

Remembering the Archive:
Linkages Between Black Gay Porn and NeoSoul in the 1990s

by
K Anderson

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Approved April 2022 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Marlon M. Bailey, Chair
J.T. Roane
Lisa Anderson

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2022

ABSTRACT

This thesis closely reads black gay pornography and NeoSoul music from the 1990s to theorize the digital transformations of the adult entertainment and music industries during the commercialization and boom of the Internet. Acknowledging black sex workers and musical artists as knowers and agitators whose labor and artistry teased and troubled these transformations, I employ an American Studies analytic to archives and genres that highlights the economic and historical undergirding of black sexual economies in the United States. I argue that black musical artists and sex workers facilitate a mapping of black sexual economies and an ecosystem of labor and pleasure upended by the commercialization of the Internet that pronounces a dialogic relationship between the adult entertainment and music industries, black musical artists and sex workers, and black musical and pornographic genres. Through close reading and nut chasing methods, I intimately describe the musical and sexual performances of sex workers and musical artists in three pornographic films and one music video to analyze the complexities of instrumentation and cinematography during this technological era, how they narrativize sound and place, and the sensorial and physiological effects of witnessing and listening to these performances. In this project, I ask: how does porn and music remember sound and place, how does black music and black gay pornography narrate black sexual economies and geographies, and how did the commercialization of the Internet in the 1980 and 90s change black musical genres and (black) gay pornography?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my expectational committee, Dr. J.T. Roane and Dr. Lisa Anderson, for their continued support and enthusiasm for my work and this thesis. To my advisor and chair, Dr. Marlon M. Bailey, thank you for your sharp insight, detailed comments, and encouragement through my matriculation in the American Studies MA program at ASU.

I want to thank my partner, my kin, and interlocutors: Chadwick Smith, Jada Renée Allen, miracle freckleton, John D. Blackshire, Miql Alexander, j.c. moore, Zalika U. Ibaorimi, Robert Randolph, Jr., Ricardo Millhouse, Leigh Anne-Goins, Joseph Harris, Neal McKinney, Papa Kobina Van Dyck, Cedrick Chandler, Jordan Horton, Kayla Thompson, Julian Kevon Glover, Marcus Strickland, Del Martin, and Kenneth M. Pass. Thank y'all for listening to all my tangents on this project, watched music videos with me, and took genuine interest in all the work curated for this thesis. I love you all dearly and feel incredibly lucky to know each of you.

Thanks goes to the DWoods Collection at the Kinsey Institute Library and Special Collections in Bloomington, Indiana and The Leather Museum and Archives in Chicago, Illinois for your awesomely rich archival databases and courtesy.

Finally, I want to thank the sex workers, musical artists, BDSM practitioners, leather folks, and kinksters all included in this project. To those I know and don't know, to those I met for the first time through the material, to those who have taught me, to those who are no longer physically here and still breathe through the archives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER 1.....	2
CHAPTER 2.....	14
CHAPTER 3.....	37
CHAPTER 4.....	56
CHAPTER 5.....	61
CHAPTER 6.....	82
REFERENCES.....	85

Chapter 1: Introduction

sopped in what i thought was sweat cause our broken ac, my hands shuddered from fantasies of touch i knew to delete. all in places that forbid arousal, allegedly. the sanctuary, the classroom, the playground, me and my brother's room
mirrors told me otherwise.
tracing where her lips would open for. erasing each hicky i
wish he left on me. before music and porn, mirrors taught me to breathe
and release. each sweet touch interrupted
by knocks on the bathroom door.
moans shushed by overhead lighting.
a nut too close
to bust, erotics archived
awaiting a purge.
till i heard him.

Before the sun touched my face, I heard D'Angelo's voice first. His bright, and endless cooing signaled the start of my Saturday mornings as a child. Around nine every Saturday morning, my father would turn on his mahogany-coated home surround speakers and out of his extensive CD and cassette tape collection of music select an artist to start everyone's day. Alongside D'Angelo, he often started with Kem's "Love Calls" or the repeated snap of drumsticks in Jill Scott's "The Way." After planting my feet on our sandy, unkempt brown carpet, I would be right on time when the first verse of "The Way" ended and would greet my sibling by singing along, "beaming all the way, down Third". In December 2020, I revisited D'Angelo's discography after hearing rumors of his return to the music industry after dropping his last project *Black Messiah* in 2014 alongside his band called The Vanguard. Upon watching his infamous music video "Untitled (How Does It Feel)", I instantly remembered seeing the premiere of the music video on television as a child in December 1999. Witnessing D'Angelo's lips bounce to every enunciation and the vocal coloring of his lyrics with the same erotic potency as his bodily performance in the music video held me through the four minute, twenty-three

second video. The same evening, I visited my Pornhub account to watch porn, specifically scenes from the 90s. While watching a scene, an advertisement on the left of my laptop's screen showed a black, muscle bodied figure undressing and the vertically rectangular frame excluded the performer's face. "Tell Me What To Do Next " blinked once the ad ended and my mouse leaped to follow the link.

On December 13th, 2020, Pornhub purged millions of content from unverified accounts following investigations of "inappropriate and illegal" videos. To verify an account on Pornhub, the platform requires users to submit a selfie (portrait-framed photo of their face) with a handwritten statement including their username and "pornhub.com" on a piece of paper. The content from unverified accounts included child pornography and hate porn including to Nazi symbols and antisemitism. This investigation led credit companies Visa and Mastercard to suspend the use of its cards on Pornhub which impacts sex workers using the site as a digital market for their content creation. For users, this purge "brought the total number of videos on the site down from 13m to just 4m," reported from Motherboard. After finding this news, I visited my profile on Pornhub to see if the late 1990s black gay porn I watched and added to my playlists was swept up in the millions of videos deleted. Content including performers like Gene Lamar and Bobby Blake were missing along with solo content from other black sex workers. Folks I knew in real life, folks I edged with, folks I made memories with. Another disruption in my mirrors, my archives. Operating as an anti-black psychic and material violence, this purging warps how the black consumers of black gay pornography remember and associate sound and place to pleasures.

Dis- and re-appearances of black bodies are not new in my life. Sade's second, ten-year hiatus like The Roots' 2001 return without central MC and recently departed, Malik B, are points

of loss that begged my memory to retain their sounds and voices. Both groups' albums during this time, *Lovers Rock* (2000) and *Phrenology* (2002), felt like departures from their artistic centers and from how I was introduced to them. An undisturbed memory during this transitional era for hip-hop and R&B in the late 1990s and early mid 2000s is the death of Luther Vandross in the summer of 2005. Some fleeting days prior, my mother and brother sang the Luther and Beyoncé duet “The Closer I Get to You” and to keep grief at bay I replayed their rendition of the duet in my mind to remember his voice. More recently, Kevin Moss, black bisexual man and porn star most known as Flex-Deon Blake, passed away in March of this year alongside other black performers and sex workers, like Mistress Velvet who died this year. The sticky and heart aching performances of these black musical artists and sex workers are remembered through sensorial recollections of hearing them speak, watching them touch other black folks, and witnessing them perform and experience pleasure. In tandem with these recollections, black liveliness in opposition to the looming loss are thematic inspirations seasoned throughout black musical and pornographic genres and subgenres and ground the emergence of racially specific markets, especially in the adult entertainment industry in the 1980s. What does it mean to watch films of black porn stars no longer living and/or retired? How can I sing along with Luther without replaying the day of his death? How is each orgasm full of these reckonings?

This purge of content disrupts an archive of black gay pornography and attempts to erase the sociocultural, sonic, and technological linkages between the adult entertainment industry and the music industry in the 1990s. Both industries during this time began experiencing shifts in the dissemination and production of videos, especially after United States Congress introduced multiple bills on the commercial use of the Internet and adaptation of legislative information into this new age of information technology. Former Vice President and US Senator, Al Gore, led

legislation for the national development of the Internet. Gore began promoting the development of Mosaic, one of the first and most attributed web browsers for the boom of the internet in the 90s, and alongside Former President Bill Clinton released a report on February 22nd, 1993, titled “Technology for America’s Economic Growth, A New Direction to Build Economic Strength”. In this report, Clinton and Gore detailed the creation of “information superhighways” that included developing national telecommunications infrastructure for economic expansion and funding federal programs to support the commercialization of the Internet. This political development alongside the boom of the world wide web in the 1990s globally shifted how music and pornography was accessed and consumed.

In the late 90s, file sharing platforms, like Hamster in 1999, morphed how people were able to listen to music which forced the music industry to reconsider new ways of releasing music. With file sharing platforms, consumers were able to download music files and enjoy music without relying on the radio or purchasing CDs at local stores. In response, the music industry partnered with technology companies to introduce media content platforms like iTunes in 2001 to control consumers’ access and engagement with music. For the adult entertainment industry, video sharing websites grew as platforms to showcase pornographic videos. With the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s happening during this boom of video technology, the viewing experience for both consumers of gay pornography and those engaging in sexual acts transitioned to private engagements with porn and sex. Sites under the Mindgeek network (Redtube, Youporn, XTube, and Pornhub) rose as digital content sharing platforms offering new features for users to create accounts, generate personalized video playlists, post comments, and download videos. The adult entertainment industry’s use of magazines, DVDs, and other erotic materials expanded due to this era of the Internet. This shifted how pornography marketed erotic

material to audiences and increased pressure for production companies to quickly adapt to newer video formats and other technological advancements.

This thesis and larger project deeply considers the stakes of black musical and pornographic genres as archives and how these holds for storytelling and fantasy critically respond to the digital transformations of the adult entertainment and music industries during the medium-shifting technological era of the 1990s and early 2000s. This project acknowledges black porn stars, musical artists, and sex workers as agitators and laborers who teased and troubled these transformations in their musical and sexual performances as a means of moral and spiritual reconciliation, pleasure making, and socioeconomic survival. In this project, I ask: how does porn and music remember sound and place, how does black music and black gay pornography narrate black sexual economies and geographies, and how did the commercialization of the Internet in the 1980 and 90s change black musical genres and (black) gay pornography? Employing an American Studies and black queer feminist analytic to archives, genres, and uncovering subtexts, “Remembering the Archive” details a multidisciplinary method that highlights the economic and historical undergirding of the pornographic films, musical performances, interviews, and autobiographical passages curated for this project. Apart of this economic and historical corsetry, I historicize how age of the Internet during this era of (black) gay pornography layered a digital landscape onto black sexual economies which transformed how sex workers and musical artists navigated both industries. Their engagement with one another in music videos, filming and performing in the same neighborhoods and cities, and their work following similar distribution cycles maps an ecosystem that articulates the dialogic relationship between these industries. I argue that sensory engagement and storytelling in music videos, musical performances and pornographic film facilitate the mapping of black sexual

economies for sex workers, musical artists, and audiences that begins at the turn of the 20th century. Music and erotic labor are co-constitutive to the black musical tradition and sexual performance and materializes how black queer folks remember and preserve archives of pleasure and fantasy.

In the second chapter of the thesis, I begin outlining a historical and economic corsetry that names the links between slave markets and the emergence of sexual economies in the United States through a critical historiography. The critical historiography addresses how sexual labor, specifically for slaves sexed as male, is theorized by historians of slavery and in gender and sexuality studies. Different from a literature review, the critical historiography highlights how bondage and kink are discussed in relation to sexual labor, slave economies, and slave cultures and includes a fictive writing redress exercise on autobiographical accounts of navigating desire and delectability as a slave. I assert that the works included in the critical historiography both explicitly and implicitly emphasize the sensuous and ontologically complex nature of slave labor and sexual labor. Systems of gender and sexuality and their horrific regulations through sexual and slave labor are addressed and offers a foundation for chapter three where I theorize coalitional politics between of black musical artists and sex workers in early 20th century U.S sexual and underground economies.

Method

I deploy a black feminist pornographics framework to perform close readings on three pornographic films, one music video, and one album promotional video and deploy a black queer feminist analytic to examine the works for sonic, aesthetic, and sensorial linkages to black geographies and soundscapes. Extending Jennifer Nash's close readings of straight, interracial pornographic films from the Golden Age (1970s) and Silver Age (1980), my close reading

deeply considers the “social functions and historical context” pornographic films engender¹ in black gay pornography in the 1990s and early 2000s. With a black feminist pornographics framework, the close readings will unearth the links on the labor and visual erotics as they are performed in the pornographic film and music video with histories of black sexual economies². Bringing this framework and method together, I critically describe the performances of sex workers and black musical artist and attend to complexities of instrumentation and cinematography to analyze how they narrativize sound and place. Nash reveals subtexts in her black feminist close readings and my extension of this method attends the narratives in the black gay pornographic films and music videos and how performers and musical artists play with the senses.

An emphasis on pleasure and the senses evokes a black queer feminist analytic that informs how subtexts are closely read. The deploying of a black queer feminist analytic to black gay pornography and Neosoul musical performance disturbs assumptions of black gay pornography and performers of this genre and subgenre of pornographic film as catered to cismen and their sexual imaginaries. A black queer feminist analytic here comments on how pleasure slides in and out of strict categories of gender and sexuality. This offers an opportunity to stretch who is the assumed audience of this pornography and music to consider who else is touched from the sexual and musical performances in black gay pornographic film and Neosoul music videos. As I perform the close reading method, I look for subtexts in the narratives and bodily performances in the film and music video. In the first scene of *Bone Thugs #2*³, we witness a tawny oak colored man settled on black and white Afrocentric sheets wearing a New

¹ Nash, J. C. (2014). *The black body in ecstasy*. Duke University Press. 22.

² Miller-Young, M. (2014). *A taste for brown sugar*. Duke University Press. 29.

³ Bone Thugs #2 is one of the pornographic films curated for this project and was provided by the DWoods Collection at the Kinsey Institute Library and Special Collection.

York Yankees cap. With his right fist full of himself, the mix of close shots showing the length of his torso and thighs maintain a view of a Yankees cap on his head. As an example, my close reading of this scene would analyze what the cap tells about this character, where he is stroking his dick, and what the cap as a signifier of place, time, and class says about the larger narrative of the film.

Alongside close reading as method, I create and perform a method called, nut chasing, wherein I detail the sensorial impact of sexual and musical performances in music videos and pornographic film through notetaking and mimicking the sexual acts and vocal performances of the musical artist and performer. Watching the promotion video for *Voodoo*, I instinctively sang the background vocals for “One Mo’Gin” and shaped my mouth in response to D’Angelo pursing his own, as if he pulled away after kissing someone’s lips. Nut chasing as method understands music and pornographic as instructive curriculum informing how we play with our bodies and instruments to create sound. Said another way, the method follows the physiological responses happening as I watch musical and sexual performances that reveals what is being felt, learned, and remembered as a witness and documented through note-taking and voice memos. The film *Black Nubian Fantasies* (1997), *In the Black* (1998), and *Hooked on Ebonics* (1988) were obtained from the DWoods Collection at the Kinsey Institute Library and Special Collection in Bloomington, Indiana on March 23rd, 2021. The music video was obtained from YouTube and was uploaded on the site February 26th, 2009. The close reading includes sexually explicit images and are included in the thesis with intention to evoke the intimate experience of witnessing archived black sexual and musical performance as live and active⁴.

⁴ Ajamu, McFarlane, C., & Cummings, R. (2020). Promiscuous Archiving: Notes on the Joys of Curating Black Queer Legacies. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 54(2-3), 585-616.

Chapter 2: Histories of Black Sexual Economies and Erotic Labor in the U.S

As part of a process of dehumanization that was/is chattel slavery, the eroticization of the African body laid part of this strategy of rendering the bodies of West African as black, slave, nonhuman, and property. The buying and selling of people as oddity commodities transformed modes of labor that tore into flesh and demanded an unfathomable physical and psychic might. Autobiographical and oral accounts to academic studies on slave labor most often hyper focuses on the physical (dis)ability of slaves to complete duties and the plantation as the center of the slave economy. As an undertheorized yet growing consideration in the disciplines of History and Black Studies, sexual violence and labor most often centers the slave as un/gendered and read as black women. To begin detailing the historical and economic corsetry of the slave economy as sexual economy, I first confront the colonial conundrum of gender, sex, and flesh that fixes how studies and accounts of sexual labor are gendered and arguably flattened. This pancaking and settling forfeits a more complex analysis of sexual labor and the erotics of sexual violence on the slave. To get at this conundrum, this chapter outlines a critical historiography of observations of bondage and kink in the wake and afterlives of slavery. This chapter includes a fictive writing and close narration exercise that teases this matrix of dehumanization and attempts to redress highlight the erotic dangers of failed analyses on stories of sexual labor from slaves sexed and raced as black and male.

