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Creativity Or Collusion?: Representations of Women in Music Videos

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CREATIVITY OR COLLUSION?: REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN MUSIC VIDEOS

by

Jan E. Urbina

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
Department of Sociology

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1999
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1999
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are certain individuals that touch our lives in profound and oftentimes unexpected ways. When we meet them we feel privileged because they positively impact our lives and help shape our futures, whether they know it or not. These individuals stand out as exceptional in our hearts and in our memories because they inspire us to aim high. They support our dreams and goals and guide us toward achieving them. They possess characteristics we admire, respect, cherish, and seek to emulate. These individuals are our mentors, our role models.

Therefore, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the outstanding members of my committee, Dr. Susan Caringella-MacDonald, Dr. Zoann Snyder, and Dr. Charles Crawford. I thank each of you for your support, assistance and guidance. I would also like to extend a special thanks to Dr. Caringella-MacDonald, my chair, for not only allowing me the opportunity to do the research I wanted to do, but for her encouragement and enthusiasm for this project. Her belief in me has made all the difference in the world.

Martin, mi amigo mejor, mi novio, mi esposo, y mi vida, I want you to know that to say thank you will never adequately express how grateful I am for your love. You consistently demonstrate your generosity of spirit, your belief in me, and your commitment to brighter todays and even better tomorrows.
Acknowledgements—Continued

You share your knowledge, your wonderful sense of humor, your warm and generous heart, and yourself unselfishly. You make the extra effort to show how much you care. I want you to know that the wonderful qualities you possess do not go unnoticed or unappreciated. You are a true egalitarian and positively the best thing in my life. Te amo, mi vida, con todo mi alma, ahora, manana, y siempre.

And finally, I dedicate this project in memory of Madeline Elaine Bisbee Reynolds, my paternal grandmother. Her zest for life and unwavering belief in me is something that I will always cherish. Her physical absence is a sorrow in my heart. I miss her still.

Jan E. Urbina
CREATIVITY OR COLLUSION?: REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN MUSIC VIDEOS

Jan E. Urbina, M.A.
Western Michigan University, 1999

There is a need in the field of sociology to expand our knowledge about how media-generated representations of women impact our lives. This research was designed to explore participants' perceptions of music video representations of women. Using a pre-test (survey), treatment (educational video) and post-test (survey), I analyzed participants' perceptions of how women were represented in music videos. The educational video exposed the techniques, which are used by the male-dominated music video industry, that present women in demeaning ways. The post-test proved useful in my attempt to determine whether the educational video impacted participants' understandings of the ways in which women were portrayed in music videos.

I found that this particular group of participants, prior to viewing the educational video, was already highly aware of the negative portrayals of women in music videos. In fact, most did not believe that the portrayals were actually characteristic of women. Also, the majority did not believe that music videos actually influenced their beliefs. Plus, some reported that the messages in country western and rhythm and blues videos portrayed women in a less stereotypical, more active and independent light. However, the overall consensus was that most representations of women in music videos were demeaning.
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INTRODUCTION

Research has shown that how males and females understand themselves and each other is largely informed by cultural messages and imagery. Inundated with violent and sexist media images and reports of continued and increasing violence against women, it is important not only to examine these cultural messages, but also to determine their origins. Today, one of the most important aspects and sources of our cultural messages comes from music videos, which tell stories (or create advertisements) about what it means to be female and male. Moreover, many of the stories in music videos convey messages that clearly link sex with violence and portray women as passive objects of desire, which is significant given the incidence of violence against women in our culture (Jhally, 1995).

Therefore, the purpose of this research project was: (a) to explore participants' perceptions about the ways in which women were portrayed in music videos; (b) to raise participants' awareness about the violent and sexist themes contained in many music videos; and (c) to ascertain whether there was a change in participants' attitudes following the viewing of an educational video entitled *Dreamworlds II: Desire, Sex, and Power in Music Video* (Jhally, 1995).

In order to begin to accomplish these goals, the research conducted was an experiment, utilizing a questionnaire that, while consisting of multiple choice,
yes/no, and open-ended questions, was designed to encourage more detailed responses. Participants were undergraduate students from Western Michigan University's sociology/criminal justice class, SOC364: Sociology of Law Enforcement. The reason students were chosen as participants and as the unit of analysis was, in part, to test the proposition that the more education an individual has, the higher their level of awareness might be. However, the sample was one of convenience and not meant to be generalized.

By examining the student/participants' answers, a descriptive statistical analysis was conducted in order to determine their attitudes about the representations of women in music video stories. The purpose was to discover whether or not the participants actually believed that the messages and imagery found in music videos were actually characteristic of most women in the real world.

Benefits of the Project

By focusing on examining the messages of music videos, critical questions may be raised about the effects, if any, that media-created representations of women may have on the attitudes of individuals. That is, music video stories may influence the ways in which women feel about themselves, the ways in which men feel about women, and how males and females subsequently interact.

The value in making these determinations has significant implications in terms of education. For example, students may be unaware of the vast amount of negative, stereotypical media-generated imagery of women, yet they may believe that
stereotypical images are characteristic of women in real life. If this is the case, then it is important to bring this to light in order to raise students' awareness of the specific techniques that music video producers and directors use in order to create damaging messages and imagery of women.

On the other hand, it is important to acknowledge that it is possible that many individuals are already aware that music videos are based mostly on male fantasy, contain negative, stereotypical imagery and messages of women, and are not representative of women in the real world. Unfortunately, when individuals are unaware of such media-generated representations and distortions of reality, they are more vulnerable to advertisements and imagery and less prepared or unable to effect changes to counteract such detrimental fabrications. Awareness is an important first step in the process of creating positive social changes regarding gender imagery and messages.

Jhally (1995) claims that Dreamworlds II is a video that exposes such techniques and may be a potentially powerful instructional tool, because it takes the viewer behind the scenes to show how special effects, editing, camera angles, lighting, and sound are used to create potent illusions of reality.

Layout of the Document

What the reader will find in this text is a series of several sections. The first presents various theoretical perspectives about how we come to understand social life and our roles in it. A review of the literature follows the section on theory. This
section offers a discussion of research on the role of media in attitude formation, gender identification, the politics of media-generated gender representations, and real-life consequences of uncritically accepting media-generated representations.

A discussion of the methods used in this study follows the literature review. This section includes the purpose of the project; the research design, chosen sample, and collection procedure; an in-depth review of *Dreamworlds II*; the development of the survey instrument; and expected findings.

The next section on findings includes demographic information about the participants, their viewing patterns and preferences, a summary of responses to each survey question (both the pre- and post-tests), and direct quotes made by participants.

A discussion of the relevant findings, major changes in responses, and conclusion follows the findings section. This section also includes strategies for change, the limitations of this project, and recommendations for future studies.

The appendices, which contain the documents used in this study, follows the conclusions. These documents include the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) approved protocol clearance, classroom scripts, letters of introduction, and the actual survey instruments or questionnaires administered to participants.

Lastly, the bibliography, listing all of the resources used to accomplish this project follows the appendices.
How do we come to understand social life and our roles in it? How are our beliefs shaped? What does it mean to be female in our society? Why are women oppressed? Why is violence and sexual assault of women not unusual? While these issues have been studied for a number of years, they remain complex and controversial. For example, many theorists do not agree on causation or remedy for any given social phenomenon. Nonetheless, some of the salient theories that have surfaced over time include (but are not limited to) the following: feminism; critical race theory; individual or psychological theories; social constructionist theory, sociobiological theory; social psychological theory; cultural; and structural.

Beginning with micro-level (individual or psychological) explanations we learn that we always have choice, free will. Bad choices may be seen as faulty thinking or stemming from a lack of information, but clearly a result of one's own decisions and actions. People are expected to distinguish between make-believe and reality, except in the case of psychopathology. As a consequence, just because we see violence or negative images portrayed in the media does not mean that we have no choice but to mimic violent acts, accept negative images as real, or act out violence in our personal lives.

Some authors, such as Katz (1988), believe that men's attempts to uphold the good, however the good is defined (i.e., defending family virtue, self-righteousness,
wounded pride, etc.) often leads to violence against women. In this context, violence that leads to the murder of women may be seen as righteous slaughter. We often see this ideology played out in popular music video stories. For instance, Jhally (1995) points out that in some music videos, women who deviate from male-defined norms are treated harshly or punished severely if they will not conform.

In a similar vein, psychoanalytic and gender feminists, who rely heavily on Freudian concepts, believe that the fundamental explanation for women's ways of acting is deeply rooted in their psyche, or individual ways of thinking (Tong, 1998). Jhally (1995) notes that often times in music video stories, women are so desperate for men that without them, they fall apart. Others disagree completely with these psychoanalytical theories.

For example, authors such as Bourgois (1995), and Faludi (1991), incorporate cultural and structural factors in their examination of violence against women. These authors point out that as females gain more power, males are more inclined to strike out against women and children over the loss of control. One way of striking out against women is to create demeaning representations of them in music videos.

Social construction theorists, such as Potter and Kappeler (1998) acknowledge the larger, macro-level forces that shape our social structures and institutions. These authors assert that media has a great deal to do with constructing the dominant ideology that embraces male dominance and often glorifies violence as a means to solve conflict. In their view, propaganda is better understood not as conspiracy, but rather as deeply institutionalized and routine practices that uphold our social
structures of capitalism and patriarchy. Faludi (1991) says that like any large institution, the movements of the press are not premeditated or programmatic, just grossly susceptible to the prevailing political currents.

Moreover, authors such as Chambliss and Zatz (1993) believe that the ideological alignment of political leadership exists in a dialectical relationship with structural contradictions. For example, when male-dominated music video advertisers, producers and directors depict women almost solely in subservient roles and as dependent sexual objects, patriarchy is reinforced. Hegemonic ideology, such as patriarchy, is an attempt to legitimate existing society, its institutions and ways of life. Ideology becomes hegemonic when it is widely accepted as characteristic of the way things are, inducing people to consent to their society and its way of life as natural, good, and just. Hence, when we continuously, passively and uncritically accept media-generated images of women that reinforce women's subordination to men, we are in effect accepting, if not supporting, the status quo.

Tong (1998) has a great deal to say about the status quo, as she details various feminist theories and their underlying assumptions. Those theories include black feminist theory; liberal and radical feminist theories; Marxist and socialist feminism; and multicultural and global feminist theory. The following is intended to be a very brief and broad summary of some of the feminist theories Tong (1998) reviews.

To begin, Tong (1998) points out that black feminist theory identifies the interlocking systems of gender, race, and class in shaping social structures. Tong (1998) notes that bell hooks, a black feminist theorist (who does not capitalize the
letters in her name), claims that racism, sexism, and classism are inseparable; oppression is a many-headed beast. When we reflect upon the messages inherent in many music videos, it is clear that gender, race, and class shape music video stories. Generally, actors in most music videos are depicted as affluent, whether black or white. Rarely is any other race or ethnicity represented. For the most part, women are shown in supporting or subordinate roles (Jhally, 1995).

Moreover, liberal feminism is based on the belief that society remains structured in ways that favor men and disfavor women in the competitive race for the goods with which our society rewards us: power, prestige, and money. When we frequently see media-generated images of women in supportive and subordinate roles, earning less income, and holding less power and prestige, we may come to accept and expect less for women.

On the other hand, radical feminist theory is based on the argument that the sex/gender system is the fundamental cause of women's oppression. Some radical-libertarian feminists would argue that because male control of the public and private worlds constitutes patriarchy, male control must be eliminated if women are to be liberated. Jhally (1995) offers a similar argument when he asserts that many music videos are based on adolescent male fantasy, with nearly an all-male cast serving as advertisers, producers, and directors. While there may be some recent changes, females defining females is rarely seen in music video production. And, as Kate Millett (a radical-libertarian feminist) has pointed out, patriarchal ideology exaggerates biological differences between men and women (Tong, 1998). Therefore,
it is not surprising when we see female actors in male-dominated music videos depicted stereotypically as superficial sexual objects or emotionally and physically weak.

Turning now to Marxist and socialist feminism, Tong (1998) notes that both argue that women's oppression is not the result of individuals' intentional actions but rather the product of the political, social, and economic structures within which individuals live. Marxist feminists assert that social existence determines consciousness and so aim to create a world in which women can experience themselves as whole persons, integrated, rather than as fragmented beings. As Jhally (1995) points out, many music video stories portray women as fragmented body parts. Jhally (1995) argues that females defining females (or an oppositional point of view) seems to be missing in many music videos.

Further, socialist feminists view capitalist patriarchy as a two-headed beast. More specifically, capitalism and patriarchy oppress women. That is, women must fight two wars in order to be liberated from oppression. Juliet Mitchell, for example, speculates that patriarchal ideology, which views women as lovers, wives, and mothers rather than workers, is at least as responsible for women's position in society as capitalist economics is (Tong, 1998). Jhally (1995) has pointed out that the occupations that women hold in music video stories, for the most part, are not high-status or leadership positions. Quite the contrary, women are portrayed largely as groupies, cheerleaders, hookers, escorts, housewives, dancers, strippers, etc. Women in music video stories are not portrayed as managers, lawyers, executives, chief
executive officers or business owners. When women are portrayed as teachers or nurses, for example, very often they are depicted as sexy teachers who may dance on a desk and begin to strip for her all-male students or a sexy nurse giving an incapacitated male patient a sponge bath (Jhally, 1995).

Multicultural and global feminists, according to Tong (1998), share with postmodern feminists a view of the self as fragmented. For multicultural and global feminists, the roots of this fragmentation are primarily cultural, racial, and ethnic rather than sexual, psychological, and literary. Once again, Jhally (1995) notes the fragmentation of women in music videos when they are represented as empty body parts, devoid of feelings, emotions and dreams. Women of color, especially African-American women, are particularly vulnerable to sexual fragmentation in music video representations (Jhally, 1995). And finally, for global feminists, there is no boundary between so-called women's issues and political issues. To ecofeminists, such as Karen J. Warren, patriarchy's hierarchical, dualistic, and oppressive mode of thinking has harmed both women and nature (Tong, 1998). Stated another way, the oppression of any is damaging to all.

Therefore, with most of these theories and because of the ways in which patriarchy has constructed men's and women's psyches, women will continue to remain subordinate to men under a patriarchal and capitalistic system. In other words, until the minds of men and women have been liberated from the thought that we are not equals, women will remain subordinate to men (hooks, 1995; Jhally, 1995; Tong, 1998).
In an effort to create positive social change, we may question whether patriarchy is the cause of capitalism or vice versa. However, Tong (1998) points out that it is important to recognize the similarities and mutual reinforcements between, for instance, the U.S. male-headed nuclear family and the U.S. state-regulated official economy, or the political system and mass media. As Jhally (1995) and Parenti (1992) point out, mass media is largely owned and operated by affluent white males. These are the individuals who largely dictate which stories are aired. As hooks (1996) has pointed out, race, class and gender intersect to shape our social systems.

In conclusion, most feminist theories support Jhally's (1995) assertions that stereotypical, media-generated representations of women are demeaning and harmful to everyone. In turn, stereotypical representations serve to perpetuate the message that women are subordinate to men, thus reinforcing patriarchal ideology. With these theoretical perspectives in mind, a review of the literature, beginning with a discussion of theory and then moving to a more empirical level follows.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Media Images and Representations

The Politics of Media Representations

Media images or representations impart many different meanings and communicate a variety of messages to onlookers; they are never accidental or neutral, they are advertising something. That is, they are designed to sell. Whether selling tangible goods, services, or ideologies, media messages are always linked with power. Hence, they are political in nature (Hall, 1997; Jhally, 1995). However, one cannot rule out the fact that media is often influenced by economic as well as political factors. Nevertheless, the politics of images is a struggle over meaning, over what gets represented in the media by the groups who have the ability or power to specify how images are represented (Jhally, 1995).

Since powerful groups choose how images are represented, depictions of gender roles are especially consequential. That is, media-generated representations inform and directly impact our personal identities, sense of self, and social roles and behavior (Jhally, 1995). According to Goffman (1979), the details of our social behavior are symptomatic revelations of how a sense of self is established and reinforced in any given culture or society. Our sense of self, in turn, reflects and cements the social institutions upon which a culture's hierarchical structure rests. If
one examines the details of social life with a highly conscious eye, one learns who and what one is in the socially organized world.

Therefore, the power-struggle over media-generated meaning is particularly salient because in our everyday world, knowledge and power create ideas that influence how we view and act in the world (Hall, 1997). People and cultures naturally attempt to make sense of the world by categorizing humans, objects, and experiences, and developing systems of representing shared experiences and understandings of the world (Hall, 1997; Moscovici, 1984).

Moscovici (1984) suggests that social representations conventionalize people's knowledge through two mechanisms. The first is objectification, which identifies relationships between images and ideas people store in their minds and objects they encounter in the physical world. The second mechanism is anchoring objectified relationships into broadly encompassing categories and then grouping these categories together to form patterns of general knowledge. In turn, these representations provide a "structure, environment, or frame, into which people can fit new information and associate their information with a known category, thereby making something unfamiliar, or unfamiliarity itself, familiar" (Moscovici, 1984:24).

Importantly, Moscovici (1984) rejects the notion that individuals direct or control the operation of systems of social representation. The process of conventionalizing knowledge does not provide individuals with the opportunity to think freely about new information. Instead, social representations confine
individuals to weigh information in relation to a set of finite model categories in the general knowledge of his/her culture.

In the social or public situation, the minutest behavior has meaning. Gesture, expression, and posture reveal not only how we feel about ourselves but also add up to an entire arrangement that embodies cultural values (de Villiers and Cheminais, 1994). In Moscovici's (1984:9) words, "representations are prescriptive, that is they impose themselves upon us with an irresistible force." Unfortunately, "women are extremely under-represented in terms of coverage and grossly misrepresented in all respects throughout the media" (de Villiers and Cheminais, 1994:110). Therefore, it is critically consequential that we examine these images and ask hard questions about what these images mean, rather than accept them at face value (Hall, 1997).

Gender Roles

Media-generated gender roles and images we commonly see advertised reflect what many scholars point out is our culture's continuous emphasis on exterior looks over interior substance. They are also reflective of our society's promotion of male superiority, privilege, and dominance over females in numerous mediums. In short, media-generated gender roles teach us to objectify others. As Gomes, Leupold, and Albracht (1998:33) put it:

We live in a society that celebrates image... it may make men think what really matters about women is looks and not character, or maybe what matters most about women is how she dresses or what she does, and not necessarily what she believes, or thinks... Women can be similarly influenced in their relationships with men, encouraged... to objectify and look only to the surface... This emphasis on image can
lead people to devalue their own depths, their less-visible experience, objectifying themselves as they have been objectified by others.

Said in another way, advertisements teach us to ignore the depths of our inner experiences and concentrate on those aspects of ourselves that can be quickly sized up by others and changed on demand to meet shifting standards of style. Advertising encourages us to focus on clothing, appearance, and status to the exclusion of more personal qualities. In this way, advertising contributes to a cultural climate in which our real selves are undervalued. In effect, we are led to make our surface appearance a high priority, marketing ourselves in our most intimate relationships (Gomes, Leupold, and Albracht, 1998).

But Gamman and Marshment (1989) do not blame individuals, rather they argue that deep social structural foundations support and encourage this superficiality. As Gamman and Marshment (1989:1) put it:

In most popular representations it seems that men look and women are looked at. In film, on television, in the press and in most popular narratives men are shown to be in control of the gaze, women are controlled by it. Men act: women are acted upon. This is patriarchy.

Under a system of patriarchy, echoes Madriz (1997), the body of a woman becomes the object of males' desires and fantasies. The media in films, advertisements, TV programs, magazines, and even the daily news periodically reinforces this view. Moreover, if patriarchy indeed informs our political, economic and cultural systems, as well as our language and unconscious, as Gamman and Marshment (1989) assert, then it is not surprising that male perspective is dominant in
media-generated representations. And unfortunately, much of the media-generated roles are nothing short of stereotypes.

**Stereotyping and Framing**

Goffman (1979) is convinced that a system of gender stereotypes prevails in Western cultures. He says that advertisers reinforce gender stereotypes by incorporating them into the images that bombard people in industrialized societies during most activities of their daily lives. According to Berger (1972), it is precisely from male-centered attitudes that stereotypes arise. These male-centered attitudes have dominated democratic thought from the rise of ancient Greece through the present century. Berger (1972) reasons that the advent of capitalism accentuated the damaging consequences of gender stereotypes.

As a result of gender stereotypes, men have been defined as social actors who can move in and out of the public gaze, while women are trapped in it (Berger, 1972). But what does the public gaze mean? There are several factors to consider. First, Jary and Jary (1991:398) define "the public" as "the general body of persons within a society able to engage freely in political participation and public discourse." In other words, political participants not only make laws, but also have the power to shape social values and norms.

Second, according to the dichotomous model of social relations, the domestic sphere of the family is separated from the public sphere of socialized labor and politics (Jary and Jary, 1991). In other words, some believe that society may be
understood as consisting of the private sphere of home and family and the public sphere of work and politics. "This separation was gendered, with the domestic sphere being associated with women and children, the public sphere with adult males" (Jary and Jary, 1991:384). While Jary and Jary (1991) argue that the splitting of the domestic from the economic and political spheres was, and still is, more ideological than empirical, the ideological continues to be promoted and is a powerful means to reinforce patriarchy.

Third, since patriarchy governs our society, the gaze may be understood as a kind of male-centered public point of view, or social norms, which in turn, are shaped largely by the media. Generally, social norms, defined by male standards, are not the same for women as they are for men. Specifically, while laws do not restrict women from enjoying public space, one can easily argue that in reality, women are not entirely granted equal access, because women are not judged equally in the eyes of the public when they do enter the public arena and negative consequence results.

