

Close-Up: Beyoncé: Media and Cultural Icon

Ass You Lick It: Bey and Jay Eat Cake¹

Dinah Holtzman

Abstract

This essay investigates a period from 2010 to 2014 in which Beyoncé covertly celebrates mutual marital anilingus with her husband rapper Jay-Z. This is no coy allusion to transgressive sex play but rather an embrace of egalitarian erotic practices. Such a radical position is especially significant since, other than the Obamas, the Carters are the premiere example of a successful black heterosexual marriage. The couple's subtle promotion of cake eating suggests the key to commensurate male-female coupling is to queer and black(en) heterosex. The Carters' down-low affirmation of reciprocal anilingus is notable because of the larger cultural debates around Beyoncé's embrace of feminism in late 2013 in the midst of her "Mrs. Carter Tour." Through a close reading of the Carters' references to cake eating, I argue that the couple's coital customs are feminist, queer (heterosexual), and black.

Beyoncé is the reigning queen of bootyliciousness. The term, denoting bodacious female buttocks, went mainstream after Destiny's Child's single "Bootylicious" (2001).² With this ode to women blessed with bounteous bums, Beyoncé claimed her derrière as the premiere asset underlying her celebrity persona. Since "Bootylicious," she has coauthored songs celebrating women's posteriors through use of the slang, "cake." This emphasis on the buttocks re-orient the primary site of female sexual desire, and as I argue here operates to profound political effect.

This essay investigates a period from 2010 to 2014 in which Beyoncé covertly celebrates mutual marital anilingus with Jay-Z. This is no coy allusion to transgressive sex play but rather an embrace of egalitarian erotic practices. Such a radical position is especially significant since other than the Obamas, the Carters are the premiere example of a successful black heterosexual marriage.³ The couple's subtle promotion of cake eating suggests the key to commensurate male-female coupling is to queer and black(en)

heterosex. Analingus sidesteps the privileging of gendered genitalia. Every body has an anus and they appear similar despite gender and racial differences. Ass play may thus be understood as the most democratic of all sexual practices.

The Carters' down-low affirmation of reciprocal analingus is notable because of the larger cultural debates around Beyoncé's embrace of feminism in late 2013 in the midst of her "Mrs. Carter Tour." Beyoncé announced the concerts nine months before releasing "***Flawless" in which she samples Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Ted Talk "We Should All Be Feminists."⁴ Her inclusion of her husband's misogynist verses of "Drunk in Love" on *BEYONCÉ* (12/13) riled skeptics critical of "Bey feminism."⁵ While the album testifies to their glorious marital sex, the coded references to mutual cake eating re-orient our understanding of their partnership. Mutual analingus requires both partners to function as penetrator and penetratee. As Leo Bersani, Jennifer Nash, and Kathryn Bond Stockton affirm, the radical potential of ass play represents liberation from heteronormative gender roles and traditional conceptions of sex. Through a close reading of the Carters' references to cake eating, I argue that the couple's coital customs are feminist, queer (heterosexual), and black.

I identify analingus as queer because it represents a departure from normative heterosexual acts. Its focus on anal stimulus links it to the sexual practices of queer men. Within the context of hip-hop, cake eating relocates black heterosexuality from vaginas and penises to mouths and anuses. Through its de-emphasis of the penis, we may understand anal-oral play as fundamentally feminist. Both genders can experience pleasure from orifices that are identical. Favoring analingus over penis/vagina or anal intercourse has profound racial and gender ramifications by affirming a form of black (hetero)sexuality independent of the over-determined power of black men's penises.

Racing Rump Reverence

In her study of pornographic representations of blackness, Jennifer Nash expounds upon associations between black sexuality and the anal. She identifies Saartje Baartman, better known as the Hottentot Venus, as a key figure in linking black women to excessive buttocks. Baartman was a Khoisan South African who was exhibited to European audiences in the early 1800s. Her notoriety catalyzed the invention of the bustle—an accessory designed to provide women with the silhouette of steatopygia. The current popularity of buttock augmentation reflects a similar white fetishization and desire for posteriors stereotypically associated with black women.⁶

Nash discusses the stakes underlying the historical pairing of blackness with anality:

The buttocks are *the* location of imagined black sexual difference: black women's sexual excess is thought to be located in their spectacular buttocks, and black male desire for the buttocks is often taken as evidence of what . . . Abdur-Rahman calls a "cumulative and widespread racial and cultural retardation."⁷

Nash's comments provide an important context by which to understand Beyoncé's celebration of black female buttocks. She reverses long-standing associations between anality and racial inferiority. By embracing her own and other female "fatties," Beyoncé encourages black women to claim ownership of their fetishized fannies. Many of her lyrics and videos signal that there is power in black women's buttocks. This power goes beyond sexual seduction and can lead to greater gender equity in relationships with black men.

