



"Where Are My White Sisters Now?"

No Known Copyright

Princeton University Library reasonably believes that the Item is not restricted by copyright or related rights, but a conclusive determination could not be made.

You are free to use this Item in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use.

Princeton University Library Disclaimer

Princeton University Library claims no copyright governing this digital resource. It is provided for free, on a non-commercial, open-access basis, for fair-use academic and research purposes only. Anyone who claims copyright over any part of these resources and feels that they should not be presented in this manner is invited to contact Princeton University Library, who will in turn consider such concerns and make every effort to respond appropriately. We request that users reproducing this resource cite it according the guidelines described at <http://rbcs.princeton.edu/policies/forms-citation>.

Citation Information

Morrison, Toni. 1931-

"Where Are My White Sisters Now?"

1 folder

Contact Information

Download Information

Date Rendered: 2019-09-05 12:34:27 PM UTC

Available Online at: <http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/2801pm89h>

"Where Are My White Sisters Now?"

There is no place on this earth where anybody could gather 500, 100, 25 or 10 black women of any description, from any background, sober or drunk, sane or not, mothers or whores, illiterate or educated, who could be persuaded to brutalize white children who are not attacking them. It is not in us. But it is in white women; they do it all the time. In New Orleans, in Selman, in Little Rock in Prince George's Country and now in Boston. They are not racist(they tell us) but they are women. They are bus-burning women, spitting women, skirted barbarians, who roam the streets of every town in this country when the fruit of their womb is in danger of being touched by the fruit of a black women's womb. Where are the feminists now? The white women who want me to call them sister. Are there no great symposia scheduled in White Plains? Will there be no special issue of feminist magazines? Or is barbarianism part of their new found liberation?

I'm a fiction writer and have a highly developed ability to project myself into almost any mind or skin. Lives wholly unlike mine I can enter emotionally. Whether or not the fictional consequences are successful, the emotional processes are not difficult for me. Except one: that of collecting the phlegm from my throat to ejaculate into the face of a child that is not attacking me. Children can enrage all of us, and I can share the emotions of a woman who smashes her crying baby's body into a wall. But I cannot throw a brick at a kid walking or riding to school. My spirit, and mind and arms

would lock. I cannot see a group of white children walking down a sidewalk, their eyes jelled with fear, their hands damp with helplessness, and try to damage them. The reason I cannot do this is not because I am free of racism. I am not. But I think it is due more to my femininity than to my humanity. Having put my womb to use, I cannot destroy the product of another woman's womb, at least, not when it is young and not when it is not trying to kill me. And in this respect, I am better, and all black women are better than the white women who can. If the feminists want something to mobilize around, something other than vaginal examinations, something other than sexual orientation, something other than household chores, here is one. This is a woman's issue because women and children are involved. It has always interested me, those huge and delicious opportunities that white women always miss, deliberately miss, when something occurs which might force them to be grand, noble, or serious. They would rather go on endlessly explaining their neuroses, and finding male dragons to slay than to address themselves to a hard political problem. I would like to know the official feminist position on this Boston Tea party. Or shall I rely on Mr. President Ford's benign concern.

Lucille Clifton has a poem, which I believe, speaks for every black woman in this country.

To Ms. Ann

i will have to forget
your face
when you watched me breaking
in the fields,
missing my children.