“She Waan Di Vitamin S”

Messages, Music and Video: An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos

Researched and written by Yvette Rowe
Project funded by the European Union
“Vitamin ‘S’”: An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos
VITAMIN ‘S’

Messages, Music and Video
An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos
VITAMIN ‘S’

Messages, Music and Video
An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos

....................
Researched and written by Yvette Rowe
Project funded by the European Union
This research project was made possible through funding from the European Union through CARICOM. The University of the West Indies HIV/AIDS Response Programme (UWIHARP) and UWI’s Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), were responsible for administration and supervision of the project.

Special thanks are extended to:

Prof. Brendan Bain — Lead Coordinator UWI HARP
Drs. Marjan de Bruin — Director, CARIMAC,
Vice Chair UWIHARP
SIRHARC Research Coordinator

Patria Aarons — Research Assistant
Naomi Francis — Research Assistant
Ronalie Sirju — Research Assistant
Melanie Smith — Research Assistant
“Vitamin ‘S’”: An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos
Executive Summary

VITAMIN ‘S’
Messages, Music and Video:
An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos

Abstract
At the end of 2002, there were an estimated 440,000 people in the Caribbean living with HIV/AIDS. In the same year, it was reported that approximately 25,000 persons were living with HIV/AIDS in Jamaica. Research indicates that information about sex and sexuality can be a factor in helping teens make positive decisions regarding reproductive health (NACJ 2002).

This research project was a descriptive content analysis that looked at what is contained in popular Jamaican music videos. The researchers looked at the content of lyrics and visual images. The project looked more specifically for images and lyrics related to sex and sexual behaviour. Concern has been expressed over the music’s preoccupation with sex and violence. This has led to discussion and debate on whether the music mirrors reality or contributes to attitudes and behaviour.

The local music video is beginning to assume more importance in the wake of the establishment of a number of cable channels devoted to music, that now provide an outlet for music videos. There are now more music videos available for viewing than ever before. Against this background, this research project aimed to assess and identify the messages contained in Jamaican popular music videos that relate to sexual behaviour particularly risky sexual activity. The output of key, local music cable stations was monitored over two weeks in 2004. The lyrics and images in the selected videos were recorded, interpreted and analysed.

The literature and material review indicated that young people were among those most at risk in Jamaica of contracting sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS. "Adolescent girls aged 10-19 years are three times more likely than boys to be HIV infected” (NACJ 2002). They are also among the largest targeted audience of popular music videos. It became clear from the review that a high percentage of popular music videos focus on themes of romance, courtship and sexuality.

Methodology
To identify a population of music videos from which the sample would be chosen, the output of three local cable music channels, which were also rebroadcast on national television, was monitored. A list of videos played on the stations over two weeks was compiled. From this list, those music videos that appeared on more than one station’s playlist were deemed popular and were selected for content analysis.
Thirty-two hours of music video programming from three local cable music channels were recorded over a two-week period. Thirty videos were identified as being "popular" and made up the sample.

A coding sheet was designed to analyse video content in relation to messages about HIV/AIDS. The design focused on separately coding lyrical content, modes of dress in men and women and dance moves. All music videos were viewed at least five times by coders.

Each viewing was devoted to observing one of the following categories:
1. Number of Shots
2. Lyrical content
3. Visual content
4. Dress
5. Dance moves

Sexual words and images were counted, as well as, incidences where the words and/or images referred to casual sex, condom use and sex with multiple partners.

Results
In the sample of 30 popular music videos, 66% contained lyrics with sexual content. Of that 66%, approximately 53% had lyrics that referred to casual sex, multiple partner sex or intercourse. 70% of the sample videos contained lyrics referring to sex.

In terms of visuals, 41% of the videos contain visuals suggesting casual sex and 23% had visuals suggesting multi partner sex. However, there was no mention or suggestion of condom use, or any other allusion to safe sex practices, in the video sample.

The results from the sample of videos analysed suggests propagation of negative messages in regards to condom use. Some of the lyrics also suggest multi partner sex and casual sex. In some cases, this lyrical content is reinforced by visual elements. The results also revealed visual images of casual or multi partner sex in videos with no sexual lyrics.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: Background</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Literature and Material Review</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Research Design</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Presentation of Findings</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I: Music Video Sample List</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix II: Selected Music Video Lyrics</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix III: Coding Sheets</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Cited</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Vitamin ‘S’”: An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos
Introduction
Saturday afternoon in a small Kingston, Jamaica, household, six youngsters between ages six and fourteen are huddled around a television watching a succession of popular music videos. They become seemingly mesmerised by images of the young artistes and scantily clad dancers. They take in the sexually suggestive gyrations of the performers; they mimic the moves and repeat the lines. What do they see and hear on the screen?

Adolescents are the primary audience of music videos. Grant hypothesizes, "these [sexual] messages [in music videos] are bombarding teens at a stage when they are in the midst of developing their values and beliefs around gender roles, sexual behaviour and attitudes" (2003).

Local music videos are awash with sexual messages and images, yet their content appears devoid of messages that reinforce safer sex practices. Educated personal choice is the true avenue for control of the spread of HIV and AIDS.

As Sabatier emphasizes, "virtually the only effective weapon we have against it [HIV/AIDS] is persuading people to change their sexual behaviour" (1988, p. 145).