Bondage and kink as mode of play extend to linguistic articulations of enslavement, capture, and the fleshiness of black bodies. For this chapter, I draw from Ariane Cruz's assertion of critical kink in *The Color of Kink: Black Women, BDSM and Pornography* and observe kink as a longing for socially nonnormative, unusual acts of pleasure⁵. For defining bondage for this

⁵ Cruz, A. (2016). *The Color of Kink*. New York University Press.

chapter, I highlight Ralph White's understanding of bondage in the *BDSM Primer* as "using some device, like rope, chains, cling film, etc. to restrain the movements of another person,"⁶. Both bondage and kink, within this historiography, are observed in ways that extend beyond formal play and forgoes the assumption that practitioners and those who indulge in BDSM are trained, engaging in consensual acts, and navigating even power dynamics in their relationship types and structures. A romanticization of bondage and kink, similar to the lightening of the horrors of enslavement in several fields, mirages the everyday acts of bondage and kink not staged at a demo event at a local leather bar or in a studio and yanks the teeth of these acts that potentially reveal deeper, more perverse insights on how the power dynamics (and imbalances) practiced during enslavement prime all of our interpersonal relationships. This critical historiography and its' framing of bondage and kink on literature and research on 16th and 17th century transatlantic slave trade and ends with more contemporary studies on afterlives of slavery. Scholarly takes on fetish and the fetishization of Africans more specifically connects it to constructions of race and sexuality and how Africans were/are raced and understood as hypersexual deviants. Because of this, I begin with J. Lorand Matory's 2017 lecture "The 'Fetish' Revisited: Marx, Freud, and the Gods Black People Make".

Non-vanilla BDSM and Leather Specificity as Ethic and Fetish

In the lecture, Matory recalls how Portuguese mariners overheard Guinean marketplace dealers say "fetisuit" or "fetiche" to describe European witchcraft. It was not until the 18th century Enlightenment Period that the Portuguese would in turn use the word to point at objects of West African religious practices and call them fetishes. This naming of these objects as

⁶ White, Ralph. *BDSM Primer*. The Nazca Plains Corporation, 2007.194.

fetishes recognized these objects as having an inappropriate attribution of value and simultaneously perceived the (West) African as a metaphor for disordered thinking for placing value on objects, even for spiritual practice⁷. The logic of West African religions and traditions as fetish understood West Africans as disordered, hypersexual, and deviant. Additionally, Matory introduced several objects during his lecture, some related to West African religious traditions and one specific to BDSM and leather gear. He very early in the lecture described an object as a “BDSM whip” with “an unusual color” and went on a lengthy diatribe stating Master/slave play as “faked” and “deep experiences, apparently” along other comments. Here, his descriptions in a playful, mimicking tone disrespect the relevance of the tool to BDSM and leather traditions and rejects how these traditions and their objects are connected to spiritual and religious formations and practices. The correct terminology of the object he introduced is a flogger and the purple and black colors of the flogger relate to the hanky code, a set of kinky identifications that correlate to the color and positioning of handkerchiefs and other objects on one’s body.

While he does not publicly name, he is a part of any BDSM or Leather communities, Matory’s omission or lack of awareness of the vernacular and practices as he makes sharp connections between BDSM, fetish, and African Diasporic religious practices mimics BDSM and leather practices. Related to this critical historiography, I argue it is imperative that scholars of slavery be knowledgeable of the practices and traditions of communities they are even loosely engaging. A lecture like Matory’s follows the reductive, morally deviant framing of kink and non-vanilla sexual and communal practices which is dangerous to how BDSM and leather practices and collectives are studied ethically.

⁷ Matory, J. L. (2017, October). *The ‘Fetish’ Revisited: Marx, Freud, and the Gods Black People Make*. UVM Religion Department Speaker Series.

As previously discussed, the gaps in slavery studies and sexuality studies on topics of bondage and kink often follow how Matory structured his lecture. The books and works collected in this critical historiography follow and deviate from this standard. I will address how each work fills and, in some ways, widens gaps on topics of bondage and kink in these fields and how they emphasize slave economies as sexual economies. An introduction to the latter argument through bondage and kink facilitates a query that considers how sexual labor adopts similar playful language, similar to Matory's lecture of fetish, that dulls the possibilities for critical analyses that address the ways slave labor and its' antiblack logics foreground the adult entertainment and music industries and sex work antagonisms. This historiography is made up of social and cultural historians, English literature scholars, black feminists, and gender and sexuality studies scholars. The social and cultural history texts more exclusively narrativize the wake of the enslavement of West Africans and the social, cultural, and economic ecosystems of the Antebellum South from 16th century to the 19th century. The English Literature scholars follow a black studies practice in how they recall, emphasize, and theorize symbols, patterns, and dynamics of the transatlantic slave trade into the 19th century. Finally, the gender and sexuality studies work by black feminists address the afterlives of slavery by more closely analyzing contemporary instances of the subjugation of the black body and how slavery has its' own legacy that permeates gender and sexuality in our sexual politics, performances of gender, and in black cultural production. The works included in this historiography start in the late 1980s and end in 2019.

Accounts of Bondage, Kink, and Sexual Labor in the Antebellum South

Very early in *Slavery and Social Death*, Orlando Patterson distinguishes what makes slavery distinctive from other forms of extreme domination and slavery's power relations which he describes in three points. 'The first is social and involves the use or threat of violence in the control of one person by another. The second is the psychological facet of influence, the capacity to persuade another person to change the way he perceives his interests and his circumstances. And third is the cultural facet of authority,'"⁸. These steps on power relations ground his analysis of slave status, Master/slave relationship, and the institution of slavery. As some would argue as a text foundational to Afropessimist thought, Patterson's book grapples with institutions of slavery globally and how and where the black (re: the slave) is positioned in them. To further mention Patterson on the topics of bondage and kink, I turn to chapter seven "The Condition of Slavery". In this chapter, Patterson offers examples of how societies facilitate Master/slave relationships. As Patterson unfolds how masters, to an extent, had exclusive proprietary claims and power over *his* slave, the examples he brings up throughout the chapter and the book name all masters as men. This articulation presumes a M/s binary that implicitly names the slave as without manhood. While the occurrence of white women as masters and enslavers has been more recently addressed by scholars like Stephanie Jones-Rodgers⁹, Patterson among other academics included in this historiography contribute to this gendered gap that emphasizes the white man as *the* master and central actor of acquiring, selling, and owning slaves. As an example of the forgoing of an analysis on the sexing and gendering of slaves, *Slavery and Social Death* emphasizes power without tending to the violence of gender and sex as contributors to the

⁸ Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: a Comparative Study* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, (1982):1-2.

⁹ Jones-Rodgers, Stephanie E. *They Were Her Property*. Yale University Press, (2019).

establishment of slave economies throughout the Americas. Related to bondage, in play and related to slavery, I agree with Patterson about the conditions of slavery function as a way of priming of everyone in slave societies. The social and economic negotiations Patterson mentions in this chapter and book I tease out further when works on BDSM structures are addressed later.

In Part One “Formations of Terror and Enjoyment” in *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery and Self-Making in Nineteenth Century America*, Saidiya Hartman plays with the horrors of slavery through a literary analysis of accounts of sexual assault, whipping, and mutilation. This book, I argue, boldly introduces where kink, bondage, and sexuality show up in scholarly discourse on slavery. Due to her English Literature academic background and training, Hartman fantastically pokes at the subtleties and outright erotics of acts of violence on the enslaved. I point to chapter three “Seduction and the Ruses of Power” where Hartman more explicitly titles these violences as sensual and playful. In this section of the book, Hartman emphasizes how the plasticity of ontological blackness¹⁰ and the binary of slave (as nonhuman) and person (as human) run insufficient for considering the complexities of enduring violence as a slave. “The confusion between consent and coercion, feeling and submission, intimacy and domination, and violence and reciprocity constitutes what I term the discourse of seduction in slave law.”¹¹ Kink enters Hartman’s analysis when she details the conflict of consent and coercion as she interprets the potential for a longing for what this violence invites. Said another way, I argue that Hartman thinks through how violence is potentially orgasmic, ecstatic, and euphoric which is why I consider *Scenes of Subjection* as one of the first and foundational texts in studies of slavery that embraces bondage and kink. Since 1997, this book continues to invite black feminist historians

¹⁰ Jackson, Zakiyyah Iman. "Losing manhood: Animality and plasticity in the (neo) slave narrative." *Qui parle: critical humanities and social sciences* 25, no. 1-2 (2016): 95-136.

¹¹ Hartman, Saidiya V. *Scenes of subjection: Terror, slavery, and self-making in nineteenth-century America*. Oxford University Press on Demand, (1997): 81.

and black feminists et al. to deeply consider how an analysis of sexuality and gender are necessary for studies of slavery¹². Scholars cannot fully theorize black gender and sexuality and its connections to enslavement without confronting antiblack logics of the transatlantic slave trade as instructive¹³.

For James Oakes in *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South*, a focus on dialectics and an insider-outsider perspective guides their portrayal of the Old South and its' slave societies. The Old South, also credited as the Antebellum South, is the historical period understood between the late 18th century with 1861 marking the beginning of the American Civil War and the economic shift with the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. I argue that Oakes makes clear how slave labor (which includes sexual labor) births and permeates how industries were shaped. Additionally, I focus on chapter three "Slaveholders and Nonslaveholders" and Oakes' examination of the spatial and social relations between slaveholders and nonslaveholders. Oakes addresses how the process of social reproduction and organization of family life were integral parts of discourse in the Old South and how children interacted with slaves. Regarding bondage, kink, and sexuality altogether, socialization is a greatly influential vector of child rearing and for children to witness Master/slave relationships makes me wonder how children in the Old South learned bondage and kink. Following Hartman's naming of violence as intimate and conflicting, I consider how kink is already present

¹² Roach, Shoniqua. "Black pussy power: Performing acts of black eroticism in Pam Grier's Blaxploitation films." *Feminist Theory* 19, no. 1 (2018): 7-22. I follow Roach's departure from 'black female sexuality' to 'black feminine sexuality' to express an opening and widening of gender variance and black feminist epistemological accounts on sexualities of black femmes, women, and gender variant folks.

¹³ Cruz, A. (2016). *The Color of Kink*. New York University Press. Chris, L. (2015). *Preaching bondage: John Chrysostom and the discourse of slavery in early Christianity*. Univ of California Press.

in the dynamic's children witness living with and around slaves. The racial, white-black dynamic and the sexual, Dominant-submissive dynamic of Master-slave relationships being witnessed by children, even against the disapproving thoughts of white mothers¹⁴, curates the environment of slave societies that includes how children observe sexual acts, sexual violence, and the hyper sexualization of slaves. To this, I am arguing that nonslaveholders and their children are not omitted from this socialization for a Master/slave relationship or an uneven sexual-social dynamic. A priming dynamic that understands the sexual labor by slaves and sexual violence done to slaves as teachable, just by legal standards, and constitutive of slave culture in the Antebellum South. In the next book, *Soul by Soul*, Walter Johnson illuminates how slavery, and the act of enslaving was and is instructible through magazines, newspaper, and other cultural and literary items and ways of gathering¹⁵.

In *Soul by Soul: Inside the Antebellum*, Walter Johnson notably offers concrete concepts on racial hierarchies through his examinations of the buying and selling practices at slave auctions and slave markets into studies of slavery. At this time in the discipline of History, more robust discourse on the historicization of economies was happening and racial capitalism as a concept became a popular topic in the discipline. Within this book, Johnson continues the growing articulation of Slaves as property/things/nonhumans and conceptualizes the lack of personhood as integral to slavery, the slave market economy, and sexual violence. Similar to Katherine McKittrick's theorization of mapping the black Atlantic Ocean and the transatlantic slave trade, Johnson identifies the slave pens as the central location of the nature of slavery and where a person is marked with a price. Understood as "living property", the book participates in

¹⁴ Oakes, James. *Slavery and freedom: an interpretation of the old south*. WW Norton & Company, (1998): 94-97.

¹⁵ Johnson, Walter. *Soul by soul: life inside the antebellum slave market*. Harvard University Press, (1999): 86-87.

this reimagining of slave cultures in the South and how the economy of slavery influenced white people's desires and understandings of race. In the following quote, Johnson names how fantasy permeates the marketplace of slavery and influences how to purchase slaves. "They dreamed of beating and healing and sleeping with slaves; sometimes they even dreamed that their slaves would love them. They imagined who they could be by thinking about whom they could buy."¹⁶ Johnson cites Saidiya V. Hartman's *Scenes of Subjection* in the notes section of his book which I think suggests that his imagining of slaveowners and poor whites is inspired by Hartman's analysis of the psychic and affective technologies of the slave auction. Additionally, I read Johnson's description of selling practices as script-making, one that harkens to script-making practices apart of race play. This kind of BDSM play accentuates the racial contours and histories of racial identities. It is facilitated through the naming of racial epithets, acts of acknowledging the difference of the physical body from one another specific to racial stereotypes, and plays on blood quantum biological measurements of race. Later in this historiography, I address what black femme BDSM practitioners say about race play and how it connects to Walter's narratives of slave markets.

His term, slave-pen blackness, speaks to the physical and aesthetic feature and ability mapping of slaves for their physical and reproductive (dis)abilities and learned skills. Alongside this term, Johnson theorizes the desires of white men (and women) buying and selling Slaves and how these desires informed how slaves could labor and perform their slave-ability, which is to say their Blackness. Assessing the fullness of the slave market and its' economy of reading bodies, Johnson imparts a solid examination on slave markets, specifically on the selling of slaves sexed as male and how the hyper sexualization of their bodies became a quantifiable

¹⁶ Johnson, Walter. *Soul by soul: life inside the antebellum slave market*. Harvard University Press, (1999). 87.

metric of value. Slaves would be physically examined, stripped of their clothes, and were asked about their skills depending on what slaveowners came to the Slave market to buy, trade, or sell. Johnson, like other social historians that recognize slaves as property, described the slave market and auctions as places to buy property and things, not people. “And yet., through the same gaze and beneath the same probing fingers, slaveholders were looking for a different set of (projected) qualities--qualities that were not, like those they attributed to their black field hands, opposite of the qualities they ascribed to themselves, but, rather, were proximate to their own whiteness.”¹⁷ This probing and assessment of skill is taught between slave owning and purchasing whites and in newspapers and magazines. In publications like *South Agriculturalist* and the *Southern Planter*, slave owners wrote extensive guidelines naming how to be successful slave farmers and slave holders. Detailing working conditions, oversight, dieting, and sleep schedules, the slave economy extends past slave pens and markets and saturates interlocking industries most pronounced in this thesis, the entertainment industry. In the next section, *Delectability, Kink, and Black Queer Feminist Redress through Fictive Writing*, I invite Olaudah Equiano’s autobiography into this historiography to interpret how he narrativized sexual labor as a slave.

Delectability, Kink, and Black Queer Feminist Redress through Fictive Writing

Before addressing black feminist accounts of bondage and kink and their connections to studies of slavery, I continue unfolding how kinks specific to race and the hyper sexualization of black bodies are autobiographically narrativized. This section of the critical historiography includes a black queer feminist fictive rewriting of an excerpt from Olaudah Equiano’s

¹⁷ Johnson, Walter. *Soul by soul: life inside the antebellum slave market*. Harvard University Press, (1999). 150.

autobiography¹⁸. I lean into Saidiya Hartman¹⁹ and Sarah Haley's method-making intinctions when histories are removed from the intimate and the personal from accounts of violence to adopt close narration as a method of rewriting the excerpt²⁰. I argue that redress is possible in Equiano's autobiography and that it is warranted given the ultra-exploitative nature and practices by publishing houses in the mass distribution of his narratives. The continued translation of his stories by publishing houses pulls further and further away from what Equiano reckons with in his autobiography. Here, a black queer feminist practice and framework guides how I fictively rewrite and marks "race and class in relation to desire and reveals that the telling of desire must always be a text written about race and class no matter how encoded within gender oppression,"²¹. With close narrative as a method and fictive writing as the medium, my analysis of Equiano's understanding and engagement with kink and racial difference contributes to the historiography framing slavery as sexual economy. First, I frame Olaudah Equiano's shared experiences in his autobiography, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, with Vincent Woodard's theorization on homoeroticism and cannibalism to make clear the connection between the two and what they dually contribute to the historiography of bondage and kink.

Hunger, as defined by Vincent Woodard in *The Delectable Negro: Human Consumption and Homoeroticism within U.S. Slave Culture* refers to the idea of auto-cannibalism, consuming oneself voluntarily or through external coercion²². I extend Woodard's use of hunger to address

¹⁸ Harris, Laura Alexandra. "Queer Black feminism: the pleasure principle." *Feminist Review* 54, no. 1 (1996): 3-30. I make the distinction of "black queer feminist" to be clear the critique of an analysis of race, class, and desire on feminist sexual politics and how a black queer feminist analytic on pleasure is useful in this fictive writing and close narration method.

¹⁹ Hartman, Saidiya V. "Venus in Two Acts." *Small Axe* 12, no. 2. (2008): 1-14.

²⁰ Haley, Sarah. "Intimate Historical Practice." *The Journal of African American History* 106, no. 1, (2021): 104-108.

²¹ Morgan, Joan. "Why we get off: Moving towards a Black feminist politics of pleasure." *The Black Scholar* 45, no. 4 (2015): 36-46.

