

MEDIA EDUCATION
FOUNDATION
STUDY GUIDE

DREAMWORLDS 3:

DESIRE, SEX & POWER IN MUSIC VIDEO

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NOTE TO TEACHERS

This study guide is designed to help you and your students engage and manage the information presented in this video. Given that it can be difficult to teach visual content—and difficult for students to recall detailed information from videos after viewing them—the intention here is to give you a tool to help your students slow down and deepen their thinking about the specific issues this video addresses. With this in mind, we’ve structured the guide so that you have the option of focusing in depth on one section of the video at a time. We’ve also set it up to help you stay close to the video’s main line of argument as it unfolds. The structure of the guide therefore mirrors the structure of the video, moving through each of the video’s sections with a series of key summary points, questions, and assignments specific to that section.

Pre-viewing Discussion Questions are designed to inspire preliminary discussion about the issues the video addresses prior to viewing.

Key Points provide a concise and comprehensive summary of each section of the video. They are designed to make it easier for you and your students to recall the details of the video during class discussions, and as a reference point for students as they work on assignments.

Questions for Discussion & Writing provide a series of questions designed to help you review and clarify material for your students; to encourage students to reflect critically on this material during class discussions; and to prompt and guide their written reactions to the video before and after these discussions. These questions can therefore be used in different ways: as guideposts for class discussion, as a framework for smaller group discussion and presentations, or as self-standing, in-class writing assignments (i.e. as prompts for “free-writing” or in-class reaction papers in which students are asked to write spontaneously and informally while the video is fresh in their mind).

Assignments for each section encourage students to engage the video in more depth—by conducting research, working on individual and group projects, putting together presentations, and composing formal essays. These assignments are designed to challenge students to show command of the material presented in the video, to think critically and independently about this material from a number of different perspectives, and to develop and defend their own point of view on the issues at stake.

OVERVIEW

In this second update of 1991's groundbreaking *Dreamworlds*, Sut Jhally critically examines the representation of women, men, and sexuality in music videos. Jhally's primary argument is that music videos, not unlike other forms of advertising and popular culture, represent the pornographic imagination by offering a degraded and limited view of female sexuality based on narrowly defined adolescent heterosexual male fantasies. Locating the stories and images of music video in a wider context, the film explores how American popular culture, more generally, encourages and excuses men's violence against women, and argues that we need a wider range of stories about femininity, masculinity, and sexuality.

Special Note: This video features images of graphic, sexualized violence. It is important that educators preview the film prior to screening it with their students. It is also advised that ample time for discussion of the impact of these images is allowed at each screening.

PRE-VIEWING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you watch music videos? Why or why not? When you do watch them do you enjoy them? What are some of your favorite music videos? Why do you like those particular videos?
2. Have you ever thought about how music videos portray men, women, and sexuality? What are your initial thoughts about this? How do you think music videos define and portray "femininity"? What stories do music videos tell about female sexuality? How do you think music videos define and portray "masculinity"? What stories do music videos tell about male sexuality? What stories do music videos tell about race? Why do you think certain stories are told but not others?
3. Compare the experience of knowing a song without knowing its video to knowing both the song and the video.

INTRODUCTION (3:40)

KEY POINTS

- Since MTV debuted in 1981 music videos have become a central part of our popular culture. They are now found on multiple television channels, in many different media, and across most genres of music. The images and stylistic conventions of music video have influenced other types of film, television, and advertising.
- Music videos essentially function as advertising for the recording industry and, like other forms advertising, have long relied on provocative images of female sexuality to attract viewer attention.
- Across the media culture— in movies, television, advertising, and more—stories that link women’s identities with their bodies and sexuality are everywhere. However, these stories are especially prevalent, and intense, in music videos.
- Looking closely at the stories music videos tell about both male and female sexuality provides us with insights into our own identities, and helps us understand what the culture teaches about what it means to be a “normal” man or a woman.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Sut Jhally say that music videos are advertisements? Have you ever thought of them in this way? Do you agree with this statement? How does looking at them as ads help us to understand their functions and the role they play in our culture?
2. Why do you think graphic images of female sexuality are so common in popular culture? Other than in music videos, where else do you find these sorts of images?
3. What does it mean to say that music videos tell a story about male and female sexuality?

