

## “Formation” Interprets Freedom with Art

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### Abstract

News and media have infiltrated society in a variety of ways, and political correctness has been instilled into everyone's mind, but does this really bring justice and freedom to people of color or marginalized groups? In fact, implicit targeting and discrimination continue to pervade modern society, because some reports reinforce and imply that injustice is justified and the unscrupulous media always try to confuse the public in the grey area and provoke more disputes in order to seek profit.

Most people may have noticed that people of colour and marginalized groups are not really treated fairly, but the voices of most people are not as powerful as those of influential people, such as artists. For example, Beyoncé shows us how she uses art media (music) to export her power and her thoughts with "Formation", which can be extended into three new concepts: the stereotype of Black people on social platforms; the real influence of Black artists; Black women face far more negativity than Black men. It must be emphasized that art always comes from life, and people need to learn how to see the cruel truth through art, and "Formation" just proves this.

### Keywords

Beyoncé, freedom

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Social media fills people's lives, and most people are subtly infected by the ideas it conveys. Any negative remarks and opinions will be infinitely magnified by the Internet. For example, many brands or works will overemphasize race and gender to show that they do not have bad remarks such as racial discrimination, using a plethora of African or Asian models and even key slogans to attract people's attention, as if to distinguish themselves from other "normal" brands.

This is exactly a kind of strong indoctrination of political correctness, because in fact, such behaviour will not bring about a substantial change in the treatment of these groups, but will increase the curiosity of the new generation about the "particularities" of people of colour. Plus, after experiencing a series of media baptisms, what hasn't changed?

The answer is the typical stereotype. Even now, if you search for Black music on the Internet, rap will most likely appear. In the 21st century, rap has spread and become popular, so that it should no longer belong to a certain race. However, only Black rap will still be marked as "dangerous" or "violent." "The social construction of rap and rap-related violence is fundamentally linked to the social discourse on Black containment and fears of a Black planet...It is this ideological position regarding Black youth that frames media and institutional attacks on rap and separates resistance to rap from attacks sustained by rock-and-roll artists (Rose)."

Tricia Rose explains in her book *Fear of a Black Planet* that Black rap is viewed as a threat to society and the government, because society unilaterally believes that it represents strength and darkness. And Beyoncé also used her usual rap in her "Formation" to fight back against racial doubts, telling the world that Blacks are using their strength to prove that they do not need to be forced by others to place titles.

The louder the public opinion, the louder the counterattack. As people can see that the popular dissemination of Black music is extremely fast, and with the creation of all kinds of works, the popularity of Black artists is unprecedented. Looking back at a series of outstanding artists and musicians such as Michael Jackson, most of them contain strong emotions for humanity and identity. Why? Perhaps it is because they desire to be truly understood by society rather than pretended care by people under the pressure of public opinion, which will only perpetuate the existence of Black racism.

From Beyoncé's release of "Formation" before the Super Bowl, it can be seen that Black artists are more aware than people think that they are in an unfair situation.

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Compared with the original silence, in recent years, more and more Blacks are willing to speak for themselves, especially influential artists. This shows that the influence of Black artists is far stronger than people think, and at the same time they are more courageous to face racial history and create new works that are deeply rooted in the hearts of the people.

As Audre Lorde said, “I have come to believe over and over again that what is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood (Lorde).” This is their bravery, because only by speaking out for themselves can they get the respect they deserve.

The last key point, and the most worthy of consideration, is how should Black women fight for their own interests when gender and race are both disadvantaged? Is it okay to just stand out and speak up? Feminism has been controversial since the last few centuries, and patriarchy which has led to the constant neglect of women's abilities and excellence. In addition, this kind of situation does not only appear in a certain race but has universal connotations. In history, countless outstanding women have been obliterated by public opinion on their talents and life which is extremely sad and cruel. This is mainly because women have been suppressed for a long time, and only in recent years have they gradually begun to fight for their rights, just like racism.

In the words of Crenshaw, “as a result, both feminist theory and anti-racist politics have been organized, in part, around the equation of racism with what happens to the Black middle-class or to Black men, and the equation of sexism with what happens to white women (Crenshaw).” This shows that Black women in Black racism are in fact more vulnerable, and compared to other races, Black women’s struggles are usually divided into separate parts, yet the slanders and stereotypes they suffer are more serious than those of Black men.

To give a simple example, one of the most common types of racism directed at Black women is to imitate their tone of voice, which is rare or even non-existent in Black men. “Formation” led everyone to review the history of Black women, their marriage, growth, and the difficulties they faced with a new perspective. Keleta-Mae mentioned in her article “Get What's Mine: “Formation” Changes the Way We Listen to Beyoncé Forever” that what Beyoncé’s performance in the Super Bowl revealed was a special manifestation of the 21st-century Black feminist freedom in the United States; one ambitious, spiritual, decisive, sexy, capitalist, loving and community (Keleta-Mae).

In general, the media and art are two-way output platforms. When the media repeatedly conveys negative information, Black artists are also working hard to speak out for their racial rights. “Formation” conveys such a call, a warning to the mainstream media, do not try to deprive and interfere with Black politics, and do not speculate about the lives of others at will. It depicts and satirizes the social conditions, police violence, and Black racism at the time. As an excellent political pop song, it starts from the

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perspective of Black women and tells people about racism and identity in a brand new way on the platform of music and art.

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