



INNOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research

Volume 4 Nomor 6 Tahun 2024 Page 5522-5544

E-ISSN 2807-4238 and P-ISSN 2807-4246

Website: <https://j-innovative.org/index.php/Innovative>

## Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Gay Identity in Lil Nas X 'Montero (Call Me By Your Name)' Music Video: Implications In Religion

Mutiara<sup>1✉</sup>, Friska Tambunan<sup>2</sup>, Thesia Aprianti Purba<sup>3</sup>, Elizabeth Rusida Yosephine Tamba<sup>4</sup>, T.

Thyrhaya Zein<sup>5</sup>

Universitas Sumatera Utara

Email: [Mutiaradamanizhy20@gmail.com](mailto:Mutiaradamanizhy20@gmail.com)<sup>1✉</sup>

### Abstract

Call Me by Your Name (Montero) by Lil Nas X is a song that portrays the breaking of social norms, particularly regarding sexuality. This research aims to analyze gay identity in the song and its implications in religion. The researchers use descriptive qualitative method and multimodal approach to analyze the song. The analysis uses Theo Van Leeuwen theory to analyze the visual, linguistic, auditory, intertextuality, and contextual factors. The result of this research is Lil Nas X reclaims religious symbols, transforming them from means of oppression into acts of personal emancipation. Based on analysis, the conclusion of Lil Nas X's "Call Me by Your Name" is a strong expression of self-acceptance, resistance to society and religious condemnation, and a celebration of LGBTQ+ identity, especially gay since Lil Nas himself is a gay.

Keywords: *Lil Nas X, Gay, Music, Song, Religion*

## Abstrak

Call Me by Your Name (Montero) karya Lil Nas X merupakan lagu yang menggambarkan pelanggaran norma sosial, khususnya yang berkaitan dengan seksualitas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis identitas gay dalam lagu tersebut dan implikasinya dalam agama. Peneliti menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dan pendekatan multimodal untuk menganalisis lagu tersebut. Analisis menggunakan teori Theo Van Leeuwen untuk menganalisis faktor visual, linguistik, auditori, intertekstualitas, dan kontekstual. Hasil penelitian ini adalah Lil Nas X merebut kembali simbol-simbol agama, mengubahnya dari sarana penindasan menjadi tindakan emansipasi pribadi. Berdasarkan analisis, kesimpulan dari "Call Me by Your Name" karya Lil Nas X adalah ekspresi kuat penerimaan diri, perlawanan terhadap masyarakat dan kutukan agama, dan perayaan identitas LGBTQ+, terutama gay karena Lil Nas sendiri adalah seorang gay.

Kata Kunci: *Lil Nas X, Gay, Musik, Lagu, Agama*

## INTRODUCTION

Language is a communication tool that is often used by humans to convey intentions, goals, ideas, and feelings to (Sermiah et al., 2023). According to Norman Fairclough (1996: 3) in (Situmorang & T Tyrhaya, 2023), "language has become perhaps the primary medium of social control and power," making any textual discourse such as song lyrics a plausible mean for persuasion and representation of social structure.

Call Me by Your Name (Montero) by Lil Nas X is a song that portrays the breaking of social norms, particularly regarding sexuality. Released in 2021, the song is a bold statement through both its music video and lyrics, addressing the stigma often faced by LGBTQ+ identities, especially within mainstream hip-hop and pop music. The song was inspired by André Aciman's 2007 novel, "Call Me by Your Name," which also explores themes of love and self-discovery.

Lil Nas X is a Black artist who has created many songs across multiple genres and he is a gay. His first number one hit was a mix of country and trap, including elements of black culture. The second was a mix of hip hop and pop, showcasing elements of queer culture. His rise to fame started when he carved a space for himself in the country music genre as a Black man with his song, "Old Town Road". More recently, he has been explicitly gay in his music video, "MONTERO (Call Me by Your Name)" (Swope, 2021). Through his lyrics, Lil Nas X conveys a narrative about embracing one's true identity despite external judgment. The music video, featuring religious and mythological imagery, further amplifies its impact by raising issues of stigma often faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, especially in conservative contexts.

