contemporary rap artists are creating something new where black masculinity and emotionality are concerned (Chaney and Mincey 2014; Lafrance et al., 2016; Tracey and Singh

2015; Randolph 2006). I credit Drake, XXXTentacion and Juice Wrld for creating something new and I recommend that scholars capitalize on the door that they have opened into the nuanced, contradictory artistic, dark, and lively realm of the black male psyche that is impacted by love, loss and longing.

Conclusion

Future Considerations

The association between black men and hypermasculinity fuels the hip-hop industry, sold as a cultural commodity in the global market for multiracial consumption. As a driving force in the western capitalist economy, the hypermasculine black man is bound up in a two-fold process. In one sense, the black hypermasculine man legitimizes the western valorization of hypermasculinity, making its negative connotations “cool.” On the other hand, I assert that it simultaneously legitimizes the exclusion and systemic condemnation of black men as nonprogressive promoters of patriarchal rhetoric and deviance. This is damaging because it socializes young boys and men to stifle, reject and stigmatize their diverse non-hypermasculine emotions and experiences, in addition to perpetuating the notion that black men are regressive members of society.

While conducting my analysis, my initial tools to investigate the hypermasculine and non-hypermasculine representations of black men became overly restrictive – making it clear that black masculinity cannot be reduced to these two categories. My findings led me to devise the terms *intimate expression* and *material expression* which, by extension, allowed me to explain my sample with language that was not riddled with the racial presumption of black male marginality or behavioural dysfunction. It became clear that the traits associated with hypermasculinity encompass characteristics that make black men—and men and women for that matter—human; traits such as assertiveness, self-assurance, confidence, aggression and rationality. Thus, I assert, that to truly promote a multidimensional black manhood, these traits must not be *de facto* pathologized. What is pathological, however, is focusing only on those traits and assigning them and only them to black masculinity.

This study and the dynamic sample that birthed it revealed the necessity for a new conceptual apparatus that can account in complex terms for the inner lives of the black male experience. The apparatus that I have coined to fill this gap is called *Intimate Masculinity*. The notion of *Intimate Masculinity* emerged from my sample of emotionally expressive artists at the top of the charts that accounted for the most popular songs in July 2018. Drake, XXXTentacion and Juice Wrld conveyed emotions that are unconventional within traditional hip-hop culture as well as in society at large. These emotive practises and performances may include vulnerabilities,

sensitivities, empathy, pain, insecurity, excitement, fear, passion, mental confusion, depression, anxiety and love that guide their thoughts and actions as they navigate the social world. To create the structure of *Intimate masculinity* I drew on the constructive aspects of MAT, HMT and Black feminism. *Intimate masculinity* borrows from the HMT insofar as it acknowledges that there are unequal power dynamics within the gender category of men, where the white patriarch figure has been idealized as a staple component of western culture, subordinating non-whites, homosexuals and others. The concept also draws on the work of black feminists, whose work has allowed me to destabilize the white normativity at work within HMT, whereby it is implied that all men—including black men—are motivated to adopt hypermasculinity in order to achieve racial whiteness and social dominance.

On an interpersonal level, *Intimate Masculinity* follows the supposition that the white patriarchal ideal has socialized black men to rescind their expressive identities that like women are used to create symbolic meaning unto the self and one's surroundings via sensory engagement. Thus, separating all men, even the "patriarch," from their species being, theorized by Karl Marx (1844) as an alienated relationship that is void of meaning with themselves and others. To cope with intrinsic dissociation, taking from Swidler's (2001) theory of culture, intimate masculinity rests on the claim that men adopt hypermasculinity as the only socially acceptable "cultural repertoire" for them to construct normative "strategies of action" (43, 81-83). It is important to note that *Intimate Masculinity* recognizes that acts of control and oppression against all members of society have been enacted by men under the patriarchal ideal that are unjustifiable and pose a detriment to black men, women and others.

In response, *Intimate Masculinity* calls for a movement by scholars to develop an alternative cultural repertoire centralized around prioritizing the intimate lives of black men. This would involve unravelling the different emotions and interactions that encompass the male experience of and within a given phenomenon, rather than a sole relationship with hypermasculinity. *Intimate Masculinity* as a developing framework reinforces that hypermasculine practices exist as an important topic of analysis but should not be studied exclusively. With *Intimate Masculinity*, scholars are offered the critical tools to conduct a balanced analysis of men that can account for both their hypermasculine and non-hypermasculine practices and performances. By exploring the lives of black men through lyrical analyses, I hope this study will lay the groundwork for a larger

project that seeks to further complexify and do justice to the black male voice. By presenting an in-depth account of the way that rap music represents *Intimate Masculinity*, I have endeavoured to show that a robust research design can be employed to understand the qualitative narratives of black men in the world of hip hop and rap. Thereby establishing relatively unprecedented empirical knowledge on the intimate dimensions of black men's lives, which will act as a formula to recenter studies onto the intimate existences of all men.

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Appendices

Appendix – A : The Sample Lyrics

Drake - Nice For What

I wanna know who mothafuckin' representin' in here tonight

Hold on, hold on

I keep lettin' you back in (lettin' you back in)

How can I, explain myself?

Care for me, care for me, you said you'd care for me

There for me, there for me, said you'd be there for me (Lil Weezyana shit)

Cry for me, cry for me, you said you'd die for me (Murda on the beat)

Give to me, give to me, why won't you live for me?

Care for me, care for me, I know you care for me (A song for y'all to cut up to, you know?)

There for me, there for me, said you'd be there for me (yeah)

Cry for me, cry for me, you said you'd die for me

Give to me, give to me, why won't you live for me?

Everybody get your mothafuckin' roll on

I know shorty and she doesn't want no slow song

Had a man last year, life goes on

Haven't let that thing loose, girl, in so long

You've been inside, know you like to lay low

I've been peepin' what you bringin' to the table

Workin' hard, girl, everything paid for

First, last phone bill, car note, cable

With your phone out, gotta hit them angles

With your phone out, snappin' like you Fabo

And you showin' off, but it's alright

And you showin' off, but it's alright (alright!)

It's a short life, yeah

Care for me, care for me, you said you'd care for me
 There for me, there for me, said you'd be there for me
 Cry for me, cry for me, you said you'd die for me
 Give to me, give to me, why won't you live for me?

That's a real one in your reflection
 Without a follow, without a mention
 You really pipin' up on these niggas
 You gotta, be nice for what, to these niggas?

I understand

You got a hunnid bands
 You got a baby Benz, you got some bad friends
 High school pics, you was even bad then
 You ain't stressin' off no lover in the past tense
 You already had them
 Work at 8 A.M., finish 'round five
 Hoes talk down, you don't see 'em outside
 Yeah, they don't really be the same offline
 You know dark days, you know hard times
 Doin' overtime for the last month
 Saturday, call the girls, get 'em gassed up
 Gotta hit the club, gotta make that ass jump
 Gotta hit the club like you hit them mothafuckin' angles
 With your phone out, snappin' like you Fabo
 And you showin' off, but it's alright
 And you showin' off, but it's alright

It's a short life

Uh-huh! (Oh yeah!)

These hoes! (They hate!)

Your boy! (Today!)

I may! (Watch the breakdown)

Care for me, care for me, you said you'd care for me
 There for me, there for me, said you'd be there for me
 Cry for me, cry for me, you said you'd die for me
 Give to me, give to me, why won't you live for me?

Gotta make that jump, gotta make that, gotta, gotta make that
 Gotta make that jump, gotta make that, gotta, gotta make that
 Gotta, gotta, gotta g-g-gotta, g-g-gotta, gotta
 Gotta, g-g-gotta, gotta, gotta make that jump, jump (let's go)
 Bend it over, lift it up, bend it over, lift it up (Make that jump, jump)
 Bend it over, lift it up, bend it over, lift it up (Make that jump, jump)
 Bend it over, over, over, over, over (Make that jump, jump)
 Bend it over, lift it up (Make that jump, jump)
 Bend it over, lift it up (Make that jump, jump)

That's a real one in your reflection
 Without a follow, without a mention
 You really pipin' up on these niggas
 You gotta be, nice for what, to these niggas?
 I understand

Care for me, care for me, you said you'd care for me
 There for me, there for me, said you'd be there for me
 Give to me, give to me, why won't you live for me?
 Cry for me, cry for me, you said you'd cry for me
 Gotta hit the club like you hit them, hit them, hit them angles
 It's a short life
 Cry for me, cry for me, you said you'd die for me
 Give to me, give to me, why won't you live for me?

Songwriters: Aubrey Drake Graham / Chauncy Hawkins / Corey Woods / Orville Hall / Dennis
 Coles / Phillip Price / Marvin Hamlisch / Alan Bergman / Marilyn Bergman / Russell Tyrone
 Jones / Clifford Smith / Shane Lee Lindstrom

Nice For What lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Universal Music Publishing Group,
Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

Drake, Lil Baby - Yes Indeed

Yeah

Wheezy out of here

The dash, a digi', the schedule busy
My head in a hoodie, my shorty a goodie
My cousins are crazy, my cousins like Boogie
Life is amazin', it is what it should be
Been here for ten but I feel like a rookie
I tell her, "look up" 'cause it's snowin' in Tootsie's
Booked for three years, man you can't even book me
It's me and Lil Baby, this shit goin' crazy
Wheezy produced it and Weezy F. made me
And she held it down, so she got a Mercedes
Young Money Records, the Army, the Navy
They ran me ten thousand, I threw it like Brady
The foreign is yellow like Tracee and K.D
I trusted my niggas, they never betrayed me
Met all these niggas, they sweeter than Sadie
When I started out, I just took what they gave me
Did all the favors, they never repaid me
It worked in my favor, 'cause nobody saved me

Brand new whip got no keys

Tailor my clothes, no starch please

Soon as I nut, you can gon' leave

Got M's in the bank, like: "Yes, indeed"

Cartier glasses, I won't even peek at you
 Yellow Ferrari like Pikachu
 I got 'em waitin' and watchin' what he gon' do
 Tryna peep what I do, tryna steal my moves
 \$2, 500 for a new pair of tennis shoes
 The same price, I could make them youngin's come and finish you
 Lawyer been chargin', he a Jew, he like his voodoo
 Real dope boy, hundred thousand in Evisu
 Presidential tints slide by, we don't see you
 I been gettin' money, I ain't worried 'bout what he do
 I'm gettin' money like I'm from the '80s
 Me and Drake 'bout to drop man, this shit gon' go crazy
 They know I'm the truth, comin' straight from the basement
 I'm straight as the street, man I come from the pavement
 A million, all hundreds, it make em 'go crazy
 Wah-wah-wah, bitch I'm Lil Baby

