

The Year of the Yuppie

In order to keep on buying, Americans of the 1980s became more focused than ever on how to make money. Many of those who were in college, or about to enter college, planned to major in business. The M.B.A. (masters of business administration) degree was seen as the key to a successful career in corporate America. And the big corporations, which offered high starting salaries to new M.B.A.s, were where young people wanted to work.

Young Americans building careers in business or in professions such as medicine or law became known as young urban professionals, or "yuppies." The yuppie lifestyle involved total dedication to career and a willingness to work many hard hours in order to get ahead. The yuppie's goal was to have a successful career and the high standard of living made possible by that

career. So many people were drawn to the yuppie lifestyle and yuppie values that *Newsweek* magazine decided to call 1984 the "Year of the Yuppie."

As more women entered the workplace, two-career families became common. Unlike during previous decades, many young married couples postponed having children until they had achieved financial security. The goal of making money replaced the ideals of social justice that had driven young people in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1985, Madonna released a song called "Material Girl." It seemed to represent the desire of many Americans to acquire more and more things. The lyrics went, "We are living in a material world, and I am a material girl."

Madonna's hit song "Material Girl" expressed not only people's desire to own expensive, fashionable things, but also carried a strong theme of female independence. Through the 1980s, women were fast becoming a vital part of the business world. Madonna (opposite) was among the most successful female singers and businesspeople of her time. Her image affected not only styles of music, but fashion and lifestyle as well.

Stephen Feinstein, The 1980s: From Ronald Reagan to MTV. Enslow: Berkeley Heights, 2000; 8-9.



Lifestyles, Fashion, and Fads

heroine is someone who is forced to give up, between desire and reality, the feminist is give up, no matter how hard the struggle to , shares more with Sue Ellen than we might amifest dramatic content of *Cagney & Lacey* feminist ideals and concerns, and as such the eters can provide an outlet for identification tion for women viewers.¹⁹ Despite the fact ; an independent career woman who knows must at times face the unsolvable dilemmas modern women: how to combine love and ith the boys; how to deal with growing older ncounters frustration and displays a kind of like Sue Ellen's. I would argue that some of ents of *Cagney & Lacey* are those in which nse of powerlessness so characteristic of the

Mary Ellen Brown, ed. Television & Women's Culture: The Politics of the Popular. Sage Publications: London, 1990; 89-101.

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Consumer Girl Culture: How Music Video Appeals to Girls

Lisa A. Lewis

Cyndi Lauper and Madonna are pop music stars whose appeal among young women has been particularly strong. This essay analyses the connections between a social audience of girls and the two musicians' promotional videos and star styles. Their video and star images, I argue, address girl audiences by textually making reference to consumer girl culture, a gendered cultural experience engaged in by American middle-class girls.

Adolescence binds both boys and girls in an ideology of lifestage, but gender guides them towards separate spheres of cultural experience. In the context of American adolescence, one's relation to school and family life, outlets for sexual expression, modes of leisure and consumption, are structured by assumptions based on a social system of gender inequality. Barbara Hudson, in her study of femininity and adolescence, describes adolescence as a form of discourse which fundamentally incorporates assumptions and definitions of male experience, activity, and desire.¹ Adolescence and masculinity, she says, are ideologically united to support male privilege. Behaviour typically associated with adolescence — retreat from parental surveillance and the constrictions of domestic life, aggressive attention to leisure practices and associated peer activities, pursuit of sexual experiences, and experimentation with social roles and norms

— embody the very activities and attitudes which serve boys in the assumption of their position in patriarchy.² Towards this end, boys learn to feel comfortable in public space, adjust to competitive pressures, network with male peers, build a familial support system, and prepare for risk-taking in future work endeavours. The social authorisation of such practices is gender specific, and does not fully extend to girls.

