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The Meaning of Lana Del Rey

Pop culture, post-feminism and the choices facing young women today

By Catherine Vigier

The criticism leveled against pop singer Lana Del Rey on the Internet and in the mainstream press raises a number of questions about young women choosing to conform to the image required of them by the corporate media in order to achieve success, and about the conditions under which success can be achieved in the culture industries and elsewhere. This raises further questions: about the power of the corporate media and its capacity to control cultural products and establish norms, and about the choices open to young women—whether to exploit their sexual assets in order to make it to the top, or to refuse these pressures and risk remaining unknown. These pressures are also faced by young women attempting to find work or build a career in other areas. Personal relationships are squeezed and put under pressure, too, and satisfying relationships are difficult to maintain at a time when both men and women need relief from the harsh competition of the marketplace

This essay will argue that Lana Del Rey's music gives some expression to the lived experience of her audience, and to the aspirations of that audience. Through an analysis of Del Rey's songs and videos, it will also be argued that she is representing and speaking to a contradiction facing thousands of young women today, women who have followed mainstream society's prescriptions for success in what has been called a post-feminist world, but who find that real liberation and genuine satisfaction elude them.

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Working for long hours and for relatively low pay and still having responsibility for household management, many women have little free time or money. Images that suggest romance or escape are thus extremely attractive.

The rise and trashing of Lana Del Rey

In 2011 an aspiring singer-songwriter named Lizzie Grant ditched her name and her tarty look and staged a marketing relaunch that allowed her to rise to the heights of stardom. The singer, born in New York City and raised in Lake Placid, had begun her musical career singing in bars. After various failed attempts to break into the popular music market she signed a contract with Stranger records in June 2011. Her debut single was called "Video Games," and it was the home-made video of this song that went viral on YouTube and brought her overnight success.[*] She, now Lana Del Rey, was immediately signed by Polydor Records and Interscope, home to Madonna and Lady Gaga. Her album *Born to Die* was released in January 2012 and topped the charts in eleven countries including France, the UK, and Australia, along the way winning the 2012 Brit awards for Best Breakthrough Act in the UK.

The backlash against this assemblage—backlash from bloggers and Internet users, but also, significantly, in the *New York Times* and other mainstream print media—focused on Del Rey's surgically enhanced lips and her false retro look, which outraged many who believe art is synonymous with authenticity. The arguments were that this Lana Del Rey lacked talent and was simply the product of a corporate marketing machine. Her millionaire daddy, Robert Grant, was said to have bankrolled her rise to fame.

At first glance, the criticism of Grant-Del Rey's music seems to echo the arguments made by Theodor Adorno of the Frankfurt School, writing in the 1940s.[1] Adorno pointed to the way in which corporate interests controlled and defined the production of music and other popular arts. Popular music is standardized and pre-planned in order to elicit a series of predictable and controllable responses on the part of the consumer, he argued. Adorno's pessimism grew as the experience of National Socialism darkened his perspective on humanity's capacity to resist the propaganda offensives of the military-industrial complexes that dominated Western governments. In 1944 he and his colleague Max Horkheimer suggested that culture now assumed the role of providing social cohesion which had formerly been provided by religion.

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[*] To view, see Video Games.

Adorno and Horkheimer's insistence on the homogeneity of many cultural products, on the fact that we can scarcely distinguish advertising from editorial text, seems particularly true today. Yet there is a difficulty with this emphasis on the overwhelming power of the culture industries. Popular culture, in order to be successful and win audiences, must express in some way people's lived experiences. Even religion, if it is to channel people's aspirations toward the hereafter, must give expression to feelings of injustice, anguish and desire for a better world. Thus popular culture is a more complex affair than Horkheimer and Adorno made it out to be. The stars that are co-opted by the music industry are also particularly adept at expressing the sentiments of listeners—and usually at channeling these sentiments into harmless outlets such as the search for Romantic Love. Yet sometimes, in some ways, popular music can challenge the established ways of seeing, feeling and thinking about life. This can happen regardless of the intentions of the artists, as is suggested by Bob Dylan's hostility to the idea that he represented or expressed the aspirations of a particular social movement or generation.

