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# Can You Hear Me? An Exploration of Interracial Coupling between African Americans and White Americans from the Perspective of the Black Woman

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*and you white girl  
shall I call you sister now?  
Can we share any secrets of sameness  
any singularity of goals...*

*you white girl  
i am yet suspicious of/  
for deep inside of me  
i am  
a road  
you would travel  
to my man*

*Carolyn Rodgers*

**Can You Hear Me?  
An Exploration of Interracial Coupling between African Americans and  
White Americans from the Perspective of the Black Woman**

**By Monica Branch**

The black-white racial tension is a sociological agent that permeates almost all forms of implicit biases when it comes to this specific race relation. The perspective of the black woman remains a highly suppressed viewpoint in the conversation of interracial dating between black and white people. The history of black and white interaction serves as a critical social basis for the dynamic of this country culturally, politically and economically. Society projects the common discourse that the United States (and the rest of the world) lives in a “post-racial” society, and that color, specifically black people, are not seen, but regarded as equal like everyone, and everything else. Unfortunately, this is completely false. This discussion will explore the saliency of the heterosexual relationships between black and white Americans and their (racialized) interactions through the perspective of the black woman as a way to reiterate

and reemphasize where the black woman stands in a society of male dominated white supremacy.

For the purpose of this discussion, African Americans will be referred to as black. The primary relationships will be aimed towards black men with white women, and black women with white men to narrow the discussion within the bounds of black people *with* white people, specifically, black women with white people. This is significant to the base of which to unpack a narrative of and from the black woman that is commonly projected on a surface level grounded in her disparagement and holds far more concreteness to a generally and genuinely misunderstood reality. Since herstory is left out of the story, this essay will attempt to synthesize the historical context to which interracial romance affects the black woman within the broader historical scope of why this could even seem burdensome or upsetting.

As the historical context builds, providing the foundation for the state of which the black woman rests today in relation to everyone else, this paper will focus specifically on how black female college students navigate the dynamisms of racial interaction within predominantly white institutions as the (still) most subjected group within them. Her experience watching her black male counterpart actively seek and choose white women over her becomes a significant discourse to her mindset as she is left in confusion and often resentment as her oppressor's daughter takes the few black men from which to choose from in a space of which she does not belong.

In the advent of racialized societies, the use of artistic "white spaces"/cubes is suggestively a symbolic gesture towards the exclusion of black and brown bodies, and the perpetuation of a lack to represent them accurately and uncommercialized is a distortion of reality. As white spaces neglect and reject black bodies, specifically that of the black female, her reality is subjected to not just an exclusion to societal space and privilege, but also to

relationships where black men have gained access these white spaces by their relationships with white women often at the cost of the (continued) debasement of black women. The emergence of the “white cube” as an idea of gallery space was implemented in the 1950’s as a relationship building technique between art and its viewers. Its concept presents an exclusion from “social spaces” as a way to neutralize the atmosphere to allow for optimal focus/concentration on the art pieces. A clean, confined, contained space of “plain white walls” is aesthetically attractive, yet can be easily distinguishably disorienting and unsettling. This desire to dissociate from the outside world consists of the (possible) desire to neglect the outside world, and in that/a sense, embrace it (this neglection). Arguably, the concept of “white cubes” narrows the mind’s capacity for attentiveness to things excluded to white spaces. Author Taylor Renee Aldridge in her article *Black Bodies, White Cubes: The Problem with Contemporary Art’s Appropriation of Race* illuminates the connection of observing art in these white gallery spaces, as pertaining to the black body; a common object of hypervisibility in today’s racialized society. She discusses how artists have begun using their art as responses to instances of social unrest in a way that almost seems to glorify the events as instances that are disconnected to the outside world (agents of the white gallery cubes/spaces).