Similarly, Angela McRobbie has described the consequences of gender discrimination on youth cultural expression, how it mediates against girl participation in the street culture of boys.³ Leisure practices engaged in by boys are often deemed inappropriate for girls. Subcultural youth groupings, many of which are allied, in part, by musical preferences, are usually off-limits to girls. Girls are, in effect, excluded from much of the leisure activity, social bonding practice, and subcultural formation that critics of male youth culture identify as important sites for the negotiation of social contradictions. Girl leisure takes different forms as a consequence of gender inequality, and perhaps more aptly stated, as a result of female resourcefulness and will to resist subordination. Social biases constructed around gender difference push girls into less visible interior spaces, into what McRobbie and Garber label, 'bedroom culture'.⁴ If subculture critics find girls to be peripheral cultural participants, says McRobbie,⁵ it is because they fail to grasp the different, but complementary ways in which girls organise their cultural lives.⁶

This complementary world of female cultural activity is developed into a system of textual address in the video and image constructions of Cyndi Lauper and Madonna. Representations of consumer girl culture and its composite parts of fashion, shopping, and personal style guide female spectators toward recognition of themselves and their common gender experience, and prompt intense and often visible forms of fan response.

Video Texts: The Discovery of Consumer Girl Culture

The targeting of audiences by the television industry is a familiar marketing practice. In the 1970s methods for measuring demographically-specific audience sectors provided the means for identifying and addressing upscale consumers.⁷ In the same vein, the American music video channel MTV chose to target a youthful audience noted for its expendable income. In an attempt to create an address to a youth audience, MTV and the record companies who produce the videos MTV airs, adopted imagery designed fundamen-

tally around the discourse of male adolescence. Ideologies of rebelliousness, independence from social authorities, and sexual promiscuity were culled into symbolic representations of street culture, leisure practice, and female conquest.

Unaccommodated by MTV's preferred male address were the rising number of female musicians in need of a vehicle of self-representation and promotion. MTV's semiotic disparagement of female subjectivity left female musicians without a means to position their own gendered subjectivity. In defiance of the channel's dependence on male discourse, a select number of female musicians, among them Cyndi Lauper and Madonna, began to fashion videos predicated on the representation of *female* gender experience. Two interrelated sign systems developed as cornerstones of the new textual system of female address, what I call respectively: *access signs* and *discovery signs*.⁸

Access signs are those in which the privileged experience of boys and men is visually appropriated. The female stars textually enact an entrance into a male domain of activity and signification. In this way, the texts work at providing imagery that challenges assumptions about the boundaries which gender, as a social construct, draws around men and women. The texts visually execute takeovers of male space, the erasure of sex roles, and a demand for parity with male privilege.

Discovery signs reference and celebrate distinctly female modes of cultural expression and experience. They attempt to compensate in mediated form for female cultural marginalisation by drawing pictures of activities in which females tend to engage apart from males. By representing girl practices, the videos set a tone that celebrates female resourcefulness and cultural distinctiveness.

The system of address devised by MTV relied heavily on the representation of male leisure practice. The street, a key symbol, referenced the decidedly male experience of adolescent camaraderie and public space. As McRobbie suggests, leisure, for boys, represents a privileged 'space' for the sowing of wild oats and experimentation with roles and dangers before a lifetime of work.⁹ The street is a major site of sociability and escape, of subcultural formation, rebellious play, male bonding, and female pursuit. But herein lies the problem for adolescent girls, for they are subject not only to expectations based on their age, but overwhelmingly by those assigned to their gender:

Streets are dangerous and fearful places for girls and women.

What Rayna Rapp Reiter describes as 'sexual geography' in her study of male and female use of public space in southern France applies to the United States as well. Females are expected to use streets as the route between two interior spaces, be they places of employment or consumption activity. The social consequence of street loitering or strolling is the label, 'prostitute', and the coding of one's body as available to male pursuit. Women's level of comfort on city streets is tenuous at best; rape and harassment are constant threats structuring their behaviour. Girls learn early the gestures of deference: to avoid making eye contact, to cause one's body to 'shrink' so as to take up as little space as possible.