This does not mean that the music is necessarily revolutionary. Singers can express deep unhappiness while embracing the conditions that give rise to that unhappiness. So, for example, Greil Marcus argues that country music could never be a symbol of social change in 1950s America. For Marcus, country music expressed the fatalism of poor whites and helped them feel more comfortable with accepting their lot. From the Carter family to Hank Williams and Patsy Cline, country music could only accompany the suffering of the poor, only bring momentary relief, without any hope of change.[2]

By contrast, and not wishing to suggest that Del Rey's music is radical or progressive (which I do not believe that it is), I would argue that it gives expression to some of the profound dissatisfactions that women continue to feel. In particular it speaks to a sense that freedom has not really been achieved and to a particular ambivalence about the kinds of relationships that seem required of women in need of either economic or emotional support.

While the backlash against Del Rey's music has taken the form of questioning her authenticity, accusing her of being a product of corporate, commercial pop music, it is difficult to see why she has been singled out in this respect. All producers of popular music are obliged to sign contracts with the big record companies who dictate the compromises they must make in order to be "saleable." This was as much the case for the Beatles in the 1960s as it is for the wannabe stars of today. The point is that those

who maintain and expand their popularity manage to continue to express something that is felt by their audiences, even while selling that feeling back in cultural products that do anything but challenge the status quo. What was astonishing about the media backlash, which began before the release of her album, was how international it was. *Le Figaro*, a conservative paper, quoted unfavorable comments on Del Rey from French journals of differing persuasions—e.g., *Le Parisien*, *Le Monde*, and *Le Point*—and also from the British *Telegraph* and *Guardian* and even the *Michigan Daily* student newspaper. One *Figaro* music critic was quoted as saying that "*Video Games*" had "given birth to a monster." The *Figaro* writer then added that the positive points of Del Rey's album "could be counted on the fingers of one hand," even though she did have the potential to become a great artist.[3] An early photo in *L'Express* magazine was accompanied by the helpful information that Del Rey was known as "duckface" to insiders.

Nostalgia for Disempowerment?

The press has claimed to be only repeating what was said on the Internet by certain bloggers, but the extent of the backlash raises questions as to what is really the problem with Del Rey? One of the problems is that, after a decade in which women were told that they had everything it took to get ahead, and that the playing-field was somehow level in our new, post-feminist world, it was disturbing to many to see a woman recast herself as an old-fashioned male fantasy and to seemingly embrace submissiveness, and to dress as if she were nostalgic for the days before women's liberation. (Although back in those days a pop star might not have taken off her clothes for a magazine— *GQ*—when it voted her woman of the year.) Submissiveness, nostalgia and a tendency to indulge in self-destructive behavior are the hallmarks of Del Rey's persona. Sometimes this comes down to the clothes she wears. *The Observer* music critic Kitty Empire wrote, "Her floaty trousers, not seen since a '60s convention of Stepford wives, sweep the ground so that it looks like the alluring, infuriating Lana Del Rey is walking on air." Empire concluded by saying that Del Rey "takes as her stylistic template a kind of pre-feminist Americana halfway between suburban perfection and the trailer park"[4]

Although female submissiveness, particularly of the sexual variety, has been making a comeback in various forms of pop culture (for example in the S&M of *Fifty Shades of Gray*), Del Rey has been particularly criticized for this aspect of her persona. Various critics have argued that she undermines the notion that women can be powerful if they use their skills and assets to their own advantage. The idea of empowerment was

articulated within conservative feminism in the 1990s and became quite influential. In her 1993 book *Fire with Fire* Naomi Wolf argued that what women needed was to embrace "power feminism."[5] Women needed to show their power, and if they were strong enough as individuals they could achieve equality. This meant learning from stars with high media profiles, people like Madonna, Spike Lee or Bill Cosby. If you didn't like your group's image in the media, you had to decide on another image and to seize the means of producing it. Women's liberation seemingly came down to a series of choices about image, lifestyle and sexual expression.[6] As journalist Charlotte Raven wrote in *The Guardian*:

