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The music industry continues to enculturate a two dimensional and discriminatory view of women as provocative and submissive to men, perpetuating ongoing prejudicial attitudes. The basis of my Personal Interest Project was formed through a strong interest in popular culture and its ability to influence the wider world in relation to culture, values, and the socialisation of individuals and groups. A further interest in how the mainstream music industry impacts upon individuals, specifically the treatment of women in the macro sphere, led to the hypothesis concluding that *'the music industry increasingly pushes the ethical boundaries in its hypersexualised portrayal of women which is evidence of a continuity of discrimination'*.

Extensive secondary research allowed for a thorough understanding of the topic. These sources included journals such as *'Women, Pop Music, and Pornography'* by Meredith LeVande<sup>1</sup> as well as *'Music Video and the Construction of Gendered Subjectivity (Or How Being a Music Video Junkie Turned Me into a Feminist)'* by Jennifer M. Hurley<sup>2</sup>. Newspaper articles were also used including *"Blurred Lines: the most controversial song of the decade"*<sup>3</sup> by Dorian Lynskey allowing for a current perspective on hypersexualisation and insight into the public view of such unethical behaviour.

Primary research was undertaken to help develop a broad understanding of the topic and additionally gather a wide range of personal opinions. A questionnaire<sup>4</sup> consisting of 14 closed and 2 open-ended questions was distributed via the internet to 209 participants, therefore providing both qualitative and quantitative results on the provocative nature of women. Issuing the questionnaire through the internet was efficient and allowed for an extensive variety of opinions from different age groups. Due to a demographic bias, and the respondent's inability to ask for clarification, however, the questionnaire had restricted validity and further research had to be used.

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<sup>1</sup> LeVande, M. (2008) *Women, Pop Music, and Pornography* Meridians, Vol. 8, No. 1, [Representin': Women, Hip-Hop, and Popular Music](#), pp. 293-321

<sup>2</sup> Hurley, M. J. (1994) *Music Video and the Construction of Gendered Subjectivity (Or How Being a Music Video Junkie Turned Me into a Feminist)* [Popular Music](#), Vol. 13, No. 3, Australia / New Zealand Issue, pp. 327-338

<sup>3</sup> Lynskey, D. (2013). *Blurred Lines: the most controversial song of the decade*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/nov/13/blurred-lines-most-controversial-song-decade> [Accessed 30 Apr. 2014].

<sup>4</sup> Appendix A -Questionnaire

Blurred lines-entertainment or exploitation? Investigates the hypersexualisation of women within the music industry and its impact on the socialisation and treatment of women within society

A content analysis of the music video's *'Blurred Lines'*<sup>5</sup> by Robin Thicke and *'Partition'*<sup>6</sup> by Beyoncé Knowles was used to gather quantitative results on the provocative gestures and stereotypes conveyed of women in the delivery of music videos. A content analysis of intentional response videos by other musicians including *'Hard Out Here'*<sup>7</sup> by Lily Allen and *'I Luh Ya Papi'*<sup>8</sup> by Jennifer Lopez provided a contrasting perspective, contributing to an understanding of the reaction to the objectification of women in the music industry by other musicians. These methodologies relied on the researchers judgement and as a result, the overall validity of the research was weakened.

The conduction of an interview with author Emily Maguire via email provided an educated perspective on the topic and supported my primary research findings. Since the qualitative interview was conducted by email, there was difficulty in assessing how the respondent was interpreting questions. Since the interview was from one individual's perspective, it was ethically necessary to consider bias when undertaking the methodology.

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<sup>5</sup> Appendix D –Content Analysis of Blurred Lines

<sup>6</sup> Appendix C –Content Analysis of Partition

<sup>7</sup> Appendix E –Content Analysis of Hard Out Here

<sup>8</sup> Appendix F –Content Analysis of I Luh Yah Papi