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University of British Columbia, Vancouver, unceded Coast Salish territories

We would like to acknowledge that Ignite was assembled on x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam) land

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Field
Maneo Mohale

for her

Take me back to that first flush
Trace it
like a slow fingertip along the lengthy warmth of my collarbone
trace it back for me.

I'll pick up my skirts, reveal my thick ankled boots
and march through the dirt
and dust of us

back to the first,
where the brown of the ground
seeped up
into the brown of my dress
skin brown leather triangles
buttoned down

you stared.

and I asked
“...what?”

the boyish imp of your smile digging into the soft of your cheek
like a poke in a pillow

you replied
“...ah, it's nothing”

my curiosity lifted its head
like a sudden-sunflower at the sun

I ventured again
“no. ...what?”

you replied
“it’s just”
[a pause]
“youlooksobeautiful”

I was this curved canvas. for you to leave strokes of
momentary desire clean your brush on the inside and
pretend to paint... surprised at the abstract grace that your
colour left on my stretches. convinced now of beauty.
accidental.

Field, a queer love poem in two parts, deals first with discovery and desire in my own past, and secondly with my present sense of pain, realization and ultimate acceptance. Due to the white supremacist, heteronormative, capitalist patriarchy (as bell hooks so eloquently terms it), within which my experiences as a queer, South African woman exist, and within which my poem operates, an expression of queer desire is in itself a political statement.

The "War Against Sexual Harassment:" Constructions of the University Through Security Discourses in the 1970s

Pardis Pahlavanlu

Trigger warning: This piece discusses reactions to sexual assaults on campus and the gendered and colonial roots of sexual violence.

The university campus is a microcosm of society in that it carries the values, histories and myths of the nation at large. One such myth is that it is a place of innocence and benevolence countered by external threats. The construction of the university as a safe and inclusive space is evident in the amalgam of university services that exist for students to use. The University of British Columbia is no exception to this with services such as Access and Diversity and Jumpstart among many others. However, the history and present occupation of Musqueam territories, the expulsion of students of Japanese origin during the Second World War, and increasing university tuitions, to name a few, show that perhaps the university campus is not as inclusive or accessible as it is constructed to be. The occurrence of sexualized violence on campus, especially, proves that this perception may be little more than a constructed myth.

This paper will analyze the discourses present in the response to several sexual assault incidents on the University of British Columbia Vancouver campus (UBC) in 1979. I will do this by reviewing an article written for *The Ubysey*, titled "Bucks Spent to Stop Rape", by student-journalist, Julie Wheelright (A1, A2). I will argue that the construction of the university campus as safe in comparison to external threats of assault decontextualizes the university's role in the patriarchal and colonial power regimes that allow for such actions to occur in the first place. This decontextualization is shown by the portrayal of university men as saviours to university women in a stark contrast to "peeping toms" and "delivery people" (Wheelright A1, A2). Secondly, the insistent presence of the RCMP on campus and the locations of the assaults themselves hint at a link towards UBC's colonial history and present.

Before I contextualize the milieu that shaped the discourses that I will discuss, I would like to situate myself in this text, as I too am re/producing knowledge here. I do this to recognize and link my position as a university student to the privileging of academic knowledges. Scholars influenced by Foucauldian thought, such as Steven Maynard (68-70) and Margaret Hillyard Little (232-233), have noted the role that such respected and "rational" identities have played in re/producing discourses that impact the livelihoods of those they study.

As such, I situate myself in this text, first, as an undergraduate university student who has been given the tools and power to gather information and produce knowledge. However, as I write on my own "community", the university student body and campus, I must also acknowledge that I am affected by the occurrences of which I write. As a cisgender woman, I walk at night on the campus or elsewhere with the potentiality of attack engraved in my head, which influences the steps I take, and where and how I take them. Beyond the worries of dark streets, I am impacted by the undergraduate "rape chants" that allow for a culture that is complacent towards sexualized violence. These discourses shape the relationships that I have with, but not limited to, those who identify as men.

I also am a racialized body as I navigate the university campus. However, I grant that my middle-class position due to my university education and family background lightens threats that I feel due to my racial background. For example, I rarely have to walk through dark streets after a late work shift, as many working class people may. That being said, the violence of patriarchy goes beyond the notion of night-time gropers and enters the intimate lives of people in their homes, workplaces and school, in all of which I am present.

Finally, I would like to emphasize my position and relation as a non-Indigenous settler on occupied Coast Salish territories. Canada's continued colonial relationship with Indigenous peoples has allowed for occurrences of sexualized violence of Indigenous women to go unjustly uninvestigated. In fact, the police and RCMP have done worse for these communities as the history of colonialism shows. This paper acts as a beginning of my own unsettling of dominant national narratives through the works of scholars who aim to question and dismantle hegemonic power structures that feed into patriarchal and colonial discourses.

Setting the Scene – The University Campus in the 1970s

Post-war Canada was an interesting time for youth entering university. Not only did the post-war Baby Boom of the fifties and sixties lead to increasing numbers of students entering the post-secondary institutions, but it also allowed for an increase in women entering the universities (Sethna 291-292). Despite information on the greater gender diversity of this era, there is a gap in the research on the racial makeup of the student body on campus. While Christabelle Sethna (291-292) does mention that the population was largely white, middle class students, there is little information on the actual numbers of racialized students and their respective backgrounds. Nonetheless, these new cohorts of students were quite active in their involvement in the social changes that were occurring at the societal level.

According to Roberta Lexier (4), students on campus in the post-war era participated largely in the campaigns that surrounded them as they saw themselves as citizens at the local, national and international level. For example, at Simon Fraser University there was a special interest in Indigenous issues rooted in the Red Power Movement of the 1960s. Here, students campaigned for changing the university's name to "Louis Riel University" in order to pay tribute to a leader more aligned in the struggle against colonial domination (Lexier 2). It should be noted, however, that this motion was not popular among the majority of the students of the university.

If discourses around social change were entering the lives of students on campus, the women's liberation movement was of no exception. In the 1970s, women's organizations against sexualized violence in the workplace began to form across North America. These organizations emphasized the need for legal actions, as well as the importance of greater public awareness campaigns (Baker 164-174). By 1979, feminist Catharine MacKinnon had named these actions against women's bodies under the term "sexual harassment" (Eyre 295). In this milieu, sexualized violence remained under structuralist categories that saw women as potential victims and men as potential rapists.

The student newspaper became a site where these discourses played out. Under the (white, male-dominated) leadership of editorial boards that identified with the progressive politics of the "New Left", student newspapers brought these discussions to the forefront of student life (Sethna 291). However, regardless of their platform for discussion, the response to sexualized violence was mixed. Ultimately, it was the individualistic and liberal discourse in response to violence that came out on top on the university campus (Eyre 301), and also the pages of the university newspaper. Hence, the student newspaper, and *The Ubyyssey* in particular, provided a space for the students to construct their reality through the back-and-forth of discursive negotiations about the meaning of their student life (Sethna 290-291).

The university campus' involvement in social movements that were happening outside of its gates shows that there was a great deal of permeability for the transition of discourses from greater society and the university campus. We can see this with the involvement of student body in social change movements, from women's liberation to anti-war campaigns, but how was the mainstream student population and school administration affected by more entrenched forms of socialization rooted in patriarchy, heteronormativity and colonialism? In

discussing the construction of history, Philip Abrams (16-17) emphasizes the connection of single events as occurring within a social context. Thus, it is impossible to deconstruct an event without acknowledgement and action aimed at solving its systemic roots.

Constructing Sexual Assault Occurrences on Campus

On September 11, 1979, “Bucks Spent to Stop Rape” written by Julie Wheelwright (A1, A2) was printed on the front page and continued onto the second page of *The Ubyyssey* publication. Wheelwright, a regular reporter for the student newspaper, did not place herself in this article in a possible attempt to sound “objective” so as to be printed on the front page. She outlined the steps that were being taken by university administration to address the occurrence of several sexual assaults that had been reported on campus at the residences in the previous school year. She includes the voices of Kate Andrew, a member of the Women’s Committee at UBC, Al Hutchinson, the UBC Director of Traffic and Security, and Kevin Rush, a Senior Housing Advisor.

The article, as well as the whole of *The Ubyyssey* editions, has been preserved digitally by the UBC Archives initiative. Other publications that have been also been digitized include *UBC Reports*, *UBC Alumni Chronicle*, *The 432*, and the *Indian Education Newsletter*. In addition, it collects pictures and textual records of decision-making processes on the campus. Although it is fortunate to have these artifacts for future generations to examine, they still exist within the confines of a university that itself exists within the colonial Canadian state. To reference Ann Laura Stoler’s work (93), the colonial archive is a subject that can be analyzed along the politics of storage. Moreover, colonial archives “concealed, revealed and reproduced the power of the state” (Stoler 97). I argue that the special preservation of *The Ubyyssey* makes the UBC Archives a colonial subject. The following two sections will show how the representation of sexualized violence on campus has been stripped of a critical review of the situation to conceal any roles the university may have had in patriarchy and colonialism.

“Prowlers and Peeping Toms” Versus the Buddy System

Wheelwright’s article (A1, A2) had several issues with the way that it proposed ending sexualized violence on the campus according to such men as Al Hutchinson. In fact, the lack of inclusion of women’s voices in this article, other than Kate Andrew from the Women’s Committee who was briefly quoted as being skeptical, is not unproblematic. Interestingly, *The Ubyyssey* was not shy in reporting on and publishing opinions about sexualized violence on campus. The topic was brought up in at least every other edition that was published. Within this same edition, there was a full page piece co-written by Sally Thorne and Kate Andrew of the Women’s Committee titled, “Nobody Wants to Admit It—Sexual Assault Exists at UBC” (A5). This article takes a perspective in line with the feminist movement of the time, stating that although there are assaults occurring on campus that it “does not mean that you should NEVER talk to strangers, walk alone at night or go into Main Library” (Thorne and Andrew A5). On the other hand, the paternalistic voice of Kevin Rush in Wheelwright’s article advised university housing residents to not let “delivery people” into the houses at night.

The significance in the reporting of these two perspectives is the in the placement of the articles within the edition. While the “protectionist” voices of male professionals are placed on the first page, those of individuals involved in the women’s movement are placed later in the article and the edition. Henry Yu notes that politics are inevitable in the writing of history, where “individuals either contribute to the unfolding of that nation’s history, or they are excluded as meaningless and irrelevant” (XIvi). Here, the voices from the UBC women’s committee and are pushed deeper in the edition of *The Ubyyssey*, while writing that is more aligned with mainstream discourses around sexualized violence are placed more prominently. Furthermore, the editorial by Thorne and Andrew is regarded as subjective and up for debate, while the Wheelwright article is seen as

more objective and neutral in its presentation of ‘news’.

To add insult to injury, Al Hutchinson is quoted saying that “there’s a need to be careful but not to be paranoid” (Wheelwright A1), perhaps signalling toward skeptical voices coming from members of the Women’s Committee who saw sexualized violence as a larger, societal issue. Unsurprisingly, this sentiment of feminine hysteria was voiced more strongly by another student, by the name of Chris K (A4), in a letter written in response to the Thorne and Andrew article, in the next edition of *The Ubyyssey*. This person goes on to say: “If the over-reactive sentiments of these two are shared by the majority of women on campus, we males are in for a lonely and frustrating year” (K. A4). This shows that more representative voices on the assaults were ill-received by some in the student population. The placement of the article on the first page, beneath a caption of a picture that details how a “silent show entertained students outside the [Student Union Building] Monday and pleased watching professors, most of whom like their students to keep quiet and go through the motions without causing a fuss”, in relation to a mime performance, also hinted at the difference between rational men, and hysterical women.

The use of male professionals in the article serves to “legitimize” the quest for action against sexualized violence. In doing so, the voices of those in better positions to empathize with and understand occurrences of sexualized violence are marginalized, quite literally in the case of the student newspaper. Margaret Hillyard Little’s review of the case files in the Ontario Mothers’ Allowance mentions this disjunction. She notes that the voices most often heard in the files found for receiving allowances for working class women was the middle class professional women who wrote the files (Hillyard Little 230-231). Similarly, the need for programs to fight against sexualized violence required the voices and ideas of male professionals to gather mainstream attention.

These professionals were not the only saviours in this narrative, however. The university’s male student body was also seen as “protectors” of the women on campus. By putting in place a “buddy system” for those living in co-ed housing, Kevin Rush was not only stating that the women would benefit specifically from the attention of male counterparts, but also that there was no threat coming from these men. A noteworthy article to tie into this was published on the front page in a 1977 edition of *The Ubyyssey*, where it discussed first-year men in Totem Park residence began a “tuck-in service” for the women on the alternating floors. Along with reading the women bedtime stories, the men would check the room for spiders and “sex crazed perverts, moral degenerates, sickies and rapists” (Conn A1).

It is important to emphasize that there is a clear distinction being made between the men on campus and those “peeping toms” and “delivery people” mentioned in Wheelwright’s article. In his article on masculinities in the post-World War II era, Jeff Sommers (289-291) investigates the construction of the Downtown Eastside as an abject space in relation to the respectable, middle class spaces of “domesticated” men who lived in the suburbs of Vancouver. Those men outside of the familial areas of Vancouver were seen as rejects that formed identities of pathological masculinities (Sommers 295-298). In a similar fashion, Becki Ross and Kim Greenwell (141-145) map out these racialized zones in relation to forms of striptease dancing in Vancouver. The distinction between the respectable university man and the outsider not only labels outsiders as abject and threatening to the (university) society, but it also serves to construct the university, and the pupils it produces, as inherently good when it clearly is involved in so many of the processes that result in violence.

Bringing in the RCMP on Musqueam Territory

This analysis would be incomplete without an unsettling of the colonial discourses that are present. At first glance, it may seem difficult to do so as there is little mention of Indigenous people in the article, nor in the whole edition. In this way, the notion of the “in/visibility” of Indigenous bodies, that Renisa Mawani (100-101)

studies, is relevant in getting a more complete picture of the time. The ambiguity of the presence of Indigenous peoples in their constructions by white settlers shows an erasure of Indigeneity on the one hand, and an evocation, on the other (Mawani 121-122, 125-131). In the post-war era, the move towards constructing Canada as multicultural and postcolonial lead to commodified and superficial representations of Indigenous people. The Totem residence building that was mentioned in Wheelwright's article exemplifies this. According the Facebook page titled *Decolonizing Knowledge - UBC*, Totem Park residence began naming its building halls based on local Indigenous groups in 1964, in order to acknowledge the native people of the land. However, in doing this, they also misused the names of Nations, such as Dene and Haida, which were not the main Nations in the Coast Salish territory, themselves.

The Indigenous student body, although likely to have been small, was also active on campus. When they were rendered invisible or insulted, their student body spoke up. In a 1978 edition of *The Ubyyssey*, a front-page picture with a caption that mocked experiences colonialism and genocide was published. The photo of two people sitting in the sun was captioned with: "Basking in warm sun of Indian summer, non-Indian students soak up some rays that once played on evil, exploitative Canadian explorers... Genocide by livelihood deprivation is utterly forgotten in pretty fall scene outside of [Student Union Building]" ("Indian Summer" A1). This sparked a response from the Native Indian Student Union of UBC in the next printed edition of *The Ubyyssey*. In his reaction to this, Theo Collins (A5) asserted his place on the campus as an Indigenous student and told a seemingly innocent editorial staff that the caption was offensive. Here we see a counter-narrative to the presumed invisibility of Indigenous students on campus.

If Indigenous students were present and active on campus, what role did the emphasis of increasing security with the presence of the RCMP play? The representation of the RCMP and paternal figures, similar to Al Hutchinson, were portrayed in a positive light; as saviours on the campus. The hero-saviour discourse likely had different implications for Indigenous students than it did for white students. The portrayal of the RCMP as heroic and benevolent was juxtaposed by their active involvement in the colonial project, most significantly in this context, as the agents who took children from their homes and into residential schooling. The ignorance of the non-Indigenous student and administrative bodies in making this connection may have shown Indigenous students their interactions and histories with the RCMP were trivial, similar to the way genocide was mocked in the caption mentioned above. Indigenous students may have felt that they did not belong on the university campus.

In a conversation created around the publishing of two poems in two separate editions of the Indian Education Newsletter, we can begin to contextualize the colonial campus (Appendix). Perhaps the most striking of this is the recognition that the university campus is a white one, where the "Indian" must pay a price in order to partake in. It is these voices that need to be heard in order to fully understand the university campus' relationship to colonialism and patriarchy.

Moving Forward– Contextualizing the Decontextualized

The decontextualization of the occurrences on UBC's Vancouver campus aims to serve the constructed notion of structural innocence in settler Canadian society. *The Ubyyssey's* article written about initiatives to cut down on sexual assaults on campus shows these very discourses at play. While those privileged enough to go to university on occupied Musqueam territory were painted as victims or saviours, outsiders such as "delivery men" were seen as a threat. In particular, the presence of the RCMP and other markers of colonialism also detached those involved in the response to the assaults from any larger participation in the colonial project. It should be noted that similar responses to sexual assault incidents continue to occur at UBC today, and campuses

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Is Orange Really the New Black- Or Has It Always Been White?

K. Ho

In an article in the New Yorker, Emily Nussbaum writes that Orange is the New Black (*OITNB*) is “the love child of *Oz* and *The L Word*”. *OITNB*, an American-drama TV series loosely based on Piper Kerman’s memoir, *My Years in a Women’s Prison*, integrates a prison-based narrative with a storyline of queer desire, identity, and sex, as respectively seen in *Oz* and *The L Word*. Although I cannot comment on the show *Oz*, Nussbaum’s statement about *OITNB*’s similarity with *The L Word* is interesting. What immediately becomes salient is a theme that undergirds both shows: the overrepresentation of white queer narratives – and conversely, the underrepresentation of queer racialized narratives. Despite critical acclaim and wide success, *OITNB* is not without its own biases and shortcomings. In this essay, I will argue that by privileging whiteness, white desire, and white sexuality in its queer storylines, *OITNB* silences and erases the experiences of queer racialized folks, and thereby sustains the dominance of white queer homonormativity.

As Julie Podmore writes, homonormativity is “a central power dynamic among ‘queers’ whereby neo-liberal capitalism, patriarchy, colonialism and racism [work] to empower some queer subjects and further marginalize others in the assimilation process” (264). Homonormativity contributes to a politics of normalization by positioning middle-class, able-bodied, settler, cisgender, white, “mainstream” lesbian and gays as ideal queer citizens, while excluding and alienating queers of colour, queer, trans, and Two-Spirit Indigenous folks, and other “sexually deviant” and non-normative folks, including heterosexual poor women of colour and single teen mothers (Cohen; Morgenson; Smith, “Heteronormativity”). JP Catungal’s work on queer AIDS organizations exposes how the effects of a colour blind, *one-size-fits-all* (read: white-dominated) approach “severely neglect[s], if not denie[s], the role of power, inequality and hierarchy, defined along ethnoracial lines” – and therefore privileges particular sexual bodies (259). To support my argument, I will examine three points: the absence of Two-Spirit, queer, and trans Indigenous narratives, the de-sexualization of queers of colour, and the hypersexualization of white queers.

My paper will be informed by critical race, postcolonial, anti-colonial, and intersectional feminist theory. As a queer, Chinese-Canadian, gender non-conforming, diasporic settler of colour living and producing work on the unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəy’əm (Musqueam) nation, I firmly believe that my simultaneously-occurring, sometimes-conflicting, and differently-layered identities are integral to how I navigate and stay accountable to my work. As such, I will be frequently drawing on my lived experiences to inform this piece.

Part 1: Invisibilization of Indigenous Narratives

The majority of the *OITNB* storyline takes place throughout various areas of New York State. New York State is situated on the ancestral territories of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (also known as Goano'gano'ch'sa'jeh'seroni, Six Nations, or the Iroquois Confederacy), comprised of the Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora Nations. New York City, in which much of *OITNB*’s filming occurs, is situated on ancestral territories of the Munsee-Delaware Tribe.

As both the United States and Canada are white settler states premised on the ongoing dispossession, genocide, displacement, assimilation, and exploitation of Indigenous peoples (Smith, “Three Pillars”), it is particularly striking that there is no representation of Native Americans in *OITNB*. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the incarceration rate of Native Americans is 38% higher than the national rate (vii). This

overrepresentation is linked to racial profiling, systemic discrimination, and over-policing of Indigenous communities by the state, as well as the continuing implications of settler colonialism, such as socioeconomic disadvantage, intergenerational trauma, historical and ongoing violence, and land dispossession (Office of the Correctional Investigator; Rudin; Simpson). Given such high rates of incarceration of Indigenous peoples, why then, are there no Indigenous narratives in the show? Here, I am not justifying the state's over-incarceration of Indigenous people, nor am I lending legitimacy to the prison industrial complex; rather, I am critiquing *OITNB* for failing to acknowledge that Indigenous people exist and are disproportionately represented in the prison industrial complex. Would it not be thought-provoking and important for *OITNB* to portray a Native American inmate's experiences, to shed light on the ways in which the prison industrial complex is inherently colonial and racist (Rudin), and to show the realities of settler colonialism that Indigenous people face - and resist - on a daily basis, incarcerated or not?

Kate Shanley notes that "Native peoples are a permanent "present absence" in the US colonial imagination, an "absence" that reinforces, at every turn, the conviction that Native peoples are indeed vanishing and that the conquest of Native lands is justified" (cited in Smith, "Three Pillars" 68). Despite tireless mobilization and organizing by Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island, settler citizens and colonial governments have continued to erase and exploit their communities, ontologies, territories, and resources (Simpson). *OITNB*'s omission of Native American narratives effectively negates Indigenous existence and sovereignty, thus reinforcing a settler colonial agenda.

Furthermore, there is no mention of non-colonial/non-colonized understandings of gender and sexuality in *OITNB*. Indeed, *OITNB* represents queer feminine sexuality only through a lens of "mainstream" (white) lesbianism and bisexuality. In other words, the show solely displays Eurocentric conceptions of gender and sexuality, thus erasing the possibility of all other identities (Driskill). Jessica Yee Danforth, a self-identified "Two-Spirit multi-racial Indigenous hip hop feminist reproductive justice freedom fighter" (Yee 18), writes that she identifies as "Two Spirit beyond the acronym of LGBT" (Danforth 23). Her statement is a poignant critique on the hierarchy of the LGBT acronym, exposing how power is articulated through the acknowledgment of certain identities (those that are listed in the LGBT acronym), and the erasure of other identities (those that are unlisted and invisibilized, such as intersex, Two-Spirit, asexual, non-binary, genderqueer, transsexual, and non-Western orientations). When shows like *OITNB* prioritize, represent, and therefore (homo)normalize mainstream LGBT identities, they subsequently dismiss identities that lie *beyond* Western/colonial constructions of gender and sexuality (Driskill). In the context of a white settler state, the lack of representation of Indigenous conceptions of gender and sexuality contributes to colonial assimilation and erasure (Driskill; Smith, "Heteronormativity").

Part 2: Desexualization of QTPoC Intraracial Relationships

The second point in this paper refers to the de-sexualization of intraracial relationships between queer and trans people of colour (QTPoCs). Here I define QTPoCs as racialized settlers or immigrants who are non-Indigenous to Turtle Island. As a queer settler of colour, my understandings of gender and sexuality are inherently Western, as English is the only language through which I can conceive of my identity. Thus, my queer identity is always positioned within a settler colonial order (Morgenson). Andrea Smith's work reminds me that queer of colour critiques can – and often do – "neglect the normalizing logics of settler colonialism, particularly within the U.S. context" ("Heteronormativity" 42). As such, I am careful not to conflate queer, trans, and Two-Spirit Indigenous realities with QTPoC realities, but also wish to hold space to examine the queer experiences of Black and Latina characters in *OITNB*.