> In this model, power could be taken on, like a mortgage, after due consideration. Everyone could sign up for it. Those who chose not to may have had some perverse attachment to their "downtrodden", "sorry victim" status. The rest would opt for life as a "laughing, independent, ambitious optimist."[7]

The important thing was to express a confident, upbeat image, and to abandon any image that suggested victimhood. As music critic Paul Rice wrote in *Slant* on-line magazine:

> Even casual top 40 listeners have become conditioned to the almost bludgeoning sense of self-empowerment in pop music today. . . . Nowhere else in mass culture have young people, especially women, been allowed to feel so unvexed about their desires, even if those desires are constrained to the relatively superficial, glitter-sprayed longings of a Ke$ha rager: "We're taking control/We've got what we want/We do what you don't."[8]

Del Rey doesn't fit this model. For Rice, this is because Del Rey sings as a woman who does not know what she wants. For some commentators, this is a negation of "girl power." As student Hallie Chen commented on a San Francisco blog, "There is a particular visual language that her 'Lolita lost in the ghetto' look attempts to deploy that is saturated in nostalgia for disempowerment."[9]

Del Rey's harshest critics have thus accused her of being anti-feminist. Music critic Ann Powers has said that the singer's persona is based on the allure of the *femme fatale* but without the "girl power update." Women found Del Rey troubling, she argued, because they saw in her the worst aspects of being a girl.[10] *The Atlantic*'s entertainment editor, Spencer Kornhaber, saw Del Rey as being unique, and odd, in her "retro gospel of stereotypical, codependent, frivolous girlishness." He goes on to add that while pop music has not abandoned sexism or a gendered world view, its major feminine icons have more recently depicted women as willful and, indeed, empowering all sorts of people to "act and think independently."[11]

Freedom and self-exploitation in the post-feminist world

Wolf's idea of empowerment, which suggests that liberation is a question of advantageously deploying one's assets, intellectual, social, sexual or otherwise, goes hand in hand with the idea that the only thing preventing true equality for women is their own lack of initiative and their inability to seize the chances offered them. This dovetailed nicely with the consumer spending booms of the 1990s and early 2000s, and this idea of dress freedom as synonymous with women's liberation has been used by neoconservatives like Laura Bush to justify Western governments' repeated military interventions in the Middle East and elsewhere, in part in order to "liberate" women whose oppression is symbolized by their dress. Western women, on the other hand, are considered to have all the freedom they need. The corollary of this is that women who fail to compete with men on equal terms and who demand rights such as paid maternity leave are considered to be taking unfair advantage. This attitude was reflected in former French justice minister Rachida Dati's returning to ministerial meetings just a few days after giving birth by Cesarean section. Women don't need maternity leave was the implicit message.

This impatience with "girly girls" and "victims" is perfectly described by Ariel Levy in her 2006 book *Female Chauvinist Pigs*.[12] Women who want to get on are encouraged to identify with men, to see themselves as exceptions to the rule, as the ones who by sheer effort of will are not going to be held back by their femininity, but who are going to succeed on equal terms with men, if necessary by joining with men in the deriding of other girls. This worldview encourages contempt for women who come across as victims (e.g., the people Ronald Reagan called "welfare queens"), but can also be extended to women who complain about sexism. Madonna's success in the 1980s coincided with a determined struggle by some feminists to shift feminism's agenda toward personal empowerment and a focus on individual, as opposed to collective progress. This position was also put forward by conservative cultural critics and anti-feminists such as Camille Paglia, who argued in one *New York Times* article that "Madonna was the future of feminism."[13]

