

Facebook © 2014

English (UK) · Privacy · Terms · Cookies ·

More



Magpie Corvid

Yesterday at 12:09 via Mobile · Edited ·

I wish there were hot bdsm pics in the daily fail every day, and that vile racist incidents were not their occasion. I loooooooooove using people as furniture!

Also, Mrs Abramovich looks so comfortable there. I wonder if she is a domme?

4 people like this.



Sadie Batz I blocked the fail with kittens ;)

Yesterday at 12:10 · 1



Magpie Corvid Comrade Batz, I am calling you on the carpet soon ;)

Yesterday at 13:08



Louise Whittle Oh but Magpie look at this tea and kittens site. After three, one-two-three...

Awwwwww

<http://www.teaandkittens.co.uk/>

Tea and Kittens

www.teaandkittens.co.uk

Tea and kittens. Tea. Kittens. What more do you want?

Yesterday at 13:11 · 1



Sadie Batz That's what appears when I try and visit a DM link ;)

Yesterday at 13:17 · 2



Sadie Batz and on the carpet doing what?

Yesterday at 13:20 · 1



Ellen Tansey Probably not a domme, probably just a massive racist.

Yesterday at 16:34 · 8



Shanice Octavia McBean are you saying you found that picture hot...?

Yesterday at 16:39



Magpie Corvid Saw the pic, thought it was hot, then saw the context, and was disgusted.

Yesterday at 16:40



Shanice Octavia McBean what do you mean by context? the context of the photo or the context of racism in general? I'd have assumed in a racist society, any racialised use of black bodies in any kind of play/representation of play is inherently problematic...?

Yesterday at 16:44 · 10



Maggie Corvid Very good question Shanice - The context of the photo, used in an unrelated article about a woman at the pinnacle of Russian oligarchy, released on MLK day, is disgusting. Race play is a very controversial topic - Mollena (<http://www.mollena.com/>) is a fantastic resource on race play. Like her, I think race play can sometimes be OK in a consensual setting. Race play is not a fetish interest of mine, but human furniture and other humiliation and objectification play most definitely is. :) nb: Mollena's blog is SO unsafe for work :)



The Perverted Negress

www.mollena.com

it ain't just the hair that's kinky

Yesterday at 16:52 · Edited · 1



Shanice Octavia McBean race play is okay when it's people of colour dominating and subverting whiteness. anything other than that is racist. our sexuality is not constructed and does not play out in a vacuum.

Yesterday at 17:04 · 5



Maggie Corvid So do you mean that Mollena, who is black and does race play as a bottom, shouldn't?

Yesterday at 17:06



Shanice Octavia McBean she should do what she likes in her own bedroom and with her own vagina, but it's still racist.

Yesterday at 17:06



Magpie Corvid She's written some excellent stuff addressing that very question.

Yesterday at 17:46



Shanice Octavia McBean That's cool but in a racist society racism is racism whether it's whipped, consensual and makes you come. I don't fathom how a revolutionary could seriously argue otherwise. Material reality doesn't stop existing, not even when your endorphins are running, and certainly not because a black woman who plays bottom says so.

Yesterday at 18:01 · 2



Magpie Corvid In a game space we, the players, create the rules. That can be revolutionary in itself, or just hot. Or both :)

Yesterday at 18:04



Kae Smith Bdsm never gets a good write up in the press, only ever negative, fairly disgusting it's like that.

Yesterday at 18:29



Rozza Alice I find this fascinating Shanice. Forgive me if I've misunderstood, and please do correct me, but are you saying that revolutionary socialists should condemn race play unless it is the BME person in the position of dominance? That we should tell BME women who like being sub in race play that their desires are racist against themselves? If so, do you think this applies to all politically uncomfortable kinks? What about women who have rape fantasies and act them out consensually with their partners?

Yesterday at 18:51 · 4



Shanice Octavia McBean The nuance is we shouldn't tell anyone how to have consensual sex. But I'm sorry it's still racist. I'd say the exact same thing about rape fantasies; it reflects and probably reinforces sexism. It's sexist. But it's your body. If it's consensual I can't tell you what to do. But for people to turn around and pretend raceplay is not racist is outrageous, I'm sorry.

23 hours ago · 16



Shanice Octavia McBean You've got a white man in that photo above who gets off on chaining a black woman round the throat, and a black woman who gets off on white domination. These scenarios only make sense in a racist society and it's literally grating for serious materialists to pretend you can make up your own rules and it's all okay; so long as your naked and say yes reality disappears. No, not really. I think we can agree people can have consensual sex how they want without abstaining and pretending these ways of playing are unproblematic.

23 hours ago · 19



Magpie Corvid These scenarios may have sprung from the earth of a racist society, and part of why they resonate may be because of players' experiences in a racist society. That doesn't make them racist. How does this activity in a game space make racism happen? Is telling a black race player their fetish is racist progressive? What should he or she do with this information?

23 hours ago



Shanice Octavia McBean Yeah, fuck this. Literally cba.

23 hours ago · 1



Shanice Octavia McBean Maybe when I also find this magic button where you can turn oppression off in the bedroom, I'll understand.

23 hours ago · 9



Magpie Corvid Well, I was interested in this discussion, and was engaging in a comradely fashion. Is this what's going to happen when we disagree? :(

23 hours ago



Magpie Corvid The magic button is called negotiation and consent.

23 hours ago



Shanice Octavia McBean Nah it's gonna happen when you pretend racism switches on and off at your consent.

23 hours ago · 3



×

Roza Alice What you say is nuance seems to me to be a contradiction. What you seem to be saying is that race play is a) racist b) something we, as anti-racists and revolutionaries ought not to intervene in. And also that acting out rape fantasies is a) sexist b) something that we, as anti-sexists and revolutionaries ought not to intervene in. Why? If someone is being oppressed either on the axis of gender or race, or both, why would we not intervene?

Does this apply to every situation in which a woman is occupying the position of sub? Is it inherently reactionary for a woman to like to be dominated, and if so, what is she supposed to do with that information? Should she be ashamed of her desire to be dominated? Should she keep it secret? Should she pretend instead that she wants to dominate, because that's politically better?

I'm really not attempting to be provocative, I'm just not sure where this position takes you to.

23 hours ago · 2



×

Hazel Croft I totally agree with Shanice on this, and I think the same applies to rape fantasies. You cannot understand rape fantasies without understanding the sexist context in which they are embedded and constructed; that is not to condemn those that have rape fantasies or want to act them out; but you cannot pretend that they are unproblematic and it's all just a game, or that somehow our fantasies are divorced from social context and the gendered structures of society

23 hours ago · 10



×

Roza Alice Hazel, I don't actually disagree with you. Of *course* these things come from the fucked up society we live in. Of *course* they are completely embedded with reactionary bullshit, and of *course* fantasies aren't divorced from society (where else would they come from?) but to assert that they are *sexist*, not just problematic, or uncomfortable for those who don't share them, or complex and contradictory, I don't see how you can hold that position and yet not condemn them, and argue against them. Either they're sexist/racist, and we should call them out as such, and argue with people that they should not be doing that, because it's sexist/racist and people should not do sexist/racist things, or they're not, and we shouldn't.