While *OITNB* portrays more racialized queer female narratives than most mainstream television shows, the show also fails to represent their specifically sexual stories. Of all the queer female characters in *OITNB*, only four are people of colour - and none are Indigenous. Notably, with the exception of Brooke SoSo, who will be later discussed, the three other QTPoCs (Poussey, Suzanne, and Sophia) are not given an active (or sexy) present-day “prison-love” storyline – one so eagerly handed to white females. In this section, I will examine the ways in which QTPoCs are desexualized and denied sexual opportunity.

Within many QTPoC spaces, I have frequently noticed that many QTPoCs do not seek relationships with folks of the same race. Many of us have *interracial* PoC relationships or relationships with white folks, but rarely do we have *intraracial* relationships. Although intraracial disavowal is not the reality for all QTPoCs, it does appear in our communities with remarkable consistency. This disavowal is inexplicably complex, highly individualized, and intimately tied with internalized racism and white supremacy (Thom). In *OITNB*, the dynamic between Poussey and Taystee follows similar lines. Poussey, a queer Black woman, is best friends with Taystee, a heterosexual Black woman. Throughout the seasons, their friendship is portrayed as strong, spirited, and funny. Underlying the relationship, however, is the fact that Poussey is in love with Taystee. In season 2, episode 4, Poussey attempts to kiss Taystee, a sexual advance that Taystee rejects: “Sorry, P, we’ve been through this...” A similar theme of queer disavowal arises in the scene between Flaca and Maritza, two best friends who are both Latina. In season 2, episode 6, they kiss, but then step back and look at each and laugh. “No,” they say, between giggles, “Just no.” Of course, there are various other factors that inform these friendships, but the final message remains clear: racialized folks do not get the opportunity to express intraracial queer love, sex, and desire on *OITNB*.

Part 3: Hypersexualization of White Queers

This next section will discuss how *OITNB* privileges white queer sexuality and subordinates QTPoC sexuality. It is interesting to note that of the few QTPoCs depicted in television, they are almost always partnered with white folks (ie. Bette and Tina in *The L Word*, Stef and Lena in *Meet the Fosters*). This too occurs in *OITNB*: although Poussey’s relationship with Taystee is desexualized, Poussey has a sexually fulfilling relationship with a white woman in her flashback, and flirts with white inmates in season 2. This unveils a necessary question: Is the sexuality of QTPoCs legitimate only when it is in contact with whiteness? In discussing the prevalence of internalized racism within QTPoCs and white dominance in queer spaces, self-identified “Gaysian” artist Kai Cheng Thom writes, “I am speaking in solidarity with [QTPoCs] who, like me, have begun to question the construction of our desires as subordinate to that glorious subject, the young white body; those of us whose bodies have rarely or never appeared in our own sexual fantasies”. Thom’s writing powerfully exposes how QTPoC sexuality is continually positioned as inferior to, desiring of, and striving towards, whiteness. Thom also incisively critiques the ways in which racialized bodies (differently) endure exotification, fetishization, emasculation, erasure, hypersexualization, and tokenization at the hands of white people (Cohen; Hutchinson; Self; Thom). In the case of *OITNB*, by portraying white relationships as the only means through which Poussey can express her sexuality, the show reinforces such narratives of QTPoC inferiority.

Another expression of white dominance in *OITNB* occurs in the relationship between Piper, a bisexual white woman, and Suzanne “Crazy Eyes” Warren, a queer Black woman. Throughout season 1, Suzanne obsesses over Piper, showing affection through a myriad of socially “unacceptable” manners, such as having a violent fit in the cafeteria after someone threatens Piper, serenading Piper in an uncomfortable manner, and watching Piper sleep. When Suzanne calls Piper “Dandelion,” because dandelions are “pretty and yellow, just like you [Piper],” we also see how light-skinned and European beauty is elevated and coveted. The show

creators thus create a dichotomy that is very much racialized, portraying a Black woman trying, but desperately failing, to woo a white woman. Suzanne is depicted as the unwanted perpetrator, while Piper is depicted as the benevolent, tolerant, and repulsed victim. This invokes a flattening representation of Blackness as irrational, aggressive, possessive, and socially undesirable, and conversely represents whiteness as complex and layered. In writing about the “in(di)visibility of whiteness,” Ross Chambers explains how white people are given the privilege of pluralization and individuation, while racialized folks must “acquire characteristics of (derivedness, deviation, secondariness, and examinability) that function as indices of disempowerment” (142). This rings true for the relationship in question: Suzanne’s character is given a single narrative of “crazy,” whilst Piper’s character is given a nuanced narrative of control, superiority (and simultaneous victimhood), desirability, and power.

It is also worth commenting on the hypersexualization of white queer female characters in *OITNB*. The show’s creators liberally – and gleefully – portray the wide-ranging sexual escapades of fisting, fucking, and flirtation of white queers, as seen in the various sex scenes of Nicky and Morello, the masturbation scene of Big Boo, the sex-driven bet between Nicky and Big Boo, and the erotic tone of Alex and Piper’s relationship. For the most part, these sexual encounters are all explicit and racy, and include portrayals of rough sex and multiple orgasms. QTPoCs, on the other hand, are denied the opportunity to express such carnal and erotic demonstrations of sexuality; as mentioned before, Poussey is denied by Taystee, Maritza and Flaca never progress beyond friendship, and Suzanne is rendered sexually unappealing. In fact, the only times folks of colour are seen to have queer sex in *OITNB* is when they are being fucked by Nicky, a queer white female. These scenes are almost always de-romanticized and decontextualized, and the QTPoCs are usually unnamed and faceless, as if they are objects to be sexually exploited and discarded.

There is, however, one character that is the exception. Brooke SoSo is a mixed race character whose story provides an interesting site of analysis. As SoSo invokes many aspects of whiteness, such as class privilege, educational privilege, and English-speaking privilege, she is deemed “white enough” to have a queer storyline. However, SoSo does not “pass” as white, for she is also half-Asian. Her character, therefore, is used to reify Orientalist tropes of Asian femininity and sexuality. Upon SoSo’s arrival into the prison, she is quickly “sexually conquered” by Nicky, and is used as a sexual pawn/prize in a disagreement between Piper and Big Boo over a *blanket*. Notably, SoSo’s queer sexuality manifests only through contact with white characters. In these encounters, the producers represent her character as subordinate and passive, thus re-entrenching notions of Asian queerness as servile, exotic, well-behaved, and delicate (Chou).

Conclusion

Chong-Suk Han writes that “To the larger gay community, our existence, as gay men and women of color, is merely a footnote, an inconvenient fact that is addressed in the most insignificant and patronizing way”. This bears similarity to Canada’s notion of multiculturalism, a perfunctory and additive policy that fails to challenge – and in fact reinforces – dominant power structures of racism, capitalism, heteropatriarchy, and colonialism (Day and Sadik). Ultimately, through a myriad of ways – the erasure of Indigenous queer, trans, and Two Spirit narratives, the desexualization of queer intraracial relationships, and the inferior positioning of QTPoC sexuality – *OITNB* includes queer racialized storylines in a superficial, problematic, and assimilatory manner, ultimately sustaining settler colonial agendas and naturalizing white homonormativity.

As a QTPoC who was – and still is – starved for media portrayals of intraracial QTPoC relationships, I wonder how our under-representation in the media affects our psyches. As queer Black activist Mia McKenzie writes, “we don’t need *People Magazine* to tell us that people of color are considered inferior to white people in

myriad ways, including romantic desirability. We see it in our lives, in our communities, every day”. Queer Black writer Audrey Cash adds to the conversation by asking, “Could the lack of loving Black LGBT relationships on TV and in Hollywood make us feel unrepresented, and therefore not have an example of what our love could/should look like?”. According to GLAAD, a non-governmental media monitoring organization, QTPoCs comprise only 1.63% of all regularly occurring characters on television. As QTPoCs who stand at the marginalized intersections of sexual/gender identity and race (as well as other identities), we are told, time and time again, through white, Western, cishetero/homo-normative narratives, that our ability to love and be loved as QTPoCs does not exist. Many of us internalize these messages, having them manifest in shame, silence, disavowal, and lateral violence (Thom). However, despite *OITNB* and mainstream television’s inadequate representations of queers of colour storylines, this type of radical-subversive love can, and does, exist. In speaking about her marriage with Black trans activist Tiq Milan, queer Black writer Kim Katrin Milan states that “We [should] trust ourselves, like our intuitions and our gut[,] as opposed to any other institution or idea that tells us love cannot exist and be this grand between Black people[.] We know ourselves and *know how capable we are of loving that big*” [emphasis added] (cited in Cash). In my disappointment with *OITNB* and all other white-washed television shows, I have learned to turn away from mainstream media, and instead turn inwards to my QTPoC communities to find the hope, representation, and “public possibility models” I so desperately and deservedly covet (Cox). Each time I enter a QTPoC space, I feel as if I am coming home; I am reminded that we do exist, and our love *can be* “this grand” (Milan, cited in Cash). Perhaps we, as queer racialized folks, are asking too much of *OITNB*... or perhaps we are simply asking for what we deserve.

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Subverting Patriarchy, Maintaining Piety: Rastafari Women as Leaders in the Reparations Movement

Zoë David-Delves

I acknowledge that I am on the unceded ancestral territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Indigenous peoples. I acknowledge that I, as a settler immigrant to Canada, a student at the University of British Columbia, and a Canadian citizen, impose my presence on these lands, and receive privileges made possible through the exploitation of Indigenous lands, cultures and bodies. As a citizen of St Vincent and the Grenadines, a country which also grapples with neo-colonisation, I write this essay in solidarity with the Canadian Indigenous peoples from an anti-colonial, anti-racist standpoint.

Introduction

I choose to write about Rastafari women because I identify as a Rastafarian woman. Though I strongly agree with many Rastafarian beliefs and practices, I cannot agree with the regular policing of women's bodies and behaviours within the Rastafarian community. However, I especially identify with the constant and committed activism to black 'consciousness' (a term referring to an awareness of the Afro-Caribbean self as the descendant of enslaved, displaced Africans). Because I am 'conscious', I am acutely aware that the Caribbean's 'underdevelopment' is a product of the ruthless exploitation of African, indigenous and pan-African bodies. In contrast, most European nation-states who were the so-called owners of supposed colonies enjoy economic richness. A call for the former colonial powers to make reparatory actions is necessary.

What are reparations, and why are they necessary?

The very existence of Black people in the Caribbean is a direct product of the slave trade, during which the governments of the colonial states of Britain, France, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands exploited and commodified African bodies and Caribbean land. Agricultural products harvested in the Caribbean only benefited colonial governments of the colonisers. In return for slave labour, colonial nations gave "their" territories the bare minimum of resources to sustain the economy of slavery.

One hundred seventy-seven years after the abolition of slavery in the English-speaking Caribbean, the legacies of slavery remain. European nations have been able to construct powerful, wealthy civilisations, while many Caribbean countries remain underdeveloped. The legacy of slavery has undoubtedly contributed to the Caribbean's socio-economic and political instability characteristic of the global South ("Capitalism and Slavery").

Many Caribbean governments have recently initiated efforts to repair the scars of slavery. CARICOM, a collaborative organisation of 15 Caribbean nations¹, has launched a campaign for reparations for slavery. The aim is "to establish the moral, ethical and legal case for the payment of reparations by the former colonial European countries, to the nations and people of the Caribbean Community, for native genocide, the transatlantic slave trade and a racialized system of chattel slavery" (Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat)

A great number of women have been involved in the Caribbean reparations effort. Rastafari women in particular have been at the forefront of the movement. Yet the Rastafarian religion encourages Rastafarian women to be submissive to men (Murrell, William and Adrian 12). The women who take action in the reparations movement work within the Rasta² community yet may seem to disobey some of its fundamental principles. How can they be faithful to their religion while their actions as leaders contradict a basic expectation of their role as pious women?

In this paper, I will examine an oft-quoted biblical verse that describes the supposed role of women in relation to men. This essay will offer an alternative reading of the text. I will suggest that women can be true to the text, but can undermine a gender hierarchy that suppresses their ability to be leaders within their religious, political and cultural communities. I will argue that through their involvement in anti-colonial, anti-racist campaigns such as the movement towards reparations, they are revising what it means to be a Rastafarian woman in today's world. They are also revising what it means to be a feminist. Caribbean Rastafarian feminism is unlike the feminism of Euro-America. Like the melting pot culture of the Caribbean itself, Rastafari feminism borrows from elements from third-wave feminism and incorporates it into the reparations movement (Third wave feminism acknowledges that gender-based oppression varies given a person's geopolitical location, age, race, class, dis/ability, etc). The modern Rasta woman's identity is hybrid, fluid, and self-malleable.

Who are the Rastafari?

The Rastafari movement began in Jamaica in the early 1930's. They believe that His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia was the second coming of Jesus Christ. They found evidence in the bible that H.I.M. Selassie I would deliver Black people from the Third World to the Promised Land and up through colonial oppression. The Rastafarians take their name from the word *Ras*, Haile Selassie's royal pre-coronation title, and *Tafari*, his pre-coronation name. Although the movement began in Jamaica, it has successfully spread throughout the Caribbean, as the rights for which they are agitating resonate relatively equally with Afro-Caribbean people outside of Jamaica. The Rastafari believe that Afro-Caribbean people have been displaced, and that their rightful place is in Africa, or *Zion*, their promised land. Thus, one of the primary goals of their activism has been to repatriate the Rastafari and to seek justice for the atrocities done to Afro-Caribbean people during slavery and colonisation. They refer to colonial powers of the past and present as *Babylon*. *Babylon* also refers to any bureaucratic, capitalist institution which profits from the oppression of marginalised groups (Edmonds 3).

Gjerset gives examples of how Rastafari in the Netherland Antilles fight *Babylon*. The first stage is reasoning which involves thinking through and discussing issues of social inequality within an informal setting. The second is dispensing knowledge at 'gatherings' (any space in which the Rastafari and allies come together) (73-74).

Historically, the Rastafari people have met resistance from *Babylon* in the form of racist governmental, systemic hierarchies but they have also met resistance from their own people. The Rastafari, until very recently, were associated with uncleanness, and political radicalism which was perceived to be unnecessary. Though the Rastafari have gained recognition from the worldwide popularity of reggae music, they have struggled to be seen as a legitimate religious and political group (Edmonds 40).

Consequently, Afro-Caribbean Rastafari women face a multifaceted bind. They encounter the same socio-political challenges as Rasta men, and on top of that, must overcome the patriarchal history of their own religion. Many traditional beliefs in Rastafari are patriarchal. The community largely supports the idea that in a nuclear family unit, men are the leaders. Women, according to the culture, should be wives and mothers, but should not be leaders. According to the tradition, a Rastafarian woman should be docile and receptive to men's instructions. Most importantly, it is believed that only men are able to reach the spiritual apex, or the "highest of heights". If a woman wants to gain spiritual enlightenment, she must designate a man to be her guide. As a result, women are banned from holding leadership positions in the church (Barnett 181).

The Bible verse in question

"The biblical passage 1Timothy 2:9-14 describes the woman that the Rastafari traditionally believe is

ideal. The passage is as follows:

9 I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes,

10 But with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.

11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission.

12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.

13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

14 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.”

(1 Timothy 2:9-14 NIV)

What are the real-world implications of a traditional reading within the Rastafari community?

It is difficult to assess the consensus in the Rastafari community regarding women in leadership roles. In my experience, some community members (both male and female) use the passage to inscribe cultural rules policing gender expression.

Others consider that, as Janelle L. Harrison of Regent University says, the historical context in which the passage was written must not be forgotten (2). Paul tells Timothy that a true Christian woman is quiet and submissive because at the time, so-called false leaders were infiltrating the church, some of whom were women. It is implied that women leaders were exclusively “false” leaders. This interpretation eliminates the possibility that the women who were not quiet or who were leaders were not true believers of God. Harrison further claims that once the reader of this text is aware of the historical context, the gendered guidelines become “not an issue of chauvinism or discrimination, but rather of biblical interpretation” (3).

Yet, within some circles of Rastafari, it is that the determiners or regulators of behaviour are still men, while the subjects of the regulatory gaze are women. The divine word in this biblical passage is constructed through a male gaze and projected upon women’s bodies and sexualities.

Why must the Rastafari must reinterpret 1 Timothy 2:9-13?

A reinterpretation of the passage would make the passage less essentially oppressive towards women. Some Rastafarian women do dress ‘modestly’, for example, those belonging to the mansion (denomination) of Boboshanti tend to cover their hair and wear long, loose-fitting garments (Rowe). These women demonstrate, through their bodies, that they are members of the Rastafarian community. This in itself is a political statement. Through the body markers of dress they make themselves immediately identifiable as Rastafarian. Women who dress this way are true to verses nine-eleven, but this does not mean that they concede to gender oppression.

Of course, Rastafarian women are not always docile and submissive to men. They have been embodying leadership roles more and more frequently. Deborah Price argues that Afro-Caribbean women have been subject to violence and abandonment as a direct result of the colonial process and as such, they deserve to be leaders in reparations efforts just as much as men. For example, in the ‘post-colonial’ Caribbean, paternal absenteeism, violence against women and gender essentialism are devastatingly common nearly two centuries after the abolition of slavery (222).

Michael Barnett has suggested that patriarchal regulations over women's abilities and disabilities are a product of the biases in the larger Caribbean context which have themselves been informed by slavery and colonialism (194). Slaves were believed to be "non-human, chattel, property and real estate" and were treated as such (Leigh Day 4). The value of a slave was measured by his or her capacity to do manual labour on plantations, and to sustain and increase the slave population through reproduction. As if they were livestock, black men were referred to as "studs", and black women as 'breeders'. The nuclear family unit was discouraged, so black women often raised their children alone. The rape of slave women by white men in authority was not uncommon (Smith 146). Given the Rasta people's history of rising up against oppression, the presentation of Rasta women as leaders in the movement would be appropriate on multiple levels. The symbolism of a Rastafari woman leader would simultaneously (if more implicitly) challenge gender-based oppression and would directly challenge colonial oppression.

In light of this history, women *should* be at the forefront of reparations, and are perhaps even more deserving of these positions than men. Certainly the Rastafarian women who lead the movement are promoting a gender-egalitarian manifesto. In doing so, they subvert any patriarchal passages in the biblical text, such as the leaders of the reparations movement, are re-creating the identity of a Rastafarian woman. This new identity works with a more flexible interpretation of the Timothy passage. If the religious community continues not to acknowledge that certain parts of the Timothy text restrict women's community involvement and does not allow space for gender justice, the Rastafari people will lose half of the population's contributions towards the reparations effort.

Women have proved that they are not only valuable, but essential to the cause. There are many examples of such women. Karen Marks Mafundikwa, a Jamaican, has directed and produced a documentary called "The Price of Memory". The 2014 film is about the slave trade, its legacy in today's English-speaking Caribbean and the way that the Rastafarian community leads the reparations movement ("The Price of Memory"). The film accomplishes several things at once. Firstly, it exposes that the Caribbean's history of slavery has led to present-day effects on Caribbean culture. Secondly, since the film has been screened around the world, it creates the potential to inspire allyship among like-minded anti-oppression activists outside of the Caribbean. Thirdly, by using film, she pays homage to oral tradition, a cornerstone of Caribbean knowledge making. Marks Mafundikwa writes from the perspective of a Jamaican descendant of slaves and asserts that her positionality makes her an authority on the subject of reparations.

Another example of important female leadership is that at the first annual Regional Conference on Reparations in St Vincent and the Grenadines, three of the four presenters of the Vincentian Rastafari Community Meeting (VRCM) were women ("The Rastafari Millennium Council Report" 6-7).

Esther Roniyah Stanford-Xosei, or Sister Ekuia, is a Guyanese activist-scholar and lawyer who heads the Pan-Afrikan Reparations Coalition in Europe (PANCOE) ("Esther Stanford | About"). Stanford-Xosei has said that within her community, the presence of women "in the limelight of the global reparations movement [can] ruffle some feathers" (Dred), highlighting the enduring omnipresence of the marginalisation of women by men within Rasta activist spaces. The coordinator of the Jamaica Reparation Movement is also a Rastafarian woman named Barbara Makeda Blake Hannah (Jackson).

Stanford-Xosei, Marks Mafundikwa, Blake Hannah and the women of the Vincentian Rastafari Community Meeting make space for themselves as leaders in the campaign for reparations but do not infringe on men's ability to be leaders. They exemplify that the very narrow gender roles illustrated in the Timothy passage are unnecessary, obsolete and must be open to revision.

Rastafari religion and culture is founded on anti-oppression activism. If the Rastafarian community considers this passage as a guide for modern gendered social interactions, it contradicts its anti-oppressive stance. Ziba Mir-Hosseini says that the interpretation of the holy word is inevitably influenced by cultural norms, and cultural norms, in turn, are often patriarchal (“Feminist Voices in Islam”).

Feminism creates a space for religion to engage in practices of ongoing self-critique. Mir-Hosseini refers to a “reformist feminist discourse” that moves the religious community forward by challenging it. A Rastafarian ‘reformist feminist discourse’ could use the tools of activism which are characteristic of the Rastafarian movement (noted by Greriset above) to simultaneously promote the case for reparations and dismantle patriarchy and other forms of oppression. These women are subverting a space which has historically been relatively oppressive to women. This is a practical application of the master’s tools dismantling the master’s house (Lorde). If a feminist is a person who supports economic, political and social equality between men and women, and takes action to move that agenda forward, then Rastafari women are feminists by default (“Feminism”). They also embody feminism by standing up to a form of systemic violence (colonialism) which limit certain populations’ (Afro-Caribbean peoples) access to power and agency.

Barriers to Change

It should be noted, however, that their version of feminism would be fundamentally different than feminism in a North American context. Rastafari feminisms would reflect the particularly Caribbean legacy of slavery, colonialism, immigration, and anti-black sentiment. They already explicitly speak against this, but Rastafari women would have to explicitly speak against the patriarchy within their own community. This is not to say that they would rebuke their culture. The community would benefit from a collaboration which took into consideration women’s oppression as well as the community’s at large. Otherwise, the Rastafari community falls prey to self-contradiction in its fight against oppression. A pro-reparations argument would be more cohesive if the community making the claim itself displayed an intersectional, anti-racist, anti-colonialist framework. Rastafari women’s involvement in the reparations movement could be the first step towards a more inclusive Rastafari population, within the church and without.

Of course, this identity work poses potential problems. Some Rastafari women are hesitant to name themselves as feminists. Lisa-Anne Julien, a Trinidadian black Rastafari feminist scholar suggests that “a woman’s liberation is a personal journey,” but “[t]he Rasta woman is forever mindful of the oppression already experienced by the Black man and she does not want to risk the disintegration of the Black family and increased alienation of her man” (81). Julien’s statement reflects patriarchal ideas of Rastafarian womanhood and may reveal an internalised gender binary; that the woman must, as 1 Timothy 2:12-14 imply, put her family and ‘man’ above herself. Although she identifies herself as feminist, she maintains a gender essentialist discourse. *The Rasta woman*, according to her, is cisgendered, heterosexual, willing and able to reproduce, and most importantly, bound to her duties as a mother and a partner of a man.

However, the author does acknowledge that gender analysis is lacking in the Rastafarian community. Like Stanford-Xosei, she criticises the fact that the male-dominated community of leaders often does not seriously consider intelligent dialogue among women nor does it see patriarchal social relations as a system of oppression. If the dominant members of the community do not see gender injustice as a problem, motivation or support to remedy will be an uphill battle. According to Julien, some members of the Rastafarian population (in Trinidad) seem to equate gender equality with gender complementarity, a notion which is illustrated in the Timothy passage, and which places women’s issues on ‘the back burner’ of social justice (78).

