

PLAYTHINGS

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It is still not uncommon, nowadays, to hear the misguided remarks of many who believe there to be an inherent disconnect between architecture and race; misunderstandings often come to mind of the material world existing in an objective, universal standing, or even the notion of all having equal accessibility to resources so long as you work hard enough and aren't "lazy". After all, how could the material objects that we ourselves create, which have no life nor voice, project any sort of racialized discrimination upon the living humans of such societies? Rather than seeing architecture as the voice which spews the racialization, it is imperative for the population to understand that it is but the product of the racializing people; that is, the architecture is not the elite faucet from which the water dribbles, but, instead, it is the enormous, oceanic volume of water that has been abusively built up over time for the advantage and enjoyment of a select few faucets – the self-proclaimed "superior". The "architecture" in this sense is, therefore, about much more than just the power, status, money, and intellect of a nation's identity which its crafted buildings depict; it is about the way in which those in power – all as a means to ensure their positions of control and fuel their lavish self-indulgences – organize the masses with designed disparity for placement between these built walls of economics and freedom, as well as praise capitalistic functionality for its dual-sidedness of profiting off unethical labor that is painted in the illusion of fair reward. Nowhere is a case more evident of the abuse of this architectural power than with the many attempts of colonization on the behalf of European explorers throughout the past several centuries with all of their attempts to establish themselves as the superior species at the cost of the rest of the world becoming their disposable playthings – a manifested idea which has very much remained stable in vitality through time, even until today – be it from their attempts to lethally slander other nations'

beautiful architecture after thieving it for themselves, their sexual, fetishized fantasies of certain demographics of women which they manifest through the power of their money, or the teasing and laughter they hold towards the struggling and underprivileged without sight to what causes such misfortunate living.

A large stigma still exists today regarding the “Made in China” label; people see it on the backs of their phones, the bottom of a toy they’ve bought their nephew for Christmas, a drinking cup, and their experience of the item suddenly completely changes as they view it cheap and of subpar quality. The devastating part is that many people don’t question why this is – they recognize the cheap, unethical labor but fail to see the root cause and chalk up such unethical operations to Chinese culture and society – which leaves a large, negative imprint on Chinese bodies as a whole with them then beginning to view the Chinese people themselves as cheap, subpar toys as well. This was not always the case, though, as the Chinese people, along with their culture and intellect, were first admired as having a rich beauty when they were first “discovered” in the early 18th century. As Addison Godel details in “Terrestrial Paradise”¹, persons like Jean Dennis Attiret praised Ancient Chinese designs as “fabulous palaces of the fairies”², which is a stark contrast to not even a century later when Europe had firmly established slander against the nation’s architectural designs³. The European ego could not handle a reality in which their inferiors designed something of superior quality – the people of China were too

1. Addison Godel. “Race and the Chinese Garden in European Eyes.” *From “Terrestrial Paradise” to “Dreary Waste,”* (2020).

2. Attiret further adds that the Ancient Chinese craft of lighting and fireworks was far superior to any technology of it which the Italians and French had at the time

3. It was particularly common to see Europeans spreading the idea that China ran on decrepit culture and social order, which was a means to establish fear in such a mode spreading to their own nation so that the general European population would seek safety in supporting imperialism

uncivilized and barbaric to procure something of such beauty and intelligence, as they successfully did with their gardens – so they took it for themselves. The result is the articulation of the widely bought notion of inherent, but false, luxuriousness in European items over the items of all other races, and especially over those of the Chinese, which are cheap, poor quality, and often unsafe. A division thus ensues where other races are unable to make a livelihood from their businesses like the superior Europeans and their goods – people, for instance, often visit Chinese-owned businesses and try to haggle down prices or even become angry at the given “high” prices because they think that they know, without a doubt, that it must be a cheap product or service just from cultural identity – bestowing wealth inequality that not rarely forces these people to take up the very same low-paying, unethical jobs which the elite Europeans run and profit off, creating an often inescapable feedback loop. They are the financial plaything.

In building off the target on Asian bodies, the sexual fetishization of Asian women, along with Black women, is one whose roots are also still very prominent in modern society. The colonizing Europeans sexualized Asian women as easy trophies, desiring them for an almost taboo excitement with ideas of thin figures, and Black women for their over-romanticization of them being large in breasts and other regions. The past men procuring such ideas sought out these women for sexual acts to fulfill their misguided wants⁴ and the booming popularity and repetition of which solidified them as sex machines within the functioning society; they became the sexual playthings. The existence of such a manner as selfish pleasure is inherent in functions like *Parts Sequitur Ventrem*, which dictated the social status of a child to be handed down from

4. The use of “sought out” as terminology should be taken very loosely as many of these interactions were rape

their mother, ensuring that the separation between the Europeans and all else remain as the elite men enjoy their quick sexual gratification to thereafter leave for the baby and the mother – lest us not forget that this is in addition to the slavery and forced labor that these women of color were unwillingly subjected to, surmounting them as both slave laborers and the birthers of more slave laborers. In effect, these women become a silhouette to the abusing man – invisible without their image – and so this idea of submissiveness to the male arrives and very much lives on today: social expectations of the woman being a stay-at-home subservient server to her husband, misconceptions of Black women being immune to childbirth justify using them as baby-making machines, the hypersexual marketing of women and female products all over that make any who do not buy into it feel less of a “woman”, and forget not all of the financial opportunities a woman “turns down” by not enjoying the inappropriate sexual behavior she receives from, say, her boss or other powerful economic figures. In a more gruesome light, such as during the Salem witch trials, the acts of aggression displayed towards women were praised as holy acts of cleansing the earth of the damned, or even satanic, witches, when, actually, the actions were that of colonizing men violently oppressing woman-empowering, matriarchal modes of societal organization, function, and culture, whose foreign presence acted as a threat to European civilization as they did not place the white male at an inherent superiority. Imani Perry’s *Vexy Thing* attests how the Salem witch trials were this attempt to erase femininity and its roots in religious interpretation: “Federici conceives of it [the killing of “witches”] as a mode of squashing women’s history of resistance to feudal domination and challenges to the church.”⁵ In

