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25

## Silence and Its Opposite

### Expressions of Race in *Tongues Untied*

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When Marlon Riggs's *Tongues Untied* (1989), a video by, for, and about black gay men, was broadcast on American public television in 1991, it unleashed a wave of unprecedented controversy and heated debate fuelled by right-wing conservatives and their supporters in Congress. In an obvious attempt to win office by exploiting homophobia during his 1992 election campaign, candidate Pat Buchanan used a clip from the video in a television ad to accuse President Bush of misusing taxpayers' money to fund "pornographic art." Ironically enough, the clip chosen for the ad focused on white men's exposed buttocks, and neither the ad nor the media reports about it referred to the production context or the goals of the video itself. According to Riggs, this appropriation by white hegemony was also racist and "amounted to the erasure of black gay men from a work designed to empower and affirm us" (interview with Grundmann 53). Viewed today, *Tongues Untied* still possesses the power to challenge, shock, enrage, and reveal. The voice in which the video speaks is personal and confrontational. It interrogates rather than provides answers, and perhaps it is the passion with which the video questions black gay identity, and the maelstrom in which it is forged, that is the essential heart of the power of *Tongues Untied*.

When Marlon Riggs died on April 5, 1994, at the age of thirty-seven, he had directed, in addition to *Tongues Untied*, two other major documentary works, *Ethnic Notions* (1986) and *Color Adjustment* (1992), as well as several

shorter videos. However, it was the highly political and lyrical form of *Tongues Untied*, with its open celebration of black gay content, that not only challenged contemporary notions of the documentary tradition, but revolutionized black film- and videomaking in general. Indeed, the video moves beyond the tradition of black independent documentary realism pioneered by African-American filmmakers such as William Greaves, St. Clair Bourne, Henry Hampton, Louis Massiah, and Carroll Parrot Blue (Mercer 22) by expanding the ways in which media are used to tell stories about "our lives as black people" (Riggs quoted in Mercer 23).<sup>1</sup>

The creation of *Tongues Untied* was inspired by Riggs's desire to make a video to illustrate "all the poetry that was coming out by black gay men" (Riggs interview with Kleinhans and Lesage 119). Interested in documenting the art and interaction taking place in such venues as The Other Countries Workshop in New York, Riggs wanted poems that would lend themselves to visual translation in a video medium.<sup>2</sup> Benefitting from interaction with poets like Essex Hemphill,<sup>3</sup> Riggs searched for works, conversational in structure and style, that expressed the same passion that he felt toward his own black gay identity. This search, in turn, inspired his own writing, and Riggs "wanted to use everything in the way the poems did, with words and phrases coded for the black community or the black gay community" (Riggs interview with Kleinhans and Lesage 120). Thus, the concept of *Tongues Untied* expanded beyond that of a documentary dealing specifically with black gay poetry to include a deeply personal exploration of Riggs's own experience as a black gay man.

*Tongues Untied* is truly a breakthrough documentary, for it penetrated "the walls of silence by which oppressive norms and taboos crase any 'evidence of being' among black lesbians and gay men" (Mercer 22). Although Riggs is considered among the first to speak out and give open voice to the black gay male experience in Western cinema (Mercer 22), he does not construct a monolithic representation of black gay identity. Rather, Riggs advocates the construction of an "open-ended black sexuality" (Reid 124) that is in a constant process of (re)negotiation. Through the use of personal monologues placed at critical points in the video, Riggs foregrounds his personal journey toward black gay identity and provides a unifying frame for the video's multiple agendas. In fact, the monologues themselves, both his and others', are so integrated with the poetry in the text that the very notion of authorship is often blurred. This lack of distinction between poetry and personal recollection, between authorship and utterance, creates ambivalent narrative spaces that are at once confirmatory and confrontational. Riggs achieves this by politicizing silence and the act of speaking in order to structure representations and negotiations of race and sexuality. Thus, Riggs's own experience, and those of the black poets, become universalized as metaphorical constructs of black gay

identities. This leads to a proliferation of voices and gives the video its sense of polyphony.

