

# Black MTV videos are less offensive

CHAPEL HILL -- Parents concerned about what children see on television may be disturbed to hear what a mass communications researcher at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has discovered about rock music videos.

White musicians performing on cable television's popular MTV channel are about twice as likely to be shown engaging in antisocial behavior as acting in ways that could be called positive, says Dr. Jane Brown.

Lead characters in the videos, both male and female, are more often shown assaulting someone or being assaulted, arguing, stealing or threatening than helping or being helped, displaying affection or completing a task.

Videos featuring black groups, however, tend to show more affection and fewer aggressive acts.

Two studies that Dr. Brown, associate professor of journalism at UNC-Chapel Hill, conducted on music videos soon will be published in the *Journal of Communication* and the *Gazette*, a scholarly journal.

One of her studies explored for the first time how race and gender are displayed on the screen, while the other examined why and how much adolescents watch rock videos.

Part of the goal of the continuing research, which involved analyzing 112 music videos taped off television and interviewing adolescents, is to learn what effects the videos have on the nearly four out of five young people who watch them, she said.

"Almost 60 percent of the white lead performers engaged in some kind of antisocial behavior, whereas only 28 percent of black performers did," Dr. Brown said. "On the other hand, 53 percent of the black performers behaved positively, but only 33 percent of the whites did."

Music videos featuring blacks, however, are played infrequently on the 24-hour-a-day MTV channel except when the artists -- like Michael Jackson, Lionel Richie and Stevie Wonder -- become too popular for the station to ignore, she said.

Black videos air mainly on a six-hour-a-day "Video Soul" program on Black Entertainment Television that fewer cable subscribers receive.

"Why black videos display less antisocial behavior than whites is difficult to explain, but it probably has something to do with the nature of black music, which is more ballad-like," she said. "Eventually, we may see black artists add more of a rock element to their music just to get more air time."

The study also found that:  
 • White men outnumbered all others combined as lead performers by more than four to one.

• Black videos tended to be more optimistic in tone than white ones.

• Sexual behavior was less explicit than the researchers expected, at least on the screen.

Dr. Brown said interviews with 1,209 youngsters, ages 12 to 14, in 10 Southern cities revealed that more than a third watch music videos every day, and about 80 percent reported having seen them at least once.

Blacks watch more than whites, and girl viewers outnumber boys.

Learning the latest fashions and how to dance were common reasons for watching, and girls paid more attention to lyrics than boys did.

"Overall, kids say they like music videos because they're exciting, and it's a good thing to do when you're alone," Dr. Brown said. "But they also say they like to see how people act, to learn about themselves and to see how others deal with the same problems they have."

"If kids are actually watching to see how people behave, as our data indicate, then that suggests that videos showing compelling images of antisocial behavior may have some kind of negative effect on them."

Particularly antisocial, in her analysis, were messages in videos made for heavy metal groups like Billy Idol, Ratt, Motley Crue, Twisted Sister and AC-DC.

Nevertheless, quite a few of the three- to five-minute musical programs -- white as well as black -- showed helping, caring and completing a task, Dr. Brown said.

Among the musicians whose videos displayed positive or neutral behavior were Richie, Wonder, Jackson, Dionne Warwick, Huey Lewis, Phil Collins and Bruce Springsteen.



'Bud'-dies

Left, Clayton Henry, special markets manager at R.H. Barringer Distributing Co., accepts an official proclamation from Mayor Wayne Corpening praising the Budweiser Community Health Mobile which visited Winston-Salem earlier this month. The Health Mobile offered free sickle cell anemia testing and other health services (photo by Art Blue).



'A-Door-Able'

Winners of Kimberly Park Child Care Center's "Best-Decorated Door" contest proudly pose with their winning entry. The contest was held during the center's Valentine Fun Day. Pictured, left to right, are La Sonya Samuels, Raymond Hash, Toniette Williams, Latifa Burnette, Saliah Rice and William Ingram (photo by James Parker).



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## Apology

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things had gone too far to be cleared up by an apology. He advised Edward Hufnagel to hire an attorney for his daughter.

Silverman said Andrea Hufnagel could be charged with contempt of court, perjury and jury tampering for allegedly telling another prospective juror she would suggest hanging the defendant to avoid jury duty.

Silverman will decide by March 13 whether to file charges against the woman.

Court records show that during jury selection for the Arapahoe County District Court trial of Joel Willie Hightower, Hufnagel told another person in the

hallway, "If they call me in there I'm just going to say hang the ... because I want out of this."

"If you're that prejudiced, why don't you just tell them?" the other person asked Hufnagel.

"How are you supposed to say anything like that when the dumb ... is sitting in the same room with you?" Hufnagel said.

Judge Charles Friedman cited Hufnagel for contempt of court because he had told prospective jurors not to discuss the case. He set bond at \$25,000.

Hufnagel spent six hours in the county jail before her father posted bond.

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