Multimodal analysis of LGBTQ+ and gay identity has been done by previous researchers such as "Growing up Gay in Vietnam: Seeing and Experiencing the World through Multimodal Visual Autoethnography" by Giang Le (Le, 2023) that examine the author experiences as a gay child and student, and later on as a scholar in Vietnam, a heteronormative society, and "Black, Gay, and Unapologetic: How Lil Nas X Is Bringing The Out Group In" by Swope (Swope, 2021) that identify Black pride and gay pride are driving him in his work and public persona. "Media Representations of Gay and Lesbian Couples with Families: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Proposition 8 Advertisements" by Tabangcura (Tabangcura, 2017) that shows ideologies of idealistic family life and heterosexual relationships influence both advertisements in their characterizations of gay and lesbian couples and their respective families, "Ideological Ambivalence: A Social Semiotic Multimodal Analysis of LGBT Activism in @WhatIsUpIndonesia" by Auliainsani and Anjarningsih\_ (Auliainsani & Anjarningsih, 2023) that examine how the ideology can be negotiated using ambivalence instead of leaning towards only one, and "Transgender Identities in Children's Picture Books: A Critical Multimodal Discourse Analysis" by Radojčić (Radojčić, 2024) that shows the picture books effectively introduce readers to transgender individuals and their experiences.

However, this research analyze how multimodal shows an identity, in this case is a gay, and how it implicates with religion. According to Theo Van Leeuwen(Theo Van Leeuwen, 2021), identity is a complex issue. It has been, and still is, differently understood and differently experienced in different times and places. In today's complex and rapidly changing society, it is often something people search for, uncertain where and to whom they belong, and what styles of life they should adopt. The music video has never been analyzed before, especially of Lil Nas X's boldness in using controversial themes and religious symbols that are rarely touched on explicitly in mainstream pop culture. And it also sets itself apart from other more conventional music videos because of Lil Nas X's openness in speaking out about LGBTQ+ issues in his provocative way.

## METHODS

This research used descriptive qualitative method and multimodal approach to analyze gay identity in Lil Nas X's artistic expressions and its implications within religious contexts. The data was collected from music videos by selecting the scenes that shows visual and lyrical expressions. The analysis will focus on how these elements convey Lil Nas X's identity as a gay and how it implicates with religion.

The analysis used multimodal theory by Theo van Leeuwen. The researchers analyzed the linguistic, systemic-functional linguistic (SFL), visual, auditory, intertextuality, and contextual factors. Visual analysis such as imagery, colors, and symbols; linguistic analysis such as lyrics and any spoken or written text in the video; auditory such as tone, music and sound design; intertextuality such as references to other cultural texts, including religious texts or popular culture, and how they shape the interpretation of gay identity in the video; and contextual factors such as socio-political context surrounding the music video, including current debates on LGBTQ+ rights and religion, to deepen the analysis. Ethical considerations will be prioritized, especially given the sensitive intersections of sexuality and religion. This analysis will respect the diversity of perspectives and avoid reductive interpretations

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. Linguistic Analysis

The researchers look at the lyrics and any spoken or written text in the video to analyze how language conveys themes of sexuality and challenges religious norms.

#### Pre-Chorus Analysis:

Repetition amplifies in pre-chorus as the emotional tone and themes of the song. Key examples include:

1. Destructive Behaviors: Phrases like "Cocaine and drinkin' with your friends" emphasize escapism and emotional detachment.
2. Emotional Detachment: "I'm not fazed, only here to sin" highlights denial and inner conflict.
3. Biblical Imagery: "If Eve ain't in your garden" reinforces themes of temptation and moral struggle.

#### Chorus Analysis:

Chorus underscores repetition of LGBTQ+ struggles for recognition and self-acceptance. "Call me when you want, call me when you need" reflects a longing for connection, while religious conflicts highlight the tension between faith and identity.

#### Verse 2 Analysis:

Lil Nas X openly expresses his identity despite social and religious stigma. Lines like "God was shinin' on me, now I can't go" illustrate the conflict between personal freedom and societal expectations.

## Post-Chorus Analysis:

Post-chorus also uses repetition conveying acceptance and resilience. "Call me by your name" symbolizes authenticity, while "Tell me you love me in private" reflects challenges of hidden love in the face of societal and religious pressures.