4. Do you think that aspects of your own identity have been shaped by media images and stories? In what ways? Are your friends and peers influenced by media? How?
5. In the previous question, if you said that you are not very strongly influenced by media but your friends are, why do you think so many people seem to believe this? What does it say to you that so many people seem to believe that others are influenced more than they, themselves, are?
6. Market research drives a lot of what appears in music videos. This means that much of what you see is designed to sell something—whether it is specific products, ideas, or attitudes. Other than CDs, downloads, concert tickets, or band merchandise, what do you think music videos are designed to sell?
7. How does what Jhally defines as the Dreamworld of music video differ from or echo the “dreamworlds” of other advertising genres?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Cut out 3 or 4 magazine ads that feature pictures of men and women. Tape your ads to the walls of the classroom and then walk around and look at what everyone else brought in. Participate in a group discussion on any patterns you detect. What consistent stories about gender are told in these ads? How do these images compare to the images in music videos?
2. Interview other students about their use of music videos. Do they enjoy them? How often do they watch? What do they think of the images used? What do they think of how men and women are depicted? Do they think their own ideas about gender and sexuality have been influenced by music videos and other media? Many people will say no to this last question. If they do, follow up by asking them to explain their answer and where they think their ideas about gender and sex come from. Also, ask them if they think their friends are influenced. Take notes, and write a summary of the results of your interviews. Be prepared to discuss your findings with the rest of the class.
3. MTV now shows very few music videos and instead has developed a roster of reality and game shows, comedy, documentary, and other genres of programming. List and describe the programming MTV features aside from music video. How does this programming tie into or contradict the themes of Dreamworlds 3?

TECHNIQUES OF STORYTELLING (3:00)

KEY POINTS

- Sexualized female bodies are so much a part of music videos that they seem to be everywhere in videos that span the genres of rock, pop, hip-hop, and country. The female body appears so frequently and in such limited ways that it is easy to identify the conventions that are used by video producers.
- The major conventions include:
 - Inserting shots of sexualized women into scenes of band performances. Often this occurs in bizarre ways with the women made up in outlandish costumes. Sometimes the women appear as dancers, sometimes they appear as if they are background musicians, sometimes they are near the band. Producers use this convention more than any other.
 - Showing images of women as members of the audience at live shows. Frequently these women expose their bodies to the band.
 - Hypersexualized women are also shown just hanging around band members. Their only function here is to draw the attention of male viewers and pull them into the fantasy world constructed by the musicians and video producers.
 - Sometimes the women play a key role in the narrative of the video, often playing out standard heterosexual male fantasies such as group sex with multiple women.
- Beyond what may appear in any one video there is a consistent story about masculinity and femininity told by the entire system of music videos. It is therefore crucial to identify what stories about men and women are being told, who is telling these stories, and what the effects of these stories on audiences may be.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think Jhally means by the “conventions” of music videos? How do conventions work? Why are they important? Can you think of other music video conventions besides the ones he mentions in this section of the video?
2. In real life do women act as they do in the conventions of music video? If not, where do you think these ideas – and ideals – may have come from?
3. What do you think is the consistent story about femininity told by music videos? What is the consistent story about masculinity? Why is it urgent to identify these stories, who is telling them, and how we might be affected by them, as Jhally says at the end of this section?
4. Why do you think this film often uses clips of music videos without the original accompanying music? Describe the effect this has on the way you look at these images. Does it change the way you see them? If so, why do you think this is?
5. If sexuality in the Dreamworld is a set of elaborately staged stories, what is it in the real world? Do you think sexuality and intimacy in the real world can exist without role-playing?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Tape a number of music videos or find them on the Internet. Bring them into class and as a group project come up with a list of all of the conventions that you see used repeatedly.
2. Do some research into who is behind the cameras of music videos. Who are the directors, writers, producers, editors, etc.? Do these people share certain characteristics? Who do they work for? Who profits from music video production? Write a short report based on your findings.
3. View 30 minutes of music video programming and keep a detailed log of the standard characters, plot lines, and filmic techniques that are used to represent female sexuality.