Conclusion

It is important to acknowledge that this paper points out Rastafari community's failings from an ideologically and geographically distanced perspective. The understanding of a liberated woman is embodied and symbolised differently in Canada than in the Caribbean. Nevertheless, a movement towards reparations will require solidarity amongst the entire community to deliver a cohesive message. The liberation of women does not detract, but adds to the liberation of black peoples. As Audre Lorde says, when black women are free, we will all be free, because the liberation of black women requires the downfall of all systems of oppression. She argues that "we [black women and men] live in the mouth of a dragon, and we must be able to use each other's forces to fight it together" (Lorde). In this case, the mouth of the dragon is Babylon, and unity amongst black Rastafarian peoples is necessary, regardless of gender. In addition, it should be noted that most 'mansions' of Rastafari illustrate gender biases, but not all. There is great variety. While the Boboshanti people seem to be the most true to the biblical passage mentioned above, leaders of the Twelve Tribes mansion have suggested that their conception of women's rights is close to egalitarian. (Barnett 67-69).

The recommendations for the decorum of women as suggested by the passage 1 Timothy 2:9-14 do apply to some Rastafari women, but not most. Most women, especially those in support of the movement towards reparations directly defy the notion that a good Rastafari woman is docile and submissive. Those involved in the reparations campaign are often leaders and active in their communities. These Rastafari women are undermining the passage, showing that the normative word can be adhered to or not, but whether a woman follows it or not does not affect her legitimacy as a pious woman.

The fight for reparations forces all systems of oppression to acknowledge and atone for the atrocities of slavery. However, the damage done to the Caribbean community manifests itself most prominently in present-day gender relations. For this reason, Rastafarian women should be at the forefront of the campaign. Rastafari itself is a symbol of black anti-racism, anti-capitalism and anti-colonialism. Because women Rastafarians must also navigate anti-sexism within a community which is supposedly anti-oppressive, they implicitly establish their own version of feminism. For the reparations movement, and the Rastafari movement to be a fully cohesive, collaborative body, women's rights must be made a priority.

Notes

1 Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago ("CARICOM Member States").

2 The terms Rasta, Rastafari and Rastafarian are synonymous.

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Basketball Billions: Racialized Commodification in the NBA

Lyon Tsang

There is an indisputable force within sports quite capable of uniting people. Entire nations can come together as one to rally behind a Usain Bolt, a Michael Phelps, even a national soccer or gymnastics team. Professional athletes themselves become brothers and sisters, often spending more time with teammates than their own families. Even on the playground, sport cultivates honour and respect that is consistent in both competition and camaraderie. Competitors judge one another primarily on their abilities to perform. Such values are what once prompted Nelson Mandela to pronounce that sport simply “laughs in the face of all types of discrimination”.

By believing in sport and its potential for equality and justice, one can see how it provides an ideal platform to facilitate Paul Gilroy’s cosmopolitan concept of planetary humanism. Gilroy believed that in order to transcend racism and other forms of discrimination, citizens of the world must be united and brought together. Only with the creation of a world community can the socially constructed concept of race itself be eliminated. While optimistic, there are those such as Kwame Agyemang arguing that progress is evident; after all, humanity has shifted from times of Black slavery and oppression to Black presidency in Barack Obama, leader of possibly the world’s most powerful nation today (Agyemang, 2014, p.12). This is undoubtedly an indication of the potential despite the dominance of race as a social structure.

Today’s discourse of globalization further suggests such a reality. Nation states and their citizens are increasingly able to exert influence beyond the geographical borders in which they reside. But globalization is also largely driven by capital, profit, and therefore power. While a developing country may benefit economically by producing goods for developed nations, doing so only further defines their structurally disadvantaged position within the world community. In the wake of racist comments made by National Basketball Association (NBA) team owner Donald Sterling, I argue in this paper that the dynamic between team owners and their players is essentially a microcosm of such a neoliberal relationship. Players of the NBA are given opportunities of wealth and fame, but at the expense of being embedded within structures and systems designed to transform them into commodities. This potential for exploitation becomes racialized by the fact that while most owners are White, the most valuable players in the league are Black, racialized bodies.

The NBA has no shortage of international players, but its biggest names remain attached to African-American superstars like LeBron James, Kobe Bryant, and Kevin Durant. This should not be surprising considering that Black players represent over 76% of the league demographic (Agyemang, 2014, p.13). Upon first glance, the NBA appears to be an institution in which members of the historically-oppressed Black community are able to thrive. According to the NBA’s Collective Bargaining Agreement, the minimum annual salary for a player in the 2013-2014 season was approximately \$500 000 (RealGM, 2014). Keep in mind that most players make much more than this baseline figure; a superstar like Bryant received a massive salary of over thirty million dollars this season (ESPN, 2014).

Stardom in the NBA means not only hefty contracts and business opportunities, but also the potential to become a global icon. Superstars like James, Bryant, and Durant are recognized and revered figures all over the world. They become role models for the youth, fashion models for luxury brands, and cultural models in demonstrating what it means to be a successful Black man. Yet even with the rising influence and fame of these individuals, it would be difficult to say that the league is truly free of racism and discrimination. The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport deemed the NBA as the premier American sport league in racial and gender hiring practices. Yet recent comments made by Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling suggests

that racial exploitation may be built into the very foundation of the league itself.

Sterling's comments emerged in an audio recording of a conversation with his girlfriend at the time. One of the most powerful quotes in his racist rant revolved around his perception that Black players depended on him for their avenues to riches and opportunity.

Girlfriend: Do you know that you have a whole team that's Black, that plays for you?

Sterling: You just, do I know? I support them and give them food, and clothes, and cars, and houses. Who gives it to them? Does someone else give it to them? Do I know that I have—Who makes the game? Do I make the game, or do they make the game? Is there 30 owners, that created the league? (Deadspin, 2014)

Although quickly condemned by almost everyone with ties to the league, these remarks provoke the inconvenient thought that such sentiments may actually exist within the NBA. Many owners are distanced from the actual basketball operations of their team, merely providing the finances. But even with such a physical disconnect between owners and their players, the relationship is essentially still that of an employer and employee. Successful basketball players may enjoy international recognition and earn millions in their careers, but the team owners lurking behind the scenes remain at the peak of the societal hierarchy as multibillionaires. This wealth disparity is effectively illustrated by Michael Jordan. Arguably the greatest, and most well-known basketball player of all time, it was only recently that Jordan's net worth reached a billion dollar evaluation (CBS Sports, 2014). Almost ironically, Jordan achieved this not by the sales from his iconic and ever-popular shoes and apparel, but by his majority ownership of the Charlotte Hornets NBA franchise.

A weakness in Gilroy's concept of planetary humanism is the concept of modernity, or the historical and societal shift towards industrialization and capitalism. How can equality truly be achieved in a world driven by profit and production? Broadly, the National Basketball Association and its owners provide a framework in which players of the game can compete and engage in what is agreed to be the highest quality of professional basketball in the world. This becomes a product that is distributed to millions of fans worldwide for consumption, drawing colossal profits from anything like television broadcast deals and sponsorships, to jersey and fan apparel sales. While fundamentally a team game, fans are furthermore drawn to individual stars and favourites. In a league driven by Black superstars, the Black athlete essentially becomes a commodity himself. It is with this perspective that one can begin to understand, however delusional and discriminatory, the views of Donald Sterling and all the potential others lucky to have not yet been exposed.

Agyemang argues that this concept of Black commodification and white ownership is effectively illustrated by the debacle of LeBron James leaving the Cleveland Cavaliers in 2010. In a heated and scathing letter to fans after James' departure, owner Dan Gilbert referred to his decision as a "cowardly betrayal" and accused James of giving up in that year's playoffs (Agyemang, 2014, p.24). With anger and bitterness, he blamed James not only for his basketball performance, but furthermore attacked his character and honour as an individual. These remarks prompted accusations of Gilbert possessing a "slave master mentality" (Agyemang, 2014, p.24). He was enraged that one of the most popular players in the league, or his most valuable commodity, had decided against renewing his contract in order to leave and gain the freedom of selecting the team he wanted to play on. Perhaps even more insulting for Gilbert's slave master mentality was that his prized possession had exercised agency, choosing to sacrifice money in a profit-driven league to team up with other stars for a better chance of winning. LeBron James had in many ways defied the exploitative system of commodification in the NBA, valuing instead a fundamental pleasure of sport in victory.

Gilroy himself observed that during the processes of their commodification, Black athletes are

objectified into generalized representations of athletic prowess and aggressiveness. Somehow, this implicit cultural racism is still prevalent in the league today; Black players are expected to be athletic, aggressive, and physically strong. They are strangely and enthusiastically lauded if deemed to have a high “basketball IQ”, a quality understood by many fans as stereotypically and predominantly reserved for White players. Black athletes like Glen Davis (nicknamed “Big Baby”) and Raymond Felton are ridiculed for appearing overweight and sluggish. Chris Bosh is sneered at for his thoughtful and relaxed personality as well as for his tendencies to shy away from contact. While crude and most likely mistaken, these sorts of generalizations and ideas of black athletes have become entrenched and accepted.

One only needs to look back a decade to see an explicit mechanism implemented by the league itself to better facilitate Black commodification. In 2005, a dress code for the players was implemented and as suggested by Stacy L. Lorenz and others, this policy was designed to eradicate the hip-hop and 'gangsta' culture most players were immersed in at the time (Lorenz, 2014, p.24). By doing so, the league hoped to transform these players into safer, more appealing figures their extensive white audience could invest in. A second policy increased the minimum age defining when players could enter the league (Leonard, 2006, p.158). While not explicitly stated, this policy encourages players to attend at least one year of college and consequently gain experience and employability of some sort outside of basketball. David J. Leonard argues that this policy, too, reflects efforts to groom and assimilate players into marketable commodities before they even enter the league (Leonard, 2006, p.168). Prolonging the time that young hopeful Black athletes have to wait before entering the league is also implicates the criminalization and of Black youth leading to disproportional incarceration. In implementing this policy, the susceptibility of Black teenagers to crime and imprisonment further filters the inflow of new talent into the NBA (Leonard, 2006, p.173).

The NBA responded rapidly to Donald Sterling’s actions, banning him from their business for life and removing his ownership of the Los Angeles Clippers. The league is considered the leader in racial and gendered hiring ethics today amongst all professional American sports. It is, however, imperative to realize that without the promise of profit, today’s NBA would not exist. The relentless forces of modernity and capitalism are among the largest obstacles of Paul Gilroy’s vision of planetary humanism, and allow us to view basketball as not merely a sport but a venue of great economic opportunity and potential. Donald Sterling’s comments are controversial and offensive, but are vital in understanding much more than his personal values. They point to the presence of mechanisms within the NBA that facilitate the commodification and exploitation of Black athletes, often unknowingly to the fans and perhaps the athletes themselves. They are also judged and expected to adhere to racialized stereotypes of their bodies and minds. Regardless of how successful a basketball player becomes, the owners they play for will advance just as much on their own playing fields as society’s wealthiest.

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Ongoing Colonialism and the Racialized Application of the Law

Sania Ahmed

Trigger warning: This piece discusses gendered, racialized violence.

The devastating impacts of a past of colonialism still impact both the conditions faced by Aboriginal peoples today, as well as the ongoing relations between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian settlers' legal system (Beniuk, 2012; Dell & Kitty, 2013; Dylan, Regehr, & Alaggia, 2008; Gotell, 2009; Green, 2006; Johnson, 2008; Lawrence, 2010; Mackey, 2010; Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002). In this paper, I will be using the term "Aboriginal" as an umbrella term to refer to the Indigenous peoples of Canada, although I recognize that this may obscure the both culturally inherent and colonially imposed differences within this racialized group. Firstly, I will describe Canada's colonial past and demonstrate how colonialism is ongoing in current Canadian society through the racialized application of the law in relation to Aboriginal victims of murders and sexual assaults. I will discuss research that argues that pervasive negative stereotypes of Aboriginal peoples, rooted in the colonial past, perpetuate notions of this group as the racialized, inherently risky Other that is not entitled to justice in these murder and sexual assault cases. Afterwards, I will outline the official discourses that frame Canada as tolerant and gentle country, downplaying its colonial past, and the Canadian law as race-neutral. I argue that this ignorance of the law's complicity in racial inequities sustains racial hierarchies by naturalizing the conditions faced by Aboriginal peoples as inherent, rather than systemically caused. It is imperative to disrupt the Canadian state's race-neutral masking of the law's complicity in ongoing colonialism of Aboriginal peoples, in order to be able to dismantle racialized hierarchies that manifest in encounters with the law.

Colonial History

Before discussing how ongoing colonialism is manifested in the racialized oppression of Aboriginal peoples, it is important to highlight Canada's colonial history. Until the 1867 Confederation of Canada, a series of changes occurred, which transformed colonization of the relatively unsettled territory through the fur trade (Mackey, 2010, p. 21). This required a degree of cooperation with the Aboriginal peoples, with colonization occurring through settlement. Mackey (2010) suggests that as these territories of settlement became more institutionalized, racial boundaries became more established, noting the fact that colonization employed racially essentialist ideologies of who can and cannot be civilized along with control of sexualities (p. 21). Lawrence (2010) describes how in addition to racial ideologies, the process of colonization in Canada was enacted through spread of epidemics, encouragement of conversion to Christianity, and removal of the "Native" military threat to spreading availability of alcohol (pp. 41-44, 48-49).

The process of colonization was wrought with oppression, as can be noted by the following evidence. The Indian Act of 1876 enacted cultural genocide through discouraging traditional Aboriginal ways of life by, for example, encouraging agricultural labour (Johnson, 2008, 54, Mackey, 2010, p. 27). Amendments to this act from the late eighteenth century to early twentieth centuries featured, among other attempts at assimilation, banning of Aboriginal ceremonies such as the potlatch, a gift-giving ceremonies practiced by Aboriginal peoples and were of political significance, in terms of status of the gift-giver increasing with the generosity of gifts (Mackey, 2010, p. 27). In addition to being targeted by assimilationist policies, Mackey (2010) describes the manners in which Aboriginal culture and artefacts have always been romanticized and appropriated into Canada's official forms of national identity, in order to reaffirm Canada as a progressive, tolerant settler nation, yet, as I will demonstrate in this paper, the racialized application of the law silences issues faced by Aboriginal peoples (pp. 28-29).

The devastating impacts of these colonial activities, in addition to expropriation of Aboriginal land and forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families for assimilationist indoctrination in residential schools, are still felt among Canadian Aboriginal peoples today. This is demonstrated by the overrepresentation of Aboriginal peoples among the incarcerated, the poor, the sufferers of violence, and the murdered (Johnson, 2008, pp. 54-56). For example, survivors of residential schools, which were institutions overridden with physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, feel as though they have poorer parenting skills and little knowledge of normal family life (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p. 75). In regards to the higher concentration of Aboriginal individuals in urban spaces that are marginalized, Razack (2002) demonstrates how the nineteenth century spatial containment of Aboriginal peoples to reserves and the end of this spatial containment in the 1950s led to a migration of Aboriginal peoples to urban spaces with lesser access to social services and networks (pp. 129-131). Importantly, not only do past Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations impact the current social and health inequities and marginalization experienced by Aboriginal peoples, these past relations continue to shape current-day Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p. 75).

Ongoing Colonial Oppression: Racialized Application of the Law

Due to current patterns of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations reflecting those of Canada's colonial past, Johnson (2008) argues that cultural narratives, often carrying negative stereotypes regarding Aboriginal peoples, are inseparable from the law (p. 47). These cultural narratives, according to Johnson (2008), determine who is defined as a criminal and how the law and society evaluate the guilt or innocence of those accused of crimes (p. 47). Therefore, the law cannot be assumed to be a neutral entity or process that is external to cultural discourses.

One manner in which Aboriginal individuals suffer ongoing colonialism is through the racialized application of the law; based on racialized notions of who is a deserving victim in such a manner that disproportionately denies Aboriginal peoples of victim status (Beniuk, 2012; Dell & Kitty, 2013; Dylan, Regehr, & Alaggia, 2008; Gotell, 2009; Green, 2006; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002). This denial of victim status may fuel reluctance among Aboriginal peoples to report physical and sexual violence to the police (Dylan et al., 2008). The justice system's ignorance of victimization among Aboriginal individuals may also frame Aboriginal peoples as deserving of violence (Dell & Kitty, 2013; Dylan et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Green, 2006; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002). This serves to marginalize and contain Aboriginal peoples in the settler colony through putting victimization against Aboriginal peoples outside the realm of justice (Dell & Kitty, 2013; Dylan et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Green, 2006; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002). This is an example of institutional racism where the law is race-neutral on the surface but its application leads to disadvantages for Aboriginal peoples through the judiciary's implicit profiling of victims based on "race" (Satzewich and Liodakis, 2010, p. 209).

As Dell and Kitty (2013) emphasize, it is critical when analyzing the law to note who has the power of defining what constitutes a victim. Research indicates that the dominant classes in Canadian society form the judiciary and law enforcement and that a negative image of Aboriginal individuals has origins in the history of colonialism (Dell & Kitty, 2013; Dylan et al., 2008; Fiske, Belanger, & Gregory, 2010; Gotell, 2009; Green, 2006; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002; Smith, 2003). These stereotypes have grave consequences for Aboriginal victims of crime. This is clearly demonstrated by Razack's (2012) examination of an inquiry that was aimed at investigating the wrongful death of an intoxicated Aboriginal man, named Frank Paul, whom the police left to freeze to death in an alleyway. Particularly, Razack (2012) argues that the inquiry served to sustain the racialized hierarchies of oppression, rooted in the state's past and ongoing colonialism, that framed Frank Paul as "intrinsically vulnerable", in line with the "drunk Indian" stereotype (p. 911). This inquiry rooted the

reasons for Frank Paul's death to purely bureaucratic mishaps rather than outcomes of racism or the colonial history of spreading alcoholism to prevent a Native military threat (Lawrence, 2010, pp. 41-44, 48-49). Similarly, Green (2006) finds that an inquiry into the death of Neil Stonechild, a young Aboriginal man beaten and left to freeze to death by police officers, also ignored notions of ongoing white dominance, colonialism, and racism (p. 509).

The grave consequences of negative stereotypes for Aboriginal victims are further illustrated when analyzing legal cases of Aboriginal women who have faced sexualized, racialized, and gendered violence (Dell & Kitty, 2013; Dylan et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Razack, 2002; Smith, 2003). Kubik, Bourassa, and Hampton (2009) argue that Canada's colonial past of sexualized and racialized oppression impacts the multiple oppressions faced by Aboriginal women in current Canadian society, resulting in higher rates of poverty, violence, sexual exploitation, and poor health than other Canadian women. Yet, the British Columbian inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women mostly overlooked race relations and the impact of racism and colonialism (Stanton, 2012). This was despite arguments that the murders of these Aboriginal women, the police's slow start to investigating their murders, and the inquiry's denial of funding for certain interest organizations were all due to the racialized Othering of Aboriginal women (Beniuk, 2012). Specifically, Aboriginal women are negatively stereotyped as being "squaws", a derogatory term to refer to Aboriginal women as impure and sexually polluted sub-humans (Dylan et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Razack, 2002; Smith, 2003). Those stereotyped as "squaws" are framed as not really being victims of rape due to their perceived intrinsic lack of purity, with this stereotype stemming from the notion that the colonial body or settlement must cleanse itself of the Aboriginal body or presence (Dylan et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Razack, 2002; Smith, 2003). Importantly, the pervasiveness of this racial stereotype impacts the definition of Aboriginal women as undeserving of victim status and as being outside the realm of justice in encounters with the judicial and legal enforcement institutions (Dylan et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Razack, 2002).

A major problematic result of these stereotypes of Aboriginal women is shown by researchers' findings that Aboriginal women and girls' racial categorization impacts the extent to which they are viewed as deserving victims in sexual assault and murder cases (Dylan et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Razack, 2002). Through conducting qualitative interviews that illuminate the lived experiences of Aboriginal victims of sexual violence, Dylan et al. (2008) reveal that "race" played a major role in determining how members of the justice system perceived victims. Dylan et al. (2008) link this to a process of ongoing colonialism (p. 692). Examples that revealed how the racist stereotype of the sexually promiscuous Aboriginal "squaw" and "drunk Indian" manifested in these women's encounters with the law included falsely labelling a murdered Aboriginal woman as a sex-trade worker and police asking a victim seeking help if she was under the influence of alcohol and driving away (Dylan et al., 2008, p. 690).

Furthermore, Gotell's (2009) in-depth examination of a sexual assault case revealed themes that were in accordance with Dylan et al.'s (2008) findings. In this case, three Caucasian men in rural Saskatchewan gave alcoholic drinks to, sexually assaulted, and murdered a twelve-year-old Aboriginal girl who had been hitchhiking to purportedly escape from a sexually abusive family member (Gotell, 2009, p. 865). All, except one, of the men were acquitted of the charges and the sole convicted perpetrator served a short two-year sentence in the community (Gotell, 2009, p. 865). To explain why such a decision was reached and upheld by the courts, Gotell (2009) described the concept of engaging in risky behaviour as determining whether or not a woman is a deserving or undeserving victim of sexual assault (p. 867). This notion of the "risky woman" easily lines up with the previously mentioned stereotype of the sexually promiscuous, unrapeable Aboriginal woman (Smith, 2003). Thus, there is an increased likelihood that Aboriginal women are defined as deserving of sexual

assault due to failing in their personal responsibility to avoid risk (Gotell, 2009, p. 882). The White defendants in this case were positioned by the judge as community-oriented men who had a lapse in judgment when in a racialized space of degeneracy near the Aboriginal reserve (Gotell, 2009, p. 885, 890). This positioning framed the victim as a drunken Aboriginal female, who was the “sexual aggressor” due to her “irrational” disregard for risk (Gotell, 2009, p. 885, 890). Furthermore, acquitting the Caucasian defendants implies that they are perceived as not posing a threat to the community (Gotell, 2009, p. 984). This signals a “colonial construction of ‘community’ that excludes Aboriginal women and girls and that views them as the source of the violence that is inflicted upon them” (Gotell, 2009, p. 894). The results of this case are an example of the Canadian state sanctioning ongoing colonial oppression, by locating the Aboriginal girl as beyond the protection of the law due to racialized perceptions of her behaviour (Gotell, 2009, p. 890).

Such spatialized justice indicates the permissibility of gendered racialized violence. Mirroring Gotell’s (2009) analysis, Razack (2002) demonstrates that the acquittal of two White, middle-class, male university students from the murder of an Aboriginal sex worker and mother of two, Pamela George, was an example of such spatialized justice. Like the White defendants examined by Gotell (2009), the White defendants in the Pamela George case were seen as crossing over into a space of degeneracy, populated by the racialized Other, in the inner city and losing control after being intoxicated (Razack, 2002, p. 124, 127). The judge in this case instructed the jury to bear in mind that Pamela George was a sex worker who consented to a sexual encounter with one of the boys, leading to both boys brutally murdering her (Razack, 2002, p. 125). As such, Pamela George’s Aboriginality and location in a space of prostitution served to dehumanize her as the inherently risky, racialized Other (Razack, 2002).

Particularly resonant, Razack (2002) traces how this murder and the court decision were, in fact, examples of ongoing colonialism, stemming from sexual violence against the colonized in the nineteenth century where White masculine individuals gained dominance through perpetrating violence against the colonized Aboriginal females (p. 128). This led to the legal system being influenced by implicit notions of “white respectability and entitlement and Aboriginal criminality” (Razack, 2002, p. 128). Analyzing the Pamela George case, while taking colonial history into account, leads to the revelation that “race” determines who is and is not entitled to justice in the Canadian legal system by locating certain degenerate spaces and racialized identities as outside of the realms of justice and citizenship (Razack, 2002, p. 155). Like Razack (2002) and Gotell (2009), Fiske et al. (2010) reveal the creation of Aboriginal women as racialized, degenerated Others in their own land. In line with Gotell’s (2009) and Razack’s (2002) case studies, Fiske et al. (2010) demonstrate how Aboriginal women are located outside the realm of citizenship, due to their possibility of living on reserves instead of being able to own property, portraying them as undeserving of the liberal notions of universal equality (p. 76).