For example, men do not breach dominant cultural norms, nor are they scrutinized and judged harshly when they go out alone (especially after dark) to bars, parties, nightclubs, public parks or restaurants. On the other hand, the same does not hold true for women. For example, the male jogger who gets up at 3:00 in the morning to run may be admired or considered ambitious, health-conscious, or, at the very worst, obsessed. On the other hand, the female jogger, out alone at 3:00 in the morning might be considered a fool, just asking for trouble. If the female jogger were attacked, would she not be blamed for reckless behavior? Would the same hold true
for the male jogger? Likewise, if a woman was out drinking alone in a bar late at night and was sexually attacked, mugged, or beaten in the bar's parking lot, would she be considered wholly or partially culpable, because she should know better? Would the same standard apply to a man in the same situation?

While some may argue that women are now independent, enjoy equality and freedom (however one defines freedom), perhaps freedom is a matter of degree. In fact, women must deal with stereotypical notions of socially approved feminine behavior that can and often does restrict our mobility in the public sphere.

Moreover, because stereotypes shape or frame the way people envision masculinity and femininity and, to some extent, frame each person's sense of identity, humans learn to fit into existing social structures by accepting, as natural, those traits assigned to each group or gender within the existing structure (Goffman, 1979). In addition, as Goffman (1974:21) points out:

... cultures generate 'primary frameworks,' which render what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful by offering a point of comparison, or a conceptual structure, through which people can digest information.

Importantly, the study of frames gives insight into how people understand and negotiate their world (Goffman, 1974). Garland (1990) adds that while values and emotions may be experienced and nuanced individually, they are patterned by cultural frameworks and supported by social structures. But lest we assume that these structures are beyond our ability to control or effectively change, as Goffman (1974:22) so astutely observes, "... social frameworks arise from the willful exertions of an intelligence, a live agency, the chief one being the human being."
Moreover, humans are neither inactive nor isolated beings. We live within social structures and share some commonalities with a given culture or way of life. This brings us to an examination of our cultural beliefs, norms, and values.

Popular Culture

Before discussing popular culture, it is important to offer some definitions of what is meant by the terms *culture* and *popular culture*. First, Garland (1990:195) says that "in its cognitive aspect, culture refers to all those conceptions and values, categories and distinctions, frameworks of ideas and systems of belief which human beings use to construe their world and render it orderly and meaningful." Hence, normative schemes of taste, fashion, manners, and etiquette are no less a part of culture than are the developed systems of ethics, justice, and morality.

Second, Parenti (1992) says that authentic popular culture is manifested in a folk culture that includes dances, songs, music, crafts, storytelling, reading groups, book circles, street theater, community drama clubs, children's play culture, and even ordinary primary group sociability and conversation. Parenti (1992:210) also notes that while "the word 'popular' is an adjective for 'populace,' meaning 'of the people,' as it exists today in the United States and much of the world, popular culture is anything but that." As he sees it, real popular culture has been replaced by a marketed mass culture in which a few highly centralized production units feed messages and images to millions of consumers.
On the other hand, Gamman and Marshment, (1989) believe that culture may be seen as a site of struggle where meanings are determined, debated, and contested and dominant ideologies can be disturbed. hooks (1997) adds that popular culture is where learning takes place, where the world of ideas interplay. Importantly, most people in our society get both their information and entertainment from stories told through popular music, videos, soaps, sitcoms, the tabloid press, magazines, mass-produced fiction, etc., where women's experiences are often subordinate to men's (Gamman and Marshment, 1989).

Yet our compulsion for stories is not only important, but according to Campbell (1993), fundamental to our survival. But unfortunately, as Campbell (1993:170) so notes, "... popular culture has a way of trivializing reality and confusing human expectations, especially with regard to relationships between men and women." Campbell (1993:141-143) goes on to say that:

One of the essential qualities of being human is our need for stories. Stories provide a context in which life has meaning. They shape our emotional attitudes, provide us with life purpose and energize our actions. At present, mainstream popular culture force-feeds us a steady diet of stories of domination and violation, which leaves us starved for stories that foster hope for ourselves and our future. The process of image internalization works outside rational thought, and for this reason the absorption of images and sounds requires no special gift, no level of education, no minimum age. Words carried by music remain in the rhythm of our heartbeat, whether we desire recollection or not. Whether we like it or not, the coming generation absorbs the values represented in contemporary icons, perpetuating their underlying beliefs.
Hegemony and Popular Culture

Indeed, an understanding of underlying beliefs expressed through the various mediums of popular culture is crucial, as it reveals hegemonic ideology. But, as Frith (1997) points out, the nature of hegemony is one of the most important and least understood features of the late 1900s, because it is an abstract concept. He defines hegemony as a kind of society-wide agreement to maintain social order among various members of any given society. Hegemony is a form of consensual control that does involve the threat or use of force and/or violence. That is, to maintain social order, in most non-fictional societies the dominant group or groups, to some degree, oppress the subordinate group(s). But who is/are the dominant group(s)? Frith (1997:177) says that "the dominant group can be identified as the producers . . . of popular culture. . . . Hegemony occurs when the subordinate group acquiesces and accepts the reality produced and then maintained by a dominant group."

The subordinate group(s), according to Frith (1997), have an understanding of their culturally-defined positions within society and believe that they are, for the most part, preordained. Still, in order for the dominant group(s) to maintain hegemony, some concessions must be made in favor of the subordinate classes, but these concessions are the type that will not disrupt the status quo. Seen in this way, hegemony is an active and ongoing process; it needs maintenance and revision as attitudes and culture shift and change.

To illustrate this hegemonic process, Roth (1993:410-413) notes that
We send boys the message that we expect them to grow into men who like hard, heavy things, who compete and play to win, who armor their bodies against touch, and who secrete androgens when anxious. We train little boys to mistrust each other and to defend themselves physically against aggression . . . culture does its damndest to turn us all into heterosexuals with high anxiety levels who fetishize each other's bodies and consume goods as a substitute for sexual activity. If, in raising boys, we emphasize achievement more than exploration and competition more than cooperation, we will train them in competitive, goal-directed behavior, including sexual behavior, and we will give them bodies—or body images—that are dominating rather than receptive or playful.

This overt emphasis on sexuality, particularly in mass media, according to Elliott, Jones, Benefield, and Barlow (1995), is something these authors call commercial pornography or a form of sexual consumption that implicitly genders the audience as male. Women are particularly vulnerable to this phenomenon because of their relatively powerless position in the ideological hegemony supported by stereotypical representations of women. Moreover, gender differences are apparent in the interpretation of sexual meaning in mass media visuals. For example, these authors note that males and females have interpreted a picture of a man and woman (fully clothed) in very different ways. They contend that women tend to extract romantic meaning, while men read the picture as much more erotic. Therefore, male and female acculturation is vitally important in shaping our worldviews.

But what is meant by acculturation? Acculturation is not simply benign socialization. Rather, according to Madhubuti (1993:167), male acculturation is:

Anti-female, anti-womanist/feminist, and anti-reason when it comes to women's equal measure and place in society. This flawed socialization of men is not confined to the West but permeates most, if not all, cultures in the modern world. Most men have been taught to treat, respond, listen, and react to women from a male's point of view.
On the other hand, there are countervailing forces at work. Frith (1997:178) points out that "counter hegemony . . . implies a clear theoretic consciousness which enables people to comprehend fully and act on their discontent . . . and their discontent may come from critical analyses of certain facets of popular culture." Critical analysis can help one see how different aspects of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation sit in relation to the power of the dominant classes. In this way, such analyses are counter hegemonic in that they raise awareness of oppression and awareness, in turn, can lead to action.

Nevertheless, as Parenti (1992:208) makes clear, "the media reinforce the hegemonic ideology while giving the appearance of challenging it. Oppositional opinion is articulated but contained; it is contoured to the dominant ideology." In this way, the choices that remain open to us are still limited choices. This author asserts that these choices contribute to the illusion that we have a cultural democracy, one of our own choosing. What we really have, he believes, is a narrow range of pseudo-choices.

Masculinity in Popular Culture

To our detriment, Western cultural definitions of masculinity encourage bitter consequences (Buchwald, 1993; Jewitt, 1997). For instance, requiring males to be physically tough also means requiring them to tune out their own pain, which weakens their capacity for empathy (O'Sullivan, 1993). According to O'Sullivan (1993:27),
The definition of masculinity in our culture includes independence (from relationships), lack of sentimentality, sexual success (which usually means access to numbers of different women, but can also mean getting women to do things they do not want to), physical roughness, and worldly success, measured in dollars or achievements.

Interestingly, calling behavior "physical roughness" sanitizes its violence. Moreover, witnessing violence against women desensitizes males and has a normalizing effect on the acceptance of violence in general. Boys in particular associate masculinity with dominance and power and consequentially accept violence as a normal response to conflict, anger, or frustration (Buchwald, Fletcher and Roth, 1993). Unfortunately, "a major part of our children's socialization now lies in the hands of the entertainment business, whose primary goal is not helping to cut down on rates of rape or other forms of violence, but maximizing profit" (Miedzian, 1993:156). Let us now turn to a discussion of mass media to take a closer look at who and/or what shapes our lives, our perceptions, and to a degree, our very identities.

Who is Behind Mass Media?

Money and transnational corporations, according to Parenti (1992), are behind mass media. Bowen (1994) adds that today's stories serve the interests of a few at the expense of many, because media elites are behind the stories being told. Parenti (1992:181) observes:

What is called mass culture today is a communication universe largely owned and controlled by transnational corporations. These corporations are highly concentrated capital formulations whose primary functions are (1) capital accumulation: making a profit for
their owners and investors; and (2) ideological legitimation: supporting an opinion climate that is favorable, or at least not hostile, to the continuation of profit-making and corporate economic dominance.

The media, according to Parenti (1992), have a twofold purpose: (1) to make money for their corporate owners and (2) help legitimate the hegemonic ideological system with images and themes that propagate private enterprise, personal affluence, individual acquisitiveness, consumerism, super-patriotism, imperialism, racial stereotyping, and sexism. In other words, the media is self-serving and perpetuates dominant patriarchal ideology in order to maintain power and control over resources while upholding the status quo. In short, "far from being the free and independent media of a cultural democracy, the entertainment industry is the centralized domain of a rich oligarchy" (Parenti, 1992:210). In other words, the "make-believe" or entertainment media's existing fare is justified as being the product of a popular culture that "gives people what they want" (Parenti, 1992:1). This, according to Parenti (1992), is a male-dominated and a male-defined argument indeed.

Hence, while some assert that the media is simply giving people what they want, Parenti (1992) says that this is too simple an explanation of what the media really do. In fact, Parenti, (1992:201) says:

The media industry foists upon us what it thinks we want, often promoting films and television shows that we never asked for and do not particularly like. Instead, those who claim to give us what we like presume to know what we like. Then they do everything they can to make us like what they serve up.

Parenti (1992) further claims that we usually do not have much opportunity to determine what the potentials of public taste are, since the media industry has no
interest in exploring such possibilities. Instead the media offers us a prefabricated, pre-censored, diluted product that seldom ventures onto politically taboo ground. In other words, Parenti (1992) claims that the media will give us what we want as long as what we want is not politically troublesome. That is, it is assumed by media manufacturers that most people want to escape reality not confront it. Ironically, Parenti (1992) points out that there are many high-powered escapist productions that are flops just as there are large and interested publics who respond positively to quality production that contain real life relevance. (Incidentally, Parenti (1992:202) makes clear that "there is not one public but many publics.")

Nevertheless, over time, people indeed become conditioned to accept slick, shallow, mediocre, and politically truncated media. The process of acceptance may be partially attributed to a lack of information. For example, many do not understand the inner workings of mass media production, its politics and economics. And, acceptance may be largely due to lack of choice. That is, when choices are narrowly limited, often, consciously or not, individuals will choose "the lesser of the evils" available to them. Some may choose to watch unfulfilling programming, because the menu offers little else. If alternative programming does not promote the status quo or is deemed too controversial, it may never hit the airwaves. On rare occasion, when alternative programming does air, if it is deemed too threatening to dominate ideology, even if it enjoys a large viewing audience, it will readily or eventually be pulled off the air; perhaps it will be relegated to a cable station, not accessible to everyone.
All in all, an unfortunate cycle is set in motion. That is, production creates the consumer and standardized images become the only digestible ones. Unfortunately, this pre-conditioned consumption is then treated as evidence that the public is getting what it wants. Yet, interestingly enough, "despite all the exposure to trash, many people are still keenly interested in quality productions dealing with themes that go beyond apolitical idiocy or mainstream orthodoxies" (Parenti, 1992:207). At this point, let us turn to the phenomenon of music video as argument and its impact in shaping popular culture.

Music Video as Argument

To say that music video has broad social appeal, produces social meaning, and is influential is perhaps at once an understatement and stating the obvious. In looking at the historical beginnings of music video, as Jones (1997) and Seidman (1992) point out, MTV gained rapid and widespread support since its inception in 1981. In fact, by 1986, more than 27.5 million homes in 3,100 cable systems were receiving MTV, and in 1990 that number had increased to over 5.2 million. Those who watched the music videos (mostly 14- to 34-year-olds) became zealous fans of the 3- to 5-minute mini-films, whose current impact on television, film, and recording is immeasurable (Jones, 1997:343).

But are these widely consumed music videos simply entertainment and nothing more? Walker and Bender (1994) think they are not merely benign entertainment; they assert that music videos contain elements of argument and must be considered as such. Just what are the arguments and their appeal? Brown and Steele (1995) and Jones (1997) point out that music videos (now available on at least
five major cable networks) frequently contain references to relationships, romance and sexual behavior. These are most enticing topics, particularly for teens and young adults. Unfortunately, as was the case in the early to mid 1980s, and some argue is still the case today,

... female characters were depicted less desirably than males both behaviorally and occupationally. Females also were shown as sex objects more frequently than males, and this was associated with increased sexism in the music videos of the period (Seidman, 1992:210).

Seidman (1992) notes that in the early to mid 1980s, about half the females in music videos wore provocative clothing. In almost three-quarters of the clips, women were put down or kept in their place by males, and males cast female characters in occupational roles that tended to be less socially desirable than those portrayed by men. Females were depicted as less active, less goal-directed, and less worthy of attention than males. Furthermore, "both black and white females in music videos were less frequently shown doing 'professional work'" (Seidman, 1992:210). In other words, some music videos contain certain stereotypical themes about women.

These video themes are particularly interesting, influential, and often instructive to teens as they engage in the ongoing process of constructing a sense of who they are, what they value, and how they should behave in sexual relationships. Importantly, music videos are unique in that they present a flow of highly impressionistic and often random or illogical sequences of audio/video imagery. They are also distinctive because they imitate dreams or manufactured fantasies rather than
the event structure normally seen in bounded programs. This unusual presentation has great appeal to many viewers, particularly young adults (Christenson, 1992).

Ironically, even when they put forward a reasonably straightforward narrative, music videos either lack or distort many of the formal features upon which younger viewers rely in order to make sense of standard television programs. However, younger viewers may not possess a critical stance toward the genre that adults do. Still, there is an abundance of sexual imagery and behavior (even if no real sex), considerable violence, and some alcohol and drug use in music videos (Christenson, 1992). Many believe there is cause for concern when younger audiences view violent and sexist music video messages uncritically and/or indiscriminately.

This cause for concern revolves around the power of media-generated messages to influence negative attitudes and behaviors, which in turn are seen as normal. Seidman (1992:209) says that "... music videos not only appear to reflect society and its norms, but may also help socialize young people by communicating ideas about proper behavior . . . as well as influencing males and females to develop distinct personality characteristics." And, since the verbal content is secondary to the listening experience in music videos, viewers may be less conscious of their thematic focus.

But even when lyrics are actively listened to, the references in them to romance and sexuality are more abstract than the visual imagery, which is harder to overlook. "Videos paint pictures of the world, especially of the world of cross-sex relationships and courtship, that are uniquely compelling and concrete" (Christenson;
1992:63). Christenson (1992) also points out that music video messages are complex. In short, he says, the meaning of most music videos is anything but transparent and interpretations vary widely. As Walker and Bender (1994:64) note, "... few other genres are as open to audience interpretation as are experiential, highly impressionistic music videos."

Moreover, music videos may be especially influential sources of sexual information for adolescents because they combine visuals of adolescents' favorite musicians with music and many of the visual elements are sexual. Brown and Steele, (1995) note that increasingly sexually explicit music lyrics have drawn sharp criticism, although conversely, criticism has also increased the desire for such forbidden fruit. Lest we paint a one-sided picture, on rare occasion, some musicians have turned to alternative messages. Some lyrics, for example, do promote safe sex and more positive images of non-stereotypical independent women (Brown and Steele, 1995).

Nevertheless, media-generated messages are particularly important when one considers the considerable debate over the sophistication (or lack thereof) of the audiences of music videos. More specifically, there is dispute over whether most music video audiences, comprised chiefly of adolescents to young adults, are passive recipients or active and informed critical interpreters of media-generated messages. For instance, some argue that the general audience of music videos consists mostly of passive, uninformed and highly impressionistic individuals. However, Walker and Bender (1994) disagree. They believe that music videos exist as a form of social
expression in which audiences participate actively to interpret meaning. Seen in this way, music videos may be viewed as persuasive arguments whose messages advance claims in order to gain the adherence of viewers.

On the other hand, Bowen (1994) asserts that people are only half-conscious most of the time they watch television, thus more vulnerable and inclined to accept the persuasiveness of media-generated messages or advertising. While industry representatives claim "it's make-believe, just entertainment," Bowen (1994:60) thinks otherwise. Whether the audience is unaware, half-aware, or fully aware, the stories in music videos are, without a doubt, important.

Relevant Studies of Music Videos

Jones (1997) summarized the research findings of studies undertaken on music videos from 1985-1986. These studies found that: (a) sex and violence in music videos were mostly innuendo; (b) blacks and women were depicted differently than whites; (c) black artists on Video Soul engaged in more pro-social behavior; (d) that whites on MTV engaged in more antisocial behavior (contrary to other research); (e) adolescents were found to watch videos for nontraditional TV viewing reasons; and (f) women, elderly, and non-whites were more often portrayed as aggressors rather than victims.

Studies from 1987-1994 revealed that: (a) sex-role stereotyping was common in videos; (b) video compositions reflected gender subcultures; (c) blacks and whites interpreted Madonna's videos differently; (d) differences in preference for
music on the basis of gender and race were apparent—men were more likely to prefer heavy metal while African Americans were more likely to prefer rap music; (e) men and women were depicted differently in their sex-typed occupations; (f) in MTV commercials and videos, gender portrayals of female characters were stereotyped and portrayed less frequently, less clothed, and more physically attractive than males; and (g) differences were commonly found in race and gender across different genres.

Messages About Women in Music Videos

Jhally (1995) argues that the primary message in many music videos is stereotypical and sexist. In some videos, Jhally (1995) says that women are depicted as interested in sex at all times with any available male. This deliberate, sexist, stereotypical representation, according to Jhally (1995), is created out of the adolescent male fantasy or the dreamworld of music video production. Women, by adolescent-male-fantasy standards, are usually tall, thin, and large-breasted nymphomaniacs who will attack men for sex, even when their own lives are at risk. In this male dreamworld, women, in a state of perpetual desire, often rip off men's clothing and fight other women for the men they want to possess; violent competition between women is the norm (Jhally, 1995).

Likewise, because of the constant competition between women in dreamworld-based videos and the fact that women always outnumber men and are ready to serve men in all ways, men can choose and dismiss women as they please.
In short, women in dreamworld videos, by and large, are solely the objects of male-driven fantasy (Elgie and Houck, 1998; Jhally, 1995).

Moreover, in dreamworld video relationships, there is no courtship or conversation, only instant attraction between people driven by the power of sex (Gow, 1996; Jhally, 1995). Women are portrayed as desperate for and dependent upon men and sex to the extent that even when males are absent, females find substitutes or objects to be sexual with. If substitutes are not available, women fall apart. In dreamworld videos, women spend most of their time getting in and out of clothes, because, according to male fantasy, women are exhibitionists, waiting for the opportunity to expose their bodies for men. So, women are often depicted dancing for men on tables, in pools, and on the beach. Far too often, particularly in rock and rap videos, women attend parties that look like orgies; most are shown to be enjoying these events, but those who do not or appear to be uncooperative are treated harshly by the males in these videos (Jhally, 1995).

Additionally, as Jhally (1995) notes, women's bodies in dreamworld videos are fair game for anything males want to do with them. Hence, sharing a man or being abandoned by men who use women is another frequent theme. Women are also often shown showering and bathing or dancing in water. These images of women in water are tied to male adolescent fantasies of wet tee-shirt contests. However, Jhally (1995) points out that when women do wear clothing, lingerie such as bras, stockings and garter belts are displayed with great pride. He adds that nothing in dress is too bizarre for a woman in dreamworld videos.
Elgie and Houck (1998) emphasize that, unfortunately, women's lack of worth or value in male-fantasy-based videos can cause women's disillusionment with their own identities. The overriding and dehumanizing message for women is that they are interchangeable as long as their bodies conform to a male idealized reservoir of adolescent images. With these grossly negative and stereotypical depictions of women, one might wonder how the viewing audience and social critics and commentators have received music videos and their messages. One author noted,

During the early 1980s, music video became a new source of televised gender portrayals. At the same time the video clips shown on outlets such as the cable network MTV were praised for the innovative ways in which they presented popular songs, they were also often condemned for the stereotypical manner in which they depicted relationships between men and women (Gow, 1996:153).