The narrative premise of the video is very complex because Riggs negotiates, not within one cultural space, but four: black culture, white culture, gay culture, and black gay culture. This makes generalizations, either about his narrative structure, or his thematic material, almost impossible. There is something musical in the video's structure, particularly evidenced by the interdependence of visual and auditory rhythms and the poetic use of language. *Tongues Untied* is at once a symphony on race, culture, and sexuality, and these threads are so tightly intertwined that it is virtually impossible to extricate a single thread and discuss it independently of the others.

It could be argued that the video possesses a literal symphonic form, complete with prelude, exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda.<sup>4</sup> In *Tongues Untied*, the "prelude" at the beginning of the video provides the general historical and cultural context in which black gay identities will eventually be located. Riggs creates a theme-and-variation structure: the "prelude" introduces themes which will be restated and transformed into layered variations by adding and changing textures and densities of narration, visual systems, and ideological structures. Most importantly, the use of repetition and restatement forges the central organizing principle facilitating Riggs's exploration of a wide variety of issues without sacrificing narrative clarity or cohesiveness.

In the "prelude," Riggs begins by hailing a specific audience through the use of voice-over narration.<sup>5</sup> The words "brother to brother" are chanted over a black screen which is disrupted by black and white images of young black men moving in slow motion. Having stated that his "intended primary audience was really focussed on black gay men" (Riggs interview with Kleinhans and Lesage 122), Riggs uses the images of young black men to initiate a process that will eventually posit specific black gay identities as natural expressions within the larger realities of African-American culture.

The sequence further develops with a color long shot of young black men greeting each other on a basketball court. Riggs introduces the notion of ambiguous or contradictory space through narration of a poem: to the uninitiated eye, the images could be of any young black men, but the use of coded words such as "girlfriend" and "Miss Thang" suggests that these young men, the space they occupy, and the language itself might all possess double meanings. By employing several performers in the narration and subverting the notion of authorship, Riggs appears to be presenting the poem as both a singular and plural experience. This implies the existence of a cultural gestalt by underscoring the commonality and shared nature of African-American experience.

The poem begins with an acknowledgment of the existence of a pattern of "silence" within African-American culture. The speaker tells of being re-

fused entry to a jewellery store because he is black, and therefore, a "thief." Riggs dramatizes the poem with visual irony: the racist incident is predicated on the depersonalized view that all black men are thieves. He then takes this example of systemic racism and places it in visual counterargument to a series of slow motion close-ups of young black men, some of whom address the camera directly. Thus, the close-ups become personalized and the subjects are individualized in a way that is denied them by the dehumanizing racist incident.

The sequence also introduces the issue of silence versus the act of speaking out. The speaker of the poem is able to share with his intimates the ordinary details of life but feels constrained from discussing the racist incident, except in the context of anger. The hurt that such racism engenders is deeply internalized, but not forgotten or forgiven: silence becomes a way to "grin and bear it,"<sup>6</sup> but does not provide resolution. Riggs then politicizes the relationship between such silence and unresolved rage by associating its articulation with images of social unrest and police brutality directed at black males. The narration and the images become causally linked, suggesting that such hurt, thus internalized, translates into violence.

This is further illustrated as the sequence progresses and the camera slowly zooms in from a medium close-up to a close-up on a photo of a black man, again personalized through direct address. The zoom is spatially interrupted by intertitles—"Howard Beach, Virginia Beach, Yusef Murder, Crack, Aids, Black Men, Endangered Species?"—each representing a landmark incident of violence or a social issue affecting African-American culture. By interrupting the personal space of the photograph with the intertitles, Riggs suggests that individual identity is both disrupted and realized within larger cultural and political realities.