In female address videos, like those of Lauper and Madonna, the street is a representation appropriated for the production of access signs. Lauper's video *Girls Just Want to Have Fun* and Madonna's *Borderline* video, released on MTV in 1983 and 1984 respectively, both feature scenes of street takeovers. In *Girls Just Want to Have Fun* the bouncing Lauper leads her band of girlfriends through New York city streets in a frenzied snake dance that turns women's experience of foreboding streets upside-down in a carnivalesque display. Their arms reaching out for more and more space, the women push through a group of male construction workers who function as symbols of female harassment on the street. The lyrical refrain, *Girls Just Want to Have Fun* enacts a powerful cry for access to the privileged realm of male adolescent leisure practice.

In *Borderline*, Madonna portrays a rambunctious teenager immersed in male street-corner culture. She is shown street dancing, spraying graffiti on urban walls, and loitering on a street corner with female peers. She blows kisses and imitates flirtation with street boys, and takes her female companions into the male turf of the pool hall. In short, she appropriates activities and spaces typically associated with male adolescence. Many of the activities in which she engages also place her in the role of the male youth delinquent. She defaces public and private property; loiters in 'bad' neighbourhoods, and hangs out in the pool hall. Such images confuse the iconography of the prostitute suggested by her street corner lingering and flirtation, and obviate the different social standards for male and female transgressions. Building a tension between the two implicitly raises questions about how the visual code of prostitution is elaborated and about how representations of females on the street might be revised.

Access signs open out into discovery signs that rejoice in female

forms of leisure to which adolescent boys have little access. These are the representations that call forth the allegiance of girls to bedroom and consumer cultures. In *Girls Just Want to Have Fun*, the construction workers, their threatening status alleviated, are brought back to the Lauper character's home to experience female fun: dancing with wild abandon to records in one's bedroom. Fun is visually defined both in terms of doing what boys do: i.e. getting out of the house (and housework) and onto the street, and in terms of the activities and relationships girls devise in their attempts to create a complementary order of female fun.

Borderline moves into discovery signs in its presentation of the female fantasy of becoming a fashion model. In the video, a fashion photographer 'discovers' the character played by Madonna during the first street dance scene. She participates in the excitement and pleasure of wearing glamorous clothes and makeup, until the male photographer begins to assert his authority over her 'look'. Defiantly she grabs back the hat he does not want her to wear. Desiring to manage her own image, she returns to participate with boys in street culture. Later Madonna videos rely on discovery signs to a greater extent, dwelling on the recognition that fashion and makeup faces achieve for women. In *Material Girl*, a peak performance by Madonna, draped in furs and male attendants, rewrites the tragic Marilyn Monroe image she references, into a decidedly female image of recognition and power.¹⁰

Star Texts: Style and Female Adolescence

From birth, the imposing of a gendered appearance by parents, largely in the form of clothes, signals the social recognition of gender difference and becomes the first step in the construction of a gender identity. Dressing up in Mother's clothes is an encouraged socialisation activity for little girls, one that develops their self-conception as female-identified. Girls have been shown to engage in dress-up play to a greater extent than boys and to develop a higher level of clothes awareness.¹¹ Boys are considered by one study to be disadvantaged by their lack of participation in dress up play. Dressing up in commercially-designed costumes instead of their father's clothes has consequences for male sexual identity, according to Stone's study. Another interpretation might be that boys are under less pressure socially to identify with the role of father, whereas, the role of mother is central to female identity. Its internalisation, in the form of dress imitation, must be ensured.