Call Me by Your Name lyrics use repetition to enhancing its emotional depth and thematic resonance. The pre-chorus highlights destructive behaviors, emotional detachment, and moral struggles through phrases like "Cocaine and drinkin' with your friends" and biblical imagery. The chorus reflects LGBTQ+ struggles for connection and self-acceptance, emphasizing tensions between faith and identity. In verse 2, Lil Nas X boldly asserts his identity, addressing conflicts between personal freedom and societal expectations. The post-chorus symbolizes authenticity and resilience, with lines like "Call me by your name" portraying self-acceptance, while "Tell me you love me in private" underscores challenges of hidden love.

### B. Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Halliday (1994) developed a theory of the fundamental functions of language, categorizing the three main meta-functions, ideational, interpersonal, and textual in his analysis of lexico-grammar (Hidayah et al., 2023).

#### a. Ideational Metafunction

The ideational metafunction relates with clauses as representations and is concerned with the natural world in its broadest sense, which includes our own consciousness (Hidayah et al., 2023). The lyrics feature a mix of material, mental, and relational processes:

##### 1. Material Processes

These express physical actions or external events. (table) "I wanna sell what you're buyin'": This is a material process where the speaker expresses an action of wanting to engage in an exchange, potentially representing a metaphor for personal connection or power dynamics.

Table 1 Material Processes

I	wanna	sell	what	you're	buyin
Actor	Material process		Goal		

*"I wanna sell what you're buyin'":* This is a material process where the speaker expresses an action of wanting to engage in an exchange, potentially representing a metaphor for personal connection or power dynamics.

Table 2 Material Processes

Call	me	when you want,	call	me	when you need
Process material	Goal	circumstances	Process material	Goal	circumstances

*"Call me when you want, call me when you need":* These are material processes that imply actions of communication, where the speaker is asking to be contacted, showcasing the speaker's willingness to engage.

## 2. Mental Processes

These express internal states like thoughts, feelings, and perceptions.

Table 3. Mental Processes

I	wanna	feel	on	your	ass	in	Hawai
Actor	Mental process		phenomenon			circumstances	

*"I wanna feel on your ass in Hawaii":* The action here is a physical one, signifying intimacy and lust, emphasizing a desire for physical connection.

### b. Interpersonal Metafunction

The interpersonal metafunction relates with clauses as exchanges and is concerned with the social world, particularly the interaction between speaker and hearer (Hidayah et al., 2023).

Table 4. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Compleme nt	Moo d	Residu e	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
I caugh t it bad yester day	I	caught	It bad yesterday	Moo d	Residu e	Declarativ e	Reflective tone ; the speaker recounts a personal moment of vulnerabilit y	Expresse emotiona weight ; subtle understoo d of longing or regret

You hit me with a call to your place	You	hit	Me with a call to your place	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Positions the speaker as receiving action, indicating emotional intimacy or imbalance	Suggest Surprise or longing for connection
--------------------------------------	-----	-----	------------------------------	------	---------	-------------	---	--

*"I caught it bad yesterday / You hit me with a call to your place"*

Mood: Declarative, establishing a reflective tone.

Tenor: The speaker positions themselves as vulnerable, recounting an event that highlights an intimate, perhaps unequal relationship (one reaching out while the other is passive).

Appraisal: Subtle emotional undertones of longing or surprise.

Table 5. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
Ain't been out in a while anyway	(Ellipse)	been	Out in a while anyway	Mood (Elliptical)	Residue	Declarative	Suggests isolation or detachment, building on the speaker's introspection	Self sense wit or w
Was hoping I could catch you throwing smiles in my face"	I	was	Hoping I could catch you	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Highlight hope for reciprocity or warmth in a relationship	Con mix anti and vuln

*"Ain't been out in a while anyway / Was hoping I could catch you throwing smiles in my*

*face*" Mood: Declarative.

Modality: The use of "hoping" expresses medium-level modality, indicating desire but not certainty.

Tenor: The speaker is showing a mix of longing and cautious optimism, suggesting a playful but emotionally invested tone.