I just don't see how I can say that something is both racist/sexist and also at the same time completely none of my business.

23 hours ago · 1



Ellen Tansey Rozza is there necessarily an imperative for revolutionaries to intervene in personal sexist or racist choices? For example, the cosmetics industry is hugely sexist and racist, but no one would advocate for preventing, or worse shaming, women for buying and wearing make up. It's not necessarily expedient or effective to intervene in certain oppressive behaviors, nor does it target the cause of the oppressive behavior/choices. Rather than intervening or shaming women for holding fantasies that re-enact sexism, as revolutionaries we ought to interrogate where those fantasies come from. Shanice put it perfectly in saying that our sexuality isn't constructed in a vacuum and surely we can recognise the oppressive forces that shape it without therefore having to intervene in anyone's sex lives?

23 hours ago · 12



Arnie Hill I don't actually think I completely agree that race play is ok if whiteness is being subverted. 1) Its definitely not, in a black male/-white/black female paradigm (This makes me feel uneasy), 2) it plays into rape fantasies AND stereotypes of black males (as does this). 3) mimics male sexual domination of the two points above. Not sure what I think, Shanice?

23 hours ago · 3



Rozza Alice In answer to your first question, yes. absolutely we should intervene when someone is being sexist or racist.

the cosmetics industry is hugely sexist and racist, yes, but the *act of buying cosmetics* is not. why would we prevent a woman from buying make-up? who is she oppressing?

But in these scenarios, Shanice is asserting that there is racism/sexism going on. Someone is being racist by dominating this BME sub. Someone is being sexist by acting out a rape fantasy with this woman who has a rape fantasy.

Of course we can *recognise the oppressive forces that shape* something. Of course race play is a product of racist society. Of course rape fantasy is a product of sexist society. (again, where else would these things have come from?) But to say that something, i.e., someone's desire *was shaped

by* a racist and sexist society is different than saying that someone is *being racist/sexist* in their desires and the actions they do as a consequence.

23 hours ago · 2



Shanice Octavia McBean Arnie I think you're right actually, didnt take into account how black masculinity would play into this.

23 hours ago · 1



Kae Smith Sorry, just wanted to come in slightly: it's men, not 'males', anatomy and gender are two different things.

23 hours ago · 2



Shanice Octavia McBean Can someone please explain how a white man chaining a black woman by the throat, expressly choosing to do so with her because she's black, is not sexist or racist just because she consents? I'm finding this 'discussion' infuriating, absurd and insulting because people seem to not be arguing concrete politics based on reality but instead abstract logic ("what you're saying is a contradiction" - well sure, life is full of them) and some strange -reverse moralism ("will you seriously tell BME women xyz about abc" well yes I would if what she was doing is racist). Concretely, why is this scenario not racist?

22 hours ago · Edited · 4



Ellen Tansey Perhaps I could have worded that better, of course when someone is actively being racist or sexist we should intervene. When someone makes a personal choice that exists of a consequence of sexism, there isn't necessarily an imperative to intervene, is a better way to explain what I meant.

But if we're in agreement that rape fantasies and race play exist as a consequence of the way race and gender exists in society, then it is re-enacting that oppression? To suggest that that oppression switches off just because the re-enacting of it on that particular occasion is consensual seems absurd?

23 hours ago



Roza Alice I'll make you a deal Shanice, I'll answer your questions if you answer mine.

22 hours ago



Shanice Octavia McBean I'll answer your question you explain how sexual consent wishes entire material structures of oppression away. This is a joke.

22 hours ago



Magpie Corvid It is actually wonderful that people can build a little space together where they make the rules, and enter it. :)

22 hours ago



Roza Alice This scenario, is, of course, a product of racism and sexism. It reflects that these two individuals have been socialised in a racist and sexist society. It reflects racism and sexism. It is complex and contradictory, like most of sexuality. I'm not denying any of that. Nor am I claiming that any of this goes away in the mean time, or that there is a switch which turns off oppression.

But why does the fact that something is related to, imbricated with, caused by racism/sexism lead you to conclude that it is **in itself** an act of racism/sexism?

That the woman gets her kicks by doing race play, is of course caused by her existence in a racist

society, but why does that mean it is actually racist for her to act this out, with another consenting adult?

Why does consent change it? Well, if a man touches my arse without my consent, that's sexual assault and incredibly sexist. If he does so because I want him to, it isn't.

Likewise with violence. If a guy hit me in the face, that's assault, and if he did so because I was a woman, it's sexist. If I ask him to because that's what I desire, then it isn't.

So, to sum up: consent has normative power in these situations, everybody exists in a fucked up society that shapes what their fantasies are, and people don't decide their desires.

22 hours ago · 1



×

Hazel Croft "It is actually wonderful that people can build a little space together where they make the rules, and enter it." - but they are not really making the rules are they? Our fantasies are formed, shaped and constructed by the sexist and racist structures of society, and our fantasies may be complex but you cannot just declare yourself free from the way that our most seemingly private and intimate feelings and desires are shaped by the oppressive structures of society. Why do women have rape fantasies? You can't just say that it's all OK because it's consensual. We 'consent' to a whole load of oppressive shit. We even sometimes actively desire to face a whole load of oppressive shit; it doesn't make it any less oppressive. And in answer to Rosie... I wouldn't say a woman who has rape fantasies is being a sexist, but I would say that such fantasies and the acting out of such fantasies are structured by the ways that sexism affects the way we relate to people, our psychology, etc, and are a re-enactment of that oppression

22 hours ago · 17



×

Richard Seymour "I would say that such fantasies and the acting out of such fantasies are structured by the ways that sexism affects the way we relate to people, our psychology, etc, and are a re-enactment of that oppression".

I have to say, watching this conversation, I have seen Rozza repeatedly make the point that there is a huge distinction between saying something **is** racist/sexist, and saying something is **structured by** racism/sexism. And so, as far as I can tell, you're not really disagreeing with her.

22 hours ago · 2



Arnie Hill 'That the woman gets her kicks by doing race play, is of course caused by her existence in a racist society, but why does that mean it is actually racist for her to act this out, with another consenting adult?'

If we take the rationale behind this argument, the underlying presumption is that this individual is not a contributor to the way in which that racist society came to exist, either historically or contemporary contexts. It also implies that in no way shape or form can the conditioning from this racist (and sexist) society effect the psychology of either either persons in this situation, yet there is a desire as you said, and if there is consent

why is it racist?