Official Discourses and Narratives

Mackey (2010) describes how the nation story or myth of Canada consists of a narrative of gentle, tolerant settler colonization progressing through history to a tolerant, unified nation (p. 17). Importantly, this story is codified in a government document on national identity released in 1992, entitled Report on the Special Joint Committee on a Renewed Canada (Mackey, 2010, p. 18). The colonial settlers are described as “innocent of racism” due to forming alliances with Aboriginal peoples (Mackey, 2010, p. 18). However, this construction fails to mention that successful colonial rule, through resource extraction in the fur trade, was dependent to an extent on cooperation with the Aboriginal peoples and that such relations may have emerged from necessity rather than tolerance (Mackey, 2010, p. 19). Although the Royal Proclamation of 1763 is referenced in the nation-building myth of Canada as an example of the tolerance and generosity of the settlers by granting

Aboriginal peoples land and governance rights, it was in actuality employed in utilizing this population's rights to prevent expansion of the French or Americans into other regions of Canada (Mackey, 2010, p. 20; Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, pp. 68-70).

Furthermore, Mackey (2010) describes how the official Canadian national identity is based on the notion of sturdy, resilient northern White "races" and of the romanticized Aboriginal peoples who passively accept a "bloodless revolution" by the Mounties (p. 26). These notions ignore the role of epidemics and loss of traditional subsistence in facilitating the "bloodless revolution" and settlement of Canada (p. 26). For the most part, this official story glosses over the colonial oppression enacted on Aboriginal peoples through the spread of epidemics, assimilationist policies, banning of traditions and culture in the Indian Act of 1867, and the trauma of residential schools (Lawrence, 2010; Mackey, 2010; Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010). This minimization and ignorance of the intensity of Canada's colonial past is also exemplified in Alberta's centennial celebration of its history not mentioning past, nor present, colonialism (Rosenberg, Dean, & Granzow, 2010).

Official stories of past racialized oppressions in which the law was complicit are obscured in an official story of compassion, celebration, and compensation enacted by the race-neutral law (Gill, 2002, Nelson, 2002). The law's complicity in creating the dismal conditions faced by certain racialized spaces and groups is masked through viewing these conditions as inherent and regrettable things of the past, rather than as ongoing processes (Nelson, 2002). The banning of the term "racist" as unparliamentary language and subsequent eviction of Oscar Lathlin, a Cree Member of the Legislative Assembly, demonstrates the official governmental view of Canada as non-racist. Despite the findings from the Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry highlighting the law's complicity in racism -- in the murders, high rates of incarceration, and expropriation of lands for industrial development of Aboriginal peoples, Oscar Lathlin is silenced from using the term "racist" in referring to the need for reform (Gill, 2002). Similarly, the death of Frank Paul, an Aboriginal man, in police custody is framed in an official inquiry as being one merely of bureaucratic mishaps, with the inquiry being silent on issues racism and colonialism (Razack, 2012). Like the Frank Paul inquiry, the Stonechild inquiry into the death of a young Aboriginal man at the hands of the police (Lugosi, 2011), the inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women in British Columbia (Stanton, 2012), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on residential schools (Nagy, 2013) have been argued to be focused more on individual healing and bureaucratic failures over and above that of ongoing racialized colonialism.

Consequences of Official Myths of Race-Neutrality

Through utilizing critical race theory, it is possible to recognize how the previously mentioned official discourses' silence on "race" can be problematic. Critical race theory argues that the government's liberal concepts of meritocracy, neutrality, and colour-blindness are, in fact, questionable and play a role in the perpetuation of white privilege (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p. 53). As evidenced in the previous examples regarding Aboriginal women sexual assault cases (Dylan et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Razack, 2002), the notions of "colour-blindness" allow the law to hide its racialized oppression of groups under the guise of race-neutrality (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p. 53). Moreover, such mythological discourses of Canadian state being "colour-blind" and multicultural are actually examples of democratic racism, in which commitments to certain democratic principles paradoxically coexist with discrimination against and negative feelings towards racial minorities that is masked by these democratic principles of neutrality (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p. 193).

These official, race-neutral narratives of Canada obscure the law's complicity in current and past racialized oppression, ignore the colonial and historical context of racialized inequities, and, as such, allow ongoing colonialism to continue (Beniuk, 2012; Gill, 2002; Green, 2006; Lugosi, 2011; McGill, 2008;

Monture-Angus, 2010; Nelson, 2002; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002; Seshia, 2010; Stanton, 2012). Masking the law as race-neutral and benign may have negative impacts on certain racialized groups. This is evidenced by how the City of Halifax's urban renewal policies were masked as a way to eliminate "slums," thus destroying the historic black community of Africville (Nelson, 2002). The dismal conditions created in Africville were the result of the legal regulation of space, through denials of improvements and the zoning of industrial and waste facilities. Ironically, these very conditions, with the law's complicity in creating them ignored, were used as a rationale for "urban renewal" (Nelson, 2002). Thus, it allowed the destruction of this space to be perceived as a race-neutral, benevolent, and inevitable solution (Nelson, 2002). Reflecting this, Monture-Angus (2010) argues that the law cannot distance itself from colonialism and oppression of Aboriginal peoples when dealing with cases regarding Aboriginal peoples in particular, as this prevents action and reforms (p. 108). The exclusion of the role of legal regulations in creating the dismal conditions in the Africville community serves to naturalize its Black residents as the "Other" by ignoring the origins and historical context of both the neighbourhood conditions and the decisions to dismantle the neighbourhood (Nelson, 2002). This indicates that not addressing the law's complicity in the production and maintenance of racial inequalities may lead to essentializing racialized groups that face disadvantages as naturally the inferior "Other" (Lugosi, 2011; Nelson, 2002; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002; Seshia, 2010).

Burial of the law's complicity in racialized oppression through official memorials and legal proceedings perpetuates an official story of compassion, celebration, and compensation that ignores the law's oppressive actions (Nelson, 2002). This burial is akin to banning the term "racist" in the Manitoban Legislative Assembly (Gill, 2002). If there is no public or parliamentary discourse on institutional racism, the public and policymakers can assume that institutional racism does not exist. By ruling the oppressive histories of Aboriginal dispossession as irrelevant through defining the term "racist" as unparliamentary language, the eviction of Cree MLA Oscar Lathlin in his description of institutional racism demonstrates how the law maintains a racial hierarchy in current Canadian society (Gill, 2002). This silence on "race" allows discrimination to go on unquestioned, with nothing being done to reform policies and practices (Gill, 2002). For instance, Aboriginal women's overrepresentation among maximum security prisoners in the federal prison system can be linked to "needs assessment" procedures in security classification policies that consider education, employment, social interaction, marital or family status, history of violent victimization, sexual preferences, addictions, physical or mental illnesses, disabilities, and attitude (McGill, 2008, p. 98). Although these policies seem race-neutral on the surface, Aboriginal women are more likely to be classified as requiring higher security classification because they are disproportionately impoverished, unemployed, and victims of violence (McGill, 2008, p. 98). Another example of ignoring the law's complicity in racism, police are more likely to state that sexual and physical violence "comes with the streets" when faced with reports of violence against Aboriginal sex-trade workers (Seshia, 2010, p. 1). This naturalizes these women as the racialized "Other" who irrationally put themselves at risk, without recognizing their colonial and historical context (Seshia, 2010, p. 1). In line with this, Beniuk (2012) demonstrates that the police's reluctance to investigating cases of missing Aboriginal women, the actual murders of these women by Robert Pickton, and the inquiry's denial of funding for certain interest organizations stemmed from the racialized Othering of Aboriginal women as naturally risky and sexually promiscuous (Beniuk, 2012). Similarly, silence on racism in legal proceedings, such as court cases and inquiries about wrongful deaths of Aboriginal individuals, portray these individuals as the inherently risky Aboriginal "Other" (Gotell, 2009; Lugosi, 2011; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002).

Not only does ignorance of the law's complicity in producing racialized inequities prevent any action from taking place on dismantling racial hierarchies, but it also leads to lack of consideration of racial groups'

historical context in legal issues (Gill, 2002; Nelson, 2002). Failing to root the overrepresentation of certain racialized groups in the criminal justice system in the context of racism and colonialism makes Parliament unable to create meaningful solutions to these inequalities (Gill, 2002). In line with this, Green (2006) argues that the inquiry of the case of Neil Stonechild's death, should have addressed colonialism and white privilege in order to actually question ongoing colonialism and dismantle systemic racial hierarchies in Canadian society.

Therefore, framing of the law and state as race-neutral and colour-blind leads to denial of the law and dominant society's complicity in the racialized oppression and racial inequalities that exist in current Canadian society (Beniuk, 2012; Gill, 2002; Green, 2006; Lugosi, 2011; McGill, 2008; Nelson, 2002; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002; Seshia, 2010; Stanton, 2012). This denial is what allows ongoing colonialism to continue unquestioned (Beniuk, 2012; Gill, 2002; Lugosi, 2011; Nelson, 2002; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002; Stanton, 2012). Returning to the case of the murder of Pamela George, it is important to note that the colonial and racial histories of the middle-class White male defendants and the Aboriginal female sex worker were absent at the trial (Razack, 2002, p. 126). This led to these individuals being abstracted from their histories, masking how this murder was evidence of ongoing colonialism and Aboriginal dispossession and its accompanying violent victimization (Razack, 2002, p. 127). In fact, Razack (2002) argues that the White defendants were unable to see Pamela George as a human being in their encounter due to the "intensity of ongoing colonization" through historical and ongoing spatial containment of Aboriginal peoples to the realms of policing, prostitution, and crime (p. 127). However, this was ignored at the trial due to silence on race relations.

The spatial containment of Aboriginal peoples to degenerate spaces served to naturalize Pamela George as the racialized Other belonging innately to the area of prostitution, crime and violence, therefore positioning her as outside of the respectable space of justice (p. 143). This positioning allows the ongoing colonization and racialized victimization of Aboriginal women to continue unquestioned by the justice system, with the conditions creating this spatial containment ignored at trial due to liberal notions of issues of "race" being irrelevant to the neutral law. Likewise, Razack (2012) describes how the silence on racism and colonialism in the inquiry into Frank Paul's death allows ongoing colonialism to continue. Razack (2012) argues that inquiry's conclusion that this Aboriginal man was "intrinsically vulnerable" actually emerges from his Aboriginal body being a reminder of colonial dispossession that must be evicted from the respectable spaces of the settler (p. 908). Stemming from this, this Aboriginal man's death is a result of his eviction into a degenerate space by police officers in the middle of the night (Razack, 2012, p. 908). Thus, silence on colonialism can lead to racially essentialist notions of Aboriginal peoples being naturally risky that mask the processes of ongoing colonialism that lead to the conditions faced by these racialized individuals.

Conclusion

It is not surprising that the law has racialized impacts, as it is influenced by dominant cultural narratives (Johnson, 2008). Rooted in a colonial past of racialized oppression and cultural genocide, (Lawrence, 2010; Mackey, 2010; Satzewich & Liidakis, 2010), colonialism is still perpetuated in current Canadian society. This is evidenced by racialized notions of the "drunk Indian" and the sexually promiscuous "squaw" infiltrating the judiciary's perceptions of whether or not Aboriginal victims of murders and sexual assault are truly victims or just naturally risky (Beniuk, 2012; Dell & Kitty, 2013; Dylan, et al., 2008; Gotell, 2009; Green, 2006; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002). Yet, official narratives of Canada's past and present are silent on racism and colonialism, particularly masking the law as race-neutral in a manner that sustains unquestioned racial hierarchies and inequalities (Gill, 2002; Mackey, 2010; Nelson, 2002; Satzewich & Liidakis, 2010; Rosenberg et al., 2010). As demonstrated by the aforementioned research (Beniuk, 2012; Gill, 2002; Lugosi, 2011; McGill, 2008; Nelson,

2002; Razack, 2012; Razack, 2002; Seshia, 2010), it is critical that the Canadian law, state, and judiciary recognize the law's complicity in racialized oppression and colonialism of Aboriginal peoples, in order to glean structural explanations, rooted in history and discrimination, of current conditions faced by this group (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p. 241, 243). Fostering such complicity that acknowledges colonialism as being more than a regrettable thing of the past is imperative because racialized legal practices are an ongoing process of suppression, denial, eviction, oppression, and discrimination (Monture-Angus, 2010; Nelson, 2002, p. 212).

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An Analysis of Clandestine Homonationalism in Canada

Philip K.C.

In *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*, Jasbir Puar underscores how Western countries have tried to situate themselves as “an exceptional nation-state” compared to non-Western countries (3). Puar is referencing the United States in particular, and how it has capitalized on the War on Terror to create a distinct type of nationalism — homonationalism. Homonationalism is defined by Puar as “an exceptional form of national heteronormativity [that] is now joined by an exceptional form of national homonormativity” (2). On the one hand, homonationalism alludes to an apparent acceptance of homosexuality in the public domain. Upon further inspection though, it can also be understood more insidiously to be an exclusionary practice that “is contingent upon the segregation and disqualification of racial and sexual others from the national imagery” (2). In this paper, I draw upon Scott Lauria Morgensen’s idea that sexuality has been colonized to explore how certain policies and structures adopted by the Canadian nation-state challenge their own constructions of diversity and inclusivity (105). For example, the archaic and discriminatory blood ban in Canada which bars gay men who engage in homosexual intercourse from donating blood confronts this myth. I argue that just like the the United States, a so-called melting pot society, Canada adopts homonationalist discourses to position its national identity as a function of cultural and gender inclusivity. Moreover, the proliferation of these discourses do not address the systemic inequalities embedded within Canada’s colonial, racist, and heteronormative culture.

Morgensen, in “Settler Homonationalism: Theorizing Settler Colonialism within Queer Modernities,” suggests that homonationalism is “an effect of U.S. queer modernities forming amid the conquest of Native peoples and the settling of Native land” (105). Morgensen argues that contemporarily, the effects of colonization have undermined spaces for alternative gender identities to exist. He highlights the vehicle through which sexuality was homogenized by naming this practice “‘settler sexuality’: a white national heteronormativity that regulates Indigenous sexuality and gender by supplanting them with the sexual modernity of settler subjects”(106). Morgensen also asserts that the American nation-state utilizes this mechanism to disenfranchise all bodies it deems to be non-conforming: “settler definitions of modern sexuality became hegemonic for all non-Natives...” (106). I posit that this assertion can be applied in the Canadian context, as both the United States and Canada have legacies of violent settler colonialism.

With this in mind, the association of homosexuality with HIV should be read as a product of colonial heteronormativity. Until July of 2013, men who had sex with other men (MSM) in Canada were banned from donating blood because of the stereotype that attributes HIV/AIDS to homosexuality. Since July of 2013, Health Canada has begun allowing MSM to donate blood. This comes with very strict conditions though, such as MSM having to abstain from homosexual intercourse for at least five years. The blood ban in its entirety currently exists under a framework that hopes to preserve heterosexuality. First, current testing to detect HIV is highly accurate up to ten days after possible exposure, meaning one can find out their status before donating blood (“Health”). Second, all blood that is donated to the Canadian Blood Services undergoes strict testing to detect any transmissible diseases before being used for transfusion purposes (“False”). Third, a little less than half of those infected with HIV are homosexual. In Health Canada’s own words, “there were similar numbers of new infections occurring in the MSM and heterosexual exposure categories” (“Estimates”). In the face of these comparable rates of transmission between heterosexual and homosexual persons, Health Canada defies arithmetic logic by mandating that gay persons can only donate blood if they have abstained from sex for five years.

Contrary to the supposed Canadian value of inclusivity then, the blood ban suggests that Canada only permits a certain degree of gayness that passes stringent heteronormative considerations. Gays are to be accepted as a part of Canada's cultural mosaic only so long as they pose no threat to heterosexual purity. I argue that this is an insurmountable effort due to the imposition of an illness long stigmatized as a largely gay problem. Puar more eloquently defines this by suggesting there are "certain homosexual bodies [that] signify homonormative nationalism" (10). In other words, homonationalism is an omnipresent tool that homonationalist countries employ to promote a tolerance towards gayness in conjunction with their own heteronormative institutions.

Just as homonationalism seeks to reinforce the idea that only a certain type of homosexuality will not disrupt the continuum of heterosexuality, Puar also posits that homonationalism is strongly reinforced by orientalism. Because her book is an analysis of sexuality in post-9/11 America, her work explores the "constructions of 'Muslim sexuality' "(4). I argue that the same interplay between homonationalism and orientalism happens in Canada when speaking about racialized entities. In September of 2012, then Minister of Foreign Affairs John Baird spoke about the unprogressive ethos of "unexceptional" countries who "have regressive and punitive laws on the books that criminalize homosexuality." He mentioned specifically the murder of Ugandan gay rights activist David Kato ("Address"). Upon further analysis, what Minister Baird's speech really did is two things: continue to sensationalize Canada as a model for what qualifies a country as being progressive and exceptional, as well as reinforce Canadian cultural imperialism.

The irony of Baird's speech is that his championing of the exceptional Canadian nation does not mention how Canada was ruthlessly stolen from the Indigenous peoples through the processes of colonialism. Eva Mackey makes the claim that all attempts by the Canadian nation-state to consolidate its multicultural identity is done so through the "uncritical celebration of hybrid cultural forms" (152). Furthermore, Mackey argues that the "narratives of nationhood...are used to bolster settler nationalist mythology" (152). Just as homonationalism endeavours to qualify gayness with certain ideals, these "narratives of nationhood" that national officials such as Baird advance actually serve to reduce the myriad of lived experiences which constitute Canada's multifaceted identity.

Baird's speech also symbolizes Canada's long-standing appropriation of moral superiority. Exceptionalism may be considered by recognizing the West's propensity to dominate global affairs, but it can also be defined by the West's continued conflation of Whiteness and moral superiority (Puar 2). Chris Weedon traces this exaltation of Whiteness to the historical depiction of Whiteness as being "the signifier of civilization and development" (157). As such, the surge in inclusive rhetoric does not necessarily indicate a turning point surrounding a change in how society views queer identity because it does not interrogate the subconscious establishment of Whiteness with moral superiority. Exceptionalism therefore more accurately intimates that these 'exceptional' Western countries like Canada deny a long history of White supremacy, and is dependent on the denunciation of countries who do not share their beliefs as being inferior.

This also permeates into stereotypes of what Puar calls "gender exceptionalism," and Canada is no different (5). Canada enjoys exuding its progressive ideals by promoting the acceptance of gay communities across the country. This erases the arbitrary violence that queer folks face, and is silenced by the Canadian nation-state's unwillingness to address its violent colonial past which is the source of Canada's systemic violence. For Canada to highlight its own "exceptional" track record as grounds to dictate how other countries should craft their own national identity is an example of Canada's blatant hypocrisy, as underscored by the contradictory blood ban. In fact, Puar clearly suggests that "exceptionalism is used not to mark a break with

historical trajectories or a claim about the emergence of singular newness” (5). In other words, national exceptionalism does not imply a meaningful interrogation of past actions – no matter how contentious they may be – to reconcile the present. Instead, exceptionalism unequivocally silences the past.

In conclusion, Puar’s interpretation of homonationalism is a great tool in critiquing the notion of Canada’s gender and cultural inclusivity as a function of its national identity. This paper drew from Canada’s colonial history to explore how certain policies refute the Canadian nation-state’s exaggeration of exceptionalism. Just as the United States positions itself as the embodiment of progression, I argued that Canada too embraces homonationalist rhetoric to position its national identity as a function of cultural and gender inclusivity. This paper also highlighted how Canada’s national identity is built around the exploitation of gendered bodies. So while Canadian history is demonstrated as being progressive and linear, this paper challenged that narrative: Canada is still a colonialist country that refuses to address its systemic issues which continues to marginalize racialized and gendered bodies.

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“Some Green, Mischievous Creature:” Aliens, Alienations and Othered Bodies in Hiromi Goto’s *The Kappa Child*

Anna Butler-Koo

In her article “Alien Texts, Alien Seductions: The Context of Colour Full Writing,” Hiromi Goto argues, “there are many ways in which ‘aliens’ are constructed” (267). While *much* of her writing interrogates the concepts of aliens and alienated identities, Goto’s *The Kappa Child* engages with this subject in a particularly captivating way. *The Kappa Child* is a quirky, unsettling novel about a Japanese Canadian family’s migration from the fertile West Coast to the arid Alberta prairies. Split into two time periods, the novel simultaneously recollects the unnamed narrator’s childhood and reveals her present adult life. Woven throughout the text is a Japanese mythical creature, the kappa. From the childhood stories she hears growing up, to her bizarre sexual encounter with a kappa Stranger, and her subsequent kappa pregnancy, the protagonist is enthralled by this inhuman entity. Though the kappa clearly embodies an alien ‘otherness’ in its transgression of human/animal and mythical/real boundaries, *The Kappa Child* ultimately depicts the narrator’s multi-layered alienation within her family and the larger society. Sandra R.G. Almeida asserts that Goto “represents the gendered and racialized body of her protagonists as an alien entity, as an other within themselves, as an outsider, a foreigner, a stranger” (50). I explore Almeida’s argument in the context of *The Kappa Child*, delineating the many ways in which the protagonist is constructed as an ‘alien’ figure. As the narrator is racialized, gendered and queered, she becomes an excluded and victimized Other; only through embracing these exclusionary differences, embodied by the kappa within her, can the narrator resist her own alienation.

Goto asserts that she “live[s] well aware of race, the alien space [she] inhabit[s] in a colonized country” (“Alien Texts” 264). While *The Kappa Child* is not autobiographical, its ‘alien’ awareness reflects Goto’s own positionality as a racialized writer; her protagonists are often forced to negotiate their identities in a predominantly white, colonial culture. As race serves to exclude and alienate the narrator of *The Kappa Child*, Goto’s linking of racial difference and aliens here is exemplified. At a young age, the protagonist becomes acutely aware of her family’s status as outsiders due to their Japanese heritage. Upon their arrival in the Alberta prairies, a local motel owner soon categorizes the family as foreigners. In this tense encounter, the owner asks for identification papers from Hideo, the narrator’s father, because he is “not a local” (Kappa 68). As ‘visible minorities,’ the family cannot blend in. Hideo quickly becomes aggressive and the motel man eases off, attempting to wish the family well as he expresses sympathy about past injustices committed by the Canadian government, specifically the Japanese internment. The motel man states: “I always thought it was terrible what was done to *you* people” (Kappa 68, emphasis added). This comment, while possibly well intentioned, is racially charged, establishing a clear distinction between ‘locals/Canadians’ and ‘foreigners.’ Goto’s protagonist is puzzled by this interaction, asking herself, “Which ones does he think we are?” (Kappa 68). Here, the narrator’s naiveté about how racial difference can exclude certain bodies is apparent. In contrast, Hideo immediately responds with an angry outcry of “We are CANADIAN!” (Kappa 68). Though Hideo attempts to counter this assertion of racial difference, he is ultimately unsuccessful; the family will always be Othered bodies in this colonial context, a fact the narrator will discover.

The protagonist eventually recognizes the power of racial categories to constrain identities, and thus internalizes her own kind of racial self-loathing. She recalls feeling trapped on her father’s failing rice farm at ten years old: “I lay there and thought about my options. There were none...Going to white outsiders wasn’t an option for an Asian immigrant family like us. If you ditched the family, there was absolutely nothing left” (Kappa 197). Her lack of choices, exacerbated by her marked racial difference, serves to confine the narrator to

being dependent on her dysfunctional family and abusive father. Her statement also underscores her sense of loneliness. She believes that she cannot reach out to anyone outside of her family because of inflexible racial and cultural barriers; she believes no one would welcome her. In this way, the protagonist's own perceptions of race foreclose any opportunities to seek support outside of her family. In other words, she alienates herself.