Rationale
A cursory look at music videos reveals a substantial number of sexual images; hardly surprising as love and relationships have long been major themes of popular music. Largely, Jamaica's most popular musical genre "dancehall" focuses on themes of sex and violence. Dancehall music's seeming preoccupation with these themes has prompted research, discussion and debate. Whilst dancehall music has been widely researched, concerns regarding the sexual images in the dancehall music video have been kept at "letters to the editor" and "calls to talk shows". Against this background, this research project aimed to identify and count images and lyrics related to sexual behaviour contained in Jamaican popular music videos.

A criterion was established to identify a local music video as being popular, and thirty videos were selected for content analysis, regarding issues relevant to HIV/AIDS.

A review of relevant literature and material provides both history and current information on the subjects of music, music videos, teenage viewing habits, HIV/AIDS and Jamaica, and the issues of sexual messages in music. A conceptual framework was created to guide the process of content analysis and the compilation of results.
Research Questions

• Do popular Jamaican music videos contain lyrics that refer to sexual behaviour?

• Do popular Jamaican music videos contain images that refer to sexual behaviour?

• Do the lyrics of popular Jamaican music videos refer to sexual issues relevant to HIV/AIDS, such as casual sex, multi-partner sex or unprotected sex?

• Do the images in popular Jamaican music videos refer to sexual issues relevant to HIV/AIDS, such as casual sex, multi-partner sex or unprotected sex?

• Do popular Jamaican music videos contain images that emphasise the sexual characteristics of men and women?

• Do popular Jamaican music videos contain images suggestive of sex?

• Do music videos for certain genres of popular Jamaican music contain different levels of sexual content?
Chapter Two

Background

The music video industry began in the 1980's with the setting up of Music Television (MTV) and other channels devoted to popular music in the United States and Europe. However, in Jamaica music video production was slow to develop in part due to economics and the nature of the marketing of local music.

In the 1990's, Jamaica's television industry expanded with the introduction of cable services and the establishment of local channels on cable stations. Music videos form part of the programming for several of these local cable stations, most notably Music Plus, RE.TV and Hype TV. The programming of RE.TV is rebroadcast on the national station TVJ, and Music Plus is rebroadcast on the national station CVM. In addition, each week, local music videos can be seen on TVJ's Video Saturday, Video Alley, Hypezone and Entertainment Report and on CVM's E strip, and On Stage. Viewers can watch music videos whether they have access to cable or only to free-to-air-television. The number of outlets, and consequently the viewership, for the screening of music videos has expanded. Grant argues that children in Jamaica who once gathered around televisions to view Black Entertainment Television (BET), MTV, and Video Hits 1 (VH1), now have local music channels to watch too (2004, p.9).

In Jamaica, the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS among adolescents is a major concern. It is reported that in Jamaica, "The number of reported HIV infections in adolescents, ages 10 to 24, has doubled since 1995 and this age group has the largest number of new cases of AIDS" (Scott-Fischer, Lee & Spence, 2000, p. 18).

In Jamaica, a National Aids Committee survey suggests, that more than two in every 10 adolescents are affected by a sexually transmitted infection each year and adolescent girls aged 10 to 19 are three times more likely to be HIV infected than boys (NACJ 2004).

In Jamaica a survey on condom use among young people points to a significant number of teenagers having multiple sex partners and not using condoms regularly. "Among those who were sexually active 41.6 % of the boys admitted to having multiple partners in the last 12 months" ("Adolescent Condom Survey," 2002).

These figures suggest a gap between knowledge about the risks of contracting STI's and HIV/AIDS and actions that would lead to safer sex. The United Nations Development Project notes that "Young people often lack the information, skills and services they need to protect themselves from HIV infection (UNDP, 2003).

Undoubtedly, various factors influence these statistics, yet as Tarr points out, "Music videos have always been a powerful platform for communication...and influence the most powerful global market: youth" (2001, p. 26).
Chapter Three

Literature and Material Review

The American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (A.A.C.A.P.) says, "Singing and music have always played an important role in learning, and the communication of culture" ("The Influence," 2003). The Association also expresses concern about the possible "...negative and destructive themes of some rock and other kinds of music, [...] such as] sex which focuses on control, sadism, masochism, incest, children devaluing women and violence toward women" ("The Influence," 2003). Meanwhile, the American Academy of Paediatrics (A.A.P.) points to the "dramatic changes that music lyrics have undergone in the last 40 years" ("Impact of Music," 1996).

The A.A.P. describes rock music lyrics as having become explicit, particularly with reference to sex, drugs and violence, ... which poses unprecedented threats to the health and well being of adolescents" ("Impact of Music,"1996). The threats, the Academy says, include pregnancy, drug use, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, and sexually transmitted diseases.

Wingood carried out a quantitative study of the risky behaviours of teenagers who watch rap videos regularly. Her project consisted of a sample of 522 unmarried, sexually active 14-18 year old African-American females. At the end of a twelve-month period, "they calculated the adolescent’s involvement in such behaviours as: hitting teachers, fighting, being arrested, using alcohol or drugs and having multiple sex partners" (cited in Webster, 2003).

Wingood’s findings revealed that participants "with high exposure of 14 hours or more per week to rap music, were three times more likely to hit a teacher, and two and a half times more likely to have been arrested, compared to those with less exposure to rap music" (cited in Webster, 2003).