It's still racist even with consent, all it is, is acting out a play scenario based on race (and or sex). You'd be acting out, or less so 'acting' but participating and reinforcing those very racist structures and conditionings that you have a desire for, as shanice said, everything is full of contradictions, as is what I see people arguing.

In another case, it wouldn't be not anti-semitic to act out a nazi scenario with a person from a jewish background, even with consent. It is anti-semitic.

Have a look at discourse on the histories and construction of sexualised black bodies, both men and women, it could be argued that this has origins in the slave plantation structure, especially in the discourse around the sexualisation and rape of black women/bodies. This is important for understanding historical and structural mechanisms of socially dominant groups i.e. male supremacy, class domination.

Re, im not for moralizing,
if its racist, say its a racist desire - it looks like that to me,
If it was sexist, I would say it was a sexist desire, it is looked like that to me.

Denying the contradictions in desire, or just in general precludes that revolutionaries can consciously identify the problematised nature of this, and get around it through consciousness recognising it on both sides.

Which is the same as saying 'Im aware this is sext abc, but im aware of it, Im aware this is racist abc, but im aware of it'.

Revolutionaries, or any multiplicative oppressed group, conscious or not, can extrapolate themselves out of the social reality that surrounds themselves, Not even in the bedroom!

On that topic: Audre Lorde, Leslie McCall, Patricia Collins.

Also look up black intersectional feminist's and collectives who argued against the liberal feminist movements, Seneca Falls Movement and National Organisation For Women (NOW).

22 hours ago · Edited · 4



Richard Seymour "You'd be acting out, or less so 'acting' but participating and reinforcing those very racist structures and conditionings that you have a desire for"

So, you're emphatically denying that those engaged in kink of this kind are 'acting out', performing a fantasy with highly elaborate codes and protocols; that those engaged in it are metabolising the shit and grind of real life and putting it to work in an erotic scenario. On the contrary, you're insisting that they are actually desiring *real* racist structures, that they are actually participating in them, that they are reinforcing them. Okay. Just out of curiosity, what is the empirical basis of this claim?

22 hours ago · 1



Arnie Hill Firstly, Im not emphatically anything right now.

Your second point is better, even so with those highly elaborate codes and protocols, I have to ask, what exactly is being fantasized? A social reality in a racist society. That must be acknowledged.

Your third point is a strawman, Ive not said anyone actually desires real racist structures.

Im not the master of this subject, but Im researching this for my dissertation (as we speak), and stuff in relation to this has come up (around sexualisation of black bodies) in black feminist intersectional literature.

Im pretty also sure, despite not being a master academic, that I can tell when I see or smell something dodgy on race, thats all.

22 hours ago · Edited · 2



Shanice Octavia McBean Have you guys heard? Minstrel shows aren't racist because the entire cast consent, they make the rules and there's a difference between things being racist and being shaped

by racism, and that distinction legitimately applies to minstrel shows... Oh and when a white man chains a black woman round the throat and treats her as a slave for kicks.

It probably matters little to you all but I'm infuriated, and so are quite a few people and I can't see how this is anywhere near a materialist understanding of oppression at all. This is certainly not my politics.

22 hours ago · 19



Richard Seymour "what exactly is being fantasized? A social reality in a racist society. That must be acknowledged."

I'm asking, is that in fact what is being fantasized? I realise that the *raw material* for the fantasy is social reality - thus must be true of all fantasies by definition. The question I'm asking you is, are you arguing that such role playing is straightforwardly a literal representation of oppression, in which what is enjoyed is not the taking control of oppressive experiences, not the playing with them, not the transmutation of them into something deliberately distorted and OTT (hence, 'kinked'), but actually the oppression itself? Is what we're discussing a manifesto for racist abuse? And if it is, how can we stop it? Because I don't want to live in a society that tolerates racism.

And please don't get the wrong idea: I'm not asking you to give me a master academic answer to that question. I'd just be interested in any answer really. If truth be told, I'd actually really like to get the answer from a couple who actually participate in this sort of role play. Because that's important evidence in itself. Personally, I intend to read the writings of Mollena linked to by Magpie, so I can get a grasp of 'race play' and what it involves, and hear the arguments of its advocates, before categorically dismissing it as racist.

21 hours ago · 1



Richard Seymour "Minstrel shows aren't racist because the entire cast consent, they make the rules and there's a difference between things being racist and being shaped by racism, and that distinction legitimately applies to minstrel shows"

I suppose the distinction that Rozza was trying to make was between phenomena which is shaped by racism, and phenomena which actively contribute to, perpetuate and reinforce racist oppression. Can I ask those who know about 'race play', does it actively contribute to, perpetuate and reinforce racist oppression?

21 hours ago · 2



Ged Colgan In terms of the debate so far I'm pretty much with Hazel Croft and Shanice. I think the question of how fantasy, kink and BDSM of how they can either be; representations, performances (as in -ivity) springing from and reproducing oppression, or subversions of dominant power structures (and perhaps more often than not a combination of both at the same time at the same time?) is an interesting and complex one, but I don't think in this case is what's going on here. I would but the image in question squarely in the former camp- crudely labelled reaction. Would be interesting to hear what people think of these questions in general. In terms of my own view I don't really see the attraction or interest in fantasy's that merely reproduce the real relations of power and subordination in society- say for example what is alternative and sexy about say the situation put in "50 shades" where a younger woman submits herself to a much older, richer fatherly figure can be seen as 'progressive'. That said it would be lazy simply to say that there is a "kink of the oppressor and a kink of the oppressed". for example could we not say on the flip side the dominatrix spring from the same constellation of gender and oppression as woman as 'bottom' in so far as its tied up with Freudian terrain of woman as a motherly authority or whatever. Obviously we must be ever-mindful of the rightwing 'save the children' brigade, and indeed perhaps equally of the quite embarrassing history of prudeism of Postwar European Trotskyism on matters of sex and sexuality (which still lives on today). As is properly clear this is not my particular area of expertise and would be interested to hear some thoughts from my favourite guru's of "mental hygiene" Out To Lunch, and on matters of sex and whatnots Maximum and perhaps Harries.

21 hours ago · 1



Richard Seymour "of course that's racist."

Oh, right. Glad that's sorted out then. All my questions have been answered.

21 hours ago



Richard Seymour Well, you did. You only said that. Just then. Sorry if my being sarcastic about your unconvincing answer was patronising. I didn't mean it that way. I meant it to be, y'know, sarcastic.

21 hours ago



Richard Seymour I'm sorry you feel that way. Truly. I haven't engaged with you much on FB, and I've never had any desire to make you feel 'bullied'. In this case, I was just calling it as I saw it. If you do feel bullied, though, I would urge you to make a complaint to the complaints group.