The girl practice of dressing alike also has roots in female socialisation and cultural expression, not just in the form of adherence to a regime of feminine attire, but as a symbolic system that signifies female solidarity and female bonding. Mother-daughter dresses are signs of marital identification and represent one of the few permissible expressions of mother-daughter love within the hegemony of the Oedipal construct. Dressing alike is frequently part of the signification system of girl friendships at the time in a woman's life before heterosexual desire is rigidly channelled. Christine Griffin describes the rich texture of girl friendships and its reliance on the manipulation of consumer items:

These best friendships were typified by young women going everywhere together, walking along arm in arm, wearing *exactly* the same clothes, shoes, hairstyles, even jewelry.¹²

Purchasing and dressing up in feminine clothes accompanies every major event in a girl's life from confirmation to prom night, until the arrival of the most fussed-over ritual, the wedding, with its expensive and rigidly defined attire. It is the regimen of dress codes and restrictions on hairstyle and application of makeup that often first exposes girls to gender contradictions. Girls learn that buying and wearing particular clothes is a highly-charged activity that situates one's own desires against a host of social approval ideologists. The desire to dress like a boy is an early form of resistance to the physical and mental restraints that gender definitions seek to impose on girls. As girls age and experience physical body changes, they discover relationships between modes of displaying the body and social response.

Barbara Hudson, a British writer, describes clothing and appearance manipulation by girls as a reaction to their conflicted status as female adolescents. As she describes it, adolescence is unproblematic as a masculine construct, but becomes the source of contradictory expectations when applied to female adolescents who are subject to conflicting gender discourses, most notably the discourse of femininity.¹³ The femininity discourse exists as a set of expectations that attempts to restrict girls' behaviour and choices especially at the time of adolescence. Girls, during this phase of life, are required to display a driving independence at the same time they prepare for a social role predicated on an acceptance of dependency. The authorities they come in contact with expect them to simultaneously demonstrate political and career interests, and develop a

personality style of caring for others, looking after children, being gentle and unassertive.¹⁴

Susan Brownmiller has written an exegesis of the femininity discourse in an American context. Recalling her own experience of female adolescence, she paints a picture of the contradictory impulses which propelled her into gender conflicts as an adult.

As I passed through a stormy adolescence to a stormy maturity, femininity increasingly became an exasperation, a brilliant, subtle aesthetic that was bafflingly inconsistent at the same time that it was minutely, demandingly concrete, a rigid code of appearance and behaviour defined by do's and don't-do's that went against my rebellious grain. Femininity was a challenge thrown down to the female sex, a challenge no proud, self-respecting young woman could afford to ignore, particularly one with enormous ambition that she nursed in secret, alternately feeding or starving its inchoate life in tremendous confusion.¹⁵

Hudson describes the two discourses of adolescence and femininity as subversive of one another and argues that they are manipulated to this effect by girls through a symbolic alignment with modes of self-presentation. The femininity pigeonhole is opposed symbolically in two usual ways:

- 1) through affecting an appearance and behaviour based on the male adolescence discourse, or
- 2) through exaggeration of the codes of feminine appearance and mannerisms that frequently crosses over into sexual display.

Interviews with Madonna and Cyndi Lauper in the popular press suggest a certain familiarity with and adoption of strategies of subversive self-presentation in the stars' own youth. In one interview conducted by Harry Dean Stanton, Madonna describes how she and a best girlfriend developed a sexual persona in order to subvert their parents' authority, an image which, interestingly, was inspired by their identification with a female musician:

M: . . . it was a private joke between my girlfriend and me, that we were floozies, because she used to get it from her mother all the time, too

S: So somewhere you did like the floozy look?