Madonna's success also coincided with the liberalization of the porn industry, which flooded our lives with a constant stream of images of sexual behavior at its most alienated. Madonna could claim to be at the cutting edge of sexual liberation, for she was apparently liberating herself by breaking all the old taboos that had prevented people

from enjoying sex before. You didn't need to be a feminist anymore to reach for liberation. All you needed was to express your sexuality. This had the built-in advantage of being a way to get ahead. Women celebrities were gaining more social recognition than, for example, women athletes or scientists. As Ariel Levy pointed out, successful women had to be sexy, too, if they wanted recognition. A line between sexual liberation and self-exploitation disappeared. While greater openness about sexual matters was obviously a good thing, it encouraged the idea that nothing else was required. We could now talk about a post-feminist society in which women could compete on equal terms with men.

In Lana Del Rey's work, however, despite the sexual freedom expressed in her videos, there is a persistent sense of frustration, dissatisfaction and longing. She personally has been successful, but by representing a loser in her songs and videos. What many listeners have taken from the sad, haunting melody of "Video Games" is the way in which she dresses up for her boyfriend when he comes over, and how he nonetheless ignores her and focuses on his video game. We understand that both her sexual desire and her desire to be noticed are frustrated, and we can note that withholding sex is a form of sadistic behavior in certain types of relationships. Clearly, she is trying very hard to get attention in the video but has very little power, sexual or otherwise. This is glossed over in the nostalgia that seems to be a trademark of Del Rey's music.

The success of Del Rey's *Video Games* video must in part be related to the way it portrays a carefree past—in which young people are not performing or striving, but simply larking around, at the swimming pool, skateboarding, or riding motorbikes. They are not dressed up and are not obviously performing for the camera. They are just enjoying themselves.

It is important to remember that video games are played by both men and women, and even though they parallel the real world in the way one has to constantly strive to reach a higher level and compete with other players, the penalties for failure are not as dramatic as those encountered in the world of work. Yet video games and nostalgia are not the only forms of withdrawal from the harsh realities of everyday life. The key one is the search for a personal relationship that will make up for the failures and frustrations encountered elsewhere. The themes of the search for freedom and for the relationship that will save her is particularly evident in Del Rey's most recent release, "Ride" (October 2012). In the ten-minute video she is shown in a cowgirl outfit swinging on a tire in the middle of a countryside which we can identify as typical of the American

West. She tells us an imaginary life-story in her introductory soliloquy, explaining, "It was the winter of my life and the men I met along the way were my only summer."[14]

We see her adopt a number of roles and poses in her search for unity with a male love object. Different men appear to fulfill this role. She adopts the poses of streetwalker and biker girl (or Hell's Angel girlfriend). Her lovers turn out to be men who are considerably older than her. Del Rey has a penchant for exploring the power relationships at play within specific types of sexual relationships, and represents the woman's role as the weaker one. Nonetheless, Del Rey affirms that "my memories of them were my only real happy times."[15] In fact, she seems happier remembering and longing than actually living in the present. Perhaps because of this, Del Rey returns repeatedly to her other theme, that of incipient madness, and acts as if she were crazy, waving a gun around and holding it to her temple. Her advice to her fans at the preview of *Ride* in Santa Monica was this:

> People say your imagination is your greatest tool to success, and I think it's because things manifest in reality from the visions you have in your mind's eye. And so the most important thing is to really have a rich internal world, and live there, because reality will never meet your expectations.