The "exposition" section of *Tongues Untied* begins with Riggs locating himself and his personal experience within the video's narrative space. Having posited a construction of passive silence that is culturally specific, Riggs catalyzes the construction by expanding on the ambiguity of its power. This is accomplished on both narrative and visual levels by positioning slow motion, medium long shots of Riggs himself dancing naked contiguously with the following poem: "silence is my shield, it crushes, silence is my cloak, it smothers, silence is my sword, it cuts both ways, silence is the deadliest weapon." Riggs's nudity and well-muscled physical appearance skirt the stereotype of the brutish black man, but this is powerfully deconstructed by the vulnerability created as Riggs uses his hands to shield his face. Balanced between power and defenselessness, the movement is enhanced by slow motion and dramatically illustrates the ambiguity of the narration which describes silence as both protective and destructive. The sequence ends with a moving exhortation to black gay men to end the legacy of silence by speaking out

together as a community. Thus, Riggs takes the notion of silence as a passive coping mechanism and translates it into the action of "untying tongues."

*Tongues Untied* is a consequence of the absence, certainly in 1989, of black gay discourse in African-American history and culture. This video not only reflects a personal struggle to legitimize identity, but also the struggle of the entire black gay community to do so. However, in order to create a presence in the void, Riggs must first initiate a process of discarding codes and revealing the specifics of black gay realities. This community exists in an invisible relationship to the larger expression of African-American culture, and in the "exposition" Riggs seeks to expose or "out" the community, much as he openly proclaims his own relationship to this narrative space.

Riggs uses codes both to situate his community in and differentiate it from mainstream expressions of black culture. In the context of *Tongues Untied*, Riggs outs, or "reads," the black gay community by making transparent the coded act of "snapping" fingers: as Riggs has observed, "the Snap! can be as emotionally and politically charged as a clenched fist; can punctuate debate and dialogue like an exclamation point, a comma, an ellipsis; or can altogether negate the need for words among those who are adept at decoding its nuanced meanings" ("Black Macho" 392). Associated as it is with the "fine art of insults" (Becquer 8), the outing of Snap! and its identification as a uniquely black gay discursive practice is actually a declaration of defiance. Riggs is stating that the black gay community, with its own expressions of culture, exists whether or not its mode of being is recognized or accepted by the mainstream black community.

In the "Snap Rap" sequence, Riggs deconstructs the musical practice of "rap" and subverts the form for his own discursive practices by the infusion of black gay ideology. Riggs uses group shots of black gay men snapping in unison to visually underscore the notion of an invisible community suddenly choosing to visibly and defiantly declare their mutual association. This use of the group, or community, will come to have an enhanced meaning as the video unfolds because Riggs, having revealed the existence of an identifiable black gay community, will now proceed to demonstrate the cultural isolation experienced by its individual members.

Expanding, in the "exposition," on the devices of direct address and disruption of personal space first introduced in the "prelude," Riggs places his own personal experience of black gay reality within the larger expression of both black and white culture through a series of monologues that chronicles his struggle to establish a constructive black gay identity. Riggs is shot in direct address, in a loosely framed close-up, and positioned slightly left-of-center in the frame. He begins by stating, "I heard my calling by age six. We had a word for boys like me." The monologue space is disrupted by the intercutting of an extreme close-up shot of a young, black male mouth grunting out the word "Punk." The first disruption is unpleasant and intrusive, but

not threatening. This swiftly changes as Riggs, now in a tighter close-up, reveals how he and his best friend "practiced" kissing until his friend's brother caught them. A new word, "homo," is introduced as the narrative space of the close-up is disrupted by a new and more mature black male mouth, which expands on the term adding the invectives "punk, faggot, freak." As Riggs relates how "best friend became worst enemy," a third disruption occurs when a white, male mouth chants "mother-fuckin' coon." The monologue continues with Riggs's description of dislocation from both the black and white communities as he is bussed to Hepzebah Junior High School and then placed as one of only two blacks in the advanced class. Tension rises with the incorporation of two additional disruptions: the first is a white mouth that spits out "Niggers, go home" and the second is a black mouth that declares "Uncle Tom." As the name-calling escalates into menace, Riggs's personal space contracts as he is framed in progressively tighter close-ups. In the final disruption sequence, the shots of the mouths are intercut, and the effect of collision between the angles is that of Riggs being crushed and pounded by the violence of the epithets.