The narrator's external and self-imposed alienation influences the way in which she perceives her adult body. In her writing on female characters in science fiction, Jane Donawerth explores the concept of "minority women as alien among us" (43). Donawerth's analysis of how minority women are Othered can be linked to *The Kappa Child*; the narrator is racially excluded by a colonial culture, and sees her body as alien in a predominantly white society. Goto's protagonist is perpetually self-deprecating, debasing her appearance as "ugly" (Kappa 12), even "monstrous" (Kappa 47). In a moment of particular vulnerability, she describes her body in racialized language: "I was a short and dumpy Asian with bad teeth, daikon legs, stocky feet. A neckless wonder with cone-shaped pseudo breasts" (Kappa 120). Defining herself as a kind of freakish, non-human entity, the narrator links ethnicity with hideousness, as she refers to herself as an "Asian," not a woman, or person. She frequently describes herself as an "ugly Asian," engaging in a kind of self-inflicted racial name-calling (Kappa 12, emphasis added). In this context, the term Asian becomes associated with something dirty, even grotesque. The protagonist's reference to daikon, a type of Japanese white radish, reinforces the racial context of her alienation. In this comparison, we can see how notions of race can define the body and the racialized subject's self-identity as an Other. In contrast to the slim, white figures that dominate images of beauty in North America, racialized bodies that do not conform to these standards are excluded. As the narrator emphasizes what she deems to be physical inadequacies, she makes herself an alien.

Not only is the protagonist alienated by her racial difference, she is also excluded because of her gender, especially within the patriarchal structure of her family. While the ratio of females to males is 5:1, the narrator's father ultimately controls his submissive wife and frightened daughters. In "Water Birth: Domestic Violence and Monstrosity in Hiromi Goto's *The Kappa Child*," Nancy Kang examines the narrator's family in the context of the Confucian family system, specifically its restrictive structure and exaltation of filial piety. She asserts that the Confucian family model, with its emphasis on loyalty, obedience and conformity, continues to pervade perceptions of Asian North American life (Kang 29). These values are often passed down through generations, even carried across the globe, as in the case of the narrator's diasporic family. Though Confucianism situates the father at the head of the family, emphasizing his power as rightfully claimed, Kang suggests that Goto undermines this cultural notion of a male-dominated hierarchy by creating an abusive, unfit father figure (29). Flawed as Hideo is, the narrator still cannot escape his control or his abuse because of her status as a subservient daughter. The protagonist's ambivalent feelings toward her father call attention to the deeply rooted nature of familial love and loyalty. The narrator reflects: "I can't cut off my feelings from him, my monster, my hero" (Kappa 243). Kang affirms that this statement exemplifies the filial duty that is central to Confucian tradition, and also highlights the narrator's "divided sensibility," as she considers herself to be a somewhat monstrous figure ("Water Birth" 35). Because she is her father's daughter, the protagonist transfers Hideo's monstrosity onto her own body. The narrator's perception of herself as a monstrous woman in a patriarchal culture is accentuated in her descriptions of her physical self.

Goto's protagonist feels confined by racial difference to rely solely on her family, and as a result, she feels further alienated from her parents and sisters. She describes her childhood in jail-like terms, as "doing time" with her family, whom she views as "the people who are most likely to hurt and disappoint me" (Kappa 224, 241). She knows that her Okasan (mother), Emiko, would never leave her father, and her older sister, nicknamed Slither, lacks the necessary courage and agency to stand up for herself. Slither's inability to be

self-sufficient, “so weak, so sad,” sparks violence within the narrator: “how could she stand there and bawl like that? How could she show him he’d won? I’d smack some pride into her if I thought it would help” (Kappa 180). The narrator’s aggression, stemming from a need to protect her sister, reinforces her self-construction as monstrous, echoing the violent tendencies of her father. In the context of her repressive, patriarchal family, the protagonist sees her aspiration for independence to be unnatural, thereby alien. In her childhood, none of her sisters or her mother showed the kind of resistance to Hideo that the narrator desired. Expected to be a loyal daughter, the narrator is bound to obey her father, lest she suffer abuse at his hands. In this way, her body is gendered, victimized and excluded from exerting agency.

As an adult in her heteronormative, culturally conformist family, the protagonist is also Othered by her sexual desire for women. Kang explores how queer Asian Canadians, especially lesbians, have to navigate non-heterosexual sexualities in a diasporic cultural context that can include racism, sexism and homophobia (“Ecstasies” n.p.). She highlights how the uninformed and dismissive attitudes of the family serve to further Other Goto’s narrator. Emiko appears to be both blissfully ignorant of her daughter’s queer sexuality, and observant of the narrator’s otherness, as she calls her a “strange child” (Kappa 44). After moving out of the family home, the narrator continues to feel excluded, as her parents cannot conceptualize the possibility of their daughter as a lesbian. After calling one of her best friends, Genevieve, the narrator laments Emiko’s naiveté, exclaiming: “Lucky Genevieve having a grandmother who was bi...My mother probably wouldn’t even know what it meant!” (Kappa 80). Emiko’s assumption of her daughter’s heterosexuality becomes clear as she tells the narrator that if the family still lived in Nihon (Japan), she would be “happily married with two kids” (Kappa 13). Contrary to her mother’s wishes, the protagonist has not had any adult romantic relationships, and seems to have accepted her permanent solitary lifestyle. At the novel’s opening, she bluntly states, “There are no love stories for me and I’m not up to invention” (Kappa 9). Here, the narrator’s inability to see herself as worthy and capable of romantic love is evident. Just as Emiko negates her daughter’s queer sexuality, the protagonist also obstructs her own opportunities to find love by closing herself off. The narrator may believe that if she was in a heterosexual relationship, she would not feel so alienated. In a sense, her feelings of failure in this area are evidence of an internalized homophobia. The narrator’s self-perception of monstrosity is intriguing in this context, as many queer individuals struggle with a destructive self-hate. Her sexuality, an alien desire, makes her an Othered figure, perhaps even a monster in her own mind.

In contrast with the narrator’s experience of multiple alienations, two kappa figures, the Stranger and the kappa child, exist between the limited binaries of local/foreigner, male/female and hetero/homosexual, thus challenging their legitimacy. The protagonist’s sensual encounter with the Stranger creates new avenues of exploration. As an entity that complicates the limits of race, gender and sexuality, the kappa Stranger can be interpreted as what Donna Haraway calls a “cyborg” figure (117). The cyborg, Haraway argues, is a creature that transgresses essential boundaries, blurring many divides between human and animal and physical and non-physical (120). The cyborg functions as a metaphor for the post-modern human and exists in a “post-gender world” (Haraway 118). As a creature defined by inclusion and fluidity, the Stranger epitomizes Haraway’s cyborg. Its ambiguous nature enables the Stranger to exist as a subject free from essential limits; the narrator describes the Stranger as a “retro—dressed person of questionable gender and racial origin” (Kappa 119). Goto has also underlined how androgynous bodies are subject to alienation, stressing: “the prurient horror of an apparently ‘ungendered’ being betrays a homophobic subtext that speaks volumes of a society that continues to assert heterosexist patriarchal primacy” (“Alien Texts” 267). While the narrator finds the Stranger’s fluid identity disturbing, the Stranger destabilizes the narrator’s limited conceptions of what is ‘normal’ by retorting “Does it matter? I bet you haven’t had this much excitement for years!” (Kappa 119). The

Stranger's question is arguably a new one for the protagonist, whose life has been defined by her racial difference, gendered body, queer sexuality and family role. To her, these categories have always mattered. As the Stranger pushes the narrator to confront the sources of her alienation, she begins to see how others have limited her to a confined identity.

After her mysterious rendezvous with the Stranger, the narrator's alienation becomes a physical reality as she becomes pregnant with a kappa child. Several scholars have interpreted the protagonist's pregnancy as a physical manifestation of her otherness. Pilar Cuder-Dominguez and Almeida have both noted the kappa's connections to Japanese culture. Cuder-Dominguez views the kappa as a "mark of [her] race and ethnicity," a foreign presence that reflects the narrator's own sense of exclusion (124). Just as the narrator's family is displaced in the hostile, arid landscape of the Canadian prairies, so is the kappa in a human body. As such, the kappa can be read as a representation of the protagonist's displacement in a colonized society. Almeida similarly interprets the kappa as a living connection to the narrator's Japanese heritage, observing that the kappa child holds the narrator's body "hostage" as it forces her to consume large amounts of Japanese cucumbers (51). Almeida views this imposed craving as the kappa's attempt to reclaim the narrator's Japanese heritage. The protagonist's consumption of Japanese cucumbers pervades much of the novel, as she negotiates a thirst that she associates with monstrous desire. After appeasing the kappa child with the juicy, green fruit, the narrator wonders, "Is this how a vampire feels when it feeds on blood?" (Kappa 135). This musing is indicative of the narrator's continued perception of herself as monstrous. The kappa child can also be seen as an alien reflection of her sexuality. Kang argues that the alien "is the queer self" ("Ecstasies" n.p.) which the protagonist harbours in secret, much like her clandestine crushes on her two best friends, Genevieve and Midori. While the kappa child is a foreign Other within the narrator's body, she eventually accepts its particular strangeness as an integral part of herself.

By embracing the kappa, the narrator undergoes an empowering transformation from an excluded, Othered body to a self-accepting subject. Kang views the narrator's metamorphosis as "essentially homeopathic," dependent on the kappa's intervention, after which the narrator's "self-perceived human monster become[s] powerful, validated, even desirable" ("Water Birth" 31). As the kappa's presence becomes less foreign, the protagonist recognizes similarities between herself and her kappa inhabitant. The mirroring of these two Othered bodies, narrator and kappa, is highlighted during the narrator's walk in the prairies as she examines a small pool of water, a substance frequently associated with kappa life. She recounts, "I dip my fingers in a pool wet with possibilities and something touches me back. I don't know if it is just some green, mischievous creature, or just my nightly reflection" (Kappa 220). Here the narrator begins to see herself as a kind of kappa figure, but as a welcoming, accepting Other, not one who is alienated by her monstrosity. As the divide between protagonist and kappa collapses, the protagonist perceives her body in a new light. Once describing her body as a "neckless wonder," she now sees a new image: "My neck emerges from my shoulders, not graceful swan-like, never that, but a neck, definitely long enough to kiss" (Kappa 120, 246). Through the kappa's influence, the protagonist's self-perception changes from that of a hideous monster to a beautiful Other.

The narrator's kappa child can also be interpreted as a metaphor for her new subjectivity, one that is capable of self-love. Cuder-Dominguez claims this pregnancy is a psychological one that will result in the birthing of a "renewed self" as the protagonist confronts her past traumas and embraces her sexuality (125). Kang suggests this process is "truly pro-creation" in that it creates a subject who is "positive, productive and rehabilitated," able to finally part with her experiences of abuse and alienation ("Water Birth" 41). As the aftermath of a sexual experience with an ungendered being, this conception notably occurs without male participation. By portraying a successful and positive conception outside of a patriarchal context, Goto subverts

dominant discourses of reproduction. The narrator's birthing of her new, kappa self, without male involvement, can also be seen as her embracing an ungendered, thus unconfined identity.

Goto's productive pairing of human and kappa offers an intriguing vision of the future, one that does not alienate Othered bodies. As a creature that lives "in the borders between human and natural environments," the kappa presents alternative possibilities of existence (Kappa 277). By embracing this figure, the narrator resists being alienated by her race, gender or sexuality. Goto emphasizes the transformative potential of the boundary-transgressing kappa and suggests a possible future free from the restrictive binds of (human) socialization: "maybe when humans are gone, our myths will come alive, wander over the remnants of our uncivilization. Kappa, water dragons, yama-uba, oni. Selkie, golem, Lorelei, xuan wu. The creatures we carry will be born from our demise and the world will dream a new existence" (Kappa 221). Here, we see an embrace of the fantastic, of the kappa, as leading to a potential future that is fluid, non-hierarchical and optimistic – full of possibility. Goto underlines how acceptance of that which may be deemed Other or monstrous, marked by difference, is empowering.

The Kappa Child challenges preconceived notions of what it means to be Other, and explores how certain beings are constructed as 'alien' within the dominant North American culture. Through her protagonist, Goto underscores how racialized, gendered and queered bodies become alien figures in the eyes of a predominantly white, patriarchal, and heteronormative society. In turn, alienated individuals can internalize this exclusion and construct themselves as monstrous figures, as does Goto's narrator. Goto's incorporation of the kappa invites readers to imagine the unimaginable and question our conceptions of what is possible, and what is 'real.' As a cyborg figure, the kappa offers an intriguing possibility of alternative subjectivity, unconfined by limited binaries. The kappa's fluid, liminal existence has significant implications for our contemporary conceptions of race, gender and sexuality, in its ability to destabilize the absolute nature of these categories. As the narrator reconciles the Other within herself, becoming a kind of kappa figure, she also embraces a liminal and empowered existence. By portraying the kappa as a post-human entity, Goto offers an optimistic vision of the future that is literally "wet with possibilities" (Kappa 220).

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Malala Yousafzai: A Girl Used by the West to Please the West

Marina Bochar

Before I expand into the details of this paper, it is important for me to state my own social position in relation to this project. Throughout this paper I will be critiquing the West and White Western feminism. However, as someone who lives in the West and has been educated in the West, I am not entirely exempt from the problematic power relations that I discuss in my paper. As a settler living out my ancestors colonial past on Turtle Island, I benefit from from colonization and White privilege in the past and present. I understand how colonialism informs the ‘saviour complex,’ which is perpetuated through the work of many White feminists. My inspiration for this project comes from the need to deconstruct and resist the White liberal feminist framework, and to critique a culture that I am very much a part of and benefit from. In turn, I hope that this will draw attention to the need for a feminist movement that is intersectional, reflexive, and does and appropriate and obscure the voices of others.

Malala Yousafzai is a seventeen-year-old girl and activist from the town of Mingora, in the Swat District of Pakistan. She first began to speak about her experience as a girl in Pakistan by writing a blog under a pseudonym for BBC Urdu about living under the Taliban (Yousafzai inside cover). On October 9, 2012 Malala was on a bus on her way to school. Due to her activism towards girls’ rights to education, she was targeted and and shot in the head by the Taliban. Malala considers herself an activist for girls’ education in her community of Mingora and advocates for universal access to education and investment in community-led programs through the Malala Fund, a non-profit organization that supports education advocates across the world (Yousafzai inside cover).

When news broke that Malala had been shot by the Taliban, the world responded through all forms of social media, expressing awe, compassion and a sense of solidarity for a sixteen year old girl who had stood up to the Taliban in the name of girls’ education. Her story became a global sensation. “We are all Malala” slogans started to surface on social media outlets and parents, teachers, celebrities, non-governmental organizations and international organizations rallied around her cause to support girls’ education.

My intention in this essay is not to question Malala’s integrity. There is no doubt that Malala is a courageous and inspiring individual, who is advocating what she believes in. However, what is at issue is how the West has framed Malala’s story and consumed and appropriated her lived experience. I have made connections to Malala’s autobiography “*I Am Malala*,” however; the bulk of my paper addresses broader ideas that are connected to Malala’s experience and campaign. Within this essay I will argue that Malala and her campaign have been co-opted by Western women to please Western consumption, while further demarcating a divide between the West and the East. In turn, this justifies Western cultural imperialism and intervention in the global East. In order to defend my argument I have separated my paper into three parts. I will first examine how western women have both obscured Malala’s campaign and supported her health to please the West and fulfill vested interests. I will then analyze how campaigns of solidarity are often superficial, because they decontextualize Malala’s lived experience and erase any acts of resistance. Lastly, I will provide evidence to show that Malala’s experience has been used to demarcate the West from the East and justify war in Pakistan.

Western Women Pleasing the West

It is significant to note that “*I Am Malala*” was written with the co-authorship of Christina Lamb, a British woman who is Oxford and Harvard educated (Yousafzai inside cover). This reveals Lamb’s racial and educational privilege. Lamb is praised as one of the world’s best foreign correspondents, with experience

reporting on Pakistan and Afghanistan (Yousafzai inside cover). A literary agent who was representing Malala, approached Lamb and asked if she would be interested in writing her story (Lamb par. 5). Christina Lamb showed interest in Malala and her campaign, and arranged to take the job (Lamb, par. 7). This is an example of what Said refers to as the West using the Orient (the East) as a career (Said 26). Christina Lamb may have had good intentions to ‘help’ Malala and further her cause, however, she capitalizes off of Malala’s struggle by attaching her name to her campaign and thereby furthers her own career as a writer.

The use of a British co-author begs the question of how much Western influence has manipulated Malala’s message and filtered her voice to serve the West. By using a co-author, Malala’s voice is obscured throughout the autobiography. Further, because the autobiography is written in first person (from Malala’s perspective), the co-author is removed from accountability for the content of the passage. This allows Christina Lamb to remain innocent in the process of the autobiography, while having the authority to filter Malala’s message. This is an example of what Haraway refers to as “the god trick”. Haraway maintains that the god trick is “seeing everything from nowhere” (Haraway 284), whereby, information is presented as objective, neutral and true. As the text is written in first person, the reader is led into believing that the autobiography fully represents Malala’s voice and how she wants to be represented. Linda Alcoff maintains that speaking for others is “arrogant, vain, unethical and politically illegitimate” (Alcoff 6).

For instance, Lamb recounts that due to religious reasons, Tor Pekai, Malala’s mother, did not want to appear in the book. Lamb could not convince Ziauddin, Malala’s father, so she attempted to persuade Malala. Lamb stated “Ziauddin won’t go against her wishes, so my only hope is Malala. We can’t have a book about you as an icon of girls’ rights, and your own mother not appearing” (Lamb par. 65). In order to secure the integrity of the book for a Western audience, Lamb used Malala as a tool to persuade her mother to go against her religious beliefs (Lamb par. 65). The co-author not only had influence over Malala’s voice but also manipulated whose voices were heard to please Western consumption.

There are two sections within the autobiography that show images of Malala. Some of the images depict her childhood, some are of her giving speeches in school, and others are of her laying in a hospital bed in Birmingham. These images are significant to note because they depict a Westernized image of Malala, which works to please a Western audience. These images serve to create a visual justification for superficial attempts at supporting Malala’s campaign and are another form wherein the Western reader can consume and commodify Malala.

During the first few days of Malala’s recovery, she was visited by two British doctors who were in Pakistan advising the military on how to set up a liver transplant program. Dr. Fiona, from Birmingham, sympathized with Malala’s cause for girls’ education, and offered her support because “she herself had been lucky to go to a good school and train to become a doctor” (Yousafzai 258). Dr. Fiona recommended that Malala be moved to a hospital in England to ensure that she could be properly cared for (Yousafzai 266). For technical reasons, Malala’s family could not travel with her to England during the first term of her care. Thus, Dr. Fiona became her legal guardian for her trip to the UK (Yousafzai 258). This detail of the autobiography is significant to recognize because it draws attention to White women from the West ‘saving’ Muslim women. While it may be true that Dr. Fiona’s intervention in Malala’s treatment contributed to her full recovery, the rhetoric of a White Western woman ‘saving’ a Muslim woman deserves further analysis.

The image of the liberated and accomplished White female Doctor from the West is contrasted with the image of Malala, as being a victim of subordination under Islam and the Taliban. This contrast often provokes forms of colonial feminist interventions. Mohanty argues “it is this ‘Third World Difference’ that Western

feminism appropriate and ‘colonize’ the fundamental complexities and conflicts which characterize the lives of women of different classes, religions, cultures, races and castes in these countries” (Mohanty 243). It is through this process that women outside of the West are essentialized, homogenized and othered into a stereotyped group based on gender, religious beliefs and geographical location.

Abu-Lughod maintains that it is imperative to be vigilant about the idea of saving people because it has implications about our attitudes (Abu-Lughod 787). Western efforts in Malala’s support are often rooted in Western Islamophobia and vested interests. Dr. Fiona stated afterward that “if anything had happened to her it would have been blamed on the white woman, if she’d died I would have killed Pakistan’s Mother Teresa” (Yousafzai 263). What Dr. Fiona fails to mention is that if she saved Malala, she becomes the Mother Teresa. Dr. Fiona makes no attempt at self-reflexivity and turns Malala’s critical condition into an issue of how it will affect her representation. This demonstrates a superficial sense of support which branches from self-interest.

Abu-Lughod contends that Western feminists must not ‘free’ Muslim women to be like us, and that it is critical to acknowledge and respect differences, as our differences are products of historical and political circumstances (Abu-Lughod 787). As Muslim women are constructed in need of saving, “there is an implication of saving her from something, and to something” (Abu-Lughod 788). This assertion brings forth a sense of superiority of Western ideals and patronizing arrogance. Similarly, Mohanty argues “sisterhood cannot be assumed on the basis of gender; it must be formed in concrete, historical and political practice and analysis” (Mohanty 245). Moreover, as Dr. Fiona and thousands of Western feminists were quick to support Malala and her cause, many efforts have ignored differences in ideas toward social change. Interventions by Western feminists often obscure the idea that there could be a liberation that works within Islam, and equate liberation with the eradication of Islamic fundamentalism.

We Are Not All Malala

The way in which Malala’s attack is framed within the autobiography establishes affect for Westerners to support her campaign. “While I was hovering between life and death, the Taliban issues a statement assuming responsibility for shooting me but denying it was because of my campaign for education” (Yousafzai 256). This quote not only presents Malala as a victim, but also brings the topic of education into question. From a Western perspective, education is often seen as a human right, and should be accessible to everyone. Thus, Western supporters will feel obligated to act in her honor.

Celebrities such as Madonna and Angelina Jolie have demonstrated acts of solidarity and given financial support to Malala’s global campaign. Madonna added her support by performing a striptease while exposing a temporary tattoo reading MALALA across her lower back (Rob Sanders). Hedge maintains that “media and markets set the conditions under which gendered causes come into visibility” (Hedge 96). The media constructs the gendered non-Western subject on a global scale, which perpetuates colonial rationality of difference and is accompanied with a post feminist celebrity spectacle (Hedge 96). The “I am Malala” and “We all are Malala” campaigns are demonstrative of a superficial sense of a transnational community that is created without recognition of any political or historical context.

The humanitarian celebrity draws similar discourse to colonial subjects. Both the humanitarian celebrity and colonist invoke the Whiteman’s burden. The Whiteman’s burden is seen throughout history whereby the colonizing mission was justified by ‘saving the other’ as Western ideals of enlightenment were imposed (Baiden 15). This idea reveals that the messianic colonialist mission has trickled down to Western philanthropy by celebrities, further perpetuating the story of the Whiteman’s burden. Moreover, “such circulation of the Western celebrity creates a geopolitical space for the exercise of Western dominance” (Baiden 16). In other words, the

economic domination in Hollywood allows for the transnational circulation of its celebrities in a form of celebrity imperialism, which reinforces power relations that positions the West as superior to the East.

As celebrities engage in global campaigns such as “We all are Malala” they are acting under the pretense of humanitarianism and take a position of representing the aid recipient, which results in the silencing and dispossession of the aid recipient (Baiden IV). As Angelina Jolie and Madonna claim to be in solidarity with Malala and her campaign, they are creating *affect*, which will influence fans to invest both emotionally and financially in association with the particular celebrity (Baiden 2). The celebrity is part of a fabricated industry that is driven to achieve capitalist goals. Celebrities who align themselves with humanitarianism campaigns are involved in a process of creating an ideological persona that will contribute to their fan base and capital success. Moreover, as Angelina Jolie and Madonna chant, “We all are Malala,” they are acting out a vested interest while obscuring Malala’s intentions, and the other individuals who are relevant to the context of her lived experience.