This citation was reported in the *Spin* on-line magazine.[16] It sums up the contradictions in Del Rey's work: the ever-present striving for success, that essential part of the American Dream, which is underscored by her willingness to drape herself in the American Flag and affirm a belief in "the way America used to be." On the other hand, she suggests, we can strive, and indeed we must strive, and still face disappointment. Only a rich inner world can guarantee happiness, apparently. One problem is that having a rich inner world and living there can be the equivalent of madness. The other problem is that the alcohol and drug consumption which Del Rey includes in her songs can remove inhibitions, but this also means giving self-destructive impulses free rein. She herself struggled with alcoholism as a teenager, and talks openly about the problems of drug and alcohol abuse. "[A]t first it's fine and you think you have a dark side—it's exciting—and then you realize the dark side wins every time you indulge in it."[17]

It is important to say that there can be no liberation "in the head" if society is not similarly changed at the same time. There is a heavy price to pay for the retreat into a rich internal world that Del Rey is advocating.

The choices open to women today

In his 2007 novel *After Dark*, Haruki Murakami builds a story around the lives of two sisters. The main one, Mari, is studious and intellectual. She sits in an all-night café reading a book and does not seem terribly interested in men. But she has a beautiful sister who has been groomed for success in the fashion and modeling industries and has done quite well. The sister, however, has problems which lead her to consume drugs and alcohol. As the story unfolds, the sister lies in a deep, coma-like sleep. Her body chooses to opt out of the life to which it has been subjected.

The clear distinction made by Murakami between the fashion-model young woman who takes pills and retreats into a coma, and the studious, competent young woman, who is capable of effective action and exercises control over her destiny, is not so clear in the real world. In reality, women students, too, are under pressure to be glamorous, to use their sexuality as an asset to get ahead, even if this is just to give them a tiny competitive edge. Sex in the post-feminist world is not so much a recreational activity as a way to get ahead. As Nina Power, professor of philosophy at Roehampton University in the United Kingdom emphasizes:

> The sexualisation of contemporary women, from which men are of course not exempt from either, reflects less a freely-chosen desire to express oneself as a fully-rounded sensual being and far more the desperate, yet eminently comprehensible, desire to insert oneself in whatever way possible into a cruel economic structure that will selectively use and value the "assets" of its workers whenever it needs to. We should not be "blaming" women for their complicity in such logic, as if blame were ever a useful political category, but try better to understand it. The hyperreal sexuality of today's culture has as little to do with real libidinal emancipation as contemporary "flexible" work has to do with true human fulfilment.[18]

Escape seems the best option when there does not seem to be any way of changing the situation. Murakami's character falls into a deep sleep, but other forms of withdrawal are at hand for those whose attempts at self-actualization meet with frustration in the real world. Nostalgia for another time is one of the least damaging forms of withdrawal from the present.

With the intense competition of the job market, women are becoming used to the idea that everything they have—even their sexuality—has to go into selling themselves. This idea is reinforced by the images we have of the successful executive woman. As Power reminds us:

> Nevertheless, images of a certain kind of successful woman proliferate—the city worker in heels, the flexible agency employee, the hard-working

> hedonist who can afford to spend her income on vibrators and wine—and would have us believe that—yes—capitalism is a girl's best friend. The demand to be an "adaptable" worker, to be constantly "networking," "selling yourself", in effect, to become a kind of walking cv is felt keenly by both sexes in the developed world."[19]

But the meager rewards on offer for many—and the fact that work has become compulsory for working-class and many middle-class women since their male partners no longer earn what used to be called a family wage—mean that for most women work is not nearly as fulfilling or as attractive as it could be, and is often seen as somewhere to escape from rather than to escape to. Once the family provided the haven that the male worker would return to after a day of tough competition and stress in the workplace. If a woman wants a haven to return to, she has to make it herself. In the song "Born to Die" we hear Del Rey asking her boyfriend if he can "make it feel like home," because she feels so alone on a Friday night. [20] The nuclear family and monogamous relationships gain their strength and appeal from the harshness of the world and working life for both men and women. Even in the era of so-called post-feminism, we can still sense the attraction of the family as a haven in a heartless world.

