

DEFINING THE HAITIAN WOMAN THROUGH FEMINIST ART

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Introduction

This study explores the evolution of feminism from suffragettes in the late 19th century to the rise of feminist art movements in the 1970s. This exploration provides crucial context for understanding Euro-American perspectives on feminism and gender identity. However, current feminist scholarship primarily focuses on Euro-American feminist perspectives thus this paper seeks to investigate: "How does the creation of visual art made using a third-world feminist gaze allow non-Western Black women to confront and deconstruct dominant Western ideologies of womanhood?"

Within this study, through the creation of art, as a natively Haitian woman, I sought to reflect the cultural narratives of Haitian women and art through a third-world gaze to craft a holistic comprehension of feminist principles in the third world.

Discussion

The artwork serves as a visual representation of the complex impact of the Duvalierist state on Haitian women. The Duvalierist state idealized a "patriotic woman" loyal to the regime, but Haitian women resisted and protested, defying this image so, I used an AI art tool instead of a live subject because most Haitian women do not adhere to the Duvalier woman archetype. The artwork brands the central figure with Duvalier's name and incorporates blue and red from Haiti's flag in a disarrayed background, challenging the notion of harmonious national pride. The central figure, while a pivotal element, is overshadowed by Duvalier's words, emphasizing his role in defining Haitian womanhood. This reflects the enduring influence of the Duvalierist regime, which persists in Haiti's mistreatment of women.



The Duvalier Woman: Mammy the Riveter

Objective

This study's essential analysis of feminist art as a tool for deconstructing gendered barriers provides visibility to the perspectives of third-world women while contributing to a deeper understanding of feminist visual art and its ability to be a medium for female artists to center themselves and define their representation.

Discussion

This piece is a series of photographs centered around a showering woman. The first photograph shows her with a relaxed facial expression, unaware of the camera. This creates a sense of tension and curiosity in the viewer. The second photograph shows the woman aware of the camera, with a blurred face and a defensive stance. This highlights the issue of voyeurism and the violation of privacy, which is especially relevant to the experiences of displaced Haitian women in IDP camps. The third photograph shows the woman with a fearful expression, reacting to the viewer's presence. This startles the viewer and makes them feel ashamed for intruding. The piece overall weaves a narrative between the delicate balance between resilience and intrusion, confronting the viewer's perspectives on privacy, intimacy, and the ethical dimensions of their gaze.



Pa Manyen Fanm Konsa

Methods

I created artwork to test my thesis which was that by explicitly analyzing Haitian feminism, insight into the challenges of global feminist movements through a third-world context is gained. I used a digital camera to take the black and white photos titled *Pa Manyen Fanm Konsa* and an AI art generator (Imagine art) to create the second piece *Mammy the Riveter*.

Conclusion

Euro-American feminist movement fought for gender equity.
Black feminism emerged to address intersectional issues not tackled by mainstream white feminism.
Black feminism distinguished itself from white feminism with different methods and perspectives.
Third-world feminism is distinct from Euro-American feminism.
Haitian female artists use feminist art to challenge Western ideologies of womanhood.
Research explores how third-world feminist art confronts dominant Western ideals.
Haitian feminist art brings visibility to issues faced by Haitian women.
Art serves as a primary source to understand Haitian women's experiences.
Haitian feminist art centers women's narratives and experiences.
It broadens the inclusivity of feminist movements and enriches feminist discourse.

FUTURE GOALS:

I want to take these pieces and do a curation project within an art gallery space to bring visibility to Haitian feminist art in the world of curation.

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