"Those heavily exposed to rap music, were twice as likely to have multiple sex partners, 1.5 times more likely to acquire an STD” (cited in Webster, 2003).

Such research creates a picture of youth at risk, and a youth audience that may be affected by the images and lyrics they hear and see in music videos.

Grant asks the question, "if adolescents can learn aggressive behaviour from the television, could they not also be able to learn sexual behaviour?" (2003).

A Swedish longitudinal study of teenagers and media use also suggests that adolescents with an early interest in rock music are more likely to be influenced by their peers, and less influenced by parents or older adolescents (cited in Grant, 2003). Furthermore, the Kaiser Family Foundation — U.S. — conducted a focus group study of 12-15 year olds, which revealed the group’s understanding of underlying themes in television and video clips. The 12-15 year old members of a focus group commented that the presence of sex in pop culture is "to sell stuff" (cited in Silver, 2002).
Women's Media Watch of Jamaica (WMWJ) asserts, "that women and men between the ages of 12-35 are the main supporters of the popular music industry" (1998, p. 17). WMWJ goes on to add that many pop songs "make crude and explicit references to men's sexual exploits and female sexuality" (1998, p. 17).

In particular, WMWJ asserts that music videos are similar to commercials, with the repeated use of sex to gain attention. The organisation more pointedly suggests that, "Women's physical appearance is of paramount importance to the male artist ... women's bodies are used as bait ... as a sex object, no personality, only body parts" (1998, p. 15).

In Jamaica, the development of two national television stations, a religious station and the introduction of cable service has made many more hours of television programming available in Jamaica. Local broadcast television, like radio has benefited from the addition of new services over the past ten years. "The grant of two new TV licences in 1991 and 1992 marked the end of a period where the television market had been controlled by one entity" ("Broadcast Radio & Television" 2002).

According to the Jamaica Broadcasting Commission, "Subscriber television, or cable TV, is a popular form of home entertainment in many Jamaican households and was brought under the umbrella of the law on July 1, 1998 when licences were first issued" ("Subscriber (Cable) Television" 2002). In Jamaica, there are now 51 cable service providers across the island with the licence to deliver cable programming to a specific geographical area.

On the local television scene, the music video has gained prominence, especially because of the availability of cable television services, which in turn have led to the establishment of local channels devoted to local music. These cable stations feature local music videos, advertisements for dances, parties and events as well as features on popular artists. This suggests programmers and advertisers are fully aware that their primary audience is made up of teenagers and young adults. "This local phenomenon is manifest through raw enterprise, intense love, commercial potential and free market opportunity bears the name of three brash upstarts, Hype TV, RE.TV and Music plus" (Grant, 2004, p.9).

Internationally, music video production is a multi-million dollar industry, proven an effective tool for increasing record sales and artist exposure. In 2003, the U.S. top rap album, by artist 50 Cent, earned 6.54 million U.S. dollars (Willman, 2004, p.13). With potential earning so high, a music video production for a top rated artist can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. These sums could not be justified if there was no confidence in the audience of potential buyers.
Reiss and Feineman point to the dual role of the music video. "No art form is as schizophrenic as the music video. In part a commercial and in part, a short film it has flaunted the line between art and commerce undermined narrative and character development and shortened an entire generation's attention span" (2000, p.24).

However, unlike Europe and the United States, the Jamaican market does not yet require a song to have a video for it to become a popular hit. The local weekly television magazine programme Entertainment Report, covers Jamaican music; the show contains a weekly rating of popular songs.

Videos are used to illustrate the chart positions; however, according to producer Miller only a few of the top ten songs have a music video, therefore, editors have to use other footage to illustrate the chart positions (2004). Miller says that the dance halls, the shows and the "buzz" on the street are what "run the music business; a song can be a hit without airplay and without a video; it is the more established artists who have videos, and not always before their music is a hit" (2004).

Smith asserts that although the local music video is still seen as an expensive luxury, things may be changing (2004, p. E5). Smith surmises that as the number of outlets for viewing local videos increases, the potential to reach lucrative international market is being explored (2004, p. E5).

The music video provides an opportunity for artistes to reach wider audiences, without having the added expense of touring. Indeed, Smith quotes one video director as saying, local artistes now realise music videos provide the opportunity for their work to be seen on the internet by international promoters, who may then be interested in booking them for lucrative shows (2004, p. E5).

The internet and cable combined offer an increased market size for local artistes at no additional cost to them and provide the programmers with material for broadcast. Jamaican popular artiste Sean Paul won a Grammy in 2003 and was named MTV Europe's artist of the year. His album Dutty Rock spawned a number of international hits. The track which started the series of hits was "Gimme the Light", which was accompanied by a video directed by renowned Hip Hop music director.
video director Little X. The video made it to the important play lists of BET, MTV and VH1.

The director describes music video as not just visuals on top of music, but an attempt in three minutes to present strong visuals to appeal commercially and to make sense of a small amount of time. Little X adds that videos can also sell a culture, not just music (Entertainment Report 2004).

Chang (1998) argues that there is an emphasis on sex and violence in dancehall, saying favourite themes are "guns, gals and guns". Yet, even before the era of dancehall music there was lewd content in Jamaican music.

