

Beyond the Black Lady: Sexuality and the New African American Middle Class

Lisa B. Thompson

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In this book, Lisa B. Thompson explores the representation of black middle-class female sexuality by African American women authors in narrative literature, drama, film, and popular culture, showing how these depictions reclaim black female agency and illustrate the difficulties black women confront in asserting sexual agency in the public sphere. Thompson broadens the discourse around black female sexuality by offering an alternate reading of the overly determined racial and sexual script that casts the middle class "black lady" as the bastion of African American propriety. Drawing on the work of black feminist theorists, she examines symptomatic autobiographies, novels, plays, and key episodes in contemporary American popular culture, including works by Anita Hill, Judith Alexa Jackson, P. J. Gibson, Julie Dash, Kasi Lemmons, Jill Nelson, Lorene Cary, and Andrea Lee.