²² Woodard, Vincent, and Dwight McBride. *The Delectable Negro*. New York University Press, 2014. 18-19.

how this consumption of oneself is predicated on the “delectability” and desire to devour oneself, for Olaudah Equiano. The degrees of delectability, I think, relate to desire mapping and understandings of how bodies and ability are valued, like Johnson’s illumination of value as a probing, quantifiable metric. The marketing of bodies as a space for slaves to disrupt sales and evade being purchased for labor is, in part, a self-making, agentic one²³. Slaves are “on the floor” witnessing slavery, as a sexual economy, happen and how they come to understand the hypersexual, deviant logics projected on their bodies to navigate markets for pleasure, survival, and intimacy. For Equiano, I wonder how he understands this matrix of desirability and adjusts these strategies to learn biblical texts, histories of English civilizations, and Anglo-etiquette from white male shipmates. Throughout *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, Or Gustavus Vassa, The African Illustrated*, Equiano names being “chosen” by his white companions, even as his companions talked of murdering and devouring his body.

“He used to often tell him jocularly that he would kill and eat me. Sometimes he would say to me—the black people were not good to eat, and would ask me if we did not eat people in my country. I said, No: then he said he would kill Dick (as we always called him) first, and afterwards me.”²⁴

In this book, Equiano often describes the white shipmates' and masters' longing for him and each other as “desire”. Because of this, I take a short excerpt from his book to stretch and fantasize what he’s written about his interactions with his master (at the time) and an interpreter named Dick²⁵. Equiano's writing, as erotica, opens historians and readers of slave narratives to the orgasmic possibilities of the terror of humanization. (De)humanization not as a final and complete indictment of abjection, but a contested negotiation about the plasticity of ontological

²³ Both Johnson and Hartman further analyze how these violences are, in turn, contributing to a self-making process that informs how slaves navigate the plantations, slave pens, and being sold.

²⁴ Equiano, Olaudah. *The interesting narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano*. Broadview Press, 2001. 38.

²⁵ I honor Equiano’s lower-casing of the “m” in master " throughout this section.

Blackness that informs sexual politics for the slave²⁶. In a string of digital video journals apart of her #HoOntologies / #HoOntologies series titled “What did i say”, Zalika U Ibaorimi records herself speaking as she wears a black vinyl and orange bikini set, gold jewelry, and a classic blonde bob wig. Three of the nine entries say, “In this #HoOntologies / #HoOntology series I share a few personal stories. I will not share what I am discussing, but I am welcoming you, my spectator, to tell me what I said. I desire intimacy, and this is the only time you can place words in my mouth.” All the journal entries are muted and transition in sequence from videos in color, to greyscale photos, and finally to black and white. Similar to Equiano’s story telling of intimacies with white masters and crewmen, Ibaorimi invites us, the spectator, to voice what we imagine her personal experiences to be as the subject/human/thing toggling between dehumanization and humanization. Both Equiano and Ibaorimi ground their storytelling in speculation and autoethnography as fantastic modes of self-narration and fiction. As a reader and spectator of Equiano, close narration and fictive re-reading and writing function as methods that fantasize the intimate, the violent, the irreversible experiences that Equiano hints at and explicitly names in his autobiography. Through close narration method and a fictional re-reading, I argue that from this excerpt from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah, Equiano* measures his delectability from his masters’ and Dick’s actions and how Equiano tastes himself as a performance of illicit eroticism²⁷. My fictive writing and redress story begins on the deck of a slave ship shortly after a slave was lost overboard.²⁸

²⁶ Jackson, Zakiyyah Iman. "Losing manhood: Animality and plasticity in the (neo) slave narrative." *Qui parle: critical humanities and social sciences* 25, no. 1-2 (2016): 95-136.

²⁷ Miller-Young, Mireille. *A taste for brown sugar*. Duke University Press, (2014).

²⁸ To follow my storytelling alongside Equiano’s account, you can start at page 34 in his autobiography.

Turning from the wine-pigmented waters, they all stared at me. Stuck watching the agony pulse across my face as I heard these large fish feast on the man's body as offering. I often did not find myself on the deck to see these fish following us, but I heard stories of them. Dick's grin creased once he saw my confusion and tears, unlike the other shipmates. Finding me tucked away at the fore of the ship, he listened as I tried asking him what those fish were. Even with my poor English, he answered telling me that these fish devour bodies and would do the same if I had the same fate as the man overboard. "Come, look at these fish with me," the captain ordered, interrupting Dick's attempt to calm me. The flesh tearing happening at sea masked my hesitant steps across the creaky, wooden floor as I inched closer to the captain. These sounds, worse than my own nightmares, caused trembles until I cried all over again. Disgusted by my fear this time, he ordered me to leave and for the shipmates to toss a barrel down to distract the fish. Dick followed me to my bed, and I welcomed him to it.

"What scares you," he questioned after watching my sadness clear. I followed the dried paths of tears on my cheeks with my hands trying to understand his question. I knew if I didn't answer him that he would surely leave; and he was too good a friend for me not to answer. I told him that I was afraid of losing someone else. "You have not lost much, Falmouth will have new streets for you to see, and buildings to write about. That man was not going to see Falmouth how you will," Dick responded. Pleased by his answer, I wanted to hear about his times in this city and what I should expect upon our arrival. His shoulders dropped with every story he told me about this place we are headed. I closed my eyes to hide the excitement growing from his descriptions of the food and the people. My mind placed me next to him in these stories. Every alarm left ringing from the death of that man was replaced with warm dreams of a land far away from this fish. Of a city with me by Dick's side.

Thirteen weeks later, the ship docked at Falmouth. With fresh food to eat, the mood of everyone aboard lightened. In the spring of 1757, I was twelve and Dick was right. The buildings towered over me, and the streets stretched longer than I imagined they would. To my surprise, snow covered the deck one morning. Shocked by what I thought was salt, I ran to Dick to help make sense of what I was seeing for the first time. Instead of following me back to the deck, he told me to bring some down to him. The trembling found me again once I scooped a handful of the snow. He dared me to taste it and that's what I did. Still unsure, I asked what it was as it fell through my fingers and onto the floor in his room. He told me it was snow, and I did not understand. He asked if we had snow in my country, and I said, "No". I questioned the use of it and who made it and he told me about God, a man above all men from the heavens. Even after his explanation, I still did not follow.

If God made us, why do I look different than Dick? Why would this great man send this down on us? Why have I not seen this before? Why would God withhold such an amazing gift from my country?

Convinced Dick would answer every question, I listened to each explanation of God. I enjoy Dick's explanations of things and learning from him. The white people have so much knowledge and in Falmouth they weren't selling each other, as we did. They cleaned their hands before eating and didn't touch the dead. I remember their women also being thinner than African women, with charisma and a brightness to them. My master and Dick read, so I did the same. I sensed they knew

I was curious with all the questions I had. A book could answer my questions. If not, my master and Dick would answer whatever the book chose to not tell me.

In this fictive writing and close narration exercise, I tug at the fantasy-making in Equiano's accounts of living on the ship and in Falmouth to intensify how Equiano spoke of his encounters with Dick and his master. Through Mireille Miller-Young's term of illicit eroticism and Woodward's concept of delectability, Equiano in the autobiography and in my fictive writing interpretations of the excerpt fantasizes the very dangerous, life-threatening navigation of homoerotic, interracial desire²⁹. Equiano performs illicit eroticism by teasing his master and shipmates and unabashedly responding to death as a means of preserving an imagination and sexuality seasoned with how he is hypersexualized and touched, sensorially and metaphorically, by white men. The redress in this fictive writing also reveals the sexual politics of living in bondage and as a slave. While Equiano's movement and opportunities to learn were much looser than other slaves, the looming death in any poor interaction with his master or Dick informed how he devised strategies of survival and sensation. Equiano's autobiography, alongside other autobiographical texts written by black enslaved men during this century, represent early documents of black men's sexual politics and sexual labor. Equiano knew his embodiment was read with logics that understood him as sexually deviant and floating in this matrix between nonhuman and human. All this theorization of his body and experiences as a slave to white men informed how he learned to read, speak, and eventually write his autobiography. His navigation

²⁹ In *A Taste For Brown Sugar: Black Women in Pornography*, Miller-Young defines illicit eroticism as “a framework to understand the ways in which black women put hypersexuality to use” in their navigation of the adult entertainment and music industries with highly stratified structures of desire and “tiers of desirability”. Miller-Young, Mireille. *A taste for brown sugar*. Duke University Press, (2014): 10.

within slave and bloodwater economies mirrors how sex workers and BDSM practitioners engage non-black clients for pleasure and survival which is explored further in the next section.

Un/gendered Fleshiness (?), BDSM and Sex Work, and Studies of Slavery

In this final section of this historiography, I center black feminist interventions on power, kink, and the afterlives of slavery in slavery to highlight how black feminists analyze contemporary instances of the subjugation of the black femme*³⁰ and masc* body as it relates to sex, gender, and sexuality. While my focus is on sex work and musical performance done by black folks read as masculine and (cis)men, the anecdotal experiences and black feminist theorizations in this section massage the contradictions of framing and naming a sexual performance and labor as masculine or feminine and male or female. Said another way, working in the adult entertainment and musical industries and sexual economies at-large means categorizing one's labor specific to race, gender, and sexuality through genres. In this thesis, I acknowledge genres as race and class specific codifiers of sexual and musical performance and labor. However, I do not assume the gender of sex workers and musical artists unless named in the films, interviews, and autobiographical texts collected for this thesis. This is done to distinguish and recognize difference between a sex worker or musical artist portraying a character versus the sex worker or musical artist's interior life and identity and the complexities therein.

I begin this final section of the historiography with Amber Jamilla Musser's book, *Sensational Flesh: Race, Power and Masochism*, and end this section with accounts from black queer BDSM practitioners and their facilitation of race play and Master/slave play. This

³⁰ Femme, as a gender-expansive term, includes black trans and cis women, nonbinary and gender queer folks, lesbians, and agender people whose gender presentation and expression is perceived as feminine.

historiography on bondage and kink in studies of slavery includes the social, sexual, and professional experiences of black femme BDSM practitioners and black men sex workers as they are quite literally contributing to the field in their personal and professional lives as practitioners, sexual health educators, cultural workers, and artists. I form this historiography not solely around scholars in academia to articulate those academics are not the sole proprietors of intellectual discourse and knowledge production. Additionally, I reassert that sex work and black BDSM and Leather traditions and practices are the present-day remixing and contending with histories of slavery and the centuries-built infrastructure of slave cultures and economies that constitute today's sexual and underground economies. This widening of the historiography is informed by how I come to understand my work as deeply intimate with my life as a writer, burgeoning scholar, BDSM practitioner, and kinkster through my teachings from and engagement with Black queer and gender variant leatherfolk and kinksters.

Musser in *Sensational Flesh* grapples with masochism as an animation of histories of the difference-making and subjugation of flesh. Flesh, as described by Musser, “connects bodies to the external world by emphasizing the various conditions that make bodies visible in particular ways it is about power and difference.”³¹ Additionally, flesh is guided by embodiment and how marginalized subjects come to understand oneself in the face of relentless violence. In this part of her “Introduction”, she introduces Hortense Spillers intervention on fleshiness in “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book” like Hartman to detail the flesh-making process during the transatlantic slave trade. Part of that process, Spillers includes the potential for pornotroping in that of the captive body being rendered to flesh³². Here, Musser poignantly

³¹ Musser, Amber Jamilla. *Sensational Flesh*. New York University Press, (2014): 19-21.

³² Spillers, Hortense J. *Mamas baby, papas maybe: An American grammar book*. Duke University Press, (1994): 67-68.

brings together how embodiment and the acts of violence done to the captive body as slave and as flesh leads her empathetic readings and examinations of accounts of racialized transgression and agentive traversing of sexual degradation for sensation and pleasure in masochistic power dynamics. A captive body that for Spillers endures gendering/ungendering as it is expected to perform labor and be tagged with value for exchange and purchase. The labor and fleshiness of the slave become inseparable, fungible, and understood as without personhood. The unspeakable violence that Musser and Spillers detail functions of power and difference which codes the power dynamics in economies. This coding in capitalist economies remains uneven and is deeply invested in sustaining the gendering and ungendering of persons as property and labor as commodity that Spillers articulates throughout “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe—”. In the following texts, I further address how this gendering and ungendering shows up for BDSM practitioners and sex workers in sexual economies.

In “Searching for Climax: Black Erotic Lives in Slavery and Freedom”, Treva B. Lindsey and Jessica Marie Johnson challenges the framing of black erotic subjects and argues to historiographical reimagine erotic/ized subjects like Harriet Tubman reconsiders narratives of slavery as radical black interiorities. In Lindsey and Johnson’s paper, they analyze *The Harriet Tubman Sextape*, its’ respectable responses, and contemplate how the digital video plays on the historicization of black sexual subjects and narratives of slavery that render enslaved black women through (cis)heteropatriarchal sexual acts and sexual exploitation. They also profess a necessity to embrace the uncomfot in taking on trauma, self-deprecating humor, and desirability (or the lack thereof) as part of black women’s embodiment and understandings of their sexual interiorities. This call for reimagining opens to kinky and deviant expressions of black feminine sexuality and Ariane Cruz in *The Color of Kink: Black Women, BDSM, and Pornography* enacts

Lindsey and Johnson's call. Lindsey and Johnson also call into question the stakes of finding pleasure in perverse narratives and racial stereotypes as an audience and performer. This is further explored in Mireille Miller-Young and Xavier Livermon's paper, "Black Stud, White Desire: Black Masculinity in Cuckold Pornography and Sex Work".

For Ariane Cruz, a rethinking of the formative links between black female sexuality and violence can be explored through fantasies that perform memories of chattel slavery and racial and sexual violence. She argues that BDSM is a productive space that considers the complexity and diversity of black women's sexual practice and the mutability of black female sexuality³³. In Chapter 1 "The Dark Side of Desire: Racial-Sexual Alterity and the Play of Race", Cruz brings together artists and scholars, like Kara Walker and Darlene Clark Hines, with black lesbian BDSMers engagement with histories of chattel slavery and genocide to theorize race play in its' choreography. Midori, a Japanese American sexuality educator, argues that race play is recommended for "advanced players" for what this kind of play elicits regarding racial and sexual trauma. Playing in scenes like the auction block in the antebellum south, as an example, draws upon the erotic potential and subversive injuries of chattel slavery. After a short situating of the book alongside black feminists and anti-pornography feminists' arguments on pornography, sex work, and black female sexuality, Cruz analyzes Viola Johnson, a well-known black lesbian Leather Mother and Old Guard Slave, and her personal account long after playtime with one of her Mistresses.

Alone in the darkness of the quarters of my mind is reliving the scene of a few nights ago. I can feel my Mistress's body beneath me. I can feel her voice, raspy and sexual, in my ear. 'Fuck. Niggah. That's what I bought you for.' With little if any mechanical aid I cum. My orgasm is sudden, and powerful. For a brief second, I am exhausted and happy. But in only a moment there

³³ Cruz, Ariane. *The Color of Kink*. New York University Press, 2016.

is a little voice creeping into the back of my consciousness (You shouldn't be turned on to the word NIGGER).³⁴

Viola Johnson follows this narrative saying, "Why is it that we, as Leathermen and women of color, can't accept the possibility that to some of us, Nigger may be empowering?". The question rejects politically correct, respectable sexual expression to think about what contradictions about racial trauma and histories of chattel slavery arouse us. Cruz argues that Johnson reminds us to recognize the racial axis of BDSM's fundamental master/slave dialectic and that slavery is a phenomenon of the past and present. Bondage and kink as methods of performing and conjuring histories of chattel slavery that reflect radical black sexual interiorities and black sexual politics that rubs against cisheteropatriachal assumptions about black sexualities. As ways of connecting our past and present, BDSM heightens the possibilities of pleasure in playing with race and uneven power dynamics.

Different from the institution of slavery, BDSM and kink place an emphasis on consent whereas slavery as a system is void of consent. As histories of chattel slavery after performed by kinksters and BDSM practitioners, it is important to highlight that playtime will never fully embody the system of slavery and its' complete legal, economic, and social framing of slaves and nonhuman. The histories Oaks, Johnson, and Matory narrativize are scripts for playtime and the analysis that Hartman, Woodward, and Lindsey and Johnson detail the relationships between every person or thing involved in the fantasy-making of BDSM. The fantasy and script-making follow antiblack logics of dehumanization that also show up in sex workers and BDSM practitioners' navigation in sexual economies. The psychic toll of grappling with histories that shape these logics as a means for survival is discussed by Miller-Young and Livermon as it

³⁴ Cruz, Ariane. *The Color of Kink*. New York University Press, (2016): 53.

relates to black men who take on Mandingo stereotypes in their clients with all the complexities of consent, pleasure, and survival.