 Brand new whip got no keys
 Tailor my clothes, no starch please
 Soon as I nut, you can gon' leave
 Got M's in the bank, like: "Yes, indeed"
 Me and my dawgs goin' all the way
 When you livin' like this, they supposed to hate
 Brand new whip got no keys
 Tailor my clothes, no starch please
 Soon as I nut, you can gon' leave
 Got M's in the bank, like: "Yes, indeed"
 Me and my dawgs going all the way
 When you livin' like this, they supposed to hate

 Wheezy out of here

Songwriters: Aubrey Drake Graham / Dominique Jones / Wesley Tyler Glass

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Drake - In My Feelings

Trap, TrapMoneyBenny
This shit got me in my feelings
Gotta be real with it, yup

Kiki, do you love me? Are you riding?
Say you'll never ever leave from beside me
'Cause I want ya, and I need ya
And I'm down for you always

KB, do you love me? Are you riding?
Say you'll never ever leave from beside me
'Cause I want ya, and I need ya
And I'm down for you always

Look, the new me is really still the real me
I swear you gotta feel me before they try and kill me
They gotta make some choices, they runnin' out of options
'Cause I've been goin' off and they don't know when it's stoppin'
And when you get to toppin', I see that you've been learnin'
And when I take you shoppin' you spend it like you earned it
And when you popped off on your ex he deserved it
I thought you were the one from the jump, that confirmed it
Trapmoneybenny

I buy you champagne but you love some Henny
From the block like you Jenny
I know you special, girl, 'cause I know too many

'Resha, do you love me? Are you riding?
Say you'll never ever leave from beside me
'Cause I want ya, and I need ya

And I'm down for you always
 J.T., do you love me? Are you riding?
 Say you'll never ever leave from beside me
 'Cause I want ya, and I need ya
 And I'm down for you always

Two bad bitches and we kissin' in the Wraith
 Kissin'-kissin' in the Wraith, kiss-kissin' in the Wraith
 I need that black card and the code to the safe
 Code to the safe, code-code to the safe-safe
 I show him how the neck work
 Fuck that Netflix and chill, what's your net-net-net worth?

'Cause I want ya, and I need ya
 And I'm down for you always
 (Yeah, yeah)
 And I'm down for you always
 D-down for you always
 D-d-down for you always
 (I got a new boy, and that nigga trade)

Kiki, do you love me? Are you riding?
 Say you'll never ever leave from beside me
 'Cause I want you, and I need you
 And I'm down for you always
 KB, do you love me? Are you riding?
 Say you'll never ever leave
 From beside me, 'cause I want ya, and I

Bring that ass, bring that ass, bring that ass back
 B-bring that ass, bring that ass, bring that ass back
 Shawty say the nigga that she with can't hit
 But shawty, I'ma hit it, hit it like I can't miss
 (Clap that ass, you're the only one I love)

(Clap that ass, clap, clap)

Bring that ass back

(Clap that ass, you're the only one I love)

(Let's go, let's go)

Bring that ass back

Trap, TrapMoneyBenny

This shit got me in my feelings

I just gotta be real with it, yup

"What are y'all talkin' about?"

"I don't even care, I need a photo with Drake

Because my Instagram is weak as fuck"

"What are you talkin' about?"

"I'm just being real, my shit look"

Songwriters: Adam James Pigott / Aubrey Drake Graham / Benjamin Joseph Workman / Caresha Brown / Darius Harrison / Dwayne Michael Carter / James Gregory Scheffer / Jatavia Johnson / Noah James Shebib / Orville Erwin Hall / Phillip Glenn Price / Renetta Yemika Lowe / Rex Fritz Zamor / Stephen Ellis Garrett

In My Feelings lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Peermusic Publishing, Reservoir Media Management Inc, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

Drake - Summer Games

I think you're changin' your mind

Startin' to see it in your eyes

I used to love a good surprise

And now I'd rather know ahead of time

You said "I love you" too fast

So much for that, girl, summer just started

And we're already done

Yeah, you say I led you on, but you followed me
I follow one of your friends, you unfollow me
Then you block them so they can't see you likin' someone just like me
I expected more from you honestly
Said you want a simple life and that's not me
How you go from that to endin' up with someone just like
How can you be angry on a night in July
And be warm with me when it's freezin' outside
You're confusin' me, don't have me wastin' my time / Yeah, you said "I love you" too fast
So much for that, girl, summer just started
And we're already done
I kept it decent, I kept you sane
I kept it peaceful, don't lie
I kept it decent, even the secrets
Kept it between you and I
Breakin' my heart, tearin' me apart
Breakin' me down when I'm already down
Breakin' my heart– breakin' my heart– breakin' my heart
Breakin' my heart– breakin' my heart
Brea– brea– brea– brea– brea– brea– brea– brea
Breakin' my heart, tearin' me apart
Breakin' me down when I'm already down
Breakin' my heart– breakin' my heart– breakin' my heart
Breakin' my heart– breakin' my heart
Brea– brea– brea– brea– brea– brea– brea– brea
You said "I love you" too fast
So much for that, girl, summer just started
And we're already done
How can you be angry on a night in July
And be warm with me when it's freezing outside

You're confusin' me, don't have me wastin' my time

Yeah, you said "I love you" too fast

So much for that, girl, summer just started

And we're already done

Songwriters: Aubrey Drake Graham / Noah Shebib / Ernest Dion Wilson / Harley Arsenault /
Maneesh Bidaye / Paul Jefferies

Summer Games lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, BMG Rights Management

Drake - Jaded

Ayy, yeah

Dogs on this side, dogs over on this side

Yeah

Leaving me (leavin' me)

Dippin' out on me (on me)

Already got what you needed, I guess

Quickly (quickly) learned yourself through me (through me)

Already gave you what you needed, I guess (ooh, yeah)

I guess, (yeah) yeah

That's why I'm not with nobody (ooh, yeah)

'Cause I don't wanna hurt nobody (ooh, yeah)

Did it over text, didn't call me (ooh, yeah)

Still got love for you, mami

I know you wanna be somebody (body)

Even if you gotta leave somebody, yeah

Yes, I'm hurting, yes, I'm jaded (jaded)

Most of these things I don't wanna say (jaded)

I wanna be around while you chasin' (while you chasin' it)

You wanna hit me up when you make it

You'll try and come back when you famous

I always want the truth, but it's dangerous (dangerous, oh)
 You got somethin' real, not basic (ooh, yeah)
 You wanna get with me, stop
 Yes, I'm hurting, yes, I'm jaded (jaded)
 Most of these things, I don't wanna say (say)
 I wanna be around while you chasin'
 (Wanna be around, wanna be around)
 You wanna hit me up when you make it (ooh, yeah)
 You'll try and come back when you famous
 (Back around, back around)
 I always want the truth, but it's dangerous (dangerous)
 You got somethin' real, not basic
 You wanna get with me, stop (playin')
 Yeah, dogs on this side, dogs over on this side
 (Ooh yeah, ooh yeah, ooh yeah)

 Ayy, told me about all your insecurities, for what?
 Dragged me like two hours to your family's house, for what?
 Said you need some time but I should stick around, for what?
 Always felt like stickin' 'round's the same as being stuck
 And like guns with the inkin', you get in under my skin
 Pretty little young thing (young thing)
 Had a nigga convinced, got me too excited
 Yeah, you played me, you played me, you played me
 Low down, dirty, shameful, crazy
 I need to know how the new nigga you got does the same thing
 I do for a living but it's way less wavy
 How you even managin' to keep straight faces
 In all the pictures that I seen lately
 Lord knows, you still look amazin'
 That's besides the point I'm makin'
 You're way too opinionated

Have to force it, have to fake it
 You have potential, I coulda shaped it
 You went and caved in (ooh, yeah)
 We coulda waited, I wasn't rushin', differences in ages
 You're old enough, but you're still a baby
 You've shared stories where you did amazin'
 Things to be loyal, things to be patient
 That was before me, I must've changed it
 Shifted your focus, lens lookin' jaded (jaded)

Most of these things I don't wanna say
 I wanna be around while you chasin' (while you chasin')
 You wanna hit me up when you make it
 You'll try and come back when you famous
 (Back around, back around)

Dogs on this side, dogs over on this side
 You wanna get with me, stop (playin')

Songwriters: Aubrey Drake Graham / Christian Ward / Christopher Dotson / Floyd Bentley /
 Noel Cadastre / Tryone William Griffin

Jaded lyrics © BMG Rights Management, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Sony/ATV Music
 Publishing LLC

Drake - Is There More

Only holdin' up I do is my end of the bargain
 Only beggin' that I do is me beggin' your pardon
 Only tryin' that I do is me tryin' the hardest
 Only problems I do are math problems with profit
 Only lyin' I do is lyin' out in the tropics
 Only cryin' I do is cryin' from laughin' 'bout it
 Only lackin' I can do is my lack of responses

Only rest that I do is "Where the rest of my commas?"
 Still I rise, Maya Angelou vibes
 When life comin' at you from all angles and sides
 And they don't wanna see that you smilin' from inside
 It really boils down to how you plan to survive
 Love certain ones but never get attached to 'em
 Give 'em nice things, but what's that to 'em?
 Especially when another girl I flew in is flickin' up in my bathroom
 And they recognize the bathroom
 All hell starts to break loose in my texts
 I only tell lies to who I gotta protect
 I would rather have you remember me how we met
 I would rather lose my leg than lose their respect
 But that'll never happen the way I'm watchin' my step
 That ain't what I'm 'bout
 I'm in control of my destiny, never in doubt
 If I can't make it with you, I'll make it without
 They say take the good with the bad, I'll take it without
 Houston women I wine-and-dine and take to the house
 My moral compass is janky, it breaks in the south
 Is there more to life than digits and bankin' accounts?
 Is there more to life than sayin' I figured it out?
 Is there more? Yeah
 Sweeter the berry, the blacker the juice
 The boy is back in the booth, ready to tap into truth
 Too many lyrics 'bout houses and loot
 Too many Walt Disney characters, mice and goofballs
 I mean you know I love a challenge, but challenged by who?
 I'll let you bring a thousand recruits
 My peers are a talented group