In the final shot of this sequence, Riggs is fragmented by an extreme close-up that concentrates on his eyes as he rearticulates the notion of silence proffered in the "prelude" by declaring, "Cornered by identities I never



*Tongues Untied*: Marlon Riggs addresses the camera directly, discussing his personal experience as a black gay man.

wanted to claim, I ran fast, hard, and deep inside myself where it was still silent, safe." Here, Riggs actively demonstrates why the roots of silence grow in the black gay community, and why they run so deep within it.

The shots of mouths suggest that the prejudice and racism faced by black gay men is systemic and thus linked to the same dehumanizing processes exhibited by the racist jeweller in the "prelude." Riggs creates a variation on this theme by implying, through the combination of black mouths and white, that in the case of black gay men the prejudice is not only systemic but cross-cultural as well. Thus, black gay men are isolated both by the inescapable racism of the dominant white culture as well as by "Black America's pervasive cultural homophobia" (Riggs, "Black Macho" 390) which makes invisibility and deception seem inevitable, even desirable, as survival strategies. The fear of identification as a black gay is underscored by the sequence in which several black men attack and beat a gay brother while a voice-over poem biting observes: "Left, in a bloody pool, he [the victim] waited for the police, ambulance, the kindness of brethren, or Jesus to pick up his messages." This is clearly a society, both black and white, in which open declarations of sexual difference engender violence.

Since identification with mainstream black culture is problematic and potentially dangerous for black gays, gravitation toward white gay culture seems somewhat inescapable, as white gays theoretically share certain interests with them, at least in terms of surviving systemic homophobia and violence. Yet, as Riggs illustrates in the developing "exposition," this is a troubled relationship fueled by, amongst other factors, the absence of positive black images with which black gays might identify. Beginning with a series of slow motion color shots of white gays, which recall the black and white shots of young blacks from the "prelude," Riggs transforms the device from a statement of black male community to one of white gay community. He then offers a series of "positive" shots from *Blue Boy* magazine with its white icons, and contrasts these with those of black "slaves" in chains and leather; "comic," grossly obese black women; and drawings of muscular black men with exaggerated penises. The implication is that power and desirability in gay reality are determined by the dominant white culture, just as they are in the heterosexual community, underscoring the ambiguities of identity and negative stereotypes that black gay men must negotiate. As Riggs's narration reveals, even though he is intent on his search for his "reflection, love and affirmation" in an environment of "vanilla," he is nevertheless aware of a deep dysfunction in his own cultural context. Despite "sharing" sexual orientation with white gays, Riggs reveals, again in tight close-up and direct camera address, that he remains "an invisible man. I had no shadow, no substance, no place, no history, no reflection. I was an alien, unseen and seen, unwanted. Here, as in Hepzabah, I was a nigger. Still." This realization becomes the

central inquiry of the video's "development" section: can black gay identities find expression within the larger African-American mainstream culture?

Beginning the "development" section with a series of quick shots, Riggs provides several views or constructions of homosexual stereotypes that occur in mainstream African-American culture. These shots echo those of the "exposition" in that they are extreme close-ups of male mouths, and the attitudes of homosexuality they espouse are negative: a preacher quotes homophobic doctrine from the Bible; a black activist questions the inclusion of black gays in his cause; another man asks what type of role model black gays provide for children. Once these "voices" are introduced, they are intercut with a close-up of Essex Hemphill, whose personal space is disrupted by the intrusive editing.