In this paper, Miller-Young and Livermon examine how the black buck and Mandingo archetypal characters are performed in cuckolding socialites and the ways that black masculine sexuality shows up in contemporary American popular culture. Their concept of cuckolding sociality queries how racial fetishism coat desires and how neo-miscegenation and interracial sex reconsider the multiplicity of pleasures for everyone involved in sexual acts that heighten racial difference and stereotypes. They argue that pornography offers a generative site to explore the repressed and potential enactments of racial fantasy. While we focus on two different genres and subgenres of pornography, black gay pornography like cuckold pornography narrativizes fantasies about race and of blackness specifically that oozes sensuality and familiarity. Like Miller-Young and Livermon, I understand pornography as both instructive and reflective of histories and cisheteropatriarchal logics. The racial dynamics in interracial or monoracial scenes of pornography mirror and play on these histories which induce a familiarity to audiences that also speak to socioeconomic divides and anxieties as well.

This familiarity is felt by sex workers too like Damien Decker, a black Swedish escort, who speaks to his experience with bourgeoisie white male clients who solicit him to perform specific cuckold fantasies. Decker shares to Miller-Young and Livermon saying, “...At the end of the day, I try to make sure that the clients know that I’m for hire and not just for fun. That is my control, that he has to give me something or else I won’t come.”³⁵ As a site of labor and potential pleasure for Decker, he names a clear realization of the racial-class dynamics engaging clients to ensure payment and a sense of control. For Miller-Young and Livermon, black male sex workers

³⁵ Bailey, M. M., Bascomb, L. T., Blake, F., Bost, D., Cruz, A., Dominguez, P., ... & Williams, E. L. (2019). *Black Sexual Economies: Race and Sex in a Culture of Capital*. University of Illinois Press. 61.

and Mandingo swingers participate in a sexual economy founded on black male hypersexuality as their labor is feminized and disempowered in relationship to white men. I disagree with the former assertion about a feminization of black sex workers' labor and reflect on Spillers' mediation of the gendering and simultaneous ungendering of the captive body and its' labor. An argument positing a feminization of their labor does not closely account for a black man's sexual labor and performance of hypersexuality as insufficient and divorcing from manhood, womanhood, and gender altogether. In relationship to white men and any other nonblack clients and audiences, expectations of black hypermasculinity as sexual performance and labor does not start and end with scenes and bookings. Instead, the hyper sexualization of black sex workers (regardless of person gender dis/identifications) includes both an acknowledge of their ability to perform gender sufficiently as a service and a severing from gender that is present in a client's fantasies, desires, and treatment of sex workers.

In this chapter, I outline works and theoretical concepts on black sexual labor and how transatlantic slave cultures and economies coat sexual economies today. This historiography highlights the gaps in scholarship on bondage and kink and black gay pornography and argues that gender and sexuality studies scholars and historians continue to historicize sexual labor and violence in sensuous ways that acknowledge slavery as sexual economy and its' afterlives in today's BDSM cultures and sexual economies. For chapter three, I continue spotlighting sex work histories in underground economies in urban cities during the turn of the 20th century. As the entertainment industry transforms throughout the 20th century, black sex works and musical artists map markets and traverse the geographies full of police surveillance, criminalization of sex work, and respectability politics at the hands of black political elites and the black church. In the final section of the chapter, I focus on the emergence of genre and subgenre specific

television, pornography, and the commercialization of the Internet from the 1970s to the 2000s.

Black sex workers and black musical artists share worlds of labor and their contributions to black musical traditions and black sexual performance will be further detailed in the third chapter.

Chapter 3: Histories of Black Sexual Economies and Erotic Labor in the U.S Cont.

Turn of the 20th century, urban cityscapes, particularly in the U.S Midwest and Northeast, began accruing large populations of black southerners. At the brink of the first world war and the close of the industrial revolution, black folks from the South sought jobs and access to education that would assumably provide socio-economic stability without what felt like the constant death in the South. Considered the making of “Black America”, the first Great Migration (1910-40) and second Great Migration (1944-1970) restructured industries and markets due to these mass movements of blacks that pronounced difference in cultures from other racial and ethnic minorities during this time³⁶. African American culture began seasoning urban cities with foodways, religious practices, and most poignantly, music that narrativized relocations from the U.S South and experiences of adapting to the not-so differently structured Midwest and Northeast regions of the United States. Fleeing convict leasing, grand lynching, and legalized racial segregation and discrimination (Jim Crow laws), millions of black folks moving to states like Illinois, Ohio, Virginia, and New York instantly realized how the antiblack racism endlessly saturating the South also coated these regions as well. Pitted against and facing discrimination from white ethnic minorities, black migrants struggled obtaining housing, jobs, and the bolstering of state and local police forces across the nation. In response, musical artists and sex workers created means of surviving financially while contributing to black cultural production in the face of criminalization and respectability politics. Underground economies served as a world of labor toying with invisibility for musical artists and sex workers to traverse

³⁶ Sernett, M. C. (1997). *Bound for the promised land*. Duke University Press.

urban cityscapes to work at clubs and brothels, churches, and bars, and even with developments of downtown districts, use sidewalks as spaces to market labor and gain clients.

This third chapter brings together histories of sex work and musical performance at the turn of the 20th century and where black musical traditions and genres show up in urban sexual and underground economies. The critical historiography in the previous chapter on slavery as sexual economy laid the foundation for the rise of the adult entertainment and music industries from the early to mid 1900s. Throughout this chapter, I will begin theorizing the sonic and erotic relationships between sound and place for black musical traditions and erotic labor. Converging jazz theory with Henri Lefebvre's theorization on the production of space, the first section of this chapter queries how black musical traditions and sex work serve as theorizations of sound and place in ways that animate cities, clubs, and brothels. I will focus on jazz and its' narration of urban cities and navigating sexual and underground economies as sex workers and jazz musicians. The second section of this chapter addresses the emergence of new media television and the Internet during the commercialization of the Internet. During this emergence, music videos and pornography begin taking various mediums that stretch how the sexual and musical performances by musical artists and sex workers became more readily consumable, familiar, and instructive to black interior lives. I argue that this familiarity has everything to do with black musical artists and sex workers performances of sound and place. In this section, I transition to focus on Gospel and R&B and how these black musical genres transformed with the boom of the Internet and other forms of new media. Due to the commercialization of the Internet, the black sex worker and musical artist endure a raised level of celebrity and iconography that shift their relationship to labor in these industries and their artistry.

Jazzy Sounds, Jazzed Places: Meditation on Urban Sex Work and Black Music Tradition at the Turn of the 20th Century

Bouncing club to club, client to client down and up the streets as a drummer and burlesque dances in the early 1990s was a meditation of space and sound. Listening and improvisation, both central to jazz, led black musicians, artists, and sex workers through cityscapes unfamiliar as they adapted to new physical, social, and political climates of the Midwest and Northeast regions of the United States. This meditation livens theories of space and sound and puts in practice how responding to these climates meant listening to the rhythms jumping in red districts³⁷ and further embracing black religious and spiritual traditions to make sense of growing and unfathomably segregated industries in urban cities. Here, I introduce histories of sex work and jazz performance with theories on jazz and cities to animate this meditation. Physical and psychic survival in these new economies for this duo called unlikely collaborations and bringing together jazz theory and theories of space in this section honor and facilitate this sense and place making for these musical and sexual actors.

Henri Lefebvre, French philosopher most known for his theorization of space and knowledge, offers a triad theorizing of space that identifies how neo-capitalism and industrialization are responded to and what (hyper)development means for those existing in spaces throughout cities. First in this triad is spatial practice which Lefebvre names as dialectical interactions between society and daily life that deciphers space in cities. Representations of space, as a second entry of this triad, speaks of actors that identify “what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived”³⁸. Lefebvre emphasizes that a system of signs is part of

³⁷ Blair, C. M. (2010). *I've got to make my livin': Black Women's Sex Work in Turn-of-the-century Chicago*. University of Chicago Press.

³⁸ Lefebvre, H., & Nicholson-Smith, D. (1991). *The production of space* (Vol. 142). Blackwell: Oxford. 38.

conceptualized space and where life exists. Lastly, representational spaces as the final part of this triad named space as described, overlaid with imagination, and directly lived through images and symbols by its’ “inhabitants and users”. Twice in this early section of his book, *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre names artists as figures part of his conceptualizations of space alongside urbanists, scientists, and social engineers. What is most fascinating about this entry of his work is that Lefebvre writes extensively about the body being instrumental to the liveliness of this triad on space. “Considered overall, social practice presupposes the use of the body: the use of the hands, members and sensory organs, and the gestures of work as of activity unrelated to work,”³⁹. What does this mean for the musician, the sex worker, the artist? What does it mean for the dialectical conceptualization of space to into sensual acts with one’s body, one’s instrument? And what are the stakes of conceptualizing space into place for these actors?

Placemaking, conceptualized as an act of attributing meaning to physical space, includes how Lefebvre speaks of sensual acts. Specific to black musical artists and sex workers, I consider musical performance and sexual labor as sensual acts that transform space into place. Sound adds to this transformation of space into place with its’ narration of these transformations and the political and social climates hindering this process. As Lefebvre defines spatial practice, his distinction of dialectical interactions between society and daily life can be stretched that reconsiders the precarity of black life and relentless antiblack violence and death in the United States at the turn of the 20th century. Comparable to George Lipsitz’s articulation of racism and the white spatial imaginary onto space⁴⁰, Matthew D. Morrison’s phenomenological and method of analysis, *Blacksound*, is useful in speaking of corporeal and sonic articulations of race and its’

³⁹ Lefebvre, H., & Nicholson-Smith, D. (1991). *The production of space* (Vol. 142). Blackwell: Oxford. 40.

⁴⁰ Lipsitz, G. (2011). *How racism takes place*. Temple University Press.

commodification to the benefit of the modern commercial music industry and racial hierarchies. In relation to Erich Nunn's concept of sounding the color line, "Blacksound reveals how the racialization of sound and shifting notions of intellectual property throughout the nineteenth century made popular music a space in which to hear, see, and interrogate the circulation and commodification of the black performance property"⁴¹. As I assert how black musical performance and sexual labor animate transformations of space to place in urban cities for survival, an analysis of this transformation is not sufficient if only acknowledging discourses on blackness and race. Incorporating gender, sexuality, and class into this intersectional analysis by highlighting histories of sex work and musical performance in cities like New Orleans, Chicago, and New York bolsters this meditation on the conditions priming black music tradition and urban sex work in the early twentieth century.

In chapter two of *Between Beats: The Jazz Tradition and Black Vernacular Dance* by Christi Jay Wells, they begin describing a dynamic relationship between jazz and New Orleans before the turn of the 20th century that names jazz as "practice, history, and historiography". Additionally, Wells highlights quadron balls as sites where sex work, black music tradition, and black vernacular dance meet and narrativize strategies of refusal and resistance. In response to neoliberal accounts of jazz as a prized genre mirroring an American melting pot in practice, Wells instead names jazz as a symbolic practice "overcoming racialized systems of injustice as it simultaneously validates those systems' existence, positioning them as necessary conditions of possibility—" ⁴². Wells leaves their reframing of jazz as a response to conditions with a note of its' uniqueness that is "fundamentally American" ---and that comes short of considering the

⁴¹ Morrison, M. D. (2019). Race, Blacksound, and the (Re) Making of Musicological Discourse. *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 72(3), 781-823.

⁴² Wells, C. J. (2021). *Between Beats: The Jazz Tradition and Black Vernacular Dance*. Oxford University Press. 38-39.

diasporic and regional relationism that jazz puts to practice in the varying spaces it fills. Like the inescapability of an analysis of black musical traditions' (em)bodied improvisation of the African diaspora, the genre's early roots in the New Orleans sex industry cannot be severed as well. Sherrie Tucker similarly agrees with Wells' critique of a neoliberal and sex-work antagonistic historicization of jazz and names that jazz was "delivered into the steamy ambience of exotic prostitutes by a handful of irrepressible and ingenious male musicians"⁴³. A mix of outdoor and indoor places, like the Congo Square and Club Alabam in New Orleans, faced constant police surveillance for their promotion of prostitution, miscegenation, and black spiritual practices like Vodou⁴⁴. The eroticism in jazz structure, lyrics, and performance brought together acts of sexual and spiritual deviance to places spatially charted and recognized as impoverished, criminal, and unruly.

On stages, in rehearsals, and down the streets of clubs, jazz improvisation as real time composition in the 1910s and early 1920s grew as musicians played with sex workers in shared place. As its own remix of melodies, improvisation and the glitching of traditional patterns often followed the swing of hips, stripping of clothes, and how the hands of burlesque dances would glide across their own bodies. In *Jazzology*, Nor Eddine Bahha and Robert Rawlins further emphasizes an attentiveness to sound and the senses necessary to improvise. "Jazz is an aural skill, and there is no substitute for having a clear and accurate conception of the sound that one is trying to achieve. Most jazz musicians began by having models and imitating the players who inspired them"⁴⁵. The musical and performance styles and strategies from sex workers and jazz

⁴³ Wells, C. J. (2021). *Between Beats: The Jazz Tradition and Black Vernacular Dance*. Oxford University Press. 41.

⁴⁴ Turner, R. B. (2016). *Jazz Religion, the Second Line, and Black New Orleans, New Edition: After Hurricane Katrina*. Indiana University Press.

⁴⁵ Rawlins, R., & Bahha, N. E. (2005). *Jazzology: the encyclopedia of jazz theory for all musicians*. Hal Leonard Corporation. 142.

musicians enact this transformation of space into place through sensual acts and actors derived from Lefebvre's triad conceptualization of space. Jazz theory and improvisation is dually important to an analysis of neoliberal framings of the music and sex industries in the early twentieth century. Both Chicago and New York City during the early 1900's experienced convergences in sexual commerce and music industry in the rise and prominence of nightlife in these cities.

The commercialization of leisure culture in the early 1900s due to the expansion of the Black Belt in Chicago shifted how black women in sex work interacted with clients and entertainment venues. Cynthia M. Blair describes the describing importance of brothel-based sex work during this economic and cultural transformation happening in Chicago for its' growing Black population from 1900 to the late 1930s. Before this expansion of the Black Belt, red-light districts, located geographically on the south side of Chicago, mostly had male patronage. Early cinema showing pornographic film followed technologies of the time including filmstrips and projectors that aided a defining of the masculine gaze and audience⁴⁶. Both Chicago and New York City were sites of prominent districts rich with entertainment of all kinds which greatly contributed to the city's revenue and branding as entertainment capitals in the United States. This commercialization of leisure culture and (adult) entertainment including more casinos, clubs, cinemas, and bars meant the red-light districts within the Black Belt brought wider patronage of both Black men and women which offered Black sex workers more opportunity to engage queer erotic labor and grow their clientele⁴⁷. Due to the declining brothel-based work, black women engaged in sex work who began working outside of brothels meant less physical protection than

⁴⁶ Slade, J. W. (2006). Eroticism and technological regression: The stag film. *History and technology*, 22(1), 27-52.

⁴⁷ Harris, L. (2016). *Sex workers, psychics, and numbers runners: Black women in New York City's underground economy*. University of Illinois Press. 141-143.

what private and indoor places provided. In response, sex workers create larger networks with other sex workers to include accomplices who could physically protect them and look after each other as the Black Belt continued to expand. Sharing physical space with jazz musicians at nightclubs offered the possibility of protection and access to a growing clientele due to jazz's increased popularity during this era.

After-hours clubs and saloons in the underground economy of Chicago in early decades of the twentieth century offered festivities after bars and clubs throughout the Black Belt officially closed at 1 in the morning. Defying the city's closing ordinance, after-hours clubs extended opportunities for gigs for jazz musicians, gamblers, singers, and sex workers in the South Side sexual economy. As these economies overlay one another and, for Blair, locate hotels, bars and clubs as places sufficient to perform and conduct business. Buffet flats in New York City during the 1920s and 30s functioned comparable to after-hours clubs in Chicago during this era. LaShawn Harris in chapter four of *Sex Workers, Psychics, and Number Runners: Black Women in New York City's Underground Economy* details the interior spaces of buffet flats and how they functioned as places for parties with jazz entertainers and as brothels. Harris adds that sex-sex intercourse between lesbians and homosexuals would often occur during these gatherings and in the brothels. This labor space and place curated the desires of white clients for black sex workers to play with their perceptions of them as hypersexual and sexually deviant.

As an example, Virgie "Cotton" Canfield's buffet flat in Harlem was known for offering sexual performances and fetish play and black sex workers toying with miscegenation and arguably race play fantasies of white men and women was erotically affirmed with live jazz playing in the living room⁴⁸. Here, jazz theory and sex work meet at fantasies of miscegenation

⁴⁸ Harris, L. (2016). *Sex workers, psychics, and numbers runners: Black women in New York City's underground economy*. University of Illinois Press.

and class difference and the practice of jazz and sex work as modes of labor permit an improvisation that highly arouses clients, satisfies the madam, secures physical security and payment for jazz musicians and sex workers. For this transformation of space to place in urban cityscapes in the early twentieth century, black jazz musicians and sex workers mapped the liminal geographies between underground economies and sexual economies and utilized the sensuous nature of jazz and fantasy to identify places of labor for themselves and each other. This coalitional practice responds to the surveillance and criminalization of sex work and illegal businesses in the underground economy at the hands of the police and city ordinances and animates jazz theory and theories of space. As cartographers, navigating urban cities during the First Great Migration included identifying and plotting spaces primed and ready to be filled with jazz, fantasy, and sensual acts that secured a sense of physical and financial security for musicians and sex workers and brought commerce to the ever-adapting entertainment industry in these cities.

