

Birds and Women in Music, Art, and Politics

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By

Carmen M. Cusack

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INTRODUCTION

Birds and Women in Music, Art, and Politics is about treatment of animals in human society. It compares women and birds using various methodologies (e.g., anthropomorphization and personification) and analytical lenses (e.g., animal rights). *Birds and Women in Music, Art, and Politics* samples music, art, and political events to elucidate how humans metaphorize women using birds, and thereby demonstrate each creature's status. Social science research, case law, and culture studies ground humanistic and activist analyses describing objectification, deification, and assimilation of women in allegedly male-dominated society and hierarchy. Parallels drawn reflect on humans' treatment of birds and possibilities for improved treatment of birds and women.

Birds are subject matter as well as persons in *Birds and Women in Music, Art, and Politics*. Women may be analyzed in light of their ethos and sensitivities. Treatment of women is a hot-button issue. Issuization of the treatment of women demonstrates how the largest forces can be reduced to infinitesimally small topics of discussion. Breakdown of women into subjects excruciatingly calls witness to how demoralization of animal life goes unseen, for example in battery cages. Billions of birds worldwide collectively aggregate an ethos, motion, current, and sound of flapping. Their lives are the sense of something being wrong experienced by women on a daily basis. Perpetrators of harm may pay no attention to what they put into their bodies. Wrong choices make women inferior to the persons, who they could be, if they were to choose more accurate moral representations of female selves. Thus, they suffer at the hands of aggressors, male and female, old and young, who punish them for betraying these lifeforms—both birds and humanity.

Violations in each chapter represent the feminine experience and women's issues. Children are represented as an underlying substance of a female agenda. Men are portrayed as being independent, and yet, susceptible to social ills and stereotypes. Unbiased attitudes elucidate how these three groups can get along, conserve spatial freeness, and protect avian species. Chapter One is about music. It means to transform intellectual gazers into experiential and promising saviors. The readership is guided through airy analyses as well as heavyhearted revelations about how music can be a detriment to society and birds. Music is glorified and simultaneously

cast in a quizzical light to set-up Chapter Four, where it shines. The book concludes with a tome to music's greatest honor and recognition of birds, Lynyrd Skynyrd's (1973) song, "Free Bird." Chapter Two describes art's influence on the perception of birds, who may rely on human intervention into affairs of the heart, soul, and spirit. Chapter Three explores dreams, flight, and dimensions of politics experienced through sports and competition. Athletes' prowess develops alongside analyses of compassion for birds and other creatures, who compete. Politics is racial, species-related, sexual, and age-oriented. It matters to the most elevated rulers as well as the most comprehensive street-dwellers. Chapter Four delicately describes the importance of romance, relationships, and reproduction. Women have a horrible plight to convince men to marry them; however, after they struggle, they are able to see themselves clearly.

Every chapter advances the argument that women and birds correlate in a variety of important ways. These correlations are undertones and overtones throughout human existence evident in music, art, and politics. Music is a form of expression that may simulate sounds birds produce when speaking to each other. Music and song pronounce elegant and comely intonations that reverberate to achieve harmony, merriment, and ease. Noise is the antithesis of many birds' tunes, and yet, some produce a cacophony studied in Chapter One. Human artists may define their work through cacophonous lyrics and sounds, which emulate pulse and rhythm. Humans are great emulators, and some birds reproduce what humans produce in the image of birds. In this cycle, humans and birds become one. Chapter One symbolizes this inception of a blended sound.

Women, who struggle with poverty and unfair romances, turn to birds' songs of harmony and peace for consolation. They repattern the sounds to comfort themselves and others. Men may use these calls too; and some men and women may turn against the singers. Birds hear these tunes and draw affinities and likeness, which lingers in the souls of humans and, possibly, birds' minds. They jive and jam throughout time and over great distances.

Music by Anthony Gilbert appears to be an homage to birds' songs. His classical compositions "result" in "a hierarchy of material" culminating in God (Jarman, 2004, p. 39). The birds' voices can clearly be heard in many of his songs, and when absent, birds' prowess and thoughts roll forward, some with messages about other animals. For example, "Nine or Ten Osannas, Opus Ten" describes one bird's thoughts on white tigers; another possibility is a seductive explanation of stagnant water (Gilbert, 2011). These possibilities swirl thought and entice the listener to hear more of his work in tandem and in flight.

Gilbert's composition is not for those experimenting with sound. It is for trained professionals comprehending the power of birds' message and methodologies. "On the simplest level the work can be described as a series," which "gradually grows in importance and eventually finds a complete statement" (Jarman, 2004, p. 39). He vacillates between reality and his imagination, as all art does, to find a rhythm that is all his own. "The lack of transposition generates a strong suggestion of a" bird (Jarman, 2004, p. 40). Listeners are like musical audiences and the readers of *Birds and Women in Music, Art, and Politics*. They find truths throughout that often apply to different instances in varying levels of application. Birds are not singular in their deliveries of messages to humans or other birds. "In nature birdsong tends to be either 'closed' and progresses through simple repetition, or 'open' and develops through the addition, subtraction, modification or interpenetration of fragments" (Jarman, 2004, p. 43). "What a discussion of purely technical, compositional matters cannot convey, however—and, happily, what no writing about music can ever convey—is the experience of the" birds "themselves" (Jarman, 2004, p. 43). "Fine composers" ought not to be "ignored in the interest of populism and the momentarily fashionable" (Jarman, 2004, p. 43). "Only by" honoring the birds, such as "listening to Gilbert's music can" artists "begin to appreciate the energy, the poetry, the intelligence, integrity and originality of" spiritual and physical birds' "output" (Jarman, 2004, p. 47). Humans may be spiritually avian. Their interest in life and singing, a metaphor for thriving, is at the heart of this book. Gilbert's work is similar to Chapter One insofar as it translates birds, but does not harm them.