Table 6. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
Romantic talking?	(Ellipsis)	-	Romantic talking	Residue	-	Interrogative (Implied)	Suggests doubt or playful questioning of intentions	Subtle skeptic teasing
You don't even have to try	You	was	Even have to try	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Positions the speaker as admiring the listener's natural	Convey admire the resignation of the appear charisma or ease

*"Romantic talking? You don't even have to try"* Mood: Declarative with a rhetorical undertone.

Tenor: The speaker emphasizes the effortless charm of the listener, possibly flattering them.

Appraisal: Positive evaluation of the addressee's natural allure.

Table 7. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
You're cute enough to f* with me tonight"	You	are	Cute enough to f* with me tonight	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Direct and intimate, signalling physical attraction.	Suggests boldness and desire.

"You're cute enough to f\* with me tonight" Mood: Declarative, highly direct.

Modality: High certainty; the speaker asserts their interest boldly.

Tenor: Establishes a dynamic of confidence and desire, possibly reversing traditional roles of pursuit.

Table 8. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
Looking at the table, all I see is weed and white	I	see	Weed and white	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Positions the speaker as observing excess or indulgence	Highlights disapproval or detachment from the scene.

"Looking at the table, all I see is weed and white"

Mood: Declarative.

Appraisal: Neutral observation, but with implicit judgment or commentary on a hedonistic lifestyle.

Tenor: Suggests an awareness of the listener's context, with subtle detachment.

Table 9. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
Baby, you living the life, but n*a, you ain't living right"	You	Are not	Living right	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Reflect judgement and concern over the listener's choices.	Suggests a blend of care and disapproval.

*"Baby, you living the life, but n\*a, you ain't living right"*

Mood: Declarative.

Appraisal: A juxtaposition of admiration ("living the life") and moral judgment ("ain't living right").

Tenor: Highlights a tension in the relationship — admiration tinged with critique, implying intimacy but also distance.

Table 10. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
Call me what you want	You	call	Me what you want	Mood (Elliptical )	Residue	Imperative	The speaker invites or commands action signaling availability.	Suggests openness and eagerness to connect
Call me what you need	You	call	Me when you need	Mood (Elliptical )	Residue	Imperative	Reaffirms the speaker's readiness to	Emphasize reliability and devotion.

---

respond.

---

*"Call me when you want, call me when you need"* Mood: Imperative.

Modality: The repeated use of "call me" indicates a strong sense of invitation and desire for connection.

Tenor: The speaker assumes an accessible and accommodating role, positioning the listener as having control.

Table 11. Interpersonal Metafunction

---

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
Call me out by your name, I'll be on the way like	You	call	Me out by your name	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Suggests a willingness to follow and support the listener.	Express strong devotion and urgency to meet emotional or physical needs.

---

*"Call me out by your name, I'll be on the way like"* Mood: Declarative with implied imperative.

Appraisal: Positive and urgent; shows eagerness to respond to the listener. Tenor: Deepens intimacy, as the speaker offers total availability and readiness.

Table 12. Interpersonal Metafunction

---

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
I want to sell what you're buying	I	want	To sell what you're buying	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Positions the speaker as eager to align with listener's desires	Suggests a transactional metaphor for emotional or physical connection.

---

*"I want to sell what you're buying"*

Mood: Declarative, with underlying intent.

Modality: Suggests alignment and complicity with the listener's lifestyle or choices. Tenor: Positions the speaker as desiring unity or participation in the listener's world.

Table 13. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
Champagne and drinking with your friends	(Ellipsis)	-	Champagne and drinking with friends	Residue	-	Declarative (Implied)	Observes a carefree and possibly hedonistic environment	Suggests content between indulgent behavior, possibly celebratory or critical.

*"Champagne and drinking with your friends"*

Mood: Declarative.

Appraisal: Neutral description of indulgent behavior, possibly celebratory or critical.

Tenor: Builds a sense of shared experience or observation of the listener's life.

Table 14. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
You live in the dark, boy, I cannot pretend	You	live	In the dark	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Positions the speaker as confronting the listener's hidden or destructive tendencies.	Reflects a blend of honesty and moral judgement.