But, because of the persistence of sexism, most women still come off second best. In "This is What Makes Us Girls", Del Rey talks about girls sticking together because they put love first—and suffering accordingly. The suffering makes them "hate those guys." But suffering can also be proof of investment in a relationship, a form of self-sacrifice. Del Rey's critics have accused her of showing herself about to be strangled by her boyfriend, beaten or bleeding or possibly raped. It is obviously extremely unhealthy to desire being physically attacked or to imagine that this is a normal part of a relationship. Being totally absorbed in a relationship to the exclusion of all else, being obsessed with someone who is clearly the wrong choice is not a good thing. But when Del Rey sings "You're no good for me/but I want you," she may well be expressing the paradoxical feelings of many women, and perhaps men too.

We need to ask why so many women choose to accept abusive relationships and suffering. Part of the answer, at least, may be in the lack of real alternatives. The woman may feel that the roller-coaster emotions that are part of emotionally abusive relationships are a better choice than being alone and abandoned, not to mention the violence some women might face if they did decide to leave.

But talk of a post-feminist society leaves little room for recognition of the persistence of women's oppression. Even today, there is a tendency for society to say that if a woman is subject to violence, then she was in some way responsible for it. We

cannot say that women with morbidly dependent tendencies are responsible for the behavior of those who exploit them. It is important to remember the words of psychoanalyst Karen Horney: morbid dependency "is an outcome of many other factors and not their root."[21] It can be argued that these factors are social and cultural just as much as they are psychological.

In particular, in a society in which the choices facing women are to exploit themselves or go under, we should not be surprised to see some very shocking symptoms appear. According to an article on "Hospitalizations for poisoning by prescription opioids, sedatives and tranquilizers," in the US rates of death from drug overdoses more than doubled for males and tripled for females between 1999 and 2007.[22] The references to morbidly dependent relationships, addiction, self-destruction, mental illness, which appear constantly in the songs of Lana Del Rey or Rihanna, are a reflection of what is going on in the minds and bodies of young people.

Not everybody becomes addicted or gets involved in violent, abusive relationships. But a lot of people have difficulty coping with the material difficulties of life, and this surfaces in different ways in their personal relationships. Feminist writer Susan Faludi has amply documented how economic decline can lead to men feeling like failures, and how this can lead to hostility toward women and sometimes violence. The present economic crisis, which has tended to hit male workers harder than female workers, can only aggravate the illusion that women have it easier, that they can use their sexual assets and communication skills, for example, to get jobs while men are losing out. When economic and social phenomena feed back into intimate lives the results can be disastrous, especially when young people are encouraged not to be aware of these influences on their personal lives and choices.[23]

Neoconservatives argue that it is up to women themselves to overcome the difficulties they face. Individual solutions are consistently put forward and collective ones ruled out. It is hardly surprising that so many young women (and men) escape into alcohol, self-injury and other forms of self-destruction. Their work is boring and routine, and their relationships offer rather more stress and struggle than pleasure. Psychology has named many new conditions and disorders assumed to disproportionately affect women, from borderline personality disorder to masochism, but there is little questioning of the type of society that paves the way for these mental disturbances by blocking off opportunities for real self-development and human growth. On the contrary, even

discussion of the possible alternatives to capitalist society and its destructive mechanisms is discouraged.

One thing is for sure: women's continued, sometimes desperate search for fulfillment outside the world of work reflects disillusionment with post-feminism's message that the only thing holding women back is the limits of their own ambitions. Horney argued that morbid dependency is a form of neurosis, and that so is the search for glory.[24] Are the only paths open to young women today the go-getting, aggressive individualism of the Madonna model, or the Del Rey turn inward that can lead to self-destruction and despair?

