

WGS. 101
Class #6

Spring 2023

Homework Questions Due Class #7

Ida B. Wells: Passion for Justice (William Greaves, 1989)

**Homework/ Film Discussion Questions: Answer #2 and #3 (a few paragraphs each)
(We'll also discuss #1, but it's not necessary to write about it.)**

1. Most contemporary documentaries about women either omit voice-over narration or use a female voice-over. Why do you think this filmmaker chose a male voice-over (in addition to having novelist Toni Morrison read from Wells's diary)?
2. In this film, acclaimed novelist Toni Morrison (*Beloved*) reads from Wells's diary. Rather than simply using Morrison's voice-over, the filmmaker includes Morrison as a powerful visual presence. What is the effect on the audience of Morrison reading Wells? Why do you think this director chose Morrison? How does Morrison's presence connect with the male voice-over?
-- If you were making this film, what actors or activists might you have cast in the role of diary reader(s)? How might this film have been different if Wells's diary had been read by a different or less well-known writer, actor or activist (or more than one person)?
3. How does the life of Wells influence our ongoing discussion about the intersection of race, class and gender in the lives of African-American female activists (such as Sojourner Truth, Anna Julia Cooper and other female activists of color)? How does Wells's life of political engagement influence our thinking about gender-conscious political activity and women's rights activity/feminism?

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