“Traps is an exciting collection of writings by Black men on gender and sexuality issues that collectively reflects a sensitivity to language as well as uncommon depths of understanding of the complexity of manhood in America. Editors Rudolph Byrd and Beverly Guy-Sheftall deserve high praise for making this invaluable anthology available to students and general audiences.” — Darlene Clark Hine

“After looking carefully at Traps’ selections, I have to confess that I’m both excited and satisfied by what Rudolph P. Byrd and Beverly Guy-Sheftall have assembled here from the 19th century to the present. Educators genuinely need a text like this for opening their classroom and critical discussions on the well-born subjects of race and gender.” — Charles Johnson

“Finally a collection that documents the intellectual history of black men’s disloyalty to patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality! Traps is an urgent intervention for race, gender, and queer politics.” — Robyn Wiegman

Traps is the first anthology of writings by nineteenth- and twentieth-century African American men on the overlapping categories of race, gender, and sexuality. The selections on gender in Parts I and II reveal what some may view as the unexpected commitment of African American men to feminism along with critiques of the subordinate social, economic, and political position of Black women. Parts III and IV analyze the taboos and myths in which Black sexuality is enmeshed. These selections also stress the importance of rejecting homophobia and the need to contest the predominance of a heterosexual paradigm. Monolithic constructions of gender and sexuality, reinforced by sexism and historically sanctioned homophobia, are the “traps” that give this anthology its focus and its title.

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