Art galleries have been seeking artists who make “systemic racism look sexy” which makes common the idea of racism through art as an agent of commercialization. By creating artistic renditions of the mutilation of the black body, this alludes to galleries and artists alike recognizing that they could exploit the boom in social movements such as Black Lives Matter, by showing the deaths of black people as a mainstream “spectacle”. There are cases where white artists such as Ti-Rock Moore, who created a performance piece of a lifelike sculpture of Fat Albert (representing Michael Brown) lying face down taking his last few breaths. Not only was this utterly disrespectful to the Brown family and an attack on black affirmation because a white

woman was allowed the “space for a sculpture of a black corpse”, but Moore even admitted to creating the art as a way to save herself from financial distress. Essentially, the black image/body is being commodified and perpetuated through agents of voyeurism within “white cubes” or spaces where black bodies are subject to meaningless, decontextualized, and desensitized observations by white people.

America’s neglect to create and promote nothing but “white spaces” for white people is intrinsic to the country’s mishandling of black representation. James Baldwin argues that American arts has taken the experience of African Americans and projected it through the lenses of a “white fantasy”- a socially constructed perception, that has brainwashed America into a false idea that they do not live, and subsequently maintain a highly racialized society. And while in a twenty-first century context the misconception that the United States, is in fact, **not** a post-racial society, America continues to be presented in terms of whiteness, and constructed through the lenses of whiteness. In other words, the ways in which the “white cubes” of art galleries neutralize social spaces, is simply an extension of the ways society neutralizes the representation, interaction, and movement of black bodies (Branch, 1-2).

In America’s racialized construction of space, black (and brown) bodies have remained hypervisible, and in consequence, have been constantly under attack through acts of violence, victimization, commodification, and sexual exploitation. And in the centuries of black body objectification, subjectification, and subordination, it only seems appropriate to question just how black people have managed to navigate these spaces when the system, and those who govern it, reign on the premise of black oppression. Particularly with the black female- arguably one of the most subjugated of all human bodies- is a prime example of how the white cube perspective continues to exist. The ways in which black women have been historically manifested within the confines of white society has condemned black women to the bottom of

the social food chain. Her (black women) role, as what W.E.B. Dubois coins as “the mule of society”, (a double negative as black, and a woman) far too often accurately describes where she stands in relation to everyone else (*Souls of Black Folk*). But as a woman, (typically) born and raised idealizing a strong “desire to fall in love and get married”, to what extent does a group of people who are in a constant state of the lowest social neglect, highest subservient role, and a beautifully complex self-identity commonly misinterpreted as a simple “otherness”, presented a situation for this desire to come true? In other words, who wants to marry a mule? And at that, have its children?

To be termed the “mule of society” assumes that black women have both incredible work ethic, reliability, and strength. Yet being labeled, looked upon, and treated as a “mule” when everyone else is a human, can also assume that black women who do all for others, rarely receive anything in return. The nation as it was created (and maintains) as a white space allowed “white people to establish the “social hierarchy...that ranked white men first, white women second...black men...third, and black women last (Hooks, 53).” As a result, there has been a very deep social and systematic devaluation of black womanhood that continues to persist to this day.

This country was built on the backs of black women. But “in the eyes of the white public” black women will “never be seen as worthy of consideration (Hooks, 55).” The state of a black women’s oppression was primarily a direct “result of the sexual exploitation of black women during slavery” where her inferior status as black, a woman, **and** a slave made her a prime target to white male superiority. One nineteenth century humanist named Lydia Marie Child defined the social status of a black woman during slavery as a

woman who is unprotected either by law or public opinion. She is the property of her master, and her daughters are his property. They are allowed to have no conscientious scruples, no sense of shame, no regard for the feelings of husband, or parent; they must

be entirely subservient to the will of their owner on pain of being whipped as near unto death as will comport with his interest or quite to death if it suits his pleasure (Hooks, 26)