21 hours ago



Ged Colgan http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uh7tgX_Uaqs



ANCHORMAN Brick Killed A Guy

www.youtube.com

hahahahahahahahaha i dont own this. But this OWNS

21 hours ago



Daphne Lawless *sigh* Jesus wept, it's the Lesbian Sex Wars all over again. I thought we dealt with this in the mid-90s.

21 hours ago



Ged Colgan ^ Daphne Lawless what was that? (the "lesbian sex wars")

21 hours ago · Edited



Daphne Lawless http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminist_Sex_Wars



Feminist Sex Wars - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

en.wikipedia.org

The Feminist Sex Wars, also known as the Lesbian Sex Wars, or simply the Sex War...s or Porn Wars, were acrimonious debates amongst feminists regarding a number of issues broadly relating to sex. The debates, which Lisa Duggan said felt like war,[1] polarised into two sides during the late 1970s and ea...See more

21 hours ago · 2



Richard Seymour As I've suggested before, we're re-living all the wrong bits of the Seventies.

20 hours ago · 1



×

Daphne Lawless It's funny that the only feminist who actually ever dared lecture me on my politically incorrect sex-life was the only man I've ever met who was a big fan of Andrea Dworkin.

20 hours ago · 2



×

Magpie Corvid Apologies i have not abandoned this thread - I am at work at a party :)

20 hours ago



×

Hazel Croft Just coming back to this thread. I think Ged raises some good points. I don't think fantasies, role playing, kink etc reflect and reproduce relations of power and subordination in a straightforward way, and I agree that often such acts can combine (sometimes at the same time) both reproducing and subverting power relationships. What I was really objecting to was the idea that if you consent to an act that somehow makes the act non-sexist or non-racist, and that if the person consenting to the act is BME or a woman that also makes the act non-oppressive. So when a woman fantasises about being raped that doesn't mean she wants to be raped in actuality but at the same time just because it is a woman doing the fantasising doesn't make the rape fantasy any less embedded in the sexist structures of society; just because a person consents to certain acts doesn't in itself make those acts subversive/progressive/non-problematic or make those acts any less connected to and embedded in complicated relationships of oppression, power and subordination.

20 hours ago · 3



×

Magpie Corvid Minstrel shows are commercial enterprises meant to make money. They were ubiquitous in culture. Performers consented inasmuch as any worker consents; it's not straightforward.

Consensual bdsm race play is entirely different - it originates in an oppressive culture, but does not perpetuate racist cultural or economic relations. I am open to hearing an argument about how race play does racist 'work.'

20 hours ago



Stef Newton I'm not going to comment about race play because I don't feel that it's my place but I did want to come back on rape fantasies/getting off on being slapped or humiliated or whatever. It's always seemed to me that consent and discussing limits and whatnot aren't there to act like a way to ignore the oppressive structures of society but to subvert them. It's always seemed to me that if one is acting out a rape fantasy they've consented to, are in complete control of and can stop at any time, it's an act of defiance against rape culture and a sexist society in the context of which we don't have that power.

20 hours ago · 3



Stef Newton I guess I haven't really made any coherent point, sorry, thinking aloud :)

20 hours ago



Jen Oh Thanks for the add. I **am** going to comment on race play. I fully agree with the points made by Shanice. People are into some fucked up shit, and that's fine of course, but getting off on being the bottom or being the top isn't the issue here, i don't think. The problem arises where the getting off on is on the basis of the eroticism of skin colour on the basis of implicit associated systemic oppression - that then becomes racist i.e. that **does** amount to getting off on racism.

Here's a link which I'll quote from and then attach (yes I know, it is women who generally resort to attaching [edited here for typo correction] links rather than using our own words - but hey...)

"I could not engage in such types of role-playing. My personal politics would not allow it; my libido would not respond.

"If the website Fetlife is any indication, there is apparently a not insubstantial number of people who engage in sexual roleplaying and BDSM using the motif of chattel slavery in the antebellum South. A cursory review of the member profiles suggests that many of these people are white supremacists."

http://open.salon.com/.../race_play_gone_wrong_black...



Race Play Gone Wrong? Black Slavery and Plantation Retreats - Chauncey DeVega - Open Salon

open.salon.com

Those who have loved and dated across the color line have to negotiate the reali...ties of race in our society, and by extension, its impact on their relationships. For many, this is done through explicit conversations. For others, these dialogues come implicitly, through gestures, and taken for grante...See more

19 hours ago · Edited · 11



Shanice Octavia McBean <http://jezebel.com/.../when-prejudice-is-sexy-inside-the...>

the blogger above has this to say about her work:

"When she's choosing a top for such scenes, she'll avoid anyone who claims to be "colorblind" or not racist at all. Such a person may not be very self-aware. Instead, she'll ask her potential top, "when have you felt yourself behaving in ways that were racist, or that were bigoted," and listen to their stories. "We are tribal people," Williams says, and "racism is an extension of that clannish tribalism." It's "a part of who we are as people."

Race play allows her to:

"go into the Big Ass Ice Cream Parlor of Racism and have a sample spoon, and leave. [...] I'm not trapped there being force fed the Rocky Road Ice Cream of Oppression until I am sick."

What a client has to say:

"There is a level where everyone's a little bit racist." For him, racialized sex was a way to "exorcise" racist feelings, to "get these feelings out while getting off."



When Prejudice Is Sexy: Inside the Kinky World of Race-Play

jezebel.com

A bitchy white woman belittling her black maid. A Latino man being tied up and called racial slurs. A black woman being offered for sale at a slave auction. All of these are awful in reality, but for people who are into race-play — or racialized sexual situations — they can be extremely hot. I talk...See more

18 hours ago · 6



Hazel Croft I;m sorry but I totally disagree that acting/performing a rape fantasy is "an act of defiance against rape culture"

12 hours ago · 10



Richard Seymour ^ As to that, I would think it's neither an act of defiance against rape culture, nor simply an endorsement or abutment of rape culture.

I'd like to suggest that, even if somewhat schematically, we could approach this from two levels of analysis. There's the 'subjective' meaning that such fantasies have, how they work internally, what they're about. On this, we can only skim the surface, but I've always found this quote from Nancy Friday useful:

"A fantasy is a map of desire, mastery, escape, and obscuration; the navigational path we invent to steer ourselves between the reefs and shoals of anxiety, guilt, and inhibition. It is a work of consciousness, but in reaction to unconscious pressures. What is fascinating is not only how bizarre fantasies are, but how comprehensible; each one gives us a coherent and consistent picture of the personality the unconscious of the person who invented it, even though he may think it the random whim of the moment.