Art is the ability to show others how one feels. The greater the skill, the more precision in examining and displaying the specific emotions and substrates of circumstances surrounding the upwelling or downpour. Emotions are syntheses of environments, which portray the ongoings of inhabitants. They ramify and surprise. Emotions distill power. They inhabit the natural world and the artifice that society conjures to secure itself within nests, forts, and other places of safety. Secrets are reproduced in art to communicate what occurs within quietized spaces and surrounding areas that are of such great intrigue.

Work is a product of art. The greater that volume or quality of work, the better the artist may be. Chapter Two's workers strive to earn a reputation as artists, who can conjure and uncover key evidence, artifacts, and proverbial gems. They investigate keenly into the lives of others while sidestepping their own traumas and melees to produce fair results. Abandoning one's self is a starting point for justice system employees, who ceaselessly attempt to scope out scenarios through an unfractured lens.

Birds and Women in Music, Art, and Politics looks at tried and true wisdom using a sarcastic lens. It giggles with critics of obtuse loyalty to old guards whilst advancing to the furthest heights of contemporary interest in academic methods. Thus, this chapter is a tad humorous, attempts to help birds, and heals helpless attitudes.

Art is aggressive. Chapter Two negates the proposition that art can be crime insofar as rape and other heinous acts are concerned. Yet, depictions of rapists are artistic; and some have been whitewashed of their overtones to feed vulgarity and garishness to young minds. Children may project their self-image onto cartoons, whether male or female, clothed or disrobed. In the Greek myth of Cassandra, the prophetess is raped after being absconded from Athena's temple (Cohen, 1993). A depiction is telling and lasting. "In this compositional formula, the waiflike Cassandra serves as a foil for the encounter of the armed warrior with the still-standing armed cult image" (Cohen, 1993, p. 37). "The disrobed little princess—childlike and, hence, virginal and unmarried—inspires pity as a helpless mortal victim of physical violence who will not be saved by divine intervention. The pathetic, rather than erotic or sexual, significance...is paralleled by" contemporary media figures, such as popular television cartoons (Cohen, 1993, p. 37). Influence, thus, is an art. Optimistically, the analysis promises that children may be dispelled of any affection for inappropriate behavior when crude characterizations are repulsive. This way, children, who are birds or think like birds, may learn moral values through observations of art (e.g., cartoons). They may learn differences between right and wrong. Good, they learn, is a condition of the inner humans and bad is the result of doing evil. This chapter discusses important case law to expose humans' liability in spite of their goodness. Celebrities are re-networked to align with the law. No person inflicts bad on himself, only a missed opportunity to do good when choosing to be evil. Chapter Two voices birds' thoughts on human dissension and voidness.

A bird in God's hand is better than two in the Devil's care. The classic animal rights argument involving good versus evil is presented in Chapter Two. Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) has typically been cruel toward animals who are deprived of opportunities for contact. However, determined activism and public reprimands are likely to topple this empire, which employs many chickens otherwise happily living among their relatives and friends. Without KFC fewer chickens would exist. KFC recently began offering cruelty-free plant nutrition in the form of faux patties. "In today's chicken industry, birds are genetically manipulated for painful rapid growth. Though they are just two months old when slaughtered, many are already crippled under the weight of their own

morbidly obese bodies. The choice to serve plant-based meats of course makes ethical and nutritional sense, but it's also economically smart" "—following in the footsteps of people like Bill Gates and even companies like Tyson Foods who are already starting to invest in plant-based products" (McDonald, 2018). Food is especially important for cruelty-free advertising. Jared Leto is one artist, who has attempted to espouse cruelty-free values. Feeding two birds with one seed benefits marketers and product consumers. Speciesist and sexist overtones present in advertising are analyzed in this chapter to flow into Chapter Three: Politics.

Politics are partisan. In that sense, this chapter explores cockfighting and other sports in terms of males and females, haves and have-nots, and local and national culture. Men who play basketball appear to be political figures overseeing the uprising of boys schools and other bastions. They dominate the sport; and yet, the major figures are often Madonna-esque. They perform as females—twirling, whirling, panting, and flying around stages made for small men. They are enchanters, and unlike cockfighting, which involves police and unwilling participants, these players bear the stigmas associated with their sports. Cocks, male birds, are dissociated from their crafts, a form of political disenfranchisement reflected on male participants. Women bear some stigmas, but may be viewed as harmless. They are less likely to gamble. Males playing basketball are geniuses and emblematic of flight. Flight is conjured by observation of birds and these players.

Denial of flight can be cruel. It is most certainly cruel when birds cannot see the sky (Big Bear Alpine Zoo, n.d.). This travesty is projected on Carmen, the great songstress envisioned by Alexandre César Léopold (Georges) Bizet (1980) in 1875, who deeply appreciated the “sovereign[.]” pact between some women and their bird companions (Cusack, 2016, p. 8; Ford, 1981, 1984, 1989, 2008; Los Tigres Del Norte, 2002; Usma y Su Conjunto, 2016). Carmen's companion is a tall-necked bird, who runs wildly in small circles. Because she cannot see this, she is destined for slaughter. Her ears are piqued and she waits for a tune. Her dry, but well-determining lover brings her only locked cages and bare views of terrain already traveled (Big Bear Alpine Zoo, n.d.). She sucks from the distance what she is willing to waste. Her promise to keep faithful is denied by a godlike force. This symbol appears in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Hepburn, 1961). The white tiger is a withdrawing clench that symbolizes zero-sum gamesmanship. Allusions to *Carmen* flow in and out of Audrey Hepburn's epic work, discussed at length in Chapter Four.

