

I have faced significant inner turmoil in striking a balance
between my whiteness, and my womaness.
My body though a woman, with her nuances and tribulations
Is nonetheless a historic multitude of pillages, colonization
It is hard work: to unlearn and decolonize the tethers of a brain warped and twisted and taught
that I am to be treated as a superior, or at the very least - to claim a blindness to color
And I am resisting a perpetual pressure of indulgence and fetishization and appropriation
To not repeat the mistakes of colonizers before me
To not assume that my experience with assault is not the only experience
And I wonder how much this is tied in to whiteness wanting to steal all of the good parts of being
black without the systemic oppression
Or how much this is tied to misogyny creeping under my door frame
Making me pinch and prod at a frame i am supposed to hate
And I am reminded - once again - that it is much easier to talk about your oppression,
the ways in which i've suffered from a cultural state of mind entitled 'patriarchy'
As opposed to the opposition white people have instilled within and into me
That my blue eyes make me angelic and beautiful
And worthy of protection
It is so much harder to talk about the identities in which you are privileged
But I can stand up here with fringe bangs and plaid and leather and ripped jeans
And I look punk and deviant and radical by the most palatable means -
I can wear all the hoodies I want
and not worry that my comfy clothes will serve me a death sentence -
I can declare 'free the nipple' knash and scarl my teeth,
And be certain there will be people who defend me.
I can be as queer and as womanly as I want,
that will never undo the whiteness and the endless perceiving and grace it will grant me.

In Richard Wright's *Native Son*,
a young black Bigger Thomas kills two young women.
Their deaths are both equally unfair and tragic, but observe a key difference:
The black, mutilated, raped body is used as a piece of evidence in convicting a black man of
raping and killing a white girl.
I'm not saying trauma experienced by white woman is any less significant
But my other sisters will not have access to the same grace and forgiveness.

The world taught me
When Bigger Thomas kills Mary Dalton,
That I am meant to deeply fear black men.
That they cannot be gentle, or forgiven.
Because when we hate each other and fear each other
it is so much easier to keep us where we are
The writers of our constitution wrote white women and black men as all one in the same:
we are all slaves of our masters.
Notice - they did not even include black women.

We are to be held under a tight thumb
Only white women are the ones holding that thumb in place,
53% percent.
demanding everyone constrained to stay put along with us and below us.

How deeply we must feel misogyny
53% percent.

when we take a man hanging out of the side of a car as a compliment
and trade feminist prose for Lululemon and Acai bowls.

An empowered nude selfie and a cold Pepsi can has no place in contrived feminism when black
women and black trans people literally die at the hand of sexism

love your body, whatever, and all of its dripping glitter and pouted lips and angles to appease
Love your body, sure, but do not leave the rest of our sisters dying for the sake of your
revolution.

Buying mugs from forever 21 that say 'girl power' does not bring back the lives of Trayvon
Martin or Eric Garner or Mike Brown.

Kate Spade iphone cases that donate 10% to breast cancer research does not erase the fact that
53% percent of white women voted to put a sexual predator in the White House.

A commercial where a woman donning a hijab and another rips off a blonde wig does not
demilitarize our country's police force.

Ask yourself - who are your people?

Whose deaths anger you to your core -

enough to dismay and revolt and scream and burn every American flag within reach?

White women: who are our people?

how could we have let this happen?

53% percent of us voted for further oppression, and even if we did not vote for that monster -

If we did not shoot an innocent 15 year old driving home with his friends -

If we did not scream hate speech at a passing saint Mary's professor -

what are we going to do about it?