While Del Rey has been accused of producing retro trash, it is significant that many of her references are more related to the 1960s than to the 1950s. For all her identification with the victim, if we listen to what Del Rey says, there is no going back to the 1950s and the repressive social climate which then dominated. The connection with the '60s becomes controversial when one considers the video of the song "National Anthem." In this, Lana Del Rey first imitates Marilyn Monroe singing Happy Birthday Mr. President, then imitates Jackie Kennedy in a presidential couple in which JFK is replaced by a black president. The singer and video producer A$AP Rocky plays opposite Lana in a remake of the ideal family. The couple's mixed-race kids gambol on the White House lawn and a multiracial society seems to be really on the agenda.

With this video Del Rey shows the gap that exists between mainstream media discourse and the way in which people live their everyday lives. At least some of the viewers who commented on the *National Anthem* video posted on YouTube said that Lana Del Rey talked about real life and didn't try to pretend that certain things didn't happen.

Looking back to the '60s is not the same as looking back to the '50s. In France, former president Nicholas Sarkozy vowed to wipe out the memory of the '60s, and particularly of the student rebellion and general strike of 1968. Dreaming of a better society, of feeling good and having fun cannot be a bad thing. It might make us want to do something about it, and that is what frightens the neoconservatives.

Conclusion

There are more women looking for fun and a half-decent relationship, and drinking and getting high and playing video games, than there are powering to the top of the corporate ladder in high heels and designer outfits. Mainstream feminism's embrace of the

corporate agenda since the 1980s has meant that it has less and less to say to the women who are not going up. Popular culture, to the extent that it expresses the lived experience of women and girls, is showing that the allegedly post-feminist society, in which woman make choices on the same basis as men, does not exist. Yet the images of women's own experiences as they are reflected in popular culture show that we urgently need an alternative to the present state of affairs. Self-exploitation or self-destruction cannot be the only choices open to young women today. It is important to recognize that as long as the pressures on working women remain at their present intense levels, women and men will be thrown back on traditional forms of relationships which many had hoped were a thing of the past. Capitalism has a way of adapting to changes won in struggles, of integrating them and using them to enslave us even more. Nineteenth-century capitalism reconstituted the working-class family in order to reproduce future generations of workers. But it did so with the accord of men and women who felt that a family wage was better than an entire family working in the mines or in the dark satanic mills. The more women are exploited at work and in the home, the greater the appeal of romantic love as an apparent alternative. Even for women who consider themselves entirely liberated and free.

Endnotes

[1] T.W. Adorno, "On popular music."

[2] Greil Marcus, *Mystery Train* 45.

[3] Mathilde Cesbron, "Lana Del Rey."

[4] Kitty Empire, "Lana Del Rey – Review."

[5] Naomi Wolf, *Fire with Fire,* 47.

[6] Ibid., 323..

[7] Charlotte Raven, "How the 'new feminism' went wrong."

[8] Paul Rice, "Lana Del Rey's Feminist Problem."

[9] Chloe Roth, "Blahna Del Rey or Lana Del Rage?"

[10] Ann Powers, "Lana Del Rey: Just Another Pop Star."

[11] Spencer Kornhaber, "Lana Del Rey's Regressive, Beautiful, Twisted Fantasy."

[12] Ariel Levy, *Female Chauvinist Pigs,* 101.

[13] Camille Paglia, "Madonna – Finally, a Real Feminist."

[14] Lana Del Rey, "Ride."

[15] Ibid.

[16] Chris Martins, "Born to 'ride'."

[17] Jonathan Heaf, "Lana Del Rey."

[18] Nina Power, "*Capitalism, Consumerism and Feminism*."

[19] Nina Power, *One Dimensional Woman*, 23.

[20] Lana Del Rey, "Born to Die," from the album *Born to Die,* 2012.

[21] Karen Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth*, 258.

[22] J.H. Coben et al., "Hospitalizations for poisoning by prescription opioids, sedatives and tranquilizers."

[23] Susan Faludi, *Stiffed: the Betrayal of the American Man* (New York: Perennial, 1999), 46.

[24] Karen Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth*, 187.

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