The use of close-up and disruption of space is transformed by substituting the overlapping of voices from the extreme close-ups of mouths for the straight cuts of the "exposition." The poetry, presented in voice-over rather than actively articulated by Hemphill, questions his passive silence in the face of the negative stereotypes espoused by the mouths. Emphasized by waves of overlapping sound, the relationship of these elements to Hemphill's evocative close-up invokes a sense of identity adrift in a wave of political, social, and religious imprecations. When the black activist demands to know, "Come the final throw-down, is he black or gay?" the schism in which black gay identity exists is painfully exposed, just as it is in the "exposition" when Riggs realizes the meaning of "homo." As the voice-over narration dramatically illustrates, this question is fraught with impossibility: "How do you choose one eye over the other, this half of the brain over that or, in words this brother might understand, which does he value most? His left nut or his right?" The sequence offers Riggs's position that it is impossible in fact to separate the thread of race from the thread of sexuality and that the act of privileging one over the other leads to diminishment of identity.

Riggs adds to this a sharp critique of "Hollywood's Black Pack" (Riggs, "Black Macho" 392), those African-American artists who have the power to shape public representations of black experience. Clips from homophobic routines performed by Eddie Murphy and scenes of homophobic content from Spike Lee's *School Daze* (1988) reinforce the negative stereotypes with which black gay men are burdened. The cumulative shame evoked by all these judgments is accentuated by Hemphill's silence and his lowered, averted gaze.

The sequence climaxes in a tightly structured montage that combines the shots of the assault and robbery of the black gay man (from the "exposition") with shots of the preacher, the activist, Essex Hemphill's passive close-up, Eddie Murphy, and *School Daze*. By such an association, Riggs suggests that the roots of violence against black gays are found in both their own passivity and the unchallenged and glorified homophobia within mainstream African-American culture. When the montage ends, Hemphill begins to speak

on camera, giving active voice and resistance to these detractors and the anger they engender. It both reprises the discourse of anger and yearning introduced in the "prelude" and culminates in multiple voices all expressing articulations of anger and cultural isolation as black and white photographs of black gay men follow one another on screen.

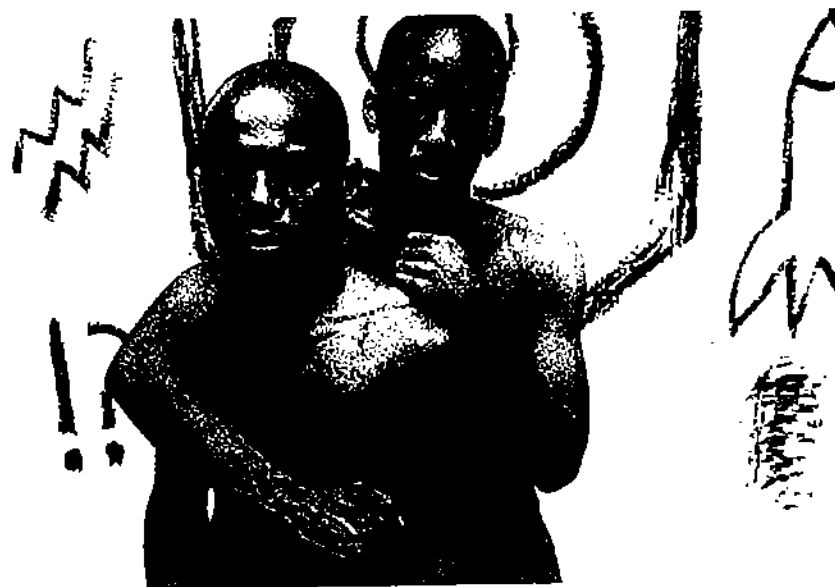
As Riggs has observed, "*Tongues Untied* tries to undo the legacy of silence about Black Gay life" (interview with Simmons 21), yet it appears that this cannot be achieved without black gay men assuming responsibility for empowering their own lives. In the "development" section, Riggs asserts that the ultimate act of colonization occurs amongst/between black gays themselves because of their refusal to acknowledge their own common existence. In a monologue, Riggs describes how, while walking in the predominantly white gay community of the Castro, he noticed the approach of another black gay man, but chose not to meet his eyes as they passed. A slow motion, long-to-medium shot of Riggs walking down the street toward the camera dissolves into a close-up still shot of another man. For an instant, both men appear suspended together on the screen, but the shots "pass" from one to the other without any real contact.