But even if you take all their statistics and carry the two
 Even if you rounded up the numbers and rounded the troops
 There's still nothin' they could really do
 It's too bad reality checks don't cover the balances due
 Whenever it's time to recoup
 Yeah, soon as this album drop I'm out of the deal
 In the house playin' D'Angelo, "How Does It Feel?"
 I got a fear of havin' things on my mind when I die
 What you got, time on your hands or time on your side?
 Is there any sense in doin' these songs when I'm high?
 Is there more to life than goin' on trips to Dubai?
 Yachts on 4th of July, G5 soarin' the skies
 Is there more to life than all of these corporate ties
 And all of these fortunate times
 And all of these asses that never come in proportionate size?
 Am I missin' somethin' that's more important to find?
 Like healin' my soul, like family time
 Is there more to life than just when I'm feelin' alive?
 Is there more?
 Passion, instant
 Sweat beads, feel me (feel me)
 Cupid's shot me
 My heartbeat's racing (my heartbeat's racing)
 Tempt me, drive me (tempt me)
 It feels so exciting
 Thought of highly (highly)
 It's yours entirely
 I'll be, I'll be more than a lover
 More than a woman
 More than a lover for you

Songwriters: Aubrey Graham / Joseph Lane / Jr. / Naomi Saalfeld / Stephen Garrett / Timothy
Mosley

Is There More lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Reservoir Media Management Inc,
Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC

Drake - Peak

Treat you like princess
Rest in heaven, Diana
Piquing my interest
She got peak like Montana
England breeds proper girls
Where are all your good manners?
Reply with pleasantries
Honestly, I can't stand ya

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh
Oh, oh, oh, you gon' make me turn up on you
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh
Oh, oh, oh, you gon' make me turn up on you

What you thought of me?
Never had me missin' a beat
That's just a view from a cheap seat
They don't want problems with me
Talk used to be cheap, nowadays it's free
People are only as tough as they phone allows them to be
Girl, that could never be me
I found my peace, I'm about to say my piece
You might not agree with me

"Bitch been with this boy, yeah
For four weeks, I told them go on a date

All of a sudden she married
 Didn't say get bloodclat married"

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh
 Oh, oh, oh, you gon' make me turn up on you
 Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh
 Oh, oh, oh, you gon' make me turn up on you

"What I'm sayin', in today really at our big, big age
 If you're gettin' with someone right now
 And you're linking them for couple weeks, they should know
 'This is the girl I kinda want to see'
 So lemme lock off the ting but obviously
 In the world that we live in today is not like that"
 "He is, did that, but obviously it takes time"
 "You're chattin' shit

First of all you shouldn't have no problems at the beginning
 It should be like honeymoon
 "That's what I said, that's what I said
 The beginning is always honeymoon"
 "Yeah, well you overdo it and he's overdoin' it
 Both of you are overdoin' it right now"
 "Yeah, well, alright"

Songwriters: Aubrey Drake Graham / Noah Shebib / Adrian Eccleston

Peak lyrics © Ultra Tunes, Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC

Drake - After Dark

Aha, aha
 Yeah, ayy
 (After dark)

In a whip so low, no one's gotta know (after dark)
Knocking at your door, I don't gotta work anymore (after dark)
You can put your phone down, you gonna need two hands (after dark)

You can't get enough

Girl, you know I set it up for after dark

Late night, like Left Eye

I'm creepin'

Assuming the worst 'cause I haven't heard from you all weekend

Your silence is driving me up the wall, up the wall

I cannot tell if you're ducking calls or missing calls 'cause

You've been so patient

I drink on the job and smoke on the job

So, I don't know how serious you take it

Can't offer much more, you've heard it before

That narrative for me isn't changing

I wanna make you a priority

I wanna let you know there's more to me

I wanna have your faith restored in me

I'll be on my way (after dark)

In a whip so low, no one's gotta know

No one's gotta know (after dark)

Knocking at your door, I don't gotta work anymore

I don't gotta work no more (after dark)

You can put your phone down

You gonna need two hands (ooh, yeah), after dark

You can't get enough

Girl, you know I set it up for after dark

Late night, me and you, got you wet like the pool

Then I'm tryna dive in, put some time in, yeah

Get the vibes right, get your mind right

It's gon' be a long night (ooh yeah)
 Put your feet in this water, don't wanna get your hair wet
 We've hooked up a couple times, we ain't took it there yet
 You broke up with your man and ain't been with nobody else
 You like, "Fuck these niggas", rather keep it to yourself
 He did you wrong, he left you down bad
 Now you can't trust nobody
 You said, "Do anything, but just don't lie to me"
 I said I ride for you, girl, you said you ride for me
 Umm, pulled up to the show than we got ghosts
 And when it's after dark anything goes
 In a whip so low, no one's gotta know
 No one's gotta know (after dark)
 Knocking at your door, I don't gotta work anymore
 I don't gotta work no more (after dark)
 You can put your phone down
 You gonna need two hands (ooh, yeah), after dark
 You can't get enough
 Girl, you know I set it up for after dark
 93.7, WBLK, talking to you now in the Quiet Storm
 Taking you right there with Hall & Oates
 Moving you through the storm at what is now
 Nineteen minutes after ten o'clock
 Thanks for your phone calls
 As we get you closer to your requests and dedications
 Phone lines are open for you to send the love
 Your love note dedications at 644-9393, call me
 Coming up, we will head through your storm
 With Troupe Fantasia, Chaka Khan
 My Funny Valentine, Jill Scott

Giving you whatever and more
 The selected music of Mr. Luther Vandross
 As we kick off your first hour of the most selective, most seductive
 Most relaxing four hours of the 93-7
 It's Al Wood and you are safe, soft, and warm
 In the loving embrace of my storm on BLK

Songwriters: Gerald Maxwell Rivera / Tyrone Griffin / Stephen Ellis Garrett / Aubrey Drake
 Graham / Melvin Ragin / Noah Shebib / Joe Kent

After Dark lyrics © Reservoir Media Management Inc

Drake - Finesse

Yeah, turn everything up
 Yeah, oh yeah
 Turn everything up a little more
 I want my baby to have your eyes
 I'm going against my own advice
 Should I do New York? I can't decide
 Fashion week is more your thing than mine
 I can't even lie, I'd rather stay inside
 I can't do suit and tie
 Can't be in a room with you and stand on different sides
 One thing at a time
 I have to learn to hide
 One thing at a time
 Emotions running high
 I wish you felt alright
 Just hitting my line
 All the time, all the time, all the

You stay on my mind
All the time, all the time (yeah)

It takes some finesse
I seen you finesse
He can't know finesse
You stay on my mind

You and your sister
Too hot to handle
Things would get cancelled
I would make time for you

Commitment
Going the distance
I'm new to all of this

It takes some finesse
I seen you finesse
He can't know finesse
You stay on my mind

Songwriters: Aubrey Drake Graham / James Edward Fauntleroy / Noel Cadastre

Finesse lyrics © Reservoir Media Management Inc

Lil Baby - Life Goes On

Cook that shit up Quay!

Trap house, Jeep goes too fast
I don't even wear no seatbelt (seatbelt)
Bad lil' bitch got no breasts (no breasts)
Upgrade, now she got D-cups (D-cups)
Hop out the Range, I'm glowin' (glowin')
Who is Lil Baby? He goin' in (goin' in)

Man these old rappers gettin' borin' (borin')
 They be takin' shots, I ignore them (ignore them)
 Send them packs to the hood while I'm tourin' (tourin')
 Makin' plays out of town like I'm Jordan (scorin')
 Need to go get your ho 'cause she whorin' (scorin')
 If her ball come my way I'ma score it (scorin')
 Lamborghini, I don't want no Porsches (Porsches)
 I'm on fire, don't touch me, I'm torchin' (torchin')
 Had to fix all my teeth, I went porcelain (porcelain)
 Put the town on my back, I'm a horseman (horseman)
 One more year, I'ma make it to Forbes' List (Forbes' List)
 They love me in the Bay like E-40 (40)
 I be sittin' exotic on Moreland (Moreland)
 Ain't no strings attached, keepin' it cordless (cordless)
 She keep callin', but I keep ignorin' it
 Ain't no stoppin', I'm keepin' it floorin' it
 Man these niggas can't stop me, I'm goin' in
 Man these niggas can't stop me, I'm goin' in

Every time the pack get gone, I get another load ('nother load)
 My main bitch tryna leave me 'lone 'cause I fucked another ho ('nother ho)
 I'm like, "Baby, I know I'm wrong, but this just how life goes (how life goes)
 And I know these niggas'd be happy if I let you go" (oh no, no)
 Got me walkin' on a thin line, on my tippy toes (tippy toes)
 Man this shit crazy, different city with some different hoes, here we go
 Every time the pack get gone, I get another load ('nother load)
 My main bitch tryna leave me 'lone 'cause I fucked another ho ('nother ho)
 I'm like, "Baby, I know I'm wrong, but this just how life goes (how life goes)
 And I know these niggas'd be happy if I let you go" (let you go)
 Got me walkin' on a thin line, on my tippy toes (tippy toes)
 Man this shit crazy, different city with some different hoes, here we go

Tryna spend a whole M on some clothes (clothes)
 Got a bonus, I sold out a show (show)
 Gunna hot like a pot on the stove
 Yellow AP on all of my hoes (hoes)
 I like when that white on her toes
 Picture me ridin' around in that Rolls
 I put some ice on my wrist, it was swole
 I ain't got time to lay up with you hoes (hoes)
 All of these drugs in my body
 I gotta pay somebody keep checkin' my pulse
 Walk in the club with no wallet, take care of that money
 They swing on the pole (pole)
 Water on me like Dasani
 I shine when it's sunny, this platinum and rose
 Gunna out the streets
 When I go to DC I'ma fuck with Lil Mo

Every time the pack get gone, I get another load ('nother load)
 My main bitch tryna leave me 'lone 'cause I fucked another ho ('nother ho)
 I'm like, "Baby, I know I'm wrong, but this just how life goes (how life goes)
 And I know these niggas'd be happy if I let you go" (oh no, no)
 Got me walkin' on a thin line, on my tippy toes (tippy toes)
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 I'm like, "Baby, I know I'm wrong, but this just how life goes (how life goes)
 And I know these niggas'd be happy if I let you go" (let you go)
 Got me walkin' on a thin line, on my tippy toes (tippy toes)
 Man this shit crazy, different city with some different hoes, here we go
 Man this shit crazy, different city with some different hoes (yeah)
 I can switch my girls up the same way that I change my clothes (okay)

Man it's crazy, all blue backend in the envelope (let's get it)
And you know I'm never lackin', gotta new whip that's up in traffic
Water, water, water on my Patek (woah), it's automatic
I drink water when I'm fastin' (water), you's a has-been
They would love me in a casket, I can't have it
Boy I'm far from average, better wait your turn, better get in line

Every time the pack get gone, I get another load ('nother load)
My main bitch tryna leave me 'lone 'cause I fucked another ho ('nother ho)
I'm like, "Baby, I know I'm wrong, but this just how life goes (how life goes)
And I know these niggas'd be happy if I let you go" (let you go)
Got me walkin' on a thin line, on my tippy toes (tippy toes)
Man this shit crazy, different city with some different hoes, here we go
Every time the pack get gone, I get another load ('nother load)
My main bitch tryna leave me 'lone 'cause I fucked another ho ('nother ho)

Tryna spend a whole M on some clothes (clothes)
Got a bonus, I sold out a show (show)
Gunna hot like a pot on the stove
Yellow AP on all of my hoes (hoes)
I like when that white on her toes
Picture me ridin' around in that Rolls
I put some ice on my wrist, it was swole
Still ain't got time to lay up with you hoes (hoes)

Songwriters: Christopher N'Quay Rosser / Dominique Jones / Sergio Kitchens / Symere Woods

Life Goes On lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc

XXXTentacion - SAD!

Who am I? Someone that's afraid to let go, uh
You decide, if you're ever gonna let me know, yeah
Suicide, if you ever try to let go, uh
I'm sad and low, yeah, I'm sad I know, yeah

Who am I? Someone that's afraid to let go, uh
You decide, if you're ever gonna let me know, yeah
Suicide, if you ever try to let go, uh
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 Suicide, if you ever try to let go, uh
 I'm sad and low, yeah, I'm sad I know, yeah

Songwriters: Jahseh Dwayne Onfroy / John Cunningham

SAD! lyrics © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

XXXTentacion - Moonlight

Yeah

Spotlight, uh, moonlight, uh
 Nigga, why you trippin'? Get your mood right, uh
 Shawty look good in the moonlight
 All these pussy niggas so bad mind
 Spotlight, moonlight
 Nigga, why you trippin'? Get your mood right
 Shawty look good in the moonlight
 All these pussy niggas so bad mind
 Spotlight, uh, moonlight
 Nigga, why you trippin'? Get your mood right, uh
 Shawty look good in the moonlight
 All these pussy niggas so bad mind
 Spotlight, moonlight
 Nigga, why you trippin'? Get your mood right
 Shawty look good in the moonlight
 All these pussy niggas so bad mind
 Feel like I'm destined
 I don't need no Smith & Wesson, no
 Girl, who you testin'?
 Fuck a Scantron, here's your lesson, oh

Knife in intestine

Takin' shots with all your brethren, no

Feel like I'm damaged

Feelin' like you fuckin' planned it

All alone, call my phone, make me feel right

Girl you know when you call, make me feel right

All alone, call my phone, make me feel right

Girl you know when you call, make me feel right

Spotlight, uh, moonlight, uh

Nigga, why you trippin'? Get your mood right, uh

Shawty look good in the moonlight

All these pussy niggas so bad mind

Spotlight, moonlight

Nigga, why you trippin'? Get your mood right

Shawty look good in the moonlight

All these pussy niggas so bad mind

Spotlight, uh, moonlight

Nigga, why you trippin'? Get your mood right, uh

Shawty look good in the moonlight

All these pussy niggas so bad mind

Spotlight, moonlight

Nigga, why you trippin'? Get your mood right

Shawty look good in the moonlight

All these pussy niggas so bad mind

Songwriters: Jahseh Onfroy / Johnathan Carter Cunningham

Moonlight lyrics © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

XXXTentacion - Changes

Mmm, baby, I don't understand this

You're changing, I can't stand it

My heart can't take this damage

And the way I feel, can't stand it

Mmm, baby, I don't understand this

You're changing, I can't stand it

My heart can't take this damage

And the way I feel, can't stand it

Mmm, baby, I don't understand it

Girl, you're making it hard for me

Girl, you're making it hard for me

Girl, you're making it hard for me, uh

Girl, you're making it hard for me

Girl, you're making it hard for me

Girl, you're making it hard for me

Mmm, baby, I don't understand this

You're changing, I can't stand it

My heart can't take this damage

And the way I feel, can't stand it

Mmm, baby, I don't understand this

You're changing, I can't stand it

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And the way I feel, can't stand it

Mmm, baby, I don't understand this

You're changing, I can't stand it

My heart can't take this damage

And the way I feel, can't stand it

Mmm, baby, I don't understand it

Songwriters: Jahseh Dwayne Onfroy / John Cunningham / Rakim Allen

Changes lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

XXXTentacion - Fuck Love

Ooh

Baby, I need you in my life, in my life
Please, bae, don't go switching side, switching sides
I swear this is where you reside, you reside
Please bae, don't go switching sides, switching sides
Yeah, yeah, yeah
Ooh, please don't throw your love away, huh
Please don't throw your love away, huh
Please don't throw your love away, huh, yeah, ayy

I'm nauseous, I'm dyin'
(She ripped my heart right out)
Can't find her, someone to
(My eyes are all cried out)
Lost it, riots
Gunfire inside my head, I've
Lost it, riots
Gunfire inside my head

Baby, I need you in my life, in my life
Please, bae, don't go switching side, switching sides
I swear this is where you reside, you reside
Please, bae, don't go switching sides, switching sides
Yeah, yeah, yeah
Ooh, please don't throw your love away, huh
Please don't throw your love away, huh
Please don't throw your love away, huh, yeah

Songwriters: Danny Lee Snodgrass / Dexter Randall / Jahseh Onfroy / Michael Lamar II White /
Nick Mira

Fuck Love lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Universal Music Publishing Group, Kobalt
Music Publishing Ltd., Built BY Seven

XXXTentacion - The Remedy for a Broken Heart (Why Am I so in Love)

Why am I so in love?

Why am I so in love?

Why am I so in love?

I don't know why

Steady tryin' to maintain

Same things that a blood bitch may frame

My brain can't fathom what the hate say

He say, she say, how 'bout me say?

Get the Visa

Headed to the islands ASAP

What's that on my shawty wrist? That's a AP

I'm the type to save a bitch, C-A-P-E

Feeling like ET, flying out of the Addy

Fucking on shawty, she baddie

Casual convo then at it

I mean I'm better than better, maybe I'm lying

I'm sadder than most of y'all with the money and the freedom, nigga

What is money really worth if it ain't love?

I'ma find a perfect balance, it's gon' take time

I heard shawty still in love through the grapevine

Heard shawty still in love through the grapevine

Heard shawty in love through the grapevine

Mix a little bit of weed with a little bit of cash
 With a little bit of this, with a little bit of that

We gon' be all, we gon' be all

We gon' be all, we gon' be all

Mix a little bit of weed with a little bit of cash
 With a little bit of this, with a little bit of that

We gon' be all, we gon' be alright

We gon' be all, we gon' be all

Mix a little bit of weed with a little bit of cash
 With a little bit of this, with a little bit of that

We gon' be all, we gon' be all

We gon' be alright, we gon' be all

Mix a little bit of weed with a little bit of cash
 With a little bit of this, with a little bit of that

We gon' be all, we gon' be all

We gon' be all, we gon' be all

Why am I so in love?

I don't know why

Why am I so in love?

I don't know why

She said I, oh, I, am falling for you, falling for you

I, oh, I, am falling for you, falling for you

I, oh, I, am falling for you, falling for you

I, oh, I, am falling for you, falling for you

Why am I so in love?

Why am I so in love?

Why am I so in love?

I don't know why

Why am I so in love?

Why am I so in love?

Why am I so in love?

I don't know why

Songwriters: Jahseh Dwayne Onfroy / John Cunningham

The Remedy for a Broken Heart (Why Am I so in Love) lyrics © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

Kanye West - All Mine

Yeah, you supermodel thick

Damn, that ass bustin' out the bottom

I'ma lose my mind in it, crazy that medulla oblongata

Get to rubbin' on my lap

Get the genie out the bottle

Fuck it up, fuck it up

Pussy good, go and back it up

Pipe her up, I'ma pipe her up

Make her mine, I done fell in love

Juicy thing, make that pussy say

"One more time, baby, do it big

Make it cry, come, go hold this shit"

Yeah, you supermodel thick

Damn, that ass bustin' out the bottom

I'ma lose my mind in it, crazy that medulla oblongata

Get to rubbin' on my lap

Get the genie out the bottle

If I pull up with a Kerry Washington

That's gon' be an enormous scandal

I could have Naomi Campbell

And still might want me a Stormy Daniels

Sometimes, you gotta bag the boss up

I call that taking Corey Gambles
 Find yourself up in the food court
 You might have to enjoy your sample
 All these thots on Christian Mingle
 Almost what got Tristan single
 If you don't ball like him or Kobe
 Guarantee that bitch gonna leave you
 Ay, time is extremely valuable
 And I prefer to waste it
 On girls that's basic
 That's just some Ye shit
 Right now let's do what we want
 Let's have a threesome, me, you and the blunt
 I love your titties 'cause they prove I can focus on two things at once

Yeah, you supermodel thick
 Damn, that ass bustin' out the bottom
 I'ma lose my mind in it, crazy that medulla oblongata
 Get to rubbin' on my lap
 Get the genie out the bottle
 Get the genie out the bottle

Let me hit it raw like fuck the outcome
 Ay, none of us would be here without cum
 Ay, if it ain't all about the income
 Ay, let me see you gon' ahead and spend some
 Ay, if you driving round in some Dri-Fit
 Ay, I'ma think that you the type to dry snitch
 Hm, mhm, If I see you pull up with the three stripes
 Ay, ay, I'ma fuck around and make you my bitch

