

# REPRESENTING WHITENESS IN THE BLACK IMAGINATION

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## NAMING AND CRITICALLY DISCUSSING WHITENESS

### BLACK KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WHITENESS

- Black people have a vast historic knowledge about whiteness dating back to slavery
- This knowledge on whiteness is and was key to Black survival in a white supremacist society, and, for the most part, was not recorded in written form
- This knowledge unsettles many white people because in a white supremacist society. White people are not accustomed to being studied under the critical gaze of Black people

### WHITENESS AS TERROR

- Whiteness is terrorizing to many Black folx as whiteness controls and dominates in the form of economic exploitation, physical violence, systemic oppression, institutional racism and countless more forms
- White people are not accustomed to seeing whiteness as terror as it sits in a place of power where it is normalized and confers power to white people
  - For white folx, whiteness is often associated with goodness

### COLLECTIVE WORK TO BE DONE

- With whiteness being named in the Black imagination as terror, a written history which erases and denies Black voices must be faced
- Collective memory must be reconstructed. The past must be looked at from a non-white perspective to make sense of the present
- To change the present, it must be placed in relation to the past. This means recognizing the impacts of the terror of whiteness and using that information to recognize harmful patterns of racism and reshape an equitable society

The process of remembering can be a practice which transforms history from judgement on the past in the name of present truth

### HOLDING WHITENESS ACCOUNTABLE

- **White people need to see how whiteness acts to terrorize without seeing ourselves as bad, or all white people as bad**
- **White people need to occupy the subjectivity of the other, in other words, examine ourselves from the lens of people of colour, and listen to people of colour in order to change our reality**
- **Progressive white people need to be antiracist and understand the ways that our cultural practices reinscribe white supremacy without promoting guilt and denial**
- **White people need to name racism and its impacts in order to help break its hold**