Malala was not alone in her attack by the Taliban. Two of her female classmates, Kainat Riaz and Shazia Ramzan, were also injured in the shooting (Rahman 162). Why have these other two young women received so much less attention from the West when they are no less heroic and just as deserving of an education? Malala wrote a blog for BBC and was given a voice in Western media. This created a platform for her to be ‘rescued’ by the West. I do not intend to critique Malala for using her relationship with the West, however, it is problematic for one individual to be so idealized while so many in similar situations are ignored. These girls, and many others, are all familiar with the horrors of war. Thousands of other children have been victims of US drone strikes and suicide bombings (Rahman 163). Yet, there is little international condemnation and outcry for these individuals’ losses.

In the following months after the attack, there were a series of protests and detachment between Malala and the girls of the Swat Valley (Rahman 163). According to *The Express Tribune*, an online media outlet in Pakistan, a protest broke out after a girls’ school close to Malala’s hometown was renamed in her honor (Rahman 163). Many students protested and refused to attend classes if the school was not renamed. One girl told reporters: “this was their school and Malala was in the UK, so why should she represent their college” (Rahman 163). This evidence reveals that there have been several acts of local protest against the Western co-optation of Malala and her campaign. However, US government officials, celebrities and journalists who promote slogans such as “We Are All Malala”, have obscured any attempt at resistance. Moreover, global solidarity campaigns in favor of Malala erase the context of her campaign and are an arrogant and superficial attempt of activism. The voices of the Swat Valley are not chanting “We are all Malala” but crying, “We are *not* all Malala” (Rahman 163).

Orientalism and The War on Terror

As Malala and her campaign have circulated to the West, she has been used as a tool to demarcate a divide between the West and the East. Malala is utilized by the West to criticize Islamic countries and in contrast, produce and reproduce the notion that the liberal West is the ideal. In turn, this alienates not only Malala, but Pakistan and it’s surrounding region from the global West. Through this discourse, a binary between the West and East is created, whereby the East is constructed in comparison to the West. Flax argues that “order is imposed and maintained by displacing chaos into the lesser of each binary pair” (Flax 453). Through Malala’s autobiography and the scene of her attack, the East is constructed as dangerous and chaotic. In contrast, Malala’s recovery in the UK is constructed as safe and orderly. The autobiographical text constructs the East as dangerous for young women, and the West as safe and healing for Malala. This myth contributes to the West/East binary as it represents the East as threatening to the White female subject.

Malala recounts that as she was being airlifted to the hospital in Peshwar, her mother was in the middle of a reading lesson where she was “struggling to learn words like ‘book’ and ‘apple’” (Yousafzai 248). This passage creates the image of an illiterate middle-aged Pakistani woman, who is struggling to read at an elementary level. While literate people in the West read this passage, a stark contrast is made between the Western and Eastern woman. Malala’s mother is constructed as the Orient, while the reader is defined in opposition to her. Said contends that “the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience” (Said 24). This section of the passage further demarcates the West from the East, portraying the West as literate, progressive and liberal, while the East is portrayed as illiterate, regressive and repressed.

Geopolitical events throughout the last decade have drawn attention to issues of gender (Hedge 95). When geographical areas are represented in essentialist terms, female bodies are often used as justification for war. More specifically, as Malala and her mother are constructed as subordinate victims of Islam, the West is able to justify intervention in the Middle East. This notion needs further analysis and must be connected to how Western foreign policy is actually affecting women and girls like Malala.

The extent to which Malala’s story was virally circulated might have initiated some immediate support, however, the rapid circulation bypasses any relevant geopolitical and structural issues. Malala’s story is embraced and co-opted by the West, yet is not connected to Western foreign policy and its implications in Malala’s hometown of the Swat Valley. For example, unmanned American drones are a recent technique of virtual warfare that have become common in Pakistan (Rahman 159). Drones are operated from afar, allowing a minimal physical harm for American soldiers. However, the physical impacts of drone strikes are all too real for Pakistani civilians whose lives have been severely altered by the ongoing strikes (Rahman, 159). Supporters of the drone war maintain that drones are working to ensure the safety of citizens like Malala, yet the lives, losses and livelihoods of Pakistani citizens are cast as irrelevant (Rahman 159). As Malala’s story is presented in the West, it serves the purpose of justifying occupation in the region and Western-led development projects while ignoring the indirect and direct consequences of drone strikes.

Near the latter half of Malala’s Autobiography, she writes about her experience after the shooting. Malala expresses shock that she was taken to the Combined Military Hospital, which dates back from British rule (Yousafzai 250). Within this chapter, Malala’s father similarly expresses his discomfort of being in a military hospital. Her father states, “in our country, where the army has seized power so many times, people are often wary of the military” (Yousafzai 251). I understand there is reason to be wary of the Pakistani military, however, it is ironic because the British have a history of controlling the country as well, yet Malala goes to the UK for medical care. The British also have a lasting influence over the military medical system in Pakistan. For instance, the very doctor who was named Malala’s guardian for her trip to the UK was “in Pakistan advising the army on how to set up the country’s first liver transplant program” (Yousafzai 258). This shows that British officials still have a degree of authority over their former colony Pakistan, and influence decisions made in their military. This section of my essay reveals that Malala’s experience is deeply connected to geopolitical issues, colonization in the past and present, and how the West is using Malala to perpetuate Islamophobia and justify intervention in the Middle East.

Although my research has several knowledge gaps and leaves room for further investigation, I contend that Malala and her campaign have been co-opted and appropriated by the West to please a Western audience in the aims of establishing the West as superior to the East. Western foreign correspondents, doctors, and celebrities have all invoked the White savior complex in a superficial form of solidarity. They have then benefited from the accumulation of capital at the expense of Malala’s lived experience. Malala’s experience has then been used to contrast the East and West and justify Western foreign policy and occupation in the East. I acknowledge that there are limitations within my analysis and that further study on the topic may include an exploration of how one could ethically act in solidarity with Malala and her campaign.

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Women's Tattoos and Feminist Discourses: The Divergence of Opinions on Ink

Whitney Brennan

In recent North American feminist research on women and tattooing practices, scholars have focused predominantly on issues of gender. In particular, discussions have focused on the experiences of female-bodied persons in contemporary tattoo culture. Additionally, there has been to a large extent a concentration on the societal role of tattoos. A postmodern interpretation argues that tattoos may operate as powerfully subversive countercultural acts (Neville, 43). There has also been an identifiable deficit in many feminist enquiries in the past. Factors such as socioeconomic class, race or ethnic identity were rarely mentioned as contributing to the perception and motivation behind North American women's tattoos. In more recent literature, there are more inclusive discussions which acknowledge the diversity of situational and contextual intersections within women's tattooing practices. Contemporary tattoo practices exhibit a cross-cultural and trans-cultural quality, which, according to recent research, is all underscored by the presence of gender. While further empirical research is needed on a diversity of women's experience with tattoos (Atkinson, 221), the significance of gender in this respect is a foundational component for deconstructing women's tattoos in feminist discourse. Also significant is the dichotomy within feminist discourse that either supports or condones women's tattooing practices. Contemporary research has shown that postmodern and post-essentialist feminists support women's tattooing practices, (Neville, 2005; Demello; Atkinson, 2002; Botz-Bornstein, 2012; Pitts, 2003) while in contrast, radical feminists have condemned women's tattooing practices as self-mutilation, and accused tattooing as reproducing cultural ideals of femininity and gender hierarchies (Jeffreys, 2000).

While the provocative nature of tattoos is unanimously uncontested, their acceptance or rejection from feminist discourse remains a source of scholarly debate. In light of this dispute, the postmodern feminist perspective offers a more inclusive and body-positive perspective on women and tattooing practices, allowing for personal empowerment and self-expression through body modification. By viewing tattooing as an act of agency and self-empowerment, postmodern feminism allows for women's bodies to maintain an autonomous identity, even within inscribed systems of power.

Looking at earlier feminist theorizations on representation of the female body, second wave feminism viewed dominant representations of women in the West as "objectifying, exotifying and fetishizing" (Neville, 53). In contrast, more recent feminists have "viewed sexually connotative representations of women as appealing to freedom of sexual expression which was denied to women previously" (ibid, 54). Tattooing practices participate in this freedom of expression as Neville argues, and she quotes Dick Hebdige in saying that women have "turned being looked at into an aggressive act" (54) through the use of tattoos. Furthermore, Atkinson asserts that "modifying the skin to wage cultural resistance is an act of cultural subversion" (227), speaking to the political power embedded in body modification projects, and the counter-normative messages that practices like tattooing send.

Radical feminist critics of body modifications have often "equate[d] women's body modification with more mainstream cosmetic practices that are seen as objectifying" (Pitts, 73). While their arguments may align tattooing with other forms of modification which cause pain to the body, Pitts argues that their theories "seem to be informed by implicit assumptions about the body as naturally pristine and unmarked" (75). This assumption, she asserts, is difficult to support, due to contemporary society's heightened awareness of the ways bodies are

socially and culturally constructed and controlled, and “inscribed by gendered relations of power” (75). Pitts directly aligns her own argument with postmodern feminism, stating they “view female bodies and subjectivity as socially constructed, culturally negotiable and saturated with power relations” (72). Sheila Jeffreys, a radical feminist scholar, aligns acts of body modification with self-mutilation (409). Her parallel between voluntary acts of self-harm and tattoo practices is according to Pitts, highly misguided, and by pathologizing body modification, it reiterates Western colonial discourse on body practices of indigenous cultures, where tattooing and other modifications have strong cultural connotations (Pitts, 73). She further argues that using pathological language is highly problematic, due to it being “a powerful discourse that has historically been used as a tool of gender socialization and control” (77). Radical feminists also claim that body modifiers are “not in control” (ibid, 73) of their decision to get tattooed, and that “the practices violate the body and reproduce oppressive relations of power by echoing patriarchal violence” (ibid, 73). This argument is similar to those made by radical feminist is opposition to women participating in sex work, pornography and other practices condoned for reproducing and participating in patriarchal culture. Heather Neville articulates the significance of using a contextually critical approach when analysing these practices. She states, “it is of the utmost importance to consider representations of tattoos and women’s tattoos specifically in terms of a multiplicity of contingent and fluid readings that are enacted by individuals in individual contexts” (60). Her argument posits that readings of tattoos necessitates an understanding beyond the act of tattooing itself, and requires consideration of the contextual and cultural intersections affecting each individual.

Historically, prior to the Christian era, parts of Western Europe accepted tattooing the body as a form of adornment (Neville, 44). While symbolic meanings and societal acceptance has fluctuated throughout Western history, the practice has come to be included in a postmodern feminist perspective regarding the imposed gender roles for women. This can be attributed to the growing understanding of social and cultural control and regulation over female subjects’ bodies. This awareness is owed to the “Body Politics” movement, notably the work of gender theorist Judith Butler. Currently, through various transcultural phenomenon, tattooing has come to be accepted in mainstream North American society. Heather Neville attributes this shift in the acceptance of tattoos to a number of cultural changes, starting in the 1960s. Specifically, performance art, holistic New Age philosophies, and the British punk movement in the 1970s (46). Mark Blanchard also states that, “the growing vogue of tattoos as a basic art form is actually a by-product of the development of photography...people could look at tattoos without being confronted by the physicality of the body beneath the tattoo” (Blanchard; Neville, 46). The artistic quality of tattooing is also growing in social appreciation.

Postmodern feminist research argues that women’s tattooing performs a “deconstruction of bodily norms, which are part of the ideological arsenal used to subjugate women” (Pitts, 49). They view acts of body modification, such as tattooing, scarification and piercing as acts of subverting gender norms and socially constructed definitions of “acceptable” femininity. Neville states that tattooing “has become mainstream but under certain circumstances remains a deviant, subversive and empowering countercultural practice” (42), reaffirming the postmodern interpretation of self-empowerment through tattoo practices. As supported by Michael Atkinson, research into contemporary tattooing reveals that “tattoos are analyzed as embodied signifiers of gender” (220), and how “women’s involvement in the body project [such as tattooing] illustrates the ways in which forms of body modification are simultaneously replete with cultural messages about conformity and resistance” (224). Significantly, many scholars identify how women’s bodies are politically,

culturally and socially controlled through acts of power and domination. Atkinson claims, “some women tactically engage in tattooing as a form of negotiated resistance to dominant gender codes” (233), which is supported by postmodern theories on active political engagement through bodily acts (Neville, 49). Scholar Victoria Pitts, in her book, *In The Flesh* (2003), argues that, “postmodern feminists have viewed women’s subcultural body modifications as part of a ‘focus on contradiction’ and resistance” (54), and she sustains that the “female body is socially controlled, and permanently marking the body is an example of female power” (56). It is important to note that postmodern scholars do not attribute these empowering and gender-subverting qualities to other forms of body projects, such as “cosmetic surgery, excessive dieting and exercise” (Atkinson, 219) that they do to tattooing and other related body modifications. Body projects such as those have “been interrogated as highly ritualized, commonplace and deeply gendered projects that embody patriarchal ideas about femininity” (ibid).

The concept of agency associated with tattooing is significant in representing what many women ascribe to their motivations for acquiring tattoos. Indeed, many women in their interviews regarding their tattoos, state that they wished to “claim back the body” (Botz-Bornstein, 237), from normative gender codes and social regulations. Botz-Bornstein contests that “tattoos reclaim a feminist, but also a more erotic space in a world where sexuality is rationalized and commercialized” (241), which is represented in media images of women that are highly sexualized and perpetuate “hegemonic feminine norms” (Neville, 43). With respect to the looked-at social nature of women’s bodies, according to Hebdige, “expression of subculture spectacularity is a form of ‘hiding in the light’...a way of coping with the gaze that seeks to control the body by turning the experience of being looked at into an aggressive act” (Hebdige; Neville, 49). In this way, tattooing may act as a form of “political protest” (Atkinson, 232), and can reveal, like other body projects, “the ways women’s bodies are sexualized, objectified, regulated and monitored in accordance with established cultural constructions” (ibid). In line with Atkinson’s assertion, Botz-Bornstein states that “women who choose to get tattoos do not reject the male gaze...but they refuse to receive an erotic mark from the hands of male fantasy” (240). Likewise, Pitts argues that “marking and transforming the body can symbolically ‘reclaim’ the body from its victimization and objectification in patriarchal culture” (49), and she further stresses, “practices that seem to reject beauty ideals can be perceived as instances of women’s assertion of agency in relation to their bodies” (54). The agency to mark, transform or otherwise alter the body is convincingly argued as a feminist act, and in regards to tattooing, the act of adorning the body is contended as an act of personal power, more than those that are inflicted out of psychological or physical imbalance.

The power of subversion through non-normative body projects, and the concept of choice in regards to wilfully rejecting dominant cultural norms through tattooing can be compared to bell hooks’ writings on “Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness” (Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics, 1990). Hooks states that, “those of us who would participate in the formation of counter-hegemonic cultural practice” (145), mark their location in the margins as “spaces of radical openness” (148). The connection to this marginality is seen in Victoria Pitts’ discussion that in the “liminal state of embodiment that [body modification practices] promote, boundaries are erased and redrawn” (72), which places the “individual in a position of marginality” (ibid). Although what hooks discusses is based on racialized marginality, and the societal “Othering” that occurs for African Americans and other People of Colour, she emphasizes that it is the choice of non-conformity or assimilation that is pivotal to understanding marginality and deconstructing the social

hierarchy. She calls the margins “a central location for the production of a counter-hegemonic discourse” (149). Likewise, the “Othering” of body modification communities which remain outside the hegemonic centre, share a common capacity for “radical openness” (hooks, 148), as Pitts states, “liminality can denaturalize gender categories” (73), and may act as “expressions of agency that potentially work against relations of power that oppress women” (50). This reiterates what Atkinson claims is a primary reason for some women choosing tattoos. He states, “non-normative body projects such as tattoos are increasingly adopted by North American women precisely because radically marked bodies tend to subvert hegemonic ideologies about femininity” (220). Significantly, Hooks’ argument on the choice of marginality speaks to a deeper theoretical and cultural framework of racism and colonization that is not comparable to the agency associated with tattooing practices. It should be noted that there are incomparable differences between these two sites of marginality; racial identity and tattooing are not synonymous as cultural categories. Hooks’ theories shed light on the importance of recognizing the potential power in counter-culture, and for the ability of “marginal bodies” to destabilize what medical sociologist Kathy Davis calls “many of our preconceived notions about beauty, identity and the female body” (Pitts, 73).

As posited by many postmodern feminist theories, tattoos provide a counter-cultural outlet that subverts and dismantles hegemonic social constructs of femininity and beauty. They also reveal some of the constraints put on female bodies. Although there remains a dichotomy within some feminist discourse on tattoos, Victoria Pitts explains that, “feminist disagreements over body modification reflect divergent assumptions about subjectivity, consciousness and the body.” (72). This is significant to consider when conducting research on women and tattoos, and to acknowledge that the contested issues within feminism surrounding body modification are intrinsically connected and embedded in cultural and political discourses. Bodies are culturally and socially constructed, and women’s bodies in particular are regulated and prescribed into definitive categories of aesthetic and behavioural acceptability. Botz-Bornstein states, quoting scholar Margo Demello, that the “postmodern female tattoo does not establish identities, but destroys conventional female identities such as ‘neatness, diligence, appliance, femininity and passivity’” (241). Supported by Pitts, who states that “bodies are socially controlled and regulated...and marked by relations of power” (72), reaffirms the agency of subverting systems of power that postmodern feminist discourse supports, and that is illustrated through the practice of women’s tattoos. Current postmodern feminist research reaffirms the possibility for political and social empowerment through tattooing. While current beauty standards continue to impose a hegemonic normativity, there is a capacity for women to subvert the cultural discourses that regulate and enforce power against their appearance and behaviour through individualized tattooing practices.

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Giroux's Biopolitics of Disposability: Colorblindness, Confinement of the Black Body, State Preservation and Unveiling the Racial Divide in The United States

Keepa Karmacharya

"Atticus--" said Jemm bleakly.

He turned in the doorway. "What, son?"

"How could they do it? How could they?"

"I don't know, but they did it. They've done it before and they did it tonight and they'll do it again and when they do it seems that only children weep.

- To Kill a Mockingbird

We claim that we study history, analyze it, research it and record it in order to ensure that history does not repeat itself; moments of war, death and desperation, never to be forgotten and forever engrained in our memories. However, the lifeless black body on display, like that of young Emmett Till, is a recurring sight in the contemporary world. As the flow of information, knowledge, people and goods through the world reaches unprecedented speeds, the newspapers, television and World Wide Web are plastered with images like this every day, the most recent media spectacle being the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. His case was not so different from that of Emmett Till, as his body lay on the streets for the world to see, covered in bullet wounds, his blood spilled across the street. The events that unfolded in Ferguson unveiled racial inequalities that had, for so long, been repressed and invisible. Comparably, in "Stormy Weather: Katrina and the politics of disposability," Giroux argues that the events that transpired in the aftermaths of Hurricane Katrina spectacularly lifted the veil on social and racial disparities that would normally be hidden from view. The purpose of this essay is to examine what ideologies, philosophies, and institutions were working to perpetuate the rise of the United States as a racial state, and the development of what Giroux has termed the 'biopolitics of disposability.' This essay is divided into three sections, first this essay will discuss the ways in which Mills' "Racial Liberalism" provides a historical framework, illustrating how liberalism has become a dominant ideology and how it has had the power to obscure racial inequalities, which only become exposed during events like Hurricane Katrina and Ferguson. Mills' understanding of liberalism also provides historical context for how the convergence of politics and life have occurred using race as the primary instrument for distinguishing between useful and "disposable" bodies in society. Second, using Wacquant's article "From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the 'race question' in the US," this essay will discuss the ways in which the United States can be classified as a racial state in which the rise of neoliberal ideals and capitalist principles have allowed for the confinement, control and commodification of African-Americans. This essay will also discuss how the biopolitics of disposability could be considered a fifth era in Wacquants series of institutions that have attempted to regulate and control African American life. Finally, using arguments proposed by Denise Ferrerira da Silva in her article "No Bodies: Law, Raciality, and Violence," This essay will briefly discuss the ways in which the disposability and violence against colored citizens of the state are largely an attempt for the state to preserve its own sovereignty which allows for complex interactions between law, violence and space.

Colorblind

This part of the essay is dedicated to fully understanding what ideologies and philosophies are at work which, to this very day, have tried to conceal the true tribulations of racial difference. Numerous scholars have argued that we have recently seen a move into what is called a “post-racial” era. A moment in time where we have reached such progress, modernity and development that racism is no longer a pressing issue. This notion is unrealistic and impractical and Giroux would undoubtedly agree as he argues that race, class and poverty still very much matter. However, Giroux believes that there has been a fundamental change in the way we think about race. The convergence of life and politics, has shifted the understanding that human beings should be able to expect a basic level of protection from the state. Giroux argues that since the Reagan movement in the 1980’s, images that made the violence, war, and poverty and racism visible in the United States were veiled. While I largely agree that Reagan’s Republican movement played an important part in the development of the biopolitics of disposability, I believe another factor was at play. Therefore, I would like to discuss Mills’ understandings of “colorblindness” and the racialized social contract; unpacking the ways in which racial liberalism played a part in the development of disposability and the maintenance of a systemic racial hierarchy.

Liberalism is the ideology which forms the base of American society and is the prevailing political outlook of this modern age. According to Mills, liberalism is largely linked to race, he claims that liberalism is a “white liberalism in which inferior treatment of people of color is not at all incongruent with racialized liberal norms.” Mills believes that the seeds of racial inequality can be found planted within the ‘racialized social contract, a philosophical abstraction which ultimately dictates who is included (whites) and excluded (minorities) in the social contract. This understanding of the racial contract has been carried on by the “whiteness of political philosophy.” However, the greatest issue here was not only that the majority of philosophers were European who based their theories on their own experiences, the problem is the way these ideas have been constructed over the years within philosophy and contemporary politics, which has allowed for the marginalization of minorities which has continued on into the 21st century.

Giroux states that the bodies of Katrina victims could not speak with the same directness to the state of American racist violence, but the bodies did expose and shatter the illusion of living in a color blind society. According to Mills this “colorblindness” refers to: “the political history of the West that has been sanitized and reconstructed as if white racial domination and the oppression of people of color has not been central to that history.” I think what both Giroux and Mills are suggesting is that this “colorblindness” has allowed for the racial nature of liberalism to establish itself through racial avoidance of injustices that do not negatively affect whites. This colorblindness tends to distort reality by presupposing the fact that race does not matter, and that by making race salient we are, in turn, preserving a “racist” discourse, which is unwelcome in the so called “post-racial” world in which we live. Mills believes that we need to use the metaphor of the “dominant contract”, which seeks to: “expose the realities of domination and social hierarchy to unravel that through European expansionism, colonialism, white settlement, slavery, and apartheid: intra-white agreement shapes the modern world and that whites contract to regard one another as moral equals who are superior to non-whites and who create government, legal systems and economic structures that privilege them at the expense of people of color.” Giroux has taken this understanding of the dominant contract and has transformed it into an understanding of how the American government, particularly Reagan’s deconstruction of the welfare state, has

successfully created a system which has shattered any possibility for the upward social mobility of African Americans and has boosted neoliberal and capitalist aims through privatization, deregulation, downsizing and taxation.