Speedy Media, Slow Sounds: The Emergence of Contemporary Gospel, Hip-Hop, and Neo Soul and in the Age of the Internet and Television

Often the speedy shifts in the adult entertainment and music industries due to the commercialization of the Internet in the 1980s and early 90s focuses on the change of pace to which sex workers and musical artists are expected to participate exploitative music videos and pornographic film. Studies of this musical and technological era remiss how transformations in genre and subgenre in porn/orgraphy, music and media at-large is integral to the hyper-commodification of bodies and sounds of black musical artists and sex workers. The turn to focus on the liveliness and precarity of existing in overpopulated and purposefully structured

ghettos and urban spaces in porn/orgraphy and music post 1960s Civil Rights era and into the 1990s are bolstered from the creation of new technological equipment and the rise of network news. The Huntley-Brinkley Report, a National Broadcasting Company (NBC) evening and Saturday news program, expanding its running time from 15 to 30 minutes in 1963 amidst political uprisings and imperial duels marks a major transformation in media and consumer ship. The assassination of United States President John F. Kennedy, the ongoing Vietnam War, coverage of black political movements and police violence, I argue, were events understood as consumable and watchable by networks like NBC that coincide the marketing of the television as an obtainable luxury⁴⁹.

As more homes and communal spaces like the basements of black churches and community centers begin to own televisions and cassette players, our relationship with media became more intimate and simultaneously invasive. In *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, Jacques Attali speaks of the invasive intimacies of music as it relates to its consumption. “Music has thus become a strategic consumption, an essential mode of sociality for all those who feel themselves powerless before the monologue of the great institutions. –And above all, it is the object that has the widest market and is the simplest to promote: *after the invention of the radio, that incredible showcase for sound objects, solvent demand could not but come their way*”⁵⁰. Following Attali’s assertion on the consumption of music and the sociality it engenders, porn/orgraphy post-Civil Rights endures transformations in content, format, and medium. Due to the increased access to television and eventually the Internet, the adult entertainment industry shifted how films were marketed and began placing an emphasis on clips, trailers, and other mediums like magazines and premium television channels. Mirielle Miller-Young argues this

⁴⁹ Murphy, S. C. (2011). *How television invented new media*. Rutgers University Press.

⁵⁰ Attali, J. (1985). *Noise: The political economy of music* (Vol. 16). Manchester University Press. 100-101.

shift to private viewing and consumption of porn/ography in homes from the 1970s golden era of pornographic film transformed the political economy of the adult entertainment industry⁵¹. This transformation follows post-Civil Rights class and political anxieties and the commodification of S/soul which informed the 1980s emphasis on interracial, suburban, American fantasies. This move to private viewing of pornography alongside the rise of network news and television forever changed race relations due to the television functioning as a digital medium that show ecological and empire-exacted disasters, black death, and covered the everyday lives of groups of people through electronic, moveable footage unlike newspapers and the radio. What is invasive and tremendously industry-shifting in the 1980s is how new media and technologies brought illustrations and stories of violence into the home that added to the process of socialization and became more entangled with practice of sex in the home.

Political anxieties and discourse on porn/ography flooded conferences and legislation during the 1970s and 80s alongside the emergence of (white) feminist porn studies as a field with its' emphasis on the "meaning making work that bodies perform on the pornographic screen"⁵². Here, a distinction between porn and pornography is theorized to name the ways and modes the pornographic takes shape in shorter and smaller mediums that are not full-length films. Music videos, sex scenes in non-pornographic film and television shows, and even clothing advertisements come into consideration for their pornographic potential. The possibilities of arousal and foreclosed certainty of porn's exploitation of women asserted by anti-pornography feminists and even scholars in the field of (white) feminist porn studies in the 1980s placed a hyper focus on the violence(s) of heteropatriarchy to women, more specifically cis

⁵¹ Miller-Young, M. (2008). Hip-hop honeys and da hustlaz: Black sexualities in the new hip-hop pornography. *Meridians*, 8(1), 261-292.

⁵² Nash, J. C. (2014). *The black body in ecstasy*. Duke University Press. 7.

white middle class women who do not labor in sexual economies. Present in porn studies and in the rise of black porn/sex work studies as its own field, a gap in scholarship exists that recovers and speaks to sex work histories and sexual labor performed by people assigned male at birth and are gendered as men. This project begins this process of recovery as I focus on black sex workers and musical artists performing gendered as men, performing in gay porn/ography, and contributing to the genre and subgenre of Neosoul. This post 1960s–post Soul rise in technology in black homes and spaces influenced how black folks consume and engage sex workers and musical artists ushering in new genres of music and pornography.

Mark Anthony Neal in chapter three of *What Music Said: Black Popular Music and Black Public Culture* historicizes the shifts in corporate marketing strategies in the music industry in the 1970s that influence black record executives, like Berry Gordy, to aspire to mainstream success. This turn in focus to larger, nonwhite consumers by record executives, labels and musical artists signify a departure from black nationalist, Afro-American and lower-class specificity and a move towards black capitalism and the construction of a black middle-class identity. Marketing soul music to a younger, white and middle-class audience in exchange for social and economic mobility and commercial success, Neal argues, commodifies soul and African American popular expression that severs it from the cultural and social markers that define blackness⁵³. Black political movements and cultural expressions of the 1960s informed and made Soul as a genre and musical era recognizable through one's hairstyle, clothing, everyday vernacular, and to the way someone walked down the street. Neal's detailing on S/soul calls into question how the fall of black radical and revolutionary political movements and the shunning of black nationalist and Pan-African identities are tied to the decay of Soul as a genre,

⁵³ Neal, M. A. (2013). *What the music said: Black popular music and black public culture*. Routledge. 173-200.

what black spaces and places held onto soul in their black musical traditions and performances, and if it was possible for black musical artists to lose S/soul.

The black church and gospel world in the 1970s and 80s deeply struggled with the transformations in the music and entertainment industry at-large as Gospel and Soul musical artists navigate secular and black religious musical arenas. Claudrena Harold in the fifth chapter of *When Sunday Comes: Gospel Music in the Soul and Hip-Hop Eras* discusses Al Green's bounce between Soul, Pop, and Gospel sounds and audiences⁵⁴. These sonic and lyrical migrations in his artistry left consumers in the gospel community questioning his return to pastoral service and his gospel debut 'The Lord Will Make a Way' that was released January 1st, 1980. I argue that Green's commitment to living in this sensual, secular, and spiritual liminal space and sound in his musical and religious career marks a foundational conjuring and foreshadowing of Neosoul as a genre and subgenre of Soul. "Too Close", track three on his album 'The Lord Will Make a Way', perfectly forecasts a blend of bluesy instrumentation and improvisation, traditional gospel vocal arrangement, and lyricism that narrates that traveling to heaven and enduring tribulations as a great, meaningful tease. Here, I consider this track and album as a declaration of the inescapability of the erotic in black musical tradition and performance. The erotic not only as a sexual and sensual evocation, but as a life making and meaning.

Years later, black lesbian feminist, Audre Lorde, would share her essay "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power" to name the fierce utility of the erotic for women and distinguish the erotic from the pornographic. Departing from Harold, Neal and other black music historians in their emphasizing of the spiritual and political economy of black music and lean into Lorde's

⁵⁴ Harold, C. N. (2020). *When Sunday Comes: Gospel Music in the Soul and Hip-hop Eras*. University of Illinois Press. 116-121.

articulation of sensuality and the erotic as a bridge that tends to the “physical, emotional, and psychic expressions of what is deepest and strongest and richest within each of us, being shared: the passions of love, in its deepest meanings”⁵⁵. Lorde’s call to embrace and return the erotic, an abandoned and undertheorized epistemological reservoir, encourages us to honestly evaluate the relative meaning within our lives and where acts of sensuality clarify the spiritual and political in our lives. Neosoul, as a genre and subgenre, performs this call amidst the technological advances in the music industry, class tensions between black political and religious elites, and alongside the birth of hip-hop. Often not articulated and historicized as a radical musical genre, neo soul emerges as a balm and ingenious compilation of varied literary and musical modalities that narrates black interiority through U.S sanctioned attacks on urban, black communities and those marginalized by gender and sexuality. The War of Drugs, the AIDS Epidemic, the 1985 bombing of the MOVE collective, and the deaths of black musical artists like Minnie Riperton and Marvin Gaye charged this emergence of a new black musical genres that comparable to hip-hop drew storytellers of diverse mediums together to describe how issues of the mass incarceration of black people, the increased funding and militarization of the police, and the focused vilification of poor and uber impoverished black communities through welfare reform by political elites. Neosoul’s animation of the erotic as method introduced counter narratives to stigma-ridden discourse in the media about poor and urban black communities and rejected the music industries’ attempts to disavow black musical artists from discussing political implications of their lives in exchange from commercial success.

The adult entertainment industry experienced the emergence of black and interracial hardcore genres of porn as they exploited new media technology like cable, digital broadband,

⁵⁵ Lorde, A. (1993). The uses of the erotic: The erotic as power. *The lesbian and gay studies reader*, 56.

and the internet. These technologies migrated audiences from public viewing spaces like cinemas and arcades back into their homes. While genres specific to gender and sexuality categories (gay, *transsexual, lesbian) existed prior to the Golden Era of pornography (1969-1988), the genres do not flourish in great number until the 1960s, arguably, when filming technology became more accessible and the adult entertainment industry (while still heavily dominated by white cismen executives, directors, and producers) gained larger audiences due to the commercialization of the Internet and credit-card transaction technologies⁵⁶. The 1960s brought the arrival of race and class-specific pornography and fetish films which I attribute to the rise in surveillance of black communities and bodies in new media by network television, newspapers, and other mediums of media consumptions. Plots with an emphasis on large asses and tittes, bondage and discipline, enormous dicks, and urban and suburban geographies flourish due to the growth of niche markets as more people gain access to the Internet and cable television. The plots and scenarios, due to the speedy transformations of new media and pornographic filming and distribution technologies during the Golden Era, become an even sharper fantasization of the racial and class realities and tensions during the Civil Rights Era and into the War on Drugs.

In “Hip-Hop Honey and Da Hustlaz: Black Sexualities in the New Hip-Hop Pornography”, Miller-Young explores the convergence of hip-hop and pornography as a commodification of black sexuality and specialized fetish market in the 1990s and how music videos become the “the principle location for a growing pornographic sensibility that functions to market black bodies, aesthetics, and culture to a global consumer audience”⁵⁷. Music video and gay pornographic film in the late 1990s and early 2000s underwent technological

⁵⁶ Slade, J. W. (2006). Eroticism and technological regression: The stag film. *History and technology*, 22(1), 27-52.

⁵⁷ Miller-Young, M. (2008). Hip-hop honeys and da hustlaz: Black sexualities in the new hip-hop pornography. *Meridians*, 8(1), 262.

transformations that shifted how music and porn was marketed, produced, and disseminated. With the early emergence of 1980s music television channels like BET (Black Entertainment Television), VH1 (Video Hits 1), and MTV (Music Television), consumers could now visit specific channels for genre-specific music. These channels and their commercial success introduced web-based magazines and music-integrated social media in the 1990s alongside music video streaming platforms like YouTube in 2008. Similarly, the adult entertainment industry followed these technological transformations with adult television networks (Playboy TV in 1982) and adult film platforms (Pornhub in 2007). Pornographic film voyeurs with the presence of sites like Pornhub could also watch genre-specific pornography. The analytics and viewership from both music and adult entertainment television and internet-based mediums further guided how both industries categorize and canonize videos and film that converge time, genre, and audience⁵⁸. Hip-hop and Neosoul music videos, as racial-ethnic and class specific genres, and their representations and performances of black masculinities* strengthened how music labels, music television networks, and production companies profited off these black visual and sonic performances⁵⁹.

The rapper-stud relationship in hip-hop music videos presents one example of an increase in opportunities for black AMAB sex workers and While rappers most often did not appear shirtless or willing to expose any part of their bodies, studs, as theorized by Mireille Miller-Young, maintained the fantasy of in videos by appearing with video vixens and porn actresses. The archetype of the stud appears the transatlantic slave trade as a black masculinized and sexed as male slave that was coerced for sexual labor and demeaned for their genitalia. The stud

⁵⁸ Railton, D. (2011). *Music video and the politics of representation*. Edinburgh University Press.

⁵⁹ Chaney, C., & Mincey, K. D. (2014). Typologies of black male sensitivity in R&B and hip hop. *Journal of Hip Hop Studies*, 1(1), 121-156.

archetype merges into black (gay) pornography where black AMAB performers are named and branded for their “hung-as-a-horse” dicks and perceived hyper-heterosexual performances in film and other erotic material. The stud as an “encompassing, inescapable text”⁶⁰ traverses both the music and adult entertainment industries and opens jobs for black sex workers at music video sets, in interracial and black porn productions, and other gigs in the adult entertainment and nightlife industries. Similar to the rapper, the black porn star is an integral economic resource for both industries and their fans and consumers purchase films they appear in. Here, the music industry and adult entertainment industry function as a shared world of sexual labor. This shared world maps sexual economies for black porn stars across regions of the United States where both industries thrive among large black populations like Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Miami. Neosoul and black gay porn as genres of music and pornography are undertheorized by academic pornographers, music historians, geographers, and sound theorists in this regard. Additionally, the stud, as the black hyper masculinized pornographic figure and black AMAB sex worker, is undertheorized in the field of black porn/sex work studies in relation to the ho. Without constructing an analysis confined to a binary of gender expressions and identities, I like fellow black porn/sex work studies scholars, Zalika U. Ibaorimi⁶¹ and Alexandria Cunningham⁶², understand these archetypal figures as both configured by racialized gender coding of black femininity and masculinity and are performed by sex workers of varied gender identities that exceed cisheteropatriarchal logics.

⁶⁰ Miller-Young, M. (2014). *A taste for brown sugar*. Duke University Press. 163.

⁶¹ Ibaorimi, Z. U. (2020, October). *(Ho)lyOntology: Black Visual Cultural Geographies of the Sexually Illicit. Black Women Radicals*.

⁶² Cunningham, A. (2018). Make it nasty: Black women's sexual anthems and the evolution of the erotic stage. *Journal of Black Sexuality and Relationships*, 5(1), 63-89.

What makes music danceable and porn potentially orgasmic is their visual and sensorial optimization of space and place through performance. I turn to critical musicologists and music geographers to inform how theorize porn (music videos, film, magazines) as visual and sonic constellations of black sexual economies and geographies. Compounded with other engagements with our senses, music is condensed and sometimes heightened in our everyday living, particularly in public spaces like shopping malls, restaurants and on modes of transportation⁶³. This pairing influences how soundscapes are formed specific to socioeconomic, aesthetic, and racial geographies and how viewers of pornography, like listeners of music, link commodity to pornographic film. Listeners of music also distinguish and sense sexuality in the composition, instrumentation, and performances of music. Derek B. Scott in *From the Erotic to the Demonic on Critical Musicology* asks three questions to ponder the relationship between eroticism and music that I find helpful to my analysis of music and porn's relationship to one another. "--How does a composer represent sexuality? How does a performer convey sexuality? How does a listener interpret sexuality (for example, interpret a performance as erotic or interpret a composition as erotic)?"⁶⁴.

The erotic animations of racial, gender, class and sexual logics in the storytelling and sexual performances by black sex workers and musical artists in film, video, or clip fantastically illustrate geographies and economies the viewers recognize as un/familiar. Music and porn's storytelling ability to bridge fantasy and reality through sound and visual technologies is part of this mapping of black sexual economies and geographies. NeoSoul and black gay pornography in their developments as a musical and pornographic genre in the 1990s and early 2000s narrate black interiorities and sexualities to audiences familiar with the sounds, expressions, vernacular,

⁶³ Leyshon, A., Matless, D., & Revill, G. (Eds.). (1998). *The place of music*. Guilford Press.

⁶⁴ Scott, D. B. (2003). *From the erotic to the demonic: On critical musicology*. Oxford University Press on Demand.

and lives of urban black neighborhoods in the United States as they endure ongoing state-sanctioned antiblack violence and black death. In the next chapter, I invite the stories, music, and performances of black musical artist, D'Angelo, and black porn star, Bobby Blake, to theorize the celebrity and hyper sexualization attached sex workers and musical artists due to the mass distribution and exposure of NeoSoul music and black gay pornography during the 19990s and early 2000s. Following this comparative historicizing of their careers, I detail the close reading and nut chasing methods performed in this thesis and discuss the precarity of NeoSoul and black gay pornography as archives.