Riggs problematizes the types of gazes and identification between black gay men: the act of denial evoked by the physical action of looking away and refusing eye-contact is a recognition of shame and negation, an affirmation of inferiority. For Riggs, it is an acknowledgment of all the ways in which black gay men have internalized the negative valuations that dominant white society and mainstream black culture have invested in them and thus, become complicit with the shame of the moment (interview with Harris 9). By employing a "disempowering" gaze, Riggs appears to suggest that black gay men are encoding themselves as "Other": "an essential Other against whom Black men and boys maturing, struggling with self-doubt, anxiety, feelings of political, economic, social, and sexual inadequacy—even impotence—can always measure themselves and by comparison seem strong, adept, empowered, superior" (Riggs, "Black Macho" 390–91). The dismantling of this bias is critical and Riggs advocates that black gays construct a new, independent space, "not of peace, harmony, and sunshine, no, but truth. Simple, shameless, brazen truth. . . . Listen."

In the last major section of the video, the "recapitulation," and for the first time since the "Snap Rap" sequence in the "exposition," Riggs presents shots of black gay men as a cohesive social group, discussing issues and passions close to their community. By displacing articulations of anger and isolation with depictions of diverse black gay experiences, Riggs suggests that empowerment must come from within the black gay community through self-acceptance before social change can be effected. This is underscored as the group shots give way to a dolly shot of two black gay men walking and discussing voguing: as differences between practices in New York and Washing-

ton, D.C., become evident, one of the men comments, "Each state, each gay community does different things." As in the earlier "Snap Rap" sequence in the "exposition," Riggs "outs" the practice of voguing by creating in its slow motion photography and distortion of movement, a defiant embrace of all that is overtly black and gay. As Marcos Becquer remarks, "the elements united in voguing coalesce around a critique (and here also an appropriation) of dominant culture, while simultaneously connecting with popular African diasporic practices and gay-identified attitudes" (11). Riggs, therefore, issues a challenge and claims with pride specific "sexual" grounds for his community, as the video openly, perhaps even defiantly, identifies its unique cultural difference. Furthermore, through shots of gay activist marches and the explicit exhortation to "Come Out Tonight," Riggs urges the black gay community not only to proclaim its existence, but to take responsibility for its own emancipation. This suggests that "ending the silence" has both personal and political responsibilities.

Building on the idea of community, Riggs initiates an exploration of black, gay desire or, as the voice-over poetry describes it, "the unending search for what is utterly precious." In a series of shots depicting gay black men in social environments such as clubs, Riggs shows men embracing, dancing, and exchanging looks of desire while poetic narration presents contrasting expressions of sexual desire. Combined with slow motion and the sound of a



*Tongues Untied*: Ending the silence—an exploration of male homoerotic desire.

slow heartbeat, the digitized images invoke a feeling of time and life suspended. This is reflected in the poetic narration as Essex Hemphill, again in close-up, provides a forthright celebration of love between black gay men as he asks, "Who dares tell us that we are poor and powerless? We keep treasure any king would count as dear." Riggs offers the explicit images, both visual and narrative, of black men making love without apology, rationalization, or justification for the existence of black gay desire. As he himself has commented, "There is no debate about whether my life is right or wrong. It is right—period!" (interview with Simmons 21).