*"You live in the dark, boy, I cannot pretend"*

Mood: Declarative with a hint of judgment.

Modality: "Cannot" implies strong personal boundaries or values.

Tenor: Positions the speaker as self-aware and honest, highlighting a moral or emotional

divide.

Table 15. Interpersonal Metafunction

Clause	Subject	Finite	Complement	Mood	Residue	Mood Type	Tenor	Appraisal
I'm not fazed, only here to sin	I	Am not	fazed	Mood	Residue	Declarative	Suggests resigned acceptance of flaws and imperfections..	Boldly amoral; embraces transgression as a theme

*"I'm not fazed, only here to sin"*

Mood: Declarative.

Appraisal: Boldly amoral; embraces transgression as a them.

Tenor: Establishes the speaker as confident and unapologetic, perhaps seductive in tone.

c. Textual Metafunctional

The textual meta function is about the verbal world, especially the flow of information in a text, and is concerned with clauses as messages (Hidayah et al., 2023). In analyzing the lyrics of Lil Nas X's "MONTERO (Call Me By Your Name)", we examine themes, rhemes, and cohesion to uncover how the text constructs meaning.

1. Verse 1

*"I caught it bad just today*

You hit me with a call to your place Ain't been out in a while anyway

Was hoping I could catch you throwing smiles in my face"

Table 16. Textual Metafunction

Clause	Theme	Rheme	Mood	Residue	Notes
I caught it bad just today	I (Subject)	caught it bad just today	Top Unmarked Theme	Rheme	Reflects the speaker's personal state.
You hit me with a call to your place	You (Subject)	hit me with a call to your place	Top Unmarked Theme	Rheme	Centralizes interaction with 'you.'

Ain't been out in a while anyway	Ain't been out in a while (Circumstance)	anyway	Circumstantial Theme	Rheme	Backgrounds speaker's isolation.
Was hoping I could catch you throwing smiles in my face	Was hoping (Mental process)	I could catch you throwing smiles in my face	Interpersonal Top Theme	Rheme	Expresses longing for connection.

### Theme-Rheme Analysis

#### Clause 1

Theme: "I" (subject).

Rheme: *"caught it bad just today."*

The focus is on the speaker's emotional state, setting the stage for personal reflection.

#### Clause 2

Theme: "You" (subject).

Rheme: *"hit me with a call to your place."* The interaction between the speaker and "you" becomes central.

#### Clause 3

Theme: *"Ain't been out in a while"* (circumstance).

Rheme: "anyway." A circumstantial theme provides background context for isolation.

#### Clause 4:

Theme: *"Was hoping"* (mental process).

Rheme: *"I could catch you throwing smiles in my face."* The longing and hope for connection emerge as a thematic focus.

Table 17. Textual Metafunction

Aspect	Cohesion
Pronouns	Repetition of 'I' and 'you' highlights intimacy.
Temporal Cohesion	'Just today' and 'in a while' situate actions in time.

## Cohesion

The repetition of personal pronouns (I, you) reinforces intimacy and relational focus.

Temporal cohesion ("just today," "in a while") situates the narrative in a specific time frame.

### 2. Verse 2

*"A dime and a nine, it was mine every week What a time, an incline, God was shining on me*

*Now I can't leave*

*And now I'm acting hella elite*

*Never want the niggas that's in my league I wanna fuck the ones I envy, I envy"*

Table 18. Textual Metafunction

Clause	Theme	Rheme	Mood	Residue	Notes
"A dime and a nine, it was mine every week"	"A dime and a nine"	"it was mine every week"	Nominal Theme	Rheme	Highlights material possession.
"What a time, an incline, God was shining on me" was shining on me"	"What a time, an incline"	"God was shining on me"	Nominal Theme	Rheme	Nostalgic reflection.
"Now I can't leave"	"Now" (Circumstance)	"I can't leave"	Circumstantial Theme	Rheme	Signifies a shift in reality.
"And now I'm acting hella elite"	"And now I"	"acting hella elite"	Subject Theme	Rheme	Contrasts with past humility.

## Theme-Rheme Analysis

### Clause 1

Theme: "A dime and a nine" (nominal group).

Rheme: *"it was mine every week."* Focuses on material possession, grounding the narrative in past abundance.

