Bravado black hypermasculinity—the raw libidinal insistence of the drive—is a way that symbolic castration is continually disavowed. Belonging to a gang establishes a counter authority that is based on loyalty and defending local territory, being a Home Boy and Fly Girl. On the whole, women as bitches, bizzos, and hos are an abjected irrational element which is feared. They are only to be “fucked.” 2 Live Crews’ notorious 1990 album, As Nasty as They Wanna Be, is one long, repetitive misogynist rant, complete with nursery rhymes (Dirty Nursery Rhymes). Jack and Jill, Goldie Locks, Little Jack Horner, Humpty Dumpty, Little Red Riding Hood are rewritten to become raw, sexually explicit acts of oral, anal, and straight sex. If fairy tales from the Middle Ages were rewritten by middle-class literati to introduce a new set of moral values for children, as Zipes (1983) first argued, here the cautionary tales of sexual exploitation of middle-class sensibilities have been twisted to ironical proportions.

Such a countercultural tactic was defended by Gates, Jr. in 1990 (1995) during the trial to censor the album. Gates argued that the Crew was parodying and exploiting the virile black man that had been a historical white stereotype. Contrary to offending and being violent, the album was ironic and even laughable. The Crews' performance belonged to the traditional way black men have intervened in dominant white culture. Can Gates’s defense be accepted? Or, is this a reconciliation of middle-class black intellectualism with a “wanna-be” ghetto romanticization? Martin Kilson, political science professor of Black Studies at Harvard University, now emeritus, who was in the same department as Gates, Jr. would have thought so. Kilson (1999) accused Gates for his verbal trickery which, at times, is caught by its own cleverness. Gates, he says, acts as an “intellectual entrepreneur,” at times taking on what could be characterized as a “deconstruction for deconstruction’s sake” attitude rather than attending to the ethical import of what is being critiqued. A case for an oral culture can clearly be maintained, but can Gates’ entire defense hold up? The African American oral tale of the Signifying Monkey (see Gates, 1989) had many versions with no one author, much like
the Homeridae, but it is the aggressiveness of the toast tradition from which rap draws its inspiration that remains problematic. How is communal authorship being retained in the tradition of oral societies when rap and record labels are associated with specific rappers because of their biographical “authenticity”?

Black women rappers, on the whole, were silent with regards to 2 Live Crew’s misogyny. Rose (1994, 177) attributes this to their solidarity to the cause of racism. But, perhaps there is more to it than this? In their rap, “If You Believe in Having Sex” the “ladies” in the crowd are asked to repeat, line after line, words that subjectivize them as sexually insatiable and “bad,” whose job is to only service “niggas.” Perhaps one way to understand this self-blatant humiliation is that it provides a psychic hardening of the female black imaginary in the context of gangsta culture; as a way to push back the white gaze, which already cynically positions black women as exoticized hos ready to be had for a bit of “black pussy.” Women are pushed to the floor during performances and water poured over them to confirm their low status in the white order. Hard core women rappers, like Man Hole (Tairrie B with the nü-metal band My Ruin, Century Media Records), seem to have excepted this label. While such a reading seems “far-fetched,” it becomes more probable if the Crew is read as executing such jouissance onto black women in the context of a sadomasochistic performance where the hystericized female as “bottom” has found a sadistic “top” who “says it like it is.” He has the power. By exposing the rawness of phallic power, rappers like the Crew treat women as “equal” sexual predators (as hos), thereby executing a Sadean pact—the promise of equal sexual satisfaction of the body. It is possible to read “2 Live Crew” as signifying “two live sexes” defined by their eroticism (zoë) alone. “Booty rap” with its obsession for sex and perverted eroticism is Sadean through and through. Besides Manhole, Bytches with Problems (BWP) in New York, Hoez with Attitude (HWA) in Los Angeles also sprang up. The former produced singles like “Fuck a Man” and “Is Pussy Still Good?” The latter released “True Hoez” and “Hoe I am,” then a later album Azz Much Ass as You Want. In BWP’s “Two Minute Brother” the attempt is to ridicule the sexual performance of her partner. Two minutes is the extent of his lovemaking (Perkins, 1996, 26–27). Both groups exemplify the Sadean woman.

Crew’s album vivifies the difference between demand and desire. Demand belongs to the drive, which in this case remains insistent: there is no staging of fantasy of desire for the object. Women are put in a perverse position by direct address. The Crew as sadistic perverts are Sade’s agent-executors of women’s will. Women are asked only to be the objet a for the Crew; to satisfy the Crew’s sexual drive—as an object. In turn, they are the objet a for the ho who can have her sexual desires satisfied. The Crew emerge as “pure” drive with an unconditional demand. By “telling it like it is” in their raps, they are merely the objective “instruments” of “truth”; as if black women are merely exoticized “pussy” for white tastes, but they can be the sexual equals with black men such as the Crew. Their performance is not a “social realism.” “Telling it like it is” holds no sympathy, only “raw” reality. There is no fantasy