Mills' discussion of racial liberalism and the whiteness of the social contract provides historical evidence for how America's social construction of racial identities, privileged the white majority as the superior race and functioned to subordinate and exploit non-white, non-contractors for white benefit. The power of the liberal moment is the constant decontextualization and ahistorical approach to making sense of our realities. It entirely divorces the historical production of ideologies of racism from the current moment and it invents new terms like "post-racial" to exemplify the erasure of the past. Since it's very beginning the United States has been shaped, scarred and defined by race and violence. I strongly agree that the rethinking, eradication and deracializing of liberalism should be a priority for us all, as it has perpetuated understandings of white superiority and black criminality, savagery and uselessness, which according to Giroux, is now punishable by social exclusion and government regulation of life, in other words, death.

Confinement, Control and Commodification

By recognizing Mills' understanding of racial liberalism and his notion of colorblindness we have begun to unpack how such serious racial issues are hidden by a "post-racial" outlook on the world. To further our understanding of how the biopolitics of disposability came to exist, it is important to first understand how the United States became the racial state that it is today. This section of the essay will draw upon Wacquants article and discuss the ways in which the United States can be classified as a "racial state," in part, because historically it has repeatedly sanctioned institutions that have successfully operated to "define, confine and control African Americans." Wacquant believes that this succession of institutions in the United States is divided up into 4 periods: chattel slavery, the Jim Crow regime, the ghetto and finally the period we are in today the "remnants of the dark ghetto and the carceral apparatus." Wacquant claims that these four institutions are all instruments for the conjoint extraction of labour and social ostracization of an "outcast group". I will begin by outlining Wacquants eras of the institutionalization of black exploitation, then move on to discuss how the biopolitics of disposability could be considered a fifth period in Wacquant's series of institutions which have worked to regulate and control African Americans.

The first era which Wacquant defines is 'chattel slavery,' which he claims is "the plantation economy and inceptive matrix of racial division from the colonial era to the civil war." The unfortunate and unanticipated consequence of the methodical enslavement and dehumanization of Africans and their descendants in the United States was the creation of the racial caste line dividing what would become categorized as blacks and whites. According to Wacquant the conception of race that America has invented is a direct outcome of the momentous collision between slavery and democracy as modes of organization of social life after slavery had been established as the major form of labour and control in a pre-capitalist system of production. This era illustrates the true foundations of the racial divisions, it is certainly arguable that racial marginalization can be traced back further in history during European rule, however Wacquant chose slavery as the birth and construction of racial segregation specifically between black and white.

The next era was the Jim Crow regime which consisted of a collective of social and legal codes that established segregation of the races and constrained the life chances of African-American while binding them

to whites in a relation of submission backed by legal coercion and terroristic violence. African Americans had finally experienced emancipation; however, the continued white ownership of the land and the plantation system remained virtually untouched as former slaves became “dependent, propertyless peasantry, nominally free, but ensnared by poverty, ignorance, and the new servitude of tenantry.” Wacquant’s understanding of the Jim Crow era demonstrates how African Americans became dependent citizens and substantiates Giroux’s argument that Reagan’s push to deconstruct the welfare state further marginalized African Americans. The Jim Crow era also demonstrates how African Americans were commodified, deemed by the logic of modernization, neoliberalism and militarization as a category of ‘waste’ who were rendered redundant in the new global economy, incapable of making a living or consuming goods.

Finally Wacquant describes the rise of the ghetto, which he defines as “the conjoint urbanization and proletarianization of African-Americans from the Great Migration of 1914-30’s to the 1960’s.” As immigrants from the South flocked to the northern metropolis, they quickly discovered another system of racial confinement as they were forced to congregate to the ‘ghetto’ which quickly became congested and overrun by crime and disease. As African Americans entered the Fordist industrial economy, they contributed a vital source of abundant and cheap labour, but they remained part of an ever-growing army of impoverished and disenfranchised peoples. African Americans were unable to escape these positions of structural economic marginality, and the ghetto quickly became the third era which succeeded in exploiting black labour, while keeping black bodies away from the material benefits of white society. Locking up the relationship in one of structural subordination and dependency, the ghetto operates as an ethno-racial prison. It inhibits the life chances of its members in support of the “monopolization of ideal and material goods of opportunities” by the dominant status group dwelling on its outskirts. Hence, African Americans remained excluded from long-term goals, and according to Giroux, it is these populations that have been rendered redundant and disposable in the age of neoliberalism and global capitalism.

Wacquant believes that all three institutions: Slavery, Jim Crow and the ghetto are 'race making' institutions and are linked to the mass imprisonment of African Americans (the era we are currently in). Wacquant claims that African Americans are destined by their lack of marketable cultural capital, and most deprived among them resist by escaping into the illegal street economy. This understanding parallels Giroux’s understanding of “disposability” he claims that the limited capabilities to be productive and inability to be good consumers have made certain people “disposable,” blamed for their own death or not being able to fend for themselves. This new form of biopolitics includes state sanctioned violence but also relegates entire populations to spaces of invisibility and disposability. Therefore, the biopolitics of disposability could possibly be considered the next era of racial exploitation, following the carceral apparatus which Wacquant claims is the era we are currently in. The carceral apparatus continually revives and solidifies the association of blackness within criminality and devious violence. It could be argued that neoliberalism, privatization and militarism coupled with “market fundamentalism and contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of capital accumulation” has replaced Wacquant’s era of the “carceral apparatus”. Giroux claims that the events surrounding Katrina have shown that state actions are the consequences of a systemic, violent form of social engineering in which those populations in the United States marginalized by race and class are now considered disposable, in other words, collateral damage in the construction of a neoliberal order. Therefore, it can be assumed that the carceral apparatus has come to an end, and we are beginning to witness an institutionalized

regulation of life by the racial state through the biopolitics of disposability.

Racality and the Preservation of the Nation-State

In this last section of the essay Denise Ferrerira da Silva's article will be used to discuss the ways in which the disposability and violence against citizens of the state are largely an attempt for the state to preserve its own sovereignty. Silva argues that racality has justified the state's decision to kill certain persons in the name of self-preservation. In relation to this argument, it is undeniable that in the aftermaths of Katrina, government institutions at all levels independently and collectively failed the citizens of New Orleans. The government did not fulfill its fundamental responsibility to protect its citizens, and as illustrated in Wacquants article, its failure to protect was systemic, pervasive and long-standing. The failure to respond to Katrina exposed the government's indifference to human life and dignity, as African Americans facing the aftermath of an extraordinary natural disaster were blamed for their own death by not being able sustain themselves, thereby disrupting the trust and confidence in government that is the foundation of strong democratic institutions.

Silva uses the state military police's and Brazilian Army's occupations in the city of Rio de Janeiro's predominantly black/brown economically dispossessed neighbourhoods (known as 'favelas') as a demonstration of how racality exposes the violent face of the state through its ability to collapse justice in order to rationalize self-regulation. Silva believes that states possess juridical-political power, which justifies the right to protect and punish their subjects, but it also has the obligation to preserve itself. Silva's analysis of the 'favela's' map the grounds for the state's claims for the legitimacy of violence within those spaces and exposes how racality refigures the workings of disciplinary power and juridical-political power, thereby making claims for and recognition of civil and human rights irrelevant. Silva claims, that certain human beings' civil and human rights are stripped in the name of the state's decision to deploy its self-preserving forces in the territories it is supposed to protect. This draws a parallel to Giroux's understanding of 'disposability,' because in the United States it has become easier for the government to disregard to sanctity of life, rather than spend the time, money and effort to assist citizens in need. As Giroux states "the life unfit for life, unworthy of being lived is no longer marginal to sovereign power but is now central to its form of governance."

According to Silva the justification for the deployment of forces of self-preservation already exists, which represents black economically dispossessed urban regions, like Rio's favelas or the Ninth Ward of New Orleans, as political regions without law. Because they are always already constructed as indigenous zones of violence, the state must show its self-preserving face. In territories that are claimed to already be the home to violence and unlawful behaviour, the state's right to kill is always already legitimate. Furthermore the dehumanization, stripping of moral and legal protection produces "bare life: the naked body before which sovereignty appears as naked violence." In conclusion, Silva argues that the state intervenes not to protect its citizens but to preserve itself, to reassert its exclusive right to deploy death in these territories. This creates a complicated interaction between law, violence and politics and it precisely validates Giroux's claim that modern politics reveals how a modern government stages itself by dealing directly in the power over life: the power to exclude, to enforce, to strip human existence of civic rights and social value, all in the name of state preservation and sovereignty.

Conclusion

In “Leviathan,” Hobbes contemplates the formation of a commonwealth, an administration signifying government by the common consent of the people in the name of peace and security. In return for relinquishing some liberties and freedoms, we successfully escape the dreadful “state of nature,” and are warranted security and satisfaction. Applying this philosophical abstraction to the United States today, the key question which arises is: are human beings under the power and control of such governing bodies truly receiving the security in which they were warranted? This essay has proven the answer to this question is: no. Certainly issues of race roots itself in many different ideologies, philosophies, and institutions, but the three which have been identified and examined in this essay have all played a significant part in preserving the title of racial state in the United States. Additionally, they have allowed for the proliferation of the biopolitics of disposability.

First, by analyzing Mills understanding of liberalism as ‘racial liberalism’ we began to recognize how major issues relating to race were silenced by the whiteness of philosophy and colorblindness which endorses white superiority and white benefit at the hands of colored groups. Second, by outlining Wacquant’s four periods of racial confinement and control, we begin to understand the transformation of the United States into racial state and how slavery is linked to the ‘dependency’ and ‘inadequacy’ of African Americans which substantiates over and over again that black life is expendable. By examining Wacquant’s argument we also saw how perhaps Giroux’s ‘biopolitics of disposability’ is the next era of governmental control over African American bodies following the ‘carceral apparatus’ which is the era we are currently experiencing. Finally, by analysing Silva’s argument about raciality and state preservation, we found that the state intervenes not to protect its citizens but to preserve itself, and to reassert its exclusive right to deploy death in particular territories. In doing so, the nation-state is able to surpass legality and render claims for and recognition of civil and human rights irrelevant. Events like Hurricane Katrina call into action that something must be changed, and that the world we live in is so clearly unjust. To conclude, I would like to comment on the quote which is on the cover of this essay. This segment in the book “To Kill a Mockingbird,” perfectly captures the essence of what has happened in the past, what is occurring in our present and what, unfortunately, will most likely happen in the future which is the intolerance and disregard for the death of black bodies. Events like Katrina and Ferguson have unleashed sparks of outrage that have been building up throughout history and it is these collisions of race, violence and politics that has fueled the fire for African Americans to demand the equalities that have continually been taken away from them. We claim that we study history, analyze it, research it and record it in order to ensure that history does not repeat itself, and I sincerely hope that history is done repeating itself.

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Baked Beans, an Architectural Construct, and a Crow

Chermaine Tay

I once worked at a pizza shop. We had to shout—Pizza up!—followed by the number of minutes it would take. It was always numbers, precise, two, three, four. To count more than needed was blasphemous, we ran the risk of a customer rampaging out. I learnt that mouths should never stop trying to entertain, to downplay the importance of time, and how to lie extravagantly and effortlessly in the glare of a face which wanted something from me.

It was the last of these virtues that explained my mother's shock when I told her I was a lesbian. "Please," she said, "don't be one."

"Please," she repeated, as if good manners would make me more responsible for her feelings (and infinitely more obedient). "Don't be a lesbian. I can't lose you. Don't be one for me."

Cajoling. "I'll be a better mother. I'll lay off the belt and less of the beer."

Then she became sorrowful and repentant and wondered where she went wrong in bringing up a selfish ingrate with no sense but to be a dyke.

I wanted to tell her that I found no architectural delight in impersonating a drainage construction. But her mouth was running away from her like her tears, for I was a senseless dyke who could know no better but to break her mother's heart (sexing girls was implied). So we sat there, and I wondered if I could get her teardrops to return to her eyes, I would be held less guilty. But she sat and sat and—"Ma, do you have anything else to say to me?"—stared.

I had nothing to say. Neither did she. However, I have to admit in hindsight that when I was younger and she predicted I would live a half-baked existence, I wasn't expecting her to shower me with a saucer of baked beans. But that had always been my mother's motto: When in doubt, blame someone else. Not that the apple fell far from the tree. My own personal favourite was: Adopt a policy of non-recognition for all problems. Both were highly inapplicable under present circumstances. But whatever else could be said for us Tays, we persevered in the face of tremendous odds.

Both of us were dripping on the diner linoleum but for different reasons. Hers were tears, mine was blood red sauce. I saw the wait staff darting stricken glances like ruffled hens. Clearly they were ill-trained to handle projectile-launchable weaponry in the form of lethal baked beans. Having served said beans, they looked terrified to be next on the hit-list. I contemplated explanation. It was after all just the discovery of a daughter's unmarriageability coupled with an overwhelming attack of nerves à la *Pride and Prejudice*. Better to reach for the baked beans than the knife after all.

I got up, a walking tableau of *phaseolus vulgaris* (I was tempted to point out the Latin appropriateness, but decided even lesbianism could not excuse a lack of tact). I went to Rosa's instead.

It was one of the lovely things about Rosa. Her "I love you, dear"s were frequently rushed but never judgmental. She was just a little too focused on the man in the grim reaper's coat. He would enter the house at seven with a newspaper and vignettes of a life outside that Rosa would have known if only she had opened the window. The weather, for instance, or whether my mother across the street had pruned her roses. It was as if Rosa was housebound instead of a housewife. It was easy to confuse the two, so she did. But she used the reason "at least he doesn't hit me" as a baseline benchmark. It gave all his actions an idyllic glow which suited both of them very well. It was the same reason why so many women stayed married in the 80's. Rosa simply

never learnt better or that times had changed. So she stayed married, while her other friends waltzed their way into divorce and new haircuts.

The wives on our street could be divided into two camps: the ones who bossed their husbands and the ones who got bossed. The former, out of pity, never spoke to the latter, but not vice versa. Being extremely principled, my mother took all such ordinances very seriously, and thus never spoke to Rosa. In consequence, Rosa and I got along extremely well for she was never catechised about my faults.

Rosa was out. I sat on her steps and cried steadily for half an hour. Then I got to my feet. My life seemed devoid of happiness but my buttocks still hurt from excessive squatting. There was also the worrying possibility of my mother being resuscitated by a kindly waiter from her post-traumatic state of shellshock. After all, we might meet on the street. I found a bench two streets over instead.

The only thing I learnt from an English undergraduate degree was the art of indecent personification. I would often practice my black arts on hapless passing animals. This time, it was a crow. Its black feathers were stretched elastically over the stout little body. I watched the pouched flabby skin quiver as it opened and shut its beak.

Caw, went my mother.

“Why did you tell me?” The frowsy crown of her head dipped in agitation.

I shrugged. It was a particularly bad habit I had long observed about myself. Most times, I would be so overwhelmed with the urge to spit out a secret, it didn’t matter who I was talking to. I would find me emptying myself out, lies exposed, secrets revealed, to the inquisitive surprise of a non-friend. Not that they minded. People, I found, were always quite happy to snatch at what was not theirs. Especially when it came to secrets: unregulated property and easily distributed behind my back. Perhaps my mother, like that time she caught me pilfering sweets from the grocery store, had simply been at the wrong place at the wrong time.

I tried to breathe, but it emerged as a moist snuffle.

“Do you have a—“ She fluffed her shoulders and rummaged for a suitable word. “—lover—you—?”

“No.” I didn’t like people thinking the world of me. I was no Atlas lifting the sky and if forced to do so under duress or direct distress, I tended to let the darlings fall and watch as they shattered. It made for poor relationship etiquette.

My monosyllabic answers were clearly deemed unsatisfactory. She took a few disgruntled hops away. “You’re only 19,” she cawed. “You don’t know better.”

No, I thought. I do. Imagine a hormonal boy—except this time it’s a girl actually, masturbating frenzically in the bright square-edged lot of her room. The skinny fingers pumping hard before the body expires, languorous in release, unfurling that thick nub of desire. Now think about the same hormonal throb of lust, except this time it is in the proximity of another girl. Smooth elbows touching, one unaware of the frisson of another’s awareness. The quick flicker of thought, and the instinctive tamping down of lust, misguided.

“What do you want?” she asked, beady eyes curious. “What did you want, when you told me about it?”

I paused. I wanted—I wanted to rid myself of a shame that hovered like midget purse dogs I tripped over sometimes, underfoot. I wanted to believe I could find a girl with the audacity to remain unclothed the morning after, even without the fuss of debauchery. I wanted to know that once I found her, I could tell my mother about it.

I'm sorry, I thought. I'm sorry. Knowing I have a right to my happiness made me believe I could get away with it.

"You don't know better you don't know better you don't know better—"

My penitence evaporated. "Don't expect me to come back." I called after her.

"You have to," she tilted her head appraisingly. "You're halfway through your degree. Not to mention, broke and perpetually starving."

"Go away, you—" I flung a loose stone at her.

"Not that I'll make it any easier for you to stay." I tasted blood. For a feverish second, I thought she had slapped me before I realized I had bitten the inside of my cheek.

I did so many odd things, I occasionally wondered whether I should have majored in the absurd with a minor in ridiculousness. But cuddling myself to sleep on the bench, I was suddenly unnerved by the thought that there could be someone behind me. It was highly improbable, but I was overwhelmed by the possibility that an unknown hand would reach out and touch me, the small of my back that faced the pavement. And if he or she did, I knew in that moment, I would awaken without a start and follow him. Quite unquestioningly and unresistingly. I would follow him wherever he chose to lead me.

It made me shudder. Not because of the potentiality of an unknown touch, but by the knowledge of how much power this stranger's hand would possess over me, a thin husk of blood-encased skin, a sack of uncongealed blood and bone huddling.

Touch me, I thought with terror. Touch me now, damn you, and I would follow you to the ends of the earth.

I blinked. That wasn't my imagination. I did feel someone, cold fingers extended and travelling across my back. I sat up and saw fingers dirt-inked. He was a dirty little man, the feeble grimace and the half-shrug.

"You fucking asswipe." His face looked stretched vertically, the skin wrinkled and crumbly. An amiable foolish half-grin.

"You fucking asswipe," I repeated. But the words seemed to come from a place far away, the meaning evaporated, leaving only the dry husks of vowels squishing together. I could taste the ugliness of the sounds but not the frenzied excitement, the fury that had been contained. The silence was thick, possessing a certain stolidity. I felt the useless weight of my tongue and wanted to cry; the way tiny children woke up after a nightmare and wanted the starchy familiarity of their mother's arms.

I put my fist into his face because he expected me to. There was no anger. Then I went home.

Public Space and Social Conduct: How Sanitization Regimes in Vancouver and Seattle Fail to Solve Issues of Equity.

Jessica Stephens-Whale

Public space occupies an important place in the imaginaries of a city's occupants. Often it is constructed as a fully inclusive and utopic space. In these spaces, people can interact with individuals outside of family and friends as well as with people of all different social standings and economic backgrounds (Ruppert, 2013). Alternatively--and often simultaneously--it is seen as a space of danger or anarchy, lacking any social control (Mitchell, 2003). From these two diverging constructions, it becomes clear that public space is contested space. Due to its often contradictory constructions, public spaces are controlled and governed to disenfranchise one group of people's access over that of another's. When such is the case, ideal or desired citizens are granted preferred access to these spaces, resulting in urban sanitization that removes those less desirables from these spaces (England, 2008). It is through business improvement districts (BIDs) and municipal and provincial by-laws that public spaces in urban centres become governed and patrolled.

This raises the question of for whom and for what are public spaces for, and how does the way we govern these spaces in turn govern the civil liberties of certain individuals? In this paper, I will argue that public spaces are being increasingly regulated and sanitized in order to make room for neoliberal agendas. Public spaces thus become places of consumption and a city's inhabitants are encouraged to be consumers first, and political citizens second. The neoliberalization of public space works to push homeless and stigmatized groups of people out of the public eye. This marginalization, however, only pushes such individuals to find innovative and clandestine ways of living in urban environments, and further fails to directly address issues of homelessness. In this paper, I will look at two case studies in which public spaces have been sanitized, or "cleaned up," in efforts to attract foreign and local capital investment, and the effects this had on each city's homeless population. Vancouver, during the 2010 Winter Olympics uprooted its homeless population in order to appeal to tourists and foreign investors, whereas Seattle imposed Stay out of Drug Areas (SODAs) to appease BIDs and members of the public who pathologize drug use and homelessness in order to eliminate their existence in public spaces. I will conclude by discussing potential solutions, including the creation of more welcoming and open spaces that are heterogeneous and democratic in their makeup.

Constructions of Public Space

There are many forms and definitions of public space; however, this paper focuses on the discussion of public space in the context of urban environments. This is due to the more visible forms of homelessness present in these spaces, and is not to say that homelessness and contest over public spaces does not occur in rural places, only that forms of invisible homelessness tend to be most pervasive in these areas. Additionally, when discussing homelessness in urban areas, a gender bias exists where women tend to be less visible (May, 2006). Due to the limitations of this paper, only visible forms of homelessness will be discussed, but with adequate resources, a more gender nuanced lens could be adopted to bring to light the issues and experiences women face in public spaces. This analysis is further limited in offering an Indigenous perspective when it comes to contest over public spaces that take place on unceded, and or traditional/ancestral territories of First Nations and Native Americans in Canada and the United States. Public spaces are places of both historical and present appropriation by white settlers, and the absence of such a critique in this paper is a flaw that could be rectified with again additional time and resources. For the context of this paper, public space is defined as a space that is open and accessible to the general public and does not include privately owned or operated public spaces such as malls and shops, or public private partnerships, such as community centres. Therefore, I will be

exploring public space in the form of streets, sidewalks, plazas and park areas.

In the discourse of public space there exists a diversity of opinions on the role it plays in a person's everyday experience. In terms of human rights, some deem it as a place of political expression, a gathering place where people can interact with others outside of the private sphere of family and friends, and for many, it is the simple right to be a visible presence of difference (Ruppert, 2013). Under this perspective, a public space is a space of equity that is heterogeneous in its makeup. This however, is rarely the case, as certain groups of people within society will inherently compete for its use, pushing others out. With this in mind, one must realize that public space is both political and contested.

As a result of its anarchist constructions, despotic perceptions posit public space to be an unsafe environment where acts of crime and deviance are rampant (Ruppert, 2013). It is this dystopic perception that lead to policies that grant preferred access to particular individuals. Usually the policies enacted are driven by BIDs, foreign investors, and affluent buyers, leading to the sanitization and gentrification of lower income communities. Public spaces then become more associated with spaces of consumption rather than spaces of political action. As public space becomes commodified, new activities and behaviors requiring a certain level of affluence are imposed on public bodies inhabiting these spaces. As a result, access for marginalized groups of people is stripped. From this, one can gather that public spaces can be molded to exclude certain groups of people by imposing certain behaviours and activities on bodies. However, the regulations imposed never mean to “overtly exclude any particular group; rather they [seek] to regulate, guide, and shape conduct” in a public space (Ibid.). Imposed conduct, by extension determines who has access to public spaces.

Constructions of Public and Citizenship

The above analysis raises the question of who is the public of public space: public space is the tangible construction of the public. Without public spaces to define the public, a cities inhabitants would only exist in the abstract (May, 2006). When public spaces are controlled and limited by codes of conduct, the “public” is thus constructed. Public then is synonymous with citizenship, and although one may be a *political* citizen, that does not make one a public citizen (England, 2008). In other words, there exist multiple forms of citizenship in society, and public citizenship is granted according to a person's ability to perform the prescribed norms (Ibid.). Such norms may be performed through a person's actions, appearance, behaviour, and/or health. Those who cannot perform the prescribed conduct are constructed as outsiders or deviants, leading to their denied citizenship. When these individuals are constructed as outsiders of public citizenship, policy makers and urban planners can then exclude them from public spaces and cater these spaces to neoliberal agendas. For example, homeless individuals fail to fit the narrow description that would allow them access to these ‘sanitized’ public spaces. This is due to their need to perform activities that public citizens would consider to belong to the private sphere in public spaces. Some of these activities include relieving themselves, sleeping, and using/consuming substances. Additionally, homeless persons' inability to perform expected activities, such as wearing clean, intact looking clothing, washing, hair brushing, tooth brushing etc. and their lifestyles which leave them in a constant state of mobility, places them outside of the prescribed normal functions of public citizens. Public citizens, after all, must embody a purpose to leave their homes, meaning they are never found loitering. Due to the nature of existing solely within the public sphere, and for lack of any private sphere to resort to, homeless individuals face a constant risk of humiliation, public scrutiny, and even arrest (May, 2003).