Yet there are inherent risks attached to a black gay lifestyle, and Riggs demonstrates that he is very aware of them as he takes a lyrical exploration of personal power and sexual delight, and transforms it, with bitter irony, into a somber discourse on AIDS. The sequence begins with a direct address close-up of a black man chanting, so quickly that the words are almost unintelligible, "Now we think as we fuck." This is disrupted by another direct address close-up, of Hemphill, as he relates how each sexual encounter results in the risk of a "lethal leak" in the condom and exposure to AIDS. These two elements are intercut for "orgasmic" rhythm, and as the sequence builds to climax, Riggs reprises a third element: a close-up image of himself being kissed, from the "exposition." It becomes graphically apparent that the landscape of black gay identity has been irrevocably transformed by the incurable virus.

Riggs builds this sequence by moving from the individual consequences of AIDS to the cost to the community at large. Starting with a close-up of himself, and the acknowledgment that "I found a time bomb ticking in my blood," Riggs fades to a series of brief, still shots of obituaries of black gay men, a restatement of a similar device used in the "prelude." The toll of AIDS is vividly illustrated as the sound of a heartbeat, which had begun with the explicit images of black men making love, fades and the obituaries fly by with increasing speed until only the ticking of a clock, the "time bomb," is heard. Riggs finally freezes on an extreme close-up of a black man, focusing on the eyes, as there is silence. Then, in voice-over, Riggs says, "I listen for my own silent implosion."

With the resumption of the heartbeat, Riggs begins the process of locating the struggle of the black gay community within the resonance of "older, stronger rhythms." Still images of black activists like Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass appear, culminating with that of Martin Luther King. As a black spiritual is heard, Riggs posits the black gay struggle for cultural autonomy as part of the ongoing historical struggle for political and cultural equality as being shared with the African-American community generally. This is further reinforced as the video dissolves from stock footage of earlier civil rights marches to shots of more recent gay activist demonstrations.

The "coda" begins with a final blank screen after the credits fade, as words chanted on the sound track offer the spectator the heart of the video:

"Black men loving black men. A call to action. A call to action." This fragment of theme extracted from the video as a whole is significant in identifying Riggs's artistic rationale. It underscores his desire to address the wrongs that have been done by his own community to black gay men (interview with Simmons 21) and to recoup black gay identity as a vibrant and constructive force.

Riggs is uninterested in either balance or objectivity, but rather, considers *Tongues Untied* as an attempt to counter what he views as the displacement of the black gay as "Other" within his own community ("Black Macho" 393). By "untying tongues" and daring to give voice and image to that which remains culturally taboo, Riggs succeeds in simultaneously exposing and dismantling cultural barriers. By closing with Joseph Beam's quote, "Black men loving Black men is the revolutionary act," Riggs invites controversy and demonstrates that *Tongues Untied* is uncompromising in its insistence that black gay men can and must take responsibility for declaring their worth to society.

## Notes

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1. See Mark A. Reid. *Redefining Black Film* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) and Gladstone Yearwood, ed., *Black Cinema Aesthetics: Issues in Independent Black Filmmaking* (Athens: Ohio University Center for Afro-American Studies, 1982) for further discussion on how black documentary filmmakers and their films became an important part of the American documentary tradition.
2. Information regarding Riggs's preference for working in video is sketchy. However, a reasonable inference can be made that his choice of video is linked to his extensive background in journalism.
3. The poetry and performance of Essex Hemphill play a prominent role in the video. Marlon Riggs has said that "Hemphill has probably published as much if not more than any other black gay poet in this country. His work moves me extremely just reading it, and it did so before I ever met or heard him" (interview with Kleinhans and Lesage 120).
4. The following are brief definitions of the musical terms used metaphorically in this essay: prelude—an introductory movement that sets the stage for a more substantial movement; exposition—the main thematic material of a movement; development—the further presentation of thematic material presented in the exposition; recapitulation—a return of the first theme and other material from the exposition; and coda—a short motif extracted from the exposition.
5. According to John Fiske, "In responding to the call, in recognizing that it is *us* being spoken to, we implicitly accept the discourse's definition of 'us,' or, to put it another way, we adopt the subject position proposed for us by the discourse" (Fiske 53).
6. All quotations, unless indicated otherwise, are taken directly from the video.

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