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Women’s Art “Herstory”: Examined Through Voice, Mind, Body

Art is free and open for interpretation to everyone no matter their background, age, political class, social class, religion or ethnicity. These are just a few social identifiers that define the parameters of certain ‘types’ of art. In this paper, we look at woman’s art and how it can relate to the wider spectrum. A woman’s art can be seen as the makeup of her being; the woman herself becomes the very definition of “a piece of work”. Even Freud, in all of his analytical processes holds women in “high value”, although he does not make this claim verbatim, we can find evidence of this in his writing. Mendieta, Export and Ukeles come along decades later and reconstruct Freud’s intentions about the value of a woman and through the extension of his respect for the women’s voice that can also be found in their art. The artwork and writing of female artists Mendieta, Export and Ukeles resurrect what could be considered Freud’s lost intention to advocate for women.

In order to cultivate the idea that Freud holds women in “high value” we demonstrate how Mendieta finds her voice through her unapologetic need for a speech that informs society about why she makes the art that she does. Ukeles provides this same support for women when she creates literature and artwork that defines a woman’s actions as being art and therefore certain actions can not be separated into categories and given lesser value. Lastly, this paper demonstrates how Export exposes her body as her most powerful weapon in emphasizing the value of a woman’s art. All three of these artists resurrect Freud’s lost intention by putting into practice the value of a woman’s life through her voice, her intellect, and her body by way of their art.

This paper argues that although the woman’s voice has been undervalued throughout the history of art in various forms, Freud understands that the woman’s “voice,” albeit often unexpressed, is still of value and is treated with the same respect that he gives to his male and female patients alike throughout his practice as it is in the case of “Dora”; and that the work of Mendieta, Export and Ukeles help us shed light on Freud’s lost intention of the importance of a women’s voice and the role it plays in understanding her being. The prefatory remarks in *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria* (“*Dora”*)is the focal point of Freud’s lost intentions in advocating for women. The work of Tupac Shakur will help illuminate Freud’s “admiration” of women through some of his most influential songs that are dedicated to women (black women in particular however, for the purpose of this paper when there is a reference made to “woman/women” we refer to all women) through a subjectivity which recognizes the value of a woman’s art.

Throughout history men are portrayed as dominant authority figures, ultimate makers of decisions, rulers of kingdoms, etc. and their position of power gives them “rule” over women. “The history of woman is the history of man, precisely because man has defined the image of woman” (Export 928). Freud provides a space for his patient Dora (a young woman) to become a relevant part of history by making space for her work in philosophy books and beyond. Freud allows Dora to make a name for herself through his “case histories”. In the case history of Dora, Freud shows his vulnerability when he lets his guard down as he feels that he has no other choice but to publish his findings (Gay 173). In the “Prefatory Remarks”, Freud acknowledges that because of his profession he is able to publish the artwork of Dora. Freud states “It is certain that the patients would never have spoken if it had occurred to them that their admissions might possibly be put to scientific uses; and it is equally certain that to ask them themselves for leave to publish their case would be quite unavailing” (Gay 173). Freud being a man of high status makes room for Dora to share her story adding to her value as a woman artist and in this way Freud is able to define the image of a woman through a women’s own voice.

In *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, Freud often times does not use the most positive uplifting nor descriptive words when he makes references to women, which could lead one to believe that he does not value women. For instance, as Freud makes mention of Dora’s mother in *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, he states that from “the accounts given me by the girl and her father I was led to imagine her as an uncultivated woman and above all as a foolish one who had concentrated all her interests upon domestic affairs, especially since her husband's illness and the estrangement to which it led”(Gay 179). Freud gives a summary of Dora’s mother describing her as an uneducated woman with little sense and does not acknowledge her value since she spends her waking hours wrapped in her daily home activities. On the contrary, Freud views Dora as “a girl of intelligent and engaging looks,” perhaps suggesting his admiration for her intelligence and beauty (181). While it appears that Freud speaks before he thinks, one could argue that he is misunderstood and he indeed has good intentions as it pertains to his regard for Dora; we can see this in the relationship that he has with Dora. Freud says with certainty that even though Dora has “sympathies” of her own, “[t]here could be no doubt, too, that it was from her father's family that she had derived not only her natural gifts and her intellectual precocity” (179). Freud recalls one of his first encounters with Dora from which he recognizes her “natural gifts,” and while Freud does not define what Dora’s “natural gifts” are explicitly, through this paper one can conclude that she has a knack for storytelling i.e. “natural gifts” (179). Freud the “father of psychoanalysis” is captivated by Dora’s storytelling abilities which makes him want to investigate the reasons for Dora’s hysteria.

In Freud’s attempt to dissect Dora’s background he realizes that although Dora is one of his youngest patients, she has wit like her father. Advocating for women may not be Freud’s most memorable attribute; however, Dora makes him think about things just a little differently. “I think I have taken every precaution to prevent my patient from suffering any such injury” (174). This sentiment of Freud, speaks to Ukeles, *Ideas* about *Development and Maintenance*. Freud sees the delicacy of a woman and wants to make sure that he does no harm to her character. As Freud begins to reflect on his relationship with “Ida Bauer”, he finds that there is a mutual level of respect when one is called by name (Gay 172). Freud states, “I shall in future give the name of ‘Dora’” giving her a pseudonym to protect her identity, showing her the same consideration he gives to any of his patients (180). Dora quickly makes a name for herself through her 11 week analysis treatment with Freud in 1900 (172). Dora’s natural inclination for storytelling, gives her the upper hand in her treatment analysis with Freud. She limits his case histories by cutting her treatment short which leaves Freud unable to diagnose her, a failure by Freud’s account (172). Unable to diagnose Dora, Freud gives her a voice by publishing her narratives which is one of today’s most well-known “famous and controversial case histories” or what some may view as “literary works” (172). Dora is a hero among other women artists that are underrepresented in history for their brilliance and for finding their voice through their art. Dora's ability to create a world through her story in which Freud is captivated, left him wanting more. Freud often times speaks negatively about women such as he does with Dora's mom and other women like her mother, yet Dora remained distinct in her own right as a strong woman and "artist" as we see from the introduction to *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*. We find that “Freud’s attitude toward Dora remains susceptible to varying assessments, including his disappointment at this inability to keep Dora in analysis, and Dora causing Freud to learn from his mistakes” (173). Dora is focused on her goal of walking away from Freud’s care, and her fortitude to leave demonstrates her strength and power to leave Freud with a fragmented analysis where Dora takes control of her own destiny as she finds her voice.

While there are many women artists who are still in search of their voice, Mendieta has found hers. “The Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset said: ‘To be a hero, to be heroic, is to be oneself’” (Mendieta 1064). Mendieta has not only found her voice but she has found her heroism in using her voice as her most powerful tool in her speech that she gives in 1982, at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. Her speech is a wake-up call that urges society to think about the idea of culture as being bigger than the “ruling class”. With the ever changing technological advances in the world, Mendieta’s objective is to make sure that art produced by people of “the real culture” does not become invisible because the “ruling class” [refuses] to assimilate it (1065). Mendieta is very aware of her position as a woman, and as an artist who has a voice and the ability to influence society. When the voice of an artist is heard, there is an environment that evolves where individuals feel liberated to express themselves artistically just as Mendieta is in this speech that she gives. Export, another supporter of the feminist art movements, states, “I demand that women acquire a voice so that they can become aware of themselves” (Export 928). When women “who make art” become aware of themselves they are able to navigate through the world by narrating their own experiences such as Dora does in *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*. Dora finds this freedom as well and she is liberated in the environment that Freud makes room for her to do so (as is customary with his patients) by letting her speak freely in a time in a society where a woman’s voice is muted.

