The Value of Love, Using the Dylan Model

by Joseph Cliburn, Dept. of Institutional Research/Planning, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College,
Perkinston, Mississippi
Andrew Russ, Department of Physics, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania
Tiny Montgomery, State Penn Center of Mathematics and Truck Driving, University Park, Pennsylvania
Zeke deCork, Shady Acres Old Folks Home and State University, Perkinston, Mississippi

Starting from a statement brought home by Bob Dylan [1965a], we estimate the value of Love using basic algebra of need [Mottram, 1965], perhaps some calculus, maybe a bit of the geometry of innocence [Dylan, 1965f], and a lot of wishful thinking.

The Limits of Love

We begin with the following assertion by Dylan [1965a]:

$$(\text{Love} - 0) \ / \ \text{No Limit} \tag{1}$$

using the expression on the record label in preference to the statement on the back cover [1965b], and taking a cue from the author's statement that it is a fraction [1965c].

Setting aside the question of whether the use of an expression here marks Dylan as an Expressionist, we set the expression equal to X, which is unspecified for the moment, and solve for Love:

$$X = (\text{Love} - 0) \ / \ \text{No Limit} \tag{2}$$

Thus:

$$(\text{No Limit}) \ X = \text{Love} - 0 = \text{Love} \tag{3}$$

where we've made use of the fact that for any A, A - 0 = A.

Thus Love = something times "No Limit." The traditional quantity that has no limit is infinite, thus we get Love is infinite, assuming that X is finite. If X is 0, we have 0 times infinity, which is indefinite.

Signs of Love

However, if X is negative, or "Less than Zero" [Costello, 1977], we get the result that Love is infinitely negative. This is perhaps enough negativity to succeed when gravity fails you [Dylan, 1965d], and will probably get the reader down. We may allow (no limit) to be negative, in which case we'll want either both X and (no limit) to be positive at the same time or both negative.

Other than the sign of X [Dylan, 1967a], however, there is nothing specified about it. If X is complex, then it has a real part that acts as above and an imaginary part, in which case (No Limit) times X is also complex, which makes Love both complex and partly imaginary [Whitfield-Strong, 196?]. Dylan himself has explored this idea extensively in later investigations [1975a, 1975b], with extensive revisions [1984, 1974/1993, various public presentations since 1975].

At any rate, we can conclude definitely [Anderson, 1982] that:

$$X = X \qquad\qquad (4)$$

We thus sum up by offering the following observations:

1. Love is infinite if X is finite.

2. Love is indefinite if X is zero.

3. Love is infinitely negative if X is negative.

4. Love is imaginary if X is imaginary.

Fractal Love is Problematic

There remain some questions regarding the appropriateness of using fractal mathematics to resolve these problems, e.g., "i accept chaos. i am not sure whether it accepts me" [Dylan, 1965e]. But we should also clarify that we are not putting infinity up on trial [Dylan, 1966] here. Love is, after all, just a four-letter word [Dylan, 1967b].
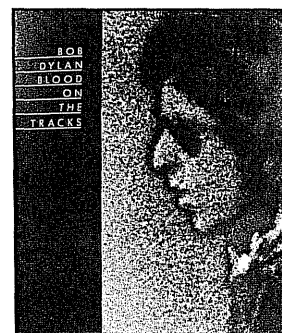
Dylan's 1975 research report Blood On the Tracks.

References

Anderson, L., 1982, "Let X = X," *Big Science*, (Warner Brothers, Burbank CA).
Costello, E., 1977, "Less Than Zero," *My Aim Is True*, 2nd ed., (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1965a, "(Love - 0)/No Limit," *Subterranean Homesick Blues*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1965b, "Love - 0/No Limit," *Subterranean Homesick Blues*, back cover, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1965c, broadcast communication.
Dylan, B., 1965d, "Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues," *Highway 61 Revisited*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1965e, liner notes, *Highway 61 Revisited*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1965f, "Tombstone Blues," *Highway 61 Revisited*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1966, "Visions of Johanna," *Blonde on Blonde*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1967a, "Sign on the Cross," *Writings and Drawings*, (Random House, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1967b, "Love Is Just A Four-Letter Word," *Writings and Drawings*, (Random House, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1974/1993, "Tangled Up In Blue," *The Bootleg Series*, vol. 2, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1975a, "Simple Twist of Fate," *Blood On the Tracks*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1975b, "Tangled Up In Blue," *Blood On the Tracks*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1978, " ," *Street Legal*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Dylan, B., 1984, "Tangled Up In Blue," *Real Live*, (Columbia, New York NY).
Mottram, E., 1965, *William Burroughs: The Algebra of Need.*
Whitfield-Strong, 196?, "Just My Imagination," as reviewed in R. Stones, 1978, *Some Girls*, (Atlantic, New York NY).