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## **I'm a Pervert and I like My Eggs Sunny Side Up**

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Sculpture

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(Figure .1) Egg vs Rock



(Figure .2) Egg frying on the rock

## INTRODUCTION

There is a Korean proverb 계란으로 바위치기 (fig .1): To strike a rock with an egg. The act of striking a rock with an egg can seem menial and nonsensical; attempting to break the rock without immediate, tangible results. This proverb feels especially true to those who want to make social and cultural changes to society and world at large. The discouragement and hopelessness is even more relevant when associated with racial and gender discourses, which will be examined in this essay. However, the rock gets dirtier every time you strike it with eggs. In addition, there are always others with you, throwing eggs. Moreover, you can make fried eggs on the rock (fig .2) on an especially hot day; make sure their sunny side up<sup>1</sup>

Chapter One of this research paper covers the racial discourse of racialised bodies navigating through the colonised Western world. It will examine the sexual fetishisation of Asian woman by the Western male gaze. How does racial otherisation of these individuals create internalised racism further complicating the racial dynamic? I come full circle in this discussion from disassociation with my Korean heritage, to ultimately accepting and embracing my cultural identity through the performance documentation of *Kimchi in my mouth 5EVA*, where the importance of language and cultural subjecthood is examined.

<sup>1</sup> JR Thorpe, "Why Do People Expect Women To Smile?" Bustle , 7 July 2017, <https://www.bustle.com/p/why-do-people-expect-women-to-smile-67360>

Chapter Two will deconstruct the gender discourse in Korea where phallogentric values are rooted in reproducing a hyper feminisation of the Asian female body, robbing women of positive self-image and agency. *I'm a warm tone, so pink isn't my colour*, *Shitting on the moon* and 'cute-ification' of the phallus reveals and criticises the absurdity of the patriarchy and daily misogyny faced by women.

Chapter Three will continue the discussions of gender discourse, examining the theory of 'penis envy' by Sigmund Freud, the importance of woman's laughter, and clitoral orgasm to liberate oneself from the phallogentric narrative; to reclaim and recreate their agency and subjecthood. I unpack my desire to navigate my life without interruption; interruption being the reduction of one's self to otherness; the failure to meet society's deeply engrained expectations of femininity; and people's cultural, historical and social perceptions of oneself in which discouraging and discounting senses of identity are forced to be internalised; that is until you've had enough and lose your sanity. Or, perhaps find your sanity in order to reconstruct reality through laughter, orgasms, and 'cute' objects!

## CHAPTER ONE:

난누구, 여긴어디?ㅋㅋㅋㅋㅋㅋ

### WHO AM I, WHERE AM I? KKKKKK <sup>2</sup>

*“Do you think I could ever exist outside the realm of being labelled as the Asian female artist?” I asked. He said, “No you will always be the Asian female artist, whether you like it or not.”*

I remember the day before I started at SCA; I bleached my hair and died it purple. I wanted to differentiate myself from the ‘ordinary’ Asian girl and preferred to be referred to as the “girl with the purple hair”. I realised my naivety in thinking that I would be the only girl with purple hair in an art school. My usual interaction with a white person would always follow something along the lines of them, futilely recalling any knowledge they have of Korea and/or that one Korean friend they knew named Kim and/or inquiring whether I was from the “Good Korea” or the “Bad Korea” <sup>3 4 5</sup>. It is as if there is nothing else to be talked about or related to because of the racial difference; my otherness. I’d rather they notice my well-co-ordinated, matching electric blue turtleneck and sock combination instead of our racial differences.

#### **ORIENTALISM**

Whiteness and heterosexuality are the natural, normal or default background against which everything else is foregrounded as different. To feel the differences is to fail to maintain the subjectivity and to be objectified. Sarah Ahmed writes that the body shifts, “from an active body, which extends itself through objects, to one that is negated or stopped in its tracks...”<sup>6</sup> To be not white and not heterosexual is a provocation and disruption in space, and a dislocation of the individual.<sup>7</sup> The familiarity of the “white world” as a world we know implicitly, “disorients” racialised bodies; they cease to know where to find things, as they are reduced to things amongst other things<sup>8</sup>. Racism disorients the individual, diminishing their capacities for action. Colonialism has

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<sup>2</sup> ‘ㅋㅋㅋㅋㅋㅋ’ is equivalent to ‘hahaha’ in Korean, but the direct translation of the alphabet ㅋ makes the sound K, so similar to kekeke

<sup>3</sup> An actual question I was asked by woman with ginger hair working at a sex toy shop, doing her PhD in sexology.

<sup>4</sup> Min Jin Lee, “North good, south bad? Time to shed the Korea stereotypes” The Guardian, 13 February 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/12/north-south-koreakoreans>

<sup>5</sup> Alan Stokes. “Redhead rage: is gingerism like racism?” Sydney Morning Herald, 12 April 2016, <https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/redhead-rage-is-gingerism-like-racism-20160411-go3l7x.html>

<sup>6</sup> Sara Ahmed. “Orient and the other others” in Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006. pg 109-118

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, pg 109-118

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, pg 109-118

made (and makes) the world 'white', a world only 'ready' for certain kinds of bodies. Edward Said's text classic *Orientalism* (1978) suggests, "the orient was almost a European invention and had been since a place of romance, exotic beings, landscapes and remarkable experiences."

The Orient is not an empty place; it is full of all which is "not Europe", and which in its "not-ness" seems to point to another way of being in the world; full of desire, and a world of sexuality and sensuality. It is not only full of signs of desire in how it is represented and 'known' within the West, it is also desired by the West as having things the West itself is assumed to be lacking. This fantasy of lack (of what is 'not here') shapes the desire for what is 'there'<sup>9</sup> as the constitutive outside of the Occident. Most importantly, the conceptual making of 'the Orient' is an exercise of power as 'the Orient' is made oriental as a submission to the authority of the West.

## **YELLOW FEVER**

Yellow Fever is defined as the contemporary sexualisation of the Orient; the racial fetishisation of Asian women.<sup>10</sup> It is cultural portrayal of them as facades of either the submissive, domestic 'Lotus blossom'; or the seductive and treacherous 'Dragon lady'<sup>11</sup> in films, pornography, sex tourism, war brides, and mail order brides.<sup>12</sup> Represented as sexually erotic creatures, silent and oppressed wives, and/or mothers with Confucius family centred values, it is (to the West) the embodiment of the best of the both worlds. Asian female sexuality and femininity are based within, and determined by, a racist patriarchal ideology. The supposedly shy, polite, passive racial 'essence' produces 'double feminisation' of the Asian women. It is this double feminisation that increases the sexual capital of Asian women but not that of Asian men. According to Michael B Lewis, in attractiveness, Asian women rank the highest, whilst Asian men, the lowest.<sup>13</sup> In popular media, Asian women have greater representation compared to Asian men; this supports the claim that it is extremely unrealistic to deny the connection with one's preference for Asian women from the over exposure to historically and culturally saturated stereotypes of Asian women.<sup>14</sup>

Through accepting exoticisation of Asian women, one accepts a white racist stereotype of beauty. Asian women endure the feelings of being locked out of mainstream standards of Western beauty even in the Asian beauty standards, as they find westernised features more appealing<sup>15</sup>; such as double eyelids, sharper jawline, fair skin, and taller nose bridge. The target of Yellow Fever feels

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<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, pg 109-118

<sup>10</sup> Robin Zheng. "Why Yellow Fever Isn't Flattering: A Case against Racial Fetishes." *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 2, no. 3 (2016)

<sup>11</sup> Celine Parreñas Shimizu. *The Hypersexuality of Race: Performing Asian/American Women on Screen and Scene*. Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2007

<sup>12</sup> Zheng, *ibid.*, pg. 408

<sup>13</sup> Michael B Lewis. "A Facial Attractiveness Account of Gender Asymmetries in Interracial Marriage." *PLoS One* 7, no. 2 (2012): e31703

<sup>14</sup> Zheng, *ibid.*, pg. 406

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, pg 408

and is otherised; one is separated and held to a different standard. There shouldn't be a difference between 'sexy' and 'sexy Asian'.