It was common for white male slaveowners to force “enslaved black women to passively accept sexual exploitation” as a way to reassure his control over her. Raping black women was “categorical” and a “political aim” for white men to “obtain absolute allegiance and obedience to the white imperialistic order” as the top of the social hierarchy (Hooks, 27). It was also argued by black activist Angela Davis that sexual exploitation was more of “an institutionalized method” to the “demoralization and dehumanization” of black women than it was a way for white men to assert their (sexual) dominance. In addition to the “deep hatred” of woman instilled by the white patriarchal ideology, the “white colonizer’s psyche” was developed with motivations that sanctioned “brutality against black women (Hooks, 32).” What is significant about the context of a black woman in relation to a white man is that much of his pleasure comes from displaying his power over her via sexual exploitation or just plain violence in general. Whipping a black woman “to death” for his “pleasure” is an aspect of the black woman’s narrative that is misconceived as a part of the uplift of white male patriarchal agency that was from *back then*, when in reality is still a part of *right now* (Hooks, 26). It is concerning to think that this subjection of the black woman to the white man is misunderstood because it has taken more covert forms, and thus rendered unclear. The perpetuation of white space, privileged mentality, and public opinion has literally misconceptualized the bodily mutilation of the black women as a historical advent, when it is just as prevalent today.

The construction/production of white spaces are maintained via institutions and systems such as slavery that serve(d) to preserve “‘whiteness’ as a racially pure identity” and the privilege that comes with it (Ferber, 113). As much as it existed to sexually exploit black women to further subdue them to mental and physical incapacitation, white men were equally as fixated

on asserting their control and they were retaining their whiteness. *White Man Falling: Race, Gender, and White Supremacy* by Abby L. Ferber discusses how historically, white supremacists “obsessed” over interracial sexuality and believed it was their sole duty to protect their white identity (Ferber, 85). The mixing of races was always seen as a threat to white purity because the presence of “blackness is necessary to the definition of whiteness”, therefore a combination of the two would disrupt the “white/black binary” whole heartedly (white supremacy existing because of black oppression) (Ferber, 112). As long as blackness was “separated and subordinated” to whiteness” then it could do no harm to the white identity, and thus do no harm to their power (Ferber, 112). Ferber defines “race” as “the reiteration of physical differences that are visible and knowable” and since white identity relied on “racially pure reproduction”, the mixing of races would potentially cause a greater difficulty in distinguishing “who was white and who was not (Ferber, 114).” Essentially, the infatuation with keeping white people white, yet consistent intentional debasement of black women through both body and mind is a contradiction in itself. The black woman was used to build white men, in white spaces, for white people.

Therefore, as interracial sexuality between black and white people grew and transformed into interracial intimacy, dating, and even marriage, it makes sense as to why most black women naturally gravitate towards their male counterparts. Love, as a “compelling, all-encompassing feeling of expansion and selflessness” for a black woman seemed only retrievable from a black man, and rightfully so. Her understanding of a white man’s hatred towards black women is an equal understanding of a white man’s hatred towards black men, especially when it came to a white man’s daughter. The brutal murder of Emmett Till in 1955 was not only a catalyst for the civil rights movement in the post-reconstruction era, but it also serves as one the most famous examples of a white woman using fear factor, and the hypermasculinization/hypersexualization of black men to get an innocent fourteen year old black boy killed. The claim that Emmett

“allegedly whistled” at Carolyn Donham was exacerbated to him flirting, and eventually sexually assaulting her is a notorious narrative in the history of African American men and their interactions with white women. So, knowing the extent to which America has yet to release these racial tensions, romantic relationships between black women and black men seemed plausible and pertinent.

But what a black woman desires can never be attained that simply. The context of race relations has evidently shifted over the course of the twenty-first century as more and more interracial couples are forming. In 1970’s, the rate of racially mixed marriages was “only 1.5 of every thousand (Wilson and Russell, 124).” The sexual revolution of the “late sixties and early seventies” was a result of more integrated environments that spurred both blacks and whites to experiment with one another on a sexual and romantic level (Wilson and Russell, 124). Statistics showed that in the 1990’s “71 percent...of all Black-White interracial marriages, involved” black men with white women, versus “29 percent...involved” black women with white men (Wilson and Russell, 125). Similarly, in 2008, “more than one-fifth of black men intermarried...while just 9 percent of black women did ([prb.org/usintermarriage/](http://prb.org/usintermarriage/)).” Additionally, the Pew Research Center conducted a study on these same social and demographic trends and concluded that “black men are twice as likely” to marry outside of their race than black women. Whereas the percentage of newlyweds who are intermarried showed that 12 percent of white men and 10 percent of white women married other races, there was a much larger margin between black men and black women at 24 percent versus 12 percent ([www.pewsocialtrends.org](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org)).