Yeah, you supermodel thick
 Damn, that ass bustin' out the bottom

I'ma lose my mind in it, crazy that medulla oblongata

Get to rubbin' on my lap

Get the genie out the bottle

Get the genie out the bottle

Songwriters: Michael Dean / Francis Farewell Starlite / Kanye West / Cydel Young / Dexter Mills / Jeremih Felton / Danielle Balbuena / Anthony Clemons / Uforo Ebong / Tyrone Griffin / Jr. / Malik Yusef / Kenneth Pershon / Terrence Boykin / Jordan Thorpe

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Juice Wrld - Lucid Dreams

No, no, no

I still see your shadows in my room

Can't take back the love that I gave you

It's to the point where I love and I hate you

And I cannot change you so I must replace you (oh)

Easier said than done

I thought you were the one

Listening to my heart instead of my head

You found another one, but

I am the better one

I won't let you forget me

I still see your shadows in my room

Can't take back the love that I gave you

It's to the point where I love and I hate you

And I cannot change you so I must replace you (oh)

Easier said than done

I thought you were the one

Listening to my heart instead of my head

You found another one, but

I am the better one

I won't let you forget me

You left me falling and landing inside my grave

I know that you want me dead

I take prescriptions to make me feel a-okay

I know it's all in my head

I have these lucid dreams where I can't move a thing

Thinking of you in my bed

You were my everything

Thoughts of a wedding ring

Now I'm just better off dead

I'll do it over again

I didn't want it to end

I watch it blow in the wind

I should've listened to my friends

Did this shit in the past

But I want it to last

You were made outta plastic (fake)

I was tangled up in your drastic ways

Who knew evil girls have the prettiest face?

You gave me a heart that was full of mistakes

I gave you my heart and you made heart break

You made my heart break

You made my heart ache (I still see your shadows in my room)

You made my heart break

You made my heart ache (can't take back the love that I gave you)

You made my heart break (were made outta plastic, fake)

You made my heart ache (I still see your shadows in my room)

You made my heart break again (I was tangled up your drastic ways)
(Who knew evil girls have the prettiest face?)

I still see your shadows in my room
Can't take back the love that I gave you
It's to the point where I love and I hate you
And I cannot change you so I must replace you (oh)

Easier said than done

I thought you were the one
Listening to my heart instead of my head

You found another one, but

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I won't let you forget me

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Easier said than done

I thought you were the one
Listening to my heart instead of my head

You found another one, but

I am the better one

I won't let you forget me

Did this shit in the past but I want it to last

You were made outta plastic (fake)

I was tangled up in your drastic ways

Who knew evil girls have the prettiest face?

Easier said than done

I thought you were

(Instead of my head, you found another)

I won't let you forget me

Songwriters: Danny Lee Snodgrass / Dominic James Miller / Gordon Matthew Sumner / Jarad A. Higgins / Nicholas Mira

Lucid Dreams lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., BMG Rights Management

Juice Wrld - All Girls Are The Same

They're rotting my brain, love

These hoes are the same

I admit it, another hoe got me finished

Broke my heart, oh no you didn't

Fuck sippin', I'ma down a whole bottle

Hard liquor, hard truth, can't swallow

Need a bartender, put me out my sorrow

Wake up the next day in the Monte Carlo

With a new woman, tell me she from Colorado

And she love women, she'll be gone by tomorrow

Who am I kiddin'?

All this jealousy and agony that I sit in

I'm a jealous boy, really feel like John Lennon

I just want real love, guess it's been a minute

Pissed off from the way that I don't fit in

I don't fit in

Tell me what's the secret to love, I don't get it

Feel like I be runnin' a race I'm not winnin'

Ran into the devil today and she grinnin'

Hey, these girls are insane

All girls are the same

They're rotting my brain, love

Think I need a change

Before I go insane, love
All girls are the same
They're rotting my brain, love
Think I need a change
Before I go insane, love

Ten minutes, she tell me it would take ten minutes
To break my heart, oh no she didn't
Fuck livin', I'ma drown in my sorrow
Fuck givin', I'ma take not borrow
And I'm still sinnin', I'm still losin' my mind
I know I been trippin', I'm still wasting my time
All the time given, am I dyin? Am I livin'?
It's fuck feelings, my sorrow go up to the ceilin'

Now I am insane
Demons in my brain, love
Peace I can't obtain
'Cause all these girls the same, love
Now I am insane
Demons in my brain, love
Peace I can't obtain
'Cause all these girls the same, love

Songwriters: Danny Snodgrass / Jarad A Higgins / Nick Mira

All Girls Are The Same lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

Juice Wrld - All Girls Are The Same

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I don't fit in

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All girls are the same

They're rotting my brain, love

Think I need a change

Before I go insane, love

All girls are the same

They're rotting my brain, love

Think I need a change

Before I go insane, love

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 To break my heart, oh no she didn't
 Fuck livin', I'ma drown in my sorrow
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 All the time given, am I dyin? Am I livin'?
 It's fuck feelings, my sorrow go up to the ceilin'

Now I am insane
 Demons in my brain, love
 Peace I can't obtain
 'Cause all these girls the same, love
 Now I am insane
 Demons in my brain, love
 Peace I can't obtain
 'Cause all these girls the same, love

Songwriters: Danny Snodgrass / Jarad A Higgins / Nick Mira

All Girls Are The Same lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

Rich the Kid - Plug Walk

Ayy, ayy, plug walk (plug walk, plug, plug)
 I don't even understand how the fuck my plug talk (huh? what, what?)
 Pick him up in a space coupe, I don't let my plug walk (skrrt, pull up in a space coupe)
 New freak, had to cut my other lil' bitch off (ooh, ooh, lil' bitch)
 50K, you could come and book a nigga for a plug walk
 You can't reach me (what?), space coupe like E.T
 It's the plug tryna call me (skrrt, skrrt)
 I was up trappin' early in the morning (plug)
 Ooh, on the wave like a du-rag (du-rag)

Pussy nigga callin' for his boo back (pussy)
 Plug walk, Gucci on my shoe racks (Gucci)
 Walk up in the house with a rat-a-tat
 'Til I ran into the plug ('til I ran into the plug)
 'Til I ran into the mud (to the mud)
 I done ran into some racks, I done ran into your girl (your girl)
 Why the plug show me love? (Show me love)
 I done came up from a dub (huh?)
 Plug walk (plug walk, plug, plug)
 I don't even understand how the fuck my plug talk (huh? what, what?)
 Pick him up in a space coupe, I don't let my plug walk (skrrt, pull up in a space coupe)
 New freak, had to cut my other lil' bitch off (ooh, ooh, lil' bitch)
 50K, you could come and book a nigga for a plug walk
 Big ol' Bentley, it's a spaceship (whoa)
 Call me on my phone, I don't say shit (what?)
 I make money when I talk (when I talk)
 I'm a boss, take a loss (I'm a what?)
 I could introduce you to the plug (to the plug)
 Bitch, this ain't no Henny in my cup (lil' bitch)
 Stayed down, now the racks up (racks up)
 She gon' let me fuck, ass up (ass up)
 Plug
 I stuck keys in the Louis V (Louis V)
 Fuck 12, I'm a G, ain't no stoppin' me (ain't no stoppin' me)
 And my wrist is on overseas (drip)
 Rich nigga, you can't talk to me (rich)
 Ayy, plug walk (plug walk, plug, plug)
 I don't even understand how the fuck my plug talk (huh? what, what?)
 Pick him up in a space coupe, I don't let my plug walk (skrrt, pull up in a space coupe)

New freak, had to cut my other lil' bitch off (ooh, ooh, lil' bitch)

50K, you could come and book a nigga for a plug walk

Songwriters: Danny Lee Snodgrass / Dimitri Leslie Roger / Grant Dickinson / Jabrill Brooks

Plug Walk lyrics © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., The Administration MP Inc

Migos - Walk It Talk It

Yeah, yeah (Deko)

Whoa, hold on (OG Parker)

Uh

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (woo!)

Walk it, like I talk it (yeah!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (woo!)

Walk it, like I talk it (hey!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (woo!)

Walk it, like I talk it (talk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (ayy!)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it (woo)

Like I talk it (yeah!)

Take my shoes and walk a mile

Something that you can't do (woo, hey!)

Big talks of the town, big boy gang moves (gang moves!)

I like to walk around with my chain loose (chain, chain!)

She just bought a new ass but got the same boobs (same boobs!)

Whipping up dope, scientist (whip it up, whip it up)

(Cook it up, cook it up) (Skrrt-Skrrt!)

That's my sauce, where you find it?

(That's my sauce) (Look it up, look it up, find it)

Adding up checks, no minus

(Add it up, add it up, add it up, add it up, yeah)

Get your respect in diamonds (ice, ice, ice, ice, ice, ice)

I bought a 'Plain Jane' Rollie

These niggas bought they fame (woo!)

I think my back got scoliosis 'cause I swerve the lane (skrrt!)

Heard you signed your life, for that brand new chain (I heard)

Think it came with stripes, but you ain't straight with the gang (Gang, gang!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (woo!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (talk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (let's go)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (woop!)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (hey!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (yeah!)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it

Ayy! I gotta stay in my zone
 Say that we been beefing, dog
 But you on your own
 First night, she gon' let me fuck 'cause we grown
 I hit her, gave her back
 To the city, she home (she at home now!)
 That was that
 So I can't be beefing with no wack nigga, got no backbone
 Heard you living in a mansion in all your raps though
 But your shit look like the trap on this Google Maps, though
 We been brothers since Versace bando, whoa
 Name ringing like a Migo trap phone, whoa
 Used to be with Vashtie at Santo's
 That's on Tommy Campos
 We live like 'Sopranos'
 And I
 Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)
 Walk it, like I talk it
 Walk it, walk it like I talk it (walk it)
 Walk it, like I talk it (woo!)
 Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)
 Walk it, like I talk it
 Walk it, walk it like I talk it (talk it)
 Walk it, like I talk it (let's go)
 Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)
 Walk it, like I talk it (woop!)
 Walk it, like I talk it
 Walk it, walk it like I talk it (hey!)
 Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)
 Walk it, like I talk it (yeah!)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it

Offset!

Niggas pocket watching (watching!)

I want that thot this that 'ménage (which one?)