A common defence of racial fetishes is the claim of the mere preference argument (MPA)<sup>16</sup>, in which sexual attraction is based purely on an aesthetic reason. Advocates of MPA equate racial fetishes to preferences for phenotype traits such as blondes over brunettes, which are morally acceptable. This gives MPA a special merit in a supposedly "post-racial" society where many people claim that race no longer matters. Sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva calls this as 'colour blind' ideology,<sup>17</sup> where people deny the existence of racial difference and claim "we are one race, the human race". This colour blind theory seems to be a harmless notion; if anything it embodies the sentiments of a peace advocate. However, MPA and colour blind theory denies the presence of racial discrimination, prejudice, and bias. It is important to recognise this habit of mind as it erases the social and historical reality of a racially ordered world and different treatment based on racialised phenotypes. It reproduces and continues the racial stereotypes and bias that does not allow any marginalised person to be seen as an individual instead of a racialised body, trapping them in a system of oppression.

Upon looking up Yellow Fever (and also through personal experience), white men who prefer Asian women are linked to an interest in Anime and Manga, associated with 'nerds', 'geeks' and Otaku culture.<sup>18</sup> White men who only seek to date Asian women are often viewed as men unable to date white women; these men are considered to be 'inferior goods', 'rejects', 'losers' and only acceptable to 'inferior' Asian women who are motivated by marital gain.<sup>19</sup> These negative stereotypes further complicate the psychological evaluation of Asian women's relationships with white men and their own self-image. It is also reflective of economic realities where many Asian immigrant women from the lower classes desire to marry a white man to escape poverty<sup>20</sup>. They often accept men who are older, unattractive and socially inept.<sup>21 22</sup> These results conform to an

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<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, pg. 414

<sup>17</sup> Zheng, *ibid.*, pg. 209

<sup>18</sup> otaku: (in Japan) a young person who is obsessed with computers or particular aspects of popular culture to the detriment of their social skills

<sup>19</sup> Zheng *ibid* pg. 411

<sup>20</sup> Rosalind Sue Chou, "Asian American Sexual Politics: The Construction of Race, Gender, and Sexuality." ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Sheridan Prasso, *The Asian Mystique: Dragon Ladies, Geisha Girls, & our Fantasies of the Exotic Orient*. 1st ed. New York: Public Affairs, 2005.

<sup>22</sup> Bitna Kim, "Asian Female and Caucasian Male Couples: Exploring the Attraction." *Pastoral Psychology* 60, no. 2 (2011): 233-244.



## INTERNALISED RACISM + YELLOW FEVER = LOVE?!

Internalised racism is when an individual adopts the racist stereotypes, ideologies, values and images perpetuated by the white dominant society about one's own race, feeling inferior due to their racial identity.<sup>23</sup> This often costs the individual self-doubt, disgust, and disrespect for ones race and oneself.

My adolescent years were spent wishing I could be white. I was simultaneously too visible and too invisible; I wanted to be noticed. I used to look at myself in the mirror and exclaim "Ew, I'm so fucking Asian," and started seeking validation from my white friends, who would 'compliment' me by saying, "You're the coolest Asian I've ever met." I felt so accepted and 'cool'; I wasn't like the 'other' Asian girls anymore. I actively avoided being seen with a large group of Asians, in the fear of being called "Chinatown". I'd do my make-up with a subconscious focus in wanting to 'look' whiter, such as wearing blue contacts (fig. 3); doing/dying my hair; and dressing a certain way to differentiate myself from the 'fobs'.<sup>24</sup> Speaking of 'fobs', I remember seeing an image on my fellow Korean friends Nokia phone. Her background image was stylised text, stating 'I heart FOBS' in similar style to the culturally famous I heart NY shirts. I got her to send it to me and it stayed as my background until a white friend asked if I liked the "fall out boys".<sup>25</sup> I dressed up as a banana for sports carnivals (fig. 4), claiming "yellow on the outside, white on the inside". This is a good example of a Korean proverb 누워서 침뱉기, spitting lying down as in to spit on one's own face. Roughly equivalent to the Australian slang pissing into the wind.



(Figure. 3 )Sixteen year old self with blue contacts (unwary on cultural appropriation (re: indian headdress in the background, which I wore for my sixteenth birthday). We are all a continued work in progress)



(Figure .4) Banana Highschool self

<sup>23</sup> Karen D Pyke, "What is Internalised Racial Oppression and Why Don't we Study it? Acknowledging Racism's Hidden Injuries." *Sociological Perspectives* 53, no. 4 (2010): pg. 551-572.

<sup>24</sup> 'fob: fresh off the boat' a derogatory slang usually used for asian immigrants.

<sup>25</sup> Fall out boys abbreviation also fob, they are an american punk rock band

My ex-boyfriend is a white man ten years my senior, who found me the 'most beautiful' women he'd ever met. He serenaded me with compliments and worshipped me. He worshipped Korea too; so much so, that after a trip to Korea, he brought back the biggest Korean flag I had ever seen and hung it up on his bedroom wall because he was proud. He also loved K-pop<sup>26</sup> and he would hum along to the newest tracks wearing his favourite shirt that was custom made for him, which said 'Hentai'<sup>27</sup> and the number 69 on the back. He bought Japanese schoolgirl uniforms<sup>28</sup> for me to wear and he loved his e-sports.<sup>29</sup> I had subconsciously (or perhaps willingly) blocked these signs of weeaboo<sup>30</sup> traits as my desires for white male validation blinded me to my own internalised racism. I felt I had become white as he had become Korean through dating each other. He later got married to a Korean girl within a year of our break up (who eerily looks like me). As difficult as the realisation of this dynamic of internalised racism and Yellow Fever had been, ironically this relationship had made me embrace certain specificities of my cultural identity; I came to love my Korean heritage and culture... to love my 'Asian-ness'.

### ***Kimchi in My mouth 5EVA!***

This idea of branding my 'Asian-ness' and cultural specificity provoked the work *Kimchi in my mouth 5eva*. The video documentation of the performance takes place in a garage studio in my parents' backyard (like they say, big things start from your parents garage<sup>31</sup>). I am sitting on the floor, with my back to the camera (fig. 5). The reflection from the mirror is obstructed, the viewers are curious, as the buzzing sound of the tattoo machine and my "unlady-like" position, is almost suggestive of masturbating with a vibrator. Thus, making the actions of branding myself, an act of self-pleasure.

As the mouth is a position of taking something in and a place of expression, I tattooed the word 'kimchi' upon my inner lip. Tattoos are illegal in Korea<sup>32</sup>, still associated with gangsters and outcasts. My father hates tattoos. As a daughter, being tattooed brings great shame, embarrassment and dishonour to the family. However, for me, tattoos were more than a rebellious

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<sup>26</sup> K-pop: abbreviation of Korean Pop music

<sup>27</sup> Hentai: a sub genre of the Japanese anime, characterised by overtly sexualised characters and sexually explicit images and plots. in short, animated pornography. Hentai means pervert in direct translation <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Hentai>

<sup>28</sup> Sharon Kinsella, "What's Behind the Fetishism of Japanese School Uniforms?". *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body, & Culture* 6, no. 2 (2002): 215-37.

<sup>29</sup> Multiplayer online game played competitively with spectators, typically by professional gamers.