When individuals become more actively engaged in a participatory environment, they have a greater respect for their supporters, and they feel they are in a safe space to express the reasons for their actions. Freud supports Dora; Dora is able to express herself to Freud freely and openly because he creates a space where she feels heard. As Dora gives detailed accounts of her troubled life exemplifying her two dreams, Freud supports Dora through actively engaging her in constant conversation and listening to her life experiences through “the art storytelling” which becomes her “vocation” in a way. Mendieta puts it this way “vocation is a limiting factor, which extends even to the kind of art an artist is able to make. In other words, I believe an artist is even limited to what he or she can give life to” (Mendieta 1064). Dora’s limitations are confined to her being of a young age, her unstable living environment, and the lack of “real life experience”. Dora therefore defines her own meaning of life and makes it challenging for Freud to accept that she decides to leave treatment on her own will giving power to her voice.

Mendieta is able to speak freely about why she chooses to make her art as she states, “I am an artist who feels that art is first of all a matter of vocation” and she further states “I make the art I make because it’s the only kind I can make. I have no choice” (1064). In regards to Mendieta stating that she has no choice in the art that she makes she has the ability to change a person’s perspective through seeing the value of being able to do so and knowing intuitively that she makes art that can change a person’s perspective and activate “its spiritual role and the influence that it exercises in society, because art is the result of a spiritual activity of man and its greatest contribution is to the intellectual and moral development of man” (1065). The type of art a woman makes matters because it gives voice to the subject. This is confirmed when Mendieta’s states, “The greatest comfort that great works of art give to me is not only my experience of them but also the fact that they were created and that they exist” (1065). As a woman artist, Mendieta knows that there is an inclusive nature in the work that she creates that looks to expose culture through the arts but more specifically, through a woman’s art by the use of her voice.

Mendieta’s point is illustrated in Freud’s *Fragment of Hysteria (Dora)*. With Freud’s social position and admiration for Dora’s intellect, he publishes Dora’s first set of “literary works” through the publication of his case histories. Thought provoking and often humorous, Dora’s “literary works” has Freud’s head spinning in circles as she leads his mind through a series of questions that begins and ends with “what happens next”. In Freud’s *Postscript*, he tells of an encounter with Dora after not having talked to her for years, valuing Dora’s art and knowing that perhaps he is going to get another good story he welcomes Dora visit even after she abruptly stops her treatment two years prior (Gay 238) Dora’s art of storytelling quickly draws Freud into her world as he inclines his ear to hear what she has to say thus continuing to create a space where she is owning her voice. Baffled, Freud takes notice to write, “For how could the patient take a more effective revenge than by demonstrating upon her own person the helplessness and incapacity of the physician? Nevertheless, I am not inclined to put too low a value on the therapeutic results even of such a fragmentary treatment as Dora's” (237). Freud questions himself as he falls victim to Dora’s ability to define the rules on her terms and her choice of how much information she wishes to disclose to him throughout her “treatment”.

Dora's ability to define the rules with Freud does not necessarily extend beyond their sessions as no one specific person is given the authority to define the “rules”. As Dora finds her voice, her art, she is able to use her own thoughts of “self-determination” to break free from a situation which she has not chosen for herself, breaking the rules. “The question concerning what women can give to art and art can give to women, can be answered thus: to translate the specific situation of the woman into the artistic context is to construct signs and signals which, first, constitute new artistic messages and forms of expression and, second, retrospectively change the situation of women” as Export states in *Women’s Art* (Export 928-929). Through Dora’s stories, portrayals of her life, and recollections of her dreams, Freud gives Dora the space that she needs to find her voice and artistic expression, and she is able to retrospectively change her situation through some of the most challenging times in her life.

Through her literary works and storytelling abilities Freud is taken away as a character not only in the story but also in his emotional shared experience with Dora, such as when he experiences an emotional transference and feels just as “disgusted” for her mother’s “‘housewife’s psychosis’”(Gay 179). In “*IDEAS*” part Cof the *Maintenance Art Manifesto,* Ukeles writes, “*Maintenance is a drag”* (Ukeles 918).The maintenance that Ukeles mention is equivalent to a “vocation” that Mendieta speaks of in her ‘*Art and Politics*’ address. Ukeles take a stand for the undervalued wife, mother, woman, etc. who is an artist in her own right and decides to write a manifesto that “represents the increasing emergence in the artwork of the late 1960s and 1970s both of ‘women’s issues’ (that is, in this case, issues related to the sexual division of labour in society), and of women as artists” (917). Freud respects Dora’s skill to overcome and adapt to life’s circumstances, but does not have the same regard for Dora’s mother who is a housewife. Freud views Dora’s mother as doing the same mundane job over and over again in which he states “This condition, traces of which are to be found often enough in normal housewives, inevitably reminds one of the forms of obsessional washing and other kinds of obsessional cleanliness” (179). While Freud identifies housewives as having a condition, Ukeles uses her position as a mother and an artist to come up with a solution to where she finds balance in writing her manifesto. Through her manifesto, Ukeles calls for there to be respect for maintenance work and she makes a quest to shed light on ‘woman’s issues’ and women as artists to expose the truth and provide support for women about the reality they face in society where their voices and ideas have been silenced for too long.