I bought a franchise to double up the profits (franchise!)

We make a landslide chopper get to popping (landslide!)

Eliott got me rocky

Blow a socket, chicken teriyaki

Take off, rocket keep 'em in pocket

Water gon' lock it

Quadruple the profit! (profit!)

I walk like I walk (hey!)

Talk like I talk (whoa)

What's in my vault? Load of cash and assaults (brrr)

I put a lab in my loft (lab)

She cook up, and jab with the folk (jab)

By the pair, I got karats that choke (by the pair)

By the pair, I got karats each load (by the pair)

Private life, private jets 'round the globe (private life)

Hit a bitch, hit a lick with the 'Cho (hey!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (woo!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (talk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (let's go)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (woop!)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (hey!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (yeah!)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it

Watch it buck, no Milwaukee (hunnid)

Walk it, like I talk it

That's my bro, he know the lingo (lingo)

Ain't no 'walkie-talkie' (no)

This some, "You know, why don't we know?" (we know?)

Hold out on that coffee

Smoke the Cookie, get the coughing

Drop dead fresh, I need a coffin

Balling, something we do often (ball)

Take the pot and I splash, no dolphin (splash)

I take the nine and go buy me a faucet (nine)

Walk it like I talk it, a nigga done about it (uh)

I play the coach, so I gotta call it (call it)

Up in the shits, some niggas just dormant (shits)

Fucking a bih, and that's not a problem (a problem)

I get a rebound, ain't talkin' 'bout Spalding (ball)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (woo!)

Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)

Walk it, like I talk it

Walk it, walk it like I talk it (talk it)

Walk it, like I talk it (let's go)
 Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)
 Walk it, like I talk it (woop!)
 Walk it, like I talk it
 Walk it, walk it like I talk it (hey!)
 Walk it, like I talk it (walk it)
 Walk it, like I talk it (yeah!)
 Walk it, like I talk it
 Walk it, walk it like I talk it

Songwriters: Aubrey Graham / Grant Andrew Decouto / Joshua Isaih Parker / Kiari Kendrell
 Cephus / Kirsnik Khari Ball / Quavious Keyate Marshall

Walk It Talk It lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Cypmp, Universal Music Publishing Group

Tyga - Taste

Slide on a pimp game with my pinky ring
 Lotta gang, lotta bitches, and a icy chain
 Why you claim that you rich? That's a false claim
 I be straight to the whip, no baggage claim
 Whole lotta styles, can't even pronounce the name
 You don't even got no style, see you on my Instagram
 I be rockin' it like it's fresh out the pan
 Only when I'm takin' pics, I'm the middleman
 Walk, talk it like a boss, I just lift the hand
 Three million cash, call me Rain Man
 Money like a shower, that's my rain dance
 And we all in black, like it's Gangland
 Say the wrong word, you be hangman
 Watch me stick to your bitch like a spray tan

Aw, Mr. 'What Kind Of Car You In?'

In the city love my name, nigga, I ain't gotta say it

Taste, taste, she can get a taste

Taste, taste, she can get a taste

Taste, taste, fuck what a nigga say

It's all the same, like Mary-Kate

Taste, taste, she can get a taste

Taste, taste, let you get a taste

Taste, taste, do you love the taste?

Yeah that's cool but he ain't like me

Lotta girls like me, niggas wanna fight me

Nigga get yo ass checked like a fuckin' Nike

Me not icey, that's unlikely

And she gon' suck me like a fuckin' Hi-C

Aw, chains on the neck for the whole team

And I feel like Gucci with the ice cream

And my bitch want the Fenty, not the Maybelline

I'm the black JB the way these bitches scream

Make these bitches scream

Pretty little thing

Like my nigga A.E, say, "yadadamean"

Taste, taste, she can get a taste

Taste, taste, she can get a taste

Taste, taste, fuck what a nigga say

It's all the same, like Mary-Kate

Taste, taste, she can get a taste

Taste, taste, let you get a taste

Taste, taste, do you love the taste?

Yeah that's cool

Yeah, I'ma put the drip on the plate (drip, drip)
 Diamond ice-glazed, niggas imitate (ice, ice)
 Aye, aye feed me grapes Maybach with the drac' (grape)
 Slow pace in the Wraith, got this shit from bae
 Diamonds up to par, the cookie hittin' hard (hard)
 The Rari sit in park, I'm at it, on Mars (Mars)
 Shotgun shells, we gon' always hit the target (blaow)
 Popcorn bitch shell poppin' out the cartridge (pop it)
 3400 Nawfside, Charles Barkley
 4-8-8, Ferrari

Make her get on top of me and ride me like a Harley
 She wanna keep me company and never want depart me (no)
 (Depart me) Yeah, fishtail in the parking lot (skrt, skrt)
 I don't kick it with these niggas 'cause they talk about 'cha
 And I got the fire, don't make me spark it out 'cha
 Keep it in my back pocket like it's a wallet
 Like the way she suck it, suck it like a Jolly (whoa)
 Stack it up and put it with the whole project (racks)
 And she got the Patek on water moccasin
 I'm rich in real life, I get that profit, copy

Taste, taste, she can get a taste
 Taste, taste, let you get a taste
 Taste, taste, do you love the taste?
 Yeah, that's cool, but he ain't like me

 Taste, taste, LA you can get a taste
 Taste, taste, Miami you can get a taste
 Taste, taste, Oakland you can get a taste
 Taste, taste, New York do you love the taste?
 Taste, taste, Chi-Town you can get a taste
 Taste, taste, Houston you can get a taste

Taste, taste, Portland you can get a taste
 Taste, taste, overseas let them bitches taste
 Taste, taste, she can get a taste
 Taste, taste, she can get a taste
 Taste, taste, do you love the taste?
 Taste, taste, worldwide they gon' get a taste

Songwriters: Cameron Forbes Lewis / David L Doman / Kiari Kendrell Cephus / Michael
 Stevenson

Taste lyrics © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., Reservoir Media Management Inc

Lil Skies - I Know You

Beachboy in the sun, yeah
 Look, I know you, you just wanna fuck me for the fame
 Wanna fuck me 'cause them diamonds on my chain
 Girl, don't you? Don't you? Yeah, oh

 Look, I know you, you just wanna fuck me for my fame
 Girl, don't you? You just wanna fuck me for the fame
 Yeah, don't you? You just wanna fuck me for the fame
 She wanna fuck me 'cause them diamonds on my chain
 Girl, I know you, you be out here playin' all them games
 Girl, don't you? Out here fuckin' with all of them lames
 Yeah don't you? Don't you? I know you

 Ayy, ayy, ayy, ayy
 Big body she gon' swerve it
 Now we way above the surface
 Shorty lookin' picture perfect
 Say she ready, never nervous
 I wanna know like it's urgent
 Give her good pipe when in person

You want the cars and the purses
Baby girl, tell me is it worth it
I'm in a spaceship, get ready for takeoff
Can't fuck with lil' shorty I know that she basic
She makin' my dick soft
These niggas hatin' said I wouldn't make it
I shine with a new floss
I got his girl in a room gettin' naked
She fuck with a real boss
When my gang walk in it's lit (it's lit)
Legit (legit)
Give her the D then she dismiss (dismiss)
No kiss (no kiss)
You test me then you getting hit (hit)
Lil' bitch (lil' bitch)
I take my shot and I don't miss (don't miss)
My diamonds piss (piss)
And girl that's funny 'cause I know you
You just come around and make a name
Girl, I know you, gon' tell me that you different and you changed
But I know you
Are everything you say you ain't
You tried to take me down, I left you in the rain
Look, I know you, you just wanna fuck me for my fame
Girl, don't you? You just wanna fuck me for the fame
Yeah, don't you? You just wanna fuck me for the fame
She wanna fuck me 'cause them diamonds on my chain
Girl, I know you, you be out here playin' all them games
Girl, don't you? Out here fuckin' with all of them lames
Yeah don't you? Don't you? I know you

Look, she want the money and the fame
 Told her you gotta go
 I ain't gon' give your ass a thing she want a pot of gold
 Look, back when I was young I had a lot of hoes
 I'm talking back before I got this dough now I see how they rockin'
 I know how you roll now ain't no need for talkin'
 That shit gettin' old now, left me with no option
 But to keep knockin' these goals down left me with no option
 But to keep knockin' these hoes down, hold up, wait
 Gucci down to the socks, oo yeah that's a beach boy, baby
 Pull up to the party, shawty all up on me now she wanna date me
 Said she wanna have my baby
 I ain't know that was your lady, oh no
 I've been workin' off the clock for this shit
 Did a lot for this shit, please don't expect me just to give it up
 Shorty wanna rock with the kid
 I gave her cock then I dipped told lil' mama go ahead and live it up

 Look, I know you, you just wanna fuck me for my fame
 Girl, don't you? You just wanna fuck me for the fame
 Yeah, don't you? You just wanna fuck me for the fame
 She wanna fuck me 'cause them diamonds on my chain
 Girl, I know you, you be out here playin' all them games
 Girl, don't you? Out here fuckin' with all of them lames
 Yeah don't you? Don't you? I know you

Songwriters: Blake Chandler Sandoval / Danny Lee Snodgrass / Dez Wright / Henry Lother
 Nichols / Kimetrius Foose

I Know You lyrics © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

ASAP Rocky - Praise The Lord (Da Shine)

Get it, text message I don't know the number
 Flexin' on these niggas, every bone and muscle
 Steady taking shots, but I'm never hurting nothing
 Even then you don't worry none
 And I'd like to give a shoutout to my niggas with the game plan
 And shoutout to my niggas with escape plans
 Uh, twenty bands, rain dance
 We can keep the rain check or we can make plans
 Pockets loaded, rocket loaded, okay lets rock and roll this
 Time to go, lock stock and two smoking barrels
 Locked and loaded, diamonds glowing, chart-climbing on 'em
 You think I'm jumping out the window how I got 'em open
 Line around the corner, line 'em up to block and over
 Times I even stop the smoking when it's time to focus
 My shades Dior, my pants velour
 Create, explore, expand, conquer

 I came, I saw, I came, I saw
 I praise the Lord, then break the law
 I take what's mine, then take some more
 It rains, it pours, it rains, it pours
 I came, I saw, I came, I saw
 I praise the Lord, then break the law
 I take what's mine, then take some more
 It rains, it pours, it rains, it pours