<sup>30</sup> Weeaboo: A person who retains an unhealthy obsession with Japan and Japanese culture, typically ignoring or even shunning their own racial and cultural identity. <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Weeaboo>

<sup>31</sup> David Batty, "Steve Jobs: from parents' garage to world power", *The guardian*, 6 October 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2011/oct/06/steve-jobs-timeline-apple>

<sup>32</sup> Tim Chan, "Inside the Underground Subculture of Female Korean Tattoo Artists," *Vice*, 14 June 2017, [https://www.vice.com/en\\_au/article/qv4zjx/inside-the-underground-subculture-of-femalekorean-tattoo-artists](https://www.vice.com/en_au/article/qv4zjx/inside-the-underground-subculture-of-femalekorean-tattoo-artists)

gesture to my conservative father. It gives me a sense of autonomy over my body and helps to interrogate the gaze which attempts to objectify me; to permanently mark my own body, on my own terms. While I didn't get to decide the skin I was born in, tattooing allows me to create almost what is a second skin.

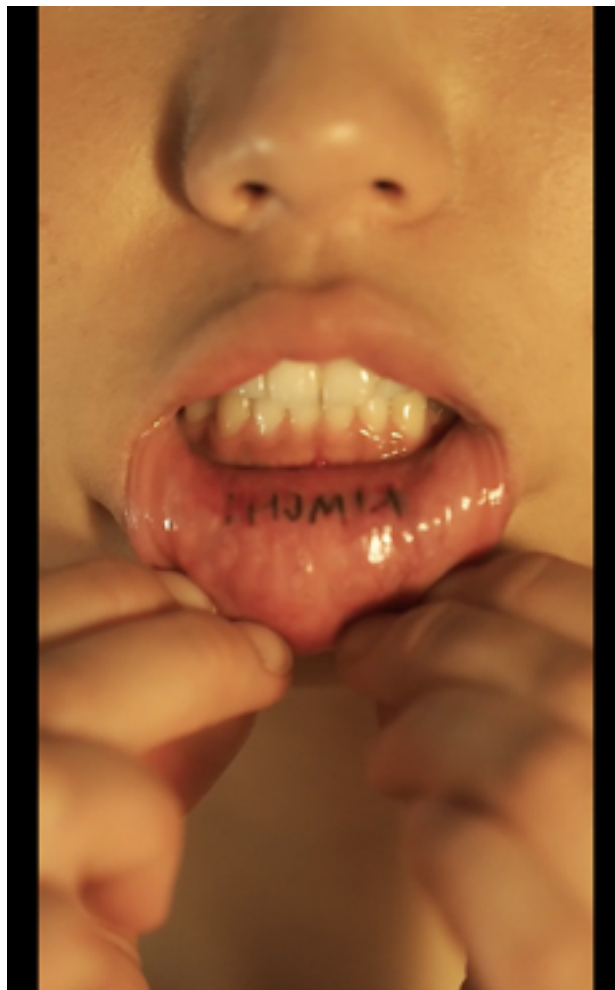
The masochist act of tattooing myself is my way of reclaiming my subjectivity; I am Korean inside and out. Coming full circle from my high school days when I would claim to be a banana, I am no longer 'white' on the inside as I have *Kimchi in my mouth 5eva*. Not just forever/4ever, either. As the number 5 is greater than 4, it is more infinite than forever. The title is a humorous attempt at emphasising the permanence of tattoos and the patriotic pride in the 'kimchi' Koreans create. In addition, I wanted to redefine "Kimchi-nyeo", a derogatory term used to describe Korean women by Korean men. I no longer wish to allow men to categorise and reduce women, particularly myself. This term will be discussed further in chapter two.

The second half of the video is a close-up of my lips, in slow motion I count to three in Korean and say "Kimchi~~" which is the Korean equivalent of the West's "1,2,3, say cheese!" I migrated with my family to Australia in 2004 at the age of eight. Naturally my foundational emotions and social, cultural ideologies were developed in Korean. So, to this day it is only natural for me to part with my shoes at the entrance of the house, and it is still foreign to greet people with kisses.

There are many found objects arranged within the installation, spatial collage. The 'Oriental'<sup>33</sup> objects were found in second hand stores and in Korea such as the screen divider, red tasselled ornaments, the traditional smoke pipe (fig .6) with a cigarette, and the making of moon vessels. Collecting them is a way of reclaiming and rescuing the culture I once abandoned. As I speak Korean in the video, I stamp them on vessels to return to them a greater sense of appreciation and adoration, reflecting back upon my internalised hatred and disassociation develop due to my feelings of racial inferiority. I wish Konglish could be an acceptable language on its own. I would say "English is my second language" as a joke at times when I would feel embarrassed for a mispronounced word. I would like to blame my bilingual capabilities and the different oral structures that are activated within the English and Korean languages. English has a rounder and softer consonant whereas Korean consonants are harsher and separate. I used to avoid speaking Korean entirely for a while as I feared my English skills would deteriorate if I constantly spoke Korean.

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<sup>33</sup> They are not considered to be really oriental for me as they are a object of the every day.



(Figure .5) *Kimchi in my mouth* 5eva 2018 - still from video



(Figure .6) Smoking a cigarette with traditional Korean pipe, my ancestors would be proud

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **KIMCHI BITCH**

#### **Misogyny in Korea: Discourse of Kimchi-nyeo**

Back when it felt like I was stuck between two worlds (Korea and Australia) I felt the need to choose one over another. So, I rejected my Korean heritage as I found it extremely conservative compared to the ‘progressive’ attitudes of Australia. Growing up in a compact house with Korean parents, there was an emphasis on success via academical achievements as not to let their migrant-related sacrifices and torments be in vain. However, it seemed like the emphasis of my ‘success’ was to be wedded to a good husband; like I was some sort of a property to be given to a man to take care of later. My parents would warn me to behave myself, so I remain reputable within the small Korean community in Sydney. “No one will want you if you act like that” is something I was told repeatedly. I should be more like a lady, be less loud, less bright, more feminine, more careful... Naturally my behaviours and looks were constructed in a way to be appealing to men, my self-worth measured by male validation.

It is true that most Koreans consume kimchi daily; I testify this to be true. You are not considered a true Korean unless you eat Kimchi every day. Korea is obsessively proud of it<sup>34</sup>, and rightly so as Korean households have a separate fridge solely for kimchi. Ironically, it is also used as a derogatory slang word for Korean woman. An online male community website called Ilbe ([ilbe.com](http://ilbe.com)) created in 2010 came up with 김치녀/년 Kimchi -nyeo/-nyeon (-girl,women/-bitch). It is Korea’s third largest online community as of October 2016<sup>35</sup>. The common website visitor, for comparison

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35 *ibid.*,

purposes, is very similar to Incels<sup>36 37</sup> in the west. Kimchi nyeo expands to serve negative stereotypes of the Korean female image. The most commonly used hate speech follows as such, “Korean women only see marriage as business and judge men based on their wealth,”<sup>38</sup> and “They are obsessed with plastic surgeries and appearances only to seduce men.”<sup>39</sup>



(Figure.7) Kimchi- nyeo vs Sushi- nyeo

Kimchi-nyeo’s are often compared with their Japanese counterpart, Sushi-nyeo (fig. 7). Japanese women are called Sushi-nyeo, this online terminology revealing how ethnicity, food and gender function together. Not just because cooking and food have traditionally been regarded as ‘women’s work’,<sup>40</sup> but also because women are the ‘cultural carriers’.<sup>41</sup> Sushi-nyeo are stereotyped to be faithful, subservient, sacrificial, and fulfilling ‘women’s roles’, while earning money and being economically independent. This internalised orientalism is a very familiar stereotype to the Western man. Regardless of the reality of Japanese women, they project their ideologies, desires and fantasies onto them, hyper feminizing and sexualising them as the perfect wife. One Ilbe<sup>42</sup> user comments, “I think our mothers’ generation was like the Japanese woman.... [while] Kimchi-nyeon, the bitch, sees her husband as her father or guardian, treats her husband like an ATM...<sup>43</sup> she complains and neglects her duty as a wife regarding sexual intercourse, housework, and cooking.”