CONSTRUCTING FEMININITY (8:50)

KEY POINTS

- Our ideas about what it means to be a man or a woman are not natural, we are not born with them. They come from the culture that surrounds us.
- According to music videos, all that really matters about women is their sexuality.
- This version of female sexuality is defined in very particular ways. Women are depicted as:
 - *Ravenous.* Always aroused, always desiring sex.
 - *Indiscriminate.* They will have sex with any man who is around. They will have sex at any time and in any place: public restrooms, cars, swimming pools, and hot tubs.
 - *Sexually aggressive.* They care only about having sex and will do anything to get it.
- Women in music videos tend to far outnumber men, as the standard adolescent heterosexual male fantasy of multiple sex partners plays out repeatedly.
- Men, meanwhile, hold all the power because women need them so much. When men are not immediately available, women are shown using everyday objects to replace them. And when men are completely absent the women fall apart, unable to cope until the man returns to provide them with purpose in their lives.
- Women in music videos participate in a restricted range of activities, all meant to titillate heterosexual male viewers: stripping, partying, dancing, sunbathing, swimming, washing cars in bikinis and wet t-shirts, mud wrestling, and showering. Water is frequently used as an erotic element just as in standard heterosexual male fantasy images.
- The women in music videos are usually barely dressed and when they do wear clothes they tend to be low-cut and skimpy tops, stockings, and lingerie.

- Women also appear in a limited number of roles, again drawn straight from standard heterosexual male fantasies: cheerleaders, airline stewardesses, hotel maids, naughty nurses, repressed librarians, lustful school teachers and schoolgirls, police women and dominatrixes, and strippers—the latter an especially common role for women in music videos.
- Women are often seen touching, fondling, and making love to other women, even as gay men are completely absent from music videos. This provides a clue to the source of the imagination behind the stories.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. This section of the video states that the images of music videos reflect standard adolescent heterosexual male fantasies. Where do you think those fantasies come from originally? What other sources of these fantasies can be found in the culture? Are these fantasies restricted to adolescents? How are girls' fantasies similar or different? What are the sources of girls' fantasies? Is there an equivalent form of popular culture that caters to the fantasies of adolescent heterosexual females as music videos do for adolescent heterosexual boys? What about for gays and lesbians?
2. What alternative ways of looking at women are possible? What other roles do women play in the real world? Why do you think the roles that do exist in the media world are so restricted?
3. Why does it seem to be the case that sex between women is acceptable in music videos but not sex between men?
4. In our society, we are told that beauty is only skin deep, that the color of a person's skin doesn't count, that "it's what's inside that counts." On the other hand, we treat fashion photography as high culture, spend large amounts of money and time on our appearance, and even use our exterior as a way of communicating ideology or membership in certain social groups. What exactly is the relationship between appearance and inner character?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Create a list of characters and roles allowed women in the Dreamworld. Create a list of characters and roles allowed men in the Dreamworld. Do these two lists hold true for popular media in general, beyond music video? Do they hold true in real life?
2. Create a list of alternative ways that women could be depicted in music videos. In small groups compare your lists and discuss why you think these sorts of images do not usually appear in mainstream music videos.
3. Read *The Beauty Myth* by Naomi Wolf. Think about the issues raised by discussion question #4 above and write a report that applies Wolf's ideas to music videos.

THE PORNOGRAPHIC IMAGINATION (8:45)

KEY POINTS

- Sex between women, commonly referred to as “girl on girl action,” is a mainstay of heterosexual male pornography. In this, and other ways, music videos increasingly resemble pornography.
- Also like pornography, music videos are not just voyeuristic but also misogynistic. Women in music videos are routinely treated with disrespect and disdain and they are sometimes subjected to violence.
- While this is true across music video genres, it is particularly the case in many hip-hop videos. While black women were invisible in the early days of music video, as hip-hop has achieved widespread popularity, black women’s bodies have become a prominent feature in hip-hop videos. However, at the same time they have been reduced to isolated body parts and defined solely through their sexuality.
- For example, in the video “Tip Drill” – a term that refers to women having sex with multiple men in exchange for money -- Nelly swipes a credit card through a woman’s backside. Again and again, hip-hop videos depict men in this way, showing them disdainfully throwing money at black women’s bodies, treating them like strippers and prostitutes.
- Meanwhile, black men are repeatedly portrayed as violent, drunken, misogynistic savages. These distorted images are some of the most racist in media history, harkening back to D.W. Griffith’s controversial 1915 film Birth of a Nation, which justified white supremacy by representing black men as animalistic, boorish abusers of white women.
- As with Birth of a Nation, the controlling forces behind the images of music videos are usually white men. In the case of music video, the power brokers, and ultimate decision makers, are those (primarily) white (primarily) males who run the world’s huge media conglomerates.
- The connection between pornography and music video is made explicit in the Snoop Dogg DVD Diary of a Pimp. This DVD was produced in collaboration with Larry Flynt’s pornography empire, the publishers of Hustler magazine. In the