### Clause 2

Theme: *"What a time, an incline"* (nominal group).

Rheme: *"God was shining on me."* Reflects nostalgia and divine favor.

### Clause 3

Theme: "Now" (circumstantial marker).

Rheme: "I can't leave." Presents a shift in the speaker's reality.

Clause 4

Theme: "And now I" (subject).

Rheme: "acting hella elite." Contrasts past humility with current confidence.

Table 19. Textual Metafunction

Aspect	Cohesion
Temporal Progression	"Now" indicates a transition from past to present.
Repetition	"Envy" emphasizes internal conflict.

### Cohesion

The use of temporal markers ("Now") and contrasting clauses ("was mine" vs. "can't leave") builds tension and progression.

The repetition of "envy" emphasizes inner conflict and desire.

### 3. Pre-Chorus

*"Cocaine and drinking with your friends You live in the dark, boy, I cannot pretend I'm not fazed, only here to sin If Eve ain't in your garden, you know that you can"*

Table 20. Textual Metafunction

Clause	Theme	Rheme	Mood	Residue	Notes
"Cocaine and drinking with your friends"	"Cocaine and drinking"	"with your friends"	Nominal Theme	Rheme	Sets a hedonistic, social scene.
"You live in the dark, boy, I cannot pretend"	"You" (Subject)	"live in the dark, boy, I cannot pretend"	Subject Theme	Rheme	Contrasts addressee's secrecy and honesty.
"I'm not fazed, only here to sin"	"I'm not fazed" (Subject)	"only here to sin"	Subject Theme	Rheme	Accepts personal flaws openly.
"If Eve ain't in your garden, you know that you can"	"If Eve ain't in your garden"	"you know that you can"	Dependent Theme	Rheme	Biblical Metaphor for temptation.

## Theme-Rheme Analysis

### Clause 1

Theme: *"Cocaine and drinking"* (nominal group).

Rheme: *"with your friends."* Introduces hedonistic actions as a situational theme.

### Clause 2

Theme: *"You"* (subject).

Rheme: *"live in the dark, boy, I cannot pretend."* Juxtaposes the addressee's secrecy with the speaker's transparency.

### Clause 3

Theme: *"I'm not fazed"* (subject).

Rheme: *"only here to sin."* Focuses on the speaker's acceptance of their own actions.

### Clause 4

Theme: *"If Eve ain't in your garden"* (dependent clause).

Rheme: *"you know that you can."* A biblical metaphor ties desire to rebellion and freedom.

Table 21. Cohesion

Aspect	Cohesion
Religious imagery	"Eve" and "garden" connect temptation and desire thematically.
Negation	Use of "cannot" and "not fazed" underscores contrasts in thought.

## Cohesion

Religious imagery ("Eve," "garden") ties back to themes of temptation and sin.

The use of negation ("cannot pretend," "not fazed") reinforces internal and external contrast.

## 4. Chorus

Table 22. Textual Metafunction

Clause	Theme	Rheme	Mood	Residue	Notes
Call me when you want	Call me	when you want	Imperative Theme	Rheme	Repeated for emphasis.
Call me when you need	Call me	when you need	Imperative Theme	Rheme	Flexible invitation.

Call me in the morning, I'll be on the way	Call me	in the morning, I'll be on the way	Imperative Theme	Rheme	Adds timespecific details.
Call me out by your name, I'll be on the way	Call me	out by your name, I'll be on the way	Imperative Theme	Rheme	Strengthens intimacy.

*"Call me when you want, call me when you need Call me in the morning, I'll be on the way Call me when you want, call me when you need Call me out by your name, I'll be on the way like"*

Table 23. Textual Metafunction

Clause	Theme	Rheme
Call me when you want in the morning	Imperatives	Specific conditions for the call

#### Theme-Rheme Analysis

Theme: Imperatives ("Call me").

The repeated imperative sets the tone as one of openness and invitation.

Rheme: Specific conditions for the call ("when you want," "when you need"). This provides flexibility, emphasizing desire and availability.

Table 24. Textual Metafunction

Aspect	Cohesion
Repetition	"Call me" repeated structurally and rhythmically.
Lexical Variations	Temporal phrases ("when you want," "in the morning") maintain fluidity.