Internationally, Jamaica gained a reputation for lewd music when Jamaican Max Romeo's "Wet Dream" went to number 10 in the British charts in August 1969 despite a ban by the BBC; as McAleer notes, "Romeo (born Max Smith) wrote the popular club track which opened the door for rude reggae in the UK" (1996, p.296).

Risqué music and rude lyrics are not a new phenomenon, Cohn states, "Blues wasn't the only folk music to emerge in the nineteenth century that spoke plainly of the pleasure and pains of a poor underclass, ... [and gave voice to subjects of] sex drink and drugs" (1993, p.153).

Cohn further explains about Blues, "In lyrics comprised equally of slang, lurid poetry and journalistic matter of factness, these songs report the daily drudgery and fleshly pleasures of slum life" (1993, p.153-54).

Dancehall, which is the most popular form of Jamaican music, shares these traits. Baker describes it as a, "kind of Caribbean rap music that focuses on earthy themes dear to the heart of young male Jamaicans, principally 'gal business', gunplay and ganja." (2003, p.43).

In the early 1960s, for example, Lord Laro sang of "Night Food"; the euphemism for sex. In another song, "Walk and Talk", one of his subjects was a man exchanging material goods for sexual favours from a woman.

Pon the Wednesday night she lock the bedroom door, and when him ask her why she say things gone sky high and what me have that interest you that gone up sky high too. (1961). (On Wednesday night she locked the bedroom door and when he asked the reason why she had done this she said that price of things had increased and as such he should be aware that the charge for her sexual favours had increased greatly as well.)

Music in Jamaica has changed with the times, from ska and rock steady of the post independence 1960s, to the social concerns for crime in the rude boy records, to the conscious and political reggae of
Marley and others in the turbulent 1970s, giving way to the sound of the deejays of the 1980s.

Bradley talks of the revolutionary move in the music of the 1980s and 1990s, "The slackness of Yellowman and General Echo seemed gentle compared with the humiliating 'punaany' lyrics that were to come" (2000, p.525). Not only explicit sexual descriptions cause concern. Indeed, such incidents are covered by the rules of the Jamaica Broadcasting Commission, which prohibits the broadcasting of "indecent and profane matter" ("Television and Sound" 2002).

The Commission explains: "As of Monday, January 13, 2002 all licensed television, radio and cable services in Jamaica were required to implement the Children's Code of Broadcasting, as the Commission puts it to "actively limit children's exposure to harmful violence, sex and language in the electronic media" (Green, 2003).

The Commission dictates that programmes depicting or displaying sexual organs, or conduct, in an explicit and offensive manner be deemed adult programmes; it dictates that broadcasts be restricted to certain times or scrambled in the case of X-rated channels.

The content of local videos would also seem to be of concern to the Commission. In 2001, it suggested that some of the material in music videos might have to be scrambled: "Customers who want to see certain videos of dancehall on their cable services will have to make sure they get decoders from their subscriber television (STV) operators. That's because the Commission is issuing a directive to all licensed cable services to air this material under the same conditions as other adult programming" ("Dancehall Sessions," 2001).

However, music deemed fit for airplay may contain questionable material, whether in its use of Jamaican slang "She Want the Vitamin S'"; (She wants sex) or in its phrasing:

I want a man with the wickedest slam, ... a one two three hour man." (I want a man that can give me good sex... a man who can last for one, two or three hours). ("Dude", 2004)

Songs with sexual content are, in fact, played on the air with offensive words censored. Oftentimes, these tunes are a hit in the dancehalls before reaching the airwaves. The term slackness or slack has been coined to describe lyrics or music which deals with sexual innuendo and graphic descriptions of sex.

Popular, and so-called, slack music can be heard whether you choose it or not: on a bus, a trip to the beach or the river, the local market place, and on the street.
In the 1980s loud music on public buses was banned, but despite this Burke asserts that this music is still being played on buses. He says agents keen to expose the music often give Bus crews CDs. "...The bus crews play them because they attract passengers especially young people. Much of the music is lewd and it is therefore not surprising that the word “dance” to many young people means “dubbing” or male to female crotch contact" (2004, p.8).

Crawford-Brown suggests a need in Jamaica for a Children’s Media Watch; she says that a large volume of popular music is, "... laced with lewd sexual innuendos, and coarse sometimes vulgar, references to parts of the male and female anatomy" (1999, p.101). She asserts that there seems to be a national campaign to expose children to as much violence and as much adult sexual imagery as possible (1999, p.101).

Best addresses the issue of the perception of dancehall by stating, "[Dancehall has been] much more notorious than any other popular Caribbean music in terms of its perceived support for activities that can give rise to the AIDS epidemic. Slackness and dancehall are synonymous in the mainstream perception" (1998, p.57).

Music Video

The music video industry developed in the 1980’s. Soifer points out that "Until recently, music and video were unrelated areas of media production, .... In the early 1980’s with the emergence of MTV and its many imitators. The rock music world saw video as an innovative way to market albums and artists whose products received little or no airplay” (2000, p.11). In its early stages, the music video was mostly about performance; music was sung or mimed, and a few effects or band footage may have been added. "As rock videos evolved from sales tools to saleable products, video managers realized music's creative potential to enhance the visual images they were presenting" (2000, p.11). As technology improved the possibilities increased, and artistes and directors became more creative in their expression and vision of musical interpretation.