It comes as no surprise then that Elgie and Houck (1998:79) argue, "the mass produced images of women in music video are products of patriarchal censorship." And just as women's behaviors in many music videos are based in male-dominated fantasy, so are the roles they fulfill.

Roles of Women in Music Videos

Jhally (1995) has observed that since the early 1980's, the roles of women in dreamworld videos range from strippers, exotic dancers, hookers, prostitutes, dominatrix, playmate nurses, cheerleaders, and women prisoners, to bored over-sexed housewives. Women are also frequently shown as back-up singers or members in the audience watching the male band members perform. Moreover, a new addition to
male music video fantasy is women who like other women. As such, we are given the voyeurism of lesbian sex.

One may wonder if there have been significant changes in more current music video representations of women. Not according to Gow (1996), who points out that during the early 1990s, while MTV executives began turning to videos featuring innovative artists, the stereotypical images of women did not change. For instance, of the 100 most popular MTV videos of the early 1990s, men outnumbered women in lead roles by nearly 5 to 1. Of the 100 lead roles, female groups or singers filled only 17%. Mixed gender groups rarely appeared in lead roles. Women were also shown in a narrower range, most often appearing as posers and dancers. In short, for women to star in music videos in the early 1990s, they had to demonstrate physical talents rather than exhibit musical skills typically displayed by men who appeared in lead roles.

Moreover, because women have mostly been depicted as posers and dancers, much greater emphasis has been placed upon women's personal appearance, particularly physical features and sexuality. As Gow (1996:159) notes, "... while the women in these popular videos might sometimes have been portrayed as talented singers and dancers, they almost always were portrayed in ways that emphasized their bodies and facial features." Gow (1996:159) adds that "in contrast, there was not such an overriding emphasis on the physical features of the men who seem to have emerged as the dominant figures ... men were not confined to a narrow range of lead roles."
Gow (1996:153) also notes that repercussions between the sexes differed:

For men, the damage hasn't been too great. They get to play a wide range of fantasy roles, from heroes to clowns. But women? All too often—especially as supporting characters in the videos of male singers—they're played as bimbos. Dressed in fishnet and leather, they drape themselves over car hoods, snarl like tigers, undress in silhouette behind window shades. Most rock videos give free reign to the cheesiest imagery of women as playthings.

Given this situation, important questions arise. For example, do the roles women play in music videos actually impact our attitudes toward women's roles in real life? And, to what extent, if any, do people believe these images are actual portrayals of women in the real world? For insight into these and other questions, let us now turn to some of the research findings on media effects.

According to Barker and Petley (1997), the whole point of communicating is to influence one another; media and advertisement do have effects upon behavior. Moreover, they note that media effects can be negative and positive at the same time. However, Barker and Petley (1997:1) also argue that "the educated and cultured middle classes are much more immune to advertisement and media effects than are the working class and younger viewers." Parenti (1992) echoes this notion when he points out that children (although he did not specify age of children) often believe that what they are seeing in the make-believe or entertainment media is real. That is, children's capacity to distinguish between real and unreal images as well as their ability to reject some images as unreal must be learned.

Baxter, DeRiemer, Landini, Leslie, and Singletary (1985), Hansen and Hansen (1990), McCrickard (1995), McKee and Pardun (1996), and Phillips (1997) all contend that MTV may transmit much more than messages of youthfulness. MTV also depicts images of youth engaged in sex, violence, and crime. Hence, in this regard, MTV may actually promote sex, violence, and crime. Brown and Steele (1995:1) add "... the media do play an important part in shaping American's sexual beliefs, attitudes and behavior." And, Phillips (1997:34) says, "the repeated exposure to violent imagery desensitizes us to violence and greatly increases the risk that we will manifest violence in our own behavior."

McKee and Pardun (1996:170) argue, "ultimately, the interpretation of such video imagery lies with those who view the video, not with those who create it." While this may be true, it may also be true that, according to Linz and Donerstein (1990), after watching scene after scene of violence, the desensitization process is more efficient in that viewers may become more tolerant of violence and cruelty and more accepting of rape myths. While studies do not prove that men who watch
sexually violent films will commit rape, they do show that many men tend to find rape and violence against women more acceptable.

According to Malamuth and Briere (1986), studies of media sexual violence suggests three conclusions: (1) males act against females in the vast majority of the depictions (rather than the other way around); (2) sexual aggression in the media appears to have increased markedly over the past 15 years; and (3) sexual aggression is often depicted very differently from non-sexual aggression. When sexual violence is portrayed, there is frequently the suggestion that despite initial resistance, the victim secretly desires and eventually derives pleasure from the aggression (Smith, 1976a and b). Additionally, sexual aggression is often presented without negative consequences for either the victim or perpetrator (Malamuth and Briere, 1986). Given these findings, concerns about media's use of sexual aggression are not based solely on the frequency of such portrayals, but on their potential for increasing women's victimization due to the way in which these messages are positively presented (Russell, 1984).

Although they are not the only sources of sexual information available to the public, Hansen and Hansen (1990) point out that mass media provide some of the more compelling messages. For example, while television, movies, music and music videos, and magazines focus on topics considered taboo in other social situations, sexual media fare is extremely attractive, particularly to young consumers. "The music in many rock music videos is arousing and the importance of arousal in emotional responses has a long history" (Hansen and Hansen, 1990:214). Yet, many
other social institutions, such as churches, schools, and the work place rarely discuss sexual intimacy, except perhaps to counsel people to abstain unless married.

Furthermore, Brown and Steele (1995) note that in one study, approximately one in five said they learned the most about sex from entertainment. In this way, the media should be considered an integral part of the sexual development of Americans. That is, the media serve as windows on mainstream cultural norms, values and mores. It is noteworthy to point out that, according to these authors, in most media depictions sexual behavior is frequent, often with unmarried partners, and rarely with any concern for consequences or use of contraceptives. In these common stories, women rarely get pregnant, and when they do they either have the baby or a convenient miscarriage, but rarely ever have an abortion.

Considering that the media affect the issues people believe are important, it comes as no surprise that they set the agenda and frame the issues that affect individuals' lives. Particularly for those who heavily rely upon media stories, the media's portrayal of the world becomes reality whereby attractive media role models and engaging story lines provide scripts for individuals to emulate in everyday life (Brown and Steele, 1995). Indeed, much research has shown that media do shape even our ideas of what it means to be male and female in our culture. Gow (1996:151) reports that

> [g]ender definitions have an impact upon almost all aspects of our lives. Notions about what it means to be a woman or a man shape opportunities for education, work, family, sexuality, reproduction, authority, and the chance to make an impact on the production of culture and knowledge.
Are these images actually harmful? Kimmel (1994) believes they are. Kimmel (1994:133) says, "as sociologists have long understood, stigmatized gender identity often leads to exaggerated forms of gender-specific behavior." And, considering that many of our mediated notions of masculinity are enmeshed with images of brute force and aggressive violence and the reality that television viewing is significant for many, there are a number of researchers who claim violent representations are particularly harmful, especially to women. Given the large television audience, potential harm is consequential.

Television viewing, according to Brown and Steele (1995), is indeed heavy for many individuals. Statistics reveal that about one-third of American's free time is spent watching television. They point out that most children spend more time with television than they do in school. Teenagers spend about two hours per day watching television and show a growing preference for music videos as they age; African-Americans reportedly watch approximately 50% more television than other groups; and children and teens from low-income households watch more television than other children do.

As Brown and Steele (1995) acknowledge, television tells its stories from cradle to grave. Cultivation theory tells us that a steady dose of television over time acts like the pull of gravity, toward an imagined center of expectations about reality. Tests of this hypothesis have found that heavy television viewers are more likely to believe the world is a mean and dangerous place, apparently the result of excessive exposure to a high frequency of violence on television. Additionally, some studies
have examined the cultivation of sex-role stereotypes and have found evidence that television nurtures their continuing presence in American society. "... in general, our culture sells sex without consequences" (Brown and Steele, 1995:19).

Furthermore, cognitive social learning theory predicts that people will imitate or model behaviors of others when those models are rewarded or not punished for their behavior (Brown and Steele, 1995). Accordingly, modeling will occur more readily when the model is perceived as attractive and similar and the modeled behavior is salient, simple, and prevalent, has functional value, and is possible. Based on these theoretical assumptions, teenagers will likely imitate the behavior. This is because they spend more time watching television programming that includes graphic depictions of attractive characters enjoying sexual intercourse with one another without suffering any negative consequences.

Furthermore, Brown and Steele (1995) say that the media may provide cognitive scripts for sexual behavior not seen elsewhere. Because of the lack of available information resources, teenagers may watch television to fill in the gaps in their understanding about how a particular sexual or social scenario might work. Unfortunately, relying on media-generated stereotypical information to guide real-life situations may encourage harmful behaviors. For example, frequent unprotected sex with strangers is positively portrayed in the media but, in reality, has potentially fatal consequences.

While we may not know with any degree of certainty if media-generated messages about reckless sex and violence are the cause of real harm in our society,
we do know that there is ample research to support the theory that media-driven messages indeed influence attitudes and possibly behavior. We also know that many men participate in violent behavior against women. Moreover, in a patriarchal society, boys tend to get very little training in negotiating intimate relationships, and instead are taught to accept violence as a normal male response to real or imagined threats. Furthermore, many men believe that they have the right to control or expect certain behavior from women and children, individuals whom many men believe they possess. And as Allen and Kivel (1997) point out, we live in a society where the exploitation of people with less social and personal power is acceptable. Bem (1997:40) adds that "[a]ll forms of female brutalization ... are but an exaggeration of the male dominance and the female objectification that have come to seem normal and natural."

Ideas, then, about sex and violence are not simply created out of thin air and are not an anomaly. Men and boys are exposed to extensive depictions of violent male response and violence in sexual relationships in mass media. Several comparative studies cited by Brown and Steele (1995) reveal significant information about media effect on sexual behavior. Particularly noteworthy is a study that found that 40 percent of the sexual behaviors observed in prime-time comedies fit the legal definition of sexual harassment, frequently to the accompaniment of a laugh track. Interestingly, while these harassing behaviors rarely led to successful sexual encounters in television comedies, they did not lead to social sanctions either. In most
instances, the male or female recipient of the harassment ignored or quietly rejected the unwelcome sexual advances.

Brown and Steele (1995) also point to another study which found that during the 1992-1993 broadcast season, about one-fourth of the television shows that were watched mostly by children contained some sort of sexual message in each episode. As Brown and Steele, (1995:6) note, "[t]he most frequently occurring types of messages equated masculinity with being sexual or commented on women's bodies as sexual objects." Furthermore, sexuality was portrayed as recreation where competition and game playing were givens. It is noteworthy that over the course of a three-week study, only two of ten programs included messages about sexual responsibility.

Jhally (1995) lends further support to the theory that media-generated depictions negatively impact intimate relationships and sexuality. In a survey on attitudes of over 6,000 college students, sixty percent of men and forty percent of women replied that women provoke rape by their appearance and behavior. Almost one-third of the males said it would do some women some good to be raped. Many men believed that date rape was justifiable if the woman invited the man out on the date; the man paid for the date; and/or she dressed suggestively (Jhally, 1995).

When asked when it is okay to force sex on a female against her will, in a survey of 1,700 seventh to ninth grade students, twenty-four percent of the males said forced sex was okay if they spent a lot of money on her. Sixty-five percent said forced sex was okay if he had dated her a long time. Thirty-one percent said forced
sex was okay if the woman had sex before with another male (Jhally, 1995). These statistics should be taken seriously. Moreover, efforts should be made to counter these attitudes with increased education.

Jhally (1995) believes that these attitudes normalize sexual assault and are commonly found among young and adult males. Jhally (1995) also points out that these attitudes reveal that the danger and violence against women in our society mostly resides within our relationships, rather than from strangers. Interestingly, the everyday way of experiencing heterosexual desire is so shaped by the androcentric and gender-polarizing conception of male dominance as normal and natural, that anything other than male dominance is viewed as alien and often times problematic. In any event, Bem (1997) adds that the sexual brutalization of a woman by a man is not simply an isolated act, a case of an individual man taking out his psychological problems on an individual woman. Rather, it is the inevitable cultural by-product of an androcentric heterosexuality that eroticizes sexual inequality.

Allen and Kivel (1997) echo this belief when they point out that our entire society contributes to the learning process whereby males get violent ideas about masculinity. That is, there is a kind of unspoken contract many males live by in which they expect females to show their appreciation by taking care of them emotionally and placing their concerns and interests aside to provide sex whenever males want it. Some describe this attitude as pornographic in nature (Allen and Kivel, 1997; Hill and Silver, 1993).
But pornography is a loaded term. What do we mean by pornographic? Pornography, admittedly a controversial and hotly debated issue, has been defined in many ways, ranging from sexually explicit materials to any materials that encourage sexually abusive and degrading treatment of women (Barongan and Hall, 1995). However one defines pornography, Cole (1995) says that pornography and misogynous messages are champions of the status quo.

If pornography is indeed a means to support the status quo, then it is not surprising to find various aspects of popular cultural saturated with pornographic messages, especially in music videos. In fact, Barongan and Hall (1995) assert that there is evidence to suggest that viewing rock videos have the same effect as viewing pornography. These authors also point out that in some studies, men who viewed violent rock videos expressed more callused and antagonistic attitudes toward women than did men who viewed nonviolent rock videos. Consequentially, as a result of these negative and violent messages, both men and women may reject women's worth.

Still, Hill and Silver (1993) note that opponents of ordinances against hard-core pornography claim that there is no scientific evidence to support the connection between unreal pornography and violence against women in the real world. These authors reject this claim and argue that studies on media effects has found direct links between people's attitudes toward sex and violence and what they see in the media. What's more, those very studies confirm that repetition plays a significant factor in desensitizing men to women's experiences of being shamed, attacked, and punished.
The more sensory input men received that supported sexual stereotypes about women, the less guilt and accountability they felt about replicating the behaviors they read about in books and viewed in images. As Hill and Silver (1993:288) put it, "[v]iolence, humiliation, and eroticism became enmeshed in the same socially sanctioned matrix, so that sex was regarded as a situation of domination and power-over rather than reciprocity and love."

Hill and Silver (1993) argue that if words and images do not have power, what is the basis for advertising? These authors make a powerful point:

Because women's bodies glut billboards, magazines, movies, and television—giving the message that women are less than human and enjoy such treatment—after a point we become callous to the sexual violence we see around us . . . and the violence ceases to have meaning. . . . The constant becomes commonplace, commonplace becomes normal, normal becomes natural; and what seems natural can then only be regarded as right. . . . Demeaning printed and visual images—in advertising and other media as well as pornography—have so greatly saturated our lives and everyday consciousness that we tend to dismiss them as normal, as 'the way things are.' But 'the way thing are' has been proven to be devastating, not only by the scientific studies but also by the countless testimonies of women about the degradation, intimidation, and discrimination they suffered as a result of pornography. Depictions of subordination tend to perpetuate subordination. The subordinate status of women, in turn, leads to affront and lower pay at work, insult and injury at home, battery and rape on the streets (Hall and Silver, 1993:295-298).

Unfortunately, we are all affected by stereotypical imagery. That is, in our culture, the media is saturated with the sounds, images and politics of sex. Consequently, according to Bem (1997), both males and females tend to see it as normal and natural for males to play more dominant or assertive roles in heterosexual encounters than females. Females are expected largely to play more yielding or
accommodating roles. Both males and females tend to view the female, in general, and the female body in particular, as more the object of male sexual desire than as a desiring sexual subject or agent (Bem, 1997). Importantly, these assertions that males are the sexual aggressors and females more passive, are a direct contradiction to many of the messages found in music video stories, as described by Jhally (1995), whereby women are portrayed as insatiable sexual aggressors.

Bem (1997) further notes that this objectification, which is manifested in the extraordinary emphasis on a woman's physical attractiveness in North American culture, constitutes an eroticizing of sexual inequality because it implicitly imposes a male perspective on the definition of female sexuality. Women are androcentrically defined in terms of their ability to stimulate and satisfy male sexual desires. In constructing sexual behavior this way, males find it normal and natural to keep pushing for sex even when the woman is resisting. In turn, females find it alien and problematic to assert themselves so forcefully and unmistakably that the man will have no choice but to stop what he is doing or use force. It is not surprising that so many males in North American society find violence against women to be sexually arousing, thus affirming their masculinity (Bem, 1997).

However, before we embrace direct causal connections, Jhally (1995) makes an important point. Jhally (1995) argues that while images and stories may not directly cause dangerous behaviors, they do legitimize attitudes and values. For instance, many believe that sexual assault is provoked by the victim and is self-deserving. Given the gravity of the situation and the real and potential harm to
society, the question then becomes, how do we usurp the system and promote healthier attitudes and behaviors? To meet this challenge, we must first learn to recognize and critically analyze media-generated imagery.

Critical Reading of Text

Frith (1997:21) says

[t]he use of the word 'text' suggests that the object of analysis is conferred with significance that places it at the heart of the message creation; but a text, more complicated than a single message, is problematized by codes of meaning on the one hand and social experiences on the other. Texts are the building blocks of discourse and discourse operationalizes 'common sense.'

If we passively and unthinkingly accept the images mass media creates for us, we are more apt to accept stereotypical notions and perpetuate harmful behaviors they inspire. We are also less likely to challenge or effect positive changes if we remain unaware of the process by which media construct messages that shape our world. By critically reading text we can become more vigilant about the world we live in (hooks, 1997). Transformation, according to hooks (1997), occurs through this process. As Sarat and Kearns (1995:128-129) have stated,

... reading cannot be separated categorically from the other practices that make up the world. The textual strategies by which people are represented as individuals or as groups cannot be understood apart from the ways in which those representations are wielded elsewhere, be they portrayals of gender, race, ethnicity, and so on.

Hence, intellectual work can help regain control of the image-drive world that has drifted beyond the democratic reach of ordinary people (Hall, 1997). Like Jhally
(1995), Bowen (1994:47) suggests that we need to teach individuals to become media literate, because it

...[t]akes students behind the scenes to show how special effects, editing, camera angles, sound, and lighting are used to create powerful illusions of reality. Media literacy also delves into the economics of media and examines how the needs of advertisers dictate what we're offered by media.

Importantly, media literacy, as opposed to censorship, protects the tradition of free speech by sidestepping the First Amendment shield used by commercial media to protect their profits. As Frith, (1997:3) puts it,

[t]hrough critical thinking, we can begin to deconstruct meaning in order to find the real significance of texts. A text's real significance is not in its explicit meaning, nor even in its implied meaning, but in the unintentional meanings it conveys. The aim of deconstruction is to expose the social and political power structures in society that combine to produce the text.

Most certainly then, dominant readings need to be challenged and deconstructed so that we can make sense of the specific ways that texts teach audiences to structure meaning (Reinharz and Davidman, 1992). However, it must be noted that in some texts, such as music videos, the messages are frequently ambiguous and often complex. Yet, as Frith (1997:58) asserts, "... understanding evolves out of respect for the complexity, fluidity, and multi-vocal nature of reading. Ambiguity and divergence are accepted as the norm, not errors that must be resolved if meaning is to be agreed upon."

Thus, it is through critical reading that we can begin to see the political, social, and cultural forms of subordination that create inequities among different groups as we live out our lives. The benefits of critically examining text are
profound. It helps sharpen one's sensibilities and may counteract the non-critical response so often conditioned by the mass media (Frith, 1997). In fact, the demystification of any aspect of mass culture is most successful when several methods are jointly employed.

... demystification is the most desirable form of cultural practice. ... [it] is the intellectual challenge of modern day cultural workers, students, and scholars interested in exposing the ideological undercurrents of society. Myths are preexisting, value-laden sets of ideas derived from a culture and transmitted through various forms of communication. For example, social class, as we know it in the United States, is often described in terms of clothing—there are 'white'-collar (privileged) workers who wear suits and there are 'blue'-collar workers who might be considered working or lower class. Therefore, a man in a suit represents dominant white upper class. The image of being a woman is constructed in mass media almost entirely through sexuality based on standards set by white males. Demystification, therefore, is to seek the connotative meaning embedded in such myths and to... expose them (Frith, 1997:11).

In order to expose the myths and reveal the ideological messages in mass media, according to Frith (1997), we must ask questions about the roles people play in our society. For example, who is in charge? Who holds the power? Who is weak? Who is dominant and who is subordinate? These kinds of questions help us begin to see the deeper social structures that are circulated and re-circulated throughout mass media. For instance, in examining texts such as music videos, certain masculine assumptions may be exposed if one utilizes a method of sex-role reversal. Exposure occurs when we ask if one person has power over another or if the man's role could be exchanged with the woman's in the scene. We might ask if the young person could be substituted with an elderly person, a minority person with a white person. If the roles were exchanged, would the story still make sense or would it seem ridiculous?
In this way one can determine who appears to have the power or control in the story and how that power is expressed (Frith, 1997).

From their research, Frith (1997), Reinharz and Davidman (1992) and Renzetti (1998) conclude that the public domain is used to promote gender stereotypes. All of these authors point out that mass media has emerged as a social indicator of contemporary social values and trends and plays an important role in society. They also argue that the most frequently depicted qualities of social relationships in mass media are hierarchy, dominance, and subordination. Hence, there is a definite need for a critical pedagogy that is concerned with mass media and its relation to culture (Frith, 1997). With these things in mind, let us now examine our culture’s embrace of the male perspective or male gaze.