Although Beyoncé presents herself as straight, her approach to female sexuality and its manifestations responds to Kimberly Springer's call to black women to use queerness as a means of empowerment:

Isn't it time for heterosexual black women to adopt the language of queerness to free us from [the asexual] Mammy's apron strings? . . . [It is time to queer black female heterosexuality . . . a queer black female heterosexuality isn't about being a freak in the bedroom; it's about being a sexual person whose wants and needs are self-defined].⁸

Capitalizing on demand for booty, Beyoncé identifies her ass as the seat of her sexual power and a crucial site for sexual pleasure. Declaring her predilection for reciprocal analingus signals that the Carters derive particular pleasure from their practice of a non-genitally focused sex act in which both partners give and receive.

Is analingus a specifically "black" approach to navigating the complications of gender in heterosexual partnerships? Nash suggests that black anality is the arena through which heterosexual black women can inhabit their sexualities in resistance to the long history of racial and gender stereotypes projected onto their bodies. While Nash focuses on black female anality, her citation of Abdur-Rahman suggests that racist stereotypes capitalize on heterosexual black men's purported investment in black women's buttocks. The Carters' veiled veneration of mutual analingus represents an attempt to depathologize black heterosexuality for both partners through an embrace of anality.⁹

Hip-Hop Booty Beatification

Beyoncé made her first allusion to analingus in 2010. Appearing in New York City, she wore a Wildfox Couture T-shirt bearing the slogan, “Let me eat cake.” The phrase alludes to Marie-Antoinette’s alleged response to rioting French subjects.¹⁰ While there is no question mark on her shirt, the word “Let” implies a request for permission. Unlike Antoinette’s condescending mandate, Beyoncé’s slogan acts as a question and a plea, “can I, a black woman, acknowledge a desire to ‘eat cake?’” She poses her query in response to the history of racist theories denoting black women’s buttocks as corporeal evidence of their excessive sexuality. Understanding “eat cake” as slang, we might ask whose cake does Beyoncé wish to consume? While Jay-Z is an obvious candidate, the phrase lends itself to a queer reading since “cake” refers to female ass yet can also signify women’s genitalia.

Beatification of black and brown women’s asses is a foundational element of hip-hop. Chuck D memorably characterized B.E.T. as a “thug and booty fish tank.” Thus, Jay-Z’s apparent admission that he receives analingus from Beyoncé has ramifications with regard to the ongoing debate among straight male rappers over the sexual politics of giving versus receiving analingus. Some heterosexual rappers contend that any anal activity is inherently gay. Other straight MCs celebrate cake eating as appropriate heteronormative masculine behavior but oppose receiving it as too potentially queer. The most vocal heterosexual advocates for analingus are Kevin Gates and Trick Daddy, founder of the Eat-A-Booty Gang and National Eat-A-Booty Day.¹¹

Gates declares, “If I love a woman I’m supposed to lick her pussy, lick her toes, eat her booty. ... Yeah I eat booty! Real niggas eat booty! Real niggas please they bitches!” Trick Daddy proclaims, “I like ladies to let me out too! Don’t get it twisted, I don’t have no complex.” Both rappers note that they eat cake with women. Thus, they foreground gender to refute accusations that any man interested in receiving oral-anal stimulation must be gay. Trick Daddy responds to such slurs with the caveat, “ain’t nothing funny about me. Ask your momma and your sister am I funny.”¹² Male rappers receiving unreciprocated oral sex may represent the apex of gendered sexual power. However, receiving analingus is literally having your ass kissed, a position that privileges the recipient.

While some men perceive a willingness to perform blowjobs as demeaning and symbolic of gender or sexual inferiority, Gates and Trick Daddy consider orally stimulating a woman’s anus active, perhaps because although performed with the tongue rather than the penis, it still involves an act of penetration. The apparent paradox of giving fellatio as passive versus administering analingus as active may persist because the penis and tongue are protuberances while the buttocks are cleft, like the vulva, and the anus is an

orifice like the vagina. While giving anilingus could be considered passive like performing fellatio, male cake eating enthusiasts demonstrate a vested interest in engaging in a “queer” sex act while maintaining their unassailably active heterosexual masculinity. Thus, characterizing the giving of anilingus as active undergirds the exaggerated performances of heterosexual masculinity so common in hip-hop.

