

## LOVE, SEXUALITY AND MATRIARCHY: ABOUT GENDER

by Erich Fromm  
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These choice nuggets suggest an order of insight curiously absent from more recent studies in cultural theory by the likes of, say, Arthur Kroker or bell hooks. Sadly, it's also absent from Erich Fromm's *Love, Sexuality and Matriarchy: About Gender*. Though Fromm died in 1980, these essays, collected in English for the first time, date from 1970 at the latest—two years before the *Black Dick* LP. In other words, this is a pre-*Black Dick* document.

It shows. Many of Fromm's conclusions about inter-gender conflicts seem erroneous and easily refuted by *Black Dick*. Why, for example, is Fromm so hesitant to factor folkloric Afro-priapism into his admonition of "traditional, biologically-based value judgments?" His very wording, though evasive, seems contiguous to the matter when he states:

*[The] character typical of men and women in Western culture is determined by their respective social roles, but there is a coloring of character which is rooted in sex differences. This coloring is insignificant in comparison with the socially rooted differences, but it must not be entirely neglected.*

Refusing to beat around the bush, as it were, *Black Dick* puts Fromm's timid statement to shame:

"Now in talkin' about the sex part, through it all I have discovered one clear and certain truth (that's right): the more you talk about it, the more the muthafuckin' meaning come true. In the core of the heart of the American race problem, the sex factor is rooted so fuckin' deep, I mean rooted deeply, that it's always not recognized when it shows at the surface. Regardless of other problems... sex persists! It is strong an' bitter an' covered up with so-called niceties!"

Thus the lack of development in Fromm's

thinking is brilliantly exposed. The latter is convinced that patriarchy has had its day and must be replaced by a mutual understanding between the (admittedly different) genders, such that neither one dominates the other—hence the inadequacy of matriarchal systems as well. But *Black Dick* lets us know that Fromm has not taken *all* patriarchal constructs into consideration. In fact, *Black Dick* itself remains the untested administrator, the hard, sweet, passionate steward of tomorrow's institutions. When we listen to *Black Dick* grapple with difficult problems, such as the pronunciation of "clitoris" ("The black man, with his woolly, thick hair... weaves like a lock around the cunt, gripping the—cuh, cuh, *cuhitoris* or the—whatever you wanna call that little man in the boat..."), we know we're hearing a leader.

What language of comparable force can Fromm offer? Only vague generalizations; lymphatic postulates that cannot withstand the rhetorical tidal wave that is *Black Dick*. For Fromm's "Women in America have achieved a great deal of equality... [but] women are in a state of frustration because they are not allowed to play the role of their own sex in full freedom," we can substitute *Black Dick*'s incisive, "If *Black Dick* was president, the black woman would be completely free, and the frustrated white woman would have a chance to fuck herself inna slavery!"

The devastating parallels continue. In fact, I can only assume that *Black Dick* was aware of Fromm's work, and that *Black Dick for President* is actually a subtle yet ribald critique of the psychoanalyst's essays. There's even an obscure, tantalizing reference on Side Two to a "German cocksucker" who "ran around countin' black dicks." Could this be a thinly-veiled reference to the author of *Love, Sexuality and Matriarchy*?

Perhaps Fromm, for all his shortcomings, did manage a few cogent observations. Perhaps his preference of biophilia over necrophilia, of self-love over selfishness, bear consideration. But I know this one truth as a very real fact: that long, hard, hot, juicy, sweet-tastin', funky 14-inch dick is the place we all want to go. It is true! This ugly weapon burns the need of love and liberty *Black Dick! Black Dick for President!*

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# Erich Fromm's Honky Bone

BY COLIN RAFF

AN ACQUAINTANCE of mine without his own turntable recently left a record on my doorstep, feeling that, of his vinyl-compatible pals, I'd most likely appreciate it. It's a triple album, a '72 release titled *Black Dick for President*, which features much satirical commentary on what would be the year of Nixon's re-election. Darius James informs me that since it's on an L.A. label, it's probably the fruit of some comedian's sessions at the legendary Sugar Shack nightclub. No names besides "T. Martin" are given—the cover credits just say "Produced by Six Black Dicks."

The man speaking on the records calls himself "Black Dick," too, thus adding to the confusion over the term's actual meaning, as he also uses it to mean another person, an object, sev-

eral objects, a political party, etc. The recording's basic premise is that Black Dick, despite its uncertain identity, should be president of the United States. From this conceit springs a wealth of seemingly now-forgotten wisdom concerning America's psycho-sexual unconscious.

Eloquent and persuasive, Black Dick is never at a loss for words during the album's 110-odd minutes. We are advised, for instance, that "Slavery robbed the Negro man of his masculinity, chained his most gifted weapon, his most precious respect, his black, hard, enjoyable, good-tasting, long-lasting, strong, reproductive sperm, proving to the white man that the just of god's mysterious ways never leave the poor and blackness and sharpness of meat!"

And: "When you see a black man raise his hand and lift up his arm, and he goes up with his arm, he's liftin' up his black dick! He's unzippin' his pants, right on in Black Power, right on in Black Dick!"



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