<sup>36</sup> Incels: online subculture of men who are involuntarily celibate as they are sexually unattractive to women. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incel>

<sup>37</sup> Zack Beauchamp/Incel. “the misogynist ideology that inspired the deadly Toronto attack, explained”. Vox. <https://www.vox.com/world/2018/4/25/17277496/incel-toronto-attack-alekminassian> Apr 25, 2018

<sup>38</sup> Jacqueline Ryan Vickery, Tracy Everbach, and SpringerLink. “Misogyny for Male Solidarity: Online Hate Discourse Against Women in South Korea by Jinsook Kim ” in *Mediating Misogyny: Gender, Technology, and Harassment*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

<sup>39</sup> Vickery. *ibid.*, pg 151-164

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*,pg 151-164

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*,pg 151-164

<sup>42</sup> User of the website [ilbe.com](http://ilbe.com)

<sup>43</sup> Vickery. *ibid.*,pg 151-164



This reminds me of a comment an older Chinese man made at a bar I used to work in, “Women are only good for three things: Cooking, Cleaning and Sex.” The World Economic Forum’s 2017 Global Ranking of Gender Equality ranks Japan 114th followed by South Korea 118th out of 145 countries. Australia is ranked 35th.<sup>44</sup> The discourse of Kimchi-nyeo demonstrates Korean men’s eager misogynistic attitude and anxiety over the ‘male bread winner ideology’ and changing gender relations. Their attempt to reiterate a masculinity that needs continuous reinforcement, reveals the fragility and instability of the supposedly universal notions of masculinity and patriarchal ideology.



(Figure. 8) Ads for plastic surgery in South Korean

As Simone de Beauvoir stated, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.”<sup>45</sup> Women are expected and enforced to conform to the patriarchal ideas of femininity and beauty. The unrealistic beauty standards are of a high importance in South Korea, as it is easily the world’s most cosmetically enhanced country;<sup>46</sup> this is no surprise with the rise of K-beauty and K-pop entering the global market. Korean women are consistently coddled into insecurity and doubting their appearances, pushed to believe that plastic surgery is a social norm. Korea owns 24% of the plastic surgery market share, worth 5 trillion dollars as of 2014. Plastic surgery is part of their daily lives with endless advertisements seen on public transports, in streets, and in mainstream media (fig. 8). The number of plastic surgery patients increase during the entertainment industry’s recruitment season as applicants that are attractive have a greater likelihood of being recruited during the recruitment processes; attaching your photos to the resume is expected. Often, as a graduation gift, parents pay for their children’s plastic surgery.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> The Global Gender Gap report 2017 [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2017.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2017.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Simone de Beauvoir, Constance Borde, and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier. *The Second Sex*. 1st American ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.

<sup>46</sup> Korean Plastic Surgery Statistics <https://www.seoultouchup.com/korean-plastic-surgery-statistics/>

<sup>47</sup> Ho Kyeong Jang, “Why is Plastic Surgery So Popular in South Korea?”. *Korea Expose*. 9 January 2018. <https://www.koreaexpose.com/plastic-surgery-popular-south-korea-history/>

***I'm a warm tone, I don't look good in pink.***

Plastic surgery seems like an intense choice and commitment to obtain 'beauty', and to feel desirable and confident. It is a common to hear, "beauty is pain" and this is especially true during the making of the *I'm a warm tone*<sup>48</sup>, *I don't look good in pink*. I appear in the screen 'armoured' in pink 'torture' devices. The objects are East Asian beauty inventions I have come across. It is bewildering to realise that there is a market and a demand for these items as they are being mass-produced. The results are proven to quite ineffective but perhaps it doesn't matter... maybe the placebo effect is good enough for the consumers, as there's a product for any and all insecurities. It didn't require too much effort to collect these torture devices in the common colour, pink. The colour pink seems to be an attempt at 'cutifying' the absurdity, making it palatable for the grim 'functionality' of these objects. The head gear tightens the jaw for a smaller face; the glasses for a double eye lid (fig .9); the nose clip for a narrower nose; and the breast pump for bigger boobs.

In the second part of the video I attempt to blow bigger bubbles, I endured this suffocating feeling as the nose clip limited the exhale of the breathe, disallowing oxygen to come through. The monstrosity which unfolds interrogates ideas around women's desire for beauty. One needs to wonder if their daily practices to look 'beautiful' are to empower and satisfy oneself, or if it promotes low self-esteem, imposed by the patriarchal and misogynistic ideologies and values of beauty. Male validation should not be one's source of self-worth as this is following the phallogentric narrative of women's lives. It is critically important for women to feel beautiful in their own skin without having to feel consistent negative feelings of one's physicality because it is not considered to be desirable for man.

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<sup>48</sup> Miki Hayes. "Warm Or Cool Skin Tone: 5 Questions To Help You Determine Your Undertones, So You Can Find The Prettiest Colors For You" Bustle <https://www.bustle.com/articles/36375-warm-or-cool-skin-tone-5-questions-to-help-you-determine-your-undertones-so-you-can> 22 August 2014





figure.9 *I'm a warm tone, I don't look good in pink* 2018- still from video

### ***Shitting on the moon***

Moon jar (달항아리) are traditional Korean vessels, where two bowls are thrown and combined to make a circular moon-like shape, and recreates the odd imperfections as beautiful, like the concept of 'Wabi-Sabi'. Each one different to one another, each with perfect imperfections, as we are individually. The moon jar is considered to be feminine, as the waxing and waning of the moon coincides with the length of the menstrual cycles, occurring around every twenty eight days. The surface of this vessel is stamped with English letters and letters from the Korean alphabet (hangeul), translating to words of misogyny and patriarchal notions of 'femininity' that is emphasised for and enforced upon women. The process of stamping was therapeutic, as I stamped each letter one after another, the repetitive act deconstructing and reminding myself of the oppressive construction of language. To translate a few:

“남자는 주방 들어가면 고추떨어져” / “If a man enters the kitchen, his penis would fall off” (This is commonly said to excuse men from engaging with domestic duties such as cooking and cleaning.)

“여자 나이는 크리스마스 케이크와 같다 —23일부터 잘팔리다가 25일부터는 팔리지않고, 30일에는 폐기된다.” / “A woman’s age is like a Christmas cake —It’s popular from the 23rd, seizes sale from the 25th and gets disposed on the 30th.” (An analogy for women’s age as women’s ‘f\*ckability’ has an expiration date, implying a woman’s worth is measured by physical beauty and their youth to determine their sexual desirability.)

The word ‘SEXY’ appears multiple times over the vessel. Any woman with a respectable job or values are immediately discounted and reduced as a sexual commodity through the adjective ‘SEXY’.