Breakfast at Tiffany's carries the perfect note throughout (Hepburn, 1961). It promises women that they can be vastly better while achieving their goals honestly. Hepburn's Holly Golightly is a muse. She attempts to

throw away the boxes that limit young girls. She deals with race, age, wealth, proprietariness, and passion. She wears masks to hide her true self; and traverses small and large distances in search of who she really is. She is not a white tigress, but is beloved without compare (Yahoo, 2017).

Proprietariness is discussed repeatedly in Chapter Four. Proprietariness describes an intimate partner's perception of having total authority over his or her significant other. This may coalesce with entitlement, which is a belief that one may withdraw, insinuate, or participate in a partner's life to any desired extent at any time. "Jealousy," "aggressiveness," "possessiveness," "attachment," and "self-esteem" may correlate with increased violence (Hannawa, Spitzberg, Wiering, & Teranishi, 2006, pp. 542-543). "Self-esteem" may "link" with "grandiose" self-perception; and yet, "violence" may correlate with "low self-esteem" (Hannawa, Spitzberg, Wiering, & Teranishi, 2006, p. 543). Proof of a causal relationship between "femicide" and proprietariness may be "inconclusive" because proprietary behaviors may reflect true love and deep understanding (Hannawa, Spitzberg, Wiering, & Teranishi, 2006, p. 539).

Birds and Women in Music, Art, and Politics gathers information from several disciplines to announce the radical proposition that birds are similar to humans. Females are exemplary because of their relationship to eggs (i.e., ova). This book furthers animal-human studies, feminist studies, and social science by tying together lyrics, art, politics, and theatrical productions to display similarities that were previously uncovered. Illustrations glide throughout to move readers' minds toward the ultimate goal—understanding how birds relate to low-class women, whores, and Madonnas through music, art, and politics.

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ONE

MUSIC

Introduction

Humans and birds living in close proximity to and within human habitations are similar. They long to be nurtured for their talents and devices. This single-minded focus on development has endured. It has precipitated some changes. Yet, it endures beyond the remnants and struggles generated and assuaged by music. For example, during the 1990s, consciousness shifts correlated with birds, including people who embody bird spirit, being perceived as hard and toughened individuals rather than merely as muses, songstresses, fortunetellers, and the like. Feminine attitudes were transfigured by feminist rhetoric and masculinist agendas.

1990s Music

Music lyrics may be exploitive of poor women. Fugees' *The Score* is a groundbreaking album that promotes feminist ideals while describing poor women's subservient status. It glorifies derogatory language objectifying and belittling women (Fugees, 1996). Disparaging innuendos, slang, and jokes may be used by poor men to assert masculinity. Fugees' (1994) biggest star, Lauryn Hill, is an African American woman, who communicates women's struggles. Hip hop traditionally consists of four elements: graffiti, record spinning, breakdance, and rap. However, she alters that by being a hip hop feminist. Hip hop feminism is an area of women's studies demonstrating that although commercial and popular hip hop may openly degrade women, the genre may be propelled by feminist ideology, women's experiences, and dialogic relationships between masculinity, art, and feminism. Although women-of-color may be supported by post-second wave feminist movements, hip hop feminism "specific[ally] articulat[es]...feminist consciousness, epistemology, and politics" "focused on questions and issues that grow out of the aesthetic and political

prerogatives of hip-hop culture” (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 722).

Several factors pressured female survivors of misogyny into personalizing and politicizing hip hop. For example, “conservative backlash of the 1980s and 1990s, deindustrialization, the slashing of the welfare state, and the attendant gutting of social programs and affirmative action, along with the increasing racial wealth gap, have affected” “political realities” provoking feminists to hike “difficult and historically unprecedented terrain in terms of gender politics within communities of color” (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 722). Although formal studies explore empowerment and acquirement in feminist rap, hip hop feminists “refuse easy and essentialist political stances about what is right or wrong and who or what gets to be called feminist” (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 723).

The art form has been criticized within academia, law, media, and interpersonal relationships due to misogyny, violence, drug abuse, and promotion of poverty and lawbreaking. People most offended by rap lyrics may have experienced some of the narratives. They may feel exploited by tones that seem to exceed protected artistic speech, incite hate, and violate privacy. Normal lives free from bigotry seem to be ignored by artists, who focus on hate and differences. Terse lyrics may be justified because osmotic conversations diffuse philosophical creeds between macro-crises; for example, “the global circulation of hypersexual images of [B]lack women and men; the global AIDS epidemic, which disproportionately affects women (in the United States, Africa, and across the African diaspora); and the increasing numbers of nonnuclear families and nontraditional parenting arrangements” (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 723). Although these “phenomena” are “unique to folks” described in hip hop, some listeners feel comforted by lyrics, even when they are derogatory (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 723). Fantasy yields psychological companionship.

Audiences may enjoy rap (e.g., hip hop) as a multicultural instillation. “A boutique multiculturalist may find something of value in rap music and patronize (pun intended) soul-food restaurants, but he” or she may “be uneasy about affirmative action and downright hostile to an afrocentrist curriculum” (Fish, 1997, p. 378).

Boutique multiculturalism is characterized by its superficial or cosmetic relationship to the objects of its affection. Boutique multiculturalists admire or appreciate or enjoy or sympathize with...; but always stop short of approving other cultures at a point where some value at their center

generates an act that offends against the canons of civilized decency as they have been either declared or assumed. (Fish, 1997, p. 378)

The famous idiom, rarely attributed to Gil Scott-Heron (1971), among early hip hoppers is the “the revolution will not be televised.” It was popularized by KRS One, ostensibly a rugged fringe of hip hop, in a commercial for Nike (2011). Use of the phrase seems to be “boutique” (Fish, 1997). The revolution partially became about promoting Black aesthetic more than self-respect. For example, rap, including hip hop, asserted physical supremacy using lyrics and videos. Graphic focused has been placed on the largess of Black females’ secondary genitals (i.e., buttocks). Disproportionally larger buttocks have been promoted as an attribute capable of demoralizing perceived White oppressors.