Hip-hop’s migration from margin to center over the last forty years is paralleled with a coterminous rise of young heterosexuals engaging in anal play. Has the mainstreaming of hip-hop catalyzed the correlated efflorescence of hetero anality? We cannot attribute this hetero “discovery” of anality solely to the Carters. However, their coded public dialogue about cake positions them as informal ambassadors for the practice if only for those hip to the meaning of “eat the cake.” While slang fluency is not an exclusively black phenomenon, the Carters camouflage their allusions to anilingus. We might understand their use of code to betray their anxiety about revealing their anal predilection; however, another interpretation is that their message is aimed specifically at black heterosexuals. The Carters provide black women and men with a model for achieving heterosexual gender parity: reciprocal anilingus.

Beyoncé’s Covert Cake-Eating Celebration

Beyoncé’s cake eating injunctions began with her 2010 appearance in the “Let me eat cake” t-shirt. The apparel’s slogan substitutes “me” for Antoinette’s reputed “them.” The change implies that Beyoncé identifies with the rioters since she too is a cake eater. However, her appropriation of Antoinette’s phrase marks her as queen, a given for her fans who refer to her as Queen Bey. While cultural commentators characterize the Carters as “American Royalty,” Beyoncé has done much to solidify this monarchical identification.

In the original and Director’s Cut of the “Mrs. Carter Tour” trailer (2/13 and 4/13), Beyoncé is styled as a European queen of bygone eras.¹³ Though she models her regalia upon Queen Elizabeth I, her hairstyle, adornments, and décolletage are reminiscent of Antoinette. The Elizabeth homage honors the tour’s April/May 2013 London stops, while also aligning Beyoncé with the Virgin Queen and her canny use of sexuality. Most importantly, Beyoncé models herself on Antoinette to associate Mrs. Carter with “Let them eat cake,” thereby drawing a connection between her marriage and anilingus.

In “***Flawless,” included on *BEYONCÉ*, she informs us “don’t think I’m just his little wife.” However, her February 2013 choice to anoint her concert tour “Mrs. Carter” effectively identifies her as exactly that. Despite this seeming contradiction, Beyoncé claims feminism in “***Flawless.” A paean to the

Carters' enthusiastic sex life, *BEYONCÉ* presents mutual analingus as the bridge between her feminism and her marriage. Beyond the tour's troubling title, critics pointed to the apparent paradox of Beyoncé championing feminism on an album that includes a disturbing line sung by Jay-Z that mentions convicted rapist Mike Tyson and wife-beater Ike Turner. In "Drunk," he raps, "In 97, I bite / I'm Ike, Turner, Turn up / Baby no I don't play, now eat the cake, Anna Mae, said 'eat the cake Anna Mae.'" ¹⁴ The latter lines reference a scene from the 1993 Tina Turner biopic *What's Love Got to Do with It?* ¹⁵ In the film sequence, Ike, threatened by a fan's request for his wife's autograph, smashes cake down her throat. The seeming contradiction between Beyoncé's avowed feminism and the questionable "Drunk" stanza is resolved by understanding how the couple signify on their practice of reciprocal analingus.

The first line refers to Tyson's post-prison comeback match against Evander Holyfield during which he bit off a chunk of his opponent's ear. Thus, Jay-Z implies he bites during sex. However, this does not suggest an antagonistic approach to his partner; rather, read against other lyrics on the album, Jay-Z's line indicates consensual rough sex play with his wife. In "Haunting," Beyoncé sings, "My wicked tongue where will it be? ... You want me? ... slap me! I'm pinned to the doorway / kiss, bite, foreplay." ¹⁶ In addition to indicating the couple engages in aggressive sex-play, she explicitly affirms Jay-Z's "Drunk" boast that he "bites." But there is enough ambiguity in her lyrics to suggest she bites back. The references to violence are mediated by her desire for rough sexual encounters with her husband.