"A man has a reverie of meeting a blond woman in a purple nightgown. He doesn't know why the colors are exciting; his unconscious does, but doesn't bother to explain. The man only knows the

blonder, the purple ier, the more heated he grows. Soon he is inventing scenarios of bare-breasted models hired to test new peroxide hair bleaches, supplied by a company that arbitrarily orders all contestants to wear purple underwear. If the plot seems silly, what does it matter? The erotic has its reasons that reason doesn't know."

So, the reason I raise this is to underline that what's taking place is not a literal mimicry of social reality; rather, social reality is being processed by unconscious psychic life in a particular way. It's not being protested against, as such (although the ludic space of kink can make a certain amount of subversion possible), but nor is it simply being reproduced. I think this is even evident in the articles cited above, which are offered to demonstrate that race play is in fact racist. What they actually demonstrate is that 'race play' instrumentalises and metabolises real life oppression, in a context which is not oppressive but 'freely chosen' (insofar as anything is a 'freely chosen'). Of course, the second there is any actual coercion or oppression, all bets are off: the analysis totally changes.

But then there's the 'objective' meaning. The argument from structure. So, my question above was whether 'race play' reinforced racist oppression. Because that, to me, is pretty much the definition of racism. A symbol, for example, can be part of a system of oppression in one context, and it can be part of a politics of liberation in another (or it can be neither). One thinks of the raised fist, which can be a symbol of black liberation, socialism, student power, various 'colour revolutions', etc., and has also been used by white power groups. Or, another example would be the swastika which, once appropriated by the Nazis, became a symbol of Aryanism, but which has no such permanent meaning (because symbols don't have any permanent meaning). So, my question is, does the practice of inter-racial bdsm couples, taking real life experiences of racial oppression, real life bigotry, real life pain, and putting that to work in an elaborate, highly controlled, consensual fantasy, reinforce racist oppression? Does it leads to the perpetuation of racial hierarchy, violence, abuse, and discrimination outside the fantasy context? Does it legitimise racial oppression? Because the answer to that doesn't seem to me to be as straightforward as people are implying.

And my problem here with categorically denouncing 'race play' as racist, is this. There are many people, largely oppressed people, who are into this sort of kink. By definition, at least a good half of them are racially oppressed; others are LGBTQ, and so on. It has not been demonstrated that what they do furthers racist oppression. If it does, this is serious, because they have to be persuaded to stop; this argument about the 'private sphere' being some wholly protected sanctuary doesn't cut it, not for socialists. And the line that 'yes you can do what you like if it's consensual, but what you're doing is actually racist' strikes me as passive-aggressive guilt-tripping. As if there isn't enough guilt and shame about sexuality. As if the oppressed actually need that, on top of everything else. As if the culture of the British Left on questions of sexuality wasn't repressive enough (seriously, we're a joke on these questions). I am not beyond being persuaded that what 'race play' fetishists do is racist, is actually perpetuating racial oppression. But I do think there needs to be a much higher bar for making that claim, given the consequences; and therefore much more rigour in the handling of the issue. Much of what I've seen above is question-begging, where not just downright moral browbeating.

10 hours ago · 2



Stef Newton Not being funny but I don't think you can tell anyone what their experience of their sex life is. I didn't tell anyone to go out and perform rape fantasies as a means of getting rid of rape culture, I suggested that some people (including survivors) feel that it subverts it. I'm not very interested in being told that the way I have sex is degrading to myself and my 'sisters', I had rather thought we got over this in the 70s. I do think rape play can be liberating. Race play is something I have no experience of or that much knowledge about but it's been interesting reading the above articles and comments

9 hours ago



Shanice Octavia McBean I have to say Richard! As a gay black woman I am thoroughly glad you know what the oppressed need right now!

This is nonsensical academic garbage and the more it continues the more I don't want to have anything to do with the folks making these arguments.

9 hours ago · 1



Richard Seymour By all means, feel free to dismiss and ignore my arguments as a middle-aged petty bourgeois white male intellectual from the imperialist metropolis. But can I just point out that you were also similarly dismissive of Mollena's arguments, declining even to engage with them? In light of which, this just looks like further moral browbeating to me. I'm also sorry that you don't want to have 'anything to do with the folks making these arguments'. But I would argue that we are better comrades than Alex Callinicos.

9 hours ago · 1



Hazel Croft I'm not trying to claim anything about what people fantasise about or telling anyone what they should do in bed or how they feel about their sex life nor am I trying to tell anyone that their fantasies are degrading. That is a total misreading and misrepresentation of these debates. You

have no idea what my own experiences of sexual violence is, or the content of my own fantasies and I really resent this idea that those who have a different analysis are just old fashioned 70s feminists who haven't gotten over it. Well I haven't gotten over sexism actually. That is just so patronising. But I really hate the tone of some of this discussion and it does come across as really patronising. Why is someone like Lally apologising for not being an "expert" because she doesn't practice or hasn't read loads on the issue. This is crap. We are political people developing an analysis of oppression/power/sexism/racism and we shouldn't feel we have to apologise for our opinions! I also feel quite moralised at - that by suggesting that i don't think rape fantasies are liberating, a defiant act against rape culture - I am somehow being an old fashioned moralistic feminist or not paying attention to recent developments in debates. In fact i agree with Richard that fantasies are not a literal mimicry of social reality, and that rape fantasies are complex and do not simple reflect or reproduce relations of power and dominance, which I had in fact said in an earlier comment.

9 hours ago · 1



Stef Newton The whole point is I'm not interested in your sexual experiences. I'm not being patronising about them, I'm not moralising about them, I really care very little about them in general. I don't think anyone needs to apologise for not knowing about certain common sexual fantasies or not sharing them. It's totally fine to have different kinks from other people, or no kinks at all. It's not ok to tell other people what they should think about theirs. You can't 'disagree' with someone's experiences of what they find liberating. It's bullshit.

9 hours ago · 2



Richard Seymour Can I just point out, I'm not expert on this either, and I wouldn't claim to be. I suspect the only one here who comes close to expertise on the subject is Magpie. Maybe that's a good reason for humility in these discussions (yeah I know, I'm not exactly an expert on that either, but...). We do need to realise that many of us are kind of starting from scratch on a lot of this stuff because in the SWP we were fed on straw. For me personally, I have only really started to think about sexuality and oppression in a serious way since the crisis. That's shit, and it means I'm now in the position of 'discovering' stuff that other socialists, queer feminists, kinksters, etc., have always known and taken for obvious. But I guess it's the same for others too.

9 hours ago · 1



Lally Lord I really don't think it's helpful to turn this into sparring between people on the rev left either tbh. This is an interesting debate on all sides, ruined only by rancor at times.

8 hours ago · 1



Magpie Corvid Um... i think this would be a good debate for the women's mag? :)

8 hours ago · 2



Katherine Notman I think this needs to be a proper debate and not on someone's Facebook wall because this is awful. I'm incredibly upset that some people this rape-play is liberating and annoyed at how a BME woman's comments on this thread have been received at times, in such a defensive manner.