M: Only because we knew that our parents didn't like it. We thought it was fun. We got dressed to the nines. We got bras and stuffed them so our breasts were over-large and wore really tight sweaters — we were sweater-girl floozies. We wore tons of lipstick and really badly

applied makeup and huge beauty marks and did our hair up like Tammy Wynette.¹⁶

Hudson's fieldwork suggests how overtly sexual dress by girls, the kind Madonna develops into an image for her videos, can send school authorities reeling:

... teachers respond positively to 'feminine' girls, whilst they like to encourage the development of feminine traits; nevertheless, the school is not regarded as an appropriate arena for the display of unbounded femininity. The idea that femininity can be taken on and off by changing clothes explains a form of behaviour that is common amongst teachers; if femininity is bestowed by dress then teachers can keep displays of femininity within bounds by insisting on a plain, deindividualised dress.¹⁷

In *People Magazine* and *Newsweek* Cyndi Lauper describes an alienated adolescence filled with quests for independence, rebellious behaviour, and an appearance set against the conventions of femininity:

In high school I fell out of step. Everything became unreal for me. I felt there just wasn't any room for me in this world... I didn't fit in, didn't have nobody to do things with that I liked. I did them by myself.¹⁸

People Magazine

I was an oddball... No matter how hard I tried to look normal there was always something that wasn't right.¹⁹

Newsweek

Whether or not Cyndi Lauper and Madonna draw directly on their own personal experiences of female adolescence to construct their images, the enacting of subversive styles and roles in their video performances can be interpreted by female readers as textual strategies of opposition.

Madonna's visual style engages with and hyperbolises the discourse of femininity. She combines contradictory accoutrements of a feminine presentation with the affected attitude of a cinematic vamp. Bleached blonde hair proudly displays its dark roots. Glamour eye makeup and lipstick create a look that is likened to Marilyn Monroe's, but a cocky demeanour exudes a self-assuredness and independence to counter the outdated, naive image. Skin-tight, lacy undergarments and crucifixes add up to a blasphemous, 'bad girl' affectation, particularly in a woman who, we are told in the promotional press, hated the uniforms at her own Catholic school.

Lauper's image is more an ode to the adolescence discourse and incorporates a rebellious, anti-feminine, 'she's so unusual' address. It is

this sense of bucking the norm that *Ms.* magazine applauded by awarding Lauper a Woman of the Year citation in 1985. In explanatory notes, *Ms.* characterised her rebellious style as a feminist stance. Lauper's display of odd color combinations in dress and hair, her wearing of gaudy fake jewelry, application of striped and sequined eye makeup, mock socially appropriate modes of female attire and behaviour. Thrift store and boutique renditions recirculate fashions from the past, calling attention to the circularity of consumption and pointing out ways to construct personal style on a budget and to exercise control over the terms of prevailing fashion.

Whether tied to femininity or adolescent discourses, both Madonna and Lauper styles grow out of and address the investment of girls and women in fashion and consumer culture. They both depend on an articulation of the tensions between conforming and resisting codes of gendered appearance, between marketplace dictates and consumer innovation of fashion. The proliferation of consumer items at shopping venues constitute the raw material out of which their styles are constructed, and from which symbolic negotiation and textual communication is made possible.

Fan Response and the Marketplace

I have suggested ways that Lauper and Madonna videos incorporate style and appearance manipulation and its many meaningful intersections with girl culture. Style is also a mode through which girls formulate their response to the videos and associated stars. By initiating the dress and performance codes of their favoured musician, girl fans demonstrate their identification with the star and with female address, represent their extensive knowledge of textual nuances, and display their association with a community of fans.

Use value is demonstrated most spectacularly by Lauper 'dress-alike' and Madonna 'wannabe' fans. Their efforts to reproduce the look of the star extends the status of best friend to the stars they mimic, conjuring up the cult of female friendship. The fans' initiation of the stars' affected modes of appearance re-creates the stars' subversive stance against the femininity discourse and the privileging of male adolescence. Many of the female audience members have undoubtedly discovered all by themselves the subversive potential of an aberrant personal style, and may already have been practising such behaviour in isolation. The video and star texts of Lauper and Madonna affirm this individual and private response, but additionally, they enable a girl to organise with other girls into an interpretive

community to participate in struggles over meaning in a public arena.