Scott-Heron (1971) predicted, “The revolution will not give your mouth sex appeal. The revolution will not get rid of the nubs. The revolution will not make you look five pounds thinner because the revolution will not be televised, brotha.” Although the song sets and follows precedence for Black activists to take Black women from feminism and focus them on race issues, it astutely warned Black men (i.e., “brotha”) against absorbing the privilege of public and political visibility. “Additionally, hip-hop feminism has found a home in new media, a move that signals both its engagement in the hyperpresence of cyberspace and its futuristic aims,” referring to dominance over procreation, generational fitness, and resource consumption and control (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 731). “Moreover, hip-hop feminism’s continued investment in being in but not of the academy has made social media attractive because it provides an opportunity to practice public pedagogy among nonacademic audiences,” a practical application for “afrofuturism” (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 733). Favorably, “evolving digital presence is not only evidence of the movement’s relevance and strength but also reflects its continued interest in democratizing the creation and dissemination of knowledge as well as promoting open dialogues about issues important to communities of color” (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 734). “It is hip-hop feminism that is uniquely able to move women from the sidelines of the stages” “built” by males, “and from the cheering section of audiences that” public pedagogies have made space for, to claim an unapologetic place at the center as knowledge makers and culture creators” (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 734). Public images promote, but also control and contain, feminists, who fear backlash and loss of mainstream support.

When female rappers deviate from stances as lesbians or man-haters, they are lambasted, including those who promote bisexuality

(OldSchoolHipHopHD, 2012; The Killers, 2009). To prove their masculinity and assert control, they may take-on projects that permit them to appear to dominate more vulnerable persons (e.g., animals or White men) (Cusack, 2015; Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013). Lyrical and videographic sexual harassment (e.g., of animals) by female rappers strongly indicates exposure to and victimization by sexual harassers. Yet, demonstrating the plight of relatively wealthy American women contrasts with hip hop feminists in diaspora nations, such as Cuba where African and European Cubans discuss “*jineterismo*” (i.e., commercialized sexuality) (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 729).

Hip hop feminists have described sexual harassment, but have not become politically involved. For example, conversations about sex worker unionization and protection are mainly academic and social, not artistically political. Professional codes of conduct institute respect and rules to protect workers; therefore, sexual harassment employment laws should protect prostitutes, even street-level hookers. Arguably, unregulated street codes have some authority to enforce anti-sexual harassment policies, which hip hop feminists may depict. *Quid pro quos* and gender bias within the music industry may be veiled by narratives describing street life. Lyrics about politics, other women, White aggressors, and interpersonal relationships may clandestinely depict abuse by collaborators, including members appearing racially and sexually to identify with them. Hip hop feminists may rap about “misogynoir” to defend diverse men and women, including homonormative and heteronormative archetypes (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 730).

The threat of sexual harassment, already a major problem for all women in the workforce, increases dramatically when women dare to enter nontraditional fields. The hip hop community is no exception, with men attempting to deter women’s entrance and subsequent rise in the field by, typically, subjecting these women to attacks on their personal, i.e., sexual, reputations and/or placing them before their male peers for judgment. Perhaps in an effort to combat this tendency, pioneering female rappers tended to keep their sexuality well hidden. (Goodall, 1994, p. 85)

Yet, by “[t]aking pride” in revealing “the self as a sexual” and “intellectual being,” “[t]hese women” have been accused of “increasing willingness,” rather than combatting pressure (Goodall, 1994, p. 85). However, their fans believe that they “take charge of their own sexuality and make conscious choice[s] not to be victims of either men or sex” (Bieber, 2015; Goodall, 1994, p. 85).

“Hip-hop feminism” buzzed around pop culture in 1999 when Joan Morgan coined the term (Morgan, 1999; Queen Latifah, 2017). Only through academia, has the term acquired legitimacy. Morgan’s book, *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: A Hip-Hop Feminist Breaks It Down* (1999), feels like spoken word poetry; yet, it lacks authenticity, especially for its time. Morgan relentlessly superficially complains about White people being a problem; and pauses occasionally to apologize. For example, she admits to attending a wealthy, mostly White, preparatory school.

Simultaneously, Sistah Souljah of Public Enemy penned *The Coldest Winter Ever* (1999). Although she is best known for encouraging Black people to murder White people during a Los Angeles riot, new copies of her book were passed around between White college students and cherished by hip hop feminists, most of whom were White females. Hip hop feminists have portrayed their contributions during the 1990s as having been avant garde and fearless; yet, at the time, many readers saw *The Coldest Winter Ever* as self-celebrating, but foggy, work akin to a screenplay for a Tupac Shakur or Coolio film (Sistah Souljah, 2000). It seemed to be a gentle treatment of true street life in integrated urban areas; and a promising look at how Black interpersonal and domestic relationships may actually be less damaging than White (e.g., Latino) relationships. The Black, female author may have believed that she was describing aggressive characters; and yet, many readers found the material to be a bit cheeky or schticky in comparison to their daily lives. The Black characters seemed to struggle less than White readers would have anticipated, and the characters were depicted as having greater networks than some White readers. White audiences failed to see the book’s insight, not because it was unrelatable, but because it depicted normal life. Nevertheless, Sistah Souljah’s invitation to share and open-up was refreshing and unusually inclusive, albeit overdue. For some readers, the invitation to experience normalcy and solidarity lit a fire and eradicated social and self-imposed barriers.