Chapter 4: Theorizing the Black Porn Star: Bobby Blake and D'Angelo

For the music star and the porn star, their brand and artwork produced are representative of their persona. One's persona is informed by their embodiment and how they choose to engage physical and metaphorical scripts of gender, sexual, and racial performance. Porn stars are recruited for the sexual acts they can perform, their physical body, and the potential charisma they exhibit during sexual performances on and off camera. "He must maintain it in his on-screen sexual activities, in his public appearances, and in his interactions with fans. It is a kind of identity or character; it helps him do his job--,"⁶⁵. Bobby Blake, a black gay porn star legend, addresses this in his autobiography, *My Life in Porn: The Bobby Blake Story*. In the book, Bobby shares how he balanced his twenty-five-year-old career in the adult entertainment industry. The autobiography includes Bobby discusses how he navigated being at the "top of the heap" in black gay porn alongside his partner, fellow black gay porn legend and recently departed, Flex-Dion Blake. Bobby extensively describes their shared embodiment and childhoods and further name as one of many inspirations for going into the adult entertainment industry. "We were both masculine-type bisexual African American who had grown up in the South. We were both brought up in traditional Christian households where churchgoing, spirituality and faith were important,"⁶⁶. Here, Bobby details his embodiment and all the co-constitutive factors of his porn persona, one that serves as a bridge between old and new eras of black gay pornography from the 1980s to the early 2000s.

D'Angelo, known as the post-soul and funk artist, comparably adds to the genealogy of Soul and is most notably attributed for being shepherding the 1990s and early 2000s era of neo

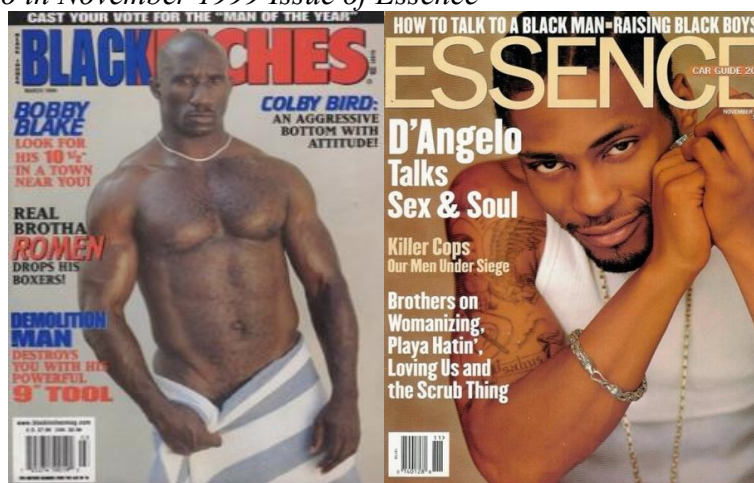
⁶⁵ Escoffier, J. (2007). Porn star/stripper/escort: Economic and sexual dynamics in a sex work career. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 53(1-2), 186.

⁶⁶ Rowden, T. (2011). The "Top" of the Heap: Race, Manhood, and Legitimation in *My Life in Porn: The Bobby Blake Story*. *Black Camera: An International Film Journal (The New Series)*, 2(2), 93.

soul. Early in his career, his persona and imagery followed representations of popular black masculinities in the 90s and early 2000s⁶⁷. His shirtless public stage performances and infamously erotic music video matched the rise in muscle-bodied masculine black bodies in erotic material in the adult entertainment industry, like the magazine *Black Inches*. From 1993 to 2009, *Black Inches* featured porn stars, BDSM practitioners, strippers, and other sex workers in the world of black gay porn. In Figure 1, Bobby Blake is featured on the cover of the March 1999 issue of *Black Inches*. The cover shows Bobby shirtless with a periwinkle and white striped towel dressed around his hips with his right fist clenching the towel. The text in red below his name reads, “Look For His 10 ½ In A Town Near You!”. Figure 2 shows D’Angelo on the cover of the November 1999 issue of *Essence* magazine. The soul artist is shown wearing a white tank top, wearing gold and silver jewelry adorning his neck, wrist, and pinkie finger with both his hands interlocked and gracing his cheek as he gazes into the camera. This issue of *Essence* is titled “How To Talk To A Black Man” and “Raising Black Boys”. Under D’Angelo’s name in white, the text reads “Talks Sex & Soul”.

Figure 1: Blake in March 1999 Issue of *Black Inches*

Figure 2: D’Angelo in November 1999 Issue of *Essence*



⁶⁷ Harris, K. M. (1999). "Untitled": D'Angelo and the Visualization of the Black Male Body. *Wide Angle*, 21(4), 62-83.

The photographic codes of both covers show an aesthetic and tonal link in 1999. Both black men are wearing gold jewelry, photographed staring into the camera, and have their forearms exposed. While representing two different entertainment industries, each magazine cover signifies black urban space in language. The text on the covers can be read and felt, almost as if a fan of D'Angelo and Bobby could hear each of them singing, speaking, and moving in front of the cameras capturing these images. Like Bobby, D'Angelo has publicly discussed his reverence for spirituality and Christianity in his personal life and as part of his artistry. In a segment of "Making the Video" for the MTV VMAs in 2000, D'Angelo and Paul Hunter, director of the "Untitled (How Does It Feel)" music video, recalls the discussion they had prior to filming talking about spirituality for D'Angelo's performance. Paul Hunter remembers telling D'Angelo, "--think about like when you are in church, sing when you are in the choir, like you know, from your gut"⁶⁸. D'Angelo later in the interview names, "We talked about the Holy Ghost and the church before that take." Their commitment to spirituality is what for D'Angelo encouraged him to take several hiatuses from the music industry and for Bobby Blake what, in part, led him to retire from the adult entertainment industry. In a 2014 interview with Tavis Smiley, D'Angelo opens about his experiences dealing with being a black sex symbol during the late 90s and early 2000s.

““It would bother me...A lot of times the crowd — or a lot of the ladies were just screaming, ‘Take it off.’ And I kind of felt like, for lack of a better thing, like a male stripper, you know? Or I expected to be that” he said. “I wasn’t mad at that...but I think that I’m a serious artist. So, it’s a fine line to walk. But I accept that. This is the realm that we’re in.”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Weiner, N. (2018, July 25). Why D'Angelo's 'Untitled' Video Is Still Uniquely Provocative, Nearly Two Decades Later. Retrieved from <https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/hip-hop/8467000/dangelo-untitled-video-sex-symbol/>.

⁶⁹ Williams, B. (2015, September 08). D'Angelo On Being 'Objectified' By Female Fans. Retrieved from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/dangelo-on-being-objectified-by-female-fans_n_55ef34d7e4b093be51bc70b2.

D'Angelo's naming of how women engaged his body as "a male stripper" further demonstrates a convergence between the music and adult entertainment industries. The hypersexualization of black masculinities and of the muscle-bodied stud archetypal figure by fans stands as a point of contention for black men in R&B and black gay porn. While Bobby Blake speaks of this hypersexualization with more comfort, both stars discuss the hypersexual symbol-making of their musical and pornographic performances and bodies as pivotal moments in their careers. Bobby speaks of the white neo-Nazi inspired film, *Nigga's Revenge*, with similar anguish as D'Angelo. Bobby, in his autobiography, names this film as his last film for its hyper explicit interracial dynamics and barebacking scenes that for him pushed it to his limit. "At the time I wanted to do just one film that was totally extreme. I did it, and that was it,"⁷⁰. "Untitled (How Does It Feel)" was received by music television networks and digital video sharing platforms, like BET and YouTube, with similar caution and limitations. Stephen Hill, senior vice president of music, talent and programming at BET in 1999 said D'Angelo's video, "stopped just north of the line where, you know, we would have issues." When D'Angelo's video was uploaded to YouTube in 2009, viewers shared they were initially stopped by a disclaimer stating, "This video may be inappropriate for some users. While the video does not show D'Angelo's genitalia, the video was flagged by YouTube's then community and machine learning technology that flags content that violates their then Community Guidelines. The surveillance of Bobby Blake and D'Angelo's bodies situate how the shared world of sexual labor within the music and adult entertainment industries serves as capital monumenting, psychically taxing, and spiritually toxic for black musical artists and sex workers. As era-defining figures hypercommodified into stud figures and black masculine iconography, Bobby Blake and

⁷⁰ Blake, B. (2008). *My life in porn: The Bobby Blake story*. Running Press Adult.

D'Angelo face personal dilemmas with celebrity and the sexualization of their physical bodies that shows up in their musical and sexual performances in pornographic film and music videos in the 1990s and early 2000s. To analyze these performances and their narratives, the methods performed in this thesis, close reading and nut chasing, understand music videos and pornographic films as texts that can reveal more of the complexities of musical and sexual performance by black stud sex symbols and the sensorial arousal and physiological memory making for fans and voyeurs.

Chapter 5: Close Readings and Analysis

The close readings and nut chasing methods facilitated in this chapter identify subtexts in the musical and sexual performances in the pornographic films and music video from the late 1980s to 1999. Each close reading describes the sound and places wherein these performances occur to analyze how they narrate storytelling during this era of black gay porn and NeoSoul. The anecdotal experiences Bobby Blake and D'Angelo in the previous chapter highlight how black sex workers and musical artists who were men navigate an era in both the adult entertainment and music industries when audiences and fan cultures became more closely engaged with them. Due to an increased use of new technological equipment and of the Internet during the 1990s, fans of artists and sex workers became obsessive in ways that added to the already exploitative hiring and marketing practices by distribution companies and music labels. The close readings in this chapter analyze the performances from sex workers and musical artists as intimately knowledgeable of the status of these industries, emerging technologies, and hyper-engaged fans during time. In chronological order, this chapter begins with the earliest film, *In the Black*, and ends with D'Angelo's music video for "Untitled (How Does It Feel)".

Video Fantasy: Flashes of Black Suburbia

In the Black 1988 (Opening Scene and Threesome Tennis Court Scene)

A Film by Vincent and Veronique de Paul

A Man to Man Production

Edited by The Cutting Hands

Music by Carlos Martinez

Makeup, Hair, and Wardrobe Design by Andre Douglas III

Starring: Gene Lamar, Tobin Matthews, Damion Michaels, Kent Warwick, Bert Noardman, and John Cochran

The ninety-two-minute film leads with static for the first 24 seconds until an FBI warning flashes across the screen. Unlike films I watch today, the FBI warning followed with two

paragraphs and two brief sentences that name the intended viewing audience, uses of the film, and a caveat that all models in the film are “at least 18 years of age”. Filmed by Vincent and Veronique de Paul and produced by A Man to Man Production, *In the Black* begins with performers standing side by side in white jockstraps as the title and crew of the film are displayed in a bold, green font. The focus on this opening scene glides between short cuts of performers in the white jocks and overhead video of a black performer with green eyes zipped wearing a purple, adidas tank top, purple and neon yellow shorts hugging their crotch and thighs, white athleisure bands, and a pair of white shoes with calf socks. Sweat dribbles down their forehead the more they bounce side to side on a white exercise mat. The performer follows the tempo of the track as they complete their warmups, landing each foot on the mat to match 80s soft rock drumming patterns. From the casual exercising, their dick hops out of the top of their shorts and the performer looks at me (and the camera) to undress.

Figure 3: Lead with Dick Out at 0:04:46



Stripping arouses him or it at least leads his dick to lift between thighs just as twiggy as his body. With sweat covering the mat, the performer reaches for a towel and lays on his back to continue stroking his dick. The scene's pacing speeds up as it's revealed that the lineup of bodies in jockstraps is standing in front of him. Flashes of their asses twitching, and flexing increase the faster the performer slides his dick into his left fist. What about these bouncing asses has this character mesmerized? Why white—jocks, exercise mats, towels, shoes, armbands? The baked brown complexion of each performer contrasts the beige and white backgrounds and accessories around them. Our lead nuts over his own abs and smears its gooey texture into his body hair before standing to leave the mat. The scene however does not end with a fadeaway to a black scene. The lead reappears fully dressed and walking across the room where two other performers are weightlifting (one bench pressing, another spotting). To transition between scenes, the lead stands in front of the pair, turns to face me (the camera), winks, and struts out of the shot caressing his hair-bunched titties. "Two more, it's coming up. Take it easy..." is said from the spotting performer as Gene Lamar winces and moans lifting 95 pounds.

The pairing of music and exercise culture, popularized as jazzercise in the 1980s, ground the video fantasies of *In The Black*. Every performer in the film is muscle-bodied, brown and dark skinned, and wears athletic attire in the first two scenes. Aerobics and pop anthems like "Pump Up the Jam" by Technotronic and "Beat It" by Michael Jackson played during halftime shows, through radios, and in the gym as athletes and other fitness enthusiasts moved to the tracks. The guitar, keys, and the synthesizer were foundational to the bright sounds of pop in the late 1970s and throughout the 80s. The inclusion of synth pop and soft rock in the opening scene of *In the Black* as the lead performer masturbates signifies the black homoeroticisms of these subgenres and of gyms as places of arousal and mutual attraction. Bathhouses and sex clubs, like

Flex and Steamworks, growing in popularity during this time in the United States for their multi-purpose spaces, brought together exercise and gay nightlife cultures and functioned as places for black gay people to work out, fuck, and socialize. The opening scene's display of sweaty black bodies with synth pop and soft rock as an overlay demonstrates the black homoerotic potentials of black gay sex in spaces other than the home.

Figure 4: Jockstrap Lineup at 0:07:55

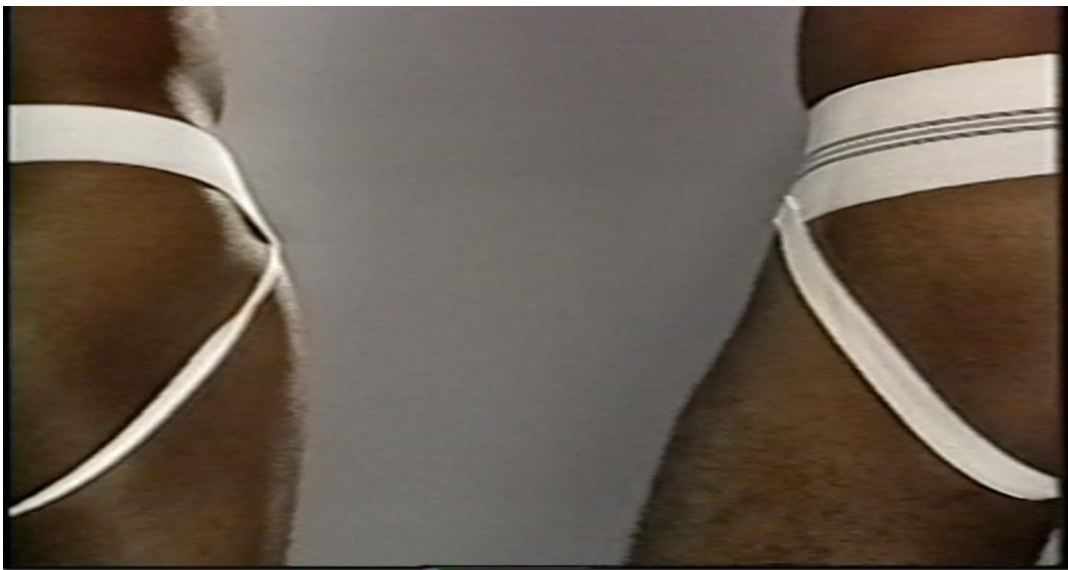
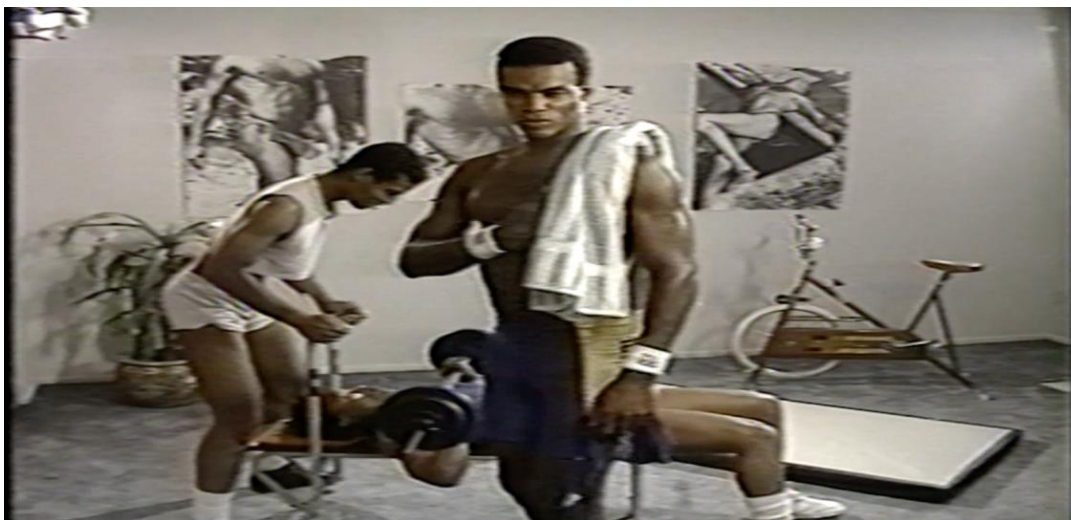


Figure 5: A Wink Goodbye at 0:13:32



Serving to a darkskin character in white denim shorts and a sleeveless shirt, the performer draped in a peach-colored polo and white linen shorts asks, “hey, what’s the win we get out of this?”. Running a match of tennis on a gloomy day, both characters continue to tease one another up till it begins to rain. Once they get inside, they decide to undress as a justified reason to get out of clothes drenched by the downpour outside. In the middle of foreplay, they are interrupted by a front desk receptionist who brings them an invite to a birthday celebration later that evening. The film introduces each character invited to this party throughout scenes in well-furnished homes, in luxury vehicles, and with every performer rocking permed hair. With *The Cosby Show*, *Family Matters*, and *Frank’s Place* on television in the 1980s, *In the Black* fills a disappearance of black gay life in rising narratives in dominant media about the black middle class, black capitalism, and life in black suburbia. Countering political and religious propaganda about AIDS and the sexual behaviors and lives of black gay men, this film follows black gay and lesbian writers and artists’ works centering the pleasures and interiorities of black queer life amidst the state-exacted Black AIDS Epidemic.