The style imitation practices of inense Lauper and Madonna fans signal their membership in a group identity in a form that resembles the subcultural organisations that British critics have described primarily as a male youth activity. Reproducing the stars' styles and performance codes encompasses the three interconnected features Michael Brake identifies as features of subculture:

- 1) image, the projection of an identity through costuming, makeup and other visual material;
- 2) demeanour, the mode of stance, pose, performance, in effect, the way the image is worn; and
- 3) argot, a special vocabulary and delivery style.

Although the Lauper dress-alike and Madonna wanna-be fans manifest typical subculture behaviours, they do not conform to many of the underlying assumptions in the subculture literature.²⁰

Much of the work on subculture, primarily under the purview of British cultural criticism, places theoretical emphasis on class as the determining social structure dictating subcultural form. Yet the female fan's response derives primarily from an association with gender and female expressions of culture. Likewise, a focus on authenticity in the subculture literature devalues the diffusion of subcultural style into mass media representations and marketplace reproductions. But, in the case of Lauper and Madonna fans, their spectacular response arises directly out of member interaction with mass media texts. There is a correspondence between the video address and its reception as manifested by its use. This demonstrates, more generally, the dynamic relationship between mediated texts and social practice, something subculture critics have tended to overlook. The fan response also integrally involves the marketplace as a point of reference as if to assert shopping and fashion as an authentic arena of female culture.

Culture critics' expressed aversion to dominant culture forms, their coding of the marketplace as the antithesis of authentic cultural expression (as essentially a mechanism of capitalist reproduction), has created an obstacle to the analytical consideration of consumer girl culture. Such assumptions operate to portray girl participation in consumer culture as a kind of false consciousness, useful only as a means of preparing girls for social roles that support the economic status quo. Erica Carter, developing McRobbie's critique of male bias in the work of British theorists of youth subculture, cites certain

critics' alignment of commercialism with female gender and the disdain for both that permeates much of their work:

Like the phenomena which they examine, the analyses themselves are founded on a number of unspoken oppositions: conformity and resistance, harmony and rupture, passivity and activity, consumption and appropriation, femininity and masculinity.²¹

Close analysis of the overlap between consumption practice and female gender reveals far more complicated patterns of use and considerable activity between the opposed characteristics that Carter identifies in the assumptions of the critics.

Part of the structural/cultural experience of female gender in the United States is women's participation in and relation to consumption practice.²² The domestic division of labour has long positioned women as the primary consumption workers in American society. The consumption of products and services by unpaid women is, indeed, crucial to recreating and maintaining a productive cycle that functions to support the capitalist economy. In this respect, consumption activity has served to promote both gender and economic stratified forms of exploitation. But, wherever exploited labour plays a key role in economic relations, hegemonic struggle is implied.²³ The fact that consumption work has been largely framed by Marxists as non-productive labour does not negate the potential that exists for its mobilisation for resistance practices.

William Leach links the historical rise of consumption culture in the late nineteenth century to a transformative effect on women. Centralised sites of consumption, in the form of department stores, offered middle-class women a socially acceptable way to escape the confines of their houses and provided a richly imaginative culture in which to explore social possibilities. He suggests that modern advertising methods and store display prompted suffragettes of the time to adopt colourful, graphic forms of political expression and provides evidence that department stores were selected as sites from which suffrage activities were publicised and coordinated:

Stores everywhere volunteered their windows and their interiors for suffrage advertising. In June 1916 Chicago's Carson, Pirie Scott installed a wax figure of a suffragist in one of its windows, a herald of the coming convention of the Woman's Party in that city. At about the same time, Wannamaker's set a precedent by permitting all female employees to march in suffrage parades during working hours. In 1912 suffragists chose Macy's in New York as the headquarters for suffragette supplies, including marching gowns, bonnets, and hats.²⁴

The shopping mall, a modern day extension of the department store, has similarly been chosen as a site for female leisure culture. The cartoon image of a woman with her charge cards hints at the way shopping has been articulated by women into a pleasurable pursuit. Buying something special for oneself is one of the few routes by which the traditional reproducer of men and children reproduces herself. Middle-class adolescent girls who have yet to take on the responsibilities of careers and families experience the leisure side of consumption more fully. For girls, the mall represents a female substitute for the streets of male adolescents. Mall corridors resemble city streets in both appearance and function. They offer the same active and anonymous sites for adolescent loitering, places to meet friends, to 'girl watch' and 'boy watch,' but within a more restricted and supervised setting. Girls at the mall experience the added attraction of shopping, an activity closely connected to their socialisation, to female bonding, and to cultural expressions of identity.

The shopping mall is the site around which female spectator correspondence with star and video texts coalesces. 'Madonna is everywhere,' writes one biographer, 'there is even a mall in California that people have nicknamed 'the Madonna mall' because so many girls who shop there try to look just like her'.²⁵ In response to the popularity of Madonna Style, Macy's Department Store created a department called 'Maddonaland' devoted to the cropped sweaters (\$30), cropped pants (\$21), and a variety of jewelry accessories such as crucifix earrings and outside 'pearl' necklaces (\$4-\$59) resembling those worn by Madonna. The department became the location for the mobilisation of Madonna fans in the summer of 1985 when Macy's sponsored a Madonna look-alike contest to coincide with the star's New York concert date. To provoke attendance, Macy's ran a full page ad in the *Village Voice* with text designed to capitalise on fan familiarity with Madonna's video, *Material Girl*, and with the movie, *Desperately Seeking Susan* in which she co-starred and performed the song, *Into the Groove*.

JRS!

DESPERATELY SEEKING MADONNA LOOK-ALIKES

Join our Madonna Day contest, Thurs, June 6 in Maddonaland on 4, Macy's Herald Square. If you're a brassy material girl, get into the groove and prove it. . . .

The overwhelming response was featured on both MTV and the ABC Evening News where Madonna wanna-be's revelled in their new

found fame. On camera, they gushed that they too 'wanted to be famous' and 'be looked at' like their idol, Madonna. For one magical moment, in front of Peter Jennings and ABC viewers, it came to pass.

Cyndi Lauper's style has also proved to be an inspiration for the ready-to-wear market. *Seventeen* ('Funky Frills'), billing itself as Young America's Favorite Magazine, disseminated word of the Lauper-inspired fashion accessories: black rubber bracelets, twelve for \$4 (Maripolitan); multicoloured rhinestone bracelets, \$9 each (Medusa's Heirlooms); black leather wristband with rhinestone cluster, \$26 (Michael Morrison MX); Gun-metal and rhinestone bracelets, \$30 each (Maripolitan).

The appearance of music video displays in Juniors departments in stores at shopping malls across the country is a further testament to the connection between consumer girl culture and music video. While Lauper and Madonna are not the only videos featured in the displays, it is their styles that the marketplace has scrambled to emulate.

That style diffuses into fashion so readily should come as no surprise. The market reacts to popularity and new cultural forms with striking speed. But the context of consumer girl culture and its representation in music video texts, star styles, and fan response reveals the extent to which the market is also used for female symbolic expression. Consumer culture has economic consequences, but it is still resilient and responsive to consumer interaction. Girl consumer culture is not merely a reproductive incorporation, for in practice, it branches into a gendered support system for girls. Similarly, MTV videos may codify male adolescent ideology, but they also allow female authors and audiences to command their own symbolic vision.

For girls and women who have shared in the experience of fashion innovation; in style as a vehicle for self-expression, group identity and subversive pleasure; in the imaginative cultures of shopping malls and mediated texts as backdrops for fantasies and enactments of personal or social change, the female address videos of Lauper and Madonna produce a field of gendered interpretations. The fan response of the Lauper dress-alikes and Madonna wanna-be's demonstrates how the textual strategies of female performers can cohere with female spectators' cultural experience to create a powerful correspondence between text and audience.