

# Women in Hip-Hop Cannot Thrive While Misogynoir Exists

The jokes about Megan Thee Stallion's traumatic shooting sheds light on the bigger issue of misogynoir in hip-hop—and it must be eradicated, Taylor Crumpton writes.

BY [TAYLOR CRUMPTON](#) / JUL 30 2020, 10:16 PM EDT





“It was just the worst experience of my life. And it’s not funny. It’s nothing to joke about. It was nothing for y’all to start going and making fake stories about,” said Megan Thee Stallion on Instagram Live, holding back tears as she addressed her shooting injuries. “I didn’t put my hands on nobody. I didn’t deserve to get shot.”

The men in the hip-hop community have failed Megan Thee Stallion. On social media she was mocked and memed, diminishing the gravity of the violence enacted upon her. It points to a larger problem: the sadistic nature of misogynoir in hip-hop, an industry stained by the blood of violence against Black women by its forefathers.

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Hip-hop, a genre born from the overt abuse and brutality Black communities have suffered by law enforcement, upholds the patriarchy. It’s one of the few spaces where Black men can emulate the power ideals of whiteness. It’s a developed framework that justifies Chris Brown’s existence on Billboard’s chart despite his physical assault of Rihanna in February 2009; instead of being held accountable by his peers, he was welcomed into a fraternity of success and masculinity built on the dehumanization of Black women. It’s often said that Black women are fighting two wars based on the intersections of race and gender. Misogyny is institutional oppression against women at large, but misogynoir is the dehumanization of Black women perpetuated through individual, societal, and cultural violence toward Black women. Until men in hip-hop show genuine support and investment for Black women in hip-hop, Black women will never be granted justice, not even in death.

Black women are so unprotected & we hold so many things in to protect the feelings of others w/o considering our own. It might be funny to y’all on the internet and just another messy topic for you to talk about but this is my real life and I’m real life hurt and traumatized.

— HOT GIRL MEG (@theestallion) July 17, 2020

As Black women took to the streets to protest the death of Breonna Taylor, social media and blogs reduced their calls for justice to a superficial meme, a trend void of the richness and complexity of her life. When news broke about Megan’s attack, Twitter erupted with

misogynistic memes from Black users centered on her ass, boobs, and knees, implying that the loss of her sexual appeal mattered more than her actual life. Her face was superimposed on Ricky Baker's (played by Morris Chestnut) when he is shot in the film *Boyz N The Hood* and Madame Vera Walker's (played by Della Reese) when her pinky toe is shot in *Harlem Nights*. The migration of memes across social media platforms reinforces the devaluation of Black women in celebrity and hip-hop culture, where their full humanity is reduced, sexualized, and rendered one-dimensional.

One of the most compelling emcees and lyricists of her generation, Megan Thee Stallion is hip-hop's biggest star. She has accomplished world-wide success and renown for her explicit lyrics that put women in power, catering to their satisfaction and fulfillment as she raps about her "player ways" and "skimpy clothes." She's the "Houston hottie with a model body," yet through a patriarchal lens, men in hip-hop seek to reconstruct her lyrics of empowerment as justification for objectifying her body as a holding place of male desire, rage, and violence.

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## Who hears a Black woman's cries of fear and pain if their personhood is stripped away?

Who hears a Black woman's cries of fear and pain if their personhood is stripped away? If Black women are no longer regarded as human, then their bodies are deemed deserving of disproportionate amounts of pain. If Black women are no longer granted femininity, then their bodies are subjected to transphobic attacks in an attempt to validate the violence they endure. Cam'ron responded to Megan's attack by reposting an [Instagram post](#) that said her shooter "saw that dick and started shootn..IDC what no one say." His commentary reflects a double standard in hip-hop's misogynistic framework, one that awards male rappers for protecting themselves against an aggressive assailant but blames women for behavior that results in gun violence. 50 Cent, who survived being shot nine times (he references the attack on his hit "Many Men (Wish Death)" from his debut album *Get Rich or Die Tryin*), posted a meme about Megan's injury, which he later apologized for and deleted after her Instagram Live session.

Megan Thee Stallion didn't deserve to get shot. Liza Rios didn't deserve to be hit by Big Pun. Dee Barnes didn't deserve to be attacked by Dr. Dre. Steph Lova didn't deserve to be harassed by DJ Funkmaster Flex. Linda Williams didn't deserve to be punched by Damon Dash. Lil Kim didn't deserve to be in a violent relationship with The Notorious B.I.G. Drew Dixon, Sil Abrams, Sheri Sher, and others didn't deserve to be sexually assaulted by Russell Simmons. (Simmons has denied the allegations.) Misogynoir is an intracommunal pandemic.



It's not the responsibility of Black women in hip-hop to address the racialized and sexual violence towards their community.

Oppressive structures are maintained by the erasure and intentional neglect of individuals who are disregarded and marginalized. In a white supremacist society, hip-hop is unique because of its existence as one of the few influential structures where cisgender heterosexual Black men can be in positions of power, but their silence toward Black women is reflective of the patriarchal systems they have upheld. Hip-hop has provided a space for Black men to build empires and legacies; Def Jam Recordings, Roc-A-Fella Records, and Bad Boy Records have affirmed Russell Simmons, Jay-Z, and Diddy's places as worldwide ambassadors for hip-hop culture. Where was Jay-Z following Megan's attack? She signed to Roc Nation management and collaborated with Beyoncé on the "Savage" remix, but he said nothing. Where was Diddy? He featured her on his COVID-19 Dance-a-Thon, but he also said nothing. Though some men like Wale and 21 Savage showed their support, the majority of voices in hip-hop who displayed comfort and support for Megan Thee Stallion were Black women, who historically have shown up for themselves when no one else would.

Before the age of 25, Megan Thee Stallion had publicly lost her mother and grandmother. Yet during her ascension to stardom, and through her grief, she still continued to reach out and support "Hotties" with engagements on social media, charitable donations to her hometown of Houston, and a CashApp campaign. On her July 27 Instagram Live, her first appearance since the shooting, she continued to show that resilience, assuring us, "A bitch is alive and well. Strong as fuck. I'm ready to get back to regular programming with my hot girl shit....I can't keep putting my energy in a bunch of you motherfuckers."

It's not the responsibility of Black women in hip-hop to address the racialized and sexual violence towards their community. Black men in hip-hop need to participate in the disinvestment of misogyny in the culture, instead of silence. In order for Black women in hip-hop to live and thrive, the structure of misogynior must be abolished.

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