A look at the changing visual concepts of pop singer Michael Jackson’s videos, are vivid examples of the developments in the production of music videos, from early performance footage of the artiste with special effects, to the ground breaking 17 minute full version of the music video for “Thriller” directed by, feature film director John Landis, to the morphing effects in the 1990’s video for the song “Black and White”. Moore states: "Michael became a solo performer in the late 1970s. He became very successful with young teenagers in the early 1980s by exploiting the development of pop videos as in “Thriller” (1982)" (1993, p.205).
Some videos became mini films with directors from advertising, and major films being drafted in. Reiss and Feineman suggest that there are different types of music video such as performance driven, narrative, gothic, moody dreaming-scapes and personal home videos" (2000, p. 24). Additionally, the development of the music video, as an industry-marketing tool, created the opportunity to establish new television networks dedicated to music videos, such as MTV, BET and VH1.

Henceforth, the music and image of the artiste moved into the audience’s living room; the influence of youth’s musical heroes now had the power of a new art form, and the reach of mass media.

The introduction of local cable stations devoted to music videos could suggest that the appetite for music videos is twofold, first in its appeal to a young audience, and second in the portrayal of images of Jamaica and Jamaicans. For the cable stations, the music video provides entertainment at a low cost, as record labels produce videos [at their own cost], and supply them to the stations at no cost.

Currently, the international acclaim and profits being enjoyed by some popular Jamaican artistes has spawned what writer, Smith, in the Jamaica Gleaner, calls a gold rush. Smith comments, "... previously regarded by dancehall artistes as an unaffordable luxury, music videos have now become a vital tool in local promotion" (2004, p. E5).

A recent development in the local music video industry is that an artiste may have two videos in circulation for the same song: one for the local market and one streamlined for the international audience. It is still only the most popular of artistes that are able to create music videos very early in the marketing of a record. Yet, for these artistes, trying to break into the international market will necessitate another more expensive video to appeal to the programmers at BET, MTV, and others.

Local artiste Spragga Benz along with Kevin Little, had an international hit in 2004 with the song "Turn Me On". In March 2004, the video used to promote the song in Europe debuted on Jamaican television. In an interview, Spragga Benz said a third version of the video was being considered, specifically for the U.S. market. By June 2004, the video was listed on the BET video chart in the U.S. In the same way, after Beenie Man and Miss Thing had a local hit with "Dude", a second music video was produced with U.S. video director Little X overseeing the work of local director Rass Kassa. The aim was to produce a video that would appeal to the international market (Bens).

While a music video may not yet be an essential tool for a song to become a hit locally, artistes and music producers now recognize that access to the international market is limited without one.
Chapter Four

Research Design

The project’s research design progressed through three distinct stages. Firstly, the selection of a population of music videos and a criteria to choose a sample for further study. Secondly, deciding which aspects of the music video to code, and how. Thirdly, designing a coding sheet and developing a system of coding.

In Jamaica, there are numerous music charts published by radio stations, internet web sites and television programmes. However, unlike the Billboard Chart of the U.S.A., there is no one chart considered an overall music chart. As previously discussed, not all music in the charts will have a music video; consequently, a list of popular videos is likely to differ from a list of popular music. Against this background, producers of television and cable music shows were approached and asked to supply a list of top ten music videos. Unfortunately, as only three responses were received, an alternative method of arriving at the population was sought. It was necessary to establish an objective definition for a popular music video in Jamaica. In order to approach this task, the nature of the music video business in Jamaica was explored. At the time of this research project the local music video stations and free to air video shows did not have a weekly chart.

The channels RE.TV, Music Plus and Hype TV are shown on a number of cable operator services across the country. In the corporate area, five cable operators confirmed broadcasting either one or all of these channels. In addition, Music Plus and Hype TV programmes are rebroadcast on CVM and TVJ.

Given this coverage, a decision was made to monitor the output of these channels to arrive at a population of popular local music videos. Cable channels such as R.E.TV, Hype TV and Music Plus operate by providing cable operators with a tape of programming. R.E.TV gives cable operators a four-hour tape loop and Hype TV and Music Plus supply an eight to 12 hour tape. These tapes are repeated during the week and constitute the channels’ output for that week. For these three stations, the series of videos off the tape loop were recorded during the weeks of April 23, 2004 and May 8, 2004. Thirty-two hours of music videos were recorded, and popular was defined as any music video that appeared on more than one channel.

For each channel, individual videos were named only once, even if they appeared more than once on that channel’s rotation. R.E. TV’s loop did not contain any repeated videos, Music Plus did repeat some, and Hype TV repeated four videos four times during its rotation. Thirty music videos were played on more than one channel, and consequently, defined as being popular. The majority of the videos in the list were by male artistes. The list covers different genres of popular Jamaican music, including dancehall, social commentary, and lovers rock.
Coding

The coding sheets were developed by observing the visuals and lyrics of a small sample of videos. The videos chosen were “Vitamin S” by Baby Cham from 2004, “Trailer Load Of Gal” by Shabba Ranks from the 1990’s, and Ultimate Shine’s “Gang Rival” from 2004; they were looked at as examples of social commentary. This observation of visuals and lyrics formed the basis of the information needed to construct the coding sheet. The videos revealed examples of sexually suggestive lyrics and visuals in both “Trailer Load” and “Vitamin S”. In “Trailer Load”, for example, the artiste Shabba Ranks is in a dancehall setting; fully clothed and surrounded by women dressed in tight shorts and tops. The predominant image is of women in tight clothes, dancing suggestively. “Vitamin S”, also a euphemism for sex, contains references to sexual intercourse and oral sex. The story of the song is a man talking about the fact that although so many women are after him for sex, he is able to deliver. “Gang Rival” is an example of social commentary in lyrics. The topic of this song is the danger of gang life.

