

The Language Through Which Black Feminist Theory Speaks

A Conversation with Jennifer C. Nash

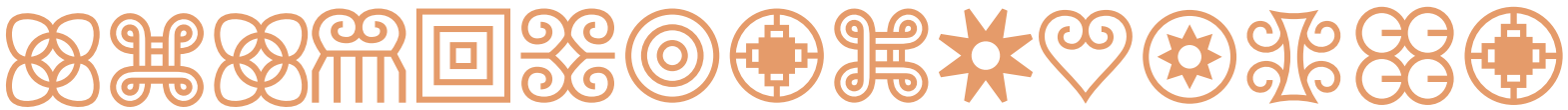
"This conversation gives reverence to Black feminist sociologists, practitioners, and culture workers who made inter- and anti-disciplinary Black feminist work possible" (p. 57).

Introduction

Mali Collins interviewed Jennifer C. Nash to discuss a range of topics that charts a contemporary **"Black feminist intellectual genealogy"** that resists and transforms institutional scholarship about, for, and by Black women (p. 63). They consider Black feminist sociology (BFS) with an interdisciplinary lens and acknowledge the critical work of emotions and affect to speak on Black motherhood.

Interdisciplinary

When asked about how Black feminism is brought to interdisciplinary works, Nash engages academics like Patricia Hill Collins and journalists', activists', and artists' work like Dani McClain and Patrisse Cullors. McClain and Cullors helps bring Black feminism outside the academy through public journalism and art which is closer to the people Black feminism supports. BFS connects the inter-relatedness of Black life with institutions of power and control. Black feminism is an "anti-disciplinary project"; its scholarship refuses to limit itself to one areas of study (J.C.N, p. 59).



Affect

Collins asks: How is **affective rhetoric** changing how we conceptualize and create academic work about Black women's experiences? Nash responds that writers like Patricia Williams, Toni Morrison, and bell hooks have written about intense emotions and push us to investigate the **"felt life"** of Black women (p. 62). Affect theory focuses on how the felt life is a manifestation of social structures and how it impacts individual health and wellbeing. Black feminist academia invests in emotion and love. Nash continues, "We can't do the intellectual work we do without taking seriously feeling" (J.C.N, p. 62).

Collins and Nash both engage Black Motherhood Studies to discuss the duality of Black motherhood is positioned in by the Movement for Black Lives. Nash talks about the duality of Black motherhood. Some sources emphasize that Black motherhood is facing a crisis because of the prevalence of Black maternal mortality, infant mortality, and post-natal health concerns. On the other hand, Black communities celebrate community mothering and family life. These positive and negative aspects of Black motherhood lend to its radical politicization.

Citation: