

Incubus - Megalomaniac

Incubus is an American rock band that was formed in 1991. The band's name means "a demon in male form who, according to mythological and legendary traditions, lies upon sleeping women to engage in sexual activity with them." ("Incubus."). Some critics have even said the band name does not fit the band because this group of boys is known as nice guys. When the band chose the name, they did not realize the meaning behind the title but thought it sounded cool. The album that Megalomaniac is featured on is called "A Crow Left of the Murder", which is a pretty dark and interesting title. While reading more into this, I discovered that a flock of crows is called a "murder", meaning you are not the type of person to follow society. This is important because the video shows how toxic and brainwashing society is, especially when someone has power, which refers to the title name Megalomaniac (a person who is obsessed with their power.)

At the beginning of the video, we get a pan of an urban city and see graphics of barbed wire. Making the viewer somewhat uncomfortable or feel unsafe in this town. At 20 seconds, the screen shows a bedroom and zooms into an old television. On the television screen, we can see "The United States Air Force Presents Brain Washing". This stood out to me the first time watching this music video because I thought it was interesting and different for a band to call out our Air Force. The old television screen then flashes with a red symbol with a w lightning bolt, which seems to be a mock of the US Army 25th division shoulder patch, and then transitions to Adolf Hitler speaking out to a crowd of people. This is when I first realized this is an Anti-War anthem. The video then transitions to a flock of fighter jets, soldiers marching, tanks, and other

war-like materials. Having the video set up this way prepares viewers for what the message is behind the video.

At 31 seconds, the video shows us a black and white close-up of a man's eye with multiple officers or soldiers holding up gun shields layered on top. While the camera pulls away from the eye, we see more and more of these officers holding up shields. Eventually, the farther the camera pulls away from the eye, we see Adolf Hitler, again, but this time with a ballerina's legs. He zooms off into the sky, which seems to be fighter jet wings. Once in the sky, we see Hitler, his ballerina legs and fighter wings multiplying into a flock. The camera cuts to real people, unlike the graphic work we saw for the first 40 seconds. These people are pointing at the sky and seem in disbelief as to what they are seeing. When Hitler is landing, we see a LED sign that states "Jesus Saves", foreshadowing a lyric in the song. Also, when he lands we see a graphic of people screaming in fear. The graphic looks as if it was a collage with all the layering.

Already this video has a lot going on and it has only been 50 seconds in. From the detailed graphic work to the clips of real people. The video transitions from Adolf Hitler next to the "Jesus Saves" LED sign, to the lead singer faded over city buildings. The faded shot of the singer is a medium close-up, while the base layer is a medium still shot of the city. Eventually, the artist is no longer faded over the city and sings "I hear you on the radio you permeate my screen, it's unkind. But if I met you in a scissor fight, I'd cut off both your wings on principle, alone". I see this connects with what we had previously seen on the television of "The United States Air Force Presents Brain Washing", and Adolf Hitler flying through the sky.

At 1 minute and 23 seconds, we go back to the graphics, but this time it's nuclear bombs with angel wings dropping on a crowd of people. When the singer sings "You're no Jesus, yeah, you're no fucking Elvis", we see Adolf Hitler again but this time only half of him flying in the

sky. He traded his fighter jet wings in for some angel wings as well. While he flies through the crown, he is laser eyeing the crowd, which makes me think he is brainwashing them as it is some type of superpower. At 1 minute and 35 seconds, we see Hilters head transition into Jesus' head. The screen jump cuts back to the real people with black possessed eyes. The crowd seems brainwashed as they are blank staring into the sky with their pitch-black eyes. I believe that the director decided to use Hitler for this message because he brainwashed a whole country to think the way he did, also because Adolf Hitler is a perfect example of someone obsessed with their power.

At 1 minute and 42 seconds, we are introduced to a family that seems to be brainwashed. The teenage boy is eating a record with the red logo and w lightning bolt we saw before on the television and nuclear bombs, the mother of the family goes into a cabinet and grabs a box of cat food and decides to eat it, the father and daughter are eating a cable wire. They seem disattached to the world and unsure as to what exactly they are doing. The screen then jumps to a sign that states "heroes don't ask why." and what seems to be a man and woman from the WW1 era in flying uniforms. Meaning doesn't question what is being told by power or society, just do what you are told and don't ask questions. But I seem to be asking myself a lot of questions as to why this family is eating dry cat food, wires, and records. At 1 minute and 51 seconds, we see George W. Bush holding up a baby with the red logo with the w lightning bolt all over the microphones. This video is calling out those who have or currently are obsessed with their power to connect it back to the song title and lyrics. The camera jump cuts to rioters holding up signs, then cuts back to George W. Bush screaming at the riots to stop and sending police to break up the riot. Sadly, this clip looks like it could have been taken today. At 2 minutes and 15 seconds, the clip is black and white and we see a girl in the crowd walking by with an anti-swastika, meaning anti-Nazi.

The patch is in color which makes it stand out to the viewer. The music syncs up with the video. The music gets very fast-paced and so do the clips. making the viewer feel overwhelmed. At 2 minutes and 15 seconds, we see a young child getting ripped away from their mother, something that happened often when Hitler was in charge. The video then jumps to multiple videos of police brutality, which seem to be real videos. These clips include cars on fire, people being dragged, people with wooden bats, and more.

