

The Top 10: Songs that mean the opposite of what most people think they mean

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1 DIVERSIONS
THE LIST



THE TOP TEN

Songs that mean the opposite of what most people think they mean EDITED BY JOHN RENTOUL

This started when Peter Watt said that he was traumatised because he had just discovered that Tom Jones's 'Delilah' is about a vengeful murder. He had never noticed the words, 'I felt the knife in my hand and she laughed no more.' Damian Counsell pointed out that there are many more examples, and he was right...

Next week: Metatheses (transposition of sounds in words: for example, bird used to be brid).

Coming soon: Footnotes. Send your suggestions, and ideas for future Top 10s, to top10@independent.co.uk

1

'Part of the Union'
Strawbs. Sarcastic anti-union song. From Adrian Mccmenamin.

2

'Every Breath You Take'
The Police. About stalking. Nominated by Damian Counsell.



3

'The One I Love'
REM. About using people. From General Boles, Louise Shaw.

4



'The Future's So Bright, I Gotta Wear Shades'
Timbuk3. About nuclear war. Counsell again.

5

'The Drugs Don't Work'
The Verve. It's about Richard Ashcroft's dying dad, not Britpop indulgence. Nominated by Jem Stone.

6

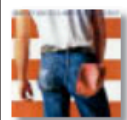
'You're Gorgeous'
Baby Bird. About a dirty old man. Also suggested by Damian Counsell.



7

'I believe in Father Christmas'
Greg Lake. A protest against commercialisation. Mccmenamin again.

8



'Born in the USA'
Bruce Springsteen. "Classically misunderstood by Reagan camp," says Giles Coren.

9

'Rockin' in the Free World'
Neil Young. From Peter Russell, Liversedge. Young castigates rockers for ignoring social problems. East Europeans took it up as a pro-West, pro-democracy anthem.

10

'Happy Together'
The Turtles. He thinks about her day and night but has never even spoken to her. Suggested by Bill Detty.