It is clear that there is an unmistakable trend when it comes to racial mixing between blacks and whites. As authors Midge Wilson and Kathy Russell describe in their work *Divided Sisters: Bridging the Gap between Black Women and White Women*, “black women” were (and are) “far less interested in crossing the color line” for “a variety of reasons (125).” As has been

explained in the previous sections of this essay, black women have been the bottom tier of society and used as a factor in the creation of white male dominance while simultaneously racialized as a mongrel to white purity. If anything, her existence in America does not call for her to seek romantic refuge in a white man, but actually in her “eyes”, being “involved with a white man” means she is directly “allying herself with [her] racist oppressor (Hooks, 69).” And with her understandable reluctance to be with white men, she turns to black men to satisfy her appetite for love and affection (since she is ultimately rejected that by all other aspects of society). This then creates another problem in itself. Black men coupling with white women leaves black women left alone, upset, and ultimately (feeling) undesired.

The projected narrative then is presented as follows: black women are angry when black men are with white women because it is both in their natural behavior to act as such, but also because they are jealous, resentful, and narrow minded to the idea that racial boundaries are being broken so love can prevail. As Wilson and Russell discuss, the actuality behind a black woman’s resentment goes much deeper than surface level imposes. They claim that “interracial relationships”, and this one specifically, is “quite possibly the biggest source of tension among” black and white women because of the “history of racism in America (124).” For black women, black men coupling white women forms an even greater divide between the two races, often resulting in black women being “angry at White Women for ‘stealing’” her men, who are “already in short supply (124).” In the U.S., the ratios of black men to black woman stand at seven to ten, while the ratios for white men and women are ten to nine (124). To put it into perspective, in addition to all that black women are already subjected to, she now must face the fact that black men would prefer a white woman over her, and usually in the context of society’s centuries of cultivating and forming the conditions of which white womanhood always dominates over black womanhood.

In almost all aspects of feminism, the white woman is featured as the staple norm for beauty, behavior, and overall sexuality. The ideas of beauty were “created by White society”, and since both women “live in a society that defines...them according to their looks”, there becomes a divide “confounded by race...that” could “never apply to men and their cross-race relations (Wilson and Russell, 73-74).” In terms skin color, the gradient of lighter-skinned women to darker skinned women always served as a quick way to validate their social class. White women with “the palest creamiest skin” were the most attractive and thus more valued (Wilson and Russell, 73). Especially in the antebellum south, colorism played a significant role to the status of a slave. Lighter-skinned black women were commonly selected to work in the house amongst their white masters, while darker-skinned black women, “at the bottom of [the] cruel color caste hierarchy” were forced to work the fields (75). Hair also played a significant factor in beauty. Long, straight, flowy hair was the “cultural norm” for what was deemed as “good” hair, while “short ...nappy hair was” seen as “bad (79). When the “eurocentric standards for hair only include hair naturally exclusive to white women, black women are automatically subject to “‘bad hair’ lives (79).” Cultural norms also idealized small, “delicate” women as opposed to larger, fuller formed women (98). Historically too, as women they were both subjected to the plight of white male misogyny. white women were depicted as “passive because they were ladies” while black women were depicted as “submissive because they were slaves (Wilson and Russell, 16).”