The Male Gaze: Women as Objects

In popular culture, both men and women are invited to look at women, but the invitations to look are different, as are the resulting experiences of looking. That is, spectators are invited to identify with a male gaze, or to watch an objectified female, thus replicating the structure of unequal power relations between women and men (Gamman and Marshment, 1989; Jacobson & Mazur, 1995). In fact, Haskell (1987:1) calls this male-defined representation of women as inferior to men "[t]he big lie perpetrated on Western society." In fact, the idea of women's inferiority is a lie so deeply ingrained in our social behavior that simply to recognize it is to risk unraveling the entire fabric of civilization, adds Haskell (1987).
So in order to perpetuate patriarchy (and presumably avoid social upheaval and collapse), we keep this lie intact to the point that this view of women is commonly portrayed in popular culture through the male gaze (Haskell, 1987). Echoing this sentiment of upholding patriarchy, Jhally (1995) notes that women are deliberately negatively and subordinately portrayed in many music videos. First, women are treated like subordinate objects while men pose them before the camera for the male audience. (The very act of men posing women conveys powerful messages and imagery that further reinforce male superiority and dominance.) Second, the main message of music video stories is that women invite men to gaze at them: they want to be watched and they enjoy being on display. This so-called female desire to be watched by males is so exaggerated in many music videos that if men are absent from the scene, women will turn toward mirrors and look at themselves as objects of desire. And finally, the primary message, although not plainly stated, conveys that women invite desire and are passive things to be used and explored at will. In other words, women want to be possessed by the male gaze and forever in the spotlight (Jhally, 1995).

In order to bask in the spotlight of music video land, the camera is a critical tool to achieve this end. That is, the angles of the camera are deliberate. Unfortunately, and to the detriment of positive, real, and whole images of women, women are often presented as a number of disconnected body parts to be watched and used. African-American women are particularly vulnerable to this type of fragmentation. Hence, we are given the message that women are interchangeable, as
long as the body is attractive. Moreover, the camera is used to pan and explore women's exposed bodies in great detail. Looking at breasts and up a dress and shooting action between women's legs are common techniques used in music video production. Unfortunately, looking at women in this way denies them any agency and reduces women to sexual body parts; it also gives legitimacy to and encourages watching women in this fashion (Jhally, 1995).

As Ciriello (1993) notes, from an exclusively male perspective, women are the entertainment, men the entertained. By mainstreaming this boundary, we sanction and perpetuate the objectification of women and the attitudes and behaviors associated with this view of them. Furthermore, as women lose their unique identities under the male gaze, as is the case in many music videos, they become objects that appear open to action by others upon them. In other words, women's bodies become the grounds by which action takes place (Jhally, 1995).

A prominent aspect of male-fantasy-based music video stories is the ways in which women are handled (Jhally, 1995). Women are posed, fondled, manipulated, and squeezed. Invasion of the female body is portrayed as welcomed and desired by women. Even more, women have been shown dragged, drowned, hit, shot, crawling, chained to beds, pulled by the hair, stripped, exposed, whistled at and undressed. In some videos, women have been shown engaging in sex in front of an audience of men. In some videos, even little girls are dressed like seductive women. This raises a disturbing question: what happens when men use the stories told in music videos to understand relationships with women in the real world (Jhally, 1995)?
What impact do violent and stereotypical images have on the way people see the world and act within it? How do men and women relate? How do men think about women and sex? Our attitudes are not simply created in our heads; attitude formation is a process that guides our behavior. Stories told in our culture are part of the process of how we understand the world and behave in it. If we accept that stories of our commercial culture are important avenues by which people understand the world, are there consequences in real life (Jhally, 1995)?

Indeed, Jhally (1995) believes that there are dangerous consequences in the real world from accepting the male dominated music video industry's depiction of women as idealized objects of desire. For one thing, both men and women continually subjected to unrealistic images of women attain a distorted view of sexual relations. For another, women frequently become obsessed with trying to attain a desirable image, even to the detriment of their own health and well-being. For example, the high incidence of eating disorders and dieting, particularly among young women, attests to this fact. And finally, men are conditioned to respond favorably only to those women who have achieved the prescribed images presented in advertisements such as music videos. In short, according to Jhally (1995), women lose their true identities when they misidentify with distorted media-generated representations of women.

However, there are other real-life consequences as well. Existing research suggests that exposure to sexually violent material not only increases acceptance of
violence toward women, but also lowers compassion for victims of sexual aggression, perpetuates more negative self-concepts among women, contributes to sex-role stereotyping, and adversely affects males' attitudes toward women (St. Lawrence and Joyner, 1991; Seidman, 1992). Additionally, "by instructing men to regard women's bodies as objects, these media-generated messages help create an atmosphere that devalues women as people, encourages sexual harassment, and worse" (Jacobson and Mazur, 1995:84).

Importantly, Jhally (1995) points out that while explicit images of control and violence against women are not very prevalent in music videos, when we do see them, they do not look strange to us, but rather ordinary. Hence, given that violence perpetrated on women is considered normal in our society, it is difficult to assess the damage to women and girls. Buchwald (1993:197) says that

[The cumulative effect of media violence on girls is difficult to estimate, but I believe that over the years the results are visible in the lessening of their self-esteem, and in their belief that they cannot effectively fight a predation that appears to be universal. We demonstrate to girls repeatedly that being beautiful and seductive are the qualities society prizes in adult women. At the same time, girls cannot help but observe that in the media beautiful and seductive women are the most likely candidates to be sexually assaulted. A successful woman, in this unspoken double bind, is set up to be a victim of violence. The media portrayal of women prepares girls to become victims just as surely as it teaches men to be comfortable perpetrators of violence.

Backing this claim, Jhally (1995) provides alarming statistics. Jhally (1995) asserts that one in eight college women are victims of rape and one in four college women are victims of attempted rape. A full eighty-four percent of the victims of sexual assault know their attackers while fifty-seven percent of the cases of sexual
assault happen on dates. Furthermore, one in four women are raped at some time in their lives (Jhally, 1995). Cole (1995) adds that the litany of real abuses women experience paints a very harsh picture. Taken together, the percentage of women who will experience some form of sexual abuse, such as battery, sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, and sexual harassment, is a full ninety-two percent.

However, it is equally important to reiterate that music video images in and of themselves do not directly cause sexual assault against women. Human behavior is too complex to pin on one explanation. But Jhally (1995) asserts that the stories we are told indeed influence how we think about our world, our attitudes, and what we believe to be true. Moreover, all behaviors are based on assumptions, attitudes, and values. Unfortunately, our basic assumptions about women in our society create understandings of women that often encourage violent behaviors against women. While the situation is distressing, we must ask 'where do we go from here?' This question will be discussed further and in greater detail in the discussion/conclusion section.

Conclusion

As evidenced by the foregoing review of literature, it is apparent that recognizing and making sense of deliberate and stereotypical media-generated images of gender is a complex and worthwhile undertaking. As many have argued, fantasy and reality can be easily blurred and this blurring of the boundaries is not innocent in advertisements, including that in music videos. While some demand censorship,
others argue that more censorship is not a viable solution. Jhally (1995) believes that we have too much market censorship in that only the voices of corporate, commercial interests are being heard. Many other voices that need to be heard are not. As Jhally (1995) urges, we need to resist offering easy solutions to complex problems. Our culture needs more diversity and honesty in discussions of sex and gender roles and a more democratic process so that alternative stories may also be told (Hall, 1997; hooks, 1996; Jhally, 1995). Having reviewed the literature, the next section presents the methods used in this study.
METHODS

Purpose of the Research

This research project was undertaken to: (a) explore and describe students' perceptions about the ways in which women are portrayed in music videos; (b) educate students about the violent and sexist themes of many music videos; and (c) determine whether there was a change in attitudes following the viewing of an educational video.

Research Design

To accomplish the aforementioned goals, this research was designed as a quasi-experiment and included a pre-test, a treatment (an educational video entitled *Dreamworlds II: desire, sex and power in music video*), and a post-test. Attached in Appendices A through E are the HSIRB required and approved letters of introduction, and classroom scripts. The pre- and post-test are attached in Appendices F and G.

The survey instruments contained forty-eight (48) questions. Twenty-two (22) were yes/no, twenty (20) were multiple-choice, and six (6) were open-ended. Each questionnaire took approximately twenty (20) minutes to complete. Informed consent was obtained from all participants in the research project through the letters of introduction.
Jhally (1995), in his video entitled *Dreamworlds II: desire, sex, and power in music video* makes a number of claims about the negative and stereotypical images of women portrayed through music video stories. First, Jhally (1995) asserts that producers and directors of music videos (mostly male) are advertisers, trying to sell music through the medium of videos. Because advertisers of music videos are challenged to make their ads stand out amid a myriad of competition, many use sex to sell their goods. Few would dispute the fact that sexual imagery in advertising draws consumers. However, not only are music videos created to sell, but they also tell a story about sex and women. Importantly, as Jhally (1995) notes, the salient question is who gets to tell the story?

Jhally (1995) states that ninety percent of music videos are written, produced, and directed by men. Moreover, many bands featured in music videos are all male. (It is noteworthy to point out that his statistics are based on videos produced prior to 1995.) In addition, Jhally (1995) points out that many music videos are produced and directed around specific sexual imagery or what he refers to as a sexual dreamworld that is based upon adolescent male fantasy. Jhally (1995) argues that by and large, males in our culture have monopolized the definition of female sex through the use of stories in popular culture.

These male-based adolescent fantasies receive widespread attention. They are told in thousands of commercials daily and recounted on television programs on many channels, in fashion magazines, on MTV programs, in country music videos,
hip hop, rap, Latino videos, even on VH1 (owned by MTV network, but geared toward an older audience). What is wrong with this picture?

According to Jhally (1995), these predominantly one-sided stories about women's sexuality in the dreamworld of music video are dangerous for young women and girls, because they often negatively impact females' relationships with themselves, each other, and with males. This is because femininity, defined by adolescent male fantasy, portrays women and girls in very narrow and demeaning ways. For instance, Jhally (1995) asserts that women in the dreamworld of music videos are either band members, back-up singers, dancers, or part of the audience, but most always decoration, often only present around the artist. Unfortunately, these images are frequently carried to extremes. Frequently, seductive-looking, scantily dressed females are shown as part of the story or song, even if the connection is not clear.

Moreover, women in the dreamworld are presented as one-dimensional in that they are portrayed as only interested in sex with any available male at any time (Jhally, 1995). In other words, women are portrayed as nymphomaniacs. Women in the dreamworld, in a state of perpetual desire, rip off men's clothing and seduce them, with little regard for anything else (Jhally, 1995). In addition, women in the dreamworld will fight other women for men. Violent competition is the norm and because men in the dreamworld are so outnumbered by women, men may choose and dismiss women as they please. In the dreamworld of music video, women not only outnumber men, but exist to serve them in all ways (Jhally, 1995).
However, not only are women in the dreamworld presented as one-dimensional, sexually aggressive, shallow, divisive, and manipulative, but relationships between the sexes suffer this extreme superficiality as well. That is, in male/female relationships within the dreamworld, there is always instant attraction that leads to sex. There is no courtship or conversation, only people driven by the power of sex (Jhally, 1995). Women in the dreamworld are depicted as desperate and dependent, to the degree that when males are absent, females find substitutes or representations (objects) to be sexual with. If male substitutes are not available in the dreamworld, women fall apart (Jhally, 1995).

Jhally (1995) says that when women in the dreamworld are not pursuing men or falling apart, they are shown spending enormous amounts of time getting in and out of clothes, always in front of an audience and always ready for sexual action. In other words, women in the dreamworld are also exhibitionists, just waiting for the opportunity to expose their bodies. Jhally (1995) makes further claims about the demeaning characterization of women in the dreamworld.

First, Jhally (1995) points out that video producers and directors utilize effective techniques to reinforce adolescent male-driven fantasies in music videos. Producers and directors make sure that women in the dreamworld are never in short supply. In addition, women in the dreamworld are frequently shown dancing for men on top of tables, in pools, or on the beach. In fact, many women in the dreamworld attend parties that look very much like orgies. Jhally (1995) points out that women in
the dreamworld are not only expected to participate in the exclusive role of pleasing males, but are expected to desire and enjoy the orgy-like atmosphere.

Jhally (1995) also asserts that women in the dreamworld who behave uncooperatively toward males are treated harshly. Women in the dreamworld must either submit to male dominance or they are dismissed and left alone to suffer their loss. Given this situation, it is not surprising that women's bodies in the dreamworld are fair game for anything males want to do. For instance, sharing a man or being abandoned by men who use women is a frequent dreamworld theme.

Furthermore, because women in the dreamworld are depicted so sexually, they are frequently shown showering and bathing and/or dancing in and around water. These images, according to Jhally (1995), are tied directly to the male adolescent fantasy of wet tee-shirt contests. In keeping with this theme, when women in the dreamworld do wear clothing, lingerie such as stockings and garter belts are displayed with great pride. Nothing in dress is too bizarre for women in the dreamworld.

Given the fact that women in the dreamworld are dehumanized, it is not surprising that the roles of women in the dreamworld are demeaning and narrowly defined. Jhally (1995) points out that women are frequently depicted as strippers, exotic dancers, hookers, prostitutes, dominatrix, playmate nurses, cheerleaders, women prisoners, and bored over-sexed housewives. More titillating still, a new addition to some music videos is women who like other women. In other words, we are given the voyeurism of lesbian sex in dreamworld videos (Jhally, 1995).
It is important, at this point, to consider plight of female artists. According to Jhally (1995), female artists in the dreamworld of music videos encounter the same male-dominated system as female actors do. That is, advertisers, producers, and directors not only control the economics of the music video industry, but also are also behind the cameras and in the director's chair, with very few exceptions. Because of these important dynamics, male adolescent fantasy-based videos entrap female artists (Jhally, 1995).

In other words, Jhally (1995) points out that while female artists might prefer to tell a different story about female sexuality, structural and economic barriers confine them. If female artists attempt to tell stories that depict women as independent agents searching for soul mates, rather than quick sexual fixes, then they face a dilemma. That is, female artists who deviate from dreamworld production risk alienation from the interests that control the industry and the loss of an audience accustomed to male adolescent fantasy-based stories. A failure to integrate fully into the male dreamworld can mean the difference between super-star success and only moderate success or even failure (Jhally, 1995).

This situation, asserts Jhally (1995), is a serious problem for female artists. Jhally (1995) points out that even when lyrics feature stories of female autonomy and sexual pleasure, the visuals that are arranged by male directors tell a very traditional and stereotypical story. Jhally (1995) asserts that female artists are coerced by the imperative of the dreamworld, so much so that our imaginations remain imprisoned by male sexual fantasy. hooks (1996) refers to this mental imprisonment as the
colonization of the mind. In response to this dilemma, female artists often opt to conform to dreamworld production standards in order to gain a measure of success.

At this point, it is important to understand that the use of the camera in music videos is a potent tool or technique in choreographing male domination and female subordination (Jhally, 1995). Most male directors will pose women exclusively for a male audience. This power to pose women conveys significant cultural messages. For one thing, the messages are that women are subordinate to men and invite their gaze. This reinforces the beliefs that women are dependent upon male direction and that women enjoy being on display. For another, according to Jhally (1995), when men are not present in dreamworld stories, the women are frequently directed to look longingly or gaze at themselves in mirrors. Thus, Jhally (1995) argues, women in the dreamworld of music video are directed to objectify themselves.

Jhally (1995) also argues that the images we see in the media are never accidental, they are always chosen. According to Jhally (1995), in the dreamworld, women are presented as objects to be watched or passive things to be used and explored. It is not uncommon in the dreamworld production, for the camera operator (usually male) to sweep over women's bodies, exploring them in great detail. Featuring women in this way lends legitimacy to the idea that staring at women's bodies, slowly and deliberately is acceptable.

Jhally (1995) says that the primary and almost exclusive function of females in the dreamworld of music videos is to be gazed at, examined, and explored. Jhally (1995) emphasizes that camera angles are deliberate; looking at breasts and up a dress
is common in music video dreamworld production. Moreover, women are frequently presented as a number of disconnected body parts. Often during dreamworld production, the camera shoots scenes between the legs of women. In other words, women's legs are used as a frame in which action takes place (Jhally, 1995).

According to Jhally (1995), focusing solely on women's body parts in the dreamworld of music videos is detrimental to women in the real world. This myopic vision of women distracts the viewer from thinking about women as real people with emotions, feelings, intellect, and dreams and desires of our own. Further, the implied message is that women are all the same or interchangeable, as long as the body is attractive.

On the other hand, Jhally (1995) admits that to treat another as an object, at times, is part of human desire. But, because women in the dreamworld are almost exclusively presented as objects, nothing that makes women human is revealed. In effect, women in the dreamworld are legs in high heels, often shown in outline, as shapes in shadows, or even under sheets. These images suggest that there is nothing inside (Jhally, 1995). Moreover, in dreamworld videos women of color are almost exclusively portrayed as sexual objects and nothing more. Jhally (1995) points out that videos with African-American women frequently focus on only one part of the body: their rear-ends.

Jhally (1995) also points out that in many rock videos, females are shown behind bars or in cages, anxiously waiting for a man to summon them. Moreover, there have even been videos that demonstrate that when women try to escape male
domination and confinement, men with dogs chase them down, rope them, and drag them back. However, Jhally (199) points out that the very nature of this dreamworld chase is strange, because the women in these videos seem to want to be caught. In other words, no means yes. The message is that women in the dreamworld are saying no for the sake of appearances. In this way, women in the dreamworld are depicted as merely teasers who long for men to overcome them.

Another prominent aspect of the dreamworld is the demeaning ways in which female actors are touched, handled, fondled, and squeezed. Invasion of the female body in the dreamworld is depicted as welcomed and desired. Jhally (1995) asserts that this type of presentation of females is dangerous in the real world and raises very important questions. More specifically, do men actually rely upon these stories to relate to women in real life? If so, what happens when men use the stories in dreamworld videos to understand relationships with women in the real world? Is there a relationship between dreamworld imagery of women and sexual assault? (Jhally, 1995).

Jhally (1995) makes a very powerful point about sexual assault in Dreamworlds II. In Dreamworlds II, the gang rape scene from the movie The Accused was shown. Intermittently, the camera would switch from the rape scene of The Accused to a popular rock video. In the rock video, male band members and other males in the audience were shown hooting and cheering at a female who was emulating sexual acts with other males inside a boxing ring. The female in the rock video was shown in dominatrix attire, complete with a spiked dog collar, crawling
around the floor of the ring. As Jhally (1995) points out, the physical gestures and facial expressions of the male rapists and on-lookers in The Accused, did not look much different from the physical gestures and facial expressions of the men in the popular rock video who cheered at the woman crawling on the floor. The images were chilling.

Jhally's (1995) point is that images of sexual aggression are not always that unusual to us and not always considered rape. In fact, there are a number of popular movies and television programs in which forced or coerced sex is not identified as rape or sexual harassment. Jhally (1995) admits that explicit images of sexual control and sexual violence are not often seen in music videos, but when we do see them, according to Jhally (1995), they do not look strange to us. In fact, Jhally (1995) asserts that the context in which violence and control are used in music videos has the effect of making them appear normal. Normal in the dreamworld is where women are decorations, sex-mad, objectified and dehumanized. Normal in the dreamworld is also where young, attractive females are depicted as incapable of saying no to male advances and where the invasion of female bodies becomes common behavior, nothing out of the ordinary (Jhally, 1995).

Jhally (1995) raises more questions. What impact do these images have on the way people see the world and act within it? How do men and women relate? How do men think about women and sex? Jhally (1995) believes that how we understand the world guides our behavior. In other words, our attitudes are not simply created in our heads; attitude formation is a process. Therefore, stories told in
our culture are part of the process of how we understand the world and behave in it. If we accept that stories of our commercial culture (videos and ads) are important avenues by which people understand the world, what are some of the potential consequences?

Jhally (1995) asserts that stories we are told influence how we think about our world, influence what we believe to be true, just as they influence our attitudes. To provide support for this argument, Jhally (1995) provides statistics. In an attitude survey of over 6,000 college students, sixty percent of the men and forty percent of the women said that women provoke rape by their appearance and behavior. When asked if it would do some women some good to be raped, almost one-third of the males answered yes. Moreover, many men who were surveyed said that date rape is justifiable if the woman invites the man out on the date; if the man pays for the date; and if the woman dresses suggestively (Jhally, 1995).

Jhally (1995) believes that these attitudes, found in young as well as older men, normalize sexual assault. In fact, in a survey of 1700 7th to 9th grade students, when asked if it was okay to force sex on a female, twenty-four percent of the males said it was okay if they spent a lot of money on her. Sixty-five percent said forcing sex was okay if the male had dated the female for a long time (the length of time was unspecified). Thirty-one percent said forced sex was okay if the female had done it before with another male (Jhally, 1995).

The statistics do not end here. Jhally (1995) points out that one in eight college women are victims of rape. One in four college women are victims of
attempted rape. Eighty-four percent of the victims of sexual assault know their attackers. Fifty-seven percent of the cases of sexual assault happen on dates. One in four women are raped at some time in their lives.

According to Jhally (1995), these attitudes and statistics reveal that danger and violence is more likely found inside, rather than outside, our relationships. Moreover, images of sexual assault legitimize attitudes that violent behavior is provoked by the victim and is self-deserving. This rationalization can leads us to blame the victim and, in turn, affects how we respond to rape. Said another way, our culturally embraced beliefs and attitudes about sexual violence affects our formal and informal social institutions, our social, legislative, and judicial processes.

According to Jhally (1995), the assumptions we form about women create our understandings of them. Because violence seems rather normal in mass media and popular culture representations, some men might not be discouraged from engaging in violent behavior toward women. Therefore, one may argue that if we eliminate violent, stereotypical imagery, we can begin to solve the problem of violence against women. However, Jhally (1995) advises against embracing elementary solutions to complex problems.