5. Imani Perry, “Introduction.” *Vexy Thing: On Gender and Liberation* (2018).

retrospect, what the Church, whose power was conducted exclusively by rich, white men, constituted a woman as a witch during such times was highly subjective⁶ and easily abused by any man whose woman did not please him like a king and appear to enjoy living a life not dissimilar to a slave for him. The woman, today and before, is a “witch” – a rebellious outcast who serves as a threat – if she does not agree to such sexual forcefulness, else she turns her back on the hypersexual servant image that the patriarchal society paints her in, of which there is no means to survive or which she is killed; and so womanly reality is no longer a mere European fantasies of lies, as they have, by that point, manifested themselves into an accepted cultural reality.⁷

For humor, the elite turn to the incarcerated as entertainment; they are their humorous playthings. Be it the houseless, the imprisoned, the disabled...these lives become the prey in an arena of racially-motivated, predatory law whose violence they watch from lavish house seats; where illness is mocked in inferiority as though it were a choice; and where the poor are ignorantly judged in description of them participating in a desensitized, disgusting culture. Such irrationality of thought is inherent in the fact that the wealthy who laugh at the underprivileged fail to realize that their lobbying of mountainous amounts of money is the direct cause of such disparity: it is impossible for a world to exist where no one is chewed up and spit out when the top 1% of earners net tens of trillions of dollars for wasteful luxuriousness and when the rich, which extends greatly below just the top 1%, are actively becoming richer while the poor

6. One of the most common tests to determine a woman a witch during the Salem trials was to have them thrown into pools of water, where they were deemed a witch, and thereafter killed, if they were able to swim. This was, in effect, a lose-lose situation for feminine power because the accused either drowned a woman or were killed a “witch” by their society after successfully staying afloat.

7. Edward Said. “Introduction.” *Orientalism* (2000).

become poorer. “Since 1984, California has completed twenty-three major new prisons (see map), at a cost of \$280–\$350 million dollars apiece... The gargantuan new poured-concrete structures loom at the edge of small, economically struggling, ethnically diverse towns in rural areas.”⁸ Rather than questioning why so many people end up in this high number of new prisons, which is the economic misfortune that, without question, is racially motivated within our capitalistic society that favors rich white success above the success of all others, they instead see them as a statistic of savages who must be stabilized. And rather than invest in mediums which seek to assist and help those in economic misfortune, the solution from the rich is to punish them by locking them away in prisons N.I.M.B.Y.⁹ style and prevent them from fully re-integrating into society after release, such as the imprisoned losing their ability to vote. The same goes for the mentally ill; the rich largely believe them to be unstable beings who need to be under the constant advisory of a mental facility so they can do no damage to the “normal” people of society, obscuring the causes of such afflictions and their ability to be healed. And, at one of the extrema of the economic spectrum, are the houseless who have become the most cast out from all of society as even the general population push them away from sharing the same parks, sidewalks, convenience stores, and many other places as they do; overall, places that are tout to be public are suddenly private based on the economic status one appears to visually have at first appearance. Just like the financial playthings, these humorous playthings remain the laughing stock of the rich in a feedback loop where the general population mostly looks upon these outcast

8. Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*, Second ... Edition (University of California Press, 2018).

9. “N.I.M.B.Y.” is an acronym which stands for “not in my backyard”. Its expressions rests in the actions and thoughts of people whose solution to a problem is to physically dissociate it from the locality.

groups as bringing down the quality of life of their society, with them too failing to realize that these outcasts are not the problem, but, rather, it is the select wealthy who hoard their money over generations, disallowing it to trickle down into equity and painting beneficiary illusions that keep growing their wealth in an entertaining manner that plays out like reality TV show drama.

With how much fruitfulness fills the lives of the elite, it's shocking to see what lengths they go to for ever-increasing self-indulgence via their economic, sexual, and humorous playthings – the way in which they sustain an insatiable hunger for money and intellectual appearance, their use of wealth in and the subsequent existence of economic disparity to fulfill their hypersexual female fantasizes, and the laughs they have in poking fun at the lives of the poor and criminal. When one is absorbed into the cultural comforts of the elite and wealthy, such ideas become base expectations as no other modes of living, such as struggling with mental illness, with money, as a woman, as a person of color, etc., are incomprehensible for such a groomed person; in fact, they are avoided and ignored completely, despite them being a very real reality that is largely caused by the socioeconomic disparity which those same elite enable. On that point, it rests in the hands of the public to help awaken itself to the roots of these issues so that they can be faced head-on and no longer deterred by the propaganda, illusions, and power which the elite enable and which they will seriously defend to sustain their lavish paradises at the suffering of a large percentage of the global population. One person, or ten, or a thousand, or ten thousand, or even one-hundred thousand people alone cannot drink dry that abusive oceanic volume of architectural water – and neither will this writing or that of any of the others mentioned prior as they are just means to end – but they provoke conversation about why such

few numbers of people would try to drink an ocean dry so that all can, hopefully, come to understand their logic and then too pitch in a couple of swallows.

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