Why does Jay-Z then reference Ike Turner? As a widely recognized husband/wife musical team, the Turners can be understood as precursors to the Carters. Jay-Z cites the Turners to acknowledge their status, but also to highlight how he and Beyoncé are not like the older couple. By most accounts, Jay-Z's cultural relevance as a rapper peaked prior to his marriage to Beyoncé. Thus, the Ike reference may be his shrewd response to concern that his wife's rise might result in the demise of his career as well as the dissolution of their marriage. Such speculation reifies the notion that heterosexual men cannot cope with being eclipsed by their wives. Jay-Z's lyrics taunt fans by admitting his waning status, and suggesting that like a frustrated Ike he will take out his anger on Beyoncé. But by adding, the phrase "I'm nice," he subverts the very expectations set up by the comparison to the Turners. Indeed, Jay-Z is adroit enough to recognize that the Turners have become a kind of cautionary tale that appears to conform to racist stereotypes about emasculating black women and their trifling husbands. ¹⁷ Jay-Z calls out fans vulnerable to projecting such loaded assumptions about black heterosexual marriages onto the Carters.

If we understand the sexual meaning of "eat the cake," the line can be understood as a command that Beyoncé perform analingus on him. This interpretation transforms the threat of domestic violence into a call for anal

play. Jay-Z pairs Turner's aggressive forcing of Anna Mae to ingest cake with his implicit demand that Beyoncé "eat cake," that is, perform analingus. While Ike's injunction to Anna Mae is literal, Jay-Z's take involves literalized slang. Through coded word play, Jay-Z signifies upon the Turners' violent dynamic, offering up a prescription for consensual sexual role-play.

This reading is bolstered by the Carters' appearance at the 2014 Grammy Award ceremony.¹⁸ During their joint performance of "Drunk," Beyoncé joins her husband to chant, "said 'eat the cake, Anna Mae.'" Immediately after the two intone the line, they wrap their arms around each other and Jay-Z rests his hands atop Beyoncé's buttocks. Although many critics understood the phrase as an allusion to domestic violence, their embrace at the Grammys reveals another interpretation. Their united singing of the phrase is better read as a coded declaration that they eat one another's cake. From this perspective, mutual analingus is foundational to the ecstatic marital sex life glorified on *BEYONCÉ*. By repeating, "said, 'eat the cake, Anna Mae'" with her husband, Beyoncé suggests that they switch between the "Ike" and "Anna Mae" roles during their sex play. In "Rocket," included on *BEYONCÉ*, Beyoncé draws a direct correlation between analingus and gender equity between heterosexual partners, "Daddy what you gonna do with all this ass / All up in your face ... Ohhhh my shit's so good it ain't even right / ... hell yeah you're the shit / That's why you're my equivalent."¹⁹ On stage at the Grammys, Beyoncé and Jay-Z effectively announced to the world that they are sexual equivalents and that analingus is key to this dynamic.

In addition to the foundational role that "ass" plays in analingus, Beyoncé embraces the word on multiple levels. In "Best Thing I Never Had" from 4 (2011), she informs her ex, "When I think there was a time that I almost loved you, you showed your ass, and baby, yes, I saw the real you."²⁰ "Showing your ass" can be understood as "walking away" but she also draws a parallel between her partner's ass and his real self, a self who is apparently beset by fears of intimacy and commitment. Viewed in this light, we might understand Jay-Z's "Drunk" command to "eat the cake" not as an expression of violence but rather as the inverse: a willingness to experience physical and emotional vulnerability. By keeping his ass still, that is fighting his "real self's" propensity to leave in the face of true intimacy, he allows himself to engage in meaningful partnership. In "Drunk," she does not watch his ass leave but rather observes it opening up to her.

The original "Tour" trailer (2/13), the "Bow" video (3/13)²¹ and Åkerlund's Cut of the "Tour" trailer (4/13) feature a crowned Beyoncé with black male attendants bowing before her. What might be expected of the bent men? If we read Mrs. Carter as Antoinette they bend to defer to her power. The "them" Mrs. Carter commands to "eat cake" appears to be black men. The same footage appears in the "Bow" video but with the lyrics "bow down

bitches.” Since these men bow before Mrs. Carter, their positioning visually marks them as the “bitches” she commands to bow. Notably, the queen’s ladies in waiting never bow; only these two men sink to their knees.