video, after Snoop Dogg turns a female journalist into a sexual plaything, he looks at the camera and says, "Mission accomplished: another bitch broke."

- But it is not just hip-hop videos that share this relationship with pornography. In rock and pop videos the connections are also obvious. Female porn stars have appeared in music videos, and porn directors have produced music videos.
- In a film called *Backstage Sluts*, male rock stars cavort with porn actresses, and, in an incredibly degrading display of misogyny, the men are shown throwing food at the women's naked bodies.
- The video for the song "Stacey's Mom," by Fountains of Wayne, makes it clear that music videos represent the dream worlds of heterosexual adolescent males as a 15-year-old boy is shown fantasizing about, and masturbating to, images of his girlfriend's supermodel mother.
- The critique of music videos offered in *Dreamworlds 3* is not a moralistic one. The argument is not that sex, and the representation of it, is bad. In fact, the real question is not whether the images of music videos are either good or bad. Instead, the most important questions are about power and control: Whose story is being told? Whose story is not being told? Whose eyes do we see the world through? Whose eyes do we never see the world through? Who's in control of these images? Who's behind the camera? Whose fantasies are shown, and whose fantasies are never seen?
- The point is not that there is too much sex in media and popular culture, but that there is not enough. Meaning, there is not enough diversity, not a wide enough range of alternative images and differing perspectives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree that music videos resemble pornography? Why or why not? Are there other aspects of our culture that also resemble pornography? Do you think that pornography can now be considered mainstream? If so, what does this tell us about our culture?
2. Why do you think so much of pornography (and music video) is about the degradation of women? What do you make of the fact that this degradation seems to be considered sexually arousing in our culture?

3. What is your reaction to videos like “Tip Drill,” Diary of a Pimp, or Backstage Sluts? How do the images in these videos make you feel? Are they entertaining? Why do some people find them entertaining? Do you think men and women, boys and girls, are likely to respond differently to these images? If so, how?
4. Do you agree that music videos represent heterosexual adolescent male fantasies? If so, why do you think it’s the case that male fantasies appear so much more frequently than female fantasies? Are there places in the culture where female fantasies are dominant?
5. What effects do the stories told again and again in music videos have on the ways we conceive of romance and sexuality in contemporary American culture?
6. What do you think is meant when it is said that music videos are about power and control? How would you answer the questions posed above: Whose story is being told? Whose story is not being told? Whose eyes do we see the world through? Whose eyes do we never see the world through? Who is in control of these images? Who is behind the camera? Whose fantasies are shown and whose fantasies are never seen?
7. What would a more diverse range of alternative images of sexuality in music video look like?
8. How can we distinguish between harmful and benign portrayals of sexuality?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. For a class presentation or short essay, research the extent to which the porn industry has become mainstream. You can start at this website for a PBS documentary, American Porn: www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/porn/
2. List a number of possible definitions for the following terms: sex, sexuality, beauty, romance, intimacy, love. What do these definitions tell you about the human struggle to find ideal physical and emotional relationships?
3. In a short essay, compare and contrast music videos to pornography. What distinguishes their content and cultural status? In what ways do they operate under similar principles? How are they different? Also: consider the implications of knowing that some of the videos of Mandy Moore and Britney Spears were produced by a well-known pornographer.