The coding sheets were designed not only to track the incidence of sexual themes in lyrics and visuals, but more specifically to look at those related to sexual content relevant to HIV/AIDS. For this reason, the coding sheets examined the incidence of lyrics suggesting condom use or non-condom use, multiple partners, casual sex and different sexual practices. The first viewing counted and recorded the total number of shots making up the video. The total number of shots became the baseline figure to compare the number of shots for each category. For example, rather than simply recording five incidences of shots suggesting multiple partners, one would record five incidences of shots suggesting multiple partners in a video containing 200 shots.

The second viewing of the video was done to concentrate on coding the lyrics of the video. The incidence of lyrics suggesting condom use or non-condom use, multiple partners, casual sex and different sexual practices was noted.
The third viewing was devoted to counting incidences of sexually suggestive visual images, as well as visuals that suggest multi-partner sex, casual sex and other sex practices.

The fourth viewing coded modes of attire, and the presentation of males and females. Using indicators from the sample observations, rather than looking at a whole range of attire, the coding sheet categorized women wearing clothes that bared the midriff, exposed cleavage and emphasised body shape (e.g. tight short shorts, swimming costumes skimpy shirts and tops). For men, the categories were men fully clothed and men baring their chests. Therefore, a shot showing three fully clothed men was marked as one incidence of men fully clothed.

Clothing was given a separate category because it is often used as a way of communicating messages about sexual desirability, accessibility, and wealth.

The final viewing coded dance movements. Not all dance movements were counted; specific movements that emphasize the secondary and primary sexual characteristics, and entail male\female body contact in a sexually suggestive manner, were coded.

The categories included shots emphasizing the pelvis, the buttocks, males and females dancing together with full front-to-front, and back-to-front body contact.

As the music video is the sum of music, lyrics and visuals, the coding takes cognisance of this by separating the coding into specific areas. This also allowed for a particular area to be dealt with individually and for coders to then move to an overall picture of the content. For example, could it be that a video that is not on the topic of sex might contain sexual images?

Do videos about sex have visuals or dance moves to match? Are sexual messages contained in videos that are not about sex? With the majority of videos being on the subjects of love and sex what are the images that go with this subject matter?

The coding was divided into five distinct areas. A shot is defined as an image taken at a particular angle. A music video is a compilation of shots, of varying length and content; content distance is the sign of a change of shot, a change of angle.

First, the number of shots in the video was counted. The number of shots in a video moved from a low of 34 to a high of 218. The average was 138.46.

The number of shots was important because the content analysis looked at what the shots contained. So, for example, a shot with two women with their midriffs exposed would be counted not as two, but as one; one shot that contains an image of women revealing cleavage and midriff.
Chapter Five

Presentation of Findings

Of the 30 videos, 20 were defined as dancehall, 5 social commentaries, 1 gospel, and 4 lovers’ rock. Of the 30 videos, the most popular topic was sex, this featured in 16 videos; the rest featured a combination of social commentary (5), love (3), gospel (1), dance (3) and gang life (2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Number of Videos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gangs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 30 videos feature a mix of artistes, but the majority were by a single male or male group. Of the 30 videos, 13 were by solo male artistes. Only 1 was by a solo female artiste; 1 by male duo, 5 by mixed duo, 6 by male group and 3 by a mixed group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of Videos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solo Male</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo female</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male duo</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female duo</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female male duo</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male group</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed group</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lyrical Content

There were 523 incidences of sex related issues in the lyrics of the 30 videos; an average of 17.34 per video. Twenty-two videos contained sexual words or phrases. The lyrical sexual content included references to multiple sex partners, casual sex and intercourse. Fourteen of the videos refer to casual sex, 13 to multiple partners, 6 to oral sex, 13 to intercourse and 1 to foreplay.

Twelve videos had visuals suggesting casual sex, 1 referring to foreplay, oral sex 1, 7 multiple partner, 9 intercourse or 41 percent of videos contain visual references to casual sex, 30 percent to intercourse, and 23 percent multi-partner sex.

FIGURE I (Sexual References)

In the area of dress, 26 of the videos feature shots of scantily clad women (midriff bare, "batty rider" and swimsuit) or 86.6 percent of the videos contain visuals of scantily clad women.

Thirteen videos contained shots of men baring their chests; defined as naked torso or wearing vest. However, there were no examples of men naked from the waist up in the sample.

All 30 videos feature shots of fully clothed men; 20 videos feature fully clothed women; 26 videos feature images of scantily clad women.
Visual Content

In looking at visuals, the starting point was the number of individual shots in the videos. To this, information was added, like the number of shots that contained certain of the coding elements. For the 30 videos, the total number of shots was 4,154, therefore the average number of shots per video was 138.46. Of the 4,154, there were 2,329 sexually suggestive shots in the videos; the equivalent of 56.05 percent of the total number of shots.