Ukeles literature and art work defines a woman actions as being art similarly to Tupac’s words in his song entitled *Dear Mama,* in which he attest to through his mother’s position as a housewife internally knowing that she is an artist in her own right. Tupac’s lyrics echoes detailed account of his mother performing duties similar to those stated in Ukeles, *Maintenance Art Manifesto.* Tupac remembers his mother taking care of him after coming home from a long day at work and still having to cook. This idea is described when he says, “Cause when I was low you was [there](https://www.definitions.net/definition/there) for me / And [never](https://www.definitions.net/definition/never) left me [alone](https://www.definitions.net/definition/alone) because you [cared](https://www.definitions.net/definition/cared) for me / And I [could](https://www.definitions.net/definition/could) see you [coming](https://www.definitions.net/definition/coming) home [after](https://www.definitions.net/definition/after) work late / You're in the [kitchen](https://www.definitions.net/definition/kitchen) trying to fix us a hot plate” (45-48). He takes particular notice to his mother’s abilities as a woman, as an artist to take care of two children by herself. “Everything I say is Art is Art. Everything I do is Art is Art” (Ukeles 918). Ukeles has the notion that she can make work while she works. This is the epitome of the line in Tupac’s song *Dear Mama,* when he says, “Ya just working with the scraps you was given / And mama made miracles every Thanksgiving*”* (Line 50-51)*.* Through song, Tupac brings to life Ukeles “'maintenance’-type activities as artwork” through the subjectivity of his mother’s cooking and performance as a housewife.

Although Tupac’s mother went through a number of hardships the values she instilled in him as a young child remained salient to him as he grew into his stardom. “If history is told through art then that means that a woman’s history is told through art” (Export 928). Tupac’s song *Dear Mama,* illustrates a woman’s history as a work of art that is told through the words of her child’s own art. Tupac’s reverence for his mother is revealed in his art as he tells his mother’s story and highlights her value as a woman artist taking care of her home. The song *Dear Mama*, gives listeners the history of a woman’s art through the life of Tupac’s mother’s struggles during the 1970’s. While Tupac views his mother’s position as a housewife as admirable, Dora despises this very attribute in her mother perhaps because of the implications on her life. Dora is not pleased with her mother “who [is] bent upon drawing her into taking a share in the work of the house. She trie[s] to avoid social intercourse, and employ[s] herself...while attending lectures for women and with carrying on more or less serious studies” (Gay 181). We find that this is an indication that Dora’s agenda is to position herself amongst more of the “ruling class” individuals. At the rise of the feminist movement in 1972, Export experiences similar challenges as Tupac’s mother and writes a manifesto in response, addressing individuals both men and women such as Dora who undervalue and diminish the role.

Export’s manifesto boldly proclaims that women take back their power and reclaim from men their history that was lost along the way, by redefining their own “herstory”. In Export’s manifesto that she presents for the exhibition ‘MAGNA’, she writes “art can be significant for the women’s movement to the extent that we strike new meanings -our-meanings- from art”(Export 928). By defining the use of her own body as a weapon, Export uses an innovative approach to challenge the way that a woman’s body has been viewed by men throughout history. In her manifesto she proclaims, “AND IT IS THE TIME” for us women to employ art as an expressive means of influencing the consciousness of everyone, in order to allow our ideas to permeate the social construction of reality and to create a human reality” (928). Export’s example of this statement is found in her performance piece entitled, *Action Pants*: *Genital Panic*. Export exposes her genitals in a porn theater where her intentions are to confront the male audience. She uses this performance piece to uncover the 'real' genitals of a live woman showing the men the difference between romanticizing and objectifying female genitalia. Export’s aim is to demonstrate that interactions between men and women can-not be separated into categories and given lesser value, when it benefits men and at the cost of women. In Export's *Action Pants*: *Genital Panic* performance, she steps on stage with a crotchless pair of black pants using her body as a weapon while holding a weapon.