WAYS OF LOOKING (8:55)

KEY POINTS

- Music videos use many strategies to communicate the message that femininity is only about women's bodies and sexuality, and that women's identities are based on how desirable they are to men.
- It is not just the narratives – or stories – of the videos that communicate these messages, but also the visual techniques that producers employ. In other words, just as relevant as the content of music videos is how women in music videos are filmed. And by examining how women are framed by the camera, we can begin to understand the stories about femininity that are being told.
- Women are often shown posing in front of a camera—inviting the gaze of the presumably male viewer. Even when there is no camera visible, women pose as if they are on display for a camera, wanting to be watched and open to whatever men want.
- Women are also shown touching themselves and stroking their own bodies—an implicit invitation to the presumably male viewer.
- When no man or camera is visible, women in music videos pose for themselves in front of mirrors. The message here is that they want to be watched, they yearn for attention.
- None of this happens by accident. These are all deliberate choices by predominantly male writers, directors, and editors. And the choices that are made are clues to how women are regarded by those who produce the videos.
- Women are displayed as passive objects in music videos, not as real, unique, thinking human beings.
- Often the camera pans up and down women's bodies, roaming at will. This legitimizes exactly this kind of gazing from men. The women's sole function is in fact to be watched.
- Camera angles also help to convey the meaning of the videos. Women are shot from above—with the camera looking down into their cleavage. Or they are

shown bending over to display their cleavage to the viewer. They are shot from below, as if the viewer is sneaking an illicit peek up their dresses. Sometimes they are shot from between their legs so that their legs frame the action of the scene.

- Over and over again, the camera focuses on just one part of their bodies, rather than on the whole woman. The women are broken apart into a series of disconnected, fragmented body parts. Not really people but just objects.
- Because these conventions bear such a striking resemblance to pornography, they can be considered symptomatic of the pornographic gaze. Women are denied their subjectivity in both pornography and music videos. Focusing on just one part of their bodies keeps us from thinking of them as real, as thinking people who are unique and active individuals.
- There is nothing inherently wrong with these types of filmic techniques. In the real world, both men and women alike take pleasure in being gazed at and in gazing at others. The problem is that in the world of music video, and in so many other parts of our media culture, this is the only way that women are represented.
- The women of music videos are only presented as sexual objects – not as intellectual, athletic, political, creative, spiritual, independent, or autonomous human beings. This represents a severe narrowing of what is important and valuable about real women.
- A little objectification might not be as harmful if it were balanced by a more complete array of images. Instead, only one story is told. Women are constantly depicted as passive objects whose only function is to please men.
- This narrow range of representation suggests to viewers that there is only one way to think about femininity. It ignores the complexity of real women and reduces them to nothing but body parts. And there are real consequences for the boys and girls, and men and women, who grow up and relate to one another in this sort of a culture.
- Girls who grow up surrounded by these images may become trapped in a notion of sexuality that is not their own. They may internalize these ideas about women and come to accept them as natural. The Girls Gone Wild series of videos shows real girls and young women who have embraced the images and stories of pornography, music videos, advertising, and other aspects of media

culture. They view their own identities and their own sexuality through the male gaze and act out the male fantasies that are repeated over and over again in popular culture.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kinds of camera and editing techniques are used in music videos, and how might these techniques affect the way you see and react to what you are watching?
2. Do you agree that a little objectification might not be as harmful if it were balanced by a more complete array of images? Do you agree that objectification is a natural part of human sexuality? Do you agree that there is nothing inherently wrong with the techniques of music video or that in the real world people get pleasure from being looked at and looking at others?
3. Our popular culture offers us endless images of intimacy, romance, and sex. Compare these images to reality. How do popular images affect our own pursuit of these things?
4. What does it mean to say that the problem with our popular culture is not that it needs to be censored but that there is already too much censorship?
5. In a medium inherently driven by market forces, how could additional, alternative stories about female sexuality be introduced? What types of stories merit inclusion? Do any merit exclusion? Are there examples of alternative stories and images out there already? Why, specifically, do you think alternative images are not more widely distributed?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. In a group, create a brief screenplay for a new music video that would defy some of the conventions of the genre.
2. Identify and analyze one or more music videos that offer an alternative picture of female sexuality. How are problematic narratives avoided or subverted? Are some retained? One video you might want to consider is "Stupid Girls" by Pink (available at <http://youtube.com/watch?v=F8o-eB6Ygdo>).