To post-Soul and synth pop sounds, the performers and production team of *In the Black* lean into the life-meaning and sexual making of black gay life in the 1980s that adds complexity to the persistent death of black folks surviving with HIV during this time. The final orgy birthday party scene illustrates unphased attractions between black characters (assumed cismen) that shows them living with housing security, kinships, access to transportation, and dancing. The group of six characters drink champagne to celebrate their mutual friend’s birthday and begin dancing and fondling, which leads to a strip fest. Traces of champagne smelling saliva down each other’s necks to gazing into the eyes of a fellow black person getting fucked, the shared recognition through touch, taste, sight, and sound saturates this living room scene as performers

fuck on cream-colored carpet and a gaudy printed couch. As this film responds to dominant narratives of black gay men as sinners, deviants, and already dead, *In the Black* simultaneously places black gay life within black expressions of respectability that are highlighted as characters make fun of someone's ignorance of turning on a stereo and living lives siloed from urban cities and larger populations of black queer and trans folks. As the only film curated for this thesis from the 1980s, *In the Black* showcases the conundrum of a rapidly growing racial fetish market in gay pornography in the Golden Age of pornography and the intentional erasure of representations of black gay and queer middle-class life. The next film, *Hooked on Ebonics* almost a decade later furthers this conundrum by hyper focusing on public schooling, black urban living, and the sounds of neo soul and hip-hop.

Figure 6: Champagne Chasers at 01:13:11



The Class Clown Got Sumthin' To Say

Hooked On Ebonics 1997 (Opening Scene and Locker Threesome)

Film by Paradox Pictures, A Steele Productions and Edward James Production

Directed By Edward James

Edited By Jules Love

Starring: Doc Holliday, Zanvega Mocha, Drakar Deon Rolf, Richard Reyes, David Jones

Opening Scene on Ebonics

The opening very much gave 90s black sitcom. Think *Moesha*, *In Living Color*, and *Martin*. An instrumental mix of “Spend a Little Time on Top” by Heavy D & The Boyz and “Who Got Da props” by Black Moon, the music during the opening credits looped with an unforgettable bassline and random DJ scratching. A transition from black and white to color occurs as the first scene full of performers is set in a classroom. Eggshell colored walls, wooden desks and chairs, and no teacher in it, just six boys. “She just wants me to eat her pussy and shit,” one of the performers shares. In response, some of their peers exclaim with disgust at the thought of eating pussy. One peer wags their hand in front of their nose and another pinches his nose to allude to pussy smelling unpleasant. The group continues chatting about stories and suggestions they were told to make eating pussy more pleasurable for men. All of the suggestions included using the following food items: peanut butter, chicken salad, and kiwi jelly. A lengthy performer wearing a grey blazer, white-ish shirt, and black-tie walks into the classroom and the group’s conversation led as if no one entered the space. Frustrated from the students’ “lack of respect”, the teacher slaps a textbook on a desk to grab their attention causing the students to start joning⁷¹ the teacher relentlessly.

⁷¹ Joning, as an act of witty banter, is similar to the act of reading. This vernacular tradition in the classroom among adolescent boys can range in severity and makes observations on each other’s appearance, behavior, and the space they occupy.

The film very early from the opening music and into the first scene depicts urban, poor and working class, black men through set production of the classroom, the attire of the cast, and how they are speaking to one another. After the later announced substitute teacher endures some verbal licks from the students, he shares that he was brought in to teach the class about ebonics. “While you’re here in America, you need to act like an American”, the teacher yells to one darkskin student rejecting the lesson the teacher attempts to begin. The students respond with, “which way should we talk” and “so, you saying so you saying Ebonics is not a proper way of English” questioning the necessity of a lesson shaming them for how they speak to one another. Later identified as the class dunce, one performer shares that ebonics derives from two “phrases”, ebony and phonics. The class discussions spirals in an unfocused manner as students name objections to speaking “regular” English and being taught about the white man. Voices layered on one another, huffs and puffs from the teacher, and constant tapping of drumsticks from the class dunce convey a normalized chaos within urban, public classrooms. *Hooked on Ebonics*, through semi-structured scriptwriting, shows viewers a group of black men pushing back on respectability and Eurocentric learning and teaching standards.

Fuckin’ Bitches and Niggas: Benevolent (Trans)misogynoir in the Locker Room

As the film progresses, each scene occurs in offices, classrooms, and other places in a hypothetical, public school building. These scenes include the substitute teacher and students having sex with one another throughout the school day. Circling back to the film’s beginning discourse on pussy and “straight” acts of sex, the middle scene of the film opens in a locker room as a performer stands facing an open locker, wearing a navy tank top and black briefs cutting high on their hips. With this nearly nude illusion, the performer sways the weight from one leg to

the next and pronounces their hips. Two more performers enter the locker room fully clothed chatting about a recent breakup with a girl and trying to go “get my freak on” as they also begin to undress. The first performer sits on a wooden bench between the other two quietly until their teacher is brought up. Rumors of the teacher being gay and having sex with students comes up. “So, that whole detention shit is a front then, huh,” one of the students says. The dialogue below begins at 40:22 and follows conversation between the three students.

Student 1: Exactly. He got his fuck on to pass the class. But shit, I ain’t knockin’ him. Hell, if I had the opportunity I’d do it, too.

Student 2: Yeah, that shit was kinda like getting me hard and shit.

Student 3 with Briefs: Ion know bout’ the gay shit, man.

Student 1: It ain’t all about being gay. Just about fuckin’ around.

Student 2: It’s just about fun. Can somebody pass me somethin’ cause I’m kinda ashy.

Student 1: *passes bottle of baby oil*

Student 2: yeah, that’ll do me.

Student 1: put some on yo dick and nut on homie back.

Both students start teasing Student 3 as he lotions his body, calling him “pretty boy” and smacking his ass. Turning him towards Student 2, they pressure the student with briefs to undress and allow them both to fuck him. One student compares his chest to titties while rubbing his nipples. To defend himself he says, “nigga, i ain’t got titties like no bitch.” This is the final thing he says before they pull his briefs off to begin having non-consensual sex as a percussive and bass driven instrumental fades over the sounds of wet lips on his titties.

Figure 7: *Threesome with Titties* at 42:47



These descriptions of his body and behaviors narrates difference as a matrix of arousal and benevolent (trans)misogynoir dressed as desire. Performers in this scene animate how black boys regulate each other's bodies with cisheteropatriarchy and strict expressions of black masculinity as the measuring stick. The performers highlight the difference in physical appearance between one another and how it deviates from aesthetic standards of black masculinity which led them to reach for language like "pretty" to describe this difference. The violence of transmisogynior is subliminally coded in the logics of this act of naming difference between cis (?) men, their identification of this boy as a bitch and a nigga, and the naming of his chest as titties. Alongside these logics, the student wearing briefs responds with "nigga, i ain't got titties like no bitch" to dually confirm his gender identity and protect his perceived gender performance at the expense of TMA⁷², ciswomen, and those with titties who also identify as men. To be clear, I do not assume the characters portrayed by these performers engage TMA folks; however, the fantasy portrayed in this scene calls into question who else these men would

⁷² TMA stands for transmisogynior affected.

fuck. This scene was the loudest in sound during sex in comparison to other scenes in the film from the ongoing instrumentals and the ad-libs from performers. With the locker room as space presumably autonomous from surveillance by teachers and administration, the performers vocalize a comfort in their desires and bodies without an indictment on their deviations from normative performances of black masculinity and male sexuality.

Situated in this locker room threesome, arousal, as a physiological response, springs up from highlighting difference in ways that challenges fixed understandings of black men's sexuality as heterosexual or "strictly" gay. Instead of foreclosing the sex being had between these performers as gay or same sex, the expressions of their desires and arousal to difference agitates quick classifications of sexual acts in pornographic film as black gay porn. *Hooked On Ebonics* makes an erotic playground out of the urban, public-school setting and narrates vignettes of boys with little interest in Eurocentric educational lessons and more interested in "—fuckin around". In 1997, the film highlights controversies of teacher-student sexual relations, the erotic potency of the classroom, and responds to Western behavioral expectations of respectability and assimilation in school. A few years earlier, "Eros, Eroticism, and the Pedagogical Process" by bell hooks was published in the seventh volume, first issue of *Cultural Studies* in January 1993. Intrigued to unravel her own experiences teaching in the classroom, hooks names her responses to unknowingly being "erotically drawn" to a male student and questions the efficiency of a Western pedagogy without consideration of the erotic as a learning force⁷³. Overlaying DJ scratching and looped vocal samples, the scenes in *Hooked On Ebonics* artistically depicts hooks' meditations on liveliness in the classroom that focuses on sexual acts that respond to

⁷³ Hooks, B. (1993). Eros, eroticism and the pedagogical process. *Cultural Studies*, 7(1), 58-63.

fixed understandings of black male sexualities and cisheteropatriarchy in the key of Black Moon and Heavy D & The Boyz.

Relaxed Mouths, Sounds, and Bottoms

Black Nubian Fantasies 1997 (Narration, Bobby Blake Scene)

Film by Nubian Video, a Scott Chandler Production

Starring: Paul Manson, Sean Bishop, Jerry Deep, Pretty Tye, Darryl Harris, J.J., Trey Whitman, Ty Trent, Bobby Blake, Kyle Thomas, and Terrell Jones

Filmed in Los Angeles, California, *Black Nubian Fantasies*, a Scott Chandler Production, was initially published in October 1997. The one hour, twenty-minute film included popular black porn stars like: Sean Bishop, Jerry Deep, and Trey Whitman. Bobby Blake performed in the last scene of the film with the less-experienced black masculine performer, Kyle Thomas. The scene opens at 1:00:56 with narrator, Terrell Jones, setting the scene for viewers. Like the first thirty seconds of D'Angelo's music video, an extreme close up shot shows Terrell offering a thick description of the plot for the final scene of the film. Their tenor voice has a calming weight with pauses where they breathe and reposition their mouth before speaking. The lower quarter of Terrell's face is medium-dark skinned, and, like D'Angelo, Terrell has gaps in their teeth. Terrell's lips are brown with a soul patch (a minor collection of hair beneath someone's bottom lip just above the chin) tucked under their full bottom lip. During this twenty-nine second pre-scene monologue, we only see the narrator in two shots: the extreme close up on their lips and an over-the-hip shot of the right side of Terrell's face in front of a briquette-colored backdrop. The editing between these shots mirrors the pauses in the narrator's speech with faded, smooth jazz playing in the background. The tunes selected evoke sounds from Quiet Storm and Watercolors radio formatting. Both sub genres of radio and smooth jazz reinvented formations of jazz-influenced contemporary R&B. Marketed to middle-class black populations during the

Reagan administration, both radio stations played music from notable black jazz and R&B artists (Luther Vandross, Anita Baker, and Grover Washington Jr.) as major political events like the signing of the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984 occurred. This layering during Terrell's narration echoes a transformative era for black music by reminding audiences of histories of criminalization and mass class disparity as they conjure the final scene with Bobby Blake and Kyle Thomas. In figure 5, Terrell Jones is shown, and a transcription of the monologue follows.

Figure 8: Terrell Jones Narrates at 1:01:01



“Often, fantasies constrict and suddenly end without warning. As with Kyle, a college preppie visiting LA on spring break, while waiting for the bus in the rain.... two hundred and thirty pounds of body offers him a well-needed lift. In the end, (soft laughter) that’s exactly how Kyle gets it. Heavy duty ass pounding, in the end.”

Bobby Blake fades into the frame driving a mossy-green station wagon on a rainy early afternoon. His fellow performer, Kyle Johnson, is standing on the sidewalk when Bobby offers

to take him to his destination. Kyle is wearing a brown bandana tied around his forehead, baggy denim jeans, and an oversized Jackson State University (JSU) t-shirt. Bobby is wearing black khaki pants, a washed-out green polo button down, with two gold chains. Both performers are dark skinned and there is a visible age difference between Bobby and Kyle which is integral to the script. This age dynamic plays out during their sole sexual position as they fucked (anal penetration). The scene transitions from their short dialogue in Bobby's station wagon to an empty, grey room with a cushioned platform draped with brown cloth in the middle of the room. Bobby at 01:04:16 is laying vertically on the platform and is a static, pillow princess (someone typically inactive during foreplay and sex) sprinkled with a few short commands until he begins topping Kyle. Fulfilling the bottom role in this scene, Kyle begins to massage Bobby, unbutton his pants, suck his dick, and eventually fully undress him.

With the first to be nude, Bobby's nude body communicates a comfort for the voyeur and slowly eases Bobby out of his clothes, in comparison to other films where Bobby undresses him or is introduced to the scene as shirtless. Throughout the scene, both performers keep certain articles of clothing and jewelry on. Kyle keeps the brown bandana and Bobby continues to wear two gold chains and a pair of white socks. For Bobby and his fans, Kyle's leading the first half of this scene offers another sexual performance that Bobby's fans do not often witness, especially with younger black performers who bottom. Additionally, Kyle's JSU oversized shift adds to the age dynamic in the present in the script and hints to viewers that Kyle is inexperienced with bottoming. Terrell's narration also confirms this by characterizing Kyle as: exploratory, innocent, of consenting age, and ripened for sex. This characterization follows how black bottoms in black gay pornography as characters follows racially coded scripts and narratives through sexual performance.

Once they start fucking, we see a variation of camera shots and angles. Starting at 01:14:34, Bobby is in a two-shot, hip level angle penetrating Kyle in a standing doggystyle position with Kyle's face out of frame. Soft jazz music begins as Bobby topping. Bobby's hands are cuffed on Kyle's hips and maintains eye contact with his dick as he takes each stroke. For five minutes, both performers maintain this doggy-style position as Kyle is bent over at a 90-degree angle at the start and by the minute develops a crescent-shaped curve in his back. The crescent-shape signals inexperience and/or discomfort with bottoming which could possibly be the performer's intended dramatizing and personification of the character. Kyle's wincing and moaning comes and leaves throughout the five-minute fuck and just seconds after the first shot Kyle is in a high angle with shallow focus cuffing his hands together on the brown platform. They do not make eye contact with one another until the final clip of the scene. In the final figure pictured below, Kyle's body is within the frame at a high angle with their forehead grazing the cushioned platform. Their spine is visible from the overhead lighting and Bobby Blake's left hand holds Kyle's left hip and his right pressing on Kyle's right shoulder blade. At 01:15:36, Bobby softly grunts over the soft jazz as Kyle starts to release deep exhales.

In this scene, the age dynamic and script portray a coming-of-age sexual experience for young, black bottoms, including the range of discomfort, pain, and physical pleasure induced from being fucked by an older, sexually experienced top. As a scene apart of the larger *Black Nubian Fantasies* film, condom use, the performer's attire, and the addition of soft jazz during scenes, visualizes this age dynamic as a racial-sexual necessity as part of the fantasy-making and mirroring of black gay sexual experiences in the late 1990s. Adding to the black gay cultural renaissance occurring from the late 1970s and into the 1990s, black gay pornography with its' integration of jazz and R&B and other pornographic materials (magazines, advertisements, etc)

are part of the explosion of art and literature that narrativized black gay life and cultures. The ghost value⁷⁴ this film and other pornographic materials from this era holds due to the ongoing, state sanctioned death of black queer people due to the criminalization of sex work and the AIDS Epidemic must be included as part of black gay canon. The precarity of black gay life, then and now, obfuscates how we remember this renaissance and who we honor as part of it. Sex workers are artists, laborers, and cultural workers that greatly contribute to black (gay) cultural production and sex work and class antagonisms do death-dealing work to the psychic and physiological act of remembering and to the archive.