(Figure .10) Rabbit Vibrator



(Figure .11) Rabbit on the moon making rice cakes

There is a “cute little” bunny sitting in an ‘Asian squat’<sup>49</sup>, shitting on top of the vessel. In the West, the rabbits represents the feminine as it symbolises fertility.<sup>50</sup> Rabbit is characterised as docile, and self-sacrificial perhaps all qualities desired in a woman.<sup>51</sup> This iconography of rabbits have been manifested in the West through the Playboy bunny and rabbit vibrators (fig .10). However, in Korean folklore, rabbits are perceived as erudite, smart and mischievous, despite its ‘weak’ physical traits.<sup>52</sup> In contrast to tigers who are stronger, but stupid. So, there are many tales of rabbits fooling the scariest tiger of the mountain, with its sharp wits (the stories are usually an analogy to criticise and reflect upon the class hierarchy of the aristocrats and proletariat<sup>53</sup>). You are told as a little kid in Korea that there are two rabbits on the moon making rice cakes (fig. 11), It is fascinating that ‘making the rice cake’ (떡치다) is a contemporary slang to sex, because the sound of making rice cakes sounds similar to the sound of sexual activities. The inversion of power is reminiscent of the Carnavalesque, a concept theorised by the Russian academic Mikhail Bakhtin in his book *Rabelais and His World* (1965)<sup>54</sup>.



(Figure .12) Tomorrow Power Troop Girls      (Figure .13) Guerrilla Girls

A feminist collective called Tomorrow Girls Troop (TG) also uses the rabbit as a common motif in their artwork. TGT are East Asian artists, activists and academics who fight for gender equality and queer identities. Inspired by the Guerrilla Girls (fig .13), TGT wears pink rabbit masks (fig .12). They critically engage with pop and kawaii culture and creatively reference commercials, internet memes, magazines, and comics to open up conversations about feminism to wider audiences. In

<sup>49</sup> Fung Bros, “ASKING RANDOM PEOPLE TO DO THE ASIAN SQUAT” youtube 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJx3smlfk1U>

<sup>50</sup> 유연수. “달토끼와 두꺼비” 한국민화센터  
 Yeon Soo Yoo, “Moon Rabbit and the Toad” Korean Minhwa Centre [http://minhwacenter.com/base/business/part\\_01.php?com\\_board\\_basic=read\\_form&com\\_board\\_idx=22](http://minhwacenter.com/base/business/part_01.php?com_board_basic=read_form&com_board_idx=22)

<sup>51</sup> Natalie Hegert, “The art group preaching girl power to Japan,” Dazed Digital, <http://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/29985/1/the-all-female-art-group-preaching-girlpower-to-japan-tomorrow-girls-troop>. 24 Febuary, 2016

<sup>52</sup> Yoo *ibid.*,

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*,

<sup>54</sup> Mikhali Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*. Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 1984.

Korea and Japan, feminists are conceived to be too radical, aggressive or theoretical, and misunderstood to only benefit women.<sup>55</sup> The burgeoning fourth wave nests a new generation of feminist discourse in the “ecology of the Internet”.<sup>56</sup> They want to provoke discussions and question the norm, raising awareness and consciousness by inviting people to look beyond the frameworks of heteronormative and patriarchal oppression in society.

One of the founders of TGT stated that “a lot of Japanese girls associate themselves with rabbits.” With their rabbit masks, they wish to redefine and reclaim the rabbit as a symbol of empowerment, and peace, (not from a place of anger). They fight towards the happiness and betterment of society, for the girls of tomorrow.<sup>57</sup> This re-channelling of the energy from anger to hopefulness is crucial in this time, to open discussion to broader audiences and allow serious engagement of the gender discourse. If feelings of anger and ‘misandry’ are easily felt, it only widens the gap between the two sexes. However, the use of cute aesthetics and the role of humour allows this reach to happen.

I don’t mean to shit on femininity, but also do mean to shit on the male construction of “femininity” that is used to maintain the phallogocentric system. As the rabbit is shitting in the jar, the relation between the grotesque and humour acts to subvert the status quo like Bakhtin, TGT and the Guerrilla Girls.

## **KAWAII**

Upon visiting East Asia, you will find that everything is ‘cutified’. Birthed after World War II, ‘Kawaii’, meaning ‘cute’ in Japanese, was a reaction of national-cultural anxieties about youth and national futurity. They wanted their everyday commodities to be tender, whimsical, and envision a romantic world.<sup>58</sup> The aesthetics of cute is much more prominent in Asia than the West, as it is another realm of culture. I would go so far to re-define the East Asian culture of the aesthetics of cute as ‘Kawaii culture’. ‘Cuteness’ seems ineligible with grotesque aesthetic, but in fact, it is closely linked to the grotesque as cute objects are fundamentally deformed and odd in proportions (compared to ordinary bodies). The cute aesthetics of popular culture (‘kawaii’) represents “a readymade race of loveable inferiors whom both children and adults collect, patronise, and enslave in the protective concubinage of vast harems of homely dolls and snuggle some misfits.”<sup>59</sup> They are often missing anatomical details such as a mouth, fingers and sex organs.

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<sup>55</sup> Hegert *ibid.*,

<sup>56</sup> Tomorrow Girls troop, Firstdraft <http://firstdraft.org.au/exhibitions/ashita-shoujo-tai-2/>

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*,

<sup>58</sup> Marilyn Ivy. "The Art of Cute Little Things: Nara Yoshitomo's Para-politics." *Mechademia* 5 (2010): 3-29.

<sup>59</sup> Daniel Harris. *Cute, Quaint, Hungry, and Romantic: The Aesthetics of Consumerism*. 1st Da Capo Press ed. New York: Da Capo Press, (2001).



Figure .14 Yoshimoto Nara's painting on my studio wall:  
The anger of the figure I resonate personally with.

Yoshimoto Nara (b.1959) is a Japanese artist whose works are closely associated with the aesthetics of cute and rebellion as “many women find his aesthetic an expressive way to identify their experiences of everyday in an advanced capitalist society and the conundrum of adulthood.”<sup>60</sup> A majority of his works display a single child in the frame, often angry and sad, drawing on the perpetual loneliness. However, this is the very basis of the ‘cute’ community, for those who find adulthood destitute and desire to postpone maturity, sustaining an unending sense of childhood. The ‘cutification’ of such raw dissatisfaction (fig.17) and dread of daily life is the politicisation of the aesthetics; this is what Marilyn Ivy refers to as para-politics based on shared effects and affection provoking a sense of association and communality difficult to establish.<sup>61</sup>

One of biggest consumer of kawaii objects are Asian women. You can easily find cute objects adorning their everyday lives; from soft toy dolls in their rooms, on their bags, ‘cutified’ make up and stationary, and even their actions are perceived as cute.<sup>62</sup> The exaggerated vulnerability and passivity of the aesthetics of cute is a disruptive indulgence of the patriarchal values of femininity. Woman’s fascination and obsession with the aesthetics of cute is almost like a religion of infantilism,<sup>63</sup> their resistance to engage with ‘real’ womanhood. This then provokes a sense of “aggressive and ugly” feelings as well as the obvious tender, maternal feelings. According to Sianne Ngai, “something is cute not because of the quality it has, but of the quality it lacks... the cute object is as often intended to excite a consumer’s sadistic desire for mastery and control as

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<sup>60</sup> Ivy *ibid.*,

<sup>61</sup> Ivy *ibid.*,

<sup>62</sup> Aegyo (Hangul:애교) in Korean refers to a cute display of affection often expressed including but not limited to through a cute/baby voice, facial expressions, and gestures. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6I9bIOEQxds>

<sup>63</sup> Harris *ibid.*,



much as his or her desire to cuddle.”<sup>64</sup> Empathising and identifying with a cute object’s ‘inferiority’ arouses a unique sense of comfort through familiarity and feelings of power as one feels superior over the cute objects.<sup>65</sup>

### Cutification of the phallus

It is evident that I am also a collector of cute objects, usually catering to my sexual humour, as my installation contains little ‘cutified’ phalluses (fig .15). The cutification of the penis works in a similar way to politicising the patriarchy and misogyny. I don’t find small sized penis ‘cute’ or funny, as discussed previously regarding the female orgasm. Size does not matter for majority of women as studies show that 84% of women are fine with their partner’s size. It is mostly men who are concerned (to the point of obsession) about size. In actuality, abnormally big penises can bruise the cervix, which is immensely painful, likened to bad period cramps<sup>66</sup>. Thus, the ‘cutification’ of the penis is the disempowerment of phallogocentric narratives, ideology and values.