One final point is that while some individuals demand censorship, more censorship is not the answer (Jhally, 1995). We already have too much market censorship because only the voices of corporate, commercial interests are being heard, to the exclusion of many other voices that are not heard (Jhally, 1995). Our culture, according to Jhally (1995) and hooks (1996), needs more diversity and
honesty in discussions of sex. We need a more democratic process so that other stories are told and people will have access to alternative points of view. From the foregoing assertions that Jhally (1995) made about music video production, the survey questionnaire used in this research project was developed.

Instrument Development

The survey instrument (Appendix F) was designed to test the major premises asserted in Jhally's (1995) *Dreamworlds II: Desire, Sex and Power in Music Video*. While the instrument contained multiple choice, yes/no, and open-ended questions, respondents were asked to write in any other responses or comments or choose more than one answer where applicable.

Because Jhally (1995) asserts that music videos contain powerful demeaning and stereotypical messages about women, establishing participants' viewing patterns was important. Hence, the first question asked respondents if they watched music videos. If respondents did not watch music videos, they were asked to answer only the last four questions on the survey, which identified their age, race/ethnicity, gender, and the socio-economic class of their families of origin.

Because Jhally (1995) asserts that negative and stereotypical messages about women are most frequently (but not exclusively) seen in rock and rap videos, the next set of questions dealt with the types of music videos participants preferred and their viewing patterns. Specifically, respondents were asked about frequency in viewing,
whether they usually watched music videos alone and whether they watched in a focused way, rather than as background while doing other things.

The next set of questions were designed to determine what respondents liked best and least about music videos, what they believed most music videos were about, and if they found anything offensive in music videos. Respondents were asked to specify what they found offensive.

Since research supports the notion that media influences its audience, participants were asked, in two separate questions, if they believed that music video stories attempted to influence their beliefs and if they actually influenced their beliefs.

Jhally (1995) asserts that portraying women negatively in music video stories has real life consequences. Therefore, the next set of questions dealt with whether participants believed that female behavior in music video stories was actually characteristic of most females' behavior. Respondents were asked to identify women's emotional, physical, and sexual behavior in music video stories. Respondents were also asked if they believed that the behaviors in music video stories were actually characteristic of women.

Jhally (1995) claims that in dreamworld videos, women appear to enjoy being watched by others, particularly when dressing and undressing. From this assertion, respondents were asked whether women in music video stories appeared to enjoy being watched and if they appeared to enjoy being watched while dressing and undressing.
Jhally (1995) also claims that most communication between males and females in dreamworld music video stories is not direct. Therefore, the next set of questions dealt with how male and female actors in music videos communicated and whether or not those communication styles were actually characteristic of most male and female communication.

Jhally (1995) points out that women in the dreamworld of music video are not portrayed as real people with human qualities, nor are the stories particularly realistic or romantic. Moreover, often the action in dreamworld videos has little or nothing to do with the words of the song. Therefore, participants were asked whether the actors seemed real, if the stories were romantic, if the stories seemed realistic, and if they thought that the action matched the words of the songs.

Because, according to Jhally (1995), the camera's focus in dreamworld videos is often on women's physical bodies, the next set of questions dealt with the focus of the camera in general and the focus of the camera when females were featured.

Jhally (1995) also points out that most females in dreamworld videos are beautiful, sexually pursuing and pursued, dependent and childlike, and competitive with other females for male attention. Most of the women in the dreamworld are shown in demeaning or subordinate occupations. Therefore, the next set of question dealt with this issue. In one question, participants were asked to choose the characteristics and behaviors that best described female actors in music videos. Respondents were given choices from a list of 45 possible characteristics/behaviors, along with the category 'other' for their comments. Respondents were also asked if
they believed that the characteristics and behaviors of female actors were actually characteristic of most females. In a separate question, participants were asked to list the occupations/roles that female actors in music video stories played. They were then asked if they believed that the occupations/roles were actually characteristic of most females’ occupations/roles.

Jhally (1995) says that in dreamworld videos, women are scantily dressed, even wearing lingerie as outerwear. Therefore, the next series of questions dealt with females’ attire in music videos. First, participants were asked to choose (from a list of 15 categories plus 'other') what female actors typically wore in music video stories. Next, participants were asked if they believed that the ways in which female actors dressed was actually characteristic of the way most females dress. Participants were also asked if the ways in which female actors dressed in music video stories actually influenced their own choice of dress.

Jhally (1995) points out that dreamworld stories frequently take place in water, in bedrooms, nightclubs, and at parties that often resemble orgies. Hence, the next question asked participants to identify (from a list of 17 categories plus 'other') the most typical environments in which music video stories took place.

And finally, respondents were asked to list their age, gender, race/ethnicity, and the socio-economic status of their family of origin.
Subject Selection and Sample

The research sample was a convenience sample taken from one undergraduate sociology class, SOC364: Sociology of Law Enforcement during the winter semester 1999. Since the class met three times a week for fifty minutes each class period, the research was conducted over the course of a one-week period: on March 15, March 17, and March 19, 1999. Only students over the age of 18 who were enrolled in SOC364 and who participated in the survey were the unit of analysis.

It is important to point out that this sample is not, nor is it intended to be, representative. It is not this researcher's aim to generalize the findings to the greater population. Rather, the findings may help attune us to new questions, new perceptions, and present-day understandings of how media-generated images of women impact our perceptions. That is, descriptions of lived experiences and individuals' voices and perceptions are valuable in and of themselves.

Risk to Subjects

Ethical considerations are of utmost importance when conducting any research with human subjects. Since the subject matter could have been considered personal, controversial, and/or sensitive, completing the surveys and/or viewing the Dreamworlds II educational video could have raised some discomfort, questions, and/or issues for some participants.

However, showing educational videos is common educational practice. Moreover, the class instructor has had experience with showing educational videos
and discussing critical, controversial, personal, and/or sensitive issues that sometimes arise from viewing instructional videos. Therefore, while there were no anticipated risks to participating students, there was the possibility that some participants might experience mild discomfort in completing the survey and/or viewing the *Dreamworlds II* educational video. For these reasons, the emotional safety and comfort of the participants was taken into consideration.

**Protection for Subjects**

Due to the importance of protecting participants, all respondents were clearly advised in advance that the purpose of the project was to determine how women were portrayed in popular culture via music videos. It was stressed repeatedly during the process that participation was voluntary, anonymous and confidential and that anyone who did not want to answer any question or wanted to withdraw participation at any time without any repercussions could do so. In addition, prior to participation in the research, all students received contact information for Western Michigan University's counseling center.

**Data Collection Procedure**

On March 15, 1999 the pre-test was conducted on the aforementioned undergraduate sociology class in Sangren Hall, Room 2502. First, a script introducing the research in the classroom (attached in Appendix B) was read to the
potential participants. A letter of introduction welcoming participation (attached in Appendix C) was then given to the entire class.

The survey, which took approximately 20 minutes to complete, was given only to students over the age of 18 who volunteered to participate in the study. By completing and returning the survey, as per the letter of introduction, students were granting permission to use their responses in this research project. Forty students chose to participate. Two days later, on March 17, 1999, the entire class was invited to watch *Dreamworlds II: Desire, Sex and Power in Music Video*, a fifty-minute educational video. Finally, on March 19, 1999, two days after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, only those forty students who participated on March 15, 1999 and who viewed *Dreamworlds II: Desire, Sex and Power in Music Video* on March 17, 1999, and still wanted to continue with the study were given the post-test.

Once the nominal and ordinal level data was collected, a descriptive analysis was conducted in order to identify initial responses and then determine whether there were changes in student's responses after viewing *Dreamworlds II: Desire, Sex and Power in Music Video*.

Confidentiality of Data

All participation was anonymous. Furthermore, because the focus of the analysis was on overall attitudinal changes within groups (for example, changes within categories such as gender, race/ethnicity, age), there was no need to pair the pre- and post-tests individually. Therefore, no names or identifying information were
in any way connected with collected data. Moreover, the researcher was not given a copy of the student roster. No master list of participants was created. Only numbers have been used to code completed surveys. That is, pre-test and post-test surveys were kept separated. For both the pre- and post-tests, the completed surveys were divided between males and females, then numbered, beginning with 1 and ending with 40. In keeping with federal regulations, all data will be maintained for a three-year period in a sealed box locked in the sociology graduate office in room 3202 in Sangren Hall.

Expected Findings

If Jhally (1995) is correct that many music videos contain negative and stereotypical messages and imagery about women that many believe are characteristic of women in real life, then we might expect to see this reflected in the survey responses. If viewing *Dreamworlds II* served as an effective educational tool, then we might expect to see some significant changes in the responses in the post-test. The next section presents the major findings of this research project.
FINDINGS

Demographic Information

A total of 40 students participated in this study. Ages ranged from 19 to 37, with an average age or mean of 22. Twenty-five (63%) of the participants were female and 15 (37%) male. With regard to race and ethnicity, 30 (75%) were Caucasian; 5 (12.5%) African-American; one Multi-racial; one Other/ Japanese; and 3 did not report this information. Thirty (75%) of the respondents reported that their family of origin's socio-economic status was middle class; 4 (10%) working class; 4 (10%) upper class; and 2 (5%) did not report this information.

Non-Viewer Participants

In the pre-test, two female respondents reported that they did not watch music videos and, as instructed, completed only the demographic information on the questionnaire. Therefore, a total of 38 students completed the pre-test questionnaire. Worthy of note, in explaining why she did not watch music videos, one 37-year-old Caucasian female commented that she "does not subscribe to cable, otherwise I might [watch] but—[sic] because my kids probably would watch them."

Interestingly, in the post-test there were three individuals, rather than two who said they did not watch music videos. These three included the two females who had reported in the pre-test that they did not watch music videos and an additional male.
student. The male student (who used a symbolic mark on both the pre- and post-tests) was one of the forty pre-test participants who claimed to watch music videos and had completed the pre-test. Hence, a total of 37 students completed the post-test questionnaire.

Preferred Types of Music Videos

Regarding the types of music videos participants preferred to watch, the majority chose both Rock and Rap categories. However, since participants were instructed to choose as many categories as applicable, the breakdown is as follows: 16 chose Alternative; 7 chose both Country and Heavy Metal; 6 chose Other/R&B (Rhythm and Blues) and Hip-Hop; 4 chose Easy Listening; and 2 chose Christian. In the post-test questionnaire (after having watched Dreamworlds II) the trends remained relatively the same except that 8 chose Easy Listening, double that of the 4 reported in the pre-test.

Viewing Patterns

In the pre-test, when asked how frequently respondents watched music videos, 21 (53%) reported that they watched a few times a week; 11 (28%) reported they watched daily; and 6 (15%) said weekends. [Note: totals will not always add up to 100% due to missing data of those who did not watch music videos]. After viewing Dreamworlds II, while 22 (55%) reported watching a few times a week, only 6 (15%) said they watched daily and 9 (23%) said weekends. It appears that after viewing
Dreamworlds II, fewer respondents admitted to watching music videos daily, but more admitted to watching music videos on weekends.

There were also some differences in the pre- and post-test responses regarding the number of hours per week that the participants watched music videos. That is, it appears that after viewing Dreamworlds II, more respondents admitted to watching between 1 to 3 hours per week and between 3 and 7 hours per week. Specifically, in the pre-test, 23 (58%) claimed they watched under one hour; 9 (23%) said between 1 and 3 hours; 5 (13%) said between 3 and 7 hours; and only 1 individual reported more than 7 hours. However, in the post-test, 11 (28%) said under one hour; 15 (38%) said they watched between 1 and 3 hours; and 10 (25%) said between 3 and 7 hours. On both the pre- and post-tests, when asked if they usually watched videos alone, the majority said yes. That is, 21 (53%) on the pre-test and 18 (45%) on the post-test said they watched alone. When asked if they usually watched music videos in a focused way, rather than just background while doing other things, the majority said no: 25 (63%) on the pre-test and 27 (68%) on the post-test. In other words, the majority of participants did not focus their attention on music videos, but used them as background music.

What Respondents Liked Best and Least in Music Videos

In an effort to discover what attracted and repelled people when watching music videos, in two separate questions, respondents were asked what they liked best and least about music videos. As is apparent in the following table (Table 1), 75% in
the pre-test and 78% in the post-test chose 'beat/sound' as their number one choice of what they liked best. Their second choice of what they liked best was 'words/lyrics,' 70% on the pre- and 63% on the post-test. On the other hand, when asked what they liked least, nearly half of the respondents (48%) on the pre-test chose 'use/reference to drugs' followed by 'violence' (40%), 'nudity' (38%), 'sexual images' (33%) and 'use/reference to alcohol' (33%). On the post-test, 50% chose 'violence' followed by 'use/reference to drugs' (43%), 'use/reference to alcohol' (40%), and 'nudity' (33%).

When four respondents in the pre-test chose the category 'Other' for what they liked best about music videos, they listed the following: the artist, dancing, creativity, and black people. One respondent in the post-test also listed dancing. When three respondents in the pre-test chose the category 'Other' for what they liked least about music videos, comments ranged from "when the song is not good—boring," "nothing I don't like except when they don't make any sense," "things don't bother me, but what my children see does," to "no black people." On the post-test, one respondent said "no black positive females or males." Participants' comments follow Table 1.

Table 1

What Respondents Liked Best and Least About Music Videos
(Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching Dreamworlds II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liked Best</th>
<th>Liked Least</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beat/sound</td>
<td>30 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liked Best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words/lyrics</td>
<td>28 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action/performance</td>
<td>25 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of songs</td>
<td>19 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special effects/animation</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nudity</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way people dress</td>
<td>10 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/political messages</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual images</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romance</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/reference to drugs</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/reference to alcohol</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Music Video Themes

As discussed throughout the review of the literature, Jhally (1995) has made a number of assertions regarding the themes of music video stories, particularly rock videos. In an effort to address and investigate these assertions, and since a majority
of respondents reported that they watched rock (as well as rap) music videos, questions in the surveys were designed to determine whether or not respondents were aware or agreed with Jhally's (1995) assertions. Therefore, in another question, participants were asked what they believed that most music video stories were about. Table 2 details their responses.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual relationships</td>
<td>21 (53%)</td>
<td>20 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical performance</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling in love</td>
<td>14 (35%)</td>
<td>18 (45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreams and fantasies</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>17 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking up</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
<td>10 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting dumped on</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting over a female</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting over a male</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendships</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family relationships</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clearly, most of the respondents reported that most music video stories were about sexual relationships. On the pre-test, the second most chosen response was 'musical performance,' followed by 'falling in love,' 'dreams and fantasies,' and then 'breaking up' and 'getting dumped on.' Interestingly enough, on the post-test, the second most chosen response was 'falling in love,' followed by 'dreams and fantasies,' 'getting dumped on,' 'musical performance,' and then 'breaking up.'

Comments regarding what music video stories were about in the pre-test for the category 'Other' included the following: "I believe a lot of the videos have a political and social context as well," "different videos mean different things," "life stories, entertainment," and "violence, life's struggles." In the post-test 'Other' category, respondents said "everyday life," "just relationships in general," and "most are about every aspect of life according to the singer or band or their interpretation of what life should be."

Examining the Offensive Messages in Music Videos

Participants were asked if they found anything offensive when watching music videos. If they replied yes, then they were asked to explain what they found offensive. Respondents were split on the first question; nearly half (48%) reported they were offended by something in music videos, while nearly half (48%) reported they were not.

On the pre-test, when asked if respondents found anything offensive while viewing music videos, sixteen separate comments were made, as follows:
1. "Clothes women wear, how women are portrayed, language used"—22-year-old African-American female;

2. "How women are portrayed"—20-year-old African-American female;

3. "Almost nude skinny women dancing in most videos"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

4. "Portrayal of women as objects—it's getting really bad"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

5. "Nudity, some of the fighting that they do"—21-year-old African-American female;

6. "When music videos portray women as passive and as an object to be controlled"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

7. "I find drugs, prostitutes, men taking advantage of women, and vulgar language offensive"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

8. "Some of the sexual content"—22-year-old Multi-racial male;

9. "The sexual images"—22-year-old Caucasian female;

10. "Stereotypes and generalizations are usually portrayed"—22-year-old Caucasian female;

11. "The way they make women sex objects"—23-year-old Caucasian female;

12. "Some of the subject matters shown should not be shown on t.v.—although they do have a warning, kids still watch them. A verbal warning on t.v. is pretty much useless"—24-year-old Caucasian female;

13. "Violence and sexual images, etc."—24-year-old Japanese female;

14. "Portrayal of women (especially black women) and violence and drugs are glorified. They should not be shown during prime time"—37-year-old African-American female;

15. "The case of how they use drugs, alcohol, sex, and violence"—20-year-old Caucasian male; and
16. "More to deal with the language, do not like bad language that is not necessary to the music. Don't like violence that's unnecessary"—22-year-old Caucasian male.

On the post-test, the following thirteen comments were made regarding the offensive nature of music videos:

1. "Any video depicting sexual assault or violence against women"—23-year-old Caucasian male;

2. "Swearing/cursing, violence (needless)"—22-year-old Caucasian male;

3. "The violence, nudity, and ways women are portrayed. Also the lack of black females (unless they are light-skinned with long hair)"—37-year-old African American female;

4. "I'm concerned for my children to view some of them because of the nudity, violence, etc."—32-year-old Caucasian female;

5. "The way they use women in most of them"—22-year-old African-American female;


7. "Sexual exploitation of women and men"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

8. "Lots of references to drugs, the way a woman always has a perfect body"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

9. "The way they portray women as sex objects"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

10. "The way some girls are treated"—19-year-old Caucasian female;

11. "Sex images"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

12. "Way women act stupid, way men look at women"—24-year-old Caucasian female; and

It is apparent that female respondents, before and after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, were offended by the ways in which women were stereotypically sexually portrayed, used and exploited in music videos. Nudity and the focus on female bodies also offended female respondents, as did foul language, violence and drugs. In neither the pre- nor the post-test, did male respondents make reference to the offensive portrayal of women in the dreamworld. Instead, the use of foul language, references to drugs and alcohol, and the sexual and violent content of music videos reportedly offended male respondents. After viewing *Dreamworlds II*, only one male respondent reported that he was offended by any depiction of sexual assault or violence against women.

Examining the Influence and Realism of Music Videos

In the next set of questions, participants were asked if they believed that music video stories attempted to influence their beliefs, if music video stories actually influenced their beliefs, and if they believed that the portrayals of female behavior in music video stories were actually characteristic of most females' behavior.

As evidenced in Table 3, while 40% of the respondents in the pre-test said they believed that music video stories attempted to influence their beliefs, after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, more than half (53%) admitted that music videos attempted to influence their beliefs. When asked if the stories actually influenced their beliefs, 88% said no on the pre-test, but after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, the percentage dropped to 78%. And finally, when asked if the portrayals of female behavior in
music videos were actually characteristic of most females' behaviors, 33 (83%) said no on both the pre- and post-tests. Comments, in the form of direct quotes identifiable only by the respondents' gender, age, and race/ethnicity, follow.

Table 3

Questions Regarding Music Videos' Influence on Beliefs/Perceptions (Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching Dreamworlds II)

1. Do you believe that music video stories attempt to influence your beliefs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16 (40%)</td>
<td>21 (53%)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>22 (55%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Do music video stories actually influence your beliefs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>35 (88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>32 (82%)</td>
<td>34 (86%)</td>
<td>32 (82%)</td>
<td>34 (86%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Do you believe that portrayals of female behavior in music video stories are actually characteristic of most females' behaviors?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33 (87%)</td>
<td>31 (92%)</td>
<td>33 (87%)</td>
<td>31 (92%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the pre-test, only one respondent commented about deliberate attempts to influence beliefs when she said that while she is not influenced, "a person who is easily influenced" would be. On the post-test one person admitted that she is
influenced "some." Comments in the pre-test about whether music video stories actually influenced beliefs included the following: one 21-year-old African-American female said they do, "only if you let it"; and one 24-year-old Caucasian female said "no, although for many 'wanderers' it will."

On the post-test, when asked if music video stories actually influenced beliefs, one 37-year-old African-American female stated very emphatically, "no, hell no!" This same respondent answered exactly the same way in the pre-test when asked if the portrayals of female behavior in music video stories were actually characteristic of most females' behavior.

It is clear that after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, more respondents admitted that music videos attempted to influence their beliefs and actually influenced their beliefs. However, most respondents did not believe that the ways in which women were portrayed in music videos was actually characteristic of most female behavior in either the pre- or post-tests. In other words, after viewing of *Dreamworlds II* there were no changes in responses.

The Emotional, Physical, and Sexual Portrayal of Women in Music Videos

The next set of questions addressed the emotional, physical, and sexual portrayal of women in the dreamworld, as outlined in Table 4. As Jhally (1995) pointed out, the ways in which women are portrayed in many music videos are negative and stereotypical. Therefore, respondents were asked how women were
portrayed and if they believed that those portrayals were actually characteristic of most females.

Table 4

Perceptions About How Women Were Portrayed Emotionally, Physically, and Sexually in Music Videos (Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching *Dreamworlds II*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotionally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotionally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dependent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>independent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>dependent</td>
<td>16 (40%)</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dependent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physically</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very weak</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat strong</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
<td>14 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weak</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>weak</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sexually</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very passive</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Passive</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When asked how women were portrayed emotionally in music videos, 16 (40%) chose 'somewhat dependent on males' in the pre-test, but only 8 (20%) chose this category after viewing *Dreamworlds II*. Ironically, in the pre-test, only 4 (10%) chose the category 'very independent of males,' yet after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, 8 (20%) chose 'very independent of males.' Nine (23%) in the pre-test chose 'completely dependent on males,' but 13 (33%) chose this category after viewing *Dreamworlds II*. And, interestingly, no one chose 'not at all dependent on males' in the pre-test, but 4 (10%) chose this category in the post-test. It is clear that after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, more respondents admitted that women were portrayed as completely and very emotionally dependent than they had in the pre-test.

