

Morakot Areerasada 2014: *Feminism through Figurative Language in Contemporary American Songs of Leading Contemporary Feminist Music Icons*. Master of Arts (English for Specific Purposes), Major Field: English for Specific Purposes, Department of Foreign Languages. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Pataraporn Tapinta, Ph.D. 211 pages.

The main objectives of this study are 1.) to identify feminist values reflected in contemporary American songs of the six feminist lyricists (i.e. Madonna, Pink, Beyonce, Britney Spear, Lady Gaga, and Kesha); 2.) to analyze how those feminist values are reflected in those songs through figurative language. The main theoretical frameworks of four major perspectives of third wave feminism (Mann & Huffman, 2005), of figurative language (Perrine, 1977; Arp. and Johnson, 2009; Straker, 2013), and of content analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Coffey and Atkinson, 1996) were applied. The findings revealed that six major feminist values were expressed in those songs including the themes of women's 1.) *Ambition*; 2.) *Survival*; 3.) *Pride*; 4.) *Individualism*; 5.) *Liberalism*; 6.) *Women's inferior social status and struggle for life quality*. These feminist values were commonly expressed through three common figurative devices—1.) metaphor; 2.) simile; 3.) parallelism. Especially, metaphor was employed most frequently. This device of using shared background knowledge of social values (e.g. beliefs and attitudes) between the lyricists who are considered as feminist icons and their audiences through metaphoric symbols of women's behaviors, outer appearances and characteristics, abilities, and so on seems to show the most effective impact in promoting understanding of feminist sensation among their audiences. In conclusion, song which is a common contemporary genre of literary work can transcend feminist messages to the society effectively, and the intended messages appear powerful because of the use of figurative language.

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