Despite the problematic tour title, Mrs. Carter may be encouraging black women to demand black men eat cake. This is a feminist gesture that advocates for black women’s empowerment through an egalitarian sex act that can signify male submission. Beyoncé affirms that black women are queens and deserve to be treated as such by black men. By implication, black men should consider themselves lucky to be granted the privilege of worshipping black women’s asses. Mrs. Carter may be a synecdoche for black women whose identities have been effaced by their relationships to black men. Reading Mrs. Carter as espousing a feminist message (about anilingus) aimed at (heterosexual) black women indicates that the feminism Beyoncé claims in “***Flawless” originated with the counter-intuitive title of her 2013/14 “Mrs. Carter Tour.”²²

Even as this reading offers a radically feminist message, it is important to recognize the violence at work in the previously cited lyrics that Jay-Z raps in “Drunk.” These lines function as an over-compensatory proclamation of aggressive black male heterosexuality meant to counteract his acknowledgment that Beyoncé “eats his cake.” The somewhat troubling tenor of his stanza may be calculated to demonstrate that he, the King/Hova, remains the “man” even as Beyoncé embraced the nickname “King Bey” and revolutionized the music industry with *BEYONCÉ*.²³ Her decision to name her tour “Mrs. Carter” indicates that she too may be invested in portraying her husband as a dominant hyper-masculine man albeit one who can handle his wife’s success and power. His pairing of the anilingus reference with two extreme examples of violent, aggressive, black male heterosexuality serves to negate any associations of passivity or inferiority. Although having one’s ass kissed clearly evokes power, that power may be mitigated when a man permits a woman to penetrate him.

If Jay-Z’s “Drunk” verse can be understood as an over-compensatory disavowal of his sexual subjugation as signified by receiving anilingus, then Beyoncé’s tour title performs similar work. She camouflages fiery feminist rhetoric with self-effacing deference to her man much like Jay-Z couches his anal “submission” to his wife’s tongue through analogies to domestic violence, rape, and boxing. By signifying on Tina and Ike Turner’s failed marriage, Beyoncé and Jay-Z offer a new model of black musical and marital partnership, one that is based on equality and respect even as it involves kinky sex. By foregrounding anilingus, the Carters ask us to consider an act that involves both absolute power and its inverse: total submission. What may at first be construed as crude references to anal play is instead a sophisticated model for egalitarian black heterosexuality.

Dinah Holtzman is a lecturer in the American Studies department at Indiana University Bloomington and a Research Associate with the Kinsey Institute. Her research interests include popular culture, celebrity, film, visual and cultural studies, contemporary art, psychoanalytic theory, critical race, and queer theory. She has published broadly on a range of topics including James Franco, Lady Gaga, Kara Walker, Kathryn Bigelow, and James Cameron's collaborative film projects.

Notes

1. The title of this essay was inspired in part by Z. Hall's essay, "The Shrews Are Drunk in Love," in which she contends that Beyoncé and Jay-Z's collaborative *BEYONCÉ* track presents an adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. See *Popular Music and Society* 40, no. 2 (2017): 151–63.

2. Destiny's Child, "Bootylicious," by Beyoncé Knowles, Rob Fusari and Falonte Moore, *Survivor* (New York: Columbia Records, 2000).

3. According to Chloe Angyal, who cites Boston.com as her source, both Beyoncé and Jay-Z (Shawn Carter) legally changed their surname to Knowles-Carter after their 2008 marriage. Purportedly, Jay-Z changed his surname at the behest of Beyoncé's father Mathew Knowles since he had no male heirs to carry on the family name. Ironically, around the same time, Knowles père impregnated one of his mistresses with a son. However, that child was conceived out of wedlock since Knowles was still married to Tina Knowles (now Lawson) at the time. In addition to naming her concert series "The Mrs. Carter Tour," Beyoncé recently signed the Instagram post announcing her pregnancy with twins "The Carters."

4. Beyoncé Knowles (featuring Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie), "****Flawless." By Beyoncé Knowles, Aaron Muka, Terius "The Dream" Nash, Chauncey Hollis, Raymond DeAndre Martin, Rashad Muhammed, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. In *BEYONCÉ* (Los Angeles: Parkwood Entertainment and Columbia Records, 2013).

5. Elizabeth Y. Whittington and Mackenzie Jordan, "Bey Feminism' Vs. Black Feminism: A Critical Conversation on Word-of-Mouth Advertisement of Beyoncé's Visual Album," *Black Women and Popular Culture: The Conversation Continues*, ed. Adria Goldman (London: Lexington Books, 2014), 155–74.

6. Jacqui Goddard and Nicola Davidson. "British Women Cast Aside the Skinny Look in Quest for a Superior Posterior," *Sunday Telegraph*, August 29, 2004.