FEMALE ARTISTS: TRAPPED IN THE PORNOGRAPHIC GAZE (5:20)

KEY POINTS

- In order to gain success in the world of popular music, female artists have to adopt the same visual conventions that are used in music videos by male artists.
- Female artists may have their own vision in mind but they face tremendous pressure to conform to a narrow pre-existing set of options, and it has become difficult to even imagine what an alternative to these standard images might be.
- Mainstream female artists seductively perform for the camera and enact the same conventions we see when women are used as scenery in male artists' videos. They undress, touch themselves, and allow the camera to roam their bodies and focus in on disconnected body parts.
- Even artists like Madonna or Gwen Stefani, who want to convey a powerful and independent persona, find that the only way for women to express power in music videos is through the use of their sexuality. Here they face a contradiction, and must make severe compromises: because female sexuality in music videos has been objectified and defined as soft and submissive.
- If we look at how some artists' images have changed over time we can see how the pressure to conform is relentless. Jewel, for example, did not exploit her sexuality in early videos. But later in her career, she began to adopt the same sexual imagery that is conventional in many music videos. This is true for many other female artists as well, such as Mariah Carey, Christina Aguilera, and Jessica Simpson.
- To be accepted in the mainstream of the culture, female artists find that they must embrace the vision of the pornographic imagination and enact the fantasies of male video producers and viewers.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Besides those mentioned in this section of the video, can you think of other female artists whose images were increasingly sexualized as they became more successful? Can you think of female artists who have resisted this sort of transformation in their images? Have the artists who resisted achieved wide commercial success? Do their videos get played on television?
2. Do male artists face the same types of pressure to conform to particular sorts of images? If so, can you offer some examples? What types of images are they asked to conform to? If you don't think male artists face the same kind of pressures, what do you think accounts for the difference?
3. Do you think consumers' tastes and desires simply exist or that they're created?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Create a list of perspectives you would like to see included in the popular representation of human sexuality. Describe some of the fantasy plotlines these perspectives might generate if employed in the creation of music videos.
2. In a group, formulate a marketing plan that could realistically convince music executives to retreat from the current portrayal of women in music videos or to include a wider variety of portrayals.
3. Take a look at the websites for alternative female artists such as Patti Smith (<http://www.pattismith.net/intro.html>), PJ Harvey (<http://www.pjharvey.net/>), Cassandra Wilson (<http://www.cassandrawilson.com/>), and Ani DiFranco (<http://www.righteousbabe.com/ani/index.asp>). Write an essay that explores how these artists have carved out their own personas and created an alternative vision of femininity.

MASCULINITY AND CONTROL (14:00)

KEY POINTS

- Like other female artists, Janet Jackson is an example of a singer who did not become a superstar until she adopted a hypersexualized image.
- Jackson came under fire for her role in the notorious “wardrobe malfunction” incident during the 2004 Super Bowl halftime show. But what got lost in the ensuing media firestorm was the fact that Janet Jackson was only one half of the act. Media critics tended to ignore the role that Justin Timberlake played in this incident, barely commenting on the actual content of the song and the subject matter of the performance prior to the “malfunction.” They ignored the fact that throughout the performance Timberlake played the role of a man bent on controlling a woman’s body.
- In one of his most popular videos, Timberlake plays out the role of a male stalker who invades the home of his ex-girlfriend, Britney Spears, and watches her strip and shower. In this way, the video glamorizes real-life stalking and abuse, turning it into a form of entertainment.
- Many music videos tell a story about masculinity that equates manhood with power and domination. This story complements the story of femininity as passive and women as submissive.
- Women in music videos are shown gyrating in cages, tied up and writhing on beds, and being chased and captured by men. Men in music videos push, slap, and spank women. Men push women against walls, throw objects at them, and douse them in water and alcohol.
- Women in music videos never really say no to sex. They may resist at first, but usually they then become aroused, give in, and enjoy the assault. The message is that “no means yes.”
- Men’s violence against women is eroticized in many music videos.
- A prime example can be found in the video for “Eat You Alive” by Limp Bizkit. The band’s lead singer, Fred Durst, ties a woman to a chair, sprays her with a hose, and screams violent threats and insults through a megaphone held inches

from her face. Images like this, and those found in many other music videos, normalize and glamorize sexual violence. We must ask what consequences they have for relationships between real men and women who grow up with these images.