Sparks may have flown incalculably far from Sistah Souljah’s simple conflagration. For example, the female protagonist’s male sexual interest receives stiches in his rectum after being raped in prison (Erie v. Pap’s A.M., 2000; Sistah Souljah, 2000). A “stich” is reminiscent of Justice Sandra Day O’Connor’s opinion in *Erie v. Pap’s A.M.*, known as *Kandyland* (2000). In that case, an adult dance club, named similarly to a child’s board game “Candy Land,” argued that laws requiring performers minimally to cover their genitalia (e.g., wear G-strings) violated the First Amendment. “[E]ven if Erie’s public nudity ban has some minimal effect

on the erotic message by muting that portion of the expression that occurs when the last stitch is dropped, the dancers at Kandyland and other such establishments are free to perform wearing pasties and G-strings. Any effect on the overall expression is de minimis” (Erie v. Pap’s A.M., 2000, p. 294). Arguably, performers and the public were protected from professional requirements that may have sexually exploited them.

Hill’s work likely has permeated society to a greater extent than Sistah Souljah although mutual influence is evident. For example, Sistah Soulja, may have been “[i]nvigorated by the 1997 Million Woman March in Philadelphia that rapper Lauryn Hill referenced a year later in her critically acclaimed and commercially successful studio album *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*” (Durham, Cooper, & Morris, 2013, p. 721; Hill, 1998). *The Coldest Winter Ever* was “thought by many to be the inaugural text in hip-hop or street fiction” even though hip hop, comparable with sonnets, sonatas, operas, short stories, and other forms of creative expression, had already presented a forum and attracted racially, sexually, economically, and spiritually diverse audiences (Antony, 2010; Sista Souljah, 2000).

Hill’s group, Fugees, including Haitian Presidential candidate Wyclef Jean and Pras, denounces oppression of poor Black people. The trio calls attention to the premise that poor females are so oppressed that they are distinguished politically from poor people generally; and specifically, from poor males and children. Lyrical references to animals and their body parts (e.g., “chicken wings”) demonstrates “ghetto” mentalities that oppress women and the poor (Fugees, 1996). The group boasts of their experiences in the ghetto. They mock culture in an attempt to portray mating calls performed by the poor. Humans’ ritualization of poverty, including through sexual pomp, generates and reinforces oppression, resistance to mobilization, and reductionism.

Following Fugees’ “The Beast,” a parody skit mocking dating in the ghetto plays on *The Score* (Fugees, 1996). Two customers enter a Chinese restaurant. A sitar and chimes waft over the sound of two presumably African American, young men and a middle-age, male, Asian immigrant, who speaks with an accent. One customer says to his friend, “Yo, let’s go to this next Chinese-Muslim joint; and get some shrimp fried rice and make Salah at the same time” (Fugees, 1996). The Chinese restaurateur hums and sings a Michael Jackson tune. ““You are not alone. I am here with you”” (Jackson, 1995; Fugees, 1996).

Customer: A! Yo! A! Yo! Chang Wang, wassup?...

Customer: Yo, can we get somethin’ to eat, Man?

Customer: Chink, aight?...

Restaurant Guy: Okay, then. Fine. You order.

Customer: Lemme get, um, lemme get two of them beef fried rices over there. Lemme get a half a chicken wing. Don't put that little retarded leg in it, cuz. Cut that off.... (Fugees, 1996)

A chicken wing is a sidepiece. She represents the paramour and the main affection. The customers say, "Don't put no onions in my white rice. Yo, yo, yo, yo, yo, yo. I need four chicken wings fried hard and shit" (Fugees, 1996). "Fried hard" means feeling spent from excessive crack cocaine use (Fugees, 1996). "Hard" also refers to turgidity; and "shit" references anal sex with a man (Fugees, 1996).

Restaurant Guy asks, "What's this" (Fugees, 1996)? "What" signifies revulsion (Fugees, 1996). His side piece is better cared for than the customers. The customer insists, "I'm not finished. I'm not finished" (Fugees, 1996). Restaurant Guy interjects, "Hold on? What's this" (Fugees, 1996)? One of the customers confronts him. "What the fuck is you talking about" (Fugees, 1996)? He views the customers' shared side piece as a sex toy, like a "gadget;" merely a "pop[ped] cooch[y];" and a way to "burn...calories" (Fugees, 1996). "Oppression" is "subliminal" (Fugees, 1996). The customers are "trained" to "beef" in vain (Fugees, 1996).

Restaurant Guy coerces them. "The two of you? At once? Okay, then. You want beef (Fugees, 1996)? The implication is an orgy and their homosexuality, not his interest in their arrangement. Customer says, "No, no, no. We want beef to eat. We ain't got no beef" (Fugees, 1996). His consort follows-up. "I want four chicken wings fried hard, nigga. What the fuck is you talking 'bout" (Fugees, 1996)? This statement portrays the plateau. They are ready to fight. Previous statements were mere puffing. Now they will brandish their incisive nails. These gentlemen are piqued.

Restaurant Guy replies, "Alright, I'll kick your monkey asses my fucking self" (Fugees, 1996). This statement is a derogatory slur that insinuates that the customers are not, who they appear to be. They are lower. It is speciesist, racist, homophobic, queerphobic, and antithetical to sportsmanlike mating rituals. The proprietor's female is not pleased. She is demoralized by his debased resolve. He, on the other hand, feels charged. She has fled the ethos; and he is free to resolve the gentlemen's attitudes and adjust them as he sees fit. Fitness is at issue in his mind. He is Darwinian. They are egocentric and stand for it instead of walking out because of the possibility that he may change his opinion and honor them. They have miscalculated his aggression and her presence; and, therefore will suffer. He is unworried about their suffering because in his mind, he will advance his position by winning the affection of his lady and the interest of their others, whoever they may be, including those side pieces

in which he was originally not interested. However, if it should turn out that they are a lower form of datable beings, then he will rescind his interest post haste. The males will be aggrieved and angered; and therefore, he will win again, and it will have cost him nothing to fight them for the side pieces.