7. Jennifer C. Nash, "Black Anality," *GLQ: Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 20, no. 4 (2014): 440.

8. Kimberly Springer, "Queering Black Female Heterosexuality," *Yes Means Yes!: Visions of Female Sexual Power and a World Without Rape*, ed. Jaclyn Friedman and Jessica Valenti (Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2008), 85–86.

9. A study by McBride & Reece, 2008; McBride et al., 2008 of roughly 1,478 heterosexuals divided their subjects into two categories: men who had engaged in insertive anal intercourse and those who had not. "[A]mong the men with insertive anal intercourse experience 24% had received a finger in their anus, 24% had put their mouth on their partner's anus, and 15% had received a mouth on their anus." In comparison, men

with no insertive anal intercourse experience reported lower rates of anal sex behaviors (McBride and Fortenberry, "Hetero," 127)." In this group, 4 percent gave and 2 percent received analingus.

10. There is no historical evidence that Antoinette ever used this particular phrase with which she is associated.

11. Tyrone Palmer, "The Booty Eating Renaissance," *Gawker*, September 14, 2014.

12. Ibid.

13. Jonas Åkerlund, "Mrs. Carter Tour' Official O2 Priority TV Commercial," YouTube video, 1:00. Posted by TurnerTVInc. February 4, 2013 (Original) and Jonas Åkerlund, "Mrs. Carter Show Tour' (Director's Cut Version) O2 Priority [w/o tag]," YouTube video, 1:00. Posted by TurnerTVInc. February 4, 2013.

14. Beyoncé Knowles (featuring Jay-Z), "Drunk In Love," by Beyoncé Knowles, Shawn Carter, Detail, Andre Eric Proctor, Rasool Ricardo Diaz, Brian Soko, Timbaland, Jerome Harmon, and Boots, *BEYONCÉ* (Los Angeles: Parkwood Entertainment and Columbia Records, 2013).

15. Brian Gibson, *What's Love Got to Do With It?* (Burbank: Touchstone Pictures, 1994).

16. Beyoncé Knowles, "Haunting," by Beyoncé Knowles and Jordan "Boots" Asher, *BEYONCÉ* (Los Angeles: Parkwood Entertainment and Columbia Records, 2013)

17. See Daniel Moynihan's *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (1965) widely referred to as *The Moynihan Report*.

18. "Beyoncé ft. Jay-Z 'Drunk in Love,' The Grammys 2014," YouTube video, 4:57. Posted by Naomi Gouba, February 19, 2014.

19. Beyoncé Knowles, "Rocket," by Miguel Jontel Pimentel, Beyoncé Knowles, Justin Timberlake, Timothy Mosley and Jerome Harmon, *BEYONCÉ* (Los Angeles: Parkwood Entertainment and Columbia Records, 2013).

20. Beyoncé Knowles, "Best Thing I Never Had," by Antonio Dixon, Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds, Larry Griffin, Jr., Beyoncé Knowles, Caleb McCampbell, Patrick "J Que" Smith, and Shea Taylor, 4 (Los Angeles: Parkwood Entertainment and Columbia Records, 2011).

21. Jonas Åkerlund, "Bow Down/I Been On," dir. Jonas Åkerlund. Vimeo video, 3:33. Posted by Evan Price, 2013.

22. In an interview with *Vogue* entitled "Mrs. Carter Uncut," Beyoncé responded to an inquiry about the name of the tour, "I feel like Mrs. Carter is who I am, but more bold and more fearless than I've ever been. . . . It comes from knowing my purpose and really meeting myself once I saw my child. I was like, 'OK, this is what you were born to do.' The purpose of my body became completely different (Ellison)." Beyoncé's imbrication of Mrs. Carter and motherhood effaces her husband altogether. The suggestion that Mrs. Carter has more to do with Blue Ivy than Jay-Z is evident in the conclusion of "Blue," a homage to her toddler daughter included on *BEYONCÉ*. Blue speaks the concluding lines "Been sy ay/Been sy ay/Blue/Mommy, Mommy, Mommy/Can we see Daddy? (laughs)/Can we see Daddy?/Missus Carter! Missus Carter!"

23. Jay-Z declared himself "Hova" in 1999 with the single "Izzo (H.O.V.A)" from *The Blueprint*. While the "J" is absent, he is Jay-Z, and appending "Hova" renders him Jay Hova or "Jehovah," one of the Christian God's many names. Shawn Carter refers to himself as "king" by way of album titles such as *Kingdom Come* (2006) and *Watch The Throne* (with Kanye West) 2011.

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