- While women in music videos welcome and invite sexual pursuit from strangers and casual acquaintances, women in the real world find this threatening. Men often feel entitled to say anything they want to women in public spaces, or even to follow them, even though this might frighten and upset women, who for obvious reasons often don't find this kind of thing exciting or erotic.
- At the 2000 Puerto Rican Day Pride Parade in Central Park, women were doused with water, stripped, and sexually assaulted by groups of men. Images from home videos used by the police in subsequent investigations of these incidents bear a shocking resemblance to scenes that have played out in hundreds of music videos – but with one major difference: The women who are subjected to this treatment in music videos like it and become sexually aroused, while the women captured on tape in the real world are terrified and traumatized. They do not find the abuse erotic or exciting.
- A similar photograph was taken at the 2001 Mardi Gras Festival in Seattle when a mob of men surrounded a woman they stripped naked and sexually assaulted. We have to ask how these men, who look just like “normal” men, might have justified and rationalized their abusive, criminal behavior.
- The aggressive sexual objectification of women by men carries with it a deep contradiction. It simultaneously involves both desire and contempt for women. So even as some men claim to be attracted to women, they talk about them in the most degrading language imaginable—as “bitches,” or as animals who need to be tamed. These men view sex as punishment directed toward women who “deserve it.”
- A crucial point needs to be made, a distinction: The images and stories of music videos, and other forms of media culture, do not directly cause men to harm women. But they do dehumanize women and thus make it easier to inflict and justify abusive treatment. They contribute to an environment where men's violence against women is legitimized and the female victims of this violence are blamed for the brutality that men inflict on them. They encourage an attitude of callous disdain while all the while implying that this is how women want to be treated—that women in fact desire harassment, stalking, and assault.

- Our fantasies matter because they are fodder for our values, beliefs, and attitudes. The heterosexual male fantasies of the Dreamworld are not just entertainment. They play an important and powerful role in shaping our attitudes and beliefs about gender and sexual relationships.
- In the real world violence against women is neither entertaining nor erotic. But it is an all-too-normal part of our society:
 - More than 1 million women are stalked by intimate partners every year.
 - 1 in 5 college females will be the victim of rape or attempted rape.
 - On college campuses 90% of rape victims know their assailants.
 - A sexual assault occurs every 2 1/2 minutes in America.
 - 1 in 6 women has been the victim of sexual assault.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If the images and stories of music videos don't directly cause male violence against women, then how should we understand the relationship between music video and gender relations? What role do you think images in music videos play in the high incidence of male violence against women mentioned at the end of this film? Can a major cultural force like music videos have an effect on behavior without directly causing it? Can it not have an effect? Explain.
2. Dreamworlds 3 argues that the Dreamworld of music video is based in adolescent heterosexual male fantasies. The film also suggests that music videos shape adolescent ideas about sexuality, leading young males, for example, to treat issues of sexual assault casually. Is this a circular argument? If so, what does this suggest about the influence of media, and at the same time, its propensity to be influenced?
3. Is the Dreamworld of music videos compelling to more than just an adolescent male audience? Why or why not?
4. Dreamworlds 3 focuses primarily on how music videos portray female sexuality. But what does the film suggest about how male sexuality is portrayed in music videos? How do you think male sexuality is portrayed in music videos?
5. What did you think of the video's juxtaposition of scenes of real world male abuse of women with clips from music videos?

6. How do people draw the line between sexy and violent in their interpretation of popular imagery? Do you think men and women draw the line differently? If so, how and why? Why do you think sex and violence are often equated in our culture?
7. Would you agree or disagree with the statement that everything you see in music videos is designed to encourage viewers to be good consumers? How does this relate to the overall themes of this film regarding sexuality, power, and violence?
8. What would women-driven Dreamworlds look like?
9. What kinds of women-driven or other alternative Dreamworlds exist in popular culture already? Where can they be found? How do they differ what you see in mainstream music videos?
10. Based on the central argument of this film, how do you think Sut Jhally would respond to the criticism that “he’s reading too much into videos.” Or that they’re “only entertainment”?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Watch the full “Cry Me A River” video (available at http://youtube.com/watch?v=N1j9HQ_uUtc). Then participate in a class discussion about the possible real world effects of cultural representations such as this.
2. Read the book *The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help* by Jackson Katz. Write a review of this book, relating it to the themes of Dreamworlds 3.
3. Interview men on campus about their relationships with women and what their expectations are of these relationships. Then interview women about their relationships with men. Summarize these interviews, then write up a comparison of the male and female responses in your report. Did the people you interviewed seem satisfied with their relationships? Did you notice anything that relates to the arguments advanced in Dreamworlds 3?
4. If you are concerned about the issues brought out in this video, get involved with your school’s Women’s Center or any anti-violence groups that may exist. If no anti-violence group exists at your school, start one.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BOOKS BY SUT JHALLY