#### Cohesion

Repetition of "Call me" creates rhythmic and structural cohesion.

Lexical cohesion with variations of temporal phrases ("when you want," "in the morning") enhances flow.

## 5. Overall Analysis

Table 25. Textual Metafunction

Aspect	Description
Thematic Progression	Moves from personal reflection (Verse 1) to interaction (Chorus), indulgence (Verse 2), and self-acceptance (Bridge).
Interpersonal Meaning	Direct address ("Call me") invites listener engagement and highlights vulnerability.
Cohesion and Coherence	Lexical repetition (e.g., "call," "envy") and temporal markers tie the text together.

*Thematic Progression:* The text moves from personal reflection to interaction, indulgence, and self-acceptance. Themes of desire, conflict, and self-expression are recurrent.

*Interpersonal Meaning:* The use of direct address ("Call me," "you know that you can") invites engagement with the audience. The mixture of vulnerability and confidence highlights the complexity of emotions.

*Cohesion and Coherence:* Lexical repetition (e.g., "call," "envy") and thematic patterns (e.g., desire, sin) unify the text. Temporal markers and contrasting ideas ensure logical flow.

### C. Visual Analysis

The researchers examine the imagery, colors, and symbols in the music video to analyze how they represent gay identity and interact with religious iconography.



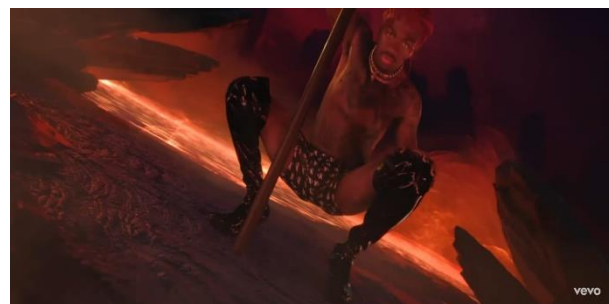
Picture 1. Garden of Eden Setting



Picture 2. Serpent Seduction



Picture 3. Punishment of the "Sin"



Picture 4. Pole-Dance Descent to Hell



Picture 5. Interaction with Satan



Picture 6. Killing Satan and Taking His Place

### 3. Imagery

In *Montero (Call Me by Your Name)*, the Eden-like paradise symbolizes innocence and temptation, with Lil Nas X portraying multiple characters. The serpent represents embracing identity and taboo desires, while chains symbolize societal oppression faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. His descent into Hell via a pole signifies rebellion and acceptance of queerness, while the lap dance for Satan defies condemnation. By killing Satan and taking his crown, Lil Nas X rejects judgment and reclaims power over his narrative.

### 4. Color

Soft pastels in the Eden scenes evoke innocence and queerness, challenging gender norms. In Hell, red and black represent danger, rebellion, and passion. Dark purples and blacks in the throne scene convey strength and sovereignty, reflecting his transformation and empowerment.

### 5. Symbolism

The paradise garden represents exploration and innocence, while chains reflect societal constraints. Satan symbolizes judgment and stigma, and the crown and throne signify empowerment. Religious symbols challenge traditional notions of sin, and the contrast between bright and dark colors illustrates the journey from judgment to liberation and pride.

### D. Auditory Analysis

The auditory elements in "Call Me By Your Name" by Lil Nas X effectively enhance the song's themes of desire, secrecy, and emotional conflict. The track features smooth electronic beats and a steady tempo that create a sensual atmosphere. Vocal pitch variations, particularly in the chorus, emphasize emotional intensity and longing. Quiet moments in the music allow the vulnerability in Lil Nas X's voice to shine, while dynamic shifts in volume and intensity underline the internal tension of the song. Overall, the

interplay of rhythm, pitch, and dynamics keeps the listener engaged while reinforcing the emotional weight of the lyrics.

#### E. Intertextuality

According to (Xing & Feng, 2023), The framework of multimodal intertextuality provides a useful lens for explicating the complex meaning-making resources, their communicative functions, and hidden ideologies in advertising discourse, which can further provide new insight into the social reality.