8 hours ago · 6



Shanice Octavia McBean Well I'm terribly sorry for not being nice but I'm not going to take anyone seriously who thinks it's a serious argument to suggest things like sex chattel plantations and white men chaining black women and treating them as slaves is anything but racist. It's classic right wing bull to claim in a racist society this shit is up for 'debate'. And it's even worse coming from apparently materialist revolutionaries. So stick you and your debate.

8 hours ago · 9



Katherine Notman You shouldn't have to be nice.

8 hours ago · 2





Magpie Corvid I don't mind people not being nice. I would prefer people stay engaged and not walk off swearing :)

8 hours ago · Edited



Richard Seymour If some people aren't up for a 'debate', why have they been trying to make an argument at all? Why have they bothered citing evidence? Also, I'm very glad that some people know everything already and don't have anything to learn through argument - but we're not all so omniscient. Give the rest of us a chance. One day we'll catch up, I'm sure.

8 hours ago · 1



Katherine Notman People are offended and so their responses are emotional. I couldn't have kept going at this as long as Shanice has and I don't think her not wanting to continue this argument means that she shouldn't have bothered engaging in it in the first place. You say that one day we'll 'catch up' but in order to do that we need to concede that some people's experiences of different oppressions will inform their responses in a way that can help us understand (but never experience) things like racism. We should try to make room for that, not push it out with defensive language.

8 hours ago · 3



Luke Evans Saw this conversation and found the politics of the debate really interesting. I agree with comrades that this is an under-theorised area of human experience for the organised Left and it's important to begin to develop a sincere and fraternal approach to the questions of personal life. In fact, in speaking to a number of comrades about the last year, my summary has been that we were dealing, to some degree, with the politics of personal relationships.

I recognise that the BDSM community is a consciously ritualised endeavour. I'm blissfully vanilla, but my own knowledge of the subject comes from my undergraduate years studying gender and sexuality, taught by Ani Ritchie. As I recall, and this is perhaps dated, the watchwords were "safe, sane and consensual" ("sane" here may now be considered problematic use in light of the politics of ableism, but I have always taken it to be a critique of the kind of 'Fifty Shades...' romanticism of

sexual excess based in the playing out of some sort of harmful psychodrama, rather than an a priori exclusion of psychological diversity).

As a base for exploring sexual identity, I think those watchwords are almost universally applicable, BDSM or not BDSM. I think that the defence of the right to practice BDSM is politically sound, but that doesn't necessarily negate the *correctedness* of a political critique of the forms of practice that people choose to engage in. Shanice's point that we can critique what people do without necessarily denying them a right to do it is coherent on those terms. As good dialecticians, I think we can grant ourselves the luxury of recognising that the contradiction doesn't exist in what we say, but in the reality we are remarking upon.

"Play" is also a contradictory political enterprise. I don't buy the argument that once play commences the de facto logic is that rules are suspended, because the mode of "play" is often subversion. Rules in this context are not suspended, but rather an attempt is made to reverse them. This, to me at least, means that we're not dealing with a "liberated space" but an attempt to process the "lived experience" of everyday life. This can only be contradictory and imperfect, as far as I'm concerned.

I'm also not particularly won to reading "pleasure" as an index of progressive politics (I'm aware this isn't necessarily the point being made, but I'm off on one right now). I hate pleasure on these terms. It's nice to be curled up in a haze of sensory delight, but it's always fleeting and contingent. The ability of human beings to transform their world is existentially painful and without guarantee. Seeking to ground guarantees of political practice in whether it feels authentic in terms of attaching a pure logic to the emotional experience of the sensuous (in the non-sexual meaning of this word) world of things seems like a Sisyphean labour. That's not to say we can't try...

Part of the emphasis of my approach is because "painfulness" is in some ways a critique. When we feel "pain" in relation to the experience of an alienated, capitalist society, it's a criticism not yet put into words. It's fine to relish in the pleasure of pain, but it's also useful to develop the expression of pain into the voicing of opposition to that which causes pain. I'm not thereby arguing that BDSM is somehow celebratory of "being in pain" in terms of accepting the oppressive vagaries of bourgeois rule, but I do think it's a partial critique at best. This is why "play" is a limited method for engaging in effectively challenging oppression. I can fully recognise that individuals and groups are marginalised or discriminated on the basis of their sexual identities, whilst not being of those identities, without losing the capacity to critique practices I read as incomplete in their politics.

Part of my reluctance here is also because I'm not won to a political interpretation of "subversion" as inherently progressive. People can find delight in the subversion of progressive values. We've managed to force a vague consensus around the inappropriate display of overt violent homophobia, anti-Semitism, and biologically based racism. To do so would be deemed "controversial", even by the mainstream rightwing press. So, a loose consensus about "civil behaviour" is in place. The Tory who did a Nazi party thing was subverting a certain socially expected rule of thumb.

Perhaps my intervention does not provide an analysis, but I'm not particularly inclined to do so. Developing an approach means to me something like hewing a diamond collectively. We work by

chipping away at the rough edges and inconsistent surfaces of a shared set of ideas until we reach something that has a little bit of sparkle. In this sense, I am much more inclined to point out where I read ideas I find imprecise or ill-formed and argue for sharpening them up. On these terms, I'm not won to "pleasure", "play" or "subversion" as effective categories for political analysis. I think that the reason for this reluctance is because these are all in need of political dissection before we apply them to debates about BDSM or sexuality in general. This reluctance might also be because I'm a boring, post-war Trotskyist ;-).

8 hours ago · 4



Richard Seymour "We should try to make room for that, not push it out with defensive language."

Yeah, I agree that we should make room for people responding in a way that reflects their own material experiences of oppression. Absolutely. Some people are better at doing this than me, but it's basic revolutionary praxis and as such I fully take your point. That said, I think it would be patronising for those of us who disagree to withhold those disagreements, or soft-sell our arguments, because of those experiences of oppression. I still very much think there is a debate in this, and if I'm totally honest I feel a certain instinctive solidarity with those who practice 'race play', not because it's my thing, but because I think they're already marginal, already shamed, already in a difficult situation, and I want to keep the space open for their case to be heard. But Facebook is probably just not the best format for the debate.

7 hours ago · 1



Kat Burdon-Manley Absolutely Katherine, I think there has been a lack of empathy with women and men from BME groups and their experiences of oppression, and a patronising tone and a hardness when there's no need for it. In re to the debate, some of us are pretty poor on oppression politics coming out of the SWP, so we probably should have the debate.

7 hours ago · 1



Richard Seymour "where consensual behaviour reinforces oppression no one is going to try to stop that behaviour, because what would be the point?"

