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Paper Title:  
**Strange Fruit: Mimetic Theory and the Lynching of Black Bodies**

**Abstract:**

The history of lynching in the African American experience has been one of the most prominent reflections of mimetic theory. This was especially the case during the early part of the twentieth century. Many southern communities across America engaged in ritualized killing of black bodies. Sacred violence became part of the cultural and religious landscape of white southern communities in the early 1900s and black bodies operated as particular kinds of scapegoats in the minds of southern whites. Mimetic theory provides an extraordinary lens by which to understanding the historical structuring of “otherness” towards African Americans in America. Using mimetic theory as a tool by which to deconstruct the ways in which race, violence, and oppression become the underlying themes surrounding incidents of African American lynchings, this paper addresses the 1903 lynching of John Osborne, a young African American male living in the southeastern region of North Carolina. The lynching of John Osborne, as it is seen through the perspective of mimetic theory reveals the intricate processes within the social construction of race and the racialization of the black male body within Jim Crow culture. Violence is at the heart of racialization and its varied manifestations in society. This work seeks to expose these intricate processes of “othering” in American History in order to provide counter-mechanisms of resistance against these occurrences in contemporary race relations.