Carrie Mae Weems’ 1995-1996 installation “From Here I Saw What Happened and I Cried” provides an opportunity to meditate on the discourses of woundedness that permeate much thinking on race, affect and masochism while allowing us to theorize brown jouissance. Following Lacan, jouissance is taken to be the experience of being a body, “something’ lived by a body when pleasure stops being pleasure.”

This lecture dwells on jouissance in order to retain the ambivalence that is provoked by Weems’ invocation of tears. Brown jouissance offers to consider this opacity as deeply connected to the flesh, sensation and strategies of resistance.