 I sold the pack, the loose, the hard (yeah)
 I listened to X, I peeped the bars (yeah)
 The snakes, the rats, the cats, the dogs
 The games, a trap, protect, your heart (yeah)
 I waited in line, return, refine

The new design, it's time to shine
 To shine, to shine, to shine, to shine
 I hustle, I flex, the world is mine
 So please believe, allow the greaze
 These niggas disease, don't speak we squeeze (squeeze)
 I make the devil go weak the knees
 You hate, you're lame, your loss

I came, I saw, I came, I saw
 I praise the Lord, then break the law
 I take what's mine, then take some more
 It rains, it pours, it rains, it pours
 I came, I saw, I came, I saw
 I praise the Lord, then break the law
 I take what's mine, then take some more
 It rains, it pours, it rains, it pours

She came, I came, now what's my name?
 My chain, my pants, my pants with the chain
 They know it's me, the hat and the shades
 They heard my voice and they ran to the stage
 My vans, my braids, my mans, my babe
 My girls, my ex, my hoes that I left
 The way I stepped, out the car, that's a flex
 Give thanks, get fresh, praise the Lord then finesse, bless

I came, I saw, I came, I saw
 I praise the Lord, then break the law
 I take what's mine, then take some more
 It rains, it pours, it rains, it pours
 I came, I saw, I came, I saw
 I praise the Lord, then break the law

I take what's mine, then take some more
 It rains, it pours, it rains, it pours

Songwriters: Rakim Mayers / Joseph Adenuga / Hector Delgado

Praise The Lord (Da Shine) lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Warner/Chappell Music,
 Inc, Reach Music Publishing

Swae Lee, Rae Sremmurd - Powerglide (From SR3MM)

Yeah, yeah, yeah
 Mike WiLL Made-It
 Yeah, yeah, yeah
 Mally Mall
 Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh
 Ear Drummers
 Yeah, hoe

What's in this mug? Toasted up, no I ain't hostin'
 Kush all in my lap because these hoes don't want to roll it
 I was sliding in the Lamb' with the powerglide (oh)
 Slime green paint, peanut butter inside (oh)
 She wanna fuck, speak up
 Comin' out her clothes (oh)
 I'm in wonderland when she comin' down the pole (whoa)
 And I don't care if she take all of mine (oh)
 Like it ain't shit but a dollar sign
 Diamonds unthawed, comin' in froze (froze)
 Got too many girls to let one of them go (oh)
 When I make a purchase, I can't wait to showboat (oh)
 If she bad, I put a pinky ring on, snow globe
 I'ma have that pussy on lock like po-po (yeah)
 She was going up and down like yo-yo (down)

You can say I'm greedy 'cause I always want more (more)
 I don't fuck with holmes 'cause they with some slow-pokes (lame)
 Ooh, money on monsoon, baby girl full moon (ay)
 Give these niggas with some money some room
 She don't stop, batteries not included
 Oh, big balling like Mutombo, yeah
 Much cooler than the cool kids, woah
 Can you believe every night we do this? (yeah)
 What's in this mug? Toasted up, no I ain't hostin'
 Kush all in my lap because these hoes don't want to roll it
 I was sliding in the Lamb' with the powerglide (oh)
 Slime green paint, peanut butter inside (oh)
 She wanna fuck, speak up
 Comin' out her clothes (oh)
 I'm in wonderland when she comin' down the pole (whoa)
 And I don't care if she take all of mine (oh)
 Like it ain't shit but a dollar sign
 Hold up, I'ma go and spend those hundreds though
 I don't care if she had a man, so? (man)
 Pedicure gang, get your fingernails did
 With no shame, flip that ass like heads or tails (tails)
 And she finer than a motherlover (lover)
 Can I hit that ass like a bullseye? (hit)
 She gon' suck like a bloodsucker (woo)
 My fee higher than a motherfucker
 Oh, I hear you like fast cash (fast cash)
 Baby, you know I got the hots for you (I got the hots)
 I've been workin', so I cash in
 She said, "I only wanna dance for you" (dance)
 We have no mercy for you, no (no)

Me and my niggas closer than in-laws (than in-laws)

Fuck an interview, she know the answer (answer)

Prototype cars not a Jaguar, aaah!

What's in this mug? Toasted up, no I ain't hostin'

Kush all in my lap because these hoes don't want to roll it

I was sliding in the Lamb' with the powerglide (oh)

Slime green paint, peanut butter inside (oh)

She wanna fuck, speak up

Comin' out her clothes (oh)

I'm in wonderland when she comin' down the pole (whoa)

And I don't care if she take all of mine (oh)

Like it ain't shit but a dollar sign

Duck sauce on my feet, hoe, pass around the pre-rolls

Rollie on my chain, Flava Flav with the Steez, hoe

Kush residue on my jeans, I blow hella dope

And them classic Reeboks, whiter than snow

And a nigga be dressin', walkin' 'round, Gucci steppin'

Unintentional flexin', tryna send out a message

Money walk with the extra, shake that ass wit' ya bestie

Seein' stars in the rental, got your broad in the rental?

20K in AOD and it's just me and my kinfolk?

Tryna send a girl to college, I ain't coppin' no free show

Say her birthday late July, yeah, that means she a Leo?

Might just leave with me tonight, but that don't mean she a freak hoe

Fuck with dancers and models, shout out them girls who get dollars

Shawty came from the bottom, yeah, shout out Keisha Bottoms

Couple cases of Rosé, came out to me with the sparkles

I pour up for all the girls, but I'ma drink out the bottles

What's in this mug? Toasted up, no I ain't hostin'

Kush all in my lap because these hoes don't want to roll it

I was sliding in the Lamb' with the powerglide (oh)

Slime green paint, peanut butter inside (oh)

She wanna fuck, speak up

Comin' out her clothes (oh)

I'm in wonderland when she comin' down the pole (whoa)

And I don't care if she take all of mine (oh)

Like it ain't shit but a dollar sign

She got that million dollar pussy, but I get it for the free

She like to do a lot of snow, I told that bitch to come and ski

Shawty bad, she can get it, she can swallow, she can spit it

Bring her friend, if she with it, on the pole, y'all can split it

In the bed or the Lamb'

Got your bitch suckin' dick on the 'Gram

V12 helped me get up out the jam, trunk full of slam

R.I.P. Lil Peep, I gotta slow down on them Xans (hey)

Just had a ménage (hey), back seat of my Benz (hey)

Put that shit on camera (hey), she squirted on the lens (hey)

Then she told me put it on her chinny chin-chin (hey)

Pocket full of nothin' but them Benjy Franklins

In the game, posted up (up), puttin' numbers up (up)

Bitch, run me that check first, I don't wanna fuck (yeah)

They say it's cuffin' season, baby, you ain't good enough (nope)

She want a real nigga, dog, you ain't hood enough

What's in this mug? Toasted up, no I ain't hostin'

Kush all in my lap because these hoes don't want to roll it

I was sliding in the Lamb' with the powerglide (oh)

Slime green paint, peanut butter inside (oh)

She wanna fuck, speak up

Comin' out her clothes (oh)

I'm in wonderland when she comin' down the pole (whoa)

And I don't care if she take all of mine (oh)

Like it ain't shit but a dollar sign

Songwriters: Aaquil Brown / Jamal Rashid / Jean Hovart / Jordan Houston / Khalif Malik Brown
/ Michael Williams / Paul Beauregard

Powerglide (From SR3MM) lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, BMG Rights Management,
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Appendix – B: Song Selection

Step #3: Final Song List

1. XXXTentacion – sad (June 7th – 2, June 14th – 10)
2. Juice world – Lucid Dream (June 7th – 3, June 14th - 16)
3. Drake – Nice for what (June 7th – 6, June 14th – 1)
4. Drake ft. Lil Baby – Yes Indeed (June 7th – 11, June 14th – 26)
5. XXXTentacion – Moonlight (June 7th – 13, June 14th – 47)
6. Rich the Kid – Plug Walk (June 7th – 15)
7. XXXTentacion – Changes (June 7th – 18)
8. Migos – Walk it Talk it (June 7th – 29)
9. Tyga ft. Offset – Taste (June 7th – 30, June 14th – 39)
10. XXXTentacion – fuck love (June 7th – 34)
11. Juice World – All Girls are the Same (June 7th – 42, June 14th – 60)
12. Lil Skies- I know you (June 7th – 79)
13. Raw Sremmund – Powerglide (June 7th – 86)
14. Lil Baby – Life Goes on (June 7th – 89)
15. Drake – In My Feelings (June 14th – 6)
16. Drake – Summer Games (June 14th – 28)
17. Drake – Jaded (June 14th – 32)
18. Drake – Is There More (June 14th -38)
19. Drake – After Dark (June 14th – 41)
20. Drake – Finesse (June 14th – 42)
21. Kanye – All Mine (June 7th – 54, June 14th – 83)
22. XXXTentacion – The Remedy for a Broken Heart (June 7th – 55, June 14th - 98)

Step #2: Song List from July 7th, 2018 (56 non-rap and 44 rap songs)

<https://www.billboard.com/charts/hot-100/2018-07-07>

1. I like it like that- Cardi B
2. Sad – XXXTENTACION (1 last week, 17 weeks on chart)
3. Lucid Dreams – JuiceWorld (4 last week, 7 weeks on chart)
4. Girls Like you – Maroon 5
5. Pyscho – Post Malone F. Ty Dolla Sign (6 last week, 18 weeks on chart)
6. Nice For What – Drake (3 last week, 12 weeks on chart)
7. Boo'd Up – Ella Mai
8. No Tears Left to Cry – Ariana Grande
9. God's Plan – Drake (8 last week, 23 weeks on chart)
10. Meant to Be – Bebe Rexha
11. Yes Indeed – Lil Baby & Drake (7 weeks on the chart, 12 last week)
12. The Middle – Zedd
13. Moonlight – XXXTENTACION (16 last week, 11 weeks on chart)
14. Better Now – Post Malone (23 last week, 9 weeks on chart)
15. Plug Walk – Rich Kid (32 last week, 20 weeks on chart)
16. Mine – Bazzi
17. Perfect – Ed Sheeran
18. Changes – XXXTENTACION (18 weeks, 11 weeks on chart)
19. Apeshit – The Carters (13 last week, 2 weeks on chart)
20. Delicate – Taylor Swift
21. Tequila – Dan + Shay
22. Friend – Marshmello & Anne-Marie
23. In my blood – Shawn Mendes
24. This is America – Childish Gambino (17 last week, 8 weeks on chart)
25. Jocelyn Flores – XXXTENTACION (19 last week, 18 weeks on chart)
26. I'm Upset – Drake (15 last week, 5 weeks on chart)
27. Look Alive – BlocBoy JB Featuring Drake (25 last week, 20 weeks on chart)
28. Never be the same – Camila Cabello