With regard to how women were portrayed physically, 13 (33%) chose 'neutral' followed by 'somewhat weak' (30%) in the pre-test. In the post-test, though, 9 (20%) chose 'neutral,' while 14 (35%) chose 'somewhat weak.' Only 4 (10%) and 5 (13%) chose 'very strong' in the pre- and post-tests, respectively. After viewing *Dreamworlds II*, more respondents reported that women in music videos were
portrayed as very physically weak and somewhat physically weak than was the case in the pre-test.

In assessing how women were portrayed sexually, 15 (38%) chose 'somewhat aggressive' in the pre-test. However, only 6 (15%) chose this category in the post-test. While 5 (13%) chose 'very aggressive' in the pre-test, 10 (25%) chose this category in the post-test. Very few respondents chose 'very passive' or 'passive' in either the pre- or post-tests. After watching Dreamworlds II, more respondents admitted that women in music videos were portrayed as very sexually aggressive and sexually aggressive than prior to the viewing.

With regard to the comments respondents made about the ways in which females were portrayed emotionally in music videos, on the pre-test one 22-year-old Caucasian female said that the degree of emotional dependency "depends on the style of the videos and music." One 20-year-old Caucasian female suggested that females were "very emotionally independent of males in female-group videos." When asked if the ways in which females were portrayed in music video stories was actually characteristic of most females, 30 (75%) of the respondents on both the pre- and post-tests said no. However, one 37-year-old African-American respondent believed otherwise and stated, "yes, unfortunately."

Some interesting comments were made on the pre-test regarding the physical portrayal of women in music videos. One 20-year-old African-American said, "a lot of music videos have females as the artist and not the groupie." A 20-year-old Caucasian female commented, "women are portrayed as physically very weak, but it
depends on the video." Another 21-year-old Caucasian female stated that women were portrayed in "extremes in different videos." And finally, a 20-year-old Caucasian male said that women were portrayed as "somewhat physically weak with the exception of many rap videos." On the pre- and post-tests when asked if the physical portrayal of women was actually characteristic of most females, 33 (83%) said no. One 24-year-old Caucasian female who dissented wrote on the pre-test, "yes, because many feel that is how they should act."

Two comments were made on the pre-test regarding the sexual portrayal of females in music videos. Specifically, a 20-year-old Caucasian female and a 21-year-old Caucasian female, respectively, noted that "women are sexually aggressive in all videos" and "they are [portrayed] at either extreme [very sexually passive or very sexually aggressive]."

And finally, on the pre-test regarding whether the sexual portrayal of women in music videos was actually characteristic of most females, a 37-year-old African-American female said no and pointed out that "some women are hung up, some are very sexually liberated."

Women Portrayed as Exhibitionists

For the next set of questions, outlined in Table 5, we return to Jhally’s (1995) assertions that in most music videos, women are portrayed as exhibitionists and appear to enjoy being watched at all times, but particularly when dressing and undressing. Therefore, respondents were asked whether most female actors appeared
to enjoy being watched by others and if they appeared to enjoy being watched by others when they were dressing or undressing. They were also asked if they believed that the portrayals were actually characteristic of most females. Additional comments made on the questionnaires follow the table.

Table 5
Perceptions About Whether Females Enjoy Being Watched (Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching Dreamworlds II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) In general, in music video stories do most female actors appear to enjoy being watched by others?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 36 (90%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2) If you answered yes, do you believe this is actually characteristic of most females?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 12 (30%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3) In general, in music video stories do most female actors appear to enjoy being watched by others when they are dressing or undressing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 33 (83%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5—Continued

4) If you answered yes, do you believe this is actually characteristic of most females?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes 8 (20%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>No 30 (75%)</td>
<td>28 (70%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, most (90%) of the respondents in the pre-test thought that female actors appeared to enjoy being watched by others. Interestingly enough, after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, the percentage dropped to 80%. However, in the pre-test, of those who said that female actors enjoy being watched by others, 12 respondents (30%) said this was actually characteristic of most females. After watching *Dreamworlds II*, 13 (33%) said it was actually characteristic of most females. In contrast, 26 (65%) of respondents did not believe that it was characteristic of most females.

When asked if female actors appeared to enjoy being watched dressing and undressing, 83% said yes in the pre-test, but in the post-test the affirmative responses dropped to 73%. For those who responded affirmatively, that female actors appeared to enjoy being watched dressing and undressing, only 20% said in the pre-test that this was characteristic of most females. After viewing *Dreamworlds II*, 18% said it was characteristic of most females.
Additional comments regarding these questions include the following replies. When responding to whether females actually enjoyed being watched, one 20-year-old Caucasian and one 37-year-old African-American, respectively, said, "yes, but it depends on the person" and "yes, but not me!" On the other hand, one 32-year-old Caucasian female said no but noted that the actors, "would not participate if they did not want people to see them."

When commenting on whether female actors appeared to enjoy being watched while dressing and undressing, on the pre-test a 22-year-old multi-racial male noted, "yes—that's what is suppose to catch the eye of the audience." And finally, on the pre-test regarding whether females enjoyed being watched while dressing and undressing, a 20-year-old Caucasian female stated, "yes, [but] it depends on the type of person." One 37-year-old African-American added, "yes, if it is their own free will to do the undressing."

Communication Patterns in Music Video Stories

Respondents were asked to identify styles of communication in music video stories. Jhally (1995) points out that most communication that takes place between males and females in dreamworld stories is represented by non-verbal communication, such as gestures and touching. The communication style is demeaning to women and portrays them in a subordinate manner. For example, males tend to summon and dismiss females by physically dragging and grabbing them
and by gestures such as pointing, throwing up one's hands, and snapping one's finger, etc. Nearly anything but direct verbal non-violent communication is depicted.

Therefore, the first question asked how male and female actors in music videos most often communicated with one another. The second question asked if respondents believed that the ways actors communicated was actually characteristic of most male and female communication. It is interesting to note that in the pre-test, out of 38 responses to this question, 23% chose direct verbal communication while 73% chose non-verbal communication; 38% chose verbal and physical arguments; 20% chose communication through others; and 5% chose the category 'Other.' The only recorded comment was that communication was represented "differently in different videos."

After viewing *Dreamworlds II*, only 18% chose direct verbal communication while 80% chose non-verbal communication; 30% chose verbal and physical arguments; 18% chose communication through others; and 5% chose 'Other.' The two comments were "through sexual communication," made by a 23-year-old Caucasian male and "singing," from a 22-year-old Caucasian male.

When participants were asked if they believed that the ways in which male and female actors generally communicated with one another was actually characteristic of most male and female communication, on the pre-test, only 20% responded affirmatively while 75% said no. On the post-test, results did not waiver.

In summary, after watching *Dreamworlds II*, more respondents admitted that males and females in music video stories communicated through non-verbal means.
On the other hand, fewer respondents thought communication occurred through verbal and physical arguments or through direct communication. Furthermore, the majority of respondents did not believe that communication in music videos was characteristic of communication between men and women in real life. Their responses did not waiver from the pre- to the post-test.

**Perceptions of Music Video Actors and Stories**

The next series of questions, as outlined in Table 6, dealt with how actors and stories were perceived (real, romantic, or realistic). If participants answered that the actors and stories did not seem real, romantic, or realistic, they were asked to elaborate. Because some of the authors mentioned in the review of literature asserted that music videos were vague and open to interpretation, participants were also asked whether they thought that the stories enacted matched the words of the songs. And because Jhally (1995) pointed out that many music video viewers might not be aware of the male- and fantasy-driven themes of many music videos, these questions were designed to determine participants' awareness (or lack thereof).

When asked if the actors in music videos seemed real, over half (60%), in the pre-test said no; 65% in the post-test said no. The vast majority of respondents, 75% and 80% in the pre- and post-tests, respectively, did not believe that the stories were romantic. Moreover, 73% of respondents in both the pre- and post-tests did not believe the stories were realistic. And finally, when asked if the stories enacted matched the words of the songs, 73% in the pre-test said yes, but only 45% agreed
after viewing *Dreamworlds II*. Comments, in the way of direct quotes, follow the table.

**Table 6**

Perceptions of Music Video Actors and Stories
(Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching *Dreamworlds II*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In music video stories, do the actors seem real?</th>
<th>In general, in music video stories do you believe that the stories are romantic?</th>
<th>In general, in music videos do you believe that the stories are realistic?</th>
<th>In general, do music video stories match the words of the songs?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-test Post-test Pre-test Post-test</td>
<td>Pre-test Post-test Pre-test Post-test</td>
<td>Pre-test Post-test Pre-test Post-test</td>
<td>Pre-test Post-test Pre-test Post-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>In music video stories, do the actors seem real?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes 14 (35%) 11 (28%) No 24 (60%) 26 (65%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>In general, in music video stories do you believe that the stories are romantic?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes 8 (20%) 5 (13%) No 30 (75%) 32 (80%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>In general, in music videos do you believe that the stories are realistic?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes 9 (23%) 8 (20%) No 29 (73%) 29 (73%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td>In general, do music video stories match the words of the songs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes 29 (73%) 18 (45%) No 9 (23%) 19 (48%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following sixteen comments were made on the pre-test when respondents replied that the actors in music videos did not seem real:

1. "In many of the cases, I think a majority of them are just shitty actors"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

2. "They are acting, videos are for entertainment"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

3. "I think if I was less educated, younger and more impressionable, I'd believe what I saw was real, and the way that things really are, but I know better. It's all fake"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

4. "Actors always seem extreme emotionally and over dramatic"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

5. "Its all about fantasies, more likely that it is not going to happen in real life; but it looks good"—22-year-old Multi-racial male;

6. "I guess its because I would never act like the rap videos and I don't know anyone else who would"—22-year-old Caucasian female;

7. "I think in videos they act the way they normally want to act"—23-year-old Caucasian female;

8. "It's how many people would like to be seen and heard but in actuality, its fantasy"—24-year-old Caucasian female;

9. "They are doing a job!"—24-year-old Caucasian female;

10. "I know they are acting"—32-year-old Caucasian female;

11. "Too perfect, too gorgeous, always know what to say and how to handle situations"—37-year-old African-American female;

12. "They feel unreal to me"—20-year-old Caucasian male;

13. "They are just music videos and almost all of the time, like 99.9% of the time, are not even close to being real. They are just eye and ear candy"—21-year-old Caucasian male;

14. "Fake"—22-year-old Caucasian male;
"Music videos are not trying to show real life but portray music through examples of life stories—just fantasies of the song"—22-year-old Caucasian male; and

"I think that most music videos are based on fantasy, thus the characters and their actions are exaggerated and/or unrealistic"—29-year-old Caucasian male.

On the post-test, sixteen comments were made:

1. "Most people are not as physically appealing, nor do they 'act' like they do in the videos in the real world"—29-year-old Caucasian male;

2. "This is not what happens in our day to day lives"—23-year-old Caucasian male;

3. "A real woman would never let a man or men do some of the things they do"—23-year-old Caucasian male;

4. "No, because there's no real communication"—23-year-old Caucasian male;

5. "Very small because they have to fit in that little box"—22-year-old Caucasian male;

6. "It is just a music video, just like a movie is just a movie. They are mostly made up stories that someone wants to tell"—21-year-old Caucasian male;

7. "Because they are doing things most cannot do"—21-year-old Caucasian male;

8. "The acting is usually bad and you can't believe things you see on t.v."—20-year-old Caucasian male;


10. "I know that they are acting"—32-year-old Caucasian female;

11. "It's all just fantasy and dreams"—23-year-old Caucasian female;

12. "They are what society deems to be ideal (physically and sexually)"—21-year-old Caucasian female;
13. "Because the situations they are in don't really happen. People usually can't live their lives that way"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

14. "They are acting!"—20- and 22-year-old Caucasian females;

15. "They just go along with too much"—19-year-old Caucasian female; and


When respondents were asked to explain what they found romantic about music videos, on the pre-test, four comments were as follows:

1. "Some stories are about people ending up together and that is romantic"—21-year-old African-American female;

2. "Most are love songs (country). Rap, no romantic qualities there"—22-year-old Caucasian female;

3. "Touching/gestures"—21-year-old Multi-racial male;

4. "They bring to light some of life's ups and downs, sometimes these are romanticized"—23-year-old Caucasian male;

On the post-test, two comments to this same questions were as follows:

1. "When two people end up together after searching for one another"—21-year-old African-American female; and

2. "Real life situations"—female.

When asked what respondents found realistic about music video stories in the pre-test, seven comments made were:

1. "In my case, rap and R&B tell stories of how live [sic] and where you come from"—20-year-old African-American female;

2. "Violence"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

4. "Some are—mostly country ones"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

5. "I guess the environment sometimes"—22-year-old African-American female;

6. "Most artists it seems today make music about things they know and have experience with"—20-year-old Caucasian male; and


When asked what respondents found realistic about music video stories in the post-test, five commented:

1. "They have to be true or people will talk about you"—23-year-old Caucasian male;

2. "Some of the situations going on in videos happen in real life"—21-year-old African-American female;

3. "Life is hard"—21-year-old Multi-racial male;

4. "Real life situations"—female; and

5. "Life's hardships"—24-year-old Caucasian female.

Finally, respondents were asked to explain the significance of the stories if they thought that the stories enacted did not match the words of the songs. On the pre-test, seven comments made are as follows:

1. "To get people's attention to the videos and make them listen to the words"—19-year-old Caucasian female;

2. "Most are just for looks or visual effects"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

3. "Sometimes [they] do send out other hidden messages"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

4. "Visual stimulation, an attempt to make you need the song in your life"—37-year-old African-American female; and
5. "To catch people's attention, as well as sell their music"—20-year-old Caucasian male.

On the post-test, eleven comments made are as follows:

1. "I'm not sure"—29-year-old Caucasian male;

2. "Catch your attention, keep you watching"—22-year-old Caucasian male;

3. "I believe it is only to entertain"—20-year-old Caucasian male;

4. "To get you to buy the song—usually"—37-year-old African-American female;

5. "I have no idea. Like Madonna. Some of her music is totally different from what the video is suppose to be portraying"—22-year-old African-American female;

6. "It's to catch the viewers attention"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

7. "Something stupid for the sake of a video. Anything they believe will catch the watcher's eye"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

8. "Entertainment"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

9. "To get audience attention"—19-year-old Caucasian female;

10. "Fantasy"—22-year-old Caucasian female; and


In summary, there were some notable changes in each of the foregoing questions, following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*. Specifically, fewer respondents thought that the actors seemed real; fewer respondents thought that the stories were romantic or realistic; and far fewer thought the words of the song actually matched the action of the video.
The next set of questions, detailed in Table 7, was designed to address Jhally's (1995) assertion that the camera's focus is mostly on females' lust for males and females' oftentimes-disconnected and highly sexualized body parts. Hence, respondents were asked to identify what the music video camera mostly focused on in general and then what the focus was on when female actors were featured. Comments made by respondents follows the table.

Table 7
What the Camera Focused on in General and When Female Actors Were Featured (Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching *Dreamworlds II*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In General</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>In General</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female's bodies</td>
<td>29 (73%)</td>
<td>32 (80%)</td>
<td>Musician(s)</td>
<td>19 (48%)</td>
<td>17 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female's faces</td>
<td>17 (43%)</td>
<td>23 (58%)</td>
<td>Males' bodies</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males' faces</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
<td>Setting/environment</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>Backup performers</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical body</td>
<td>31 (78%)</td>
<td>30 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facial features</td>
<td>16 (40%)</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character/role</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other objects</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movements/Dance</td>
<td>26 (65%)</td>
<td>25 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic talent</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, in the pre- and post-tests, most respondents believed that the primary focus of the camera, in general and when females were featured, was on female's bodies. As a second choice, nearly half of the respondents (48% in the pre-test and 43% in the post-test, respectively) chose 'musicians' as the camera's general focus. Moreover, the second choice of the camera's focus when females were featured was 'movements/dance.'

In the pre-test question regarding the camera's focus in general, one 32-year-old Caucasian female commented: "It depends on the video." In the post-test question regarding the camera's focus when females were featured, one 37-year-old African-American female stated quite frankly, "Boobs and ass mainly."
Characteristics and Behaviors of Women in Music Video Stories

The next question, presented in Table 8, was designed to determine how respondents thought women were most characteristically represented in music videos. Jhally (1995) points out that in many music videos, female actors are characterized mainly as dependent on male attention; sexually pursued and pursuing; beautiful; jealous; childlike; desperate for men; and exhibitionists. Hence, respondents were asked to choose (as many categories that applied) the characteristics and behaviors that best described female actors in music videos. The participants were given a list of 46 choices, including 'Other.' Only one 37-year-old African-American female made an additional comment (in the pre-test): "White, blondes in particular."

By and large, the most chosen categories were 'beautiful,' 'flirtatious,' 'sexually pursued,' 'sexually pursuing,' 'happy,' 'thin,' 'dependent,' 'promiscuous,' and 'jealous.' It is interesting to note the majority of the most frequently chosen categories remained relatively the same in the pre- and post-tests, with the exception of 'happy,' which dropped by nearly half in the post-test and 'beautiful,' which dropped from 70% in the pre-test to 60% in the post-test.

Table 8

Characteristics and Behaviors That Best Described Female Actors in Music Videos
(Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching Dreamworlds II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unattractive</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>Lazy</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristic</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>Characteristic</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturing</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insensitive</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Shallow</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Innocent</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiteful</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Adventurous</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talented</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devious</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
<td>Affectionate</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>Possessive</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanding</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>Victimized</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desperate</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>Exhibitionist</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>10 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childlike</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needy</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
<td>16 (40%)</td>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>10 (25%)</td>
<td>14 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lonely</td>
<td>10 (25%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>Fun-loving</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealous</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
<td>16 (40%)</td>
<td>Promiscuous</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>14 (35%)</td>
<td>14 (35%)</td>
<td>Thin</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
<td>17 (43%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents were asked if they believed that the characteristics and behaviors of female actors were actually characteristic of most females. On the pre-test, 34 (85%) said no. However, one 24-year-old Caucasian female disagreed. She stated, "Yes, because many females think they should be like the women on t.v." On the post-test, 32 (80%) said no.

Roles and Occupations of Women in Music Video Stories

In the next open-ended question, participants were asked to list the most typical occupations/roles of female actors in the music video stories. This question was raised because, as noted in the review of the literature, Jhally (1995) states that the typical occupations/roles for females in most music videos are stereotypical, sexist, and subordinate. Such roles and occupations include dancers, back-up singers, groupies, waitresses, schoolgirls, prostitutes, etc. On the pre-test the following twenty-six comments were made:
1. "Play the broken heart or the in-love role"—19-year-old Caucasian female;

2. "Like they are all that"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

3. "Girlfriends, friends, and dancers"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

4. "Dancers, lovers, or main male actor"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

5. "Musical artists, movie stars, actors"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

6. "Hores [sic] and prostitutes"—20-year-old Caucasian female;

7. "Dancing half naked"—21-year-old African-American female;

8. "Waitress, prostitute"—21-year-old Caucasian female;

9. "To be a pretty face and body"—21-year-old Caucasian female;


12. "N/A"—22-year-old Multi-Racial male;

13. "Not sure"—22-year-old Caucasian female and 29-year-old Caucasian male;

14. "To be the woman madly in love with the man and she can't resist him"—22-year-old Caucasian female;

15. "Grocery store clerk"—23-year-old Caucasian female;

16. "Dancers, 'female role type jobs'"—24-year-old Caucasian female;

17. "Dancers"—24-year-old Caucasian female and 21-year-old Caucasian male;

18. "Sexual role"—24-year-old Japanese female;

19. "To look good"—32-year-old Caucasian female and 20-year-old male;

20. "I have not a clue—probably 'female' jobs"—37-year-old African-American female;
21. "High school girls"—20-year-old Caucasian male;
22. "Getting beat or sexed up"—21-year-old Multi-racial male;
23. "Dancers and actors"—22-year-old Caucasian male;
24. "Sluts"—22-year-old Caucasian male;
25. "The ex- or current girlfriend who is being left or madly in love"—23-year-old Caucasian male; and

Twenty-four comments to this question on the post-test were as follows:

1. "Most females do not appear to have real jobs"—29-year-old Caucasian male;
2. "Dancers, sexy"—20-year-old male;
3. "Secondary money winners, waitresses and dancers"—23-year-old Caucasian male;
4. "Sex objects"—22-year-old Caucasian male;
5. "To look at"—23-year-old Caucasian male;
7. "It seems that since all we watched on Wednesday was parts of music videos that had the most female sexual things in them, it seems that it would greatly influence everyone's opinions today (Friday). There are a lot of videos where women are having fun and are strong. Why didn't you show some videos like that, instead of just showing us one side of the story?"—21-year-old Caucasian male;
8. "They are all different"—21-year-old Caucasian male;
9. "To give in to men's wishes"—20-year-old Caucasian male;
11. "Objects to look good"—32-year-old Caucasian female;
12. "Dancers and strippers"—24-year-old Caucasian female;
14. "Unemployed"—23-year-old Caucasian female;
17. "Strippers, prostitutes, runaways, dancers"—21-year-old Caucasian female;
18. "Look like hookers/tum males on or make them watch it"—20-year-old Caucasian female;
21. "To have sex with the guy or some sort of relationship"—19-year-old Caucasian female;
22. "Dancers and waitresses"—27-year-old Caucasian male;
23. "Girlfriends"—female; and

Respondents were then asked if they believed that the occupations/roles of female actors reflected in music video stories were actually characteristic of most females. On the pre- and post-tests, 34 (85%) said no.