The customers fight. “Whoa! Whoa! What are you coming over the counter for? You better watch—The nigga—! Yo! Hold up” (Fugees, 1996)! “Hold up” insinuates that Black men rob restaurants (Fugees, 1996). They are trying to scare him. They do not sense his fear and are trying to escalate to achieve dominance and perspective on the horizon. Restaurant Guy exclaims, “You think I open a restaurant in the middle of the ‘hood and don’t know what’s going on” (Fugees, 1996)? Customer refers to him as “nigga,” saying “I’ll fuck” (Fugees, 1996). Restaurant Guy snaps, “I fucking represent” (Fugees, 1996)! Customer screams, “I’ll fuck you the fuck up” (Fugees, 1996)! “Fuck up” means to “fuck” “hard” (Fugees, 1996).

Restaurant Guy argues, “I will avenge my brothers by representing and whooping your ass. Word is bond” (Fugees, 1996). “Whooping” “ass” is a crane (Fugees, 1996). Like the Karate Kid, he is tough and immovable (Macchio, 1984; The Cure, 1980).

Customer: Nigga, this ain’t Channel Five. Nigga, somebody gonna die, for real.

Restaurant Guy: Okay, then. I must show you Flying Fist of Judah.

Customer: You ain’t gonna show me shit....

Customer: I’m gonna show you these nuts in your mouth.

Restaurant Guy: You and you!

Customer: Nigga’s straight from Mortal Kombat.

Restaurant Guy: You’re just talking. Obviously the two of you are just bitch ass niggers, ha! (Fugees, 1996)

“Nigger[.]” means an inferior (Fugees, 1996). It can mean any race and is unspecific. Customer profanely urges, “Nigger, well then do something. You talkin’ some bullshit” (Fugees, 1996).

“Nigga” is a term used to defuse the situation (Fugees, 1996). It is playful and an insincere word choice intended to deescalate intensity. It implies that any of the parties could be a friend, the customer, or the owner, who is the aggressor. It is an invitation to deal, but anticipated to be turned-down. Customer asks, “So what’s up, so what’s up, nigga? Wassup, punk ass. I ain’t no bitch nigga” (Fugees, 1996). “What’s up?” is a question about what is left (Fugees, 1996). Which god can reduce the

stress and eliminate the confrontation? Who will aid them during this great war?

Restaurant Guy finishes. "Alright, this is a Chinese restaurant, but like Burger King, have it your way" (Fugees, 1996). He strikes them each several times. Customer shouts, "Ah! This nigga hea" (Fugees, 1996). Here, use of the term "nigga" implies rescission, an attempt to recoil and supplicate for forgiveness. Customer finalizes the blow. "The wrong way" (Fugees, 1996).

An analysis of "The Beast" easily yields a classic feminist observation (Fugees, 1996). Hill and her band are upset on behalf of poor women, who are treated as animals. They are "conflict[ed]" because rhetoric informs them that "the beast" is a terrible oppressor; yet, from their observations they can find no harm in animals, only in humans (Fugees, 1996). Therefore, the song is a "conflict[ed]" "dribble" of analogies that leaves women powerless, albeit egotistically well-attended, by the Fugees' patronization of other poor people, including "kid[s]" (Fugees, 1996).

The chorus is "Warn the town the beast is loose," perhaps alluding to the dangers of promiscuous women (Fugees, 1996). Hill raps the first verse. "Conflicts with night sticks, illegal sales [, and]...handpicked lunatics, keep poli-trick-cians rich. Heretics push narcotics amidst...frisks. Cool cliques throw bricks" (Fugees, 1996). "Bricks" may refer to riots, robberies, or vandalism; and may be a term for "drugs" (Fugees, 1996). She says, "Private dick sell hits, like porno flicks do chicks. The six six six cut W.I.C. like Newt Gingrich sucks dick" (Fugees, 1996). W.I.C. is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). To "cut" means to reduce in potency; for example, to cut cocaine with baking soda. It also means to issue (e.g., cut a check); and in some contexts, to remove (e.g., cut-off). Depending on a listener's political leanings, the song appears to say that government handouts are evil; or, those, who remove government subsidies from the hands of the people, are the true henchmen.

Hill and Jean reportedly endured a long-term romance. The content of his raps seldom hints at any personal suffering, although hers are rife with angst (Fugees, 1996). Jean raps, "Meanwhile the government brings Star Wars....C-o-p has an [all-points bulletin] A.P.B. out on Chewbacca. Mr. Mayor, can I say something (Fugees, 1996)? He seems to say, "Anna, yesterday in Central Park they got the jogger" (Fugees, 1996). Anna Lewis symbolizes poor women. She was the Vice President for Public Policy at the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Director of Communications for Bill Clinton's presidential campaign in 1995 and 1996. She served as the administration's Director of Communications

when *The Score* was popularized (Fugees, 1996). Wyclef wants to “say something” either for her, to her, or on her behalf or the president’s behalf. She also served in communications for Hillary Rodham-Clinton’s senate and presidential campaigns between 2004 and 2008. The song likely refers to New York City Mayor David Dinkins, who served from 1990 to 1993. Dinkins is the only African American to have served as Mayor of New York City. No women have ever served as Mayor. Mayor Rudy Giuliani followed Dinkins. He is blamed for eliminating the visible homeless population from the streets of New York, some say with the use of mafia methods, such as culling and one-way transportation. Like the prolonged ordeal of the Central Park jogger case, “9/11” combusted into a routine world affair involving many nations and casualties while Giuliani was in office. It had the effect of overshadowing domestic problems, such as poor women in the ghetto having babies, who were raised to be gang members and drug dealers because they could not afford airplane tickets to get to the nearest Army base or recruitment center to enlist and serve in a profitable war. Heroically, Giuliani diverted the problems of New York City from a local-level to international stardom with the help of Rodham-Clinton, who was in service at the time as Senator. “Let’s get the confusion straight in ghetto Gotham—the man behind the mask you thought was Batman is Bill Clinton, who soon retire. The roof is on fire. Connie Chung brung the bomb as it come from Oklahoma. Things are getting serious, Kumbaya; on a mountain Satan offered me Manhattan. Help me Zsa Zsa” (Fugees, 1996). Zsa Zsa Gabor allegedly struck a police officer and was issued celebrity justice (Cusack, 2013). Her husband was adopted as an adult by a princess; and later adopted dozens of adult males for millions of dollars so that they could inherit royal titles. Jean may refer to Jah, a deity honored in numerous religious communities, including Rastafarianism (i.e., “Jah Jah”), Christianity (i.e., Jehovah), and Judaism (i.e., Yahweh).