The Coding and Enforcement of Public Bodies

The rise of neoliberalization has the effect of turning public spaces into sites of consumption. Businesses and the affluent impose regulating mechanisms of social conduct that come in the forms of

municipal by-laws, BIDs, public safety acts, and sanitization regimes. Sanitization regimes, often enforced by public health agencies, grant permission for public spaces to be purged of social deviants who have been constructed as threats to the health and safety of public citizens (May, 2006). Vagrancy laws, such as British Columbia's Safe Streets Act, and Seattle's SODAs, impose the view that a city's 'real' or public citizens are its more affluent (Lorenson and Collins, 2006). Moreover, laws such as these additionally work to relieve the state of providing services to these groups of people, who then must seek assistance from non-governmental organizations and other private spheres. City planners are concerned about how the presence of low income, and homeless individuals and their activities works to interrupt commercial activities now taking place in these spaces. When faced with the presence of impoverished and/or marginalized individuals, public citizens may experience discomfort. This discomfort leads to avoidance, resulting in an interruption in market functioning. Homeless bodies symbolize the more dystopic interpretations of public space as a space of potential disorder and social misconduct. Sanitizing these spaces, however, only creates an illusion of cleanliness. In many studies, such as the ones explored in this paper (Ruppert, 2013), banishing marginalized individuals from public spaces does not actually solve the problem of homelessness. Homeless individuals are instead found either to move to other less patrolled spaces, or find clandestine ways of existing in these public spaces, and performing the necessary private sphere activities. An example of this exists in Mitchell Duneier's book *Sidewalk* (1999), which describes some of the experiences of homeless black men on New York's Sixth Avenue. Men, when needing to relieve themselves, carried around a disposable coffee cup that they would urinate into while pretending to hail a cab. For these men, this was the only way they were able to relieve themselves as public washrooms did not exist in the area, except for in private establishments which homeless men were frequently turned away from. It is clear that public space sanitization is a mechanism by which the systematized marginalization of urban homeless people is implemented. What does this mean when it comes to human rights to public space? As the philosophy scholar Jeremy Waldron described, "no one is free to perform an action unless there is somewhere he [or she] is free to perform it" (Waldron, 1991). Considering this, if public spaces become so sanitized that individuals cannot perform certain tasks, let alone exist as a presence of difference and heterogeneity, is not the very act of sanitizing spaces inherently unconstitutional?

Vancouver and the 2010 Olympic Winter Games

Before the commencement of the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games, Vancouver underwent a major transformation and revitalization in order to prepare for being a world spectacle. A part of this transformation was sanitizing its downtown eastside (DTES) core, which is the site of Canada's infamous poorest postal code (Kennelly and Watt, 2011). Leading up to the Olympics, Kennelly and Watt (2011) explored the experiences of homeless youth in the DTES, finding that many were forcefully dislocated from the spaces they inhabited to make room for tourists. The provincial government mobilized three months before the event, and passed the Assistance to Shelter Act (ASA) that allowed police to force DTES residents to move into shelters (Kennelly and Watt, 2011). This was done mostly by police sweeps. Additionally, in preparation for the event, a London Drugs, new condominiums, and a false wall were constructed to hide the homeless shelter. As a result of the ASA and police sweeps, one interviewee described areas that were previously bustling with activity to be completely emptied. All were attempts to cleanse the neighbourhood of its undesired population, in order to bring about the appearance of a safe, clean, and united Vancouver.

The effects of this emptying might have only seemed temporary, but the construction of condominiums and a London Drugs symbolize a greater force of gentrification that threatens the very existence of public spaces like the DTES. Expo '86 is a past example illustrating the dangers brought by sanitization regimes to lower income areas. During this time, single room occupancies (SROs) and other low income housing in Vancouver's

Gastown were replaced with higher income housing and hotel establishments. This was done in order to capitalize on incoming tourists and burgeoning middle and upper class markets. These changes however had the effect of eliminating 2,000 low income units and displacing an extremely vulnerable and marginalized population (Smith, 2002). Once the presence of more affluent communities appear in low income areas, pressures are exerted on municipal governments to cater to their specific needs. Today, Gastown has been transformed from a part of the DTES to its own protected historic site inhabited by Vancouver's elite (Smith, 2002).

Seattle's Stay out of Drug Areas

Where cities like Vancouver have used gentrification as a means to displace its homeless population, Seattle has adopted an entirely different strategy. Beginning in the 1980s, Seattle began initiatives to cleanse its streets of its homeless population through regulations and laws that took the form of "stay out of drug areas" (SODAs). SODAs are designated zones that have been identified as sites where the use and selling of drugs would have negative impacts on surrounding communities (England, 2008). SODA zones experience an increase in surveillance and police presence; thus, individuals who have been convicted for drug using or peddling have restricted access to these areas, facing arrest and/or charges if found occupying or travelling through them (England, 2008). Although SODA has been successful in 'cleaning' these areas, it has failed to actually solve issues around homelessness and drug use. Instead, it is found that when an area becomes redlined, illegal and non-condoned behaviours are simply adopted in new areas (England, 2008). Additionally, the policy's focus on punishment rather than treatment left negative impacts on this vulnerable population. The war on drugs in Seattle has actually resulted in the increased stigmatization of drug use, and, by extension, homeless people, leading to decreased access and availability of social services and an increase in the rate of infection of HIV/AIDS (England, 2008). Many social services remained located in SODAs, leaving individuals trying to access these services at risk of arrest. What these zones are really doing, then, is determining what public bodies belong in public spaces. The zones work to construct homeless and drug users as abject bodies whose presence in public spaces leads to dysfunctional and pathologized landscapes that are unsafe and unclean. Through sanitization regimes like SODA, public spaces become less democratic and increasingly commodified, as they become constructed to appeal to a desired public (Ruppert, 2013).

Resistance to Neoliberalization and the Appropriation of Public Spaces

Some geographers have expressed that creating a truly open and all-accessible public space is impossible (Mitchell, 2003). Inevitably, certain groups of people will be excluded as we see when spaces are sanitized, or when spaces are left unsanitized. What is important, however, is to create spaces where people are free to roam and exist in as much difference as is possibly attainable, to access the services they need, and to provide places where they can perform the activities that they need to perform. Pushing individuals out by prescribing certain activities and behaviors to a space will only lead to vulnerable populations' exclusion or infiltration elsewhere. Unequal favoring of one group's needs over that of another is currently observed in urban environments, where pressures to adapt to neoliberal policies runs high. Public spaces that attempt to be democratic, responsive, and meaningful will have a better chance of being inclusive (Mehta, 2013). Local governments can help by acting as public space regulators, rather than owners who perform democratic consultation with community members as to what kind of spaces they require (Ruppert, 2013). For example, public spaces should be adapted to fit a community's needs through processes that include meaningful consultation and consent. Employing solutions such as these begins to address an individual's right to the city. This concept, first introduced by Henri Lefebvre, calls for citizens to have a public space that is accessible, dynamic and changeable (Plyushteva,

2009). According to Lefebvre, this would mean that an individual may be granted a human right to live in their city and would be subsequently denied this right if the only shelter they could access existed outside or on the peripheries of their city (Ibid). Moreover, an individual would have the obligation and responsibility of influencing their city's landscape and public spaces and changes would be implemented through democratic processes that would involve all stakeholders (Ibid). This distinction made by Lefebvre points to the power held by the public and as well the homeless and disenfranchised community in influencing public spaces, suggesting that they are not just passive victims of the policy changes that urban environments and governments exert on them. Marginalized groups of people have the ability to make spaces for themselves even within spaces that are meant to be sanitized of their existence. This points to the agency individuals hold as public bodies:

City public spaces thus become an important site for the battle between top-down sanitized space and a bottom-up space for participatory expression and use. In an era in which much public space has been surrendered to private commercial interests, the homeless become both pioneers on the 'new' frontier of public space and warriors in the inevitable battles they must engage in to reconquer those spaces. (May, 2003)

Pressures from marginalized communities to insert themselves into conversations surrounding land use, and their consistent presence in areas that have been designated to exclude them, are all ways of disrupting the false depictions of public and citizenship.

Conclusion

In the pursuit of neoliberal agendas, public spaces are increasingly being transformed into places of consumption. The behaviors, and codes of conduct imposed on these spaces work to disenfranchise homeless people who fail to both participate in capitalist activities and work to impede and interrupt such modes of accumulation. As public spaces are meant to be used by the public, homeless individuals are constructed as abject bodies that exist outside of public citizenship, thus stripping them of the right to access public spaces.

Sanitization regimes, such as the ones performed in Vancouver during the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, and in Seattle's SODAs, work to pathologize homeless bodies and result in the gentrification of low income areas and the persistent marginalization of a society's most vulnerable populations. Homeless populations must constantly fight for access to public spaces, as their presence marks the failure of the state to commodify and sanitize public spaces. This struggle for representation in the public sphere is undemocratic and government efforts to incorporate homeless people into city planning will actually assist in creating healthier, safer, and more united communities.

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Returning the Gaze: An Intersectional Analysis of Black Lesbian Women in South Africa and the Phenomenon of 'Corrective Rape'

Maneo Mohale

Trigger Warning: This piece discusses sexual violence, racialized violence, and homophobia.

“We are oppressed triply by society: (1) Black-racism (2) Women-Sexism (3) Homosexual-Heterosexual Bias.”

– Elandra V. Henderson (325)

It is impossible to begin to understand the lives and oppressions of black South African women who identify as lesbian without an intersectional focus. Intersectionality as a sociological paradigm was first formally introduced in 1989 by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, whose scholarship in the topics of race, black feminist theory, civil rights, and law has positively and irrevocably influenced both scholars and social justice activists alike (Crenshaw et. al. 303). In order to understand the phenomenon of ‘corrective rape’ in South Africa, a term used “to describe the sexual violence perpetrated for the purpose of supposedly ‘curing’ a person of their real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity,” it is imperative to look at the phenomenon through an intersectional lens (Anguita 490).

In this paper, I will examine corrective rape as it is experienced on the black female lesbian body, a site where the axes of race, gender, class, and sexuality meet. I argue that in order to understand corrective rape in South Africa in the present day, we must first examine how South Africa’s turbulent apartheid history informs present oppressions. To conclude, I will look at the work of a self-identified black South African lesbian photographer named Zanele Muholi, whose work attempts to make the lives of queer black women visible, while returning the gaze in an innovative and essential act of resistance.

Historical Context

Under apartheid – the legislative system of racial discrimination that was enforced by the National Party from 1948 to 1994 – South African society was intensely stratified. Apartheid’s architecture, with white supremacy at its core, created such stratification within the categories of race, as well as gender and class. White, or ‘European’ bodies, ruled over ‘non-white’ bodies, while urban white upper and middle classes ruled over ‘non-white’ lower classes, especially the black South African ‘under-class’. More importantly for the purposes of this paper, both white and ‘non-white’ men benefited from patriarchy, though in different and complex ways. In light of this, both white men and men classified as ‘non-white’ had considerable power over black women.

In mapping out the effects that apartheid’s policies had on the black female body, (laws such as the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act which created ethnically segregated Bantustans for black South Africans), Sharon Groenmeyer writes:

Women, especially Black women, numerically dominated the secondary labor market with low wages and poor conditions of work [...] Because the labor market was rooted in the legacy of apartheid and took on a particular formation, the multiple burdens of gender, race, and class discrimination consigned women, especially Black women, to the lowest rungs of the socioeconomic ladder. . . . [The system] also calcified patriarchal traditional practices by extending the authority of the traditional chiefs and their control over women living in the Bantustans. This marginalized women’s voices from the public discourse and kept hidden from the public purview women’s ability to challenge traditional patriarchal

authority or control (262).

Once the apartheid system was dismantled in 1994, this ‘calcified’ sense of traditional patriarchal control did not dissipate with the advent of democracy. On the contrary, in an effort to reclaim their sense of authority, many black South African men re-inscribed a strongly traditional, patriarchal and heteronormative system in post-Apartheid South Africa. As Megan Morrissey writes in her essay “Rape as a Weapon of Hate: Discursive Constructions and Material Consequences of Black Lesbianism in South Africa”:

Emerging from the oppressive racial regime of apartheid where many Black South Africans felt their traditions and cultures to be negated, some have attempted to reclaim those values they identify as natively South African in an effort to reforge their national identity. In this way, heterosexuality has been identified as a natural South African characteristic, leading to vehement proclamations that homosexuality is a product of whiteness and colonialism. These pronouncements are made among Black South Africans from cities and townships, as well as among influential politicians and clergy who verbally attack homosexuals or equate them with external threats to the nation (72).

An example of such a pronouncement occurred in 2006, when South African president Jacob Zuma asserted, “When I was growing up, an ungqingili [a gay] would not have stood in front of me. I would knock him out” (Ismail 1). Although he later apologised for his comments, which hurt and angered many LGBTQIA South Africans, Zuma’s comment revealed the pervasive nature of South Africa’s compulsory heterosexuality.

In her essay on the subject, Adrienne Rich describes compulsory heterosexuality as a social aspect that “needs to be recognized and studied as a political institution – even, or especially, by those individuals who feel they are, in their personal experience, the precursors of a new social relation between the sexes” (637).

Although South African homosexuality is not “new,” many LGBTQIA individuals recognise the country’s compulsory heterosexuality as a false political and social construction, and thus, challenge it through their myriad lived experiences, expressions, desires, and lives.

‘Corrective Rape’ and the ‘Tripartite Threat’

According to Amanda Swarr’s 2012 study, “Paradoxes of Butchness: Lesbian Masculinities and Sexual Violence in Contemporary South Africa”, survivors of ‘corrective rape’ are commonly black lesbian women living in South Africa’s urban townships (962). This particular form of sexual assault is perpetrated against women who openly break gender norms by self-identifying as ‘butch’, thus “performing” their gender in a way typically read and registered as ‘masculine’ (Butler 67). These women are then perceived as openly challenging traditional patriarchy in a hyper-visible manner, and are also perceived to threaten what is viewed as exclusive male heterosexual access to women as sexual partners. In the act of ‘corrective rape,’ black lesbians are then not only punished for the perceived transgression of a rigid gender binary, but also for disrupting patriarchal compulsory heterosexuality.

As Swarr illustrates, butch lesbians are targeted for sexual violence because of the tripartite threat they pose: to heterosexuality (through their relationships with women), to gender norms (through their expressions of masculinities and disregard for femininities), and to sex (through challenging expectations surrounding somatically female bodies).

Zanele Muholi and the Act of Visual Resistance

Despite the intense levels of violence that many black South African lesbians face, many reclaim their experiences in order to fight back. A remarkable illustration of resistance can be seen in Zanele Muholi’s photography and social justice work.

Muholi is a talented South African artist, activist and photographer, who actively works to challenge heteronormative understandings of South African life. Her visual art deals with the lives of LGBTQIA individuals, particularly focusing on black South African lesbians, in an effort to change social attitudes and shed light on the many struggles and oppressions that individuals within these communities face. In her essay “Mapping Our Histories: A Visual History of Black Lesbians in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” Muholi describes her own experiences of violence based on her sexuality and gender identity:

In 1996 I experienced a severe hate crime when I was beaten up by my former girlfriend’s mother. Her mother believed that I was a ‘pervert’ who promoted homosexuality and made her daughter into a lesbian. We broke up after that. This experience was a wake up call about the effects of lesbophobic attacks. Six years later, I started documenting hate crimes. I journeyed to the townships and listened to and recorded more than 50 cases. I conducted interviews and recorded survivors to mark their experiences, resistance and existence as black lesbians in the country, as I believed that it is important to put a face on each and every issue (20).

In her *Faces and Phases* series, Muholi uses the photographic portrait as a means to return the harmful gaze that is often focused on hyper-visible LGBTQIA individuals as an act of resistance. She writes, “In *Faces and Phases* I present our existence and resistance through positive imagery of black queers (especially lesbians) in South African society and beyond. I show our aesthetics through portraiture. Historically, portraits serve as memorable records for lovers, family and friends” (*Faces and Phases*, 1).



In the above photographs, Muholi intends to challenge the viewer by having them grapple with their own assumptions and stereotypes about African homosexuality. In describing her intent for the series, Muholi writes that the viewer “is invited to contemplate questions such as: what does an African lesbian look like? Is there a lesbian aesthetic or do we express our gendered, racialised and classed selves in rich and diverse ways? Is this lesbian more 'authentic' than that lesbian because she wears a tie and the other does not? Is this a man or a woman? Is this a transman? Can you identify a rape survivor by the clothes she wears?” (*Faces and Phases* 1).

In challenging South Africans to ask these insightful and important questions, Muholi's work plays a vital role in dismantling the oppressive systems of power that inform and contribute to the perpetuation of horrific forms of violence such as 'corrective rape.' In *Faces and Phases*, each of the individuals in Muholi's series looks directly at the camera in a simple yet powerful assertion of personhood, agency and visibility. In returning the viewer's gaze, Muholi's subjects perform a profound and compelling act of resistance.

Muholi's work is only one example of the countless ways in which queer black South African women are engaged in acts of remarkable resistance. In living complex and intersectional lives, queer black South African women help to unravel the rigid and harmful sociological structures that contribute to violent practices such as 'corrective rape' in South Africa. Thus, in existing, resisting and surviving, queer black South African women work to expose interlocking systems of oppression while refusing to succumb to the myriad forces that seek to invisibilise and erase them.

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Circling Through Issues of Representation of Women as Nature

Farzaneh Davani

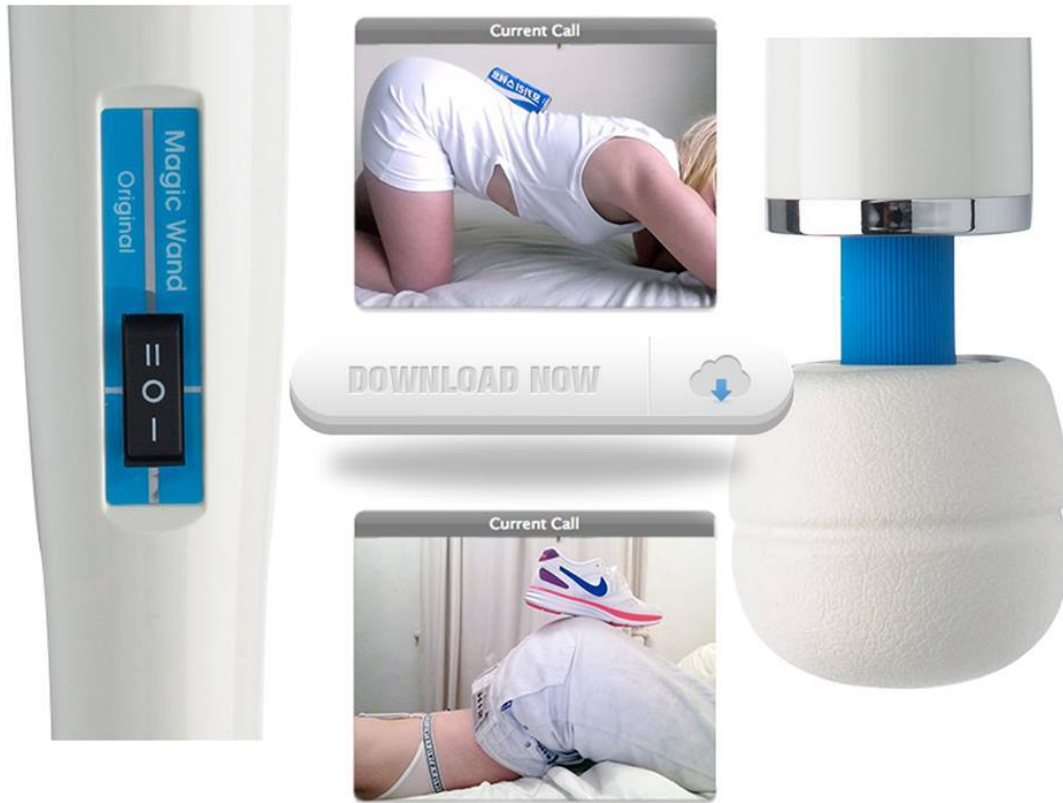


For many years women have been portrayed as beings that have an inherent connection with nature or have been used to represent nature itself. The history of colonization and racialization has also lead to indigeneity and race being associated with nature. The concept of dualism constructs binaries and places them in a hierarchy, such as dominant male/submissive female and untamed nature/civilized culture. In this ideology, as nature is portrayed as female, they are both considered as inferior/primitive compared to the superior/rational male in Western societies. I use the medium of painting to critique the misrepresentation of women as nature in visual images. I show two women in a gestural pose, one of them in a flowing and in powerful pose while the other is in a vulnerable pose. The use of several natural elements in the paint, such as rose petals, sand and leaves, as well as the exposed wooden canvas bar, highlight characteristics of women commonly associated with nature.

While the life cycle and fertility of women is invoked through the circle containing the female figures, the figures are painted in a cubist style, which is disorienting to reference disastrous imagery. Dualistic worldviews are critiqued through the use of geometrics of a circular and square shape to indicate a sense of hyper-separation. The act of ripping the canvas to create space references that the hyper-separation imposed by the dominant group is an act of violence. The sense of objectification and oppression is shown through the torn canvas and entrapment in the circle. However, by sewing back the canvas fabric back together, stretching the strings out of the canvas and painting the outer area in gold color (which represents Utopian world) I make reference to the empowerment and resilience Othered groups may respond to such violence with.

Call Now By Pussy Juice

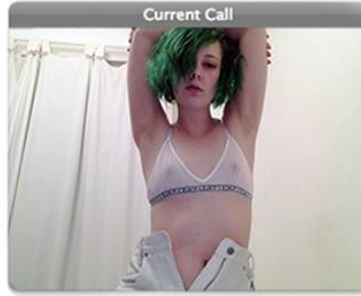
Olivia Dreisinger (bird bone) and Veronika Khvorostukhina (Space Babe)



Pussy Juice is erotica created by queer women for queer women and non-binary folks. These photographs embody the concept of “queer gaze,” attempting to channel the point of view of a queer person. While the appeal of the photographs may be universal, the subject matter is highly personal. As queer cisgendered, feminine-of-center women, the authors strive to promote femme visibility within the LGBTQ+ community.

The “Skype call” is a conversation between two different ways of representing self and desire. The conversation was assembled from “selfies” taken by a web camera, which allows the authors to control the way they appear on screen. At the same time, the juxtaposition of the images captures the productive tension between two different personalities. The authors hope that these photographs channel both self-reflective distance and the closeness of female-female intimacy.

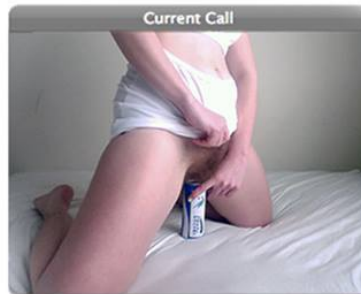
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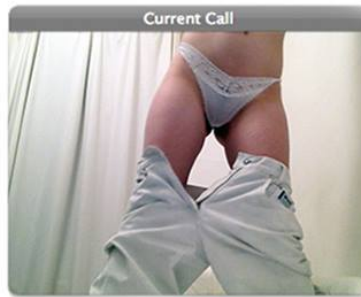


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