FIGURE 4 (Sexually Suggestive Shots)

The total number of sexually suggestive shots includes shots that are generally sexually suggestive, shots of sexually suggestive dance moves and shots including images of people that emphasize the primary and secondary sexual characteristics. The breakdown of sexually suggestive shots revealed that there were 607 general sexual suggestive shots, or 26.06 percent of all sexual shots; 1,193 shots containing sexual dress or 51.22 percent of all sexual shots and 529 shots containing sexual dance moves, or 22.71 percent of all sexual shots.
The sexually suggestive shots referred to types of sexual activity. The 607 sexually suggestive shots are made up of shots that suggest sexual activities like foreplay, casual sex, multi partner sex, oral sex and intercourse.

The most frequently seen sexual shots after general sexual shots were those suggestive of casual sex 93, multi partner sex 53 and of intercourse 90. In the category of sexual shots relating to dress, 1,088 shots were of women. This category contains shots of women in swimming costumes, and clothes that reveal midriff, cleavage and body shape. Images of men in revealing clothing are limited to 103 shots containing images of men exposing shoulders, arms and upper chest.

In the area of dance, the majority of the sexual shots emphasize the front pelvic area; 288 out of the 529 total sexual dance shots, or 54.44 percent. The breakdown of the other shots revealed that there were 94 shots of men and women dancing front-to-front, or 17.7 percent; 80 shots of men and women dancing with male front to female back, or 15.12 percent, and 67 shots emphasizing the back pelvic area, or 12.66 percent. All of the back pelvic shots are of women.
Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of the research highlight a number of issues regarding the content of popular music videos. The research suggests that popular Jamaican music videos are likely to contain lyrical references to sexual behaviour; 22 of the 30 music videos analysed contained such references. The sample of videos also contained visual images that refer to sexual behaviour, some 56.05 percent of the total number of shots in the sample were sexually suggestive.

The images in the videos also referred to sexual behaviour relevant to HIV/AIDS; 41 percent contain references to casual sex, 30 percent to intercourse, and 23 percent to multi-partner sex.

The videos also appeared to emphasise the sexual characteristics of men and women, but in the sample women appeared to be more sexualized in terms of mode of dress; 26 videos feature images of scantily clad women. 13 videos contained shots of men exposing shoulders and upper chest.

The dominant theme in local popular music videos appears to be sex, this being the topic of the majority of the sample videos. The results also point to the genre of dancehall being the genre most likely to contain sexual subject matter. However, the sample also suggests that sex is not the only subject of videos that people are likely to see on local video channels. Other subjects include social commentary, gospel and dance.

The results support the notion that sex is an issue frequently referred to either directly or indirectly in lyrics and visuals in local music videos. However, while there is mention of casual sex, multi partner sex and other sexual practices there is no mention in the sample of condoms or condom use or the possible consequences of the sexual activities highlighted in the videos.

In the area of visuals, there is evidence to suggest that sexual imagery is often part of videos whose topics are not sex. This is so in the video “Solid as A Rock”, by TOK. The lyrics of the song are about gang life and not sex, yet the video has a high proportion of shots of scantily clad women; 83 out of a total of 195 shots in the video or 42 percent contain shots of scantily clad women, and 23 shots or 11.7 percent contain suggestive dance moves.

The dominant feature of the video visuals are shots containing women, women dancing suggestively or exposing midriff and cleavage, or shape in tight fitting clothes.
Local popular music videos do, it seems contain sexual messages, these are carried overtly in song titles, lyrics and also visuals suggestive of sex generally or specifically in terms of women's attire and dance movements.

It can be seen that messages about sexual practice contained in the images and lyrics of music videos suggest or represent casual sex and multi partner sex. This in itself could simply be seen as art imitating life; however, where the representations do differ from reality is in giving a fuller picture of sex and sexuality, inclusive of consequences and safer sex practices. Other research has pointed to the fact that youngsters may be overly influenced by the examples of risky sexual behaviour they see within music videos.

The research had certain limitations in terms of size of population but it suggests a need to look more closely at the content of music videos particularly those of the dancehall genre. This genre of music video represents the majority of local music videos and the genre where there is most likely to be sexual references and messages. The fact that dancehall is a popular type of music amongst the young suggests the need for further focussed study of the genre. However it could be argued that if the majority of music videos carry sexual messages that may be detracting from safer sex messages, that there is a need to look at the rest of the programming on cable stations to see what overall messages are carried by this medium.

Some cable stations have begun to include, safer sex public service announcements in programming but the bulk of programming is music videos and recordings of parties and beach promotions that include a great deal of sexual content.

The study looked at only a portion of the music videos being consumed, therefore it should be noted that within the music video world there are other examples of overt and covert sexual content, which may include supporting stigmatisation of certain people and condemnation of some sexual practices, and the encouragement, casual or multi partner sex. To look at these other examples, it would require research that is more extensive.