(Figure .15) Squishy penis



Bitmoji's<sup>67</sup> are introduced from this chapter onwards as its cute presence further manifests the ideas of cuteness and humour. As well as making it more enjoyable to navigate this paper.

(Figure .15.b) Bitmoji\* “Cute”

<sup>64</sup> Sianne Ngai. "The Cuteness of the Avant-Garde." *Critical Inquiry* 31, no. 4 (2005): 811-47.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*,

<sup>66</sup> Emma MCGowan “What It's Like To Have A Bruised Cervix, The Sex Injury That No One Talks About”, *Bustle*, 28 October 2015, <https://www.bustle.com/articles/119634-what-its-like-to-have-abruised-cervix-the-sex-injury-that-no-one-talks-about>

<sup>67</sup> Bitmoji is a mobile phone app that allows users to create a personalised avatar to use as emojis

## CHAPTER THREE:

### FUNNY BANANAS

#### **SEXUAL HEALING: sexual humour as a woman**

I always found penis' quite funny; the unpredictability of a boner; its externality, simpler portrayal making it immediately funnier than the female genitalia. In her book, Grapefruit, Yoko Ono agrees with this sentiment, saying:

*"I wonder why men can get serious at all. They have this delicate long thing hanging outside their bodies, which goes up and down by its own will. First of all, having it outside your body is terribly dangerous. If I were a man, I would have a fantastic castration complex to the point that I wouldn't be able to do a thing. Second, the inconsistency of it.... If I were a man, I would always be laughing at myself. Humour is probably something the male species discovered through their own anatomy. But men are so serious. Why? Why violence?"<sup>68</sup>*

Jokes are a mean of social interaction, and men and women use humour in gendered ways "performing and reproducing the gender system"<sup>69</sup>. When women pretend not to understand sexual jokes or laugh politely at sexist jokes, they are following the social expectations and are "performing gender" in expected ways.<sup>70</sup> But, when women tell jokes that do not meet conventions, they are acting out of the role and dismissed as less than respectable, or even 'worse'; as a "liberated women".<sup>71</sup> Often times a woman who laughs at dirty jokes or even dares to tell her own is seen as indicating her willingness to accept a man's sexual intentions. Women are stuck with a double bind, where if they don't 'get' sexual jokes, they have no sense of humour but if they do get it, they're available. Males do not have to navigate through such restrictions<sup>72</sup>.

Liberated sexual jokes are more about sexism than about sex. They allows feminists to introduce uncomfortable subjects about societies that systematically keeps females at a disadvantage.<sup>73</sup> As women tell and hear more liberated jokes, perhaps they will also become less fearful of public displays of their own capability and intelligence. As an Asian woman (or perhaps most women

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<sup>68</sup> Yōko Ono. Grapefruit: A Book of Instructions + Drawings. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

<sup>69</sup> Mary Crawford. "Gender and Humour in Social Context." Journal of Pragmatics 35, no. 9 (2003): 1414

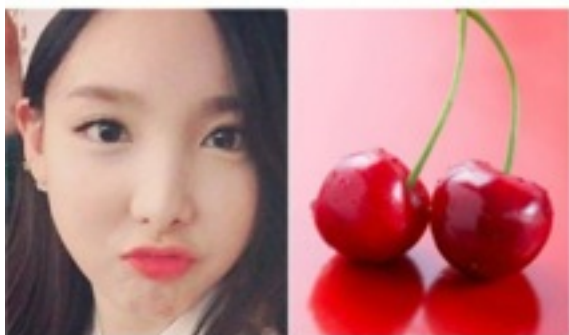
<sup>70</sup> Judith Butler. Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2011.

<sup>71</sup> Crawford *ibid.*,

<sup>72</sup> Janet, *ibid.*, pg 351.

<sup>73</sup> Janet, *ibid.*, pg 351.

regardless of their race), I'm led to believe that I need to remain soft spoken, shy and timid in a male-dominant group setting. The opposite couldn't be truer; I find myself making overt 'liberated' sexual jokes or making comical perverse gestures, which I have found intimidates and discomforts men. On the other hand, women find me very funny, and I find great joy in the sound of female laughter as they subvert the phallogocentric narrative that overrides the everyday.



(Figure .16) Cherry face



(Figure .17) Q: It's a fruit I like, A: BANANA

K-pop girl groups are often compared to fruits. It's called “과즙상” which roughly translates as “juicy-fruit face,” girls with characteristics that are reminiscent of “cute, fresh and youthful”<sup>74</sup> fruits such as cherries (fig .16), green apples, and peaches. Recently a ‘new’ idol group called *Celeb-five* debuted. The group is made up of five female comedians with the average age of 38.6 years and their combined show-biz experience of 100 years. One of the members Youngmi Ahn is infamous for her sexual jokes on TV, that are considered inappropriate and edited out due to Korea's conservative broadcasting regulations.<sup>75</sup> On a show called “Weekly Idols”, the *Celeb-five* was asked in turn which fruits they represented, amongst answers such as durian and dried date. When it came to Youngmi's turn, she gives them a wink and a hint, “It's a fruit I like,” revealing that it's a “banana” (fig .17).

Korean society places a strong emphasis on concepts of purity, naivety and cluelessness in women. 백치미 (this word is also stamped into the *Shitting on the moon* work) roughly equivalent to ‘bimbo’ is often considered to be an attractive trait. It is often told in both East and the West cultures that smart women are exhausting and unattractive, making her male counterpart feel inadequate. In particular regarding sexuality, women's aggressive displays and forwardness does not meet the passive archetype of a desired woman, resulting slut-shaming and being pigeonholed as ‘easy’. So, they are taught to play the ‘game’, play hard to get and make it more ‘fun’ for guys. In Korea, they call it ‘hunting’ for a man to pick up a woman they like off the streets likening women to

<sup>74</sup> 최희나, ‘과즙 뚝뚝 떨어지는 상큼 미모의 ‘과즙상’ 스타 6인’ 인사이드

Heena Choi, “6 stars who have ‘Juicy fruit face’ beauty that are dripping in sweet juice”, Insight , 24 March 2016, <https://www.insight.co.kr/newsRead.php?ArtNo=55556>

<sup>75</sup> 윤정미, ‘해투3’ 안영미 “활동 뜸한이유? 뭐만하면 편집 되더라” 뉴스1

Jung-Mi Yoon, ‘Happy together3’ Ahn Youngmi “The reasons for in activity? “Whatever I do I am edited out””News 1, 24 May 2018, <http://news1.kr/articles/?3326435>

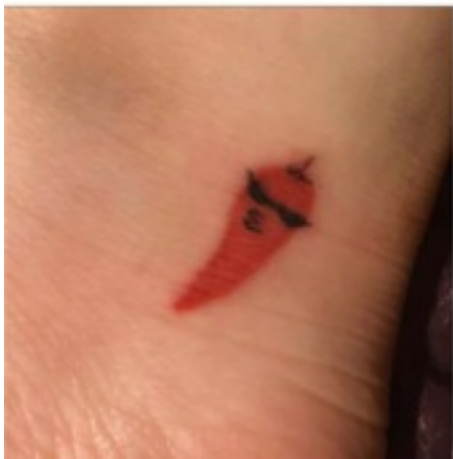


prey; a 'good' deer. Youngmi challenges these gender roles by outraging her viewers with her unapologetic approach and behaviours towards sex, reversing gender stereotypes and norms. She becomes the shameless hunter herself, on the lookout for hunks she can ravage. Her reluctance to filter herself and conform to the conservative restrictions are extremely liberating. I would like to hashtag this attitude #soznotsoz meaning "sorry not sorry"<sup>76</sup>, an unapologetic attitude towards being 'bad'. Women are taught to feel and say sorry all the time as 'our words feel like an imposition rather than a contribution.'<sup>77</sup>

## PENIS ENVY

I have an ongoing collection of fake bananas, accumulated over the years. I have a fascination with the phallic-ness of the banana, always having to hold myself back from placing it between my groins and imagining it as a dick. One of my favourite icebreaker jokes<sup>78</sup> is, "What did the left leg say to the right? Don't talk to the guy in the middle, he's a dick."