The song and its video draw on cultural and religious texts to reframe traditional narratives. Lil Nas X reinterprets the story of Adam and Eve, portraying himself as Adam in a paradise that transforms into a hellish setting. This symbolizes rejection of religious condemnation of same-sex relationships, replacing shame with empowerment. The depiction of the devil and temptation flips traditional Christian narratives, with Lil Nas X seducing the devil to assert liberation and authenticity rather than sin. The video critiques religious guilt and reclaims symbols of oppression as expressions of queer power and freedom, challenging long-standing stigmas against LGBTQ+ identities.

#### F. Contextual Factors

The music video for "Call Me by Your Name" by Lil Nas X is a bold statement on LGBTQ+ identity, societal rejection, and religious condemnation. Released in 2021 amid debates on LGBTQ+ rights, the video uses religious imagery—such as Lil Nas X descending into hell and dancing with the devil—to challenge the belief that queer identities are sinful. It critiques how religion has been used to oppress nonheteronormative individuals, advocating for self-acceptance and liberation.

As a Black queer artist, Lil Nas X brings attention to the unique marginalization faced by Black LGBTQ+ individuals. The video celebrates his identity, confronting societal and religious norms while pushing for visibility and acceptance. Ultimately, it serves as an anthem of defiance, empowerment, and the fight for equality.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research analyzes Lil Nas X's "MONTERO (Call Me by Your Name)" as a multidimensional exploration of identity, desire, and resistance to societal norms. The song's repetition, dynamic composition, and intertextual references to biblical narratives transform traditional notions of sin into a celebration of LGBTQ+ identity. By reclaiming religious imagery and combining visual and auditory elements, Lil Nas X creates a powerful narrative of self-acceptance and empowerment. The interplay of lyrical themes, video symbolism, and socio-political commentary highlights the complexities of queer

identity, navigating tensions between societal expectations and personal authenticity.

The study underscores the socio-political impact of Lil Nas X as a Black queer artist, challenging both racial and sexual norms while advocating for LGBTQ+ visibility and acceptance. It also identifies research gaps, particularly in the auditory analysis of queer representation and the reception of LGBTQ+ themes in non-Western or conservative societies. Addressing these gaps can deepen our understanding of how music not only represents but also influences LGBTQ+ identities across diverse cultural contexts.

## REFERENCES

- Auliainsani, E. N., & Anjarningsih, H. Y. (2023). Ideological Ambivalence: A Social Semiotic Multimodal Analysis of LGBT Activism in @WhatIsUpIndonesia. *K@ta*, 25(2), 65–80. <https://doi.org/10.9744/kata.25.2.65-80>
- Le, G. N. H. (2023). *Growing up Gay in Vietnam: Seeing and Experiencing the World through Multimodal Visual Autoethnography* [Brock University]. <http://hdl.handle.net/10464/17783>
- Radojčić, P. (2024). *Transgender Identities in Children's Picture Books: A Critical Multimodal Discourse Analysis* [University of Zagreb]. <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:131:663604>
- Sermiah, Z., Arvianti, I., Kurniadi, D., & Heriyanto, E. (2023). A Multimodal Analysis on the Song "Easy On Me" by Adele. *Dinamika Bahasa Dan Budaya: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Bahasa Dan Budaya*, 97–106. <https://www.unisbank.ac.id/ojs/index.php/fbib1/>
- Situmorang, M. K. T., & T Tyrhaya, Z. (2023). To The Bone: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Pamungkas' Music Songs. *LingPoet: Journal of Linguistics and Literary Research*, 4(2), 105–114. <http://talenta.usu.ac.id/lingpoet>
- Swope, J. S. (2021). Black, Gay, and Unapologetic: How Lil Nas X Is Bringing The Out Group In. *Student Research Submissions*, 383. [https://scholar.umw.edu/student\\_research/383](https://scholar.umw.edu/student_research/383)
- Tabangcura, D. F. (2017). *Media Representations of Gay and Lesbian Couples with Families: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Proposition 8 Advertisements* [University of Victoria]. <http://hdl.handle.net/1828/7710>
- Theo Van Leeuwen. (2021). *MULTIMODALITY AND IDENTITY*.