

The Psychosis of Race: Exploring the Post-Racial Imagination [Abstract only]

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The Psychosis of Race: Exploring the Post-Racial Imagination

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Abstract

In this presentation, I argue that race and racism must be approached not merely as social constructs or ideological fictions but as formations with a psychotic structure. Drawing on Lacanian theory, it is proposed that racism operates through mechanisms of foreclosure, certainty, and the *objet petit a* (now conceived as the object *a* of race). Denoting a strange element, which underwrites the subject's racialization, the object *a* of race functions to fabricate a 'something from nothing', thus producing the delusional coherence of racial difference. Alongside the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father, and the subsequent generation of an unbounded *jouissance* that binds the racialized subject to a racial order that imprisons and defines them, racism is explored as a constitutive defence against absence, which ultimately stabilizes the racial symbolic order by objectifying the Real through the racial other. Supported with analysis and discussion of Jordan Peele's, *Get Out*, Bernard Rose's, *Candyman*, Alfred Hitchcock's, *Psycho*, Toni Morrison's, *Beloved*, and the music of Kendrick Lamar, it is demonstrated how racial ideology functions as a delusional anchor that organises racialised subjectivity. In particular, attention is given to exploring how Lamar's music can serve as an aesthetic practice that stages a politics of doubt, indeed, a psychoanalytic ethics of non-knowledge that unsettles the paranoid certainties through which race sustains its reality. Through Lamar's formal play with time, voice, and silence, the presentation develops the idea that resistance to psychotic certainty requires the cultivation of doubt as an ethical and aesthetic mode. It is in this cultivation that we can begin to think not beyond race, but within its very impossibility.

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