

list of illustrations / v
acknowledgments / vii

introduction / 1

one

"She Should Have Been a Boy": Shades of Blackness in
Three Lives and *The Blacker the Berry* / 23

two

The Fantasy and Fear of Dilution in *Absalom, Absalom!* / 43

three

The Black Arts Phallus / 62

four

The Surreal Aesthetic and the Sticky Racial Fetish: *The Bluest Eye*
and *Tar Baby* / 90

five

Skin Color Geographies in *Paradise* / 112

six

The Critique of Dilution Anxiety in *Sent for You Yesterday* / 135

epilogue

Post-Dilution Anxiety / 167

notes / 177

works cited / 191

index / 197