The point would be that it has ramifications for others who are oppressed and therefore has to be argued against and stopped. But thus far, no one has made a case that this particular consensual behaviour reinforces oppression.

7 hours ago · 1



Magpie Corvid My thread should come down?

7 hours ago



Magpie Corvid Calling people racist or sexist for their private behaviour can be oppressive, particularly when the players are members of oppressed groups. That is different from respectful analysis and critique of their behaviour.

7 hours ago



Magpie Corvid I would rather not have to take the thread down because I and others are talking about our lived experiences here. I don't want to censor it. I am upset by some of the stuff in here but trying to be upbeat and polite about it xx

7 hours ago · 1



Lally Lord OK, fine. But I am taking my comments off of it. This is a perfect example of what is not possible to debate on facebook, and also a good example of aggressive and patronising behavior from one person in particular. Damn me for sitting on the fence earlier.

7 hours ago · 1



×

Jen Oh Richard says this: " I think this is even evident in the articles cited above, which are offered to demonstrate that race play is in fact racist. What they actually demonstrate is that 'race play' instrumentalises and metabolises real life oppression, in a context which is not oppressive but 'freely chosen' (insofar as anything is a 'freely chosen')."

But no, I think that what is actually demonstrated by the articles is that getting off on racism is a thing. Why not call it what it is? It **is** getting off on racism.

Also, this: "The point would be that it has ramifications for others who are oppressed and therefore has to be argued against and stopped. But thus far, no one has made a case that this particular consensual behaviour reinforces oppression."

But this feels like we (or rather the person who actually does live with the consequences of racial oppression daily) are being told that our objections here are only valid if oppression is being reinforced?

7 hours ago



×

Richard Seymour "But no, I think that what is actually demonstrated by the articles is that getting off on racism is a thing. Why not call it what it is? It **is** getting off on racism."

Because I don't think that is literally what it is. I think it's literally not that. I think it's getting off on taking control of experiences of real life racial oppression, and putting them to work in a structured fantasy that is consensual and under the complete control of participants.

"our objections here are only valid if oppression is being reinforced?"

If the objection is that this 'race play is actually racist, as opposed to making erotic play with the experience of racism, then I think that's correct. The only way in which the objection can be true is if this behaviour concretely reinforces racial oppression. And I think this is in fact what many people on this thread believe, though I still am not sure on what basis that belief is entertained.

7 hours ago · 1



×

Magpie Corvid Actually, yes. Your objection should be respected - you should not have to watch or read about or experience anything that offends you - but an objection that intends telling others

who do consensually and consciously partake in activities that offend you that their partaking is oppressive needs to be rethought.

7 hours ago · Edited



Javaad Alipoor I feel its quite important for me, as a member of the ISN, to be clear about the fact that what two of our most prominent members are arguing here is not at all necessarily a shared position in our group.

7 hours ago · 5



Magpie Corvid Please everyone read Richard's last post, it is a clear expression about these objections.

7 hours ago



Richard Seymour (I feel it's quite important for me, as a member of the ISN, to be clear about the fact that the ISN having a shared position on anything is a complete joke.)

7 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor Well, indeed.

7 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor We do for instance, have the beginnings of shared positions on antifascism.

7 hours ago



Richard Seymour Rob. I see nowhere that a case has been made that hasn't already been addressed. And I'm sorry that you're so easily shocked by people not automatically agreeing with you.

7 hours ago



Rob Mitchell Sorry, I've deleted my comments. I just can't.

7 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor I would want to raise a couple of points here, and then move on to what, for me, is the fundamental issue. I think comrades have made a series of points that begin to outline the contours of a proper debate about this question of these kinds of sexual...See More

7 hours ago



Jen Oh Ok, well I find it hard to see how a socialite using a naked black woman as a chair is art. I also fail to see how this image does not reinforce oppression. Can we shift the onus here - can those defending this please explain how this is not reinforc...See More



Russian Socialite Uses Naked Black Woman As a Chair, Calls It Art

www.clutchmagonline.com

Russian Socialite and Editor-in-Chief of Garage magazine, Dasha Zhukova, is coming under fire for a recent interview she gave to artist Miroslava Duma's online pub Buro 247. While the content of the interview isn't offensive—the pair discusses the Zhukova's magazine, fashion, and collecting Russian...See more

7 hours ago · 2



Javaad Alipoor So if you accept that's going on in BDSM, "kink", (or whatever other trendy word we want to use), we're left with a startling parallel with religion; Religion being a way we are tied in, through ritual and libido to the material social relations around us.

7 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor Taking that point on, we wouldn't argue with a religious believer over the direct context of the ritual as good materialists, so we shouldn't be in the business of thinking that to end racism we have to stop black women wanting to be dominated by white men or whatever. Liquidate the social relation. If you're waiting for people's sexuality and "inner life" to change before the world does, you'll never get started.

7 hours ago



Richard Seymour "I find it hard to see how a socialite using a naked black woman as a chair is art."

Oh, I don't think there's any disagreement about this specific example. The wider context of this image and how it has been deployed makes it clearly a racist provoc...See More

7 hours ago · 2



Javaad Alipoor But the more fundamental point here is this. A white comrade celebrated a picture, even talking about how she "looooooves" using people as furniture. But as a number of Black and White comrades have pointed out, there is very clearly a racist context...See More

7 hours ago · 1



Richard Seymour Woah. Seriously?

7 hours ago



Richard Seymour I think that's disgraceful, what you just said.

7 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor Whats your point comrade?

7 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor In what way?

7 hours ago



Magpie Corvid That's one reason why I immediately cited Mollena's far more articulate and important defence of race play.

7 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor Im not talking about race play. Im talking about celebrating that picture.

7 hours ago



Richard Seymour My point, comrade, is that Magpie is clearly an informed female practitioner of kink, and has demonstrated knowledge of the background, and you just described her as basically ignorant of it. And then, after this whole debate has been about people inc...See More

7 hours ago



Richard Seymour "Im talking about celebrating that picture."

One of the first things Magpie did in this thread was to state openly that in context she thinks the picture is racist.

7 hours ago



Magpie Corvid I both found the picture hot and remonstrated with myself for doing so. And then I was courageous enough to be open about both things.

7 hours ago · 2



James Coles Richard, I think perhaps there's a point that you've missed in all this and if it's right, I need to pull you up on it. Your arguments have rested on the assumption that there's a clear separation between race play in private, and the rest of society. ...See More

7 hours ago



Richard Seymour "Race play *may* not be reinforcing of racism *for the participants*. But other people, who are not (necessarily) participating and who know that such practices are going on, might experience them as a reinforcing of racism."

