

Nora Hantula
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Week 8
Word Count: 259

“The public story of black male lives narrated by rap music speaks directly to and against white racist domination, but only indirectly hints at the enormity of black male pain. Constructing the black male body as site of pleasure and power, rap and the dances associated with it suggest vibrancy, intensity, and an unsurpassed joy in living. It may very well be that living on the edge, so close to the possibility of being “exterminated” (which is how many young black males feel) heightens one’s ability to risk and make one’s pleasure more intense” (hooks, 1992, 377)

“The black mouth continues to serve as a proxy for the white mouth, for white feeling, but it also metonymizes the presence of black consuming public, as it navigates the consumer phantasmorgoria of the period, employing spectacular moments of visibility to become opaque—solid, in other words, present and real” (Tompkins, 2012, 148)

I did not include an extra article. -nora

Throughout the history of literature, speech, including the most recent modern period, the narrator often uses words such as “digestible” or “palatable” to describe information or knowledge that fits their own definition of comfortable. In the context of the two passages I chose this week, the white mind uses the black body to further elevate, and sometimes to enlighten, its own political self. While racism through white supremacy is widely unpopular, the “good white person,” (read: the unintentionally racist person) continues to benefit from hierarchical structures of power.

In *Eating the Other*, hooks writes about the creation and distribution of rap music written by black artists. Originally an art form used to express painful experiences and feelings of young black men, rap music has become palatable for

white audiences who do not relate to the history behind the genre. The commodification of the black voice for white minds has de-radicalized the politics within the music. Furthermore, a genre that was once an outlet for emotion has transformed to meet racist and sexist stereotypes to satisfy the white audience that has commoditized it. While black men are in control of a “powerful public voice,” they do not have the liberty to articulate that pain. Therefore, as it is alluded to in *Racial Indigestion*, the work of the black musician is produced to satisfy the emotions of the white listener instead of the artist. The black artist has a platform for creation, yet the work is separate from body, mind, and emotions, to produce a digestible product for the white audience.