At 2 minutes and 38 seconds, we see President George W Bush standing on top of a gas tank. The screen shows gas prices rising and the gas pump spilling out oil and hosing it over the city. We see a close-up of President George W Bush, and his head flies off and is replaced by an eagle head, the national bird of our country. This shot is about Arbusto Energy, an oil and gas exploration company that was founded by President George W Bush in 1977, and co-founded the Zapata Petroleum Corporation, which drilled in Texas's Permian Basin. The scene is calling out President George W. Bush for his oil company and profiting millions off of this. It is also calling out how he secretly tried to raise the gas tax. At 2 minutes and 44 seconds, we see the audience with fish heads, aka the prey to the Eagle which is the predator. In the back of this clip we can see the red logo with the W lightning bolts we have seen throughout the whole video. The director has tried to include this little symbol in all clips. The Eagle, President George W. Bush is seen picking up one of the fish heads with his beak and eating it. The shot then quickly transitions to the lead singer and old school film strips, and transitions again to the DJ. The video does not show the band members in the crowds or any shot except the ones where they are alone and the city is behind them. I am curious as to why they decided to include the band members this way?

This next shot is my favorite because it looks like it could be an art piece in a museum. 3 minutes into the video, we see a man sitting on the edge of a building with huge wings. I believe this is some sort of demon wing because of the band's name. The video then jump cuts to different men with these wings transitioning from medium shots to close-ups. At 3 minutes and 4 seconds, we see a ballerina with an angel on top of a building which reminds me of an earlier clip from this music video of Adolf Hitler and his ballerina's legs. The ballerina angel runs to the end of the building and oversees a flock of angels/demons flying over the city. This shot looks like a murderer, as known as a flock of crows. As the video goes on, we see more and more people jumping off a building and out of windows to join the murder. The video then jumps cuts again to Jesus with angel wings and the face transitions back to Adolf Hitler. This syncs up again with the lyric "You're no Jesus". The video zooms out and we see Hitler again with his ballerina legs and the fighter jet wings. When Hitler is zooming across the sky, he is accompanied by what appears to be another ballerina but with two torsos. The two fighter jets fly across the sky twirling around and causing a storm. The two-headed ballerina falls to the ground and bleeds out. The show follows the blood and goes underground. The blood turns into tree roots and we quickly zoom into the brainwashed family giving the baby oil, and the father takes some of the oil off the baby's face and puts some into his mouth. The mother then takes the oil and pours it into her mouth. The camera jump cuts into an x-ray and we see the same effect that happened to the ballerina but this time the oil turns into tree roots. The video quickly jumps from one idea to another but this time we see the link between Adolf Hitler, President George W Bush, and oil. Although it took about 3 minutes and 35 seconds for the video to get there, it finally did. This scene of the video was super overwhelming and jumped from one clip to another keeping the

audience on their toes and trying to process what is going on. It feels as if we are being brainwashed just watching the video.

Just like the scene above, the next one is almost twice as overwhelming with a lot of jump cuts and jumping from one idea to another. This also syncs up with the pace of the music which makes it feel way more overwhelming than it should. The shots fade from the previous one to bright yellow lighting to a bomb being set off into the city. The next following shot is the brainwashed family running from the fog to safety. The clips show disposable camera photos of the mother screaming with her hands above her head in fear, and more of the family also share the same expression. The clip jump cuts to the guitarist playing music in a city building and jumps back to the family running away from the bomb. After a few jump cuts of the band, we see a man holding a bible preaching to those about Jesus. At 3 minutes and 55 minutes, we see an extreme close-up of the priest's face looking like a mad man. The clip jumps cut back to the clipart audience running away with fish heads and one skull, which makes me think he is either dead or a demon. The clipart audience rips off President George W Bush's long legs and pushes him to the ground, defeating the demon. This is synced up with the lyric "Step Down", meaning 'leave office'. While this is all happening we see the flock of demons fall from the sky as if hell was let loose and fell to earth. At 4 minutes and 3 seconds, we see a Nazi standing on top of a roof patio talking to another man, and jumpcut to a shadow of the lead singer. We jump cut again to the demons falling from the sky and to people putting books into a pile, just like they did during the Nazi book burning. Just like before, the video highlights key parts of history or key elements that show when the world was at its worst. Once President George W Bush hits the ground, the prey is eating the predator. The video ends with the madman priest holding up the bible that says "Ye Holy Buy Bull", the cross with the mock US Army 25th Division shoulder

patch (that we saw throughout the video), and a piece of shit under the cross. This version of the bible is pretty much saying that the bible is Bullshit and that these people are “no Jesus” and that they are just obsessed with their power.

Overall, this video was quite overwhelming but highlighted very important topics we should remember and brought out a strong message that even your leader is shit at their job. Also, this style of editing using graphics to help give off a crowd is very interesting because they did not need many characters besides the brainwashed family and the band. Doing this gave the video an overwhelming vibe that helped go with the music. I enjoyed the easter egg red symbol. When I first noticed it I was curious about what that symbol meant and the importance behind it because it was featured in every scene. After doing research and looking up the logo, I realized it was making fun of the US Army 25th Division shoulder patch. This group was based in Schofield Barracks which is located in Hawaii where the military conducts its Asia-Pacific operations. This group was involved in the Pearl Harbor bombing. I enjoyed analyzing this video and it left me thinking a lot about how shitty and fucked up our world is.

Sources

Talks about brainwashing - shows hitler the king of brainwashing It is an Anti-War/Anti-Bush anthem

“Incubus.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 21 Mar. 2021, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incubus.