Through a sense of self-discovery, Export is able to show how women are able to foster creativity, and self-awareness where she “destroy notions created by men and create new ones which correspond to our sensibility and our wishes” (928). In her manifesto, Export writes that “art can be a medium of our self-determination, and this introduces new values into art. These values will change reality via the processes of cultural signification, and do so in the direction of women’s needs” (929). Exports creates a scene in society that makes way for women to create her own body image. Tupac gives space for women to “articulate [their] views” through a line in his song entitled, *Keep Ya Head Up*, when he states, “And since a man can't make one/ He has no right to tell a woman when and where to create woman” (23-24). As with Export, Tupac uses his influence to empower women through his art as he calls for an end of the mistreatment of women, and to treat them with respect as equals. Tupac’s public protest through several of his most notable songs speaks to women’s issues and brings awareness to society testifying that men live a different reality than women. Tupac is aware that his responsibility is to shift the narrative of the untold stories of women who suffer in silence due to public condemnation and public shame. Tupac thus, stands as an agent of change for women and their rights to choose what to do with their bodies.

There are times where Freud’s values are not aligned with the uplifting and powerful views of the woman such as in Freud’s case notes where he writes, “[from] the very beginning I took the greatest pains with this patient not to introduce her to any fresh facts in the region of sexual knowledge; and I did this, not from any conscientious motives, but because I was anxious to subject my assumptions to a rigorous test in this case” (Gay, 185-186). His notes indicate that he ensures that he is not the one to introduce the topic of sexuality to Dora before she mentions this, in case she did not have any experience with sexual relationships. Freud case notes indicate that he does not, “call a thing by its name until her allusions to it had become so unambiguous that there seemed very slight risk in translating them into direct speech” (186). His actions are not to protect her innocence but his own ambitions, maintaining the social ideologies that men have a say in a woman’s sexual expression (185). Freud blunders in the area of valuing how complex the female body is and fails to mention that it is made up of many layers.

There are many layers to the female body, these layers add complexities that gives the woman’s body power and make it hard for a man to understand what message she is conveying. A woman’s sexuality goes beyond what a man can say or think therefore she is in control of how she communicates her sexuality. Tupac illuminates these complexities in his song, *How Do You Want It*. Tupac’s lyrics in his first verse of the song make evident his shellshock as he exclaims “*oh [sh\*\*], you got me fiendin' / Body talkin' [sh\*\*] to me but I can't comprehend the meaning”(l3-14)*. Even in his advocacy for women, Tupac admits that he does not understand the multiple layers however, he shows that he values and respects the woman’s body enough to get consent before he touches her body. An example of how Tupac speaks to the woman’s control of the experience of her own body is when she guides him through the layers as he asks, *“How do you want It, How Does It Feel.”* Export tells society exactly “how she wants it” and “how it feels” when she proposes possible solutions as to best accomplish her art of representation without condemnation in all facets, especially in the media.

Export states, “in order to develop an image of woman as defined for ourselves and so transform the way the social role of woman is represented, we women must participate in the construction of reality through the elements of the media” (Export 928). It is Export’s objective to expose her audience to truth by “any media necessary” which stems from the lack of representation of a woman’s art defined by women. Although Freud is a man, in his presentation of Dora’s storytelling he is the blank “canvas” and he is the media as Export declares in her manifesto “THE FUTURE OF WOMAN WILL BE THE HISTORY OF WOMAN” (172). Dora’s name will forever be ingrained in the history books all by the works of Freud's “good intentions.”