Jean’s political tirade appears to have sexual undertones in his description of “search[es],” “friction,” “seeds,” a “seat,” “Mother Mary,” and “loli” pops (Fugees, 1996). “You can’t search me without probable cause or that proper ammunition...reasonable suspicion...I bring friction to your whole jurisdiction. You planted seeds in my seat when I wasn’t looking...You ask me for my license, registration: ‘Where the fuck do I work? What the fuck is my occupation?’ Well I’m an [Master of Ceremonies] M.C. I’m down with the Fugees. Mother Mary caught a flashback like Rodney [King]. Now the cops got Lolly” (Fugees, 1996). Lolly is a nickname for Lauryn Hill.

Hill retorts to Jean’s stream of consciousness that portrays her being beaten like King following his declaration that he is “down” with her

(Fugees, 1996). “The subconscious psychology that you use against me, if I lose control will send me to the penitentiary, such as Alcatraz; or shot up like Al-Hajj Malik Shabazz. High class get bypassed while my ass gets harassed” (Fugees, 1996). Al-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, known as Malcom X, was married to Betty Shabazz, who Hill references in other songs. The prominent figurehead became an iconic single mother of six African American children after her husband was shot and killed. “The fuzz treat broads like they manhood never was; and if you too powerful, you get bugged like Peter Tosh and Marley was....My word does nothing against the feds, so my eyes stay red as I chase crazy bald heads” (Fugees, 1996). “Broads” is loosely pronounced to sound like “bruhs”/ “bros” (Fugees, 1996). The term “fuzz” calls attention to afros in contrast to “bald heads” (i.e., skinheads) (Fugees, 1996). Hill suggests that when members of the Black community unify, they are preferable to the establishment over poor, White males. An intoxicated and weary (i.e., red-eyed), Redneck-hating, African American becomes an extension of the law to fight a race war. Bald eagles symbolize the federal government. Eagles enforce and exhibit motherly concern.

Jean plays into her perspective by claiming that Black females pursue Black males for status over poor, White males (Fugees, 1996). “The chase is on I feel like the bad guy...Looked in my rearview mirror, police was getting closer. Heard a roar in the sky...my inner conscience says throw your handkerchief and surrender. But to who? The Star-Spangled Banner: say can’t you see cops more crooked than we, by the dawn, early night, robbin’ niggas for keys. Easy, low-key, crooked military. Pay taxes up my ass, but they still harass me” (Fugees, 1996). In this verse, his “inner conscience says” that he is “harass[ed]” (Fugees, 1996). Officers unjustly rob “niggas” for their car “keys,” house “keys,” drug kilos, and “keys to the kingdom” (e.g., women and “ass”) (Fugees, 1996; Hurston, 1937).

After Jean’s strong reply, Pras concludes the bout. “The streets of corruption got me bustin’ and cussin’ in the concrete jungle. Thugs being dribbled, like that tall kid Mutombo. Hand over Hannibal, suitable to be a fugitive like Dr. Kimble” (Fugees, 1996). The term “bust” refers to ejaculation, insemination, breasts, hard work, and arrests. Jean interrupts with a question. “Hey, yo, should I slow down” (Fugees, 1996)? Pras replies. “Nah kid, go faster. Just ‘cuz they got a badge, they could still be impostors. Probable cause got flaws like dirty draws. Meet me at the corna’ sto’ so we can start the street wars” (Fugees, 1996). The corner store is symbolized by the “Chinese-Muslim joint” in the following parody (Fugees, 1996).

Emblematic dissonance is a major reverberation in 1990s music. Counting Crows' opus "Murder of One" refers to a group of crows, who inhabit a single individual. He or she may account for many aspects of the human soul. This concept is similar to contemplations about race and gender expressed by Fugees (1996). "One for sorrow, two for joy, three for girls, and four for boys" (Counting Crows, 1993). The symbols are easier to digest when they conflate heroes, winners, losers, and villains. Perspective may be alternated by performers to enhance their likability and consolidate allies. This tactic is widely recognized in politics; and therefore, is recognizable to audience members wishing to participate. For example, the Kennedy brothers' love triangle with Marilyn Monroe played each party as a winner and hero, even though they eventually lost their lives, and to some extent, legacies. Their positive power may be metaphorized as being similar to a shadow (e.g., Jungian psychology). Bobby would be a little brown bird. His friends turned on Jack for protecting Monroe. In a saga defined by paranoia, Jack would envision that Bobby's friends attracted additional shooters to the grassy knoll. Birds, Jack may imagine in a power grab, may attempt to harm his progress, career, and possessions because he protected even just one worm, the slinky Monroe. Her "Happy Birthday" tune is evidence of her wormhood. A worm may humiliate birds, and try to destroy waterlogging. Some birds may be more hopped-up on their utter and unassuaged desire to kill worms; and therefore, make mistakes. It may result in their despair when they feel they cannot conquer a worm—as if looking into the stomach of the worm through her mouth; and yet, knowing that one day she potentially could fry to death (e.g., on a sidewalk). Spalax Jack was a subterranean buzzard, who kept gnawing on, clawing at, and eating Monroe until she dropped dead of a heart attack. Contrasting with "Lady Bird" Johnson, she seemed weak to Jack, but he was incorrect. Lady Bird was so nicknamed because she was the president's wife. Her husband, Lyndon Johnson, once said that he did not prowl Washington D.C., but he was known to roll-over onto Lady Bird in the White House. Monroe's legacy outshone his wife and Johnson's wife. Worms do birds a solid favor by consuming their bodies postmortem. None of the animals accurately assessed the value or detriment of a sexual relationship or affairs (Anderson, 1921; Stevens, 1922). Murky waters prevented them from properly calculating retribution and attraction, unlike seagulls, who capably may detect animals far below the surface.

