

(white) womanhood, reinserts itself by commodifying "otherness" within certain sexual/body practices:

- body piercing, tattoos and scarification are a part of the Modern Primitives (an offensive and loaded term) movement, forms of body adornment inherent within Indigenous and Eastern cultures;

- in *Leatherwomen*, a book of women's sex writings, a (straight-identified) white woman is gang raped by 1 Black and 2 Latina women (never mind that Blacks, Latinos and First Nations form the majority of those incarcerated) who are portrayed as being sexually "deviant" and violent;

- and, in *Love Bites*, a book of lez-sex photography, white dykes fuck each other with big, black dildos.

Talks regarding the representation of women in porn and erotic writings have for too long privileged white gender and sexuality. Unchallenged racism is reflected in both het and queer smut: Black men are reduced to the size and effectiveness of their penises, while Black, Asian, Latina, Arab and Jewish women are viewed as anomalies, exotic treats and fetishes. Stereotypical notions of a person-of-colour's body suggest intense sexual pleasure unknown to the vanilla experience.

### cross-over vanillas

Reactionaries may claim censorship over my blatant observations of race and representation. And reactionaries from the pink third space may attempt to regulate how we, as queers-of-colour, should knock boots proper (read: no S/M).

Yet most needed is a level of acknowledgement and social understanding regarding the cultural specificities of sexual expression. Non-sexual examples include how dancehall, rap and Black speech are misinterpreted in the mainstream by non-Black audiences. And how, in porn and other sex-smut, the racialization of Black and Brown people is taken to the nth power and most extreme level. Perhaps what I'm trying to express most is that a lot of the debates presume that we are all white and that the confines of white body culture apply to us all. And this just isn't so.

Stressed here is not a simple trashing of lezzie-fuck culture, but the limitations and myopia of a sex-lib scene that is stuck in the rut of racial ambivalence. What one has the right to fantasize about or sexually impress is not the issue here. The question *How entrenched is that sexual fantasy/practice in the myth of progressive representation and the transcendence of white patriarchal expression?* is key.

### Further Reading

Hazel V. Carby, *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (London: Harper Collins, 1990).

Sander L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992).

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### for Doug Wilson

a wall fell down, a field  
of muddy bootprints like scattered bricks,  
in early spring

then again, clinched  
by winter, hard and white as a public toilet

shocked by the headlong rush of green  
never before seen, every year, the  
spring that never comes, every year

exhausting itself to the bones  
of a million wheat, the ochre carcass  
asleep on the black earth

then shucked, in autumn filaments  
stacked by a few archivists  
filing for winter

and again, summer  
and again, for us, spring

### Something in my Eye

My era shifted like the lurch from safety  
to sudden unwellness, or the penis  
pushing further to an unexpected depth  
without warning, the platform spongy  
the mother unrecognizable in evening wear

So my head tracks a cursive  
swerve and spreads its reading  
deeply across the dank wood  
of this book, left through to  
right against the grain, particles  
floating to reach the eyes  
in a splurge of scented sawdust  
bearing physical memories  
in letter form, hard inflections,  
the crafted motes inhaled  
in gulping osmosis.

And my eyes too casting off  
not a vision precisely but a  
fragrance, an outpouring of  
every rational substance  
once transcribed by time  
with the elements of fovea,  
iris, sclera, cornea...now  
in heaping garlands, in sloppy handfuls  
tossed into the disintegrating text  
air-borne, chimerical  
miasma of pulp and perceptive flesh.

### Sleeping With the Enemy

The first lesion  
does not appear for some time.  
Its quiet mood ripples  
below the thin velum  
crackling a moment  
unalarmed its message  
hovering, static  
giving way to defining flesh  
and the horror of the body  
speaking for the rest of me.  
We mouth the taste of bodies  
numbed and numbered.  
We lie with the enemy  
and dull the remembered flavour  
of animal limbs  
that arched our backs  
with tidal shocks  
receiving every pulse.  
Our open mouths shun  
the pleasure our pores speak of  
delirious corners  
and endless human corridors  
leading to one place.  
We miss the skin's vague contour.  
We lie with the enemy  
on restless sheets  
damp with suspense  
mealy with the erasures  
of each recent session.  
The body is on everything  
humid breath through every fiber  
the fluid exchange  
of sentences, parsed or emended  
down to a tender contract.  
The push of flesh  
furnishes this consoling aftermath.  
We are left with this.  
But the lambent body  
articulates itself  
irradiating nothing  
leaving the night as chill,  
as sanitary.  
No one permeates its solitary  
uninfected reflection.  
You are left with me  
and the touch of a rhythmic figure.

### Stuart Blackley