In conclusion, this paper gives insight into Freud’s lost intentions of advocating for women in particular Dora, and having this understanding can help to inform the way we read Mendieta, Export and Ukele’s work as influential women artists of the world who define their own concept for the value placed on women and women’s work. By viewing Freud and the experiences of these women artists from this perspective, we see that a woman's art becomes the makeup of her very being. An important factor to remember about a woman’s art, is its ability to retrain the mind and redefine what one thinks they know. We learn this from the lessons that Dora teaches Freud such as the transference he experiences when he is drawn into what the character feels in her stories. Mendieta, Ukeles and Export help to expose Freud’s lost intentions by redefining value on a woman’s terms found in her own voice as he did with Dora. Mendieta makes a case for the value of a woman’s art by finding her voice in *Art and Politics,* while Ukeles give spectators a piece of her mind in her piece entitled, *Maintenance Art Manifesto*, and Export through her text, film, and performances when she uses her body as her secret weapon to bring new value to women’s art. As a contributing member of society in mainstream hip-hop, through song, Tupac illuminates a woman’s art by making room for her in society where she can answer the question, “*How Do You Want It”.* Despite how women have been undervalued throughout history in society, it is what a woman does that truly defines who she is thus, defining her art. This paper describes how Freud, Tupac, and the women artists Mendieta, Ukeles, and Export utilize their social position to create a new “story” or as described in this paper “herstory” for women through art. In understanding a woman’s art from her own voice, a new “herstory” is created, transforming the value of a woman’s life through her voice, her intellect, and her body.

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**Appendix**

*Dear Mama,* Tupac Shakur

Now ain't [nobody](https://www.definitions.net/definition/nobody) tell us it was fair

No love from my [daddy](https://www.definitions.net/definition/daddy) cause the [coward](https://www.definitions.net/definition/coward) wasn't there

He [passed](https://www.definitions.net/definition/passed) away and I didn't cry, [cause](https://www.definitions.net/definition/cause) my anger

Wouldn't let me feel for a stranger

They say I'm [wrong](https://www.definitions.net/definition/wrong) and I'm heartless, but all along

I was [looking](https://www.definitions.net/definition/looking) for a [father](https://www.definitions.net/definition/father) he was gone

I hung [around](https://www.definitions.net/definition/around) with the Thugs, and even [though](https://www.definitions.net/definition/though) they sold drugs

They [showed](https://www.definitions.net/definition/showed) a [young](https://www.definitions.net/definition/young) brother love

I [moved](https://www.definitions.net/definition/moved) out and [started](https://www.definitions.net/definition/started) really hanging

I [needed](https://www.definitions.net/definition/needed) money of my own so I [started](https://www.definitions.net/definition/started) slanging

I ain't [guilty](https://www.definitions.net/definition/guilty) cause, even [though](https://www.definitions.net/definition/though) I sell rocks

It [feels](https://www.definitions.net/definition/feels) good [putting](https://www.definitions.net/definition/putting) money in your mailbox

I love [paying](https://www.definitions.net/definition/paying) rent when the rent's due

I hope ya got the [diamond](https://www.definitions.net/definition/diamond) necklace that I sent to you

'Cause when I was low you was [there](https://www.definitions.net/definition/there) for me

And [never](https://www.definitions.net/definition/never) left me [alone](https://www.definitions.net/definition/alone) because you [cared](https://www.definitions.net/definition/cared) for me

And I [could](https://www.definitions.net/definition/could) see you [coming](https://www.definitions.net/definition/coming) home [after](https://www.definitions.net/definition/after) work late

You're in the [kitchen](https://www.definitions.net/definition/kitchen) trying to fix us a hot plate

Ya just [working](https://www.definitions.net/definition/working) with the [scraps](https://www.definitions.net/definition/scraps) you was given

And mama made [miracles](https://www.definitions.net/definition/miracles) every Thanksgiving

But now the road got rough, you're alone

You're [trying](https://www.definitions.net/definition/trying) to [raise](https://www.definitions.net/definition/raise) two bad kids on your own