For centuries, white spaces have idealized white women while black women have been degenerated. It becomes clearer how the advents of racialization have been shaped to pit black and white women against each other. However, since white women “set the culture’s ideals of feminine beauty”, there is a much lesser threat when white men find black women attractive. But, when black men find white women attractive, there becomes an affirmation in a black

woman's "deep fear...that they are not pretty enough by society's standards" and are easily replaceable by the very white woman she competes with. This idea that the black woman is replaceable feeds into the idea of her disposability within white spaces. In terms of relationships, the perspective of love from a black woman is different from that of any other person. In *Love's Revolution: Interracial Marriage*, author Maria P.P. Root discusses Psychotherapist Nathaniel Branden's definition of love as "a passionate spiritual-emotional-sexual attachment...that reflects a high regard for the value of each other's persons (114)." With such an intense emotion, forming couples are capable of "[suspending] learned judgments and essentially "dissolve" preconceived notions (114). For black women, to love and be loved touches greatly on this aspect of **value**. For her, to be valued is privilege that white people are born with, while she is neglected. So, while a white person may expect that for their relationships, a black woman not only **needs** it, but **deserves** it as well. To see black men value a white woman over a black woman only perpetuates her degeneration and the idea that her worth is truly little to none.

With this context, it becomes much easier to understand how interracial coupling affects the black woman in a way society refuses to accept.

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The *Loving v. Virginia* case of 1967. Richard Loving, a white man and Mildred Jeter, a black woman were two blue collar workers who fell in love and destroyed the restrictions that white supremacy had placed on it. Their original arrest convicted them of violating Virginia's Racial Integrity Act of 1924 which "made it unlawful for any white person...to marry [anyone except] a white person (Brown, 18)." Their love then, served as a backlash to Jim Crow laws established in "the formerly slaveholding South" to inhibit black uplift in post-civil rights and protect "racial purity of whites (Brown, 18)." The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Virginia's anti-

miscegenation laws violated the fourteenth amendment which states that “no State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges (or immunities) of citizens of the United States (*History.com*).” While this prolific ruling contested the legality of white supremacist authority in sixteen states, it essentially constituted marrying who you love, and thus freedom to love, as a privilege. In America, privilege is instituted only to a select group of the population. White people have privilege. Black people do not. The Loving’s were convicted because Richard as a white man broke the law of being white and marrying someone who was not white, so fighting against it was fighting for his privilege. When it was ruled they had the legal privilege to love, it was not because the law said *she* could. It’s because the law said *he* could.

Even at the onset of legalizing freedom to love as universal, the systems and institutions for which white spaces inhabit (which is everything and everywhere) are still constructed to maintain them and its people. Such a critical analyzation of the *Loving v. Virginia* case exposes how even when black women stand at the forefront as a way to leverage the black community (and in this case society in general), black women are still forced to “navigate interrelated oppressive systems while standing at the margins (Phelps-Ward et. al, 62).” This is important because “white people” have “created an image of black womanhood which they could tolerate” and places black women in a perpetual state of exclusion from white cubes even when she fights for equality within them. This presents a very convoluted and compounded adjunct to the social construction of (white) space, and the social construction of racialized identity within that space. Author Henri Lefebvre in his book *The Production of Space* discusses how “humanity” as a “social practice, creates works and produces things” which rationalizes how labor and other activities generate products that curate the functionality of humanity (Lefebvre, 71). As a result, “formal relationships” are made and “allow separate actions to form a coherent whole.” And since these relationships are always associated with “preconditions of individual and collective

activity” and “based on an order to be followed” they essentially become defined by its “spatiality (Lefebvre, 71).”

The “preconditions” of America have put forth a continuous production of whiteness where individuals (white people) and “collective activity” (systems and institutions of whiteness) rationalize racism, and thus function racism as the social practice and consequent social space. Therefore, the spatiality of a black woman is defined from the preconditions that America has placed on her, and not the conditions she tries to create. To put it simply, the social construction of white space and the social construction of racialized identity are essentially one in the same. The black woman is a (stereotyped) product of her environment despite her having **no part** in the production.