The Spectacle of Accumulation: Essays in Culture, Media, and Politics. (Peter Lang, 2006.)

Social Communication in Advertising, 3rd Edition. (With William Leiss, Stephen Kline, and Jacqueline Botterill.) (Taylor and Francis, 2005.)

Hijacking Catastrophe: 9/11, Fear, and the Selling of American Empire. (With Jeremy Earp.) (Interlink Publishing Group, 2004.)

Enlightened Racism: The Cosby Show, Audiences, and the Myth of the American Dream. (With Justin Lewis.) (Perseus Publishing, 1992.)

Codes of Advertising: Fetishism and the Political Economy of Meaning in the Consumer Society. (Taylor and Francis, 1990.)

Cultural Politics in Contemporary America. (With Ian Angus.) (Routledge, 1988.)

BOOKS ON MUSIC VIDEO

Monopoly Television: MTV's Quest to Control the Music by Jack Banks. (Westview Press, 1996.)

Sound and Vision: The Music Video Reader edited by Simon Frith, Andrew Goodwin, and Lawrence Grossberg. (Taylor and Francis, 1993.)

Dancing in the Distraction Factory: Music Television and Popular Culture by Andrew Goodwin. (University of Minnesota Press, 1992.)

Ladies First: Women in Music Videos by Robin Roberts. (University Press of Mississippi, 1996.)

BOOKS ON GENDER REPRESENTATION, SEXUALITY, AND VIOLENCE

Transforming a Rape Culture edited by Emilie Buchwald, Pamela Fletcher and Martha Roth. (Milkweed Editions, 2004.)

Featuring Females: Feminist Analyses of Media edited by Ellen Cole and Jessica Henderson Daniel. (American Psychological Association, 2005.)

Gender, Race and Class in Media: A Text-Reader, 2nd edition edited by Gail Dines and Jean M. Humez. (Sage, 2002.)

Pornography: The Production and Consumption of Inequality by Gail Dines, Ann Russo, and Robert Jensen. (Taylor and Francis, 1997.)

Stopping Rape: A Challenge for Men by Rus E. Funk. (New Society Publishers, 1993.)

Turning it On: A Reader in Women and Media edited by Ann Gray and Helen Baehr. (Oxford University Press, 1998.)

Getting Off: Pornography and the End of Masculinity by Robert Jensen. (South End Press, 2007.)

The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help by Jackson Katz (Sourcebooks, 2006).

Can't Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel by Jean Kilbourne. (Simon and Schuster, 1999.)

Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture by Ariel Levy. (Simon and Schuster, 2005.)

Pornified: How the Culture of Pornography is Changing Our Lives, Our Relationships and Our Families by Pamela Paul (Times Books, 2005.)

Overcoming Violence Against Women and Girls: the International Campaign to Eradicate a World-Wide Problem by Michael Penn and Rahel Nardos. (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.)

Ending Violence Against Women by Francine Pickup, Suzanne Williams, and Caroline Sweetman. (Oxfam Publishing, 2001.)

Making Violence Sexy: Feminist Views on Pornography edited by Diane Russell. (Teachers College Press, 1993.)

The Beauty Myth by Naomi Wolf. (Harper Collins, 1991.)

OTHER MEF FILMS ON RELATED ISSUES

Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes

Killing us Softly 3: Advertising's Image of Women

Money for Nothing: Behind the Business of Pop Music

Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls

Tough Guise: Violence, Media, and the Crisis of Masculinity

War Zone

What a Girl Wants

Wrestling with Manhood: Boys, Bullying, and Battering