29. Walk it Talk it – Migos Ft Drake (24 last week, 22 weeks on chart)
30. Taste – Tyga ft Offset (38 last week, 5 weeks on chart)
31. Whatever it Takes – Imagine Dragon
32. Be Careful – Cardi B
33. Rockstar – Post Malone ft. 21 Savage (31 last week, 41 weeks on chart)
34. Fuck Love – XXXTENTACION (28 last week, 21 weeks on chart)
35. Back to You – Selena Gomez
36. One Kiss – Calvin Harris & Dua Lipa
37. Love Lies – Khalid and Normani
38. Heaven – Kane Brown
39. Havana – Camila Cabello
40. New Rules – Dua Lipa
41. I Like Me Better – Lauv
42. All Girls Are The Same – JuiceWorld (45 last week, 7 weeks on chart)
43. Te Bote – Casper Magico
44. Get Along – Kenny Chesney
45. Simple – Florida Georgia Line
46. Everybody Dies in Their Nightmares – XXXTENTACION (42 last week, 6 weeks on chart)
47. Freaky Friday – Lil Dicky ft Chris Brown
48. Mercy – Brett Young
49. One Number Away – Luke Combs
50. Wait – Maroon 5
51. Sit Next to Me – Foster the People
52. Youngblood – 5 Seconds of Summer
53. Up Down – Morgan Wallan
54. All Mine – Kanye West (48 last week, 4 weeks on chart)
55. The Remedy for a Broken Heart – XXXTENTACION (58 last week, 4 weeks on chart)
56. Big Bank – YG ft 2 Chains, Big Sean and Nicki Minaj (4 weeks on chart)
57. Dura – Daddy Yankee
58. Sober – Demi Lovato
59. Ball for Me – Post Malone ft Nicki Minaj (62 last week, 9 weeks on chart)

60. Bigger than You – 2 Chains, Drake, Quavo
61. Say Amen – Panic! At the Disco
62. Chun-Li – Nicki Minaj
63. Japan – Famous Dex (64 last week, 14 weeks on chart)
64. X – Nicki Jam
65. Legends – JuiceWorld
66. Everythings Gonna Be Alright – David Lee Murphy
67. Bed – Nicki Minaj ft Ariana Grande
68. KOD – J Cole (71 last week, 10 weeks on chart)
69. Alone – Halsey ft Big Sean
70. Hope – XXXTENTACION (80 last week, 2 weeks on chart)
71. Esskeetit – Lil Pump (76 last week, 11 weeks on chart)
72. Tati – 6ix9ine ft DJ Spinking (68 last week, 5 weeks on chart)
73. Drowns the Whiskey – Jason Aldean
74. Done for me – Charlie Puth ft Kehlani
75. I was Jack – Jake Owen
76. Fake Love -BTS
77. Yikes – Kanye West (67 last week, 4 weeks on chart)
78. Call Out my Name – The Weeknd
79. I Know You – Lil Skies ft. Yung Pinch (92 last week, 3 weeks on chart)
80. Numb – XXXTENTACION (82 last week, 3 weeks on chart)
81. Medicine – Queen Naija
82. Praise the Lord (Da Shine) – ASAP Rocky ft. Skepta (79 last week, 5 weeks on chart)
83. Sin Pijama – Becky G + Natti Natasha
84. High Hopes – Panic! At the Disco
85. I Lived It – Blake Shelton
86. Powerglide – Rae Sremmurd & Juicy J (83 last week, 17 on chart)
87. Lovely – Billie Eilish & Khalid
88. Coming Home – Keith Urban
89. Life Goes On – Lil Baby ft. Gunna & Lil Uzi Vert (86 last week, 6 weeks on chart)
90. Zombie – Bad Wolves

91. Overdose – YoungBoy Never Broke Again (90 last week, 9 weeks on chart)
92. Life Changes – Thomas Rhett
93. Women, Amen – Dierks Bentley
94. Born To Be Yours – Kygo
95. The Light is Coming – Ariana Grande ft Nicki Minaj
96. OTW – Khalid, Ty Dolla Sign & 6black (97 last week, 10 weeks on chart)
97. Solo – Clean Bandit ft Demi Lovato
98. Take Back Home Girl – Chris Lane ft. Tori Kelly
99. Boss – The Carters (77 last week, 2 weeks on chart)
100. Sativa – Jhene Aiko ft. Swae Lee

Step #1: Song List from July 14th, 2018 (49 non-rap and 51 rap songs)

<https://www.billboard.com/charts/hot-100/2018-07-14>

1. Nice For What – Drake (6 last week, 13 weeks on chart)
2. Nonstop – Drake
3. I Like it Like That – Cardi B ft. Bad Bunney & J Balvin
4. God's Plan – Drake (9 last week, 24 weeks on chart)
5. Girls Like You – Maroon 5 ft Cardi B
6. In My Feelings – Drake
7. I'm Upset – Drake (26 last week, 6 weeks on chart)
8. Emotionless – Drake
9. Don't Matter to Me – Drake
10. Sad – XXXTENTACION (2 last week, 18 weeks on chart)
11. Boo's Up – Ella Mai
12. Psycho – Post Malone ft Ty Dolla Sign (5 last week, 19 weeks on chart)
13. Mod Ties – Drake
14. Elevate – Drake
15. No Tears Left To Cry – Ariana Grande (8 last week, 11 weeks on chart)
16. Lucid Dreams – Juice World (3 last week, 8 weeks on chart)
17. Survival – Drake
18. Can't Take a Joke – Drake

19. The Middle – Zedd
20. Talk Up – Drake ft Jay Z
21. 8 out of 10 – Drake
22. Meant to Be – Bebe Rexha
23. Delicate – Taylor Swift
24. Better Now – Post Malone (14 last week, 10 weeks on chart)
25. Mine - Bazzi
26. Yes Indeed – Lil Baby and Drake (11 last week, 8 weeks on chart)
27. Sandra’s Rose – Drake
28. Summer Games – Drake
29. Perfect- Ed Sheeran
30. Blue Tint – Drake
31. In My Blood – Shawn Mendes
32. Jaded – Drake
33. Friends – Marshmello and Anne-Marie
34. Tequila – Dan + Shay
35. Never Be The Same – Camila Cabello
36. Is There More – Drake
37. That’s How You Feel – Drake
38. Peak – Drake
39. Taste -Tyga ft Offset (30 last week, 6 weeks on chart)
40. Whatever it Takes – Imagine Dragons
41. After Dark -Drake ft Static Major and Ty Dolla Sign
42. Finesse – Drake
43. Apeshit – The Carters (19 last week, 3 weeks on chart)
44. Look Alive – BlocBoy JB ft Drake (27 last week, 21 weeks on chart)
45. One Kiss – Calvin Harris and Dua Lipa
46. Love Lies – Khalid and Normani
47. Moonlight – XXXTENTACION (13 last week, 12 weeks on chart)
48. Be Careful – Cardi B
49. Back to You – Selena Gomez

50. This is America – Childish Gambino
51. Ratchet Happy Birthday – Drake
52. I Like Me Better – Lauv
53. Get Along – Kenny Chesney
54. Simple – Florida Georgia Line
55. Changes XXXTENTACION (18 last week, 12 weeks on chart)
56. Final Fantasy – Drake
57. March 14 – Drake
58. X – Nicky Jam x J Balvin
59. Sit Next to Me – Foster the People
60. All Girls Are the Same – Juice World (42 last week, 8 weeks on chart)
61. Te Bote – Casper Magico
62. Up Down – Morgan Wallen
63. Karma – Queen Naija
64. Mercy – Brett Young
65. One Number Away – Luke Combs
66. YoungBlood – 5 Seconds of Summer
67. Big Ban – YG ft 2 Chains, Big Sean and Nicki Minaj
68. Jocelyn Flores – XXXTENTACION (25 last week, 19 weeks on chart)
69. I was Jack – Jake Owen
70. Drowns The Whiskey – Jason Aldean
71. Alone – Halsey ft Big Sean & Stefflon Don
72. Freaky Friday – Lil Dicky ft Chris Brown
73. Everything’s Gonna Be Alright
74. Ball For Me – Post Malone ft Nicki Minaj (59 last week, 10 weeks on chart)
75. Life Changes – Thomas Rhett
76. Kiss Somebody – Morgan Evans
77. KOD – J Cole
78. Done for Me – Charlie Puth ft Kehlani
79. Take Back Home Girl – Chris Lane
80. Coming Home – Keith Urban

Figures

Figure 1 : Percentage of Intimate and Material Songs

Artist	Song	Expression	*Intimate (%)
Drake	Nice for What	Intimate	13/22 = 60%
Drake	In My Feelings	Intimate	
Drake	Summer Games	Intimate	
Drake	Jaded	Intimate	
Drake	Is There More	Intimate	
Drake	After Dark	Intimate	
Drake	Finesse	Intimate-Material	
XXXTentacion	Sad	Intimate	
XXXTentacion	Moonlight	Intimate	
XXXTentacion	Changes	Intimate	
			**Intimate + Intimate-Material (%)
XXXTentacion	Fuck Love	Intimate	16/22 = 73%
XXXTentacion	The Remedy for a Broken Heart	Intimate	
Juice Wrld	Lucid Dreams	Intimate	
Juice Wrld	All Girls are the Same	Intimate	
Lil Skies	I Know You	Intimate-Material	
Rich the Kid	Plug Walk	Material	
Lil Baby	Life Goes On	Material	
Kanye West	All Mine	Intimate-Material	
			***Material (%)
Migos	Walk it Talk it	Material	5/22 = 23%
Tyga	Taste	Material	
Swae Lee, Rae Sremmurd	Powerglide	Material	

*songs that only intimate expressions

**songs with intimate and material expressions

***songs with only material expressions