To explore interracial coupling as a product of racialized social spaces, these same “preconditions” that built the dominant (white) narrative of black womanhood, can also be used to understand the workings of interracial couples in such a racialized society. Author Erica Childs in her work *Navigating Interracial Borders: Black-White Couples and Their Social Worlds*, studied the ways society conceives and constructs views on black and white couples, and how they view themselves. Of the fifteen couples, ten of the black individuals “emphasized...their racial identity” as black or African American and their “affiliation” to their “‘blackness’ was integral to how they saw themselves and how others viewed them (Childs, 20). However, the other five “[acknowledged]” their blackness but “preferred not to think in racial terms (Childs, 21).” There is a specific importance to use race as a personal identifier, despite the level of relating to an individual’s blackness can vary. It is disconcerting to how some black people can acknowledge their blackness but don’t take it into account in their day-to-day lifestyles as an establishing factor of the self. This seems to allow them the psychological opportunity to disassociate their “otherness” as a black person and associate as just a person.

While that reads as a progressive idea, to actually put that into practice would mean the elimination of one's blackness, which in the state of today's racial society is seemingly problematic. These individuals appear to compartmentalize the fact that society has already socially constructed the conditions to their existence. It's as if they partake in fantasy of colorblind, but to the self, which in turn could be relatively self-destructive. Childs concludes that by "deemphasizing race in identity [and] relationships" is not an effective way to "challenge" the "central and undeniable role that race play (42-43)."

Contrastingly, all fifteen of the white partners had "little [to] no attachment to their racial identity" since their privilege allows them to ignore it (Childs, 22). This only reiterates how America has been constructed by whites, for whites because they are the norm. It appears black/white coupling is contingent to the one-sided lenses of how the country sees itself.

The study also demonstrated a significant difference between the "interracial status" of the couples when alone versus in the public sphere. For these couples, the private and public sectors work as a dichotomy. Society on the other hand, biases these interracial relationships based off the assumption that the stereotyped public perception is also their private relationship. Regardless of the couples' awareness of their status in either realm, for society to shake its preconceived opinions, even after seeing successful interracial couples firsthand, is the preconditioned social construction Lefebvre discusses. It is difficult to understand the extent to which love can allow a person to sacrifice some of their race consciousness for the sake of their feelings. Seems easy to conceptualize, but in reality, it is not.

The black woman's position in racialized society greatly parallels her position in white college spaces, specifically predominately white institutions, as they function on the same (pre)conditions. In *The Agony of Education: Black Students at White Colleges and Universities* authors Joe Feagin, Hernan Vera and Nikitah Imani discuss the severity of how public and

private institutions are viewed as “open and tolerant places (1).” They claimed that multiple critics argue that the “modern university” is becoming “too tolerant of the views and interests of African American and people color” and are actually quick to blame “black students...for” their “college troubles (7).” The reality, however, is that the education system and institutions are some of the “most active and effective instruments for the oppression of black people” since higher education was originally created for white people, by white people (Feagin et. al, 7). College is essentially an extension of the white cube. Black bodies, specifically the black woman, are neutralized in this space because for colleges and universities to claim as “an ethos of tolerance” when they are not at all is just another aspect of Baldwin’s “white fantasy” theory (Childs, 139).

In the article *A Rhetorical Analysis of Beyoncé’s “Freedom”: An Examination of Black College Women’s Experiences at Predominately White Institutions*, authors Robin Phelps-Ward, Courtney Allen, and Jimmy L. Howard discuss the significance behind Beyoncé’s 2016 MTV performance of her song “Freedom” and how for black (collegiate) women the desire for freedom has yet to be fulfilled. They explain how black women have constantly “exercised the little power they had to leverage the advancement of the black community” in a simultaneous attempt to define and find a freedom they are never truly granted. For most black women attending white colleges or universities, she is forced to “break through so many barriers just to” be able to give the slightest impression that she belongs (Phelps-Ward et. al, 53). For black women, navigating regular social spaces is less of a skill than it is survival tactics. In the context of PWI’s where seek of refuge in safe (black) spaces is nearly minimal to none, the extent to which a black woman has to work to give herself any “opportunity of an actual and proverbial seat at the table” is enough to stir a hefty load of resentment for white spaces and the ignorant white people within them (53)! The dream of attending higher education is prompted by