And there's no way I can pay you back

But my plan is to show you that I understand

*How do You Want it, Tupac Shakur*

Love the way you [activate](https://www.definitions.net/definition/activate) your hips and push your ass out

Got a [nigga](https://www.definitions.net/definition/nigga) wantin' it so bad I'm bout to pass out

Wanna dig you, and I can't even lie [about](https://www.definitions.net/definition/about) it

Baby just [alleviate](https://www.definitions.net/definition/alleviate) your clothes, time to fly up out it

Catch you at a club, oh [sh\*\*] you got me fiendin'

Body talkin' [sh\*\*] to me but I can't [comprehend](https://www.definitions.net/definition/comprehend) the meaning

Now if you [wanna](https://www.definitions.net/definition/wanna) roll with me, then here's your chance

Doin [eighty](https://www.definitions.net/definition/eighty) on the freeway, [police](https://www.definitions.net/definition/police) catch me if you can

Forgive me I'm a rider, [still](https://www.definitions.net/definition/still) I'm just a [simple](https://www.definitions.net/definition/simple) man

All I want is money, f\*Fck the fame I'm a [simple](https://www.definitions.net/definition/simple) man

Mr. International, [playa](https://www.definitions.net/definition/playa) with the passport

Just like [Aladdin](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Aladdin) bitch, get you [anything](https://www.definitions.net/definition/anything) you ask for

It's [either](https://www.definitions.net/definition/either) him or me, champagne, Hennessy

A [favorite](https://www.definitions.net/definition/favorite) of my [homies](https://www.definitions.net/definition/homies) when we floss, on our enemies

Witness as we [creep](https://www.definitions.net/definition/creep) to a low speed, peep what a hoe need

Puff some mo' weed, funk, ya don't need

Approachin' [hoochies](https://www.definitions.net/definition/hoochies) with a passion, been a long day

But I've been [driven](https://www.definitions.net/definition/driven) by [attraction](https://www.definitions.net/definition/attraction) in a [strong](https://www.definitions.net/definition/strong) way

Your body is bangin' baby I love it when you [flaunt](https://www.definitions.net/definition/flaunt) it

Time to give it to [daddy](https://www.definitions.net/definition/daddy) nigga now tell me how you want it (Tell me how you want it)

How do you want it?

How do you feel?

Comin' up as a [nigga](https://www.definitions.net/definition/nigga) in the cash game

I'm livin' in the fast lane, I'm for real

How do you want it?

How do you feel?

Comin' up as a [nigga](https://www.definitions.net/definition/nigga) in the cash game

I'm livin' in the fast lane, I'm for real

*You are appreciated, Tupca Shakur*

[[Verse 1]](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-1535235)

[Some say the blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-30072)

[I say the darker the flesh, then the deeper the roots](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-13130900)

I give a holla to my sisters on welfare

[2Pac cares if don't nobody else care](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-14038168)

[And I know they like to beat you down a lot](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-30077)

When you come around the block, brothers clown a lot

But please don't cry, dry your eyes, never let up

Forgive, but don't forget, girl, keep ya head up

[And when he tells you you ain't nothin', don't believe him](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-1311511)

[And if he can't learn to love you, you should leave him](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-1311511)

[‘Cause, sister, you don't need him](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-1311511)

[And I ain't tryin' to gas you up, I just call 'em how I see 'em](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-48935)

You know what makes me unhappy?

When brothers make babies

And leave a young mother to be a pappy

[And since we all came from a woman](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-93623)

[Got our name from a woman and our game from a woman](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-93623)

[I wonder why we take from our women](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-93623)

[Why we rape our women — do we hate our women?](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-93623)

[I think it's time to kill for our women](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-366098)

[Time to heal our women, be real to our women](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-366098)

[And if we don't we'll have a race of babies](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-366098)

[That will hate the ladies that make the babies](https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics#note-366098)

And since a man can't make one

He has no right to tell a woman when and where to create one

So will the real men get up?

I know you're fed up, ladies, but keep ya head up

A person wearing a black dress

Description automatically generated

Export, Valie. *Action Pants: Genital Panic*, 1968. Live performance, Munich.