고추 (go-chu) means both chilli and the male genitalia in English. I tattooed myself a small chilly on my ankle (fig .18) so I could claim that I have a penis. Anybody who caught on with the play of the word would react in embarrassment and laughter. There is also a Korean proverb "작은고추가 더맵다" / "Smaller chillies are spicier", which is often used to warn someone not to underestimate another on the basis of his/her size.



(Figure .18) Gochu tattoo



(Figure 18.b) Bitmoji "Spicy"

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<sup>76</sup> soz: is an internet slang for sorry.

<sup>77</sup> Sydney Beveridge, "I Am Woman, Hear Me Apologize: My Quest To Stop Saying 'I'm Sorry' All The Damn Time" Huffingtonpost, 26 April 2018, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/women-stopapologizing\\_us\\_5ae0b420e4b04aa23f1e7f09](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/women-stopapologizing_us_5ae0b420e4b04aa23f1e7f09)

<sup>78</sup> Shared this joke during the Icebreaker time at a group job interview at T2, which scored me a job

I was at a bus stop around 2am, when a man approached me from a nearby pub with a schooner of VB. He asked, "Hey girl! Where are you going? What's your digits?" I paused for a minute, calculating the possibility of physical threat. Concluding that it was safe, I looked at him dead in the eyes and claimed "Just letting you know... I've got a dick". As he observed me, looking up and down my body, he said "YEAH RIGHT! Show me then!" I put a frown on my face, and winced "Oh man... I'm the shy type, so it's a little soft right now, maybe you could give me a hand and get it hard for me?" Looking horrified, he stood up and walked away. I was exhilarated, I felt a gush of blood rushing down my imaginary boner. I would describe this as one of my 'big dick energy'<sup>79</sup> moments.

All these subconscious and conscious jokes on having a penis might allude to what Freud would diagnose as 'penis envy'.<sup>80</sup> Freud believed little girls would look down and realise that she lacking a penis, would be perceived as a lesser version of her brother, doomed to be anxious and envious of males. Girls would grow up to desire her father and only overcome the envy through giving birth to a son or achieving vaginal orgasm with a phallus.<sup>81</sup> I guess I do have penis envy. Not because I necessarily want another leg between the two, but to have a penis would mean I had the power to repel a heterosexual man... or to do a helicopter dick.<sup>82</sup> Even better, with a penis would come the social, cultural and economic privileges and advantages associated to men. The world is so phallocentric that the size of a penis matter too, as males measure their masculinity upon the size of their genitals.<sup>83</sup> Freud believed the intensity of female orgasm was determined by the size of the penis (which is an absolute false claim<sup>84</sup>).

Feminist biologists in the 1980's began to question sex, or rather the knowledge if it. They learnt that the facts weren't resulting from value-free investigations. They were the results of scientific experiments subject to socio-cultural operation and assessment in which women traditionally had

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<sup>79</sup> Big Dick Energy: confidence and aura of a well "endowed" men. <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=big%20dick%20energy>

<sup>80</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Rev. ed. Vol. no. 57. London: Hogarth Press, 1962.

<sup>81</sup> jumbocockjoe, "Penis helicopter" Pornhub [https://www.pornhub.com/view\\_video.php?viewkey=ph5a26195bf2e15](https://www.pornhub.com/view_video.php?viewkey=ph5a26195bf2e15)

<sup>82</sup> Mari Ruti, *Penis Envy and Other Bad Feelings: The Emotional Costs of Everyday Life*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018.

<sup>83</sup> David Veale, Ertimish Eshkevari, Julie Read, Sarah Miles, Andrea Troglia, Rachael Phillips, Lina Maria Carmona Echeverria, Chiara Fiorito, Kevan Wylie, and Gordon Muir. "Beliefs about Penis Size: Validation of a Scale for Men Ashamed about their Penis Size." *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* 11, no. 1 (2014): 84-92.

<sup>84</sup> M. -H Colson. "Female Orgasm: Myths, Facts and Controversies." *Sexologies* 19, no. 1 (2010): 8-14.

little to no impact compared to men.<sup>85</sup> Eventually it is revealed that sex is not as universal or ahistorical as scientists had led the world to believe. Judith Butler wonders:

*“Are the ostensibly natural facts of sex discursively produced by various scientific discourses in the service of other political and social interests? if the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps the construct called ‘sex’ is as culturally constructed as gender; it was always already gender, with the consequence that distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction as all.”<sup>86</sup>!*

### **WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CLIT? Freud snorts coke and finds a G-spot in the nose, but what happened to the clitoris?**

As we are aware of Freud’s phallogocentric views, his claims of female sexuality are even more absurd. Many studies debunk and deplore similar Freudian theories, but his misogynistic legacies live on and are still prominent in the mainstream conscious. In 1901, Freud investigated the nasal-genital reflex theory with Dr. Whiliem Fleiss. They claimed that the nervous system makes a direct link between the erectile tissue in the genitals and the nose;. However, with modern technology, this has now been proven to be pseudoscience. It’s no surprise then that Freud was an advocate for the medicinal use of cocaine<sup>87</sup>. From these findings, it is evident that Freud’s G- spot was up his nose. Whilst he was searching up the nose and developed his homoerotic desires for Fleiss,<sup>88</sup> he had dismissed the clitoris as an “amputated penis”<sup>89</sup> and declared clitoral orgasm to be “infantile and immature”.<sup>90</sup> He claimed that little girls used this as a compensation until they find their true orgasm. According to Freud’s three essays on the theory of sexuality<sup>91</sup>, the mature female orgasm is achieved through penile penetration, the vagina valued only as a ‘receptacle for the penis’. Given this historical discourse of female sexuality, it is then not much of a surprise that to this day, so many women fake orgasm during sexual intercourse. If Freud’s theory was correct, women who don’t orgasm through vaginal sex, must have something wrong with them; they must be frigid, insecure and unadventurous. To make the matters worse, many heterosexual women desire to

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<sup>85</sup> Marianne van den Wijngaard. *Reinventing the Sexes: The Biomedical Construction of Femininity and Masculinity*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.

<sup>86</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2011.

<sup>87</sup> Charles Legge, “Sigmund the cocaine king.” *Daily Mail*, 2013, Mar 27, <http://ezproxy.library.usyd.edu.au/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/docview/1319722570?accountid=14757>

<sup>88</sup> Jacques Lacan,, Juliet Mitchell, and Jacqueline Rose. *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the École Freudienne*. London: Macmillan, 1982.