Women's Dress in Music Video Stories

Turning now to the issue of dress, Jhally (1995) points out that in music videos, nothing is too bizarre for women to wear. Table 9, which follows, details perceptions of what female actors in music video stories typically wore. Jhally
(1995) points out that women often proudly wear revealing clothing and undergarments as outerwear. Hence, the next question asked participants to identify what female actors in music video stories typically wore.

As evidenced in the Table 9, the most frequently chosen categories of female dress were 'mini-skirts/short shorts,' 'high heel shoes,' leather,' 'lingerie,' 'athletic wear,' bathing suit,' and 'other revealing clothing.' Note that following the viewing of Dreamworlds II, the number of respondents who chose lingerie jumped from 53% in the pre-test to 70% in the post-test.

Table 9

Perceptions About What Female Actors in Music Videos Typically Wore (Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching Dreamworlds II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mini-skirts/short shorts</td>
<td>29 (73%)</td>
<td>28 (70%)</td>
<td>24 (60%)</td>
<td>25 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>22 (55%)</td>
<td>19 (48%)</td>
<td>21 (53%)</td>
<td>28 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic wear</td>
<td>19 (48%)</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
<td>19 (48%)</td>
<td>26 (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other revealing clothing</td>
<td>18 (45%)</td>
<td>24 (60%)</td>
<td>16 (40%)</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dresses</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
<td>19 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tee-shirt</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
<td>10 (25%)</td>
<td>14 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal wear</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business suit</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work boots</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments from those who chose the 'Other' category included, "it depends on the band/music," "stylized clothing," and "jeans and tee-shirts—I'm only referring to country! [music videos]" When asked if the ways in which female actors in music videos dress was actually characteristic of the way most females dress, in the pre- and post-tests, 28 (70%) replied no.

When respondents were asked if the ways in which female actors dressed in music videos influenced their choices of dress, on the pre-test, 29 (73%) chose 'not at all'; 6 (15%) chose 'somewhat'; 3 (8%) chose 'does not apply'; and none chose 'completely.' On the post-test, 23 (58%) chose 'not at all'; 8 (20%) chose 'somewhat'; 2 (5%) chose 'does not apply'; 1 (3%) chose 'to a fairly large degree'; and 3 (8%) chose 'completely.'

Music Video Settings

The final question, detailed in Table 10, addressed the environments in which music video stories took place. Jhally (1995) points out dreamworld videos take place in environments that resemble parties where females outnumber males and the
activities often resemble orgies. He also notes that many videos take place in water, such as showers, bathtubs, pools, beaches, etc. where women are shown bathing or having water poured over them. This use of water on women, as discussed in the review of the literature, connects with adolescent male fantasies of wet tee shirts. Hence, respondents were asked to choose from a list of 18 categories, including 'Other', in which music videos take place.

As indicated in the Table 10, the most frequently chosen categories were 'bedroom,' 'beach,' 'nightclub,' 'bar,' 'studio,' 'swimming pool,' and 'street.' On the pre-test, those who chose the category 'Other' offered: "out in the open (most country videos)"; "home"; "in fantasy-land"; and "in an arena or stadium." On the post-test, one responded, "wherever, as long as it is dark."

Table 10

Perceptions About the Environments in Which Most Music Videos Took Place (Comparing Responses Prior to and After Watching Dreamworlds II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedroom</td>
<td>27 (68%)</td>
<td>26 (65%)</td>
<td>25 (63%)</td>
<td>24 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightclub</td>
<td>23 (58%)</td>
<td>21 (53%)</td>
<td>20 (50%)</td>
<td>21 (53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>17 (43%)</td>
<td>14 (35%)</td>
<td>17 (43%)</td>
<td>20 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathroom</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this section, I have presented the findings of this research project. In the following section, I will summarize the results and discuss the major changes between the pre- and post-test responses. The concluding remarks will provide a discussion of what has been discovered through this study, potential future studies, and recommendations.
DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS

Relevant Findings

Clearly, before viewing *Dreamworlds II*, many respondents reported that music videos were unrealistic and did not portray women in a positive light; rather, women were often portrayed stereotypically. These results parallel much of Jhally's (1995) central thesis, as discussed throughout this study. In summation, the majority of the participants in this study watched music videos: only a few times a week, for under one hour, usually alone, as background rather than in a focused way, and tended to prefer rock and rap videos to the other genres. The vast majority of participants reportedly liked the beat and sound, words and lyrics, action and performance best, but least liked references to drugs, violence, and alcohol. On the pre- and post-tests, most participants reported that the stories were mainly about sexual relationships.

About half of the respondents in both surveys were offended by something in music videos. In the pre-test, offensive material included the clothing women wore, how women were portrayed as objects, bad language, nudity, drugs, and sexual content/imagery. In the post-test, offensive material included sexual assault/violence against women, the lack of black females, sexual exploitation of both women and men, and assault played out in front of children.
In the pre-test, less than half of the respondents said that music videos were attempting to influence them, but over half in the post-test thought this was the case. Interestingly enough, in the pre- and post-tests, the overwhelming majority said that music videos did not actually influence them.

While respondents were split over the emotional, physical, and sexual portrayal of women in music videos in both the pre- and post-tests, the most frequent replies were: somewhat emotionally dependent upon males and completely emotionally dependent upon males, in the pre- and post-tests respectively. In the pre-test, respondents felt that women were portrayed physically neutral and in the post-test, somewhat physically weak. Interestingly, while 38% of the respondents thought that women were portrayed as somewhat sexually aggressive in the pre-test, this percentage actually dropped to 15% in the post-test, because a few more thought that women were portrayed as very sexually aggressive in the post-test.

The majority of respondents in both the pre and post-tests also agreed that women in music videos appeared to enjoy being watched by others. The majority of respondents in both the pre- and post-tests did not believe this was actually characteristic of most females. In both the pre- and post-tests, the vast majority of respondents also felt that women in music videos appeared to enjoy being watched while they dress and undress and the vast majority in both surveys did not believe this was actually characteristic of most females.
In both the pre- and post-tests, the vast majority of respondents reported that males and females communicated by non-verbal communication in music videos and that they did not believe this was actually characteristic of most communication between the sexes. It is also worth noting that the majority of respondents in both surveys did not believe that music video stories were romantic or realistic. The overwhelming majority in the pre-test thought that music video stories matched the words of the songs, but after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, less than half agreed that stories matched the songs. In both the pre- and post-tests, many participants pointed out that music videos were fantasy-based and designed to entertain and sell records.

The overwhelming majority, in both surveys, believed that the general focus of the camera was on female and male bodies, over all else. And, in both surveys, the majority of respondents thought that females in music videos were portrayed as beautiful and flirtatious, above all else. Most respondents in both surveys reported that the occupations/roles of females in music videos were to serve, support, and please males. The vast majority did not believe that the occupations/roles of women in music videos were actually characteristic of most females. The majority of respondents in both surveys also thought that the ways that females dressed in music videos was not characteristic of the ways most females actually dress. Furthermore, most respondents in both surveys reported that the ways in which females dressed in music videos did not influence their choice of dress.

Most respondents, in both the pre- and post-tests also agreed with Jhally (1995) that most music videos take place in bedrooms, in water, nightclubs, and bars.
And finally, the overwhelming majority of respondents in both the pre- and post-test believed that the portrayals of female behavior in music videos were not actually characteristic of most females. At this point, a summary of the major changes in participants' responses after watched *Dreamworlds II* is in order.

**Major Changes in Responses After Viewing *Dreamworlds II***

First of all, following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, while half as many participants in the post-test said that they watched music videos daily, more admitted watching music videos more hours per week, on the weekends. In fact, the numbers of respondents who said that they watched music videos between three to seven hours per week, between the pre- and post-tests actually doubled.

One may speculate that following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, participants' awareness was raised and/or their curiosity peaked, so that they wanted to watch more hours per week. However, given that there was only two days between the showing of *Dreamworlds II* and the post-test, this explanation is not very likely. Why this change in frequency in viewing music videos occurred is unknown.

Second, after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, more participants admitted that most music video stories were about dreams and fantasies and falling in love and less about musical performance than was the case in the pre-test. This change in attitude may or may not be attributed to the viewing of the educational video.

Third, while both males and females reported offensive messages in music videos, only women commented on the negative, demeaning, and stereotypical ways
in which women were portrayed as offensive. Only one African-American woman commented that she would like to see more African-Americans in popular music videos.

Fourth, with regard to the influence of music videos, before viewing *Dreamworlds II*, the majority of respondents stated that music video stories were not attempting to influence their beliefs. The majority also said that the videos did not actually influence their beliefs. However, after viewing *Dreamworlds II*, more admitted that music videos both attempted to and actually did influence their beliefs.

Fifth, following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, more participants reported that women in music video stories were portrayed as both completely emotionally dependent and very emotionally dependent. In addition, following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, more respondents reported that women in music video stories were portrayed as very physically weak and somewhat physically weak. And finally, following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, more respondents reported that women were portrayed sexually aggressive and very sexually aggressive.

Sixth, following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, more participants reported that communication in music videos was non-verbal, while less reported that communication was through verbal and physical arguments. The vast majority of participants did not believe that communication patterns between men and women in music videos was actually characteristic of those in the real world.

Seventh, following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, fewer participants reported that the actors in music video stories seemed real. Moreover, fewer reported
that music video stories were either romantic or realistic. Still fewer respondents reported that the words of the songs matched the action of the video.

Eighth, the largest change in responses regarding the characteristics and behaviors that best described female actors in music videos was that, in the post-test, half as many respondents chose the category 'happy' than in the pre-test. Interestingly, more respondents chose the categories 'shallow,' 'possessive,' 'fearful,' 'dominant,' 'adventuresome,' 'needy,' and 'aggressive' in the post-test.

Ninth, and lastly, following the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, more participants reported that women in music video stories were shown wearing lingerie, bathing suits, pajamas, other revealing clothing or nothing at all (nude).

The findings indicate that there were some differences between the pre- and post-tests. Thus, this implies that respondents were indeed impacted by the educational video. In other words, after viewing the video, respondents' awareness of how women were portrayed in music video stories was slightly higher than the pre-test. Such findings are supported by the fact that the pre- and post-tests were administered back-to-back and, thus, there was little time for the respondents to be influenced by external factors. However, while there were some differences between the pre- and post-tests, such differences could be partially attributed to other factors. Those other factors might include the fact that participants, in an effort to report what they determined the researcher might want to hear, might have changed their responses to accomplish that goal. Furthermore, just because respondents reported changes in responses on a survey questionnaire, does not necessarily mean that they
actually changed their attitudes or beliefs. This brings us to a discussion of the limitations of this study.

Limitations of the Study

It is important to point out that all research has limitations and this study is no exception. As previously stated, the sample was one of convenience and was not intended to be generalized. Another of the major limitations could be in the instrument design. That is, many other questions could have been raised that could have provided additional information not found in this particular study. For instance, respondents were not asked if they had previously seen *Dreamworlds II*.

Furthermore, some of the participants may have had other classes within the sociology, communications, or other departments that taught them about media-generated stereotypical imagery of women. If this were the case, it could also be true that university students might be more aware than others that media-generated stereotypical imagery about women is an intentional construction. Another weakness is that the participants were a group of upper level undergraduate students in a sociology/criminal justice class. One could argue that this particular sample might have been more aware of social constructs than others might have been.

Since the sample was very small, and since many respondents were aware of the stereotypical imagery in the pre-test, one cannot definitely say that *Dreamworlds II* was the cause of the differences between the pre- and post-test. Moreover, since some respondents reported that there were more positive, less stereotypical images of
women and relationships between males and females in music videos today, *Dreamworlds II* may not be as relevant in 1999 as it was in 1995. In terms of time, four years may not seem lengthy, however, when one considers the vast changes in technology and accessibility to the extensive amount of demeaning and violent messages available on the Internet, *Dreamworlds II* may pale in comparison.

Despite this study's limitations, it is encouraging to know that these particular participants were very much aware of the negative ways in which women have been portrayed in music videos in the pre-test. Clearly, more research remains to be conducted, particularly with younger participants, on the effects of media-generated representations of women. This study touches only on a small portion of this debate. Recommendations for future studies will be addressed following the next section on strategies for change.

**Strategies for Change**

Brown and Steele (1995) suggest that it is not unrealistic to use mass media to promote healthy and responsible behavior. Media can be used to positively affect healthy behavior through public information campaigns, media advocacy, and entertainment education. Socially responsible representations of women can be promoted on television, in movies, in music videos, and in radio programming.

hooks (1996 and 1997) adds that we cannot hope to transform our culture without (a) committing ourselves fully to resisting and eradicating patriarchy, (b) providing artistic diversity, and (c) eradicating illiteracy. In order to accomplish
these goals, we must be pro-active, which requires a greater level of literacy. In this sense, the movement for literacy is radical political action (hooks, 1997).

Ciriello (1993) advocates protesting media images of women that are sexist and misogynist. Some of the strategies she suggests include writing letters, making telephone calls, conducting boycotts and lectures, producing local newsletters, and participating in demonstrations or pickets. Musa Moore-Foster (1993) adds that each of us must speak out against the depiction of violence and all forms of shaming of women. We need a new vocabulary for intimacy and to teach young men, at the earliest feasible age, how to interact with women in ways that are not exploitative.

On the other hand, Clarke (1993) advocates a more radical approach: violent resistance to violence against women. Because, "for the sexist, violence is the necessary and logical part of the unequal, exploitative relationship. In order to dominate and control, sexism requires violence" (Clarke, 1993:353). She says that sometimes a demonstration of violent rage accomplishes what years of prayers, petitions, and protests cannot: it gets taken seriously. She also acknowledges and cautions that violent response can also get one labeled crazy and/or institutionalized.

While Clark (1993) admits that she is not particularly attracted to images of anyone being hurt, she does see potential value in fiction and film on the theme of women taking violent means of vengeance on rapists and femicides. Clarke (1993) also asserts that if violence is considered so terribly wrong when committed by women, then it should be seen as terribly wrong when committed by men. One
benefit of promoting vengeance by women in mass media is the assertion of female personal honor; yet another is the shock value.

Clarke's (1993) argument raises an important question. That is, if women are depicted as more violent in the media, will the world actually become a more violent place? Clarke answers:

Perhaps, but it's not a simple equation of addition. We will have to subtract any violence that women prevent. So, we will have to subtract a large number of rapes and daily humiliations suffered by women who today cannot or will not defend themselves (Clarke, 1993:403).

She also believes that the notion that violence never solves anything is a myth.

Violence definitely solves some things . . . violence is a glamorous commercial property in our time . . . a tool, an addiction, a sin, a desperate resort, or a hobby, depending on where you look and whom you ask (Clarke, 1993:403).

On another note, according to Buchwald and colleagues, (1993), we must look at the bigger picture. The bigger picture, according to these authors is social reconstruction. If people truly wish to transform culture, basic institutions such as language, kinship, religion, governance, and education must be dismantled and replaced with new tools. However, reconstruction is no small matter. Admittedly, there are undeniable impediments to change and often the major obstruction to change is a lack of power to name our experiences and perceptions. That is, naming an experience or perception may not be an option for many because they have no name to give it. However, when the media, through representation, offer an image, naming pours forth and change is then possible.
With this in mind, if we truly want the media to reflect both male and female perspectives (equalize the playing field), we face a struggle over definition or constructing meaning (Buchwald et al., 1993; Gamman and Marshment, 1989). But in a patriarchal society, why would the dominant group want to share power? Unfortunately, as the late Audre Lorde pointed out, the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house (Buchwald et al., 1993).

Short of social reconstruction, Parenti (1992) offers more immediate and available strategies. He suggests that in order to subvert changes we need to exercise the limited consumer sovereignty available to us by voting with our pocketbooks and refusing to attend slick, superficial Hollywood movies. We need to stop sacrificing large portions of our lives to television. We need to rediscover or discover community activities with others. We can drop out of the mass-media culture as much as possible and reclaim our own brains and sensibilities.

Parenti (1992) adds that we must organize politically to pressure the media into creating better, more politically diverse offerings. Women's groups, labor unions, ethnic and environmental organizations and politically dissident groups must exert direct pressure upon the media by demanding better programming and voice our support and encouragement when superior films and programs are created. The goal is not censorship, but to broaden and deepen choices. "By creating larger and stronger realms of political protest, we create more legitimacy for representations of realities that are so often suppressed" (Parenti, 1992:212). Why is resistance so
important? In Parenti's (1992:213) opinion, "the struggle against corporate cultural hegemony is an important part of the struggle for political democracy itself."

The Female or Oppositional Gaze

"Changing how we see images is clearly one way to change the world" (hooks, 1996:6). hooks (1996) suggests that we develop an oppositional (female) gaze, which admittedly is no small task. Some authors note that because our minds are so engrained in dichotomist thinking (colonized by patriarchal ideology), when women have reversed the relation to appropriate the gaze for our own pleasure, we simply reinforce the dominant system of aligning sexual difference with a subject/object dichotomy (hooks, 1996; Gamman and Marshment, 1989). Jhally (1995) discusses this problem when he considers the dilemma female artists face in making music videos.

As previously discussed herein, when female artists are behind the cameras and in the director's chairs, non-conformance has very real consequences that may negatively impact their success and/or earning potentials (Jhally, 1995). Because of this economic bind, alienation from the music video industry carries a heavy price and presents a real predicament for female artists. However, Gamman and Marshment (1989) offer hope. They believe that feminists can intervene in the mainstream to make women's meanings part of commonsense, or rather convert commonsense into good sense. These authors assert that feminists have always engaged with the minutiae of language and culture. Therefore, if women can change
the language of popular media, then perhaps we can re-appropriate it for our own purposes. Women should engage in a revolution with language, one that refuses all roles and demands ungendered speech. To obtain a better understanding of the impact of alternative perspectives, there is a real need for additional research.

Future Studies

Given the fact that this study was comprised of a small convenience sample, future studies might focus on a larger random sample and include younger, less educated participants. For instance, because many studies lend support to the idea that cultural messages influence perceptions, it would be worthwhile and add to the body of research findings on media effects to determine how grade school, junior high school, and high school children perceive the stories told in music videos and determine whether or not they believe that they are influenced by them. Because Jhally (1995) cites statistics that tie damaging sexual imagery of women in music video stories to our culture's tolerance of aggression toward women, it would be most informative to include in such study, questions regarding perceptions about aggression toward women, rape, and date rape.

Conversely, it would be equally beneficial to learn how adults, at any level of education and of any age, perceive the messages found in music videos. These studies could help to determine any alleged influences music video message have upon the viewing audience, as well as investigate whether or not the messages are indeed changing.
Moreover, because there have been assertions that the roles of women in music videos are changing, it would be informative to analyze current videos. One might record a number of popular videos (e.g., top ten) across a variety of music genres. A content analysis could be conducted, in an effort to determine major themes. An analysis of such recordings would be informative and might reveal whether there are more positive representations of women in music video than stereotypical portrayals.

Lastly, it would be advantageous to conduct a study of focus groups whereby participants were shown *Dreamworlds II*, and then asked to critique the video. This could be done in an effort to determine if those same negative and stereotypical themes that Jhally (1995) asserts were dominant in dreamworld videos (prior to 1995) still hold true today. Turning now from future studies, it is equally important to note the overall benefits of this project.

**Overall Benefits of the Current Study**

This project has provided a wealth of information and raises many questions. First, while we cannot be confident that the differences between the pre- and post-tests were due to the viewing of *Dreamworlds II*, there is some indication that the participants were indeed influenced. Second, based on this conclusion, one could reasonably argue a number of things. For one, *Dreamworlds II* may be viewed as an alternative media and because there were differences in the pre- and post-tests, this may indicate that when people are given alternatives, they do change their views. For
another, because only female respondents pointed out the stereotypical and demeaning ways in which women were portrayed in music video stories, more education about media-generated representations is needed. Everyone could benefit from greater awareness and the development of critical thinking skills.

Third, because only African-American female respondents commented about the lack of African-Americans in popular music videos and the negative portrayals of African-Americans when they were present in music video stories, this is an indication that there has not been enough change in minority representation in the media.

Fourth, while there have been some changes over the last several years in portraying women in a more positive light, overall, the changes appear small. They appear small in this study because respondents did not give much feedback about positive imagery. On the contrary, both the pre- and post-tests revealed that respondents believed that the portrayals of women in music video were largely demeaning, with few exceptions. Also, as mentioned above, some did comment on the lack of minority representation. Both of these factors may be an indication that dominant racist patriarchal ideology remains intact in the music video industry, despite the claims that messages have changed or are changing. Furthermore, if messages are changing, are they changing enough to offset years of demeaning and stereotypical representation? Even more, are media-generated representations perceived as a problem?
Fifth and finally, the comments in the post-test indicated that more respondents believed that the videos were not realistic and were more about dreams and fantasies than musical performance. This may indicate that respondents do not view the negative portrayals of women as a serious problem. If music videos are seen as merely entertainment and not meant to be realistic, as several commented, then demeaning and stereotypical imagery may not be taken seriously. This may also be a further indication that more education about media-generated representations is needed, which leads us to a discussion of recommendations.

Recommendations

Since we cannot conclude definitively that *Dreamworlds II* did, in fact, change respondents' perspectives, and since there could be potential harm in dismissing music videos as fantasy-based entertainment not to be taken seriously, my first recommendation would be additional research. Using focus groups, participants could watch *Dreamworlds II* and then critique its relevance and discuss possible negative outcomes as well as potential solutions.