The presence of sexual messages is only one part of the whole, for the existence of sexual messages in music videos does not of itself give information about what those to whom the messages are transmitted make of the messages. This may be important considering the suggestion that there is a lag between knowledge of safer sex practices and behaviour.
Many music videos contain sexually suggestive content, which run contrary to notions of safer sex practices. Perhaps, professionals in the area of adolescent reproductive health could work with music video directors, artistes and cable channels to further promote safer sex themes in music videos and cable programming.
### Appendix I: Music Video Sample List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Artist</th>
<th>Video Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Bare as you Dare</td>
<td>Carl Henry and Cecille</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Be my Lover</td>
<td>Shynz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Dance Medley</td>
<td>Elephant Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Dude Remix</td>
<td>Beenie Man, Miss Thing, Shawna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Dutty Life</td>
<td>Capelton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Feel Good</td>
<td>Jagwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Guns to Town</td>
<td>Natty King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Hollow Point</td>
<td>Spree etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  Hot Gal</td>
<td>Cecille</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 If Only I Could</td>
<td>Yogi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 In Her Heart,</td>
<td>Capelton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Into You</td>
<td>Junior Demus and Mr. Kat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Marshal Medley</td>
<td>Wayne Marshal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Moving On Up</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Peace in Spanish Town</td>
<td>Luton Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Peace Song</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Real Fire Woman,</td>
<td>Pashon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Revelation</td>
<td>Abijah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Rock You Tonight</td>
<td>Tami and Kid Kurrupt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 She Want It</td>
<td>Delly Ranks and Voicemail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 She's Hot</td>
<td>TOK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Signal de Plane</td>
<td>Elephant man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Solid as a Rock</td>
<td>TOK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Someone Loves You Honey</td>
<td>Anthony B and Aisha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 The Cross, Prodigal Son</td>
<td>Prodigal son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Tweeta</td>
<td>Bling Dawg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 U've Got Me</td>
<td>Morgan Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Want Natty,</td>
<td>Sasha and Turbulence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 We de Time</td>
<td>Voicemail and Bogle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Where is the Love?</td>
<td>Warrior King</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II Selected Music Video Lyrics

**Vitamin S — Baby Cham**

Listen to mi good mi a tell all di guys,
Jook dem right let dem fantasize
Dat's why gal a stake out my home
And blow up me phone cause
She waan di vitamin S.
Gal waan smoke mi cigar
and a run dung mi car
Cause she waan di vitamin S
Gal a unbuttom har shirt
and pop off har skirt
Cause she waan di vitamin S
(Baby Cham, 2004)

(Listen to me this is what I tell all the men
Give them good sex let them fantasize
That's why girls wait for me outside my house
Why they are always calling me on the phone
Because they want sex from me
Girls want to give me oral sex
They run after me when I am in my car
It is because they want sex
Girls unbutton their shirts
Rip off their skirts
It is because they want sex)
**Dude — Beenie Man, Miss Thing and Shawna**

You want your proper fix, call me.
You want to get your kicks, call me.
If you want your cheese chix, call me
Me have the remix, call me
From the other day, it's like a play some boy ah play
Me hear the girls calling
Hear the girls balling
Hear the girls crying out
She say Beenie
I want a dude with the wickedest slam
(Bennie Man et.al., 2004)

(You want good sex, call me
If you want to get your kicks, call me
If you want good sex, call me
I have the remix
Recently I hear the girls calling
I hear them crying out
The girls say Beenie
I want a man to give me good sex)

**Hot Gyal — Ce’cille**

"Hot gal no want no bruk pocket man
One hand wash di other one,
Nuh drive ina borrow van
Cut out dem slackness how long bwoy have fi have ambition...."
(Ce’cille, 2004)

(Sexy girls don’t associate with men
who don't have money
It's all connected
The man is trying to impress the girls by driving a car that is not his
Stop doing that, a man has to have ambition)
### Appendix III Coding Sheets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIDEO CODING SHEET 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lyrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shots:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE INCIDENCES OF**

- Do Lyrics Suggest Sex
- Do Lyrics Suggest Casual Sex
- Do Lyrics Suggest Multiple Partners
- Do Lyrics Suggest Condom Use

**DO LYRICS SUGGEST**

- HIV
- AIDS
- S.T.I.’s
- Condoms
- Non Condom Use
- Non Consensual Sex
- P.L.W.H.A.’s
- Sex Practice
- Oral Sex
- Anal Sex
- Underage Sex
- Intercourse
- Homosexuality
- Foreplay
- Transactional Sex
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTE INCIDENCES OF</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do Lyrics Suggest Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Lyrics Suggest Casual Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Lyrics Suggest Multiple Partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Lyrics Suggest Condom Use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DO LYRICS SUGGEST</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.T.I.’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condoms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Condom Use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Consensual Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.L.W.H.A.’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anal Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underage Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercourse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreplay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fransactional Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### VIDEO CODING SHEET 3 (Dance Moves)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front to Back</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front to Front</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Pelvic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Pelvic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VIDEO CODING SHEET 4 (Dress)

**NOTE INCIDENCES OF**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressed in Bikinis or Swim Suit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revealing Midriff and Cleavage (Not in Swim Suit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In ‘Batty Riders’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Fully Covering Clothing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully Clothed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revealing Chest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Vitamin ‘S’


“Vitamin ‘S’”: An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos
VITAMIN ‘S’
Messages, Music and Video:
An Investigation into Sex and Sexuality in Popular Jamaican Music Videos

..................................................
Researched and written by Yvette Rowe
Project funded by the European Union