I think you must have mis...See More

7 hours ago · 1



Javaad Alipoor I refer comrades to the argument I gave above: I don't care who finds what hot. The reality of the situation is that it is white privilege that allows some people to not see racism when its in front of their face. The mistake is to look at the picture...See More

7 hours ago · 1



James Coles Richard, if people of colour tell you that they experience race play as racist, then it surely is. How is it not that obvious?

6 hours ago



Richard Seymour Javaad - the specific picture, it has been repeated time and again, is believed by Magpie and myself and probably everyone on this thread, to be racist. So, the argument that white privilege is preventing people from seeing it falls at the first hurdle. You are simply refusing to engage with what has actually been said.

6 hours ago · 1



×

Richard Seymour "if people of colour tell you that they experience race play as racist, then it surely is. How is it not that obvious?"

6 hours ago



×

Richard Seymour BECAUSE LOADS OF PEOPLE OF COLOUR WILL TELL YOU THAT IT ISN'T.

6 hours ago · 1



×

Richard Seymour FFS

6 hours ago



×

Richard Seymour What, do they not count as people of colour because of their wrong views?

6 hours ago · 1



×

James Coles No, Richard all that does is point to the limits of the racism.

6 hours ago



×

Richard Seymour The implication of the above moralistic attacks is that people of colour can't possibly be mistaken about how racial oppression works, UNLESS they have the wrong views about 'race play'.

6 hours ago · 1



Richard Seymour "Richard all that does is point to the limits of the racism."

You're not even making sense now.

6 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor I said "first and foremost"; the comrade magpie in her original post describes it as a "hot bdsm pic". And you yourself havent actually engaged with anything I said Richard. Other than a point you chose to describe as "disgraceful", and misrepresen

6 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor misrepresenting me as saying that I said that magpie didnt know what she was talking about "race play" or whatever. Which I never have. I have said that looking at a picture with such a clear dynamic of race, and not immediately seeing it is a result of the ideology of the white power structure, white privilage, racisim call it what you want.

6 hours ago · 1



Javaad Alipoor I dont think someone denouncing other people as disgraceful is any position to be calling others moralistic.

6 hours ago · 1



Ian Anderson so dominant mores play out in our sexuality. Surely that is also the case when a woman tops in BDSM, or a white person bottoms in BDSM, or when it's missionary vanilla between two white people? Surely that is just a fact regardless of what roles people...See More

6 hours ago · 4



Javaad Alipoor Its also worth me saying here, I think, is that one of the things that I like about being in the ISN, is that Im in an organisation big enough for us to have disagreements, and serious enough to do it in public.

6 hours ago · 2



Richard Seymour "I have said that looking at a picture with such a clear dynamic of race, and not immediately seeing it is a result of the ideology of the white power structure, white privilege, racism call it what you want."

You said that Magpie was blind to its ra...See More

6 hours ago · 1



Jen Oh I'll just ask one more question here (to Richard):

"The wider context of this image and how it has been deployed makes it clearly a racist provocation imo. It's not itself an example of 'race play' so much as 'race play play', using imagery from 'race...See More

6 hours ago · Edited



Javaad Alipoor I have consistently referred to the original post, not a comment made afterwards Comrade; where comrade Magpie draws a distinction to "hotness" intrinsic to the picture and a "vile racist incident" extrinsic to it, the racism is intrinsic to the photo, ...See More

6 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor If I were a less classy facebook poster I might start to feel "anathematized", by the accusations of "disgraceful behavior" or "bullying moralism", but I'm not, so I won't.

6 hours ago



Richard Seymour Jen - "What is it that makes 'race play play' racially provocative and racist but not 'race play'?"

I think 'race play' is just inter-racial couples using real painful experiences and processing them in a particular erotic context, without straightforwardly reproducing them or seeking to perpetuate them. I don't think, or am not yet convinced, that they are being racist in so doing.

I think this so-called 'race play play' is using a bit of kink iconography to intervene in a public discourse about race on MLK day, to link this woman's wealth and status to her ownership of a black slave in an 'ironic' way (hence the appropriation of kink). I think Zizek says somewhere, probably nicking it off Jameson, that this particular kind of 'irony' is profoundly conservative, because it is essentially a way of telling the same old stories and making them palatable. In this sense, this ironic racism is racist ideology at its purest.

And Javaad - I will not try to speak for Magpie, but I think you are misrepresenting her argument. And this isn't 'sulking' on my part, its weariness and frustration and the certain knowledge that I should have been editing rather than polemicising on FB.

6 hours ago · 3



Magpie Corvid Imagine I just said Richard's middle paragraph Javaad. Richard, get back to work :)

6 hours ago · 1



Javaad Alipoor Tell me about it comrade, I've got like three deadlines this week. Always a (slightly sado masochistic) pleasure, getting into there things on facebook. Also good point about the conservatism of irony. I don't think there's any point me pursuing this argument further here, but I might try and look at something longer for our website.

6 hours ago · 1



Magpie Corvid I want to read this thing on the conservatism of irony. And then explain it to hipsters.

6 hours ago · 1



Javaad Alipoor the problem is its zizek, so you have to read little chunks of the argument over about twenty rambling books.

6 hours ago · 1



Richard Seymour I will dig up the reference later, but I think he suggested somewhere (in the sort of Hegelian reading that I don't usually go for) that the logic of 'irony' is not, as it appears to be, that "I pretend to believe this, but I don't really", but rather "I pretend not to believe this, but actually I really do believe it". Useful for understanding a lot of culture that, e.g., appears to be 'ironic' about its obsession with race or empire or traditional masculinity, etc., but is actually incredibly invested in it.

6 hours ago · 1



Javaad Alipoor There's quite a concise statement of it, the example being the tibetan prayer wheel in his "how to read lacan".

6 hours ago



Richard Seymour Bah. That's just a version of Althusser's 'kneel and you shall believe' schtick.

6 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor Ironically he gets a lot of it from pascal via that arch anti hegelian althusser.

6 hours ago



Javaad Alipoor You know what they say comrade; "great minds think alike and average minds post the same sentiment on facebook".

6 hours ago



Magpie Corvid So, I wonder if there is a solution to this - people who do controversial play and people who are triggered by it should have a dialogue about it and figure out what should happen so all parties can share practical solidarity respectfully.

This is wha...See More

5 hours ago · 6



Rozza Alice Magpie, I'd like to just say, hand on my heart, that you're one of the very best, bravest and inspiring feminists I've ever had the pleasure of encountering.

5 hours ago · 2



Kēth Fissure "Please everyone read Richard's last post, it is a clear expression about these objections."

I can't, I'm blocked. But privately, I play out a situation in which I'm completely unblocked.

4 hours ago · 6



Magpie Corvid Er, is it okay to keep personal issues out of my thread? I am happy to pm anyone posts they can't read. This is hard enough without side issues.

4 hours ago

Bottom of Form