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Loving Music Until it Hurts. Notes

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Lecture by Dr. Pyle

Cheng

- music + ethics and music + social justice focus

- he begins with an epigraph by Audre Lorde, so we begin class by reading "Power" by Lorde

• 3/4 time ("three-four time") - waltz time; waltz was originally condemned as overwhelming for white women to perform b/c of proximity to partner, whirling; now the epitome of culture & stateliness

• tears

• similar to Dunn trial: colorblind, but not actually colorblindness as a concept arose mostly b/w poem

- publication and Dunn trial)

- Lorde on being +one-policed: does manner or content or message matter more?

- Lorde on women responding to racism: there's a necessity for Black women to make a symphony of order from the cacophony of silencing & anger at that silencing

• symphony v. cacophony: necessity to make anger useful & respectable vs. wild, "ugly"

Scientific Racism

- taste/skin/touch: idea of Black numbness to pain, brutishness - and according numbness to culture - rooted in enslavement

- skin color relied on for discrimination - during 18-1900s as skin color grew more ambiguous, scrutiny & danger of "passing" ↑

- black noise considered too loud & cacophony-esque - "animal noises" justifying enslavement

- all these things employed to justify enslavement and also to support Dunn's arguments

- all of it: scientific racism

Formidability Bias

- enforced by concept of animality/nonhumanness

- scientific racism also enforces it - we're still struggling to separate science/race

- reasonability in criminal law - what can we reasonably do to another person?

- resilience creates tropes of "Black Girl Magic," "Black Boy Joy," "strong Black women"

• tropes stem from uplift ideology

• however allow for aggression to continue

- slow death "by a thousand microaggressions"

- uplift

Sonic Excess

- **sonic color line**: there's this idea of **race influencing voice** but that's not so - class, geography, etc influence tone, which get **stereotyped & reflected back** onto race
 - idea of race of speaker then creates **skewed perception** of speaker's **volume**
- and more

Castle Doctrine/Stand Your Ground Laws

- **stand your ground laws**: if someone **believes** someone is ^{else} **bodily threatening** them, they can use **deadly force** vs. someone else
- **prioritize** internal fears over what 'trespasser' actually does
- **no duty to retreat** - you can just shoot
- some states have shifted burden of proof to not rely on "**reasonable person**" judgement (making proving the crime rest on persecution)

Music Use in Chapter?

2 sides
of this
coin

- 1). **demonizing** especially w/ respect to **respectability**
- 2). **humanizing** making music, for some, confers humanity / respectability
 - ability to sense music $\rightarrow$ ability to reason $\rightarrow$ **humanity**
- 3). **fortifying** - music contributes to sense of **invincibility / formidability**
 - ex. galvanic hand response / marble hand illusion
 - bulletproofness & invincibility conveyed in **rap lyrics** = dangerous
 - **sorrow songs**: uplift aesthetic
- 4). **weaponization** (extra-judicial)
 - 21st-century (extra-judicial) & **legal lynching**
 - music as weapon for **gun**
 - **sound ordinances** = weapon of **gentrification**
 - ex. NYC illegalization of "ficked-out" "loud cars"
 - ex. 7-11 playing "refined" opera loudly to keep loiterers and homeless people away
 - ex. police using LRAO noise technique to (not really) not harm protestors

Thug Music v. Rap Crap

- "**thug music**" would've implied **racialized connotation**, painting oavis as racist - "**rap crap**" is **politely aesthetic, deracializing**
 - **thug** = person, **rap** = genre (but still brings up image of certain group of people)

all "black" genres disparaged - ex. jazz demonized until white people took it up

- aesthetic value of gangster rap - considered to promote disobedience, violence

- myths of culture & race in dunn's testimony -

- "where are their dads?"
 - "pull up their pants"
- } dunn makes himself a martyr by fighting back vs. the country "going to shit," shifts blame to black families as not good, blaming culture vs. kids in deep to avoid scrutiny
- myth breaks down to

- many black families cohabitate, not marriage - hence fathers not considered
- leftover of fathers sold away in enslavement
- extended family (including neighbors) not considered

the trial (of dunn, not k) discussion

- respectability in defense, witness testimonies - dunn tries to make himself respectable

(rap crap, whispering "n word"), demonstrating his disrespectability

- "glove compartment armory" reveals vigilante complex, hatred vs. fear

→ implication that dunn inherently deserved respect that davis didn't give him, which apparently somehow justifies davis' violent death

→ reasonable suspicion of police can actually be based on "respectability" - clothes, music

playing, etc. → playing in orange → dunn's favorite song

- contrast btwn "beef" & "strawberry letter 23" - beef: IRL, strawberry letter: fantasy

• bass in "beef" legal restrictions parallels bans on enslaved people drumming

• idea that listening to rap creates criminals - hence dunn thinking the kids were talking to him even while he thought they were singing along

we conclude with Lorde: "A Litany for Survival"