Monroe, like Shanna Moakler, December 2001 *Playboy* Playmate of the month was a sexual icon, whose career came to represent disruption and failure. Moakler married Blink-182 drummer, Travis Barker, following

a career in pageants. After briefly portraying herself as a bad girl media darling, she and Barker engaged in a litigious and classless exhibition of sour grapes. Barker, a reef shark, devoured Moakler, a turkey, as she gobbled press and exposure. Their relationship is like chicken, a game reminiscent of the Cuban Missile Crisis, which concludes when the first party blinks and turns around.

Rap artist Busta Rhymes mixed models, the word “chicken,” animal imagery, and sex in his video (Ydaparazitu, 2009). The term “chicken” as a derogatory reference to women, rather than just a “coward,” began to popularize in the late 1990s with rap music. The video is Eddie Murphy’s (1988) *Coming to America*. The video crosses species and gender boundaries (Ydaparazitu, 2009). He and nude dancers wear animal skins, feathers, and hide prints. Busta Rhymes wears face and body makeup. He wears a ponytail of long dreadlocks, while a scantily garbed seductress, Alek Wek, wriggles under her shaved head (Deng, 2013). During his era, she represented unusual beauty; but by today’s standards, she is common. Therefore, the video also breaches aesthetic maxims; it is universal, and yet, not timeless. The song’s lyrics fanaticize about hypermasculinity, such as explosive ejaculation and success, weapons, homoerotic discipline, fighting, and having sex with attractive women. Women exhaustedly are described pejoratively in a series of double and triple *entendres* and slang suggesting that he views her homoerotically with a graphic focus on anal sex and referentially through the projected perception of his male cohort (e.g., gang). “Fuck that, look at shorty, she a little cutie, yo. The way she shake it make me wanna get all in the booty, yo. Top mistresses and banging bitches in videos. Wylin with my freak like we up in the freak shows. Hit you with the shit make you feel it all in your toes” (Ydaparazitu, 2009). His ultimate vision of a female partner is a woman, who participates in a harem or is a prostitute. She has sex with her colleagues or with women appearing in videos (e.g., music videos, pornography, and “freak shows”) (Ydaparazitu, 2009). When he arouses her, he “hit[s]” her; yet, he does not seduce her (Ydaparazitu, 2009). “Yo, it’s funny how all the chickens be always serving us. All up in between they ass where they wanna carry us. Hit ya’ good, then I hit ‘em off with the alias. Various chickens they wanna marry us” (Ydaparazitu, 2009). “To serve” means punitively cruelly to stroke one’s hand across the back of another person’s neck as to tether, pull, or burn the hair and skin. It also refers to service of process meaning seeking child support payments; and to act as a servant. The women are indebted to the males (e.g., serve time). They serve their purpose. The term “funny” is a homosexual inside joke about closeting and gender animus (Ydaparazitu, 2009). It refers to the

comedy of errors and female humiliation; and, is a word similar to “gay.” “Chickens” means “bird status” (i.e., on welfare), cowardly, contained, mass produced, scrumptious and feastable, and eager for cocks, an allusion to penises and pageantry that pits shave, tanned, and pampered prizefighters against each other (Michelangelo, 1504). “All up in between” describes liminal sexuality that does not quite rise to bisexuality because it involves closeted sex, group sex, and all male erections (Ydaparazitu, 2009). Ergo, they are in “they ass where they wanna carry us,” like a disease (e.g., HIV and syphilis) (Ydaparazitu, 2009). Being in the “ass” means that the man has the right to abort, not the female with her female reproductive organs. The “ass” symbolizes anal sex, which is homoerotic. An allusion to Christ and Madonna, Busta Rhymes wants to return to his mother’s womb. He does not want to procreate with a woman to create an illusion; but, wants to satisfy self-centered fetishization of himself and his male counterparts. Females “carry” them meaning “support” them financially, emotionally, professionally, and socially. It refers to gestation. This is why their pursuit of child support payments is so “funny.” They use aliases to have causal sex with undesirable women (i.e., “chickens”), and then depart without giving them any contact information. They leave them pregnant and begging; and yet, capable of financing their dreams (e.g., “banging bitches” meaning “female dogs”) (Ydaparazitu, 2009). “Various” women, an assorted sundry of women, Busta Rhymes fanaticizes, want to “marry us,” meaning him and his closeted homosexual partner (Ydaparazitu, 2009). He believes that they want to weigh them down with children and force them to commit. Therefore, there are several types of women: “chickens” to mock; “bitches” to turn out; “short[ies],” teens sexually to admire; and “freak[s],” the sexually exploited population, whether male, female, or both (Morrissey, 2013; Ydaparazitu, 2009).

Le Coq d’Or

Le Coq d’Or is an opera about “change” (Counting Crows, 1993; Documentaire, 2017). The opera depicts the importance of astrology. Astrology is not a recognized science or religion. For example, Anton LaVey of the Church of Satan said, “Astrology has become a religion to many, as it is a dogma but has much room for individual interpretation. I feel that any validity in astrology must be chalked up to auto-suggestibility on the part of the followers” (Nadramia, n.d.). “Astrology is becoming increasingly fashionable” (Nadramia, n.d.). “I am” “perhaps, one of the few actively involved in the occult who does not put much stock in astrology. I feel that it is only another form of arbitrary divination, and is