Figure 9: Kyle Relaxing (?) at 01:15:36



⁷⁴ A term created by Diana Ramey Berry that quantifies and determines the value of slave bodies at death. Berry, D. R. (2017). *The price for their pound of flesh: The value of the enslaved, from womb to grave, in the building of a nation*. Beacon Press. 20-22

“Untitled (How Does It Feel)” D’Angelo (1999)

Directed By: Paul Hunter, Dominique Trenier
Trainer and Choreography: Mark Jenkins

“Untitled (How Does It Feel)” is a four minute, twenty-three second music video solely featuring D’Angelo. The artist stands on a moving platform nude with a gold-coated crucifix pendant dangling from a gold chain around his neck. As the video opens, we witness a soft, blinking sound followed with someone holding a clapperboard in front of the camera. The clapperboard lists that this is the third roll, first scene, and ninth take we are about to witness. This filmmaking device exits the frame after the same short sound occurs once more before the song begins. Within the first two seconds of the video, the music video notifies the viewer that the performance they soon will observe is, in fact, a performance, one that has been edited, produced, and formatted for our viewing. These two seconds also hint at the presence of voyeurs in the space where the recording of the video has occurred. This early layering just before seeing the artist, who the audience expects to see, reveals the team-led labor and effort generated to make a music video, specifically during the late 1990s.

Figure 10: Clapperboard at 0:00



With a tilt-shift focus, D'Angelo's right earlobe enters the frame at 0:02. This extreme close up and single shot framing continues as his head turns by the second panning across these dark brown, straight back cornrows to his left earlobe and sideburns, and finally to profile shot of his face front-facing the camera. His eyes stutter with hesitation at 0:26 before opening them completely at 0:27. This twenty-five second sequence concludes with a sharp A6 note from the piano playing in the song signifying a transition in song structure to the first verse. Throughout this moving sequence, the piano keeps pace and signals each of D'Angelo's actions while additionally introducing us to the mesmerizing series of guiding chords: A9 minor, G9 major, C13. Coating this series of chords, the drums follow a 6/8-time signature at double time with three notes that consistently tap on top of the rich guitar melodies. Every feature we see during this sequence symbolize black masculinity aesthetically with the cornrows and gold chain with crucifix pendant. This aesthetic and sonic pairing, just in the first thirty seconds of the music video oozes a complex knowing of soul and funk musical genealogies and late 90s black urban cultural practices. For his audience, fans are invited into a black sonic metaphysical space in anticipation of D'Angelo lips to fall.

Figure 11: D'Angelo's Climax



During the final chorus of the song, D'Angelo vocally transitions from verbalizing lyrics through his chest voice to another series of unabashed wailing in a mix of both his head and chest voice. This series of wails only matches the notes from the drums in the first bar singing, "yeah, yeah yeah". Prior to 3:55, D'Angelo is staring directly into the camera and names what he wants to do with and for the person he is serenading. He details, "I wanna take you away from here baby, take you on a little trip and go on home baby, do you know what I'm talking about baby? Aye!" In figure 4, D'Angelo is inhaling after his first combination of scratchy and instinctual wails. Here, I signify as the climax of the music video where he is expressing a mass relief from lyrics and erupting with emotion which visualizes the connection with black spirituality he names in the MTV interview with director, Paul Hunter. "Untitled (How Does It Feel)", through every second of D'Angelo's erotic inducing of the Holy Ghost, utilizes photographic techniques and instrumental-vocal improvisations to visualize black masculine sensitivities and expressions of arousal during his post-neo soul era of R&B music.

Both D'Angelo's music video and *Black Nubian Fantasies* share photographic strategies and sonic scripts in their bodily performances of black masculinities. The layering of soft jazz, 808-focused drum programming, and background vocal loops in scenes and the D'Angelo's vocal improvisation deploys a stylistic mixture of the makings of Neosoul I theorize in the third chapter: bluesy instrumentation and improvisation, traditional gospel vocal arrangement and performance, and evocative lyricism on black liveliness and love. For Bobby Blake and D'Angelo as black sex symbols of these transformative eras, their performances of scripts about black (gay) sexual experiences and about love demonstrate how Neosoul and black gay pornography share similar narratives. This timeline convergence of black music and the world of black gay porn further emphasize the economic linkages between the music and adult

entertainment industries. As closely read in both works, Bobby and D'Angelo are not the sole participants in the fantasy-making of black masculinities. The director and other crew on the set of "Untitled (How Does It Feel)" and Kyle Johnson and Terrell Jones' performances in *Black Nubian Fantasies* reveals the collective labor occurring with, around and behind artists and porn stars. This reminds audiences that the adult entertainment and music industries, along with black sexual economies, are not solely full of sex workers, performers, and studs. The close readings stretch who we imagine as co-facilitators of visual and sexual performances of racially coded fantasies and diversifies laborers in sexual economies.

Through my documentation of the nut chasing method, I found myself tapping a nail on the keyboard, bouncing my feet to melodies from the films and music video, and wrapping my arms around myself. I played D'Angelo's *Voodoo* as I took notes and watched the films on mute. The last track on this album, *Africa*, felt mesmerizing with each listen and I would stop typing to sway to the melody every time. Because of this trance-like state I'd enter, I decided to learn the melody on my friend Miql's keys and in a practice room I snuck into and record myself. The end of the track departs with a shallow variation of the E major chord and strumming on a guitar then into silence until 0:20 of the track. A heavy reverbed of each track on *Voodoo* is played backwards in the last twenty seconds that zooms through stacked vocal melodies and trumpet solos ending all too abruptly into silence. To be clear, the album ends with this effect that performs what I consider as D'Angelo's meditation on spiritual tradition and the end of a ceremony. In the tradition of "Africa" and the last twenty seconds of the track, I gather all of the audio recordings that document my responses to the pornographic films, practicing the melody of "Africa", and singing and humming to *Voodoo* to musically produce a loop that brings together D'Angelo's meditation with my own on erotics, sound, and place. Nut chasing as a method

guided my close readings as I entered a transient and deeply embodied space watching the pornographic films and music videos. Mesmerized by colors, sounds, and voices, I felt touched by the films, the music, and the performers. The track I created will be dropped elsewhere, as this medium is not sufficient for its' sounds.

Conclusion: Soundtracks of Memory

This thesis intimately grapples with the stakes of black musical and pornographic genres as archives that remember the digital transformations of the adult entertainment and music industries from the 1980s to the late 1990s. I query how does porn and music remember sound and place, how did the commercialization of the Internet change black musical genres and black (gay) pornography, and how does NeoSoul and black gay pornography narrate black sexual economies and geographies. Through my historicization of the age of the Internet, I argue that black musical artists and sex workers facilitate a mapping of black sexual economies and an ecosystem of labor and pleasure upended by the commercialization of the Internet that pronounces a dialogic relationship between the adult entertainment and music industries, black musical artists and sex workers, and black musical and pornographic genres. Responding to shifts in the political economies of these industries, black musical artists and sex workers narrate these shifts through their musical and sexual performances in the emerging genres of Neosoul and black gay porn. By closely reading these genres as archives, I detail the precarities of the genres for sex workers, musical artists, audiences, and scholars studying pornographic film created amidst the rise of racial and class specific markets in the adult entertainment industry and emerging new media and digital technologies.

Following my analysis in the fifth chapter, the genres of Neosoul and black gay porn are not easily describable due to their quick prominence in the 1990s and early 2000s and how musical artists and sex workers adapted to the rapid shifts in the adult entertainment and music industries that impacted their artistry. As I detailed in chapter three on U.S politics greatly influencing the emergence and fall of black musical and pornographic genres, the end of

NeoSoul as a musical era ends in the late 2000s as contemporary R&B becomes the fresh sound that unlike NeoSoul can be marketed to wider audiences. More prominent NeoSoul artists, due to their stronger fan base and decent support from musical labels, make artistic leaps in sound. As an example, Maxwell makes both an artistic and aesthetic vault from his deep-cut classic 2001 album, *Now*, to the first installation in his tri-step, experimental series of *BLACKsummers'night* in 2009. In contrast, lesser-known artists, like Donnie, did not make similar leaps and we saw disappearances from so many NeoSoul artists who did not have support from labels to make similar musical vaults. Interestingly, Maxwell, like many of his NeoSoul peers, drops projects before and around the beginning of the Obama administration in 2009. Galvanized by the election of President Barack Obama and the gross uptick in hate crimes and police violence in the United States all under the guise of a “better America” because of liberal, middle class representational and multiracial politics, remnants of Neosoul were consolidated into a contemporary R&B sound, using less live instrumentation and could easily cross over into pop and hip-hop markets.

Due to the constant purging of sites and sex work antagonistic laws like, SESTA, the status of black gay porn as a pornographic genre is tricky to name as well. Productions like *Breed It Raw* and *Coco Dorm* fell in prominence in the 2010s as interracial porn steadily became more popular. With the rise of interracial porn, sex workers laboring in the adult entertainment industry began publicly naming experiences of racial fetishization and difference in pay across both straight and gay subgenres. Diesel Washington, gay porn star, in a 2017 interview shares his experiences on roles in gay porn. “Where to begin? From the start, I wasn’t doing any stereotyping roles. This includes no Thug/Homie/Homeboy/Gangsta... none of that. I was *not* trying to play characters who had to be black. Then it was overcoming models who had racial

hang-ups...which is still a problem,”⁷⁵. As sex workers of varying sized fan bases turn to digital sex work and creating collaborative practices, the genre of black gay porn remains in-flux as performers in the industry like Max Konner continues speaking out about racism in the gay porn industry while content creators like Kyriacos create porn reminiscent of 90s black gay porn and intentionally features fat, black and queer performers.

Over the past year, remembering these genres as archives has unearthed memories from the 1990s and 2000s that I forgot. I write more descriptively and move with sounds in ways I have not experienced before. NeoSoul and black gay porn as genres and archives led me back to the erotic and being mesmerized by black musical and sexual performance reminds me that archives are within reach and to be touched. As this project builds, I plan to create pornographic film and music that honors this era of black gay porn and NeoSoul focused on in this thesis. What a gift to know that as I touch the archive, the archive touches me. As I touch the archive, the archive touches me. As I touch the archive, the archive touches me.

⁷⁵ Instinct Staff (2017, July 31). Diesel Washington’s honest & upfront views on racism in the gay porn world. Instinct Magazine from <https://instinctmagazine.com/diesel-washingtons-honest-upfront-views-on-racism-in-the-gay-porn-world/>

REFERENCES

- Ajamu, McFarlane, C., & Cummings, R. (2020). Promiscuous Archiving: Notes on the Joys of Curating Black Queer Legacies. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 54(2-3), 585-616.
- Attali, J. (1985). *Noise: The political economy of music* (Vol. 16). Manchester University Press.
- Bailey, M. M., Bascomb, L. T., Blake, F., Bost, D., Cruz, A., Dominguez, P., ... & Williams, E. L. (2019). *Black Sexual Economies: Race and Sex in a Culture of Capital*. University of Illinois Press. 61.
- Blair, C. M. (2010). *I've got to make my livin': Black Women's Sex Work in Turn-of-the-century Chicago*. University of Chicago Press.
- Blake, B. (2008). *My life in porn: The Bobby Blake story*. Running Press Adult.
- Chaney, C., & Mincey, K. D. (2014). Typologies of black male sensitivity in R&B and hip hop. *Journal of Hip Hop Studies*, 1(1), 121-156.
- Cruz, A. (2016). *The Color of Kink*. New York University Press.
- Cruz, A. (2016). *The Color of Kink*. New York University Press. Chris, L. (2015). *Preaching bondage: John Chrysostom and the discourse of slavery in early Christianity*. Univ of California Press.
- Cunningham, A. (2018). Make it nasty: Black women's sexual anthems and the evolution of the erotic stage. *Journal of Black Sexuality and Relationships*, 5(1), 63-89.
- Escoffier, J. (2007). Porn star/stripper/escort: Economic and sexual dynamics in a sex work career. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 53(1-2), 186.
- Equiano, O. (2001). *The interesting narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano*. Broadview Press, 38.
- Haley, S. (2021). "Intimate Historical Practice." *The Journal of African American History* 106, no. 1, 104-108.
- Hartman, S. V. (1997). *Scenes of subjection: Terror, slavery, and self-making in nineteenth-century America*. Oxford University Press on Demand, 81.
- Hartman, S.V. (2008). "Venus in Two Acts." *Small Axe* 12, no. 2. 1-14.
- Harris, K. M. (1999). "Untitled": D'Angelo and the Visualization of the Black Male Body. *Wide Angle*, 21(4), 62-83.
- Harris, L. A. (1996). "Queer Black feminism: the pleasure principle." *Feminist Review* 54, no. 1, 3-30.
- Harris, L. (2016). *Sex workers, psychics, and numbers runners: Black women in New York City's underground economy*. University of Illinois Press. 141-143.

- Harold, C. N. (2020). *When Sunday Comes: Gospel Music in the Soul and Hip-hop Eras*. University of Illinois Press. 116-121.
- Ibaorimi, Z. U. (2020, October). *(Ho)lyOntology: Black Visual Cultural Geographies of the Sexually Illicit. Black Women Radicals*.
- Jackson, Z. I. (2016). "Losing manhood: Animality and plasticity in the (neo) slave narrative." *Qui parle: critical humanities and social sciences* 25, no. 1-2.
- Johnson, W. (1999). *Soul by soul: life inside the antebellum slave market*. Harvard University Press.
- Jones-Rogers, S. E. (2019). *They Were Her Property*. Yale University Press.
- Lefebvre, H., & Nicholson-Smith, D. (1991). *The production of space* (Vol. 142). Blackwell: Oxford.
- Leyshon, A., Matless, D., & Revill, G. (Eds.). (1998). *The place of music*. Guilford Press
- Lipsitz, G. (2011). *How racism takes place*. Temple University Press.
- Lorde, A. (1993). The uses of the erotic: The erotic as power. *The lesbian and gay studies reader*, 56.
- Matory, J. L. (2017, October). *The 'Fetish' Revisited: Marx, Freud, and the Gods Black People Make. UVM Religion Department Speaker Series*.
- Miller-Young, M. (2014). *A taste for brown sugar*. Duke University Press. 29.
- Miller-Young, M. (2008). Hip-hop honeys and da hustlaz: Black sexualities in the new hip-hop pornography. *Meridians*, 8(1), 261-292.
- Morgan, J. (2015). "Why we get off: Moving towards a Black feminist politics of pleasure." *The Black Scholar* 45, no. 4, 36-46.
- Musser, A. J. (2014). *Sensational Flesh*. New York University Press, 19-21.
- Morrison, M. D. (2019). Race, Blacksound, and the (Re) Making of Musicological Discourse. *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 72(3), 781-823.
- Murphy, S. C. (2011). *How television invented new media*. Rutgers University Press.
- Nash, J. C. (2014). *The black body in ecstasy*. Duke University Press.
- Neal, M. A. (2013). *What the music said: Black popular music and black public culture*. Routledge. 173-200.
- Oakes, J. (1998). *Slavery and freedom: an interpretation of the old south*. WW Norton & Company, 94-97.
- Patterson, O. (1982). *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1-2.

- Roach, S. (2018) "Black pussy power: Performing acts of black eroticism in Pam Grier's Blaxploitation films." *Feminist Theory* 19, no.1, 7-22.
- Spillers, H. J. (1994). *Mama's baby, papas maybe: An American grammar book*. Duke University Press, 67-68.
- White, R. (2007). *BDSM Primer*. The Nazca Plains Corporation, 194.
- Woodard, V. (2014). *The Delectable Negro*. New York University Press, 18-19.
- Railton, D. (2011). *Music video and the politics of representation*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Rawlins, R., & Bahha, N. E. (2005). *Jazzology: the encyclopedia of jazz theory for all musicians*. Hal Leonard Corporation. 142.
- Rowden, T. (2011). The "'Top'" of the Heap: Race, Manhood, and Legitimation in My Life in Porn: The Bobby Blake Story. *Black Camera: An International Film Journal (The New Series)*, 2(2), 93.
- Scott, D. B. (2003). *From the erotic to the demonic: On critical musicology*. Oxford University Press on Demand.
- Sernett, M. C. (1997). *Bound for the promised land*. Duke University Press.
- Slade, J. W. (2006). Eroticism and technological regression: The stag film. *History and technology*, 22(1), 27-52.
- Turner, R. B. (2016). *Jazz Religion, the Second Line, and Black New Orleans, New Edition: After Hurricane Katrina*. Indiana University Press.
- Wells, C. J. (2021). *Between Beats: The Jazz Tradition and Black Vernacular Dance*. Oxford University Press.
- Weiner, N. (2018, July 25). Why D'Angelo's 'Untitled' Video Is Still Uniquely Provocative, Nearly Two Decades Later. Retrieved from <https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/hip-hop/8467000/dangelo-untitled-video-sex-symbol/>.