

## The Music Video

- The song Smack My Bitch Up by The Prodigy was released in 1997
- Music video by Jonas Åkerlund
- Harshly criticised for portraying violence and misogyny
- Sexually explicit → censored version was shown on MTV but pulled after one week

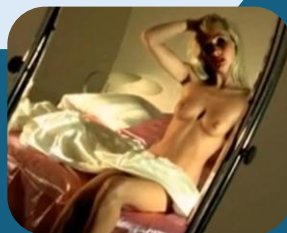
### Video Technique

- First person perspective
- Added background noises
- Partly intradiegetic placement of the music
- Visual distortion portrays the effects of drug use
- Fast cuts



### Plot

- The protagonist who the viewer perceives as male goes to the night club while drunk and high on drugs and assaults women sexually and men physically
- The protagonist ends up in a strippers' club, damages and steals a car and drives home with a stripper where they have sex
- The end reveals that the protagonist is a woman



## Smack My Bitch Up

### An Analysis of the Music Video of the „Most Controversial Pop Song of All Time“

In what way is the video transgressive?  
Is the video portraying sex-positive feminism or misogyny?

### Transgressive Elements

- Excessive illegal drug use (presumably cocaine and heroin)
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Vomiting
- Drug-induced change of perception
- Sexual assault
- Physical assault
- Damaging club equipment
- Damaging and stealing a car
- Driving a car under the influence of alcohol and drugs
- Hit and run



### Meanings of the Phrase “Smack My Bitch Up”

- 1) ‘Beat my bitch up’
- 2) ‘Fuck my bitch’
- 3) ‘Inject heroin into my vein’ (set phrase)
- 4) “doing anything intensely, like being on stage – going for extreme maniac energy” (Liam Howlett, member of The Prodigy)

## Feminist Criticism

### Positive Aspects

- Final scene encourages the viewers to question their own gender stereotypes
- Uncomfortable downsides of the ego trip are shown in first person perspective (e.g. vomiting, adverse reaction of people) → Hidden criticism: An ego trip like that doesn't pay off!

### Negative Aspects

- No direct criticism of sexual and physical assault in the video
- Even a woman acts misogynist
- Problematic lyrics sung by a man are repeated constantly and leave a misogynist message behind uncommented → The Prodigy didn't see that as a problem



### Sources and Literature

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