promises of breaking these barriers she must overcome, since education is a vital tool to her uplift. But many black women receive a rude awakening when they begin to search for that freedom and are only met with yet another set of boundaries where their freedom is disrupted and threatened by stagnancy and her silencing the entire college experience. Overall, PWI's of "higher education [fails] at supporting...Black women" because they are "rendered invisible" until their "raced bodies become the focus on campus" and they are subject to an unwarranted hypervisibility of their racialized black bodies in these white cubes (Phelps-Ward et. al, 61).

A black body's "otherness" within the white spaces of college and universities is also contingent with how interracial coupling does, or does not function in this space. Along with a general study of interracial couples, Childs also conducted a study of interracial coupling within colleges. She concluded that "black-white couples across college campuses" was not uncommon, but college life is still very "highly segregated (140)." In the wake of the twenty-first century and post desegregation, higher education is supposed to be a time to expand beyond comfortable social boundaries and experiment across uncomfortable social margins. It is such an important idea that most schools push for diversity in the numerous accounts of racial adversity, but too often most institutions lack the "ability...to address racial issues" leaving black bodies to fend for themselves (Childs, 140). She also found a consensus of white students who placed the responsibility of diversity on black people who only want to stick with other black students (145). This is another aspect of college campus working as (a function of) white cubes because white people refused to be held accountable for why there wasn't more natural integration. They believed they had "nothing in common with a black individual" which was another way of saying "whites and blacks are inherently different (Childs, 150)."

In the instances where there were interracial couples, a lot of black women believed that white women were not with black men because "of their commitment to the black community,

but as a way to test the racial waters by having fun and experimenting. She also engages in a discussion on the “historical basis” of the images of black and white women where all of her black female subjects knew “that white women are still viewed as more desirable to them (159).” In a similar study, Childs specifically focused on interracial dating from the perspective of the black woman. In her article *Looking Behind the Stereotypes of the “Angry Black Woman”*: An Exploration of Black Women’s Responses to Interracial Relationships, she expands upon how black women’s opposition to interracial relationships is rooted in “black internalization of racism” and how the black woman feels “devalued” as a result of it. She focused on a selection group interviews of black organizations at three different college campuses. One consensual conclusion for single black women was that: “a Black man’s choice to be with a white woman is seen as a specific betrayal of Black women because the decision to date interracially does not mean just choosing white women but also rejecting black women (551).” But when a black woman is with a white man, there is not the same fear that she will “desert the [black] community” **because of** her white man, as many black women feel is the case with black men and their white woman (551). But in the same instance, a white woman pursuing a black man is becoming an increasingly larger phenomenon as one black college woman describes,

White women just have this idea of its so great to be with a Black guy because he’s a big Black stud... You can tell the white girl that he’s a dog and she still wants him probably even more. Black men are in fashion; call it the resurgence of the Black male. It’s like interracial dating is a fashion statement, a token especially when it’s an African American athlete (Childs, 553).

Evidently, the agents to which interracial dating seem to act upon and within are just racial identifiers in action. Society’s white cubed colleges and white socially constructed spaces are synonymous to a black woman’s racialized identity, which is super problematic when they

see black men with white women as her idealized placeholder. It seems as though both color conscious and colorblind interracial couples can face similar adversity, but the perspective of the black woman regarding at school or in life is one in the same. Her subjection to “otherness” was literally created to validate white supremacist structures and the men who run them. And while interracial coupling is just one facet of which her perspective is commonly misconstrued, or not heard at all, love, romance and intimacy are all extremely vulnerable emotional forms in which value is a critical aspect. To investigate how a black woman can receive and perceive love, is to investigate how a black woman can receive or perceive her value being validated from someone else. Yes, love/intimacy is an exceptionally convoluted area to explore, but historical and contemporary context allows us to formulate the popular and combatted perspectives of the black woman into rational, comprehensible perspectives of the black woman.

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