<sup>89</sup> Colson “Female orgasm..” *ibid.*,pg. 9

<sup>90</sup> Jane Gerhard, "Revisiting "the Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm": The Female Orgasm in American Sexual Thought and Second Wave Feminism." *Feminist Studies* 26, no. 2 (2000): 452

<sup>91</sup> Colson, *ibid.*, pg. 9

orgasm not for their own sake, but for the sake of their male partners. As not to damage his ego and causing feelings of inadequacy, we find that women's orgasms are consistently hindered by phallogocentric imperatives.<sup>92</sup>

Research shows that lesbians' orgasm more than heterosexual women. Heterosexual relationships revolve around penetrative sex, as the study found only a minority of heterosexuals consider manual genital stimulation (10.2-14.5% ) and oral (21.4-40 % ) as sex, whilst the majority find intercourse (94.8–99.5%) to be the definition of sex.<sup>93</sup> As research shows, clitoral stimulation is often times neglected in a majority of heterosexual relationships and is instead centred around the male pleasure, coming to an end after males orgasm, and solely focused on 'orgasm' achieved through penile-vaginal penetration. Lesbians engage in more diverse and experimental sexual activities involving oral, hands and toys.

Realising the pleasure principle, it seems a majority of women may begin to identify as lesbians as we are attentive to other aspects of sex other than penile penetration. While soon, men would be more compatible with sex-bots or sexdolls<sup>94</sup>. Please note, I'm not suggesting all women should become lesbians (although it sounds like the utopia Valerie Solanas would have dreamt of<sup>95</sup>). However, it is unjust to deprive women of their bodily pleasure, limiting and policing the great joys the body can bring. The female orgasm is a true liberation. It is 21st century and it is about time we unveil the truth to the female orgasm. It is our justice to cum. It is the biggest liberation to cum.



(Figure 18.c) Bitmoji "Scandalous"

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<sup>92</sup> Willis, M., KN Jozkowski, WJ Lo, and SA Sanders. "Are Women's Orgasms Hindered by Phallogocentric Imperatives?" *Archives of Sexual Behaviour* 47, no. 6 (2018): 1567

<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*, pg 1566

<sup>94</sup> Gavin Fernando, "How AI sex robots could 'change humanity completely'" *new.com.au* , 15 April 2018, <https://www.news.com.au/technology/innovation/inventions/how-ai-sex-robots-could-changehumanity-completely/news-story/4824a52c3c8907351bdf1ea5b49ac3d9>

<sup>95</sup> Valerie Solanas, *SCUM Manifesto*. London: Olympia Press, 1971

## Sex sculpture

Women are hyper-sexualised through media and pornography to serve the male fantasy; where men are more exposed to female masturbation in pornography than actual women to their own pleasure. Female pleasure as well as its feminist consciousness has been normalised in Western society, as more and more societies come to accept the female sexuality and desire. However, in Korea it is still very much of a taboo as pornography in Korea is illegal and sex education is very limited.<sup>96</sup>



(Figure .19) Pinky Queen



(Figure .20) Sqweel



(Figure .21) Fornicorn

*Sex sculpture* is a gadget I have created to recoup for the discourse of female sexuality. As an advocate for the female orgasm, I was very much interested in the sex toy market. When I found about a sex toy called Sqweel (fig. 19) at Sexpo 2016, I was very intrigued. Amongst all the phallic-like dildos and vibrators, the little silicon tongues that resembled ice cream spoons caught my eye as well as my 'strange' fixation of the mouth and tongue. Sometime after this, I saw an illustration *The Fornicorn* (fig .20) by Tomi Ungerer in a book of Erotica by Neret Gilles; and thus, *Sex sculpture* was born! The ceramic wheel (like a Ferris wheel) with silicon tongue attached around it can be rotated like a garden hose wheel. It is simultaneously horrifying and comical as the realistic copies of the tongues imply it's been chopped off and sacrificed for the purpose of sexual pleasure.

I had learnt about sex through Western pornography, where white women's bodies were the epitome of beauty and subject of worship. Their bodies were milky white and their genitalia pink, and 'normal' looking with a 'neat' labium. On the other hand, porn including Asian women served the degrading stereotype I've examined in chapter one. I used to be so uncomfortable with receiving oral sex, as I felt extremely insecure about the look of my vagina. Many women

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<sup>96</sup> Minji Jin , "Growing calls in Korea for better sex education" *Koreajoongang daily*, 7 March 2017 <http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=3045301>

experience this sense of insecurity<sup>97</sup>, especially concerning the size of their labia. There is an increased trend towards labiaplasty, which reduces the size of the inner labia.<sup>98</sup> For women of colour (myself included), the hue of their vagina and nipples is also a source of insecurity. When I saw a cream called Pinky Queen (fig. 19) in a pharmacy in Japan (which you apply onto your nipples to colour them pink), I was tempted to purchase it. I also felt like I would make a terrible lesbian because I had a short tongue. It seemed like I hated everything about myself. It is bizarre to realise all the things women are made to feel insecure about. So, the sculpture could be perceived as 'compensation' for my 'inadequacy'. My creation of this sculpture breaks all the social and cultural expectations and framework of Asian women and femininity. I reclaim my subjectivity and agency by creating my own sexual narratives.



(Figure 21.a) Bitmoji "Deal with it"

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<sup>97</sup> Kayla Greaves, "Ever Wondered If Your Vagina Looks 'Normal'? You're Not Alone" Huffingtonpost, 24 February 2017, [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2017/02/24/does-my-vagina-looknormal\\_n\\_14915012.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2017/02/24/does-my-vagina-looknormal_n_14915012.html)

<sup>98</sup> Brittney McNamara, "he Latest Trend in Plastic Surgery for Teen Girls Is Not What You're Expecting" teen vogue, 27 April 2016, [https://www.teenvogue.com/story/labiaplasty-plastic-surgerytrend-guidelines?mbid=social\\_facebook](https://www.teenvogue.com/story/labiaplasty-plastic-surgerytrend-guidelines?mbid=social_facebook)

## CONCLUSION

Pervert is defined as “a person whose sexual behaviour is regarded as abnormal and unacceptable”<sup>99</sup> Everyone is a little perverted one way or another, to varying degrees and intensity. It is how we cope in this sick sad world; it is like a symptom of life. This paper was an opportunity to psychoanalyse myself and my place between patriarchy and racism. It is evident in this paper and my practice, that I may be a little bit of a pervert regarding my desire to own cute objects; my sexual humour; and passion for the clitoral orgasm.

Unfortunately, women’s sexuality and pleasure have been restricted to and shaped around the phallus. It seems desires for anything else apart from the penis is deemed hysterical<sup>100</sup>, immature and abnormal. So, perhaps with the historical, social and cultural ‘abnormalisation’ of female agency, clitoral orgasm and female humour, liberated women are ‘perverts’. There is a special merit to my perversion, as it has the power to subvert the racial hierarchy and the patriarchal discourse. To be liberated from the systems in which the secrets of pleasure are suppressed, I want to be a creature of an uninhabited existence. I want to celebrate this logic of female perversity, claim back the power of language to re-define ourselves. Borrowing the words of the biggest pervert Hentai Kamen “In 21st century, perversion is justice!”<sup>101</sup> (fig. 22)



(Figure 22) HK: Forbidden Super Hero (2013) directed by Yuichi Fukuda

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<sup>99</sup> Dictionary definition

<sup>100</sup> During the 19th century Doctors would stimulate the clitoris to cure Hysteria

<sup>101</sup> HK: Forbidden Super Hero 2013



(Figure 22.a) Bitmoji “CAN’T STOP WON’T STOP”



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## **APPENDIX**



Installation shots, mixed media 2018  
documented by artist







*Masterbator*, mixed media, 2018  
documented by artist



Details of installation, found objects 2018  
documented by artist





Details of installation, found objects 2018  
documented by artist



Details of installation, found objects 2018  
documented by artist



*Shitting in the moon*, stoneware, 2018  
documented by artist