My second recommendation would be to focus greater education on media-generated representations. This is particularly important since none of the male respondents commented that the portrayals of women in music video stories were offensive. This may not mean that male respondents did not find demeaning messages of women offensive or that they were unaware of them, but one could argue
that their silence may have been an indication that they were not cognizant of the problem.

My third recommendation would be to increase education about social inequalities based on race, gender, and class. Educators could offer students the opportunities to raise critical questions and discuss these issues in class. Educators could also provide and promote information about how students can participate in political activities that could lead to changes in media representations of women and minorities.

My final recommendation is that educators continue their efforts in raising critical questions about the effects of media-generated representations of women and minorities, while discouraging students from passing them off as mere entertainment. We need not only information, but encouragement and support in order to develop alternative mediums by which all human beings are portrayed with dignity, respect, and an appreciation of their own individual uniqueness.
Appendix A

Protocol Clearance From the Human Subjects
Institutional Review Board
Date: 19 February 1999

To: Susan Caringella-MacDonald, Principal Investigator
Jan Urbina, Student Investigator for thesis

From: Sylvia Culp, Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 98-12-14

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled “Images of Women in Music Videos” has been approved under the expedited category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may only conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: 19 February 2000
Appendix B

Classroom Script Dated March 15, 1999
Hello, my name is Jan Urbina from the Sociology Department at Western Michigan University. Dr. Caringella-MacDonald and I are conducting a research project entitled *An Exploratory Study of Women in Music Videos*.

As a convenience sample, your class was selected to participate in this study, which is designed to determine how women are portrayed in music videos. This project is being conducted as part of my thesis requirements and students over the age of 18 are invited to participate. If you choose to participate in this study, when filling out the questionnaire, please feel free to write in any comments or choose more than one answer wherever applicable.

Your answers are important to us and will be strictly anonymous. By providing answers, you are indicating your consent to use those answers. You do not have to answer any question that you do not wish to answer and you may choose to withdraw at any time. Participating in or refusing to participate in this research will have no effect on your grades or your relationship with Western Michigan University in any way.

If you choose to participate, the survey contains 48 questions, 22 are yes/no; 20 are multiple-choice, and 6 are open-ended. It will take you approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, you may call Dr. Susan Caringella-MacDonald at 616-387-5279, the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 616-387-8293 or the vice president for research at 616-387-8298. Should you experience any emotional discomfort in completing this survey, you may contact Western Michigan University Counseling Center at 616-387-1850.

Anyone under age 18 is excused from participating.

[Hand out Questionnaires]

[Collect Questionnaires]

Thank you for your participation.
Appendix C

Letter of Introduction Welcoming Participation
Dated March 15, 1999
March 15, 1999

Dear Western Michigan University Student:

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled *An Exploratory Study of Women in Music Videos* designed to determine how women are portrayed in popular culture via music videos. One of the goals of this project is to examine the images music videos portray. Dr. Susan Caringella-MacDonald and Jan Urbina from Western Michigan University, Department of Sociology are conducting this project. This project is being conducted as part of the thesis requirement for Jan Urbina.

You will be given a survey that is comprised of forty-eight (48) questions—twenty-two (22) yes/no, twenty (20) multiple-choice, and six (6) open ended—and will take you approximately fifteen to twenty (15-20) minutes to complete. Your replies will be voluntary and completely anonymous, so please do not put your name anywhere on the form. You may choose not to answer any question and simply leave it blank. Participating in or refusing to participate in this research will have no effect on your grades or your relationship with Western Michigan University. If you choose not to participate in this survey, you may either return the blank survey or discard it. Returning the survey indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply. If you have any questions, you may contact Dr. Susan Caringella-MacDonald at (616) 387-5279, Jan Urbina at (616) 387-5989, the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at (616) 387-8293, or the vice president for research at (616) 387-8298. Should you experience any emotional discomfort in completing this survey you may contact the Western Michigan University Counseling Center at (616) 387-1850 for information or assistance.

This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) as indicated by the stamped date and the board chair's signature in the upper right-hand corner of this letter. You should not participate in this project if the corner does not have a stamped date and signature.

Thank you for your voluntary participation.

Jan Urbina
Appendix D

Classroom Script Dated March 19, 1999
Hello, my name is Jan Urbina from the Sociology Department at Western Michigan University. As most of you already know, Dr. Caringella-MacDonald and I are conducting a research project entitled *An Exploratory Study of Women in Music Videos*.

As a convenience sample, your class was selected to participate in this study, which is designed to determine how women are portrayed in music videos. This project is being conducted as part of my thesis requirements and those students over the age of 18 who participated in the survey on March 15, 1999 and viewed *Dreamworlds II* on March 17, 1999 are invited to participate. If you choose to participate in this final portion of the study, when filling out the questionnaire, please feel free to write in any comments or choose more than one answer wherever applicable.

Your answers are important to us and will be strictly anonymous. By providing answers, you are indicating your consent to use those answers. You do not have to answer any question that you do not wish to answer and you may choose to withdraw at any time. Participating in or refusing to participate in this research will have no effect on your grades or your relationship with Western Michigan University in any way.

If you choose to participate, the survey contains 48 questions, 22 are yes/no; 20 are multiple-choice, and 6 are open-ended. It will take you approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, you may call Dr. Susan Caringella-MacDonald at 616-387-5279, the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 616-387-8293 or the vice president for research at 616-387-8298. Should you experience any emotional discomfort in completing this survey, you may contact Western Michigan University Counseling Center at 616-387-1850.

Anyone who did not participate in the study on March 15, 1999 and did not watch *Dreamworlds II* on March 17, 1999 is excused from participating.

[Hand out Questionnaires]

[Collect Questionnaires]

Thank you for your participation.
Appendix E

Letter of Introduction Welcoming Participation
Dated March '19, 1999
March 19, 1999

Dear Western Michigan University Student:

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled An Exploratory Study of Women in Music Videos designed to determine how women are portrayed in popular culture via music videos. One of the goals of this project is to examine the images music videos portray. Dr. Susan Caringella-MacDonald and Jan Urbina from Western Michigan University, Department of Sociology are conducting this project. This project is being conducted as part of the thesis requirement for Jan Urbina.

Participation in this survey is open to those of you, over age 18, who participated in the March 15, 1999 survey and watched Dreamworlds II on March 17, 1999, and wish to continue to participate. Today you will be given a survey that is comprised of forty-eight (48) questions—twenty-two (22) yes/no, twenty (20) multiple-choice, and six (6) open ended—and will take you approximately fifteen to twenty (15-20) minutes to complete. Your replies will be voluntary and completely anonymous, so please do not put your name anywhere on the form. You may choose not to answer any question and simply leave it blank. If you choose not to participate in this survey, you may either return the blank survey or discard it. Participating in or refusing to participate in this research will have no effect on your grades or your relationship with Western Michigan University. Returning the survey indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply.

If you have any questions, you may contact Dr. Susan Caringella-MacDonald at (616) 387-5279, Jan Urbina at (616) 387-5989, the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at (616) 387-8293, or the vice president for research at (616) 387-8298. Should you experience any emotional discomfort in completing this survey you may contact the Western Michigan University Counseling Center at (616) 387-1850 for information or assistance.

This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) as indicated by the stamped date and the board chair's signature in the upper right-hand corner of this letter. You should not participate in this project if the corner does not have a stamped date and signature.

Thank you for your voluntary participation.

Jan Urbina
Appendix F

Survey Questionnaire Dated March 15, 1999
Please do not put your name anywhere on this questionnaire.

ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE
An exploratory study of women in music videos

Please read each question carefully and choose which answer or answers best describe your response. Please feel free to write in any other responses or choose more than one answer if applicable.

1. Do you watch music videos?
   Yes ____  No ____  (If No, please skip to question number 45)

2. What kind of music videos do you prefer to watch?
   Alternative ____  Rock ____  Rap ____
   Country ____  Easy listening ____  Christian ____
   Heavy metal ____  Other, please specify: ____________________

3. How frequently do you watch music videos?
   Daily ____  A few times a week ____  Weekends ____

4. On average, how many hours per week do you watch music videos?
   Under one hour ____  Between one and three hours ____
   Between three and seven hours ____  More than seven hours ____

5. Do you usually watch music videos alone?
   Yes ____  No ____

6. Do you usually watch music videos in a focused way, rather than just background while doing other things?
   Yes ____  No ____

7. What do you like best about music videos? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Words/lyrics ____  Nudity ____
   Beat/sound ____  Violence ____
   Action/performance ____  Sexual images ____
   Interpretation of songs ____  The way people dress ____
   into images or stories ____  Romance ____
   they present ____  Use of or references ____
   The way people dress ____  to alcohol ____
   Special effects/animation ____
   Social and/or political messages ____
   Use of or references to drugs ____
Other (please specify):

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<tr>
<th>8. What do you like least about music videos? (Choose as many that apply.)</th>
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<td><strong>Words/lyrics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Beat/sound</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Action/performance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Interpretation of songs into images or stories they present</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The way people dress</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Special effects/animation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social and/or political messages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other (please specify):</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>9. What do you believe most music video stories are about?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Musical performance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Breaking up</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fighting over a female</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Family relationships</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dreams and fantasies</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Other (please specify):</strong></td>
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<th>10. Are there anything in music video stories that you find offensive when watching them?</th>
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<td>Yes ____ No ____</td>
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<th>11. If you answered yes, please explain what you find offensive when watching music videos:</th>
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<th>12. Do you believe that music video stories attempt to influence your beliefs?</th>
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<td>Yes ____ No ____</td>
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13. Do music video stories actually influence your beliefs?
   Yes _____  No _____

14. Do you believe that portrayals of female behavior in music video stories are actually characteristic of most females' behaviors?
   Yes _____  No _____

15. In general, in music video stories how are females portrayed emotionally with regard to intimate relationships with males?
   Not at all emotionally dependent on males _____
   Somewhat emotionally dependent on males _____
   Completely emotionally dependent on males _____
   Neutral _____
   Somewhat emotionally independent of males _____
   Very emotionally independent of males _____

16. Do you believe that the ways in which females are portrayed emotionally in music videos—with regard to their intimate relationships with males—is actually characteristic of most females?
   Yes _____  No _____

17. In general, in music video stories, how are females portrayed physically?
   Very weak _____  Very strong _____
   Somewhat weak _____  Somewhat strong _____
   Neutral _____

18. Do you believe that the ways in which females are generally portrayed physically in music videos is actually characteristic of most females?
   Yes _____  No _____

19. In general, in music video stories, how are females portrayed sexually?
   Very sexually passive _____  Very sexually aggressive _____
   Somewhat sexually passive _____  Somewhat sexually aggressive _____
   Sexually passive _____  Sexually aggressive _____
   Neutral _____  Sexually aggressive _____

20. Do you believe that the ways in which females are generally portrayed sexually in music videos is actually characteristic of most females?
   Yes _____  No _____

21. In general, in music video stories do most female actors appear to enjoy being watched by others?
   Yes _____  No _____
22. If you answered yes—most female actors generally appear to enjoy being watched by others in music video stories—do you believe this is actually characteristic of most females?
Yes ______ No ______

23. In general, in music video stories do most female actors appear to enjoy being watched by others when they are dressing or undressing?
Yes ______ No ______

24. If you answered yes—most female actors appear to enjoy being watched by others when they are dressing or undressing in music video stories—do you believe this is actually characteristic of most females?
Yes ______ No ______

25. In general, in music videos stories how do male and female actors most often communicate with one another? (Choose as many that apply.)
Direct verbal communication ______ Arguments (verbal/physical) ______
(non argumentative) ______ Communication through ______
Non-verbal communication ______ others (like friends) ______
(such as gestures/touching) ______ Other: ________________________________

26. Do you believe that the ways in which male and female actors generally communicate with one another in music video stories is actually characteristic of most male and female communication?
Yes ______ No ______

27. In music video stories, do the actors seem real?
Yes ______ No ______

28. If you think the actors do not seem real, why? Please explain:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

29. In general, in music video stories do you believe that the stories are romantic?
Yes ______ No ______

30. If you answered yes, music video stories are romantic, what about them do you find romantic?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
31. In general, in music videos do you believe that the stories are realistic?
   Yes _____  No _____

32. If you answered yes, music video stories are realistic, what about them do you find realistic?

33. In general, in music videos do the stories enacted match the words of the songs?
   Yes _____  No _____

34. If you answered no—the stories enacted do not match the words of the songs—what do you believe is the significance of the stories being acted out?

35. In music videos, what does the camera mostly focus on? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Musician(s) _____  Males' bodies _____
   Setting/environment _____  Males' faces _____
   Females' bodies _____  Audience _____
   Females' faces _____  Backup performers _____
   Other _____

36. In music video stories that feature female actors, what does the camera generally focus on? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Artistic talent _____  Character/role _____
   Facial features _____  Movements/Dance _____
   Other objects _____  Occupation _____
   Physical body _____  Relationships with others _____
   Other _____

37. Overall, which characteristics and behaviors best describe female actors in music videos? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Adventurous _____  Affectionate _____  Aggressive _____
   Angry _____  Assertive _____  Beautiful _____
   Caring _____  Childlike _____  Cold _____
   Confident _____  Criminal _____  Demanding _____
   Dependent _____  Desperate _____  Devious _____
38. In music video stories, do you believe that the characteristics and behaviors of female actors are actually characteristic of most females?
Yes _____  No _____

39. What are the most typical occupations/roles of female actors in the music video stories?

40. Do you believe that the occupations/roles of female actors reflected in music video stories are actually characteristic of most females?
Yes_____  No_____

41. What do female actors in the music video stories typically wear? (Choose as many that apply.)
Athletic-wear _____  Bathing suit _____
Business Suite _____  Dresses _____
Formalwear _____  High heel shoes _____
Jeans _____  Leather _____
Lingerie _____  Nothing (Nude) _____
Pajamas _____  Other revealing clothing _____
Mini-skirts/short shorts _____  Tee-shirt _____
Work boots _____
Other, please specify: ____________________________

42. Do you believe that the way female actors dress in music videos is actually characteristic of the way most females dress?
Yes_____  No_____
43. Do the ways in which female actors dress in music videos influence your choice of dress?
   Not at all ______  To a fairly large degree ______
   Somewhat ______  Completely ______
   Does not apply ______

44. What are the most typical environments in which music video stories take place? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Bar ______  Bathroom ______  Beach ______
   Bedroom ______  Crime Scene ______  Field ______
   Kitchen ______  Motel/hotel ______  Night club ______
   Office ______  Parking lot ______  Restaurant ______
   School ______  Store ______  Street ______
   Studio ______  Swimming pool ______
   Other, please specify below:

45. What is your age? ______

46. What is your gender? Male____  Female ______

47. Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity?
   African-American ______  Alaskan Native ______
   American Indian ______  Asian-American ______
   Caucasian ______  Hispanic ______
   Multiracial ______  Pacific Islander ______
   International/Non-US Resident ______
   Other, please specify _______

48. Please choose the answer that best describes the socio-economic status of your family of origin (parents, guardians, etc.):
   Working class ______  Middle class ______  Upper class ______

Thank you for your cooperation and participation!
Appendix G

Survey Questionnaire Dated March 19, 1999
March 19, 1999

Please do not put your name anywhere on this questionnaire.

ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE
An exploratory study of women in music videos

Please read each question carefully and choose which answer or answers best describe your response. Please feel free to write in any other responses or choose more than one answer if applicable.

1. Do you watch music videos?
   Yes _____  No _____ (If No, please skip to question number 45)

2. What kind of music videos do you prefer to watch?
   Alternative _____  Rock _____  Rap _____
   Country _____  Easy listening _____  Christian _____
   Heavy metal _____  Other, please specify: ____________

3. How frequently do you watch music videos?
   Daily _____  A few times a week _____  Weekends _____

4. On average, how many hours per week do you watch music videos?
   Under one hour _____  Between one and three hours _____
   Between three and seven hours _____  More than seven hours _____

5. Do you usually watch music videos alone?
   Yes _____  No _____

6. Do you usually watch music videos in a focused way, rather than just background while doing other things?
   Yes _____  No _____

7. What do you like best about music videos? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Words/lyrics _____  Nudity _____
   Beat/sound _____  Violence _____
   Action/performance _____  Sexual images _____
   Interpretation of songs _____  The way people dress _____
   into images or stories _____  Romance _____
   they present _____  Use of or references _____
   The way people dress _____  to alcohol _____
   Special effects/animation _____
   Social and/or political messages _____
   Use of or references to drugs _____
8. What do you like least about music videos? (Choose as many that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words/lyrics</td>
<td>Nudity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beat/sound</td>
<td>Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action/performance</td>
<td>Sexual images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of songs</td>
<td>The way people dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>into images or stories</td>
<td>Romance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they present</td>
<td>Use of or references</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way people dress</td>
<td>to alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special effects/animation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and/or political messages</td>
<td>Use of or references to drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. What do you believe most music video stories are about?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musical performance</td>
<td>Falling in love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking up</td>
<td>Getting dumped on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting over a female</td>
<td>Fighting over a male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family relationships</td>
<td>Friendships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreams and fantasies</td>
<td>Sexual relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Are there anything in music video stories that you find offensive when watching them?
Yes _____ No _____

11. If you answered yes, please explain what you find offensive when watching music videos:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offensive Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Do you believe that music video stories attempt to influence your beliefs?
Yes _____ No _____

13. Do music video stories actually influence your beliefs?
Yes _____ No _____
14. Do you believe that portrayals of female behavior in music video stories are actually characteristic of most females' behaviors?
Yes ___ No ___

15. In general, in music video stories how are females portrayed emotionally with regard to intimate relationships with males?
Not at all emotionally dependent on males ___
Somewhat emotionally dependent on males ___
Completely emotionally dependent on males ___
Neutral ___
Somewhat emotionally independent of males ___
Very emotionally independent of males ___

16. Do you believe that the ways in which females are portrayed emotionally in music videos—with regard to their intimate relationships with males—is actually characteristic of most females?
Yes ___ No ___

17. In general, in music video stories, how are females portrayed physically?
Very weak ___ Very strong ___
Somewhat weak ___ Somewhat strong ___
Neutral ___

18. Do you believe that the ways in which females are generally portrayed physically in music videos is actually characteristic of most females?
Yes ___ No ___

19. In general, in music video stories, how are females portrayed sexually?
Very sexually passive ___ Very sexually aggressive ___
Somewhat sexually passive ___ Somewhat sexually aggressive ___
Sexually passive ___ Sexually aggressive ___
Neutral ___

20. Do you believe that the ways in which females are generally portrayed sexually in music videos is actually characteristic of most females?
Yes ___ No ___

21. In general, in music video stories do most female actors appear to enjoy being watched by others?
Yes ___ No ___
22. If you answered yes—most female actors generally appear to enjoy being watched by others in music video stories—do you believe this is actually characteristic of most females?
   Yes _____ No _____

23. In general, in music video stories do most female actors appear to enjoy being watched by others when they are dressing or undressing?
   Yes _____ No _____

24. If you answered yes—most female actors appear to enjoy being watched by others when they are dressing or undressing in music video stories—do you believe this is actually characteristic of most females?
   Yes _____ No _____

25. In general, in music videos stories how do male and female actors most often communicate with one another? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Direct verbal communication Arguments (verbal/physical) ______
   (non argumentative) ______ Communication through ______
   Non-verbal communication others (like friends) ______
   (such as gestures/touching) ______
   Other: ____________________________

26. Do you believe that the ways in which male and female actors generally communicate with one another in music video stories is actually characteristic of most male and female communication?
   Yes _____ No _____

27. In music video stories, do the actors seem real?
   Yes _____ No _____

28. If you think the actors do not seem real, why? Please explain:
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

29. In general, in music video stories do you believe that the stories are romantic?
   Yes _____ No _____

30. If you answered yes, music video stories are romantic, what about them do you find romantic?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
31. In general, in music videos do you believe that the stories are realistic?
   Yes _____  No _____

32. If you answered yes, music video stories are realistic, what about them do you find realistic?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

33. In general, in music videos do the stories enacted match the words of the songs?
   Yes _____  No _____

34. If you answered no—the stories enacted do not match the words of the songs—what do you believe is the significance of the stories being acted out?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

35. In music videos, what does the camera mostly focus on? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Musician(s) _____  Males' bodies _____
   Setting/environment _____ Males' faces _____
   Females' bodies _____  Audience _____
   Females' faces _____  Backup performers _____
   Other ____________________________

36. In music video stories that feature female actors, what does the camera generally focus on? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Artistic talent _____  Character/role _____
   Facial features _____  Movements/Dance _____
   Other objects _____  Occupation _____
   Physical body _____  Relationships with others _____
   Other ____________________________

37. Overall, which characteristics and behaviors best describe female actors in music videos? (Choose as many that apply.)
   Adventuresome _____  Affectionate _____  Aggressive _____
   Angry _____  Assertive _____  Beautiful _____
   Caring _____  Childlike _____  Cold _____
   Confident _____  Criminal _____  Demanding _____
   Dependent _____  Desperate _____  Devious _____
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Educated</th>
<th>Exhibitionist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>Flirtatious</td>
<td>Fun-loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Innocent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecure</td>
<td>Insensitive</td>
<td>Intellectual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealous</td>
<td>Lazy</td>
<td>Lonely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needy</td>
<td>Nurturing</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive</td>
<td>Promiscuous</td>
<td>Sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually pursued</td>
<td>Sexually pursuing</td>
<td>Shallow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiteful</td>
<td>Talented</td>
<td>Thin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimized</td>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>Unattractive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38. In music video stories, do you believe that the characteristics and behaviors of female actors are actually characteristic of most females?
   Yes _____ No _____

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   Dresses
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   Leather
   Nothing (Nude)
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Thank you for your cooperation and participation!
BIBLIOGRAPHY


